

SAVING CAPTAIN PIEROTTI?

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In 1858, the Italian Ermete Pierotti, a former Captain in the Corps of Royal Piedmontese Army Engineers, was appointed architect and engineer of Jerusalem by the Ottoman governor. This gave him the opportunity to explore various places in the city, including the Haram al-Sharif (Temple Mount), something which hardly any non-Muslims had done at the time. In 1864, Pierotti published in London a book entitled Jerusalem Explored. His theories, admittedly not presented in a scholarly way, differed widely from those of eminent representatives of the current Victorian establishment, who launched a violent attack against him, first for an alleged breach of copyright, and then by making public a document revealing some embarrassing aspects of his years in the Piedmontese army. Pierotti was thereby compromised and lost all credibility in the eyes of the British public. Morally broken and nearly destitute, Pierotti never recovered from this blow. The article attempts to identify some of the motivations that guided Pierotti through his adventurous life.

Keywords: Ermete Pierotti, Jerusalem, Haram al-Sharif, Temple Mount, Piedmontese army, Jerusalem Explored

I. INTRODUCTION

In January 1864, the Italian Ermete Pierotti (see Fig. 1.), who had been employed as an engineer by the Ottoman governor of Jerusalem between March 1854 and August 1861 (Legouas, 2010, 180), published a book in London, entitled *Jerusalem explored: being a description of the ancient and modern city, with numerous illustrations consisting of views, ground plans, and sections* (henceforth referred to simply as *Jerusalem Explored*). The Italian original text had been translated into English by Thomas George Bonney. Simultaneously, and using the same translator and publisher, Pierotti published *Customs and Traditions of Palestine, Illustrating the Manners of the Ancient Hebrews* (see Figs. 2 and 3).

Jerusalem Explored (Pierotti, 1864a) appeared in the form of two large volumes and was sold at the high price of £5. Being composed of a volume of text and one of plates, the set intended to present a complete overview of the ancient monuments of Jerusalem, and was conceived to put an end, once and for all, to the polemics and to the brilliant as well as contradictory theories concerning the authenticity and the location of the Holy places.

This book could just have been one more of the numerous treatises published about Jerusalem (or Palestine or even the Levant in general) during the second half of the nineteenth century. Three countries in particular appeared as leaders in this race for better research on Jerusalem: Great Britain, France, and Germany.¹ Competition between these countries essentially developed after 1865, year of the foundation of the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF) in London, which symbolized for many years the primacy of Britain in this domain, and marked the beginning of an organized and systematic exploration of the Land of Israel.

In these conditions, it is not surprising that the publication of *Jerusalem Explored* in 1864 incurred the displeasure of eminent members of the British establishment who decided to discredit the book and its author in the eyes of their fellow citizens.

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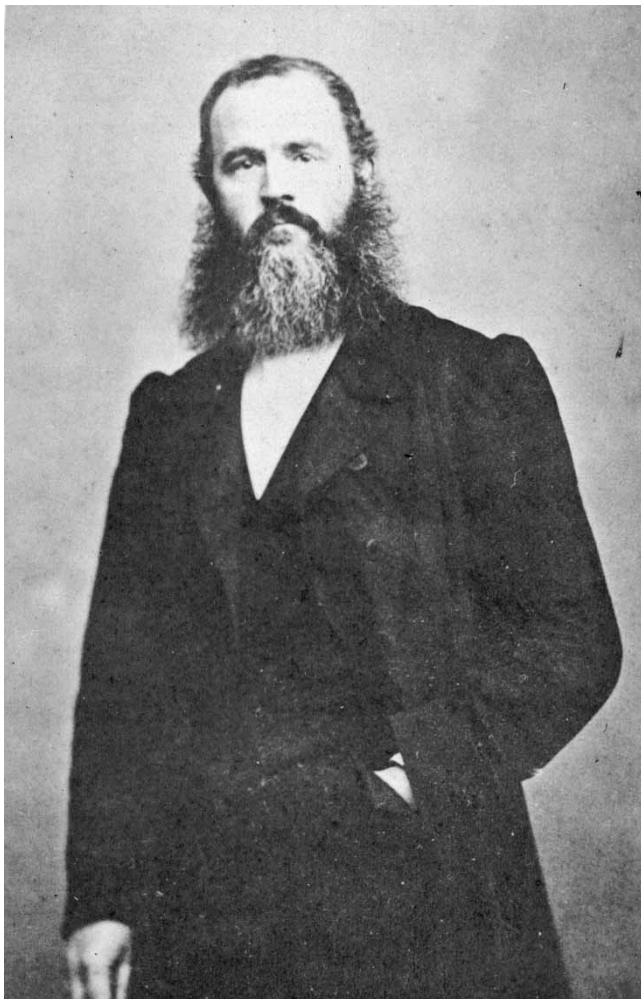


Fig. 1. Photograph of Ermete Pierotti taken by John Mendel Diness in Jerusalem in the late 1850s (courtesy of Yad Itzhak Ben Zvi).

2. SOME BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

According to the parish archives of Pieve Fosciana, Ermete Pierotti was born there on 10 July 1820, the eldest of nine children.² This little, mainly agricultural town in the Duchy of Modena belongs today to the province of Lucca, itself a part of the region of Tuscany.³ Ermete Pierotti's well-to-do family can be traced back at least to the fourteenth century.⁴ The Pierottis owned a chapel in the village of Pantardeto di Pieve Fosciana, where they used to bury their dead. In front of this chapel still stands a large sixteenth century building which also formerly belonged to the family. In the early nineteenth century, the family built a large house (the Palazzo Pierotti) which became the Town Hall in 1877 and still is nowadays. Up to ten Pierotti families were living in Pieve Fosciana during the first half of the nineteenth century.

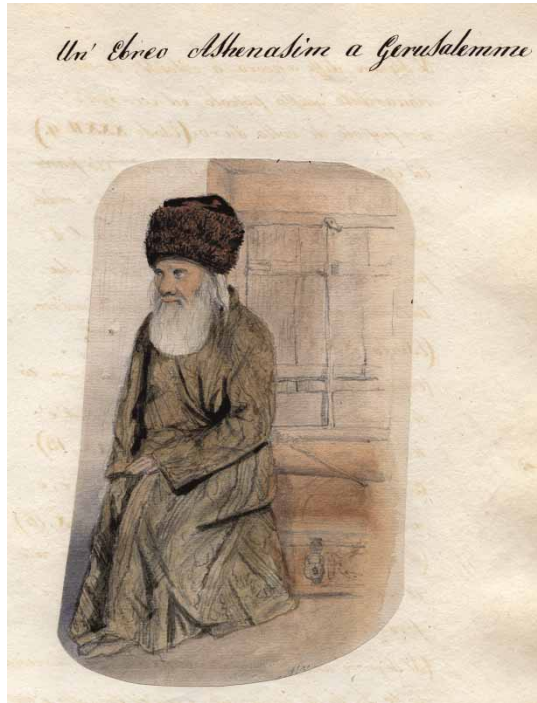


Fig. 3. Sketch titled *Un' Ebreo Askenasim a Gerusalemme* from the manuscript of *Customs and Traditions of Palestine* (Pierotti, 1864b; courtesy of Yad Itzhak Ben Zvi).

et guidée par le Docteur Ermete Pierotti, architecte-ingénieur, qui demeura dans le pays pendant huit ans also published in 1869 his alleged diplomas were simply included in the title of the booklet. Finally, in his *Topographie ancienne et moderne de Jérusalem* (also 1869), dedicated to His Majesty the Emperor of Russia, Pierotti defined himself as “Doctor and Member of various Academies”.

The Italian custom of dubbing as “*Dottore*” all students who reached university level is well known and it is quite possible that Pierotti used this local expression to his advantage, though he could hardly ignore the confusion that this could create in other languages. The title of Architect-Engineer is somewhat questionable, in particular when it is complemented by terms “civilian and military”. It seems probable that our friend liked honours, as many of us do, as well as meritorious titles. Alluding to his stay in the Middle East Pierotti himself admitted this weakness in his letter, reproduced in the Appendix (See Appendix I), dated 31 December 1864: “This is why I left for the Levant, where I spent 15 years, during which my efforts were rewarded, and where I managed to reach a scientific recognition, which flattered my ego”. On the other hand, Pierotti’s pretensions concerning his work in Jerusalem for Surrayya Pasha or his stay for eight long years in the Land of Israel were perfectly well founded.

We are better informed about the continuation of his career thanks to a copy of his conviction by the Military Tribunal of Genoa on 31 December 1864, which I found in the PEF archives in London.⁸ This court did not impose a harsh sentence against Pierotti, and even gave him permission to append a letter to the document addressed to his fellow citizens in which he provided explanations regarding his past activities.⁹

The above-mentioned document shows that Captain Pierotti, who was stationed in Genoa as Commanding Officer of the 4th Company of the Royal Engineers, left this city on 19 July 1849, apparently for personal reasons. His superiors simultaneously noticed that an amount of 3596 lire which had been made available to him by the Regimental Administration in order to supply his company with food had disappeared. Pierotti was arrested in Sarzana not far from the port of La Spezia on the coast of Liguria on 10 August as a deserter, nearly three weeks later. He was kept under arrest in the Duke's Palace in Genoa awaiting his trial, escaped from there on 10 or 11 September,¹⁰ and left the country. He was convicted in November 1849 *in absentia*. He only returned to Genoa in October 1864 surrendering himself to its Military Tribunal on 15 October, which charged him with desertion in peace-time and embezzlement of army funds.

Pierotti freely admitted, though without giving much detail on where he stayed, that he had left for the Levant without any real hope of ever coming back to his home country. However, he informs us that in 1853 he met a man called Giovanni Miani from Venice. This person (1810–1872) was a well-known explorer (a street in Rome is named after him). He was forced to leave the region of Venetia in 1849 to escape the Austrian authorities because of his opinions in favour of the *Risorgimento*. Miani successively stayed in Athens and Smyrna, and in 1859 left trying to reach the sources of the Nile. He finally reached Uganda. In 1864 he visited the Isthmus of Suez together with a German explorer named Georg August Schweinfurth. He left Khartoum in 1871 with a new expedition which brought him to Zaire where he died. Referring to Miani, Pierotti wrote: "Under the fallacious pretext that a few hundred francs would bring a happy future, he so much insisted that he managed to persuade me to give him the money". It seems probable that Miani and Pierotti somehow quarrelled, probably over money. Pierotti who was still in Egypt refused to financially assist Miani anymore, "the good man was outraged, and to repay the assistance I had given him, got hold of a copy of my sentence, made it available to the press, and widely distributed hundreds of copies around Egypt, thereby repaying the kindness I had always demonstrated with a nasty deed" (author's translation; see in Appendix I, his letter "*A' miei Concittadini*").

In the first appendix to his book *Macpèla, ou, Tombeau des Patriarches à Hébron*, where Pierotti fires a violent broadside against the Marquis Melchior de Vogüé accusing him of claiming for himself discoveries that the Italian had made much earlier, he also gives some details on his life before arriving in Jerusalem:

I was by no means, my dear Sir, a beginner in archaeology when I arrived in Jerusalem, as the following will show you: from the end of September 1849 to January 1850, I travelled to Constantinople and in the region of Troy, where I examined some antique monuments. From the end of January until September 1850, I took the time to visit and study Greek monuments in Athens, Sparta, Corinth, Acro-Corinth, Mantinea, Eleusis, Megara, Mycenae, Messina, Argos, Tyrinth near the Pentelicus, Marathon, Chaeronea, Paros, Aegina, etc. From October 1850 to January 1851, I visited the Ionian Islands. In Zante (Zakynthos), my presence was noticed, thanks to my discovery of alabaster and lignite quarries. From February 1851 until the beginning of March 1854, I worked on several buildings in Egypt, where I also studied its ancient monuments. In Alexandria, when beginning to build the foundations of the local Greek church, I had the pleasure to discover part of the foundation walls of the ancient library set up by the Ptolemy dynasty. As you can see, Mr. de Vogüé, when I arrived in Jerusalem, I was far from being a freshman in archaeology. Moreover, let me assure you that I had already read the Bible as well as Josephus (author's translation; Pierotti, 1869a, 131, footnote 1).

Pierotti also tells us that a few years later, in 1859, he met another Italian (whose name he has "deliberately" forgotten), who asked if Pierotti, as Inspector of the Russian works, would concede him certain privileges, which Pierotti flatly refused to do. This refusal prompted the Russian General Consul in Jerusalem to write to Turin, to obtain a copy of the now

famous and widely disseminated judgement (see Appendix I, his letter “*A mici Concittadini*”). This brief text enables us to infer that Pierotti was already in Jerusalem by that time. This is confirmed by another piece of information according to which he would have been employed by the Franciscans since 1854 as a consultant on their new buildings in the city (Williams, 1864, appendix XXII). This probably alludes to the refurbishing of St Anne’s church. Let us keep in mind that our man was not appointed architect and civilian and military engineer by the Ottoman governor Surraya Pasha before 1858. However, the title of “Inspector of the Russian works”, employed by Pierotti, is somewhat puzzling. This probably alludes to some employment by the Russian ecclesiastical mission in Jerusalem, which completed its new compound outside of the Old City walls in 1864 (Ben Arie, 1986, 73), known as the Russian Compound. The Emperor himself purchased the plot in 1858, which included a hospital, housing for high-ranking ecclesiastics as well as kitchens, a laundry, and other amenities. It is possible that Pierotti worked there as an architect or even as a caretaker, whilst at the same time advising the Franciscans. He probably resigned these occupations when he obtained employment from the municipality of Jerusalem and Surraya Pasha (this is confirmed by Silberman, 1982, 73–74).

In an appendix to a pamphlet,¹¹ written in his own defense, Pierotti gives us a rather detailed assessment of his past activities during his stay in Jerusalem. This assessment does not contradict the above information, but merely complements it:

1854.

Arrived in Jerusalem, was employed by the Franciscans to make a Plan of Jerusalem from some ancient “topographies” with which they furnished me. I copied them without verifying them, and afterwards found the plan very bad, and regretted that the Franciscans had published it at Florence with my name.

1855.

Assisted Assad Effendi, Architect-Engineer of the Government, in restoring the aqueduct of Solomon which conveys water from Etham to Jerusalem. Assad Effendi would not introduce me into the Haram-esh-Sharif, but lent me a Plan of the Haram and Sections of Kubbet-es-Sakharah and of the Mosque Aksa, which I copied, but afterwards found to be completely erroneous. Employed by the Austrian Consul to make a plan of the ground on which now stands the Austrian Hospice: and superintended the building of the foundations made also a plan of the Hebrew Hospital, called Rothschild’s, and its neighbourhood; and planned repairs which were in part executed. I also made some trigonometrical surveys with geodetic instruments existing in the Latin convent—and with some others of my own.

1856.

Made plans of particular parts in Jerusalem, and published a plan of the Church of the Sepulchre, a Panorama of Jerusalem, and a façade of the Sepulchre, from photographs which I had required from Mr. Diness.¹² The Archduke Maximilian accepted from me at Jerusalem a plan of the Sepulchre, and employed me to design an altar which he wished to erect in the chapel of the Invention of the Cross. Kiamil Pasha begged me to measure the ground belonging to St Mary the Great and to the Knights of St John. Made a plan and presented it to him. Also directed the works preparatory to the building of the Austrian Hospice, and examined the repairs which the Government had ordered in the sewers. During this year I had already placed in an album several plans, sections, and photographs of Jerusalem, of which last I had acquired part from Mr. Diness, and others had been given me by Padre Andrea, a Franciscan amateur in photography.

1857.

M. de Barrère, the French Consul, employed me in measuring the Church of St Anne and all the neighbouring ground, and ordered me to make a plan, sections, and levels on a large scale, which I did. My work was sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. M. Boris de Mansoureff arrived, charged by the Russian Government to enquire into the means of establishing a Russian Ecclesiastical Mission. For him I executed the following works:

1st. A plan of part of Jerusalem from the Gate of Jaffa to the end of the ground of St Mary the Great, and thence to the Damascus Gate, marking minutely the property of the various religious communities, and especially that of the convents.

2ndly. In other parts of the city, surveys and plans of the Greek, Latin, and Armenian property.

3rdly. Drew up a statistical account of the population of the city, and particularly of the religions of the various rites.

4thly. Calculated the number of Pilgrims for the last decade.

5thly. Employed Mr. Diness to take a number of photographic views, which remained my property.

6thly. Finally, made an exact report of the religions, moral, and physical state of the population, which was forwarded to Petersburg and approved, and assisted the Government planning the establishment of the Mission, and was named Architect-Inspector of the Russian works. In the course of the year I completed a Plan of the city, which was not exact, because I had not yet been able to measure the interior of the Harem, but had already entered it with Sooraya Pasha, and having stepped it in some directions [sic!] had perceived that the plan of Assad Effendi was incorrect. I made in 1857 many plans for different individuals. I had acquired the confidence of Sooraya Pasha, and towards the close of the year had obtained permission to enter the Mosque.

1858.

The Russian Ecclesiastical Mission under Monsignor Cyril, Bishop of Melitopolis, arrived at Jerusalem. Employed in finding in the interior of the city sites for Russian Establishments, and in making plans and designs. Particularly made a minute design of the part of the city from the Gate of Damascus to the South, meeting the Via Dolorosa and following it eastward to the Gate of St. Stephen, and thence again to the Gate of Damascus. Towards the end of 1858 M. de Mansouroff arrived again in company with the first Russian Consul. Made many new plans of particular localities, which gave me new materials for correcting my plan of Jerusalem and enriching my album, and especially with works in the interior of the Haram, which I now had liberty to enter whenever I chose; and I was able to use the scaffoldings, ladders, and cords placed there by Assad Effendi, who was employed in repairing the outside and inside of the Kubbet-es-Sakharah and the adjacent parts. I was thus enabled conveniently to take the dimensions in size and height of the Mosques and other parts of the Haram-esh-Sharif. I corrected my Plan of the city, and, at the request of many, sent it to Paris to be engraved by Erhard and published.

In Nov. 1858 Assad Effendi left Jerusalem, and Sooraya Pasha begged me to undertake his functions, which I did thankfully, as I was thus enabled to penetrate into all the spots reserved to Mussulmen only, and to make studies even in the houses of the Turks near the Haram more conveniently than before — to make excavations, verify cisterns, to examine all foundations which were made in the city, and to make new plans of details, and thus I succeeded in correcting my Plan of Jerusalem.

1859.

Early in 1859 finished the triangulization [sic!] of a vast *terreno* situated outside the NW of the city, now containing the Russian establishments; also accomplished a detailed Plan of the *Perimetro* of the Church of the Resurrection and its appendages for the Russians.

In April made again for the Russians a Plan of Jerusalem on a large scale, marking the property of all the religions communities, and certainly not omitting the Haram-esh-Sharif and its details.

In May was employed by the Pasha to inspect all the waters of Jerusalem, and specially the aqueduct of Solomon, and also in making plans of ancient houses around the Haram-esh-Sharif which he wished to have restored. Also perfected my plan of the city, and a large one of the Haram-esh-Sharif, with all the designs which are now contained in my work. At the same time I again explored the *sou-terrains*, and made excavations measurements, and observations everywhere. Towards the end of 1859 I became acquainted with the Miss Beauforts [sic!]. And at the end of that year I obtained from Sooraya Pasha permission to take Mr. Diness into the interior of the Haram, when he took various views for me, while I made repairs for the Government, and continued my studies.

1860.

From the beginning of the year was occupied in arranging my labours for publication. Was employed as architect directing the constructions of the Daughters of Sion and in that locality obtained many precious

materials. In 1860 Capt. Washington of the English Admiralty came to Jerusalem. I showed him my labours, which he appreciated, since he asked me to correct for him a Plan of the Haram-esh-Sharif.

1861.

Many French officers of the Syrian expedition came to Jerusalem: was their guide and interpreter in many excursions, and did the same for M. Ernest Renan, and many other distinguished French travellers. They all encouraged me to come to Paris to publish my work, and on the 1st of August 1861, I left Palestine for Paris.

Two of the photographs taken by John Mendel Diness on the Temple Mount (Haram al-Sharif) in 1859, which include Pierotti in the composition, are reproduced in Figs. 4 and 5. Pierotti's large plan of the Haram al-Sharif in the above notes for 1859 is shown in Fig. 6.

N. A. Silberman (1982, 74) tells us that the interest represented by the archaeological data at Pierotti's disposal was effectively revealed for the first time when he was employed as a guide to Ernest Renan during his visit to Jerusalem in 1860. Renan showed the greatest interest for the plans and photographs collected by the Italian and was surprised by the amount of data Pierotti had gathered in the course of the preceding 6 years. In a document written by Pierotti about Renan (Pierotti, 1869a, 140, appendix B), the Italian is definitely less enthusiastic. Expressing one of his usual complaints Pierotti reveals that, at least in his opinion, this Breton scholar did not express enough gratitude towards him after his return to France: "You did not even mention my name in the report you sent from Paris on 20 January 1862 to His Majesty the Emperor; neither did you bother sending me a letter of thanks for having assisted you in your research in Jerusalem and Hebron" (author's translation). Pierotti then becomes even more aggressive: "A man having written his *Life of Jesus* the way you did cannot be anybody else than a heartless person devoid of any faith. I want you to understand that I, at least, have a belief which is that the people of Europe will be in a position to realize that you did not behave like a gentleman with me". Pierotti concludes his diatribe by a ruthless analysis of Renan's report which contained unbearably (for him) flattering allusions to the Marquis Melchior de Vogüé who had repeatedly been accused of plagiarism by the Italian.



Fig. 4. Ermete Pierotti and others outside the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, in a photograph by John Mendel Diness (courtesy of Archives for Historic Documentation, Brighton, MA, USA).



Fig. 5. Pierotti standing atop the Golden Gate, in Jerusalem, photographed by John Mendel Diness (courtesy of Archives for Historic Documentation, Brighton, MA, USA).

Again according to Silberman (1982, 74), Captain Gélis, the French Officer and topographer who had also been part of Félicien de Saulcy's trip in 1863 declared that he was impressed by the extent and accuracy of Pierotti's achievements. He took copies of some of his plans and encouraged him to publish them as soon as possible. De Saulcy who professed some sympathy and esteem for Pierotti (Williams, 1864, appendix XX) is also one of the rare explorers of the Holy Land to have been the object of positive comments from our Italian.

Always seeking international recognition, as much as some possible and tangible benefits, Ermete Pierotti quickly packed up his personal belongings, together with his vast hoard of maps and diagrams, and left Jerusalem for Paris, in the hope that he would find a publisher there who would agree to print the outcome of his biblical research.

In 1864, however, we find Pierotti in London, preparing his *Jerusalem Explored* for publication. According to his English translator and friend, T. J. Bonney, from St John's College in Cambridge Pierotti was recovering from a severe illness (Bonney, 1864, 4).

James Fergusson (1808–1886), an eminent Victorian architectural historian, had published an *Essay on the Ancient Topography of Jerusalem* (1847) in which, based on the work of Ali Bey and Frederick Catherwood, he contended that the Temple built by Herod had been erected in the vicinity of the southwest corner of the esplanade.¹³ Fergusson also contended that the Mosque of Omar was nothing else than the Anastasis of the church erected by Constantine over Jesus tomb in Jerusalem. As a consequence, this was the real place for the Holy Sepulchre as opposed to where the eponymous church is currently standing. Fergusson developed another theory about the present location of the Holy Sepulchre: Christianity, having

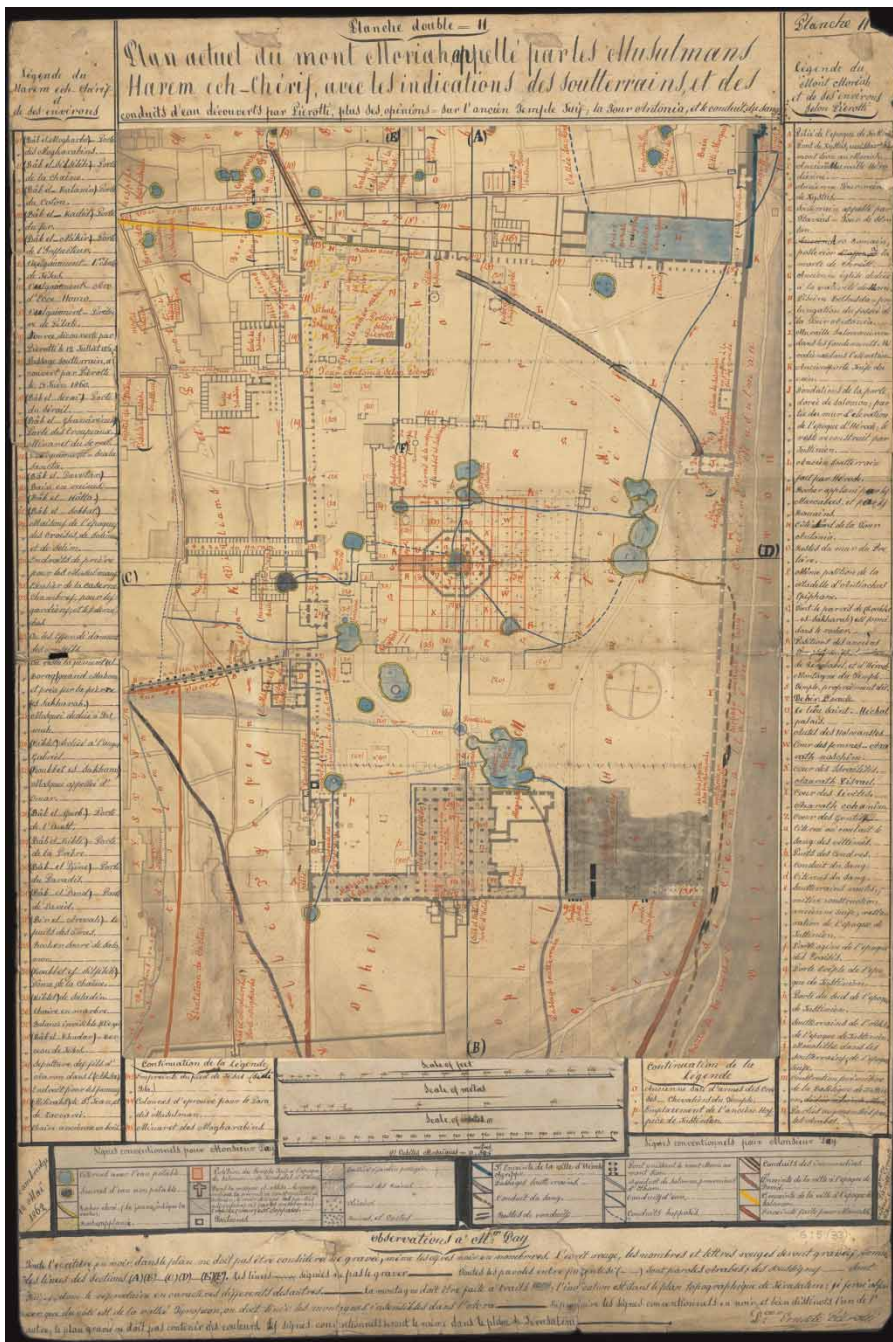


Fig. 6. Pierotti's manuscript map of the Temple Mount dated 1862: "Plan actuel du mont Moriah: appelé (sic!) par les Musulmans Harem ech-Chérif, avec les indications des souterrains, et des conduits d'eau découverts par Pierotti, plus des opinions sur l'ancien Temple Juif, la Tour Antonia, et le conduit du Sang". Scale c. 1:1450 (PEF Archives, PEF-MAP-6-5(33)).

been expelled from the real Sepulchre (i.e. the Dome of the Rock) by the Muslim victors, tried to find—and found—a replacement for this holy place. He developed this theory in his *Notes on the Site of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem* (1860). His book *The Temples of the Jews and the other Buildings in the Haram Area at Jerusalem* (1878) merely consists of the text of two earlier lectures and is a complement to Fergusson's theories, which were used as a strong argument against scholars professing more traditional opinions. His views were integrated into Dr Smith's *A Dictionary of the Bible*, in 1858.¹⁴ His opinions, however, never were universally accepted. His most famous opponent was none other than Charles Warren (e.g. 1880).

Fergusson's theories differed widely from those of Pierotti whom he attacked strongly with the help of the polymath, George Grove (1820–1900),¹⁵ who would later become the Honorary Secretary of the PEF.

In May 1851, Grove undertook successful consultations to be appointed as Secretary of the Crystal Palace Company. On 10 June 1854 Queen Victoria solemnly inaugurated the rebuilt Crystal Palace in Sydenham. Among the guests was the future Dean of Westminster,¹⁶ Arthur Penrhyn Stanley. Grove was very impressed by this brilliant man and they soon became friends. Grove's active collaboration from 1857 to 1863 on William Smith's *Bible Dictionary* is due to Stanley's influence. It was he who introduced Grove to Smith and other Anglican scholars of the time, as well as to John Murray the publisher of the *Dictionary* and of Fergusson.

Music was one of George Grove's passions. He is the author of the *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* which was published between 1878 and 1880.¹⁷ At the foundation of the Royal College of Music in 1882 Grove was knighted by the Queen and became its first Director.

Both gentlemen attacked Pierotti's book more on copyright issues linked to certain engravings appearing in it than on matters of substance. The conflict got worse by the day. According to J. J. Moscrop (1999, 63–64), Grove even pretended that Pierotti had been the reason that triggered his determination to found the PEF. Grove eventually managed to get hold of the conviction document of Pierotti in 1849. Once this conviction was made public Pierotti lost all credibility in the eyes of the British establishment.

Pierotti writes that he was: "sickened by these disgusting manoeuvres and tired of silently suffering, but confident in his honesty, (he) finally decided to walk towards his enemies to tell them, loud and clear, with incontrovertible proofs: you are liars" (in Pierotti's letter dated 31 December 1864, reproduced in the Appendix). He came back to Genoa, which he had left 15 years before, to surrender himself as a prisoner. He was then transferred to the citadel in Turin where he submitted the request that his case be reopened, which was promptly granted. On 31 December 1864, the Special Military Tribunal met in Turin, then the capital of the newly unified Italy.¹⁸ Consideration was given to a number of extenuating circumstances which can only be explained by the meek attitude and goodwill shown by Pierotti. He was finally sentenced to 1 year of military imprisonment, the reimbursement of all legal fees, and was excluded from the army.¹⁹

It is by no means clear if Pierotti really served his year in prison. The dedication of Pierotti's book *La Palestine actuelle* to Napoleon III is dated 10 June 1865. It was graciously accepted and the book includes an appropriate response addressed to Dr E. Pierotti, 11 rue des Deux Boules, in Paris. It therefore seems likely that Pierotti had once again unobtrusively left Italy in order to avoid imprisonment and live freely abroad. However, the dedication of Pierotti's *Rivista generale della Palestina antica e moderna*, addressed to "His Majesty Victor Emmanuel II, King of Italy", is dated 31 August 1866. It seems sensible to think that the King who apparently gave Pierotti the benefit of a private meeting in February 1866,²⁰ would have abstained from such friendly demonstrations if our man had been a fugitive or worse had just served time in jail. One can only wonder if Pierotti actually went to prison.²¹

A pamphlet entitled *Une caravane pour la Syrie, la Phénicie et la Palestine partant de Marseille en février 1870*, [...] dated 26 June 1869, shows the address of the author as Pension Bon-Port sous Montreux.

It seems that from that time on, Pierotti decided to live in Paris, where he was able to carefully observe the siege of the city by the Prussian forces. Earlier in 1870 he had published a booklet entitled *Paris, ses environs et ses fortifications* and also a beautifully drafted *Carte de Paris, ses environs et ses fortifications*.²² This map, was privately published, giving 35 rue de Beaune in Paris as the address of the author.

The French defeat inspired Pierotti who soon published a purely descriptive book without any personal comments: *Décrets et rapports officiels de la Commune de Paris et du gouvernement français du 18 mars au 31 mars 1871*. The address was again rue de Beaune, and Pierotti specified that he had been “an eyewitness” to these sad events. The copy kept in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* includes as an appendix the *Dictionnaire historique des environs de Paris du docteur Ermete Pierotti*, which gives information on the various villages surrounding the capital.²³

Two years later Pierotti published a curious book whose title itself evokes an unlikely combination of tourism and politics: *Versailles et les Trianons, par le Dr Ermete Pierotti, Renseignements sur le procès du maréchal Bazaine: Terrain des opérations de l'armée de Metz pour suivre le compte-rendu du procès du maréchal Bazaine* (1873).

These various publications written during Pierotti's residence in Paris demonstrate his deep knowledge of French language and culture. This, I think, indicates a real Garibaldi-like love of France. Though he cannot be compared to those great Italians of the Risorgimento period who fought for the independence of their country and the establishment of a Republic it seems possible that Pierotti felt resonances with fiery fighters such as Garibaldi and Mazzini who had also known the pangs of exile, though for very different reasons, and were actually born in the same region as Pierotti.

In 1875, Pierotti published a newspaper in Geneva entitled the *Courrier de la Palestine* which does not seem to have lasted more than five issues. It may just have been another of his unsuccessful attempts to earn some money whilst displaying his vast knowledge of the subject at the same time.

In September 1876 the *Times* of London announced that Signor Pierotti, the representative of the Vatican in Jerusalem (!), had received the agreement of the Pope to build a port in Jaffa, as well as a railroad from the port to Jerusalem. The article invited Roman Catholics all over the world to become shareholders and as a result of their investment to “draw their dividends in the form of feelings of satisfaction at having assisted by their subscriptions”. The names of the founding members would be made public. The scheme failed lamentably. The lure of a purely spiritual dividend had obviously not been sufficient to finance the much-needed railway (Gilbert, 1985, 165).

A short pamphlet (van Drival, 1876, cover page) confirms that life was not very kind to Pierotti at that time. This booklet informs us that Dr E Pierotti delivered two lectures in Arras, on 26 and 27 December, about the Holy Land. A detailed résumé of the meetings was drafted by Canon van Drival, “Chairman of the *Département du Pas-de-Calais* Committee for Catholic Charities in favour of Palestine”. During the first lecture, the speaker, who “likes to keep his audience on its toes”, displayed maps and plans during his speech, which he ended with “a number of historical and archaeological proofs of the most obvious authenticity of the Holy Sepulchre and the Calvary, thereby responding in an appropriate manner to some ignorant tourists, as well as to some Protestants”. No doubt our Canon was thus alluding, *inter alia*, to some gentlemen in London.

The rest of the report is somewhat surprising: “Mr Pierotti told us in moving details of his presentation to the Pope, who quickly understood the beauty of his achievements, and has blessed them through their formal approval”. Returning to his idea of a guided tour, which he already formulated in 1869, “Ermete painted a bleak picture of the present state of Palestine regarding its roads, the port of Jaffa, and the various places to be visited during a pilgrimage to the Holy Places”. He then explained how an extensive tour of Palestine could be undertaken, at

a surprisingly low cost if intelligently organised, “journeying for two full months whilst spending only 1200 Francs, or even possibly 800 only by cancelling some destinations, ... a way to realise, in unbelievably comfortable conditions, the tour dreamed of by every Christian, as well as by all men interested in the evolution of our world” (Author’s translation).²⁴

Seeing that his audience was very receptive, Pierotti decided to air another of his ideas financing the development of Palestine through donations made by Catholics who would have been repaid through blessings and indulgences: “After this introduction, Pierotti rapidly explained the main points of his plan: dredging the port of Jaffa, building a railway to Jerusalem, setting up agricultural, and industrial colonies. All these concepts were already existing and rapidly developing”. It is of interest to note that when formulating these ideas Pierotti was in some respects anticipating proposals made by the founder of modern Zionism, Theodore Herzl.²⁵

Canon van Drival, full of enthusiasm, finished his report with gusto: “Those who had the privilege to attend have been enraptured by his clear and positive elucidations as well as by his solid knowledge of these issues... There is no harm in taking the rare opportunity of the presence of an enlightened person to deepen one’s knowledge... It is clear that Dr Pierotti’s career is on the right track”.

With all due respect for Canon van Drival’s feelings, I have doubts about his conclusion. Was Pierotti, then about 55 years old, so destitute that he had to make a living giving lectures in front of provincial audiences more used to distribute alms than paying a substantive fee to a lecturer? Was he so desperate as to potentially offer his services as a guide to the Land of Israel to a bunch of tourists for a mere consideration?

We will possibly never know since the end of Pierotti’s adventurous life still is a mystery. A handwritten and drafted atlas which exists in a rather limited number of copies was published in 1888.²⁶ It was composed of six colour plates, and entitled *Atlas de la Palestine, par le Chevalier²⁷ Docteur Ermete Pierotti, architecte-ingénieur*. This is the last item that I have been able to find indicating that Pierotti was still alive at the time. I do not know when or where he died. I would like to conclude this article with a mild parody of the last paragraph of *Jerusalem Explored*: I have now arrived at the end of my researches on the life of Pierotti, and leave the subject, trusting that some other scholar may find more frequent opportunities and more favourable circumstances for examining this important issue, and thus carry further my discoveries, and correct any errors into which I may have fallen.

3. A SUMMING UP

Being the eldest son in a military family Pierotti probably obtained good results at school. There is no reason to think that the intellectual and educational attainments for an officer in the Royal Engineers of Piedmont were in any way inferior to those required by their British and French equivalents. For instance, a good knowledge of ancient authors, such as Josephus is indicative of his learning, even if, as he freely admitted himself, he could not read ancient Greek (Pierotti, 1869a, 129).

As he was billeted in Genoa, Pierotti, then aged 29, found himself confronted with a difficult personal issue. Whether it was gambling debts, a love affair, or something else we do not know. Anyhow, taking advantage of the poor book-keeping of his Company’s accounts which were his responsibility, he pocketed some of the funds and disappeared on 19 July 1849 long enough to draw the attention of his army superiors. Pierotti may have intended to return the money he had “borrowed”, and to explain his temporary disappearance. His arrest by the King’s Gendarmes in Sarzana on 10 August and his imprisonment in one of the rooms of the Palace of the Duke in Genoa induced him to change his tack. Terrified by the possible consequences of what he had done Pierotti decided to escape on 10 September 1849. He then left the country

only to return in October 1864. On 15 October of that year he voluntarily surrendered himself as a prisoner to the Military Tribunal of Genoa which convicted and sentenced him to practically the same punishment as the one he had received *in absentia* in 1849.

He had thus spent about 15 years in the Levant and the Middle East. Being an engineer he succeeded in making a living by working in that profession. This period of his life provided him with a much-needed catharsis. Day after day the outcast began—as many others before and after him—to fall in love with Jerusalem where he had decided to go because he had found a job there. He honed his knowledge of the country. Once he had obtained stable employment with the Ottoman administration of the city Pierotti started to realise that, provided he was careful and unobtrusive, he had access to research possibilities that no other European had ever had before him.

People would call him, for instance, when important tourists requested an erudite tour guide. Pierotti felt flattered. It is possible that the feeling that he had repaid his debt through his exile, mixed with some recognition of his capabilities, reawakened an insatiable urge to be considered as a scholar by those important people who had used his services. If they did not acknowledge him as the author of many discoveries, they found themselves harshly treated by Pierotti in his books, as was the case with Renan and Melchior de Vogüé. If they did, they were highly considered, as with de Saulcy.

Approaches apparently begun by the French to have Pierotti's seminal book published in France never materialised. The preparation of the book took place in Cambridge, thanks to the active and friendly collaboration of George Williams and Thomas G. Bonney. It included a dedication, in English, to Louis Napoleon III. Even if the average Frenchman cannot help being moved by such a display of patriotism, one cannot help thinking that it might have been more judiciously used elsewhere, for instance in a translation into French of *Jerusalem Explored*.

My own feeling, however, is that Pierotti was a broken man in the aftermath of the quarrel that opposed him to some members of the British establishment. At times in his beloved France and at times in French-speaking Switzerland, Pierotti, still desperate to be recognized as a scholar, probably lived, if not completely destitute and penniless, at least in humble conditions. He published a lot and often lectured on what was at the same time his lifetime passion and his modest business. Some of his bigger ideas such as the development of the Holy Land through Christian donations never materialised, at least in his lifetime, or in the form he had foreseen.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For the two Diness photographs in figures, thanks are due to Father Carney Gavin, the founder and president of the Archives for Historic Documentation (where the photographs are kept), Piney Kesting, and Elizabeth Carella. For figures, I am indebted to Yad Ben Zvi in Jerusalem and for the assistance of Nirit Shalev-Khalifa. Finally, I wish to thank Felicity Cobbing, the Executive and Curator of the PEF for her invaluable and friendly assistance.

APPENDIX

**IN NOME DI S. M. VITTORIO EMMANUELE II**

PER GRAZIA DI DIO E VOLONTA' DELLA NAZIONE

RE D'ITALIA

IL TRIBUNALE MILITARE SPECIALE

composto a senso di legge in Torino nette persone dei signori
 CERROTTI Cav. FILIPPO Maggior Generale, Presidente.
 CUGIA DI SANT'ORSOLA Cav. CARLO Tenente-Colonnello, Giudice supplente.
 RIGHINI DI SAN GIORGIO Cav. CARLO Tenente-Colonnello, Giudice.
 CURLI Cav. EUGENIO Maggiore, Giudice.
 BESSOLO Cav. ALESSANDRO, idem.
 MANNO Cm ANTONIO idem.

e coll'assistenza del Segretario infrascritto ha pronunziato la seguente

SENTENZA

NELLA CAUSA CONTRO

PIEROTTI ERMETE di Andrea, d'anni quarantadue, da Pieve Fosciana (Modena), Capitano nelle quarta Compagnia del Corpo reale del Genio Militare, detenuto dal 15 ottobre 1864, ed accusato :

Di diserzione, con diversione di fondi spettanti alla Compagnia, per essersi il 20 Luglio 1849 assentato senza licenza da Genova, essendo statu arrestato dai Reali Carabinieri in Sarzana il dieci successivo agosto, e tradotto in quelle città, ove d'ordine superiore venne rinchiuso in una Camera di quel palazzo ducale, dalla quale sarebbesi evaso nette flotte dal 10 all'11 settembre di quell'anno; e per aver divertito la somma di L. *tremila cinquecento novantasei* circa, somministratagli dall'Amministrazione del Corpo, per far fronte alle spese della Compagnia.

Udita la lettura della Sentenza d'accusa, intesi gli esami ed i dibattimenti che ebbero luogo pubblicamente all'udienza;

Sentiti il Ministero pubblico, la difesa e l'accusato, il quale unitamente alla difesa ebbe ultimo la parola;

Ritenuto come fatto emerso al pubblico dibattimento per lettura di documenti, per deposizioni testimoniali e per deduzioni stesse del prevenuto Capitano Pierotti che questi trovandosi stanziato in Genova, quale Comandante la quarta Compagnie del Corpo del Genio, si assentava arbitrariamente da quelle città per suoi particolari interessi nel giorno 19 Luglio 1849, portandosi in Sarzana, ove veniva poi arrestato quale disertore nel giorno 10 del successivo agosto e depositato in arresto al Palazzo Ducale in Genova in attesa di giudizio; dal quale sarebbesi evaso sul 10 ed 11 settembre di quell'anno, portandosi in esteri paesi, nè facendo ritorno nei Regii Stati che nell'ottobre ultimo scorso, costituendosi il quindici stesso mese al Tribunale Militare di Genova, onde si addivenisse in di lui confronto a giudizio contraddittoriale per addebiti statigli apposti, e pei quali era stata emessa a di lui carico net milleottocento quarantanove Sentenza di condanna in contumacia.

Che nel tempo in cui il Pierotti si allontanava da Genova e si portava a Sarzana nel mille ottocento quarantanove abbiasi dovuto rilevare come nella cassa dei fondi della Compagnia dal medesimo comandata siasi manifestata deficienza di numerario, per cui il signor Mont-Real che ebbegli a succedere nel comando della Compagnia, in tale sua assenza dovette farne parola al signor Rocci in allora Comandante il battaglione, che gli avrebbe fatto somministrare competente somma, per sopperire alle spese di prestito ai soldati devoluto.

Che infrattanto il prefato signor Comandante di Batteglione vedendo che il Pierotti non si restituiva alla Compagnia, che aveva arbitrariamente lasciata per alcuni proprii interessi, ravvisando forse colpabilità in esso, in ordine alla deficienza di numerario nella cassa, e proponimento di rendersi disertore mentre già si trovata assente, stimò denunciare i fatti al signor Comandante la Divisione, d'ordine del quale il Pierotti venne assoggettato a procedura per diserzione, dopo aver divertito i fondi della Compagnia.

Attesochè però a questo pubblico dibattimento sia rimasto assodato nome l'odierno giudicabile ponesse per altre attribuzioni poca cura nella gestione della contabilità, cui lasciava ad esclusiva cura del furiere della Compagnia, al quale deferiva piena fede e riponeva intiera fiducia.

Che sia emerso stabilito come esso Pierotti ricevendo le somme occorrenti pel mantenimento della sua Compagnia ed accessori, li passava al suo furiere perche ne operasse i relativi pagamenti e curasse la compilazione degli analoghi resoconti, facendo del medesimo quale un capo d'ufficio, cui esso in omaggio ai veglianti regolamenti rilevava nella gestione contabile coll'apposizione pressochè materiale della sua firma ai registri e carte contabili che gli venivano esibite.

Che per tal modo la parte amministrativa nella sua Compagnia si trovava avere certa rilassatezza, in vista della trascuranza al riguardo e tale da offrire dubbii circa alla sua regolarità, e da indurre nei primi di Luglio 1849 il Maggiore Comandante il Battaglione a far praticar una verifica, la quale addimostre esservi alquanto a desiderare in fatto di contabilità alla sua compagnia, quantunque non siasi per allora riconosciuto grave dissesto.

Considerando che se al pubblico dibattimento ebbe a risultare di negligenza dell'odierno giudicabile net sorvegliare la contabilità della sua Compagnia, e la probabilità di malversazioni ad altrui opera commesse in suo pregiudizio quale amministrativamente responsabile, non emersero però circostanze di fatto limpide e positive da ingenerare nell'animo dei Giudici la morale e legale convinzione che il Pierotti convertisse in proprio uso somme dell'amministrazione della Compagnia da poterlo contabilizzare di reato.

Che tale non si possa caratterizzare quella incuria delle cose di amministrazione che esso addimostro trovandosi alla Compagnia, poichè se la medesima lo poteva esporre al risarcimento di deficienze che si fossero ad altrui opera e malizia commesse, tale risarcimento unicamente per esso devoluto in via economica per la sua responsabilità amministrativa inerente al suo grado, non lo potevano mai trarre alle conseguenze di un giudizio penale contabilizzando lo di fatto delittuoso, mentre non ne potesse mai rivestire i caratteri e gli estremi.

Che non possano essere argomenti validi ad indurne la colpevolezza dell'inquisito per le supposte sottrazioni o diversioni di somme a pregiudizio della Compagnia le circostanze di essersi esso assentato da Genova, di avere, scritto al Comandante del suo Battaglione lettera con la quale si attestava in assoluto orgasma per non aver potuto avere dai suoi parenti somme per far fronte a' propri impegni d'onore, mentre e dell'una e dell'altra abbia somministrato plausibili motivi di escusazione al pubblico dibattimento, dappoichè declinasse che gli accennati impegni si fossero debiti particolari cui molto aveva a cuore di poter soddisfare verso colleghi e persone estranee alla milizia.

Che neppur la circostanza di essersi il Pierotti evaso dalla camera di sicurezza nel palazzo ducale in Genova potrebbe ritenersi quale amenicolo valido a comprovare per qualche modo che il medesimo si volésse sottrarre all'inquisizione di un fatto criminoso per diversione di fondi, mentre sia emerso che a tale passo il Pierotti veniva tratto dalla ripugnanza di essere assoggettato a giudizio per un fatto di diserzione chu lui non intendeva di aver commesso portandosi da Genova a Sarzana, mentre tale non sia mai stata la sua intenzione.

Che per contro le due lettere esistenti in atti del sergente furiere della Compagnia cui comandava il Pierotti, di Pietro Bernardo Mellini, colle quali non disconoscendo come sulla contabilità da lui tenuta a quella Compagnia potesse apparire un enorme deficit, si dichiarasse pronto a soddisfarne le deficienze che fossero per risultare, dicendosene esplicitamente responsabile, portino a conghietturare come con tutta probabilità il medesimo oltre all'aver procurato il deficit per mala gestione della contabilità, asportasse poi nel disertare somme alla Compagnia appartenenti per le quali si veniva ad accagionare il prevenuto odierno.

Che in base a tali emergenze non apparendo in alcun modo con qualche solidità provato che il Pierotti, anzichè il Mellini, come pare più probabile divertisse i fondi di cui si tratta, non lo si possa per la deficienza nelle prove di furto contabilizzare del reato di aver consumato od asportato, disertando, fondi di Compagnia, a malgrado però non si possa disconoscere nel medesimo quella responsabilità amministrativa che lo deve in via civile tener contabile delle deficienze operatesi verso la Compagnia, per la sua riprovevole negligenza e trascuranza nel sorvegliare i suoi dipendenti a tali uffizii di contabilità da esso stesso preposti in sua vece, e garantiti per le continue sue apposizioni delle occorrenti firme.

Considerando poi in ordine al fatto di diserzione obbiettati al Pierotti, che il medesimo abbia a considerarsi nella stessa incorsa, senza che possa interpersi, come si pretese, la prematura denuncia che originava una procedura penale al riguardo.

Di fatti all'articolo *centonovantanove* del cessato Codice penale militare mille ottocento quaranta, sotto al cui impero si commetteva il fatto incriminato, è stabilito *doversi riguardare qual disertore l'uffiziale che si restasse assente dal suo Corpo oltre quindici giorni*; e nel' a fattispecie il Pierotti Ermete partitosi il diciannove luglio dalla Compagnia, si rimaneva assente sino al giorno dieci successivo agosto in cui veniva arrestato, epperchio oltre a venti giorni, e ciò a tacere che all'alinea dello stesso articolo centonovantanove era facoltativo al comandante del Corpo, cui l'uffiziale apparteneva di denunciare immediatamente il fatto dell'abbandono del Corpo per quell'uffiziale che si ritrovasse in circostanze tali da addimostare intenzione di abbandonare definitivamente il Corpo medesimo, della quale opportunità essendo lasciato solo arbitro il Comandante, non si potrebbe nella specie obbiettare di prematura partecipazione quella elle il signor Comandante il Battaglione, cui apparteneva il Pierotti, faceva nel trentuno luglio mille ottocento quarantanove, prima della scadenza dei quindici giorni dell'assenza, avendo forse nella sua condizione avuti dati o circostanze per supporre che il Pierotti volesse effettivamente rendersi disertore e ne provocava perciò il di lui arresto.

Che pertanto il fatto obbiettato all'odierno giudicabile si limiterebbe ad una semplice diserzione con passaggio all'estero, prevista e repressa a senso delle veglianti leggi penali militari.

Che essendo stata commessa sotto l'impero del cessato Codice penale militare, mille ottocento quaranta, giovi in base all'articolo *cinquecentocinquantatre* del Codice vigente far applicazione della pena più mite comminata dall'una delle due legislazioni.

Che dal confronto degl'articoli *centonovantanove* cessato Codice mille ottocento quaranta, *centotrentasei*, *centoquarantadue*, Codice attuale, chiaro emerga come minori siano le pene comminate dal vigente Codice per la specie di reato, e per cui questi si presentino applicabili.

Attesochè però pel fatto della volontaria costituzione del prevenuto medesimo si presenti pure applicabile nella determinazione della pena il benefico disposto dell'articolo *cinquant'otto* stesso Codice.

PER TALI MOTIVI dichiara il prevenuto Ermete Pierotti convinto del reato di *diserzione semplice all'estero col concorso di circostanze attenuanti*, e visti gl'articoli *centotrentasei*, *centoquarantadue*, *cinquant'otto* e *ventisette* del Codice penale militare vigente così concepiti.

« *Art. cento trentasei. — In tempo di pace l'uffiziale che verra riconosciuto assente senza licenza oltre a cinque giorni dal corpo, distaccoamento, istituto, stabilimento od ufficio militare al quale appartiene o presso di cui è comandato potrà essere denunciato disertore, e lo sarà di pien diritto appena saranno compiuti giorni quindici dalla di lui assenza.*

La sua diserzione sarà punita con la dimissione e con un anno di reclusione militare.

Art. centoquarantadue. — Allorchè un militare sarà reo di diserzione all'estero in paese amico o neutrale, sia essa semplice od accompagnata da una o più delle circostanze aggravanti espresse sui precedenti articoli, sarà punito coll'aumentare di un grado la pena che secondo diversità del caso sarebbe stata pronunziata in conformità degli articoli medesimi, con che non si ecceda mai il massimo della pena prescritta.

Art. cinquantotto. — Semprechè concorrano in un reato circostanze attenuanti ed esse non siano già state espressamente o escluse o tenute a calcolo nel presente Codice penale militare per determinare la pena, potrà stessa diminuir di un grado.

Art. ventisette. — Le condanne a qualunque pena importeranno sempre l'obbligo della rifusione delle spese e del risarcimento dei danni, non che la confisca tanto del corpo del reato, quando delle cose che hanno servito o furono destinate a commetterlo, quando la proprietà ne appartiene al condannato. Il risarcimento dei danni sarà accertato e liquidato dinanzi ai Tribunali ordinarii.

Condanna il sunnominato Capitano PIEROTTI ERMETE alla pena di un anno di Reclusione militare ed alle spese del procedimento, ed alla dimissione.

Torino, trentuno dicembre mille ottocento sessantaquattro.

Sottoscritti all'originale Sentenza

PRESIDENTE

Il Maggior Generale FILIPPO CEROTTI

I Giudici
CUGIA
RIGHINI
CURLI
RESSOLO
MANNO

ALMASIO, *Segretario.*

Per copia conforme
Almasio, Segr.

.....

A' miei Concittadini

Nel mese di novembre dell'anno 1849, il Consiglio di Guerra permanente di Genova, mi condannava in contumacia alla reclusione perpetua, alla destituzione dal grado di Capitano, ed alla restituzione della somma di L.3,596, che mi si accusava d'aver sottratto dalla cassa della 4a Compagnia Zappatori, di cui ero comandante.

Siffatta Sentenza gittava sopra di me l'onta della diserzione e del furto.

Che fare? Io ero moralmente rovinato! Per ciò, anzi sopportare una prigionia che m'avrebbe, senza scolparmi, ucciso, preso da disperazione, abbandonai per sempre la patria, i parenti, gli amici, ogni cosa caramente diletta, per vivere della vita angosciosa, ma libera, ma solitaria dell'esilio.

Infatti mi recai in Oriente, ove passai quindici anni, nel corso dei quali, col frutto delle mie fatiche, riuscii a procacciarmi una posizione scientifica, che lusingava il mio amor proprio. E quelle che piu importa l'animo mio era tranquille, perché sicura, perché serena era la mia coscienza.

Ma la pace pur troppo non m'era dovuta, e non poteva a lungo durare, avvegnachè l'inesorabile destino avesse, ne' suoi reconditi e misteriosi disegni, decretato ch'io bevessi fin la feccia del calice, della sventura.

Ed eccoti che nel 1853 mi capita tra' piedi certo Giovanni Miani di Venezia, lo stesso che in un momento di buon umore sognò d'aver scoperto le sorgenti del Nilo, il quale sotto lo specioso pretesto che poche centinaia di franchi gli avrebbero procurato un avvenire felice, tanto insiste che mi persuade a sborsarglieli. Poi venuto egli a Genova, e non potendo io dall'Egitto continuare a mantenerlo, il brav'uomo s'infuria, e per vendicarsi della cortesia ch'io gli avevo usato, si procura una copia della mia sentenza, che dà alle stampe, e sparge, per centinaia di esemplari, nell'Egitto: e così paga il benefico con una mala azione.

Pochi anni dopo, nel 1859, mi si presenta un italiano (di cui non giova ricordare il nome) e mi prega volessi io, nella mia qualità di Ispettore delle fabbriche russe, concedergli talune predilezioni che in coscienza mi credetti in dovere di rifiutargli. Dal quale rifiuto egli pure inasprito induce il Console generale russo di Gerusalemme a scrivere a Torino, affinché si estraiga altra copia della mia sentenza, la quale è come la precedente pubblicata e diffusa.

Non basta: nel 1864 mi trovavo a Londra per dare alla luce la mia opera *Jerusalem Explored*. Mister James Fergusson aveva scritto anch'egli sullo stesso argomento un grosso volume, e siccome le osservazioni da me prodotte erano in contrasto con quanto egli asseriva, per la semplice ragione ch'egli non aveva mai visitato quella località, mi si slancia contro furibondo, e giovato del potente appoggio di un'altro inglese, Mister Grove, Segretario del palazzo di Cristalle, studiano insieme riuniti ogni via per attentare al mente della mia opera, e contrastarmi la proprietà d'alcuni disegni nella medesima inseriti. Io naturalmente reagisco, dichiaro stolta quella pretensione, e sleali colore che la sostengono. Ed eglino cosa fanno allora? Si muniscono della testimonianza del preteso mio reato, e tentano con essa di perdermi nella pubblica opinione.

Esacerbato per sì abietto procedere, stanco di dover continuamente soffrire e continuamente tacere, forte del sentirmi puro, mi risolve finalmente di muovere io stesso incontro a' miei nemici, per dir loro sul viso, alla piena luce del sole, con prove irrecusabili alla mano *voi avete mentito*.

E però di mia spontanea volontà, dopo quindici anni d'assenza, ritornai in Italia, mi costituii prigioniero in Genova, e dalla cittadella di Torino, ove fui traslocato, chiesi che il mio processo fosse, me presente, rifatto.

Ora per chiunque si voglia dare solamente la pena di gettare lo sguardo sulla Sentenza, che qui io produco, sarà agevole di ridurre al suo giusto valore i miei giovanili trascorsi, di rettamente apprezzare il perfide lavoro de' miei oppositori, e cader convinto che non v'ha uomo al mondo, per quanto buono, laborioso ed onesto, il quale, nel dure pellegrinaggio della vita, riesca sfuggire al morso avvelenato della malignità.

E da voi, ottimi amici miei, da voi miei cari concittadini, che tanta parte avete del cuor mio, non m'aspetto né scuse, né ritrattazioni; che di queste non avete mai d'uopo. M'attende bensì una stretta di mano, una parola di conforto, un saluto, il quale mi faccia ognor più persuaso, che comunque lontano e vilipeso, io non venni mai meno, nè al vostro affetto, nè alla vostra stima.

Torino li 31 dicembre 1864.

Tutto vostro
ERMETE PIEROTTI.

NOTES

¹ Here the term 'Germany' is employed for simplification, although, of course, that country was only unified in 1871.

² Though various documents show certain divergences on Pierotti's year of birth, his baptismal record is clear: *Pieve Fosciana, 10 July 1820*.

Ermete Felice Desiderato Massimiliano, son of Mr Andrea, son of Captain Antonio, son of Lieutenant Captain Baldassarre Pierotti and of Mrs Giuseppa Carlotta daughter of Mr Rocco, son of Michele, Giannini de Lucca, his lawful spouse, born a little after 06 am this morning was baptized according the Roman Church by me, Vicar.... In this church.... at 07 pm. His Godfather is Captain Antonio Pierotti, the Godmother being Mrs Diamante, wife of Mr Domenico Giannotti di Barga.

Signed: Pier Pasquale Berzolini... 16 July 1820.

Information regarding Pierotti's birth and his close relatives has kindly been provided to me by Mgr. Lorenzo Angelini, vicar of Pieve Fosciana, who has kindly undertaken all appropriate research in this respect. Mrs Catherine Orelli has also been more than instrumental on the matter. I am very grateful to both.

³ The kingdom of Italy was founded on 7 March 1861, in Turin, where Victor Emmanuel II of Piedmont was crowned on 27 April, after a vote of Parliament. However, at that time, Rome and Venice were not yet part of the kingdom. Italian unity was not completed before 1870.

⁴ The Pierotti family tree is as follows:

Lieutenant Captain Baldassarre son of d'Antonio, son of Sebastiano I

Captain Antonio (baptised under full name, Francesco Antonio Natale Vincenzo (1762–1835))

I

Andrea (called the Captain) (1799–1850) married Giuseppa C. Giannini (1797–1842) born in Lucca

I

Ermete Felice Desiderato Massimiliano 1820 — Teresa Ida 1824 — Zoe M. Tecla 1827 — Selene Aurelia 1828 — M. Luigia Letizia 1830 — Antonio Bernardo 1831 — M. Teresa 1833 — Anna 1834 — M. Margherita Beatrice 1839.

Andrea's other brothers were: Gio Jacopo (1801–1885) — Lorenzo 1803 — Luigi 1806 — Baldassarre 1813.

⁵ Pierotti tells us that they were the *Zappatori*, the sappers. We do not know when he became a Captain.

⁶ The book had first been published in English in London in 1864. The above-mentioned qualifications were identical.

⁷ One can also mention *Les Réchabites retrouvés*, Lausanne 1868, and *Les partis rouge et blanc depuis Abraham jusqu'à nos jours*, Lausanne 1869.

⁸ As far as I know, this document was never translated in any language. The Italian original is reproduced in Appendix I.

⁹ See the documents in Appendix I.

¹⁰ Details of his escape are unfortunately missing.

¹¹ Williams (1864), Appendix XXII. Pierotti's original syntax and spelling have been preserved in this translation.

¹² John Mendel Diness was a watchmaker from Odessa, who converted to Christianity in Jerusalem, where he learnt photography from missionary and photographer James Graham in the 1850s. Pierotti used photographs taken for him by Diness for lithographic illustrations in his publications.

¹³ Ali Bey was a Spaniard named Domingo Badia y Lebllich. He may have converted to Islam, though there is no proof of it. He travelled extensively in Arab countries. Fergusson (1865, 62) mentions that he had visited Jerusalem himself, but he does not give any specific date.

¹⁴ Smith suggested that Fergusson draft the article *Jerusalem*. George Grove was one of the main authors of the *Dictionary*.

¹⁵ Grove had been apprenticed to a London-based Scottish engineer in 1836. He then went to Belgium, to work on the railways. In 1840, he moved to Glasgow, gaining experience in the iron industry. Grove left for Jamaica towards the end of 1841, to supervise the erection of a lighthouse. Back in Britain in June 1843, he soon departed for Bermuda, to work on another lighthouse. He then proceeded to Bangor, as a member of the team which erected the Britannia Bridge, under the supervision of the famous Robert Stephenson. There are, as far as I know, two biographies of Grove (Graves, 1903; Young, 1980). Both books mainly centre on Grove's musical career, and only briefly deal with the Pierotti affair.

¹⁶ He was Canon of Canterbury at that time.

¹⁷ This work is the standard music dictionary in the English language and is regularly updated and republished.

¹⁸ Florence became the capital of Italy in 1865.

¹⁹ This last point is purely symbolic, since Pierotti had obviously left the army long before this trial.

²⁰ We can find in this book a copy of a letter from the King's Private Office dated 23 February 1866, regarding this meeting (first page, unnumbered).

²¹ It is possible that the file on Pierotti was lost, which would account for the King's attitude.

²² "By Dr Ermete Pierotti, formerly a Major in the Italian Corps of Engineers" (in translation). The map was engraved by Erhard. According to Rev. Bost (1875, 14), he married the daughter of General Belliard at about that time.

²³ The copy can be consulted online on the library's Gallica website (<http://gallica.bnf.fr/>).

²⁴ Revd. J.-Aug. Bost (1875, 14), participated in a visit to Palestine organised by Pierotti from 1 March to 19 April 1870 (as also attested by a letter of the French Consul in Jerusalem, dated 1 May 1870, in the archives of the Quai D'Orsay). This detail was kindly supplied by Mrs Paola Lazard.

²⁵ *Der Judenstaat (The Jewish State)* was only written in 1895 and published in 1896.

²⁶ Pierotti was 68 at that time.

²⁷ A brand new title for our Captain!

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