Introduction – Recollection in Patches

Jerusalem is a city, a place, a mental construction, a biblical-mythical memory. Once Jerusalem has been all this at the same time, then Jerusalem can be all this time and again by active remembrance within the context and problematic nature of the present. Through the centuries Jerusalem has been visited, sought after, used, reused, appropriated, and it has acted as a point of reference on many levels. The city has become part of different cultural figurations in different periods and places. However politically explosive, a reference to this city is ultimately pointing back to the Jerusalem of the Bible. The city, or even only its name, can be an experience of divine presence, as much as it can be a source of conflict deriving from the same claim that it is the Holy City – a claim that is forever contested and reasserted. From Early Christian times on, a great variety of legitimizations have been constructed by emphasizing myriad aspects of this source, by way of more or less orchestrated memory processes.

The contributions in this book refer, explicitly or implicitly, to dimensions of cultural memory, the way in which the past is remembered, appropriated and represented. Memory takes a vital part in the dynamics of culture. It recaptures, recycles, reshuffles and re-mediate cultural practices. It uses language, texts, images and buildings in order to develop, preserve and continue cultural identities. Cultural memory is thus a mediated memory. Its media are not so much vessels of memory in which memory passively resides but objects or manifestations through which memories are produced, shared, and given meaning.¹ They select and organize representations of the past in such a way that they can be meaningful in the (historical) present, though such redirections may lead to conflicts among groups with different or antagonistic experiences.² Cultural memories are thus negotiated, present-oriented and relative, and they depend upon processes of exchange and transfer. In this book, readers can find various examples of these processes throughout a range of historical periods and artistic media.

This collection of studies on Jerusalem in art and architecture is the result of a joint project by researchers of the Department of Art History at Radboud University Nijmegen. In May 2011 and September 2012 two symposia served as mid-term reviews at which the preliminary results were presented. Specialists in various fields such as the history of painting, sculpture, architecture, book illumination, and applied arts, from Early Christian times to the present, ar-

1 Sturken 1997, p. 9.

2 Rigney 2005.

ticated a variety of cultural, religious, philosophical and political implications of the visualization of Jerusalem. Works of art were the points of departure and main focus of those meetings, where the aim was to discern constants and variables in attitudes towards the real and imagined Jerusalem.

Jerusalem in art has been a subject of study more frequently in recent years.³ This interest can be said to have been initiated by Bianca Kühnel of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, who had already dedicated a publication to Early Christian and medieval representations of the Holy City in 1987.⁴ A decade later she edited a much broader collection of essays on the same theme, this time covering a span of two millennia and the three faiths Judaism, Christianity and Islam.⁵ In 2007 the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence organised the conference 'Jerusalem as Narrative Space', which concentrated again on medieval and Early Modern representations. Here the textual and visual narratives were the leitmotif, with the works of art primarily understood as the bearers of meaning.⁶ In 2009 followed a conference 'Imagining Jerusalem in the Medieval West' at University College, Oxford.⁷ Almost parallel to our project, the Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität in Frankfurt am Main organised the congress 'Räume der Passion', once again dealing with the Middle Ages and the Early Modern period, this time confined to visualizations of the Passion.⁸

The volume at hand proves once more that Jerusalem is an object of perennial interest. As a source of religious, political, cultural and consequently artistic focal points, the theme shows no signs of running dry. On the contrary, because of the ongoing turmoil, the city as a point of reference seems to gain new importance all the time. This observation was precisely the starting point for the present research project. Every period constructs its own Jerusalems determined by the aspirations, desires and issues of its own time, while at the same time referring back to an unchallenged origin. How did art respond to all this? With regard to Jerusalem, art has been created at the intersection of two axes: that of the uncertain contemporary situation and that of the continuous chain of meanings that history puts on the city. From this observation three notions emerge: context – contrast – conflict. These concepts can be related to the geographical Jerusalem that can be visited; to memories and objects that can be brought back; and to interpretations that can be attached to the city

3 For example see: Montefiore 2011.

4 Kühnel 1987.

5 Kühnel 1998.

6 Jerusalem as Narrative Space 2012.

7 Imagining Jerusalem 2012.

8 Räume der Passion [foreseen 2014].

from a (mental) distance – or to the complex interplay of these different manifestations.

Without aiming to survey the subject of Jerusalem in art in its entirety, our goal was to encompass a period of almost twenty centuries, from Early Christian times onwards. The choice was made to focus on Western objects and treat them *as works of art*, with attention to their materiality and tangibility. Our aim was not to arrive at general conclusions beyond those already made in other studies, but rather to add new insights to the totality of mechanisms that play a role in representation and memory processes concerning Jerusalem by means of a selection of specialized topics. The goal was to discuss in depth a series of artworks and artefacts which question the representation of Jerusalem and complement each other or put other cases in perspective. Inevitably all cases deal to a certain extent with religious or political notions and the effects they produce on the representation of Jerusalem and on cultural debate in general. As a whole and in connection to each other, the individual case studies thus do exceed their own scope. The contributions differ in their approach. They range from a cultural historical perspective to an art theoretical or a more essay-like discussion, as such also covering different ways of writing art history.

The contributions of this volume are grouped under two main themes. The first part of the book, *Competing Memories and Contrasting Meanings* is dedicated to cases in which the concept of Jerusalem creates contrasts through the way it is remembered and through the specific meanings contained in this memory. These case studies demonstrate how the context generates conflicting interpretations of aspects of the city. The conflicts have had wide consequences both in many cultural environments and also in art.

The second part of the book, *Imitation and Translocation*, concentrates on how Jerusalem was brought to the Western World – both physically and metaphorically. What links these case studies is the aspect of motion. The change of context confronts old with new concepts, here and now with there and then. Travelling to Jerusalem and back again, people gathered spiritual memories as well as material objects. Back home they materialized the city in another place. Through translocation the Holy City was recreated elsewhere in thought, in works of art and in buildings. These recreations were considered to be more than a mere substitute, acting as instruments of memory.

To stress the permanent topicality of Jerusalem, the first part begins in the twenty-first century. The successive texts trace the way back to the fourth century. Most contributions in some way pursue the original source, the Jerusalem of the Bible. The second part of the volume then departs from the period in which Jerusalem became a topic in Western art and proceeds forwards again to

the present and the future. The present time thus functions as a frame that surrounds and contextualizes the cases, highlighting how the time in which we live determines our perspective on the subject.

Although this book examines continuity in the artistic questioning of Jerusalem, this does not mean that it ignores major shifts in the history of this subject. The most prominent dividing line is without doubt the Holocaust and the subsequent foundation of the state of Israel in the twentieth century. After these events, artists tended to put terror and collision in the foreground. Although conflict was by no means absent in earlier times, it was of a different nature. Rather than irresolvable conflicts within works of art, there were instead juxtapositions of alternative interpretations and representations of Jerusalem. The aim of artworks in earlier times had been first and foremost to propagate a univocal, often doctrinal, vision in reaction to deviating opinions.

In the contribution by Anneke Schulenberg the work *Present Tense* by the British-Palestinian artist Mona Hatoum is described as the search for a homeland that, as the result of political and religious conflicts, consists only of dispersed territories. The impact of the determining power of mapping as the outcome of enforced treaties with the aim of control means imprisonment in everyday life. The sculpture of this map of the fragmented Palestinian territories determined in 1993, symbolically made of aromatic Nablus soap, not only reflects upon the limits of boundaries, but at the same time tries to point at the stability these should and can provide. In a way the sculpture embodies hope for the future.

With this opening article the stage is set: Jerusalem and Israel as places of conflict, caused by history, problematic and contested in the present, and a possible hopeful answer for the future.

In her contribution on *The Green Line* by the Belgian artist Francis Alÿs, Mette Gieskes also tackles the contested boundaries of Jerusalem and Israel as a whole. Here, the focus is on the impact of the politically sensitive armistice demarcation line of 1948, which Alÿs traced in 2004 with a dripping can of green paint. This temporary intervention in public space invites reflection on the seminal yet relatively non-intrusive armistice line as an historical source of separation between Israelis and Palestinians and the conflict between them, as well as a potential source of future peace. The absurdity of the action, which also explores the political potential of art, stimulates awareness of the arbitrariness of two-dimensional borders that are enforced onto a continuous, three-dimensional world, dividing the indivisible.

Wouter Weijers presents a profound analysis of two homonymous paintings entitled *Jerusalem* by Anselm Kiefer and Gerhard Richter. The contrast between the works turns out to be as fundamental as the internal conflict that the separate paintings evoke. The works of the two artists mark the extremes of

the way in which the problematic implications of Jerusalem could be dealt with in Germany after 1945. The mythic and material memory of Jerusalem is challenged on various levels in relation to Germany's role in the Second World War and the after-war period in Israel. Both works try in a very particular way to cope with the burden of recent history, especially that of the Holocaust. What was forcefully forgotten is recalled, what is remembered is questioned, what is unimaginable is represented. Eventually all this points back at the Holy City.

The striving for a humanistic solution to deviating opinions about the city of Jerusalem and its monuments has led to highly detailed reconstructions of the past. A seventeenth-century manifestation of this phenomenon is discussed by Jeroen Goudeau, in a text on the Temple of Jerusalem in the Dutch Republic. The Old Testament Temple is probably one of the most emblematic buildings in history. On the interface between theology and architecture, scholars of all time have tried to integrate this biblical structure into the religious, political and aesthetic paradigms of their own milieu. Lost as a material source and only fragmentarily described in various texts, the divine Jewish Temple, the holiest of places for the People of the Book, made one of the authoritative focal points of the real and imagined city. The article evaluates an Early Modern protestant reconstruction of the Temple as a visual component of the humanist enterprise of biblical criticism.

Although in quite another sense, reconstructing and remoulding the past architecturally is also the subject of the contribution by Mariëtte Verhoeven. She concentrates on the stone remnants of Crusader architecture in contemporary Jerusalem. Instead of reconstructing their original form, seven key monuments, starting with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, are considered as multilayered objects that have been subject to constant change. Verhoeven shows the different mechanisms by which buildings can acquire new meanings or can undergo radical changes that involve specific values. In each subsequent intervention a new layer to the city and its history has been added while the older layers remain visible. As visible witnesses of the past these buildings pass down the narrative of the turbulent history of Jerusalem.

Sible de Blaauw examines how a variety of media, including relics, images, locations, buildings and liturgical ceremonies, were employed to represent and incorporate Jerusalem in (Early) Christian Rome. His diachronic survey shows that the link between the two cities had been established as early as Constantinian times and was (re)activated through the ages. However, the references seem to be more or less independent phenomena. De Blaauw demonstrates convincingly that the strong and concrete potentials of meaning transfer did not result in a comprehensive, consistent, or even lasting concept

of Jerusalem in Rome. Apparently the city of Peter and Paul did not need to become a Second Jerusalem.

De Blaauw's contribution is the closest this book gets to the starting point of Jerusalem as source for artistic representation in Western art. However, at the same time it seems that the source in the ages before Christianization draws back, dissolves, and grows impalpable. The concept of Jerusalem that seems so clear and meaningful in later periods of Western art, becomes more and more diffuse, with every step further back in time. After the destruction of the Temple and the expulsion of the Jewish inhabitants, Jerusalem became a relatively insignificant Roman city with an indeterminate identity. Yet, its sacred character did not fall into oblivion, but was rather increasingly open for interpretations and appropriations from new religious and cultural perspectives. This multiplication of engagements with Jerusalem as a sacred city, by Christians, Muslims and Jews alike, made the history of the city into one of continuously changing configurations, from tolerant coexistence and cultural exchange to aggression and segregation.

It was the Crusaders who re-established Jerusalem as a Christian city. Katja Boertjes describes the cult of pilgrims' ampullae that bear images of the new, reconquered Jerusalem. They functioned as souvenirs for the pilgrims and Crusaders themselves, but perhaps even more as devotional objects for those who had not visited the Holy Land. The ampullae travelled back with the passengers and thus captured the memory of Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre in narrative, as well as materially transferring a tangible 'memento' of the Holy City.

Besides the active pilgrimage and material souvenirs there was the pilgrimage in the mind, as Hanneke van Asperen expounds on the basis of two late-medieval manuscripts from the collection of the Radboud University Library. By way of these texts, which describe devotional exercises, the mental pilgrim could travel instantaneously to the holy places. This spiritual way of travelling not only bridged a geographical distance, but also distance in time, as the worshipper felt actually present at the biblical events themselves, especially at Christ's Passion. In order to enhance the experience, the texts contain detailed measurements of distances between sites, and topographical information such as the number of steps to be climbed. In a way, this pilgrimage was more real than an actual presence in Jerusalem. In the texts the likeness with the contemporary city was no longer important. The biblical city prevailed. The biblical scenes even gained relic-like importance.

Measurements and other specific physical features were also important in copies after the holy sites as they developed in Europe during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. With their translocation to other regions, monuments

marking biblical episodes were transformed into *simulacra*, enabling pilgrims to pursue their devotions to the holy places without having to travel to the Holy Land. Apart from a few sometimes rather randomly chosen characteristics, as a rule, exactitude in these reproductions was not an issue. Bram de Klerck's contribution deals with this rich phenomenon in late-medieval and Renaissance Italy, focussing on the pilgrims' sanctuary known as 'Sacro Monte' near Varallo in Piedmont. In chapels and their interior decorations, scenes of the Life and Passion of Christ were visualized in such a way that the visitor must have felt himself present at the episodes depicted. De Klerck confronts both style and function of the life-like, expressive decoration of the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre at Varallo, with Leon Battista Alberti's renaissance-humanist 'copy' of Christ's tomb, located in the Cappella Rucellai in the Church of San Pancrazio in Florence.

The counterpart of the city of the Old Testament and the historical Jerusalem is the New Jerusalem, envisioned in St John's Apocalypse. This heavenly city is not real yet but is expected to become so at the end of time. Curator Daan Van Speybroeck examines two stained glass window representations of this apocalyptic city by the contemporary French artists Gérard Garouste and Jean-Michel Alberola. Glass windows, being one of the most immaterial of forms in visual art, seem very apt to represent a heavenly situation. In the light of recent history, however, the connection between Jerusalem and heaven has become problematic. That is why Garouste challenged the traditional configuration of Old and New Testament by placing Genesis on the dark north side of the church building and the Apocalypse on the sunlit south. In Alberola's windows the conflict is stressed through the representation of the irreconcilability of the heavenly Jerusalem and biblical Babylon.

In the closing contribution Rudie van Leeuwen also deals with the New Jerusalem, this time to be established on earth. Two enterprises in performance and music are presented within a specific Jewish context. With his *Medinat Weimar* project the artist Ronen Eidelman plays with implicit sensitivities around Zionism and the fear of Jewish world dominion, when he propagates the ideal New Jerusalem in the historically 'brown' German state of Thuringia. He dislocates the public by this provocative proposition, of which it is not clear at first sight to what extent this is a serious enterprise. The Yiddish songs by for instance Daniel Kahn and the context of their performance, as well as references to Socialism, alienate the audience just like the work of Eidelman. Nowadays it is perhaps by these confusing projects, in which irony meets social criticism and an excruciating but still ongoing history meets a sense of humour, that we can reflect on our own attitude towards Jerusalem.

After all, it is in the nature of art to express complex concepts, to mediate between the ordinary and the unsaid, to oscillate between reality and imagination – always providing a provisional and single way out.

The Editors

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PART 1

*Competing Memories
and Contrasting Meanings*