

Authentication and Competition at Sacred Sites: Three Baptism Sites along the Jordan River

Lior CHEN

Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Abstract

This paper is based on fieldwork findings in three Christian baptism sites along the Jordan River. It includes a discussion on the authentication of (sacred) places and examines how various agents compete for the recognition of sacred places as "authentic." The three sites draw their significance from the same canonical text and appeal to similar audiences. In recent decades, with over a million annual visitors, each site has been undergoing a continuous process of re-formation. This motivates the non-Christian site managers to compete for the recognition of their site as "authentic."

Researchers have recently proposed to shift the discussion from "authenticity" to "authentication," thus focusing on the social process in which objects or places are recognized and declared as "authentic" (Cohen and Cohen, 2012.) This shift addresses the academic call to abandon the colloquial term "authenticity" for the sake of standardization. Therefore, my examination of the agents' actions employs the Cohens' model of authentication, which distinguishes between "cold" authentication, stemming from scientific evidence and authority-based knowledge, and "hot" authentication, stemming from the ritualistic activity on the site.

The baptism site Bethany Beyond the Jordan underwent a "cold" authentication process, which, among others, stemmed from archaeological findings and religious authority. However, the site Yardenit underwent a "hot" authentication process, stemming from ritualistic activity on the site, with no tradition whatsoever. However, unlike the first two sites, I will argue that the authentication of the site Qasr El Yahud requires an extension of the Cohens' typology. Being in a disputed area, its agents are nearly inactive. Yet, interestingly, this very limited process of authentication has paradoxically strengthened the authenticity of the site.

Keywords: Authentication, Sacred place, Competition, Holy Land, baptism sites, place authentication, authenticity, Jordan River, pilgrimage, sacred places

Introduction

The delineation of the borders in the Middle East in the 20th century has placed the sacred Christian sites in the Holy Land under three non-Christian nation-states. This did not prevent new sacred places from developing, but, now, new agents have joined the effort to create sacred places: private entrepreneurs and gov-

ernment authorities (Feldman, 2016). My paper will focus on the aforementioned and Jordanian agents.

My paper will present the reemergence of three baptism sites along the Jordan River in recent decades: Bethany beyond the Jordan and Qasr al-Yahud (located in the southern part of the river) and Yardenit (located further north). I will analyze these sites to answer the following questions: Who are the new agents responsible for the reemergence of the sites? How do these agents act to attribute authenticity to the site related to them? Which types of authenticity are associated with each site as reflected by the agents' actions?

To answer these questions, I rely on the findings of my ethnographic fieldwork on the sites, which included participant observations, interviews with site agents, and an analysis of archival materials and online publications posted by the site's impresarios. My analyses will link two kinds of literature: literature that focuses on sacred sites and literature on tourism that relates to authenticity and authentication.

There are two classic paradigms to the study of sacred places (Eade & Sallnow, 1991; Chidester & Linenthal, 1995). The first, which is associated with the study of religions, produced historical and theological studies. Researchers who subscribe to this approach share the view that the sacredness of the place is inherent and a-historic (Eliade, 1959). The second approach is associated with social sciences. This approach, linked to Durkheim (1976) and Turner (1973; Turner & Turner, 1978), views sacredness as a human, social, and historical arena, and the sacred place as a site that reinforces cohesion and social solidarity (Turner & Turner, 1978). In recent decades, researchers have begun to challenge these classic paradigms. According to the new voices, a sacred site is a dynamic place that expresses and reflects socio-political tensions and cultural processes, and may reinforce consensus but also could lead to conflicts and competition (Eade & Sallnow, 1991; Chidester & Linenthal, 1995; Coleman, 2002; 2004).

I subscribe to the new approach. However, the case of the baptism sites has two unique features. First, the most substantial agents in the reemergence process of the sites are not members of the pilgrims' religion. Second, the three sites draw their significance from the same event, Jesus' baptism, and address a similar target audience. Therefore, the sites' agents must make an effort to persuade the public that their site is the "right" and "authentic" place for baptism when compared with the other two adjacent sites that run simultaneously. This results in a multi-faceted competition.

To explain this competition, I am aided by literature about authenticity and authentication. The use of the word "authenticity" is significant, because it is used by various actors in the field who perceive authenticity as a symbolic resource that grants them advantages (Noy, 2009) and was referenced vaguely by the researchers who wrote about the sites (Havrelock, 2011; Feldman & Ron, 2011; De Chatel,

2014). In addition, many studies have related to authenticity as a theoretical concept, while field players never used the term (Knudsen & Waade, 2010; Wall & Xie, 2005; Mkono, 2012). However, in my case, the actors often used the word “authenticity.” Certainly, there is a difference between using the term in daily speech and using it theoretically. My case, however, makes it possible to reduce the gap between the field and the researcher’s theoretical world.

In general, there are three approaches to the study of the “authenticity of a place.” The first two, the “objective” and “constructed” approaches, focus on an object, whereas the third, the “existential” approach, focuses on the subject (Wang, 1999; Jones, 2010). This threefold typology illustrates the lack of standardization in the use of the term “authentic” (Reisinger & Steiner, 2006; Jones, 2010). However, the common usage of this term rules out the possibility to reject it completely (Belhassen & Caton, 2006), and this resulted in a few coping strategies.

The first coping strategy is to dismantle the term into different meanings (Bruner, 1994; Belhassen, Caton, & Stewart, 2008). Andriotis (2011) suggested to comprehend authenticity through five genres, of which the following three are relevant to my discussion: (1) “natural authenticity,” associated with an environment unaffected by man; (2) “original authenticity,” which relates to the originality of a place, and (3) “referential authenticity,” particularly relating to the way the place is connected to the past. The second coping strategy is to focus on individuals who were authorized to verify authenticity, rather than focusing on authenticity itself (Bruner, 1994; Wall & Xie, 2005; Koontz, 2010). The third strategy is to shift the discussion from “authentic” as an adjective to “authentication” as a gerund, meaning to focus on the “social process by which something—a role, product, site, object or event—is defined and confirmed as ‘original,’ ‘genuine,’ ‘real,’ or ‘trustworthy’” (Cohen & Cohen, 2012).

Cohen and Cohen (2012) suggested that authentication appears in two configurations – ‘cool’ and ‘hot.’ Typically, cool authentication is a single, explicit, formal, or even official act, by which the authenticity of an object, such as site, is declared to be original, genuine, or real. Acts of cool authentication are based on scientific knowledge or on divine inspiration. In contrast, hot authentication is a reiterative, informal, and performative process that creates, preserves, and reinforces the authenticity of a site. It is typically an anonymous course of action, which lacks well-known authenticating agents. These two configurations interact and intertwine and sometimes it is difficult to determine where the cool ends and the hot begins, and vice versa. And yet, they are distinct, and they create sites of diverse natures (Cohen & Cohen, 2012).

Later in the article, I will discuss the re-formation of the sites by using these configurations of authentication. Thus, I will explain what the agents do to attribute authenticity to ‘their’ site in a process that sometimes produces authenticity as an aspiration, rather than a final product.

A Short History of the Three Baptism Sites

The event of the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist is described in the canonical Christian text, the Gospels. Although the event is mentioned in all the Gospels, the exact location of the baptism remains vague. However, the prevailing belief is that the baptism of Jesus occurred somewhere along the southern part of the Jordan River. Pilgrims began appearing and worshiping in a particular spot there since the 4th century and continue to do so until this day. In this paper, I will refer to this spot as “the traditional baptism site.”

In modern times, one of the results of the delineation of the regional borders in the Middle East is that the Jordan River has become a natural border between three non-Christian nation states: Jordan, Israel, and Palestine. This has affected the traditional baptism site.

The geopolitical events in the Middle East throughout the twentieth century affected this spot. In the 1930s, several churches were established in the region and the site teemed with life. But, after the 1967 War, the site was closed for an extended period. The peace treaty between Jordan and Israel, signed in 1994, led to a gradual re-opening process of this site. Two sites, then, claimed to be the place where Jesus was baptized: the Jordanians opened Bethany Beyond the Jordan on the East Bank of the river and Israel opened Qasr al-Yahud on the West Bank in an area under its control. During the period when the southern site was closed, Israel initiated an alternative baptism site, Yardenit, at the river's outlet from the Sea of Galilee.



Figure 1: The Jordan Valley and the Baptism Sites map

Before I continue, let me note that various Christian groups diverge in the significance that they attribute to the location of baptism sites. They also diverge in the way they worship there. This corresponds with the diverse concepts of pilgrimage to the Holy Land in general (Bowman, 1991; Feldman, 2016). However, visitors of all denominations visit all the baptism sites and it is noteworthy to my discussion that the site agents do not make a distinction between the various denominations and consider members of every Christian faction to be their target audience.

Bethany beyond the Jordan: Cool Authentication

In its founding years, the Kingdom of Jordan strived to strengthen the Jordanian entity by ratifying its identity as the ‘custodian’ of the sacred places situated in its territory (Katz, 2005). This included the promotion of visits of religious leaders in the Kingdom and the visit of Pope Paul XVI in 1964 was the highlight of this activity. Prior to this visit, the Kingdom of Jordan marketed several sites as national treasures. One of these sites, which was visited by the Pope, was the traditional baptism site, which was located on the West Bank of the Jordan River (Katz, 2005).

However, following the 1967 war, the Kingdom lost its hold on the West Bank and consequently ceased to promote itself as the Holy Land until the 1990's. Then, as in the past, one grounds for this claim was the Baptism site (Katz, 2005). Yet, the site had been physically shifted from the West Bank to the East Bank of the river. The shifting forced the site's agents to act in order to grant legitimacy to the new-old place. Their key action was to declare that their site is the authentic place of Jesus' baptism. According to Cohen and Cohen's typology (2012), the authentication configuration of this site is cool. Jordanian agents are the main factors involved in this process. However, they rely on the authority of scientists, religious leaders, and of UNESCO Heritage Sites Committee.

The Jordanian claim on the authenticity of Bethany beyond the Jordan is very prominent on its website. The main headline on the homepage declares that the place is “The Authentic Baptism Site” along with a background photo of the visit of Pope Benedict XVI. According to the Jordanians, the photo, like those of other religious leaders, was taken at the spot where Jesus was baptized. Thus, this is a formal act, wherein authorized religious agents declare the authenticity of the Jordanian site. Moreover, the spot seen in the photographs, “The Real Place of Baptism,” was excavated by scientists: Jordanian archaeologists. By using excavations, articles, and media, the scientists, who serve as cool authenticity agents, “proved” that Jesus was baptized on the Jordanian side (Waheeb, 1998; 2008).

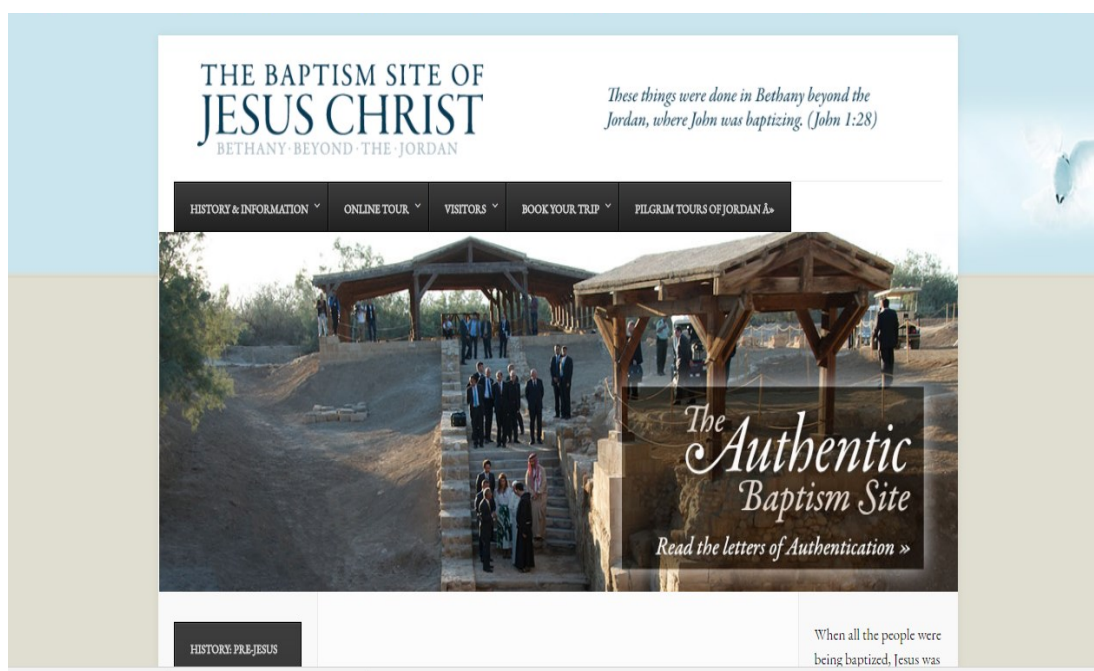


Figure 2: The homepage of Bethany Beyond the Jordan website

Another website headline is “Letters of Authentication.” The letters, written by contemporary Christian leaders and addressed to the King of Jordan, are presented by the Jordanians as evidence to the objective authenticity of the site. Thus, in a puzzling circularity, these quasi-theological letters are presented as cutting evidence. They are based on a rather different, scientific genre of evidence which, in turn, the letters reinforce.

Additional authority that confirms the authenticity of the site is UNESCO. Cohen and Cohen (2012) claim that, among others, cool authentication is based on the approval of recognized institutions. In the field of tourism, such confirmation paves the way to an inclusion in the World Heritage Sites list (Cohen & Cohen, 2012). During the summer of 2015, after a lengthy application process, UNESCO decided to add Bethany beyond the Jordan to the prestigious list. True, it took many years of candidacy to receive this declaration. However, the declaration event during UNESCO's annual meeting was a one-time, formal act and, therefore, it constitutes another act of cool authentication.

UNESCO's decision then led Jordanian officials to declare the exclusive authenticity of their site. As in other cases, this declaration was marked by the competition between the baptism sites. The *Al Rai*, a newspaper affiliated with the Kingdom, wrote after the declaration, “Since the site was discovered, Israel has been trying persistently to attribute the baptism of Jesus to the occupied side of the Jordan River, despite the religious and historical documents proving that the baptism of Jesus occurred on the Jordanian side of the river.” Therefore, the newspaper argues, “UNESCO’s declaration puts an end to Israel’s claim that the authentic location is in Israeli territory.”

Yardenit: Hot Authentication

Unlike the baptism sites on the southern area of the river, Yardenit's claims to authenticity are weak. Yardenit is located hundred kilometers north from what is perceived to be the area where Jesus was baptized and no tradition claims that Jesus even acted in this specific area. After the southern site was closed, a few pilgrims began coming to the river, just south of the Sea of Galilee outlet. As a result, the Israeli Ministry of Tourism requested that the nearby Kibbutz open a baptism site in its territory. The Kibbutz did so in 1981.

So, what is the relationship between authenticity and Yardenit? In one of my observations, a pilgrim from Ghana shared with me his excitement from the "authenticity of the site." The pilgrim knew about the other two baptism sites, but this did not prevent him from mentioning the authenticity of Yardenit. Similar comments made me rethink the authenticity of Yardenit, which various factors define as 'fake'. Thus, I argue that Yardenit re-formation process is an example of the hot authentication configuration, founded upon participation and belief, and maintained by performative practices. I contend that the Israeli site's agents are highly engaged and active in this process.

Over the years, the site managers have tried to undermine the authenticity of the southern sites, while strengthening Yardenit's "natural authenticity" and "referential authenticity" (Cohen, 1988; Andriotis, 2011). At this point, I will focus only on the hot authenticity configuration of Yardenit.

In the framework of this configuration, the managers strived to increase the visibility of the worship on the site and to convince the pilgrims that Yardenit is the right place to experience an "authentic" baptism. Even today, after the reopening of the sites in the south of the river, about half a million Christians choose to visit Yardenit every year. On a typical day during pilgrimage seasons, one can encounter the entire range of Christian rituals associated with baptism at this site. Yardenit employees do not interfere with whatever occurs at the places of worship close to the water. Yet, the site agents realize that the rituals are the essence of the place, so they try to reinforce their visibility. The baptism basins were built under a central terrace, so all visitors can see them, and the site offers every visitor a certificate, confirming that he or she was baptized or re-baptized on the site. These ceremonies are immediately posted on the Yardenit Facebook page, which has twenty thousand followers. Recently, the site initiated live broadcasts of such ceremonies.

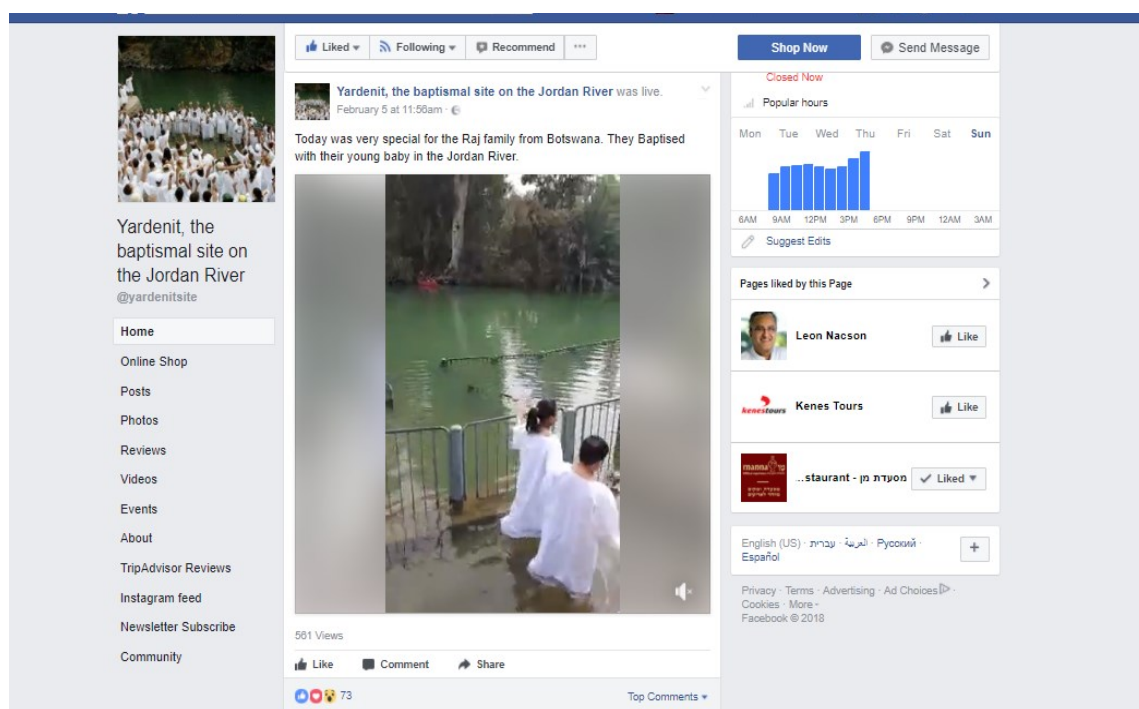


Figure 3: From the Facebook page of Yardenit Baptism site

The rituals on the site demonstrate that the believers have chosen Christianity, or a specific stream in Christianity, as their faith (Feldman & Ron, 2011). Moreover, they also signify that they have chosen to visit Yardenit. When these ceremonies are uploaded to Facebook, the cybernetic space becomes a real space for hot authentication. This space is not fundamentally different than the physical space wherein the ceremonies are held.

In addition to advertising the visitors' rituals, the managers also manufacture rituals that aim to create a link between the site and other known sacred places in the Holy Land. For example, the site has constructed a "Wall of New Life," which features hundred panels that display a verse describing Jesus baptism from the Book of Mark. These panels correspond with similar walls in major churches in the Holy Land. Every time a panel is added to this wall, the site staff holds a solemn ceremony in order to enhance the recognition of Yardenit as a sacred site.

Differences and Similarities in Cool and Hot Authentication Configurations

Cool and hot authentication configurations are distinct processes with different dynamics, which may even lead to the creation of places of diverse natures (Cohen & Cohen 2012).

Cool authentication often leads to the creation of museum-like places, while hot authentication strengthens the vitality of the site. Both these claims are true about Bethany beyond the Jordan and Yardenit. The Jordanian site mainly offers walking tours, whereas Yardenit is a vibrant site that offers daily ceremonies. And

yet, the hot and cool configurations of authentication have something in common: both are active processes, which rely on the maximum efforts of the site agents, who work hard to strengthen their site and try to load it with authenticity.

But quite unexpectedly, the case of Qasr al-Yahud displays a different kind of authentication. As I will demonstrate shortly, authenticity is attributed to this site not because of its agents' activity, but rather because of their relative inactivity.

Qasr al-Yahud: Untouched Authentication

After the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan was signed, Israeli factors began to develop and change the baptism site of Qasr al-Yahud. However, its physical development, construction, and marketing are minor and drawn-out, when compared to the other two baptism sites. Attesting to the lack of development are the restrooms and gift shop that, until just recently, were just portable buildings, the showers that are made of wood, and the fact that the site was not connected to electricity grid until 2017.

There are several reasons for the slow development of the site. It is located on the Israeli-Jordanian border, a disputed territory, of which the Palestinians also claim ownership. In addition, it is administrated by several Israeli public entities (the Israeli Defense Force, the Civil Administration, a bureaucratic subdivision of the Israeli Ministry of Defense, and the Nature and Parks Authority) whose main interests are not economic profit. Although Israel has invested a great deal of funding in the site, it was used for infrastructure and removal of mines, and not for construction or marketing purposes.



Figure 4: The abandoned and mined Ethiopian monastery at Qasr al-Yahud. January 2018. Photo of the author.

Moreover, the site agents have not declared the place to be “objectively authentic.” In its advertisements, they vaguely define the place as “a site, known as a

place where, according to Christian tradition, Jesus was baptized.” However, despite the lack of development and construction, or perhaps because of it, various actors often talk about the authenticity of the site. The lack of development and marketing, along with the pilgrims’ lack of use of the religious areas, are central elements in what I call “Untouched Authentication.” In addition to the textual tradition that links the region to the baptism of Jesus, it seems that it is precisely the absence of active authentication that strengthens the image of the site as authentic.

Since its opening and up until 2017, there were 47 TripAdvisor reviews on the site. A quarter of them included the words: “authentic”, “authenticity”, or similar words, such as “real”. An analysis of the reviews shows that the reviewers refer to the site as the objectively authentic place of Jesus’ baptism, usually, in contrast to Yardenit. For example, an American visitor wrote: “The northern baptism site [Yardenit] is definitely more developed and intensive, but the southern site [Qasr al-Yahud] has a stronger claim of authenticity.”, while a German visitor mentioned right in the title of his review: “Authentic than Yardenit.” In his review, he noted that Qasr al-Yahud is more peaceful than Yardenit, because fewer people were there and because it has no large gift shop. This served as the basis to his claim that the place was more “natural.”

This brings me to Andriotis’ suggestion (2011) that “natural authenticity” is associated with an environment and a landscape that are relatively untouched by the culture. This type of authenticity is also associated with the lack of commercialization and with only a small number of visitors, which was the case with Qasr al-Yahud until two years ago. Apparently, this type of authenticity informs the pilgrims’ attitude towards the site.

The perception of Qasr al-Yahud as authentic, objective, or natural, is also embraced by tour guides. For example, one guide managed to combine all these attributes, saying “[Qasr al-Yahud] is 99% the precise spot, the true place of Jesus’ baptism,” and immediately he added, “It is less developed, everything, the desert, Jericho, its closer to nature. More authentic.”

The site manager also referred to the matter of authenticity when comparing the operator of the site (Israel Nature and National Parks Authority) to the regional councils that want to put their hands on the site: “This site is developing nicely [...] and I hope that when you come here in five years, it will have no commercial complex, because that would spoil the holiness of the place.” Slow development, scarcity of commerce, and “allowing nature to speak” all play in the manager’s description of the authentic value of the place.

The lack of development and the ‘naturalness’ that is associated with the site even causes pilgrims to assume that physical elements are ancient. The churches at the site were built in the twentieth century but for the last fifty years, they have been fenced off and abandoned. The fact that one cannot visit them and can only see

them from afar makes them seem ‘ancient.’ In some cases, I have heard guides attribute them to the Middle Ages.

The visitors, the tour guides, and the manager use these words in various combinations to express different genres of authenticity. However, they all over-emphasize the significance of reduction or absence; what had not been built and what had not been established or developed. The lack of development results from the complexity of the location rather than a deliberate choice of its agents. However, that is what contributes to the attribution of authenticity to the place. Therefore, Qasr al-Yahud presents a unique process. Here, agents with tied hands are the source of the virtue of the site; inaction is an act of authentication.

Conclusion

It is possible to argue about the extent to which authenticity affects the prosperity of a site. One can also argue about the researchers' unceasing endeavors to grasp this elusive term. Yet it is an indisputable fact that the agents who restructure these sites attribute an immense importance to the matter of authenticity. Understanding how they perceive the concept and the actions they take due to these perceptions allows us to comprehend the reemergence of baptism sites along the Jordan River.

I have based my explanations of these processes of reemergence on the concept of “authentication.” As I have shown, the reemergence process of Bethany beyond the Jordan is identified with cool authentication configuration, whereas Yardenit is identified with hot authentication configuration.

However, regarding Qasr al-Yahud, my findings show that its authentication process is rather passive, due to geopolitical reasons. I termed this process as “Untouched Authentication” and explained how the interpretive connection that links the concepts of “naturalness” and “antiquity” with “authenticity” attributes a certain kind of authenticity to the site.

Just as the concepts of authenticity and authentication help one learn about the formation processes of the baptism sites, the analysis of these processes improves one’s understanding of the concepts of authenticity and authentication. The analysis contributes to the comprehension that authenticity should not be viewed as a final and fixed concept with a uniform meaning, but rather as a multifaceted concept that changes within various contexts and diverse perceptions and aspirations. Thus, it is better to divert the focus from formulating an exhaustive definition of authenticity to understanding the authentication of a sacred place through the dynamic uses of the word, both in the field and in relevant theoretical discussions.

The analysis of the discourses about authenticity and the practices that accompany it may add to the understanding of the social processes involved in the reemergence of a sacred place.

References

- Andriotis, K. (2011). Genres of heritage authenticity: Denotations from a pilgrimage landscape. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38(4), 1613-1633.
- Belhassen, Y., & Caton, K. (2006). Authenticity matters. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 33(3), 853-856.
- Belhassen, Y., Caton, K., & Stewart, W. P. (2008). The search for authenticity in the pilgrim experience. *Annals of tourism research*, 35(3), 668-689.
- Bilu, Y. (2010). *The saints' impresarios: Dreamers, healers, and holy men in Israel's urban periphery*. Boston, MA: Academic Studies Press.
- Bowman, G. (1991). Christian ideology and the image of a holy land: The place of Jerusalem pilgrimage in the various Christianities. *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage*, 98-121.
- Bruner, E. M. (1994). Abraham Lincoln as authentic reproduction: A critique of postmodernism. *American Anthropologist*, 96(2), 397-415.
- Chidester, D., & Linenthal, E. T. (1995). *American Sacred Spaces*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Cohen, E. (1988). Authenticity and commoditization in tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 15(3), 371-386.
- Cohen, E., & Cohen, S. A. (2012). Authentication: Hot and cool. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(3), 1295-1314.
- Coleman, S. (2002). Do you believe in pilgrimage? Communitas, contestation and beyond. *Anthropological Theory*, 2(3), 355-368.
- Coleman, S. (2004). Pilgrimage to 'England's Nazareth': Landscapes of myth and memory at Walsingham. *Intersecting Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage and Tourism*, 52-67.
- De Châtel, F. (2014). Baptism in the Jordan river: Immersing in a contested transboundary watercourse. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Water*, 1(2), 219-227.
- Durkheim, E. (1976). *The elementary forms of the religious life*. Abingdon. England: Routledge.

- Eade, J., & Sallnow, M. J. (1991). *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Eliade, M. (1959). *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Feldman, J. (2016). *A Jewish guide in the holy land: How Christian pilgrims made me Israeli*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Feldman, J., & Ron, A. S. (2011). American holy land: Orientalism, Disneyization, and the evangelical gaze. *Orient-Orientalistik–Orientalismus: Geschichte und Aktualität einer Debatte*, 151-176.
- Havrelock, Rachel. 2011. *River Jordan: The Mythology of a Dividing Line*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Jones, S. (2010). Negotiating authentic objects and authentic selves beyond the deconstruction of authenticity. *Journal of Material Culture*, 15(2), 181-203.
- Kais, R., & Eichner, I. (2015). UNESCO settles Jesus baptism site controversy, says Jordan. Retrieved from <https://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4676695,00.html>
- Katz, K. (2005). *Jordanian Jerusalem: Holy Places and National Spaces*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida.
- Knudsen, B. T., & Waade, A. M. (2010). *Re-Investing Authenticity: Tourism, Place and Emotions*. Bristol, England: Channel View Publications.
- Koontz, A. (2010). Constructing authenticity: A review of trends and influences in the process of authentication in consumption. *Sociology Compass*, 4(11), 977-988.
- Mkono, M. (2012). A netnographic examination of constructive authenticity in Victoria falls tourist (restaurant) experiences. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 31(2), 387-394.
- Noy, C. (2009). Embodying ideologies in tourism: A commemorative visitor book in Israel as a site of authenticity. *Authenticity in Culture, Self, and Society*, 219-240.
- Reisinger, Y., & Steiner, C. J. (2006). Reconceptualizing object authenticity. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 33(1), 65-86.

Turner, V. (1973). The center out there: Pilgrim's goal. *History of Religions*, 12(3), 191-230.

Turner, V., & Turner, E. (1978). *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Waheeb, M. (1998). Wadi el-Kharrar (al-Maghtas). *American Journal of Archaeology*, 102-601.

Waheeb, M. (2008). The discovery of Bethany beyond the Jordan river (Wadi Al-Kharrar). *Dirasat*, 35(1), 115-126.

Wall, G., & Xie, P. F. (2005). Authenticating ethnic tourism: Li dancers' perspectives. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 10(1), 1-21.

Wang, N. (1999). Rethinking authenticity in tourism experience. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(2), 349-370.