

THE IMAGE OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE IN THE "TOWER OF DAVID MUSEUM" IN JERUSALEM

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The aim of this paper is to analyze the ways in which the exhibition, catalogue and related items of the *Tower of David Museum of the History of Jerusalem* present the image of the Jewish people throughout its history in Jerusalem.

The museum is housed in what traditionally is called the "Tower of David". The named site is actually the ancient citadel of Jerusalem, built, rebuilt and remodeled throughout the ages since it was built in the 2nd century BCE. The picture or the profile of the citadel and especially its skyline with the minaret of the mosque built by the Turks -long thought to be the original tower erected by king David-was and still is one of the images that symbolize Jerusalem's Old City and Jerusalem itself. This image of the citadel appears already in the 19th century books and graphics as one of the main symbols of Jerusalem. In the first half of the 20th century in certain posters on different topics, ranging from those meant to encourage the Diaspora Jews' coming in Palestine to commercials, the "Tower of David" takes a central place in shaping the idea of Jerusalem. This fashion in poster art and tourist commercials is still going on today. In the time of the division of Jerusalem, from 1949 to 1967, photographs showing the barbed wire border between Israel and Jordan pictured most often the "Tower of David" as the best known landmark of the city¹. The logo of the Museum itself and other materials and giveaways show the minaret rather than other elements of the citadel.

Since the days of the British Mandate in Palestine, when the citadel lost its role as a military stronghold, the "Tower of David" complex has been transformed into a historical site and a cultural center shortly after the conclusion of W.W.I. Exhibitions, shows and other cultural events took place in the ancient incint. After Israel's War of Independence and the city's partition, the cultural activities in the citadel ceased for 19 years.

After the city's reunification in 1967, the decision was made to set up Jerusalem's City Museum in the Citadel. Extensive excavations followed by complex preservation and restoration work took place on the spot, preceding the opening of the Museum's first stage on Jerusalem Day in 1983. The completed exhibition halls were opened six years latter, and in 1991 a special wing was inaugurated in the Crusader's Hall destined for housing temporary exhibitions displaying distinctive aspects of Jerusalem's life and culture.

The declared aim of the Museum is to picture the history of Jerusalem through the ages and the contributions of the various religious and ethnic groups that had lived here. Therefore, I thought it would be interesting to examine the ways in which the image of the Jewish People is pictured, in relation with the history of the city and the other cohabiting groups, in the Museum's exhibition. The present paper is based on the material of the Museum's permanent exhibition and the catalogue to purchased there. From the museographical point of view, the exhibition is a fine work and perhaps from this point of view one of the best permanent museal displays in Israel. Using a rather reduced amount of exhibits, a synthetic picture of Jerusalem's history is created. The exhibits' small number, replicas in their majority, is compensated by the presence of a large number of pictures and dioramas and a generous display of all kind of media, and last but not least written explanations very dense in information, written in Hebrew, Arabic and English. As it will be seen, it comes out that the exhibits are an auxiliary for the text. In fact, the visit to the Museum is thought to be made in the company of a guide (the museum provides guided tours), or by the help of the catalogue that can be purchased at the entrance or the "easy guide" (an electronic device provided with a speaker that tells the story of each exhibit as the visitor walls through the museum's halls) to be rented at the entrance. If all the above are missing the visit can be made in the same manner by carefully reading all the explanations annexed to the panels of the exhibition. The material displayed is divided into thirteen parts corresponding to as many periods in the city's history, spread in several rooms in the Citadel. Before seeing the exhibition, the visitor is invited to watch a 14 minute animation film created by the Italian artist Emanuelle Luzzati, meant as an introduction. The film presents in a humorous manner the history of Jerusalem. Animated characters drawn in a friendly manner are acting all major events in the city's history.

The permanent exhibition of the museum was drafted, roughly, throughout the decade of the 1980's. The revised catalogue was published in 1992, with a second edition in 1996. Some incongruences are noticeable

¹ See *Lichiot im HaHalom*, Israel Museum, Jerusalem, 1986.

between the catalogue and the explanatory text in the exhibition, as it will be pointed out when the case. There are some main features noticeable both in the exhibition and in the catalogue. First is the idea of Jerusalem as a capital and as a national symbol throughout time, sometimes this appears a little forced. Then is the presence of the Jews in a way or another in or around the city in different historical periods. In a sometimes anachronistic way the image of the Jewish people is presented according to the standard of the "New Jew" proclaimed by Zionist propaganda and the pioneer settlers of Palestine in the beginning of the 20th century, though the strong ties with the tradition of Judaism is stressed. The "New Jew's" attributes were braveness, heroism, his dedication as a fighter for the motherland. On the other hand the exhibition stresses the strong ties that were maintained with the tradition of Judaism.

But since, as we learn from the catalogue, the museum is meant to be a place where "Jews, Christians and Muslims, from Israel and abroad" are invited to come in contact and understand the many aspects of Jerusalem's multimillennial history, the tone in the Museums explanatory panels and catalogue tends and as a whole succeeds in being impartial and keeping emotions away. Although in a not fully scientifically way, given the largely tourist destination of the museum, the general picture of the history of Jerusalem is remarkably accurate, with though, some inexactitudes mostly related to technical aspect that were at the time of the conception of the exhibition, or still are the object of disputes in the world of scholarship.

The exhibition is reconstructing rather few elements of the history of Jerusalem and it's people, by selecting from the deeds, life scenes, or artifacts created by the city's inhabitants or temporary visitors the most significant ones. I will therefore not search for traces of misinterpreting of history, or rewriting of it which is all but not present. My aim is to analyze briefly what results does a such selection of the material have on ones perception of Jerusalem's historical evolution and it's people. More precisely for what kind of image of the Jewish people living in Jerusalem, and not only, according to our contemporaries does this selection create.

I will not insist much on the introductory film, because being made by an artist it is much personalized, creating a distorted history of Jerusalem. The narration in Hebrew, with Arabic and English subtitles, goes in the same tone like the film, actually summarizing all that is shown more broadly in the museum's exhibition. The story telling starts from the laying of the first stone of the Canaanite city of Jebus (Salem), followed by it's conquering by king David "when the romance of the Jewish people began" in Jerusalem. Then we see king Solomon building the First Temple, and after that the unfortunate capture of the city and it's people exile to Babylon, when Jerusalem remained for over fifty years "lonely like a widow". And so the saga of the Holy City goes on, narrated in this metaphorical fashion, focusing mainly on battles, massacres, and successive conquerings through the ages.

The first section of the exhibition, following the chronological order of history, is the one dealing with the Canaanite period. Like for all other sections when approaching a new period, a map related to it can be found, showing Jerusalem and the land of Israel. The map related to the Canaanite period has the title "Canaan-A Bridge Between Cultures-A Buffer Between Empires". It is showing the land of Canaan (Palestine) in between the empires of the Fertile Crescent, and as part of the latter. It can be seen in this title, the map itself and the explanatory text, a picture of the promised land of the Jewish people. This is roughly the same picture as the one offered by the Jewish historiography of the last century and a half. This land seen so, is the place where historians say the Jewish people crystallized as a nation, and implicitly formed it's character according to the given conditions. But although, as we are reminded by the quotation from the Bible in the explanatory text it is a "land of milk and honey", and a part of the Fertile Crescent, having the chance of receiving beneficial cultural influences from all neighboring regions, it is still a buffer between empires, a place where powerful unfriendly forces were endangering life in the land. Those who were to settle here were to become daring defenders of the land in order to survive in the region. Among other exhibits of the section that relate to the earliest mentioning of Jerusalem, there is one depicting the first legendary relation of the Jewish people to the city. In is about Abraham meeting "Malchi-Zedek king of Jerusalem..."(Genesis 14:18). It consists of a fiberglass panel showing the two men together in the fashion of Assyrian low reliefs. This is a rather protochronistic entry, meant to show the most ancient links existing the Jewish people and Jerusalem.

The next period on the scale of time is the First Temple period, or as written in the catalogue: "The Monarchy-The First Temple Period (1000-586 BCE)". This section is granted great importance within the economy of the exhibition. From historical point of view this period is not so largely documented in comparison with many of the later periods. Though its importance and meanings for the early history of the Jewish people is emphasized by the relatively large number of panel displayed here. From this moment in time begins the history of the Jewish people in Jerusalem, and in a way also that of Jerusalem in a more strict historical sense. It represents

also the beginning of stately history of the Jews, as expressed also by the motto of the section on a panel, quoting from the Bible—"As the kingdom was finally established" (1 Kings 2:12).

The very first panel, illustrated with a picture of the mosaic in the Beth Alpha synagogue showing the sacrifice of Isaac on Mount Moriah, is dealing with *Jerusalem [as a] Capital of the Kingdom of Israel*. The text attached to this panel tells us about the founding of Jerusalem by king David who "made Jerusalem the political center of the people of Israel", and about his successor, king Solomon who built the Temple on Mount Moriah, "which became the symbol of national unity". It can be seen from this example, and others in this and the following sections, how ancient history is dealt with. Although the information is accurate, from the ways the historical data are used, echoes of the 19th century national history, positivism and Marxism are easily recognizable. Notions such as national unity, political center of a people as a whole, placed in such distant eras like antiquity are main features of all the above mentioned historical schools, and are more and more regarded by modern scholarship as obsolete and anachronical. These concepts appeared much later in time in the ways we know them today, in modern times. Social cohesion and collective conscience in ancient and medieval times were based chiefly on other means than they do today. In early historical periods determinant factors for the mentioned social phenomena originated in religious, tribal or gentile relations and later by antithesis to the other, and much less or at least not in ways we understand them today as ethnicity and nationality. This way of seeing national consciousness in distant historical epochs, has been developed under the influence of Enlightenment in the 19th century Europe, in order to back up the national awakening that struck the continent. It was not meant to be a rewriting of history. It was just the way in which Romanticism and later, positivism saw at the time development of nationhood, considering that the phenomena had very early roots. This style of historiography, is still fashionable everywhere in the world, although efforts are made among scholars to replace this view. The stronghold of this historiographical approach are first of all school textbooks, popular history books, television shows, all of which are an important part of popular culture. This approach is always reemphasized in times when new regimes are established, because of its characteristic of creating a historical filiations between the past and the present throughout the epochs, thus creating a legitimization for the very existence of the new rule. In recent times for example it has strongly reemerged in the countries of Eastern Europe after turning down of the communist regimes in the area. This fashion of writing history has been adopted by Jewish scholars in the last century, and later was largely supported by the Zionist movement², under the influence of the historiographies of the different European cultures. In this way the heroic past of the Jewish people has been recovered by means not inherited through the Talmudic and rabbinical tradition. The idea of national unity and consciousness spread out, as did the idea of Jerusalem as the eternal capital of the land of Israel and its people, and the idea of Jewish resistance to external factors throughout the ages. All these became major features in Jewish and later Israeli historiography and culture, emphasize falling on one or another aspect according to different determinants. But this is not the object of the present paper. Keeping in mind these features of historiography and modern and contemporary culture, I would try to see to what extent the influence of these facts is to be felt in the conception of the Tower of David Museum's exhibition and catalogue.

It was shown that Jerusalem is seen as the "capital of the people of Israel", or as later referring to the time of king Hezekiah, when Jerusalem as the capital of the kingdom of Judah "regained its position as the national and religious center of *"the entire [Jewish] people"* (emphasize added). It undoubtedly was the center of Judaism, but its symbolizing national unity is questionable in the ancient times. It is not seen only as that but also as a dream city, a magnificent citadel built by the efforts of its inhabitants. In the explanation of the diorama depicting the City of David, the visitor is told that "on the ruins of Jebus... [king David] built a splendid citadel". Not denying the fact that in those times the building of a walled city was a major achievement, there should be noted the persistence of the myth of the great citadels of the Bronze Age. Despite the fact that many of these cities had imposing public buildings, like Jerusalem had had its Temple, their size would rarely exceed that of a modern village. But this myth had been long time applied and by many it still is in the case of other legendary walled cities in Mesopotamia, Asia Minor and Greece, showing them as magnificent citadels. This distortion of perspective is due usually to the fact that modern people tend to relate the cities of the period with much later elements of those particular sites usually still standing to this day or by misinterpretation of sources of the time. To be sure, the diorama depicting the city of David shows Jerusalem as a small sized walled-in city.

In this section there are some panels that present material that actually goes beyond the boundaries of Jerusalem, talking about the Jewish state and "nation" as a whole. The first of them, named *"From Egypt to Euphrates"* is showing the ways in which "king David extended his overlordship" within the above mentioned

² See Bernard LEWIS, *History, Remembered, Recovered, Invented*, Princetown University Press, Princetown, NJ, 1975.

boundaries. From the other panel *Trade under king Solomon*, that is like the previous a map with stylized figures, we learn that “king David transformed his kingdom into an empire” and that afterwards, “under his son Solomon it became a thriving commercial nation with Jerusalem at its center. This is, in fact, the picture of the golden age of the Jewish state that has had a long career in the rabbinical tradition and then taken over by the Romantic literature and historiography, its image being alive to our days. Here, together with the idea of the state’s glory and its people’s heroism (also pictured in the diorama showing the Assyrian unsuccessful siege of 701 BCE), it is to be noted the concept of nation-empire, that comes together with the same myth mentioned above. It was often used in Romantic and even positivist historiography and belletristic in the 19th century but is also surviving today, although it is considered obsolete by modern historians.

Among the other panels in this section depicting daily life scenes, images of the Temple, objects and maps, another one is particularly worth analyzing. Its title is “*Ideas that Inspired Mankind*”. It deals with the prophets active in Jerusalem in the First Temple period, and about their ideas. It is underlined that these prophets were living in Jerusalem which was the religious center of the kingdom. These prophets “censored the immorality of the rulers and of the people. Their discourse contained a universal ethical message destined to ring around the world [...] The belief in One God, the brotherhood of man and in the rule of law, and the vision of eternal peace, were among these ideas conceived in Jerusalem which were to inspire mankind for all time”. The message comes out clearly. The justified claim of paternity of Judaism for some of the major ideas of mankind is reminded. What is important to be noted here is the emphasize put on Jerusalem which is not only as shown before a political, religious and commercial capital, but also a spiritual center that spread its light far beyond the temporal boundaries of the Jewish state. A place where ideas of universal value came to life.

The story of the First Temple period with the “*Destruction and Exile*” illustrated by a fiberglass cast inspired by the Assyrian low reliefs of the time, titled “*Galut Babel*” (“The exile to Babylon”). A map also illustrates the ways of the exile. The text tells about the destruction of the city and about the exile of its population, and that Jerusalem was left to lay in ruins for over fifty years. Although it comes natural that the Temple itself has been destroyed, not a word is describing explicitly its destruction neither in the exhibition nor in the catalogue. In the same manner will be treated, as shall be seen, the destruction of the Second Temple.

The next periods on the scale of time, and on the suggested route of the exhibition are those of the “*Return to Zion*” and of the “*Second Temple Period*”. Within the economy of the exhibition they take two rooms. The smaller one is presenting the first period, and the larger one, respectively, the second period. In the catalogue the period is divided in three periods, more appropriate to the facts, though. Here the first has the same title “*Return to Zion*”, but with a subtitle: *Early Second Temple Period*. The second is the “*Hellenistic and the Hasmonean Age*”, and the third is “*From Herod to the Destruction of the Second Temple*”. For this section a difference is to be noted between the text in the exhibition and that of the catalogue. While the later is giving a more distant and clear record of the historical events, the exhibition text is more subjective about the facts it is relating to, and thus putting an emphasize on different aspects of the period, creating in this way a sometimes mythical image of the past.

The room of “*The Return to Zion*” has, like the previous section, a motto that reads: “Come, let us build the wall of Jerusalem” (Nehemiah 2:17). As the room is entered, three large fiberglass casts are to be seen, made in the fashion of the Persian low reliefs of the time. These are respectively named “*By the rivers of Babylon*”, “*The Declaration of Cyrus*” and “*The Return to Zion*”, depicting the Jewish people’s dwelling and their return from Mesopotamia. On the opposite wall there is a map of the ways followed by the Jews in their return to their homeland. In the explanation the one of the first things mentioned is the rebuilding of the Temple (the same in the catalogue), although as shown above no clear mention of its destruction has been made. This and the restoration of the laws of Moses made again Jerusalem to play “the role of religious center of Judea”. In the catalogue this is seen as a more complex process of “social and political reform based on a return to religion” made under the auspices of Ezra the Scribe and Nehemiah.

Most of the material presented in this section depicts Jewish life outside of the borders of Jerusalem and even of Palestine, the point of Israelites’ willingness to return to their homeland is stressed. Even if the panels have no explanation other than their titles, the episode of the exile to Babylon and its symbolical meanings, such as suffering but not denying one’s identity, is thought to be known by nearly everyone visiting the museum. The story of this episode has long ago crossed the borders of Jewish tradition and culture, if only to keep in mind the great influence it had in the Italian movement of the Risorgimento, by the so called “Hymn of the Exiled” from Giuseppe Verdi’s opera “*Nabucco*”. The titles of the panel themselves “*By the Rivers of Babylon*” and “*Return to Zion*” form phrases that circulated in recent time in the spheres of popular culture, due to for example some

popular disco music tune in vogue at the time the exhibition was created. The strong symbolic meaning of these panels is bound to easily hit its target. The idea of the Jewish people's endurance and suffering comes out clearly to the visitor, used to and previously exposed in a way or another to these symbol. On this background, the image of a newly built Jerusalem, walled and with a new Temple, and Judaism renewed and strengthened (as seen in the diorama showing the signing of the Covenant in front of the Temple by "all (emphasize added) Jews living in Jerusalem) appears like a great achievement, with certain heroic connotations. The idea of Jerusalem being the center of Jewish life is once again emphasized, and its value as a symbol added.

The next room in the exhibition is dealing with "*The Second Temple Period*" as a whole. Although its motto is "*Jerusalem-A Metropolis for All Countries*" (Ancient Jewish Sages), and it tries to depict a multitude of aspects Jewish life in Jerusalem is a central issue.

The influence of Hellenism is described as a very powerful one. It was especially to be felt among the upper classes, that adopted the Hellenised customs and "even names". At its peak this influence was to be felt even among some priests that "would leave the Temple to go to see the games". Young Jews are to be seen wrestling in the Gymnasium. But it is stressed that the "majority of Jews clung faithful to their traditions".

Jewish resistance was once more to be experienced, as the Maccabean revolt sparked out, provoked especially by the "radical changes" performed by the Seleucid leaders. "The Hellenisation of the city and religious persecutions provoked the Hasmonean (Maccabean) revolt". It culminated with the recapture of the Temple and the beginning of the Hasmonean rule that brought with it "a 80-year period of political independence in Jerusalem". About the capture of the Temple and its subsequent desecration there is no mention neither in the exhibition nor in the catalogue's text, exactly like in the case of the destruction of the First Temple. The issue of the Jewish resistance to oppressors and any external effort to alter their tradition, will be from here on very important for the ages to come. It has been strongly dealt with in historiography and literature, being one of the main features of the Jewish history and related literature.

The next subsection of this period is that of "*Jerusalem in Herodian Times*". It is pointed out from the beginning that Jerusalem was a capital and remained so even after Herod's death - this latter information is then contradicted by another to be found in the exhibition, while the catalogue does not make such a statement. It is about an inscription from Caesarea shown in the exhibition, in which Pontius Pilate the Roman governor of Judea is mentioned in relation with the activity of Jesus of Nazareth. Here the explanation of the inscription says that although the official residence of the Roman governors of Judea was Caesarea, "they often came to Jerusalem especially on festive occasions". We are not told what those special occasions were.

Here we find, though the only mention of the destruction of the Temple, after which "the Jewish life in Jerusalem came to an end". But because in the panels that depict the capture and destruction of Jerusalem this information does not appear, although self-understood, the actual fact of the destruction of the temple does not become strongly pictured. On the other hand the information about Jerusalem being a capital then contradicted but not very clearly is due to leave the visitor the impression that the city's role as a capital remained unaltered. Herod's role in building Jerusalem anew and making it a splendid city is strongly emphasized. Throughout the pictures and dioramas the image of Jerusalem as "the Golden City" is created. A strong accent is put on the profound character of Jewish life and manners in Jerusalem, despite the strong Greco-Roman influence, that is almost not discussed. The images of cult objects and ritual bathes (mikveh), or of the wall of Temple's incint, repeatedly appear as individualized exhibits or in the film screened here. Many images from houses of the time also complete the image. The panel "*No Entry*" reminds us that Jews were still having control of their religious and internal problems. It is an inscription in Greek (presented in the exhibition in a replica), concerning the entry in the sacred precincts of the Temple. Thus, a Gentile entering there "was solely responsible for his subsequent death", we learn from the Hebrew, Arabic and English translation of the text. The message was made clear in its time as it is in the context of the exhibition. In connection with the activity of Jesus of Nazareth we find out, indirectly, about Jewish resistance in Roman times. The panel, like the others, is composed of two parts. The large one, above, carries a picture, diorama, animation or a film is screened, with the adjacent explanatory text. Below, a small and narrow panel shows archaeological finds, maps and a text related to the subject together with a trilingual explanatory text. In the case of the panel about Jesus of Nazareth, showing a triptych from a 8th century manuscript, the small panel below shows the photograph of an ossuary of a crucified Jewish man, then two of loculi and of a tomb with a rolling stone of the Sanhedrin from Adullam and the inscription of Caesarea that has been previously mentioned. The association between Jesus of Nazareth and the crucified man and the hypogeous tombs, is not striking since in the legend created around Jesus' person, his crucifixion and burial in such a tomb with rolling stone are central elements. Again we have a relation to what supposedly is a well known symbol. The

suffering of Jesus during his crucifixion and his subsequent death are stories well known even outside Christian culture. Crucifixion as a suppression method used by the Romans or others, is known by many, again from different features of popular culture as for example the classic American cinematographic super-production "*Spartacus*" or recent post modern video clips. The explanation annexed to the photograph of the ossuary tells about crucifixion as a common punishment for rebels, and that "thousands died crucified in revolt against the Romans". No reference to any specific revolt is made, creating premises for imagining a continuous action. Thus the presence of this "sword of Damocles" above the Jews' heads and in relation with these symbols, Jewish resistance and revolt appears in a different light. It is not my purpose to argue that these association were made intentionally or not. Although associating facts to such powerful symbols might produce subliminal links in the minds of the visitors.

This section concludes with a diorama and two low reliefs picturing the destruction of Jerusalem. This moment represents the beginning of Jewish Diaspora. No specific mention is made here about the destruction of the Temple. But the enslavement of the survivors and the Romans carrying sacred objects out of the Temple are shown (replica from the Arch of Titus, scale 1:1). The section ends with an enlarged copy of a Roman coin issued after the year 70 CE, having written on it the words "Judea Capta". It is a typical representation of a captured province: a woman weeping; in this case, under a palm tree.

After the destruction of Jerusalem, the Romans and then the Byzantines prohibited the Jews to enter the city. Although there have been specific dates or special occasions when they were permitted to return. Their presence has been felt in a way or another in the coming centuries. For the coming periods it is therefore little known about Jewish life in Jerusalem or around. After Jerusalem's destruction, the Roman domination became more pregnant and a new city was built on it's ruins. This late Roman period and the following, the Byzantine period are, compared to the previous sections very condensed and briefly reviewed. For the coming sections of the exhibition I will focus on the picture of the Jewish presence in Jerusalem.

The new Roman city named Colonia Aelia Capitolina is pictured as a pagan city. Like in the previous sections, the most important architectural achievements are shown. The main temples, the Forum, the Cardo, are all mentioned. Again it is interesting to see how the construction of the Temple of Jupiter on the Temple Mount is omitted. Only in the catalogue there is an explanation adjoining a stylized picture presenting Jerusalem in Roman days, where the edifice is mentioned, without any relation to when and how it has been erected on Mount Moriah on the site of the Second Israelite Temple.

Then Bar Kochba's revolt is shown in a diorama presenting a cave where the rebels are manufacturing weapons and minting coins. One of these coins is pictured below. Coins were always a sign of sovereignty and Bar Kochba's coins very often have been represented as a symbol of Jewish resistance and independence. The explanatory text of the diorama also tells that the aim of the revolt has been in "restoring Jewish sovereignty in Jerusalem". With the coin a facsimile of a letter of Bar Kochba is exhibited. Sharing the same room with the late Roman period is the Byzantine period. The major part of the material here deals with the shaping of Jerusalem as a Christian city, about its new buildings and the new aspects of life here. A brief note tells about the plans of rebuilding the Temple in the days of Julian the Apostate. The diorama "*Lamenting the Destruction*" shows how the Jews came on the site of the destroyed Temple every year on Tisha B'Av, the only day they were permitted to return into the city. Lamenting the destruction of the Temple on Tisha B'Av is a custom perpetuated until today.

On one of the walls of this section there is written a text from the Tanhuma Midrash: "the land of Israel is in the center of the world and Jerusalem is in the center of the land of Israel". This text here seems a little bit out of context, since no explanation is given. The intrinsic message of the text is clear but I could not find any further links with the rest of the material here except that this Midrash has been written in the 4th century, that is in the Byzantine period.

In the next section, of the Islamic period there is another diorama depicting Jewish life in relation to Jerusalem: "*Succoth on the Mount of Olives*". It shows a Jewish religious ceremony taking place on the Mount of Olives facing the Temple Mount. The gatherings, we learn from the explanation, were attended by many pilgrims "mainly on the seventh day of Succoth, the Feast of the Tabernacles". On these occasions the spiritual leaders were appointed. Also at these gatherings "the Jewish calendar was reaffirmed and the communities were called to contribute to the Jewish institutions in Jerusalem". No further mention of what these Jewish communities were. The continuity of Jewish live in Jerusalem, and important feature in Jewish historiography and culture is clearly stated here.

The Crusader section of the exhibition does not include any mention of Jewish activity in Jerusalem since they have been slaughtered and the survivors expelled from the city upon the arrival of the European Christians. But it is mentioned that Jerusalem became once again a capital "for the first time since Jewish sovereignty" ended.

After the reconquest of Jerusalem by Saladin, the Jews were allowed to return in the city, and "they were joined by immigrants from Maghreb, France and Yemen", and more, "in response to Saladin's call three hundred rabbis from France and England arrived in the city. This point in history is seen as the beginning of the return of the Jews from the Diaspora. A not very large panel in the exhibition is showing these facts.

In the exhibition, Jews are not mentioned but briefly in the Mameluke and Early Ottoman periods. They appear once in each of these sections, in dioramas showing the different types of residents of Jerusalem in the respective period. In the catalogue, in the Ottoman period chapter there is a paragraph dealing with the Jewish community of Jerusalem. The 15th and 16th centuries marked the community's true consolidation, although tradition attributes to Nahmanides in 1267 the renewal of the Jewish community in Jerusalem. The 15th century contouring of the community took place due to the "influx of Jews who had been expelled from Spain". We learn that "by the end of the end of the Mameluke period there were three active Jewish communities in the city: the local residents, known as "mustarabim" because they were Arabic-speakers; Ashkenazi Jews; and Spanish deportees. The common language of all three groups was Hebrew". Although it is true that these communities were present in Jerusalem in that period, some of them were merely represented by just a few members, and the total number of the Jewish residents did not exceed 300 souls. The remark that Hebrew was the common language for the Jewish community is rather anachronical, this phenomena was due to take place later in time.

The last but one section of the exhibition is that of the "End of the Ottoman Period and the British Mandate". The material exhibited here is very dens. Some of the central elements of this section are modernization and growth, as can be seen also from the motto inscribed on one of the walls: "Jerusalem shall be inhabited as villages without wall" (Zechariah 2:4). The city's importance across the boundaries of the country is stressed, and the growing interest for it, are shown in panel titled: "*Distinguished visitors to Jerusalem*" (showing heads of states and princes), "*Pilgrims and Tourists*", "*Explorers and Scholars*", and "*Links to the World*" (relating about the opening of foreign consulates and their respective postal services), etc. Modernization of the infrastructure, roads, railway are also presented.

The introduction of the new Jewish (Hebrew) culture is largely depicted. New press for Hebrew literature and the whole family of Hebrew newspapers issued at that time, as other cultural and national institutions.

Two large panels are dealing with the growth of the Jewish population of Jerusalem, that now becomes a majority. One of them is showing the population growth on the scale of time, while the other shows the spread compared to the other ethnic and religious groups within the city.

The image of the "New Jew" is present. Everywhere in this section the new way of life of the Jewish community is emphasized. It is clearly shown by presenting the Old Yishuv (settling-Hebrew) and the New Yishuv in opposition. The Old and the New Yishuv are pictured in a mixed media animated composition showing different aspects of their life. We learn that the Old Yishuv community was about one fifth of the whole population of the city, consisting mainly of Sephardic Jews. Their "life was centered around the synagogue and they were rarely productive". On the other hand the New Yishuv that began after the 1880's and consisting mainly of Ashkenazi Jews that started massively to dwell outside the city walls. Although many were traditional Orthodox "a new modern and more nationalistic community appeared [...] which strove to create a productive society based on innovative educational principles". A growth in quality is suggested with the arrival of the newcomers. These communities, old and new, were living in uneasy conditions. The "New Jew" largely popularized by the Zionist movement's propaganda was supposed to be an active character that would not give back even thought facing the most difficult conditions. This image had a strong European flavor in the description of the hero, and was much indebted to the culture related to the European socialist movement. This "New Jew" was destined to establish the Jewish state in the land.

As the British Mandate was established, "Jerusalem became once again the capital of the entire country". The Jewish National Institutions were set in Jerusalem. But living conditions were still far from being peaceful since bloodshed occurred "due to Arab resistance to the Jew's aspirations to establish a National Home and Jewish State in Eretz Israel". A film screened in this room tells the story of Jerusalem from the beginning of the British Mandate in Palestine to the creation of the state of Israel. The image of the New Jew clearly appears here: hardworking, building the "Garden suburbs" and infrastructure, and other important sites as the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus and the residences for the National Institutions: enduring, resisting the unfair British

White Paper or fighting them; heroic, in the siege of Jerusalem in 1948-1949 and other battles; and also kind-hearted and thirsty for culture.

The last section is very small. It bares the motto of David ben Gurion saying on the 10th of December 1949 that "Jerusalem is an integral part of the State of Israel and its eternal capital". The section deals with the War of Independence and the reunification of Jerusalem. With this the history of Jerusalem and its people ends, with the fulfillment of a dream. The dream of the Jewish people.

From the whole material presented in the Tower of David Museum of the History of Jerusalem the image of the Jewish people appears strongly individualized. This picture of the Jewish people throughout the ages seems to be a rather immobile one, the main characteristics of this people seem to be everlasting and transmitted from one generation to another. The image presented in the exhibition suffers strong influences and is altered by the inference of clichés borrowed from tradition, historiography, popular culture and even propaganda. Though it is roughly conform to the image that can be otherwise received in most Jewish and Israeli milieus today. This exhibition is in a way a mirror of these milieus.