

# Ermete Pierotti in the Russian Service: New Biographical Discoveries

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The Russian Compound in Jerusalem was the first residential quarter outside the medieval city walls. It was built north of Jaffa Gate in 1859–1864, in order to house pilgrims from Russia. Local residents called the buildings “Moskobiia” or “New Jerusalem”. The new city, with its European-style design and infrastructure, began to take shape here in the second half of the nineteenth century.

One hitherto completely neglected chapter in the history of the Russian Compound is the role played in its development by the Jerusalem-based architectural engineer, topographer and archaeologist ERMETE PIEROTTI, who acquired several key lots in the city and its environs for his Russian employers between 1857 and 1859. In order to understand the circumstances surrounding PIEROTTI’s participation in the Russian “Jerusalem Project”, it is necessary first to review the steps taken by the Russian authorities in the Holy Land after the end of the Crimean War.

## 1. The “Jerusalem Project” of Russia, 1857–1864

Within the context of the new political system that emerged after the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1856, Russia’s main objective in Palestine was to sustain its influence there. Two ministries spearheaded efforts to achieve this goal: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Naval Ministry. The latter proposed that Russian charitable establishments be constructed in Palestine according to the general principle of maintaining a unitary and self-sufficient pilgrimage infrastructure; it also expressed the view that a special consulate should be established in Jerusalem in order to protect the interests of Russian pilgrims and manage Russian institutions in the Holy Land. The Naval Ministry’s project was developed and implemented by B.P. MANSUROV, who visited Jerusalem in January – March 1857. In his report on this visit, MANSUROV suggested that the principle of extraterritoriality could be invoked when establishing Russian shelters for pilgrims in the Holy Land<sup>1</sup>. MANSUROV interpreted pilgrimages from Russia as a type of humanitarian activity which needed to adhere to the standards of international law, under the protection of the Russian consul in Jerusalem and following bilateral treaties between the Ottoman Empire and Russia. MANSUROV’s idea was supported by the brother of the emperor Alexander II, Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich, who convened a special “Jerusalem Committee” in St. Petersburg to develop measures that will improve the daily lives of Russian pilgrims in Palestine. Russia’s new foreign minister, Prince A.M. Gorchakov, also took part in the development of Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich’s “Jerusalem Project”, but eventually proposed an alternative plan. Under

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<sup>1</sup> MANSUROV 1857.

the authority of the MFA, a Russian Ecclesiastic Mission was reestablished in Jerusalem, led by a bishop whose status was higher than that of all the other Russian representatives in the Holy Land. Bishop KIRILL (NAUMOV) was appointed to head the Ecclesiastic Mission. In addition to his official instructions, he was also entrusted with a secret assignment from the MFA to purchase land in Jerusalem in order to create Russian charitable establishments that would fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry<sup>2</sup>. The Russian envoy in Constantinople and the Russian Consul General in Beirut received orders to assist Bishop KIRILL in this matter.

On February 1, 1858, the Russian Ecclesiastic Mission reached Jerusalem and immediately began to play a major role in the ecclesiastical and political life of the Holy Land. V.I. Dorgobuzhinov, the first Russian consul in Jerusalem, arrived in the city on September 17, 1858, together with B.P. MANSUROV and M.I. EPPINGER, the future architect of the Russian Compound. Thus all of the major participants in the “Jerusalem Project” came together in Palestine in September 1858. “I liked Bishop Kirill very much, we had a very warm meeting and I hope that everything will go well”, wrote MANSUROV to his father two days after arriving in the Holy City<sup>3</sup>. This was also the approximate date of a photograph labeled “The builders of the Russian Compound in Jerusalem”, which has reached us as part of the photographic collection assembled by Bishop Porfirii (Uspenskii)<sup>4</sup>. The photograph (Taf. 30A) depicts V.I. Dorgobuzhinov and B.P. MANSUROV seated in the front row of the group together with the leading members of the Russian Ecclesiastic Mission, Bishop KIRILL (NAUMOV) and the hieromonks Leonid and Iuvenalii. Between the bishop and the consul in the second row, stands the architect M.I. EPPINGER, and behind him to the left in the third row, stands ERMETE PIEROTTI. The date of the photograph can be established using MANSUROV’s letters to his father, which make it clear that MANSUROV had left the city by November 3,

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<sup>2</sup> The existence of these instructions, which the head of the Mission showed only to certain trusted individuals – A.P. BUTENEV, the Russian envoy in Constantinople, and N.IA. MUKHIN, Consul General in Syria and Palestine – is implied in the Consul General’s report of 21 February 1858: “The head of our Ecclesiastic Mission communicated to me the instructions of the imperial ministry concerning the finding of places in Jerusalem for the construction of Russian charitable establishments” (Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Imperii [AVPRI-Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire], f. 161 [Sankt-Peterburgskii Glavnyi arkhiv, II-9], op. 46, 1858, d. 22, l. 9v). It is mentioned directly in the journal of the Palestine Committee for 11 December 1859: “Since the instructions were given to the head of the Ecclesiastic Mission before the establishment of the Committee for All Affairs Relative to the Creation of Charitable Establishments in Jerusalem, the minister for foreign affairs is asked to amend as necessary those parts of the instructions to the head of the Ecclesiastic Mission that contradict the principles set forth in the present journal” (AVPRI, f. 161 [Sankt-Peterburgskii Glavnyi arkhiv, II-9], op. 46, 1859, d. 17, l. 9). As a result of the minister’s order, the right “given to the head of the Mission by prior instructions in the matter of land purchases for our planned charitable establishments” was revoked by August 1859 (AVPRI, f. 180 [Posol’stvo v Konstantinopole], op. 517/2, d. 3342, l. 131v). The secret nature of the instruction is suggested by the fact that the task of purchasing land in Jerusalem did not make it into the official documents of the MFA. For this reason it remained unknown to researchers who investigated the activities of Bishop KIRILL (NAUMOV) in Jerusalem, and examined the orders he was given. This secrecy can explain the odd absence in the instructions to Bishop KIRILL of any mention of the problems of Russian worshippers in Palestine. This contradiction was already noted by MANSUROV in December 1857. It seemed as if “Russian pilgrims stand in relation to the Mission as some sort of a group of coreligionists, forming no part of its required sphere of responsibility” (MANSUROV 1857, 93).

<sup>3</sup> Gosudarstvennii Arkhiv Rossyiskoi Federazii (GARF-State Archive of the Russian Federation), f. 990, op. 1, d. 34, l. 14.

<sup>4</sup> VAKH 2011, 163–176.

1858<sup>5</sup>. The location of the photograph is also interesting. The group is assembled on the rooftop terrace of the so-called Porfirii House, originally built in 1853–1855 by the Greek Patriarchate with the aid of Archimandrite Porfirii (Uspenskii) in order to serve as a home for the Russian Ecclesiastic Mission in Jerusalem. Porfirii himself never lived in this house, having been forced to return to Russia by the outbreak of the Crimean War. The house was built in the inner courtyard of the Jerusalem Patriarchate and always remained in its possession. The ceramic clay pipes lining the top of the outside wall (*kizzan*), are still partially preserved and permit easy identification of the site.

This commemorative photograph that was taken by the Jerusalem photographer JOHN DINESS, who in 1856–1859 worked with PIEROTTI on an ongoing basis, raises a crucial question: what linked PIEROTTI to the other individuals in the group?

## 2. ERMETE PIEROTTI in Jerusalem

Few details of PIEROTTI's biography are known<sup>6</sup>. He combined extraordinary talents with a tendency towards swashbuckling<sup>7</sup>. One current source calls PIEROTTI “a Commandant of the Italian Army Engineers”, while another labels him a “disgraced Piedmontese officer”<sup>8</sup>. PIEROTTI served with the Duke of Modena as captain of the corps of engineers<sup>9</sup>, but in 1849 he was accused of theft of military property and, after a court-martial, was forced to leave the service. He arrived in Palestine, as he himself claimed, in March of 1854, probably among a body of troops from the Kingdom of Sardinia<sup>10</sup>. From then until August 1861 he resided permanently in Palestine, studying biblical history and archeology<sup>11</sup>. Under the patronage of Sureyya-Pasha, the governor of Jerusalem, and of the French consul Edmond de Barrère, PIEROTTI was able to pursue a successful career as city architect<sup>12</sup>. In 1856 he took part in the construction of a sewer system on the Temple Mount and in other parts of the city. In the same year his first topographical studies: the “Plan of Jerusalem”, the “Illustrated Panorama of the Holy City”, and the “Plan of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre”, were published in Jerusalem<sup>13</sup>. Using his official position and connections, PIEROTTI became the first European researcher to investigate the archeological sites, monuments, and underground passages of the Temple Mount and construct a detailed map of the area<sup>14</sup>. B. P. MANSUROV met him during

<sup>5</sup> GARF, f. 990, op. 1, d. 34.

<sup>6</sup> He was born around 1820, arrived in Palestine approximately aged 35, and died around 1880. For recent biographical research, see SHILLER 2013.

<sup>7</sup> SILBERMAN 1982, 73–74.

<sup>8</sup> <http://cosmos.ucc.ie/cs1064/jabowen/IPSC/php/authors.php?aid=24792> (access: March 3, 2012); <http://www.pef.org.uk/maps/> (access: March 3, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> AVPRI, f. 161 (Sankt-Peterburgskii Glavnyi arkhiv, II-9), op. 46, 1858, d. 22, l. 10v.

<sup>10</sup> PIEROTTI 1869, 7.

<sup>11</sup> PIEROTTI 1869, 7. For the general review of Jerusalem research in the 19<sup>th</sup> cent., see BEN-ARIEH 1983, and recently SHILLER/BARKAY 2013.

<sup>12</sup> “To the patronage and assistance of Sorayya-Pasha, the governor of Jerusalem, belongs much of the credit for my scientific pursuits, and I proved my gratitude to him by my personal loyalty to his person and the various services I performed for him, which were his due as a governor and as a friend. Memories of his kindness have been imprinted forever upon my heart” (PIEROTTI 1869, 8).

<sup>13</sup> PIEROTTI 1866, 66.

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.edicolaweb.net/am\\_0333.htm](http://www.edicolaweb.net/am_0333.htm) (access: March 9, 2012); <http://www.pef.org.uk/maps/> (access: March 9, 2012).

his first visit to the Holy Land in 1857, and PIEROTTI made a strong impression on him, not so much on account of his archeological knowledge, but because of the opportunities that were available in Palestine to this European architect of Jerusalem<sup>15</sup>. In 1857, with the permission of Surayya-Pasha, PIEROTTI organized a visit to the Mosque of Omar for MANSUROV<sup>16</sup>. Most likely in the same year, he met N.IA. MUKHIN, the new Russian Consul General in Syria and Palestine. It was PIEROTTI who was behind the purchase of the first Russian lots in Jerusalem, which were acquired by the opulent young philanthropist Count N.A. KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO in April of 1857. MANSUROV's surviving correspondence with his father allows us to determine precisely the time and some of the circumstances of the deal. Count KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO arrived in Beirut from Constantinople on April 10, 1857, coinciding with MANSUROV. Two days later, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April, he left for Jaffa with the Consul General. It should be noted that the Consul General accompanied travelers to Jerusalem only when directly instructed to do so by his superiors<sup>17</sup>. MUKHIN and KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO did not stay in Jerusalem for very long, returning to Beirut as early as April 27. Even if we assume that traveling from Beirut to Jaffa by steamship would take no more than one day, and the trip from Jaffa to Jerusalem one more, and allow the same two days for the return voyage, KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO could not have been in Jerusalem for more than ten days, from April 15 to April 25. During this time the traveler not only performed a pilgrimage but also located two plots of land, reached an agreement with their owners, and began the arrangements for the sale. Eventually, the purchased land was of absolutely no use to KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO, although in the end he did make a profit from its sale<sup>18</sup>.

### 3. PIEROTTI and the Purchase of First Russian Propriety in Jerusalem

It is difficult to understand how the purchase could have been negotiated. Officially, the deal went through much later, when KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO was no longer in Jerusalem. The lot on the Meidam was transferred on May 23, and the one in Mamila on July 31. The purchase of the Meidam was particularly complex, and the transactions had to be undertaken by a third party. At first a deed of sale was filed in the name of a certain Anton, son of Lonzo, who paid 7,800 francs as well as two watches and a box with an unknown sum of money. Two days later Anton sold it to Count KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO on the same terms. The man who arranged both deals was PIEROTTI.

The fact that KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO met PIEROTTI during his visit to Jerusalem is attested by a power of attorney issued to Dorgobuzhinov, the Russian consul in Jerusalem, in

<sup>15</sup> "I also met the Italian artist-architect, Mr. Pierotti [. . .] a man of many talents, a well-educated and unusually resolute traveler, who has been in Palestine already for over two years in order to complete his enormous and wonderful labor in the Holy Land", wrote B.P. MANSUROV to his father. See GARF, f. 990, op. 1, d. 32, l. 67v–68.

<sup>16</sup> See GARF, f. 990, op. 1, d. 32, l. 68–68v.

<sup>17</sup> For example, he did not accompany MANSUROV to Palestine even though he knew very well that the latter was sent on a mission by the emperor's brother, Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich, and was acting with the Tsar's approval. On the other hand, when MFA ordered him to do so, the consul accompanied the Russian Ecclesiastic Mission to Jerusalem and assisted in its successful establishment in the Holy City.

<sup>18</sup> KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO paid 7,800 francs, two watches, and a box with an unknown sum of money for the lot on the Meidam and 6,000 francs for the one in Mamilla. The Palestine Committee paid 44,160 francs for both lots.

March 1859. The document contains two sets of instructions: first, for the consul to arrange the transfer of KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO's lots to MANSUROV or PIEROTTI; second, for the substantial sum of 2,000 francs to be paid to PIEROTTI by Dorgobuzhinov in accordance with an earlier power of attorney<sup>19</sup>.

The arrival of one of Russia's wealthiest men in the Orient was a major stroke of luck for the Russian MFA. KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO quickly accepted the invitation to become a "Jerusalem *pomeshchik*" for a time, while for the MFA this experience clearly proved that such purchases were possible and relatively simple. KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO's choice of lots, on the Meidam and in Mamilla, is likewise noteworthy. Located in close proximity to the Jaffa Gate of the Old City, they were situated on open, relatively flat plateaus, permitting the construction of a large number of buildings with infrastructure, in case adjacent lots were to be acquired in the future. As we have suggested, PIEROTTI seems to have been the only person in Jerusalem who simultaneously possessed the necessary information about lots that were available for sale, was able to select lots appropriate to the task, and could almost instantaneously initiate the arrangements for their purchase<sup>20</sup>. This hypothesis is confirmed by a letter found in MANSUROV's archive, sent to him by KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO from Beirut on May 18, 1857. The count wrote to inform MANSUROV that he had sent PIEROTTI funds and a power of attorney to finalize the purchase arrangements for both lots in KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO's name<sup>21</sup>.

It was probably N.IA. MUKHIN, the Consul General in Beirut, who first conceived the idea that Count KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO would acquire the land near Jerusalem. Eventually he accompanied KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO to Palestine for this purpose. Undoubtedly, however, MUKHIN was operating within the parameters of the instructions he had received from the Russian MFA. The purchase caused a tectonic shift in the real estate market. Previously, only land within the Old City or near holy sites associated with history and popular tradition were considered valuable. Now land on the Meidam and around Jerusalem began to be acquired for the purpose of resale for future construction. Before KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO, the only person to buy land near the walls of the old city to build residential homes was Sir Moses Montefiore who acquired a plot of land to the west of Jerusalem in 1855. The famous Montefiore mill was built on that land in 1857, but the construction of the first home began only in 1859, almost simultaneously with the commencement of the Russian construction on the Meidam.

PIEROTTI's strongest suit professionally was topography, and he had perfected the topographical study of Jerusalem's environs. In the eyes of both MUKHIN and MANSUROV this made him a practically irreplaceable associate. There was much to do. It was necessary to rent temporary accommodation for pilgrims in Jerusalem, and to acquire land or buildings to house Russian charitable establishments and other infrastructural objects. Most likely it was after meeting MANSUROV and purchasing land in the name of Count N.A. KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO that PIEROTTI accepted the invitation to continue working with the Russian representatives in Palestine. Until the establishment of a Russian consulate in Jerusalem, he worked with N.IA. MUKHIN, the Consul General in Beirut, and with Bishop KIRILL (NAU-

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<sup>19</sup> Count N.A. KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO to the Jerusalem consul V.I. Dorgobuzhinov, in: LISOVOI (ed.) 2000, 226.

<sup>20</sup> VAKH 2011.

<sup>21</sup> GARF, f. 990, op. 1, d. 382, l. 1v.

MOV), the head of the Ecclesiastic Mission. As mentioned above, Bishop KIRILL arrived in Jerusalem with secret instructions from the Ministry, ordering him to find places in Jerusalem for the construction of Russian charitable establishments. He informed the Consul General of this mission personally. In MUKHIN's words, "[t]his subject demanded the preliminary study of the area and scouting reports to be available close at hand. I did not fail to give preference to this task, especially since the religious and social obligations imposed on those newly arrived in Jerusalem did not allow our bishop to apply his full attention to it"<sup>22</sup>. To accomplish "such a survey of the lands", MUKHIN contracted PIEROTTI, who had studied extensively "not only the topography of the Holy City but also the local ways of acquiring land and constructing buildings"<sup>23</sup>. PIEROTTI composed a report in Italian for MUKHIN and Bishop KIRILL, dated February 24, 1858, detailing the results of his search<sup>24</sup>. Despite the fact that a large number of sites within the Old City had been surveyed, PIEROTTI directed the attention of the Russian authorities only to five sites which could in his opinion be acquired in Jerusalem. He described the peculiarities of each in detail, assessed its potential cost, and suggested ways to acquire it. Among others, PIEROTTI noted the Dabbag'a lot (the Tanners' Workshop) near the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, over which the Greeks and Latins had squabbled for years, as well as the lot known as St. Helen's Hospital (Haseki-Sultan) in the southeastern part of Jerusalem. MANSUROV mentioned these same lots in his 1857 report<sup>25</sup>. If we remember that his guide through Jerusalem in 1857 was PIEROTTI himself, the obvious conclusion is that there was probably some discussion of the possibility of acquiring these lots for the Russian government already by early 1857.

In the opinion of Consul General MUKHIN, acquiring any of these lots for the Russian side would "cause a significant inconvenience"<sup>26</sup>. The conditions of Turkish land ownership and the rights of the neighbors would, in the consul's estimation, lead to a substantial increase in the expenses that would have to be borne in order to use the lands for the government's goals. Lots belonging to the Greek Patriarchate, which were not mentioned by PIEROTTI since they were not for sale, still remained for consideration. In MUKHIN's view, the two most suitable Greek properties were Versavee and a lot known as the Monastery of the Knights Hospitaller of St. John, which bordered two sides of the Tanners' Workshop<sup>27</sup>. By agreement with Bishop KIRILL, MUKHIN decided to negotiate with the deputies of the Patriarch of Jerusalem – the metropolitans Meletios of Petra and Gerasimos of Lidda – for the cession of one of the lots to Russia. At MUKHIN's request, PIEROTTI marked on a printed map the Arab and Greek possessions in Jerusalem that interested the Russians. Because the map's dimensions were small, PIEROTTI, again at MUKHIN's request, composed a map of the Versavee lot by hand<sup>28</sup>. PIEROTTI's note dated March 1, 1858, together with its Russian translation, a report by Consul General MUKHIN, the map of Jerusalem, and the hand-drawn map of the Versavee lot were sent to the envoy in Constantinople, A. P. BUTENEV. He in turn transferred

<sup>22</sup> AVPRI, f. 161 (Sankt-Peterburgskii Glavnyi arkhiv, II-9), op. 46, 1858, d. 22, l. 9v–10.

<sup>23</sup> AVPRI, f. 161 (Sankt-Peterburgskii Glavnyi arkhiv, II-9), op. 46, 1858, d. 22, l. 10v.

<sup>24</sup> Russian translation: AVPRI, f. 161 (Sankt-Peterburgskii Glavnyi arkhiv, II-9), op. 46, 1858, d. 22, l. 3–8; Italian original: l. 17–18.

<sup>25</sup> MANSUROV 1857, 83.

<sup>26</sup> AVPRI, f. 161 (Sankt-Peterburgskii Glavnyi arkhiv, II-9), op. 46, 1858, d. 22, l. 12v.

<sup>27</sup> Plan of Jerusalem with lots labeled with numbers and outlined in blue; see: AVPRI, f. 161 (Sankt-Peterburgskii Glavnyi arkhiv, II-9), op. 46, 1858, d. 22, l. 19.

<sup>28</sup> AVPRI, f. 161 (Sankt-Peterburgskii Glavnyi arkhiv, II-9), op. 46, 1858, d. 22, l. 20.

these documents to the Foreign Minister A. M. Gorchakov in St. Petersburg, asking for instructions: “to what extent am I empowered in my own right to conduct discussions about this topic with the Patriarch of Jerusalem himself, if our Government desires to purchase the said lot”<sup>29</sup>.

From this point on PIEROTTI became Bishop KIRILL’s assistant in various complex and delicate affairs. Soon after, when the Latin patriarch Valerga provoked a controversy on Moundy Thursday, March 20, 1858, regarding the bishop’s right to conduct services on Golgotha PIEROTTI drafted a detailed plan of Golgotha for KIRILL, with the holy sites marked according to scale, in order to demonstrate the absurdity of the charges against him<sup>30</sup>.

#### 4. PIEROTTI on Russian Service

1858 was the year in which PIEROTTI worked most closely with Russian representatives in Jerusalem. His friendship with the Consul General and the head of the Ecclesiastic Mission, his direct participation in the affairs of the Russian establishment in the Holy City, and the services he rendered – all allowed PIEROTTI to take his entrance into Russian service for granted. It would be logical to suppose that the “engineer-architect”, as PIEROTTI called himself, imagined that he would obtain a position in his field of specialization. These hopes would not be fulfilled due to several important factors: his reputation had been ruined by the court-martial in 1849, his patron MANSUROV did not have sufficient authority to make such a decision unilaterally, and the architect M. I. EPPINGER apparently showed no desire to have PIEROTTI for a colleague.

In September 1858, MANSUROV arrived in Jerusalem along with the first Russian consul, V. I. Dorgobuzhinov, and the Naval Ministry architect M. I. EPPINGER<sup>31</sup>. MANSUROV brought with him a whole expedition whose goal was to find a site for future Russian charitable establishments, study its topographic features, draw up working plans, and obtain the information required to compile a budget. At first MANSUROV maintained cordial relations with Bishop KIRILL: “I liked Bishop Kirill very much, we had a very warm meeting and I hope that everything will go well”, he wrote to his father<sup>32</sup>, and few days later: “Bishop Kirill and I are in great concord and do everything as one”, adding that because of the enormous amount of work, he and all of his companions had been writing for 72 hours without a break<sup>33</sup>. But his friendly relationship with the head of the mission was soon subjected to a severe test. In late October many of the disputes were laid bare<sup>34</sup>. Bishop KIRILL had his own views about his role in Jerusalem and in the future Russian Compound. MANSUROV was forced to yield.

<sup>29</sup> AVPRI, f. 161 (Sankt-Peterburgskii Glavnyi arkhiv, II-9), op. 46, 1858, d. 22, l. 16.

<sup>30</sup> Map of Golgotha, signed by both PIEROTTI and Bishop KIRILL, see: AVPRI, f. 161 (Sankt-Peterburgskii Glavnyi arkhiv, II-9), op. 46, 1858, d. 22, l. 14.

<sup>31</sup> The “Jerusalem Project”, later transformed into the Palestine Committee, was headed by Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich, an admiral-general and head of the Russian Naval Ministry. Therefore all the main participants in the first stage of the construction of the Russian Compound in Jerusalem were linked to this ministry.

<sup>32</sup> Letter to his father, September 19/October 1, 1858. See: GARF, f. 990, op. 1, d. 34, l. 14.

<sup>33</sup> Letter to his father, September 30/October 12, 1858. See: GARF, f. 990, op. 1, d. 34, l. 13.

<sup>34</sup> “Meanwhile my affairs are taking a rather weighty and serious turn, because we are heading for a dénouement. Many obstacles have appeared, and it is very difficult for me to do what I wish and what is necessary”; Letter to his father, October 29/November 10, 1858. See: GARF, f. 990, op. 1, d. 34, l. 9v.

Bishop KIRILL's argumentation has reached us through one of his private letters to the Russian envoy in Constantinople, Count A. B. Lobanov-Rostovskii. His reasoning was that aside from the Ecclesiastic Mission, none of the participants in the Jerusalem Project had either "the right or the need" to govern the Russian Compound in Jerusalem<sup>35</sup>. The only concession on the part of the bishop was his assent to the concurrent participation of Dorgobuzhinov in purchasing land in Jerusalem.

Together with his companions, MANSUROV left Jerusalem on November 15, 1858, having confirmed that the consul had fully assumed his responsibilities. Meanwhile, PIEROTTI became Dorgobuzhinov's assistant in all matters related to determining the location and purchase of lots. With MANSUROV's permission, he was semiofficially accepted into service at the Russian consulate as a supernumerary employee. His wages, 500 francs a month, were paid by the consul out of the donations sent through the Naval Ministry to improve the daily lives of Orthodox worshippers in Palestine<sup>36</sup>. From this point on, as far as the sellers of land were concerned, PIEROTTI was an employee of the Russian consulate<sup>37</sup>. PIEROTTI's attitude to his obligations can be seen in the details of the sale of a lot on the Meidam plateau to consul Dorgobuzhinov (Fig. 1, Taf. 30B). The lot had been purchased for 2,400 francs, evidently for resale, in December 1857, and was sold to the consul for 2,520 francs (the original price plus closing costs) in the spring of 1859<sup>38</sup>.

Archival documents contain virtually no direct mention of PIEROTTI's activities in the Russian consulate in Jerusalem. His participation in the Jerusalem Project must be pieced together from mere scraps of information. As a supernumerary employee of the consulate PIEROTTI served at least through May 1859, when Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich arrived in Jerusalem. The visit of the August Duke required finalization of all the land acquisitions in Jerusalem, a work that was carried out by PIEROTTI. Some sales had already gone through, others still needed verification of documents. We can risk a further suggestion. When Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich arrived in Jerusalem, it became known that to commemorate this event Sultan Abdulmecid would grant Russia a tract of state land on the Meidam, adjacent to the land bought by Count KUSHELEV-BEZBORODKO. The grand duke was informed of the sultan's gift by the governor of Jerusalem, Surayya-Pasha – PIEROTTI's patron and friend. It was likely PIEROTTI himself who had suggested this act – which was subsequently made official by the Ottoman government – to the governor. After the grand duke's departure from Palestine, PIEROTTI hoped to take part in the construction as an architect, and with this goal in mind he participated in some work on the Russian lot in the fall of 1859. The journal entry of the Palestine Committee from April 15, 1860 contains confirmation of all of the expenses incurred in the preparatory stage of the construction of the Russian charitable

<sup>35</sup> "The mission has both the right and the need to defend its direct influence on Russian charitable establishments: the right, because it has the Most August instructions on this matter; the need, because otherwise the vizierial letter upon which my presence in Jerusalem rests loses its meaning and I no longer have a foothold for myself in the Orient"; Letter of March 2, 1859. See: AVPRI, f. 180 (Posolstvo v Konstantinopole), op. 517/2, d. 3341, l. 32–32v.

<sup>36</sup> In the consulate's expense ledger, PIEROTTI's salary of 500 francs a month for October and November 1858 is recorded along with expenses for land surveying, including the Ein Karem lot, as well as a trip to Jaffa on Mansurov's business, etc. See: AVPRI, f. 161 (Sankt-Peterburgskii Glavnyi arkhiv, II-9), op. 46, 1858, d. 19, ch. II. The pages in this ledger are not numbered.

<sup>37</sup> Rossiia v Sviatoi Zemle. Dokumenty i materialy, I: 90.

<sup>38</sup> Rossiia v Sviatoi Zemle. Dokumenty i materialy, I: 79.





Fig. 1. Plan of the land plots in Meidan area near Jaffa Gate in Jerusalem, where the Russian Compound is to be built; May 1859; AVPRI, f. 161 (Sankt-Peterburgskii Glavnyi arkhiv, II-9), op. 46, 1859, d. 17, l. 9.

establishments in Jerusalem. Among other categories of expenses it lists “Expenses for locating land”, which probably included the sums paid to PIEROTTI for these services, as well as “Upkeep for the former architect”, *i. e.*, PIEROTTI’s wages totaling 1152 rubles, 21 kopecks. This sum would account for no more than one year of PIEROTTI’s service, hence it can be concluded that by the end of 1859 he no longer received a salary from the Russian consulate in Jerusalem.

## 5. Scientific Work

Throughout his life, so it seems, PIEROTTI attempted to place himself under the patronage of various crowned heads. Jerusalem was a trump card in this ambition: full of mysteries, still almost unknown to scholarship, cloaked in legends, immortalized in European pilgrim literature. At the same time, in the middle of the nineteenth century, Jerusalem was becoming a center of gravity for European politics, an arena of competition and struggle between great powers for the Ottoman inheritance, even while the owner was still among the living. PIEROTTI counted on his knowledge of Palestine and his practical experience to secure him an honored position as an Oriental expert for one of the European governments. Two years after the publication of his first scholarly works in Jerusalem in 1856 – two topographical plans of

Jerusalem and a plan of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre – PIEROTTI published two more detailed studies on the same subject, based on his own archeological investigations. PIEROTTI's book was published in Madrid in 1858, financed by and dedicated to the Queen of Spain<sup>39</sup>. In 1858–1860 when PIEROTTI collaborated with the Russians, he published nothing. In 1861–1862 he was engaged in compiling a hand-drawn atlas of Palestine; he departed the Holy Land in August of 1861 after his patron and friend Surayya-Pasha left his post as governor of Jerusalem. In 1863–1864, he probably lived in London, where he published English translations of his most significant scholarly works: “Jerusalem Explored”<sup>40</sup>, which was dedicated to Napoleon III (there is an Italian edition) and “Ancient and Modern Customs of Palestine”<sup>41</sup>. Hounded by accusations of plagiarism, and after a passionate polemic exchange, PIEROTTI was forced to leave the country<sup>42</sup>. His next book, financed by Rothschild and also dedicated to Napoleon III, appeared in Paris in 1865 under the title “La Palestine actuelle dans ses rapports avec la Palestine ancienne”<sup>43</sup>. In 1865 he made his way to Italy and attempted to secure the support of King Vittorio Emanuele, to whom he dedicated another book, “Rivista generale della Palestina antica e moderna”<sup>44</sup>. He managed to obtain an official permit for this dedication. In his introduction, addressed to the Italian king, PIEROTTI mentions an audience which took place “in February of last year”, *i. e.* in 1865, when he had the opportunity to present his manuscript to the king<sup>45</sup>. Page 66 of this book contains a list of PIEROTTI's publications. It also mentions books due to appear soon: “La Grande Carta della Palestina”, dedicated to King Vittorio Emanuele, and “Scene Arabe”, which seems to represent the researcher's literary efforts.

In his last known book<sup>46</sup> PIEROTTI turned to Russia once more. In essence it was a French translation of “Rivista generale della Palestina antica e moderna”, and was dedicated by the author to “the autocrat of all Russia”, Emperor Alexander II<sup>47</sup>. For this dedication as well PIEROTTI received an official permit, signed by the Minister of the Imperial Court, Count Adlerberg on July 5, 1869<sup>48</sup>. This fact provides circumstantial evidence that PIEROTTI's services were not forgotten in Russia, and also that Alexander II succeeded in resurrecting the myth of Russia as the patron of Jerusalem and the holy places in the West as well as in the East.

In conclusion, PIEROTTI gained a place in history thanks to his dedicated study of the topography and archeology of Jerusalem, even though his swashbuckling failed to bring him personal profit.

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<sup>39</sup> PIEROTTI 1858a; 1858b.

<sup>40</sup> PIEROTTI 1864a.

<sup>41</sup> PIEROTTI 1864b.

<sup>42</sup> On this polemic, see SILBERMAN 1982, 74–78.

<sup>43</sup> PIEROTTI 1865.

<sup>44</sup> PIEROTTI 1866.

<sup>45</sup> PIEROTTI 1866.

<sup>46</sup> For a newly discovered manuscript of PIEROTTI, dedicated to the Holy Land, see SHILLER 2013, 42–49.

<sup>47</sup> PIEROTTI 1869.

<sup>48</sup> PIEROTTI 1869, 5.

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