***Is this sacred or what?* – the Holy Place and Tourism Destination at Jabal Haroun, Petra Region, Jordan**

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Abstract
Ziyaara (visitation) to the holy site of Prophet Haroun was both an individual observance and an annual, seasonal tradition in the Petra area of south Jordan until 1985. This chapter discusses how the regional political and economic situation in the 1980s and 1990s framed tourism, particularly, as a panacea for Jordan. Western donors propounded a certain ideal cultural climate for tourism development, the success of which was thought to indicate a positive context for investment in Jordan. The Hashemite regime positioned itself adroitly between trending Islamic conservatism and western donors of foreign aid, shaping local religious practices and ultimately determining the selection of holy sites officially sanctioned by the regime. The discussion explores the ways both Salafi-influenced attitudes toward *ziyaara* and western constructions of inclusion, tolerance and religious moderation are reflected in the one-hundred, currently most-searched websites for Jabal Haroun in Arabic and English.

As she crests the steep trail to the small white shrine an American tourist exclaims in awe, "Is this sacred or what!?" But she isn't talking about the shrine – she's exclaiming over the panoramic mountain view.

Jordan is home to forty-eight officially designated holy sites. One of the most famous is *Maqaam* Nabi Haroun, the Holy Place of the Prophet Aaron, as much because it is located within Petra Archaeological Park as for its historical and religious significance. The *dhrih*,[1] a tomb or shrine-site, traditionally venerated as the prophet's tomb, is located on the highest peak within Petra. The challenging, eight-kilometer hike to the mountaintop is a favorite with adventure tourism programs as much for the striking natural scenery as for the cultural significance.

Jabal Haroun ("Aaron's Mountain") has long been associated with the biblical Mount Hor, on which the prophet Aaron (Ar. *haaroun*) died and was buried, according to the Book of Numbers 20:23-29. The site is thus a holy place to Jews, Samaritans, Christians, and Muslims alike. On a shelf below the peak there was first a Nabataean temple and then a Byzantine Church, dating to the 1st and 5th centuries CE, respectively. The Byzantine site was excavated in a series of seasons from 1997-2013, revealing that there was once a monastery and lodgings, likely for Christian pilgrims, and a Christian presence on the mountain at least into the 11th century (Fiema 2002).

The Muslim shrine which stands there today – variously called a *dhrih*, *maqaam*, or *waly* [2]– was constructed in the 14th century (Lahelma & Fiema 2000). It is a small (ca. 8x10m) rectangular stone building, much plastered and re-painted, crowned by a conspicuous white dome and metal *hilaal*. Inside there is a simple cross-vaulted chamber with a marble cenotaph just inside the door on the southwest end, beyond which, in the same wall, is the mihrab to orient prayer toward Mecca. The cenotaph bears an Arabic inscription and graffiti in Greek and Hebrew, and between the cenotaph and mihrab is a thick stone pillar, less than a meter high, which may have borne sacrifices or offerings (Mietunnen 2013). A short staircase descends from the western end of the room into a sort of grotto, with niches in which people have long placed candles and incense. It is there, beneath thick layers of plaster, that the prophet is believed to have been buried.

The general conformation of the shrine – a small domed building over a cenotaph or tomb, with a mihrab indicated in the wall facing Mecca – is not unusual for locally-focused holy places in the Middle East. Incorporating a cave or underground grotto is also common. Nor are such holy places (*maqaamat*) unusual, though they are rapidly becoming forgotten in younger generations. In her very fine dissertation Paivi Miettunen does all of us a service by inventorying and documenting holy places and their associated traditions through much of south Jordan, focusing especially on the "pilgrimage tradition" (*ziyaara*) to Jabal Haroun.[3]

I first climbed Jabal Haroun as an "adventure tourist" in 1996, innocent of much, including the fact that I would end up moving to Jordan and staying for over twenty years to work on sustainable development projects for rural areas. In 2005 I moved to Wadi Musa, the town that serves the tourist site of Petra and functions as the main hub of the special administrative unit called Petra Region. I was conducting research on deforestation for a masters thesis in landscape architecture and, eventually, a book on deforestation in the Jibal al-Shara (Addison 2011). I was

[1] A key to Arabic transliteration can be found at the end of this article.
[2] *Dhrih* may indicate a tomb or shrine-site; *maqaam* is a holy place (which may or may not include a tomb); *waly* literally refers to the "saint" or guardian himself.
[3] The Arabic word *ziyaara* can be used to refer to any kind of visit, including stopping by someone's house for tea. *Ziyaara* used in a sacred context must not confused, however, with the obligatory *hajj* pilgrimage or *`umra* traditions in Islam. I will use the word "pilgrimage" or *ziyaara* throughout to refer to religiously motivated visits to holy places. As for the dispute about whether these are religious or "superstitious" traditions, I refer the reader to Miettunen, who reviews the debate sensitively and efficiently (2013:30-32; 57-61).

finding it difficult to document the evident impact of tourism on the environment of Petra Region, so I interned for a successful, locally-owned tour operator who was becoming interested in the new market segments of responsible, sustainable, eco- and adventure tourism. We went on to partner in a high-end, luxe eco-adventure tourism endeavor, but he was called by his tribe to stand – successfully as it would turn out – for Parliament in 2010. We both then turned our attention to generating funding for sustainable development projects – including ecotourism development – in Petra Region. In the midst of this (2010-11) I served as the senior environmental expert on the award-winning *Strategic Master Plan for Petra Region* (APA 2012). Thus, much of what I have to say angles from the perspective of an engaged citizen of the community which surrounds Petra and, thus, Jabal Haroun.

I first heard of the pilgrimage tradition in 2005, from an older woman of the `Amariin Bedouin who would have been born in the 1950s. I later heard again a wistful memory of the *ziyaara* from a woman in Wadi Musa who would have been born in the 1930s.[4] When I asked my local tourism colleagues (all men) about it they were vague, seeming embarrassed or skirting the subject altogether. During the drought winter of 2011-12, however, I heard from a (young, male) colleague who knew of my interest that there would be a *ziyaara* to the shrine to pray for rain. He would not go, he said, "because these are wrong practices, mistakes, against Islam. We don't do things like this anymore." Evidently 'we' do, however, because an historian and native son of Wadi Musa, Muhammad al-Nasarat, a year or so later published an excellent article on the local tradition, referring in some detail to a *ziyaara* of 2012 (Nasarat 2013), made by members of the community to petition for rain.

Testimonies to the widespread tradition of pilgrimage to the shrine of Nabi Haroun well into the latter half of the twentieth century are collected in Nasarat (2013) and Mietunnen (2013). Both authors demonstrate that the tradition had, in the early to mid-twentieth century, gained a "general Islamic significance" to communities well beyond Wadi Musa and the Petra area (Nasarat 2013). But Nasarat tells us that the last of the "public seasons" was 1985 (2013:210). This is interesting.

One might make a visit, a *ziyaara* to Nabi Haroun anytime, for a variety of reasons, but there was until the late twentieth century a communal pilgrimage season (*mawsim*) in late summer (Miettunnen 137), the season when the grapes ripen (Nasarat 153). The communal pilgrimage, particularly important to the Layaathna and Bidoul tribes of Wadi Musa and Umm Sayhoun (Nasarat 2013), included the long, steep walk from the floor of the main wadi to the top of Jabal Haroun. Prayers and offerings were made at the top, including some evidence, in the past, of animal sacrifice, and sometimes a meal was cooked there on the mountain. When the "visitors" (*zuwwaar*) returned to their homes in the villages, they hosted special "dinners for Haroun," and before the village was built up as it is today there were celebratory horse races. Songs to "Umm Ghaith" were sung as part of a fertility ritual to bring rain and good harvests, and there is record of local rituals of life cycle transition (fertility, birth, circumcision) (Miettunnen 2013), and even records that suggest that at one time local burials faced Jabal Haroun (Crawford 130).

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[4] Older people in south Jordan often do not know precisely when they were born, because there were few doctors. Often a government medical officer would come to a village and register the birth every child who had not yet been registered, all as born in the same year. I enquired further from time to time, out of personal curiosity and also for the purposes of guiding tourists. This experience of women as the main bearers of indigenous tradition is supported and explored by Mietunnen (2013), who was researching and writing around the same time I began working in Petra Region.

Individuals might go to petition for healing and protection (Nasarat 2013). There are testimonies and photographs of processions amongst the Rwala Bedouin headed by a cross-shaped effigy of Umm Ghaith, made of wood and clothed like a scarecrow (Musil 1927).

Like mine, however, it was Miettunen's impression that Jabal Haroun is now primarily visited by westerners, and primarily as a hike, an adventure (2013).[5] After reading her dissertation and Nasarat's article, I was moved to explore the "marketing" of Jabal Haroun in the tourism industry, and generally how the site is portrayed online to Arabic- and English-language audiences.[6] I was curious whether Jabal Haroun was ever portrayed as a *ziyaara* destination on Arabic travel sites, whether that significance was acknowledged on English language sites, and whether or not it figured in adventure tourism promotion to either audience. I analyzed the top fifty hits for the search terms "Jabal Haroun Petra" on Google.com and "جبل هارون البتراء" on Google.jo,[7] on three different days over the month of December, 2017. The same fifty websites remained at the top of each search during that time.

On both the Arabic and English web the assortment of sites was similar –scholarly articles, articles in the travel sections of online newspapers, purely religious sites (Qur'anic, hadith and Biblical interpretation), a few general interest books on Jordan, tourism or sacred sites, and, of course, travel and tourism providers and blogs. Some of the latter are sponsored by the Jordanian government, but most were commercial or personal. As I explored the websites, I asked the following questions and tabulated the results:

A. Is there content related in some way to travel and tourism?
58% of the English hits were travel-related sites; 48% of the Arabic sites.

B. Does the site mention pilgrimage or ziyaara?
22% of English hits mentioned pilgrimage; 26% of Arabic mentioned pilgrimage or *ziyaara*.

C. Does the site mention the Islamic significance of Jabal Haroun?
20% of English hits and 50% of Arabic mentioned Jabal Haroun's Islamic significance.

D. Is the site strictly a religious, not travel-related site?
10% of English and 12% of Arabic sites were strictly religious sites.

E. Is the site strictly an adventure travel site?
36% of English sites and 2% of Arabic sites were strictly adventure travel sites.

Results A, B and D are remarkably similar. Result C is unsurprising, since it would seem likely that Arabic speakers would remark more often on Islam. Result E was not surprising to anyone who has worked in Jordan tourism, but it supports what would otherwise be an anecdotal

[5] Her impressions are less casual than mine had been, because she was specifically studying Jabal Haroun for several years, and she also served with the FJHP (Finnish Jabal Haroun Project) which actually stayed on the mountain for extended periods of time during excavations.
[6] Jordan tourism is now organized and marketed overwhelmingly online. Print materials are available, but usually disseminated at travel conferences or in-country.
[7] A word to the wise: it doesn't work to inventory the top fifty sites on Google.com in Arabic – it mostly displays the same English language sites with Arabic titles. I wanted to see what an Arab tourist might see, in Arabic, searching Jabal Haroun – and so in Jordan, for example, that would be Google.jo.

observation: evidently the Arab market is still marginal in the adventure travel niche. Like most things, the comparison is more interesting as we look more closely.

Thirteen websites in the Arabic-language search sites mention both travel/tourism and pilgrimage in some way. Two are actually in English (appearing also in the English-language search), and they don't refer specifically Muslim pilgrimage, or the *ziyaara* tradition at Jabal Haroun, but to an undefined sacrality. Three refer specifically to the traditional *ziyaara* – but only as an activity which took place in the past. Two refer to contemporary Muslims making a religiously motivated visit to Jabal Haroun: a history site that focuses primarily on old photographs (jordanhistory.com), and a question-and-answer page on a travel forum, in which the traveler asks for directions to the *maqaam* of the Prophet Haroun, indicating that it is a religiously motivated visit (the host provides directions without further comment).

Nine were commercial tourism sites[8] (i.e., tourism providers or blogs intended to generate profit from tourism). Of these, two are the English language sites noted above, which mention an amorphous "sense of pilgrimage," without referring specifically to the *ziyaara* tradition or to Muslim religious tourism. A third is the traveler's question about *maqaamaat*, with no mention of *ziyaara*. The remaining six do not mention pilgrimage/*ziyaara* at all.

Of the top fifty hits for Jabal Haroun on English-language pages, twenty-nine are travel/tourism-related. Of these eighteen are purely adventure tourism sites, and eleven are commercial sites. Of the travel-related sites, eight mention pilgrimage, and four of those are commercial tourism sites. There is, however, not a single reference outside scholarly articles to the local *ziyaara* tradition. Within the travel-related sites which refer to pilgrimage, the term is *in every cas*e used without reference to cultural context or a specific ritual tradition. We shall return to this point presently.

In short, it would seem that indeed the *mawsim al-ziyaara*, the seasonal pilgrimage to Jabal Haroun, has passed into history. To explore this intriguing result, let us return to 1985, the end of the traditional, communal *ziyaaraat* to Jabal Haroun.

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The 1980s were a difficult transitional time for Jordan. By 1979 the regional balance of power was shifting dramatically following the communist coup in Afghanistan and the subsequent Soviet intervention, which burgeoned into the Soviet-Afghan War. Even more threatening to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was the Iranian Revolution and the demise of the Shah, an ardent advocate of westernization, who had been a firm ally of Jordan's King Hussein. Jordan was also experiencing deep tensions with its neighbor, Syria, and in an effort to strengthen his regional position King Hussein allied himself closely with his other powerful neighbor, Saddam Hussein's Iraq. This alliance effected, however, a chill with the Saudis and the Gulf on whose generosity Jordan had depended for aid. Jordan was in deep and worsening debt, and Iraq infused the rentier state with over $400 million in less than twelve months between late 1980 and the end of 1981 (Robinson 1998; Metz 1989).

[8] I defined a commercial travel/tourism site as one explicitly seeking to generate profit from the tourism industry – so commercially sponsored travel blogs, even if personal narratives, count as commercial travel/tourism sites, but articles in general-interest newspapers do not.

Meanwhile the influence of conservative Islam, including and perhaps especially the Salafi movement, was increasing in Jordan. The *Salafiyyin* are a literalist strand of Islam rooted in the teaching of Muhammad ibn al-Wahhab, the 18th century theologian who inspired the state ideology of Ibn Sa`ud, the founder of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The *Salafiyyin* claim an orthopraxy based exclusively on the *salaf*, the Muslims of the first three generations of Islam, as understood from the body of scripture known as the *hadith.* During the 1970s the quietist Salafi sheikh Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani gained influence on the Jordanian Salafi movement, and in 1979, during a ruthless crackdown on Islamists, left Syria for Jordan, where he remained until his death in 1999 (Wiktorowicz 2000). As corps of mujahideen returned to Jordan from the Soviet-Afghan War, however, they brought waves of Salafi ideas tinged a more political and militant hue. The defection of Sheikh Mashhour Hassan bin Salmaan from the more politically enfranchised Muslim Brotherhood to the *Salafiyyin* in 1985 suggests the movement's rising influence, as well as widespread frustration with political engagement (Wiktorowicz 2000).

It was also an increasingly political Islam, especially amongst the Palestinian population (Wiktorowicz 2000), which by 2010 constituted nearly half of Jordan (MAR 2010).[9] By 1989, when the regime held its first democratic election, the Islamists swept the vote (Utvik and Tonnesson 2008). Given the continuing failure of the Hashemite regime to address the Palestinian impasse via secular political strategies, and the fates of King Hussein's allies the Shah and Anwar Sadat at the hands of Islamists, the regime assumed a moderate and tolerant, but much more overtly Muslim attitude. Increased religious programming on radio and television included conspicuous coverage of the King and Crown Prince attending Friday Prayers (Metz 1989). The construction of Amman's "official royal mosque," the King Abdullah Mosque adjacent to Parliament, was initiated in 1982 and completed in 1989 as part of the newly Islamified landscape of the capitol city (Shami 2007). This new Islamic posture was a studied one: an iconographic public reassurance of Hashemite piety. A regime-level nudge to the right in matters religious was intended to temper the popular sway in a much more conservative direction. While in some sense a concession to "fundamentalist" influences, the regime in fact made precise moves toward stronger control over Jordan's Muslim ethos.

In 1980, as part of the effort to reposition the regime as observant, if moderate and inclusive, King Hussein founded the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilization Research, Aal al-Bayt Institute (RABIIT). Its stated purpose is to "purify" Islamic culture of "external elements" and "misconceptions." While prima facie a call to infuse global culture with Islamic thought, teaching and law, the eight primary aims of the Institute are woven throughout with the language of "modernity," "progress," "moderation," "tolerance," "dialogue," "rapprochement" and "cooperation." Its stated methods are the dissemination via the media of this moderate Islamic vision built through scholarship, education, publications, conferences, and *a review of the curricula of all educational institutions in Islamic countries* (italics mine) (kinghussein 2016). Not coincidentally, this approach is shared precisely by the Muslim Brotherhood, Salafi and Saudi ideologues (Yom & Sammour 2017), but to rather different ends. There is a meta-dialogue amongst regimes being conducted here. RABIIT is a thoroughly royal endeavor: its founder, King Hussein, delegated its administration to then-Crown Prince Hassan, who was replaced by King Hussein's son Hamzeh, himself Crown Prince until replaced by the son of the current

[9] That percentage has been skewed since 2011 by the influx of between 656,000 and 1.4 million Syrain refugees (Hayden 2017 ; UNHCR 2017).

monarch. Today the President of RABIIT is Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, of whom more shortly.

In 1986 the Dar al-Iftaa' ("Department of Fatwas") was formed under the aegis of the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs. A fatwa (pl. *iftaa'*) is an authoritative ruling on Shari'a law. Jordanian Ministers are all appointed by the King and may be dismissed at the King's pleasure. The Dar al-Iftaa' home page explains delicately how, because of "new matters in the lives of citizens" the administration of the fatwa council was in 1986 removed from the authority of the religious mufti and transferred into the hands of the Chief Justice (aliftaa 2018). Jordan's Chief Justice is the president of the high Court of Cassation, and also appointed by the King (Metz 1989). Thus were all official authoritative thinking and ruling on matters Islamic gathered under the authority of the regime.

Meanwhile King Hussein himself was engaged in intense negotiations with Shimon Peres, then Israeli Foreign Affairs Minister, to solve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. These negotiations were part of the precursory relationship which would eventually lead to the signing of the Jordan-Israel Peace Agreement in 1994 and what would come to be called "normalization" of relations between Jordan and Israel. This ongoing relationship was a more or less open secret to all, it seems, but the Jordanian street (Scham & Lucas: 2001). Peres and Hussein met several times in 1985.[10] In 1987 the talks with Peres culminated in the Peres-Hussein London Agreement, which was scuttled by Likud. What is interesting for our purposes is Peres' conviction, later detailed in his 1993 manifesto *The New Middle East*, that economic development was the lynchpin of all other regional progress, and that tourism was the centerpiece and cash cow that would yield broad-spectrum economic benefits, especially jobs, in the short term, following normalization (Hazbun 2002: 330; Leslau 2006: 59). This is rhetoric was explicitly co-opted by King Hussein in speeches leading up to the Peace Treaty of 1994 (Hazbun 2002: 336).

In 1985 Petra was designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Jordanians, mostly members of the Bidoul tribe who had been living in the ancient tombs and monuments, were moved out of the ancient remains to a planned community now called Umm Sayhoun. Obviously a brand-new, planned village with infrastructure for 150 households, approximately 2,500 people, did not appear overnight in 1985. UNESCO states that the boundaries of the WHS are coterminous with "Petra National Park," (UNESCO 1985) which only existed as proposal by USAID, first put forth in 1968 (USAID 1968). Aysar Akrawi, longtime chair of Petra National Trust, notes in one article that the motivation of the Park proposal, on USAID's side, was tourism, not archaeological conservation (2012). The Park idea persisted through the 1970s (UNESCO 1993): the plan to remove the Bidoul from their habitation within Petra's main city was floated in USAID's 1968 proposal, and planning for the relocation of the Bidoul began in the 1970s. The housing project was completed in 1982, but the Bidoul procrastinated moving out of Petra until 1984 (Tarawneh 2000). Petra Archaeological Park, as it was dubbed by UNESCO in 1985, was the centerpiece of a politically fraught, state-managed tourism strategy.

While ~~At the same time~~ the tourism plans were cooking, backroom discussions proceeded toward normalization with Israel, upon which was contingent a massive debt relief package from the United States (Scham & Lucas 2001). Furthermore, the promised economic growth – and especially job opportunities which would be spread so liberally across the population – were

[10] Throughout 1985 meetings between the two were documented. It is beyond the scope of this paper to detail the relationship, but see Schanche 1985, Friedland 1985, Safire 1985, for a sampling.

explicitly located in the tourism sector. Foreign aid investment in tourism and tourism infrastructure would, in the coming thirty years, reach into the hundreds of millions. Thus King Hussein was compelled to walk a narrow line between appeasing a conservatively inclined citizenry and appeasing its very rich, western benefactors. The direction Jordan would take aligned precisely with Peres' economic ideology, which taught that economic prosperity would weave anew the social and political fabric of the region. The regime positioned itself carefully at the intersection of Iran's new theocracy, its increasingly conservative population, the Wahhabi pseudo-fundamentalist Islam which undergirded Saudi Arabia, and the West – with which the regime had long identified, and on which, post-Peace, it would turn increasingly for foreign aid.

Jordan's worsening economic woes are commonly understood to have been the factor moving the populace toward more conservative Islam throughout the 1980s. The notion of *tajdid*, of Islamic "renewal," inspired at least in part by the rise of Imam Khomeini in Iran, gained currency as secular and state policies in the region failed and the general populace bowed under economic strain. While Salafism, Wahhabi Islam and the spreading ethic of *tajdid* are distinct, they overlap and also share a general "fundamentalism," in the sense that all advocate a return to the dogma and praxis of a foundational community, though that community may be imagined rather differently by different groups. *Tajdid* teaches that the body of hadith scripture describes ideal Islamic praxis, and that *bid`a*, "innovation" in this practice is ethically and religiously wrong. One teaching shared by the entire spectrum is the condemnation of the tradition of *ziyaara* to the shrines of holy persons, whether these are tombs, memorials or places in which supernatural events are believed to have occurred (Miettunnen 2013; Nasarat 2013). Jabal Haroun, obviously, is just such a place.

The small, bright white shrine to Nabi Haroun is the one structure in the Petra Reserve that is visible from almost anywhere within a 20km radius – from the bottom of Wadi Araba to the highest points of the Jibal al-Shara. It is impossible to approach Petra from any direction without seeing it, almost eerily perched above the rest of the landscape. The journey to Petra, including the climb to Jabal Haroun, has long been a trope of near-mythic significance to Israelis (Stein 2002),[11] finally made commonly feasible by the 1994 peace treaty. As noted above, the anticipated economic rewards of "peace" tourism were a keynote in King Hussein's efforts to sell normalization to the Jordanian public. While tourism did increase following the peace treaty (Hazbun 2002), revenue from Israeli tourism was paltry (Scham and Lucas 2001). Israeli tourists frequently came on day-trips, crossing the border only to make the quick trip into Petra and capture the necessary photographic proof of the visit (Stein 2002), even bringing their own food.

Neither did the surge in North American and European tourism bring the broad-based economic benefits anticipated. North American and European tourists added a day or at the most two in Jordan onto Israeli-based "Holy Land" tours. Established elite tourism firms and investors benefited far more than independent entrepreneurs and local tourism providers (Hazbun 2002). But there was still hope: the Millennium was expected to bring waves of Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land, and Jordan rushed to compete for millennium tourism.[12] In fact, to find Jordan's holy sites on King Hussein's official website, the reader must link from "The Hashemites" >"Islam and the Hashemites"> "Holy sites in Jordan" – which redirects to a page called "Touristic Sites." The page is divided into two topics: The Ancient Holy Land is the main title, with a subsection

[11] A moving example of the Petra myth occurs in Amos Oz' beloved novel, *A Perfect Peace*.
[12] Indeed the baptism site at Maghtas, discovered by Prince Ghazi himself in 1994-95, opened in 2000, just in time to compete with the West Bank site for millennium tourists and the Pope's historic visit.

on "Islamic Holy Sites." The top section closes with an invitation to Millennium 2000 celebrations. The main image is is Jabal Haroun.

In 1996 USAID funded a small RABIIT project of Hashemite Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, a handsome "coffee table" book called *The Holy Sites of Jordan* (RABIIT 2016b). Keep in mind that RABIIT is the royal authority on matters religious, the voice of Hashemite *tajdid*. The *Holy Sites of Jordan* begins with a 1995 fatwa permitting *ziyaara* to graves and memorials (Muhammad 1996). Its final paragraph politely addresses Salafi and Wahhabi concerns. The selection of holy sites also appears in a list on the RABIIT website. Along with the list on King Hussein's official website, these lists of *maqaamaat* have a normative function. The holy places which are strictly Muslim are all memorials to historical figures and events from the foundational period of Islam. After these, the tomb of the Prophet Hud and a sacred tree commemorating a (Christian) prophecy of the young Muhammad's future are Muslim, and the remaining twenty are shared with Christianity, and of those fourteen also with Judaism.

None of the dozens – perhaps hundreds – of purely Muslim sites venerated by local tribes, including the dozens examined with such care by Miettunen, made the list. These are humble, mysterious sites, most often associated with a sheikh or tribal elder, and frequently associated with Sufi tradition (Miettunnen 2013). The officially sanctioned sites have to be well-accepted Islamic historical sites more or less acceptable to the new conservatism in Jordanian Islam. "Correct," *sahih*, visitation does not include such activities as animal sacrifice, parading around behind a cross-shaped scarecrow and singing songs of petition to some Umm Ghaith! (Daral-iftaa 2018). Much less burial facing the *maqaam*. Miettunen documents the popular shift in local attitudes toward *ziyaara* that is doubtless what I was hearing from my colleagues in 2005 and the years following: "these are wrong practices."

The normative list picks a deft path between Islamic *tajdid* and the massive USAID funding that has poured into the Jordanian tourism sector for decades. I have argued elsewhere at length that explicit efforts were made in the late 1990s and early aughts to efface Islam from Jordan's tourism landscape and route tourists away from contact with actual Muslims (Addison 2004).[13] In the end the Millennium tourism surge was dampened by terror threats. Then came Sept. 11 in the U.S., temporarily decimating tourism worldwide and to Muslim countries in particular. In the wake of this letdown, USAID urged Jordan's policymakers, particularly in the tourism sector, to reduce the "perception of Jordan as a risk destination," to fight the "fear factor" (2004). The selection of officially sanctioned holy sites needed to be so unthreatening and inclusive that they are viable destinations for western tourists – less from the perspective of the market itself than from the perspective of international donors pouring money into Jordan based on tourism's potential (Addison 2004).

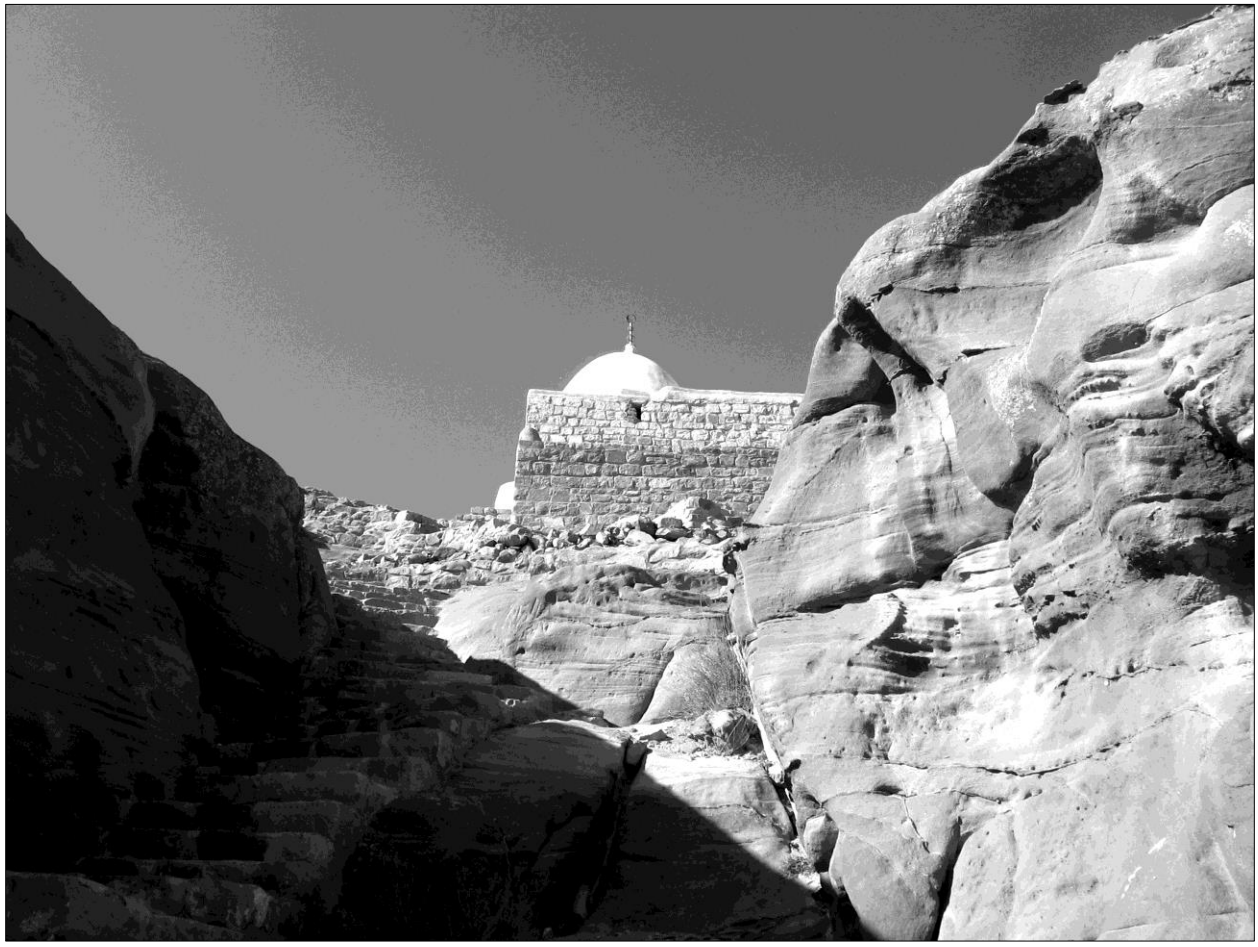
The sites that "made the list" are emblems, on the one hand, of a tolerant, inclusive Jordan crafted to appeal to western tourists. On the other, it is a list difficult for even a conservative Muslim to criticize: prophets are prophets, the companions of the Prophets are known from authoritative hadith, the battles took place, and they're known from Scripture – and it's all undergirded by a fatwa. Jabal Haroun is perfect: magnificently visible, sacred to the three Abrahamic traditions, set smack in the middle of a World Heritage Site. It only needed to be denatured of sketchy local traditions and the way cleared as much as possible of encounters with

[13] As in 1985 the Bidoul were removed from their homes inside the ancient remains of Petra

actual Muslims, *et voilà* – a tourist site. Given all of the foregoing, the fact that traditional *ziyaara* ended in 1985 seems hardly a coincidence.

In both English and Arabic, the virtual media of 2017 now hews to this line. To the Arab travel industry, the "visit" to Jabal Haroun has successfully been shorn of strange local practices. While twenty-five mention the Islamic significance of the site, in the few instances that *ziyaara* is mentioned at all it is a curiosity of the past: a matter for scholars of history. Even the three travel-related sites which mention religiously-motivated tourism strip Jabal Haroun of cultural context or detail: *people come to Jordan from all over the world for religious tourism; this shrine is located at the summit of Jabal Nabi Haroun.* That's all.

In the English-language media on Jabal Haroun the notion of pilgrimage itself has been universalized and homogenized. "Pilgrimage" is used again and again to lend a note of sacrality and solemnity to a hike, but the concept is unmoored from any technical ritual structure or reference to cultural context or tradition. In one case "pilgrimage" is used as the title of a sub-section which merely describes the physical hike. The confluence of trekking/challenge/spirituality is certainly more related to the romantic American nature writing of Henry David Thoreau and John Muir than anything remotely Muslim. Jabal Haroun has indeed become a fully sanitized western tourist destination – an unthreatening, context-free adventure.



A note on transliteration of Arabic words

Names and loanwords commonly used in English (e.g., Jordan, wadi, sheikh) are not transliterated from Arabic, but written as they commonly appear in English. The definite article "ال" is written "al-", as it commonly appears in English.

Words not commonly known in English are transliterated as follows:

aa = ا	b = ب	t = ت	th = ث	j = ج
h = ح	kh = خ	d = د	th = ذ	r = ر
z = ز	s = س	sh = ش	s = ص	dh = ض
t = ط	zh = ظ	` = ع	gh = غ	f = ف
q = ق	k = ك	l = ل	m = م	n = ن
h = ه	ou,w = و	i,y = ي	' = ء	

short vowels: a =’ i = , u = ‘
ة is transliterated as "a" for fusha, "eh" for colloquial/ dialect words
إ and أ are transliterated according to the short vowel they would carry
Many other subtleties are more difficult to transliterate, and probably not crucial to the argument.

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