

*Between authenticity of a sacred place
and a universal message:*

*The creation of the Garden Tomb –
a Protestant prayer garden.*

Thesis for the degree of
“Doctor of Philosophy”

By

Michal Bitton

Submitted to the Senate of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

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This work was carried out under the supervision of:

Prof. Ronnie Ellenblum

Prof. Nurit Stadler

Abstract

This research examines the creation process of the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem as a sanctuary, recognized as the only Protestant sacred place in the Holy Land. The research explores the sacralization *ex nihilo* of the Garden Tomb which occurred relatively recently at the end of the 19th Century, at a time when the city was already laden with dozens of ancient holy sites.

I then examine the design, function, and management of the place as a prayer garden that has enabled Protestant pilgrims to experience their devotion, responding to their unique spiritual requirements.

I also explore the relationships of the site with its geopolitical environment and inquire into the different approaches that have been taken in order to maintain the garden's fragile existence in the face of religious debates within Christianity, and its insecure position on the seam between East and West Jerusalem.

The evolution of the Garden Tomb into a sacred site originated at Skull Hill, towards which Protestant eyes were drawn for the first time in the 1840s, while pursuing an alternative site for the place of Crucifixion other than the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which is identified mostly by the Catholics and Orthodox Christians. Originally, the newly identified site was a solitary hill on the outskirts of East Jerusalem that was known as al-Adhamiya and was occupied by an ancient Muslim cemetery. The hill's skull-looking façade attracted Protestant viewers, who perceived it as the Scriptural Golgotha (or Calvary) – literally, the Place of the Skull.

Over the following four decades, the Hill became a fertile field of investigations for dozens of scholars who sought to approve or disprove the new identification.

However, it was only in the mid-1880s that the first testimonials regarding the site as a pilgrimage destination began to be heard. It was then that the site was gradually accepted as a sacred place and became the arena on which religious practices were performed. During the same period, an additional site attracted scholars' attention. It was an ancient rock cut tomb at the bottom of the Hill that was regarded as the Tomb in which Jesus was buried after his Crucifixion on Golgotha, and from which he was resurrected. (The events of Crucifixion, Burial and Resurrection in: Mt 27: 32-66, 28: 1-10; Mk 15: 21-47, 16: 1-11; Lk 23: 26-56; 24: 1-12; Jn 19: 17-42, 20: 1-18.)

The process of reception and sacralization of the Hill was gradually extended to the tomb, and by the end of the 19th century a group of British adherents of the site decided to associate in order to purchase the plot by the Tomb. Thus, in 1894, the Garden Tomb Association was officially founded and established the Garden Tomb. The Garden's first decades were characterized by a continuous struggle for survival, coping with theological, organizational and political challenges from within and without the Garden's walls. The Garden Tomb Association maintained a defensive policy led by a strong motivation to obtain religious recognition and to enhance the authenticity of the place. The location of the Garden on the borders of *babe s-Sahira*, a Muslim neighborhood of Eastern Jerusalem, demanded additional resources to cope with geopolitical conflicts that constantly occurred around the Garden.

In 1967, the Six-Day War burst into the Garden, taking the life of the Garden's warden. This traumatic event signified a turning point in the Garden's existence, from which an ideological shift occurred that influenced the Garden's management, design, function and relationship with the neighborhood. The narrative of the Empty Tomb and the Resurrection were emphasized and became the leading message of the Garden. This message reflected an attempt to transcend the physical boundaries of the locality and to transmit universal messages of peace and reconciliation in the complex reality of Jerusalem.

The theoretical framework for this research combines two research fields: gardens and Christian pilgrimage, using historical, ethnographical and interpretive research methods borrowed from historical and religious geography, anthropology, landscape hermeneutics, and culture critique. The empirical data has been produced from archive documents and the website of the Garden Tomb association, interviews with the Garden's management and staff, visitors and neighbors, field observations, and analysis of graphic materials.

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Introduction

*The kiss of the sun for pardon,
The song of the birds for mirth,
One is nearer God's heart in a garden
Than anywhere else on earth.
For He broke it for us in a garden
Under the olive trees
Where the angel of strength was the warden
And the soul of the world found ease.¹*

The above hymn, by the English poet Dorothy Frances Gurney, was published in 1913 and reflects the communion between the two worlds that stand at the center of this research: Gardens and religion. The garden's potency as a powerful mediator between mankind and its beliefs, which are reflected from this hymn, reveals one of the main motivations and assumptions of this research.

As the hymn alludes to, Christianity has a special bound with gardens. The two most dramatic events in the life of Jesus occurred in a garden. The first occurred in the Garden of Gethsemane, "under the olive trees", where Jesus spent his last agonized hours before he was arrested (Jn 18: 1-11). The second event occurred in the garden of Josef of Arimathea, which contained a tomb in which Jesus was buried after the Crucifixion (Jn 19:41). This garden and its physical embodiment as the Garden Tomb, will be the focus of this research.²

¹ D. F. Gurney "God's Garden", *Poems*, Country Life, London 1913.

² For further reading about the meaning of gardens in Christianity: E. Kluckert, *European Garden Design from Classical Antiquity to the Present Day*, ed. R. Toman, Konemann, Cologne 2000, pp.8-31; J. O'Reilly, "The trees of Eden in mediaeval iconography", P. Morris & D. Sawyer (eds.), *A Walk in the Garden. Biblical, Iconographical and Literary Images of Eden*, Sheffield Academic Press, Sheffield 1992, pp. 167-201; J. Prest, *The Garden of Eden*, Yale University Press, New Haven & London 1981;

I examine the development of the Garden Tomb (GT)³ in Jerusalem into a Protestant sacred place, that believers consider to be the only Protestant sanctuary in the Holy Land. I also explore the design and function of the Garden Tomb as a prayer garden – an infrequent form of a sacred space in Israel, as opposed to a built architectonic sanctuary. I also explore the relationships of the site with its geopolitical environment, including transnational relations between London and Jerusalem, the opposing Christian communities in Jerusalem, the Muslim neighbors, and the Israeli–Palestinian conflict.

The research is divided into four chapters that explore the site’s historical development and its contemporary function as a Protestant sanctuary. The first three chapters track the historical chain of events from the 1880s to the present along three phases of development: the sacralization of the Hill and the Tomb (1887–1920s); the creation of the Garden Tomb and adaptation period (1894–1967); and the ideological shift and the creation of the prayer garden (1967–2016). The fourth chapter discusses the contemporary consumption of the site by its visitors.

The following research questions aim to investigate different perspectives in the site’s existence and will be discussed in the above chapters.

1. What was the Protestant ideology behind the creation of the Garden Tomb?
2. What was the process of reception and sacralization of the Hill and the Tomb?
3. How was the Garden Tomb designed and functioned to respond to Protestant theological and cultural demands?
4. How did the open sacred space promote a unique spiritual experience?
5. How did the Garden Tomb Association deal with organizational, political, and environmental conflicts?

Historical and geographical background

Several authors have researched the history of the identification of the Hill and the Tomb and the establishment of the Garden Tomb Association (GTA) in the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century. Sarah Kochav explored the long process of identification of the Hill and the Tomb in the 19th century, while examining the accounts

³ A chart of acronyms is presented in p.274.

of the scholars that suggested, accepted, or rejected the new identification theory.⁴ Charles Lock explored the process that led 19th century Protestant pilgrims to disconnect from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (HS) and search for an alternative site, focusing on the Protestant pilgrimage characteristics, in comparison to those of Catholic and Orthodox pilgrimage.⁵

Seth J. Frantzman and Ruth Kark thoroughly discussed the significant contribution of General Charles Gordon to the site's acceptance in the 19th century.⁶ Frantzman and Kark also dealt with the establishment of the GTA and the entangled process of the Garden purchase, discussing the important role of women in the site's creation.⁷

Daniel Bertrand Monk explored the transference of Golgotha to Skull Hill, leaning on Walter Benjamin's allegorical notion of Golgotha, and contributed to the philosophical reading of the site's sacralization.⁸

An important source in the field of archaeology is the report of Gabriel Barkay, the Israeli archaeologist who researched the Tomb in the 1970s. His findings, which denied the identification of the Tomb as that of Jesus, contributed to the ideological shift that occurred in the third phase.⁹

Additional work has been carried by the GTA's representatives and their adherents.¹⁰ Among which is the official pamphlet of the GTA that was known as the "Red Book."¹¹

⁴ S. Kochav, "The Search for a Protestant Holy Sepulchre: "The Garden Tomb in Nineteenth-Century Jerusalem", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 46, 2 (1995), pp.278-301.

⁵ C. Lock, "Bowing Down to Wood and Stone: One Way to be a Pilgrim", S. Coleman & J. Elsner (eds.), *Pilgrim voices: narrative and authorship in Christian pilgrimage*, Berghahn Books, New York, 2003, pp. 110-132.

⁶ S. J. Frantzman and R. Kark, "General Gordon, The Palestine Exploration Fund and the Origins of 'Gordon's Calvary' in The Holy Land", *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, 140, 2 (2008), pp.1-18.

⁷ S. J. Frantzman and R. Kark, "The Protestant Garden Tomb in Jerusalem, Englishwomen, and a Land Transaction in Late Ottoman Palestine", *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, 142, 3 (2010), pp. 199-216.

⁸ D. B. Monk, *An aesthetic occupation: the immediacy of architecture and the Palestine conflict*, Duke University Press, , Durham, N.C., 2002, pp.17-44.

⁹ G. Barkay, "The Garden Tomb", *Biblical Archaeology Review*, March/April 1986.

¹⁰ W. S. McBirnie, *The Search for the Authentic Tomb of Jesus*, Acclaimed Books, Montrose, California, 1975; P. Walker, *The Weekend that Changed the World- The Mystery of Jerusalem's Empty Tomb, Jerusalem*, Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville Kentucky 2000; Revd. B. White, *A Special Place- The Story of the Garden Tomb*, Jerusalem, The Stanborough Press, Lincolnshire 1989; R. Meryon, *General Gordon and Golgotha*, The Garden Tomb, Maritime Books, London 2012; R. Meryon, *A Garden in Jerusalem -The Story of the Garden Tomb*, The GTA, Jerusalem 2014;

¹¹ The pamphlet was officially entitled "*The Garden Tomb, Jerusalem*", but was regarded by members and authors of the GTA as the "Red Book" after the color of its original cover. Following its first publication in 1911, this pamphlet was published in several revised editions along the years. The two editions to be discussed in the research are: *Jerusalem: The Garden Tomb, Golgotha and the Garden of the Resurrection*, Committee of the GTA, London 1944 [=Red Book 1944]; *The Garden Tomb, Jerusalem*, Committee of the GTA, London 1967 [=Red Book 1967];

Although GTA's historiography is not scientific and might include religious or propagandist narrative, it nevertheless provides an important comprehensive picture on the history of the GT since the 19th century until the present day.

Contemporary research into the GT has remained almost totally absent. Amos S. Ron referred to some aspects of design and experiences in the GT in his thesis of the symbolism of gardens. In additional works, Ron cooperated with Jackie Feldman and with Daniel H. Olsen to discuss Protestant cultural preferences and management of Protestant pilgrimage destinations and themed sites in the Holy Land, including a discussion about the GT.¹²

The historical geography of the Muslim neighborhoods among which the site is situated was researched by Kark and Shimon Landman.¹³ The history of the Anglican Church in Jerusalem, with whom the GTA conducted a fraught relationship, was thoroughly researched by Charlotte Van der Leest, and also by Hanna Kildani.¹⁴

The historical development explored in this research would be concentrated in aspects and periods that have not been sufficiently academically researched: the reception and sacralization process of the site since the 1880s; and the creation, management, function and design of the Garden Tomb from its founding in 1894 until the present. Additionally, a comprehensive academic research of the GT from its foundation till the present was not conducted yet, despite the fact that the site functions as one of the most important sites for Protestant visitors to the Holy Land, and the only purely Protestant sacred site.¹⁵

¹² A. S. Ron, "Gardens in Cultures: The Garden as a Symbolic Landscape – a Study in Landscape Interpretation", M.A. Thesis, Hebrew University of Jerusalem 1989, [Hebrew], pp.54-56; D.H. Olsen, and Ron, A. S., "Managing Religious Heritage Attractions: The Case of Jerusalem", in B. Garrod and A. Fyall (eds.), *Contemporary Cases in Heritage*, Volume 1. Goodfellow Publishers Ltd, Oxford 2013, pp. 51-78; J. Feldman, Ron, A.S. "American Holy Land: Orientalism, Disneyization, and the Evangelical Gaze", in: Schnepel, B., Brands, G. and Schönig, H. (eds.), *Orient -Orientalistik – Orientalismus: Geschichte und Aktualität einer Debatte*, transcript Verlag, Bielefeld, Germany 2011, pp. 151-176; A.S. Ron, and Feldman, J. "From Spots to Themed Sites – the Evolution of the Protestant Holy Land", *Journal of Heritage Tourism* 4 (3), 2009, pp. 201-216.

¹³ R. Kark and S. Landman, "The establishment of Muslim Neighbourhoods in Jerusalem, Outside the Old City, During the late Ottoman period", *PEQ* 112, (1980), pp. 113-135.

¹⁴ C. Van der Leest, "Conversion and conflict in Palestine: the missions of the Church Missionary Society and the protestant bishop Samuel Gobat", Doctoral thesis, Leiden University, 2008; H. Kildani, *Modern Christianity in the holy land: development of the structure of churches and the growth of Christian institutions in Jordan and Palestine*, Authorhouse, Bloomington c.2010;

¹⁵ N. Collins-Kreiner, N. Kliot, Y. Mansfeld and K. Sagi, *Christian tourism to the Holy Land: pilgrimage during security crisis*, Ashgate, Aldershot, Hampshire, England 2006, pp.92, 108

Theoretical Framework

In the center of this research stands the sacred garden, the religious agent who designed and managed it, the believer who require it and the environment that influence it or was influenced by it.

The theoretical framework of this research derived from the study of Christian pilgrimage and the study of gardens and landscape. The Geography of Religion that has an affinity with both serves as another field of research to lean upon in this multidisciplinary work. These disciplines, together or separately, raise several themes and conflicts that attract the attention of this research and would be thoroughly discussed during the research.

In order to decipher the sacralization process of the site, I referred to theoretical efforts to interpret this process. Two leading approaches were developed to explain the sacred place. The first was the *substantial* approach, led by Mircea Eliade, in which the sacred erupted or appeared in certain places that contain a genuine essence of the divine and are clearly distinct from the ordinary world. The substantial sacred place was never chosen, but was discovered.¹⁶ In critical response to the substantial theory, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Jonathan Z. Smith, and others theorized the *situational* approach that explains the sacred place as a product of the cultural labor of sacralization in specific historical situations.¹⁷ It is an “ordinary place, ritually made extraordinary.”¹⁸ In response to both theories, Lily Kong argued that both categories should not be regarded as inherently separated and suggested looking for their intersections.¹⁹

The study of the sacred garden’s design and meaning relied on the interpretation of religious design. It is based on the theories created by Lindsay Jones, Michel Conan, Thomas Barrie, and others regarding religious architecture and sacred sites and gardens, and discusses the ways in which design enables transmission of spiritual messages and ritual activity.²⁰ A few studies of the sacred landscapes in Israel have

¹⁶ M. Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, Sheed and Ward, New York 1958, pp. 368-369;

¹⁷ D. Chidester, and Linenthal, E.T. “Introduction”, *American Sacred Space*, Chidester, D. and Linenthal, E.T., editors, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1995 , pp.6-7

¹⁸ Lane, B. C. (1988). *Landscapes of the sacred: Geography and narrative in American spirituality*, In: L. Kong “Mapping ‘new’ geographies of religion: politics and poetics in modernity”, *Progress in Human Geography*, 25,2 (2001) p. 218

¹⁹ Kong, *ibid.*, p. 224.

²⁰ M. Conan (ed.), *Sacred gardens and landscapes: ritual and agency*, Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection Washington D.C., Dumbarton Oaks 2007; L. Jones, *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2000; T. Barrie, *Spiritual Path*,

been carried out. Nurit Lissovsky researched the sacred groves and Trees as pilgrimage sites.²¹ Noga Collins-Kreiner and Jay D. Gatrell examined the sacred space of the Baha'i gardens in Haifa.²² Tal Alon Mozes, Hadas Shadar and Liat Vardi examined the creation of the sacred compound of the Baba Sali in Netivot. The sacralization process, the role of sacred architecture in shaping the site's sacredness and its reception by the believers, were some of the themes that have been discussed in the research of Netivot and have an affinity with the questions of the current research.²³

Research into the influence made by the Protestant ethos on the site's design and function was mainly based on David Brett's comprehensive book about the Protestant aesthetics that evolved since the 16th century into a general artistic style named the "Plain Style".²⁴ I also regarded the study of religions and geography of religion concerning the ideas and perceptions that shaped the Protestant aesthetics.²⁵ The study of expectations, experiences, and demands of the Protestant visitors to the site in both the past and present relied upon a comprehensive body of research of pilgrimage to the Holy land, which includes the study of their characteristics, perceptions, narratives, and preferences.²⁶

Sacred Place: Myth, Ritual and Meaning in Architecture, Shambhala ,Boston and London 1996; J. H. Kilde, *Sacred Power, Sacred Space: an introduction to Christian Architecture and Worship*, Oxford University Press, Oxford New York 2008.

²¹ N. Lissovsky, "Sacred Trees-Holy Land: Cultural, Natural and Visual Characteristics of the Sacred Geography of Eretz Israel", *Cathedra* 111, (2004), [Hebrew], pp.41-74.

²² N. Collins-Kreiner, & J. D. Gatrell, "Negotiated Space: Tourists, Pilgrims, and the Baha'i Terraced Gardens in Haifa", *Geoforum*, 37, 5, (2006), pp.765-778.

²³ T. Alon Mozes, Hadas Shadar, Liat Vardi, "The Poetics and the Politics of the Contemporary Sacred Place: Baba Sali's Grave Estate in Netivot, Israel", *Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum*, (16, 2), 2009, pp.73-85;

²⁴ D. Brett, *The Plain Style*, The Lutterworth Press, Cambridge 2004.

²⁵ D. Davies, "Christianity", J. Holm (ed.), *Sacred Place*, Pinter Publishers, London, New York 1994, pp.33-61; P. Sheldrake, *Spaces for the Sacred*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore Maryland 2001; J. Delumeau, *History of Paradise: The Garden of Eden in Myth and Tradition*, trans. M. O'Connell, Continuum, New York 1995; L. P. Nelson, "Word, Shape and Image: Anglican Constructions of the Sacred", in: L.P. Nelson (ed.), *American Sanctuary: understanding sacred places*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 2006, pp. 157-181.

²⁶ G. Bowman, "Christian ideology and the image of the holy land", J. Eade & M. Sallnow (eds.), *Contesting the Sacred. The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage*, Routledge, London 1991, pp.98-121; R. Hummel & T. Hummel, *Patterns of the Sacred: English Protestant and Russian Orthodox Pilgrims of the Nineteenth century*, Scorpion Cavendish, London 1995, pp. 13-18, 24- 26; J. Feldman, "Constructing a Shared Bible Land: Jewish Israeli Guiding Performances for Protestant Pilgrims", *American Ethnologist*, 34, 2 (2007), pp. 361-362; L. I. Vogel, *To See A Promised Land: Americans and the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century*, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pa. 1993; E. L. Queen, "Ambiguous Pilgrims: American Protestant Travelers to Ottoman Palestine, 1867-1914", B. F. Le Beau & M. Mor (eds.), *Pilgrims & travellers to the Holy Land*, Creighton University

In order to study the unique function of the place as a Protestant sacred site and as a garden devoted to religious activity, I addressed to the study of reception in gardens and sacred places. Recent tendencies in both disciplines turn their scientific focus from the creation of the garden or the sacred space to the way it is consumed and experienced. This shift is influenced by the present tendency in social sciences and humanities to be occupied with everyday life and to focus on the experiences and practices of the ordinary man. Philosophers such as Henri Lefebvre and Michel de Certeau, who theorized on the interaction between the everyday life and the space in which they take place, are particularly relevant for the study of experiences in gardens and sacred spaces.²⁷ In the field of garden theory, the garden scholar John Dixon Hunt defined the creation of gardens as genuine art that is occupied endemically with the visitors' reaction; namely, the garden is specifically planned to stir reactions. Realizing the importance of exploring these reactions, Dixon Hunt coined the notion of the garden's "after life", referring to the stage arriving after the culmination of the architectural creation of the garden.²⁸ That is, the new research questions no longer linger on the design meaning from the designer's point of view, and instead inspect the interaction between the garden and his consumers and explore the consumer's experiences, reactions, and practices inside the garden. This approach was further developed by other garden scholars and anthropologists, who suggested a new research horizon combining between anthropological methods and landscape interpretation in order to explore the ways in which human practices in gardens and landscapes contribute to the creation of their cultural, social, and political environment.²⁹

Press, Omaha, Neb. c1996, p. 217; J. R. Todd, "Whither Pilgrimage: A Consideration of Holy Land Pilgrimage Today", *Annales de la commission des Pelerinages Chretiennes* (1984): 31, 44;

²⁷ H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, Trans. D. Nicholson-Smith, Blackwell, Oxford 1991; M. De Certeau, "Walking in the City", *The Practice of Everyday Life*. University of California Press, Berkeley 1984. <https://chisineu.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/certeau-michel-de-the-practice-of-everyday-life.pdf>, Accessed 16 September 2016.

²⁸ J. Dixon Hunt, *The afterlife of gardens*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2004, pp.7, 25, 30, 42.

²⁹ M. Conan, "From Vernacular Gardens to a Social Anthropology of Gardening", M. Conan (ed.), *Perspectives on Garden Histories*. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library & Collection Washington D.C., Dumbarton Oaks 1999, vol 21, pp.181-204; M. Conan, "Introduction: The Cultural Agency of Gardens and Landscapes", M. Conan (ed.), *Sacred gardens and landscapes: ritual and agency*, Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection Washington D.C., Dumbarton Oaks 2007, pp.3; K. Hastrup, "Social Anthropology: Towards a pragmatic enlightenment?", *Social Anthropology*, 13, 2, (2005), pp. 133-149; E. Hirsch, "Introduction: Landscape Between Place and Space", E. Hirsch & M. O'Hanlon (eds.), *The anthropology of landscape*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995 pp.1-23;

In the study of the Christian Pilgrimage, the conception of pilgrimage as a heterogenic apparatus that brings together contradictory expectations serves as a premise with which to explore the social interactions within and outside the Garden. The sacred site is understood as a contested site in which visitors compete over access and usage, between themselves and other visiting groups or individuals, between them and the site's agents, and also in front of the local population.³⁰

Research methods

The theoretical framework for this research combines two research fields – gardens and Christian pilgrimage – using historical ethnographical and interpretive research methods borrowed from historical geography, anthropology, landscape hermeneutics, and culture critique. The empirical data has been produced from archive documents and the website of the Garden Tomb association, interviews with the Garden's staff, visitors, and neighbors, field observations, and analysis of graphic materials.

The experiences and perceptions of the historical visitors were collected from 60 accounts written by scholars and travelers who frequented the Hill and the Tomb, and dozens of paintings, photos and maps that they produced. Additional information was collected through traveler's guidebooks and maps, newspapers, and popular literature. The experiences and perceptions of contemporary visitors were collected from interviews and questionnaires answered by 19 visitors between 2010 and 2013. This sample was a combination of different denomination and ethnicities, with the aim of reflecting the multicultural character of the population that normally frequents the site.³¹ Additional information was obtained from interviews conducted with nine staff members and 10 neighbors and by field observations performed between 2009 and 2016.

The policy and decision making, design principles, ideas, and perceptions of the GTA members and staff in Jerusalem were realized mostly from the primary sources found

³⁰ V. Turner & E. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1978, p. 32; J. Eade & M. Sallnow. (eds.). *Contesting the Sacred. The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage*. Routledge, London 1991, pp. 11,15; M. Shackley, *Managing Sacred Sites- Service Provision and Visitor Experience*, Continuum, London & New York, 2001, pp. 20-36; N. Stadler, "Land, Fertility rites and Veneration of female saints: Exploring body rituals at the Tomb of Mary in Jerusalem", *Anthropological Theory*, 15 (3), 2015, pp. 293-316.

³¹ See the chart of interviewees in pp. 272-273.

in the GTA Archive in Jerusalem. I collected more than 80 documents, including letters, reports from Jerusalem, and minutes from the organization's meetings in London.

Approximately 20 additional primary sources were found in the Israel State archive (ISA) in Jerusalem. Other sources included newspaper and periodicals, and literature written by the GTA members or travelers. Contemporary information on the site's management and internal and external policy was obtained through 11 semi-structured interviews with staff members from 2009–2016, and field observations performed between 2009 and 2016. Additional information was obtained through the GTA's website and its monthly newsletter. The development of the garden design was obtained through more than 100 historical photos and maps from the GTA's Archive, Micha Bar-Am Archive, and the Internet.

The external policy and relationships with the neighborhood was learned through semi-structured interviews with 10 neighbors, Christians and Muslims, between 2010 and 2012, and through field observations.

A – The Sacralization of Skull Hill: 1887-1920s

Hundreds of Christian tourists visit the place every year, and few of them go away unconvinced that both the arguments and the strong probability, are in favor of this being regarded as the true site of the Crucifixion.³²

It was a hill with a skull-like façade across the southern Jerusalem walls that attracted such an attention; so testified Selah Merrill, the American Consul of Jerusalem, in 1885.³³ Merrill's testimony pointed to the formation of a new tourist site that was frequented by visitors. Their main goal was to witness the Protestant identification for Golgotha, which was first suggested by the German Scholar Otto Thenius in 1842.³⁴ In the four decades following 1842, the site became a fertile field of investigations for dozens of scholars, who sought to approve or disprove the new identification theory.³⁵ From Merrill's account we learn that the main motivation for visitors was their desire to examine the new theory themselves. His testimonial did not suggest that the place was treated as a holy site just yet.

It is only since the second half of the 1880s that testimonials started to regard the site as a pilgrimage destination. It was then that the site was gradually accepted as a sacred place and became an arena in which religious practices were performed.

The first evidence of this sort was pronounced in 1887 by Edward Tompkins, an American pilgrim who visited the knoll escorted by Merrill and described his visit with spiritual emotions.³⁶ Tompkins' sentiments and reflections reflected a new phase in the attitude towards the Hill, which since then has been treated as a field to be researched.³⁷ By the time of Tompkins' visit, after 40 years of framing the site's reputation, supported

³² S. Merrill, *The Site of Calvary*, A.M. Lunez, Jerusalem 1886, p. 4.

³³ Selah Merrill was an American Congregationalist clergyman, amateur archaeologist of the American Palestine Exploration Society, and American diplomat who served as United States Consul at Jerusalem in 1882–1885, 1891–1893, and 1898–1907.

³⁴ O. Thenius, "Golgotham et sanctum sepulcrum extra Hierosolyma et hodierna et antiqua etiamnunc superesse", *Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie* (12), I. Heft, Jahrgang 1842, pp.33-34.

³⁵ Fisher Howe, Henry Baker Tristram and Claude Reignier Conder were among the salient promoters of the new identification along these decades. A review of the scholars who investigated the place is presented in: Kochav, (note 4 above), pp.286-288; See also: C. W. Wilson, *Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre*, Committee of the Palestine, Exploration Fund, London 1906, p. 109.

³⁶ E. S. Tompkins, *Through David's realm*, Nims & Knight, Troy New York 1889, p.54.

³⁷ Henceforward I reflect the sanctified attitude towards the site by using capital letters for the site's Name, as was used in the visitors' accounts.

by prominent scholars and heroes of the era, it seems that the time had come to establish it as a sacred site.

My aim in this chapter is to explore the process of creation and reception of Skull Hill as a new Protestant site of worship, a process that supported and justified the sanctification of the adjacent Tomb, which was discovered in 1867.³⁸ This chapter would be concentrated from the mid-1880s until the 1920s, when the last religious practices were held on the Hill and the devotional primacy was transferred to the adjacent Garden Tomb. In order to fulfill this aim, I examined around 60 accounts written by scholars and travelers who frequent the Hill, and dozens of paintings, photos and maps that they produced. This documentation has given me the opportunity to examine the creation of a modern pilgrimage site out of nothing. This is an event that rarely occurs specifically within a Jerusalem, an ancient sacred city that is already laden with dozens of holy sites whose sacredness has been established for centuries. This is not to mention the irregularity in the creation a Protestant sacred site, a concept that was normally denied in Protestantism.

By reading the travelers' accounts and observing their graphic materials, I identified three phases, according to which I have organized the following sub-chapters. These three phases enabled and supported the sacralization process of the Skull Hill and the subsequent Garden Tomb.

The first phase involved instinctive–visual attachment with the site, which was experienced as internalization of the inherent sacredness radiated from the site. This phase allegedly lacked any mediators to influence the direct bond created between the believer and the sacred site, in accordance with the Protestant ideal of unmediated faith (A.1).

The following phase included the development of new supportive narratives that helped anchor the authenticity and acceptance of the sacred site. The mediators involved in the creation of these narratives were grasped as legitimate Protestant aids, as opposed to other mediators customary in Catholic or Orthodox Christianity (A.2). The third phase contains the devotional practices that took place on the Hill and enabled its existence as a viable pilgrimage site, maintaining its sacredness and relying on the arrival of worshippers (A.3). Finally, after establishing the sacredness of the Hill with a new set

³⁸ C. Schick, "Gordon's Tomb", *PEFQS*, July[?] 1892, p.121.

of beliefs and practices, a contradictory voice was starting to question this theology (A.4).

The order of occurrences of these phases was not always distinctively observed, and they sometimes occurred simultaneously. Still, their division into three phases reflects a transition that characterized the process of sacralization on the Hill, from sacredness experienced through the eyes into sacredness that involved social or bodily practice, and from a so-called unmediated faith into a more complexed idea of faith that is supported by different mediators.

A.1 The Vision of Skull Hill: Visibility and Visualization

A.1.1 Looking for the Word of God

The visual aspect was central both to the Protestants' rejection of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (HS) and to their establishment of the new sacred site. The Protestants were the last Christian stream to rediscover the Holy Land, only in the 19th century.³⁹ They were not delighted to encounter a country where all of the sacred places were already controlled by the other Christian denominations that had filled them with shrines laden with customs and designs so foreign to Protestant tastes and theology. Since the Protestant Reformation and its attendant iconoclasm, Protestantism identified any mediation between God and man as carrying the potential to be inherently wicked.⁴⁰ This led to the Protestant preference for pure and vacant landscape to admire from a distance, in which one can experience an unmediated and personal relationship with God. Much has been written about this preference. Whether out of theological principles, cultural-aesthetic taste, imperialistic interest or simply as a way to deny the others' presence, unmediated scenery was what Protestants came to see in the Holy Land.⁴¹ Scholars also commonly agreed that the HS was the most displeasing shrine in the Holy Land for those 19th-century Protestant travelers and still remains so today, for

³⁹ Lock, (note 5 above), p. 112; Kochav, (note 4 above), pp.278-279.

⁴⁰ Brett (note 24 above), pp.14, 19.

⁴¹ See for instance: Hummel & Hummel (note 26 above), pp. 13-18, 24- 26; Lock, (note 5 above), pp. 112-123; Feldman (note 26 above), pp. 361-362; Vogel (note 26 above).

the above reasons.⁴²

Sir Charles William Wilson, the noted British geographer and a member of the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF), identified the main impediment for the Protestants to accept the traditional church as a visual obstacle:

A strong effort of the imagination is required to restore the form of the ground as it existed before the churches of Constantine were built. Many pilgrims, either from indolence or from want of knowledge, never attempt to make that effort [...] and seek some spot which appeals more directly to the eye and their preconceived ideas of the character and appearance of Golgotha.⁴³

As Wilson clearly argued, it was impossible to separate the desire of the Protestant visitors to witness an unmediated biblical landscape from their mediated ideas about it. The travelers who came to see the Holy Land were already loaded with visual images that had been ingrained in them since childhood, originating in paintings, hymns, and other educational sources.⁴⁴ All of these crucially influenced their choice of the new site upon the traditional one.

Edward Daniel Clarke, an English mineralogist who visited Palestine in 1801, is regarded as the first person dare propose an alternative site for the HS.⁴⁵

After concluding his visit in the HS, Clarke declared: “It is time to quit these degrading fallacies; to break from our Monkish instructors; and instead of viewing Jerusalem as pilgrims, to examine it by the light of History, with the Bible in our hands.”⁴⁶

He then turned to the mountains around Jerusalem to locate the true Golgotha:

“If Mount Calvary have sunk beneath the overwhelming of the city [...] the Mount of Olives, undisguised by fanatical labours, exhibits the appearance it presented in all the periods of its history.”⁴⁷ Finally, he suggested Mount Zion as a more appropriate site.⁴⁸

Following Clarke, more and more voices began to argue against the HS and, from the

⁴² Hummel & Hummel, *ibid.*, pp. 20-24; Lock, *ibid.*, p. 116; Queen (note 26 above), p. 217; Todd (note 26 above), pp.31, 44;

⁴³ Wilson (note 35 above), p.103.

⁴⁴ See for instance: Perez, *Focus East- Early Photography in the Near East 1839-1885*. H. N. Abrams, New York 1988, pp. 37-42, 50; B. O. Long, *Imagining the Holy Land-Maps, Models and Fantasy Travels*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington c.2003.

⁴⁵ J. E. Hanauer, Rev, “Notes on the Controversy regarding the Site of Calvary”, *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement (PEQ)*, (1892), pp. 295-308. Nevertheless he was not the first to doubt the authenticity of that church. Willibald in the 8th century was probably the first who ambiguously expressed some doubts: Wilson, (note 35 above), p.104.

⁴⁶ E. D. Clarke, *Travels in various countries of Europe, Asia and Africa*, Printed for T. Cadell and W. Davies, London 1823, IV, p. 319.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 319.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 320-328.

1840s on, the hill of “Al Adhamiya” above Grotto Jeremiah north of Damascus Gate, began to be identified as the Place of The Skull. This was primarily due to its appearance: an image of a skull marked its southern cliff. This skull image corresponded perfectly with the Scriptural word Golgotha, which contained the Hebrew and Aramaic words for skull.⁴⁹



Plate 1: Bonfils, Grotte de Jérémie 1870-1879

The influence of this skull-like cliff was immediate and powerful, as expressed by those who traveled with a Bible.

John William Dawson, a Canadian geologist who visited the Hill with Merrill around 1885, wrote the following about the moment he encountered the Hill:

This resemblance has suggested itself to many observers, independently of any supposition that it is Golgotha. It is true that such resemblances depend very much on the point of view and direction of light. But these conditions [...] add to the effect, for it flashes out upon us suddenly and strikingly when last expected. And it is this that excites the popular imagination.⁵⁰

As much as his description was sympathetic to the new identification, Dawson remained rational and distant, not engaging in the excitement of those who have this popular imagination. His approach was not that of a pilgrim, but of a curious scholar. Still, he probably would not have observed that resemblance without a visual preconception, since he had a copy of a model of the Skull Hill made by the General Gordon.⁵¹ However, Edward Tompkins, whom we met in the introduction to this chapter, reacted differently. Firstly, he outlined the rational justification with which he ascended the Hill. Namely, he memorized all the intellectual arguments that had been woven during the four previous decades in favor of the new site. After reaching the summit, however, he released himself from the restraints of rationality and declared the

⁴⁹ Kochav (note 4 above), pp. 286-287.

⁵⁰ J. W. Dawson, *Egypt and Syria: their physical features in relation to Bible history*, Religious Tract Society, London 1887, pp. 106-107.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 108. General Gordon will be thoroughly discussed in the following pages.

sanctity of the Hill:

Indeed, the thought came home to our minds so vividly that the very crosses themselves were almost before our eyes. It was a solemn moment; for to stand where our Lord suffered, and was buried, was to stand upon holy ground.⁵²

The most influential element of that sacred arena was the sight reflected from the knoll, which urged the visitor to admit the knoll's sanctity:

If ever the imagination of man can play without let or hindrance it must burst forth when visiting this spot. Not only will the memory assist, but the surroundings will also force one to pass in review the events of that memorable day.⁵³

More accurately, it was not the sight of the present that drew such passions in Tompkins, but the views of the ancient past: "The place where the ancient Roman gate stood, showing the course the old road took leading up to Damascus."⁵⁴ These imagined sights invoked in him the events of the Crucifixion and the words of an old hymn. He concluded his profound experience with the statement that anyone who "leave the little hill [...] without being impressed by his visit, he is beyond the hope of pardon."⁵⁵

Helen Harris, a Quaker traveler who visited Skull Hill in April 1889, described her impressions from the first encounter with the Hill as follows: "It is unique in its appearance and most convincing to the unprejudiced mind, even at the first glance, and before the cogent arguments in its favour are studied."⁵⁶

Harris bound the ability to discern the Hill's unique appearance with an unprejudiced mind. Moreover, she felt that a visitor who is equipped with that kind of mind would recognize it at first glance, even without any prior knowledge. Contrary to that primal declaration, Harris admitted later to having come prepared for her visit, since she had read about the new theory regarding the new site before her travel.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, she described her first encounter with the Hill as a spontaneous discovery that revealed an undeniable truth: "In our first walk around the walls soon after turning the north-east angle it rose unexpectedly before us, impressing us with the conviction that *this must be Calvary*."⁵⁸

⁵² Tompkins, (note 36 above), p.54.

⁵³ Ibid., p.55.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p.54.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p.55.

⁵⁶ B. H. Harris, *Pictures of the East: sketches of biblical scenes in Palestine and Greece*, J.Nisbet, London 1897, p. 8.

⁵⁷ Harris, *ibid.*, p.8.

⁵⁸ Harris, *ibid.* italics in the origin.

Plate 2: Harris
1889, The Green
Hill from the city
walls”



Plate 3: Harris
1889, Entrance to
the sepulcher near
the Green Hill

Harris then described her visit to the garden and the tomb west of the Hill. Here again, she attempted to rediscover the place by herself, supposedly without the guidance of any preconceptions. Thus, she concluded her independent investigation:

“It is, therefore, with a deep satisfaction that we assure our readers that there can be no doubt but that a garden has existed in the north-western corner for ages, and the proof of it is that a well exists here.”⁵⁹ Harris’s attitude of exploration, which was the same as Clarke’s, corresponds entirely with the Protestant theological emphasis on rational, independent inquiry with its focus on the individual rather than on the church and its corpus of inherited tradition.⁶⁰ Her impressions of both places are also apparent in her paintings. Her “Green Hill” (plate 2) seems less intimidating than other Skull Hills yet to be pictured, but still reflects a somewhat mysterious and gloomy character. Her “Sepulcher near the Hill” (plate 3) was one of the earliest visual descriptions of the Tomb and its environment, and exposed its desolate situation. Both descriptions depict primordial and neglected landscapes, waiting for their rediscovery. Clark, Tompkins, Harris and their followers presented a Protestant approach towards the unaltered landscape of Palestine. It is a perception of the biblical landscape as an entity that reflects the Word of God in the most literal way, with no artificial interpretations. The threefold combination that Harris presented of independent thought, suggestive appearance, and unexpected revelation, emphasizes this approach: The believer who relies on the Bible alone will gain a direct connection to the divine. Just as he reads the words of God with a clear mind, he can read the landscape in God’s country with no mediation, and the truth will reveal itself to him. Since its origin, Protestantism had yearned for the literal Word of God and suspected allegorical exegesis, which it saw propagandistic readings based on the Catholic

⁵⁹ Harris, *ibid.*, p.33.

⁶⁰ Todd (note 27 above), pp. 23-24.

doctrines.⁶¹ The same suspicion seemed to mark the Protestant attitude toward the HS, which was laden with artificial elements that represented the natural places in a most ambiguous manner. As Clarke wrote: “if Helena had reason to believe she could identify the spot where the sepulcher was, she took especial care to remove every trace of it [...]”⁶² Thus, the eternal landscape offered Clarke the most reliable cues for his search: “The features of Nature continue the same, although works of art have been done away : the beautiful Gate of the Temple is no more; but Siloa's fountain haply flows [...]”⁶³

Daniel Bertrand Monk, who followed the transference of Golgotha to Skull Hill through a philosophical prism, identified this transference as an effort to dissociate Golgotha from its firmly established location and its function as “the archetype of allegory” and to transplant it as a symbol in the landscape itself.⁶⁴ Borrowing from Walter Benjamin’s terminology for allegory and symbol,⁶⁵ Monk observed that while the HS could offer the Protestant visitors nothing but an allegorical interpretation for the biblical localities, with its unstable and temporal meaning, the physical inscription of Calvary into the primordial landscape of Jerusalem anchored it as a material petrified presence of the divine, as an eternal redemptive symbol. Figuratively speaking, the new Golgotha emerged from the landscape as a “hieroglyph designed by God.”⁶⁶

Thomas De Witt Talmage was one of America’s leading evangelical preachers in the 19th century and traveled to Jerusalem in the early 1890s. His testimonial continues to reflect the aforementioned perceptions and expend the efforts to match the Scriptural words with the Hill’s components. His testimonial begins with a question he had asked an old inhabitant: “where is mount Calvary?”. He did not wait for an answer: “Before he answered, I saw it. No unprejudiced mind can have a moment's doubt as to where it is.”⁶⁷ Although he seemed to brag about his independent thought that needed

⁶¹ J. S. Pendergast, *Religion, Allegory, and Literacy in Early Modern England, 1560-1640*, Ashgate, Burlington, Vt. 2005, p.8

⁶² Clarke (note 46 above), p. 315.

⁶³ Clarke, *ibid.*, p. 320.

⁶⁴ Monk, (note 8 above), p.22.

⁶⁵ W. Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. J. Osborne, Verso, London 2009, pp. 159-235. Contrary to the concrete meaning offered by the symbol, allegory creates a split between signifier (form) and signified (meaning). For further explanation on Benjamin's theory of allegory in the baroque see: D. Finkelde, “The Presence of the Baroque: Benjamin’s Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels in Contemporary Context”, Rolf J. Goebel, *A Companion to the works of Walter Benjamin*, Camden House, Rochester, N.Y., p.48, 57-63.

⁶⁶ Monk, (note 8 above), pp.17, 22-26.

⁶⁷ Talmage, T. De Witt, *Talmage on Palestine: a series of sermons*, Arno press, New York 1977, pp. 38-39.

no assistance on its way to the truth, he actually had prior knowledge of the Hill's appearance. Like Dawson, he also saw Gordon's clay model when he was in Cairo, so he had found what he expected to see. Anxious to get there, he ordered the dragoman to lead them to Calvary before anywhere else, fearing that if they would see other sites, something could happen that might prevent them from seeing the "Sacred Mount". Thus, a parade of carriages and mules were on the way "to the most sacred spot that the world has ever seen or ever will see."⁶⁸

Talmage did not need further reflections before he described the Hill – which only a few years ago had lain incognito – as the most sacred place in the world. Then, without hesitation, he recognized the cracks on the cliff as those that were gaped due to the earthquake of the Crucifixion day. A white limestone rock tinged with crimson was lying on the Hill. The combination of white and red evoked in him a sensation of purity and sacrifice. He admired this sight so much that he decided: "That stone would be beautifully appropriate for a memorial wall in my church, now building in America [...] so I rolled it down the hill and transported it."⁶⁹ The stone was carried on a back of a camel through the Sinai desert, where it adjoined a rock from Mount Sinai. When Talmage wrote his book, the two stones were already decorating the entrance of the Brooklyn Tabernacle, one of them "rent with the earthquake at the giving of the Law, the other rent at the Crucifixion on Calvary."⁷⁰ After appropriating that sacred piece of earth, he identified for his companions the presumed spot of the three crosses. He then started to recite from the Scriptures, but was subdued by his intense emotions:

I read a little, but broke down. I defy any emotional Christian man sitting upon Golgotha to read aloud and with unbroken voice, or with any voice at all [...]

what tempests of sorrow, what surging oceans of agony in those utterances!⁷¹

The vision of Crucifixion then appeared most vividly against the attendants' eyes and they sat there, petrified in silence and awe, while realizing that: "This is the centre from which continents have been touched, and the whole world shall yet be moved [...] round it circles all history, all time, all eternity."⁷² This description corresponds with the philosophical and theological notion of the *axis mundi* – "the navel of the world" – in

⁶⁸ Ibid., p.39.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p.40.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p.40. This Brooklyn Tabernacle was the third to be built by Talmage, after the prior two were burnt. Still the third was burnt as well on 1894, a short time after it was built.

⁷¹ Talmage, *ibid.*, p.41.

⁷² Talmage, *ibid.*, p. 42.

which heaven and earth meet.⁷³ Talmage's experience indicates two levels of reception of the new sacred site: the first reflects the logical-visual persuasion expressed in the efforts to locate the Scriptural text on the landscape, and the second reflects the material-sensual involvement with the site – the physical appropriation of the sacred and the sensual vortex reflected in the axis mundi experience. Other material-sensual practices on the Hill will be thoroughly discussed in sub-chapter A.3.

Like Talmage, a British painter named Henry Andrew Harper endeavored to locate every Scriptural word in the physical landscape. Harper, who visited the Holy Land many times in the late 1800s, was fascinated by the Hill's appearance and painted it many times. His painting entitled "Skull Face" is more intimidating than Harris's. As a professional painter, Harper used his eyes to discern the details that usually evaded others. He paid special attention to the cracks in the rock that, for him, authenticated the site as the place of Crucifixion:

I have felt that I stood at the place where the 'rocks were rent', and the world's tragedy fulfilled. For twenty-five years I have known this place, sketched it from many points of view, always and ever impressed with its resemblance to a gaunt skull.⁷⁴

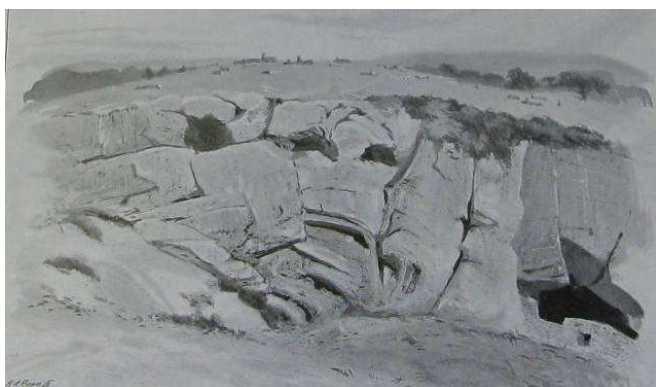


Plate 4: Harper, 1890s, Place of the Skull.



Plate 5: Harper, 1890s, The Rent in the rock

The English writer Henry Rider Haggard, who visited the site in 1900, took the opposite rout compared to other travelers until the end of the 19th century, by first visiting the Hill and then the adjacent Tomb. Haggard's choice to visit the Tomb could indicate the growing importance of the Tomb, a few years after its formal establishment by the GTA. Haggard was fascinated by the Tomb's appearance: "The resemblance between

⁷³ M. Eliade, *Images and Symbols-Studies in Religious Symbolism*. P. Mairet (tr.), Princeton University Press, New Jersey 1991, pp.39-47; T. Barrie, *Spiritual Path, Sacred Place: Myth, Ritual and Meaning in Architecture*, Shambhala, Boston and London 1996, pp.61-64.

⁷⁴ H. A. Harper, *An artist's walks in Bible lands*, Religious Tract Society, London 1901, p.74.

this garden with its grave and those described in the Gospels is remarkable.”⁷⁵ Yet, as a rational thinker he did not allow the vision to determine the facts, but instead he chose to use it as a visual aid for the biblical events: “at least, the sight of it is a great support to the imagination. such a garden there must have been, and such a tomb, even as we see them to-day.”⁷⁶ In his visit to the Hill, Haggard expressed similar hesitation regarding his reliance on his eyes to determine facts: “How can I, who, lacking an extended experience of these problems must rely mainly upon my powers of observation and deduction such as they may be, to guide me to the truth?”. Eventually, he chose to accept “the quaint and ghastly resemblance to a human skull.”⁷⁷

Macmillan’s guidebook to Palestine that was published in 1901, contained an abundance of arguments in favor of the site, when the most salient argument was the complete visual fulfillment of the Gospel’s narrative. It was claimed that the vision of the Hill and the Tomb established their identification as unquestionable:

The forehead, eye-sockets, nose-cavity, cheek-bones, mouth, and lower jaw are wonderfully clear and distinct [...] once the features have been properly discerned no reasonable person can have any doubt about the identity of the spot [...] This is the *only* tomb in the neighborhood of Jerusalem [...] where the incidents so graphically described in St. John xx 3-10 could have occurred. And when standing in this sepulcher and reading that account, the whole scene can be clearly realized.⁷⁸

Both Haggard and Macmillan’s guidebook were rigidly criticized for their visual approach by William Sanday, an Anglican theologian. Sanday, who visited the Holy Land in 1902, dealt extensively with the visual aspects of the new site. On one hand, he justified the protection of the site in English hands, since this Tomb presented near analogies to the Gospel accounts of the Tomb of Jesus. On the other hand, he negated the new identification since its only justification was based on these analogies:

I am inclined myself to think that the traditional site has still higher claim [...] it requires an effort of the imagination to realize what it was. And the effort is not helped by what the eye sees [...] The claims of the new site are just such as appeal most directly to the eye. They are such as everyone can appreciate without effort.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ H. R. Haggard, *A winter pilgrimage: being the account of travels through Palestine, Italy and the island of Cyprus, accomplished in the year 1900*, Longmans, Green, London ; New York 1908, p.324.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p.325.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p.330.

⁷⁸ Macmillan, *Guide to Palestine and Egypt*, Macmillan & Co., London 1901, pp.42-43.

⁷⁹ W. Sanday, *Sacred sites of the gospels, with illustrations, maps and plans*, Clarendon Press Oxford 1903, p.68.

The visitors who sanctified the Hill by relying on their eyes, as accused by Sanday, usually did not lean on the Bible alone. Although many visitors had tried to describe their acceptance of the site as an unmediated and instinctive process, supported solely by their rational independent thinking, they did not truly meet with an incognito land, but rather came equipped with a prior knowledge, visual images, and expectations. The following sub-chapters will discuss two of the prominent sources for those visual images.

A.1.2 The Hymn of the Green Hill

*There is a green hill far away,
outside a city wall,
where our dear Lord was crucified
who died to save us all.*⁸⁰

The visual preconceptions of many visitors to the Hill relied largely on hymns they had recited all their lives, since Protestants use hymns to depict a clear picture of a Biblical event, just as Catholic and Orthodox Christians use icons and works of art.⁸¹ The hymn of the “Green Hill” cited above was particularly influential in shaping those preconceptions. It was written by the Irish poet Cecil Alexander and was first published in 1848. Harris’s testimonial from 1889 was the first I found that mentioned this hymn in reference to the Hill. By that time, as Harris noted, the Hill was already “generally known by the name of ‘the Green Hill’.”⁸²

Since then, many visitors to the Hill have mentioned that hymn and recited its lines. It seems that within the context of visits to the Hill, the original religious-educative role of the hymn was expanded and, since the last decade of the 19th century, it functioned as a representative anthem of the Hill’s advocates. Arthur William Crawley-Boevey, a prominent member of the GTA, commented on the hymn’s contribution to the site’s publicity and to the formation of its visual image:

⁸⁰ C. F. Alexander, *Hymns for Little Children*, 1850, Herman Hooker, Philadelphia 1850, pp. 31-32.

⁸¹ Davies (note 25 above), pp.49-51.

⁸² Harris (note 56 above), p.8.

The well-known hymn [...] gave expression to the idea which made the New Calvary famous throughout the world. That hymn, set to music by Gounod, has been translated into many languages, and has contributed to foster the popular view [...] ⁸³

The three scenic components mentioned in the hymn – the Hill, greenery, and beyond the city wall – were the founding elements of the Protestant imagery of Golgotha and the features that were asked to be found in the True Golgotha. However, the only feature of the three that was actually mentioned in the Scriptures was the location of Calvary outside the city walls. ⁸⁴ Wilson located the origins of the hilly image of Calvary in the Western tradition:

The site is one that appeals directly to the eyes of those who from infancy have heard Calvary called a “mount” [...] no Greek writer uses the expression “Mount” [...] the skull-like appearance and elevation of Golgotha are apparently fancies introduced from the West. ⁸⁵

Ernest Tatham Richmond was the director of antiquities for the Government of Palestine (1927–1937) and converted to Catholicism in 1926. He denied Wilson’s criticism of Calvary’s hilly image and claimed that the Church of the HS actually stands on a hill:

Houses cover its slopes, and accumulations of rubbish have reduced the depth of its neighboring valleys; but, that it is a hill, is clear to anyone who [...] observes from the roof of the Church [...] There is, then, justification in fact for the association of Calvary with the idea of height and prominence. This idea is not, as has been suggested, a fancy introduced from the west. ⁸⁶



Plate 6: Decoration of Mount Golgotha on a silver paten, sixth/seventh century.

In fact, the Western tradition was influenced by descriptions of the earliest Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land. The first time the notion was introduced was in 333AD by

⁸³ A. W. Crawley-Boevey, “Golgotha and The Holy Sepulchre”, *PEQ*, (1906), p. 273.

⁸⁴ Jn 19:20; Heb 13:12.

⁸⁵ Wilson (note 35 above), p.115.

⁸⁶ T. Richmond, *The sites of the crucifixion and the resurrection*, Catholic Truth Society, London 1934, p. 3.

the “Pilgrim of Bordeaux”, who described Golgotha as *monticulus* (little Mount Golgotha). He was followed by the pilgrim Rufinus in the fifth century, who spoke of “the rock of Golgotha”; since the sixth century, Calvary had been designated as a mountain in art and literature.⁸⁷ Whether this notion was based on topographical truths or a mere idealization of a pilgrim or an artist, it was anchored in the universal Christian imagination for many centuries, and thus accepted by both Catholics who located in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, or by Protestants who identified it without Damascus Gate. As for other notions that the Protestants wished to be made tangible, Richmond was highly cynical:

Calvary was, it seems, only to be found outside the present walls of the city [...] it must answer to the requirements of the searchers' preconceptions and must be of a character that would satisfy, and not repel, the Christian conscience. For those thus minded, the hill of Bezetha⁸⁸ had certain obvious attractions. It is a hill, though not, except in the rainy months, a very green one, and it is without the city wall.⁸⁹

A.1.3 Visual Aids

It was not just hymns that contributed to the construction of visual images of the Hill and the Tomb. Such contributions were also made by paintings and photographs produced by travelers and professional painters and photographers, which sometimes, as claimed by Sandy, served as a useful instrument by those who wished to reinforce the site's credibility and popular acceptance.⁹⁰

Sanday discussed Christ's Tomb painting of Henry Latham, the Master of Trinity Hall, to exemplify his claim. Latham depicted the Tomb with a resemblance to the round frontage of the GT (compare plate 7 with plate 8; Latham's painting and the Tomb's photo are from the early 1900s). However, Latham's Tomb was sealed with a rolling stone, which was mentioned in the Gospels but was never actually discovered in the

⁸⁷ “Mount Calvary”, *New Advent-Catholic Encyclopedia*, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03191a.htm>, Accessed 15 March 2013.

From the sixth century Golgotha was depicted in Greek art as a hill and a cross on top of it, and with four rivers of paradise at its foot. See: G. Noga-Banai and L. Safran, “Late Antique Silver Reliquary in Toronto”, *Journal of Late Antiquity*, 4,1, (2011), pp.3-30. Plate 6 above is taken from p.14.

⁸⁸ According to Josephus, the name of a hill north of the Temple-mound, and separated from the latter by a valley. Source: “Bezetha”, *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Funk and Wagnalls, New York 1906. <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/3247-bezetha>, Accessed 15 March 2013.

⁸⁹ Richmond, (note 86 above), p.12.

⁹⁰ Sanday, (note 79 above), pp.68-71. see: H. Latham, *The Risen Master*, Deighton Bell and Co., Cambridge 1901.

GT itself.⁹¹ Sanday recognized Latham's description as an archetype for other visual descriptions, which attempted to represent the Resurrection in a manner that supported the GT.⁹²



Plate 7: Latham 1901, Tomb of Christ



Plate 8: 1905, The Tomb after Hussey excavation

By adding the rolling stone to the frontage of the GT, Latham reinforced the credibility of the GT as the actual tomb mentioned in the Bible.

Another example of influential paintings was presented by Crawley-Boevey, who discussed the paintings of two famous English painters: William Hall and Herbert Schmalz.⁹³ Hall and Schmalz painted the events of Crucifixion and Burial in the same years as the new site had been constituted, and were influenced, according to Crawley-Boevey, by its actual appearance: “Distinguished modern artists like Mr. Herbert Schmalz, and Mr. W. Hole [...] have accepted the ‘green hill’ and the GT as the most appropriate setting for their well-known pictures.”⁹⁴ Schmalz painted a series of biblical scenes after returning from travel to the Holy Land in 1890.⁹⁵

William Hall had also traveled there in 1900 to study the landscape for his biblical paintings. There he started to work on 80 oil paintings, which were published in 1906.⁹⁶ Both artists expressed the encounter of the Resurrected Christ with Maria Magdalena in a garden abounded with flowers (plates 9-10). Although their pictures lack any feature that clearly connects the scene to the GT, the stone pavement combined with cypresses and olives alludes to the actual garden in Jerusalem.

⁹¹ The rolling stone which sealed the Tomb: Mt 27:60; Mk 15:46, 14:3-4; Lk 24:2; Jn 20:1.

⁹² Sanday, (note 79 above), pp.68-71. see: H. Latham, *The Risen Master*, Deighton Bell and Co., Cambridge 1901.

⁹³ Schmalz also served as a GTA member. See p.71 below.

⁹⁴ Crawley-Boevey (note 83 above)

⁹⁵ The travel's paintings were published on the magazine *Art Journal* 1893: “A Painter's Pilgrimage”.

⁹⁶ W. Hole, *The life of Jesus of Nazareth: eighty pictures*, Eyre & Spottiswoode, London [1905?].

Plate 9: Schmalz 1896, Rabboni.



Plate 10: Hall 1905, Jesus and Maria Magdalena.



These Resurrection gardens depicted in the critical moment that the new Protestant site was established, and their appeal to English audiences, were influential in terms of reinforcing the site's legitimacy. On one hand, they pronounced the site's acceptance by the two appreciated and famous artists; on the other, they assisted in anchoring the image of the Mediterranean garden, rather than the walls of the HS to be looked for by the potential visitors to the Holy Land.

One more example that helped to promote the visual acceptance of the Hill and the Tomb was presented in the stereographic tour book by Underwood & Underwood (U&U). The book, which was published in 1914 with explanations by Jesse Lyman Hurlbut and Charles Foster Kent, served as a surrogate tour to the Holy Land for those who could not take the actual one.⁹⁷

Plate 11: Underwood & Underwood, "The 'New' Calvary, outside the Damascus Gate, from the northern wall", 1901.

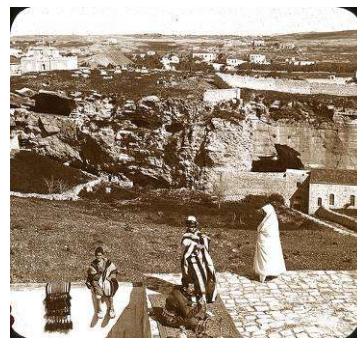
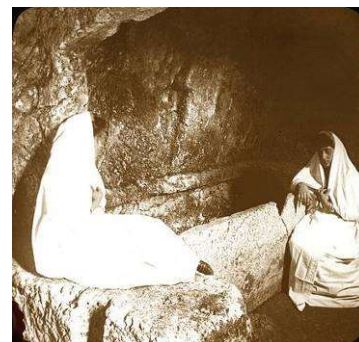


Plate 12: Underwood & Underwood, "Tomb of our Lord" – "New Calvary", 1897.



The photos of U&U (plates 11-12), like many of their other Holy Land stereographs, provide exhibition of local figures dressed in their traditional garments that maintain a vivid Oriental or biblical atmosphere to their pictured biblical sites.⁹⁸ In both places,

⁹⁷ J. L. Hurlbut and C. F. Kent, *Palestine through the stereoscope: a tour*, Underwood & Underwood, New York 1914. It was a revised edition of a photographic tour that Hurlbut had authored a decade earlier, and it included U&U's stereographs that were pictured since the late 1890's. Both authors had traveled to Palestine separately during the 20 years prior to the publication. Hurlbut- was an American Methodist leader, and Kent was a notable biblical scholar.

⁹⁸ Long (note 44 above), pp. 103, 107. Yeshayahu Nir named this genere of staged photos as "Biblical Allegory". Frank M. Good was the first to introduce this genre in the 1870's with the pohto "a boat on

the presence of the traditionally dressed inhabitants bestows a vital dynamic nature to the static desolated landscape and Tomb and helps the viewer imagine the Scriptural scene that occurred there.

The two feminine figures in plate 12 were assigned to a certain role, as explained by the authors Hurlbut and Kent:

They are young Syrian girls from the English Protestant school, dressed in the costumes of their people; and they simply show us how two people might have appeared in such a tomb as this, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. We dare not say that this was the tomb [...] but we can say [...] that the receptacle for the body was such that two people could be seated beside it, as the women found the two angels on that Easter morning.⁹⁹

The Syrian girls served as a multi-layered symbol replying to the authors' ideological assumptions, as well as to their readers' expectations. Although they dressed as locals, the girls are not the stereotypical "backward Arabs", but are instead culturally adapted to Western values. Yet, for the sake of illustration, they had been dressed in "the costumes of their people", representing the angels dressed in white who sat by the Tomb (Jn 20:12), and might also refer to the two Marias who came to search for Jesus and found the angels (Lk 24:4). Another message is apparent in the authors' explanation. During Hurlbut and Kent's tour, as Burke O. Long had discerned, the modern Palestine, and especially its women, also served as evidence of the fallen state of the country that its people did not accept Jesus.¹⁰⁰ In the case of the Tomb, the women can also be viewed as natives who had been saved from that fallen state thanks to their English-Protestant education. The visualization efforts continued when the readers were being guided to:

Notice the dark opening to a tomb, approached by steps where these two women are seated. Do you see the round, flat stone standing at the door? [...] the curve in the edge of the stone is shown, and also the groove in which it has been rolled.¹⁰¹

Just as the cracks in the rock had testified to the earthquake, as previously pronounced by Talmage and Harper, a curve in the rock and a narrow channel could become evidence for the presumed rolling stone. This kind of induction received a cynical

the lake of Gennesareth" meant to recall the deeds of Christ in that lake: Y. Nir, *The Bible and the image: the history of photography in the Holy Land 1839-1899*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia 1985, p.144.

⁹⁹ Hurlbut & Kent (note 97 above), pp. 94-95.

¹⁰⁰ Long (note 44 above), p. 128.

¹⁰¹ Hurlbut & Kent (note 97 above), p.96.

reaction from a very close neighbor of the GT – the Dominican archaeologist Louis-Hugues Vincent from the *École Biblique*, in his criticizing article “Garden Tomb, Histoire d’un Mythe”, published in 1925:

From the smaller detail observed in this sepulture, one processes laboriously the modalities of the Jewish funeral architecture; and if any sculptured shred is found in that neighborhood, it becomes straight away excessively important: the major newspapers are taken it up and sensational sections are published which make the people who are able to have some thoughts on the subject smile[...]¹⁰²

The initial phase in the site’s sacralization, as presented in the above sub-chapter, was realized through the first impressions of encountering the place with a devotional awe. The first pilgrims’ reliance on the visual aspect of the place produced a certain type of sacred place that corresponds closely with Eliade’s *substantial* approach for the sacred in which, the sacred erupted in certain places and contain a genuine essence of the divine.¹⁰³ The spontaneous emergence and the instinctive realization that immediately connected the Scriptural place with the observed landscape, as pronounced by the aforementioned visitors, depicts a sacred place, it’s the sanctity of which was already inherent within it and was just waiting to be noticed and discovered. In fact, since it was first suggested by Thenius and his successors, the relocation of Golgotha on Skull Hill was motivated by the eyesight and a sentimental insistence to link the Scriptural Word with the biblical landscape rather than by a rational deduction – “even at the first glance, and before the cogent arguments in its favour are studied,”¹⁰⁴ – as pronounced by Harris. Yet, the distance between the eye and its object of faith seems to have hindered the dynamic involvement of believers with the site. The following sub-chapter will investigate the further devotional relations with the site through additional mediators than the sight-sense and through sensual–material devotion.

¹⁰² L.H. Vincent O.P. “Garden Tomb, histoire d’un mythe”, *Revue Biblique* xxxii 1925, p. 401.

¹⁰³ Eliade, (note 16 above), p. 218

¹⁰⁴ Harris (note 56 above) ,p. 8.

A.2 Creation of Supporting Narratives

In sub-chapter A.1 some recurring perceptions pronounced by the visitors defined their attitude towards the site and enabled its reception and sacralization. Despite their alleged unmediated faith, they were influenced by images and ideas that had originated in hymns, pictures, and other mediating sources. In fact, their convictions were immersed in a noticeable episteme of the time that treated the Bible with a modern scientific approach. Two emerging disciplines – the biblical archaeology and the modern biblical criticism – functioned as prominent forces in shaping the Protestant discourse over the true Sepulchre and Golgotha.¹⁰⁵ A leading authority in promoting these disciplines was the American biblical scholar Edward Robinson. His biblical research of Palestine, which was published in 1841,¹⁰⁶ marked the beginning of debate between “scientific Protestantism” and “Traditionalist” Christians.¹⁰⁷ Although he did not suggest an alternative site, Robinson’s thoroughly elucidated rejection of the traditional HS was very influential, especially in Britain and United States due to his great reputation.¹⁰⁸ The English Reverend Haskett Smith, an eminent promoter of the GT, articulated the influence of the scientific approach on questioning the traditional site:

[The Victorian age] has been pre-eminently the period of investigation and discovery [...] In no country has this been more conspicuous than in the Holy Land itself ; where, cynically regardless of the most cherished traditions, a coldly calculating, strictly scientific, investigation has been applied to almost every so-called Holy site [...] the traditional sites of Calvary and of the Tomb of Christ have, in their turn, been exposed to the attacks of the critic.¹⁰⁹

Still, this praised rationality was not as coldly calculated as Reverend Smith had argued, but rather nursed from earlier and more spiritual trends of the 19th century, such as the Romantic Movement and the Christian revival. Both trends were born as a reaction to the 18th century’s Rationalism and supplemented each other, encouraging the use of

¹⁰⁵ Kochav (note 4 above), pp.292-294; Frantzman & Kark 2008 (note 6 above), pp.1-3; Todd (note 27 above), pp.23-24.

¹⁰⁶ E. Robinson, *Biblical researches in Palestine, Mount Sinai, and Arabia Petraea: a journal of travels in the year 1838*, I, J. Murray, London 1841.

¹⁰⁷ Kochav (note 4 above), p. 283.

¹⁰⁸ Robinson (note 106 above), I, pp.417-418; Wilson (note 35 above), p. 107.

¹⁰⁹ H. Smith, “Calvary and the Tomb of Christ”, *Murray's Magazine*, September (1891), p.305.

imagination and religious emotion.¹¹⁰ Thus, the search for historical accuracy was accompanied with a desire to enhance and approve spiritual images and beliefs. The visitors encountered the new setting with a mixture of spirit and mind, after reading the latest research written by the prime scholars of the time, while also carrying visual conceptions of Golgotha and the Tomb that they acquired from notable paintings and hymns. In a similar manner, the attempt to avoid instructions and traditions of the Catholic and Orthodox churches did not necessarily lead to a complete non-reliance on tradition. Instead, alternative neglected traditions, untouched yet by the other churches, rose from the dead just in time to support the proposed location and its meaning, whilst a new Protestant tradition was created to be imitated and followed by many visitors.

A.2.1 The revival of ancient Tradition

Since the 1860s, Palestine's archaeology had been introduced to a wide British audience through the PEF's journal, *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement (PEQ)*. *PEQ* also served as a central arena in which scholars distributed their views regarding Golgotha and the Sepulchre.¹¹¹ In 1872, the PEF appointed Claude Reignier Conder to conduct a survey in Palestine, in which he also investigated the traditional site of Calvary. In his personal reflections from this survey, Conder invalidated the genuineness of the traditional site and expressed his support for the alternative location above the Grotto of Jeremiah.¹¹² Conder reached these conclusions not only by applying the PEF's scientific approach, which relied on archaeological and topographical findings, but also by leaning on ancient Jewish traditions and customs. It seems that Conder felt that not all the traditions should be disregarded as the one who created the "miraculously-discovered fourth-century site."¹¹³ There were some traditions that deserved his serious attention, providing they could fit his theory.

Conder responded to the claim that the HS owned a continuous long tradition since the days of the early Christians by arguing that those Judeo-Christians probably did not pay any attention to the site of the Sepulchre, in an effort to avoid visiting a place that would

¹¹⁰ Y. Ben-Arieh, *Painting the Holy Land in the nineteenth century*, ed. Y. Goell, trans. Z. Brody & E. Broido, Yad Ben-Zvi, Jerusalem 1997, pp. 80-82; Hummel & Hummel (note 26 above), p.7; Frantzman & Kark 2008 (note 6 above), p. 16.

¹¹¹ Frantzman & Kark 2008 (note 6 above), p. 2.

¹¹² C. R. Conder, *Tent work in Palestine: a record of discovery and adventure*, I, R. Bentley, London 1878, Published for the Committee of the PEF, pp. 361-376.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p.371.

contaminate them.¹¹⁴ Another argument of the HS's supporters regarded the finding of an ancient Jewish tomb behind the Sepulchre as evidence that the place was outside the old city wall. Conder contradicted that argument with another Jewish tradition from the Talmud, replying that the Jews allowed ancient half-forgotten tombs to exist within Jerusalem.¹¹⁵

On the other hand, the Jewish tradition along with other Christian traditions helped Conder maintain the new location's credibility. Conder was the first to assign an ancient tradition to the Hill above Grotto Jeremiah.¹¹⁶ Assuming that the word Golgotha implied on a place of execution, he suggested that the tradition that fixed St. Stephen's Stoning north of the Hill indicates that the entire area must have been an execution ground.¹¹⁷ However, Conder relied on a "stronger confirmation" to prove that suggestion; namely, the Jewish tradition of the "House of Stoning". Dr. Thomas Chaplin, the director of the British Mission Hospital for Jews in Jerusalem, delivered to Conder his discovery about the Jewish ancient tradition mentioned in the Mishnah. According to Chaplin, the Jews still refer to the Hill as *Beth ha Sekilah*: "The House of Stoning," which was the ancient place of public execution.¹¹⁸ Conder elaborated that finding into a more comprehensive theory in which the immutability of Palestine helps fixate the original function of its sites:

For thousands of years the people have gone on living in the same way and in the same place, venerating (perhaps in ignorance) the same shrines [...] The great barracks of Antonia are still barracks [...] the Rock of Foundation is still covered by a sacred building, and the 'Place of the Skull' is now a cemetery, while close to it is the slaughter-house of the city.¹¹⁹ Knowing the immutability of sites in Palestine, we cannot, I would urge, consider these facts to be mere coincidences; they are rather strong confirmations of the accuracy of the more generally accepted views regarding the topography and monuments of ancient Jerusalem.¹²⁰

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 363.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 362-363. On the Jewish tomb behind the Sepulchre see: C. Clermont-Ganneau, "The So-Called Tomb of Joseph of Arimathea", *The Survey of Western Palestine: Jerusalem*, eds. C. Warren and C. R. Conder, PEF, London 1884, pp. 319-327, pp.329-330 [Conder's note].

¹¹⁶ In his reply to Selah Merrill on the pages of the *PEQ* he persisted on his precedence in attributing that tradition to the site: C. R. Conder, "Note on Calvary", *PEQ*, (1888), p.165.

¹¹⁷ Conder 1878, *ibid.*, p. 373.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 374; Hanauer, "Notes on the Controversy", (note 45 above), p. 307.

¹¹⁹ Jerusalem's slaughter-house was operated in a building north-west to the Hill until 1883. Then it was moved from there, and the building was reused by the Dominicans in Saint Etienne compound: Merrill 1886 (note 32 above), p.4; Fr. Riccardo Lufriani interviewed by M. Bitton, 14.05.12.

¹²⁰ Conder, 1878, *ibid.*, pp.375-376.

In Conder's theory, Palestine's perceived immutability bore witness to the customs of the people in the past, which kept the same habits along the generations. Other Protestant scholars and travelers believed that Palestine's landscape maintained its characters through centuries, which enabled notable land features to be discerned in the 19th century in the same way they had been discerned in Christ's day. An example was Macmillan guidebook's claim regarding Skull Hill: "There is no reason to think that the climatic or other influences have materially changed the appearance of the cliff from the days of Christ to the present time."¹²¹

In 1881, a few years after releasing his theory, Conder identified an ancient tomb in the area as the probable Tomb of Christ.¹²² This tomb, which was later named after him as "Conder's Tomb", was purchased by the Franciscans, who were the only ones to show an interest in it.¹²³ Unlike his Tomb, Conder's theory gained much acceptance among the advocates of the new site, so the old tradition became important as the unmediated sight and rational mind, in approving it.

The peculiar experience of the author Haggard on the Hill (1900) demonstrates the introjection of Conder's theory 30 years later. While approaching the Hill, Haggard identified it as the traditional Place of Stoning. The Hill had also summoned for him a stoning experience, which he interwove into an historical sequence that reaffirmed his ideas regarding the immutable east:

I am told, although I have been unable to trace the genesis of the statement, that it was the habit of the Jews to throw condemned persons off the brink of this cliff [...] Here as it chanced I myself was stoned, for in my hurry to look over the edge of the cliff [...] inadvertently I stepped upon the pillar of an old Mahommedan tomb [...] instantly children appeared who also began to throw stones at the Christian 'dogs' [...] Things in this respect seem to have changed little during five centuries. Felix Fabri cautions pilgrims to 'beware of stepping over the sepulchers of the Saracens, because they are greatly vexed [...] and pelt with stones anyone who steps over them, because they believe that our passing over them torments and disturbs the dead.'¹²⁴

Although it is not surprising that interfaith tension would flare up in this way in a place that served for decades as a Muslim cemetery and only recently became a Christian holy place, Haggard's account of his unpleasant experience was rare. Most visitors who

¹²¹ Macmillan (note 78 above), p.42.

¹²² C. R. Conder, "Lieutenant Conder's Report: Jerusalem", *PEQ*, (1881), pp. 202-205.

¹²³ J. E. Hanauer, "On the Identification of Calvary", *PEQ*, (1892), p.199.

¹²⁴ Haggard (note 75 above), p.327.

commented about the Muslim cemetery on the top of the sacred hill did not make any negative associations about it; rather, the contrary.

The visitors not only chose to see the cemetery, following Conder's theory, as part of the immutable landscape that maintained the old tradition of execution and death; they also identified it with a heavenly plan to save the sacred Hill. By keeping the Hill covered by Muslim graves, the divine intervention protected the place from desecration, namely from building a church or an altar above it by other Christian sects. One of the first to utter this notion was the Consul Merrill:

Who can say that the hand of Providence is not specially visible in the preservation of this spot, in this strange manner from the disgusting and degrading monkish traditions which would otherwise have sprung up about it?¹²⁵

Similar reactions were expressed by other visitors, who were relieved to find a cemetery on the Hill instead of a temple.¹²⁶ Rev. William Squires, an American historian who visited the site in 1920s, was one of the few to express strong resentment towards the cemetery. Even he eventually understood the cemetery's benefits. It was at noon on a Friday when Squires decided to climb the Hill, despite the guide's warnings about the Islamic fanaticism of that day. To the sight of a Muslim cemetery at the crest of the hill, his strong emotions erupted: "I could have wept, I could have set hands upon it and torn it away [...] the thought of that dead Arab lying there haunts me to this moment. A Mohammedan grave is as hideous and hopeless as their religion."¹²⁷

Nevertheless, in a self-controlled twist, he reminded himself that the situation could have been much worse were it not for the Muslim cemetery:

It seems inconsistent, but I can bring myself [...] to thank God for that presumptuous Moslem Tomb [...] God, no doubt, has a purpose. It saves the site from just such quasi-religion as exhibited daily at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.¹²⁸

In 1931, Alonzo Baker, editor of the Seventh-day Adventist magazine *Signs of the Times*, published an article about the GT following his visit to the site. His ardent support of the site is evident in his choice for the magazine cover: an intensely painted and most appealing photo of the skull hill as viewed from the city walls. (plate 13)

¹²⁵ Merrill (note 32 above), p. 5-6.

¹²⁶ For instance: Harper 1901, (note 74 above), p.74; A. Boddy, *Days in Galilee and scenes in Judaea: together with some account of a solitary cycling journey in Southern Palestine*, Gay & Bird, London 1900, p. 324; H. P. Hughes, *The morning lands of history: a visit to Greece, Palestine and Egypt*, H. Marshall, London 1901, p.244; M. Agate, *Egypt, the Sinaitic Desert and the Holy Land*, A. Gardner, Paisley 1904, p. 202.

¹²⁷ W. H. T. Squires, *Peregrine papers: a tale of travel in the Orient*, Richmond 1923, pp.148-149.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.149.

Eager to firm the credibility of the site, he excessively reused all the arguments that been used for almost a century, and added some myths of his own. One of those regards the Muslim cemetery, which in his version received a more active role in preserving the sanctity of the hill:

The Mohammedans, who rate Christ as one of their great prophets, also believe that He died there. Upon the crest of the hill are three Moslem tombs, so arranged as to mark what they consider to be the location of the three crosses.¹²⁹

As convincing proof for that peculiar observation, Baker attached a photo of himself standing near those three tombs (plate 14).

Plate 13: View from the city walls to The Skull Hill. Cover of the *Signs of the Times*, 1931.



Plate 14: Baker stands among three tombs on Skull Hill.

Devine intervention was also apparent in the fact that the Tomb in the Garden remained unknown for decades and thus maintained its primordial state and was saved from the fate of other Christian sites. Harris was fascinating by its desolated semi-buried look: “While the time-honoured shrine underneath the dome of the great Church of the Sepulchre [...] has been worn away by the kisses of innumerable worshippers, this in its pristine simplicity lay for ages beneath the soil.”¹³⁰

Hugh Price Hughes, a Welsh Methodist theologian who visited the Tomb around 1901, expressed similar thoughts. He admired the fact that the Tomb had been kept out of sight, and compared it to the burial place of Moses:

And now I cannot but rejoice that through all the ages of superstition and bloodshed the true site of the Holy Sepulchre has been concealed from raging and contending sects. The burial-place of Moses was concealed by the Almighty from ancient Jews lest it should become a scene of idolatry and savage bloodshed. May we not, for similar

¹²⁹ A. L. Baker, “They Crucified Him”, *Signs of the Times*, 58, 13,(1931), p.9.

¹³⁰ Harris (note 56 above), p.35.

reasons, rejoice that the tomb of the Lord has never been violated by men Christian only in name? ¹³¹

Henry Allen Ironside, a Canadian–American preacher who visited the place in 1936, also felt gratitude for the blindness of other Christian sects to both sites:

“It seemed to us providential that both Calvary and the Tomb had been hidden as it were throughout the centuries of superstition so that no Roman or Greek churches have been built upon or about them.”¹³²

A.2.2 Following in the footsteps of Heroes

Both new and old traditions helped build the site’s sacred credibility. The visitors to the Hill and Tomb were impressed by the words and acts of the former salient visitors, including religious leaders, notable scholars, and other heroes of the time.

The scholars who investigated the site in the first four decades after it was first suggested by Thenius were also influenced by the ideas and conclusions of previous authorities, such as Edward Robinson, Ernest Renan, John William Dawson, and Selah Merrill.¹³³ However, the visitors-pilgrims were not only inspired and encouraged by these authorities to accept the new identification; they also gradually started to imitate the acts of their predecessors, following in their footsteps and repeating the practices they had preformed. Many visitors had mentioned the names of their known predecessors and their contribution to the new theory. Furthermore, there were some whose main interest did not seem to be the place itself, but rather the important people who were fascinated by it, whose aura the visitor had come to touch. One of the earliest examples for that form of visit was expressed by the American writer Marion Harland, who visited the place around 1890. Harland testified that, since her arrival to Jerusalem, she had carefully studied the evidence regarding the new hypothesis of the place of the Crucifixion, which was advanced by “the learned and devout Bible scholars of the age.”¹³⁴ After reviewing the scholars’ arguments, she bestowed a special honor upon one of the site’s famous adherents, Dr. Geikie, the Scottish-born author and Presbyterian minister: “I cannot resist the temptation to quote at this point from the

¹³¹ Hughes (note 126 above), p. 243.

¹³² H. A. Ironside, *Things seen and heard in Bible lands: a series of gospel addresses based upon a visit to Syria, Palestine and Egypt*, Loizeaux Bros., New York 1941, p. 134.

¹³³ Wilson, (note 35 above), pp. 106-111.

¹³⁴ M. Harland, *Home of the Bible- What I Saw and Heard in Palestine*, The Christian Herald, New York 1896, p.347.

eloquent comment of Dr. Cunningham Geikie upon his able summing up of proofs as to the identity of the New Calvary' with the old."¹³⁵ Standing at the top of the Hill, she read his words aloud and only then recited the events of the Crucifixion from the Scriptures. Later she continued to the Tomb:

"We let ourselves down to the lower level, and are in front of what Gordon, Cummings, Selah Merrill, Lew Wallace and many other godly and learned men believed to be the long-hidden Tomb of Christ."¹³⁶

Her descent to the Tomb was an experience of walking in their footsteps, as if every famous figure adds more credibility to the site and strengthens her decision to accept it. Many other visitors to the Hill and Tomb continued to be held in the names of those figures, as if exhibiting the insurance that approves their acceptance of the sites.

One of those figures, who was far more influential than the others in promoting the acceptance of the place among wide audience, was General Charles Gordon. It was stated that the coincidence of Gordon's fascination with the Hill in 1883 and his tragic death in Khartoum a short time after urged publicity of his ideas regarding the Hill, which attracted wide interest in Britain and North America, and eventually led to the establishment of the GTA and the purchase of the site.¹³⁷ Still, Gordon's personal involvement in identifying the Tomb is controversial, and there is insufficient evidence to support that claim.¹³⁸ Gordon's writings regarding the Hill, which he used to call "My Golgotha",¹³⁹ lacked a single mention of the Tomb.¹⁴⁰ However, another famous figure in the history of the GT is the only known source for the claim that Gordon's interest was also referred to the Tomb. Conrad Schick, a German missionary, architect, and archaeologist who had lived Jerusalem since the 1840s, had close relationships with Gordon, who confided in him regarding his theories.¹⁴¹ Schick was the first person to

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 349.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p.350.

¹³⁷ Frantzman & Kark 2008 (note 6 above), pp.6-14; Wilson (note 35 above), p. 110; Rev A. Forder, *Sites, Scenes and Doings in the Holy Land*, Marshall Bros., London, 1912, p.116; Walker (note 10 above), pp. 114, 119.

¹³⁸ C. R. Conder, "Notes on The Holy Sepulchre" *PEQ*, (1889), p.204; White (note 10 above), pp. 12, 14; Rosalind Meryon interviewed by Michal Bitton, 14.05.12.

¹³⁹ C. G. Gordon, *Letters of General C.G. Gordon to his sister M.A. Gordon*, Macmillan, London, New York, 1888, p.290.

¹⁴⁰ C. G. Gordon, *Reflections in Palestine*, Macmillan, London 1884, pp.1-3; C. G. Gordon, "Eden and Golgotha", *PEQ* 17.2 (April 1885), pp. 78-81; Gordon 1888, *ibid.*, pp. 289-290. Rosalind Meryon also confirmed that there is no record for his involvement with the Tomb within his writings that are kept in the GTA Archive.

¹⁴¹ For further reading on the relations between Gordon and Schick and about Schick's central role in distributing Gordon's ideas via *PEQ*, see: Frantzman & Kark 2008 (note 6 above), pp. 2, 6, 8, 11-12.

excavate the Tomb when it was first found in 1867 by the Greek owner of the land who discovered an ancient Tomb with a red cross with Greek letters marked on its wall. He was also assigned by Charlotte Hussey to survey the terrain of the GT in 1892.¹⁴² In his survey's report, which was published in 1892 by the *PEQ*, Schick had stated that Gordon believed that the Tomb was that of Christ, and even named his article "Gordon's Tomb".¹⁴³ Whether Gordon actually identified the Tomb or not, his influence on the common imagination was so great that many visitors attached his name to both sites, calling them *Gordon's Calvary* and *Gordon's Tomb* – an honor that continues even today.¹⁴⁴ Rev. Charles Leach, the British Congregationalist Minister and Liberal Party politician, who visited the site in the spring of 1891, stated that: "the tomb commonly known as Gordon's Tomb, but is now more properly called the Garden Tomb."¹⁴⁵ From his evidence, we can learn that it had already been known by the popular name for a while, but there was a new tendency to institutionalize the place by the time he arrived there. Another estimated evidence for Gordon's influence on the wide publicity and acceptance of the site could be that the first testimonials of visitors who came to the site as tourists or pilgrims, rather than researchers, were starting to be heard only in the mid-1880s, which was right after his death. As stated above, many people have mentioned Gordon's name, words, and acts, and sometimes elaborated those into exaggerated stories. The pilgrimage to the places in which Jesus was crucified and resurrected also became a tribute tour in the memory of Gordon. One of the interesting examples for that twofold purpose of visit was described by J. Wardle, a close friend of Gordon. Wardle's visit to the GT around 1907 was loaded with special meanings, following in the footsteps of his Lord and friend. When he visited the Tomb, he assigned its exposure to his late friend:

This rock tomb, it is said, was discovered by my dear old friend and companion, General Gordon. He was for some time exploring and searching for proofs of the real hill of crucifixion and burial, and he seems satisfied that it was here our dear Lord suffered and died, and was sepulchered and rose again.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² C. Schick, "Gordon's Tomb", *PEQ*, April 1892, pp.120-124; Walker (note 10 above), p. 122-124, 130.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.120.

¹⁴⁴ See for instance: E. Butler Elisabeth, *Letters from the Holy Land*, A.&C. Black, London 1912, p.22-23; Haggard (note 75 above), p. 324; Macmillan (note 78 above), p.43; Agate (note 126 above), p.202; Sanday (note 79 above), p.67; Forder (note 137 above), p.116; Ironside (note 132 above), p.132.

¹⁴⁵ C. Leach, Rev. F. G. S. *The Romance of the Holy Land*. E. Arnold, London 1911, p.135.

¹⁴⁶ J. Wardle, *A tour to Palestine and Egypt and back*, H.B. Saxton, Nottingham 1907, pp.87-88.

Another interesting insight can be discerned in Wardle's evidence. His acceptance of the site was also relied on the experienced judgment of his host:

I believe from all I can learn after the most careful enquiry from our host who has resided here for many years and who knows all the surroundings, that the hill Calvary [...] is where our blessed Lord suffered and died.¹⁴⁷

Wardle was not the only person to put his trust in the wisdom of the locals. After gaining a few decades of absorption of the new proposed site, the local evangelical Christians were enlisted as additional authorities, beside the salient scholars, to affirm the site's authenticity. For instance, the pilgrim A.E. Booth, who visited the site around 1905, relied on both sources of authority:

Colonel Conder, General Gordon, Cunningham Geikie [...] have all believed this to be the right site; and they as well as all the evangelical Christians now in and around Jerusalem, refuse the ritualistic place [...] and recognize that the brow of this hill [...] is the place where our Lord suffered, bled and died.¹⁴⁸

The preacher Ironside also felt that the site's credibility was strengthened due to the fact that the Protestant inhabitants "were firmly convinced after living in Jerusalem for some years, that it was actually the sepulchre once owned by Joseph of Arimathea."¹⁴⁹

The above evidence reflects a new phase in the sacralization of the Hill and the Tomb, when an additional layer of meaning was added to the site. The visitors who came to witness the Scriptural word become realized in the landscape and were also interested in additional minor narrative, to follow the words and deeds of the admirable representatives of the scientific approach for the Bible, the Romantic Movement and the Christian revival. The yearning for these characters that combined the dichotomies of scientific calculation with passionate sentiments had led to a hybrid practice of faith between distant rationality and dynamic bodily involvement.

A.2.3 Guidebooks and Maps

Another authority of the epoch that contributed a great deal to the acceptance of the Hill and the Tomb and their existence as pilgrimage sites was the traveler's guidebooks and maps. The crucial role of the guidebook in shaping the visitors' perceptions and decisions was exemplified in the words of McCready and Tyndall, who described the

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p.81.

¹⁴⁸ A.E. Booth, *The Land Far Off: The Narrative of a Tour Through Palestine and Egypt, With Medidatio*, Loizeaux Bros. New York 1905, p. 186.

¹⁴⁹ Ironside (note 132 above), p. 139.

sources of knowledge on which the “Celtic Cruise” travelers relied: “our eight hundred travelers were students. They wanted to know. They sought knowledge in every direction. Some coned over the guide-book — the infallible Baedeker.”¹⁵⁰ Karl Baedeker’s guide, which is considered “the bible of tourism”,¹⁵¹ as well as John Murray’s guide, were regarded not only as authoritative sources of knowledge, but also as an instructors of travel behavior and of artistic taste and stimulators of beliefs and prejudices.¹⁵² Both guides, which were published since the 1830s, became the archetypes for the modern travelers’ guidebooks. The focalized approach that instructed the intelligent and independent traveler to the places that ought to be seen was inherited by their successors.¹⁵³ The first guidebook to instruct his readers to the new Protestant site was Murray’s handbook to the Holy Land, which was written by Haskett Smith and published in 1892.¹⁵⁴ A few years earlier, in 1887, the pilgrim Tompkins wondered why was the site had not been mentioned in any guidebook he knew.¹⁵⁵ Tompkins’s quandary reflected a gap between his conviction in the site’s authenticity and the absence of the site from a guidebook’s official acknowledgment. Reverend Smith, who at that time became a GTA member and was engaged with the acquisition of the Tomb, introduced in his guidebook the Tomb and the Hill as the actual locations of the Crucifixion and Burial in a manner that did not allow any doubts: “the arguments in favour of this site are so strong as to be practically convincing to the unprejudiced mind.”¹⁵⁶ A year earlier, Smith had published an article in *Murray’s Magazine*, which extensively discussed the arguments in favor of the new site. He appealed to English readers as a messenger of truth, convinced in his just way and aware of its consequences. He wrote: “One feels conscious that one is undertaking a terrible responsibility and laying oneself open to a tremendous attack. Nevertheless, the conviction that one is right is a great support.”¹⁵⁷ After specifying the rational

¹⁵⁰ R. H. McCready, H. M. Tyndall, *The Cruise of the Celtic Around the Mediterranean, 1902: Souvenir Volume*, Winthrop press, New York 1902, p.i.

¹⁵¹ D. M. Bruce, “Baedeker: the Perceived ‘Inventor’ of the Formal Guidebook - a Bible for Travellers in the 19th Century”, *Giants of Tourism*, R.W. Butler and R.A. Russell (eds.), CABI, Wallingford, Oxfordshire 2010, pp.93, 107; R. Koshar, *German Travel Cultures*, Berg, New York 2000, p.65.

¹⁵² Bruce, *ibid.*, pp.93-94, 98-99, 102.

¹⁵³ Bruce, *ibid.*, pp.102-103.

¹⁵⁴ H. Smith, *Handbook for travellers in Syria and Palestine: including a short account of the geography, history, and religious and political divisions of these countries, together with detailed descriptions of Jerusalem, Damascus, Palmyra, Baalbek, and the interesting ruined cities of Moab, Gilead, and Bashan*, John Murray, London 1892, pp. 73-75.

¹⁵⁵ Tompkins (note 36 above) p. 53.

¹⁵⁶ Smith 1892 (note 154 above), p.73.

¹⁵⁷ Smith 1891 (note 109 above), p.306.

justifications behalf of the site, Smith shared his spiritual sentiments that had been aroused during his visits to the place:

I never climb that skull-shaped hill [...] without being moved by the deepest feelings of reverence [...] How infinitely more solemn and sacred are the feelings [...] than those which one experiences in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.¹⁵⁸

Smith's passionate publications in Murray's handbook and magazine contributed crucially to the acceptance of the site among Protestants. It seems that once the site was published in the guidebook, along with other long-established pilgrimage destinations of the Holy Land, it was considered legitimate. Thus, since its publication, many tourists equipped with Murray's handbook headed toward the Tomb and the Hill.¹⁵⁹

Baedeker, on the other hand, was not as thrilled as Murray about presenting the new site to the travelers. In 1897, A few years after the formal constitution of the GT, the site was mentioned for the first time in Baedeker's handbook. This handbook did not mention the GT at all and only two sentences were allotted to the Hill above Jeremiah Grotto, which stated that it was identified as the true Golgotha by few a English authorities, including General Gordon. In 1904, the same guide added another sentence referring to the rock hewn Tomb regarded as the grave of Jesus.¹⁶⁰ By that meager information, especially when compared to the detailed accounts allotted to other sites of the area such as Saint Stephen's church and the Grotto of Jeremiah, the reader could judge the site as less relevant and marginal in importance. Although Baedeker was a non-Catholic,¹⁶¹ and despite his attempt to maintain an apparent objective narrative, his approach reveals that he was not counted among the site's adherents. Nevertheless, it seems that because Baedeker could not ignore the site by that time, he included it in his guide.

A different approach was presented in another well-known guidebook publisher of the era, who completely ignored the site. This was Thomas Cook, the famous travel agent who also served as a Baptist minister.¹⁶² In his handbook for Palestine, which was

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p.312.

¹⁵⁹ Wilson (note 35 above), p.111; Red Book 1944 (note 11 above), p.30; Kochav (note 4 above), pp.292-294;

¹⁶⁰ K. Baedeker, *Palästina und Syrien: Handbuch fuer Reisende*, K. Baedeker, Leipzig 1897, p.105; K. Baedeker, *Palaestina und Syrien: nebst den Hauptrouuten durch Mesopotamien und Babylonien Handbuch für Reisende*, K. Baedeker, Leipzig 1904, pp. 78-79.

¹⁶¹ A. Hinrichsen, *Baedeker's Reisehandbücher: 1832-1990; Bibliographie 1832-1944, Verzeichnis 1948-1990*, Ursula Hinrichsen, Bevern 1991. Electronic English version: *Baedeker history*, trans. A. Hinrichsen, 2008, p.17. http://www.bdkr.com/AWH_bibliography_pt1.pdf, Accessed 12 Aug. 2012.

¹⁶² P. Brendon, *Thomas Cook: 150 years of popular tourism*, Secker & Warburg, London 1991, pp.18-37.

published in 1891, he only vaguely implied the site's existence, noting the recent controversy regarding the position of the Church of the HS within the city walls, contrary to the Gospel account. However, he then immediately discharged that dilemma by stating: "It is a pity to disturb the mind of the traveler on the threshold of such a sacred spot [the HS], and we have no intention of giving an elaborate epitome of the various sides taken in the controversy."¹⁶³ It was surprising that a Baptist minister would choose to defend the Church, which was usually disliked by Protestants. After an extensive account of the Church, he returned to appease the minds of the remaining skeptics: "whatever may be the religious opinions of the visitor, there must always be a peculiar significance in the observance of this ceremonies within this building, to which the footsteps of ten thousand times ten thousand pilgrims have tended."¹⁶⁴ In the section dedicated to the northern city, while explaining on Grotto of Jeremiah, Cook remained silent regarding the Hill and the Tomb.¹⁶⁵

Haggard probably leaned on Cook's guide rather than on Murray's or Baedeker's since he was still wondering in 1900 about the site's absence from guidebooks:

"Another place in Jerusalem, of which, so far as I am aware, the guide-books take no notice, but that to me was fascinating and suggestive."¹⁶⁶

Soon after Cook's visit, a number of new guidebooks were published that included the site among their pages. Macmillan's guide, mentioned above (A.1.1), and Daniel E. Lorenz's guide, published in 1905, both used persuasive and resolved language in order to reinforce the site's legitimacy.¹⁶⁷

In 1907, two other guides were published, but their tone regarding the site was less sympathetic. One of them was Cook's new edition of guide for Palestine, which now included account of GT and the Hill. The author of the new edition was the Canon Hanauer. Hanauer described the Hill and its neighboring localities and provided the historical details about the identification of the Hill and the constitution of the GT. Hanauer's approach was restrained and he did not rush to crown the sites as sacred, and even expressed his doubts regarding the identification of the Tomb: "Thus while there is much to lead us to suppose that the knoll is the ancient place of execution, and

¹⁶³ *Cook's Tourist's handbook for Palestine and Syria*, Thomas Cook & Son, London 1891, p.121.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.133.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.182-183.

¹⁶⁶ Haggard (note 75 above), p.324.

¹⁶⁷ Macmillan (note 78 above); D. E. Lorenz, *The Mediterranean traveller; a handbook of practical information*, F. H. Revell company, New York 1905, p. 219.

possibly Calvary, there is no reason to believe that the ‘tomb in the garden’ has been found.”¹⁶⁸ Hanauer had already made similar claims in the *PEQ* 1892, when he offered moderate support for the Hill’s identification but rejected the identification of the Tomb.¹⁶⁹

Hanauer’s cautious and uncommitted approach was generally characteristic of the attitude of Anglican Church in Jerusalem towards the GT, a theme that will thoroughly discussed in chapter B.3.3.

The other guide issued in 1907 was the Catholic guide written by the Franciscan friar Barnabé Meistermann. Meistermann described the Grotto of Jeremiah and the traditions regarding it at length, but entirely disregard the new identification of the Hill above it. On the other hand, he allotted two sentences to the GT: “The first road to the right leads to an enclosure in which a Jewish tomb is shown, [...] In 1882, General Gordon fancied that it was the sepulcher of Jesus Christ. One pays 50 centimes to enter the enclosure.”¹⁷⁰ The demeaning tone of the word “fancied” subtly delivers the epitome of the Catholic attitude towards the site, which regards it as a fictional place that has no grip on Christian History or tradition. This term of ridicule was later reused in another Catholic guide by the Franciscan Eugene Hoade, issued in 1942; this time in reference to Gordon’s Calvary:

On the south side of the hill are some cavities which Gordon fancied to resemble the human physiognomy. Tradition and archaeology absolutely oppose Gordon's theory and most people look upon the tomb as the last in nearby cemetery.¹⁷¹

Hoade’s pejorative approach towards the site was even further enhanced in later versions of his guides from 1962 and 1974, in which he argued the GT to be: “Run by an English society, it has the blessing of no particular church, nor the backing of any archaeologist or historian.” Further, he accused this “untrustworthy” society of “misconstrue original texts and ‘plant’ remains.”¹⁷² Towards Gordon and his “fantastic Golgotha,” Hoade uttered a particularly venomous attitude:

May I suggest to anybody really interested in this question that they read ‘Chinese Gordon-The Story of a Hero’ (1954). Therein you will find the drawings of this

¹⁶⁸ J. E. Hanauer & Masterman, E. G., *Cook's Handbook for Palestine and Syria*, T. Cook, London 1907, p. 112.

¹⁶⁹ Hanauer, “Notes on the Controversy” (note 45 above), p. 308; Hanauer “On the Identification” (note 123 above), p. 200.

¹⁷⁰ B. Meistermann, O.F.M, *New guide to the Holy Land*, Burns & Oates, London 1907, p.190.

¹⁷¹ E. Hoade, O.F.M, *Guide to the Holy Land*, Franciscan Press, Jerusalem 1942, p.157.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, Fourth Edition, 1962, p.302; *ibid.*, Seventh Edition, 1974, p.390;

strange man [...]”¹⁷³ In the 1974 edition, he added: “don't forget that Gordon believed that Seychelles was the lost site of the Garden of Eden [...]”¹⁷⁴

Finally, he gloated about the controversy among the Protestants: “Macalister, a Protestant [...] describes the Garden Tomb as "an outrage on both religious and science".! and even those how published books in favor of the site 'do not seem convinced of their cause.”¹⁷⁵ As an answer for such a claim, a devoted adherent of the site, the American Reverend William Steuart McBirnie, published a book in 1975¹⁷⁶ in which he confronted every single claim addressed by Hoade, only to be confronted later by “scathing criticism” over his book.¹⁷⁷ The different levels of recognition of the site by the guidebooks’ authors was also apparent among the authors of another guiding tool – the maps.



Plate 15: Otto Thenius, Map exhibiting the Hill in front of Damascus Gate suggested as “Golgotha?”, 1849.



Plate 16: Tenz’s map, 1893. Number 44 in the legend: “so-called ‘Skull Hill’.”



Plate 17: Schick's map, 1894/5.

Number 59 defined in the legend as: “Grab Christi nach Gordon”, and number 59a as “Grab Christi nach Conder”.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 1962, p.303; ibid., 1974, pp.391-392;

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 1974, p.396.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 1962, pp.306-307; ibid., 1974, pp.394-395;

¹⁷⁶ McBirnie (note 10 above), 1975.

¹⁷⁷ White (note 10 above), pp. 60-61. Although this book was thought to be promoted by the GTA, White insisted that McBirnie operated independently: “As an exposé of father Hoade's dismissive treatment of the Garden in his *Guide to the Holy Land*”.



Plate 18: Vincent's map, 1912.



Plate 19: Wilson's map, 1900.



Plate 20: Kümmel's map, 1904.

Three approaches can be traced in exemplary maps drawn during the first decades of the site's existence, which reflect its unstable position between acceptance and denial. One approach refers the new identification for Calvary or the Sepulchre as a theory yet to be proved. The first example for this approach exhibited in Thenius's map, published in 1849, which marks the proposed area with a question mark: "Golgotha?" (plate 15). In Johann Martin Tenz's map from 1893, the new localities are marked with signs that imply their questionability, such as the note that reads "so-called 'Skull Hill'", which tagged the space near Grotto Jeremiah (plate 16). Another example of that approach appears in Schick's map from 1894/95. This map marked the place of the Tomb as "The Tomb of Christ according to Gordon", but Schick also marked Conder's proposition for the tomb on the opposite side of Nablus Road (plate 17). Although Schick spent many years surveying the GT area, and was the main promoter of Gordon's ideas, he finally chose to support the location of the traditional Sepulchre, following his excavation of an ancient wall that he regarded as the second wall.¹⁷⁸ When Schick

¹⁷⁸ Since the late 1880's Schick's proposed new theory regarding the second wall of the city, which suggested the existence of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre outside the city walls: C. Schick, "Notes from Jerusalem", *PEQ*, (1887), pp.217-220.; Schick, "Line of the Second Wall", *PEQ*, (1888), pp.62-63; Schick, "Recent Discoveries", *PEQ*, (1889), pp.63-68; Hanauer, "Notes on the Controversy" (note 45 above), pp.299, 303-304; Schick, "On the Site of Calvary", *PEQ*, (1893), p.23-25;

marked both Gordon's and Conder's tombs on his map, he graphically expressed the ironic thoughts he had uttered two years before regarding Conder's proposition: "Captain Conder [...] gives a view and plan of another rock-cut tomb [...] Which he thinks might have been 'the real tomb of our Lord', so that every one may choose which he likes from the three we now have."¹⁷⁹ Thus, by treating both identifications equally on his map, he maintained the Tomb's dubious position. He believed that this situation could only be solved by archaeology: "The question of the real Calvary will never be satisfactorily settled by controversy, but only excavations."¹⁸⁰

Even in the case of Père Vincent, a known opponent of the site, the indication "Gordon's Tomb" appeared on his map from 1912 (plate 18). By referring the site to Gordon, he maintained the site in the realm of theory. Still, by marking it he admitted his inability to ignore its presence, which was probably especially apparent for him as a close neighbor. On the other hand, another deifier of the site presented a second approach – total ignorance. Charles Wilson, whose critical book about the new Calvary we have already encountered, did not include a single note about the site in the revision he made in 1900 for the map he had originally drawn in 1865. However, he did include many updated details of other sites in the area, including the church of St. Stephen, the cistern, the Anserie (stables), and even Conder's tomb (plate 19).

A third approach was an unquestionable acceptance, such as the map of August Kümmel from 1904, who specifically noted "Golgatha" which was usually denoted on other maps as "Muslim cemetery" (plate 20).

A.3 Religious Practices on Mount Golgotha

It carries instant conviction even to critical and conservative minds. Mr. Moody, Dr. Talmage and others have preached on this crest to hundreds of deeply moved people. Those who were members of the 'Celtic Cruise' of 1902 cannot forget the profound impression made by the service conducted by Dr. Josiah Strong [...] and the Sunday-school Convention at Jerusalem in 1904 held a service here equally notable and inspiring.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ Schick, "Gordon's Tomb" (note 142 above), p.124.

¹⁸⁰ Schick 1893 (note 178 above), p.23.

¹⁸¹ Lorenz, (note 167 above), p. 219.

This review of the religious services that took place on the Hill was presented in Lorenz's travel guides from 1905. Lorenz's reference to the former gatherings and the religious leaders that conducted them invites readers of the guidebook to acknowledge the site's sacredness, not only by its inherent sacredness reflected through the "instant conviction" of the rational mind, and not only through the support of the religious prominent leaders as Moody, Talmage, and Strong, but also by the active practices taken by the "hundreds of deeply moved people" and the new tradition in formation of sermons on the Hill. In the following sub-chapter, I discuss the practical level of the site's sacralization; that is, the way in which the Hill became the arena upon which religious devotion and gathering take place. It is a sacredness that no longer depends on the passive eye contact between the Hill and the believer, but is actively represented through the bodily participation of the believers.

A.3.1 Sermons on the Hill

In the 1890s, the Hill started accommodating large open-air services led by notable and charismatic preachers. Harris provided the first evidence for a sermon performed on the Hill:

One of our last associations with this hill was the gathering together there of the Jewish children of one of the missionary schools on Good Friday of 1889, and there singing together the well-known hymn 'The Rock of the Ages'. This seemed to us and other Christian friends gathered together on the occasion a significant event, and full of promise for the future.¹⁸²

Whether she aimed for the future of the Protestant interests in the Holy Land, or for the prosperity of the missionary project, Harris identified a new beginning in the event. Indeed, that ceremony marked the beginning of a new worship tradition on the Hill. Talmage introduced the next evidence for a spiritual gathering on the Hill, including an overwhelming *axis mundi* experience described in sub-chapter A.1.

Rev. Charles Leach described another gathering on the Hill as involving a singing of the hymn of the Green Hill in 1891.¹⁸³ In April 1892, a pivotal occasion was inscribed in the annals of Hill's cult. Dwight Lyman Moody, a famous American evangelist, held the Hill's first known Easter service. While visiting Jerusalem, Moody was especially attracted to its hills. Moody's son, William R. Moody, explained his father's attraction

¹⁸² Harris (note 56 above), p.32.

¹⁸³ Leach (note 145 above), p.136.

to those hills: “[He] was incredulous on all the traditional sights seen in Jerusalem except the Temple and Calvary. He said that most of the localities were obscure, ‘but the hills you cannot change nor remove’.”¹⁸⁴ He turned to the hills on Easter Sunday. In the morning, Moody went for a private meditation on Mount of Olives with his Bible, and in the afternoon he performed a service on the Hill in front of at least 300 attendees, under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society.¹⁸⁵

An Australian traveler who attended the event, W. Y. McIntosh, published his impressions of it in a newspaper a decade later, emphasizing its singularity:

We are all grouped on the round green hill [...] now believed to be the scene of our Lord's crucifixion, forgotten during long centuries, and now for the first time in the history of Christianity the scene of a Christian service. It was no wonder that the famous evangelist showed evident emotion as he gazed round upon the scene.¹⁸⁶

McIntosh further explained the uniqueness of the event, not only in historical terms, but also in the special geographical opportunity to perform an outdoor service:

What a cathedral we were assembled in [...] I have visited all the greatest cathedrals that this old world of ours can show us, and what are they all to this- God's own cathedral you might call it. For walls we had in front of us Mount Olivet [...] on our right Mount Moriah [...] Gethsemane for an altar, the blue canopy of heaven for a roof, and the very ground [...] on which His cross stood, for a floor.¹⁸⁷

The uniqueness was also apparent in the composition of the audience. Western tourists, converts, missionaries, Abyssinians, native Christians, Catholic nuns, and children from Bishop Gobat's orphanage formed “such a kaleidoscope of humanity” which “made such a picture as surely never was seen.”¹⁸⁸ Moody's son also mentioned some inquisitive Jews and Muslims who came to listen to the evangelist who preached: “with an emotion that he had rarely, if ever, equaled in any previous sermon.”¹⁸⁹ McIntosh provided a detailed account of the service's course, which started with the orphans' choir singing “like a band of little angels,” a prayer and a lesson by Moody, and then the choir sang the hymn of the Green Hill in Arabic and English.

¹⁸⁴ W. R. Moody, *The Life of Dwight L. Moody*, Fleming H. Revell, New York 1900, p.384.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 384. The Church Missionary Society (CMS) which was led the Bishop Gobat, will be thoroughly discussed in chapter B.3.3.

¹⁸⁶ W. Y. McIntosh, “a memorable Easter Sunday in old Jerusalem”, *Mornington Standard*, Saturday 11 April 1903, p.1s. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/67084384>, Accessed 18 July 2012.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ Moody (note 184 above), p. 384.

Afterwards, Moody mounted a stone in the centre of the crowd and started his stirring sermon with the words: “I have been preaching the gospel for thirty years, and I have never preached when I felt the awe of God as I do on this spot.”¹⁹⁰

Plate 21: Moody’s sermon on Skull Hill, 1892.



The service concluded with Moody’s hat being passed among the crowd to collect donations for the orphans.¹⁹¹ However, this Christian grace, which aimed to save the poorest of the natives, did not gain the appreciation of the neighbors. Another act that occurred during the service had caught their attention. It was Moody’s use of one of the Muslim’s graves as a pulpit, which made the whole event notoriously unforgettable. Bertha Vester-Spafford, the daughter of the American Colony’s founders, recalled that incident and its implications:

In his enthusiasm and his utter abandon of thoughts other than on his sermon, he stood on an old grave that he might see his audience better. That incident so infuriated the Moslems that they forbade any Christian to enter the cemetery without a permit, and as rapidly as funds were available they built the high wall all around the top of the hill.¹⁹²

It is not clear from her retrospective description when was the wall erected, and from the pictures of the time, no wall appears all around the summit. The only later indications for that wall are to be found in photos from the beginning of 1900s, in which a new wall is flanking the summit from east and run along the cliff above Jeremiah’s Grotto (plate 11). Still, Vestor-Spafford’s testimony was not very far from accurate. Moody’s son provided his father’s comment for the incident, and a warrant of his own: “Mr. Moody said: ‘I don’t blame them. I wouldn’t want any man to stand on my father’s

¹⁹⁰ McIntosh, (note 186 above).

¹⁹¹ Ibid.; Moody (note 184 above), p. 385.

¹⁹² B.Vester, Spafford, *Our Jerusalem: an American family in the Holy city, 1881-1949*, Doubleday, New York 1950, p. 157.

grave to preach a sermon.’ The truth was that the cemetery on Calvary was such a dilapidated affair that the visitors took it for a deserted cemetery, as, indeed, it was.”¹⁹³ It seems that, after that incident, the approach to the Hill was limited immediately, since Moody preformed another sermon on the following Sunday, but this time it was not on the Hill but “beneath Calvary on the west.”¹⁹⁴ Moody’s sermon provided the first evidence of the conflictual encounter between the Muslim inhabitants and the Protestant worshipers on ground that was sacred for both sides.¹⁹⁵

In March 1902, a vast ceremony was conducted on the Hill in front of nearly 800 participants, travelers on the *Celtic Cruise*, an educative pleasure cruise that left American shores in February 1902. The cruise was described extensively in a souvenir volume issued by two of the cruisers, Robert McCready and H. Tyndall.¹⁹⁶ One of the high-points of the journey was the visit to Jerusalem and the conducting of the sermon on the top of the Skull Hill. The fact that the group chose to conduct the event there demonstrates the wide acceptance of the Hill:

Equal in interest to most of the party was the small eminence [...] ‘The New Calvary’. A visit to this was reserved for Sunday. It was considered appropriate that religious services be held during this day, and no place was more convenient or more satisfactory to the majority.¹⁹⁷

Although visitors’ entrance to the Hill had been restricted since Moody’s sermon, the vast assembly was gathered there and the graves were used as seats, without any apparent Muslim protest: “The gravestones were used for seats. The Moslems do not object to this, being accustomed to it several times each year. Many of America's and England's greatest preachers have discoursed upon this eminence.”¹⁹⁸ It seems that the authors of this evidence were not familiar with tensions of the past regarding the inappropriate use of the graves by the visitors.

The succession of famous leaders who preached on the Hill was continued this time by Rev. Josiah Strong, the Evangelist founder of the Social Gospel movement. His sermon was quoted in the souvenir volume:

¹⁹³ Moody, (note 184 above), p. 391.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 391.

¹⁹⁵ For further reading about the sanctity of Muslim cemeteries read: S. Berkovits, *How Dreadful is this Place! Holiness, Politics, and Justice in Jerusalem and the Holy Places in Israel*, Carta, Jerusalem 2006, [Hebrew], pp. 227-242.

¹⁹⁶ McCready & Tyndall (note 150 above), p.i.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p.165.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

Here we may reasonably believe our Lord was crucified. Of all the places hallowed by the touch of His feet, or by the wonderful deeds that He did, or the more wonderful words that He spoke, this is the most hallowed [...] Let us be grateful that this ‘holy of holies’ remains unspoiled with adornment, untarnished with tinsel.¹⁹⁹

The fact that the place was kept in its natural condition stimulated in Strong the inspiration of Protestant prophecy of the end of days that concluded his sermon:

In the vision of this glorious hope we see the Now Jerusalem — heaven come down to earth — a city with no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it [...] ²⁰⁰



Plate 22: The clergymen Strong, Young and Barton give sermons on Skull Hill, 1902.



Plate 23: Arab shepherd on the Hill, 1902.



Plate 24: View toward the Old City from the Hill, 1902.

Two years after the Celtic Cruise, another huge gathering – the fourth world Sunday-School Convention – took place by the Hill.²⁰¹ As we can learn from the explanations in the souvenir book that was published by the Convention’s organizing committee, the intention was to uphold the vast assembly by Skull Hill, which demonstrates the amount of acceptance at this stage towards the Hill:

Two years ago [...] a little group of men were talking of the next World’s Sunday-School Convention [...]. Each was asked to suggest a place. When Mr. Hartshorn’s turn came, he said, quietly, ‘Easter morning, 1904, at the Saviour’s tomb, Jerusalem.’ ²⁰²

It is not clear from Hartshorn’s declaration whether he intended for the traditional site, or for the one that had just recently gained recognition. Yet, from the final decision to hold it – “not at the tomb on Easter morning, but near the probable site of Calvary, a

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., p.166.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., p.169.

²⁰¹ The World Sunday-schools Convention, jointly organized by American and English members, assembled in different cities since 1889, in order to promote and develop Sunday-schools around the world: *The development of the Sunday-school, 1780-1905, The official report of the eleventh International Sunday-school Convention, Toronto, Canada, June 23-27, 1905*, Executive Committee of the International Sunday-School Association, Boston Mass., 1905, pp. 114-116.

²⁰² The Central Committee, *Glimpses of Bible lands: being the cruise of the eight hundred to the World's fourth Sunday-school Convention in Jerusalem, April 17, 18, 19, 1904 [= Glimpses]*, The Christian Herald, New York c.1905, p.17.

fortnight after Easter”²⁰³ – it seems that the original purpose was to indeed to hold it there. Although the convention was fundamentally Protestant, the choice of its location is surprising, since it forced all the guests to accept the new location, while it was not obvious that it was indisputably acceptable. Based on the organizers’ records, delegates from different countries and different Christian denominations had participated in the convention.²⁰⁴ Surely not all of them had accepted the new location of Golgotha and the Tomb. Myra Albert Wiggins, a Presbyterian photographer, was one of the delegates who had clearly stated this: “It really seems as if it must be the right one, for it is in the side of the hill called the Skull, but of course most of the people believe that the Church of the Holy Sepulcher is over the tomb.”²⁰⁵ Nevertheless, the convention assembled in Jerusalem on April 17–19 and fixed its tent at the stipulated destination:

This sacred place is a prominent mound [...] outside the wall, near the Damascus Gate [...] The hill has recently been inclosed by a wall.²⁰⁶ The convention tent was pitched on the north side of Calvary. Where the tent stood, a camp of German Crusaders was pitched eight centuries ago and their Hymns went up from this ground. There was no hall in Jerusalem large enough to accommodate the Convention.²⁰⁷

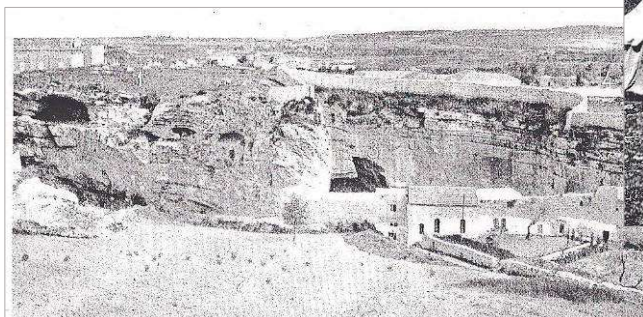


Plate 25: View of the Hill with the new wall above Jeremiah's Grotto , *Glimpses*.

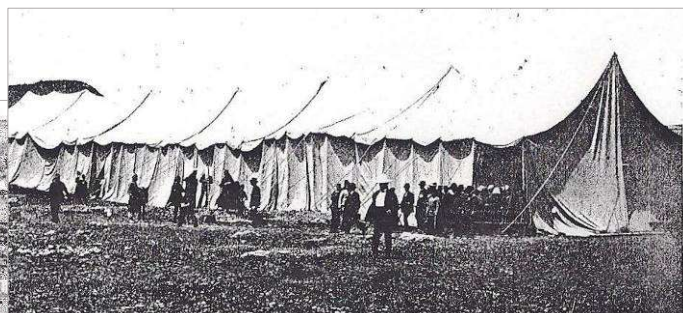


Plate 26: The Convention Tent, *Glimpses*.

²⁰³ Ibid., p.17.

²⁰⁴ Total registered: 1526. Include: 701 Americans; 63 Canadians; 206 from England; 377 from Jerusalem; Denomination: 231 Anglicans; 190 Presbyterians; 188 Baptists; 230 Methodists; 177 Congregationalists; 32 Lutherans; 43 Greek Orthodox. In reality 1800 guests took attended the convention. Ibid., pp.305, 365;

C. G. Trumbull, *A pilgrimage to Jerusalem: the story of the cruise to the World's fourth Sunday-school convention*, The Sunday school times company, Philadelphia 1905, pp. xxxii, 285.

²⁰⁵ M. A. Wiggins, *Letters from a Pilgrim*, Statesman Pub. Co., Salem Oregon 1904, p.87.

²⁰⁶ This is another indication for the wall mentioned by Vester-Spafford, but as we can see from the picture in plate 25 to which the above explanation was referred, the wall was not inclosing the Hill, but rather flanking it from east.

²⁰⁷ *Glimpses* (note 202 above), pp.237-238. The words and notes of “the green hill” hymn was published in p.237 and explanation text stated that it was reproduced from “Jerusalem manual of worship”, which was probably been in use by the convention’s guests.

These lines provide three justifications for the location of the tent. The first is compatible with the original decision to gather on sacred ground by the Savior's Tomb and Golgotha. Since the Hill was recently enclosed, the tent was fixed north of it. The second justification retroactively reinforces the sacredness of the area. After the tent was erected, it became evident that its location had contained the Crusaders' camp, a fact that added historical support to the sacredness of the site and its Christian associations. That anecdote was presented to the participants by John Edward Hanauer, Canon of Saint George's Cathedral in Jerusalem.²⁰⁸ The third justification can be interpreted as a contradiction to the original decision. It presents the location's choice as supposedly deriving from the absence of other locations that enable a vast assembling. Therefore, it is not a spiritual decision but a functional one. Moreover, a huge tent was borrowed from Catholic nuns to accommodate the large crowd:

The tent was the property of the Notre Dame Catholic Convent and was sent out for the use of French Pilgrims. One part was at Mt. Carmel, the second at Nazareth and the third at Jerusalem. They were brought together for the first time for the use of the World's Sunday-School Convention.²⁰⁹

The Catholic assistance to the Protestant convention on Skull Hill unintentionally added another layer of recognition in the site. In addition, it seems that the convention's dimensions had not been seen before in Jerusalem.²¹⁰ Large and pre-organized as it was, the local Protestant organizations were not fully prepared for it:

Although there are a score or more of Protestant evangelical organizations and many individual missionaries in Jerusalem, yet because of illness and the absence of interdenominational organization, no plan had been matured for welcoming the American and English delegates. There was also little knowledge among the pastors, teachers and members of Protestant churches of the real purpose of our coming [...] ²¹¹

The convention's organizers rushed to repair that miscommunication by sending about 200 invitations to the Protestant residents, and approximately 400 locals eventually attended.²¹² However, not all of those citizens came unprepared. The American consul Merrill and the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem George Francis Blyth (1887–1914)

²⁰⁸ Trumbull (note 204 above), p.300.

²⁰⁹ *Glimpses* (note 202 above), pp.238-237.

²¹⁰ Lester I. Vogel who studied American tours to the holy Land defines the convention "Mammoth in scale": L. I. Vogel, "Staying Home for Sights: Surrogate Destinations in America for Holy Land Travel", B. F. Le Beau & M. Mor (eds.), *Pilgrims & Travelers to the Holy Land*, Creighton University Press, Omaha, Neb. 1996, p.252.

²¹¹ *Glimpses* (note 202 above), p.226.

²¹² *Ibid.*, pp.226, 365.

delivered the reception speeches at the opening of the convention, and apparently helped realize the program.²¹³ In his speech, Blyth used a neutral tone, avoided mentioning the convention's location, and underlined the unity and agreement that should prosper in Christianity: "This convention is an evidence that there is in the horizon of its prospects a common ground on which many denominations of Christianity can meet together in harmony."²¹⁴ Blyth's speech reflected his policy of maintaining peace among the local Christian groups in the Holy Land and avoiding controversy, as we shall see in Chapter B.3.3, while his opinion regarding the GT remained obscure. Merrill, on the other hand, did not conceal his sympathy for GT, as already seen above. In addition to the speech, he was also engaged with administrative preparations for the convention, and expressed his concern about the convention's scale, which required special arrangements in a country that was not set up for such events.²¹⁵ Given its unfamiliar size, it is no wonder that the event provoked large interest among the city's citizens. The organizers chose to react in a somewhat patronizing manner toward the citizens' responses that welcomed them in Jerusalem:

Even Jerusalem, the pilgrim's shrine, recognized that this was no ordinary pilgrimage and was stirred to ask, 'Why have they come?' – 'To transfer to Gordon's Calvary the honors due to the Holy Sepulchre,' said the benighted devotee of Greek and Roman Catholicism. 'To meet the Messiah,' said the more ignorant Mohammedan, and they thronged the convention grounds to witness the advent of the Coming One.²¹⁶

In presenting a typical response of a Catholic adherent, the organizers provided a single insinuation to the expected conflict that had probably been stirred by the convention amongst local Christians and pilgrims who did not accept the new location of Golgotha and the Sepulchre. As to the response of the "ignorant Mohammedan" who expected the Messiah, it was also witnessed by one of the participants – Charles Trumbull, the editor of *The Sunday School Times*:²¹⁷

We learned later of a strange report [...] It was generally understood among the Muhammadans that these Christian people from the West had brought with them a cock, and that when, on that Sabbath morning outside the walls of Jerusalem,

²¹³ Ibid., pp.257, 357, 361.

²¹⁴ Ibid., p.257.

²¹⁵ Vogel 1996, (note 210 above), pp.252-253.

²¹⁶ *Glimpses*, (note 202 above), p.279.

²¹⁷ Ibid., p.299.

the cock should crow, Christ was to come again [...] they had gathered in awe and reverence to witness, if possible the great scene.²¹⁸

Except for the above Catholic response, the organizers did not express a controversial atmosphere. Instead they exhibited a spirit of brotherhood and harmony among the different Christian sects, even including the Jews and Muslims who attended the tent:

Jews of all countries, and Christian Jews too ; Catholics — Greek, Roman, Armenian; Copts and Moslems; Maronites and Reformed Jews [...] India, South Africa, Russia, Newfoundland. Denmark, Egypt and the islands of the sea, — all the world's children were brothers that day in their common worship.²¹⁹

However, it was not a fellowship based on equality, but a Protestant Western vision that brings light to the locals living in the darkness:

‘In thy light they saw light.’ They noted the absence of crucifix and image, of pomp and ceremony, of racial and religious antipathy.[...] Someone said that what they saw made them envy Western civilization. Perhaps it did, but it did more. It made them long, consciously or unconsciously, for the rising of the Sun of Righteousness on their own horizon. They saw womanhood lifted out of Eastern servitude, and childhood crowned with glory and honor.²²⁰

On the Sunday that opened the convention, approximately 800 people attended the communion service in the tent. Trumbull reported that anyone who wished to take part was invited:

Nor was the communion limited to the Western members [...] A saintly old Christian Armenian said to his son after the service was over, ‘I want to die ; I want to die.’ Well might he feel that he had reached a mountain peak of his earthly course.²²¹

That description provides another example of the colonial and patronizing narrative, in this case Western Christianity, that guided Oriental Christianity.²²² Within the impressions of guests, which were published in the convention’s volume, some more traces of that Western-Protestant superiority can be discerned. Archibald Forder, a missionary citizen of Jerusalem, concluded the event as follows: “The simplicity of the tent and meetings made a good impression on the people and was a practical demonstration to them of the difference between Protestant and Roman Catholic

²¹⁸ Trumbull (note 204 above), pp.285-286.

²¹⁹ *Glimpses*, (note 202 above), pp.239-241.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.279-281.

²²¹ Trumbull (note 204 above), p.289.

²²² For further reading on the subject see for example: Queen (note 26 above), pp. 209-227; Vogel 1996 (note 210 above). Both are dealing with attitudes of American travelers towards Palestine's inhabitants.

Christianity.”²²³ Another missionary, George Murray, a citizen of Hebron, recalled that the meetings “created a profound impression upon the natives. Moslems, Jews, Christians, who were struck with the unity and unselfishness of so many who devoted such a large portion of their time to the instruction of the young.”²²⁴ The Convention of 1904 enhanced and verified the general expectations and assumptions of the delegates and of those who enviously followed them from afar by the accounts of the press. It was generally crowned as a successful event that achieved its goals of promoting evangelical interests.²²⁵

Surprisingly, there was no known reference on behalf of the GTA’s writers regarding the convention.²²⁶ Nevertheless, such an impressive event with its declared orientation towards New Golgotha probably contributed to the publicity and acceptance of the GT. Moreover, some of the ideas that had been expressed in the convention provide us with a glimpse into to the formation of the unique identity of a new Protestant space that, in order to be constructed, ought to be contrasted with other religious spaces. Such a spatial identity formation would be also apparent in the Garden Tomb. In 1905, one last notable gathering took place in the area. It was performed on the Hill again, by the founder of the Salvation Army, General William Booth, who visited the Holy Land on his way to Australia.²²⁷ Booth’s sermon on Mount Calvary in front of other Salvationists was regarded as the climax of his Holy Land tour.²²⁸ Since the access to the Hill was restricted, Booth’s party was probably granted special permission to gather in the place.²²⁹ The sermon’s text, which was telegraphed to the the headquarters of the

²²³ *Glimpses*, (note 202 above), p.339.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.339.

²²⁵ Vogel 1996 (note 210 above), p.255.

²²⁶ A sole reference was vaguely made by Peter Walker who wrote: “It seems that a world Sunday school convention was held in the vicinity of Calvary in 1904.” Walker (note 10 above), p.1.

²²⁷ Notice that General William Booth and the pilgrim A. E. Booth who was mentioned above, both visited Palestine in the same year, nevertheless- they are two different persons.

²²⁸ *The Salvation Army's International Heritage Centre* [= SA Heritage]

<http://www1.salvationarmy.org/heritage.nsf/36c107e27b0ba7a98025692e0032abaa/665e593be8816afb8025696c004c1621!OpenDocument>, Accessed 25 July 2012.

²²⁹ White claimed that General Booth obtained such permission, but I did not find any other source from 1905 to support this claim: White (note 10 above), p.69. Instead other sources reported that the Turkish government prevented from Turkish subjects to attend Booth's meetings in Jerusalem: H. Begbie, *Life of William Booth, Foundr and first General of the Salvation Army*, II, 1920, chapter 25, <http://www.gospeltruth.net/booth/boothbiovol2/boothbiovol2ch25.htm>, Accessed 25 July 2012; *St. John Daily Sun*, Mar 9 1905, p.5, <http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=37&dat=19050309&id=I2hhAAAAIBAJ&sjid=jigDAAAAI BAJ&pg=3892,1346253>, Accessed 25 July 2012.

Salvation Army in London, was published in an Australian newspaper.²³⁰ Booth began his sermon by reviewing the various sacred sites he had been shown in the Holy Land, two of which especially moved him: “with indescribable feelings I have knelt in the Garden of Gethsemane ascended the hill called Calvary, and worshipped with solemn awe on the very ground where stood the cross of shame.”²³¹ The ascension to the Hill required quite an effort from the 76-year-old General, whose laborious climb reminded him of Jesus’s suffering: “Yesterday, it was a heavy drag to get up Mount Calvary in the burning sun. Oh, how I thought of the Master’s journey, [...] and other incidents in His history make me feel of the trials of my own.”²³² A large part of his sermon was dedicated to the causes of the Salvation Army, namely to save the suffering people of the world. He urged his listeners to follow Jesus’s legacy, using the sacred ground on which he was standing as adequate scenery to reinforce his message:

Oh, look with the spirit of the great Christ when He stood upon this sacred hill
[...] by the agony of the Cross under the shadow of which I make this
appeal I plead for a united desperate persistent effort to save the lost.²³³

We have already met other religious leaders who stood on the same stage and envisioned a better future for the world through a way of salvation delivered by Protestant Western Christianity. Though Booth and his predecessors did not preach their ideology for the first time when they stood on the Hill, it seems that the Hill’s religious and historical associations and its unique environment inspired them to express their quotidian missions from the bottom of their hearts, in a most influential way. The event was sealed with a reciting of the hymn “When I survey the wondrous Cross”,²³⁴ while the Salvationist’s flag was fixed upon the ground.



Plate 27: General Booth on Mount Calvary, 1905.

It was a Salvationist’s pride to unfurl this flag for the first time the Holy Land.²³⁵

Many years later, in 1985, a Canadian Salvationist group who attended the international

²³⁰ “In the Holy Land, Meditations at Jerusalem by General Booth”, *The Brisbane Courier* [=The Brisbane], Saturday 29 April 1905, p. 16. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/page/1550102?zoomLevel=1>, Accessed 25 July 2012.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Begbie (note 229 above).

²³³ *The Brisbane*, (note 230 above).

²³⁴ The hymn was written by the English hymn writer Isaac Watts, and published in 1707.

²³⁵ *SA heritage* (note 228 above)

Congress of Salvation Army in Jerusalem had carried the actual flag that was flown by Booth's party in 1905, and raised it again during a service in the GT.²³⁶ This symbolic homage illustrates another episode of following in the footsteps of the salient leading visitors and imitating their acts. It also reflects the transition of the devotional space from the Hill's exposed peak to the Tomb inside the garden. Booth's sermon was actually marking this transition since it was the last reported significant gathering that took place outside the boundaries of the GT. As we shall see in chapter B.2.5, from the 1920s onwards the GTA records indicated that the devotional meetings took place inside the GT.

Yet, during the first half of the 20th century, the Hill was still frequented by some visitors and small groups. One of those groups gathered on the Hill in 1936 was led by the preacher Ironside. Ironside was inspired by Moody, whom he had heard preaching in front of thousands of people, and for many years he served as the pastor of the famous Moody Memorial Church in Chicago.²³⁷ Thus, his small assembly also recalled the grand meeting that took place there more than 40 years earlier: "When the well-known evangelist, Dwight L. Moody, visited Palestine years ago, he was permitted to hold a most unique open-air meeting on this very hill. Standing on Gordon's Calvary, he preached to a vast throng [...]. In spirit I stand on that same spot today."²³⁸

Like many of the participants in the previous sermons on the Hill, Ironside's group members felt overwhelmed with sorrow, guilt, and gratitude as they meditated on the Hill's dramatic associations.²³⁹ However, instead of feeling that everything was turning around that sacred spot, an experience that marked those former great events, they felt like they were the only people in the world who focused on that place. It was no longer the Axis Mundi:

As we contemplated that rock height and these thoughts ran through our minds, we looked down upon the road below. Cars were gliding back and forth. Nearby some sheepmen were buying and selling. Souvenir vendors were hawking their wares. Beggars were crying for *buksheesh*. Merchants were busy yonder just inside the Damascus Gate. We alone seemed to be interested in 'the place called Calvary.' [...] Men interested in

²³⁶ White (note 10 above), p. 69. White and Walker both indicated that Booth's sermon on the Hill was performed in 1898, and not in 1905 as reported in the sources mentioned above. Walker (note 10 above), p. 131.

²³⁷ E. Reese, 'The life and ministry of Henry (Harry) Allen Ironside', *Wholesome Words website*: <http://www.wholesomewords.org/biography/bioironside.html>, Accessed 27 May 2012.

²³⁸ Ironside, (note 132 above), p. 137.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 134-135.

anything and everything pertaining to this life, and so few who have any heart for the Christ of God, His sufferings, and His joys!²⁴⁰

That experience might not represent all the other visitors' experiences on the Hill by that time, but it does indicate the changing environment that probably influenced it. The Hill was no longer surrounded by the desolated margins of the city, but gradually found itself in the middle of the hectic modern neighborhood of East Jerusalem. Thus, performing sermons on the Hill at that time could not escape the environmental interruptions. On the contrary, in the Garden – which by that time was already established as sacred ground – the assemblies and sermons could enjoy a protective environment and quiet atmosphere.

A.3.2 Material Devotion

The sermons and gatherings presented above constructed the Hill as a viable pilgrimage site. It was no longer a field to be researched or a peculiar piece of land to be admired, but an extraordinary location in which to perform rituals. Yet, besides the intensity of the religious emotion derived from the unique and elevating locality, most of the religious practices presented above were accorded with the Protestant mainstream spirituality. Only a few episodes included more radical practices, which were usually identified as non-Protestant.

The pilgrim Wardle, whom we already encountered as the pilgrim who followed in the footsteps his friend Gordon, was also following those of Reverend Hughes. When Hughes visited inside the Tomb, he went through an intense experience, as he testified:

I was so convinced that this was indeed 'the place where the Lord lay', that if an angel had suddenly appeared I should not have been at all surprised [...] I could not resist the desire to place my poor body on the very spot on which the sacred body once rested.

For a space I lay there on my back.²⁴¹

Hughes' devotional act was quoted by Wardle, who was so impressed by it that he decided to imitate it: "I followed his example and lay down on the cold rocky bed of the grave, where my Lord was laid."²⁴² Hughes' act was not the first to be performed in the Tomb. Schick reported in the *PEQ* 1892 on an English lady who washed out the

²⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 136-137.

²⁴¹ Hughes (note 126 above), p. 242.

²⁴² Wardle (note 146 above), p. 88.

tomb and then spent a night in it.²⁴³ Another kind of devotional act in the Tomb was reported by Edwin Sherman Wallace, the American consul in Jerusalem from 1893–1898. Wallace reported on the misbehavior of some eager visitors that necessitated the positioning of a warden in the Tomb:

Just recently a guard has been stationed here and no one is admitted except by him and under his surveillance - a precaution made necessary by the vandalism of visitors, many of whom in their desire to obtain a fragment of the rock did not hesitate to deface the tomb itself.²⁴⁴

These testimonials present a turning point in the Tomb's status, which had become since the 1890s a focal point for a material devotion. The visitors sought to approach as much as they could to their object of veneration and to appropriate segments out of it, until it was necessary to post a custodian in the place.

As already seen in section A.1, a similar act on Skull Hill was made by Talmage, who appropriated a rock for his church in New York.²⁴⁵ The operators of this material devotion were not mere zealous plebs, as it might have been convenient to suppose.²⁴⁶ Those who had been identified were an English lady, an American author, and two estimated religious leaders who were also regarded as role models, as we have seen in the case of Wardle. None of them belonged to an extreme branch, but to the main streams of Protestantism. Their actions indeed contrast with what might be expected to be Protestant behavior. Ironically, the bodily practices and the material worship, which attracted such ridicule from Protestants who gazed at their Christian rivals in the HS,²⁴⁷ was not absent from the Protestant space of worship.

²⁴³ "Notes and News", *PEQ* 1892, p.177. See also: C. Wilson, "To the editor of The Times", *The Times* 06.10.1892, p. 3.

²⁴⁴ E. S. Wallace, *Jerusalem the holy: a brief history of ancient Jerusalem*, Oliphant, Edinburgh 1898, p. 213.

²⁴⁵ Talmage (note 67 above), p. 40.

²⁴⁶ An anonymous GT guide, with whom I shared my knowledge of the material devotion in the Tomb stated that this sort of behavior is typical only for Pentecostals and charismatic Brazilian groups, and other Christian groups do not act this way. Interviewed by M.Bitton 29.03.12.

²⁴⁷ See for instance: Lock (note 5 above), pp. 114-116; Queen (note 26 above), p. 217-218.

A.4 The Irrelevance of the Authentic Place

In this chapter have seen the diverse methods that were adopted by the advocates of the new sacred site to justify it as an authentic place. Still, corresponding to the great effort invested in that justification was an opposite Protestant reaction that was reluctant to fixate Golgotha on the solid ground that was occasionally reflected by the same person who strove to fixate it. This view reflects the Lutheran theology, which denied the virtues of one place over others because God is present in all places. At the same time, another Protestant view was still committed to the particularity of places, since Jesus as a person operated in specific spaces that were consecrated by his presence.²⁴⁸ Both views originated in an ancient debate that had troubled the founding fathers of the Christian church.²⁴⁹ Some visitors seemed to be torn between the two stances. Philip Schaff, a Swiss-born American church historian, who traveled the Holy Land during 1876–1877, expressed this inner conflict when he considered the new location. Even though he was inclined to approve it, he eventually preferred to disconnect himself from the particular place:

Perhaps it is all the better that we should not know the precise spot. God buried Moses out of sight of men and out of the reach of idolatry. The earthly Calvary may be hidden from our view, that, instead of cleaving to earth, we may look to heaven where Christ is enthroned in glory. There is a better Calvary, which [...] has a spiritual omnipresence in Christendom, and is imbedded in the memory and affection of every believer.²⁵⁰

This tension was also reflected by Gordon, who distinguished between *places* and *sites*. For him, *places* contained a degree of uncertainty, not confined yet with clear definitions as in *sites*. The places he accounted as his favorite were open spaces with ambiguous borders, in which the holiness cannot be tracked to one exact point:

“I do not care for the sites. I like the Temple, Wailing Place, my Golgotha, the Mount of Olives, and the Valley of Kidron ; I like the places not the sites.”²⁵¹ Still, even his fondness for these places could not surpass his Protestant ethic, which denied the

²⁴⁸ For further discussion about the inherent Protestant conflict regarding pilgrimage, sacred places and relics see: Davies (note 25 above), pp.48-51; Hummel & Hummel (note 26 above), pp.18, 28-30; Todd (note 26 above), pp.32-33, 38-40; Sheldrake (note 25 above), pp. 61-63.

²⁴⁹ See: Sheldrake, *ibid.*, pp. 33-39, 48-49; J. Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, Ashgate, Aldershot 2003, pp.28-29; S. Coleman & J. Elsner, *Pilgrimage : past and present in the world religions*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1995, pp. 80-81.

²⁵⁰ P. Schaff, *Through Bible Lands, Notes to Travel in Egypt, the Desert and Palestine*, J. Nisbet & co., London 1888, pp.269-270.

²⁵¹ Gordon 1888 (note 139 above), p. 290.

importance of places. He said, “It is quite unnecessary for anyone to come to Palestine; just read the Scriptures in their simple words, for no one could describe it better.”²⁵²

For the American missionary Archibald Forder, who resided in Jerusalem during the first decades of the 20th century, the true place was clearly not important. Aside from the educational value he found in the Tomb as a demonstrator of the Gospel narrative, he did not see justification in identifying the true site:

I have included these remarks and opinions on the Sepulcher in the Garden because of the great interest in the subject, not from any belief that I have in it [...] personally, I am persuaded that the place is not known, and never will be, for what purpose would it serve if the actual sepulcher were known?²⁵³

This dubious place of emplacement that troubled the aforementioned visitors to the Hill continued to occupy the subsequent generations of visitors and managers of the adjacent Garden Tomb and became even more critical due to the well-confined borders of the new devotional center that pronounced a more confident fixation to a certain locality. Interestingly, this indecisive Protestant relation to holy places was the solution that the GT eventually promoted to avoid the potential religious and political threats that jeopardized its existence. Although GT physically continued to cling to the place, it stated publicly that the actual place was not important.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Forder (note 137 above), pp.119-120.

B – The Garden Tomb: Foundation and Stabilization 1894–1967

In chapter A we saw the process by which the new identifications for Golgotha and the Tomb had been accepted by a growing number of tourists who began revere them as sacred places since the late 1880s. Chapter B follows the institutionalization of the popular scared site into a formal place of worship named the Garden Tomb. While chapter A focused mainly on the individual and spontaneous sacralization process of the Hill and the Tomb, chapter B will follow the organized actions carried by the GTA, which was formed in London in the late 1890s in order to purchase the plot of the Tomb and establish it as a formal Protestant sacred site. The chronology of the chapter spans the first seven decades of the site's existence, which were characterized by a continuous struggle for survival and stabilization. This period was a struggle for spiritual recognition while coping with the site's historical and religious legitimacy. It was also a struggle to determine the GTA's ideology and structure and its influence on the Garden's design and function under the contradictory demands of the GTA's members and patrons in London, and staff, visitors, and the Anglican Church in Jerusalem. Finally, it was also a struggle for physical survival in a period of regime transitions in an unstable political environment that compelled the involvement of the Garden within the battles and conflicts that frequented the area. The tragic death of the Garden's Warden Mattar in the Six-Days War in 1967 marked the termination of this intensive era of foundation and stabilization. Under the domination of Israeli rule, the Garden entered a new era that was marked with an ideological and functional shift.

The sources of information for this chapter rely mostly on documents found in the GTA's archive in the GT, which include minutes of the GTA's Committee meetings, booklets, letters, and photos. Another source is the books authored by GTA members who wrote the historiography of the Garden. Additional sources are travelers' accounts, magazine articles, photos, and maps.

The chapter begins in 1894 with the establishment of the GTA and the purchase of the plot by the Tomb (sub-chapter B.1). It then follows the process of designing the Garden Tomb in accordance with the Association's initial goals in order to provide a suitable response to the Protestant spiritual and cultural needs (sub-chapter B.2). It then covers

the management and organization of the site in Jerusalem and its relations with the Association and its Anglican patrons in London, and the Anglican Church in Jerusalem (sub-chapter B.3). The chapter concludes with a genuine episode of the effort to relocate Golgotha that invoked a political conflict and the dilemma of authenticity (sub-chapter B.4).

B.1 Establishing an Association and a Sanctuary

After General Gordon's heroic death in 1885 and the publication of his ideas regarding Golgotha, the Hill and the Tomb attracted significant public exposure, as mentioned in chapter A.2.2. Further popularization was achieved through the ardent debates concerning the Hill and the Tomb in the *PEQ*, mainly in 1888–1892,²⁵⁴ and through its publication by Haskett Smith in Murray's magazine and guidebook in 1891–1892.

During that period, a small group of British adherents of the site, influenced by Gordon's ideas, began to associate in order to purchase the site.²⁵⁵ It was a spontaneous coalition of individuals, mostly church officials and aristocrats, which was exceptional in its feminine proportion and leadership.²⁵⁶ Louisa Alicia Catherine Hope was the central motivator behind the purchase's efforts, and Charlotte Hussey also played a central role in the purchasing process and later managing the site. Other dominant promoters of the purchase were Reverend Haskett Smith and Reverend Evan Hopkins.²⁵⁷ Since the group's meetings had begun to be documented since 1895,²⁵⁸ the only source that provides a general view of their initial actions is the retrospective memorandum written by Hussey in 1919. Hussey's role in promoting the purchase, as depicted from her account, was fundamental. In fact, it was her who introduced the leading members of the group, initiated the negotiations with the plot's owner, and suggested the purchase offer. Her account begins with her first meeting with Hope: "About the year 1891 the late Miss Louisa Hope spoke to me a good deal about the Tomb [...] and which Mr Henry Campbell had tried to purchase. Miss Hope was greatly

²⁵⁴ See the list of articles concerning the subject in: "The site of Holy Sepulchre", *PEQ*, 1893, p. 89.

²⁵⁵ Red Book 1967 (note 11 above), p.21; Frantzman & Kark 2008 (note 6 above), pp.8-10;

²⁵⁶ Kark & Frantzman 2010 (note 7 above), pp.204-205. Kark and Frantzman indicate that the GTA was also exceptional in being a private organization who purchased property as opposed to other property purchases in the Holy Land initiated mostly by churches or states.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.205-206; White (note 10 above), p. 29;

²⁵⁸ E.C. Carr Glyn, "The first entry in the Minutes of the GTA", 24.01.1895, GTA Archive.

distressed when the negotiations fell through.”²⁵⁹ Thus, a first purchase attempt was already made by Campbell around 1891. Hussey then reported that she introduced Hope to Hopkins since he had expressed his interest in the issue and had written a booklet about it. By January of 1892, when Hussey traveled to Palestine to serve as a missionary to Jewish women, she granted Hope’s request to inspect the situation of the Garden and the Tomb. There she met the wife of Johannes Frutiger, the plot’s owner, with whom she discussed the possibility of purchasing the ground.²⁶⁰ Since the asking price was difficult to attain, Hussey offered Hope to purchase only half of the plot. She then initiated another leading member into the group:

I heard that the Rev. Haskett Smith who had also written a pamphlet on the Tomb, and was in Jerusalem [...] He asked me to take him to see Frau Frutiger which I did and after some discussion, she agreed to write an offer on the lines of my suggestion and send it to Miss Hope, and gave Mr Haskett Smith any plans they had of the land to take back to England.²⁶¹

On Smith’s return to London he transferred to Hope and Hopkins the terms and plans for the purchase made by Hussey. The meeting of these three cooperators in London was actually the moment at which the Committee of the Garden Tomb was formed:

They quickly got together a Committee and it was decided to write to all the original subscribers (to whom the subscriptions had been returned) and asked them to give the money again. The majority did so. I believe the arrangement was then made to buy two-thirds of the land.²⁶²

The Committee then asked Hussey to employ a surveyor for the site. She assigned Schick, who took the site’s measurements and marked the boundaries of the plot to be purchased.²⁶³

The next stage was to appeal to the British public, which was well acquainted with the place by that time. On September 22nd, 1892, an appeal for the public was introduced in *The Times* magazine. It was authored by the publisher Murray and by Campbell, the conductor of the first purchase negotiation, who presented themselves as

²⁵⁹ C. Hussey, [Memorandum], December 1919, GTA Archive

²⁶⁰ Ibid. Frutiger was a Swiss-born resident of Jerusalem, who owned a bank there, and bought the plot circa 1870. Source: Kark & Frantzman 2010 (note 7 above), pp.206-207.

²⁶¹ Hussey, *ibid.*

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ Ibid.; The results of the survey were published in PEQ April 1892, but the date inscribed on Schick’s report was 17.11.1891. This date seems impossible since Hussey who arrived in Jerusalem in January 1892, was the one who recruited and assisted Schick with the survey.(see also: Red Book 1967, p.21)

temporary honorary secretaries of the GT Purchase Fund.²⁶⁴ The authors took three measures to capture the audience commitment: Reliance on the patronage of influential figures; Rational and Critical thought to enhance the credibility of the request; Participation in an urgent rescue mission. As discussed earlier, within the long process of the site's reception, the reliance on the influential figures who were mainly men of reputed knowledge generally had the purpose of enhancing the site's scientific credibility. While in this stage of institutionalizing the site, the role of the public figures was to serve as powerful patrons under whose protection the Garden could safely develop. These patrons did not necessarily have to be men of knowledge, but rather salient religious authorities who could withstand any anticipated religious attack. The appeal began by placing the site under the patronage of Gordon, who was responsible, according to the authors, for the site's name and fame and even for the identification of the Tomb – a fact that, as we have already seen, was not universally agreed upon.²⁶⁵

“THE GARDEN TOMB” AT JERUSALEM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—Many of your readers are doubtless acquainted with the spot lying outside the Damascus Gate at Jerusalem, which is commonly known as “Gordon’s Tomb,” from the fact that General Gordon, amongst many others who have made a special study of the question, believed it to be the actual Sepulchre of Our Lord.

This question of identity is one of the deepest interest, and although all archæologists are not agreed, and in the existing state of our knowledge a complete solution of it cannot, perhaps, be looked for, the probability that this tomb may be the Holy Sepulchre renders it very desirable that it should be preserved from destruction or desecration.

The tomb, together with the enclosure in which it stands, an area of about four acres, is now for sale, and the time for which we have obtained the refusal of it has almost expired. The price asked for the freehold is £4,000.

The object and desire of those who have taken the most active part in the negotiations is to purchase this site, to carry out such excavations and restorations as may be considered advisable by the most competent authorities, to lay out the garden, and to vest the property in the hands of trustees, with a view to maintaining it as far as possible in its present simplicity.

In addition to the purchase-money, it is estimated that a sum of about £2,000 would be required to meet legal expenses, to place the tomb and its surroundings in order, and to provide for the maintenance of the garden.

Nearly £1,000 has already been collected privately, and we would ask to be allowed to make an earnest appeal to the public to enable us to seize an opportunity, which may never occur again, of securing and preserving a locality which must be of the highest value and interest to all Christians.

The following gentlemen, in addition to many others, without committing themselves to any confident opinion as to the identity of this tomb with the Holy Sepulchre, have expressed their cordial approval of the purchase of the site, and in many cases have already subscribed to the fund:—The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishops of Salisbury, Rochester, Ripon, and Cashel, the Archdeacons of London and Westminster, Canon Tristram, the Hon. Rev. E. Carr Glyn, Professor R. Stuart Poole, the Rev. Sinclair Paterson, M.D., the Rev. F. B. Meyer, Mr. Lawrence Hardy, M.P., Mr. F. A. Bevan, Hon. H. Dudley Ryder, &c.

Subscriptions may be sent to either of the hon. secretaries, or paid in to the Garden Tomb (Jerusalem) Purchase Fund at Messrs. Barclay, Bevan, and Co.’s bank, 1, Pall-mall east, S.W., London.

We, are, Sir, your obedient servants,
 HENRY A. CAMPBELL, East-
 well-park, Ashford, Kent. } Hon. Secretaries
 JOHN MURRAY, 50, Alber- }
 marle-street, London, W. } *pro tem.*

Plate 28: Campbell & Murray, *The Times*, 22.09.1892

Towards the end of the appeal, the authors supplied a list of influential figures – mostly Anglican ministers – who gave their approval for the purchase and in some cases had already donated for the cause. At the head of the hierarchical ordered list was the archbishop of Canterbury, Edward White Benson. Following him were some notable Anglican bishops and the archdeacon of London, then other famous clergymen such as

²⁶⁴ H. A. Campbell & J. Murray, “‘The Garden Tomb’ at Jerusalem, to the editor of the Times”, *The Times*, 22.09.1892. p.6.

²⁶⁵ “Many of your readers are doubtless acquainted with the spot [...] which is commonly known as ‘Gordon’s Tomb’, from the fact that General Gordon [...] believed it to be the actual Sepulchre of our Lord”: Campbell & Murray, *ibid.*

the Canon of Durham Cathedral Henry Baker Tristram,²⁶⁶ politicians, noblemen, and one scholar.

A protective frame had been created, with the admirable Gordon as the forerunner and a team of powerful clergymen and politicians as rear guards. Yet another inner frame was designed to ensure the credibility of the appeal.

The new site ran the risk being accused, like other traditional sites, of leaning on fallacies or superstitions. To protect the project from such allegations, cautious and critical language was employed. Thus, before making any claim for the Tomb, the authors had to restrict it by referring to the controversy over it: “All archaeologists are not agreed, and in the existing state of our knowledge a complete solution of it cannot, perhaps, be looked for.” Also, before releasing the supporters’ list, another restriction was made: “without committing themselves to any confident opinion as to the identity of this tomb with the Holy Sepulchre.”²⁶⁷

Within these frames, the sensitive project was ready to be introduced, as a call for participation in an urgent rescue mission. It was an appeal for the Protestant sentiment to exhibit a religious responsibility. Readers were urged to “seize an opportunity which may never occur again” since “the time for which we have obtained the refusal of it [the purchase offer] is almost expired.” They were implored to donate in order to preserve from “destruction or desecration” this possible Sepulchre, which “must be of the highest value and interest to all Christians.”²⁶⁸ The authors also presented the initial plan for maintaining the place in its presumed original state – as a garden. The design guiding principles were simplicity and clarity, according to Protestant aesthetics, which sought to bestow upon the place a dimension of a non-mediated veracity. The design is discussed thoroughly in sub-chapter B.2. Interestingly, among the declared intentions for maintaining the site, no mention was made of any functional purposes the place was meant to serve. It was not stated that its purpose was to function as a place for worship, only that the site was meant to be preserved and protected. That fact may reflect again a cautious attitude meant to deny any alleged intentions to construct another “holy place” – a custom not appropriate to the Protestant legacy, as previously discussed.

²⁶⁶ Tristram was also known as a biblical scholar and an explorer of the Holy Land who published many books about his travels in the area. Source: N. Schur, *The Book of Travellers to the Holy Land: The 19th Century*, Keter, Jerusalem 1988, [Hebrew], pp.93-95.

²⁶⁷ Campbell & Murray (note 264 above).

²⁶⁸ Ibid. The authors asked a sum of £4000 for the purchase and another £2000 for additional expenses, out of which £1000 were already been collected privately.

Interestingly, apart from the authors' identification as the secretaries of the Garden Tomb Purchase Fund at the end of the appeal, no other reference of the Committee and its members was made. A single mention of the operators behind the scenes kept their identity and affiliation vague: "of those who have taken the most active part in the negotiations."²⁶⁹ As we shall see later, from this point onwards a general effort was made in the GTA's publications and actions to emphasize the organization's non-denominational nature and to maintain a neutral and modest appearance to its members. The appeal attracted many responses within the following days, not all of which were sympathetic. The first to publish a response was Conder, whose general claim was that the form of the Tomb, which he had personally examined in 1873, belonged to the ninth century style, and was not from the time of Jesus. Thus, he concluded:

There is no reason why, in the nineteenth century, we should repeat the errors of the fourth century, and give to the world two false and impossible sites for the Holy Sepulchre, instead of the one which at present represent the 'pious fraud' of Constantine.²⁷⁰

This was a painful blow from a person who had contributed greatly to the acceptance of the new Calvary, especially since he confronted the initiators of the purchase with the accusation they endeavored to avoid; namely, that they were as misleading as the rival Christian sects and were creating a superstitious shrine. Smith responded to Conder's attack by apologetically denying any intentions to transform the place "into shrines of superstitious adoration. Nor of elevating them even to the position of undoubted 'holy sites'."²⁷¹ He also rejected Conder's dating of the tomb and specified his own arguments for dating the tomb to the time of Jesus. Furthermore, he implied that Conder might have acted out of frustration, since his proposition for the true Sepulchre had failed to fulfill the Scripture narrative. Canon Tristram, another Committee member, claimed that Conder did not provide any substantial proof for his dating. He also asserted that those who accepted "Conder's Calvary" could easily identify the adjacent tomb as the possible Sepulchre, since "it follows from the Scripture narrative that the tomb must have been in its proximity."²⁷² Thus, Conder, who contributed to this natural course of events, was perceived as acting irrationally

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ C. Conder, " 'The Garden Tomb' at Jerusalem, to the editor of the Times", *The Times*, 24.09.1892, p.9.

²⁷¹ H. Smith, "To the editor of The Times", *The Times* 26.09.1892, p.10. Smith repeated the same claims again a few days later: H. Smith, "To the editor of The Times", *The Times* 06.10.1892, p. 3.

²⁷² H.B. Tristram F.R.S. Durham, "To the Editors of The Times", *The Times*, 29.09.1892, p.12.

when choosing not to accept this tomb.²⁷³ In contrast, other scholars, such as Charles Wilson and Dr. Thomas Chaplin, supported Conder's claims, and went even further by suggesting other localities for Golgotha.²⁷⁴ Moreover, Wilson surpassed Conder's accusations when he determined that "the purchase of the ground will be followed by the erection of a church."²⁷⁵ To these voices was added the protective support of James Glaisher, the Chairman of PEF executive Committee, who, despite the general attitude of the PEF Committee not "to take a side, or to promote an opinion upon any controversy on the Holy Site." insinuated very clearly on which side the PEF stood:

When an officer of experience and long study of this subject, such as Major Conder, pronounces a tomb to be of any century it is a judgment representing not an individual opinion, but the accumulated knowledge amassed during 27 years of scientific examination of the tombs and other monuments of Palestine.²⁷⁶

Eventually, the editor published an article summarizing all the arguments regarding the subject and concluded that the authors of the appeal had failed to convince that indeed "either destruction or desecration was threatened."²⁷⁷ In fact, it was the moderate approach and the non-committal language presented in the appeal and in the defending letters of the Committee members that most attracted his criticism. The use of terms such as "possible", "probable", and "it may be so", and the admission that the respected supporters will not present "any confident opinion", led the editor to determine that "they have only a tissue of vague and speculative possibilities to oppose to the emphatic negative testimony of Conder, supported by such high authorities [...] as Sir C. Wilson, Dr. Chaplin, and Mr. Glaisher."²⁷⁸ Moreover, he stated that the appeal turned to "a deeply-rooted and reverential form of sentiment"; in other words, it was not sufficiently scientific and was overly inclined towards the realm of faith. Thus, he finely concluded, there was no justification for applying for public aid.²⁷⁹

Despite this disinclined verdict, the required sum was eventually raised by 1894. As a result, the Garden Tomb Association was officially formed and purchased the Garden Tomb's plot in the same year.²⁸⁰

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ T. Chaplin, "To the Editor of the Times", *The Times*, 30.09.1892, p.5; Wilson (note 243 above), p.3.

²⁷⁵ Wilson, *ibid.*

²⁷⁶ J. Glaisher, "To the editor of The Times", *The Times* 06.10.1892, p. 3.

²⁷⁷ "An interesting controversy has been going on", *The Times*, 08.10.1892, p.9.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

²⁸⁰ Glyn (note 258 above); Red Book 1967 (note 11 above), p.21.

There were several versions of GTA's historiography regarding who was responsible for the fulfillment of this successful mission. Firstly, there is inconsistency regarding the account of who most influenced the public's interest in the purchase. In the appeal from 1892 and in other sources, Gordon is usually seen as the most influential figure, to the degree that his identification of the Tomb is presented as a solid fact. This was the case, for instance, in the appeal written by Hope and Hopkins in 1898.²⁸¹ This appeal can be interpreted as an attempt to promote that dubious fact in order to attract the people's sympathy, at a time of a strong controversy over the case. On the other hand, in the GTA's Red Book of 1944, it was John Murray and his publications from 1891 and 1892 that merited the praise for the public's response to the appeal, while Gordon's contribution was doubted by noting that the public interest in the purchase did not necessarily imply "any acceptance of Gordon's mystical views."²⁸² Still later, in the Red Book of 1967, it was Gordon again who gained recognition as the key motivator behind the foundation of the GTA, the appeal to the public and eventually the purchase of the site. Also, the rediscovery of the Tomb was attributed to him.²⁸³ On the other hand, Reverend Bill White, who served in several key positions in the GTA from the late 1960s until the late 1980s, was reluctant to accept such crucial influence ascribed to Gordon:

His name has frequently been linked with the Garden Tomb and this linkage has, too often, produced a muddle of myth and mystery [...] in fact, General Gordon had virtually nothing to do with the promotion of the Garden Tomb. The tomb was never mentioned in his writings or letters.²⁸⁴

Instead, White believed that Gordon's admirable personage served as a powerful vanguard behind which people had the courage to support the controversial site:

I have a theory that because the very notion of any alternative to the Holy Sepulchre was such a non-starter in ecclesiastical circles, people who might have adopted an open-minded position were relieved to fasten any shred of credibility for the Garden Tomb on to General Gordon.²⁸⁵

²⁸¹ E. Hopkins & L. Hope, "The Garden Tomb (Jerusalem) Purchase Fund", July 1898, GTA Archive;

²⁸² Red Book 1944 (note 11 above), p.30.

²⁸³ Red Book 1967 (note 11 above), p.21.

²⁸⁴ White (note 10 above), pp. 12, 14.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

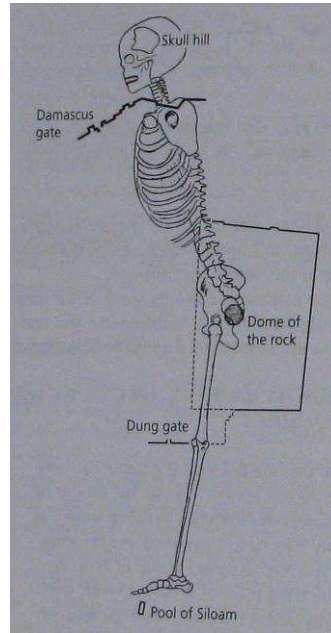
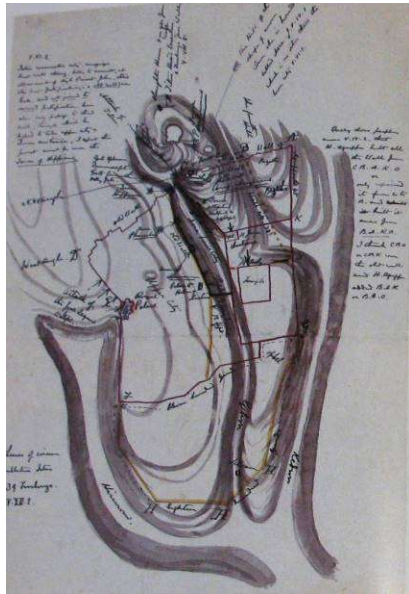


Plate 29: Gordon’s sketches and theory regarding Skull Hill.

However, even much more recently, Rosalind Meryon, the GTA’s former archivist and the wife of Richard Meryon (the Garden’s manager from 2009–2014), reaffirmed Gordon’s central contribution, in a book she wrote based on Gordon’s personal notes.²⁸⁶ Although she believed that the Garden Tomb would still have developed without Gordon’s attachment to it, she did not think the place would have been purchased by a British charity if it had not been for that British admirable figure.²⁸⁷ The historical abstract presented on the GTA’s official website seems to assign even heavier weight to Gordon’s role. It has been stated there that between the time that the site was first proposed by Thenius in 1842 and the time that Gordon visited the place, no significant progress was apparent in terms of promoting the idea: “That idea lay seemingly dormant for quite some time until General Charles Gordon on sabbatical in the area (1882-1883) began to publish similar ideas.”²⁸⁸

Another inconsistency is apparent in the question of the fundraising. The public response to the appeal was presented as highly successful in the Red Book of 1944: “The proposal to purchase the property in 1892-3 met with entire success.”²⁸⁹

Walker’s historiography stated that more than 160 contributors had responded to the appeal, resulting in the signing of the purchase contract.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁶ Meryon 2012 (note 10 above).

²⁸⁷ Rosalind Meryon interviewed by M. Bitton, 14.05.12.

²⁸⁸ “Brief History”, *The Garden Tomb Jerusalem*, <http://www.gardentomb.com/about/brief-history/>, Accessed 18 July 2012.

²⁸⁹ Red Book 1944 (note 11 above), p.30.

²⁹⁰ Walker (note 10 above), p. 128.

On the other hand, the Red Book of 1967 mentioned Miss Hope as the sole contributor who realized the entire project, and presented her generosity as a major factor in raising the funds.²⁹¹ In the second appeal to the public, written by Hope in 1898, she referred allusively to her role as a main financier of the project, in order to attract more donors for the further expansions in the site:

Now, who will help us to complete the work thus begun, £200 is still required to pay off the balance. For this, a lady, one who is not well off, has become security in the hope that other Christians will come forward in the same spirit to make up the sum required to secure the 'place where the Lord lay'.²⁹²

In addition to the public's response, the Red Book of 1944 also mentioned that the project was largely due to Hope.²⁹³

In May 1894, an agreement was signed to arrange the GTA's purchase of two-thirds of the land, which had been offered for sale for £2000,²⁹⁴ but it took more than a decade to complete the purchase legally from the Ottoman authorities.²⁹⁵

As mentioned above, another appeal was made in 1898 by Hopkins and Hope, the honorary secretaries of the GT Purchase Fund, to raise more funds to cover additional expenses of their project.²⁹⁶ Having learned from the errors of the former appeal, or perhaps having gained more confidence after the plot had been purchased, this appeal transmitted a much more decisive message. Instead of framing the appeal with protective shields, it immediately penetrated into the core of the case, replacing *may* with *must*: "it is the opinion of many of the most eminent authorities on the topography of Jerusalem, that the Calvary on which our Lord was crucified, *must have been* the summit of the low hill."²⁹⁷ Moreover, it was less tolerant towards the traditional belief: "Recent investigation has shown that the traditional Holy Sepulchre standing as it does within the walls of the ancient city, *could never have been* the spot where the body of

²⁹¹ Red Book 1967 (note 11 above), p.21.

²⁹² Hopkins & Hope 1898 (note 281 above); Miss Hope had spent more than £400, and also other members of her family donated. source: Kark & Frantzman 2010 (note 7 above), p. 206.

²⁹³ Red Book 1944 (note 11 above), p.30.

²⁹⁴ Hopkins & Hope 1898 (note 281 above); In November 1894 Hope returned from Jerusalem with the temporary title deed registered in the name of the missionary Charles T. Wilson. Wilson was a Jerusalem resident, a friend of Hussey who was asked by her to sign the Trust Deed on his name, since the Turkish Law did not permit to sell a land to a Committee, but only to an individual. Source: Glyn (note 258 above); Hussey (note 259 above);

²⁹⁵ Only on March 1905 the legal status of the land as a *Waqf* registered by the name of GTA was finally confirmed, after many difficulties and documentation mistakes made by the Ottoman rule. Source: John Dickson, [letter], 08.03.1905, GTA Archive; Kark & Frantzman 2010 (note 7 above), p.211.

²⁹⁶ Hopkins & Hope 1898 (note 281 above).

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.* italics added

our Lord was laid.”²⁹⁸ Further on, the description contains determined phrases to dismiss any remaining doubts regarding the identification theory, such as: “declared that this is unquestionably”, “must be”, “firmly convinced”, and “these facts”.²⁹⁹

Other doubts were yet to be dismissed, and were exorcized through a statement that had already been introduced in the Trust Deed and later became one of the canon rules of the GTA’s ideology. That statement regarded the main purpose of the project; namely, that the site “should be secured from desecration on the one hand and superstition on the other.”³⁰⁰ This was not only to protect the site from “desecration”, as had been originally defined in the 1892’s appeal, but also specifically to protect it from “superstition”. Apparently, it was Conder’s allegations in *The Times* that produced that emphasis on negating any superstitious use of the site. This emphasis is also indirectly apparent from the fact that no mention was made – as in the first appeal – about the future function of the site as a place for worship. Another distinction from the first appeal was that the Committee members were fully introduced. At the head of the list, which was presented at the top of the paper, was the British consul of Jerusalem, John Dickson. Following him were the bishop of Peterborough, Canon Tristram, Smith, Crawley-Boevey, Arthur Barclay, Hopkins and Hope, and finally Herbert Schmalz – the famous painter whom we encountered in chapter A.1. As in the former appeal, a similar list of supporters was presented towards the end, with slight changes, such as placing the British consul at the head of the list before the late archbishop of Canterbury, and presenting Murray and Campbell as supporters but not as Committee members. The British consul became a most influential figure, not only by assigning his name to legitimize the project, but also as an active member of the Committee who played a central role in advancing the purchase in front of the Sublime Port in Constantinople.³⁰¹ The last part of the appeal was dedicated to the site’s development since its purchase by the GTA. Through this description, we enter a new stage in the creation of the place: after the locality was officially recognized, the materiality began to be molded.

²⁹⁸ Ibid. italics added

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.; Red Book 1944 (note 11 above), p.30.

³⁰¹ Kark &Frantzman 2010 (note 7 above), pp. 205-211.

B.2 A Protestant Sense of Place: Design and Experience

Towards the end of the 19th century, the fundamental phase of identifying and affirming the new locality was approaching its conclusion. Once the GTA's members had managed to obtain ownership of the place, they were able to realize the place as an earthly sanctuary. Despite GTA's efforts to avoid advertising the site as a "Holy Place", the term *sanctuary*³⁰² is appropriate, primarily for the GTA's declared intention of protecting this place since it provides sacred associations.³⁰³ The next phase of using the place for worship would be inevitable, since the sacred association would not exist without believers who nurture and experience them. These tensions were brightly reflected by Baker, who visited the place in the 1930s and found himself torn between his joy about finding a suitable place to express his devotion and his acknowledgment of the Protestant denial of "Holy Places":

If so, how wonderful the spot! Not that we would make a Protestant 'holy place' of it, for, as the charter of the society holding it resolves, 'The garden and tomb [are to] be kept sacred as a quiet spot, and preserved on the one hand from desecration, and on the other hand from superstitious uses.' But think of the associations! ³⁰⁴

As Lindsay Jones has shown, the creation of a new sanctuary involves three essential phases, which are discernable in many examples around the world. The first is selecting or discovering the place of *Hierophany*,³⁰⁵ usually by adopting or confiscating a natural piece of land. The second is setting the place apart, providing it as a marked-off space. The third phase is sanctifying the place, mostly by purifying and cleansing it to the extent that it will ensure the appeal, integrity, and efficacy of the subsequent rites and ceremonies.³⁰⁶ The sequence provided by Jones is easily applicable in the case of the Garden Tomb. The first phase of selecting/discovering the Hill and the Tomb as places of hierophany was thoroughly discussed in chapter A, while sub-chapter B.1 discussed the confiscation of the sacred land by the Tomb. In this sub-chapter we shall examine the two other phases.

³⁰² Sanctuary derived from *sanctus*- sacred, holy. The term implies a distinction between the sacred and the profane, and it carries the meanings: Sacred place, place of worship, refuge, asylum. See: G. Alles, "Sanctuary", *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. M. Eliade, Macmillan, New York 1986. Vol 13, p.59.

³⁰³ White used the same definition: "maintain it as Christian sanctuary". White (note 10 above), p.9.

³⁰⁴ Baker (note 129 above), p.10.

³⁰⁵ A term first proposed by Mircea Eliade as signifying manifestation of the sacred: M. Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane, the Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York 1959, p.11.

³⁰⁶ Jones (note 20 above), pp.264-267, 272-274.

B.2.1 Enclosed Garden

Enclosure would be an obvious measure to protect such a plot, especially when the plot is an intended sanctuary. The Greek *temenos*³⁰⁷ serves as an acceptable archetype to demonstrate, both literally and functionally, the existence of the sacred place as a place cut off from its environment. Nearly all contemplative and ritual–architectural initiatives require the cordoning off of some sort of privileged precinct.³⁰⁸

As already seen above, the purpose of protecting the place from “destruction or desecration” was especially emphasized in GTA’s publications. Thus, confining the plot with a wall seems to be the first rational act to be made, immediately after its purchase. Indeed, the construction of a high peripheral wall around the Garden’s plot between 1895 and 1897 was one of the first actions to take place on the ground. A notable part of it was built by the first Garden caretaker Peder Beckholdt.³⁰⁹ However, it was not the initiative of the GTA, but a demand required by the Ottoman authorities. In fact, it was presented by Hope and Hopkins as an unexpected expense forced by the authorities that justified an appeal for public aid:

A wall has been built by the desire of the Turkish authorities and as a condition of their consent to the Sale, to mark off the garden property from the Hill, which is a Mahomedan grave yard and this has cost £ 185. By degrees, the boundary question having been settled, the property has been completely enclosed- the whole cost of the walls amounting to £357.³¹⁰

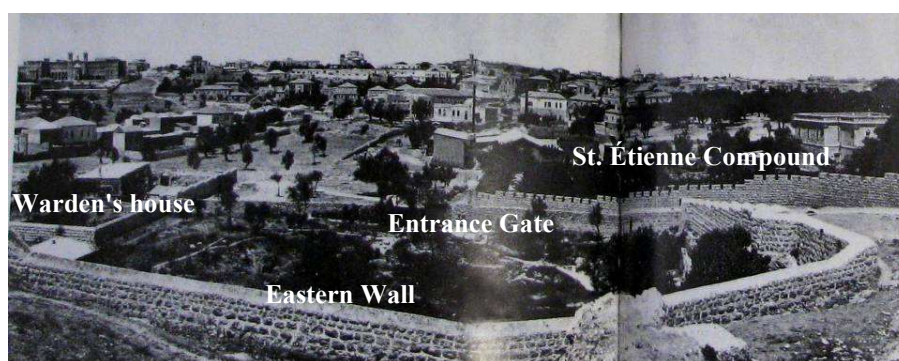


Plate 30: The peripheral wall built in 1896

³⁰⁷ *Temenos* is the Greek word for a sanctuary, has the literal meaning 'cut out' for a sacred or other purpose. Sanctuaries were marked by boulders, cliffs or walls and used for ceremonies and animal sacrifices. Source: T. Turner, *European Gardens History, Philosophy and Design*, Routledge, London and New York 2011, p.109.

³⁰⁸ Jones (note 20 above), p.267.

³⁰⁹ E. Optegnelser, *Peder Beckholdt: Danskeren, der blev Jesu grav første vogter efterladte optegnelser*, translated by GTA, Vejen Bogtrykkeri, 1979, p.5, GTA Archive; The wall building was already mentioned in the first minutes from 1895: Glyn (note 258 above). It was concluded in 1897: Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, 14.05.1897, GTA Archive.

³¹⁰ Hopkins & Hope 1898 (note 281 above). See also: Glyn, *ibid*.

Kark and Frantzman attributed this demand to the Ottoman policy of enforcing the enclosure of most properties in the Holy Land in order to ensure protection particularly against encroachments.³¹¹ This claim is well exemplified in Plate 30, in which we can see that the wall around Garden Tomb was not exceptional in its environment and was accompanied with the crenellated wall of St. Etienne compound (École Biblique) established in 1890.³¹²

However, the construction of the eastern wall that runs along the cliff does not seem reasonable, since the high cliff (about 10 feet tall) could sufficiently serve as a natural wall. There seems to be another justification for the Turkish demand. The authors of the second appeal specifically stated that the intention was to separate the garden property “from the Hill which is a Muslim cemetery”, as if the wall around the new Protestant site would protect the sacred Muslim ground from desecration. As already seen in chapter A, the cemetery was already partially encircled by a wall in 1892 as consequence of Moody’s sermon.³¹³ Thus, the holiness of the Muslim ground was now supposedly enhanced through this doubled shell of protecting walls. On the other hand, the wholeness of the area regarded as the possible locality of Christian sacred events had now been violated since the new wall separated the Tomb from the Hill. Still, although it was a project forced by the Ottomans, the wall served perfectly the interest of the GTA as well. To further explore the significance of the peripheral wall for the site, we need to employ a wider conceptualization of the site’s nature. We have already started to discuss the existence of Garden Tomb as a *sanctuary*, but it also functions as a *garden*, which is another form of functional and symbolical space. Both spatial entities are interpreted by writers from variety of disciplines as spaces designated to offer a perfected environment that may stand as an alternative for the reality outside. Namely, both can be regarded as utopian spaces.³¹⁴ Gibson Burrell and Karen Dale selected gardens as the reference point for tracing the organizational principles of utopian spaces. They detected a few recurring principles shared by many utopian spaces, including *protection* and *boundaries*. The former principle defends the spiritual, political, physical, and moral values of the community inside the utopian space, and the

³¹¹ Kark & Frantzman 2010 (note 7 above), p. 210.

³¹² L. Devillers, o.p., Histoire de la basilique, *monastère Saint-Étienne Dominicains de Jérusalem*, 21.9.2009, <http://www.domjer.org/?p=92>, Accessed 28 March 2012.

³¹³ See page 48-49 above.

³¹⁴ For instance: Delumeau (note 25 above), pp.120-121; Monasteries as utopian spaces: Sheldrake (note 25 above), pp.90-112; The garden as a provider of imaginative reality: Dixon Hunt (note 28 above), pp. 37-38, 43-44;

later includes all the good and worthy inside whilst keeping all the bad and unworthy outside. As Burrell and Dale put it, “every utopia attempts to secure the ‘best’ and obscure the ‘beastly’.”³¹⁵ Since the Garden Tomb was intentionally preserved or constructed to offer Protestants a more suitable environment than the traditional site to experience Christianity’s most dramatic events, its interpretation as a utopian space may be particularly relevant. The wall erected to mark off the Garden’s borders served not just as a separator between the sacred inside and the profane outside, but in a broader sense as a means to protect the utopian space and its community. From inside, it provided the Protestant worshipers, for the first time in the Holy Land, with a safe ground of their own, an *enclosed garden* in which they could conduct their habitual practices and express their devotional sentiments unlimitedly. From the outside, it protected them from an unsympathetic environment that could turn hostile, whether in the form of furious Muslims anxious about the graves on the Hill, or from Christians of a rival sect – thus, it literally turned the site into a *shelter* for them.³¹⁶ The concept of an “enclosed garden” contains all of the above spatial notions, and reflects the physical and symbolical condition of the Garden Tomb.

The Enclosed Garden from Song of Songs, and the Garden of Eden, which is guarded by *cherubim* and flaming-turning sword, evolved in Christian thought and imagination into a symbol of an inaccessible happiness: “If a place of peace and happiness could still be found on earth, it could only be a place cut off from the rest of an unhappy and sinful world.”³¹⁷ Thus, when men attempted to recreate the conditions of the lost paradise in earthly gardens, it had to be done in enclosed gardens.³¹⁸ As we are about to see, within the walls of the Garden Tomb the GTA attempted to recreate the conditions of another lost garden, the tracks of which had failed to be found on Earth, in the long established conventional reality dominated by traditional Christianity.

³¹⁵ G. Burrell & K. Dale, “Utopiary: Utopias, gardens and organization”, Martin Parker (ed.), *Utopia and Organization*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford 2002, pp. 108-109, 126.

³¹⁶ Notice that both *sanctuary* and *garden* convey the meaning of shelter. The word garden in Hebrew, English, Persian, and Greek originally meant an enclosed or sheltered place. By the function of sanctuary as a safe haven, the term was extended to be used for any place of safety. See: Burrell&Dale (note 316 above), p.110; Alles, (note 303 above); Utopias as well served as a refuge for their creators who asked to forget or avoid the painful reality. Delumeau (note 25 above), pp.120, 126-127.

³¹⁷ Delumeau, *ibid.*, pp.121-124. Delumeau accounts the diverse Christian meanings derived from the notion “enclosed garden”, among which: Mary’s virginity, the Church, the monastic life.

³¹⁸ That was the case with the monastic cloister of the Middle ages- *Hortus conclusus*, which evolved during the Renaissance into a secular form of pleasure gardens. *Ibid*, pp.121-130.

B.2.2 Preparing the Ground

Inside the enclosed Garden Tomb, the ground was about to be preserved or molded according to the ideology of the new owners, whose main declared purpose was to keep the site from destruction and desecration. Borrowing from Jones' chronology, we are about to inspect the manifestation of the third phase in the creation of a new sanctuary.³¹⁹ What, then, were the design principles that implemented that purpose? The first time these principles were published was in the first appeal by Murray and Campbell in 1892:

To carry out such excavations and restorations as may be considered advisable by the most competent authorities, to lay out the garden, and to vest the property in the hands of trustees, with a view to maintaining it as far as possible in its present simplicity.³²⁰

This initial plan offers a most moderate intervention and the ground would apparently remain almost without change. Still, what might seem at first glance to be a complete attentiveness to the primitive state of the site is nonetheless a deliberate alteration of the land to match the owner's biblical images and their Protestant design perceptions. Three layers of soil formation can be extricated from this plan.

The first layer is underground. The intention to excavate the ground, apparently for conducting archaeological research, can be interpreted as a desire to expose the underground secrets or to render the earth transparent.

The second layer is the ground surface, with the aim of keeping it without change and as simple as possible. David Brett recognized both *simplicity* and *transparency* (or *perspicuity*) as key principles of the Protestant aesthetics that evolved since the 16th century into a general artistic style named the "Plain Style".³²¹ We shall examine these principles later in the context offered by Brett.

The third layer is above the ground, in the planting of a garden. The intention to lay out a garden seems very natural due to the fact that this site has been identified as the Garden of the Tomb, but no conclusive evidence was ever found that a garden did actually exist there in the time of Jesus. Both visitors and the GTA used two main archaeological findings as "proof" that the ancient garden had been there in the times of Jesus: a huge cistern found in 1873, and a winepress found in 1924. Still, the dating of this evidence is not conclusive, and their existence does not necessarily indicate their

³¹⁹ Jones (note 20 above), pp. 272-280.

³²⁰ Campbell & Murray (note 264 above).

³²¹ Brett (note 24 above), p. 52. The term "Plain Style" was used by the Protestant designers themselves, and was not invented retrospectively by the historians.

function as a garden facility.³²² Thus, the decision to lay out a garden on the ground, as decorous as it may seem, is still an artificial intervention. It is a response to the Biblical image of the site – since the place was identified as the Tomb, a garden ought to be planted there to fit the Biblical narrative. All three principles presented in these layers aim to enhance the site’s authenticity and reflect a desire to uncover the truth: not to conceal the original state of the ground with any intensive development, to reveal the secrets that are waiting to be discovered, to lay a garden in order to recover the true nature of the site. Moreover, an additional contingent to support the “truth” is provided by the “competent authorities”; that is, those who would advise the excavation and restoration and those who would be entrusted with the site. A quotation used by Brett is illuminating here. It is taken from John Jewel’s *Oratio contra Rhetoricam* written in 1548, which included guidelines for the Reformed sermon:

Truth indeed is clear and simple: it has small need of the argument of the tongue or of eloquence. If it is perspicuous and plain, it has enough support in itself; it does not require flowers or artful speech. If it is obscure and unpropitious, it will not be brought to light in vociferation and flow of words.³²³

Jewel’s *Oratio* was the first time that the terms *plainness* and *perspicuity* were employed, and it marked the creation of a new Protestant aesthetics that later found expression in many other fields, such as education, interior design, and architecture.³²⁴ In later GTA publications, the principles specified above and the striving for veracity are legible, as in the report provided by Hope and Hopkins in 1898:

The ground has been cleared and laid out in the vicinity of the Sepulchre and partly planted. In the autumn more trees will be planted, and every arrangement for safeguarding the place has been made. A small native house stands on the land and in thus a trustworthy caretaker lives, whose duty it is to see that no damage is done to the property and to unlock the door of the Sepulchre when tourists come to see it.³²⁵

Thus, the initial plan presented in 1892 was already realized by 1898: the place was carefully guarded from destruction by a caretaker, it remained simple and intact, with no structure built over it but the caretaker’s cabin, and a garden had started to spring.

³²² J. R. Chadwick, “Revisiting Golgotha and the Garden Tomb”, *Religious Educator*, 4, 1 (2003) <https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/volume-4-number-1-2003/revisiting-golgotha-and-garden-tomb>, Accessed 6 June 2010. The cistern was first surveyed by Conder in 1873: Warren & Conder (note 115 above), p.386.

³²³ Brett (note 24 above), p. 52.

³²⁴ Brett (note 24 above), pp. 52-65, 80-111.

³²⁵ Hopkins & Hope 1898 (note 281 above).

In addition, another intention that had been pronounced in the first appeal was fulfilled: “Arrangements have been made to put the property in Trust, and the Marquis of Lorne³²⁶ and other gentlemen have been agreed to become Trustees.”³²⁷

The preparation of the ground described above can be also interpreted within the wider context offered by Jones. As mentioned above, to ensure the appeal, integrity, and efficacy of the site as a ritual stage, it is necessary to purify and cleanse the ground. Jones provided an example for that third phase from Stella Kramrisch’s research of Hindu Temples in India:

Once selected – or discovered – an intensely elaborate set of conventionalized rites also must be observed in order to ‘officially’ sanctify the site [...] among other sorts of ritual priming, the ground should be ‘rendered as level as the surface of water or a mirror’ and then ‘mandalaized’ or made ‘a perfect square’.³²⁸

The Indian case involved taming of the ground and ordering it into artificial forms, as opposed to the moderate and attentive approach taken in molding the Garden Tomb’s ground. Yet, both cases present the same need to artificially interfere in the configuration of the sacred ground in order to enable its transformation into a place where human can regularly experience the divine. Although the Garden Tomb’s designers probably did not have any conscious intention to purify the place in order to officially sanctify it, they could not avoid changing the ground; they could not just leave as it was. They had to excavate, to lay a garden, to clear the Tomb and the entrance in front of it. Jones explains these actions as a desire to enhance the natural qualities of the sanctuary, and to transform it into an ambience of extraordinary purity.³²⁹ Or – more accurately from the Protestant perspective – they gave it an extraordinary simplicity and clarity that enhanced the site’s authenticity.

Let us now take a closer look into the Garden’s design. Reverend Smith was the first to provide details about the desirable nature of the Garden, shortly after Murray and Campbell had published their general plan: “The garden will probably be planted with olive and fig trees [...] a feature of a great natural beauty and historical interest will be added to the Holy City.”³³⁰ This description reflects both the designer’s image of a Biblical garden and their pursuit for authenticity. The olive and the fig are valuable

³²⁶ John Campbell, 9th Duke of Argyll usually better known as Marquess of Lorne, was the fourth Governor General of Canada from 1878 to 1883.

³²⁷ Hopkins & Hope 1898 (note 281 above).

³²⁸ Jones (note 20 above), p.274.

³²⁹ Ibid, pp.273-274.

³³⁰ H. Smith, “To the editor of The Times”, *The Times* 06.10.1892, p. 3.

trees, mentioned many times in the Bible as salient features of the landscape, as important ingredients of the country's yield, and as meaningful symbols.³³¹ In the case of the Garden Tomb it may serve to evoke a sense of a typical garden from the time of Jesus, and also to firm a sense of authenticity, of deep-rootedness, by planting it with Palestine's native trees. Moreover, Smith demonstrated Jones's insight regarding the enhancement of the natural qualities of the sanctuary since, as consequence of the garden planting, a feature with even great beauty will be added to the Holy City. The use of the word "added" implies that something new is being created that was not there before; thus, the original state of the place was not sufficient to be regarded as "a feature of a great natural beauty." Such an approach to nature and its alteration may find its historical roots in the 17th and 18th centuries' design theory of the English garden. Garden theorists of the time praised the English style of gardening, which evolved at their age as the only true mode of gardening that had been there all the time, while all the rest of gardening styles were nothing but an artificial intervention imposed on nature.³³² That presentation of the English style as a nature waiting for its discovery attempts to conceal the fact that it was nonetheless an artificial intervention imposed upon nature. As argued by John Dixon Hunt, "Different garden styles are all modes of presenting, re-presenting, nature. All design is 'with nature', but all design is also 'with culture'."³³³ The pursuit of "true" and "natural" in the English Garden design recalls a similar pursuit in the realm of faith advanced by the Protestant theology. Both evolved as a critical response to the Catholic ethos and the Baroque garden design that stemmed from the art of the Counter-Reformation.³³⁴ Through the desire to achieve an unmediated work of God, artificial mediators such as religious art and buildings were gradually denied. A "plain style", stripped from decorations, led by an abstract imageless thought, was introduced into the lives of Protestant communities and reflected the Reformed way of life, which was closer to the real nature of substance.³³⁵

³³¹ N. Hareuveni, *Tree and shrub in our biblical heritage*, trans. H. Frenkley, Neot Kedumim, Kiryat Ono c.1984, pp.60-61, 84, 87; E. & J. Lehner, *Folklore and Symbolism of Flowers, Plants and Trees*, Tudor Publishing Company, New York 1990, pp.29, 74.

³³² J. Dixon Hunt, "Approaches (New & Old) to Garden History", M. Conan (ed), *Perspectives on Garden Histories*, Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection Washington D.C., Dumbarton Oaks 1999, vol 21, pp.84-85; J. Dixon Hunt, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia 2000, p.182.

³³³ Dixon Hunt 1999 (note 332 above), pp.87-88.

³³⁴ M. Conan (ed.), *Baroque Garden Cultures- Emulation, Sublimation, Subversion*, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington D.C. 2005, pp.7, 16.

³³⁵ Some quotes culled from Brett (note 24 above) exemplify that insight: In the meeting houses built by Protestants in the 17th century "everything appeared *as it is*; as if the buildings were naked" (p.88);

At this point we shall turn to inspect how the above principles were brought to life in the actual place. Unfortunately, the garden was not sufficiently photographed in its first years, so an attempt to compose a precise portrait of it from the few available photos of the time is impossible. Nevertheless, I have attempted to provide a general idea of its design and appearance. Plate 30 above reveals a first view into the newly planted garden. Among the very few discernible details we can observe are some young trees alongside some older trees that had probably been there before the site was purchased. A winding trail is also observable, and a general irregular layout that appears random, as if it was created by nature and not by man. There is nothing ostentatious in this garden. It is very plain, functional, and faithfully reflects the Protestant aesthetics. While we should take into account the fact that it is a very young garden that has not yet been covered yet with vegetation, it seems too simple, if not ascetic.



Plate 31: , ACPD, View to Skull Hill, 1900s



Plate 32: Sanday,
View to the Tomb, 1903

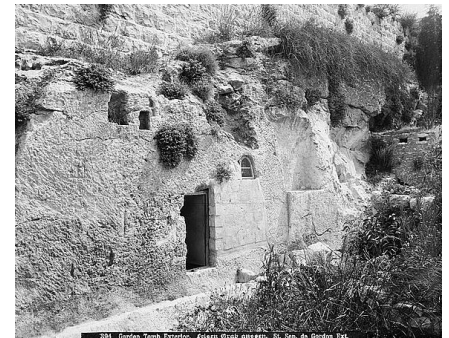


Plate 33: ACPD. 1898-1914.

The above pictures provide a few closer details, and mainly inform about the vegetation, which combines native fruit trees with succulents. In plate 31, taken circa 1900 by the American Colony Photo Department (ACPD), we can notice the Garden's peripheral wall on the south-east corner, which marks a decisive limit between the Garden and the Hill. Plate 32 shows a terrace made of field stones to mediate the height differences that have been gaped after the entrance to the Tomb was cleared. It was Hussey who exposed the flat stone floor in front of the Tomb in excavations she initiated since 1892, when she accompanied Schick's survey. Until then, the area in front of the Tomb had been filled with a large amount of debris that allowed a strained entrance into the Tomb (plates 34-35).³³⁶

Protestant spirituality “enjoyed simplicity, the avoidance of ostentatious decoration, a preference for *real* rather than simulated surfaces and an active dislike of figurative imagery.” (p.97); A sentence cited from a Quaker's meeting in 1706: “that it is plain as becometh the truth”(p.137).

³³⁶ Hussey (note 259 above).



Plate 34: The first known picture of the Tomb before it was excavated; Taken 1867.



Plate 35: The Tomb after it was first excavated; 1867.

Hussey, who was trained as a student of archaeology, Babylonian cuneiform script, and Aramaic, reported continuing her individual excavations in front of the Tomb until they were halted by Hope when she came to visit in 1898.³³⁷

Following the excavation, the narrow trench along the Tomb frontage was discovered. Hussey considered it as a possible groove along which the rolling stone was moved.³³⁸ She also discovered a few more findings, such as a cross inscribed on the Tomb's frontage and a niche and some ledges built in its rock, for which she suggested some hypotheses.³³⁹ Around 1918, she also conducted an independent survey of dozens of rock-hewn tombs around Jerusalem and conclude that "most, if not all tombs of the shape of the Garden Tomb, were hewn before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in AD 70."³⁴⁰ Despite Hussey's general knowledge of archaeology, her individual excavations and hypotheses do not seem to have been supported by professional authorities or by the consent of the Committee. Hussey's testimony of Hope's visit in 1898 provide a hint about a conflict between authorities in the Garden: "She [Hope] was not anxious to have anything more done which seemed like excavations but arranged that the cistern should be repaired and more trees planted."³⁴¹ However, three decades later, Hussey's fondness for archaeology found another ground to dig in. Hussey's hands were also engaged with restoration works. From her testimony, it seems that her actions in the Garden either resulted from her individual decision or from the Committee's requirement. She wrote about building "a loose stone fence as a slight

³³⁷ Hussey, *ibid.*; White (note 10 above), p.36.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*

³³⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*

protection on the south-west side of the Garden”, and also “Early in 1896, at the request of the Committee, I had a wall built on the North West boundary of the Garden, dividing it from the road.”³⁴² The terrace apparent in Plate 32 may also be attributed to Hussey, since it was only possible to build terraces after the area had been excavated by her.



Plate 36: ACPD, General view from the Hill towards west. c.1910.



Plate 37: ACPD/MPS, The Tomb with the iron grille, c.1910.

Plate 36 provides another general view of the garden taken by the ACPD around 1910. The height of the trees and the complete coverage of vegetation indicate that the photo was probably taken in the second decade of the 20th century.

Another salient element visible in that picture is an elegant stone building attached to the south-western wall. This was the new quarters for the caretaker and completed in 1908.³⁴³ In the same year, an iron grille was installed inside the Tomb to prevent the extraction of pieces from the rock as souvenirs (Plate 37).³⁴⁴ Apparently, the stationing of the caretaker was not sufficient, since a slab from the Tomb mysteriously disappeared around this time (compare the tomb with missing slab in Plate 37 with earlier photo of the Tomb in Plate 12). Another project conducted in 1910 was the construction of a new Garden entrance door and repairs to the wall.³⁴⁵



Plate 38: View to the Hill, ACPD, c.1910

³⁴² Ibid. This wall was erected by the help of Revd. W. F. Connor in response to attempts made by Frutiger to alter the boundaries: E. Hopkins, “A second meeting of the Committee” 23.10.1895, GTA Archive; “GT Trustees Minutes”, 10.02.1896, GTA Archive.

³⁴³ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, November 1908, GTA Archive.

³⁴⁴ White, (note 10 above), pp. 70-71. See chapter A.3.2

³⁴⁵ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, 23.04.1910, GTA Archive.

Plate 38, taken around the same time, provides an outer view of the Garden's south-east wall, while the land aside from it had been cultivated by an anonymous person. Additional details about the Garden in its first decades are provided by the accounts of visitors. These accounts deliver a new level of information, which concerns the experiences and sacred associations promoted by the Garden.

B.2.3 Garden Reception

As suggested by Jones, the preparation of the sanctuary's ground was needed in order to enhance its appeal for the intended worshipers. In this sub-chapter, the focus will turn to these intended worshipers. Chapter A presented the impressions and experiences of the informal sacred sites: the Hill and the Tomb, largely before it was established by the GTA. This sub-chapter will follow visitors' reception of the Garden Tomb since it was formally established with a focus on the garden space. The main intention is to explore whether the Garden provided them with a better opportunity to express their devotion or to experience the Biblical events.

As in chapter A, the main source of information to answer this question would be the travelers' accounts. However, this genre, which had flourished in the 19th century, unfortunately diminished gradually towards the end of the Ottoman Rule, when the country ceased to occupy readers' minds as a land of mystery.³⁴⁶ Thus, by the time the Garden was established, the evidence that accounted for the experiences in it had become less than those of the Hill. Still, within these few accounts, an abbreviated process of reception is discernible through which the Garden seem to gain recognition of a sacred place for its own sake. Naturally, it took a while before the visitors began to notice the garden. The Tomb's space was well confined, so the pilgrims' attention was focused directly on the grave where Jesus had supposedly lain. It was easier to trace a holy atmosphere inside the Tomb than in the undefined space out of it, where Jesus had supposedly appeared to Mary as a gardener. Additionally the Garden remained generally unnoticed as long it was left in its wild and un-nurtured form and less conceivable as a garden. In contrast to the Garden space, the Tomb space did not require any alterations in order to be noticed by visitors as a place suitable for their devotional

³⁴⁶ Y. Ben-Arieh, *The rediscovery of the Holy Land in the nineteenth century*, Magnes Press, Jerusalem 1979, p.229.

practices. The manifestation of the Protestant aesthetics inside the Tomb was obtained by the exposure of the space and its clearness. It was immediately recognized by the Protestant visitors who shared a *habitus* in which the “Plain Style” was inscribed.³⁴⁷ Such was the case of Harland, who gladly found that, inside the tomb, “There is no inscription, and as I gratefully record, no frippery of altar, candles, lace and artificial flowers detracts from the solemn simplicity of the shrine.”³⁴⁸ A few years later, when the Garden had begun to flourish, it started to attract visitors’ attention for its own sake. Haggard was the first visitor to relate to the Garden itself, not just to the Tomb, as a visual object, assisting the beholder to meditate:

Through just such a garden, dim and dewy, must the two Marys have crept in terror of the Jews [...] on such a little terrace as that above [...] the Magdalene might have turned to behold Him whom in the shadow she supposed to be the gardener [...] Standing in that quiet garden with the rock-hewn sepulcher before me, it was easy to imagine that here and not elsewhere these dread mysteries were enacted.³⁴⁹

The natural elements in this open-air sanctuary seem to allow a sense of devotional freedom that differentiated the site from other Christian sanctuaries in Palestine.

A.E. Booth (1905) provided such an impression. Similar to Haggard, Booth testified that the garden presented him with a possibility that did not exist elsewhere to go deeply into his spiritual thoughts:

The garden [...] is neatly kept, to prevent the simplicity and natural beauty of its surroundings from being spoiled, as is usually the case with the Latin and Greek rites [...] the whole site, with its naturalness, so well suits the bible description, and its surroundings are so different from all that we saw at the ritualistic site in the city, that here we pause and meditate upon the lessons [...] from the death of our Lord.³⁵⁰

For Booth, then, the Garden already served as a site of worship to be compared with other sites in the city and to be credited as the most appropriate site to practice his spirituality. Another visitor, Margaret Agate, who visited the site on 1902, was especially impressed with the flowers. As she testified, the Garden: “had many flowers

³⁴⁷ Brett suggests that the British eighteenth century design consensus should be explained in terms of Bourdieu's *habitus*: “It is because the habits of the Plain Style became so deeply interiorised that their foundations ceased to be a matter of discussion or comment. The perceptual schemata of plainness and the mental schemata of perspicuity have been formative of the most of the culture of North West Europe and North America.” Source: Brett (note 24 above), p.111.

³⁴⁸ Harland (note 134 above), pp.351-352.

³⁴⁹ Haggard (note 75 above), pp.325-326. Haggard later became a member of GTA. See the Red Book 1911 inner title.

³⁵⁰ Booth, (note 148 Above), pp. 187-188.

planted there [...] a sweet, quiet spot it is. I shall never forget that visit to Calvary.”³⁵¹ However, it was not just the garden that was filled with flowers; the Hill also provided her with plenty of souvenirs:

The hill stands there basking in the sunlight, covered with soft, green turf, dotted over with daisies, and other lovely wild flowers, just as it must have done on that awful day, nearly two thousand years ago. We were one and all deeply impressed as we walked about picking flowers to bring home in memory of Gordon's Calvary.³⁵²

Her account seems too generous than reality. In both places, as far as we can learn from the photos or other descriptions, flowers did not seem to take such an eminent position in the landscape. Nevertheless, flowers did catch her attention and released her spiritual imagination, to the degree that she credited some wild, probably very small and plain flowers as the holders of the Hill’s memory. Picking flowers or leaves and gathering piece of earth are recurrent practices among pilgrims who attend a sacred open space, as a means of obtaining a portion of the sacredness. That was the case in the adjacent Garden of Gethsemane, in which many visitors accounted of such practices, and many still perform them today. Also, Agate and Booth visited the Garden of Gethsemane and picked flowers there.³⁵³ Similar behavior was already discussed in the previous chapter with regard to pilgrims who chipped segments from the Tomb in the late 19th century.³⁵⁴ Yet, assigning that sacredness to organic and expandable elements of a garden or wilderness such as flowers may present a higher degree of trust expressed by the pilgrim. A tomb recognized as sacred is a well-confined and tangible locality, so chipping a piece from it not only renders a direct unmistakable connection with the source of sacredness, but also provides a durable relic. That is not the case with organic elements scattered all over the space, especially when the origin of these elements is doubtful. The wild flowers picked by Agate on the Hill, although they definitely did not grow there in the days of Jesus, had at least sprung from the soil that she recognized as Calvary. In the case of Gethsemane, leaves from the ancient olive trees had a higher acknowledged authenticity than the foreign flowers that were only planted there in

³⁵¹ M. Agate, *Egypt, the Sinaitic Desert and the Holy Land*, A. Gardner, Paisley 1904, p.203.

³⁵² *Ibid.*

³⁵³ See the following pilgrims' evidences: J. Morot, *Journal De Voyage Paris a Jerusalem 1839-1840*, J. Claye, Paris 1873, p.172; F. Schroeder, *Shores of the Mediterranean: With Sketches of Travel*, Harper & Brothers, New York 1846, p. 236; S. Braun, *Jerusalem: Bilder aus dem Orient und Erläuterungen der heiligen Geschichte*, J. Dilger, Freiburg i.Br. 1866, p.75; E. Bush, *My Pilgrimage to Eastern Shrines*, Hurst and Blackett, London 1867, p.135; Harland (note 134 above), p. 205; Booth (note 148 above), pp. 185, 193; Agate, *ibid.*, p.207.

³⁵⁴ See: p. 59 above.

modern days, or the garden soil that was brought from elsewhere.³⁵⁵ Thus, picking flowers from the newly planted Garden Tomb can be regarded as an adventurous expression of faith in the place's authenticity. Wardle, who already demonstrated a certain degree of daringness when he followed a former visitor's practice and laid himself in the Tomb,³⁵⁶ continued to perform other practices in the Garden. He was the first visitor (c. 1907) to account for picking leaves and flowers from the Garden to bring home as a souvenir.³⁵⁷ With Wardle's account the Garden was transformed from suitable scenery to the Tomb, or even a place appropriate for mediation, into a space sanctified for its own, of whose flowers and leaves contains the aura of the sacred.

B.2.4 Designing the Garden

Naturally, a few decades had to pass until the Garden obtained a riper appearance that enables us to recognize its developing character; its "sense of place". Still, the available sources that enable us to take a deeper look into the Garden design are modest, a limitation that requires a larger degree of interpretation. Certain consideration is also referred to the possible influences of historical gardening styles that originated in Europe and England in particular. The main sources that inform us of the garden design between 1930 and 1950 are pictures, mostly taken by Matson Photo Service (MPS), the successor of the ACPD since 1934.³⁵⁸

The design reflected from the Garden's general view is of a naturalness and randomness.

No leading concept is noticeable in the formation of the ground or organization of the spaces. There are some groups of mature trees along non-shaded areas with low plantation coverage, among which runs a winding trail. At the turn of that trail is a light shed, above which a stone rampart stretches lengthwise along the eastern wall.

³⁵⁵ The author had conducted another research in the Garden of Gethsemane which was published in: M. Bitton, "The Garden as Sacred Nature and the Garden as a Church: Transitions of Design and Function in the Garden of Gethsemane, 1800–1959", *Cathedra* 146 (2012), [Hebrew], pp.27-66.

³⁵⁶ See: p. 58 above.

³⁵⁷ Wardle (note 146 above), pp. 87-89.

³⁵⁸ Nir, (note 98 above), p.253.



Plate 39: ACPD, View to the east, c.1935

The pictures present an eclectic selection of flora species. Among the *mélange* of native and foreign plants, the conspicuous silhouette of the palms, cypresses, and agaves dominate the view. Stone terraces are discernible wherever a closure of a height gap is needed, echoing the native landscape of terraces agriculture in the Judea Mountains. An artless wooden bridge spans a slim glen, and paths demarcated with small stones wander around it.



Plate 40: ACPD, n. 16529, 1935



Plate 41: ACPD, n. 16525, 1935



Plate 42: ACPD, n. 16524, 1935



Plate 43: ACPD, Trail towards Skull Hill, n. 16531, 1935



Plate 44: Red Book, Trail towards Skull Hill, 1944

This scenery of unplanned random naturalness is suddenly interrupted by a rather straight trail crossing the Garden from west to east with trimmed hedges of rosemary confining its borders, in which cypresses are inserted in a certain cadence (plate 44). These hedges, which had been planted at least in the early 1940s, accompanied walkers from the Garden's entrance towards the "place of the skull" for many years, and still exist today in a less rigid version. When observing the pictures and later garden plans, it appears to be the only straight path that specifically directs the visitor to a certain point. All other trails and paths in the garden meander through the garden with no salient hierarchy, forming natural-looking serpentine lines.³⁵⁹ With its apparent directness, its emphasized borders, and the solemn cypresses that vertically mark the way, the path compels a sense of formality and order that contradicts all other spaces in the Garden. It is the only space in the garden with an explicit reference to the formal gardening style, of which one of the most familiar features is trimmed hedges.³⁶⁰ A visitor from the 1950s identified another plant to be included along the path's green curbs: "hedges of wormwood- used to make a sedative for the suffering Christ."³⁶¹ The visitor associated the path with the "way of the cross", in that, by its end, Christ's suffering was eased by a sedative potion.³⁶² Another implicit interpretation was provided in the Red Book of 1967: "The walks of the Garden are lined with low hedges of rosemary,-remembrance."³⁶³ Although this does not just refer to one specific walk, we can assume that the intention is to the path to the Hill, since no other trails lined with rosemary hedges, definitely not trimmed ones, are apparent in any picture available to us. The indication of the plant's cultivar – Rosemary "Remembrance" (or "Gallipoli") – may sound rather professional for a booklet aimed for potential visitors, who would most likely not be familiar with the plant's ascription. However, the average English-speaking reader would probably associate the title with Shakespeare's

³⁵⁹ The Serpentine was regarded as a free flowing "line of beauty" and dominated the composition of the informal gardening styles. Turner (note 307 above), p.275-276, 307, 316.

³⁶⁰ Clipped hedges and parterres (planting beds arranged to form a pattern) were among the principal features of the Renaissance and Baroque gardens. Turner (note 307 above), pp.190, 226; A. Hellyer, "Hedge", G. & S. Jellicoe and others (eds.), *Oxford Companion to Gardens*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1986, p. 248.

³⁶¹ "Two Sites as Christ's Tomb", *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, Thursday 8 April 1954 p 9
<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/62508292?searchTerm=garden+tomb&searchLimits=>, Accessed 11 July 2012.

³⁶² Wormwood and gall were mixed in sour wine (vinegar) to give to those who were dying. During the Crucifixion, Jesus Christ was offered a drink of vinegar mixed with gall and myrrh. Mt 27:34; Mk 15:23. Source: "Wormwood and gall" *Bible Doctrine News*
<http://www.biblenews1.com/define/gall.htm>, Accessed 13 May 2017;

³⁶³ Red Book 1967 (note 11 above), p.25.

reference, “There's rosemary, that's for remembrance”, which corresponded with the shrub's ancient symbolism as a token of remembrance in recalling the memory of the deceased, often used in funerals.³⁶⁴ Thus by associating rosemary with remembrance, combined with the cypresses that serve as a familiar Christian symbol for the death frequently planted in cemeteries,³⁶⁵ another layer is added to the formation of the trail to Golgotha as a funerary path.

Other plants in the Garden were generally regarded as providing a biblical atmosphere: “The Garden has been planted with a great variety of trees, shrubs and flowers; almost all the flora named in the Bible is here.”³⁶⁶ By the Tomb were planted scented stocks and geraniums, which do not hold a special meaning but have strong smells and colors that provide an intense sense of vividness to assumedly reflect the joy of the Resurrection.³⁶⁷ Another later description by White provides a long list of plants found in the garden, many of them native trees and flowers mentioned in the Bible, but also a lot of foreign plants.³⁶⁸

The Biblical atmosphere is further enhanced through the emphasis of the cistern and the winepress as archaeological evidence for the site's ancient use as a garden:

“It is standing by this full size winepress and with the awareness of the extensive underground cistern that one has the consciousness of being in an ancient garden. It is as though one stands where Mary stood.”³⁶⁹ Other than serving as a visual sign for the site's continuity, the cistern also functions as an essential part of the present garden:

“It is possible to have such a fragrant and colorful garden because a large cistern hewn out of the rock in ancient times supplies the necessary water.”³⁷⁰

Another element of antiquity was also introduced to enhance a sense of ancient times. Following an excavation near the Tomb that was carried by the Warden Solomon Mattar in 1955, three segments of tine pillars were found, and soon after found their

³⁶⁴ “Why Rosemary?”, <http://www.rslnsw.org.au/uploads/Why%20Rosemary.pdf>, Accessed 13 May 2017.

³⁶⁵ Lehner (note 331 above), p.57; “Symbols in Christian art and architecture”, <http://www.planetgast.net/symbols/plants/plants.html>, Accessed 13 May 2017.

³⁶⁶ Red Book 1967 (note 11 above), p.25.

³⁶⁷ This assumption was made relying on Rieki Neeb, the current gardener (2016) who used such an explanation for her custom to plant colorful flowers by the Tomb. interviewed by M. Bitton, 02.06.10.

³⁶⁸ Aleppo pine, Almond, Carob, Cyprus, Date Palm, Fig, 'Judas Tree' (Red Bud), Lemon, Mustard, Olive, Orange, Pepper and Pomegranate. Bougainvillea, Broom, Caper, Hissop, Oleander, Plumbago, Rosemary and Wormwood. There are amaryllis, anemones, cyclamen, daisies, fresias, fuchisias, honeysuckle, iris, lilies, marigolds and sea squill. White (note 10 above), pp.84-85.

³⁶⁹ Red Book 1967 (note 11 above), p.25-26.

³⁷⁰ Ibid.

new position above the surface crowning the top of the staircase leading to the Tomb's entrance yard (Plate 45).³⁷¹



Plate 45: Pillars at the head of the staircase to the Tomb, c.1955.



Plate 46: Three columns found during excavations by Mattar, 4.2.1955.

As has been examined so far, it can be concluded that the Garden was not carefully planned, and was not designed in the light of any dominant artistic style. There was, however, a general intention to provide a Biblical atmosphere and an expression of the natural landscape that was reflected in the choice of native plants and in serpentine, natural looking lines. However, that intention was not expressed too rigidly, since foreign plants, as well as elements of the European Formal style, were introduced in early stage. Additionally, the way to the Hill was recognized since the beginning as important and was emphasized both visually and symbolically.

B.2.5 Sermons in the Garden

The Hill had served for many years as a fertile field on which to hold sermons and devotional meetings. Especially on Easter Sundays, believers ascended the Hill to celebrate services led by notable charismatic leaders. However, these services were performed irregularly and spontaneously and sometimes turned into precarious experiences. Inside the Garden, however, the Easter Sunday service became an institutionalized and well organized event, protected from potential furious neighbors by its walls.

In the absence of any other evidence, it seems that the first service to take place in the GT was held on March 7, 1897 by a leading Australian congregational minister named Dr. Llewellyn David Bevan. The service was performed inside the Tomb, after Bevan came to realize that it was “the veritable holy sepulchre” that “had not been opened for 1700 years, and also that, previous to that time, it had been used for religious

³⁷¹ S. J. Mattar to Honorary Secretary Hardcatsle, 15th February 1955, GTA Archive.

worship.”³⁷² Thus, the decision to hold the service there was apparently a spontaneous pious reaction to the knowledge that it was not only allegedly the genuine place, but had also remained devoid of believers’ devotion for centuries. Bevan then seized the opportunity and inaugurated a new era of work of God inside the Tomb: “The celebration was participated in by a small company of several nationalities and different sects, and it is probable that it was the first Eucharist held' in the sepulchre since the first century.”³⁷³ This event, although conducted at a time when the GT was already established, did not appear to have been organized or assisted by the GT staff, and by its episodic unorganized nature was affinitive with the assemblies on the Hill.

It was only in the late 1920s that the first evidence of organized religious meetings taking place in the Garden was heard. The GTA Minutes of 1927 documented Hussey’s report of “the Easter services from the Garden Tomb when about 400 visitors attended.”³⁷⁴ Interestingly, Hussey provided a detailed account of the Garden in her memorandum written in 1919, but did not refer to any service taking place in it. Moreover, she concluded her testimonial by referring nostalgically to the services that took part on the Hill:

Before it [the GT] was purchased by the Committee and for many years afterwards it was the custom for Protestants of all denominations to visit it on Good Friday and Easter Sunday, and generally to hold a joint service on the adjoining Hill, a privilege much appreciated by both English and American visitors, until the Turks thought they could make money out of it, and enclosed the Hill.³⁷⁵

In the light of this evidence, which only mentions the Hill and disregards the GT, and due to the absence of any evidence prior to the 1920s regarding services inside the GT, it can be concluded that it took more than two decades to initiate the organized services in the Garden. It might reflect a degree of uncertainty that had to be banished before such services could attract enough participants. Meanwhile, as already seen in chapter A, meetings and services on the Hill continued before gradually fading. In 1929, the number of attendees at the Easter Service was more than twice as high as

³⁷² “The Speech the Governor read”, *The Daily Telegraph*, 24.09.1897, p.2.
<http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&d=DTN18970924.2.5&l=mi&e=-----10--1---0-->, Accessed 13 July 2012.

³⁷³ “Without the Gate. Christ's Burial Place”, *The Register* (Adelaide, SA : 1901 – 1929) Monday 13 April 1914, p.9. [http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/58496584?searchTerm=skull hill jerusalem&searchLimits=#pstart5116489](http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/58496584?searchTerm=skull%20hill%20jerusalem&searchLimits=#pstart5116489), Accessed 13 July 2012.

³⁷⁴ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, 28.09.1927, GTA Archive.

³⁷⁵ Hussey (note 259 above).

that reported by Hussey in 1927. A detailed report of that service was given a year later by Reverend H. T. Williams:

A company of one thousand visitors joined in a rather unique service to the quiet music, 'Low in the grave He lay', and swelling at the chorus, 'He arose, He arose.' Nature pulsated with the melody. [...] the lord of heaven and earth, Who set the planets in their orbits, Who painted the beauty of the flowers, and Who clothed with glory the fields, was entreated to inspire the service to every soul.³⁷⁶

Williams described a sensational experience that resulted from the encounter between the service practices and the natural arena: "Nature pulsated with the melody". Music, chorus singing, and prayer were practiced in harmony with the beauty of the flowers and the glory of the fields. The inspiration that arose from such an encounter was viewed an acknowledgement of nature as God's perfect creation. However, this sentimental and seemingly instinctive response to the event was nonetheless immersed in Protestant preconceptions: "The simplicity and lack of ritual in this open-air gathering contrasted greatly with the ostentation and ritualistic display which are witnessed later near the sepulchre in the Holy Sepulchre Church."³⁷⁷ Similar to experiences reflected in the sermons on the Hill, such as the Sunday school convention, the elevating spiritual moment was experienced through an inevitable comparison to other Christian cults, which established a sense of Protestant superiority.

From the 1930s on, the Easter Sunday service was commemorated through the lens of the MPS. The gathering at the court by the Tomb, as shown in Plates 47-48, seems rather intimate and informal, using portable chairs and a table covered with a homely cloth.



Plate 47: ACPD, Easter morning at the Garden Tomb, 1937.



Plate 48: ACPD, Easter morning at the Garden Tomb, The choir singing at the service, 1939.

³⁷⁶ Rev H. T. Williams, "Easter in Jerusalem", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Saturday 19 April 1930, <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/16682743?searchTerm=skull hill jerusalem&searchLimits=>, Accessed 11 July 2012.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

The Easter service of 1939 was the last before the outbreak of the Second World War. During the War, tourism to the Garden had ceased, but many soldiers were drawn to the place during their vacation, and some military pastors conducted sermons in the Garden.³⁷⁸ One of them was S. F. Cupples, who conducted the Sunrise Service of 1945 in the GT, “where over 700 joined in a joyful Easter remembrance [...] the main addresses at the Convention were given by Dr. Lambie of Sudan Interior Mission.”³⁷⁹ This service followed a pilgrimage to the Hill two days earlier: “On Good Friday morning a pilgrimage was made to the Hill of Calvary where they remembered our Lord's death in adoring worship.”³⁸⁰

Easter Sunday was not the only occasion to be celebrated in the Garden. The testimonial of Ironside from September 1936 reveals what seems to be a weekly routine in the Garden: “Today the Garden Tomb is under the care of Mr. Clarke [...] and through his kindness we were permitted to enter it and to join with others in a prayer-meeting there, on the Lord's Day afternoon that we were in the city.”³⁸¹

Ironside's testimony was the only one I found regarding these routine services, and it was not until 1954 that the Warden Solomon Mattar was recognized as the initiator of a regular Sunday services in the Garden. Apparently, this initiation was taken without consulting the Committee in London. A letter from 1954 reveals the disagreement inside the organization regarding these services: “General feeling of the Committee- with some dissidents- was that such services would not be in accord with the policy of keeping the Garden 'a quiet spot' and that it would be difficult to regulate such services.”³⁸² Nevertheless, the Committee decided to allow occasional service for a group that applied a special request under the supervision of the warden, realizing that a total refusal would affect the tourism revenues.³⁸³

This inner conflict among the Committee members is also reflected in the minutes of 1947, when also the Easter Sunday Service itself was put into question:

The previous decision of the Committee to prohibit the holding of a religious service at the Garden Tomb on Easter Sunday was reconsidered and, in view of Mr. Heaver's report

³⁷⁸ White (note 10 above), p.45.

³⁷⁹ “Jottings for Garden Tomb Archive from centenary booklet of mission to military garrisons (1883-1983)”, GTA Archive.

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

³⁸¹ Ironside (note 132 above), p.134.

³⁸² Lord Chatfield to Mr Hardcastle, 25th June 1954, in: Meryon 2014 (note 10 above), p.152.

³⁸³ President-Chairman, Lord Chatfield to Mr. Mattar, 21st July, 1954 in: Meryon 2014 (note 10 above), pp.152-153.

that local feeling was strongly in favour of such a Service, the Executive Committee agreed to recommend that it should be held- provided that all the Arrangements [...] should be controlled by the Warden.³⁸⁴

It seems that the geographical and cultural gap between London and Jerusalem prevented the Committee members from understanding the actual needs required in the GT. Although Mr. Heaver, the GTA's secretary, did not specify whether the "local feelings" were proclaimed by the management in the GT or by the local community attending it, his report seems to indicate a public demand. There was a spiritual need there that sought its fulfillment, and was much stronger than the disconnected considerations of the Committee who asked to enforce order and control over the site in order to protect it from desecration.³⁸⁵ The conciliation between these two tendencies was that the service would be held as long as it would be supervised by the Garden's Warden. This demand clearly indicates that the services that had been held so far were not sufficiently regulated by the Garden staff and Warden, and thus enabled religious interpretations that were not compatible with the Committee's preferences. A few years later, the Committee's preferences seemed to overcome the Warden's ambitions regarding the Garden's religious activity. Warden Mattar also aimed to enlarge the scope of religious meetings in the Garden by allowing the participation of Catholics. This initiative was accepted with distrust among Committee members:

It would be most unwise to encourage any Roman Catholic interest in the Garden, as it was felt it was not genuine [...] Mr. Dobson said the Easter Day services had always been held by the Warden and these should be encouraged. Duckworth felt the Roman Catholics should not be denied access to the Garden, but Mr. Dobson said they always been against the Garden Tomb and, in view of their behavior in the past, he still felt it would be most unwise to let them in. [...] Dr. Berry [...] urged that the Garden should be kept sacred and apart from all controversy.³⁸⁶

Finally, it was decided that: "it was not the Policy of the Committee to allow meetings to take place in the Garden, other than the recognized meetings on Easter Day, as the

³⁸⁴ Minutes of the GTA Committee 07.01.1947, GTA Archive.

³⁸⁵ This situation exemplifies the theory of conflict in the sacred space where the officials are frequently able to impose their own definitions of the situation and tend to protect sacred object and areas from those not specifically validated by the shrine authorities. However, pilgrims frequently attempt to break down the official boundary between secular and sacred space in order to be as close as possible to the transcendent. Eade & Sallnow (note 30 above), p.11.

³⁸⁶ Minutes of the GTA, 1955, GTA Archive.

garden should be kept as a quiet and sacred spot.”³⁸⁷

The Committee’s policy revealed in this account is one of exclusion, or, figuratively speaking, the “enclosed garden” policy.

An effort was made to avoid the threats of controversy and criticism simply by alienating them from the Garden,

Mattar’s neighborly approach could not be regarded as politically wise at that time. This situation would change completely six decades later when neighbors of all sects and religions would be warmly invited to visit the Garden. But in the 1950s, religious instability and insecurity ruled the site. The attention referred mostly to the site itself, to secure it and to preserve it. This was more important than enabling a meeting, especially when it concerned foreigners and potential enemies. Interestingly, such a policy was pronounced at a time when the actual tourism potential of the site was limited in the first place. Under the Jordanian Rule until 1967, accessibility to Christian sanctuaries in the Eastern City was limited. Thus, many Protestants who lived or visited in Jerusalem during Easter time went elsewhere to celebrate Easter. There was another garden in the Western City that attracted most of the attention, as reflected from the records of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in 1950:

A united Easter Sunrise service of all Protestant communities in Jerusalem was held in the garden of the St. Andrew's Scottish Memorial Church, opposite to the Old City Wall, at 5.15 a.m. The Rev. W.L. Hull delivered a sermon on the meaning of the day and said, *inter alia*, that the establishment of the State of Israel was a fulfillment of the prophecies.³⁸⁸

In the GT, however, such a harmony between all Protestant communities was still seeking to be fulfilled. According to the minutes of 1961, the Committee faced difficulties in deciding on the proper nature the Easter services should carry:

The conduct of the Easter services, particularly the main one, has given your Committee some concern for some time and last Easter our Chairman's son, was in Jerusalem and attended the Easter Service. He reported that the service was Conducted more on the lines of a Billy Graham Meeting³⁸⁹ than an Anglican one.³⁹⁰

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

³⁸⁸ C. Wardi, *Christians in Israel, a Survey*, Ministry of Religious Affairs Government of Israel, Jerusalem 1950, p.17.

³⁸⁹ Billy Graham, is an American evangelical Christian evangelist, ordained as a Southern Baptist minister. His sermons were broadcast on radio and television, with some still re-broadcast today. See: “William (Billy) F. Graham Evangelist and Chairman of the Board”, *Billy Graham Evangelistic Association*, <https://billygraham.org/about/biographies/billy-graham/>, Accessed 25 July 2012.

³⁹⁰ Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the GTA 1961, GTA Archive.

It was eventually decided to reinforce the Anglican tradition by holding an early Anglican service to enable “those wishing to attend their Easter Communion Service at 8 o'clock at St. George's Cathedral.”³⁹¹

B.2.6 A place for Sacred Associations

In light of the Committee’s conservative and hesitant approach regarding the sermons in the Garden, it is not surprising that, until the early 1960s, as reflected from the visual documentation, the Garden lacked any installed furniture or devices to serve assembly and worship. In the photos from the Easter service in 1942 (plates 49-50), hundreds of believers are standing around the Tomb’s platform, many of them at the elevated ground above the platform, which does not seem suitable to accommodate such a crowd. The area to the left of the staircase remained without the support of a retaining wall, and only a sharp slope dangerously separates between the levels.



Plate 49: MPS, n. 21236, Service, Easter service at the Garden Tomb, 1942.



Plate 50: MPS, n. 21241, Service, Easter service at the Garden Tomb, 1942.

Plates 51-52 from Easter services in 1958 and 1960 continue to exhibit the lack of any permanent sitting arrangements. Attendees are either seated on the wall edges or on movable chairs and benches that had been temporarily placed on the platform before the Tomb. The Garden does not seem capable of accommodating large crowds yet.



Plate 51: GTA Archive, Album, Easter service at the Garden Tomb, 1958.

³⁹¹ Ibid.



Plate 52: GTA Archive, Easter service at the Garden Tomb, 7, 17th April 1960.

The modification of the Garden into a place for devotional meetings and services was gradual and spontaneous, and evolved inseparably from the growth in tourism to the site. Although the site was meant to serve as a sanctuary, the immediacy was to preserve the site, regardless of the potential visitors. The number of future visitors was not anticipated. Thus, the site was not preplanned to accommodate them and to respond to their spiritual needs and practices. Spaces for gathering and prayers were not specifically designated for that cause. From its incipiency, the Garden was designed to deliver an authentic atmosphere that encouraged reflection over sacred events; a place for conceptual associations, but not yet the social associations and devotional gatherings.

B.3 Organization, Management, and Politics

Having examined how the new sanctuary had been planned and organized according to the GTA's ideology in order to provide the Protestant worshippers with an adequate space for their spiritual and cultural demands, we turn our attention in the following sub-chapter to the management of the site in Jerusalem and its relations with the Association and its Anglican patrons in London, and the Anglican Church in Jerusalem.

B.3.1 The creation of the Garden Staff

A few years before the Garden's plot was purchased, the Tomb was already under protection. Harland, who visited the site around 1890, provided the first indication of this when she reported that the Tomb was locked and the key was retained in the American Consulate during the service of Merrill. Harland was probably referring to Merrill's second tenure (1891–1893).³⁹²

³⁹² Harland (note 134 above), pp.351-352.

Still, his first tenure (1882–1885) might also be considered here, since her testimony coincident with other accounts from the mid-1880s that mentioned Merrill as the guide who accompanied them to the Hill or Tomb.³⁹³ It can be induced that, until Hussey’s arrival in 1892, the place was partially watched over by Merrill.

Charlotte Hussey takes Charge

As the direct executer of the Committee’s decisions and of her own initiations, Hussey effectively acted as the actual manager of the site right from her arrival in 1892. Since her role was not officially defined, it allowed a wide span of personal interpretation, as we have already seen. It was only in 1895 that her position was formally regarded as “Honorary Custodian of the GT property”.³⁹⁴ Surprisingly it was only much later, in 1912, that Hussey officially became a member of the Committee as honorary secretary for Ireland.³⁹⁵ As the Garden's custodian, she immediately hired a *caretaker* to handle the visitors. As she testified, this appointment also provided her indirectly with a cause to conduct her excavations:

As I was now taking charge of the property, I put a native caretaker [...] in a little hut in the Garden. It was his duty to admit visitors, charging half a franc each, and see that no damage was done. As I did not trust the man very fully I spent much of my own time there and began to clear the dust and rubble away from near the Tomb.³⁹⁶

Another position of guarding was later entrusted to a *watchman*, usually of native Arab origins. The caretaker and watchman were subjected to a representative of the Committee in Jerusalem. During the first decade, Hussey served as the Committee representative in Jerusalem. In 1896, she replaced Kaleel, the mistrusted caretaker, with Peder Beckholdt, who served as a caretaker from 1896–1910. She also appointed a native watchman at the same time. Interestingly, in the historiography of the GT, it was Beckholdt who had been regarded as the first caretaker of the Garden Tomb, and not Kaleel.³⁹⁷ In the minutes from 1898, a local agent named Mr. Hughes was employed to manage the pricing of the entrance tickets.³⁹⁸ Hughes was also reported in 1908 to have dismissed one watchman and appointed another one.³⁹⁹ It seems that

³⁹³ Dawson (note 50 above) ,p.108; Tompkins (note 36 above), p.54.

³⁹⁴ White (note 10 above), p.30.

³⁹⁵ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, April 1912, GTA Archive.

³⁹⁶ Hussey (note 259 above).

³⁹⁷ Minutes 1896 (note 342 above); Hussey, *ibid.*; Minutes 1897, (note 309 above)

³⁹⁸ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, November 1898, GTA Archive.

³⁹⁹ Minutes 1908, (note 343 above)

Hughes acted as an additional local assistant to Hussey to execute the Committee's requirements.

Peder Beckholdt – The First Garden Caretaker

While Hughes and Hussey were generally acting behind the scenes, the dominant figure with whom the visitors encountered was Peder Beckholdt. A description of Beckholdt's long tenure in the garden is provided by his biographer, Efterladte Optegnelser,⁴⁰⁰ and also by the accounts of several visitors. Beckholdt and his wife were Danish travelers who settled in Bethlehem. They had heard about the decision to appoint a caretaker to the GT and decided to offer their services. Beckholdt's advantage in speaking a dozen languages secured him the job.⁴⁰¹ Optegnelser claimed that though the job was not lucrative, Beckholdt was attracted to it due to the "luster of adventure and mysticism".⁴⁰² However, the Beckholdts did not seem to find many adventures in the Garden and instead they ran a rather peaceful life there for a decade. The greatest excitement they had there was meeting with Danish visitors, whom they invited to their house for a chat in their native tongue.⁴⁰³ Walker claims it was well-known that Danish visitors were admitted entry free of charge.⁴⁰⁴ On the other hand, as Beckholdt was meticulous with other visitors' fees, Hussey was satisfied with the account and reported that "from the week they [the Beckholdts] were installed receipts increased very largely."⁴⁰⁵ One of the privileged Danish visitors was the writer and Minister Edward Blaumüller, who visited the Garden with a friend around 1898. Beckholdt initially asked them to pay the entrance fee (one and a half francs), but after he heard they were speaking in Danish he invited them to join him and his wife for coffee in his house. Blaumüller described the house as a small cave in the cliff with water dripping from the ceiling. He also added that renovation was needed, but the Beckholdts' meager income could not afford it.⁴⁰⁶ Blaumüller became a regular visitor of the couple and occasionally held a private service for them in the cave.⁴⁰⁷ Over the years, this cave

⁴⁰⁰ Optegnelser (note 309 above).

⁴⁰¹ White (note 10 above), p.36;

⁴⁰² Optegnelser, (note 309 above), p.5.

⁴⁰³ Ibid., p.5-6.

⁴⁰⁴ Apparently some sixty Danish visitors took advantage of this offer on the Winter of 1908-9.

Source: Walker (note 10 above), p. 131.

⁴⁰⁵ Hussey (note 259 above).

⁴⁰⁶ E. Blaumüller, *Hellig jord: rejsebilleder fra Palaestina*, Gyldendalske Boghandels Forlag, København 1898, pp.165-166.

⁴⁰⁷ Optegnelser (note 309 above), p. 6; Blaumüller, *ibid.*, p.171.

turned into a prayer room. Blaumüller depicted the daily routine of the caretaker in the Garden as serene and austere:

He looked after the place, opened the tomb for visitors and collected the entrance fees. In his spare time he was clearing the earth and rock where the entrance to the Tomb was. He was also doing his craft and this probably did not give much income but enough to sustain the two of them.⁴⁰⁸

It seems that the energetic caretaker was not completely satisfied with such a routine since he also initiated some building projects, exploiting his professional skills as a carpenter. Instead of renovating the cave, he built another house for them in the Garden (1897), erected a fine gate at the entrance to the Tomb, sculptured artifacts, And, as mentioned above, built a large portion of the Garden's peripheral wall.⁴⁰⁹

In addition, he planted a garden around the house, which "in the course of the years became quite a sight, so extraordinarily it was laid out and attended to."⁴¹⁰

Plate 53: 1898, The Beckholdts beside the Tomb's entrance, White, p.39.



Plate 54: c.1897, The Beckholdts "Vore to landsmænd" (Our Compatriots), Blaumüller:

More than a decade after Beckholdt's return to Denmark, the artifacts he had sculpted were at the center of an archaeological controversy. It occurred in 1924, when Hussey conducted another amateur excavation near the Tomb and found a strange stone. This finding was thought to be a stone from Venus Shrine, providing further proof for the site's authenticity (plate 55).⁴¹¹ Following that excavation, Father Vincent published a

⁴⁰⁸ Blaumüller (note 406 above), p.166.

⁴⁰⁹ Optegnelser (note 309 above), p. 5; White (note 10 above), p.36. In the explanation Beckholdt wrote for the picture in plate 30 he described his accommodation in the Garden: "Under the wall to the left you see a flat roof with a small chimney-tube. That is the house where I lived for fifteen and a half years." Optegnelser, *ibid.* p.24.

⁴¹⁰ Optegnelser, *ibid.* p.5.

⁴¹¹ Professor Brandenburg from the *Berlin Society of Palestinian Research* led Hussey to believe it was

rigorous report on the site (see chapter A). Relying on former guests of the École Biblique, who bought from Beckholdt models of “Jewish Tomb or of Arabic house”, Vincent stated that the “Venus stone” was in fact Beckholdt’s creative initiative:

It was [...] a scrap of about fifteen years old, model of *columbarium* [...] cut by a Danish sculptor, formerly custodian of the grave of the Garden. This industrious man had custom to occupy the beautiful leisure of his responsibility to chisel [...] ‘model’ of structures that he sold to the visitors. [...] the technical Archeology must not incur any responsibility in this solemn mystification.⁴¹²

In reply to Vincent, Reverend White did not deny Beckholdt’s occupation with model making, but suggested that he duplicated the Venus Stone from the original piece he had excavated in the Garden and claimed that it was still found in GTA’s hands. Moreover, in 1934 another portion of a smaller version of the stone was excavated, a discovery that enhanced the puzzle surrounding the stone.⁴¹³ In addition, White’s assumption that Beckholdt was involved with amateur excavations relied upon Hanauer, who attributed to Beckholdt the discovery of some unrecognized artifacts. These items were pictured by Hanauer (Plate 56), and later, so he claimed, lost during the First World War.⁴¹⁴



Plate 55: From right to left: Original Venus stone , portion of the smaller stone discovered in 1934, the model made by Beckholdt around 1900. in Walker, pl. 35



Plate 56: Hanauer’s photo [1924?] of some artifacts, believed to have been found by Beckholdt in 1904. In: Walker, pl.35

a stone from the temple which was built by Hadrian over Jesus’ Tomb. GTA’s member Cyril C. Dobson immediately adopted that hypothesis and implanted it in a wider context: He now regarded the marks on the Tomb’s frontage as evidences for the ancient Shrine, and concluded that “This stone maybe thus be found to be another and important link in the chain of identification”: C. C. Dobson, “Garden Tomb – new Jerusalem discovery – Shrine Stone and its meaning”, *The Times*, 24 July, 1924, p. 15.

⁴¹² Vincent (note 102 above), pp.426-427.

⁴¹³ White (note 10 above), pp.90-91. White claimed to have seen this original piece since 1962. Since 1964 he tried to investigate its origin and took it to the British Museum and to couple of other scholars who refused aiding him with the case, which remained a riddle for him.

⁴¹⁴ Walker (note 10 above) explanation to plate 35.

After spending a decade living in the Garden, Beckholdt's wife had passed away; he remained there for a couple more years, mourning her.⁴¹⁵ A description of those final years was provided by the English author and journalist Robert Hichens:

The Garden Tomb is kept by a man from the north, I believe a Dane, who showed me round the pleasant inclosure adjoining the chamber in the rock, and stood gravely, even rather sadly, regarding his flowers and shrubs while I penetrated within. He told me afterwards that he had lived there for years with his wife, but that she had recently died, and he felt terribly alone. 'This is not my country' he said. I wondered, but did not ask whether he was a believer in the tradition connected with the empty chamber of which he was the guardian.⁴¹⁶

The Role of the Superintendent, 1909–1932

Shortly after Hichens' visit, Beckholdt returned to his homeland. Another Scandinavian was appointed to replace him: "Pastor Karl von Lehnsburg appointed to manage the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem, a Superintendent to the agent Mr Hughes, and Mr Beckholdt's tenure would cease in September, 1910."⁴¹⁷ In January 1910, almost a year before Beckholdt's return to Denmark, Pastor von Lehnsburg began to fulfill his tenure as Superintendent.⁴¹⁸ Thus, the Garden was simultaneously managed both by a caretaker and a superintendent: a new position that involved a higher degree of authority. His role was to manage the place, not just to take care of visitors. Furthermore, von Lehnsburg was a pastor, the first in this position, which for a long time later became a GTA's requirement for the Garden manager's post. An explicit depiction of the staff's hierarchy is presented in minutes from 1911: "Misconduct of 'subordinates' of Superintendent, Yusuf (Joseph) and Nazarind to be dismissed from 30th September, 1911 and replaced by a doorkeeper and Assistant of his choice."⁴¹⁹ That is, it was the superintendent's job to appoint or dismiss the guards, a role previously conducted by Hussey or Hughes.

This new position is explained by the fact that Hussey was no longer in Jerusalem by that time. She returned to Ireland in 1905, and was back in Jerusalem in 1918.⁴²⁰ The period of her absence was the only time that the title of superintendent was employed.

⁴¹⁵ Optegnelser (note 309 above), p. 5

⁴¹⁶ R. Hichens, *The Holy Land*, Hodder and Stoughton, London 1910, p.253.

⁴¹⁷ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, 1909, GTA Archive.

⁴¹⁸ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, 12th January 1910, GTA Archive.

⁴¹⁹ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, October 1911, GTA Archive.

⁴²⁰ Hussey (note 259 above), introduction by GTA.

Four years after her return, she was the last manager to be appointed as superintendent.⁴²¹ The next superintendent after Pastor von Lehnsburg was Major Fielding, who was appointed in April 1917 by Mrs. Mable Bent.⁴²² Bent, a Jerusalem citizen and friend of Hussey, served as honorary secretary of the GTA from the early 1900s for about 20 years.⁴²³ Apparently, she took over some of Hussey's responsibilities while Hussey was away. Fielding's tenure did not last since he was expelled from Palestine with all other British citizens during the First World War.⁴²⁴ During the war, Fielding's Jewish servant decided to remain in the Garden to take care of the place. Officials from the American consulate originally took custody of the site at the request of the fleeing Fielding, but when American citizens were expelled as well, the place fell into the hands of the Turkish army. Fortunately, the Turkish colonel had a weakness for flowers, so he decided to live in the Garden, and thus the place survived without any harm. He hired Fielding's Jewish servant as his cook, and even employed a gardener. White regarded this as "an act of Providence".⁴²⁵ Although Hussey was already in Jerusalem by 1918, she did not replace Fielding. As she testified a year after her return to Jerusalem: "When I went back nothing at the Tomb seemed to claim my attention, so I went to live in one of the villages in the north of Jerusalem."⁴²⁶ From that location she conducted her tombs' survey around Jerusalem, as mentioned previously. Instead, Charlotte Lomax, who was recommended by Bent, was appointed to manage the site in 1919, after more than a year obtaining military permits.⁴²⁷ These difficulties, expressed in the minutes, may reflect a hint of disappointment from the new British Rule that instead of facilitating its compatriots after the harsh war period, it actually entangled the situation. Lomax's service was concluded tragically when she was killed by a robber who broke into the garden in 1922.⁴²⁸ Squires' account from 1923 of a murder occurring in the garden around that year may have referred to the same incident:

It was a great disappointment that we were denied entrance to the tomb. A foul murder had recently been committed there. A wealthy English lady visited the tomb with an Arab guide. Next morning they found her body, but the Arab was gone. [...] we applied twice,

⁴²¹ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, 1922, GTA Archive.

⁴²² Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, 7th April 1914, GTA Archive.

⁴²³ Hussey (note 259 above).

⁴²⁴ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, 1918, GTA Archive.

⁴²⁵ White (note 10 above), pp.42-43.

⁴²⁶ Hussey (note 259 above).

⁴²⁷ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, 1919, GTA Archive.

⁴²⁸ White (note 10 above), p.44.

insistently, offering bakhshish, which works all manner of miracles in the East, the only response was: 'Door locked, key lost.'⁴²⁹

After the murder, Hussey returned to take control. At that time, she was officially appointed as superintendent, a role she fulfilled for the next 10 years until her retirement in 1932. During that period, she continued conducting her archaeological excavations, during which time the previously mentioned Venus Stone was found.

The Warden position, 1932–1957

Despite Hussey's long loyalty to the causes of GTA, by the end of 1931 the Committee decided to refresh the Garden's management:

While appreciating the long association and past services of Miss Hussey in connection with the Garden Tomb, yet, in view of the steadily altering condition of Jerusalem, constantly increasing number of visitors, and prospect of developing and widening interest in the Garden Tomb, this meeting feels that a change of Warden is essential, and should be arranged with as little delay as possible.⁴³⁰

Interestingly, the aim presented here of promoting a change in management was also reflected in changing the position's terminology from superintendent to *warden*. In reality, however, no radical change in the position's responsibilities was discerned and the caretaker post continued to support the manager's duties:

From 1st February 1932 the services of Mr Edgar Shelley, Lord Representative at Jerusalem with power of Attorney, be accepted as Warden, and those of Mr Arthur Harbour as Caretaker at a monthly engagement of £10 carried.⁴³¹

In fact, it seems that Harbour was the dominant figure of the two, and he was credited for the perfect condition in which the Garden was maintained.⁴³² Between 1935 and 1942, the warden position was replaced three times.⁴³³ In 1944, an English couple, Mr. and Mrs. May, were appointed as wardens.⁴³⁴ During the War of 1948, the Warden May reported on the battles between the Jews and the Arabs in the Garden area.⁴³⁵

⁴²⁹ Squires (note 127 above), p.145.

⁴³⁰ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, [23.09.1931?], GTA Archive.

⁴³¹ Ibid.

⁴³² White (note 10 above), p.44.

⁴³³ The wardens in chronological order were Stanely Clarke, G. Wald and Maxwell Hall. Source: Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1942, GTA Archive.

⁴³⁴ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, 1944, GTA Archive.

⁴³⁵ White (note 10 above), p.45.

This was the first time that the garden staff had been caught up in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict due to its location on the border between eastern and western Jerusalem. The garden now lay in an area under Jordanian occupation.

White identified the establishment of the state of Israel as a critical moment that influenced GT’s political ideology: “On 14 May 1948 the state of Israel was proclaimed, and so the garden tomb became the Christian sanctuary seeking to promote a ministry of reconciliation in a neutral area of a divided Holy city.”⁴³⁶

White praised the resistibility of the Mays during these difficult years and attributed the peaceful relationship with the Arab community around the Garden to Mr. May’s knowledge of the Arabic language.⁴³⁷ Another figure of influence in those years was Dr. Thomas Lambie, a Presbyterian missionary who had opened a hospital in the West Bank and was greatly appreciated by the Jordanian rulers. Lambie became a regular visitor to the Garden and conducted several ceremonies there. Tragically he died in the Garden in 1954, when he was meditating before an Easter service he was about to hold and suffered a heart attack.⁴³⁸

Solomon Mattar 1953–1967

The next warden was Solomon Mattar, who served in the Garden with his wife from 1953 to 1967. Due to his tragic death inside the Garden, Mattar became one of its most memorable wardens. However, there were other singularities as well that contributed to his unforgettable figure in the historiography of the place. Mattar was the first Palestinian Christian to have been appointed as the Garden Warden, and one of the very few wardens who was not British. He was a 1948 war refugee from Haifa, who also lived for a long time in England. His candidacy was suggested by some Christian leaders who apparently came to know him through his wife Minerva, who worked in Dr. Lambie’s hospital.⁴³⁹ It can be assumed that Mattar’s candidacy was accepted due to his English education and his Arab origins, which might have been considered to better serve the interests of the site under Jordanian rule. It also seems that his family’s status as war refugees might have aroused empathy and contributed to his appointment,

⁴³⁶ Ibid., p.47

⁴³⁷ Ibid., pp.45-46.

⁴³⁸ Ibid.; “Dr. Thomas A. Lambie”, *Wikipedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Lambie, Accessed 24 June 2012.

⁴³⁹ White (note 10 above), p. 47.

along with those of his wife and two of his sons as his assistants.⁴⁴⁰ Mattar and his wife apparently acted as generous hosts and left a most positive impression in the minds of visitors, and excellent reports of Mattar's kindness to visitors and the general upkeep of the Garden were received.⁴⁴¹ The successful management was rewarded in 1956 when Mrs. Mattar was appointed as assistant warden with an additional salary and the warden's house was enlarged in the garden for the convenience of the family, "but this was to be for their use only, not as a hostel for visitors."⁴⁴² Furthermore, in 1960 the Committee decided to raise the Mattars' salaries due to the fact that: "the visitors had increased threefold in three years, to a figure of 15,000, which has entailed very much more work for Mr. and Mrs. Mattar."⁴⁴³ In the following year another increase in the number of visitors (20,000 annually) was registered and the Mattars were again considered responsible for that, as well as for the improving security condition.⁴⁴⁴ In the same year, Mattar was also credited for successfully handling a delicate incident. A dispute with the Waqf over the northern and eastern walls of the Garden was arisen when the Wakf lawyer had asked Mattar to sign a plan indicating that these walls belonged to the Wakf. Equipped with the documents to prove that the walls were built by the GTA, "Mr. Mattar was able to settle the dispute in our favour."⁴⁴⁵ Another incident was the misbehavior of "a particular Guide, who insisted on taking a party into the Garden, and showing them round." The Committee immediately reacted by securing Mattar's position as the sole guide in the Garden: "we advised the guide and also other authorities in Jerusalem that our Warden is the only person authorised by this Association to conduct visitors around our property".⁴⁴⁶ Although these records reflect a most supportive attitude towards Mattar, he also took some actions that did not match the Committee's view or with customary English restraint. His enthusiastic approach and his effort to please the visitors concluded more than once with impetuous declarations or actions that perplexed the Committee's members. His amateur excavations in the Garden reflect such behavior. As we have already seen, he was not the first warden to dig the site. However, it seems that his unproven

⁴⁴⁰ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, 1953, GTA Archive.

⁴⁴¹ Meryon 2014 (note 10 above), p.157: Minutes of the Committee Meeting, April 1955.

⁴⁴² Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, July 1956, GTA Archive.

⁴⁴³ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA held at the Jerusalem chamber of Westminster Abbey [=WA], 23 November 1960, p.2, GTA Archive.

⁴⁴⁴ Minutes 1961 (note 390 above).

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

declarations regarding his findings damaged the already questioned credibility of the site, to the degree that the Committee adopted a much more restrictive approach towards any future archaeological excavation in the Garden conducted by the staff.⁴⁴⁷ Following his digging in the large cistern, he was especially drawn to interpret its function in reference to the crosses marked on its wall. He weaved a creative theory that was broadcast on Kansas radio in 1955, suggesting it served as a baptistery for the early Christians.⁴⁴⁸ White, who had already experienced the refusal of some scholars to investigate the Venus Stone, accused Mattar's "unrestrained flights of pious fancy" to have "brought unwarranted ridicule upon the Garden Tomb, so that open-minded analysis of the site has often been suppressed."⁴⁴⁹ In his excavations around the cistern in 1955, Mattar uncovered iron hooks in the vaulted roof, and a hole containing a pool, which led him to believe that this was the place where early Christians are baptized.⁴⁵⁰ Another of Mattar's curious findings from the same excavation was an iron box with a jeweled cross. This finding was also published in the Kansas book, under the belief that it "have been performed in the day of the apostles". It was later found to be a modern object buried by a Masonic member who believed that his action would regenerate the earth of the site.⁴⁵¹

A travel account of a privileged visitor depicted Mattar's hospitality, which was so extensive that it contradicted the Committee's orders not to host visitors in the Garden:

I had enjoyed a lasting friendship with Solomon Mattar [...] Solomon and his family visited our home in America, and we, in turn, enjoyed the hospitality of his bungalow, staying in a little guest cottage inside the Garden overlooking the Tomb.⁴⁵²

The account went on to describe a private tour to the cistern in which Mattar continued to spread his dubious theory:

At Solomon's invitation, Lane descended with a flashlight down [...] Calling down from above, he encouraged Lane where to shine the light [...] indicating clearly, early church

⁴⁴⁷ Walker (note 10 above), p.139.

⁴⁴⁸ White (note 10 above), p.92: "In 1955 an over-imaginative officer of the GTA, in co-operation with radio organization from Kansas USA, called 'The Defenders', went berserk with an assertion that this cistern was the place where the 3,000 converts were baptized on the Day of Pentecost, and that it later became the secret meeting place for the early Jerusalem church!"

⁴⁴⁹ White (note 10 above), p.92.

⁴⁵⁰ Meryon 2014 (note 10), p.157: Minutes of the Committee Meeting, April 1955.

⁴⁵¹ White (note 10 above), pp.88-89; Minutes of the Sub-Committee 3rd May 1971, London, GTA Archive, p.1.

⁴⁵² K. Anderson, "Heartbeat", Last update in March 2004, http://www.intercommedia.org/newsletter/Archive_0304.htm, Accessed 10 May 2017.

Christians had held secret worship in that old underground haven.⁴⁵³

The peculiar story of Reverend Morris H. Coers presents another example of Mattar's flexible approach towards authenticity on the one hand and his willingness to satisfy the visitors on the other hand. Coers, who visited the Garden Tomb in 1938, decided to build a replica of the tomb in Kentucky since he believed everyone should see it. For that purpose, "he raised \$140,000 and asked foreign governments to send plants." In addition "Coers also enlisted the help of Solomon Mattar, caretaker of the real Garden Tomb. Mattar sent drawings and even came to Covington to help with the project."⁴⁵⁴



Plate 57: The Mattars
in front of the Tomb,
[1954-1967]

Mattar's colorful service concluded tragically when the Six-Day War knocked on the Garden's gate. He was killed by Israeli soldiers who penetrated the site, while his wife and another staff member, Sigrid Proft, took shelter inside the Tomb.⁴⁵⁵ White retrospectively tried to mend the negative impression assigned to the Israeli soldiers who were accused of executing Mattar in the *The Times* magazine (June 7, 1967). In effort to avoid polemic allegations, White tried to justify the soldiers' behavior:

In such a situation soldiers do not stop to exchange visiting cards! Mr. Mattar was killed instantly by troops who believed that they had broken in on a pocket of enemy resistance. Although Mr. Mattar was not in uniform he was obviously an Arab.⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵³ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁴ T. Van Campen, "After 3 decades, nearly forgotten tomb, garden are spreading a ray of hope again", *Herald Journal*, October 1998, pp.b5, b8.
<http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1876&dat=19981031&id=i1MgAAAABAJ&sjid=w88EAAABAJ&pg=2482,6596896>, Accessed 3 April 2012.

⁴⁵⁵ Archbishop's Secretary to Pastor C.L. Quesenbury, O'Quinn Baptist Church, Texas, "From the office of the Anglican Archbishop, St. George's Close", Jerusalem 19th July 1967, GTA Archive; White (note 10 above), p. 49.

⁴⁵⁶ White, *ibid.*, p.48.

With Mattar's death, the Garden Tomb entered a period in which new ideological tendencies began to emerge and to be reflected in the Garden's design and management in front of the new political context of the Israeli rule. This period will be discussed in chapter C.

B.3.2 The Committee and the Anglican Patrons in London

Although many of GTA's members were Anglicans, the Association avoided specifically identifying itself with a single denomination or culture. Nevertheless, the GTA sought and enjoyed the support and patronage of important Anglican clergy and British figures, some of whom served as presidents and chairmen of the GTA.⁴⁵⁷

In its first decades, when the Garden had to struggle for its existence, the support of prominent Englishmen and the Anglican Church were essential, while the involvement of foreigners was generally denied. The refusal to allow Catholics to visit the Garden has already been discussed in section B.2.5.

In 1901, following Louisa Hope's death, The Committee published a call to raise a fund in her memory:

It remains for those who had the privilege of working with her to continue her good work, and place this valuable possession on a secure financial basis, for the legitimate use and benefit of all English-speaking Christians and visitors to Jerusalem.⁴⁵⁸

The site was not only meant to serve a certain public – English-speaking Christians – but also an explicit address was referred to a certain group of potential donors:

The Committee think it probable that there are many English-speaking Christians in all part of the world, both in Greater Britain and in America, who will consider it a privilege to be allowed to co-operate in securing the proper maintenance [...].⁴⁵⁹

In the minutes from 1960, the same Anglo-centric approach was still apparent. The Committee discussed a letter sent from Dr. Torrey Johnson, an American who expressed his desire to become a member of the executive meeting, and to represent the Association in America. He was responded to by the chairman, Lord Chatfield, who:

felt that the objects of our Association should not be in any way advertised. We are bound to get steadily increasing number of visitors to our Garden. People go to the

⁴⁵⁷ Among the prominent Presidents and Chairmen were: Bishop of Norwich. Source: Minutes 1931 (note 430 above); Lord Lee of Fareham (1936-1947); Admiral of the Fleet Lord Chatfield (1944, 1950-1962); Sir Cecil Wakeley (1964-1979); Bishop A.W. Goodwin-Hudson (1980-1986). Source: White (note 10 above), p.46.

⁴⁵⁸ E. H. Hopkins & C. J. Hope, "Jerusalem Garden Tomb Property" 1901, GTA Archive.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

Services from all over the world – of every denomination – and the knowledge of the Tomb, and the fascination of it would become World-wide. the Garden does not need to be publicised in America, or anywhere else in the world.⁴⁶⁰

Another member, Lady Robertson “felt that the influence of the Garden should not grow itself”, and then it was generally agreed by all that “it would be wrong to ask Dr. Torrey Johnson to be a member of the Sub- Committee.”⁴⁶¹

In chapter C we see a shift in these lines of thoughts with an inclination towards a more ecumenical and multicultural approach.

B.3.3 Relationships with the Anglican Church in Jerusalem

The prominent Englishmen and Anglicans who supported the GTA usually bestowed their patronage over the Garden from the safety of their home countries and never set foot in Jerusalem. As for those who dwelt or served in Palestine, it was less comfortable to express their support and recognition, due to their own involvement with the politics of the country.

Contrary to GTA’s expectations to receive the aid of their compatriots, the British Mandate government and the Anglican Church in Jerusalem (ACJ) usually preferred not to express a favorable attitude towards the Garden. This ostensible contradiction was explained by White and Walker as deriving from a policy to maintain the status quo and display neutrality.⁴⁶² Such an explanation might be sufficient to interpret the motives of the British government who was indeed meticulous in presenting an equal attitude towards all religions in Palestine and maintaining the status quo.⁴⁶³

Apparently, it was an important interest of the ACJ as well. Under the surface, however, the ACJ had less neutral considerations regarding the question of the Holy Sepulchre and the GT. A curious episode that occurred in July 1938 can serve as an entrance point to understand the views of the ACJ on the matter. An allegation was referred against a supposed cooperation between the British Government and the ACJ to obtain privileges in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.⁴⁶⁴ It was immediately

⁴⁶⁰ Minutes 1960 (note 443 above), p.3.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid.

⁴⁶² White (note 10 above), p.82; Walker (note 10 above), pp.133-134.

⁴⁶³ So determined was the British Government to preserve the status quo, that it never officially recognized the Anglican Church nor other Reformed Churches as “religious communities”, but clung solely to recognitions made by the Ottoman Rule. About the Status Quo in the Mandate period see: E. Molinaro, “The Holy Places of Jerusalem in Middle East Peace Agreements: The Conflict between Global and State Identities”, PhD Dissertation, The Hebrew University 2004. pp. 95-110.

⁴⁶⁴ It was introduced in an article by Charles Plinier in *L'Orient*, 20.7.38, Beirut.

responded to by George Francis Graham Brown, the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem (1932–1942), who wrote a letter to the Custos of the Holy Land, Alberto Gori, denying the allegation and explaining the attitude of the Anglican Church regarding the Holy Sepulchre:

I would further assure your Paternity that the Anglican Communion, while deeply appreciating the significance of the Holy Places, subscribes to the solemn promise of the Government to maintain the status quo in regard to them, and regards it as a part of the support of, and non-interference with, the rights and privileges which the other branches of the Church Universal are recognized as possessing.⁴⁶⁵

His response confirmed White and Walker’s conjecture regarding the British and Anglican mutual interest of maintaining the status quo, but also implied by the choice of words – “a deep appreciation for the significance” – that the Anglican conception is not mere neutral, but consists of a deeper involvement with the subject.

The accusation was denied, not because it was unthinkable to conceive such aspiration, but because the Anglican Church was committed to maintaining the status quo. The letter concluded with another aspiration:

We indeed look forward to the day when these rights and privileges will be shared without discrimination by all those who love our Lord in sincerity and truth, but we believe that the day will be brought nearer, not by encouraging or imagining rivalries between members, but by endeavoring to promote the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.⁴⁶⁶

No intention is reflected here to renounce the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, but instead to anticipate a better future that all Christians could share peacefully.

If the ACJ did not regard the Holy Sepulchre as a superstitious site that requires an alternative, formal recognition in the GT was improbable.

However, the ACJ had to experience a few revisions before attaining such a stand.

More specifically, the ACJ was influenced by two corresponding shifts: a shift in theological inclination from Evangelical to “High Church” Anglicanism⁴⁶⁷ and a

⁴⁶⁵ A letter From the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem to the Custos of the Terra Santa, 10.08.1939 “Allegations of intentions of His Majesty’s Government to introduce the Anglican Church into the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre”, 1938, ISA/B/28/38, physical iden. 4310/26, ISA.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁷ “High Churchmen”: The group in the Church of England which especially stresses her historical continuity with Catholic Christianity, and hence upholds a ‘high’ conception of the authority of the Church, of the claims of the episcopate and of the nature of the Sacraments. Source: *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. F. L. Cross & E. A. Livingstone, second edition, Oxford University Press, London 1978, p. 647.

transition of mission focus from Jews to Arabs. The Anglican Church was introduced to the Holy Land in 1842 through a joint Anglican–Prussian Bishopric.⁴⁶⁸ The initiators of the bishopric were passionate evangelicals who sought to establish a Protestant ecumenical unity that would form a “truly” Catholic Church as opposed to the centralist Roman Catholic Church. Along with anti-Roman Catholic feelings, there were also millenarian sentiments and eschatological hope. In this light, the Protestant bishopric aimed to advance the second coming of Christ through the restoration of the Jews.⁴⁶⁹ It is no wonder, then, that the joint bishopric did not please the “High Church” Anglicans. Besides the obvious objection on account of the salient inclination towards evangelical Protestantism, it was claimed that the establishment of a bishopric was unnecessary, since the Greek Orthodox Church already represented Christianity in Palestine, and thus a Protestant bishopric would raise hostility.⁴⁷⁰ This line of thought guided the Archbishop of Canterbury to resolve that the bishop should conduct – “relations of Christian charity with other Churches represented at Jerusalem, and in particular with the orthodox Greek Church [...] the Church of England does not wish to disturb, or divide, or interfere with them.”⁴⁷¹ For that purpose, the first bishop Michael Solomon Alexander was consecrated as “Bishop of the United Church of England and Ireland *in* Jerusalem”, rather than “*of* Jerusalem”, in order not to question the authority of the Orthodox bishops in Jerusalem. The mission led by Bishop Alexander, dwelt in Christ Church near Jaffa Gate and was aimed unsuccessfully to the Jews through the London Jews society (LJS). On the contrary, Samuel Gobat (the subsequent bishop on behalf of the Prussians) having failed to promote the conversion of the Jews, transferred the priority towards the Christian Arabs through The Church Missionary Society (CMS), which was centered in Saint Paul’s Church. This was a deliberate violation of the archbishop of Canterbury’s prohibition to convert the Eastern Christians.⁴⁷² William C.

⁴⁶⁸ It was agreed that the see would be a bishopric of the Church of England and that the Crowns of England and Prussia would alternately nominate the bishop. The spiritual jurisdiction of the bishop in Jerusalem was to be exercised according to the laws, canons, and customs of the Church of England. Source: Van der Leest (note 14 above), pp.70-71.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.62-63, 79-80.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p.76. See also: Meyer, Jerusalem Anglican-German Bishopric, *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, 1914, <http://www.ccel.org/s/schaff/encyc/encyc06/htm/iii.lvi.i.htm#iii.lvi.i>, Accessed 18 March 2013.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.71.

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63, 69, 72, 80, 103-113; D. A. Miller, “The Installation of a Bishop in Jerusalem: The Cathedral Church of St. George the Martyr, 15 April 2007”, *Anglican and Episcopal History*, (2007), 76, 4, p.549; Emhardt, W. C., “Project Canterbury – Historical Contact of the Eastern Orthodox and Anglican Churches. A review of the relations between the Orthodox Church of the East and the Anglican Church since the time of Theodore of Tarsus”, Department of Missions and Church

Emhardt, a prominent motivator of ecumenical relations between Anglicans and Orthodox Christians, accounted that Gobat's actions led to strong protests against the joint bishopric and especially against the proselytizing of the Orthodox.⁴⁷³ These tensions eventually led to the dismantlement of the Protestant joint bishopric following the death of the third bishop in 1881. George Francis Popham Blyth, an Anglo-Catholic, was nominated in 1887 as the first "Bishop of the Church of England in Jerusalem and the East".⁴⁷⁴ Blyth initiated a radical change in the ACJ's theological and political agendas. One of his first influential moves was to repair relationships with the Greek Orthodox Patriarchy. He promised not to accept Orthodox converts into the ACJ, and in return the Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem issued a statement of approval for an "English Bishop".⁴⁷⁵ Not only that, but he was also involved in strengthening the Orthodox Church in Palestine, Syria, and Cyprus, and even in dioceses out of his jurisdiction.⁴⁷⁶ Blyth's reformative approach was further expressed through the establishment of a new missionary society – the Jerusalem and East Mission (JEM) – in 1889, which focused its efforts among Muslims and Jews and avoided proselytizing.⁴⁷⁷ Another alteration was made by transferring the bishop's seat from the evangelical-oriented Christ Church to a new location on Nablus Road. Saint George's Cathedral (SGC) was consecrated there in 1898, and next to it was built the missionary college of JEM.⁴⁷⁸ Blyth did not confine his assistance only to the local Orthodox Christians, but also supported his own church's local believers, many of whom were originally of the Orthodox faith. Attentive to the growth of the Arab Anglican community, he empowered Palestinian Anglican pastors who felt undervalued by the CMS and encouraged Arab nationalism. That empowerment led to the establishment of the Palestinian Native Church Council in 1905, which marked the beginning of a gradual Arabization of the ACJ. Thus, the church became a pioneer among other

Extension of the Episcopal Church, New York 1920,

http://anglicanhistory.org/orthodoxy/emhardt_historical1920.html, Accessed 3 April 2013.

⁴⁷³ Emhardt, *ibid.*; See also: A. L. Tibawi, *British Interest in Palestine 1800-1901: A Study of Religious and Educational Enterprise*, Oxford University Press, London 1961, pp. 111-113.

⁴⁷⁴ Meyer, (note 470 above).

⁴⁷⁵ Miller (note 472 above), p. 549.

⁴⁷⁶ Emhardt (note 472 above).

⁴⁷⁷ Tibawi (note 473 above), pp. 236-237; Kildani, (note 14 above), pp. 580-581; B. Potter, "The Right Reverend George Francis Popham Blyth", *Bible Lands*, 63 IV (1915), p. 225,

<http://www.jmecca.org.uk/about-us/history-jmecca-and-jemt/right-reverend-george-francis-popham-blyth>, Accessed 1 April 2013.

⁴⁷⁸ "History of the Cathedral", *The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem website*: <http://www.j-diocese.org/index.php?page=1296660183622>, Accessed 1 April 2013.

churches of the Holy Land in Arabization and promoting local Palestinian clergy.⁴⁷⁹ It can be concluded here that by the time the Garden Tomb was founded, the ACJ, under the leadership of Blyth, was already practicing its new agenda, which was far from conforming to that of the GT. Through Blyth's initiatives and personal beliefs, the ACJ acquired its present inclination towards High Anglicanism, Palestinian nationalism, and its alliance with the Greek Orthodox Church.⁴⁸⁰ This triple combination of commitments and tendencies did not leave much room for questioning the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Nevertheless, there were two Anglican bishops in Jerusalem who gave their patronage to the Garden. Rennie MacInnes, who succeeded Blyth in 1914, served as the patron of the GT; Bishop Brown, who succeeded MacInnes in 1932, accepted the position of vice-patron of the GTA after being assured that the Association would avoid all controversy regarding the authenticity of the site.⁴⁸¹ The next Bishop, Weston Henry Stewart (1943–57), was also invited to become a patron, but declined since he believed that the GTA placed too much emphasis on the site's authenticity.

Campbell MacInnes, Rennie's son, who served as the Archbishop in Jerusalem from 1957 to 1969,⁴⁸² was the most rigid critic of the GT. He protested clearly against the Garden's harmful influence in a letter written in October 1962 to the dean of Westminster, the GTA's Patron. From MacInnes's letter we can better understand the motives of the bishops who supported the Garden against those who did not. He claimed that former bishops in Jerusalem and many other bishops and leading figures in the Church of England had shown their interest and support in the Garden, as long as they were not expected to subscribe to the belief in the place's authenticity. However, since then, the GTA published statements insisting on the site's authenticity:

There is a popular impression that the garden tomb is the holy place of the English-Speaking peoples and the forms of Christianity associated with them. It is regarded as rival shrine to the Church of the Resurrection [...] this continues to place the Anglicans

⁴⁷⁹ Miller (note 472 above), p. 549; S. J. Frantzman, B. W. Glueckstadt & R. Kark, "The Anglican Church in Palestine and Israel: Colonialism, Arabization and Land Ownership", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 47, 1, (2011), pp.102-105; Kildani, (note 14 above), pp. 577-578; "History of the Diocese" <http://www.j-diocese.org/index.php?page=1296659988562>, Accessed 18 April 2013.

⁴⁸⁰ However, during the last few decades the national Palestinian tendency has been weakened due to the fundamental Islamic tendencies. Source: H. Naum interviewed by M. Bitton, 19.06.12; *L. Hänsel*, "Christians in Israel- a complex question of identity", *Kas International Reports*, 12, 2010, p.42, 47-48.

⁴⁸¹ Walker (note 10 above), p.134.

⁴⁸² Between 1957 and 1974 The Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem was regarded as Archbishop. Source: "History of the Cathedral" (note 478 above).

here in certain real difficulties. With the growth of the ecumenical movement we feel it is all the more important that this impression of opposition to the Ancient Churches and their traditions should be overcome.⁴⁸³

The loyalty to the local Christianity, which enables the stability of the ACJ, makes a crucial argument. Campbell depicted the neighboring Anglican-rooted GT as a rebellious son who threatens the family status, a situation that obliged the ACJ to deny its support: “In the present circumstances it is difficult for me as it was for my predecessors to approve of the participation of the Anglican clergy in services near the Garden Tomb.”⁴⁸⁴ Therefore, the Association was asked to mend its ways:

Do you think the Association would think it possible to put up a notice near the gate of the Garden Tomb for all to see, stating that members of the Association take differing views on the question as whether Our Lord Jesus Christ was buried there or not? Similar statements might also be included in the literature which is given out.⁴⁸⁵

Only then, promised Campbell, would it “be possible for us to give more positive support to the GTA in seeking to preserve the garden and the tomb for the purposes for which it was purchased.”⁴⁸⁶ The letter exposes an unexpected mutual dependency of both sites. It was not just the GT who sought the SGC’s recognition, but it was also important for the SGC to accomplish understanding and cooperation with GT in order to protect the Anglican Church’s position and relations with other churches in Jerusalem. It seems that the SGC could not just disregard GT and dedicate itself to the maintenance of its local politics, but was influenced by the messages pronounced by the GT since they reflected on the Anglicans in Jerusalem. At least until the 1960s, the GT seems to be regarded both by visitors and the ACJ as an Anglican-oriented site, and was therefore recognized by the ACJ.

GTA responded quickly, eager to repair relationships with the SGC and to mend the public impression. Lord Chatfield, the GTA’s president-chairman, denied the messages ascribed to the Garden by the SGC and ensured that the GTA was not occupied with questions of authenticity: “This association has never made definite claim that the Tomb we tend in Jerusalem is in fact that of our Lord Jesus Christ. [...] The general spirit guiding us in our Red Book is that there is ‘no certainty whatsoever’.”⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸³ Archbishop C. MacInnes to the Dean of Westminster, “From the Archbishop in Jerusalem, St. George’s Close, Jerusalem, Jordan”, 04.10.1962, GTA Archive.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁷ Lord Chatfield to the Dean of Westminster, 19.11.1962, GTA Archive.

Lord Chatfield did not just claim for the innocence of the GTA's publications, but also renounced any oral messages that might have been delivered in the Garden, assigning the whole responsibility for such messages to the local warden, Mattar:

“We have, as you know, a reliable Christian Arab as our Warden, evangelistic and rather unorthodox in his approach, whose zeal may result in his not exercising the direction and wishes of The Committee in London.”⁴⁸⁸

Conveniently, he confined the supposed harmful influence only to the recent years when Mattar was in charge. It was easier to accuse a non-Anglican and non-Briton of promoting such ideas. He then declared the non-affiliated nature of the Association, but also its reliance on Anglican support:

We are an inter-denominational organization [...] and we are only too anxious to feel that we need the support of the Church of England behind us and in the future. You must know full-well how much we value your personal patronage, and that of your predecessors.⁴⁸⁹

The dependency of the GTA in the Anglican support is expressed here in such a submissive manner that it calls into question the GTA's prospective image as an inter-denominational organization.

At this point, when the political climate was not so reassuring, the GTA preferred to appease the Archbishop: “We [...] would agree to the Archbishop's suggestion that a notice be put up near the gates of the Garden for all to see [...]”⁴⁹⁰

Still, Chatfield's letter did not seem to reassure the archbishop, who wrote another letter to the patron in Westminster, in which he specifically argued against Mattar's unorthodox approach and demanded that The Committee regain control over the situation: “Perhaps you can question the wisdom of having such a man in such a position without any apparent supervision by any member of the Committee.”⁴⁹¹

The archbishop attacked the warden's competence, not only from a religious aspect, but also from the national aspect: “Only recently some American Southern Baptists in Israel said that they were very sorry that the English Committee seemed to have sold or given the Garden Tomb to the Arab as it was no longer what it used to be.”⁴⁹²

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁹¹ Letter from the Archbishop in Jerusalem to the Dean of Westminster, 11th December, 1962, GTA Archive.

⁴⁹² Ibid.

Such a claim reflects the double standard of the ACJ, which was already apparent in the persistent process of Arabization since the beginning of the 20th century.⁴⁹³ In fact, the political commitment to the Anglican Arab congregation dictated the ACJ's religious inclination towards Orthodoxy and disfavor of extroverted evangelical expressions such as Mattar's. In this case, however, the Archbishop used Mattar's Arab identity to reinforce Mattar's unrestrained and uncivilized image and protest against regression from the Anglican origin.

Apparently, The Committee did not deliver any immediate response and the alienation between the GTA and the ACJ grew stronger, as we can learn from Mattar's report on Easter 1963. He complained about the lack of cooperation from the ACJ that refused to assist him with the Easter Service.⁴⁹⁴

The growing tension between the two bodies also seemed to affect the dean of Westminster's decision to resign from his role as the GTA's patron on February 1964. Members of The Committee deeply regretted this and decided that Chairman Wakeley would ask the dean to change his mind.⁴⁹⁵ It seemed inevitable now that the ACJ's requirements would have to be discussed, under the acknowledgement that: "Mattar as Warden was antagonizing certain people in Jerusalem."⁴⁹⁶ However, instead of replacing Mattar, it was decided to appoint a reputed middleman to negotiate between the two bodies. Reverend David Izzett, a resident of Jerusalem, was elected to represent the GTA in front of the ACJ.⁴⁹⁷ It was hoped now "that the Archbishop in Jerusalem would talk to Mr. Izzett and give him the real background of the feeling against the Garden at the moment."⁴⁹⁸

At the following meeting, The Committee finally approved:

"This Garden is preserved as a quiet place for meditation and prayer, and is open to all. No positive claim is made that the Tomb in the Garden is where Our Lord was laid."⁴⁹⁹

Chairman Wakeley expressed the hope that "the Church of England felt that we are trying to get our house in order."⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹³ Frantzman, Glueckstadt & Kark, (note 480 above), pp.104-105.

⁴⁹⁴ Minutes of the Sub- Committee Meeting, 18.11.1963, GTA Archive.

⁴⁹⁵ Minutes of the Sub- Committee Meeting, 12.02.1964, GTA Archive.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁹ Minutes of the Sub- Committee meeting of the GTA held on the 15th April 1964, GTA Archive.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid.

In spite of these steps taken by The Committee to appease the ACJ, the decision not to replace Mattar still marked the gap between the two. It was a functional decision, as Rosalind Meryon deduced: “The Committee remained supportive of Mr Mattar realizing how difficult it would be to find a Warden who worked as hard and was as committed to this ministry.”⁵⁰¹ However, it might be also an ideological inclination toward the evangelical strand of the Anglicanism rather than the Old Catholicism strand represented by the ACJ. While Mattar’s tenure proceeded, it became increasingly evident that relationships between the two bodies would not be reconciled. When The Committee finally realized that the archbishop would not bestow his support on the Garden due to the complexity of political ties, it decided to untie relations to the ACJ in order to achieve freedom of operation lacked of demands and obligations or expectations from any side. After many decades of efforts to obtain recognition and support from the ACJ, the GTA had to redefine itself as not related to any Church or denomination. Rosalind Meryon pointed at the benefits of such position:

The Garden Tomb is a Protestant site, many visitors assume that it is necessarily Anglican, and aligned with the Episcopal Church worldwide, under the jurisdiction of the Church of England. It is not, and this gives the Garden Tomb a freedom to welcome those of all races, religions and rites.⁵⁰²

In 1965, The Committee realized that the separation from the ACJ was inevitable. Sir Hugh Dow, a Committee member who served as the British Consul in Jerusalem for many years, shared his insight regarding the inner politics of the Holy Land and concluded that the archbishop would never commit himself over the Garden; therefore: “We have to maintain the Garden as something which is not directly related to any Church or denomination.”⁵⁰³

Ironically, it was Archbishop MacInnes who eventually became the GT’s benefactor, in an unpredictable course of fate. Warden Mattar, who served as the main target for the archbishop's criticism, provided in his tragic death the opportunity for reconciliation between the ACJ and the GT.

⁵⁰¹ Meryon 2014 (note 10 above) p. 177.

⁵⁰² Ibid., p. 178.

⁵⁰³ Ibid., p.177.

A few days after he was killed, Mattar was buried in the Garden:

On Friday morning arrangements were made for Mr. Mattar's burial in the Garden as it was not possible to move him anywhere else. The Dominicans kindly supplied a coffin and the Archbishop took part in the service with Mrs. Mattar and Mrs. MacInnes present.⁵⁰⁴

Bishop MacInnes took charge of the Garden and recommended that The Committee appoint Mr. Geroge Sahhar as a temporary warden of the Garden.⁵⁰⁵ The Committee also received from MacInnes the first reports about the Garden after the Six-Day War. David Izzett, the honorary secretary, expressed the Committee's appreciation for the care the archbishop took of the GT's business: "In the midst of his many responsibilities at that time that he should also, as it were, have taken us under his wing, places us under a great debt of gratitude to him."⁵⁰⁶

B.4 The Relocation of the Crucifixion: Politics and Design

In the 1930s and 1940s, the London Committee tried to promote a most challenging acquisition by the Garden. A search into this entangled transaction raised political and diplomatic issues that involved a powerful figure of the GTA, the high commissioner of the Mandate Government and the Muslim religious leadership. It also raises important questions regarding the construction of memory and the contestation of different beliefs over it. Finally, this search also provides another reflection into the designing of the sacred Protestant place.

The fact that the plot of the GT was purchased before any attempts were made to purchase the area of the Hill was only a matter of real estate availability.

Ostensibly, it would have been more natural to purchase the ground by the Hill, since this was the place that had been identified first, gained wider acceptance than the area of the Tomb, and in fact served as an anchor to the identification of the Tomb. However, by the time GTA was making its first steps in negotiating for a ground purchase, the plot by the Hill was not for sale. It was only in the 1930s that an opportunity to purchase that ground had been raised, and the GTA members immediately began to explore

⁵⁰⁴ Archbishop's Secretary to Pastor C.L. Quesenbury, (note 455 above).

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁶ The Honorary Secretary's Report for 1967/68 presented at the Annual General Meeting on Monday 24th June 1968, GTA Archive.

possibilities to obtain it. The main promoter of this initiative was Lord Lee of Fareham, who served since 1936 as GTA's president–chairman. Lord Lee was described by White as a most influential leader and a generous benefactor, who avoided publicizing his beliefs regarding the GT, but nevertheless operated out of a deep conviction in its causes.⁵⁰⁷ That deep conviction seems to have led him to be engaged with the unfruitful project for more than a decade, until his death in 1947. Lord Lee was so eager to obtain this land that he influenced the Mandate Government, despite its generally neutral policy, to get involved in this transaction. The land in the question was not the crest of the Hill, but the land beneath the “skull face” cliff. The crest was occupied by an ancient Muslim cemetery known as Es-Sahira and was dated to the time of Salah ed-Din (in the 12th century).⁵⁰⁸ Theoretically, there was no reason to nurture any hopes that this land would ever be available for purchase. As a Muslim cemetery, it was considered a holy ground due to its endowment as *Waqf* property and out of respect for the deceased, especially for the graves of admired Muslim figures.⁵⁰⁹ According to *shari'a* law, it was very difficult to change land rights and uses of *Waqf* property, especially a cemetery. Nevertheless, it was generally accepted that after more than 30 years had passed since the last deceased was buried, the sacredness of the cemetery had expired, and the land could therefore be used for other purposes.⁵¹⁰ However, this was not the case with Es-Sahira cemetery, which is still active as of 2016. Thus, the only land near the Hill that the GTA could expect to purchase was the ground below it. In a surprising coordination, a new theory regarding the place of the Crucifixion had been developed during the same period. It was suggested by C. C. Dobson, a GTA member who was engaged with writing his book on the GT and concluded that the plain under the cliff was the true place of the Crucifixion, rather than the crest. In his retrospective memorandum from 1948, Dobson claimed that Lord Lee was persuaded by his theory and asked him not to publish his theory yet, in order to prevent any effect on the purchase negotiations.⁵¹¹

⁵⁰⁷ White (note 10 above), p.46.

⁵⁰⁸ Kark and Landman, (note 13 above), p. 115. The name Es-Sahira meant 'the risen', and relates to the dead who had risen to life. Source: Avni, Eran, “Muslim cemeteries”, *The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies*, July 2017, http://jiis-jerusalem.blogspot.com/2008/01/blog-post_4388.html, [Hebrew], Accessed 10 May 2017.

⁵⁰⁹ S. Berkovits, *How Dreadful is this Place! Holiness, Politics, and Justice in Jerusalem and the Holy Places in Israel*, Carta, Jerusalem 2006, [Hebrew], p. 227.

⁵¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.228-234; Y. Reiter, *Waqf in Jerusalem 1948-1990*, Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies website, Jerusalem 1991, [Hebrew], p.5.

⁵¹¹ C.C. Dobson, “Confidential – for the Committee of the GT only. Personal Memorandum regarding the Skull Hill and the Garden Tomb by The Rev. Cyril C.Dobson, M.A., Vicar of St. Mary-in Castle, Hastings.” [1948], GTA Archive.

Apparently, Dobson's book was introduced to Lord Lee at a time that he himself was occupied with the same question. In November 1934, Lord Lee wrote a secret Memorandum in which he exposed the results of his own six-month study regarding the place of the Crucifixion and mentioned Dobson as one of the academic references upon which he had based the theory.⁵¹²

In 1940 Lee published his autobiography, in which he mentioned the memorandum and the complexity involved in purchasing the site:

The whole of this case [...] set out in a memorandum which I drew up in the year 1934 and which must remain inviolably secret until peace is restored in the Holy Land and the necessary action can be taken to preserve the most sacred of all spots in Christendom from any risks of outrage or exploitation.⁵¹³

Indeed, since this ground was *Waqf* property, many difficulties burdened the negotiation for purchase and eventually prevented the transaction from happening. Apart from some reports on minutes of the GTA, a major part of the entangled negotiation process is revealed through a series of letters found in the Israel State Archive (ISA). Another view of the process was presented by Yitzhak Reiter, who discussed a case of dispute between the Supreme Muslim Council (SMC) and the *mutawalli* (the *Waqf* trustee) of the Zāwiyah al-Adhamiya Waqf.⁵¹⁴ This *zāwiyah* (sūfī shrine) was erected in 1361 near the Grotto of Jeremiah, below Es-Sahira Cemetery.⁵¹⁵ As described by Reiter, this dispute began in the late 1930s when the *mutawalli*, the former *sheikh* of the *zāwiyah*, wished to sell its plots. By that time, the al-Adhamiya area was considered a prime east Jerusalem business location; accordingly, the asking price was £P16,000–20,000, which was regarded as an unusually large sum.⁵¹⁶ The *mutawalli*'s initiative corresponded with a general tendency of adaption to the modern economy introduced in the Mandate period, in which the *qādi* and the SMC approved developments in *Waqf* properties to prevent their financial loss.⁵¹⁷ However, from the documents in ISA and Reiter's account, this *mutawalli* seems to have been negotiating

⁵¹² "Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre- Memorandum by Lord Lee of Fareham", 15.11.1934, GTA Archive, p. 1, 12.

⁵¹³ Viscount Lee of Fareham, *A Good Innings and a great partnership being the life story of Arthur and Ruth Lee*, Vol 3 (1923-1939) Arthurs press limited, Woodchester, Glogs 1940, GTA Archive, p.1399.

⁵¹⁴ Y. Reiter, *Islamic Endowments in Jerusalem under British Mandate*, F. Cass, London 1996, p.179. The British Government authorized the SMC to serve as the supervisor of the Waqf properties, while the *mutawalli* served as the manager of a specific Waqf property. Source: Reiter 1991, *ibid.*, pp. 8-12.

⁵¹⁵ Kark and Landman (note 13 above), pp.114-115.

⁵¹⁶ Reiter 1996 (note 514 above), p.179.

⁵¹⁷ Reiter 1991 (note 510 above), pp. 31-32, 114-115.

independently with the GTA with no involvement of the SMC, a fact that eventually resulted in a *shari'a* court decision to rescind the endowment and to entrust the land in the hand of the SMC.⁵¹⁸ However, from the earliest GTA's document I obtained, from the mid-1930s, all the parties including the SMC were positively involved in the application to acquire the site:

an official application has been made to the Moslem Council and registration fees on this application and valuation fees have been paid. The High Commissioner intervened on our behalf and fixed the final purchase price with the Grand Mufti for the sum of £16,000. [We?] now await the decision for payment, the decision for sale having been already given by the Moslem Council. The decision for payment has to be a unanimous decision in the case of the transfer of the Waqf Land, and the present position is that al[l] the members of the Council agree with the exception of one dissentient.

A sum of £500 is held at the Ottoman Bank, Jerusalem in the name of A.R. Heaver as Hon. Treasurer of the Garden Tomb Association as a guarantee of good faith to the owners of the land, regarding the intention of the GTA to buy. The owner of the land had no power to sell the land without the consent of the Moslem Council because the Moslem Council act as Trustees for the owner. But the goodwill and co-operation of the owner of the land is essential in the transaction because he acts as sponsor for the prospective purchaser and supports the application of such intending purchaser.⁵¹⁹

The fact that Sir Harold MacMichael, the high commissioner from March 1938 to August 1944, was involved in this purchase on behalf of the GTA, made a unique case for the English government's support of the Garden Tomb. Moreover, it reflects the awareness to the complexity of such a purchase that required the interference of the high commissioner. Approximately two years later, the GTA's report revealed that the SMC was not as positive as it seemed at the beginning:

The chairman gave a report on negotiations for land in Jerusalem adjoining the site of the Garden Tomb, and reported that owing to social disorder no further progress had been made. [...] There was little likelihood of a change in the present position whilst the present Grand Mufti remained in office.⁵²⁰

On May 22, 1942, a GTA member named Stanley Clarke sent a message to Lord Lee after trying to promote the negotiations: “[I] have discussed fully with Muslim

⁵¹⁸ Reiter 1996 (note 514 above), p.179.

⁵¹⁹ “Report on Purchase of the Land Adjoining the Garden Tomb Property”, mid 1930's, GTA Archive.

⁵²⁰ Minutes of the meeting of the GT Committee 26th May, 1937, GTA Archive.

Supreme Council [which] still refuse permission without stating reasons. My opinion—drop the matter until after war”.⁵²¹

From now on, it seems that the efforts to the advance the purchase were addressed to the land owner, while ignoring the dissenter SMC and relying on the assistance of MacMichael. In the letter found in the ISA from March 1944, MacMichael responded positively to a previous letter of Lord Lee from February 15th 1944, in which he had proposed to MacMichael to expropriate the land at the expense of the GTA. In his letter from March, MacMichael expressed the commitment to expropriate the land in the GT area on behalf of the Government of Palestine.⁵²²

After “the various aspects of this have been examined” MacMichael admitted to believing that Lord Lee presented “sufficient justification for this action, and, as you suggest, no reference to Golgotha need be made.”⁵²³ Apparently, Lord Lee was concerned that a reference to Golgotha would arouse controversy, not only among Christians, but also with reference to the Muslim environment, which might hinder the action. Finally, MacMichael concluded that “The area of this plot [parcel 25] is 5290 square metre should work out at approximately £16,000.”⁵²⁴

Plate 58: Map with parcel 25 delimited in red, 12.03.44. The map was enclosed to MacMichael's letter



⁵²¹ White (note 10 above), p.19.

⁵²² “From letter dated 25th March 1944 from [Harold MacMichael] to Lord Lee of Fareham”, doc. 1 in: 'Acquisition of parcel 25 block 55 Jerusalem (Garden Tomb area)', 1944, ISA/2/ physical iden. 307/6. ISA. The authority to expropriate the land was, as explained in the letter: “in accordance with the High Commissioner's Mandatory ‘responsibility of preserving existing rights and of securing free access to the Holy Places, religious buildings and sites..’ (Article 13)”.

⁵²³ MacMichael to Lord Lee of Fareham (note 522 above).

⁵²⁴ Ibid.

A notice to the public regarding the proposed transaction was published a couple of months later:

Notice is hereby given that the land known as parcel no.25 [...] is required by the High Commissioner for public purposes absolutely. [...] any person claiming to have right or interest in the said land is required [...] to send to the Director, Department of Land Settlement, a statement of his right and interest [...].⁵²⁵

The SMC reacted a month later, claiming that:

The Zawiyah and the land belonging thereto, situated outside Damascus Gate, Jerusalem, is administered by the Supreme Moslem⁵²⁶ Council, and that neither Sheikh Mohammad Adham Al-Budeiri [the *mutawalli*] nor any one else has anything to do with the administration of the affairs of this Waqf.⁵²⁷

Having reestablished its position while denying Al-Budeiri's rights to operate, the SMC sent another letter informing of a decision 'to retain the land to the Moslem Waqf, in view of the need of Al-Zawiah Al-Adhamiah thereto.' It then concluded:

The Supreme Moslem Council requests that the proposed expropriation of this land be abandoned owing to the damages which will be sustained by the Moslem Waqf and to the adverse effect which such expropriation will have on Moslem centers.⁵²⁸

Surprisingly, this severe notice with its potential threat to the peaceful relations with the Muslims did not discourage either the GTA or the government, which continued to cooperate in promoting the project. Correspondences between them continued regardless of SMC's claims for the property. Towards the end of 1944, the two parties formulated a draft for the agreement between them in which they specified the development instructions for the soon-to-be-expropriated site. These instructions accorded with those applied in the Garden five decades earlier, and even surpassed them in terms of *plainness* and *perspicuity*:

- 1- The "plot" shall be preserved as an open space in perpetuity, and shall be adequately protected against intrusion or desecration of any kind.

⁵²⁵ Acting Chief Secretary, "Land (Acquisition for public Purposes) Ordinance 1943, Notice", *Palestine Gazette*, 1335, 15.05.1944, doc. 9a in: ISA/2/ physical iden. 307/6. ISA.

⁵²⁶ Moslem is the form predominantly preferred in journalism and popular usage. Muslim is preferred by scholars and by English-speaking adherents of Islam. *The American Heritage Dictionary* (1992). See more at: <http://historynewsnetwork.org/article/524#sthash.vGPrYJC6.dpuf>, Accessed 5 June 2016.

⁵²⁷ Amin Abdul Hadi to The Chief Secretary, Supreme Moslem Council, 10.06.44, doc. 26 in: ISA/2/ physical iden. 307/6. ISA.

⁵²⁸ A. A. Hadi to the Director of Land Settlement [Maurice C. Bennett], Supreme Moslem Council, "Expropriation of a Waqf land situated near Al-Zawiah Al Adhamih, Jerusalem" 26th June 1944, doc.61 in: ISA/2/ physical iden. 307/6. ISA.

- 2- (a) its immemorial condition as a desolate and barren field (i.c. "the place of the skull") shall be maintained;
 - (b) neither buildings nor "improvements" of any kind shall be erected, or permitted to exist there.
 - (c) the plot shall never be let to, or occupied by, any other body or person.
- 3- the plot shall be surrounded by an unclimable iron fence, which could be seen through but which would prevent access by the public, or by anyone but officials directly concerned.
 - 4- adequate protection shall also be given to the "skull face" and the adjacent cliff, in order to prevent any damage or alteration of its appearance; and, if possible, this cliff face shall be included in the expropriated area.⁵²⁹

A second page presented the undertaking of the new High Commissioner – Field Marshal Viscount Gort (November 1944–November 1945) – to preserve the land as a religious site according to all the aforementioned principles.⁵³⁰

The intention to preserve the plain as a religious site is manifested in a most radical form of the *plain* aesthetics. Not only would the place be preserved as an open space without any buildings, it would also be protected from any “improvements” such as planting or paving, so that the ground would remain “a desolate and barren field”, which is appropriate for a site recognized as “the place of the skull”. The barrenness of the ground is even further enhanced through the intention to sterilize it from the presence of people.⁵³¹ Only an “unclimbable” but “seen-through” fence would negotiate between the viewer and the “skull face”. However, what is most remarkable in this plan is the intention to freeze a moment that had long ago passed and might never have even been there. It is an insistence to expropriate not just a land, but also a time and a memory.

In terms of memory, it is a requisition of a mental picture that had been identified first in the Holy Sepulchre, later at the top of the Hill, and now – due to the new theory combined with the right timing of purchase opportunity – on this plain below the Hill. It was an ambitious aspiration to form the place as a frozen monument of the

⁵²⁹ “Suggested Draft of Heads of Agreement between the Government of Palestine and the President-Chairman of the Garden Tomb (Jerusalem) Association, regarding the plot of land referred to in the Palestine Gazette of July 20, 1944 (supplement no.2, notice L/27/44).” in: “Skull Hill and land adjacent thereto-Jerusalem”, 1944, ISA/12/ item 1518, physical iden. 4145/12, ISA.

⁵³⁰ Ibid. The draft can be dated at least to November 1944, when Gort was installed.

⁵³¹ From the description in the draft and following correspondences on the matter, it is unclear whether the site was meant to be totally unoccupied by visitors. It is reasonable to assume, that it was meant to enable a controlled access of visitors from the GT, since it was already habitual for them since the 1930's to visit the site through a gate in the Garden's south-eastern wall. White (note 10 above), p.18.

Crucifixion while trying to erase any other traces for the passing time, human existence, and religious memories. To mark the site as completely barren – as if to symbolize the void, the aridity that remained after the act of Crucifixion, or, from another view, to signify the fresh start that this act enabled for humanity – is a drastic act of shaping the event’s memory.

At the chronological level, this monument does not just aim to freeze the place in its “immemorial condition” – a certain point in the past beyond the reach of memory – but also to hold the future from coming; it shall be preserved in perpetuity.

At the spatial level, it was not just Parcel 25 (the unrecognized *Waqf* property that allegedly held other religious memories) that was about to be expropriated, but also “if possible, this cliff face shall be included in the expropriated area.”⁵³² A few months earlier, the boundaries of the plot were specified by the director of land registration. The parcels from the north and east were registered as *Waqf* properties, while the same status was not assigned to Parcel 25. Moreover, when the director tried to set the boundary along the cliff, he found that a certain area of the cliff belongs to Parcel 36 (the cemetery), so he concluded his letter with a warning that the owners of parcel 36 could obtain access to the cave by a shaft and use it.⁵³³

Interestingly, the fifth clause in the draft promises not to publicly connect the name of Lord Lee with the project and its funding. This term corresponds with White’s description of Lord Lee as avoiding publishing his views regarding the site. It seems that, as such an influential figure, he preferred not to endanger his reputation with controversial ideas. On the other hand, although MacMichael’s letter specifically mentioned that “no reference to Golgotha need to be made”, in this draft the “place of the skull” and the “skull face” are not only fully mentioned, but also serve as the focal points around which the site will be formed.

Following this draft, the two parties continued occupying themselves in solving questions of planning and design while avoiding the legal ones. A sequence of letters was exchanged discussing the nature of the new fence to be built along with a renewal of the Garden’s existing walls. The honorary secretary and treasurer of the GTA, Mr. A.R. Heaver, was the dominant figure in charge of this matter. In December 1944 he visited the GT accompanied by the District Engineer G.T. Caryer and decided to

⁵³² “Suggested Draft” 1944 (note 529 above).

⁵³³ Director of land registration to Chief Secretary, 15.06.1944, doc. 28, in: ISA/2/ physical iden. 307/6. ISA.

heighten or rebuild the western, southern, and eastern walls to a height of 2.3 meters. He also decided not to provide an open railing and gate on the southern wall as originally planned on account of its vulnerability to trespassers.⁵³⁴ Apparently, Lord Lee was not happy with that decision, since he made a special effort to sketch his suggestion for a wall combined with a grille, “Designed to give a view of the Cliff Face to people walking along the main road.”⁵³⁵

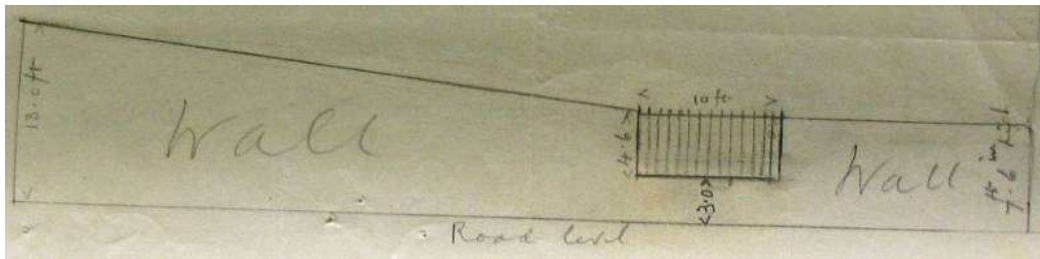


Plate 59: Lord Lee’s suggestion for a wall with view to the “Skull Face”, enclosed with letter from A.R. Heaver to Kenniff, 23.12.44.

Nevertheless, a couple of weeks later Crayer reported that Heaver had withdrawn from any “transparent” solution originally planned, such as open steel grille, and concluded that “anyone wishing to see the skull could easily do so from the wall opposite or from the much higher level of the city wall.”⁵³⁶ Heaver’s main considerations were costs and protection of the site, while the British authorities were more concerned by aesthetic considerations according to the town planning regulations. This occupation with protection corresponds with the “enclosed garden” policy, already discussed in section B.2.5. Therefore, a meeting with government officials and GT representatives was held on January 19, 1945 to discuss the building of the wall. It was in this meeting that the legal questions in front of SMC’s claims had been discussed, and the threat it posed to the fulfillment of the project was finally realized.⁵³⁷ A few weeks before that meeting, Heaver seem to have learned about this threat for the first time and was troubled with how to deliver the message to Lord Lee: “This will be in the nature of a ‘bombshell’ to Lord Lee when I see him in London next week and he will ply me with thousand questions about it.”⁵³⁸

⁵³⁴ [G.T. Caryer] District Engineer to Actg. Director of Public Works, “Land by Skull Hill, Jerusalem” 17.12.44, doc. 5 in: ISA/12/ item 1518, physical iden. 4145/12, ISA.

⁵³⁵ A.R. Heaver to Kenniff, 23.12.44, doc. 7 in: ISA/12/ item 1518, physical iden. 4145/12, ISA.

⁵³⁶ [G.T. Caryer] (note 534 above).

⁵³⁷ H.H. Pollock, O.B.E. District Commissioner [chairman], “Meeting of the GT Committee”, 19.01.45, doc.18 in: ISA/12/ item 1518, physical iden. 4145/12, ISA.

⁵³⁸ A.R. Heaver to Ruhi Bey Abdul Hadi, 30.12.1944, doc 88 in: ISA/2/ physical iden. 307/6. ISA.

In January 14th, however, a new claim was referred to the new High Commissioner by SMC, after which the whole case could no longer be denied:

We are confident that the action, your Excellency will take in the case of Al-Adhamia land will be consistent with the sacredness of the Moslem Waqf and would help to maintain the respect for Moslem religious rites in such places as the ancient shrines. The retention of this land as Moslem Waqf will promote public interest more than anything else, for this land is a place of a religious remembrance. Such places are the means of instruction for individuals as well as the community. Your administration will surely be one of fairness.⁵³⁹

Interestingly, the tone of this letter was more conciliatory than SMC's previous letter, but it employed the same reasoning used by GTA for its own benefit, and therefore made the SMC's claims irresistible. The ancient sacredness of the ground in question was emphasized along with the promotion of the public interest. The Muslim memory was now competing with the Protestant one, and it was left for the high commissioner to decide which memory should reign. It was a matter that took a while, as we can learn from a letter dated from 1947: "Pending the decision of the High Commissioner we shall be unable to apply for possession [...] I could not advise any expenditure on this site until the High Commissioner has decided that it is not a holy place."⁵⁴⁰

However, even after a decision was made in favor of the SMC in a procedure of arbitration between the SMC and the *mutawalli* in March 1947, the District Commissioner James Huey Hamill Pollock did not lose hope "To press the Council to enter into further negotiations regarding the final disposal of the land."⁵⁴¹

A memorandum by Pollock from October 1947 still reflects his unexplained hope for achievement, while referring to his talk with Lady Lee prior to her husband's death, he concluded that Lord Lee's last wish regarding the land was that "it should be registered in the name of the Municipal Corporation of Jerusalem as a private open space."⁵⁴² The last letter found in ISA on the matter was referred by the chief secretary by the district commissioner, who enquired "as to the result of your negotiations with the Supreme Moslem Council."⁵⁴³

⁵³⁹ Telegram From Muhyiddeen Makki for the Moslem Society to his Excellency the High Commissioner [Gort], Jerusalem 14.1.45, doc. 101 in: ISA/2/ physical iden. 307/6. ISA.

⁵⁴⁰ Director of land settlement to Chief Secretary, Jerusalem, 17.02.47, doc. 114 in: ISA/2/ physical iden. 307/6. ISA.

⁵⁴¹ District Commissioner [Pollock] to Chief Secretary, 27.03.47, doc. 131 in: ISA/2/ physical iden. 307/6. ISA.

⁵⁴² J. H. H. Pollock, 23.10.47, doc. 148 in: ISA/2/ physical iden. 307/6. ISA.

⁵⁴³ Chief Secretary to District Commissioner 16.01.1948, doc.160 in: ISA/2/ physical iden. 307/6. ISA.

The dispute between the *mutawalli* and the SMC was finally solved with a compromise approved by the *shari'a* court in 1947. The SMC agreed to pay the *mutawalli* £3,000 for the land and another £200 to cover legal expenses.⁵⁴⁴ However, Reiter claimed that although the SMC justified the transaction on the grounds of religious sensitivity, there is no doubt that the considerations were purely economic.⁵⁴⁵ Indeed, in 1953, after striving so convincingly to retain the land in their hands for the sake of its sacredness, the *Waqf* management leased Parcel 25 to the Jordanian municipality for the development of East Jerusalem central bus station⁵⁴⁶ – a profitable land use that completely ignores the alleged sacredness of the ground.

Plate 60: McBirnie, The ground at the floor of the Skull Hill before the bus station was erected, 1950, p.193.



This transaction has to do with the development of the *babe s-Sahira* neighborhood into a flourishing commercial and business center during Jordanian Rule, which influenced the intense process of liquidating *Waqf* properties in the area.⁵⁴⁷

In this period of new economic opportunities, not even ancient sacred grounds such as the Es-Sahira cemetery were immune from liquidation. In fact, claimed Reiter, the building in that cemetery was so economically profitable that the *Waqf* management⁵⁴⁸ did not even resist grave transference of honorable figures who had recently been buried. Thus, office buildings and approximately 30 shops were erected in the 1950s on plots belong to the Es-Sahira cemetery near Salah ed-Din Street.⁵⁴⁹

Still, not everything regarding the failed purchase initiative of GTA was in vain. Dobson's theory seems to have won not only the heart of Lord Lee and his colleagues at the time, but also influenced to this day the general view of the GTA members. White expressed his definite support in identifying Golgotha "on the ground somewhere at the foot" based on the fact that "no Jewish Place of Stoning would be on a hill top."

⁵⁴⁴ Reiter 1996 (note 514 above), p.179.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁶ Reiter 1991 (note 510 above), p.101.

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 87, 98-101.

⁵⁴⁸ Along the Jordanian Rule the position of the SMC was assigned to the Endowment Department.

See: Ibid., pp.12-13.

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid. pp.99-100.

In contrast, he exempted other views as dependent on the “mental picture of three crosses on a hill” that originated in religious pictures that are “the only source for that idea.”⁵⁵⁰ On the other hand, he admitted that most visitors to the place are not aware of that theory, and it is common that a non-informed pastor points to the top of the Hill as the place of the Crucifixion and encourages his flock to sing the hymn of the “green hill”. In such a case, “It is impolite to contradict a pastor in public, but the Garden Tomb volunteers *do* seek to present a balanced commentary.”⁵⁵¹

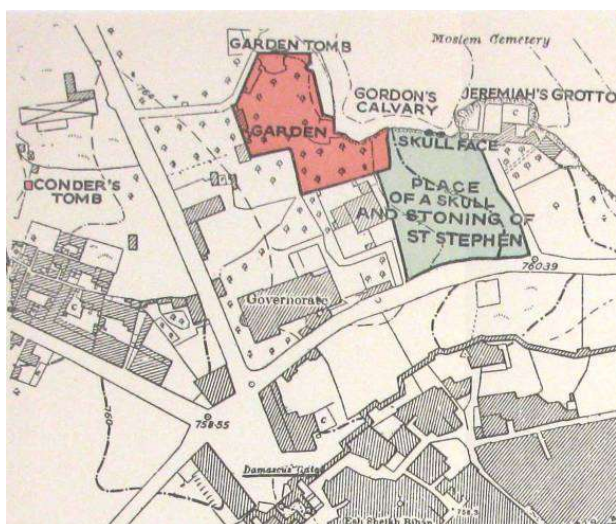


Plate 61: Portion of a GTA map presenting the Garden, the Place of the Skull, and Gordon's Calvary. Conder's Tomb is marked west of Nablus Road. The original size of the map included the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in order to compare the two localities; that is, inside and outside of the city wall. Source: The Red Book 1944, GTA.

Three decades later, the painful sight of the bus station was observed by Stuart McBirnie from the Garden:

an exceptionally ugly bus depot (which is dangerous for pilgrims to visit) occupies this site...since pilgrims and scholars will continue to come to the Holy City, many will seriously question the unfairness and irreverence of the treatment of a place so filled with meaning for many Christians.⁵⁵²

⁵⁵⁰ White (note 10 above), pp.18-19.

⁵⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵⁵² McBirnie (note 10 above), pp. 189, 194.

C – Managing the Prayer Garden 1967–2016

C.1 Reorganization after the Six-Day War

The Six-Day War which spilled over into the Garden and collected a terrible toll from its Warden-Mattar, opened a new era for the Garden Tomb with new political challenges from within and without that required a renewed observation into the GTA's ideology and organization.

Three main challenges dictated the renewed alignment of the GTA:

1. The occurrences around the Warden-Mattar and his unsupervised actions, which were strongly criticized by the Anglican Church in Jerusalem (ACJ), led the GTA to the conclusion that connections between the committee in London and the staff in Jerusalem should be strengthened. It was also decided that the role of the warden should be decentralized in order to enhance supervision over the warden's work. The reorganization of management and staff, as well as the redefinition of codes and values, is discussed in depth in sub-chapter *C.1 Reorganization after the Six-Day War*.
2. The massive growth of tourism to Israel that occurred after the Six-Day War, when the area became more accessible to visit.⁵⁵³ The number of visitors to the Garden grew from 15,000 at the beginning of the 1960s to 65,146 in 1969.⁵⁵⁴ Numbers continued to grow thereafter, with three million visitors to the site between 1969 and 1986.⁵⁵⁵ The growth of tourism required a more complexed system of staff members to serve in the Garden and a new set of rules to control and regulate the flow of visitors, and above all to preserve the qualities of the place and its unique atmosphere in light of the growing number of visitors and their demands.

Paragraph *c.1.3 From Anglo-centric to Multicultural Organization* discusses the changes in staff composition in a response to the new touristic tendencies, while sub-chapter *C.3. Hosts and Guests: Visitor Management* will explore the managing challenges of preserving a qualitative atmosphere inside the

⁵⁵³ Collins-Kreiner (note 15 above), pp.25-26.

⁵⁵⁴ Minutes 1960 (note 442 above), p.2; The Honorary Secretary's Report for 1968/69 presented at the Annual General Meeting [=AGM] 23rd June, 1969, GTA Archive, p.1.

⁵⁵⁵ White (note 10 above), p.10; AGM of the Trustees and Committee 22nd January 1987, London, GTA Archive, p.3.

crowded Garden. Another aspect of the new touristic tendencies was the physical development of the Garden into a prayer garden that accommodates hundreds of worshippers every day. This process is examined in sub-chapter *C.2 Keeping it Simple: Designing a Prayer Garden*.

3. A new geopolitical situation: Since the termination of Jordanian rule, the Garden found itself on shaky ground – inside the Muslim neighborhood under Israeli sovereignty, on the outskirts of the Western Jewish city. In such a fragile position it became essential to publicize a neutral stand in order not to be seen as supporting one side or the other. The biggest challenge the Garden faced was to preserve its existence as a peaceful haven in the midst of a conflicted area. The new geopolitical situation and its impacts over the GT is explored in sub-chapter *C.4 Walls and Bridges: Relations with the Neighborhood*.

C.1.1 Structure and Officers

Towards Decentralized Management

Immediately after Mattar's death, a temporal warden named George Sahhar, a Palestinian Christian, was appointed based on the recommendation of Archbishop MacInnes.

In his report from June 1968, David Izzett, the honorary secretary, expressed general satisfaction with Sahhar's commitment to the site's appearance, but it was also evident that Sahhar was not the right man for the job.⁵⁵⁶

A more suitable warden was soon found, in the form of Dutchman named Jan Wilhelm van der Hoeven, who impressed the committee with his enthusiasm: 'it was felt that he would be a very suitable successor to the late Mr. Mattar by whom he was introduced to the Committee.'⁵⁵⁷ Izzett's report from the same meeting ascribed to van der Hoeven the meaningful growth of tourism for the first two months of his wardenship: "It is clear that he at once got down to his task of seeing that pilgrims to Jerusalem knew where to find the Garden."⁵⁵⁸

This promising start by the new warden continued for several years. The number of visitors continued to rise, the familiarity with the garden and its charismatic warden

⁵⁵⁶ Report 1967/1968 (note 506 above), pp.1-2.

⁵⁵⁷ Minutes of the AGM of the GTA, Jerusalem Chamber WA, 24th June 1968, GTA Archive, p.2.

⁵⁵⁸ Report June 1968 (note 556 above), p.2.

continued to grow, and there was a marked increase in the garden's income.⁵⁵⁹ However, this successful wardenship was accompanied by another tendency, which was less satisfying in the eyes of the committee. Van der Hoeven was a talented enthusiastic preacher and his wardenship enabled him to explore and develop this passion through the hundreds of services he conducted in front of the Tomb. His reputation as a preacher soon extended beyond the Garden borders and in 1973 and 1974 he went on preaching tours in the USA and Holland, which demanded frequent absence from the Garden.⁵⁶⁰ Moreover, in the Garden services his ideas were seen radical to some visitors and committee members: "our Warden continued to express extreme points of view in his preaching."⁵⁶¹

During the period when he began to preach outside, a new office was introduced to the Garden. The role of administrator was added as additional management office beside the warden. Minutes of March 1973 announced the expected arrival of the British Colonel Orde Dobbie to Jerusalem on April 10th to initiate his office as the first garden administrator.⁵⁶² Secretary Izzett anticipated that the mutual proceeding of the warden and administrator would take time to accommodate; still, he hoped that "both have the will to do this in Christian understanding."⁵⁶³

Meanwhile, the arrival of Col. Dobbie was involved difficulty obtaining a visa from the Israeli authorities, since he was suspected of being connected with a missionary organization named "Jews for Jesus". Although Dobbie managed to convince the authorities that he had no connection with this movement, the committee was not as reassured and demanded that Dobbie explain the situation.⁵⁶⁴

Despite the predicted difficulties, no particular conflicts between Dobbie and Van der Hoeven were noted in the minutes since Dobbie's arrival. In fact, it seems that there was not much time to explore the new relation between the two positions since Van der Hoeven was occupied with his preaching tours and was soon to be dismissed from his wardenship. In September 1974, the decision to replace the warden was finally made: "The Sub-Committee indicated to the Warden that they felt the time had come

⁵⁵⁹ Minutes of the AGM of the GTA, Jerusalem Chamber WA 23rd June 1969, GTA Archive, p.1; Minutes May 1971 (note 451 above), p.2.

⁵⁶⁰ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 6th March 1973, London, GTA Archive, p.2; Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 2nd July 1974, London, GTA Archive, p.2.

⁵⁶¹ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 26th February 1974, London, GTA Archive, p.1.

⁵⁶² Minutes March 1973 (note 559 above), p.2

⁵⁶³ Ibid., p.4.

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid., p.2

when he should regard his ministry at the Garden as having come to an end. It was also felt that he had departed theologically from the message to be proclaimed at the Garden.”⁵⁶⁵

It was Mattar who introduced Van der Hoeven as his deputy during a visit he had to make to the USA. Interestingly there were some similarities between the two following wardens. In Mattar’s tenure, the Garden had experienced a steady growth of visitors, but under the management of Van der Hoeven (1968-1975) the site became a loadstone for tourism, and had been materialized as a garden for devotional assemblies.

Similar to Mattar, Van der Hoeven was a zealous person, eager to instill uncompromising faith in visitors’ hearts and souls. However, the committee acted more carefully in supporting his spiritual way than it did for Mattar.

When Van der Hoeven gradually became more involved with the emerging charismatic movement, the committee was worried about again assigning an incorrect wrong impression regarding the Garden’s religious inclination. Thus, it was decided in 1974 to replace Van der Hoeven with a less religiously identified figure.⁵⁶⁶ In 1981, a few years after his dismissal, Van der Hoeven became a founding member of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem – a Christian Zionist organization that aims to support the causes of the State of Israel.⁵⁶⁷

Col. Dobbie was alert to seize the opportunity and suggested his nephew for the warden’s position. The committee replied that: “It is our policy to have two senior men, each responsible for different function.”⁵⁶⁸ This response provided the first reference to the evolving policy that redefined the division of authorities within the Garden staff and the formation of decentralized management. This reply might also reflect an avoidance of maintaining the management in the hands of two relatives, again an expression of the decentralized policy.

Nevertheless, following Van der Hoeven’s departure, Col. Dobbie was operating as the sole manager in the Garden until a new warden was found, and also his nephew Jocelyn Johnston assisted him in this transitional time.⁵⁶⁹ The committee expressed

⁵⁶⁵ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 3rd September 1974, London, GTA Archive, p.3.

⁵⁶⁶ White (note 10 above), pp.74-75.

⁵⁶⁷ “Jan Willem van der Hoeven: the ICZC Director”, *International Christian Zionist Center* [=ICZC] <http://www.iczcusa.org/#/international-board>, Accessed 13 May 2017.

⁵⁶⁸ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 10th December 1974, GTA Archive, p.3.

⁵⁶⁹ Meryon 2014 (note 10 above) ,p.200.

appreciation for Dobbie's leadership during the following year, but stressed the temporary nature of this arrangement and reaffirmed the policy that was declared on 10th December 1974: "to appoint two senior representatives of the Association in Jerusalem, each of equal standing in relation with the London Committee."⁵⁷⁰

A few months later, Canon Leslie Hunt, a Canadian Anglican priest, was appointed as a warden and chaplain for a short tenure of six months from August 1975.⁵⁷¹

Hunt's nomination required the adjustment of Dobbie. Bishop Hudson, the deputy chairman, who visited Jerusalem, discussed with Dobbie the functions and duties of the new warden, with the hope that this would ease tensions.⁵⁷²

A short time later, Bill White, the new honorary secretary, reported that Dobbie was still struggling with the new reality: "While I want to pay tribute to the zeal of Colonel Dobbie, there is no question at all, although he was sent to be Administrator, he in fact sees himself acts as Warden of the Garden rather than an Administrator."⁵⁷³

In January 1976, the warden position became vacant again, but no replacement had yet been found. White, the energetic secretary, had put himself forward for the job. It was decided that he would continue Hunt's activities in the Garden with the assistance of his wife Gladis for an indefinite period, while still keeping his position as honorary secretary.⁵⁷⁴ Meanwhile, in London, endeavors to locate a warden continued. From his new position in Jerusalem, White sent his advice for a desirable warden, so that the wrong type of person, one who sought self-promotion, would not be reelected:

I believe the leadership of the garden is of such a character that it will demand singleminded attention. Too much involvement in other activities in and around Jerusalem are bound to be detrimental to the leadership of the garden. [...] one may have to deal consecutively with groups varying from Spanish Roman Catholics to American Southern Baptists [...] some of whom are the most awkward customers of the lot!⁵⁷⁵

Bishop Goodwin Hudson, who had served as the committee's vice-chairman since 1974, was visiting Jerusalem in January 1977 and conducted conversations with staff members in order to solve conflicts and ambiguity. He mainly dwelt upon the relationship between White and Dobbie and held open sessions with both. In the

⁵⁷⁰ Minutes of the AGM of the GTA, Jerusalem Chamber WA, 24.9.1975, GTA Archive, p.2

⁵⁷¹ Ibid.

⁵⁷² Ibid.

⁵⁷³ B. White, "Report from the Secretary of the GTA", August 1976, GTA Archive, p.1

⁵⁷⁴ A Special meeting of the Garden Tomb Committee 2.1.1976, London, GTA Archive. p.1.

⁵⁷⁵ B. White, "Report from the Secretary of the GTA", November 1976, GTA Archive, p.3.

session, White claimed that he had found many administrative matters that were neglected by Dobbie in recent years that White had to take care of, while his interference was accepted with a general dissent from Dobbie and other staff members. The bishop decided to clarify the responsibilities of every staff member in order to prevent any future misunderstandings and tensions. Realizing that Dobbie had continuously avoided taking charges over administrative activities, the bishop had decided that he would not maintain his office as administrator but rather concentrate on work he was most capable of: as public relations officer, guiding and counselling in the Garden, and overseeing the horticultural work of the Garden.

White, as general secretary to the association, would be directly responsible to the London committee and would continue to handle all matters relating to the Garden, business and finance, staff, shop and property maintenance.⁵⁷⁶

Despite all the efforts to define responsibilities, cooperation between staff members and White did not progress fluently. In his report from March 1977, White attributed the lack of discipline to the absence of a stable leadership for a long time:

“I am still seeking to exert gentle pressure on the staff to a more businesslike and disciplined approach to the daily program in the garden, though I do not rate my chances of success very high.”⁵⁷⁷ However, in Bishop Hudson’s visit on April 1977 he noticed the change in relations between staff members and the disciplined approach to daily work in the Garden led by White.⁵⁷⁸

In 1978, White had retired from managing the Garden in Jerusalem and Colonel Saunders was appointed as the Director – a new terminology for the previous office of warden. Also, Saunders did not enjoy cooperation with the staff and he was mainly disappointed with the communication with Dobbie. In his report after several months as director, Saunders claimed that Dobbie lacked basic loyalty and was occupied with a power struggle. The committee agreed that although Dobbie had done good work in improving public relations, both Canon Leslie Hunt and White had found him difficult to work with. After all the years he had served at the Garden, he still considered himself the director of the Garden and generally acted as such. Moreover, claimed Saunders, “there was among the staff a tendency to polarization around certain people such as John van der Hoeven, Lance Lambert, Col. Dobbie.

⁵⁷⁶ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 25th January 1977, London, GTA Archive, p.2.

⁵⁷⁷ B. White, “Report from the Secretary of the GTA”, March 1977, GTA Archive, p.1.

⁵⁷⁸ Meryon 2014, (note 10 above), p.203.

[...] staff members having too many interests outside the Garden, doing private chores in Garden time.”⁵⁷⁹

Despite those allegations, Bishop Hudson recognized rigidity in Saunders’ attitude and suggested that “it might be wise to consider a fatherly and kindly person to take charge of the spiritual side of the work at the Garden, with Major Saunders as an Administrator.”⁵⁸⁰

A month later, following White’s visit to the Garden, it became clear that Saunders was not the right man to hold the position of director. The decision was made immediately to reappoint White as the director, while Saunders was asked to deal with administration. Dobbie, on the other hand, remained in his old responsibilities as public relations officer.⁵⁸¹ Saunders felt betrayed by the committee and submitted his resignation to Bishop Hudson on August 1979. In his letter to the Bishop, he described his enormous efforts to regain control over the undisciplined team, without receiving backup from London:

I was very surprised and deeply hurt by the lack of support that I received from the Committee which appeared to me lack the courage of its convictions and opted for a policy of appeasement making me the ‘sacrificial lamb’.⁵⁸²

Furthermore, the allocation of managing responsibilities between staff members had played a part in his sense of helplessness: “I also see what may be a policy of decentralization or divide and rule by the Committee.”⁵⁸³ In his eyes, such policy had led to an unrestrained chaos: “We are certainly seeing both liberty and licence”.⁵⁸⁴ Finally, he described staff members as motivated by self-promotion, treating visitors unequally on a “favor-for-favor” basis, using the Garden for personal purposes and pronounced criticism against the Israeli government, and changing unpopular committee decisions without the knowledge of the committee.⁵⁸⁵ The issues that Saunders raised were not addressed directly. Apparently, the committee believed that those issues would be solved naturally when a new leader assumed control over the staff. A few months after Saunders’ resignation, Rev. Arthur Thom from the USA was designated as Chaplain in May 1979. In addition to performing the Sunday services,

⁵⁷⁹ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 13th November 1978, London, GTA Archive, p.3.

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁸¹ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 18.12.1978, London, GTA Archive, pp.1-2.

⁵⁸² The Administrator [Saunders] to the The Bishop [Goodwin], 3rd August 1979, GTA Archive.

⁵⁸³ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid.

Thom and his wife served as the spiritual guides for the staff members and were credited with “restoring the harmony at the Garden, which had been sadly lacking during Mr. Saunders’ time.”⁵⁸⁶ It seemed that after a long period of instability, the staff had finally achieved the right balance to maintain healthy relationships.

White continued to maintain his dual responsibilities in front of the committee and the Garden for several years until 1985. After almost a decade of hectic activity on the line between London and Jerusalem, White decided to withdraw from his demanding position. A confrontation he had in Jerusalem with two staff members, Catherine Forsyth and Geraldine Cox, seems to have been the last straw for White. This quarrel reveals the inherent weakness of White’s dual position that placed him under the skeptical eye of some staff members: Forsyth and Cox had claimed that his arrival in Jerusalem necessitated a time of 'adjustment' for the staff and that Bill was a 'disruptive influence' to the team. However, White claimed that no other staff member felt the same, and he could report that everything seemed to be in “peak” condition.⁵⁸⁷ The committee reflected seriously on the matter and came to the conclusion that a position such as White’s, with all its hardships and strains, should be limited to a period of five years in Jerusalem. Encouraged by this observation, White asked that a new general secretary be found to take his office from September 1985.⁵⁸⁸

Despite the inner tensions that the dual loyalty of White’s position as secretary-director could provoke, it provided a fluent communication between London and Jerusalem that was lacked before, and imposed renewed discipline and loyalty on the staff while removing foreign influences and interests from the Garden. During several challenging years under the management of Mattar, Van der Hoeven, Dobbie, and Saunders, the committee seemed to have found the right formula for the Garden’s leadership, as White had indicated previously and implemented in the position of the secretary-director. A few months later, White became the deputy chairman and Peter Wells, a committee member since 1979, took White’s position as general secretary and as the Garden’s manager. Wells continued serving as secretary-director until 2007, when his position was redefined and was termed CEO (chief executive officer).⁵⁸⁹ Thereafter, the CEO remained the terminology for the Garden manager’s

⁵⁸⁶ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 23rd April 1980, London, GTA Archive, p.2.

⁵⁸⁷ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 21st June 1984, London, GTA Archive, pp.3-4.

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁹ Minutes of the Council Meeting of the GTA held at the Garden Tomb, Jerusalem, Israel on 21st March 2007, GTA Archive, p.1.

office.

Wells' role in the Garden ended tragically in 2009 when he died from cancer. Richard Meryon, a former marine engineer in the Royal Navy and the former executive director of Christian Viewpoint for Men, was recruited by the Council to replace Wells. He assumed his position on June 30, 2009 and was assisted by Stephen Bridge who served as the operations manager, the new terminology for the administrator's position. From Meryon's wardenship, the position of the general-secretary was no longer credited to the manager, a change that seemingly contributed to a more Jerusalem-oriented focus rather than a focus on London, and might have been helpful in dismissing tensions within the staff.

After more than five years of devoted service in the Garden, the Meryons were replaced by the new director, Richard Meyhew and his wife. Meyhew's tenure did not last more than a year, and October 1, 2015, Stephen Bridge assumed the director's position, while Phillip Ben-Shmuel who worked in the Garden since 2007 became the new operations manager.⁵⁹⁰

It can be concluded that, since its initiation in 1972, the decentralized management was maintained through two management offices: those of the warden/director/CEO and that of the administrator/operations manager. Additional administration offices together formed "a team of leadership" as phrased by White.⁵⁹¹ For many years the chaplain provided the spiritual guidance, the bursar still directs the finance issues, and the more recent office of IT manager is responsible for information and technology.

Redefinition of Structure

In addition to the process of management decentralization and tightening of loyalty to London, another process of redefinition of structure that occurred a decade later marked the efforts to accommodate with the changing reality and learning from past lessons. Towards the end of the 1970s, the committee began to initiate a few legal measures aimed to improve efficiency and clarity within the organization. The first was the formulation of a constitution that dictated the structure of the organization and provided the legal framework for decisions' making in the future.

⁵⁹⁰ S. Bridge, Garden Tomb Newsletter October 2015, <http://www.gardentomb.com/news/49/>, Accessed 2 May 2016.

⁵⁹¹ White (note 10 above), p. 75.

In the committee meeting of November 1978, a draft of the constitution was discussed. Among the issues that were dealt with were the nature and structure of the committee, the annual general meeting, the Purchase Fund, and the Maintenance Fund.⁵⁹²

In the 1980s, new questions were asked concerning the invigoration of the organization and its effectiveness. In February 1989, the draft for a new Trust Deed was prepared in which the role of the trustees and committee was clarified. The trustees were given the authority to appoint sub-committees as they saw fit (finance, investment, or legal matters).⁵⁹³

On July 3, 1991 the first council was introduced to replace the committee. The chairman, Peter Davies, proposed that the same officers who served in the outgoing committee would form the first council of the reconstituted Garden Tomb Association. The proclamation of the new council was supported by registration of the new Trust Deed. Nine trustees were elected as members of the new council, excluding Peter Wells, the Garden's director, who was ineligible having served as trustee in the council as a salaried employee.⁵⁹⁴

Two months later, in September 1991, the association was recognized as a charity organization: "The Secretary confirmed that the Charity Commission has entered The Garden Tomb (Jerusalem) Association in the Central Register of Charities. Our registered charity number is 1004062."⁵⁹⁵ By defining the GTA as a charitable trust, the organization was credited with the legal privileges assigned to such trust, as an exemption from taxes and freedom for the trustees not found in other types of English trust.⁵⁹⁶

Trustees are appointed by the board of trustees who serve for three years and meet quarterly, after which they can reappoint for additional periods.⁵⁹⁷

The goals of the new Council reveal the evolvement of the original goal of securing the site from desecration:

⁵⁹² Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 13th November 1978, London, GTA Archive, p.2.

⁵⁹³ Minutes of Committee Meeting of GTA 8th February 1989, Westminster Central Hall [=WCH], GTA Archive, p.3.

⁵⁹⁴ Minutes of the A.G.M. and Committee Meeting of GTA 3rd July 1991, WCH, GTA Archive, pp.1-2.

⁵⁹⁵ Minutes of the Committee Meeting 23rd September 1991, WCH, GTA Archive, p.1.

⁵⁹⁶ A. Hudson, *Equity and Trusts* (6th ed.), Routledge-Cavendish, New York 2009, p.1004.

⁵⁹⁷ "The Garden Tomb (Jerusalem) Association, Report and Financial Statements Year ended: 31 December 2005 Charity no: 1004062", 27.6.06, GTA Archive, p.2.

1. To promote and advance the Christian faith and the worship of God;
2. To spread the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ;
3. To preserve and maintain the Garden Tomb as a sacred and quiet spot, as a source of edification to Christians and as a place for worship of God;⁵⁹⁸

The original purpose of the GTA, which was to preserve the site as a sacred place, is third on this list, while the two first goals are educational and missionary causes that aim to influence people's spirituality. Moreover, the original goal includes the important addition of a "place for worship", which was the most dominant activity in the Garden since the late 1960s.

Along this change and adaptation to the new era that is evident in the reorganization and reframing of the association's goals and structure, the previous cautious and conservative approach was still apparent in the council discussions and decision making. In the council meeting of March 2007 was an expression of this debate between progression and orthodoxy. About 15 years after the council was constituted, some trustees still hesitated regarding the association's common values and regarding the acceptance of new members:

Dr. Ferguson stated that he did not believe the time was right to be considering any additions to Council. [...] no additions should be made till Council are all of one mind and united behind a common vision. Dr Flynn [...] did not think it necessary to delay the consideration of good candidates, since they too could contribute to shaping Council's vision. believed that Council should be willing to move forward and to trust the Lord to lead the Association's future direction.⁵⁹⁹

C.1.2 Overseeing the Staff from Afar

In Chapter B.3.3 we encountered the challenges of overseeing occurrences in Jerusalem from distant London. Lord Chatfield, in his letter to the Dean of Westminster, specifically admitted to having difficulties keeping a watchful eye on the Garden from afar.⁶⁰⁰ The unmediated gap between London and Jerusalem had led to independent proceeding of Wardens Mattar, Van der Hoeven and Dobbie, as we saw in the previous paragraph.

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁹ Minutes 2007 (note 589 above), p.2.

⁶⁰⁰ Lord Chatfield (note 487 above).

Other committee and staff members also felt the difficulties involved with the long distant communication, but it was Bill White who dealt systematically with this challenge and strove to regulate relations between committee in London to staff in Jerusalem. Through his regular reports from Jerusalem, he sustained the connection between the two centers, even before he became the warden: “Mr. White was on a term of sabbatical leave in Jerusalem. He reported fully to the Committee [...] thus the close liaison between Jerusalem and ourselves has been maintained.”⁶⁰¹ His dual role as an honorary secretary and a warden had placed him physically and mentally in the gap between the two cities, and seem to have made him realize better than any other member the scope of inefficiency caused by communication problems.

Travels from London to Jerusalem

Committee members traveled occasionally to Jerusalem to get a first-hand impression of the reality in the Garden. These were usually very useful and positive visits for staff and committee members, in which conflicts were more easily solved and new knowledge was acquired to improve efficiency and communication. Also, spiritual relief was generally felt following such visits, as described by Col. Dobbie who attended the committee Meeting on February 26, 1974: “it was very much appreciated when members of the committee visited the Garden- this gave the staff great encouragement.”⁶⁰²

However, White claimed that visits to Jerusalem were not frequent enough. In one of his first reports from Jerusalem, White had criticized the proceeding of the committee who remained on the theoretical level without gaining comprehensive familiarity with the reality of the GT. He pointed at the fact that the committee’s meetings and decisions making were not correlated with actual occurrences in the Garden, which causes serious delay in dealing with important business. Although he supported the principle that the Garden should be directed from London, he now realized why the Jerusalem staff’s was lacking confidence in the stability of the committee’s decisions. He concluded his message with a call to send representatives of the committee to visit Jerusalem.⁶⁰³ In January 1977, following White’s report, Bishop Hudson visited the GT. The visit was highly appreciated by White, who wrote to him to express his

⁶⁰¹ Minutes 1975 (note 570), p.2.

⁶⁰² Minutes February 1974 (note 561), p.2.

⁶⁰³ White, November 1976 (note 575), p.1.

thanks for not only giving him moral support, but also for bringing renewed confidence to all members of the staff.⁶⁰⁴

Hereafter, the bishop visited the Garden at least once a year, and also encouraged other committee members to travel to Jerusalem:

It was important than ever to [...] keep a watching brief on the whole situation. To this end it would be necessary for members of the Committee to commute to the Garden as often as possible. The work at the Garden and the staff were under constant pressure, and this pressure was likely to increase. The situation in Jerusalem was in many ways unprecedented, as the number of tourists was constantly increasing, and the political situation is getting more complicated all the time.⁶⁰⁵

Other committee members who visited the Garden recognized the importance of their visits and their meaning to the staff. H. G. Duckworth, who visited the Garden in 1980, reported to White about the way he had been treated by the staff: “They were each individually welcoming to us and seemed to appreciate our visit and that London took an interest in them. Perhaps visits by Committee members could be arranged more often.”⁶⁰⁶

In September 1991 a proposition had been made to conduct mutual meeting between staff and council:

Mr. Matthews asked whether consideration could be given to an annual get-together of Staff and Council members. Mr. Ron Waelend suggested that a joint meeting be held on alternate year, so that the staff fellowship could continue at the Secretary's home on its current basis every other year.⁶⁰⁷

However, no such meeting had been held, until the first and only time in GTA’s history that the annual general meeting (AGM) took place in the Garden Tomb Jerusalem. It was on March 21, 2007, and Victor Jack, the chairman from 2000–2012, welcomed the presence of the historic meeting.⁶⁰⁸

Jack is the GTA’s current vice president and I interviewed him when he still was serving as a chairman; he explained the nature of relations between him and Richard Meryon, the CEO. Jack believed that his main duty as a chairman was to have an ‘excellent relationships with the CEO in Jerusalem’ so that the GTA would not hold

⁶⁰⁴ Minutes January 1977 (note 576 above), p.1.

⁶⁰⁵ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 19th February 1979, London, GTA Archive, pp.2-3.

⁶⁰⁶ H. G. Duckworth to Bill White 25.3.1980, GTA Archive, p. 1 [p.151].

⁶⁰⁷ Minutes of the Committee Meeting 23rd September 1991, WCH, GTA Archive, p.3.

⁶⁰⁸ Minutes 2007 (note 589 above).

meetings in London in which “unreasonable decisions would be taken.”⁶⁰⁹

To accomplish this goal, Jack had to visit Jerusalem at least twice a year, usually in the high seasons, and learned how the place was managed by taking an active role in the Garden’s daily tasks, such as guiding, cleaning, and gardening. “I was a farmer, so that I’m practical- just like Richard”, Jack declared.⁶¹⁰ In fact, as pointed by Jack, all of the Council’s members are currently encouraged to visit Jerusalem at least once every two or three years, so they will have a more direct connection and knowledge of the place.⁶¹¹

The opposite direction of travel was also significant: From time to time, staff members arrived in London and shared their experiences and insights directly with the committee. Among the staff members who attended the committee meetings were Col. Dobbie, Miss Pat Crawford, and Major Saunders.⁶¹² Some of the staff members became natural candidates to serve as committee members.

One such case was Ken Trestrail, who had been volunteering at the Garden for 14 years and started to serve in on the Staffing Sub-committee: “His contribution to this Committee, because of his considerable experience as a team member in Jerusalem, is much valued, it was agreed that Mr. Trestrail be officially co-opted as a member of the Staffing Sub-Committee.”⁶¹³ When Trestrail returned to the Garden, now as a committee member, he experienced a change in sense of unity and respect between staff and committee. No longer was there the feeling of “them” and “us” which was so evident in previous years.⁶¹⁴

Another volunteer who became a Council member was Mrs. Sharon McLean, who was invited to chair the Staffing Committee.⁶¹⁵

The CEO currently travels four times a year to the council’s quarterly meetings, at which the Gardens’ reports are presented. The reports explain everything that has been done in the garden and how the donation money was spent. The CEO then returns to Jerusalem with new instructions from the committee.⁶¹⁶ The CEO must also

⁶⁰⁹ V. Jack, interviewed by M. Bitton, 02.08.10

⁶¹⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹¹ Ibid.

⁶¹² Minutes February 1974 (note 561 above); Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA, 11th September 1978; Minutes 1979 (note 605 above), p.2;

⁶¹³ Minutes 1991 (note 607 above), p.2.

⁶¹⁴ Meryon 2014 (note 10 above), p.227.

⁶¹⁵ Minutes of the Council Meeting of the GTA held at Partnership House, 157 Waterloo Road ,London on 27th September 2006, p.3.

⁶¹⁶ Jack (note 609 above); Richard Meryon, interviewed by M. Bitton 21.06.10.

send a report to England once a month to inform the chairman of the latest news and updates.⁶¹⁷

The Power of Prayer: Spiritual Support between London and Jerusalem

Members of committee also used symbolic and spiritual customs to overcome the geographical distance and connect sentimentally and mentally with Jerusalem and the Garden lying within it.

From the 1950s to the 1970s, the AGM had been held in Jerusalem Chamber in Westminster Abbey. It was generally one of the GTA's patrons who arranged for the meeting to take place in such a privileged place. Ostensibly, besides some tapestries depicting the history of Abraham, and St. Peter healing the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, there was nothing in this room connected directly to the Holy City, and even the origin of the Chamber's name is uncertain.⁶¹⁸ Another indirect reference to Jerusalem is found the occurrences of King Henry IV dying. Apparently, King Henry planned a journey to the Holy Land but had a stroke while praying in the Abbey. He was immediately taken into Jerusalem Chamber, and there, by the fire, he asked where he was and was told "Jerusalem". The chronicle relates that the king realized he was going to die because it had been prophesied that he would die in Jerusalem.⁶¹⁹ This symbolic Jerusalem with its association of the dying king, who could not visit the real city despite his wish, served as a platform for the committee discussions over the Garden in the real city. The attenders did not remain indifferent to those associations and commemorated it on the minutes' pages. In the farewell from the GTA's Patron Dr. Don, the chairman thanked him for this privilege: "We have had the fortune of using the Jerusalem Chamber for our Annual Meeting and have the Dean of Westminster as our Patron."⁶²⁰ The following patron also related to the symbolic use of the chamber:

The Dean said he felt it an honour to become the Patron [...] he felt it a very happy thing that we should hold our meeting in the Jerusalem our chamber. it was dear to the hearts of every Christian to have a spiritual movement like the Association, which has

⁶¹⁷ Meryon, *ibid.*

⁶¹⁸ Dean and Chapter of Westminster, "Jerusalem Chamber", *Westminster Abbey*, <http://www.westminster-abbey.org/our-history/jerusalem-chamber>, Accessed 18 May 2016.

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁰ Minutes of the AGM held in Jerusalem Chamber, Westminster Abbey 15 October, 1959, p.1

its home here, and its heart in Jerusalem.⁶²¹

Almost a decade later, more gratitude was expressed for the use of the historic Jerusalem Chamber.⁶²²

Journey stories were occasionally told in the meetings, in which members of committee shared their experiences from their personal visits to Jerusalem and the Garden:

A little story – and a deep impression – and one can only hope and pray that the quietness and devotion of the Garden Tomb will be allowed to continue for many long years. Lady Robertson thanked Dr. Berry [...] for his talk, which did give such a vivid impression of the Garden, especially to those Members of the Association who had never had the privilege of visiting it.⁶²³

Staff members who arrived to London brought with them a sense of Jerusalem that was much appreciated by the attendants: “the Bishop then welcomed Miss Pat Crawford, a member of the Garden Tomb staff [...] the question was raised whether Miss Crawford should be asked to stay in England until after the A.G.M., since people often liked to see someone from Jerusalem.”⁶²⁴

White suggested another method to reinforce communication between staff and committee:

some members of the staff here wonder if the London Committee even know of their existence. Dare I suggest that if each member of the London committee would write one letter a year to some particular member of the community here – it would be a very happy gesture and a way of expressing our appreciation for the devoted work which is being given.⁶²⁵

Prayers for Jerusalem were also a usual routine among the committee members that aided them to experience a spiritual and emotional involvement with the Garden and its staff. To reinforce this involvement, the secretary tabled a list of staff: “It was hoped that his list, together with the accompanying photograph of volunteer staff members, would serve as an aid for Committee members’ prayer for the Garden and its ministry.”⁶²⁶

In recent decades, the routine of prayers for Jerusalem was expanded to include past

⁶²¹ Minutes 1960 (note 442 above), p.1

⁶²² Minutes 1969 (note 559 above), p.3

⁶²³ Minutes 1960 (note 442 above), p.2

⁶²⁴ Minutes September 1978 (note 612 above), p.2

⁶²⁵ White 1976 (note 575 above), p.3.

⁶²⁶ AGM and Committee Meeting 21st September 1987, London, GTA Archive, p.4.

or potential visitors through digital media, and it recently advanced to a new stage with the launch of The Prayer Partner Network in June 2016, an enterprise by the CEO Stephen Bridge. The aim was to establish a worldwide continuous 24/7 prayer support network for the ministry of the Garden Tomb, so that “every visitor to the Garden Tomb will be touched and changed by the Witness and Worship they experience here in the garden.” Through the website, visitors are invited to commit to praying weekly during 15-minute prayer slots, and to pray “for the ministry of the Garden Tomb as we seek to introduce people to Jesus the Messiah and His victory revealed in the cross and resurrection. Pray that we will be effective and faithful in declaring Christ crucified and risen.”⁶²⁷

C.1.3 From Anglo-centric to Multicultural Organization

The “Red Book” of 1967 asserted regarding the non-affiliated nature of the organization, in spite of its Anglican origin: “Whilst the lead for it purchase and greater part of the money raised came from members of the Church of England yet at all times membership of the Association has been open to all Christians and the committee has been inter-denominational.”⁶²⁸ For many years, however, very few foreigners had the chance to take an active role as committee or staff members. Applications to work for the Association, such as Mrs. Duce’s of St. Petersburg, Florida, who offered her help in Jerusalem were declined with no explanation.⁶²⁹ Almost a decade later, the committee seemed to have been more receptive to applications from abroad: “Allison Bartlett- a new Zealander [...] had offered her services [...] this was approved.”⁶³⁰

Within this decade, new tendencies and needs required changes in diversity and volume of the staff. But it was mainly the new influential warden, Van der Hoeven, who contributed to the new multicultural trend. Until 1967, the staff and Garden management were mainly British, with the exceptions of the Scandinavian wardens, Peder Beckholdt and Karl von Lehnsburg, and the Palestinian warden, Solomon Mattar. In 1967, following Mattar’s death, another Palestinian, Sahhar, took the

⁶²⁷ S. Bridge, “Garden Tomb Newsletter”, June 2016, <http://www.gardentomb.com/news/56/>, Accessed 13 June 2016; “Pray for the Garden Tomb”, <http://new.gardentomb.org/pray-for-the-garden-tomb/>, Accessed 13 June 2016.

⁶²⁸ Red Book 1967 (note 11 above), p.23.

⁶²⁹ Minutes of the Sub-Committee 22nd July 1968.

⁶³⁰ Minutes January 1977 (note 576 above), p.3

position of the warden, but his tenure last only one year.

The next foreign warden was Van der Hoeven, who assumed his office on March 1, 1968. Not only was he a Dutch warden, but the staff he appointed were also mainly from his own people and his Arab wife. The new staff composition was willingly accepted by the committee, which realized that the Garden's guidance now appealed to a larger variety of languages, including Dutch, German, French, Arabic, and even Hebrew, since Van der Hoeven had started to learn Hebrew. This change had a positive effect on the growing number of tourists to the site.⁶³¹ It seems that Van der Hoeven arrived just in time to handle the emerging tendencies of tourism.

So salient was this initiative that "in the Church Times the GT was said to be maintained by the Dutch Reform Church!"⁶³² It was a first step in widening the cultural background of staff members. From now on, the staff became increasingly multicultural, drifting away from the British origins of the founders.

In 1976, two years after Van der Hoeven's departure, the imprint of his Dutch staff was still discernable. Apart from the Dobbie couple, there was a Dutch couple, Mr. and Mrs. Schirmer, with their children living in the Garden, and the Dutch lady, Mrs. Bezemer. Mrs. Bartlett was a New Zealander, and Miss Forsyth was British.⁶³³

Interestingly, the British presence in the site began to drop, not only among staff members, but also among visitors to the Garden. White regretted that a new project called "Friends of the Garden," which aimed to involve more British people in the Garden's affairs, was not as successful as he had hoped for since the number of English visitors to the garden was ever-decreasing. "Many of the English groups who come out to the Holy Land did not come to the GT and many of the people from England who did visit the Garden, seemed to be least interested in its affairs and ministry."⁶³⁴

In the 1980's, despite a steady increase of visitors to the site, and the general tendency of multicultural staffing, Wilma van de Biesbos claimed to have been almost the only foreigner when she assumed her position in the Garden in 1985.

Interestingly, before she applied for the job she was told that many people who wished to work at the Garden had been denied since they were not British. She was

⁶³¹ Report 1967/1968 (note 506 above), p.2.

⁶³² White, pp.73-74.

⁶³³ White November 1976 (note 575 above), p.2.

⁶³⁴ White March 1977 (note 577 above), p.2.

not deterred since she was driven by a vision that sent her to deliver the message of resurrection to everyone. Incidentally, a British couple had just left for England at the same time and she was needed immediately. At the beginning, White told van de Biesbos that her office was only temporary since he was waiting for other people to arrive from England. Apparently, her ability to speak different languages, such as German and Hebrew, eventually convinced White to appoint her as a regular guide. De Biesbos sensed that her vision had come to be realized.⁶³⁵

Between 2005 and 2007 there has been an attempt to expand the association's composition outside of England's borders. Two American representatives were elected to serve as trustees of the GTA. They had constituted an American charity organization named The Friends of the Garden Tomb in Orlando, whose aim was to collect donations for the benefit of the Garden. During those three years, delegates of the association visited their American colleagues in the USA in order to examine together the possibilities of expanding the awareness of the Garden's activities among the American churches. However, the connection between the two bodies has now faded away and there are no signs of further mutual activity or any American members in the British association.⁶³⁶

Today, although the Garden might still be identified automatically as a British site, there is no particularly British character discernable in the Garden or its team. In fact, the only British officer is the CEO, Stephen Bridge. Other members of the permanent staff are local residents; some are Palestinian Christians or Messianic Jews, and others are foreign residents from Holland and elsewhere.⁶³⁷

Most of the staff members I interviewed assumed that the nature of management with its rules, good manners and its strict organization gives the garden its British tone. One of the oldest members welcomed Meryon, when he became the new CEO, with a warning about the different working norms in Israel compared to those of England. However, Meryon was determined to work with his British norms:

We are not trying to make it seem British, The fact that I am British and I bring my

⁶³⁵ W. van de Biesbos interviewed by M. Bitton, 22.06.10.

⁶³⁶ "The Garden Tomb (Jerusalem) Association, Report and Financial Statements Year ended: 31 December 2004 Charity no: 1004062", 22.6.05, GTA Archive, p.3; Report December 2005 (note 597 above), p.3; "The Garden Tomb (Jerusalem) Association, Report and Financial Statements Year ended: 31 December 2006 Charity no: 1004062", GTA Archive, p.3; Jack (note 609 above); Meryon interviewed by M. Bitton, 31.08.10.

⁶³⁷ S. Bridge, "Garden Tomb Newsletter", January 2016, <http://www.gardentomb.com/news/51/>, Accessed 2 May 2016.

years of British experience to organize the Garden [...] I don't think I have to accept lower standards because they are on the national culture here, in the way we perform in the garden. I talk in terms of planning, terms of behavior, respect.⁶³⁸

Although Meryon agreed that some people might still regard the place as British or Anglican, the religious or cultural affiliation is no longer relevant. His final assertion is that it is now much easier for the Garden not to be identified with any affiliation, which means that the Garden is much more accessible to everyone.⁶³⁹

This accessibility is apparent in the continuous growth of visitors from many different places, which must be responded to by the staff who welcome and guide them. This is mainly the assignment of the Garden's volunteers. While the resident staff are responsible for the Garden's souvenir shop, the Garden's maintenance and the carrying out of administrative and domestic functions, the volunteer couples usually serve as guides.⁶⁴⁰ The regular period of volunteer service is approximately two to three months, and many return each year for the same shift. The CEO must recruit them with the assistance of "skill hunters" from around the world.⁶⁴¹ The new volunteers undergo a training period of couple of weeks and are formally accepted if they are found eligible:

They have to be the kind of people that would be happy to get up at 06:50 in the morning to clean all the benches [...] sweep all the paths, so that at nine in the morning when they welcome the visitors the place would look smart [...] if someone tells me he does not like to clean toilets- I would not like him to come here.⁶⁴²

In 2010, most of the volunteers were senior couples from Britain who were not able to work 12 hours a day as required. Therefore, Meryon tried to locate younger people for shorter terms.⁶⁴³

Today, as Bridge reported in the newsletter published on the GT website, the composition of volunteers is much more universal; besides volunteers from Britain, there are couples from Sweden, Germany, Ireland, Belgium, South Africa, USA France and Singapore.⁶⁴⁴ It is an "ever-changing team of volunteers from around the world."⁶⁴⁵

⁶³⁸ Meryon (note 636 above).

⁶³⁹ Richard Meryon interviewed by M. Bitton, 07.11.11.

⁶⁴⁰ Report December 2005 (note 597 above), p.2.

⁶⁴¹ Jack (note 609 above); Meryon (note 616 and 636 above).

⁶⁴² Meryon (note 616 above).

⁶⁴³ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁴ S. Bridge, "Garden Tomb Newsletter", November 2015 <http://www.gardentomb.com/news/50/>, Accessed 2 May 2016.

⁶⁴⁵ Bridge, October 2015 (note 590 above).

The monthly newsletter provides another method to promote volunteering. A regular column provides details about the current volunteers and shares their personal experiences in the Garden. Relationships between the regular staff and the occasional volunteers have their benefits, but also their challenges: “The constant turnover of volunteers arriving and leaving brings new life and energy to the GT team, though it does mean that local staff are constantly saying ‘goodbye’ to friends.”⁶⁴⁶

Indeed, a new energy is being brought not only to the team, but also to the guiding routine. By assigning the privilege of guidance mainly to the volunteers, the visitors enjoy the fresh guidance of enthusiastic volunteer, instead of a regular staff member who might experience a burnout after too much guidance. The volunteers presented in the newsletter were grateful for the opportunity to serve God in the beautiful Garden and to touch the lives of so many people visiting the Garden. The Chinese couple Liang Fong and Sok Ching felt that their work in the Garden has contributed to the renewal of their spiritual life “as we read our Bibles with fresh insight. Our prayer is that we continue to be good ambassadors for Christ.”⁶⁴⁷ Fong and Ching represent the new generation of volunteers to the site that corresponds with the recent touristic tendency of visitors from China and South East Asia.

In light of the growth in Chinese tourism to the site, Bridge visited Singapore and Jakarta on May 2016 to establish partnerships with local churches who will assist recruiting and sending volunteers fluent in Mandarin and Indonesian.⁶⁴⁸

Ecumenism and non-affiliated organization

Since Mattar’s wardenship and the ACJ’s claims against his uncontrolled behavior and religious activity, the committee adopted a cautious approach towards any sign of radical views within the Garden staff. Anything that endangered the non-affiliated nature of the organization and insinuated an affinity to a certain movement or a radical idea was removed or denied access.

This approach was soon to be activated with Van der Hoeven, Mattar’s successor, who commenced running a parallel religious activity as a popular preacher around the world while managing the Garden. The first time that the committee discussed the issue was

⁶⁴⁶ Bridge, November 2015 (note 644 above).

⁶⁴⁷ Liang Fong & Sok Ching, “Garden Tomb Newsletter” January-March 2015, <http://www.gardentomb.com/news/45/>, Accessed 2 May 2016.

⁶⁴⁸ Bridge, June 2016 (note 627 above).

on May 1971, when the committee listened to one of his broadcast lectures: “the Warden had been quoted at length and the Committee was pleased to note that the importance of the Garden Tomb had been given appropriate comment.”⁶⁴⁹

At this point the committee did not find his external activity harmful for the Garden, but the committee continued to keep a watchful eye on the matter. At a meeting in March 1973 the committee discussed the warden’s request to take a leave for a preaching tour in the USA. He was granted leave and asked to arrange his journey via London. At the same meeting, the committee also faced new concerns regarding Col. Dobbie’s involvement with a missionary movement, a suspicion that also raised difficulties for Dobbie to obtain visa to Israel: “the secretary was asked to inform Col. Dobbie that the Committee is very concerned about this movement penetrating into the Garden and to get his reactions to this situation.”⁶⁵⁰ The warden was also instructed to pay attention to Dobbie’s activity and to be cautious about the penetration of the movement to the Garden.

In the following year the committee started taking stern measures to prevent preaching what it considered to be the wrong ideas in the Garden.

In February 1974, six years after his arrival, Van der Hoeven was regarded as an extremist who continued to spread his radical ideas while preaching in the Garden. The committee set a new rule regarding the matter: “It was generally agreed that any of the staff in Jerusalem must be restrained from expressing ‘extreme views’ when preaching in the Garden.”⁶⁵¹

At the same meeting an application from another extreme preacher was refused:

Kathleen Kuhlman, well-known in America for her ministry of healing, and the organisers of the conference had asked if she could be allowed to hold a service in the Garden. This request was given full consideration, but it was felt that the Garden should not be used for any purpose which might prove to be controversial.⁶⁵²

In July 1974, in view of the number of complaints received from visitors who spoke of unnecessary restrictions of charismatic emotionalism, Van der Hoeven was given a final warning: “We cannot allow you to use the Garden Tomb as a base for your mission.” The committee insisted that from now on “the only message to be proclaimed in the Garden is that Christ is Risen, triumphant over sin and death.”

⁶⁴⁹ Minutes May 1971 (note 451 above), p.2.

⁶⁵⁰ Minutes March 1973 (note 560 above), p.2.

⁶⁵¹ Minutes February 1974 (note 561 above), p.1.

⁶⁵² Ibid. p.2.

Van der Hoeven was invited to consider carefully whether he wished to continue in the routine work of being warden or to go on preaching tours.⁶⁵³ A few months later Van der Hoeven was discharged.⁶⁵⁴

The imprints left by Van der Hoeven have been previously discussed. It took a lot of time and efforts to return the staff's focus to the Garden and the Empty Tomb – the only idea that was considered legitimate in the site. In the early 1980s the last remnant of Van der Hoeven's legacy seemed to have been removed. It was the Dutchman Leonard Shcermer, who was originally employed by Van der Hoeven in the Garden and was also introduced by him to the Near East Mission on Mt. of Olives. As the committee noticed that Shcermer was getting more involved in the Mission, it was decided that "The Shcermers should be told gently to leave at the end of the year."⁶⁵⁵ Other cases over the years kept the committee on guard, including pressures created by American tele-evangelists who wished to use the empty tomb as a platform for their own publicity purposes.⁶⁵⁶ There was internal conflict about whether to join the Evangelical Alliance: "We have an evangelical basis of faith, we are directed and staffed by evangelicals, but we need to be cautious about being perceived as 'evangelical flag waves'." The final decision was "that we should be careful to retain the Garden's welcome to the whole of Christendom."⁶⁵⁷

There was another discussion about partnership in Relational Ministries that would "answer all the Garden's needs: financial, staff. Multi-lingual guides, as well as media." Eventually, the decision was that "We would need to resist any suggestion that 'partnership' conveyed preferential treatment for any particular group."⁶⁵⁸

In sub-chapter C.4 we will see how the insistence on the ecumenic principle worked for the benefit of the Garden at the geo-political level.

⁶⁵³ Minutes July 1974 (note 560 above), pp.2-3

⁶⁵⁴ Minutes September 1974 (note 565 above), p. 3.

⁶⁵⁵ Minutes April 1980 (note 586 above), p.3

⁶⁵⁶ AGM January 1987 (note 555 above), p.4.

⁶⁵⁷ Minutes of the Council Meeting of the Garden Tomb (Jerusalem) Association held at WCH 28th April 1995, GTA Archive, p.2.

⁶⁵⁸ Minutes March 2007 (note 589 above), p.3

C.2 Keeping it simple: Designing a Prayer Garden

Wells pronounced the essence of the Garden design principles along the last 50 years:

We try to create here a garden which is an oasis of peace and tranquility.

A place that is pleasant for meditation and prayer. We are a prayer Garden and a Resurrection Garden. There is a variety of worship spaces – for twenty people, for fifty people, for two hundred people.⁶⁵⁹

The following sub-chapter would explore the process of developing the Garden as a prayer garden in accordance with the growing tourism and visitors demands for prayer spaces and religious activity in the Garden.

C.2.1 Designing a Prayer Garden

The physical design of the place as capable of accommodating masses of visitors corresponded with the meaningful increase of tourism since the termination of Jordanian rule. As we have seen in chapter B, until the early 1960s spaces for gathering and prayers were not specifically designated for that cause.

Even in the very beginning of Van der Hoeven's wardenship in 1968, the sitting arrangements for the Easter service as reflected from plate (62) were still impermanent.



Plate 62: Van der Hoeven preaching in front of the Tomb, c. 1968, GTA Archive

However, in 1969 the Garden had already gone through a change and had become a garden for prayer. The photos of Micha Bar-Am, a well-known Israeli photographer who was assigned with a photography project in the Garden, reflect the innovations in the Garden's layout by that time.

The Garden no longer served just as a suitable background for the biblical events, encouraging the sacred associations towards the encounter with the Hill and the Tomb, as we saw in chapter B.2. It was now also serving the formalized arena in which the religious practices take place. It became an open-air cathedral, depending on the arrival

⁶⁵⁹ P. Wells, interviewed by M. Bitton, 06.04.09.

of the worshippers. This dependency is further enhanced when the visitors are absent, and the benches remained vacant.

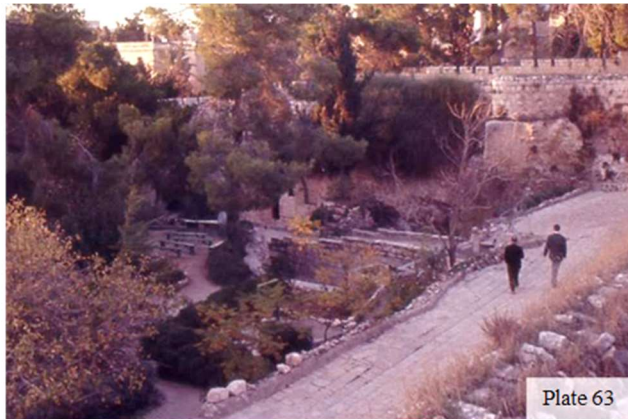


Plate 63-66: Micha Bar-Am, The Garden Tomb, Jerusalem, 1969, Bar-Am Photo Archive

We can find additional information for this process from the minutes of May 1971, in which we learn about a new stone pulpit that had been built above the Tomb yard: “The conduct of the service had been sited on an outcrop of masonry some twenty feet above the Tomb and to the side of it.”⁶⁶⁰ In the minutes from 1980, it was referred to as the “Easter Pulpit”.⁶⁶¹ The pulpit strategic location above the tomb yard receives a visual and symbolic intensification under the shade of an impressive cypress that creates a salient connection between heaven and earth—a sort of figurative “axis mundi” (plate 67).



Plate 67: The Easter pulpit under the cypress, Photo by M.Bitton 25.12.12

⁶⁶⁰ Minutes May 1971 (note 451 above), p.1.

⁶⁶¹ Minutes April 1980 (note 586), pp.1-2

A site plan to discuss the changes in the Garden layout through the years would have been very helpful. Unfortunately, until the mid-1970s there was no such plan, even though it was urgently required, as reported in the minutes of April 1974.⁶⁶² Two months later, in July, it was reported that the Garden Plan had been carried out at the cost of 5000 IL.⁶⁶³ The plan mentioned in the minutes could not be found, but another plan was presented in McBirnie's book published in 1975 (plate 68).⁶⁶⁴

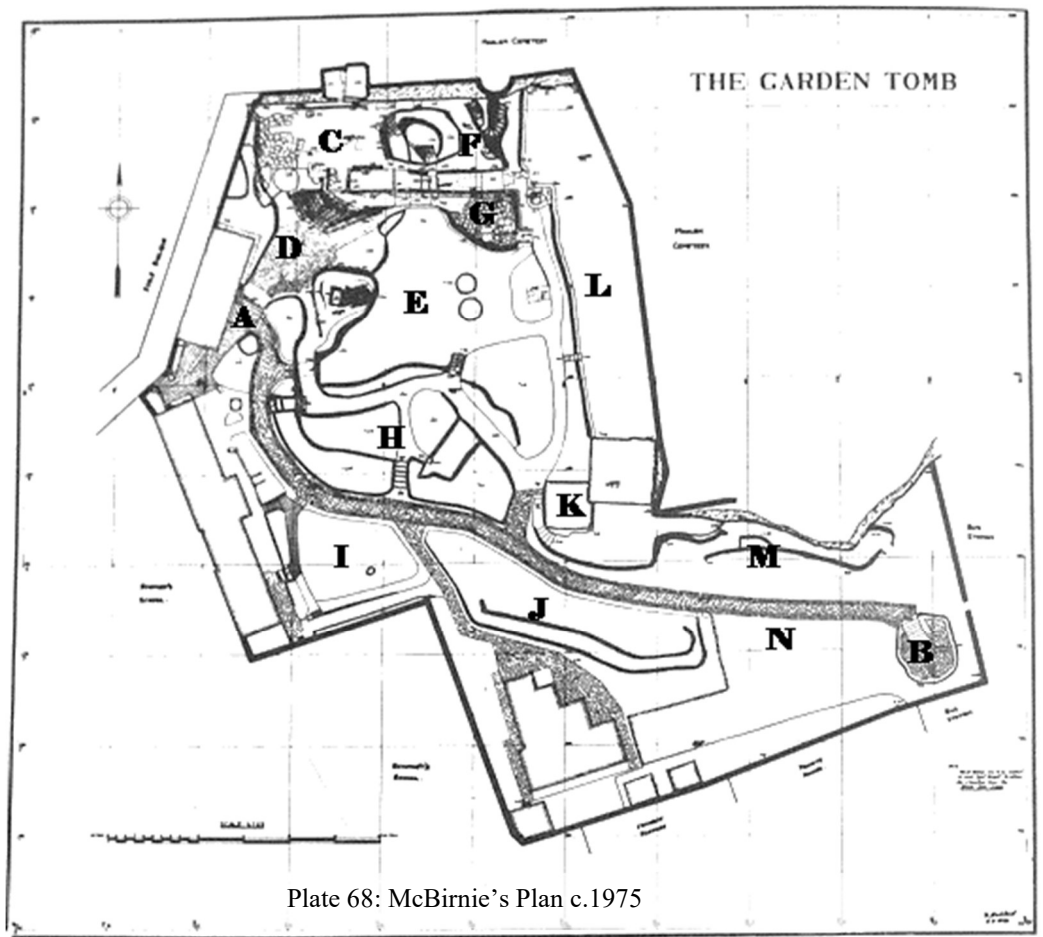


Plate 68: McBirnie's Plan c.1975

The spatial organization presented in the scheme has not been changed greatly to this day, a fact that facilitates the comprehension of the sight when compared to its present situation. The trail from the entrance (A) to the Hill's observation area (B) dominates the scheme with its determined lengthy line and a conspicuous texture that represents a stone paving lined with hedges. Another paved area (D) stretches to the northern part of the Garden, where it concludes with a staircase descending to the Tomb's court (C).

⁶⁶² Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 30th April 1974, London, GTA Archive, p.2.

⁶⁶³ Minutes July 1974 (note 560 above), p.2.

⁶⁶⁴ McBirnie, (note 10 above), 1975, p.168.

East of area D is an elevated platform that contains the central devotional space of the Garden (E). Since McBirnie's scheme does not specify areas for worship or other functions of the Garden spaces, we can only locate the areas appear in Bar-Am's pictures as spaces that accommodated religious services, in addition to the Tomb's court. White's scheme from the late 1980's (plate 69) approves this conjecture, since only these two spaces are marked as containing benches (areas D and E). However, all of the spaces specified in McBirnie's map are currently used as spaces for worship and provide a variety of spatial experiences for the different needs of the visitors, from the most secluded and immersed to the most exposed and elevated.

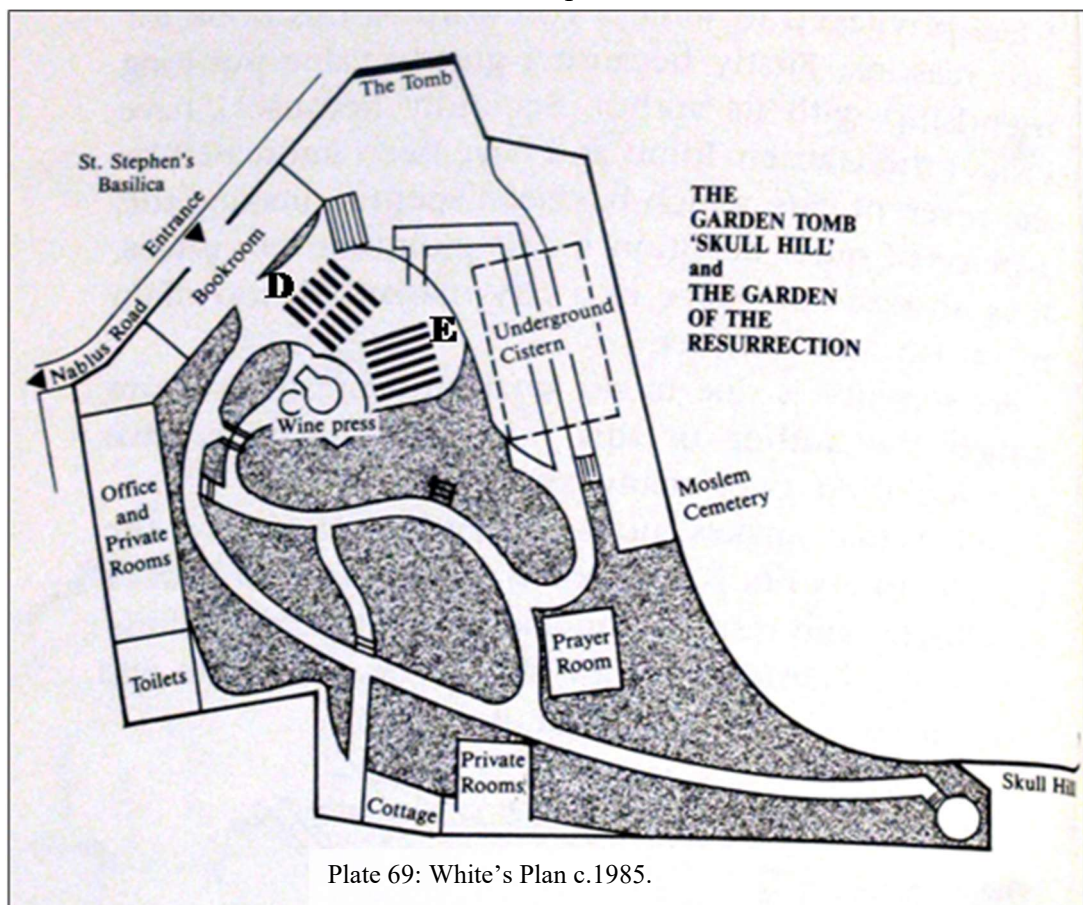


Plate 69: White's Plan c.1985.

White's plan is more schematic, but exhibits the same spatial organization presented in McBirnie's map. The main contribution of White's plan is in the clear indication of trails, passages, spaces, and buildings, which are located at the western and southern margins of the compound. The prayer room (K in plate 68) is a shelter roofed with cloth that serves visitors on rainy days, while another prayer room is also available under the cliff at area M (plate 68). These are the only two roofed spaces within the Garden, which enable its function along the winter time.

It can be concluded that in White's period, after a process of adjustment to the visitors' demands, the Garden had been grown into its formation and function as a Prayer Garden. The function of the Garden as accommodating devotional meetings and religious practices seems to have dictated the Garden design, and whenever increase in number of visitors had occurred, the Garden had to provide another space for meeting or prayer. This gradual and consistent process created a dilemma for the Garden designers: how to maintain a sense of garden, while constantly confiscating pieces from it for the benefit of another devotional space.

The whole experience in the site is primarily based on this unique quality of the place to provide this natural, blooming atmosphere. With every additional space with benches that is added, another bed of bushes and flowers has to be removed.

Already in the early 1980s, the conflict between the desired Garden atmosphere and the responsiveness to the visitors demands left its marks and was regarded as a paradox to be handled: "The Garden has a very special and emotional atmosphere. To preserve this I think we shall have to watch carefully to see that the Garden does not become overcrowded."⁶⁶⁵ The question of how to provide a sense of peacefulness in such a small plot that contains several hundreds of visitors daily became more and more challenging.

There has been a recent tendency to reclaim the Garden's centrality. The first moves in this new direction were seen in November 2015, when two mature olive trees were planted: "They are about 400 years of age and now hold pride of place in the centre of the garden."⁶⁶⁶ These two olives were added to three previous ones in the central platform, and together they formed the basis of a small olive grove. The next improvements were the replacement of the old plastic benches with stone seating. Apart from making maintenance easier, the aim was to increase seating capacity, providing enough seating for 350–400 people at the back of the garden. The aim of this step was to evacuate the Central Platform: "When this work is completed, the Centre Platform will rarely be used for meetings, but will be a place where visitors can enjoy 'The Olive Grove' - a quiet area at the heart of the garden."⁶⁶⁷

⁶⁶⁵ Duckworth (note 606 above).

⁶⁶⁶ Bridge November 2015 (note 644 above).

⁶⁶⁷ S. Bridge, "Garden Tomb Newsletter" February 2016, <http://www.gardentomb.com/news/52/>, Accessed 2 May 2016.

Although it was not mentioned by the staff, the symbolism of the olive tree as representing peace adds another layer to the tranquil and peaceful atmosphere of the Garden and to the pacifying agenda promoted by the Garden to be discussed in sub-chapter C.4.



In March 2016, an additional path was added in the olive grove to allow easy wheelchair access, and a few stone benches replaced the former plastic benches. With the completion of the peripheral seating arrangement, the olive grove has become a quiet corner where visitors can sit and view the empty tomb, “reflecting on the Love of God revealed in Christ Jesus”.⁶⁶⁸

Another reinforcement of the Garden’s wraparound was the construction of a pergola at the Garden’s entrance with vines and shrubs to provide attractive and shaded welcome from the business of Nablus Road to the quiet beauty of the Garden.



Plate 71: Peripheral sitting arrangement.
Pictured by M.B. 28.4.2016



Plate 72: New Entrance pergola, pictured by M.B. 28.4.2016.

⁶⁶⁸ S. Bridge, “Garden Tomb Newsletter” March 2016, <http://www.gardentomb.com/news/53/>, Accessed 2 May 2016.

C.2.2 Symbols and Meaning in Horticultural Design

Since the very beginning, the Garden design was organic, unintentional and integrated in the local context. Meanings and symbols behind the design remained latent and vague. From the day the Garden was founded, the British origin of the designers was not evident in their creation and today also any connection to the British heritage evades the eye. On the contrary, the staff members I was interviewing strived to explain the ideas behind the design as related much more to the local Mediterranean and biblical context than to a British or European context.

Peter Wells was very fond of colorful flowers and used to maintain the Garden's colorful appearance throughout the year. However, he avoided attributing special meaning to plants or Garden style: "Our purpose is not to create a botanical or a Biblical garden here [...]. Formerly people have tried to describe the place as an English Garden. I would prefer describing it a Mediterranean garden."⁶⁶⁹

The identification of the style as Mediterranean reflects Wells' view that the environmental conditions, not the designer, dictated the choice of plantation and design character. This reflection is also apparent in the view of the chief gardener, Rieki Neeb, who assigned to the Garden a local Mediterranean influence that is discernable through the local flora and the stone terraces.⁶⁷⁰ Unlike Wells, Neeb did regard the place as a biblical garden, similar to the identification stated in the Red Book from 1967.⁶⁷¹ The only European influence Neeb found in the Garden was the trimmed hedges on the trail's borders.⁶⁷²

Neeb who serves as the chief gardener since 1993, had the opportunity to work under two managers with different attitudes towards the gardening. Wells was more involved in her work and she had less freedom of operation. Contrary to Wells' claims, Neeb noted that Wells did assign a special symbolism to the plants; he used to ask for red flowers in front of the Skull Hill as a reminder of the blood shed by Jesus. In front of the Tomb he offered to plant white flowers as a symbol of the resurrection. Meryon, on the other hand, gave Neeb total autonomy in designing the Garden's plantation. Under Meryon, Neeb could express her personal taste; she generally preferred plainness and greenery so that visitors could concentrate on their prayers

⁶⁶⁹ Wells (note 659 above).

⁶⁷⁰ Neeb (note 367 above).

⁶⁷¹ See p.89 above.

⁶⁷² Neeb (note 367 above).

without being distracted by the colorful flowers. However, she did use some colors to distinguish between different spaces and different occasions. At the entrance, she used seasonal flowers to welcome the visitors with beauty and joyousness, while along the woody walking trail towards the Skull Hill the atmosphere pronounced by the monochromatic greenery is more calm and silent. At Christmas she used joyous colors to reflect Jesus' birth, and for Easter different colors express the crucifixion and the resurrection. Neeb's endemic and monochromatic approach is something of a novelty in recent years compared to the records of the previous four decades. Since the 1970s, the minutes have mentioned the importation of tulip bulbs from Holland before Easter. The demand for the high-quality Dutch bulbs involved the occasional hindrance: "We suffered disappointment over the bulbs for next Easter as the supply ordered from Holland failed to arrive in time and we had to make do at the last minute with some lower quality local bulbs."⁶⁷³ Another reference reveals a notable quantity of 1000 bulbs that had been ordered for Easter accompanied by a specialist Dutch gardener to plant them.⁶⁷⁴ Presumably it was not a coincidence that the botanical connection to Holland appeared under Van der Hoeven's wardenship. In the same period, other records also related to the use of colorful flowers in the Garden. In the late 1960s the report from Jerusalem described the Garden as abundant with flower beds: "The question was raised as to the present condition of the flowers and flower beds in the Garden, and the Rev. Colin Evans said these were looking very beautiful and were a credit to the Association."⁶⁷⁵ However, a few years later, an external counselor had said that the Garden was not colorful enough; this was the American Jewish landscape architect Irv Frumberg, who was planning the Hebrew University's Botanical Gardens in the 1970's.⁶⁷⁶ His recommendations were adopted by the committee: "Mr. Frumberg from the Botanical Gardens has recommended some pruning and much more color at each season to be introduced. The Committee approved expenditure of £700 to achieve this and it is hoped that even greater pleasure than ever will be given to those who visit."⁶⁷⁷

The recommendation of intensive colorful scenery given by the American Jewish

⁶⁷³ Report for December 1975 by the Hon. Administrator, GTA Archive, p.2.

⁶⁷⁴ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 11th September 1978, 59 Doughty street, p.3

⁶⁷⁵ Minutes of the AGM of the GTA, Jerusalem Chamber WA 23rd June 1969, p.2

⁶⁷⁶ M. Kroll, "One Man's Love Affair", Jewish Post, Indianapolis, Marion County, 13 April 1973, pp. 14-15, <https://newspapers.library.in.gov/cgi-bin/indiana?a=d&d=JPOST19730413-01.1.15>, Accessed 14 March 2016.

⁶⁷⁷ "D. Izzett's Report September 1973" in: Meryon 2014, (note 10 above), p.198.

designer matched the committee's idea of welcoming hospitality, and was therefore accepted entirely. Still, the demand for colorful flowers for every season was less suitable for the environmental conditions of the Holy Land in which the climate and the water supply prevented such scenery to thrive naturally. It is a scenery that is related more closely to Christian Paradisal ideas than to a biblical landscape.⁶⁷⁸

Even when realizing the inappropriate environmental conditions, the Garden staff seemed to be determined to have the Garden blossom with foreign flowers:

We are trying to grow some bright red bougainvillea in the Garden- normally this is too delicate to survive the rigors of a Jerusalem winter but we hope that the green fingers of Mrs. Johnston will work the miracle. There is not much colour in the Garden at this time of year and we are seeking to overcome this by growing flowers in pots which can then be moved around and sited as required. We are still very short of rain in the country and the Sea of Galilee is at its lowest in living memory.⁶⁷⁹

The visitors did not find the colorful decoration incompatible with the message of the place, compared to the criticism over the joyful flowers in the Garden of Gethsemane that contrasted the scene of Christ's Agony.⁶⁸⁰ On the contrary, as the minutes continued to claim that the flowery Garden enhanced the positive visit experience: "The garden remains pleasing to the eye and has a fair amount of colour for the time of year. This continues to attract favourable comments from the visitors."⁶⁸¹

It can be concluded that the selection of the Garden's plants in the last recent 50 years was based on two general approaches. One was the effort to assimilate with the local landscape to fit the image of a biblical site; the other was the intention to create a cheerful scenery to welcome visitors and celebrate the uplifting message of the Garden. The combination of these two approaches, which have not always gone hand in hand, has led to a rather eclectic planting arrangement that strives to express both worlds. The following paragraph will explore another level of meaning and symbols behind the Garden design in using or excluding artefacts to promote the message of the Garden.

⁶⁷⁸ For instance: "Since the earthly paradise could not but be a place of flowers that never fade- Marian symbolism takes the form of flowers that enable the viewer to pass in a moment from the time of sin to the time of grace." In: Jean Delumeau- *History of Paradise: The Garden of Eden in Myth and Tradition*, trans. Matthew O'Connell, Continuum, New York 1995, pp.124-125.

⁶⁷⁹ Report December 1975 (note 673 above), p.2.

⁶⁸⁰ M. Bitton, (note 99 chapter B), pp.36, 40, 47.

⁶⁸¹ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 11th September 1978, 59 Doughty street, p.3.

C.2.3 Reinforcing signs of authenticity

Since the main purpose of the GTA from the very beginning was to preserve the site from desecration and superstition, committee and staff members were constantly on the alert to any expression of behavior or element that would distract from the message of the resurrection.

Mattar's death in 1967 created an unintentional conflict of authenticity inside the Garden. Since he was buried inside the Garden, his tomb, as reported by Honorary Secretary Izzett, became a place of pilgrimage. The committee immediately took advantage of the Israeli authority's initiative to re-inter bodies that had been buried in incidental places during the June War, and arranged for the re-interment of Mattar in a Christian Protestant Cemetery.⁶⁸² This unexpected occurrence of fate served the committee in reinforcing the site's authenticity:

We felt strongly that there could only be one tomb, the Tomb, in the Garden. The grave of our respected warden we felt had to be, [...] in a Christian cemetery. [...] and there [at Baraka near Bethlehem] on 21st March of this year, Mr. Mattar was reinterred.⁶⁸³

Another case that stirred the committee's concern regarding the fragility of authenticity was introduced with a new session of archaeological digs in the area of the Skull Hill in 1991. It was carried out by the American amateur archaeologist Ron Wyatt, who claimed to have discovered dozens of biblical-related findings in many sites in the Middle East. In the Garden tomb he allegedly discovered the Ark of the Covenant. When visitors started to ask to see the cave of the Ark, the committee members denied Wyatt's claims and ceased the excavations:

Visitors had come into the Garden asking to see the cave where the Ark of the Covenant is purported have been found by Mr. Ron Wyatt. It was agreed that the team serving in the Garden should be told that no further digging would be undertaken, and that nothing of substance had been found.⁶⁸⁴

A different example of standing guard to protect the site's authenticity was discussed in 1991, when an American peace conference had requested permission to erect a 4.5 foot peace pole in the Garden: "The pole would carry a redwood sign 'may peace prevail on earth' in Hebrew, English, Arabic and Korean. It was agreed that this request should be refused."⁶⁸⁵

⁶⁸² Minutes of the Sub-Committee 22nd July 1968.

⁶⁸³ Report 1968/69 (note 554 above), p.2.

⁶⁸⁴ Minutes of the A.G.M. and Committee Meeting of GTA 3rd July 1991, WCH, GTA Archive, p.4.

⁶⁸⁵ Minutes of the Committee Meeting 23rd September 1991, WCH, GTA Archive, p.3.

On the surface, the American suggestion does not seem unreasonable.

In the light of the new geopolitical situation following the June War, the Garden staff promoted an agenda for peace among cultures and nations.⁶⁸⁶ A low headstone with a prayer for Peace in Jerusalem was placed near the entrance trail (plate 73).

Apparently, the totem presented by the Americans seemed excessively conspicuous in a place that aimed to focus on one message above all – the Empty Tomb and the resurrection. Its shape and size might have been placed this pole as another monument to be admired, a noticeable landmark that could not be avoided. It was consequently denied.

All three examples demonstrate the efforts to prevent the introduction of elements that carries myths and symbols foreign to the central message of the Garden; in other words, to protect the site from superstitions – the original goal of the Garden’s founders.

On the other hand, elements that might support the message of the Empty Tomb were reinforced. As seen in chapter B, the archaeological elements connected to agriculture and irrigation that were found in the Garden and were regarded as evidence of the site’s ancient existence as a garden were constantly repaired, renovated, and marked with signs. However, not all archaeological exhibits in the Garden were originally from there.

When the popular imagination demanded a rolling stone to complete the scene of the Tomb frontage and its orphaned ditch, a small round stone was placed to face the Tomb as a garden ornament. This stone, as claimed by White, is a first-century rolling stone that was brought to the Garden from a village near Ai.⁶⁸⁷



Plate 73: Rolling Stone placed against the Tomb's frontage. Pictured by M.B. 1.5.2013

⁶⁸⁶ This agenda would be discussed in sub-chapter C.4.

⁶⁸⁷ White (note 10 above), p.94.

Some tourists who revisited the GT were probably influenced by this suggestion, when they searched for the rolling stone after being convinced that they had already seen it by the tomb's mouth in their previous visit.⁶⁸⁸ In this case, the visualization of the story was more important than the authenticity of findings in the site.

In May 2012 another historical element was renovated. It was the Greek Cross from Byzantine period inside the Tomb's wall, which was repainted in red. After many years the cross was almost completely indiscernible, but it became the most salient vision inside the Tomb. Rosalind Meryon approved its repainting, but only to highlight the paint.⁶⁸⁹ However, this action was much more than a mere painting; it reinforced the early Christian presence in the place, which exhibits the religious importance of the Tomb in early times. It provided further evidence for the site's authenticity.

The Skull Hill, with its skull-like facade had served for many years as one of the strongest pieces of visual evidence of the site's authenticity. It was the most convincing element to combine between the imagination and the biblical text, although its archaeological credibility remained dubious. Since the skull face motivated the creation of the Garden Tomb in the first place, it has also gained historical importance as well. In the absence of any other substantial proof of the authenticity of the skull face, its main asset was its appearance.

Natural wearing out and, supposedly, the negative environmental effects of the bus station, had damaged its appearance through the years, and over the years another organ in the skull face had faded away. The council decided to employ an Israeli geologist, Professor Joseph Hatzor, to conduct an initial survey to examine the possibilities for stabilization and conservation of the Skull Hill.⁶⁹⁰ In the AGM held in Jerusalem in 2007, Professor Hatzor was invited to present his comprehensive report for the conservation of the Hill and the restoration and stabilization of the Skull Hill image.⁶⁹¹ Since then, no particular measure had been taken, and the situation continued deteriorating to the degree that contemporary face completely lacked any observable eye sockets. Additional discussions and proposals for restoration and stabilization have been continuously proposed, but no action has been taken.⁶⁹²

⁶⁸⁸ P. Ben-Shmuel interviewed by Michal Bitton 29.03.2012.

⁶⁸⁹ Meryon (note 287 above).

⁶⁹⁰ Minutes 2006 (note 615), p.2.

⁶⁹¹ Minutes 2007 (note 589 above), p.6

⁶⁹² P. Ben-Shmuel, interviewed by Michal Bitton 29.4.16.

Today, a great deal of imagination is required in order to observe the skull face. To help in this regard, a sign was erected on which a photo of the face from the 1880's when it was much clearer (plate 74).



Plate 74: Signpost on the Skull Face observation. 2007

Finally, we turn to the Empty Tomb itself – the focal point of the garden. In contrast to the situation in early decades, the tomb today provides a great challenge for the staff to handle the question of authenticity. The Israeli archaeologist, Gabriel Barkay, who researched the Tomb in the 1970's, dated the tomb to the Iron Age (the 8th–7th centuries BC); it therefore became clear that it could not have served as a newly hewn Tomb in Jesus' time.⁶⁹³ For that reason, staff members and most visitors do not currently regard the tomb as the authentic site in which Jesus was actually buried. However, this difficulty led to a redefinition of the Garden's philosophy, in which the authenticity of atmosphere became superior to the authenticity of place and physical elements. However, a wooden sign that was posted on the Tomb's door effectively signifies the transition from the authenticity of place to authenticity of atmosphere, from locality to universality: "He is not Here – For He is Risen" (Mt 28:6).

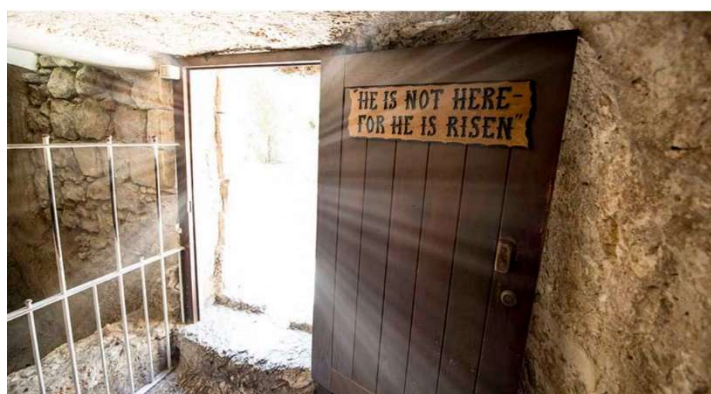


Plate 75: Sign on the Tomb's door: "He is not here, for he is risen"

⁶⁹³ Barkay, (note 9 above). However, recent investigation carried out by Riccardo Lufriani from the adjacent École Biblique reveals another possibility of dating the Tomb- for the Hellenistic period. Lufriani (note 119 above).

Richard Meryon explained this philosophy when he compared the Garden Tomb with a theme park in America where a replica of the Jerusalem Garden Tomb was built. In both cases, the authenticity of place is irrelevant. However, although the Garden in Jerusalem does not offer a certain identification of biblical occurrences, it does offer natural and agricultural elements that must have existed in the time of Jesus. The GT is not a mere movie set, and genuinely offers the correct vintage that could not be found elsewhere.⁶⁹⁴

C.3 Hosts and Guests: Visitor management

C.3.1 How to maintain a Peaceful Crowded Garden

The first original purpose of the GT's founders was to maintain the site as a sacred and quiet spot. This purpose has not changed throughout the years, despite the continual growth of visitors and demands for worship spaces. On the contrary, it has persistently remained an essential principle defining the Garden atmosphere. Thus, one of the biggest challenges for the GT members was how to maintain quietness and peacefulness in a Garden laden with many different groups that simultaneously conduct many different services.

Under the management of Van der Hoeven, the site became a loadstone for tourism and was materialized as a garden for devotional assemblies. As we saw in sub-chapter C.1, this success derived from Van der Hoeven's charisma, combined with the inclining tendency of tourism to Israel since the late 1960s. In the Garden, Van der Hoeven started his preaching career and "spoke to thousands upon thousands of people at the site of the Empty Tomb."⁶⁹⁵ Surprisingly, as noted by the committee, those thousands of visitors did not suffer from deteriorating hospitality: "When one remembers that on Easter Day, the number of visitors was 2,300 and that on other days at that time of the year the number of visitors has been almost as great, one realizes that it is truly remarkable that no complaint about being even indifferently received has ever reached us."⁶⁹⁶ Izzett's insight about Van der Hoeven coping with the crowd reveals the secret ingredient that pacified the crowded-but-peaceful Garden paradox: a personal welcome to each visitor.

⁶⁹⁴ Meryon (note 616 above).

⁶⁹⁵ ICZC website (note 567 above).

⁶⁹⁶ Report 1968/69 (note 554 above), p.1

It appears that Mattar was the first warden to set an example of such hospitality. Many records, some of which have already been mentioned in chapter B, described Mattar's impeccable hospitality that had provided him with a great deal of appreciation and loyalty, both among visitors and the committee. After his demise, Sigfrid Proft, who served as Mattar's staff member, was invited to London to share her memories from Mattar's last days in the Garden. She described his hospitality as the most salient character of his wardenship: "He always made everyone welcome at the Garden and was most kind and helpful, despite the fact that the work could be very tiring."⁶⁹⁷ Such hospitality, led by Mattar and Van der Hoeven, and adopted by their successors, had to be accompanied with rules and regulations to assist controlling the ever-growing number of visitors.

Since the beginning of the 1980s, while facing a wider range of behaviors and religious displays, committee and staff began acquiring new managing rules:

Group of half-drunk south Africans, coming straight to the Garden after an all-night party. Then there were large parties of children and tourists from the Cruise Ships. But the most difficult and re-curring cases had been those of charismatic groups, mostly from U.S.A. whose leaders asked to have a Communion Service at the Garden. Some of these Services ended up in distressing scenes of mass hysteria! There had also been complaints from the neighboring Schmidt's Girls College about the noise in the Garden.⁶⁹⁸

It was not only that the Garden, in White's description, was far from providing quietness and peacefulness to his visitors, it was also turned into a noisy disturbance for its neighbors. To cope with this, the staff had to introduce certain regulations, such as: "restricting the number of Communicants at such service to 150, and to allow Communion Services only early in the morning, when it would not disturb and upset the many other visitors to the Garden."⁶⁹⁹

In the mid-1990s, Michael Tupper, the Garden's chaplain, suggested booking for groups in order to learn in advance the groups' characters and motives and to filter undesired occurrences:

Busy or not busy, there is constant need for watchfulness that the Garden is not exploited by commercial interests of groups who take advantage of free admission and excellent facilities without honouring the Risen Christ. I welcome the idea of

⁶⁹⁷ Minutes June 1968 (note 557 above), pp.2-3.

⁶⁹⁸ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 8th November 1983, 59 Doughty street, p.3

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid.

compulsory booking for all groups.⁷⁰⁰

The booking, which became the norm following Tupper's suggestion, also served to regulate number of visitors in each hour so that the Garden would not be overcrowded. In the eyes of Richard Meryon, a proper experience in the Garden cannot be achieved without regulation of visitors' quantity. The Garden already receives as much as a quarter of a million guests annually, but there should be no encouragement to exceed these numbers: "It is not Disney World, we want everyone will have the best experience. We work very hard on building that experience, we are not searching for additional money, but to provide a most spiritual experience."⁷⁰¹ In the second interview, Meryon again chose Disney World as the antagonist to exemplify how a place with a potential to become vulgar is carefully maintained behind the scenes to provide peaceful atmosphere:

It is actually working like a Swiss clock so to get the best possible experience, and it is not *balagan* [a mess in Hebrew] to organize in an invisible way, so when it is very busy it does not become like Disney World, it did not seem like there are 2000 people come here every day.⁷⁰²

The concern deduced from Meryon's words of being compared to commercial theme park as Disney World brings back to mind a similar concern expressed in the previous decades by the Committee's members who feared of being identified as creating another superstitious site. It also reflects Richard's awareness of religious theme parks that aim to represent Biblical events. He referred to such a theme park in America, in which was presented a replica of the GT. He mentioned this site with a comparison to the actual GT, which is different from that theme park in that it provides an authentic experience.⁷⁰³

Those who work behind the scenes (the regular staff and seasonal volunteers) not only have to maintain order and perform their routine tasks, but must also carry the Garden's peacefulness and hospitality with their bodies and faces, and it has to be done with honesty, with a sense of genuine feelings that are well established in their own relations with one another, with the view that the sympathy they share between them would reflect outwards to the visitors. Warden Bridge explained this inner logic:

⁷⁰⁰ M. Tupper, Jerusalem Report Dec-Jan 1995/6, GTA Archive, p.2.

⁷⁰¹ Meryon (note 616 above).

⁷⁰² Meryon (note 636 above).

⁷⁰³ Meryon (note 616 above); For further reading about Protestant themed sites also in the Holy Land see: Ron & Feldman 2009 (note 12 above).

“We want our love for one another to stand as a witness to visitors, including to the many local guides who bring groups to the Garden.”⁷⁰⁴



Plate 76: Staff welcome newlywed staff members: Cesar and Maria Fleitas.
In: Garden Tomb Newsletter April 2016

Meryon concluded: “This is the reason why we are standing at the gate to welcome people, we want to let them feel comfortable [...] to create a personal experience.”⁷⁰⁵

C.3.2 Guidance and Communication

The hospitality of the staff and the peaceful atmosphere provide the appropriate foundation to transmit the message of the Empty Tomb and the Risen Lord. The tours guided by the staff members are the most effective instrument with which to deliver this message and to ensure that no other message would penetrate the Garden walls. The guided tour serves as an educative instrument on the one hand, and a means to ensure that superstitions and false ideas would damage the site’s credibility. In light of past confrontations regarding radical and controversial ideas reflected in the Garden, the contemporary guided tour must ensure that all messages would abstain from inaccuracy and extremity.

For that reason, it became clear in the 1960s that the Garden could not afford a guidance of external guides who came with the groups. The first clash on the subject between Mattar and another tour guide was already mentioned in chapter B.

As warden, White made a great effort to prevent external guidance and to insist on the exclusiveness of guiding inside the Garden:

We have to be firm with those tour leaders who try to evade our privilege rule in order to give a personal explanation to their own group! In the routine of a tour of the Garden

⁷⁰⁴ Bridge, October 2015 (note 590).

⁷⁰⁵ Meryon (note 616 above).

our own guides do not manipulate the commentary for evangelistic purposes, but seek to relate the words of Scripture to the fact of the Empty Tomb and the Risen Lord.⁷⁰⁶ In the late 1970s, after the temperamental period led by enthusiastic and radical figures, the nature of guidance that was sought for was the moderate one. Major Saunders, with all the difficulties that overclouded his leadership, was appreciated for his guiding style:

The secretary replied that he was satisfied with Major Saunders' guiding performance as far as large groups were concerned. His approach was factual, and he was less inclined to delay visitors by 'sermonizing', as was done by some of the staff.⁷⁰⁷

At the end of the 1980s, the committee set a list of rules for the Garden guides in order to provide them with precise procedures. In the minutes from February 1989, the committee discussed the level of rigidity that should be assigned to those rules: "all Garden Tomb guides should be kept informed of any changes in 'local rules'. Yet, There was a case for flexibility and discretion according to the circumstances."⁷⁰⁸

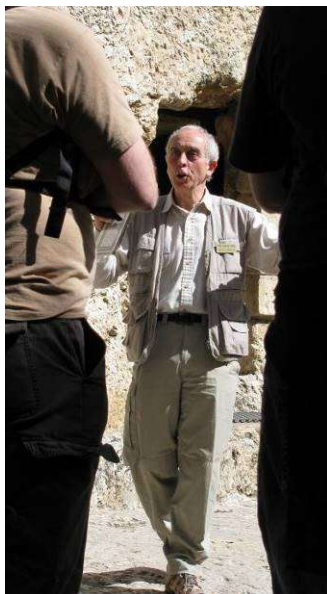


Plate 77: Volunteers guiding in front of the Tomb and the Skull Face. Photo by M.Bitton 6.3.09

Another measure to increase efficiency of guidance was the use of multiple languages: the appeal to each group's native tongue would not only provide personal attention, but also increase absorption of the Garden messages. The importance of multilingual guidance was stressed since the beginning of Van der Hoeven's wardenship, when it was realized that the new staff could guide in a large number of

⁷⁰⁶ White (note 10 above), p.67.

⁷⁰⁷ Minutes February 1979 (note 605 above), p.2.

⁷⁰⁸ Minutes of Committee Meeting of GTA 8th February 1989, WCH, GTA Archive, p.2.

languages: “English, German, Dutch, French and Arabic speaking visitors can now hear the story in their own tongue and Mr van der Hoeven is now learning Hebrew so that he can properly care for Israeli visitors.”⁷⁰⁹ In 1974, a new dimension of guidance was introduced into the Garden with the use of media equipment as additional auxiliary to transmit the message of the Garden. The first example for this tendency was the “do-it-yourself” guide: a tour with radio-tape that had a description of the Garden in German, Swedish, and Finnish.⁷¹⁰ This technological initiative corresponded with a new global trend of the last several decades in which the desire for multisensory experience introduced the techniques of Western mass culture into Protestant worship.⁷¹¹

Since the launch of this initiative, other suggestions for the use of media equipment and technology were discussed and raised quite a dilemma for the committee, who generally strove for simplicity and conservation and was not eager to introduce the hallmarks of modernization into the Garden. Bishop Hudson was a salient supporter of the new technological trend. In 1979, after returning from a tour in the US, the bishop suggested introducing an evening exhibition of “son et lumiere” (a sound and light show) at the Garden Tomb to contemplate the story of the resurrection. He had met with American Christian groups who were willing to finance such an event and assist with specialists to install and run it for three months each summer. The American offer was received by the bishop as an opportunity that must be considered positively: “While we own the Garden, it belongs to the world. If there is anything else that we should do, we [...] should do it, obviously, with proper safeguards.”⁷¹² The committee, however, did not rush to approve this suggestion. Besides the obvious considerations regarding the additional burden on the staff, it was felt that this initiative might jeopardize the already-threatened peaceful nature of the Garden. However, the committee also recognized its benefits as a useful tool in transmitting the story and decided to continue exploring the possibilities.⁷¹³

Apparently, this innovative idea did not come into realization, but a few years later, in 1986, a less radical technology was put into use to guide the visitors from afar:

⁷⁰⁹ Report 1967/1968 (note 506 above), p.2.

⁷¹⁰ Minutes July 1974 (note 560 above), p.2.

⁷¹¹ Ron & Feldman 2009 (note 12 above), p.209.

⁷¹² Minutes February 1979 (note 605 above), p.3.

⁷¹³ Ibid.

a video named “A Special Place” that told the story of the Garden.⁷¹⁴ Another method to maintain the interest of the potential visitors and donors is through the periodic newsletter that first emerged in July 1987 and was regarded as successful and helpful in terms of new members registered as “Friends of the Garden”.⁷¹⁵ Today, this newsletter is published on the GT website on a monthly basis and enables readers to track all recent developments and changes in the Garden. Since the early 2000s, the GT website became a powerful tool to share information and communicate with the visitors. Meryon, who recognized the great potential of this aid, promoted many plans to enlarge the use of multimedia and internet. When I interviewed him on August 2008, he was in the process of creating two films for the website. In one, he presented the site at the Garden entrance, and in the other, the audience at home was taken to a virtual guided tour. “One of my aims as the director of the Garden Tomb,” said Richard, “is not only to bring the word to the garden but to take the garden to the word through the internet.”⁷¹⁶

Another of Meryon’s initiatives was to create an audio guidance for visitors in their own language. His initial plan was to post audio instruments on poles in six positions in the Garden, but the high cost of that idea led to another solution that is now presented on the GT website: an audio guides of different locations in the Garden in 21 languages for the benefit of actual visitors or for “visitors” at home, who can simply close their eyes and imagine they are at the Garden:

Why not take a stroll around the Garden Tomb, almost as if you were there yourself walking the paths along which Jesus might have been carried between his Crucifixion, Burial and Resurrection? [...] We trust this will inspire you both to discover more about the story of the Garden Tomb [...] and of course to be determined to visit the Garden Tomb when you next come to the Land of the Holy One.⁷¹⁷

Another use of the Internet initiated by Meryon was encourage visitors to write their positive visiting experiences in the digital guest book and to occasionally publish some of these experiences on the website. He also planned to build a multimedia center inside the Garden in which the “bored husbands” could enjoy movies about the Garden and archive exhibitions.⁷¹⁸ This plan, which has not yet come to fruition,

⁷¹⁴ [Peter Wells] Secretary's Newsletter July 1987, p.2.

⁷¹⁵ AGM September 1987 (note 626 above), p.2.

⁷¹⁶ Meryon (note 636 above).

⁷¹⁷ “Audio Guides”, <http://www.gardentomb.com/guide/>, Accessed 7 Oct. 2016.

⁷¹⁸ Meryon (note 636 above).

reflects the ideological persistence on every soul that enters the Garden and regards everyone as holding the potential to become a better Christian or to return to faith. The fixed route of the tour also helps promote the message in the most efficient way, as described in the GT Newsletter from October 2015:

“Each tour ends at the Empty Tomb which stands as a memorial to the power and love of God expressed in the death and resurrection of King Jesus.”⁷¹⁹

The final cause that the Garden staff wish to achieve at the end of visit is to strengthen faith among visitors. Thus, repentance and proselytism in the Garden or as a result of visiting the Garden is the biggest achievement that a guide in the Garden could expect: “to see those who do not know the ‘Good News’ coming to Faith and Salvation. We long to see these things happening on a daily basis.”⁷²⁰

Guides are occasionally rewarded for their endeavors, such as the following fortunate volunteer: “Pray for changed lives. Only last Friday a volunteer had the privilege of leading 3 Chinese visitors to the Lord at the end of the tour. May this happen with all our guides, every day!”⁷²¹

C.3.3 Services and Events in the Prayer Garden

Easter Sunday Service

The central and most important event celebrated in the Garden is Easter Sunday, when time and place integrate to pronounce the miracle of the resurrection. Easter services in different languages take place in the Garden since the wardenship of Van der Hoeven.⁷²²

The increasing number of participants has created ever-larger challenges from year to year to maintain an honorable and effective experience to all attendees.

From the minutes we can learn about the main aspects that had been occupying the committee members regarding the management of Easter services over the years. The chorus singing, as a proceeding that accompanied the whole service and invited the active participation of the audience, was an important subject that was discussed regularly at the committee meetings. In the lack of other artistic expressions to attract

⁷¹⁹ Bridge, October 2015 (note 590 above).

⁷²⁰ S. Bridge, February 2016 (note 667 above).

⁷²¹ Bridge, October 2015 (note 590).

⁷²² Report 1968/69 (note 554 above), p.2; Minutes of the Sub-Committee 3rd May 1971, London, GTA Archive, pp.1-2.

the focus of the believers in the Protestant ethos, playing music and singing the familiar hymns became an essential part of the Easter service.

Since the 1930s there are records of chorus singing that accompanied the service, as mentioned in chapter B. Since Mattar's wardenship, a new custom was led to invite the chorus of the Blind Girls from Helen Keller House in Bethlehem.⁷²³ This custom was continuously reported into the 1970s, with a report that the Blind Girls had received half of the donations that had been collected.⁷²⁴ This generous allocation of resources further enhanced the central role the chorus had in the service.

In the 1980s, the cooperation with the Blind Girls' choir was no longer apparent and other choirs received the opportunity to elevate the spirit in this important event, although they did not always gain the appreciation of the committee members that discussed their performances from afar: "at least 2000 attended [...] the visiting choir did not enhance the 'dawn' with an overlong excerpt from Brahms's Requiem! It was the wrong music at the wrong time in the wrong place."⁷²⁵ In contemporary Easter services, a professional devotional band has performed in the Tomb yard to celebrate the resurrection.⁷²⁶ It is an energetic and lively performance that keeps the audience of believers singing and dancing (plate 78). It is the modern way of worship, as explained to me by Meryon, that aims to attract younger believers.⁷²⁷

Other than the quality and harmony that the music ought to provide, the message of the sermon speakers had to be delivered clearly to all present. Mr. Duckworth, a committee member who visited Jerusalem in Easter, delivered his impressions from the service. Like other members in previous years, he felt that the sermon had been too long for an outdoor service. He was also realized that not everyone present was able to see the preacher. White explained the difficulties connected with finding a suitable place for the preacher and claimed that the "Easter Pulpit" was the only spot from which a speaker could be seen by the majority of attendees (plate 79).

He stressed that the speaker's voice and messages, rather than his sight, had to be transmissible to all attendees with the aid of amplifiers.⁷²⁸

⁷²³ Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held in Jerusalem Chamber, WA, 15 October, 1959, GTA Archive, p.4; Minutes of the sub-Committee Meeting of the GTA 15th April 1964, GTA Archive, p.2.

⁷²⁴ Report 1968/69 (note 554 above), p.2.

⁷²⁵ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 21st June 1984, London, GTA Archive, p.4.

⁷²⁶ Participated observations by M. Bitton: April 2009; April 2010; April 2011; April 2012.

⁷²⁷ Meryon interview 21.6.10;

⁷²⁸ Minutes April 1980 (note 586 above), pp.1-2.



Plate 78: Chorus performing on Easter.
Photo by M.Bitton 24.4.11



Plate 79: Easter in the Garden Tomb.
Photo by M.Bitton 24.4.11

Christmas

The celebration of the Christmas service in the Garden is a rather recent phenomenon. Until the late 1980s, no special sermon was performed in the Garden in Christmas. The Minutes from December 1975 reported that 1000 visitors visited the Garden on Christmas although no service was held.⁷²⁹

It was only in February 1989 that a Christmas service was introduced into the Garden. The Minutes reported on the Christmas service, which was held in the chapel due to rain.⁷³⁰ The number of attendees was much lower than the number of regular Easter attendees. In December 1995, for instance, despite warm sunshine allowing for an open-air service, only 150 people attended the service.⁷³¹



Plate 80: Christmas staff chorus. Photo by M.Bitton 25.12.12



Plate 81: Christmas in the GT. Photo by M.Bitton 25.12.12

The contemporary Christmas services are less energetic and hectic than the Easter services.⁷³² The atmosphere is generally calmer and quieter, and there are fewer participants, with apparent dominance of Nigerian believers. The chorus in the service

⁷²⁹ Report December 1975 (note 673 above), p.1

⁷³⁰ Minutes of Committee Meeting of GTA 8th February 1989, WCH, GTA Archive, p.3.

⁷³¹ Tupper (note 700 above), p.2.

⁷³² Participated observations by M. Bitton: December 2010; December 2012.

of December 2012 (plate 80) was combined of staff members, including Neeb the gardener, who played the guitar and sang. This improvised amateur chorus assigned to the whole event a sense of informality and homeliness, as opposed to the professional Easter event.

Regular Sunday Service

The approved occasional services that had been held since 1954 turned into regular weekly services in 1967 and were held continuously until 2001.

Mattar was mentioned in chapter B as the person who initiated a weekly Sunday service inside the Garden in 1954, and managed to regularly hold it despite the hesitation of the committee members. However, when Van der Hoeven suggested reintroducing the service into the Garden, it was presented as his own initiative and was accepted by the committee with a riper attentiveness to visitors' demands:

An innovation of Mr. van der Hoeven has been, with the approval of the Committee, the provision of a short service in English on Sunday mornings in the Garden. This informal hour of worship meets the needs of many visitors to Jerusalem and indeed of some residents for whom this type of service is not otherwise available.⁷³³

In this report the committee expressed its awareness not only of needs of visitors, but also those of local believers, for whom regular Sunday Service might provide an answer to their routine religious life.

Nevertheless, as reported by White in 1976, the Sunday service seemed to remain the realm of the impermanent audience:

The 9.a.m. Service on Sunday mornings in English is going very well. Every Sunday I ask for a show of hands of those who are visitors to Jerusalem, and without exception every Sunday about 95% are visitors to Jerusalem, that is people who will probably in Jerusalem only one Sunday in their lives.⁷³⁴

The committee also expressed a sensitive observation in choosing the right chaplain to conduct the services in accordance with the audience composition:

Most members felt that in view of the type of congregation present at the Sunday Services in the Garden, someone like this couple from the other side of the Atlantic [Rev. & Mrs. A. Thom from the Baptist Church in the U.S.A] would be very suitable.⁷³⁵

⁷³³ Report 1968/69 (note 554 above), p.2.

⁷³⁴ White Report August 1976 (note 573 above), p.1.

⁷³⁵ Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 2nd May 1979, London, GTA Archive, p.3.

Like the Easter service, the regular Sunday service was accompanied by music. In his report from November 1976, White emphasized that the “music plays an important part in our Worship.”⁷³⁶ Two women, one of them was White’s wife Gladys, played the piano and the organ.⁷³⁷ From Bar Am’s photo of 1969, we learn about the challenge in using electronic musical instrument such as the organ: the organ was played inside the entrance building by the open window, so that the sounds of music would flow into the service at the Garden. (plate 82).



Plate 82: M. Bar-Am, Piano player
at the Sunday Service Jerusalem, 1969,
Bar-Am Photo Archive

As we learn from another record of the late 1980s, it was not easy to achieve the ideal musical experience in the conditions of the outdoor service; a fact that caused some discontentment:

“The Sunday morning service was an area of concern: [...] some visitors were possibly disappointed by the difficulties of open-air worship. the chairman asked Mr. Wells to research ways in which the musical leadership could be improved.”⁷³⁸

Still, despite the challenges of performing an outdoor service along the year with different weather conditions and other inconveniences, the regular Sunday service continued to take place successfully in the Garden until the year 2000.

According to Victor Jack, the service was suspended after the Intifada of 2000 due to a very low response from participants.⁷³⁹ The decision was also made as a cost-cutting measure and it allowed sabbatical rest for the volunteers and the garden itself.⁷⁴⁰

However, Richard Meryon presented the ideological shift behind this move. In his view, the place is not intended to function as a church with daily obligations to the

⁷³⁶ White November 1976 (note 575 above), p.2.

⁷³⁷ Ibid.

⁷³⁸ AGM September 1987 (note 626 above), p.2

⁷³⁹ Jack (note 609 above).

⁷⁴⁰ Meryon 2014 (note 10 above), pp. 153, 244.

local community, and there is therefore no need to hold such routine of weekly services and no intention to renew them either.⁷⁴¹ In the eyes of my anonymous interviewee, an American Evangelical woman who lived on Nablus Road, those regular services were greatly missed. She complained about the situation of the neighborhood and was hoping for the renewal of the regular Sunday service: “It would encourage the community [The Sunday service]. I believe the community here is oppressed- we hear the helicopters, the Muslim shouts, the cars horn, and I cannot sleep at night.”⁷⁴² The GT’s awareness of its neighbors and their needs is addressed in the following sub-chapter.

C.4 Walls and Bridges: Relations with the Neighborhood

After the Six-Day War, the site’s location became politically challenging. It was found at the edges of the Muslim neighborhood, on the border line between the Eastern Arab and the Western Jewish parts of the city, and thus became exposed to the violent expressions of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Additionally, its vicinity to other Christian institutes on Nablus Road and the Old City placed it at the frontline of inter-denominational debate. Yet, instead of shutting behind doors guarded from this hostile environment, the management chose at a very early stage to reach out for peace towards its various neighbors. The site’s survival strategy, which evolved along the years, was to represent itself as neutral and to welcome all nations and faiths to meet inside its walls. For that cause, the narrative of the resurrection served as a powerful measure to transcend the charged physical boundaries of the locality and the national state and to transfer universal messages of peace and reconciliation.

C.4.1 Coping with Geopolitical Conflicts

Despite the unfortunate first encounter of the Israeli army with the Garden Tomb in 1967, which cost the life of the Garden’s warden, the committee did not bear a grudge against Israeli authorities and promoted a welcoming attitude towards the new regime. From Izzett’s report of June 1968 we learn that the committee’s willingness to establish a good relationship with the Israeli Government was rewarded with an immediate official recognition: “Subsequently a description of the Garden Tomb was

⁷⁴¹ Meryon (note 616 above).

⁷⁴² Anonymous, Interviewed by M. Bitton 15.11.10.

included in the new official guide for visitors to Jerusalem issued by the Israeli authorities.”⁷⁴³ In 1970, another Israeli gesture of recognition was made when the lane leading from Nablus Road to the GT was named after Conrad Schick, a leading figure in GT’s history and of the archaeology and architecture of 19th century Jerusalem. White admirably mentioned the efficiency of the mayor, Teddy Kollek, who replaced the new street sign within a week following a spelling mistake that was reported by the GT.⁷⁴⁴ A few years later, Mayor Kollek continued demonstrating an amicable attitude towards the GT when 12–20 tons of new earth was being sent by the him to the Garden.⁷⁴⁵

The war was over, and a new era of friendly cooperation with the Israeli Authorities seemed to be standing at the gate; however, the Garden’s environment was not immersed in peacefulness. Occasional episodes of violence and security instability in the area affected the number of visitors to the site. The report on Easter 1969 described a low attendance due to the security situation: “The number (400) was disappointingly lower than on many previous occasions, which was undoubtedly due to the recent terrorist incidents arising out of the tense and unhappy political situation in the middle East.”⁷⁴⁶

Lower visitor number continued to mark tense periods along the years, and challenged the site’s financial stability and staff’s personal security.

According to Meryon’s estimation, 98 percent of the GT’s income is gained from visitors’ donations or acquisitions in the Garden’s shop, a situation that dictates the absolute financial dependence of the Garden upon tourism.⁷⁴⁷ In times of lower income from the visitors, the reserves from better touristic seasons should support the site. However, in the absence of such reserves, the only option is to appeal for assistance from the public.⁷⁴⁸ An interesting example for such an appeal was published on the Internet in May 2002 in the middle of the second Intifada, which had caused a great decrease of tourism and a heavy financial loss to the Garden. The appeal was not initiated by the GTA but by Chuck Missler, an American evangelical author who published it under the title *Tomb for Sale*, in which he implored the public

⁷⁴³ Report 1967/1968 (note 506 above).

⁷⁴⁴ White (note 10 above), p.40.

⁷⁴⁵ Minutes February 1974 (note 561 above), p.1

⁷⁴⁶ Minutes June 1969 (note 559 above), p.2

⁷⁴⁷ Meryon (note 616 above); Meryon (note 636 above).

⁷⁴⁸ Jack (note 609 above).

“to render critical assistance and support to keep the doors of the Garden Tomb open and free until the Lord's return.”⁷⁴⁹

Such a reality was not unique among Christian sites in Jerusalem that suffered from the same circumstances. However, occasional expressions of violence in the neighborhood were not always just political. The combination of inferior social-economic situation and a general ignorance of Israeli authorities of crime in the border-line neighborhood sometimes lead to increased crime and social tension, as observed by White: “Our property has been subject to ‘break-ins’ and community members have lost wallets, passports and personal valuables.”⁷⁵⁰ As a result, Nablus Road’s potential for instable security is relatively high. In his report from November 1976, White expressed his concerns regarding the peripheral walls that were not sufficiently protected. He suggested: “broken glass or barbed wire be placed along certain vulnerable areas where young Arabs or others can get in without hindrance.”⁷⁵¹ It was not until 2006 that an adequate solution was found to protect the Garden from being invaded and security fences had been erected on the walls. Additionally, sprinklers had been placed on the fences to extinguish the fires that break out occasionally in the fields of the cemetery.⁷⁵²

Muslim and Christian neighbors that I interviewed shared their experiences as residents in this frontier neighborhood where police seldom interfere to prevent crime. Rafat, a steward of Sultan Suleiman Central Bus Station, below Skull Hill, referred to the drug and violence problems in the area. Every morning he found signs of drug use around the bus station, and also witnessed several fights and quarrels on a daily basis. “It is not a good neighborhood” he concluded.⁷⁵³



Plate 83: The Sultan Suleiman Central Bus Station, M.Bitton 22.03.2012

⁷⁴⁹ Chuck Missler, “a Tomb for Sale”, May 2002 <http://www.khouse.org/articles/2002/412/> , Accessed 16 June 2010.

⁷⁵⁰ White, p.76

⁷⁵¹ White Report November 1976 (note 575 above), p.1

⁷⁵² Report December 2006 (note 636 above), p.4; P. Ben-Shmuel interview 03.06.10; Minutes 2007 (note 589 above), p.5

⁷⁵³ Rafat interviewed by M.Bitton 08.11.10.

Samir and Muhamad, who run the Nablus Road Central Bus Station in front of the entrance alley to the Garden Tomb, also portrayed the neighborhood in an unflattering light. According to Samir, the adjacent police office was always empty.

Despite the importance of Nablus Road for tourism, police officers were not present on the street. There are many pickpockets and drug addicts on the street, who harass the tourists without hindrance. The nearby public lavatory became a hiding place for the drug addicts; the police know about it but do nothing, according to the interviewees.⁷⁵⁴ Muhamad reaffirmed Samir's description and added his own detailed account of the pickpocketing tourists on their way to the Garden Tomb.⁷⁵⁵



Plate 84: Nablus Road Central Bus Station, M. Bitton 15.08.2009



Plate 85: The ever-closed police office on Nablus Road, M. Bitton 30.12.2011

Another resident of Nablus Road (the anonymous woman) complained about the lack of police intervention to prevent crime and disorder on the street, particularly on Fridays, when the Muslims return inflamed from the prayer at Temple Mount. “This neighborhood is very important for Israel’s security, it is like the entrance gate to Israel, therefore it has to be watched over.”⁷⁵⁶

From the minutes of September 2006 we learn that, in the lack of police protection, the GTA decided to fix security camera at the junction between Nablus Road and Conrad Schick Lane. Still it was agreed that the Garden should not be held responsible for the expansions.

If, as was likely, neither the Municipality nor the national government would meet the cost, Mr. Wells would approach Smulik Smadja of SarEL [travel agency], since the new cameras would offer much needed protection for the tourists.⁷⁵⁷

The evidence of Sami Yagmoor, the souvenir vendor on Conrad Schick Lane since 1969, completes the picture of the “Wild East” in which the everyday citizen is

⁷⁵⁴ Samir interviewed by M. Bitton, 08.11.10

⁷⁵⁵ Muhamad interviewed by M. Bitton, 08.11.10

⁷⁵⁶ Anonymous (note 742 above).

⁷⁵⁷ Minutes 2006 (note 615 above), p.2.

compelled to take the law into his own hands. From Sami's testimonial, a unique apparatus of reciprocal relations had been created between him and the Garden. The Garden had accepted him as a legitimate and exclusive vendor in the lane for almost 50 years, without demanding any commission.



Plate 86: Sami keeps a watchful eye on the alley, M. Bitton 3.06.2010.

Sami rewards the Garden by keeping a watchful eye on mischievous youths who commit small crimes against the tourists: “I’m taking care for the land of the Garden Tomb. [...] like pick pockets boy, you know, robbers boys, people that are bothering the people here, I stop them [...] some boys they are following girls.”⁷⁵⁸

Nevertheless, the threatening environment has rarely caused severe harm, like the unfortunate case of April 1986 when a young tourist was murdered in the alley leading to the Garden's gate.

On the day following the murder, the tourist's friends demanded White to close the Garden for seven days of mourning since it was “the blood of a martyr”. White refused, claiming that the message of overpowering death through the resurrection was relevant more than ever, not a message that emphasized death.⁷⁵⁹

Sometimes, as rarely noted in the Minutes, the message of the resurrection was strong enough to attract courageous believers, even in periods of threatening terror. One such instance was the case reported in the minutes of April 1996:

The atmosphere was very tense and fearful for several days [...] even in spite of recent events our numbers remain higher than ever and last Saturday we had 2400 visitors.

Nearly 600 came to the Sunday service.⁷⁶⁰

On the other hand, even the quiet periods always seem to carry the latent potential to explode again. Some signs and monuments around the Garden invade its serenity and

⁷⁵⁸ Samir (Sami) Mohammad Yagmoor interview 02.06.10

⁷⁵⁹ White (note 10 above), pp.50-51.

⁷⁶⁰ Minutes of the Council Meeting of the GTA held at on 26th April 1996 at Shepherd's Gate, Guildford, Surrey, p.2.

continually remind visitors of the threats awaiting outside. The Ramadan Cannon, standing at the top of the Skull Hill in the Muslim Cemetery, carries such a reminder. It is an old cannon, a remnant from the British Mandate period. The custom of firing a cannon at the beginning and the end of the Ramadan fast was probably initiated in the late Ottoman period, and this specific cannon seem to have served serving since 1945 as the Ramadan Cannon.⁷⁶¹

Plate 87: The Ramadan Cannon, M.
Bitton 12.03.2009.
Notice also the safety fence with



White claimed that its efficiency was limited since the span of its shooting sound was limited to the neighborhood and was not heard in the main Arab quarter of Jerusalem, “but does promote shock to foreign tourists.”⁷⁶² White testified that over the years several letters on this matter were addressed to the Muslim leaders and to Jerusalem municipality, but have failed to produce any involvement. Finally: “Various irreligious plans, such as a possible midnight prowling round the graveyard to fill the gun barrel with concrete, have so far been suppressed!”⁷⁶³

Meryon described the inconvenience that the staff and volunteers who reside in the Garden have to experience when they reluctantly wake up to the cannon’s sound at 4:15 a.m. every morning. They also have to endure the second shooting at 7:15 p.m., which is followed by the hustle of the celebrations every evening. The roads are very busy, and access to the Garden is especially limited on Fridays, which delays the arrival of tourists.⁷⁶⁴ Yet, the physical inconveniences are only marginal to the mental affect caused by the Cannon. The tense atmosphere that Ramadan brings into the neighborhood exaggerates the gaps between the Garden to his Muslim neighbors, as apparent from Meryon's description:

⁷⁶¹ T. Powers, “Jerusalem’s Ramadan Cannon, Then & Now”, View from Jerusalem, July 23, 2013 <https://israelpalestineguide.wordpress.com/2013/07/23/jeruselems-ramadan-cannon-then-now/>, Accessed 26 Feb. 2016; Y. Ronen, “The Ramadan Cannon”, *Nature and Country*, May 1987, 294, http://snunit.k12.il/heb_journals/aretz/294027.html, [Hebrew], Accessed 18 June 2010.

⁷⁶² White (note 10 above), pp.87-88.

⁷⁶³ White (note 10 above), pp.87-88.

⁷⁶⁴ Meryon (note 636 above).

We are very confident that God protects us, and guides us, but we also very aware that Islam invoke all sorts of other spiritual forces, and Ramadan is the high season for that.

So we always aware what is happen here in the spiritual domain during the Ramadan.⁷⁶⁵

For Meryon, experiencing the month of Ramadan from a close distance seemed to have emphasized the distance between Christianity and Islam: “Judaism and Christianity serves the same God [...] Allah is not the same God.”⁷⁶⁶

However, the Ramadan Cannon is no longer seen from the Garden, since it is now concealed behind a new plain concrete around the Muslim cemetery.

This wall stands at the center of a debate between the GTA and the Waqf since the beginning of Meryon’s wardenship and serves as another reminder for the conflicted area. The wall was intended to support an upper level of ground to contain additional graves, and work started before construction permits were received. Meryon claimed that the builders of the Waqf did not fulfill the legal requirements to keep a proper distance from the neighbor’s property, nor did they cast the necessary foundations to ensure its stability and safety. Another danger is that the construction would harm the Skull Face.⁷⁶⁷ Meryon explained the situation with his cynical British humor:

We have a phrase in English: ‘not in my back yard’. When Israeli build something, all their neighbors complain about it- nobody wants it in his plot. The whole wall might slip into the Garden and kill two hundred visitors in the Garden. Thousands of Muslim corps could slide into the Garden Tomb. It does not bother me, but it should make them worried- Muslim corps in a Christian site, especially since they sell these graves in high prices. It could be a spiritual and economical embarrassment for them.⁷⁶⁸



Plate 87: The debated cemetery wall, M. Bitton 23.02.2012.

The disagreement between the parties led to a long judicial process, which finally set a compromise in the image of monitoring system that was placed on the new Waqf

⁷⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁸ Meryon (note 639 above).

wall to trace marks for instability since June 2015. Luckily, as noted in the newsletter from February 2016, this system has not detected any movement in the structure so far: “Please keep praying that this remains so, and that we can rebuild good neighborly relations with the Waqf.”⁷⁶⁹

Unfortunately, in the field of terrorism and security in the neighborhood, what was relevant after the Six-Day War in 1967 remains relevant today. In the newsletter from February 2016, the marks of the tense situation were evident:

You may be aware of the knife attack and shooting at Damascus Gate a few days ago. As a result, visitor numbers continue to fall generally, and we now get very few ‘local’ visitors other than security forces who visit us to use our ‘facilities’. Please pray for protection for staff and visitors as they travel to and from the Garden Tomb.⁷⁷⁰

Renovation of Nablus Road

For many years, another level of environmental disturbance was the poor condition of the neighborhood’s physical development.

The Minutes of April 1996 discussed the hardship that the GT suffered as a result of the environmental chaos: “The problems of noise, fumes and frustrating gridlock have got no better. Ramadan was as pressured as ever.”⁷⁷¹ Apparently, the lasting situation of neglect by Israeli authorities had led the representatives of the neighborhood and the Warden Peter Wells at the head of them to approach the Palestinian authority in the Eastern city, as testified by Wells:

In February we were granted an ‘audience’ with Faisel Husseini at Orient House. I was asked by our various neighbors to lead our delegation because I was the English speaker [...] and because I had drafted our letter requesting help of Palestinian leaders. In the event his secretary met us for an hour. She has a U.S. degree in urban planning and traffic issues so was well qualified for discussions of our concerns. [...] it seemed helpful and productive time, though we have yet to see any tangible benefits.⁷⁷²

This curious effort to skirt the Israeli authorities had led nowhere and the neighborhood’s condition continued to deteriorate in the following years. Another interruption was added when the public toilet ceased to function and passersby used Conrad Schick’s Lane to defecate. In 2007, another appeal to the municipality was

⁷⁶⁹ Bridge February 2016 (note 667 above).

⁷⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁷¹ Minutes April 1996 (note 760 above), pp.2-3.

⁷⁷² Ibid.

made: “that we could not possibly accept another summer without properly functioning toilets in both bus stations.”⁷⁷³

Meanwhile, despite the ostensive ignorance of the municipality regarding the street maintenance, the concern with the GT interest seem to be coming from another department: According to Meryon, Raffi, the deputy CEO of the Jerusalem Municipality Tourist Department, became very concerned about the poor environmental conditions surrounding the GT, to the degree that he had invited Israeli television crews to document the filth around the bus stations and public toilets so that the municipality would be enforced to clean it.⁷⁷⁴ The GT staff is well aware of the site’s touristic value for the Israeli Tourist Office, and associated Israeli tourist organizations, and proudly exhibits their tokens of recognition on the staff room’s walls. (plate 89)



Plate 89: Merit Certificate by Israeli Tour Guides Association hanged on the wall of the GT Staff room. Photo by M. Bitton 2.8.10.

Meryon expected that the Israeli authorities would be more involved in developing the neighborhood and serving the interests of tourists by improving the appearance of Nablus Road to fit its use as an important touristic route, arranging a proper public toilet and adequate parking near the Garden, and ensuring safety on Conrad Schick’s Lane. Meryon approached the municipality several times on the matter, but other than kind attentiveness, nothing else in this regard progressed during his wardenship.⁷⁷⁵ However, contrary to the impression that Meryon and other neighbors gained, behind the scenes the municipality was promoting a new master plan for the area between the years 1992–2003 by ELR Architects. The aim of the plan was to solve the long-lasting situation of physical neglect and inferior image of the area that had function for many years as the central business district (CBD) of Eastern Jerusalem.

⁷⁷³ Minutes 2007 (note 589 above), p.5.

⁷⁷⁴ Meryon (note 616 above).

⁷⁷⁵ Ibid.

Nablus Road was regarded as part of the CBD within the area confined between the southern old city wall (Sultan Suleiman Road) to Bar Lev Road (Road 1) on the west and Wadi Al Joz from the East (plates 90-91). The architects identified the main challenges that characterized the area: a lack of city planning, obsolete infrastructure, traffic overflow, and inaccessibility. In recent decades, the problems had been aggravated due to the inauguration of Road 1 in 1994 and the transformation of Sultan Suleiman Road into a main traffic route, which caused a disconnection of the neighborhood from the Old City and the Western City.

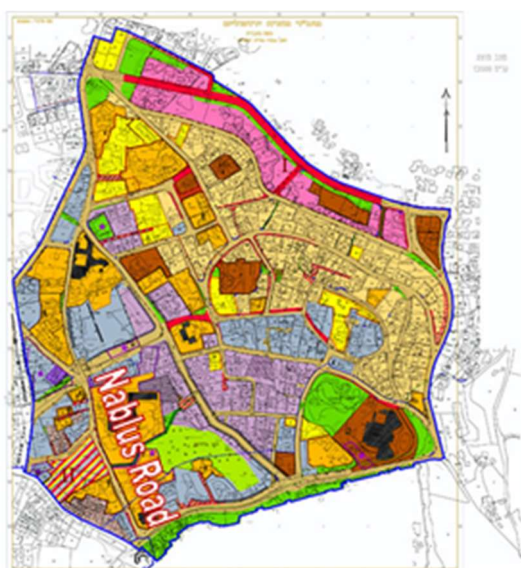


Plate 90: Master plan for CBD East, ELR Architects, 1992-2003

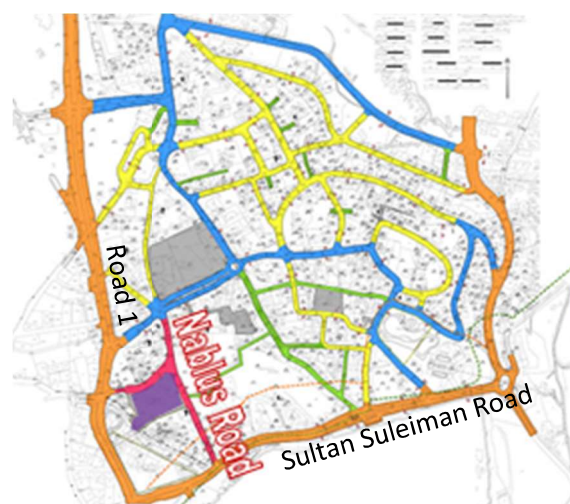


Plate 91: Traffic Scheme for CBD East, ELR Architects, 1992-2003. Central Bus Station on Nablus Road marked in purple.

The new master plan defined the Eastern CBD as a multifunctioning center that combines residence, employment, and commerce with tourism, leisure, and culture. The development of tourism routes and facilities were recognized as the leading concept. The plan enables reinforcement of connection to the Old City and the Western City, development of uniform designed public space while creating priority for pedestrians, and renovation and preservation of historical buildings. The central bus station of Sultan Suleiman was to be removed, which would enable the transformation of Sultan Suleiman into a pedestrian promenade along the city wall. The Bus Station on Nablus Road would serve as the only Central Bus Station for East Jerusalem (See plate 91 Traffic scheme).⁷⁷⁶ The removal of this bus Sultan Suleiman

⁷⁷⁶ “CBD East- Eden the Jerusalem Development Authority”, http://www.jda.gov.il/template/default_e.aspx?Pid=177, Accessed 3 Sept. 2016; “Master Plan for CBD East”, *ELR Architects*, <http://www.elr-arc.com/project/east-city-jerusalem.html>, Accessed 3 Sept. 2016.

was great news for the GT and specifically to the Skull Hill observation, which had suffered from its appearance, noise and pollution since the 1950s. Additionally, the GT never lost hope of gaining a piece of earth above or beneath the Skull face, and the evacuation of the bus station would bring a renewed hope for that matter. It was not the first time the municipality had planned to remove the bus station. The GT had received such declarations every decade since the early 1970s, but on each occasion nothing had been done.⁷⁷⁷ However, a small victory was won at the end of 2006: in a miraculous series of events, the municipality entrusted a narrow strip of ground at the foot of the Hill to the GT, a product of the excavated earth from Wyatt's digging:

Their director [of Wyatt's team], Richard Rives, had received a letter from the Municipality instructing him that this material should form the basis for a garden in front of the rock face which would be 'attached to the existing garden and form part of it'.⁷⁷⁸

The precious piece of earth that fell into the hands of the GT became known as the "Golgotha Garden": "The C E O [...] was particularly encouraged by the development of the Golgotha Garden and by the way the locals are respecting it, at least so far!".⁷⁷⁹ However, the new garden that is segregated from the GT by height differences, walls and fences, could not virtually form part of it and remained without actual observation. Consequently, soon after its inauguration it became a haven for the neighbourhood drug addicts.⁷⁸⁰ Fortunately, as the newsletter of August 2016 reported, the police have recently removed the drug users and dealers from the place. It is now hoped that the municipality will clear the rubbish, secure the site, and re-establish the gardens (plate 92).⁷⁸¹

Plate 92: The deteriorating Golgotha Garden, photo by M. Bitton 28.4.16.



⁷⁷⁷ Minutes May 1971 (note 451 above), p.2; Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the GTA 8th November 1983, 59 Doughty street, p.1; Minutes of the A.G.M. and Committee Meeting of GTA 3rd July 1991, Westminster Central Hall, p.4.

⁷⁷⁸ Minutes 2007 (note 589 above), p.1.

⁷⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁰ Ben-Shmuel (note 692 above).

⁷⁸¹ S. Bridge, "Garden Tomb Newsletter", August 2016, <http://www.gardentomb.com/news/59>, Accessed 28 Aug. 2016.

Although the GT considered this green enclave to be connected to it on a symbolic level, responsibility for its maintenance belongs to the municipality.

The detailed development of Nablus Road and was planned by Weiner-Singer Landscape Architects who defined the road as a touristic rout. Rachele Weiner recognized the uniqueness of the public space of Nablus Road as an anthropological and philosophical conflict between East and West – the Muslim merchants who dwell on the first floor of the 19th century buildings in front of the European institutions who shut themselves behind walls and gates. The first part of the street between Sultan Suleiman Road and Amar Ben Aalas Street would serve pedestrians and public transportation, with no access for private cars. Another layer of retail trade would be added to the street with pop-up shops, and new illumination appropriate to the historical nature of the street would be added. The sealed gates of the Christian institutions would be replaced with iron lattice gates that would provide a view into the compound.



Plates 93: Illustration of the peddlers' market on Nablus Road. Wiener-Singer Landscape Architecture.

Three small shaded stages would be erected along the street and serve as resting areas. New signposts would mark the historical monuments and bestow a character of open museum. The street name signs would be replaced by signs made by Neshan Balian Armenian ceramics, an old business on Nablus Road. The view towards the old city would be reinforced by axis of trees.⁷⁸² The implementation of Nablus Road renovation was launched in the summer of 2015. By April 2016 the chaotic neglected street had already acquired a tidy and nurtured appearance, which also promoted a visual silence, preceding the traffic pacification that was about to be implemented within the following months. Conrad Schick's Lane was provided renewed pavement and stylish metal seats, which bestowed a new welcoming atmosphere.

⁷⁸² N. Riba, "[...] In the Eastern City a Comprehensive Renovation is about to start", 24.10.12, <http://xnet.ynet.co.il/architecture/articles/0,14710,L-3097978,00.html>, [Hebrew], Accessed 5 Sept 2016.



Plate 94: Renovation of Nablus Road and Conrad Schick's Lane by Wiener-Singer Landscape Architecture. Photo by M.Bitton 28.4.16

C.4.2 Garden of Peace: Hosting the Local Community

The delicate situation in which the Garden had found itself since 1967, between debating cultures, religions and nations, has led to the adoption of a pacifying ideology that would ensure its survival in such a twilight zone. As a first step to promote such ideology, the Garden was identified by its leaders as a Garden of Peace. For instance, Wells defined the connection between the chaotic neighborhood in contrast to the opposite situation in the Garden as follows: “In the ever increasing noise and bustle of East Jerusalem the Garden's timeless qualities of peace and calm continue to make it a special place to meet with the Risen Lord.”⁷⁸³

A similar relation is depicted by the current Warden Bridge: “Situated as we are in East Jerusalem and close to Damascus Gate, we are conscious of the tension and fear these events cause amongst local people and visitors. We pray that as people enter the Garden Tomb they may become aware of the presence and peace of the Lord.”⁷⁸⁴

Both examples not only depict a factual opposite situation existing within and without the Garden's walls, but also pronounce their aspirations and mission for the Garden (in such a troubled area, the Garden must serve as a refuge for its visitors), locals and tourists from afar.

On another occasion, in April 2002, Wells was stressing on the importance of the Garden as a shelter especially in times of tension: “These are indeed dark and dangerous days, but we agree that we must keep the Garden open, however few visitors, as a sanctuary of prayer and peace as a symbol of resurrection.”⁷⁸⁵

⁷⁸³ Wells July 1987 (note 714 above), p.2.

⁷⁸⁴ Bridge, October 2015 (note 590).

⁷⁸⁵ Meryon 2014 (note 10 above), p.245.

Another layer was thus being added to the already religiously cherished piece of earth; it became a peaceful shelter in which people can experience confidence, friendship, and rapprochement – things that were not possible without the walls. With such a philosophy, the challenging situation outside enriches the Garden’s reservoir of merits. The Garden is no longer important only for its Christian worshipers, but becomes meaningful for anyone who seeks the benefits of the peace. The following paragraphs will explore the actions that have been taken to validate the existence of the place as a Garden of Peace.

Relations with Local Christianity

The Garden normally attracted Protestant tourists from all over the world and responded to their spiritual needs, providing them with worship spaces and guided tours. The place was not designated to serve the local congregation’s ordinary religious life and it is only in recent decades that the special needs of local Christianity have been taken into account. Even when the regular Sunday service was introduced by Mattar and Van der Hoeven, and was meant to respond also to the local needs, it was mainly serving the tourists, as shown by the evidence provided above. Still, from time to time we learn about small gestures addressed towards the local Christians. George, the merchant from Nablus Road, spoke of his childhood in the neighborhood. One of the boys with whom he studied was Phillip, the son of the Warden Matter, who used to invite the local children to watch movies about Jesus inside the Garden Tomb and to have religious conversations and Bible readings.⁷⁸⁶ Another example is that of Lance Lambert, a British Bible scholar and a Jerusalem resident, who shared his memories from Yom Kippur War in 1973 regarding the central role the Garden was playing then: “It was at that crucial moment that [...] Jan Willem van der Hoeven and his wife offered us accommodation in a house at the Garden Tomb.”⁷⁸⁷ Inside the Garden, Lambert organized a prayer group for the local Christians:

So many Christians know how to pray on their own but they do not know how to pray together [...] our burden was for the dying and wounded, Arab and Jews alike, that they might be saved [...] especially for Jordan, that she would not enter the war [...]

⁷⁸⁶ George, interviewed by M. Bitton 22.06.10.

⁷⁸⁷ L. Lambert, *Battle for Israel*, Coverdale [House], London 1977, p.17.

we had some remarkable answers to our prayers. Jordan stayed out of the war.⁷⁸⁸

From Lambert's testimonial, it appears that the connection with locals was strengthened in times of war, when tourism was declining. The Garden that was determined to remain open was truly serving as green shelter for the local believers then.

In the mid-1990s we learned about regular events for the local Christians. The minutes of April 1995 report that the first service for the local Arab Christianity was inaugurated in April of that year. Although the worshipers were Evangelical Palestinians, it was held on the Orthodox Easter Sunday, in accordance with the Evangelical Palestinians' cultural preferences as part of the Christian Palestinian community. Despite accessibility challenges at the checkpoints into the city, 170 worshippers attended the service, to the satisfaction of the council, which agreed that "It should be repeated next year if the local Arab pastors would like to organize it again."⁷⁸⁹

A few years later another local congregation was invited to celebrate Easter: the Messianic Jews who joined the Evangelical Arabs for a mutual service in the Garden. It was on the Orthodox Good Friday of 1998 that the Garden hosted for the first time a jointly service led by Messianic Jews and Palestinian Christians. Additional service was led on the Orthodox Easter, with over 200 Palestinians participating.⁷⁹⁰

Since then, the garden has hosted mutual Holy Saturday ceremonies for Evangelical Arabs and Messianic Jews. Phillip Ben Shmuel, a Messianic Jew, claimed that such mutual meeting between the two communities rarely exists elsewhere.⁷⁹¹

It was aspired, as pronounced by Richard Meryon, that the Garden would serve as a stage for reconciliation between the two rival nations: "You can bring Christians from both sides together and make them trust each other and this trust may be radiated further from these communities and the people could live peacefully on this land."⁷⁹²

During his wardenship, Meryon aimed to maximize the opportunity to bring together Jews and Arabs under the unifying Christian belief and the message of the Resurrection as part of the Garden's pacified ideology. He was interested in nurturing the mutual worship in the safe and neutral venue provided by the Garden on a larger

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁹ Minutes April 1995 (note 657 above), p.2.

⁷⁹⁰ Meryon 2014, (note 10 Above), p.229.

⁷⁹¹ Ben-Shmuel (note 752 above).

⁷⁹² Meryon (note 639 above).

scale and to increase their frequency to once a month.⁷⁹³ Although this aspiration has not yet been fulfilled, the mutual Easter services have continued to take place with an increased number of participants every year.

The newsletter from May 2016 reported on another successful joint Holy Saturday service, in which about 300 Palestinian believers from Israel and the West Bank and attended the Garden Tomb: “The service was translated into Hebrew and English and dozens of Israeli Messianic Jews joined their Arab brothers and sisters to celebrate the Messiah’s Resurrection together.”⁷⁹⁴

Meryon’s interest in connecting hearts continued further. He was also interested in appealing traditional Christianity and its attitude towards the Garden Tomb.

For that cause, he addressed the patriarchs of the different Christian denominations in the city and invited them to a tour of the Garden, in order to “breaking out the barriers and saying- it is safe to speak well of the garden to your people.”⁷⁹⁵

With the adjacent Dominican research institute – École Biblique, relations seem to maintain neutral silence. Many decades after “Histoire d’un Mythe” was published by Father Vincent,⁷⁹⁶ Dominican brothers obtained some tolerance regarding their neighbors. One of the brothers I interviewed, Riccardo Lufrani, was impressed by the welcoming attitude he received by the staff on the few occasions he visited the site, and was not bothered by the noise pronounced occasionally from celebrations in the Garden; on the contrary, he liked it. Although he felt that, from an historical point of view, it made no sense to meditate there about the events, he appreciated the fact that Protestants have their own place to celebrate.⁷⁹⁷

Interestingly, in the minutes of 1987 we learn about an initiative of the Dominicans to organize a combined tour with the Garden Tomb in the Tombs of the École Biblique and the GT. Apparently at that time, the staff was not as tolerant as their neighbors and the Dominicans were refused.⁷⁹⁸

The ACJ seems to have the same general disapproval that has prevailed for the last several decades. When Meryon initiated conversation with the Anglican bishop, the bishop claimed that everyone was certain that the Garden was anti-Palestinian and

⁷⁹³ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁴ Bridge, Stephen, “Garden Tomb Newsletter” May 2016, <http://www.gardentomb.com/news/55/>, Accessed 13 June 2016.

⁷⁹⁵ Meryon (note 616 above).

⁷⁹⁶ Previously discussed in chapter A, p.27.

⁷⁹⁷ Lufrani (note 119 above).

⁷⁹⁸ AGM January 1987 (note 555 above), p.4.

anti-Roman Catholic, and that the Garden pronounced a definite message regarding the authenticity of the Tomb.⁷⁹⁹ As we have already learned, the relationships with the ACJ cooled since the 1960s. The Warden Mattar, with his forthright impulsive manners, was standing at the midst of a critical turning point from which the GTA and the ACJ went in separate directions. Still, the bitter pill of Mattar's tragic death in 1967 was in a way sweetened when Mattar's greatest opponent, Archbishop MacInnes, organized his burial ceremony and became the Garden's benefactor in its time of trouble.⁸⁰⁰ In 1969, Archbishop MacInnes retired and his successor, Rev. George Appleton, was approached by the GTA with the hope that: "In due course the same happy and close relationship may grow up between him and ourselves as existed with his predecessor."⁸⁰¹ The hope of reestablishing good relations with Appleton, the new archbishop, was soon to be fulfilled, as Appleton participated in the Easter Service 1971 at the Garden and pronounced the blessing.⁸⁰² A couple of months later, a mutual lunch with the Archbishop and committee members was set in London, and for the first time in many years relations seemed to warm.⁸⁰³ Even after his retirement, Rev. George Appleton remained loyal to the GT and accepted the invitation to become a patron of the Association in 1974.⁸⁰⁴ However, it was the last time the GT received such direct acknowledgment from the ACJ. Under White's wardenship, the relationships with the ACJ were "politely formal", as White himself described them. Not much has been said or done between the two organizations except an occasional indirect reference, such as the article published by the wife of SGC's dean, in which she criticized the Protestants in Jerusalem for having an inferiority complex since they were not granted a section of the Holy Sepulchre.⁸⁰⁵ This status quo has continued to this day. Canon Hosam Naum, who serves as the current dean of SGC (installed in May 2012) and the canon to the Arabic-speaking congregation in the cathedral, gave a detailed explanation about the current relationship between the Cathedral to the GT and almost seemed to regret not having closer relations, due to the historical loyalty to the Greek Orthodox church:

⁷⁹⁹ Meryon (note 636 above).

⁸⁰⁰ See pp. 63-65 above.

⁸⁰¹ Report 1968/69 (note 554 above), p.3.

⁸⁰² Minutes May 1971 (note 451 above), p.1.

⁸⁰³ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁴ Minutes 1974 (note 561 above), p.1.

⁸⁰⁵ White (note 10 above), p. 82.

I would say that if it wasn't for the Anglican-Orthodox relations, Anglicans would have feel much more comfortable being associated with the Garden Tomb. In a sense because it is more Evangelical, it is less bureaucratic, less shrine like, pilgrimage like, and they can celebrate there easily, whenever they want if they book it.⁸⁰⁶

Building Bridges in the neighborhood

During Meryon's wardenship, special efforts were made to create bridges between neighbors on Nablus Road.

An episodic occasion seems to reflect the essence of Meryon's proceeding when seizing opportunities for reconciliations: Israeli soldiers visited the Garden and Meryon asked to commemorate their visit by taking a picture of them standing by the Garden stone sign of "Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem" (plate 95). His intention was to promote the mutual message of peace delivered by the Garden and Israeli Army, but his request was refused.⁸⁰⁷



Plates 95: "Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem"
A sign in the Garden.
Photo by M. Bitton 15.8.09.

Another of his initiatives was more successful. On June 2010, Meryon initiated a unique event dedicated to build good neighborliness and to promote the neutral and pacifying stand of the Garden.

It was a "Garden Party" to which he invited 50 people who lived in the neighboring community, including Muslims and Christians from different denominations. "We want to build bridges in the community, not walls", said Meryon at the garden party reception.⁸⁰⁸ At the event, the guests had been given a garden tour, enjoyed refreshments and conversed with one another. Meryon made a speech in which he stated that the intentions of the place were to engage only with spiritual and religious contents, denying any connection to politics inside the Garden.⁸⁰⁹ The message of the resurrection is regarded as a unifying message for all people that transcends time and space, and is not confined to geopolitical borders and different cultures and nations.

⁸⁰⁶ Canon Hosam Naum interviewd by M.Bitton 19.06.12.

⁸⁰⁷ Meryon (note 616 above).

⁸⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁹ Meryon (note 616 above).

One of the neighbors that I interviewed had been invited to the party. It was George, a Greek Orthodox Arab and a merchant on Nablus Road since 1980. He was educated in the Anglican school of Saint George Cathedral and had lived in England for couple of years; therefore, although he does not feel connected to the Garden religiously, he shares sympathy with its English cultural context.

George knew most of the guests who were invited to the event, and was also familiar with some Muslim merchants who had been invited but did not eventually show up. He considered the event very successful and mostly appreciated Meryon's message by the Tomb, of which he recalled some influential sentences: "The Garden Tomb staff have no interference in politics of this country. Its aim is only religious, and only worship, and to bring the Arabs and the Jews and everybody together to live peacefully and to be good neighbors."⁸¹⁰

The Muslim merchants I interviewed had not heard about the event, but some of them reacted positively when I told them about Meryon's initiative. In the case of Amin, who runs a shop for glass commodities, his generally restrictive approach towards the site seemed to change after I told him about the Garden Party. At the beginning, he expressed a suspicious attitude towards the site, as a part of a bigger conspiracy plan he ascribes to all Christians and Jews that are plotting against all Muslims; however, after he heard about the Garden party, he reacted with more willingness to rethink about the site.⁸¹¹ However, Rafat Sheikh, a tourist agent for a company that specializes in Orthodox Christian tourists, was not willing to accept the peaceful gesture. He considered the Garden Tomb as a heretic place that has no basis in reality and is an affront to the Christian tradition. Furthermore, he described the place as Pro-Israeli and Zionist and plotting against Muslims, since many of its visitors were carrying Israeli flags and the Star of David (see plate 96). He said that the place does not welcome Muslims into the garden, citing two examples when he came to visit the garden with tourists.

When I told him about the Garden party, he was not impressed with Meryon's initiative and was convinced that Meryon was inviting only important figures, rather than ordinary merchants like himself.⁸¹²

⁸¹⁰ George (note 786 above).

⁸¹¹ Amin, Interviewed by M. Bitton, 08.11.10.

⁸¹² Raffat sheikh, Interview by M. Bitton, 12.06.10. When I shared this kind of reaction with Meryon, he reacted in absolute denial of this claims and asked to speak with this person in order to dissolve this misunderstanding.

Plates 96: A Brazilian tourist bus with the flag of Israel parking near the GT. Photo by M. Bitton 23.2.12.



Events for Local Tourism

Meryon's wardenship was characterized by strong sensitivity to the environmental context of the Garden. He demonstrated awareness not only of social relationships and political challenges that affected the Garden, but also of the influence and conflicts carried by the neighborhood's physical design. As we have previously seen, Meryon did not hesitate to approach the municipality on such matters, as some of his predecessors had also done, but he also acted independently, driven by his environmental awareness. He understood the Garden's value for local secular tourism in the light of a shortage of public open spaces in East Jerusalem.⁸¹³



Plate 97: The Meryons at the Tomb's Entrance. [2009-2014]

He identified the Garden as: "the only green garden site in east Jerusalem", and corresponded to it by searching for ways to encourage more locals to enjoy this space, while respecting its religious meanings.⁸¹⁴ One of his ideas was to develop educational facilities to provide information adapted to Israeli and Palestinian children and to enable regular visits of school groups.⁸¹⁵ He also initiated the Garden's

⁸¹³About the shortage and neglect of the public open spaces in Palestinian settlements compared to secular Israeli settlements see for instance: A. Daud, "Planning and Building in the Arab Society", Internal Affairs and Environment Committee of the Knesset, 2005, p.37.

⁸¹⁴ Meryon (note 636 above).

⁸¹⁵ Ibid.

participation in the annual municipal annual “Open Houses” event, which had enabled the exposure of the Garden to many Israeli tourists since October 2010.⁸¹⁶

A similar approach continued to guide Bridge’s policy towards local tourism. Bridge decided to cooperate with a Palestinian touristic initiative on May 2016 in which the Muslim Palestinians could visit places of interest along Nablus Road from Damascus Gate to the American Colony Hotel.⁸¹⁷ The participation in the event turned out to be very successful: “Over the course of three afternoons, we welcomed about 1700 local people to the Garden; most were Muslims and had never been to the Garden Tomb before.”⁸¹⁸ An important interest of this cooperation was clearly stated by Bridge when he noted that 20 Arabic-language Bibles had been sold:

Our observation is that there has been a noticeable increase in local Arabs visiting the Garden since the Open Days event. It would be difficult to overstate what an amazing opportunity this was. We pray that local people will return many times, and will find themselves drawn to Jesus.⁸¹⁹

This report reveals the importance of another mission of the Garden that is always at work: when the Garden opens its gates and accommodates non-Christian visitors, the hope to proselytize them exists behind the scenes.

Although there seems to be a general effort to conceal this mission in order not to invite defiance, this latent wish occasionally emerges. For instance, when Wells reported to the Council in 1998 about the many soldiers and policemen who frequent the Garden, he noted that: “Some are genuinely interested and quite a few were brought in by one particular border policeman who may well be a believer, or at least a ‘seeker’.”⁸²⁰

From a personal point of view, as a researcher who visited the site and conversed with the staff and visitors many times during eight years of research, I never received any direct approach on this matter, but could not escape the feeling of expectation addressed at me occasionally to discover the true faith.

⁸¹⁶ “Open Houses”, October 2010, <http://batim.itraveljerusalem.com/Tours.aspx?batim=16&tp=3>, [Hebrew], Accessed 13 May 2017.

⁸¹⁷ Bridge May 2016 (note 794 above).

⁸¹⁸ Bridge June 2016 (note 627 above).

⁸¹⁹ Ibid.

⁸²⁰ Meryon 2014 (note 10 above), pp.229-230.

D. The Visitors' Aspect: Expectations, Experiences, Conflicts

Chapter C presented the evolvement of the site into a Prayer Garden designed to accommodate large-scale religious practices. This development signified a transition in the Garden's function and meaning, from a sacred place to be admired and preserved into a space to practice rituals in which the sacred elements serve as aids to revive faith. It is a transition from passive consumption of the sacred to active participation in the creation of the sacred. This can be viewed as an evolution of conscience in which the site's managers came to realize that its sacredness depends upon the active involvement of the believers, so that they cannot continue to insist only on the preservation of the sacred. Furthermore, the inherent sacredness of the Tomb, as it was regarded since the site's foundation, appeared to be losing its supernatural quality, especially in the light of new archeological findings that questioned its authenticity. Therefore, as we shall see in the following chapter, the Tomb began to serve as a visual aid that helped believers meditate over biblical events.

In a way, this process of comprehension resembles the formation of the two theories regarding the nature of the sacred place, already presented in the introduction. The *substantial* approach, in which the sacred appeared in certain places that contain a genuine essence of the divine, and the *situational* approach that explains the sacred place as a product of the cultural labor of sacralization in specific historical situations. This final chapter focuses on the worshippers, those who practice the rituals and maintain the sacredness of the Prayer Garden with their believing bodies and souls. My intention in this chapter is to study the unique function of the place as a Protestant sacred site and as a garden devoted to religious activity. To this end, I refer to the study of reception in gardens and sacred places presented in the introduction in order to explore the visitors' viewpoint.

This chapter will explore the expectations, experiences, and conflicts involved in the visit to the Garden. The themes of this chapter were selected as the most relevant topics according to the interviewees.

The themes are organized along a gradual observation from the moment the visitor enters the Garden. This starts with the visitor's first encounter with the Garden, the

way his or her expectations meet the reality in the Garden, and the way the garden space promotes the visiting experiences (sub-chapter D.1), then the religious activity in the Garden and the social interaction with the staff members and with other visitors (sub-chapter D.2). The process continues with the visitor's interaction with the physical surroundings and its influences on the visit inside the Garden (sub-chapter D.3). The final clause turns to the human surroundings and the viewpoint is given to a unique kind of visitors: the visiting neighbors or locals who insinuate non-religious motivation into the Garden (sub-chapter D.4).

The experiences and perceptions were collected from interviews and questionnaires answered by 19 visitors between 2010 and 2013. It is a modest sample, combined of different denomination and ethnicities, with the aim of reflecting the multicultural character of the population that normally frequents the site. Among the interviewees were six males: an American Baptist, a Presbyterian Indonesian, a Japanese Makuya believer, an Evangelical Palestinian, a Brazilian Pentecostal, and a Canadian Mormon. The list of 13 females was comprised of an Evangelical Swiss, a Reformed Swiss, a Pentecostal South-African, an Anglican Indian-Canadian, a Calvinist South Korean, a Lutheran-Evangelical Swede, an Atheist Dutchwoman, a Catholic Frenchwoman, an American-Israeli Evangelist, three Canadian Mormons, and a Palestinian Muslim.⁸²¹ The four Mormons were members of the same family.

Additional information was obtained from interviews conducted with nine staff members and 10 neighbors and by field observations performed between 2009 and 2016.

D.1 At the Garden's threshold: expectations and first impressions

The following sub-chapter deals with the initial encounter between the visitor and the Garden. That is, the way in which his or her expectations meet reality in the garden and the way the garden space contributes to an elevating visiting experience. The point of departure for this exploration is the assumption that the garden space offers

⁸²¹ See the chart of interviewees in pp. 272-273.

an exceptional opportunity to express spirituality, advocating garden theorist Michael Conan's insight regarding the religious experiences in sacred gardens:

The gardens provided a number of symbolic features that supported the enactment of the rituals, but primarily they enabled their visitors to engage in performances that carried them away to a supernatural world by promoting them to unusual types of actions.⁸²²

A brief review of leading garden theories will serve to explain the garden's unique qualities and will form the theoretical groundwork to examine the visitors' response to the Garden.

D.1.1 The Garden as a paradoxical site

A primary quality of the garden, as identified by the garden scholars, is its existence as a paradoxical site. Its construction as a meeting point between culture and nature serves as the first and most obvious paradox contained by any garden. It is the site on which these two contradictory forces ask to be reconciled.

Michel Foucault who elaborated the concept of *heterotopia* to describe places that contain multilayered and contradictory meanings, recognized the garden as a unique form of heterotopia. He defined the garden as the oldest form of spaces that are "capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible." The garden aims to represent the four corners of the world and, at the same time, create an ideal world or a sacred space that is regarded as the navel of the world: "The garden is the smallest parcel of the world and then it is the totality of the world."⁸²³ These paradoxes contained by the garden produce a vague space with no definite assertion, and promote a wider range of interpretations and extraordinary experiences. This idea was further developed by the philosophers and garden theorists who attributed to the garden the ability to resolve contradictions and achieve harmony that could not exist elsewhere.⁸²⁴ In chapter c.4 we saw several examples of how the Garden served to solve conflicts and achieve harmony; for

⁸²² Conan 2007 (note 20 above), p.9

⁸²³ M. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias", p.6, From: *Architecture /Mouvement/ Continuité* October, 1984; ("Des Espace Autres," March 1967 Translated from the French by Jay Miskowicz), <http://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/foucault1.pdf>, Accessed 12 Oct 2016.

⁸²⁴ M. Francis & R. T. Hester (eds.), *The Meaning of Gardens: Idea, Place, and Action*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1990, pp.2, 4, 10-12; C. C. Marcus, "The Garden as Metaphor", in: M. Francis & R. T. Hester, *ibid.*, p.27; Z. Gurevitch, *On Place: Israeli Anthropology (Al Hamakom: Antropologia Israelit)*, Am Oved, Tel Aviv 2007, [Hebrew], p. 106.

instance, the gathering of the Palestinians and Messianic Jews, a meeting that hardly occurred outside the Garden's walls.

Another unique quality of the garden that also serves as a paradox was presented by Dixon Hunt, who related to Wolfgang Iser's reception theory in literature. Adopting Iser's distinction between the real world, which is accessible to the receptor through his or her senses, and the literal work, which is accessible through imagination, Dixon Hunt suggested identifying the garden as maintaining both conditions: the veritable and the imaginative. Thus, Dixon Hunt claimed that the garden serves as a unique object to be researched in which two conditions of response are being examined: the visitors' reaction to the garden and the Garden's potential effect on visitors.⁸²⁵

This aspect would serve to examine the reciprocal interaction between the visitors and the Garden. The imaginative dimension of the garden – the deliberate creation of fictional world embedded in its design – holds a varied potential of response depending upon the space left for the visitors' imagination. For instance, the gardens of the Renaissance period were deliberately designed to surprise visitors, with elements such as water tricks (*giochi d'acqua*) and secret gardens (*giardino segreto*). On the other hand, picturesque English gardens attracted a richer repertoire of reactions since their ambiguous design allowed more room for imagination.⁸²⁶ A similar theory was developed by the philosopher Michel de Certeau, who identified void spaces such as cellars, attics, woods, bushes, hidden corners, and names that lost their meaning as the ambiguous sites in which dreams, ghosts, fairytales, and superstitions can flourish and be set apart from the definite meaning enforced by the urban system.⁸²⁷

In other words, the less explicit the meanings and functions of the garden design are, the more the visitors could participate in the creation of new meanings and functions in the place.

Furthermore, the ambiguity of the garden, as suggested by Conan, encourages visitors to express emotions and behavior that are not entirely encoded in the place. It allows a wider range of interpretation.⁸²⁸

The Garden Tomb, as pronounced by the visitors, seems to be moving across the two

⁸²⁵ Dixon Hunt 2004 (note 28 above) pp. 13, 16-17, 37.

⁸²⁶ Ibid., pp. 25, 30, 37-38, 42.

⁸²⁷ De Certeau, (note 27 above), pp. 103-108.

⁸²⁸ Conan 2007(note 20 above), pp. 13-14.

extremities of design in relation to the span of reception it enables. On one hand, the simplicity of design and the peaceful natural atmosphere immediately affects visitors and encourages them to express their spirituality. Heather Torrie, one of the Canadian Mormons who visited in the garden with her family in 2010, appreciated the extensive space for imagination promoted by the Garden:

I felt that it didn't have a conflicted message ... I felt like the people there and the place itself weren't really forcing any message upon you. Instead it was just an open place where you can just feel the spirit and peace of the reality of Jesus Christ. The message is just simply that Christ lives.⁸²⁹

On the other hand, some visitors did not feel that there was much room for imagination left for their interpretation, facing the concrete organization of the Garden as accommodated for worships. This was the initial response of the American Baptist pastor, Kevin Clubb, who described this connection between the design and the action it attracts: "They seem to have been intentional about making it possible for groups to celebrate Communion together. That was not something that we would have thought about doing at any other sight we visited."⁸³⁰ Club's insight emphasized the obscure position of the prayer garden; by entering this liberated and natural seeming space, he did not necessarily expect to practice as if inside a shrine. However, the spatial setup and the sacramental facilities placed in the Garden's corners had clarified the behavior that was expected from him. He had to act as if inside a shrine.

D.1.2 Prior Images and Expectations

However, in either case of encountering the garden design, the first impression rarely depends only on the reality the visitor meets in the garden.

In accordance with the study of Christian pilgrimage, most of the interviewees reported on their preliminary expectations and images that built their expectations before entering the Garden. Glenn Bowman, who researched the Christian pilgrimage to Jerusalem, claimed that the sacredness of the city depends less on the literal city than on the images constructed in the motherland, based on the songs, stories, art, sermons, pilgrims' tales and travel narratives that are embodied on the real city during

⁸²⁹ Heather Torrie, questionnaire 14.7.11

⁸³⁰ Kevin Clubb, questionnaire 22.06.10.

the visit.⁸³¹ Simon Coleman and John Elsner elaborated these preliminary images and explored the manners in which they were constructed and stressed the importance of the written or oral travel tales of previous pilgrims. Furthermore, Coleman and Elsner stressed the role of the pilgrims' narratives in the sacralization of the site. At the same time, these narratives facilitate the tangibility of the sacred since the images generated in the sacred sites are often the visual counterparts of oral and textual constructions.⁸³² The interviewees' prior images were nourished by the Scriptures, hymns, sermons, films, paintings, pictures from travel books, Internet searches, and talks with friends and relatives who had been there before. Most interviewees expected to find a mixture of tangible and metaphysical values, generally aiming to verify the Scriptures with the place of occurrence: a biblical atmosphere, an empty tomb with its symbolism, a garden setting near the Golgotha, a skull looking-face, a hill with a tomb sealed with a rolled-away stone.⁸³³

Most visitors were driven by historical or mythical views when imagining the place. They were mostly influenced from the biblical narrative and expected to find the exact geographical description they read about in the Scriptures. Most visitors were satisfied with the superposition of the text and the landscape, although some were found the site to be much smaller than they had expected, or distances between the localities that did not match what they expected.⁸³⁴

Very few of the interviewees took the reality of contemporary Jerusalem into account. Heather Torrie expected to enter a noisy neighborhood, based on the previous visit her parents had taken: “[they] told me about how they were both in the middle of a noisy city. So, I didn’t have any idealistic ideas (like those Christian songs about ‘Those little lanes they have not changed....’).”⁸³⁵

Alecio Barreto Fernandes, a Pentecostal Brazilian engineer, did not nurture far-reaching expectations due to the tense geopolitical situation: “Considering the wars, battles, destructions and reconstructions of Jerusalem, I did not have a clear image of

⁸³¹ G. Bowman, 'Christian ideology and the image of the holy land', J.Eade & M. Sallnow (eds.), *Contesting the Sacred. The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage*, Routledge, London 1991, pp.98-99.

⁸³² S. Coleman and J. Elsner, *Pilgrim voices: narrative and authorship in Christian pilgrimage*, Berghahn Books, New York, 2003, p. 4.

⁸³³ Clubb (note 830 above); R. Frischknecht, questionnaire 19.01.12; A. Van Wyk, questionnaire 2.2.12; L. Demaurex, questionnaire 05.12.12; H. Torrie (note 829 above); Musa Karel Simon, questionnaire 04.01.11; Indira Samarasekera, questionnaire 12.5.12.

⁸³⁴ Frischknecht, *ibid.*; P. Querbes, questionnaire 6.12.12; Simon, *ibid.*; M. Torrie, questionnaire 10.7.11

⁸³⁵ H. Torrie (note 829 above).

the Golgotha and the tomb. I just imagined something very similar to the Garden Tomb.”⁸³⁶

There were two denominations whose religious visit motivation was influenced by additional narrative other than the Scriptures. The Mormons and the Makuya believers also relied on myths and travel narratives promoted by the religious leaders, and thus seemed to be carrying a more intimate relation or a deeper sense of belonging to the site via these narratives prior to the visit. The Mormon interviewees expected to find the presence of the Holy Spirit, following the sermons they heard from the religious leaders telling them about the spirit that they sensed in the Garden.⁸³⁷

Also, the Makuya believers expected to find the presence of the Holy Spirit in the place, and were also influenced by the personal story of their leader, who visited the place and experienced a miracle there.⁸³⁸

People rarely come without any prior knowledge of the site’s appearance. Ann-Sofie Tedenljung-Forsberg did not have any idea about what she would find in the place. She just heard from friends about an alternative place for the Crucifixion and decided to visit it. The only thought she had prior to her visit was a fear of meeting Muslims inside the Garden, since she saw on a map that it was found in a Muslim neighborhood. When she entered the Garden, she felt immediately relieved to the sight of a loving Christian woman who welcomed them.⁸³⁹

D.1.3 The Garden as a liminal space

I will now explore the next stage of the visitor’s response, in which the prior expectations begin to evaporate and make room for the absorption of the messages delivered by the garden space and allow visitors to be freshly affected by it.

In the evidence given by Indira Samarasekera, an Anglican Sri Lankan who lives in Canada and serves as president of Alberta University, I found a description of such a process. Indira celebrated her 60th birthday with her family in the Garden. Based on what she learned from the Scriptures, hymns, and paintings, she expected to find “an empty tomb and perhaps an ancient garden; not much else.”⁸⁴⁰

The Garden design and atmosphere matched these expectations:

⁸³⁶ A. B. Fernandes, questionnaire 10.03.12.

⁸³⁷ M. Robinson, questionnaire 14.7.11; C. Torrie, questionnaire 13.7.11; H. Torrie (note 829 above).

⁸³⁸ Y. Uji interviewed by M. Bitton, 03.02.13.

⁸³⁹ A. Tedenljung-Forsberg, interviewed by M. Bitton 23.02.12.

⁸⁴⁰ Samarasekera (note 833 above).

It is perhaps the most beautiful religious site I have been to in my life because of its simplicity. The absence of a church with all its trappings was the best part. It is so much more spiritual than the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.⁸⁴¹

The Garden served as a precise mediator between culture, her religious habitus, and nature, in the form of biblical scenery. Satisfied with the fulfillment of her expectations on the sensual and intellectual level, she continued to absorb the place on the spiritual level: “I felt the presence of Christ and Felt myself weeping involuntarily overcome by emotion.” Standing at the Garden’s threshold, she allowed herself to shed her social status- to return to a juvenile phase in which she can burst into tears. She felt the atmosphere promoted by the Garden that “captures the essence of God in ways that few other religious places do. The place is so different from a church and so it opens your mind to creation and the beauty of the world.”⁸⁴²

Indira’s experience can be regarded as a liminal process promoted by the garden space. Conan identified the garden as a powerful agent that allow its visitors a corridor to the world beyond, a journey that contains a revelation or a rebirth. Conan emphasized the need for a liminal space provided by sacred landscapes and gardens, in which rites of passage can take place, applying Van Gennep’s terminology.⁸⁴³

The anthropologist Zeli Gurevitch described Adam and Eve’s acquisition of knowledge as a liminal process that demands undressing. The undressing allows emptying in order to accept a new cover. The Garden of Eden serves as a transition space in which this process takes place, and from which Adam and Eve would be banished following their revelation.⁸⁴⁴ Thus, the garden provides the opportunity to experience new knowledge and enlightenment. The transition from one stage to another is reflected in the garden in the changes of biological states, from seed to plant. The potential concealed in the garden is of the evolution of awareness, liberation, and renewal, which also radiate on the world outside, as concluded by the landscape theorist Clare Cooper Marcus.⁸⁴⁵

Ansie Van Wyk, a Pentecostal grandmother from South Africa, had visited the Garden Tomb previously, in the 1970s. The place had changed since her first visit and was now more developed and organized to accommodate several groups. Ansie was

⁸⁴¹ Ibid.

⁸⁴² Ibid.

⁸⁴³ Conan 2007 (note 20 above), pp.5, 7-8, 12.

⁸⁴⁴ Gurevitch (note 824 above), pp. 103-105.

⁸⁴⁵ Marcus (note 824 above), pp.29, 32.

amazed to see how the designers had created a number of worship spaces while still retaining a general garden setting.⁸⁴⁶ Ostensibly, a perfect balance was created between nature and culture, between spiritual work and recreation. When she first entered this unique space she “stood in awe and wanted to be silent and reflect on what happened there.”⁸⁴⁷ She described a liminal space, a threshold that guides you to cease your previous actions and reconsider your feelings and thoughts. Ansie sensed an urge to leave the group and to find a private spot to pray. The Garden invited her to experience a spiritual process.

D.2 Between Freedom and Limitation: Religious Practices and Social Interaction

The tension between culture and nature which is inherent in the Garden’s existence causes a related tension that affects consumers’ practices and place them between freedom and limitation. In the following sub-chapter we explore the way this tension is being expressed within three settings of relationships: between visitors and the Garden in the rite of mementos; between the believers and the Garden’s agents who regulate the Christian form of worship; and finally between the different worshippers who share the religious space.

D.2.1 A rite of mementos: reciprocal exchanges between the pilgrim and the Garden

The natural elements in the garden not only invoke religious associations and images, as seen in the above sub-chapter, but are also recognized by the visitors as belonging to nature. As opposed to the built, sculpted or painted elements presented in a church, the Garden space contains its loosened freely scattered particles, approachable for any reach. Anyone can enjoy the Garden freely, and can also take pieces from it as a memento. It is a consumption that disregards the Garden as a whole and instead focuses on a single element.

Musa Karel Simon, an Indonesian Presbyterian senior, was especially attracted to the vegetation and flowers and took some photos of the unfamiliar flowers of the Holy

⁸⁴⁶ Van Wyk (note 833 above).

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid.

Land. For him, the presence of the flowers served as a “deep impression of Jesus’ resurrection.”⁸⁴⁸

Pastor Clubb picked up a small pebble in the garden “as a reminder of what God did for me through the death and resurrection of Jesus.”⁸⁴⁹

However, at the other side of the garden-bed stands the Garden’s agent, who must regulate visitors’ practices and protect the garden and its organs. According to Neeb, visitors have tried uprooting plants as a token of their visit. In her heart, she felt empathetic to their actions, since her mother would have done the same, but naturally she had to prevent it. They sometimes collected gravel from the ground, and Neeb dissuaded them by informing them about the origin of this foreign gravel and that it had nothing to do with sacred ground. However, she would respond to their urge to obtain mementos by presenting them the fruits of carob or any other fruit that fell on the ground.⁸⁵⁰ These single natural elements, which are collected by the pilgrims as symbols of their beliefs and as mementos of their visit, do not seem to have great value at a first glance. Such a simple flower, pebble, or handful of soil could be found anywhere outside the Garden’s walls without being noticed at all. But in the sacred Garden they have an important role and meaning. On one hand, they become sacred objects or relics, gaining their sanctity from the inherent sacredness of the site. On the other hand, they connect the believer to the universal nature, being particles that belong to the natural world and are no longer connected solely to the Garden. This probable unconscious intuition becomes the drive that permits believers to confiscate these elements from the Garden, an act that they would probably have done less easily in an architectural cultural-dominated religious space. In comparison, Nurit Stadler’s study of fertility rites in the Tomb of Mary presents a different example of devotional behavior inside a space that is not entirely cultural-architectonic, but has natural qualities. The shrine’s cave-space stimulates a sense of devotional freedom defined by Stadler as “womb-tomb veneration”, that nevertheless is corresponded by a rigid restriction of the shrines’ clerics.⁸⁵¹ Interestingly, the believers are also willing to give, not just to take from the sacred Garden. Some visitors are driven to leave souvenirs in the Garden rather than collect them. According to Neeb, many plastic

⁸⁴⁸ Simon (note 833 above).

⁸⁴⁹ Clubb (note 830 above).

⁸⁵⁰ Neeb (note 367 above).

⁸⁵¹ Stadler (note 30 above), pp. 295-296, 298, 303;

bags full of photos and letters had been buried in the ground or were left inside the Tomb. The letters contained prayers for remedy and other requests. Since the staff could not keep all these letters, they had to dispose of them after making a prayer on behalf of the writers. Sometimes Neeb even found ashes of deceased people, whom she mixed in the ground using it as compost, saying “dust turns to dust”.⁸⁵² From Neeb’s testimonial we can learn about the subtle interference the staff committed in order to control the rite of mementos. The pilgrims’ desire to appropriate pieces of the sacred is gently hindered or responded by presenting substitutes such as carob fruits. The traces of faith that had been buried inside the Garden are confidently removed behind the scenes, without reducing the pilgrims’ experience and preventing their actions directly.⁸⁵³ In this way, the general atmosphere of a natural stage on which pilgrims can express their faith in the most authentic way is preserved, and despite the restrictions that have to be taken to maintain order, a general sense of freedom prevails.

The cult of souvenirs is not the first thing that comes to mind when thinking of the practices and habitus of Protestant believers. Yet Neeb immediately solved the contradiction, stating that she recognized the people who left souvenirs as Latinos with a Catholic background. She also observed that the visitors who usually required pieces from the sacred were the most emotional people, such as Indians, who usually pick up soil or stones.⁸⁵⁴

Van de Biesbos also commented about Latin-American groups who came with suitcases full of notes to put inside the Tomb, and with ashes they wanted to scatter on the Garden soil.⁸⁵⁵

Another evidence of such a “foreigner” cult was observed by Brother Lufrani the Dominican scholar from the adjacent École Biblique. He was very surprised to witness unexpected behavior from Protestant visitors inside the Tomb:

They were praying in the tomb and they were taking tissue [from the stone]. It is what the Protestant fear. Protestants are normally saying against Catholics that we are doing this [...] so I saw they are doing the same thing.⁸⁵⁶

⁸⁵² Neeb (note 367 above).

⁸⁵³ A similar process was described by me in the cult of souvenirs in the Garden of Gethsemane, where the Franciscans appeased the pilgrims’ desire to obtain pieces from the sacred olives, by regulated distribution of olive branches and flowers. M. Bitton, (note 355 above), pp.32, 38-39, 63.

⁸⁵⁴ Neeb (note 367 above).

⁸⁵⁵ Van de Biesbos (note 635 above).

⁸⁵⁶ Lufrani (note 119 above).

In contrast to the Garden staff, Lufrani did not notice any specific cultural affiliation that would explain such a non-Protestant behavior.

Naturally, the staff identified practices which he recognized as foreign to Christianity or to Protestantism, with exotic cultures in relation to its own European and Western origin. Although the site aims to welcome all styles of Christian worship, the “Western style” defines the norms of Christian worship inside the Garden, as we shall see below.

D.2.2 Worshipping freely under Christian restrictions

In spite of the apparently loosened design, the function of the Garden as accommodating spiritual practices imposes structure and forces action. On a typical day in the Garden, while groups from different cultures are expressing their devotion in their own style, a general sense of worship freedom is evident. Still, the staff must control this sense of freedom to maintain order and balance.

The observance of Christian expressions of worship was particularly stressed by Meryon, who mentioned members of the Hindu and the Sikh religion, Muslims, Jews, Druids, and Satanists as examples of people who are not allowed to worship inside the Garden.⁸⁵⁷

This policy is naturally assimilated in some other religious sites that also serve as touristic sites: tourists can visit the site, but only those people whose religion corresponds with that of the site can practice their religion inside the site. However, inside the Prayer Garden, due to its grasped naturalness that might stimulate a wider range of behaviors than inside a religious building, these obvious restrictions must be enforced. Also, among Christian groups, some practices are not accepted as Christian by the staff and other visitors, and were alienated. “People from Brazil who hug trees, or come from Germany and think about earth forces, they are welcome to come around the Garden, but we don't allow them [...] to worship in the Garden.”⁸⁵⁸

Meryon also mentioned the Mormons as a Christian group that has to be restricted due to a perceived non-Christian element in their religion: “We have an arrangement with them that they can come in here, they can read the Bible [...] They are not allowed to bring the Book of Mormon to the garden.”⁸⁵⁹ According to Meryon, the Mormons

⁸⁵⁷ Meryon (note 616 above).

⁸⁵⁸ Meryon (note 616 above).

⁸⁵⁹ Ibid.

accepted the rule with understanding: “That is a rule we have that Brigham Young University is happy about.”⁸⁶⁰ My Mormon interviewee, Michael Torrie, who visited the garden four times (1998, 2004, 2007, 2010), approved Meryon’s statement and found this rule reasonable:

I believe this is a fair requirement. The Garden Tomb as an organization and a holy site wishes to be comfortable and accessible to all Christians [...] Just as a synagogue or a mosque would not appreciate the open reading of other books, so it is here.⁸⁶¹

In this case, the Book of Mormon is regarded as an alien object of faith with a salient presence that cannot be ignored.

A different case of handling a Christian group with exceptional behavior was presented by van de Biesbos, who said:

There is one group in which everyone is crying. This is the belief. I was not happy about it. In fact, it is not a group, but a sect. They are not entirely Christians; they are Japanese – the Makuya. They expressed a kind of border-line behavior. I asked the manager what we shall do. We tried to find out why they acted this way. Their explanation touched our heart: ‘we never cried for the suffering of Jesus ... when we stand in this place it is suddenly bursting outside’.⁸⁶²

Van de Biesbos claimed that despite the perceived eccentric character of the group’s methods of worship, the Garden staff provided them with a specific day and time for gathering. It can be deduced that by selecting a specific day for the Makuya’s visit, the staff sought to give them the opportunity to practice their way of worship in the Garden, but at the same time to reduce potential discomfort for other visitors.

D.2.3 Social relations: Experiencing brotherhood

“There are Christians who fear other Christians.”⁸⁶³

It is not only the Christian content of worship that has to be ensured; its form must also be regulated so as not to interrupt other rituals in the garden.

⁸⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁶¹ M. Torrie, email correspondence 25.7.11

⁸⁶² Van de Biesbos (note 635 above).

⁸⁶³ Neeb (note 367 above).

John Taylor, the former president of the GTA, described this delicate conflict as follows: “The Western Protestant Christianity also has a strand that is noisy and preaching and intrusive, and if we allow this too much freedom, we shall lose the very thing we committed to preserve.”⁸⁶⁴

In chapter C.3.1 we already learned about the major challenge the staff was facing in coping with dozens of groups who performed their own style of worship in a relatively small area. Although the place is crowded, the serenity of the setting was preserved. It is a fragile balance between the will to allow freedom of worship and the need to provide the finest experience and prevent any discomfort to other visitors. The success in achieving this balance was noticed and appreciated by the visitors, such as Pastor Clubb: “The contrast was striking – the serenity of the setting and the hustle and bustle of all the groups of people roaming about.”⁸⁶⁵

Despite the risk of clashes between different styles of worship, most of the interviewees appreciated the opportunity to meet variety of people and cultures, even though some had reservations about doing so.

Michael Torrie felt “it was nice to associate with so many believers in Jesus, even though I likely differed in belief with most of them on some core issues.”⁸⁶⁶ Still, he did experience some hostility from other visitors: “There were a few moments where I very much felt out of place. One man in the line to enter the service said, ‘the Born Agains and Mormons are ruining these services.’”⁸⁶⁷ Michael’s mother Colleen was distressed by some groups that ‘were loud with laughter which I felt was inappropriate for such a sacred place.’⁸⁶⁸ Her daughter Heather felt the same: “I did notice a lot of singing. Some groups were louder than others. I could have got annoyed, but I tried hard not to because they were worshipping God too.”⁸⁶⁹ In this case, Heather admitted to making an effort to accept the difference and the discomfort that derived from it in the view of the universal Christianity; not to dwell on the particularity of worship style, but on the general belief in one God. Pastor Clubb had a similar insight regarding overpowering cultural clashes:

⁸⁶⁴ Walker, (note 10 above), p.209

⁸⁶⁵ Clubb (note 830 above).

⁸⁶⁶ M. Torrie (note 834 above).

⁸⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁸ C. Torrie (note 837 above).

⁸⁶⁹ H. Torrie (note 829 above).

We did feel a little limited in terms of not wanting to be a distraction to the other groups that were visiting the Garden [...] Maybe Paul's words to the Roman believers would be something they might adopt: [...] 'Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.'⁸⁷⁰

One of my field interviews provided the opportunity to track a living response of my interviewee to eccentric practices of other groups. I was interviewing Tedenljung-Forsberg, an Evangelical-Lutheran teacher from Sweden who visited the Garden with her elder mother.⁸⁷¹ During our conversation, a Brazilian group that gathered in a corner opposite us was singing and praying loudly. We did not move to a quieter spot since we were fascinated by their moves and voices. I asked Ann-Sofie how she felt about their singing. She said it was fantastic, even though she did not understand the preaching. Our conversation continued with these background voices until it was interrupted by the sight of a Brazilian woman falling suddenly to the ground. The woman thrust her arms to the sky and cried out loudly, and the group gathered around her answered with "Amen". She stood up and fell down couple of times, then ran along an alley and took some jumps while shouting "Hallelujah!" We were both watching this charismatic show when Ann-Sofie commented, "God can come in other ways to people ... You can control yourself," she said, critical of the Brazilian woman, "but you cannot judge anyone if it came from God."⁸⁷²



Plates 98: Ann-Sofie observing the Brazilian Pentecostal in her performance of worship. Photo taken by M. Bitton 23.2.12.

Then she told me about her own experience of "speaking in tongues". Although she was fortunate to accommodate the divine presence, she did not lose control of herself as the Brazilian did. However, she excused the Brazilian's behavior by saying, "maybe it was her first time."⁸⁷³ Fernandes, who I assumed was the spouse of the

⁸⁷⁰ Clubb (note 830 above).

⁸⁷¹ Tedenljung-Forsberg (note 839 above).

⁸⁷² Ibid.

⁸⁷³ Ibid.

charismatic woman,⁸⁷⁴ delivered a plain description that did not express the sweeping energy of the event I witnessed, but instead depicted a routine practice of the group: “After the tomb visit, all the group members stayed together. We went to a specific place and had a devotional meeting and celebrated because Jesus is alive.”⁸⁷⁵ Despite his awareness of the uniqueness of the Garden to allow such practices, he did not describe any unique behavior of the group. He was also very tolerant towards other practices of faith: “I saw other rituals. Regardless of religious traditions, we must accept and understand different manifestations of faith unusual for us.”⁸⁷⁶ On the other hand, he believed that each group should perform their rituals without disturbing other visitors.

On another occasion, the “exotic” practices of one group inspired the observing group. Laury Demaurex, an Evangelical teacher from Switzerland, enjoyed the diversity of languages she heard in the Garden. It seemed to her to be a perfect representation of God’s people. She also appreciated different types of practices: “As long as there is no desecration of this place, I think there is a place for various expressions of faith.”⁸⁷⁷ While observing Laury’s group, I witnessed a moving example of the “perfect representation” Laury had experienced: a group from Haiti was gathered in front of Laury’s group and had started to sing in Haitian Creole. The guide explained to the Swiss group about the foreign language that had suddenly interrupted his guidance. Spontaneously, one by one, the Swiss pilgrims joined the singing in French, their native language. The same familiar song, which was being sung in two different languages, attracted the attention of passersby. Laury’s eyes filled with tears of excitement.⁸⁷⁸



Plates 99: Laury and her group join in the Haitian singing; Photo taken by M Bitton,27.10.12 .

⁸⁷⁴ Field observation by M. Bitton 23.2.12. They were seen walking hand in hand.

⁸⁷⁵ Fernandes (note 836 above).

⁸⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁷ Demaurex (note 833 above).

⁸⁷⁸ Field observation by M. Bitton 27.10.12

A much different reaction to the same occurrence came from Pauline Querbes, a French Catholic tourist. Pauline was my personal guest and I invited her to join me on a visit at the Garden. As a Roman Catholic believer, she would not have been visiting there and would probably not even have heard of this place if I had not told her about it. As we arrived, the French guided tour of the Swiss group was about to start. Pauline joined this tour, as it was in her native language, but soon felt a strong sense of alienation from the spiritual atmosphere offered by the tour.⁸⁷⁹ She was especially deterred by the emotional encounter of the Swiss and Haitian groups. What I, as an outside viewer, perceived as an exciting dialog between two cultures, caused a major discomfort to Pauline:

Suddenly, in the middle of the ceremony, several worshipers started to cry, to shout, to implore from God very loudly. I felt really embarrassed. [...] In general I do not appreciate when people express their faith and devotion in an ostentatious way.⁸⁸⁰

The Makuya group provided another eccentric performance for external observers. My field observation tracked the Makuya's visit in the Garden at midday on Friday, a time that is usually not abundant with visitors. In the preliminary interview I had with Yossef Uji, the Makuya's delegate in Israel, he said that the Makuya's visits to the Holy Land are not planned for specific holidays but for economic seasons.⁸⁸¹ This touristic tendency, combined with the general impression that the garden staff aim to schedule the Makuya's visit to less-crowded days, allowed the Makuya to express their spirituality quite privately with only a few people watching their practices. One such person was my friend, Danielle Wegman, whom I asked to attend and report for me since I could not arrive there myself.⁸⁸² Danielle described extreme transitions of behavior and moods within the ceremony, which last exactly one hour. The group hastened to assemble inside a shed at the edge of the Garden without dwelling upon any other spot of the Garden. They started to sing, accompanied by an accordionist and a singer, then answered the preacher's questions with emotional exclamations. Gradually, everything became more intense: "Soon all of them were crying and yelling and the opera tones added by the singer, confusedly transformed the prayer into tragic lyrics." At this point, other visitors were attracted and started to gather, trying to get a glimpse into the shed, but were politely discouraged by the group's

⁸⁷⁹ Querbes (note 834 above).

⁸⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁸¹ Uji (note 838 above).

⁸⁸² Field observation conducted by Danielle Wegman 08.03.13

manager. This emotional climax was interrupted suddenly: “At last, after fifteen minutes of loudly contrition, the priest clapped into his hands and all stopped instantly.” Then the group had a quick visit to the Tomb and then hurried immediately to the bus.⁸⁸³ Based on this account, Makuya believers are obedient and conformist, but also driven by intense spiritual passion. This was notably exhibited by the dramatic climax that was instantly cut off. One could interpret this as a confrontation between culture and nature; the strict Japanese order and discipline and the inner call for discharge of emotions.



Plate 100: The Makuya at the Garden 8.3.13. Photos taken by D.Wegman

Uji’s account provided the story behind the Makuya’s emotional connection to the Garden Tomb. Abraham Ikuro Teshima, the founder of the Makuya movement, visited the Holy Land for the first time in 1961. He visited the Garden after he had seen many holy places that did not respond to his spiritual needs. During his visit to the Garden he met an American woman with a paralyzed hand. She blamed the Japanese for injuring her arm during the war with Japan. Teshima replied by praying for her recovery, and then her arm appeared to miraculously start moving again. Since then, said Uji, a special relation was created between the Makuya and the Garden.⁸⁸⁴ For the Makuya believers, the Garden became the arena in which divine intervention is working, where the founder of the movement expressed his powerful belief and where the body and soul can be transformed. However, this miraculous story is not the only thing that attracts the Makuya to the Garden. The group finds the place especially attentive to their spiritual philosophy, as Uji explained to me. The name of the movement means “Tabernacle”, the portable dwelling place for the divine presence carried by the Israelites. This name was chosen by Teshima to express the

⁸⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁴ Uji (note 838 above).

original meaning of *ecclesia* – a gathering.⁸⁸⁵ The Makuya’s assembly places are austere and lack the lineaments of institutionalized church. The Garden offers the group a spiritual space that is not confined by the walls of a church. The preference of the group to perform their ceremony under the portable and humble shed might reflect this ideology (see Plate 100 above).

A similar preference for austerity was reflected by Nuri Kim, a Korean Calvinist who studies the history of Jewish people at the Hebrew University. She described her hometown churches as being “as plain as shops”. The social meaning of the church is more relevant to her than the building. That is the reason she dislikes the Holy Sepulchre, which imposes segregation between groups and cults. In contrast, the Garden Tomb enables the gathering of many different groups from all over the world, who pray and sing the same songs with different languages and provide a sense of freedom and peace. She feels it is more liberated than other places, which makes it easier to approach God.⁸⁸⁶

The Garden Tomb provides an exceptional opportunity for Christian believers to experience a gathering of many cultures who worship the same God – a genuine *ecclesia*. While other Christian shrines in the Holy Land also serve as the focal point for many different Christian cultures from all over the world, the Garden Tomb with its natural atmosphere and openness enables all these different groups to pray and express their unique styles of devotion simultaneously, and to celebrate the otherness within the universal Christianity. This universality is especially praised on Easter Sunday, when the preacher reviews all of the different continents from which the visitors have arrived and asks the representatives of every continent to shout one after another phrases from the Gospel.⁸⁸⁷



Plates 101: Multicultural Easter Sunday at the Garden, photo by M. Bitton, 4.4.10.

⁸⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁶ N. Kim interviewed by M. Bitton, 26.02.13.

⁸⁸⁷ Easter Sunday ceremony 04.04.2010, participated by M. Bitton.

D.3 Pressures from without: confronting the environment

Analogous to an organism-environment field: Here the "organism" comprises all the sacred aspects of the pilgrimage, its religious goals, personnel, relationships, rituals [...]; while the 'environment' is the network of mundane 'servicing mechanisms'-markets, hospices [...] as well as antagonistic agencies, such as official or unofficial representatives of hostile faiths, bandits, thieves, confidence men, and even backsliders within the pilgrim ranks.⁸⁸⁸

Leaning upon Victor Turner's metaphorization for the site of pilgrimage, the following chapter shifts our focus beyond the Garden's walls and explores the influence of antagonistic agencies on the visitor experience.

D.3.1 The Garden Tomb and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre: Authenticity of locality versus authenticity of atmosphere

Since the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the critical response to it served as the key motivation for tracing and establishing the new Protestant site in the 19th century, the ancient church remained in the minds of the staff and visitors as a counter-Christian institution and as an object for comparison with the GT in the matter of authenticity and spiritual atmosphere.

Most visitors enter the Garden with the image of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, with its prolonged and history and heavily based tradition, in the back of their minds. The acceptance of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre as the authentic place in which Crucifixion and Burial occurred seems to be the general consensus among them. Only a very few were convinced that the Garden Tomb was the authentic place. Most visitors are familiar with the modern archaeological identification of the Tomb as belonging to the Iron Age, not the time of Jesus. The explanations given by the Garden staff reinforce this knowledge. There is no insistence on the authenticity of the place, and visitors appreciate this honest attitude. As we learned in chapter c.2.3, instead of stressing the authenticity of the physical place, the staff emphasize the authenticity of the atmosphere. The message of the Resurrection is the main focus and

⁸⁸⁸ Turner & Turner, (not 30 above), p.22.

the fact that it might not be the authentic place becomes irrelevant; it is not important where the Tomb is since the Tomb is empty.

Meryon was very cautious about this dilemma and strove to separate visitors' beliefs from the formal explanation given to visitors. He leant on the case of the Mormons to stress on this distinction, since many Mormon students from Brigham Young University in Jerusalem tend to spend their Saturday afternoons off in the Garden, and apparently have a strong view about the Gardens authenticity. On one hand, Meryon presented the Mormons' conviction of the site's authenticity: "Mormons think that this is very definitely the right place for the Crucifixion and Burial. They are absolutely certain about it."⁸⁸⁹ On the other hand, he immediately emphasized the Garden's uncommitted view:

I am sure that you have picked up from Philip that we never make that dogmatic claim here. To us the Garden is the perfect representation of the Biblical story, it is the perfect visual aid. It may or may not be the right place, but our faith is not depended on it being the right place, because we want to point people to the person of Jesus the hero of the story, not saying this particular piece of ground is especially holy because Jesus might have walked on it.⁸⁹⁰

One of the roles of Philip, who supervises the guidance in the Garden, is to make certain that the guides do not express any claim about the authenticity of the place:

"It is forbidden to say that this is the definitely the place of Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus. It is the classical example for things you cannot say."⁸⁹¹

The personal belief of every staff member usually remains obscured. Al Milton, a Baptist minister from the USA who serves as a volunteering guide in the Garden, said that he does not believe the Garden Tomb has any priority over the Holy Sepulchre in terms of authenticity.⁸⁹² On the other hand, there might be other guides who have difficulty concealing their identification with the site's authenticity. This seems to be the case presented by Pauline Querbes, whose main impression from her guided tour in French was disappointment regarding the non-objective guidance:

I felt embarrassed by the speech of the guide [...] The guide gave me sometimes the impression to behave like a preacher. He referred several time to the bible to prove that this place could be the real Golgotha/Tomb of Jesus. I did not expect that from the

⁸⁸⁹ Meryon (note 616 above).

⁸⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁹¹ Ben-Shmuel (note 752 above).

⁸⁹² Al Milton. Interviewed by M. Bitton 12.03.09.

guide. I expected him to be neutral, to take distance from the so-called sacredness of the site and to give more explanations from a historical/sociological perspective.⁸⁹³



Plates 102: Pauline with the French guided tour. Photo taken by M Bitton 27.10.12.

Pauline was the only interviewee to complain on the subject. Her Catholic affiliation might explain her sensitivity on the matter. The guide saying that the Garden “could” be the real site, instead of saying that it “is” reveals that although the guide was relying on the biblical account, he did not actually make definite claims. Still, his passionate style clearly exposed his personal adhesion to the place and offended Pauline’s religious sentiments.

The focus on the appropriate atmosphere rather than on the physical tracks of the religious affair reflects the dominancy of culture over religion, as suggested by Peter Wells: “There is more cultural interest here than a religious interest- a sense of cultural discomfort in certain places. There are Protestants who prefer open air cathedrals in front of Catholics who prefer more icons and incense.”⁸⁹⁴

Despite this dichotomy of denominational preferences, it seems that the authenticity of atmosphere now also attracts Catholic and Orthodox Christians into the Garden. Although they deny any identification of the Crucifixion and Burial other than the Holy Sepulchre, some of them find the place appropriate to conduct mediations and even religious ceremonies. The Orthodox Christians are less prevalent. George, a Greek Orthodox Arab who owns a business on Nablus Road, admitted that although he definitely renounced the authenticity of the site, he visits every once in a while and preforms meditation or private devotion.⁸⁹⁵ More and more Catholic groups tend to

⁸⁹³ Querbes (note 834 above).

⁸⁹⁴ Wells (note 659 above).

⁸⁹⁵ George (note 786 above).

visit the place and some even conduct Catholic mass in the Garden.⁸⁹⁶ Victor Jack, the vice-president of the GTA, proudly said that Catholics who arrived to the Garden preferred this site to the HS. “They were saying things like- if Jesus had a choice, I think he would have chosen to be buried here and not there.”⁸⁹⁷ This recent openness of other denominations to visit to place can be ascribed to the cautious policy of the staff when dealing with the question of locality, as Wells tried to explain: “They sense that nobody would try to proselyte them here.”⁸⁹⁸

As for the visitors’ beliefs, most of them did not regard the place as the genuine stage on which the Biblical events took place, as mentioned above. Not even all Mormons were convinced of it, which contrasts with Meryon’s perception of the Mormons’ belief in the authenticity of the site.⁸⁹⁹ Michael Torrie, for instance, admitted that he was “pretty confident that the Holy Sepulchre is more likely to be the actual location of the events.”⁹⁰⁰ Still, he was ‘spiritually fulfilled by the Garden Tomb, much more so than the Holy Sepulchre.’⁹⁰¹ Like the staff, the visitors also seemed to be focusing on the authenticity of the atmosphere. Pastor Regula emphasized the importance of the authentic atmosphere without committing to the authenticity of the place:

None could really know where the Garden Tomb is and that it is just like it could have been...The atmosphere in the garden is much more like I imagine it was at the tomb two thousand years ago.⁹⁰²

Ansie from South Africa found the place to be

The most authentic site in the entire Jerusalem, because it is the only site that wasn’t invaded or controlled by a particular denomination that built a church over it. For me that is almost a way of desecrating these sites, because it becomes a commercial enterprise and takes away the natural setting – the way it was when the events actually took place.⁹⁰³

The concept of authenticity, as reflected in the descriptions above, was defined by the conservation of the site’s original state since ancient times, rather than identifying it with the exact spot in which biblical events took place.

⁸⁹⁶ Ben-Shmuel (note 752 above); Van de Biesbos (note 635 above); Meryon (note 616 above).

⁸⁹⁷ Jack (note 609 above).

⁸⁹⁸ Wells (note 659 above).

⁸⁹⁹ Meryon (note 616 above): “Mormons are absolutely convinced that this is the genuine place for the crucifixion and Burial.”

⁹⁰⁰ M. Torrie (note 834 above).

⁹⁰¹ Ibid.

⁹⁰² Frischknecht (note 833 above).

⁹⁰³ Van Wyk (note 833 above).

Ansie, Pastor Regula, Michael Torrie and many others were satisfied with the authenticity of the atmosphere and were not bothered by the authenticity of locality and identification. In the Garden they found the place that fulfills their religious imagination and taste. They appreciated it better than being able to encounter a genuine place of biblical occurrences (such as the HS) if such a place does not allow them to express their faith as they wish.

Only a few visitors were convinced about the site's authentic identification. The spiritual experience of Simon was directed by this conviction. His belief that it was the precise place of the Crucifixion and Resurrection provided him with new strength and a higher level of spiritual expression: "like in the ways that I sang, more wholeheartedly, knowing that this is the very site of the Tomb of our Lord Jesus."⁹⁰⁴ Moreover, Simon did not regard any external archaeological, traditional, or historical reservations, and also was not aware of such a fact that might be attributed to the cultural–geographical remoteness of his country of origin.



Plate 103: Musa Karel Simon and the author M. Bitton in Christmas service; photo taken by the author's father,

Also Daniel Aqleh, a Palestinian Evangelical from Bethlehem, expressed similar determination regarding the authenticity of locality. Aqleh found a perfect match between the place and the Biblical text, and thus relied on it as historical evidence: "when I look at the Bible I see the history, I see it all. [...] thus I believe that according to history, the Tomb should have been without the walls, not within."⁹⁰⁵ He was especially excited to see the Tomb, and also Skull Hill, which provided further evidence of the Biblical account. In contrast to Simon, the indigenous Aqleh was naturally aware of the confrontation with the HS, but was convinced of the historical accuracy of the GT upon the HS.

⁹⁰⁴ Simon (note 833 above).

⁹⁰⁵ Daniel Aqleh interviewed by M. Bitton, 20.05.11.

Both Simon and Aqleh, in their uncompromising conviction in the authenticity of locality, seem to exemplify a belief in the substantial sacredness of the site, rather than the situational sacredness that depended upon the practices of the believers. Instead, the authenticity of atmosphere described by other visitors stressed the importance of the adequate background for the religious practice, and thus reflected more closely the situational approach for the sacred.

D.3.2 Visitors' Response to Environmental Interruptions

Lord Coggan, the former Archbishop of Canterbury who wrote the introduction to White's book, described the Garden as: 'an *oasis* of peace in a city marked all too often by noise and conflict'.⁹⁰⁶ The influences of the environmental noise and conflict on the oasis between them were thoroughly discussed in chapter c.4 from the managers' perspective. The following sub-chapter will explore these interruptions from the visitors' perspective. The contrast between the peacefulness and naturalness inside the garden and the plain urbanism, bustle and occasional violence outside of it, had been discerned by many visitors, and their visit experience was influenced by it. However, instead of just being disrupted by it, some of them chose to interpret it in a manner that intensified their spiritual experience.

At the theoretical level, Lane recognized this type of response as 'poetical' interpretation of the sacred place through nonreligious needs and demands. He exemplified this through the case of the Catholic Worker Movement he was investigating, which, on its 25th anniversary, received notification that its main headquarters had to be removed to make way for a new subway connection: "Instead of engaging in a politics of place, contesting the removal decision, it was considered 'a "sign" from God, a most appropriate gift on our twenty-fifth anniversary. The gift of precarity to insure our permanence."⁹⁰⁷ The group presented by Lane adopted a new challenging reality by creating an explanation that would support their spiritual narrative. In a similar way, also the visitors to the GT also created a variety of explanation to cope with the noise from the street, the sight of the bus station under the Skull Hill, and the presence of the Muslim graves above it.

Michael Torrie sensed this dramatic contrast as soon as he entered the place:

⁹⁰⁶ White, (note 10 above), p. 7.

⁹⁰⁷ Lane in: Lily Kong (note 18 above) p. 225.

“One major thing I noticed was the sound of the street outside disappeared almost immediately upon entering the garden. This was surreal and contributed to the peaceful feelings I got in the Garden.”⁹⁰⁸ However, Michael appreciated the opportunity to visit in an Arab neighborhood: “This could be one of the few glimpses of real Arab families that some tourists get as they walk to it.”⁹⁰⁹ Also, Michael’s mother Colleen did not resent having to go through the Arab neighborhood and considered it a chance to see other cultures. Still, when entering the Garden, she enjoyed the contrasting atmosphere it offered.⁹¹⁰ Heather, Michael’s sister, solved the dissonance by referring to the peaceful place in the noisy area as a metaphor to the miracle of the Savior – peace in the midst of turmoil.⁹¹¹

The Golgotha observation demonstrates a salient dissonance of juxtaposition where the Garden’s walls no longer separate the sacred inside and the profane outside. Instead, a confusing *mélange* of these dichotomies is exhibited where the sacred Hill and the profane bus stop lie side by side. In contrast to the ideal organization of a sacred site, in which the entrance serves as a threshold for a gradual passage along levels of holiness from the profane to the most sacred, as analyzed by Thomas Barrie,⁹¹² here the pilgrims encounter a harsh window to the profane environment, no gradual process to prepare them to meet the sacredness of the Hill.

This paradoxical sight was interpreted by Pastor Clubb as fitting the biblical scene: “I liked the view of Golgotha situated as it is right next to the bus parking lot because it was a reminder that what we remembered at this place came about for the world.” Yet it was the sight he had the strongest negative feelings about since it seemed to be so foreign to the peacefulness of the garden setting.⁹¹³

Pastor Regula created her own interpretation for this juxtaposition:

“It is always the modern world which makes you remember, that it is not just like it was 2000 Years ago. [...] You have to find your own way of living as a Christian – not like it was 2000 years ago, but now.”⁹¹⁴

Aqleh, after stressing on the authenticity of the place and his deep conviction regarding the genuineness of the Tomb, was also willing to become more flexible

⁹⁰⁸ M. Torrie (note 834 above).

⁹⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁹¹⁰ C. Torrie (note 837 above).

⁹¹¹ H. Torrie (note 829 above).

⁹¹² Barrie (note 20 above), pp.79-148.

⁹¹³ Clubb (note 830 above).

⁹¹⁴ Frischknecht (note 833 above).

when he had to cope with the sight of the bus station below the Skull Hill. When I asked him what his response was to the sight of the bus station, he chose to reply indirectly and stressed on a theological insight that denied the insistence on a particular locality. He told me, “Jesus said, ‘you are the temple of Lord and the Holy Spirit lives among you’. At this point Jesus canceled the focus of the actual stone. The place is appropriate, but it is only a stone ... the place is not sacred until people make it sacred.”⁹¹⁵ Aqleh exemplified a marvelous shift between the two opposite stands regarding the sacred space, from the *substantial* in front of the Tomb to the *situational* in front of Skull Hill.

Finally, the testimonial of Ann-Sofieseems less interpretive and much more forthright than others. She did not try to hide her disappointment about the sight of Muslim structures, the wall, the graves, and the bus station around the Garden, and her visit experience was clearly disturbed by it. However, she also found a unique way to explain these interruptions in relation to her faith, and to experience a spiritual intensification by creating her own philosophy regarding the Muslim environment:

Many of this non Israeli places are so massed up [...] not taking care about their nature [...] but when we entered Israeli places and Jewish places you can see how it's flourishing, the trees are beautiful [...] I think this is the way God is showing- this is my people and I want to bless them.⁹¹⁶

D.4 Forbidden fruit: Earthly desires in the sacred Garden

The enclosed Garden, with its peripheral walls and green canopy of high trees that block onlookers and noises from the neighborhood, creates an inviting environment for worldly activities as well. The illusion of freedom inside attracts secular visitors who might use it as a hiding place to dispel tensions stemming from the conservative Muslim society outside. Here lies another latent paradox contained by the garden: its existence between sacredness and secularization, between transcending spirituality and earthly desire.

⁹¹⁵ Aqleh (note 905 above).

⁹¹⁶ Tedenljung-Forsberg (note 839 above).

In the final sub-chapter, I explore the way in which local visitors from the neighborhood insinuate non-religious motivations and practices into the garden, and thus place it within this paradox.

Several staff members presented the first example of such practices:

The Garden has served for a couple of years as a place for forbidden meetings, such as love affairs of the young Muslim neighbors.⁹¹⁷ When I asked Rieki Neeb about the influences of the Garden on the neighborhood, her answer was, “There are many Muslim girls who come to meet a guy here.”⁹¹⁸ She explained how the staff recognizes these affairs: “First the girl enters and, after a couple of minutes, the guy joins her.”⁹¹⁹ Another typical act that was witnessed by Ben-Shmuel is the removal of the head cover by the girl who enters the Garden and waits for her friend.⁹²⁰ However, it seems that this phenomenon has become less frequent recently, after staff repeatedly asked the youngsters to desist.⁹²¹ These rendezvous were regarded as taboo, both from within and without; not only by the sacredness of site, but also by its conservative milieu:

When we go to the Temple Mount, I could not even sit next to you if I was a guy. We want to deliver them the message that Christians also have a secret place. We cannot allow affairs and picnics here [...] their parents ought to know that we have morals here.⁹²²

For that reason, the staff not only confront these teens with the sacredness of the place, but also reminds them that they are operating against their parents’ will and disobeying the Mullah (the religious leader);⁹²³ in this way, they use the teens’ social boundaries to enforce introjection of the Garden’s sacred boundaries. Meryon’s awareness of the parents and Mullah’s opinion suggests that the staff was confronted with their criticism. Ben-Shmuel was the only interviewee to provide information about it. He was told that, in the past, these forbidden meetings in the Garden stirred some tensions with the neighborhood’s community.⁹²⁴

⁹¹⁷ Ben-Shmuel (note 752 above); Neeb (note 367 above); Van de Biesbos (note 635 above); Meryon (note 636 above).

⁹¹⁸ Neeb, *ibid.*

⁹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹²⁰ Ben-Shmuel (note 752 above).

⁹²¹ Neeb (note 367 above); Ben-Shmuel, *ibid.*

⁹²² Neeb, *Ibid.*

⁹²³ *Ibid.*; Meryon (note 636 above).

⁹²⁴ Ben-Shmuel (note 752 above).

A slightly different kind of visitors are the girls who frequent the Garden after school (Schmidt College for Girls is located a few meters away from the GT):

They enjoy the freedom in some anonymous place, just to sit in the greenery and talk. Occasionally they turn around, taking photos and laugh. Sometimes I speak with them. Let them feel liberated. They find lots of interest in this place; they are made curious by it, examine everything that happens here.⁹²⁵

Ben-Shmuel also testified about the curiosity of the Muslim neighbors who enter the Garden just to sit and relax, or to stroll and receive information about the place. Jewish visitors also enjoy this kind of visit in the Garden.⁹²⁶ However, the neighbors I interviewed denied the idea that Muslim neighbors would enter the place, particularly for romantic reasons.⁹²⁷ The only remark I received indirectly on the matter was from Raffat, who works at the Sultan Suleiman bus station. Raffat told me about the tension in the community regarding the morals of the Muslim girls:

Every day we witness fights and violence here [in the neighborhood]. When the girls are leaving school, if the father notices anyone who takes a look at his daughter, a fight starts. There are about five to six such fights every day. The neighborhood is not good. The girls are not good. They don't study.⁹²⁸

These social tensions apparently found temporary relief inside the Garden, according to the staff. The concerns of the staff relate not only to the sacredness of the place, but also to the outer society's reactions, which seem even more justified after receiving this complementary view of the neighborhood.

As for the actual Muslim visitors to the Garden, it was even more challenging to receive their impressions. Fortunately, I did manage to interview one Muslim woman who visited the Garden. Saadia, a Palestinian teacher from Bethlehem, was sitting alone in a secluded spot when I visited the Garden on Friday at noon in December of 2011.⁹²⁹ Her Muslim affiliation was evident through her head covering. She was very friendly and smiled at me when I approached her, as if she was waiting for company. She immediately offered me a piece of her bagel with zaatar, acting as the host in her garden corner. I sat by her and ate with her, completely forgetting that it was prohibited to eat in the Garden, cooperating naturally with her hospitality.

⁹²⁵ Neeb (note 367 above).

⁹²⁶ Ben-Shmuel (note 752 above).

⁹²⁷ Raffat Sheikh (note 812 above); George (note 786 above); Amin (note 811 above); Taufiq 08.11.10;

⁹²⁸ Rafat (note 812 above).

⁹²⁹ Saadia interviewed by M. Bitton, 30.12.11.

Within a couple of seconds a staff member approached us and gently reminded us that although we were very welcome in the Garden, it was not permitted to eat there. He was protecting the sacredness assigned to the place, while we were floating with its sense of naturalness, using common eating under the trees to remove borders between us. We were chatting in English, punctuated occasionally with Hebrew words. Saadia used to visit the Garden every couple of weeks, always on Fridays, after participating in Muslim prayers at Al-Aqsa Mosque. She accidentally discovered the garden while walking on Nablus Road and found there a piece of secluded nature that she adores. She repeated the word “nature” a couple of times, emphasizing it also in Hebrew. “I love the nature very much,” she said, “Trees, flowers, all these things. It makes me feel very good, makes me very happy.” She was also attracted to the story of the place. In her visits she found the opportunity to learn about the history of other religions, to acquire a new knowledge of other cultures. She was happy to receive a brochure with explanation of the place from the Garden’s staff. She enjoyed meeting people from other countries and cultures, with whom she occasionally speaks. Moreover, she reveals, she enjoys being at the Garden’s souvenir shop, “with the Christian objects.”⁹³⁰

I asked whether she buys things there. “No, it’s forbidden for Muslims,” she responded. She only observed, especially the handmade fabrics. She compares it to her own needlework, which she sells in cooperation with other Palestinian women. When she felt more comfortable with me, she told me about the difficulties in her life. As a Palestinian woman she had to force her way through a chauvinist family and husband who deprived her of seeing her children after their divorce, and through the Israeli authorities who limited her mobility and denied her legal access to Jerusalem. The Garden became her secret refuge, in which she could temporarily regain a sense of freedom and social equality and chat peacefully with people from all over the world and reinforce that “we are all human.”⁹³¹

The above evidence affirms the unique potency of the Garden to provide a protecting and natural-seeming space to practice behavior that is not socially acceptable outside the Garden. Although the degree of social daringness might vary depending on the level of intimacy and protection the green space might provide, the basic quality of

⁹³⁰ Ibid.

⁹³¹ Ibid.

any green space as enabling a natural atmosphere encourages a sense of freedom and more liberal behavior.⁹³² These examples also emphasize the lack of other gardens or public green areas in the neighborhood. The fact that *babe s-Sahira* and East Jerusalem are relatively devoid of public open spaces, together with the conservative tendencies of the communities inhabit this area, might explain why the Garden became an attractive destination for young Muslims from the area to experience a sense of nature and freedom. As a matter of fact, the Garden provides these teens with a combination of terms that could not exist in their public space. The public open space of the Arab society, as well as that of the Jewish Orthodox society, is denied of intimate corners that might provide opportunities for behavior that is considered indecent, hidden from the public eye.⁹³³ The very few public open spaces in the area, such as the space in front of Nablus Gate, or the small archeological space on Namoi Kis Street, allow only a brief relaxation totally exposed to passersby (see Plate 104).

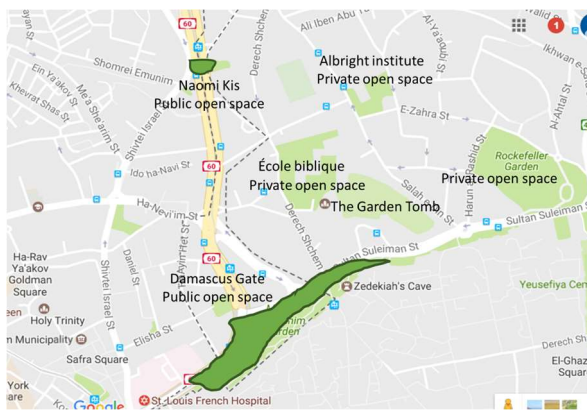


Plate 104: Map of public open spaces in Bab s-Sahira.

As mentioned in chapter c.4.2, the Garden staff were aware of the secular needs of the locals, which are not limited to non-Christians. Also, local Christians from the area or the outskirts of Jerusalem expressed similar secular needs, which points on the lack of public open spaces in their neighborhood.⁹³⁴

The interview with the anonymous neighbor provided both the visitors' and the neighbors' aspect for my fieldwork. For this neighbor, the Garden is a place for recreation in the midst of the ashen neighborhood. She tends to visit the place with friends or by herself to get some fresh air. She shared with me an exalted moment she experienced at the Garden; it was the first time her fiancé pronounced his love. She

⁹³² Francis and Hester (note 824 above), pp. 7-8, 17.

⁹³³ Information is based on my professional experience as a landscape architect that worked within Arab and Jewish Orthodox neighborhoods.

⁹³⁴ George interview (note 786 above), Anonymous (note 742 above).

was waiting for him at the Garden and he arrived with a balloon on which the words “I love you” were written. One of the visitors commented on the quaint gesture and told them it was very spiritual and romantic. A few months later, my interviewee requested permission to have her marriage ceremony performed at the Garden, since she was told that people used to get married there at the past, but she was refused.⁹³⁵ She was also familiar with many young Muslims who use the Garden as a meeting point in order “not to be seen.”⁹³⁶

The local Christian need for green spaces is especially prevalent at Easter, when Palestinian Christians receive an authorized pass to visit Jerusalem. Approximately 500 of them join the services at the Garden Tomb each year. Meryon observed the Palestinian children who get very excited about the sight of all the flowers, some of whom have never visited a garden before. As a result, “they don't always behave as best as they could”, which includes picking flowers, walking on flower beds, and climbing trees.⁹³⁷ Although the children’s positive experience was important to Meryon him, he had to maintain the balance between their needs and the Garden’s restrictions.⁹³⁸

As we learned in chapter c.4, both Palestinians and Israelis were encouraged to visit the site, either as worshipers in the mutual meeting of Christian Palestinians and Messianic Jews, or as secular tourists who search for a green open space or an exotic destination. Ben-Shmuel, while comparing Israeli and Palestinian tourists, observed that “The Israelis come to visit this place out of curiosity. They are not looking for a place to sit and relax. Palestinians come here for the sake of sitting and resting, and also out of curiosity.”⁹³⁹ This insight corresponds with the shortage and neglect of the public open spaces in Palestinian settlements compared to secular Israeli settlements.⁹⁴⁰ Based on my field observations, Israeli tourists to the Garden mostly come in organized groups, not as individuals, and they are usually looking for an educational and cultural experience, learning about each other’s beliefs and culture in

⁹³⁵ In 1973 Leenart Schermers and Ria Duyts were married at the Garden by permission of the Committee. Both served as staff members. Additionally, there was a case of spending honeymoon in the Garden cottage. Meryon 2014 (note 10 above), pp. 138, 197, 203.

⁹³⁶ Anonymous (note 742 above).

⁹³⁷ Meryon (note 636 above).

⁹³⁸ Ibid.

⁹³⁹ Ben-Shmuel (note 752 above).

⁹⁴⁰ See for instance: Daud (note 813 above), p.37.

the unusual set of the Garden.⁹⁴¹ The Garden is presented to the Israelis by Israeli guides as a mysterious piece of land, hidden unexpectedly in the midst of East Jerusalem, which offers Israeli tourists a taste of overseas inside Jerusalem and an authentic experience inside a genuine English garden with a magical atmosphere.⁹⁴² It seems that, for Israelis, and Jerusalem citizens in particular, who usually avoid visit East Jerusalem due to a feeling of insecurity, the visit in the Garden not only satisfies the curiosity regarding this unfamiliar secret garden, but also provides a sense of adventure and daringness that accompanied the visit to East Jerusalem.

On the other hand, Arab visitors to the Garden not only receive a reply to their unsatisfied requirement for green open spaces, but also obtain a temporary relief from the conservative society. Erik Cohen's typology for the tourist experience can be helpful in clearly defining the different motivations of these two groups of local tourists to the Garden. The Israelis can be identified as *Experiential* tourists, who seek to experience alternative cultures and societies, while the Palestinians can be identified as *Recreational* tourists who seek recreational experiences.⁹⁴³

Daniel Aqleh shared with me his experience from the mutual Easter meeting of Palestinians and Messianic Jews. I interviewed him by telephone a month after we had met on the Holy Saturday service in the Garden. It was Daniel's fourth time taking part in such a mutual meeting and he was very appreciative of the special occasion:

This year was good and special, as every year. The most amazing thing in the ceremony is that Palestinians and Messianic Jews are worshipping Lord together, and the two people become one. Since there is no different between Jews and gentiles, between male and female, and it is such a wonderful thing these days that there is a union between Arbs to Jews.⁹⁴⁴

For Daniel, the Garden provided an experience that could not take place elsewhere. A political, ethnic, and cultural gap in his everyday life is being filled inside the Garden.

⁹⁴¹ In addition to field observation, I was also guiding in the Garden several groups of students and seniors who were interested in my research during the years 2010-2013.

⁹⁴² See for instance: R. Peled, "The Garden Tomb- the secret of the hidden Tomb", Tours in the country, *Ynet*, 29.09.06. <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-3308741,00.html>, [Hebrew], Accessed 27 September 2009; D. Zakai, "The garden of mystery", Tourism, *Maariv*, 15.08.09. <http://www.nrg.co.il/online/55/ART1/929/849.html>, [Hebrew], Accessed 27 September 2009; R. Kfir, "The Garden Tomb", http://www.jerusalem-love.co.il/?page_id=2329, [Hebrew], Accessed 27 September 2009.

⁹⁴³ E. Cohen "A Phenomenology of Tourist Experiences", *Sociology* May 1979 (13), pp. 179-201.

⁹⁴⁴ Aqleh (note 905 above).

The Garden's sacred space allowed a union between two contradictory forces and brought inherited dichotomies into their original undivided source. In Daniel's everyday life in Bethlehem, Jewish soldiers deprive his freedom; inside the Garden, Messianic Jews become his companions to prayer and worship. Here he experienced what Marcus defined as a transformation of consciousness in which "spiritual and global perspectives are emerging organically from the partial perspectives of ego and nation-state", since "The garden is a place where matter is transformed from one state to another-seed to plant."⁹⁴⁵ However, despite the spiritual growth Aqleh was experiencing in the Garden, he could not disconnect himself from the partial perspectives of ego and nation. The theme of freedom restriction, which is prevalent in Aqleh's life, was strongly evident in his world of images. For him, the most meaningful place in the Garden is the open Tomb:

When you visit other tombs, there are guards there, there are gates- as in Hebron... there are guards at the entrance and at exit. It is a wonderful feeling to know that Jesus is alive...the fact that Jesus is not there is wonderful! Otherwise there would be a lot of checkpoints to get to His tomb.⁹⁴⁶

When I asked him whether the Garden stirred any special emotions in him, Aqleh emphasized the hardship of his journey from Bethlehem:

It's a good place for a person to disconnect from life, to go there and spend time with God. But since I live on the other side of the wall I don't have the opportunity to do so except twice a year, and it is a shame. I cannot see why I cannot move freely in the Holy Land- in Palestine and Israel as it used to be.⁹⁴⁷

His aspirations to disconnect himself from the hardships of his life inside the Garden clearly demanded an extraordinary effort from him; however, we should not underestimate the contribution of his experience in the mutual service in the Garden to his sense of religious and civil identity and his sense of social belonging to a wider range of communities. Relying on Aqleh's experience from the mutual service, we can nurture the hope that indeed, as Conan reflected, gardens "may rekindle important metaphysical ideas, stimulate a renewed sense of community, enable people to maintain a sense of identity through diaspora, or open the way to new political actions."⁹⁴⁸

⁹⁴⁵ Marcus (note 824 above), p.32.

⁹⁴⁶ Aqleh (note 905 above).

⁹⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁸ Conan 2007, (note 20 above), p.14

E. Conclusions

In this research I have aimed to explore the creation and functioning of the Garden Tomb. The site's existence as a rare example in Israel of a Protestant sanctuary and a devotional garden presented important layers of meaning for my research interest.

This exploration was comprised of several related questions, each of which has discussed a different perspective in site's existence:

1. What was the Protestant ideology behind the creation of the Garden Tomb?
2. What was the process of reception and sacralization of the Hill and the Tomb?
3. How was the Garden Tomb designed and functioned to respond the Protestant theological and cultural demands?
4. How did the open sacred space promote a unique spiritual experience?
5. How did the GTA deal with organizational, political, and environmental conflicts?

In this concluding chapter I will summarize the main themes that have been discussed in the research in accordance with the above research questions, with the final aim of providing a comprehensive observation of the site's creation and existence as a Protestant devotional garden.

The Ideology behind the Creation of the Hill and the Tomb

At the base of the search for the actual place of the Crucifixion and Resurrection laid the Protestant theology, with its persistence on the unmediated Scriptural text.

This theology sent the first scholars and explorers, under the Romantic and the Biblical-scientific climate of the era, to discover the authentic site upon which the Scriptural word could confidently rest. With their eyes open wide and their rational minds, these scholars and explorers were driven to the mountains of Jerusalem that reflected for them the immutable Biblical landscape.

And when the eye was finally setting its mind on the skull-looking cliff, the truth erupted instinctively. In this abbreviated description of the process of relocating Golgotha, the main values that also characterized the subsequent sacralization of the site are revealed: a search for authenticity, rational independent mind, uninterrupted gaze. These three expressions of the unmediated faith were combined to actualize the Word on the landscape, which was also perceived as unmediated entity, unharmed by rival Christian traditions.

Yet, from the moment the Word found its adequate place on earth, an ancient theological paradox emerged regarding the sacred place in Christianity, and notably in Protestantism. While one view advocated the sanctification of places that accommodated the Scriptural events, the opposing view denied the importance of any particular place since God is supposedly omnipresent. Hence, a conflict was created between locality and universality.

The local–universal conflict, together with the search for authenticity, served as key motivators behind the process of creation of the Garden Tomb.

The unsolved local–universal conflict left much room for interpretation, which was taken advantage of by the GTA. Thus, under different political circumstances, the Committee advocated different aspect of the dichotomy. The different interpretation of this conflict also influenced the principle of authenticity, which was always present along the way, but was realized in two different forms: when the local aspect was dominant, the authenticity was realized as the authenticity of a place; when the universal aspect was dominant, it was realized as authenticity of atmosphere.

Although these two correlated principles occasionally merged, I identified each genuine contribution in promoting different aspects in the site’s creation.

The search for authenticity influenced the practice of the site’s creation.

It led to the identification of the Hierophany in the Hill and the Tomb. It then determined the Garden’s design under the inspiration of natural Biblical landscape and the Plain Style aesthetics. Finally, the Garden’s function as a garden for sacred associations, or as a prayer garden, was shaped by the different notions of authenticity. The ideology of the GTA was influenced by its changing interpretation to the local–universal conflict. The message of the Garden, the goals of the GTA, the internal and external policy regarding the organizational, religious, political and environmental issues, were all shaped by the local or universal aspects of the dichotomy.

2. The process of reception and sacralization of the Hill and the Tomb

The first accounts of visitors who accepted the Hill and the Tomb as sacred places since the late 1880s reflect the same theological conventions that motivated the explorers who had frequented these places in the previous four decades. However, the new pilgrims took these Protestant motivations a step forward when they acknowledged the truth projected to them from the Hill as an inherent sacredness that suddenly erupted. This revelation of sacredness was persuasive enough to allow the acceptance of the adjacent Tomb, as if the holiness projected from the Hill had also marked the Tomb as sacred. This kind of sacralization, which was based on the pilgrim's admiring gaze, fixated a distance between the eye and its object of faith and detained a dynamic involvement of the believers with site.

I identified the first accounts of the Hill's sacralization as reflecting a substantial sacredness that was accompanied by a visual-passive consumption of the sacred. This approach for the sacred indicates the importance of locality rather than universality and stresses the authenticity of the place.

Despite the visitors' declared unmediated reception of the sacred site, they came to the Hill equipped with visual preconceptions that largely relied on hymns and pictures and everything was reflected to them through the contemporary Romantic and Biblical-scientific lenses. Other mediating sources also influenced the site's reception. The Scriptural narrative was accompanied by an alternative tradition instead of the one that had been brutally denied regarding the HS. Neglected or marginal traditions, such as the Jewish tradition of the House of Stoning, supported the proposed location and its meaning.

Visitors were also interested in an additional minor narrative: to follow the heroes of the time who already approved the new identification. Not only were the visitors/pilgrims inspired and encouraged by these heroes, but they also gradually started to imitate their acts, following in their footsteps and repeating the practices they had performed. This admiration for the representatives of the emotional/rational epoch created a hybrid practice of faith, between distant rationality and dynamic

bodily involvement. Thus, another step was made towards a situational experience of the sacred space that involves the cultural labor and the active involvement of the believer.

By the 1890s, the Hill began to serve as platform for sermons and gatherings and became a viable pilgrimage site. It was no longer just a field to be researched or a peculiar piece of land to be admired, but an extraordinary location to preform rituals. Meanwhile, at the Tomb, the first expressions of material devotion began to emerge. Neither the Hill nor the Tomb were immune of practices of faith considered alien to Protestantism. Their identifications were supported by traditions and narratives other than the Bible and they were also experienced through bodily and material practices other than the eyesight. With reflection on Lock's research, which placed the visual devotion of the 19th century's Protestant pilgrims to the Holy Land in a salient contrast with the bodily and material devotion of the Orthodox and Catholic pilgrims,

I identified that such a definitive dichotomy did not exist in the Hill and the Tomb.⁹⁴⁹ Instead, the religious consumption of the Hill and the Tomb were characterized by a transition from sacredness experienced through the eyesight into sacredness that involved social or bodily practice, and from a so-called unmediated faith into a more complex idea of faith that is supported by different mediators.

However, it was an ambiguous process that was marked by simultaneous contradicting actions and reactions that were sometimes expressed by the same person. On several occasions, the pilgrims/visitors had moments of self-reflection in which they sought to solve their inner conflicts. Such was the case with the few visitors who dealt with the local-universal conflict and expressed their doubts regarding the consecration of the place.

As argued by Kong, and exemplified in the case study of Netivot, this research also reflects the mutual interactions between the substantial and situational aspects of the sacred, and demonstrates the potency of both aspects in the creation of the sacred site, as opposed to a sterile comprehension of the sacred based upon only one category.⁹⁵⁰

When the Garden Tomb was established, the GTA was committed to the Garden's substantial sacredness and the importance of its locality. It was the authenticity of the place that the GTA sought to approve when it appealed to the public relying upon the

⁹⁴⁹ Lock (note 5 Above), pp. 113-117;

⁹⁵⁰ Kong (note 19 above); Alon-Mozes, Shadar and Vardi (note 23 above), p.82;

rational and critical thought and the patronage of influential figures. The first visitors to the Garden Tomb did not easily recognize the Garden as a sacred place, due to its unripe form. The first decisive evidence for its reception as sacred was expressed by a pilgrim who picked flowers and leaves as souvenirs – an act of material devotion that reflects the sacred value assigned to these of natural elements.

In the first decades of the site's existence, the search for the authenticity of place was determined to the degree that, in the 1930s the GTA reconsidered the location of Golgotha and theoretically transplanted it in the plot beneath the Hill. However, a failing transaction between the GTA and the Waqf prevented the tangible manifestation of this relocation. Although the new identification has generally been embraced by the GTA members and staff to this day, it was never accepted by the visitors to the GT. The sudden interruption in the newly sacred narrative of the Hill, together with the lack of a proper space to be gazed upon, other than a central bus station, did not contribute to the site's acceptance.

3. The design and function of the Garden Tomb as a Protestant sanctuary

The original intentions of the GTA, as declared in the two appeals to the public in 1892 and 1898, were to protect the site from desecration and superstitious uses.

In both cases, there were no references to the site's function for religious practices. These declared and absent intentions demonstrated another expression of the local–universal conflict. On one hand, the purpose of protecting the site from desecration was testimony to the founders' belief in the site's sacredness; otherwise, there is no reason in this purpose. On the other hand, the purpose of securing the site from superstitious uses and the avoidance of facing its potential as a worship place exhibited the founders' concern about creating another “holy place”.

Yet, above the surface, the design principles for the newly founded sanctuary strove to intensify the authenticity of the place, a clear indication of the importance of this place. The initial plan offered a most moderate intervention, whereby the ground hardly underwent any changes. In accordance with the key principles of the Plain Style – *simplicity* and *perspicuity* – the design reflected a desire to uncover the truth and to restore its original alleged position as the Garden in which Jesus was buried and resurrected.

The archeological excavation that took place in the Garden during its first decades served as another means to enhance veracity, and the findings were presented in the Garden as evidence of its original existence as a garden. Additionally, the uncertain dating of the Tomb left the possibility for its alleged existence as the Tomb of Jesus open; therefore, it was generally regarded by staff and visitors as the authentic Tomb. The selection of plants also served to intensify the connection to the native and Biblical landscape as appropriate for a garden from Jesus's time.

The same design principles were applied in the ambitious plan to design the Place of the Skull below the Hill. In this plan, the Plain Style emerged in its most radical form. The designers intended to create a completely desolated field sterilized from the presence of people or time as if to symbolize the aridity that remained after the act of Crucifixion. Yet, this plan was not fulfilled as the plot was never purchased.

Over the course of time, when the vegetation had grown and the place obtained a more tangible form of a garden, more visitors began to revere it as sacred. The lack of arrangements for assembling and worship became more and more discernible. The site was not preplanned to accommodate believers and respond to their spiritual needs, and the fear of being criticized as creating another holy place hindered serious consideration on the subject.

Instead, it was designed as a quiet place for conceptual associations, which has an affinity with the visual–passive consumption of the Hill's sacredness by its first visitors. The tenure of Warden Mattar, who initiated several new tendencies in the Garden, marked the beginning of a turning point in the site's existence. It seemed that his personal welcoming attitude and his warm hospitality contributed to a steady growth of visitors to the Garden in his days. Moreover, Mattar initiated a weekly Sunday service in addition to the only service that was led by then on Easter Sunday. He also sought to expand the circle of visitors by approaching to Catholic groups. These initiatives were accepted by the Committee with great concern and a general negative approach, as well as a fear that such innovations would harm the quiet atmosphere of the sacred place. The religious practices were perceived as incompatible with the *genius loci*.

The silent practice of the eye that was occupied in external and internal reflection was the practice encouraged by the Committee, not the practice of the mumbling, singing, or crying voices of the sermon's attendees. This dichotomy of practices also corresponds with the local-universal dichotomy, when the practice of the eye is place-

oriented and the practice of the voice is not, and allows the ascension from the borders of locality.

Mattar's independent moves had prepared the ground by creating a discussion on these new ideas and possibilities. Following Mattar's death during the Six-Day War, van der Hoeven entered the Garden to complete Mattar's mission. Van der Hoeven's wardenship signified the second part of the turning point, in which the Garden became a loadstone for tourism, and had been materialized as a prayer garden for devotional assemblies. This development signified a transition in the Garden's function and meaning. It was a transition from passive consumption of the sacred to active participation in the creation of the sacred.

The changing attentiveness from the sacred site's protection to the believers' demands was influenced by the massive growth of tourism to the site and from new archeological findings that questioned the Tomb's authenticity. The inherent sacredness of the Tomb, as it was regarded since the site's foundation, appeared to be losing its supernatural quality, and the Tomb began to serve as a visual aid that helped believers meditate over biblical events. In fact, as soon as the insistence on the Tomb's authenticity was discharged, another aspect of the Scriptural Tomb was emphasized: the empty Tomb became a powerful symbol for the message of the Resurrection, and also marked the insignificance of the actual place. Universality gained dominance over locality. This shift also enabled the search for authenticity to acquire a new form. Instead of authenticity of a place, the GTA now strove to acquire authenticity of atmosphere. The measures for securing such an atmosphere were not extremely different than those taken to enhance the authenticity of the place. Since the very beginning, the Garden design was organic, unintentional, and integrated in the local context. The staff members explained the ideas behind the design as they related to the local Mediterranean and biblical context. However, in the context of the site's new function as a prayer Garden, and with a different notion of authenticity, two intentions were emphasized.

The first was to create a welcoming environment that would absorb hundreds of worshippers and respond to their demands. It involved the arrangement of worship spaces all around the Garden to provide a variety of spatial experiences for the different needs of the visitors, from the most secluded and immersed to the most exposed and elevated. Additionally, an outdoor pulpit was erected above the tomb yard under the shade of an impressive cypress that intensified the connection between

the Empty Tomb and the heaven above; this connection can also be perceived as separation from locality towards universality. The first intention also involved the creation of cheerful scenery to welcome visitors and celebrate the uplifting message of the Garden. The choice of plantation now also stressed colorful flowers, not necessarily committed to the idea of indigenous Biblical scenery.

The second intention was to provide the correct vintage for the Biblical occurrences; namely, the authentic atmosphere. Thus, other archaeological elements were added to the original function of ancient agricultural elements to provide evidences for the site's authenticity. These new elements aimed to support the message of the Empty Tomb, yet those were not necessarily original to the site, such as the rolling stone presented in the Tomb's court. This ostensibly minor intervention, with the Tomb court's decoration, can also be viewed as an act of disentanglement from the fixated borders of the place and from the urge to prove its veracity. Since the Tomb was no longer important as presenting the genuine place, but instead as a visual aid for the message of the Resurrection, the rolling stone that supports this message could have been brought from elsewhere.

Another small but effective touch was added to the Tomb with a wooden sign that read "He is risen" posted on its entrance door. This sign elegantly marked the transition from the authenticity of place to authenticity of atmosphere, from locality to universality.

The choice of plantation also continued to reflect Biblical Mediterranean scenery to support the Scriptural event. However, its integration with the aforementioned cheerful welcoming flowers, bestowed eclectic appearance.

Furthermore, the combination of two design intentions created a new dilemma for the Garden designers: how to maintain the desired garden atmosphere, while constantly confiscating pieces from it for the benefit of another devotional space.

A more recent effort was made to solve this conflict and to reclaim the Garden's centrality. The seating capacity in the peripheral devotional spaces was increased in order to evacuate the central platform, which had been planted with ancient olives and was reorganized as a quiet natural area at the heart of the garden.

Another expression of this dilemma was presented in terms of function; that is, how to maintain the peacefulness in a Garden that is constantly busy with worshipping groups. This peaceful-crowded conflict was solved by careful visitor management that involved a welcoming personal attitude of the staff towards the visitors, guided tours

that limited visitors' actions and moves and observance on the volume of sermons. So, although the place might be crowded, the serenity of the setting is being preserved. It is a fragile balance between the will to allow freedom of worship and the need to provide the finest experience and prevent any discomfort to other visitors.

4. The open sacred space promotes a unique spiritual experience

Visitors from the Hill and the GT along all the research periods expressed their satisfaction with being able to experience their faith in the open-air sanctuaries. It was not only the just the identification of the Word on the landscape, or the acknowledgement in the authenticity of place/atmosphere that made them content. It was also the landscape or garden spaces for their own sake, with their natural elements, that provided the visitors with a sense of devotional freedom that was absent in other Christian sanctuaries in Palestine.

The visitors' accounts demonstrated the elevating spiritual potential that is found in gardens and landscapes, as suggested by Conan.⁹⁵¹ Additionally, the theoretical notion of the garden as a paradoxical space that enables contradictory forces to reconcile was exhibited in visitors' experiences in three main paradoxes: local–universal, nature–culture, and spiritual–mundane.

It seems that the spiritual potential concealed in the open-air sanctuary obtained increased efficiency among its Protestant consumers. The Protestant preference for open spaces and landscapes corresponded to their search for authenticity and direct connection to God's creation. Thus, this kind of sanctuary was what they had been looking for in the first place, as an inherent part of their cultural habitus, even on a sub-conscious level. It is little wonder, then, that most of the visitors to the Hill and the GT had positive experiences in these sites. However, these positive experiences were revealed in different forms and expressed by visitors from different cultural and religious milieu, not all of whom were Protestants or Christians. That said, the unique spiritual qualities offered by the Hill and the GT and the differences between them are worthy of discussion that is pertinent not just to the Protestant habitus.

⁹⁵¹ Conan, (note 20 above), pp. 3-14.

The participants of the services on the Hill reported on unforgettable spiritual experience. They were mainly influenced by their privileged position on the top of the Hill surrounded by the mountains of Jerusalem and the old city walls, which allowed them to sense intensified connection between heaven and earth, or an axis-mundi experience. The famous preachers admitted to having been profoundly influenced by the extraordinary stage and were inspired to perform remarkable services that left their impressions long after their completion.

In contrast to the spatial experience that was offered on the Hill, the Garden space presented a completely different sense of place. It is a space confined by its walls, internalized and scarcely allowing any observation on its surroundings. However, it offered a shelter for the Protestant believers. While the Hill was exposed to the threats of occasional hostility and the environmental disruptions, inside the “enclosed garden” the believers could conduct their habitual practices peacefully and without interruption. The Protestant cult that was performed in the Garden was described as ideal relationships between nature and culture. Music, chorus singing and prayer were practiced in harmony with the beauty of flowers and the glory of the fields.

Another difference between the two sanctuaries was the degree of human interference in the site’s design. The Hill presented the unaltered Biblical landscape on which the only cultural marks were the Muslim graves, which were mostly accepted as indications of God’s intervention to save the Hill in its original state. On the contrary, the Garden was a nurtured man-made land. However, the simplicity of design did not present a significant contrast between the Hill and the Garden in their natural appearance.

In the Garden, as on the Hill, the natural atmosphere had a positive influence on their religious experiences. Inside the Garden, another meaningful element left a profound impression on the believers. It was the unexpected peacefulness that contradicted the bustle of the neighborhood from which they had entered the Garden.

These qualities immediately affected visitors and encouraged them to express their spirituality. Relying on the visitors’ accounts, I identified the naturalness presented in the sacred Garden as stimulating freedom of operation that might not be found inside a religious building.

Some visitors took natural elements such as leaves, soil or flowers as mementos, and some decided to leave their own souvenirs in the Garden rather than collect them. The

loosened freely particles of the Garden were perceived as belonging to the natural realm, to the universe itself. They enhanced a sense of universality rather than locality. However, they also serve as sacred relics, gaining their sanctity from the inherent sacredness of the Garden.

The visitors gave themselves permission to confiscate these items due to their perceived natural universal quality, although at the same time they appreciated their singular quality as belonging to this sacred space; otherwise, they would not have served as valued mementos. I have suggested that they probably would have performed such acts less easily in an architectural cultural-dominated religious space. Additionally, the eclectic, uncommitted style of design, which does not apply on any preferable gardening culture, presents a universal notion of nature and enhances the sense of freedom of operation in the Garden.

The perceived naturalness and freedom was further enhanced by the religious and secular activity that was performed in the Garden.

The multicultural gathering in the Garden created a sense of universal Christian brotherhood, although singular cultural qualities were not erased and no uniform formal practice was enforced. Instead, different forms of religious Christian expressions were encouraged, and were largely approachable for other visitors to be viewed or heard – such a situation is not usually prevalent in other Christian shrines. The Garden represents a microcosm of world cultures that stands in contrast to the global unifying culture that prevails in the world outside.

Another implication of the Garden's perceived naturalness and freedom is the secular activity and the liberated behavior that was attracted to it.

Evidence from staff and visitors revealed its use as a romantic nest for young Muslim couples. The Garden provided them with a protective and natural-seeming space to practice behavior that could not have been performed in their public space.

For other Palestinian visitors, the Garden fulfilled their requirement for green open space that was usually absent from their neighborhoods.

A different example is the mutual meeting of Palestinian Christians and Messianic Jews to celebrate Easter together. The main motivation for this meeting was religious, although the meeting in the Garden provided both groups with the opportunity to ease the political and cultural tensions that exist between their nations in the world outside. In addition to the liberated behavior and the opportunity to experience unusual social encounters, for some of the visitors the Garden also served as a liminal space through

which they were able to reconsider their feelings and thoughts and to experience evolution of awareness and spiritual renewal.

5. The GTA's Internal and External Policy

Two different ideological approaches dictated the GTA's internal and external policies.

The first approach belongs to the first period in the life of the GTA (1892–1967), and the second approach corresponded with the second period (1967–2016).

As presented in the beginning of this chapter, the ideology of the GTA was influenced by its changing interpretation to the local–universal conflict.

In the first period, the Garden had to struggle for its physical and spiritual existence, and advocated a survival policy that I identify as an “enclosed garden” policy. On one hand, the GTA strove to obtain religious legitimacy as a sacred site, mainly from the British public and the Anglican Church – from which the GTA originated.

On the other hand, the organization had to take precautions in order not to be criticized as another superstitious site.

The ideological focus was on the locality, and the authenticity of the place served as the promoting force behind the Garden's design and function. However, it was accompanied with a suspicious and conservative attitude towards anything that was perceived as having the potential to jeopardize the authenticity of the place and its peacefulness or insinuate superstitious uses into the Garden.

This conservative approach involved avoiding cooperation with non-British allies, deferring religious activity in the Garden, and excluding non-Protestants from the Garden. It also involved recurrent attempts to appease the Anglican Church in London and Jerusalem and to plead for their patronage, since it was perceived essential to the Garden's existence.

This policy was reflected in the organization's initial goals, in which the protection of the garden from destruction and superstitious use was presented as the only purpose for establishing the place, while no mention was made regarding the potential believers and their use of the Garden. As mentioned above, it was also apparent in the Garden's design and function, as a garden for sacred associations, not for religious services and gatherings.

However, the efforts to appease the ACJ and obtain its recognition were not successful. ACJ's inclination towards High Anglicanism, Palestinian nationalism, and its alliance with the Greek Orthodox Church prevented any long-lasting cooperation with the GTA. During Mattar's wardenship, relations between the two organizations deteriorated until the GTA finally decided to redefine itself as not being related to any church or denomination.

Mattar's death and the Six-Day War presented a turning point from which a new ideological approach evolved. The new geopolitical circumstances and the lessons from the past required confrontations with new challenges. After the Six-Day War, the site's location became politically challenging and exposed it to the violent expressions of Israeli–Palestinian conflict. It became essential to publicize a neutral stand in order not to be seen as supporting one side or the other. Additionally, new touristic tendencies required a new set of rules to control and regulate the flow of visitors. It also included changes in staff composition. The lessons from Mattar's wardenship led to the decision to reinforce connections between the committee in London and the staff in Jerusalem. It was also decided that the role of the warden should be decentralized, with the additional role of the administrator being assigned to support the warden.

The new approach by the GTA enabled it to handle all three challenges. The principle of universality became the ideological driver behind the GTA's internal and external policies, while the authenticity of the atmosphere served as the Garden's muse for design and function. Both principles supported each other.

Since the authenticity of the place and the actual Tomb were no longer relevant, the message of the Empty Tomb and the Resurrection became the only important narrative. The narrative of the resurrection served as the absolute mean to transcend boundaries and to transfer universal messages of peace and reconciliation. All kinds of boundaries, which in the previous period had been inflexible, were reconsidered in the second period. The internal and external policy was now characterized in openness to other cultures, religions, and innovative ideas.

The Garden had turned into a prayer garden in which all Christians of all cultures and denomination can practice their faith. It also turned into a garden of peace into which secular visitors from all nations are invited and can experience confidence, friendship, and rapprochement.

The staff composition was no longer just British- and Anglican-oriented, and guided tours in many languages attracted more visitors. It was now much easier for the

Garden not to be identified with any affiliation, which meant that the Garden was much more accessible to everyone.

However, a missionary cause that was not apparent in the first phase now emerged. The aspiration to spread the Gospel and to advance the Christian faith that were marked as prime targets in the goals of the new Council were promoted in the second phase mainly through the guided tours in the Garden. The volunteering guides were entrusted with two important assignments. On one hand, they were assigned with regulating the visitors' behavior and ensuring that no **superstitions** would be used or interpreted by the visitors. On the other hand, they received an opportunity to direct the believers and to show them the right way, both physically and spiritually.

6. Concluding Insights

The existence of the Garden Tomb as a Protestant sacred site and as a devotional garden presented a unique and multilayered case to be researched. The interpretation of the sacralization, creation, design, and management of the site from varied circles of reference contributed to the study of gardens, the study of pilgrimage sites, and to the geography of religion in several aspects.

As a case study of a Protestant pilgrimage site, this research contributed to the understating of the Protestant concept of sacred spaces. It suggested a reconsideration of conventions and perceptions pronounced by scholars and by the Protestant pilgrims themselves that sets a conclusive dichotomy between the Protestant practice of faith and other Christians' practices.

Additionally, the research enabled a thorough investigation into the process of constructing a Protestant sanctuary, based on theological conceptions and aesthetics that promoted the purified embodiment of the Protestant habitus in the garden space. From a wider universal perspective, the research provided a non-prevalent opportunity to track the steps in the creation of a sacred site *ex nihilo*, and to reconsider the perceptions of sacredness and the devotional response to it.

It also enabled a comprehensive observation of the development of the sacred garden in response to the different demands and conditions that surrounds it, and to realize how theology, ideology, design, function, and site management are engaged and mutually influence each other. Thus, this research has stressed the importance of multi-layered perspectives to investigate sacred places and gardens.

The research has also emphasized the importance of creative theological interpretation by the site's managers and consumers and revealed the potency of this interpretation to confront and solve conflicts within and without the sacred site.

Finally, this research demonstrates the unique role played by the garden space as a privileged arena for spiritual practices. By providing its consumers with a sense of universal nature and freedom, it promotes a more liberated and religious experience and spiritual fulfillment. By admitting the visitors into its paradoxical realm that reconciles between conflicts, the Garden enables them to discover new possibilities to cope with the everyday life without the gates.

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Acronyms

ACJ – Anglican Church in Jerusalem

ACPD – American Colony Photo Department
AGM – Annual general meeting
CBD – Central Business District
CEO – Chief executive officer
CMS – The Church Missionary Society
GT – Garden Tomb
GTA – Garden Tomb Association
HS – Church of the Holy Sepulchre
ICZC International Christian Zionist Center
ISA- Israel State Archives
JEM – Jerusalem and East Mission
LJS – London Jews' society
MPS – Matson Photo Service
PFE – Palestine Exploration Fund
PFQ – Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement
SGC – Saint George's Cathedral
SMC – Supreme Muslim Council
WA – Westminster abbey
WCH – Westminster Central Hall
Jn – John
Mk – Mark
Lk – Luke
Mt – Matthew

בין אותנטיות של מקום קדוש
לבין מסר אוניברסלי :

יצירתו של גן הקבר – גן תפילה פרוטסטנטי

חיבור לשם קבלת תואר דוקטור לפילוסופיה
מאת מיכל ביטון

הוגש לסנט האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים
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עבודה זו נעשתה בהדרכתם של:

פרופסור רוני אלנבלום

פרופסור נורית שטדלר

תקציר

המחקר שלפנינו בוחן את תהליך יצירתו של גן הקבר בירושלים וגילומו כמקום פולחן המזוהה כאתר הפרוטסטנטי הקדוש היחידי בארץ הקודש. הוא בוחן את תהליך קידושו של האתר יש מאין, תהליך שהתרחש רק בעת החדשה המאוחרת, בעיר שכבר היתה גדושה במקומות קדושים עתיקים. לאחר מכן המחקר בוחן את העיצוב, התפקוד והניהול של האתר כגן תפילה אשר מגיב לצרכיהם הרוחניים והתרבותיים המיוחדים של הצליינים הפרוטסטנטיים ומאפשר להם להביע את אמונתם באופן הקרוב ביותר לליבם. כמו כן המחקר עוקב אחר מערכת היחסים שמנהל האתר עם סביבתו הגיאופוליטית ובוחן את הגישות השונות שנקטו על מנת לשמר את קיומו השברירי של האתר לנוכח עימותים דתיים בין העדות הנוצריות בארץ הקודש ולאור מיקומו הגיאוגרפי על התפר בין ירושלים המערבית למזרחית.

כינונו של גן הקבר כאתר קדוש ראשיתו בגבעת הגולגולת, אליה נישאו העיניים הפרוטסטנטיות בפעם הראשונה בשנות הארבעים למאה ה-19, בעודן מבקשות אתר חלופי לאתר הצליבה, במקום כנסיית הקבר, אשר היתה מזוהה בעיקר על ידי נוצרים אורתודוקסים וקתולים כאתר הצליבה. בטרם זוהתה כגבעת הגולגולת היתה זו גבעה נידחת במזרח ירושלים ידועה בשם אל-אדהמיה, עליה נח בית קברות מוסלמי עתיק. אולם מראה פני הגולגולת שהשתקף מחזית הגבעה משך את עיני המתבונן הפרוטסטנטי אשר זיהה אותה כגולגולת מהברית החדשה. בארבעת העשורים העוקבים, הגבעה הפכה להיות כר פורה למחקרים עבור עשרות מלומדים אשר ביקשו לאשש או להפריך את התיאוריה החדשה אודות המקום. אולם רק בשנות השמונים למאה ה-19 נשמעו העדויות הראשונות בדבר התייחסות מקדשת לאתר, ומכאן ואילך החל להתקבל כמקום קדוש ולשמש כזירה לקיום פולחן וטקסים דתיים.

באותה עת אתר נוסף החל למשוך את תשומת לב המלומדים והנוסעים הפרוטסטנטים: קבר עתיק חצוב בסלע שלמרגלות הגבעה, אשר החל להיות מזוהה כקבר בו הונח ישו לאחר צליבתו בגולגולת, ואשר ממנו הוא קם לתחייה.¹ תהליך ההתקבלות והקידוש של הגבעה הורחב בהדרגה אל הקבר ועד סוף המאה ה-19 קבוצה של בריטים שתמכו בזיהוי האתר החליטו להתאגד על מנת לרכוש את הקרקע עליה ישב הקבר. לפיכך ב-1894, אגודת גן הקבר נוסדה באופן רשמי והקימה את "גן הקבר".

העשורים הראשונים לקיום הגן אופיינו במאבק ממושך להישרדותו, תוך התמודדות עם אתגרים תיאולוגיים, ארגוניים ופוליטיים בתוך ומחוץ לחומות הגן. אגודת גן הקבר ניהלה מדיניות של התגוננות אשר הובלה על ידי הרצון להשיג הכרה דתית ולחזק את הלגיטימיות הדתית והאותנטיות של האתר. מיקום הגן על גבולות באב א-סהירה, שכונה מוסלמית במזרח העיר, חייבה התמודדות מיוחדת עם הקונפליקט הגיאופוליטי אשר בא לביטוי פיזי תמידי בסביבת האתר.

ב-1967, מלחמת ששת הימים התפרצה אל הגן וגבתה את חייו של מנהל הגן. האירוע הטראומתי סימן נקודת מפנה בתולדות הגן, אשר ממנו ואילך התרחש שינוי אידיאולוגי אשר השפיע על ניהולו, עיצובו ותפקודו של הגן וכן על יחסיו עם השכונה.

הנראטיב האוונגלי של הקבר הריק והתחייה הודגשו והפכו למסר המוביל של הגן. הם שיקפו ניסיון להתעלות מעל הגבולות הפיזיים של מיקום הגן ולהעביר מסר אוניברסלי של שלום ופיוס בתוך המציאות המורכבת של ירושלים.

המסגרת התיאורטית של המחקר משלבת בין שני שדות מחקר: גנים וצליינות נוצרית, תוך שימוש בשיטות מחקר היסטוריות, אתנוגרפיות ופרשניות השאלות מגיאוגרפיה היסטורית ודתית, אנתרופולוגיה, פרשנות נופית וביקורת התרבות. המידע האמפירי הופק ממסמכי ארכיונים ואתר האינטרנט של אגודת גן הקבר, ראיונות עם מנהלי הגן וצוות הגן, עם מבקרים וצליינים ועם שכנים וסוחרים בשכונה, כמו כן נערכו תצפיות שדה וניתוח של חומרים גרפיים.

ⁱ מאורעות הצליבה, הקבורה והתחייה: מתיו 27: 32-66; מרקוס 15: 47-21, 16: 11-1; לוקס 23: 26-56, 24: 1-12; יוחנן 19: 42-17, 20: 1-18.