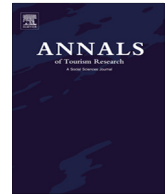




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Guiding the ‘real’ Temple: The construction of authenticity in heritage sites in a state of absence and distance



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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the ways in which heritage sites that deal with the memory of the Temple of Jerusalem claim authenticity despite the absence of the Temple and the distance between the location of the site and the original location of the Temple. The paper compares three sites adjacent to the Temple Mount: the Western Wall Heritage Tunnels, the Temple Institute, and the Davidson Center. Each of the sites forms a unique claim of authenticity that is supported by adjusted guided tour performance. The existing literature discusses authenticity as based on emotions or objects that cannot be replaced. This research expands this literature by introducing the concept of potential-based authenticity, authenticity based on future events and authentic objects that can be remade.

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Introduction

Many argue that tourists visiting historical sites are motivated by their search for authenticity, the aspiration to connect, see, or experience the “real thing” (Boorstin, 1964), and that those who manage these sites work hard to provide this experience (MacCannell, 1999). Tourists interested in the historical sites within the ancient city of Rome will likely pay a visit to the Roman Forum, where they can view the remains of numerous monuments, arches, and Temples. If they are interested in the famous Roman leader, Julius Caesar, they can visit the remains of the Temple of Venus Genetrix he erected, walk through the building where he worked, and stand in the exact spot where he was assassinated. In Rome, the remains of the past are accessible today, still in their original locations.

In contrast, tourists and pilgrims interested in visiting the Old City of Jerusalem encounter more challenging circumstances. In this city, the (arguably) most famous building, the Temple, is absent. There are no remains and its original location is inaccessible. In such a situation, how can the heritage sites that deal with the memory of the Temple present themselves as authentic and real? How will authenticity be claimed and created and what sources of authority will support it?

This paper discusses the ways in which heritage sites adjacent to the Temple Mount construct claims of authenticity through adjusted guided tour performance. This is done by comparing three heritage sites that deal with the memory of the Temple: the Western Wall Heritage Tunnels (hereafter: the Tunnels), the Temple Institute, and the Archaeological Park of Jerusalem – Davidson Center, where claims to authenticity are advanced in spite of two challenges: the clear absence of the Temple itself, and the slight, yet important distance between the original location of the Temple and the locations of the heritage sites. The different claims of authenticity are presented and created via adjusted guided tour performances, whose

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character and methods are a part of the message of the site. Thus, narrative and performance bridge the gap, making absence into presence. Moreover, the different claims of authenticity are supported by sources of authority that substantiate the nature of the claim.

According to Jewish tradition, the First Temple was built by King Solomon on Mount Moriah, nowadays called the Temple Mount. This building was destroyed by the Babylonians in the 6th century BCE and subsequently rebuilt. The Second Temple was destroyed by the Romans in the year 70 AD (Tsafrir, 2009). The memory of the Temple in Jewish tradition revolves around the notion of it being rebuilt at the exact same location, on the Temple Mount. However, since the 7th century, this location has been the site of a Muslim shrine, the Dome of the Rock, which is the third most holy place for Muslims around the world and today, also the main symbol of Palestinian nationhood (Luz, 2004). Due to these political and religious concerns, the heritage sites that deal with the memory of the Temple are located outside of the Temple Mount rather than in the original location of the ancient Temples. These sites are therefore characterized by distance, the gap between the location of the heritage sites and the original location of the Temple, which is very close yet not identical.

This distance, as well as the absence of the Temple itself, makes it hard for the heritage sites around the Temple Mount to present themselves as authentic. There are several heritage sites around the world that also deal with the memory of the Temple, such as the Holy Land Experience Park in Orlando, Florida (Rowan, 2004; Wharton, 2006). However, these sites are located so far from the original location of the Temple that no authenticity is expected from them. The unique proximity of the heritage sites that are adjacent to the Temple Mount, to the original location of the Temple, is a leading factor in their attempt to present authenticity.

While scholars identified with the constructivist theory of authenticity argue that there is no authentic original, only a constructed experience or object (Bruner, 1994; Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1992), post-modernists assert that any difference between the copy and the original has long since disappeared (Baudrillard, 1983; Eco, 1986; Knudsen & Waade, 2010; Melotti, 2011). However, tourists, as well as directors of heritage sites in Jerusalem, have a different motivation and do not share this point of view (Abu El-Haj, 2001). For them this is, to quote Bruner: “just post-modern gibberish” (1994:397). They represent the modernist approach, claiming that an original authentic thing or experience does exist. Visitors to the sites around the Temple Mount strive to connect with the authentic original (Shoval, 2000). They are far from the post-modern heritage tourists that consume tourist attractions ironically (Urry, 1990).

Pilgrims and visitors to the Wall and Temple Mount dream of a “hotter” authenticity and therefore, position holders and directors of heritage sites around the Temple Mount understand their mission as one of presenting the “real thing,” rather than a staged experience or a post-modern simulation. The question is how they create such a presentation, in light of the absence of the Temple and the gap in space. Each site uses a different *claim of authenticity*, a kind of argument or method employed in order to present itself as original. A claim of authenticity is the answer to the question: “What is the real here?”

In this study, three different types of claims were identified: 1. Object based authenticity. 2. Experience based authenticity. 3. Potential based authenticity.

Object based authenticity

Perhaps the best-known claim of authenticity stresses the quality of the object. The original objects have an aura of authenticity while the copy does not project the same quality (Benjamin, 1936). According to Belhassen et al.: “This originality can be measured with objective criteria that determine whether the object is authentic or not” (2008:669). This claim is also referred to as *cool authenticity*, which is connected to knowledge and the value of the objects themselves (Selwyn, 1996).

Experience based authenticity

This claim of authenticity is based on the visitor's experience, which is perceived as real. *Cool authenticity* is differentiated from *hot authenticity* which is based on the visitor's identity and feelings (Selwyn, 1996). One of the effects of the authentic experience is that visitors may feel that they are more connected to themselves, and so their own authenticity is enhanced (Fees, 1996). This claim has also been defined as *existential authenticity*, a process by which tourists turn inward towards themselves and find parts of their identity which are not experienced in everyday life (Wang, 1999). Characterization and presentation of the tourist space can affect the creation of experience-based existential authenticity (Kim & Jamal, 2007; Rickly-Boyd, 2013) as well as the atmosphere created by the group surrounding the visitor (Buchmann, Moore, & Fisher, 2010).

Potential based authenticity

While scholars have previously demonstrated that authenticity can be based on objects or emotional experience, this research argues for a third authentication method: *Potential based authenticity*, which relies on actions that will take place in the future. This claim represents the notion that things are real now, in the present, due to the future reality. It is not based on an existing inherent aura of objects, or on the emotional experience of the visitors, but rather on actions and realities that are yet to come. The existing literature in the field discusses various ways in which authenticity is based on material or emo-

tional things that existed or were experienced. This research identifies a new process by which authenticity is based on something that has not yet happened, but is foreseen and expected.

Authenticity is strongly connected to authority. In order to claim and persuade someone that something is real, there is always a need for a certain kind of authorization that can be accepted as proof. Different kinds of authorities may have the power to create authenticity: social institutions, charismatic leaders, bureaucratic position holders, or the authority of tradition. Conflict will arise when two different authorities occupy the same site and geographical space (Fees, 1996). In this case study the geographical space is clearly divided between the three heritage sites, thereby preventing conflict. At the same time, each site uses a different authority in order to “prove” its claim of authenticity. There is a connection between the nature of the claim of authenticity that is used, and the character of the authority that sustains this claim.

Each one of these claims of authenticity is transmitted to the visitors through an adjusted guided tour performance. Tour guides have been described as having many roles: They bear the voice of the sites and perform the narrative (Katriel, 1997). They are mediators and mentors in the secular civil religion (Katz, 1985). The guides connect the visitors with the place or local culture (Cohen, 1985; Holloway, 1981). They can be “cultural brokers” (Holloway, 1981) and they are responsible for interpreting the site, for bridging the distance between the visitors and the site and for fabricating facts in order to create authenticity (Cohen, 1985). In this case study tour guide performance is adjusted in a way that will support the various claims of authenticity.

Scholars in the fields of sociology and anthropology define performance as acting socially in a way that is meant to carry a message and meaning. As defined by Zhu, “Practices become performative by transforming from ‘doing’ to meaning-making” (Zhu, 2012:1500). Performance does more than transform meaning; in a complex society it is designed to achieve authenticity. When the performance is successful, “signifiers seem actually to become what they signify. Symbols and referents are one” (Alexander, 2006:56). The guided tour performance is a social meaning-making practice that has the ability to indicate and create what is real and authentic. The guided tour meaning-making performance is a part of the site’s efforts to present itself as authentic. Each claim of authenticity requires a different tailored guided tour performance that embodies the message of the site and thus becomes a part of it.

The claim for authenticity

Study methods

This article focuses on three heritage sites: the Western Wall Heritage Tunnels, the Temple Institute, and the Archaeological Park of Jerusalem – Davidson Center. These sites were chosen based on two categories: location and popularity. Of all the sites in the Old City of Jerusalem dealing with the subject of the Temple, these sites are the closest to the Temple’s original location, and are the three most popular ones, in terms of the number of visitors per year (according to the 2013 data submitted by the heritage sites, each site hosts over 100,000 visitors yearly). Other heritage sites in the Old City of Jerusalem dealing with this subject are located far from the Temple Mount and attract much smaller numbers of visitors each year.

The fieldwork in this research, conducted between July 2013 and September 2014, is based on qualitative methods: participant observation, interviews, and the analysis of artifacts. 60 observations of guided tours in the sites were conducted in addition to interviews with 42 tour guides, as well as with several employees holding a variety of positions in the three sites. I obtained permission from the directors to interview the guides and join the local tours. All the employees in these sites, tour guides and decision makers alike, are Jewish. Therefore, all participants in the study were Jews; however their self-declared religiousness varied from full secularity to devout orthodoxy. The interviewees in this article are presented by age, their seniority at work, and their self-identification as secular, religious, or Orthodox.

Extensive notes were taken during the observed guided tours, and the tours were recorded and later transcribed. I observed tours directed at a large variety of groups, such as: Israeli families celebrating a Bar Mitzvah, schoolchildren or IDF soldiers in their basic training course, as well as foreign Christian and Jewish tourists from around the world.

Since this article deals with the way authenticity is presented at heritage sites through the performance of the tour guide, the focus is on the providers of heritage, and not the recipients. Therefore, the methodological focus is on the providers and agents of memory. However, the visitors’ reactions to the guided tour were observed and are used to support and emphasize the analysis of the guided tour dynamics and their message. At the same time, a full study of the visitors’ perception of authenticity in these heritage sites is not the focus or the purpose here.

Object based authenticity – the Davidson Center – authenticity set in stone

The Davidson Center is an archaeological garden and a visitors’ center located just outside of the southwestern corner of the Temple Mount. At the time the fieldwork was conducted, the site was managed by the operating company PAMI (a Hebrew acronym for: East Jerusalem Development Company). PAMI is owned by the Ministry of Jerusalem Affairs (66%) and the Jerusalem City Council (33%). At the time the fieldwork was carried out, the Davidson Center was directed by a secular Jewish man. This situation changed in late 2014, when the government company that owns the area decided to terminate the PAMI contract and hand over the control of the sites to the Ir David Foundation, known as Elad, a right-wing foundation that also operates the City of David heritage site. This move attracted various objections, for example from

the Israeli Antiquities Authority. At the moment, the fate of the Archaeological Park at the Davidson Center is yet undecided as the Israeli Supreme Court is still debating an appeal in this matter.

The Davidson Center offers visitors the opportunity to explore the southern area of the Western Wall, as well as the southern wall of the Temple Mount. It is possible to visit the Davidson Center with or without a guide. Visitors that choose to receive a guided tour will be guided through the archaeological garden as well as a computer simulation of the Second Temple and its surroundings. There are approximately 12 local guides working in this site, all of whom are young professionals with university degrees in history or archaeology. Most of them are secular Jews, some are Orthodox Jews, and two belong to a Jewish-Christian community.

The Davidson Center constructs its claim of being the “real thing” around cool authenticity, the authenticity of the objects found at the site. At this site the archaeological value or aura of the remains is used in order to claim authenticity despite the absence of the Temple and the gap in space. The construction of this claim relies on the authority of scientific knowledge as well as the image and the name of well-known archaeologists. This claim of authenticity is supported by a scholarly guided tour performance.

A standard one-hour guided tour of the Davidson Center consists of a visit to the archaeological garden as well as a virtual tour of the computer simulation (which the guides call “the model”). I shall consider the model first. This is a computerized virtual simulation that is used to explain how the Temple and its surroundings looked in the past. Throughout this presentation the guides stress again and again how: “*Everything you see here was reconstructed according to archaeological findings.*” A secular guide told me in an interview, “*The most common thing people ask here is if I can show them the inside of the Temple in the model. And I hate that question because I can't show them the inside. We don't have a reconstruction of the inner part of the Temple because we don't have archaeological evidence. If there is no excavation we don't know how it really was.*” For this guide, lacking archaeological evidence, literature and tradition about the Temple are not enough to assert authenticity.

Let us now consider the archaeological garden. The guides walk with the group throughout the garden while indicating various finds, such as the main street of Jerusalem from the time of the Second Temple, a monumental staircase that once led into the Temple courtyard, a ritual bath, and two ancient Hebrew inscriptions. One of the important archaeological remains at the Davidson Center is the Western Wall, the leading Jewish and Israeli symbol. The Western Wall, however, was never a part of the Temple itself and cannot be considered remains of the Temple building; a point highlighted by the local guides.

The section of the Western Wall in the Davidson Center is surrounded by ropes preventing the visitors from touching the stones, which are presented as an authentic archaeological treasure. Only the guides are allowed to cross these ropes, in order to direct the visitors' attention to fine details on the stones and the wall. This performance symbolizes to the group the aura of the Western Wall as authentic archaeological remains, as well as the status of the guide as an owner of knowledge that gives him/her access to the “real thing.” Benjamin defined aura as “a unique phenomenon of distance,” regardless how close the object is (1968:243). Thus the guided tour performance in the Davidson Center strengthens this distance in a way that enhances the aura of the Wall.

During the tour, both in the garden as well as in the model, local guides are instructed to answer questions using citations from academic studies. In several interviews, guides explained it is important for them to include archaeological terms in their tour even if the visitors do not fully understand these terms. In addition, the images of the archaeologists themselves are used to support the claim for authenticity. Most guides included in their tour a five-minute documentary film in which Professor of Archaeology Ronny Reich introduces the site from his personal point of view, as one of the professionals heading the excavation. The film does not offer any additional knowledge beyond what the guide explains during the walk through the archaeological remains in the garden. To be sure, the presentation of the garden in the film is certainly less appealing than the local guide's performance. However, it is important for the guides as well as the directors of the Center to include this film in the tour in order to use the authority of the archaeologists in the construction of the claim of authenticity. Prof. Reich (a secular, middle-aged white man) embodies the authority of scientific knowledge; his image and presence authenticate the entire site.

At this site guides are instructed to give the guided tour performance detached from emotions or any moral message. Thus, when the director of the guided tour division gave feedback to a new guide at the site, she told the guide: “*Don't try to explain to them why it is important or why it is very similar to their life today. Just give them the knowledge and the experience of that knowledge.*” Another example was given by a young guide who is a member of the Christian-Jewish community. He said in an interview that whenever he is guiding an Evangelical Christian group, “*First I give them the professional guided tour. Only when it is over I feel I can participate in their prayer.*” This guide feels that religious activity cannot be a part of the professional guided tour (later we shall see that in the Tunnels the guides hold the opposite view).

At the Davidson Center, the claim of authenticity is based on cool authenticity, the archaeological value of the objects, which can be measured and displayed. Archaeology in the service of truth is not just a useful means of presenting authenticity; rather, it reflects an inner cultural preference shared by secular Zionists and Protestant Christians. Both groups came to rely on scientific knowledge in their search for rational proofs of their beliefs, be it a belief in God or in the civic religion (Feldman, 2007). In Jerusalem, zealous Anglicans were the first to use science and archaeology in order to find the authentic and the “real” (Ron & Feldman, 2009). These semi-archaeologists left their mark on the landscape: many of the visible remains around the Temple Mount are still named after them today (Robinson's arch, Wilson's arch, Barclay's gate). But perhaps their most influential legacy is their method of retrieving authenticity through the use of the rational tool of archaeology. The claim of authenticity in the Davidson Center is a continuation of this tradition.

Experience based authenticity – the Western Wall Heritage Tunnels – authenticity of the heart

With over half a million visitors a year, the Western Wall Heritage Tunnels constitute the most popular fee-charging site in the Old City of Jerusalem. The site is administered by a semi-governmental organization: the Western Wall Heritage Foundation, an association that is itself administered by Prime Minister's Office, and is also responsible for the maintenance and management of the Western Wall praying platform. The foundation is managed by a board of directors, chaired by the Rabbi of the Western Wall, who is appointed by the government.

A visit to the Tunnels includes a walk alongside the Western Wall of the Temple Mount, underneath the houses of the Muslim quarter. Visitors can go in only as part of a guided tour, with the exception of women wishing to pray next to the Western Wall. These women can enter the Tunnels at any time, free of charge. In addition, non-local tour guides can guide their own groups in this site. There are approximately 200 guides working in the Tunnels. All of the guides are Jewish, most of them religious.

The purpose of the guided tour in the Tunnels is to connect the visitor to the Western Wall and the Jewish heritage; in the case of Jewish or Israeli visitors, the goal is to connect them to their own heritage. In order to achieve this connection, the local guides construct an authentic visitor's experience, which is based on the visitor's emotions and identity.

First, the guides strive to engage the visitors emotionally. In one of the tours, the guide, a young ultra-Orthodox man, explained that the Western Wall is like an internet router, sending us messages. One of the participants asked in a cynical tone: *"How can we get the signal of that router?"* To that the guide answered very seriously, *"With the heart."* Other guides strive to create emotional impact by including moving personal stories about their own experiences at the Wall. One of the guides, an Orthodox woman, told the visitors about her brother-in-law who died as a soldier in the battle for the Old City, not far from the Tunnels. As she was telling the story she pulled out from her bag a picture of the brother-in-law in uniform and passed it between the visitors. In this case, blood sacrifice helps to *"tune the router on."*

In some cases the local guides themselves become emotional in order to create the desired effect. An experienced guide, a 30-year-old religious man, gave a guided tour to a group of young Jewish Americans. At the end of the tour he asked the group if they knew any songs in Hebrew. He chose the first song they mentioned, a traditional Jewish song, and started to sing it. He was singing loudly, rocking from side to side; his hands were clasped together as in prayer. When the song was over, tears were streaming down his face. Later in an interview he said that for him a good guided tour is one in which *"I say the word 'Jerusalem' and I feel chills."*

Although at this site the Western Wall is primarily understood as a Jewish holy place, guides manage to create authentic experience by engaging the visitors emotionally, even when the visitors are not familiar with the Jewish tradition. A young secular guide spoke about a tour he gave to the wife of an Indian politician: *"This tour was the most special tour I had. She was Indian with the Sari and a Tilaka and yet throughout the tour we had a strong spiritual connection. Everything was on a very spiritual level. . . First we saw a boy celebrating a Bar Mitzvah [the Jewish coming-of-age ceremony] and she cried as if he were her own grandson. . . I explained the Jewish meaning of this place and she meditated for 15 minutes, and it was very magical for me; she didn't need any knowledge of Judaism to understand that this is a very important spiritual place with very strong energies. She felt it."* In a similar vein, an elderly ultra-Orthodox guide told me in an interview about a tour she gave to a famous Chinese actress: *"And there was no translator! Still, at the end of the tour she walked down the stairs, reached the Wall, touched it and started to cry."* Note how these guides mention the tour was successful despite the distance between them and the visitors caused by cultural and religious differences or by a language barrier. The guides perceive these tours as successful because of the emotional impact the tour had on the visitors.

In some cases the local guides use physical performance in order to engage the visitors emotionally. A senior employee responsible for the training of new guides said he instructs the guides to touch the Western Wall as much as they can throughout the tour. He explained that once the guides touch the Wall, the visitors imitate them and do the same. One of the local guides, an elderly ultra-Orthodox woman, took this instruction one step further. In each of her tours, when she and the group reach the Wall, she leaves the group, and puts her hands and face on the stone while kissing the Wall in silent prayer. She would repeat this performance up to eight times a day, depending on how long her shift was.

It is important to note that in the Tunnels the guides are perceived as merely the facilitators of the connection between the visitors and the Western Wall, and not the reason for it. Several guides explained their role is to *"trigger it,"* it being the connection with the Wall. Indeed, the guides' identity and individuality is intentionally blurred by the site's management. An experienced local guide who specializes in VIP groups said: *"He [a VIP visitor] was standing in front of the Rabbi of the Western Wall and he was praising me as a guide. But the Rabbi dismissed it, and said, 'we have a lot of good guides, over 200.' In the Tunnels they don't put the guides in the center."*

The claim of authenticity in the Tunnels was well summarized by the director of the site, the Rabbi of the Western Wall, in a speech he gave at a conference at the Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem: *"People come here to touch the holy. It is true they visit the Tunnels, listen to the tour guides and photograph themselves next to the Wall. But this is just in the background of the real thing, the real thing that brought them there: the one moment in which the man presses his head against the Wall, whispers words of prayer from a book or from his head, from Psalms or straight from the heart, to place his hopes in to the Western Wall. This is why people come here, not because of archaeology. . . We do not come here to look at stones! We come here to discover our roots."* According to this narrative, the *"real thing"* is the visitor's emotion and identity-based connection to the Western Wall, which can be expressed through prayer, physical touch, or warm feelings. The guides at this site are expected to feel this connection themselves and to be able to make others feel it.

In order to support and sustain this claim, the local guides use the authority of the Jewish tradition and the history of the entire people of Israel throughout the centuries, phrased as the *Chain of Generations*. The guides present different stories about Jewish individuals that longed for and prayed at the Western Wall throughout history. They explain how the entire Jewish existence over the last 2000 years was focused around the desire to reach the Wall. This longing was passed from generation to generation until the present time, endowing the Wall with a special quality. As one of the guides said to her group: “For so long this place has been the center of Jewish thought and prayer, imagine what a privilege it is to be here right now.” An experienced guide explained, “When I think about all the generations that wanted to reach this place, and I think about all the Holocaust survivors that wanted to come here, then of course the Western Wall is very important.” It appears that the history of longing for the Western Wall throughout the centuries is what makes the Wall real. The site presents itself as the embodiment of the ancient connection between Jews and the Wall, with the tour guide performing as the speaker of that chain of generations and lineage of longing.

In the Tunnels the claim for authenticity relies upon an authentic experience, a red-hot authenticity, in which “Places are something we authenticate through our emotional/affective/sensuous relatedness to them” (Knudsen, 2010:13). As we have seen in the case of the Davidson Center, the Western Wall can be presented as an object of cool authenticity. However, at the Tunnels the choice is to transform the archaeological objects into a “hot” existential experience. The main difference between the two ends of the Wall is the way the guides construct the tour. The guided tour performance within the Tunnels transforms cool authenticity into hot authenticity.

Potential based authenticity – The Temple Institute – authenticity of things to come

The Temple Institute is a private heritage site owned by a nonprofit organization whose aim is to enhance and spread the knowledge of the Temple in order to rebuild it in the near future. The Institute was established in 1987 by Rabbi Israel Ariel, and is located on the main route to the Western Wall.

The Institute contains an exhibition of the Temple's vessels; ritual objects such as: the Golden Altar, the Showbread Table, a ceremonial washbasin, and silver trumpets, which were recreated according to Jewish tradition in order to be used in the future Third Temple. The exhibition is divided into three rooms, simulating three different sections of the Temple: the woman's courtyard, the Israel courtyard, and the Holy and Holy of Holies. A visit to this site is possible only with an Institute guide. All of the guides in the Temple Institute are Orthodox Jews. The majority of them are 18- to 19-year-old women doing their civil-service volunteer year. The latter is an institutionalized alternative to mandatory military service, available mainly for Orthodox women.

This heritage site demonstrates a new kind of claim of authenticity, which is based on actions that will take place in the future. I call this claim *potential based authenticity*. The unique innovative aspect of this claim is that it is not connected to historical events, nor is it based on emotional and spiritual impact and experience. What makes these objects real and authentic is something that has not happened yet, but is believed will happen in the near future: the usage of the objects in the Third Temple, yet to be built.

The objects on display in the Institute are represented as the true authentic Temple vessels. 13 out of the 19 guided tours that were observed began with this statement: “Everything you see here is real and authentic. The vessels are real because they are ready for use in the Third Temple. These are the real vessels of the Third Temple.” This claim of authenticity is not based on the archaeological value of the objects (cool authenticity), or on the emotional experience and connection to the site (hot authenticity); it is based on the potential usage of the vessels in the future.

We can see here a very special model of authenticity: the authentic object is not singular, unique, or irreplaceable; rather, it can be manufactured. The guides stress that the vessels on display were handmade, and they include in their tour a short film which shows the artists carving and refining the vessels into the right shape. In addition, the guides explain how during the time of the First and Second Temple, the Temple vessels were always made and remade by men. Thus the message is conveyed that in the past as well as in the present, the real Temple vessels can be manufactured and even replaced. Since the value and aura of the authentic object is based on future events, reshaping and remaking these vessels in the present cannot diminish their value or harm their authenticity.

Indeed, the authentic objects can also lose their status as authentic and real. An experienced local guide, a middle-aged Jewish religious man, expressed the opinion that the vessels on display are the real vessels of the Temple only for the time being: “Let's say that in a year we will build the Third Temple and the people of Israel will say: ‘We don't want your vessels’ and they will make new vessels for the Temple. What would happen then? These vessels that are now on display will become just an exhibition, and we will have new Temple vessels.” When I asked, “Which ones will be the real vessels?,” he answered, “Of course, the ones that are going to be used in the Temple.” In the present, however, the vessels on display are real because of their intended use in the future.

In this case, it is the authority of the Jewish tradition, interpreted by Rabbi Israel Ariel, which is used to authenticate the vessels on display. Time and again throughout the tour the local guides quote extensively from various canonic Jewish texts as well as from the writing of Rabbi Ariel. On several occasions the guides were observed quoting a biblical verse in Hebrew during guided tours in the English language. The guides did not translate the verse, since it was not recited in order to transmit knowledge, but, rather, to serve as a citation of higher authority (in this case, divine authority).

From the point of view of the Institute, the vessels on display can and will be used in the Third Temple since they were created according to Jewish law (Halacha) interpreted by Rabbi Ariel. Throughout the tour the guides repeatedly emphasized

the perfect match between the vessels and the requirements of Jewish law. The guides stress that the vessels were created following extensive study of the Halacha requirements by Rabbi Ariel and his students, who work at the Temple Institute research center. Because of his famous publications, the Rabbi is known as a student of the Temple Halacha, and as an authority on the subject.

Indeed, suitable authority is necessary in order to sustain a potential-based claim of authenticity. The vessels on display are represented as real because they were made according to Jewish law, under the supervision of an expert in the subject. Some of the guides explained the importance of this authority for the construction of the authentic vessels. For example, one of the senior guides explained in an interview that he had heard some Temple vessels were remade in South America and China, but he dismissed these vessels as only copies, saying: “*what can the Goyim [non-Jews] know?*” Here the guide referred to the native authority of the Temple Institute, implying the real vessels of the Jewish Temple could only be made by Jews who possess the appropriate knowledge. Indeed, this native authority can be accepted by the non-Jewish visitors to the site. There is a long history of Christians perceiving the Jews as “witnesses to Biblical truth,” since: “they received and preserved the Law and the prophets throughout the generations and understood the Sacred Tongue, they became witnesses and authenticators” (Feldman, 2007:360). The Temple Institute uses this native authority and combines it with additional knowledge of the Halacha, as one 20-year-old guide said in a tour for a group of Protestants from Germany: “*Before we made the garments for the High Priest we read everything that has been written on the subject, especially Maimonides [a renowned medieval Jewish rabbinical scholar], so we know exactly how to do it*”. Needless to say, the authority of the Halacha can be accepted as a suitable source of authority by religious Jewish visitors.

In the tours, the local guides use as much detail as possible from Jewish law. However, the guides do not simply repeat this traditional knowledge, but rather create a unique guided tour performance that draws a connection between the knowledge that the visitors have and the vessels on display.

Most of the visitors to the Institute are religious Orthodox Jews or devout Christians. These visitors are familiar with the Jewish literature about the Temple and its vessels. In many cases the visitors have very similar if not greater traditional knowledge about these subjects than the guide. It seems that the purpose of the guided tour is not to present new knowledge, but to create a confirmation ritual that grants existence in reality to the already familiar knowledge. As one of the guides said in an interview: “*The religious [Jews], come after they have studied Middot [a Talmudic tractate that deals with the measurements of the Temple] and now they want to see things in practice. They sit there and look at the vessel. For them it's like practicing before the final test.*” Indeed, what we perceive as real is the thing that most resembles our preconception of the real (Heidegger, 1993). “Thus ‘true’ gold is gold that resembles our expectations of what gold ought to be” (Brown, Middleton, & Lightfoot, 2001:127). In this case the true golden Temple vessels are the ones that resemble and correspond to the Temple vessels described by the Jewish law that the visitors are familiar with.

Throughout the tour, visitors come to see the vessels as the embodiment of the traditional knowledge they have. They thus perceive the vessels as suitable for future usage in the Temple, and therefore real. In many of the tours, the guides present the vessels through a series of questions the visitors answer.

For example, the guide asked: “*And what is this vessel here?*”

A young boy answered: “*This is the golden altar.*”

The guide: “*Very good. What other two names does it have? And what is it made of?*”

A few young boys answered together: “*The Inner Altar! The Altar of Incense! Made of acacia wood and covered with gold!*”

This kind of dialogue recurred throughout the tour. Indeed, this confirmation ritual is not limited to groups of children. The guide explained to a group of South Korean Evangelicals, “*this is the candelabrum. What does the bible tell us about it?*” Some of the visitors answered, “*it must be decorated with flowers and buttons. It must have 7 branches.*” The guide asked, “*and where is that written?*” The visitors answered, “*Deuteronomy!*” The guide stressed, “*and where else?*” the visitors answered, “*the book of Zechariah.*” The guide concluded, “*very good. The book of Zechariah, chapter 2.*”

This confirmation ritual supports the site's claim for authenticity. The guided tour performance makes the vessels on display the embodiment in reality of the traditional written knowledge that visitors already have. One can argue that tourism in general is all about gazing and witnessing something that has been pre-imagined, and the tourist experience is always a confirmation of an existing idea of the sites (Jansson, 2002; Urry, 1990). The Institute then is an example of the way tourists consume the site according to their pre-existing image of it.

But on a much broader scale, this confirmation ritual serves a higher purpose. It does not just validate the authenticity of the displayed vessels; it gives existence and authenticity to the broader project of building the Third Temple. If the vessels are perceived as real, then perhaps the idea that the Temple can be rebuilt in our time can also be understood as possible and real. The confirmation ritual embedded in the guided tour performance not only authenticates the vessels, but the entire effort to build the Third Temple on the Temple Mount, in our time.

Conclusion

Heritage sites that address the memory of the Temple and are located around the Temple Mount face a challenge: How will they present themselves as authentic, despite the clear absence of the Temple, and despite the small but important distance between the location of the site and the original location of the Temple?

This article compared three heritage sites, showing how each of them deals with this challenge differently by constructing a unique claim of authenticity. This claim is communicated to the visitors through the performance of the tour guides, and supported through a specific source of authority. The Davidson Center presents itself as original by stressing the archaeological value of the objects, and so the guide's performance is designed to create an academic experience that will enhance the importance of this archaeological knowledge. This site bases its claim for authenticity using the authority of science and known archaeologists.

In the Tunnels the claim is based on the authenticity of the experience. Guides engage themselves as well as the visitors with physical and emotional connections to the Wall in order to create an authentic experience that will touch the emotions and identity of the visitors. These guides use the authority of the *chain of generations*, the history of the Jewish longing for the Western Wall, and the discourse of national suffering, sacrifice, and redemption in order to support their claim.

At the Temple Institute, authenticity is based on potential. The objects are presented as real because of their future usage in the Temple that will be built. The tour guide's performance is a confirmation ritual that activates the traditional knowledge regarding the vessels on display that the visitors already have. This is achieved using the authority of the Jewish tradition as well as the figure and writings of Rabbi Ariel.

The existing literature discusses authenticity that is based on the quality of the objects that can be measured and displayed (Belhassen, Caton, & Stewart, 2008; Benjamin, 1936; Selwyn, 1996) or on emotions and feelings (Kim & Jamal, 2007; Rickly-Boyd, 2013). Hot and cool authenticities are based on something that has happened, or something that is felt, or any other inherent quality that makes the authentic object irreplaceable and singular. This article contributes to that literature by introducing a unique claim of authenticity: *potential-based authenticity*, which is based on the potential use of the vessels in the future. These authentic objects can be replaced and remade since their authenticity is derived from events that are yet to come.

The three heritage sites discussed in this article exemplify the way in which the guide's performance can be used to construct authenticity in heritage sites. Every different claim of authenticity is supported by a specific matching guided tour performance that transmits the right message. There is a close connection between the method and the message. The guided tour performance is not just a tool; rather, it is an integral part of the message of the site. The way the guides present the tour conveys the message to the visitors.

Finally, these case studies demonstrate the connection between the claim of authenticity and the source of authority. Different kinds of authority can be used to sustain and support authenticity (Fees, 1996). This article has demonstrated that there is a connection between the kind of argument or the claim of authenticity that is chosen, and the source of authority that supports it. Cool authenticity is supported by authority that provides tools and methods that can measure and prove the value of the objects. Hot authenticity is sustained using the authority of a metaphysical notion that can generate a higher emotional connection. Potential-based authenticity is backed by an authority source that has knowledge of the future. In order to present themselves as authentic, heritage sites choose the authority source that compliments their claim and message. The choice of authority is not connected to a hierarchy or a struggle between different authorities (Fees, 1996), but rather to the suitability of the source of authority and the claim of authenticity.

The concept of potential based authenticity can be implemented in other case studies in which the future plays a role in the authentication in the present. For example, Belhassen, 2009 shows how Evangelical tourists in the Holy Land look at locations, such as Mount Megiddo, as authentic based on what will come to pass there in the Second Coming of Jesus. These tourists are motivated by their desire to visit "where the history of the future is going to take place" (2009:135). Another example comes from Chabad Hasidic movements, the followers of the Lubavitcher Rabbi. The followers of the deceased Rabbi expect his future return, and the visitors to his house in Brooklyn are trained to look at and admire a displayed chair as the chair the Rabbi will use when he returns as the king Messiah (Krauel-Tovi & Bilu, 2008). Potential based authenticity can also be found outside the religious world; the Zochrot organization offers guided tour to ruins of Palestinian villages that were destroyed in the war of 1948 and in several occasions were incorporated into new Israeli neighborhoods. The goal of the tour is to commemorate the past and to train the visitors to see the ruins as the site of the refugee's return and as real, existing villages in the future, independent Palestine (Gutman, 2015).

In these examples, objects or places are authentic, now in the present, due to something that will happen in the future. The Third Temple, Mount Megiddo or the Rabbi's chair are not distinguished because of a special quality inherent in them, but because of an expected future reality. The important source of authenticity here is the things to come, and not the things that have passed.

Moreover, this claim of authenticity is always supported by a suitable authority, which is perceived to have knowledge of this future. In the Temple Institute, authority is rendered by Rabbi Ariel and Jewish law. The claim of authenticity in Mount Megiddo is supported by Evangelical writings. The authenticity of the Palestinian villages is validated by the Palestinian refugees and national leaders. In short, in order for potential based authenticity to work, it must be sustained by a source of authority that is perceived to have authoritative knowledge and reach towards the future. The effectiveness of a potential based claim of authenticity depends on the extent to which the source of authority is deemed reliable.

The concept of potential based authenticity is a challenging one, since it is built on the future, an elusive, measureless concept that is not yet a part of reality. For the outside observer, potential based authenticity can be problematic, since the future is unmeasurable and not factual. I would like to suggest that for those who accept the source of authority, the believers, the future is a reliable fact, and objects related to it can be measured and verified.

First, for those who accept the source of authority that creates the claim for authenticity (be it religious, national, or group leaders and traditions), the foreseen future has a real grasp on present reality. For the tour guides and employees, as well as most of the visitors to the Temple Institute, the vessels on display are real and authentic, just like the future Temple. For the Evangelical Christian tour guides and tourists visiting Mount Megiddo, the Second Coming of Jesus is an undisputed fact, therefore, the authenticity of the site of this future history is uncontested.

Second, the claim of authenticity can be measured and verified using the requirements and traditions of the expected future. The vessels on display in the Temple Institute will be perceived to be the real Temple vessels only if they embody the traditional requirements for these future vessels. As we have seen, the guided tour performance is designed to highlight the similarities between the tradition and the vessels on display. For the believers, the future is not abstract and unknown, rather, it is a detailed, specified reality. Therefore, for those who accept the source of authority, potential based authenticity is both factual and measurable.

The concept of potential based authenticity opens up possibilities for new lines of inquiry. Further research can focus on the point of view of the recipients. How is potential based authenticity perceived and understood? In addition, it will be interesting to examine the developments, changes, or “life cycle” of potential based authentic objects. Can this authenticity be lost, enhanced, or transformed into other kinds of authenticity? What happens to potential based authenticity “when prophecy fails”?

Finally, the concept of potential based authenticity can be an invitation to look at the role of the future in the shaping of tourist practice. The consumption and production of the tourist experience has been explained in many ways in relation to the effect of the past and the present. Perhaps it is time to consider the effect of fear, anticipation, concern, or uncertainty about the future with relation to touristic practice.

Statement of contribution

1. Contribution to theory: The existing literature discusses authenticity that is based on quality of the objects that can be measured and displayed or on emotions and feelings. Hot and cold authenticities are based on something that has happened, or that is felt or any other inherent quality that makes the authentic object irreplaceable and singular. This article contributes to that literature by introducing a unique claim of authenticity: *potential-based authenticity*, which is based on the potential use of objects in the future. These authentic objects can be replaced and remade since their authenticity is derived from events that are yet to come. *Potential-based authenticity* means authenticity can be derived from not only the present or the past, but also from the future. In addition, it calls into question the immediate connection between authenticity and singularity, and forms a new model according to which the authentic objects can be replaced.
2. The paper offers a social science approach by offering insights in to social behavior based on qualitative methods: participant observation, interviews, and the analysis of artifacts. Extensive fieldwork was conducted between July 2013 and September 2014, and it is used to explain how three heritage sites in the Old City of Jerusalem heritage sites operate and the impact they have on the visitors. This article explains how the performance of tourist guides on these sites produces various claims to authenticity, and what are the different authority sources that are used to support these claims.

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