Presenting the Hammam al-Pasha: Conserving Heritage by Creating an Attraction

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Abstract

The Hammam al-Pasha is one of the most heavily advertised—and perhaps one of the most heavily visited—tourist attractions in the Old City of Akko; markers of the site can be found in almost any tourist guidebook on Israel. In order to understand the historical and cultural 'authenticity' of this site, this research applies the framework of architectural documentation to the analysis of a touristic phenomenon, surveying tourists' experiences as they explore the Turkish Bathhouse. The final outcome of this project is a thorough record of the 'tourist experience' of the Hammam al-Pasha during a specific moment in time (June 2011), which combines interviews of locals, surveys of tourists, and content analysis of tourist advertisements, as well as an analysis of the implications on 'authenticity' of conserving the Turkish Bathhouse as a tourist attraction.

Photo 1: The Hammam al-Pasha Tourist Attraction, June 2011. Photo by Caitlin M. Davis.

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Introduction

A tourist brochure of Akko (Acre) published by the Old Acre Development Company LTD invites visitors to "experience the magic of Akko," promising to present a "fascinating history—a rare mix of east and west, authentic sites of times gone by" and "an exciting journey into the glorious past" (Old Acre Development Company [OADC] 2011). This northern Israeli city is one of the oldest continuously inhabited towns in the world. Located north of Haifa Bay in the Western Galilee region, the Old City of Akko is a living port city enclosed by fortified walls and is most famous for its preserved Ottoman and underground Crusader cities, its working fishermen's wharf, and its 'typical' Arab markets. In 2001 UNESCO designated the Old City of Akko a World Heritage site, emphasizing its character as an authentic example of a traditional Ottoman settlement in the Middle East; a city that "has remained relatively unchanged for the last 150–300 years" (UNESCO 2001:7).

Many of the above-ground monuments scattered throughout Akko date to the late 18th century, when Ahmed al-Jazzar was appointed ruler of Damascus and its surroundings. Al-Jazzar turned Akko into his political center and conducted extensive building projects within the city; he fortified the city's walls, refurbished the aqueduct, and constructed mosques, bathhouses, palaces, and caravanserai, all of which reflected the renewed prosperity—at least for al-Jazzar— in the region. Nonetheless, the landscape beyond the boundaries of the Old City's walls remained relatively undeveloped until the British captured Akko in 1918. Bringing a European-derived conservation ethic to many of its colonies, the British protected the urban character of Akko's Old City by using the land outside the city's walls to erect homes and administrative buildings; the British did "nothing to alter the fabric of life within the walls of the old city" (UNESCO 2001:41) and protected it under the law of antiquities. However, the demographics of Akko

changed dramatically after May 1948, when many of Old Akko's Arab residents fled the city during the Arab-Israeli War. While the homes of Old Akko's former residents were briefly appropriated by incoming Jewish families, they were soon emptied as a majority of the Jewish inhabitants moved into the New City's expanding housing developments. Arab refugees from farms throughout the Galilee quickly replaced these Jewish residents in the Old City, many of whose decedents still reside in Old Akko (UNESCO 2001:40–41).

Photo 2: The Old City of Akko and its Environs (Cocks 2007)

By the beginning of the 21st century, the Old City of Akko had transformed itself into a heritage tourist town notable for the Crusader ruins, Ottoman architectures, and 'oriental' culture it offered for consumption. While the current tourism infrastructure of Old Akko centers around self-contained tourist spaces designed to meet tourists' expectations, the British envisioned a more integrated encounter between tourists and locals. One of the first public imaginings of Old

Akko as a potential tourist attraction occurred during the British Mandate period, when a memorandum by the Reconstruction Commissioner to Government in July 1943 discussed Akko's tourism potential as:

> Acre is a place deserving of special treatment as probably the most beautifully situated town in Palestine and as one of its finest architectural and archaeological monuments. If, as I hope it will do, Government takes energetic steps after the War, to encourage tourist traffic with a view to stimulating visible exports, Acre should gain a new importance as an outstanding attraction for tourists. [Winter 1944:2]

In the late 1940s tourism to Akko was severely limited as it was considered 'off the map', an ironic designation given Akko's easy accessibility to main transportation routes. The variety and wealth of its archaeological and historical sites were not enough to override the perception of Akko as simply being a "beautiful panorama and natural setting" (Winter 1944:99). It was this perception of Akko that led Winter to promote the commodification of Akko's "own 'native' life," which was filled with "busy suqs; the oddities of the unexpected; life lived in the streets; the picturesque 'camera views' found in nooks and corners; the vaulted ways; the piling up of the charmingly unconventional disorder of domestic architecture" (Winter 1944:99); it is these elements that were considered to have the ability to captivate visitors. Furthermore, the promotion of tourism to the Old City of Akko represents a major catalyst for the development of a conservation strategy throughout the Old City:

> Care however must be taken at every turn to ensure that all this which gives it its particular character shall continue. Changes, alterations, or improvements to the town and its buildings which will become inevitable, since a town cannot be artificially sterilized and at the same time breathe a natural corporate life, should to this end be most thoughtfully conceived and executed. [Winter 1944:100]

The current management and planning of tourism in Akko reflects the conservation ethic proposed by the Winter Report (1944); tourism managers and planners aim to present Akko's

monuments and sites to the general public without compromising the town's "special character" (UNESCO 2001:45).

A visit to Akko generally involves the consumption of an entire 'Akko experience', with many visitors purchasing an 'Akko package' that includes entrance into Akko's major sites: the Citadel, the Templars' Tunnel, the Hammam al-Pasha, the Ethnographic Museum, and the Okashi Museum. The degree to which these sites are spread throughout Old Akko enables tourists to wander (through designated tourist paths) the Old City, passing by the al-Jazzar Mosque, the Suq, and the Khans. What is distinct about the major attractions promoted in Akko's Old City is the extent to which the city's sites depict Akko as historic, a static (dead) city frozen in the past; only the al-Jazzar Mosque, the Suq, and a few of the Khans are being actively used and changed by the local community. This phenomenon is particularly evident in the Hammam al-Pasha (the Turkish Bathhouse), one of the most heavily advertised—and one of the most heavily visited[1]— tourist attractions in the Old City of Akko.

The Hammam al-Pasha is presently managed by the Old Acre Development Company, who oversees its current exhibition: "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant," an audio-visual experience of the Turkish bathhouse in the Ottoman period. Given the cultural significance of the Hammam al-Pasha as a functioning bathhouse until the late 1940s, this research not only seeks to explore the extent to which the site being conserved by the Hammam al-Pasha tourist attraction represents an 'authentic' Turkish bathhouse, but also *what* the site is actually conserving and *for whom*. In other words, this research serves as a case study for examining the implications of tourism as a conservation strategy as well as the degree to which tourism can serve as a viable, culturally sensitive conservation tool.

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[1] In 2010 the Hammam al-Pasha received 46,000 visitors (General Secretary of OADC, 20 June 2011).

We approached this research by applying the framework of architectural documentation to the analysis of a tourism phenomenon, surveying the tourist experience of the Hammam al-Pasha in June 2011. This required researching the development of the bathhouse as a tourist attraction; creating an inventory of the current advertisements for the Hammam al-Pasha tourist attraction; transcribing "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant" film; surveying tourists and interviewing locals regarding their perspectives of the Hammam al-Pasha tourist experience; and describing and photographing the audio-visual experience of the attraction.

From the first time we visited the Hammam al-Pasha "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant" attraction in mid-February 2011, the site, its presentation of Ottoman history and culture, and its 'museumization' of a local (living?) tradition piqued our interest in the complexities of conserving intangible heritage throughout the Old City of Akko. We visited the site again in the beginning of June 2011, a couple days after developing a research proposal on the implications of using tourism as a conservation strategy. We spent the first week of our research engaging in participant observation of the Hammam al-Pasha tourist attraction, immersing ourselves in the "audio-visual experience" of "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant" while taking notes on our reactions to the site and our observations of tourists. Nonetheless, the usefulness of participant observation as a methodological approach to our research was severely limited given our inability to speak Hebrew as well as the nature of the attraction: most tourists were focused on the audio-video display and seldom verbally interacted with other tourists.

The second stage of our research involved the development of a tourist questionnaire, which we would offer to tourists after they exited the Hammam al-Pasha. This questionnaire, translated into both English and Hebrew, aimed to understand basic information about tourists and the

contexts in which they visited Akko as well as their impressions of the attraction in terms of its authenticity and its notable (memorable) features. The questionnaire participants were selected through a convenience sample of tourists exiting the Hammam al-Pasha. In order to encourage tourist participation, we incorporated a formal and inviting introduction that described who we are, the purpose of the survey, the institutions supporting the survey, and how we will maintain confidentiality, all in a way that concealed the objectives of our survey. We collected 54 surveys between June 22 and June 29 (2011), waiting in the courtyard of the Hammam al-Pasha and approaching visitors as they exited the 'hot room'. However, despite our attempts to minimize bias, tourists' satisfaction with the Hammam al-Pasha affected their willingness to respond. We encountered numerous individuals who refused to take our survey because they had left the attraction early, explaining to us briefly that "there's a reason we left in the middle of the movie" (Fieldnotes, 22 June 2011). Furthermore, our conclusions are necessarily limited: our questionnaires of tourists occurred in a very short time frame (seven days), during Akko's off-peak tourist season.

The final stage of our research involved the engagement with members of the Old Akko community through four semi-structured, in-person interviews, two of which were conducted with the help of a Hebrew-English translator. Our inability to speak Hebrew or Arabic, the distrust in the Old Akko community towards representatives of the government, and our lack of long-term residence in the Old City of Akko represent a few of the major obstacles we faced in finding people who would be willing to speak with us about the Hammam al-Pasha. The members of the local community with whom we spoke were connected to us through the Director of the International Conservation Center, a well-known individual throughout the Old Akko community who has conducted extensive research on the intangible heritage of the Old

City. The ensuing snowball sampling created a situation where our interviewees tended to be individuals who were community leaders and connected with one another, necessarily biasing our results towards one particular perspective.

Chapter One
Documenting a Tourist Experience

An extensive process of documentation occurs prior to any conservation project, where conservation architects and engineers record and catalogue the history, the architectural features, and the structural pathologies of an archaeological or historical building. This chapter applies the framework of architectural documentation to the analysis of a touristic phenomenon, surveying the tourist experience as tourists explore the Hammam al-Pasha in June 2011[2]. In order to record the 'tourist experience' of the Hammam al-Pasha at this specific moment in time, our documentation will replace the typical elements of an architectural documentation report and instead address the history of the development of the site as a tourist attraction; provide a thorough description of the site as a 'tourist experience'; and include an inventory of the various off-site markers of the attraction.

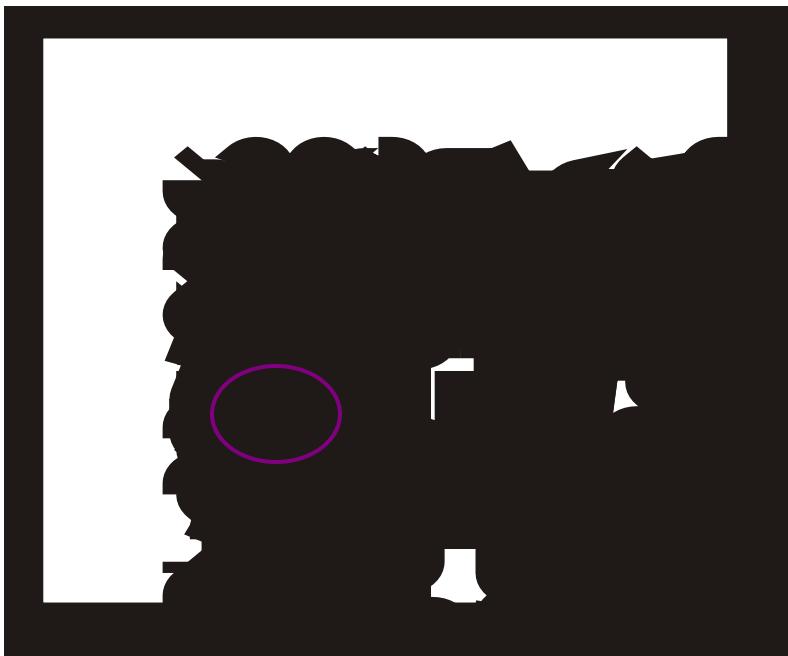**HISTORICIZING THE HAMMAM AL-PASHA TOURIST EXPERIENCE**

Photo 3: Map of Hammam al-Pasha's location in Old Akko's north section, adjacent to the Citadel and al-Jazzar's Mosque (Conservation Documentation File 2003).

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[2] The significance and urgency of documenting the Hammam al-Pasha tourist experience stems from the possibility of its re-design; the Old Acre Development Company re-evaluates its tourist program every 10 years.

The Hammam al-Pasha (the 'Turkish Bathhouse') was built in 1781 by Ahmed Pasha al-Jazzar (reigned: 1775–1804) and has been regarded as one of the largest, most ornate existing Ottoman period bathhouses in the country. Composed of large halls heated by subterranean tunnels, the bathhouse was built as a dedication to al-Jazzar's Mosque and has often been noted for skillfully incorporating beautiful granite, porphyry, marble slabs and pillars as well as colorful painted tiles originally imported from Damascus and Anatolia. The Turkish Bathhouse lies in the north-east corner of Akko's old city amidst many of the town's historic public buildings (i.e., the Seraya, the Citadel, and al-Jazzar's Mosque), exclusively serving the Pasha, his family, and his harem until the Tanzimat (1839)[3]. Edward Daniel Clarke of the British fleet provides perhaps one of the earliest touristic accounts of a 'Hammam al-Pasha tourist experience' while visiting Akko as a guest of al-Jazzar in 1801, noting:

> The bath of Akko is the finest and best built of any that we saw in the Turkish empire. We all bathed here during our stay. Every kind of antique marble, together with large pillars of Egyptian granite, might be observed among the materials of its construction. [Dichter 2000:210]

The Hammam al-Pasha continued to function as an active Turkish bathhouse throughout the Ottoman and British Mandate periods, closing its doors after the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. Near the end of the British Mandate, British visitors to the Turkish Bathhouse described it as

> purely oriental in style, and resemble[s] the public baths of Cairo. They consist of an entrance hall for dressing, in the centre of which is a fountain; a sweating room for the use of the general public; and several cells adjoining which are for private use and are fitted with stone basins and water taps. The inside of the building was formerly covered with Turkish tiles of inferior quality and made most probably in Damascus. Some panels of them have been reset and are to be seen in the entrance. [Makhouly and Johns 1946:80-81]

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[3] Although some halls were available for public use, the general public was largely served by one of Akko's three other public bathhouses (Dichter 2000:210).

In 1954 the building of the Hammam al-Pasha was turned into Akko's Municipal Museum, which exhibited archaeological and historical finds from the city and its surroundings alongside displays of Arab folklore. It was during this period of the building's history when the designer[4] of the exhibit first approached the municipality and proposed (albeit without any success) the idea for "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant." After more than thirty years as a museum, the bathhouse was emptied of the museum objects in the 1990s, becoming an empty building open for public visitation. While many of the artifacts from the museum are currently displayed in an exhibit on the first floor of the Municipality, a sign for the Municipal Museum carved into the stone on the western façade of the Hammam al-Pasha serves as a reminder of this period of the building's history.

Photo 4: Remains of Acre Museum Entrance, June 2011. Photo by Caitlin M. Davis.

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[4] The designer of the Hammam al-Pasha "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant" exhibit was the founder of Programa 1, an Israeli museum design company started in 1986.

Eliav Nahalieli approached the Old Acre Development Company[5] and presented his "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant" concept again in 2000, which involved turning the Turkish Bathhouse into a 'museum' experience that demonstrates the daily life of the hammam and its people in the Ottoman Period[6]. In the planning process for the Hammam al-Pasha "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant" exhibition, the Old Acre Development Company aimed to target the largest possible range of tourists (kids, families, adults). This effort to cater to all types of visitors helps to explain why the audio-visual storyline blends history with entertainment and folklorist elements (General Secretary of OADC, 20 June 2011). The Head of the Old Acre Development Company and its Board of Directors approved the final proposal, re-opening the Hammam al-Pasha as an audio-visual touristic experience in September 2003[7]. The Turkish Bathhouse is currently one component of a larger 'tourist package' marketed to tourists through the Old Acre Development Company; tourists to the Hammam al-Pasha generally visit the site as participants of large tour groups, passing through all the major archaeological and historic sites in Akko in just a few hours. Thus, an adult ticket to the Hammam al-Pasha is typically purchased as an addition to the combined ticket that includes admission into the Citadel, the Templars' Tunnel, the Okashi Museum, and the Ethnographic Museum for 46 shekels[8]; this is 19 shekels more than an admissions ticket to the Hammam al-Pasha, making the Turkish Bathhouse the

[5] The Old Acre Development Company, Ltd. was founded in 1967 as a government company subordinate to the Israeli Ministry of Tourism, designed to invest in the development and marketing of the Old City as an international tourism city in accordance with a regional concept combining hotel accommodation as well as tours and visits to sites and attractions in Acre and its surroundings (OADC 2003).

[6] The Old Acre Development Company and the exhibit designers chose to focus on Ottoman history because that's when the Hammam al-Pasha was built. With only "24 minutes to present information about the Hammam, we had to carefully pick and chose what would be included and excluded" (General Secretary of OADC, 20 June 2011).

[7] The video selected for the site was the theme originally presented to the Old Acre Development Company. During the planning stages of the site, there was always a flow of information between the designers and the Board of Directors, who approved every stage. It should be noted that locals weren't involved in the planning process because "they chose not to be involved" (General Secretary of OADC, 20 June 2011).

[8] As part of our fieldwork, we spent two days sitting in front of the ticket booth where tourists and tour guides purchase admission to the various sites managed by the Old Acre Development Company. This fieldwork, along with our questionnaire results, indicate that in June 2011 most tourists visited the Hammam al-Pasha as part of a packaged experience that included visits to Akko's other attractions.

most expensive attraction in Old Akko. By the time tourists arrive at the Hammam al-Pasha, they

have generally already visited the two other majors sites managed by the Old Acre Development
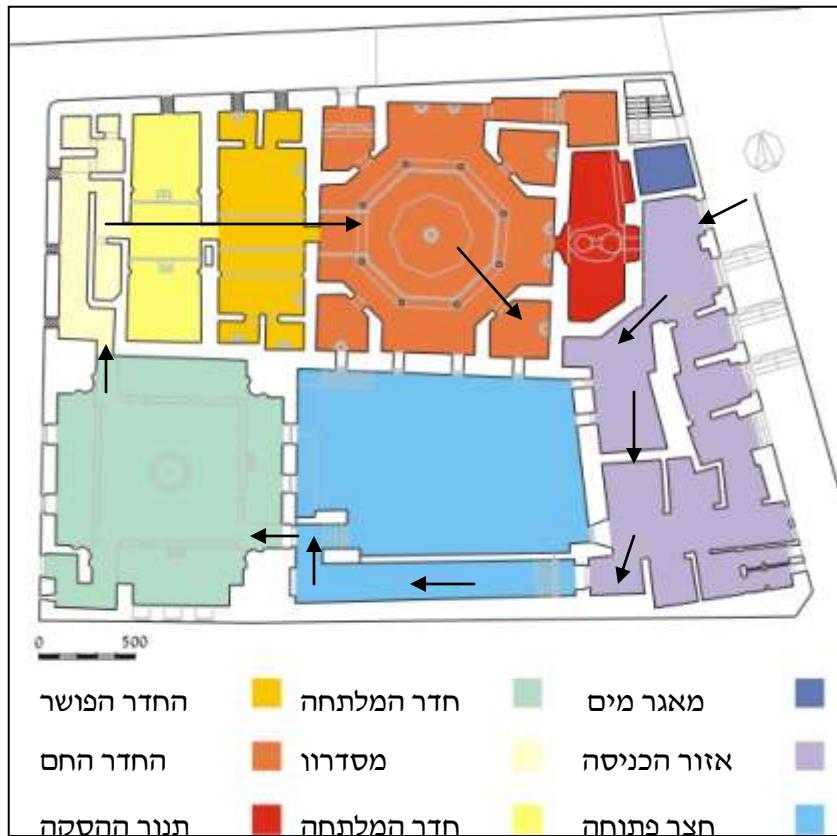
Company: the Citadel and the Templars' Tunnel[9].

Photo 5: Hammam al-Pasha plan (Conservation Documentation File 2003).

החדר הפושר	חדר המלתחה	מאגר מים	
החדר החם	מסדרון	אזור הכניסה	
תנור ההסקה	חדר המלתחה	חצר פתוחה	

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[9] It should be noted that a majority of the tourists who visited the Hammam al-Pasha during our fieldwork in June 2011 were Israeli, suggesting that Akko is a significant attraction for domestic—rather than international—tourism.
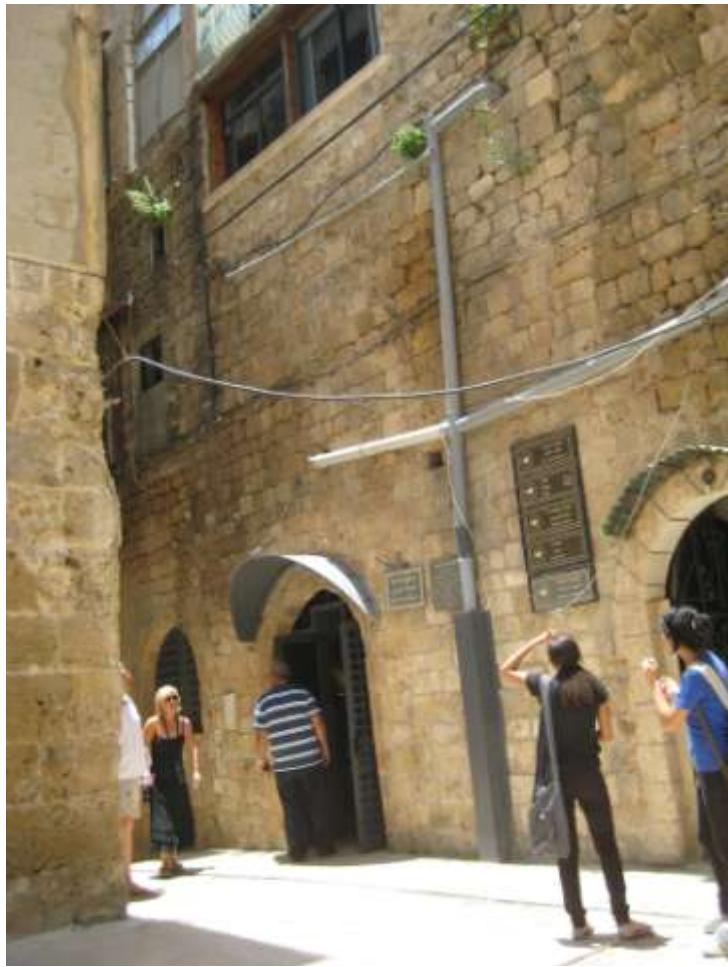
Photo 6: Entrance to the Hammam al-Pasha, June 2011.
Photo by Caitlin M. Davis.

Tourists enter the Hammam al-Pasha complex through a doorway located on the ground level of the eastern façade of a multistory residential building. Guarded by an employee who reviews entrance tickets, the doorway leads to a long corridor, illuminated with low-lighting, which guides visitors to a booth where another employee provides visitors with the audio-equipment (headsets) necessary to view "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant" video. After the visitors receive their headsets they exit the eastern portion of the Hammam al-Pasha complex and enter a courtyard, filled with "authentic" Arab music emitting from speakers disguised as rocks. The perimeter of the courtyard contains stone seating, shaded with makeshift tarps strung from the

walls of the courtyard. Before the temporary shading was installed, visitors could easily see the southern wall of the Acre Prison as well as the upper-stories of the residential building on the eastern portion of the complex; the building is composed of modern additions not in line with current building regulations and easily distinguishable from the original Ottoman level. The courtyard shows signs of preparations for a concession stand and gift shop, as mentioned in "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant" film, but these facilities were not yet open as of 2011.

Photo 7: Courtyard of Hammam al-Pasha, June 2011. Photo by Caitlin M. Davis.

Two minutes before "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant" begins, the stone speakers scattered throughout the courtyard announce in many different languages that the film will commence shortly. After two minutes has elapsed, a door to the Hammam al-Pasha opens automatically, and tourist enter a large well lit domed room—'the lobby' of the bathhouse—where they can sit on small, low-to-the-ground stools that surround a large fountain and face a screen. The lights dim and "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant" film starts playing. The narrator of the film, a popular actor in Israeli society, plays the role of the latest living descendant in a long line of bathhouse attendants. The audience watches as he describes, with the

help of his bathhouse attendant ancestors, a 15-minute fictionalized history of Akko and the

folklore of the Hammam al-Pasha, centered on the Ottoman period[10]. The attraction is designed

in a way that draws the visitors' attention towards the film, providing them with little opportunity

to observe the marble benches encircling the lobby or the first signs of the Hammam al-Pasha's

visual motif: "original" drawings[11] on semitransparent screens illustrating "scenes from the past"

(Programa 1 2011) and three aluminum-cast statues representing the Hammam al-Pasha's
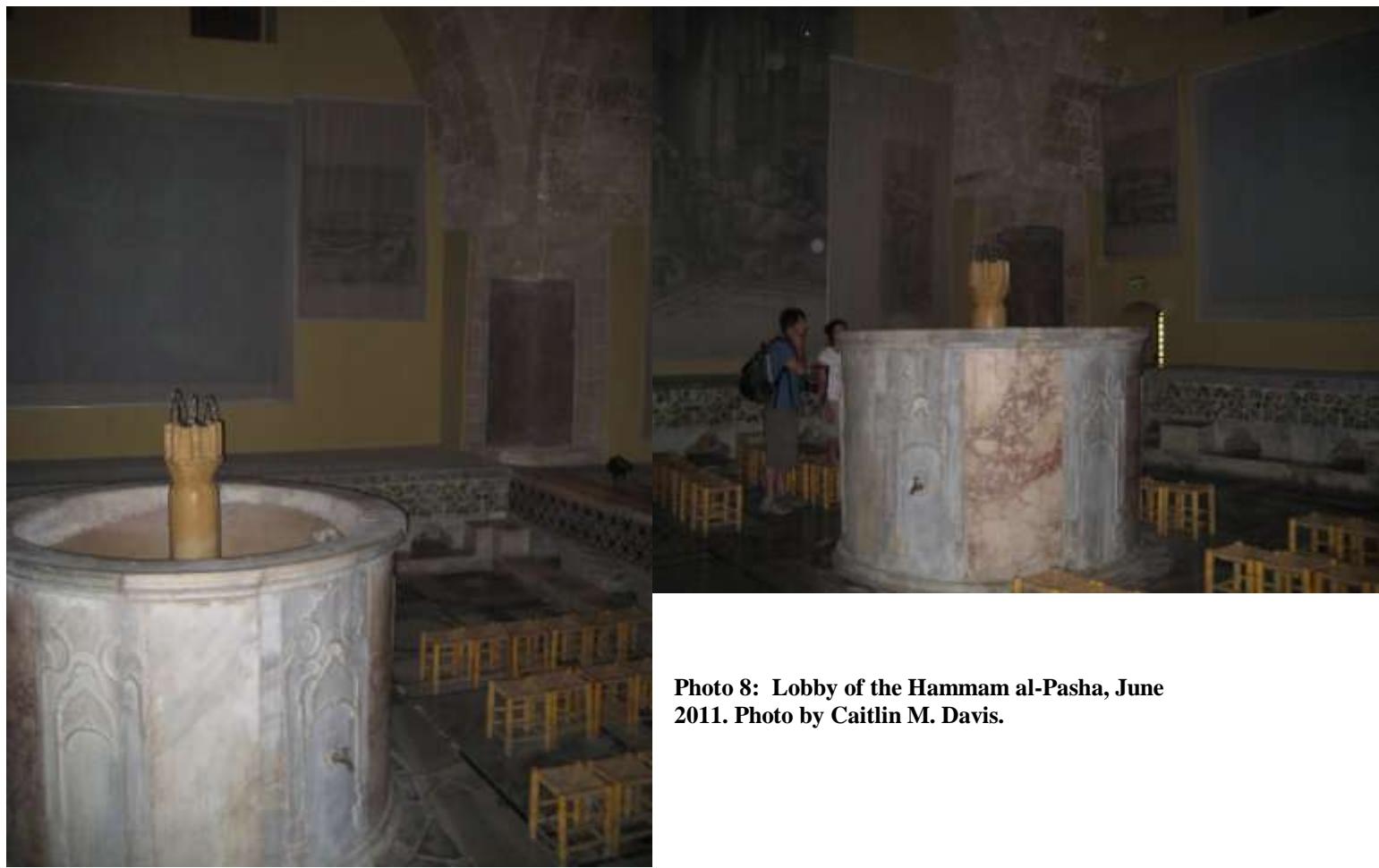
Ottoman period bath attendants and clients.

Photo 8: Lobby of the Hammam al-Pasha, June 2011. Photo by Caitlin M. Davis.

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[10] The transcript of the English version of "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant" film is included in the Appendix of this documentation.

[11] The series of drawings in the Hammam al-Pasha were created by an artist who used historical photographs of the Hammam al-Pasha as inspiration for the scenes depicted. The prints were intentionally designed to resemble historical drawings (Director of OADC, 27 June 2011).

After the first film ends a second door opens automatically, guiding visitors down a meandering corridor to a long hallway where they can view the multi-purpose rooms—in "use" by the aluminum-cast statues of bath attendants and clients. The visitors can briefly see each room from the hallway as they listen to the narrator provide a fictionalized historical account of the functions of these rooms; the visitors are prevented from entering each room by a semitransparent screen on which is imprinted more "original" drawings of the bathhouse and its guests.

Photo 9: Multi-purpose Rooms of Hammam al-Pasha, June 2011. Photo by Caitlin M. Davis.
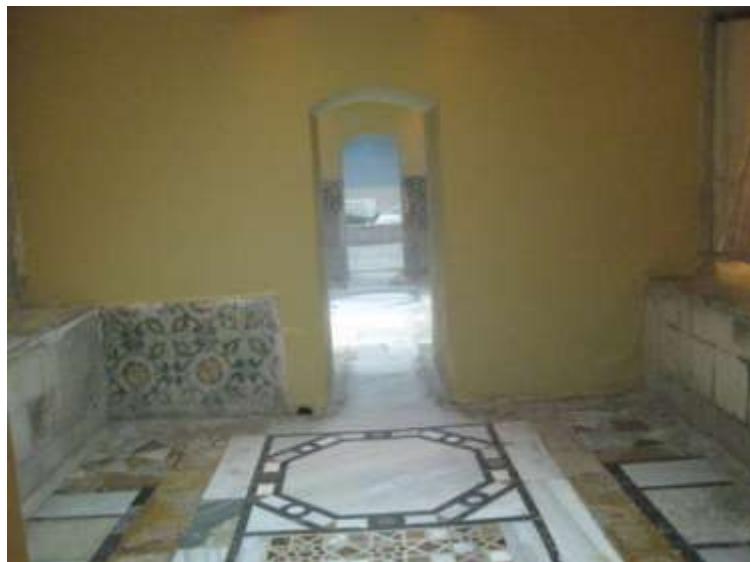
However, the highlight of the attraction occurs when visitors are led from the hallway into the "hot room," which is filled with 'steam' from a fog machine before visitors arrive. As the visitor enters the hot room, they find cast-aluminum figures of bathhouse clients from the Ottoman period scattered around. The visitors have little time to explore the "hot room," its enclosed private spaces, its clients, and its props: the towels, the bowls, the "wooden" sandals, or the sponges; the visitors are immediately directed towards a cast-aluminum figure with the face of the narrator, who is now dressed in 'traditional' Ottoman clothing, projected onto it. He briefly introduces the visitors to the "hot room" before a second video begins that details the treatments bathhouse clients received, all through the perspective of a fictionalized Hammam al-Pasha

bathhouse attendant. As the second video concludes, a third door opens automatically and brings the visitors back to the courtyard from where they first entered the Hammam al-Pasha.
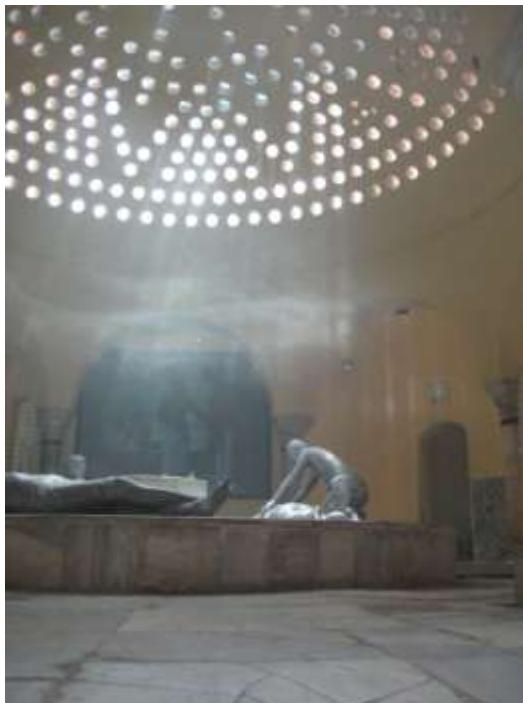
Photo 10: Hot Room of the Hammam al-Pasha, June 2011. Photo by Caitlin M. Davis.

The exhibit designer's decision to tell the "history of Acre in the Ottoman period as the walls of the bathhouse would have 'heard' it from the bathers while undressing and enjoying their bath and massage" through a 24-minute "audio-visual experience in which the audience has the opportunity to meet the last bath attendant on the premises" (Programa1 2011) directly affects the way tourists were expected to interact with the site. Since the information provided from the Hammam al-Pasha tourist experience is disseminated solely through the a audio-visual feature ("The Story of the Last Bath Attendant"), the site controls the visitors' movements, attention, and length of stay[12]. In other words the visitors are not expected to indulge in the site; they are expected to see the site and then leave as soon as the video has completed.

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[12] While conducting fieldwork the employees of the Hammam al-Pasha were shocked whenever we requested they replay "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant" for us, or whenever we stayed in the courtyard for any length of time after the film. The security guard would keep asking when we were leaving.

Chapter Two
Confronting Authenticity in the Hammam al-Pasha

The UNESCO Nomination File for the Old City of Akko consistently highlights the "authenticity" of the place. Untouched by the "industrial era," the city's spatial organization and structure have remained largely unchanged, with "the function of the majority of its buildings" correlating "to their original use" (UNESCO 2001:7). Despite "some minor changes and additions carried out by the local population," the residents of Old Akko have maintained—according to the Nomination File—the "essence and spirit of the Ottoman city" keeping "Acre largely as it was in Ottoman times" (UNESCO 2001:16). By suggesting an unbroken connection between buildings such as the Hammam al-Pasha, their original functions, and the Ottoman period, the Nomination File for the Old City of Akko not only erases the buildings' dynamic histories, but it also calls into question the 'authenticity' of sites like the Hammam al-Pasha.

One theoretical perspective within the field of tourism studies proposes that tourists travel to different sites around the world in search of 'authenticity'. While many visitors to Akko may be on this same journey, the individuals who seemed most concerned about the authenticity of sites such as the Hammam al-Pasha were the employees of the Israel Antiquities Authority and the Old Acre Development Company; it was these individuals who encouraged us to confront the issue of 'authenticity' at the Hammam al-Pasha. This chapter will explore the 'authenticity' of the site being conserved through the Hammam al-Pasha tourist attraction, perhaps raising more questions than it answers about heritage and its presentation to tourists.

SEMIOTICS OF THE TURKISH BATHHOUSE ATTRACTION

Following Dean MacCannell's (1976) semiotic analysis of tourist attractions in *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, the Hammam al-Pasha is a tourist attraction that may be

analyzed as a sign within which a relationship between a sight, a marker, and a tourist is embedded (MacCannell 1976:109). Just as Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic formulation argued that *signs* represent *something* to *someone*, Dean MacCannell's semiotic of attraction suggests that *tourist attractions* mark *sights* to *tourists*.

Sign [represents / something / to someone]

Attraction [marker / sight / tourist]

This tripartite structure expands upon the two-tier semiotic system proposed by Ferdinand de Saussure, where social convention and a process of *signification* arbitrarily link an object/concept (signified) to a word (signifier) (Knudsen et al. 2007:229).[13] While Saussure's insights refer primarily to an analysis of linguistic signs, Peirce's semiotics incorporates verbal *and* nonverbal systems of signification; this theoretical maneuver allows semiotics to become easily applicable to the study of tourist attractions and their sign systems (Echtner 1999:48–49).

The advertisements, Ottoman architectures, and audio-visual information about the Hammam al-Pasha represent a collection of signs that can be deciphered through an exercise in semiotics[14]. In order to establish the ways in which the Hammam al-Pasha may be considered a tourist attraction (sign), I will first identify the off-site markers (the signifiers) of the Hammam al-Pasha that allow tourists to recognize the building as a sight (the signified). I will then explore the possible arbitrariness and interchangeability of the signifier and the signified within the context of the Turkish Bathhouse.

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[13] According to Saussure, the *sign* is defined as the whole—or recognizable combination—that results from the association of a signifier with a particular signified.

[14] Due to time and space constraints, this analysis will focus on the advertisements of the Hammam al-Pasha attraction. However, a content analysis of both "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant" and the architectural characteristics highlighted by the site could easily reveal the same signs as the advertisements.

The markers (i.e., representations or signifiers) of a tourist attraction are typically the first contact a sightseer has with a sight (i.e., Hammam al-Pasha). A marker can include *any* information about a sight, such as the name of a sight, a picture of the sight, a map of the sight, or any other information about a sight that can be found in travel books, dissertations, visitor stories, brochures, and advertisements. These markers can be *on-sight* (any information that is attached to a sight or posted alongside of a sight) or *off-sight* (any information that is separated from the sight). This section inventories the major *off-sight* markers of the Hammam al-Pasha most likely viewed by current tourists, which we gathered from tourist guidebooks, websites, and brochures produced within the last ten years[15] (MacCannell 1976:110–11).

The "Museum" section of the Old Acre Development Company website contains a description of the Hammam al-Pasha that has also been reproduced by Eretz Hatzvi Events & Productions LTD; Index Tourism: Israel Tourism Guide; and the Old Acre Development Company's official tourist brochure of the Turkish bathhouse. The Hammam al-Pasha section of the Old Acre Development Company website includes six scattered images of the attraction, three of which focus on the architectural features of the site while the other three images highlight aspects of the audio-visual experience[16]. The text within the Old Acre Development Company website describes the history and architectural features of the Hammam al-Pasha:

> A public bathhouse that was built by El-Jazar in the year 1795 in the format of the Oriental bathhouses that were common in the Turkish Empire during the 18th and 19th centuries. The bathhouse has an entry room that serves as a dressing room, with a marble fountain in the center. A corridor leads from the entry room to a series of hot rooms, the last of which is a hexagonal steam room, with a domed roof supported by four marble columns, with four rooms for individual use, one at

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[15] See Appendix for inventory of advertisements.

[16] One of the photographs is a still-image of "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant" video, showing three members of the bath attendant family seated around a table and smoking hookah. A second photograph is another still-image from the video and shows the bath attendant bathing a client.

each corner. The bathhouse building is an elegant one and is adorned with marble floors and imported ceramic tiles. [Old Acre Development Company n.d.]

The website continues its explanation of the Hammam al-Pasha attraction by summarizing "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant - A Performance at the Al Basha Hammam (Turkish Bath)":

> The Acre Turkish Baths, one of the most beautiful and fascinating sites in the Old City, comes to life through an imaginary play based on a line of bath attendants that tell the history of Acre during the Ottoman Period.
>
> History takes on an especially luscious dimension when seen through the eyes of the bath attendant, because the Turkish Baths were much more than a religious purification house. The Baths served as a social center where people met for rest, entertainment and banquets. The Baths were a meeting place for doctors and barbers and served as a house of luxury for the wealthy and prominent as well as for the common people of the city. This was where they talked, gossiped, laughed and philosophized.
>
> The Al Basha Hammam Theater takes you on a dramatic, fascinating and educating light and sound experience. The lives of a typical family of bath attendants introduce you to the story of Acre from the time the Turkish Baths were built at the end of the 18th century by Jazzar Pasha. He was the Acre governor that turned the small fishing village into a teeming harbor city and a major trade and cultural center.
>
> The experience is comprised of visual elements, the most important being the actual building. The marvelous spaces decorated with ceramic tiles are emphasized with colorful lighting. An authentic soundtrack, original illustrations and carved figures that powerfully depict daily life, historical events and the atmosphere of the Baths, accompany the entire experience. The audience walks through the rooms of the Hammam with the performance and in the last room awaits a surprise. Bath attendant Haj Bashir scrubs, massages and bats and soaps as he weaves the story of the Turkish Baths with the history of Acre and its active social life. **An unforgettable experience**. [Old Acre Development Company n.d.]

The text of the Old Acre Development Company website (and brochure) generates a discourse of Orientalism, which we believe is built into the structure of the Hammam al-Pasha tourist experience. In a Foucauldian sense, a discourse of Orientalism consists of language, knowledge, and practice, wherein there are specific ways of talking about 'the Orient' that

produce specific types of knowledge and practices. The Orient is not "an inert fact of nature" (Said 1978:4); it is an "idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery and vocabulary that has given it reality and presence for the West" (Said 1978:5). Euro-American understandings of 'the Orient' have reflected and sustained asymmetrical power relationships between 'the East' and 'the West' by distilling a range of essentialized ideas about Oriental character, Oriental cultures, and Oriental societies, portraying the Orient's 'other-ness' in terms of its sensuality, its violence and despotism, its backwardness, its traditionalism, and its unchanging and passive nature. The language of the advertisements for the Hammam al-Pasha invoke an 'Orient-speak' that transforms the customs, cultures, peoples, histories, and landscapes of 'the Orient' into an object of knowledge for 'Western' tourists to consume.

The explanation of the Turkish Bathhouse attraction published by the Old Acre Development Company reproduces and reconstructs 'truths' that render the Orient, the Arab communities residing within the Orient, and Acre's "Oriental" Turkish Bathhouse as lavish, sensualized, and frozen in the past. The website's text highlights the decadent luxuriousness of the Hammam al-Pasha by emphasizing the architectural features of the building that allude to opulent wealth: the "marble fountains," "marble columns," and "ceramic tiles" within the building. The text continues this language by describing the Turkish Bathhouse as "an elegant one" that "is adorned with marble floors and imported ceramic tiles." Many of the other advertisements of the Hammam al-Pasha tourist attraction mimic the theme of lavishness. For example, the website *Gems in Israel: Spotlighting Israel's Lesser Known Tourist Attractions and Travel Sites* explains how the Hammam al-Pasha was "the largest Hammam in the country and part of a series of important civic buildings in the city," and contends that the "Turkish tiles, a domed roof inlaid with glass circles, and marble floors" are "what made the the [sic] Pasha's Hammam the most

magnificent bathhouse of the land, in its day" (Adar 2000). An online review of the Turkish Bathhouse attraction by Fodor's Travel Guide (2011) describes the bathhouse as "beautiful," mentioning the "Turkish tiles" and "the rooms with colored-glass bubbles protruding from the roof domes"; an online review by Frommers mentions that the "third room, the one for hot steam, is rich in marble and mosaic work." In *Akko: A City with a Dual Spirit* (n.d.), Andrea Semplici and Mario Boccia also remark on the marble and ceramic tiles in the building in order to describe its sumptuousness, stating "…the building's marvelous restoration and the amazing rooms, marble floors and tiled walls of this splendid hammam…" (33) and the "hammam was abandoned for many years, then turned into a museum, and eventually restored to its former splendour…" (35).

The advertisement of the Hammam al-Pasha created by the Old Acre Development Company also replicates the sexualized representations of 'the Orient' produced by European explorers, artists, and colonizers. The text of the advertisement employs sensualized language, describing the bathhouse as "one of the most beautiful and fascinating sites in the Old City" where history takes "on an especially luscious dimension when seen through the eyes of the bath attendant." The attraction allows you to experience, through numerous "visual elements," the "dramatic" and "fascinating" story of the Hammam al-Pasha, a story that would otherwise be inaccessible to modern-day tourists because of differences in temporal and cultural space. Tourists are promised privileged access to the Turkish Bathhouse where they can watch the bath attendant scrub, massage, bat, and soap clients. The sensuality and mysteriousness of the site's description is further heightened when the text mentions a "surprise" in the last room of the bathhouse. The construction of the Turkish Bathhouse as an object of irresistible desire, interest, and curiosity is a motif replicated in *Akko: A City with a Dual Spirit*, where Andrea Semplici and Mario Boccia

express regret that "the splendid Hammam al-Pasha is just a splendid representation of the pleasure derived from a real Turkish bath" (33) yet explain how the bath attendant "recounts the story of Akko and its hammam, revealing the secrets of a good massage and describing the pleasure of smoking a narghilah water pipe and sipping tea in the reception room" (34).

The text of the Old Acre Development Company's advertisement contains a third element of the Orientalist discourse. The language of the advertisement presents the 'Turkish bath custom' as a traditional and historic practice of Ottoman society, not as a common activity of contemporary Arab communities; in other words, the Turkish bath has become a relic of the past. The Hammam al-Pasha attraction advertisement explicitly states that the history portrayed is that of "Acre during the Ottoman Period"; there is no mention of the attraction presenting the Turkish Bath as it was functioning during the British Mandate period, nor is there mention of why the Turkish Bath closed in the late 1940s[17]. This representation of the history of the Turkish bathhouse taps into ideologies that frame the historical importance of Arab civilization as lost and forgotten over time, where the greatness of Arab civilization lies in the past and needs to be revived through cultural museums. In addition to the advertisement's historical omissions (perhaps more a reflection of the attraction's historical omissions), the history presented is openly subjective; the attraction is advertised as a fictionalized, mythological account and a sensationalized performance where the history of the Turkish bathhouse "comes to life through an imaginary play based on a line of bath attendants that tell the history of Acre during the Ottoman Period" against a backdrop of "An authentic soundtrack, original illustrations and carved figures that powerfully depict daily life, historical events and the atmosphere of the Baths." By 'weaving' the history of Acre during the Ottoman period with the story of the Turkish bathhouse, the descriptions of the Turkish Bathhouse exhibit seem to de-legitimize the

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[17] Different advertisements provide different dates for when the Turkish Bath ceased to function as a Turkish bath.

experiences of the actual bath attendants and their clients, transforming them into playful objects of the past—performances—for tourists to visually consume.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MARKERS AND SIGHTS

Just as sightseers do not empirically *see* San Francisco, visitors to the Hammam al-Pasha do not empirically *see* a Turkish Bathhouse; sightseers *see* Fisherman's Wharf, the Golden Gate Bridge, or a cable car while tourists to the Hammam al-Pasha *see* ornate tiles, a fictionalized history, or aluminum-cast statues. Each of these items is a symbolic marker, an element in a set called 'San Francisco' or 'Turkish Bathhouse'. While each item may be perceived as a sight requiring a marker of its own, the umbrella sight—or the Turkish Bathhouse—may also be interpreted as a marker for another type of sight: a sight that serves as a sign of 'the Orient'. It should also be noted that some tourists may see the tiles, the fictionalized history, or the aluminum-cast statues as pieces of information about the Turkish Bathhouse which they must possess if they are to make their visit to the Hammam al-Pasha "real, substantial or complete"; while other tourists may see these same elements as an object (a sight) worthy of attention in its own right (MacCannell 1976:111–12).

The discovery of the first semiotic uncovered the principle of the arbitrariness and interchangeability between the signifier (marker) and the signified (sight). Not only are there no natural connections between the sound of a word and the object or concept it signifies, but there are also no natural connections between markers and sights. For example, there is nothing inherent to the Turkish Bathhouse that automatically links it as a signifier of 'the Orient'; instead, cultural processes have assigned the Turkish Bathhouse with particular esthetic and utilitarian values. Moreover, a 'Turkish Bathhouse' is simultaneously both a *sight* and a *marker*. The Turkish Bathhouse is not only a sight with its own set of markers (advertisements, brochures,

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architecture), but it is also a marker for a larger type of sight (heritage, 'the Orient') (MacCannell 1976:117–19).

THE COMMODIFICATION OF SIGNS

While the Hammam al-Pasha seems to market itself as a sign of 'the Orient', the architectures, discourses, and artistic designs of the tourist attraction are open to multiple interpretations. In other words, the concepts of which the Hammam al-Pasha tourist attraction intends to be signs may not necessarily be the same concepts tourists infer from the sight's markers; tourists may not be purchasing the same signs that the Turkish Bathhouse is selling. So what signs are tourists intending to purchase? And by what process do tourists consume those signs?

As part of our fieldwork in June 2011, we spent three weeks at the Hammam al-Pasha surveying tourists about their experiences at the site. In order to understand the ways in which tourists to the Hammam al-Pasha perceived the sight and its markers, we constructed a table composed of 25 adjectives that could be used to describe the Turkish Bathhouse. We then asked each participant to select five words from the word bank that best described their visit to the Hammam al-Pasha. The results from our questionnaire indicate that most tourists viewed the Turkish Bathhouse as a sign of 'entertainment', 'tourism', and 'history', suggesting that few tourists recognized the sight as a sign of 'the Orient' despite the fact that a majority of the tourists first heard about the Hammam al-Pasha through the various tourist advertisements surveyed above. Another interesting aspect revealed through our questionnaire results is the large extent to which the site was simultaneously viewed as both 'touristic' and an 'authentic' representation of a traditional Turkish bathhouse[18].

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[18] Only one visitor remarked that the Hammam al-Pasha was not representative of a Turkish bathhouse. However, these results may be biased in so far as those visitors who were disappointed with the authenticity of the Hammam al-Pasha attraction may have been the same tourists who refused to participate in our questionnaire. For example, a

Scholars, and even tourists, often describe tourism—particularly cultural tourism—as problematic: tourism inevitably "damages or destroys cultural authenticity" (Guyette and White 2003:164). This understanding of tourism envisions tourists as *faux voyageurs* who are (knowingly and unknowingly) satisfied with the culturally 'inauthentic' (Frow 1991:1127). From this perspective visitors to the Hammam al-Pasha attraction (intentionally or unintentionally) purchase a spurious, commodified version of a 'traditional Turkish bathhouse' rather than the 'real thing'. In other words, the Hammam al-Pasha as a Turkish bathhouse attraction is actually a 'fake' bathhouse; it is a bathhouse built on the marketing of a form of entertainment rather than a 'real' Turkish bathhouse experience or a 'real' Turkish bathhouse service. Thus, the conservation of the Hammam al-Pasha through tourism actually preserves a Disneyfied bathhouse-based experience. While one of the visitors of the Hammam al-Pasha suggested that Akko was becoming "too touristy," the touristic aspects of the Hammam al-Pasha attraction did not seem to de-legitimize the site as an 'authentic' Turkish bathhouse in the eyes of tourists; most tourists viewed the Hammam al-Pasha as an 'authentic' Turkish bathhouse.

Tourism can also be described as a quest for—rather than a turn from—'authentic' experiences. However, MacCannell (1976) characterizes these quests for 'authenticity' as futile since host populations protect their cultures from tourists by dividing their lives into 'front' and 'backstage' arenas; backstage, away from the tourist gaze, hosts maintain their meaningful traditions, while front-stage, hosts perform a 'staged authenticity' where they present certain displays of cultural heritage as 'authentic' (Medina 2003:354). By suggesting that pristine, 'authentic' cultures exist somewhere 'backstage,' MacCannell insinuates the 'staged' cultural performances are less 'authentic' than the cultural practices hidden from tourists (Medina 2003:

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small number of the visitors with whom we spoke who had left the Hammam al-Pasha attraction early were hesitant to take our survey, and conversations with them informed us that they were dissatisfied with the site.

354). From this perspective the Hammam al-Pasha may be deemed an 'inauthentic' presentation of Akko's heritage since it is rarely visited by the residents of the Old City. However, the applicability of this theoretical perspective breaks down when considering that there is no functioning 'backstage' public hammam in Old Akko designated for locals' use.

Furthermore, the 'stage' metaphor approach to analyzing the authenticity of a tourist attraction proves irrelevant; every local with whom we spoke proposed restoring the Hammam al-Pasha into a functioning Turkish bathhouse open to both tourists and the Akko community. It is argued that this would not only permit the residents of Akko and its surrounding towns to visit a Turkish bathhouse without having to travel to Turkey or Palestine, but it would also increase tourism to Akko by allowing tourists to immerse themselves within Akko's cultural heritage. Thus, local residents were incredibly open to the idea of sharing the Hammam al-Pasha experience (and by extension their "heritage" and "traditions") with tourists[19].

A third theoretical perspective in tourism studies follows from a paradox, a dilemma of authenticity, whereby "to be experienced as authentic [something] must be marked as authentic, but when it is marked as authentic it is mediated, a sign of itself and hence not authentic in the sense of unspoiled" (Frow 1991:130). According to the first portion of this paradox, a sight needs to be "certified as authentic" with markers of authenticity attached to it (Culler 1990:138). The basis of this perspective stems from MacCannell's analysis on the semiotics of tourist attractions in which a distinction is made between a tourist sight and its markers. On one level this distinction roughly resembles the relation between a real object or concept and its representation, a relationship that "holds open the possibility of a sight's being either represented truly or misrepresented" (Frow 1991:131). However, the second portion of the paradox introduces another level of complexity. Even though the authentic sight requires markers, part of

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[19] It remains to be seen the effects this policy would have on the Turkish Bathhouse experience.

our cultural understanding of authenticity is that it refers to the unmarked (Culler 1990:138).

This dilemma of authenticity suggests that the distinctions between 'front stage' and 'backstage', 'representation' and 'reality' disappear; everything is mediated, represented, or marked and thereby simultaneously 'authentic' and 'inauthentic'. This semiotic process actually creates 'authenticity' at precisely the same time that it destabilizes its existence. Just as a marker frames something as a sight, a reproduction (representation) makes something into an original or the real thing; there cannot be a reproduction with the existence of something 'original' or 'authentic'. This suggests there are two types of 'authenticity': the 'authenticity' a sight derives from its makers as well as the authenticity of what lies "off the beaten track," in the space where there are no markers (Culler 1990:133–35). Within this context, the Hammam al-Pasha cannot be regarded as an 'authentic' Turkish bathhouse. Through processes of marking, the Hammam al-Pasha has become merely a representation of a Turkish bathhouse; it is the unmarked bathhouses next door that are more likely (although not without difficulty) to embody 'authenticity' than the Hammam al-Pasha tourist attraction.

These three perspectives of tourism suggest that cultural 'authenticity' does exist, somewhere out 'there'; each perspective is "generated within a conceptual framework that holds on to the distinction between the authentic and the inauthentic" (Frow 1991:131). However, we argue that perhaps it is more productive to think of the Hammam al-Pasha in terms of an emergent or constructive 'authenticity'. For example, emergent authenticity describes how cultural performances or products invented for the purpose of tourism may actually become incorporated into the local culture over time (Medina 2003: 355), while constructive authenticity describes how individual tourists construct 'authenticity' differently; tourists project 'authenticity' onto objects or experiences "in terms of their imagery, expectations, preferences or dreams"

(McMullen 2007:96). In other words, 'authenticity' is socially constructed and there are a multitude of social presentations of reality. Thus, the distinction between 'real' and 'fake' Turkish bathhouses attractions may not necessarily be the most productive approach to understanding what is actually being preserved.

All of these theoretical perspectives on authenticity address the viewpoints of tourists and their concerns with authenticity. However, the Nara Document on Authenticity requests that we turn the lens, asking the owners of cultural properties to explicate their views on authenticity:

> All judgments about values attributed to cultural properties as well as the credibility of related information sources may differ from culture to culture, and even within the same culture. It is thus not possible to base judgements of values and authenticity within fixed criteria. On the contrary, the respect due to all cultures requires that heritage properties must be considered and judged within the cultural contexts to which they belong. [Lemaire and Stovel 1994:Article 11]

In other words efforts to determine the authenticity of cultural heritage should "avoid imposing mechanistic formulae or standardized procedures" (Lemaire and Stovel 1994:Appendix 1, Article 1) and instead "encourage cultures to develop analytical processes and tools specific to their nature and needs" (Lemaire and Stovel 1994:Appendix 1, Article 2). This may explain why many of the approaches to authenticity mentioned above fail to accurately describe the relationship between the Hammam al-Pasha tourist attraction and its 'authenticity'. It is likely that these Euro-American derived perspectives of 'authenticity' are not indigenous to—and therefore not applicable in—Akko. Nonetheless, one question remains: what happens (or what should happen) when tourist perceptions of 'authenticity' do not align with local perspectives? Oftentimes this touristic quest for 'authenticity' is actually a quest for the realization of the imaginations of individuals who value certain idealized images of cultural others. As performances and encounters diverge from tourists' ideals, visitors are likely to sense

'inauthenticity' or 'spurious' culture, becoming dissatisfied with their tourist experience (Guyette and White 2003:164).

Even though the Hammam al-Pasha closed its doors in the mid-20th century, during a period when many of Old Akko's Arab residents fled the city to be eventually replaced by Arab refugees from other parts of Israel, the Hammam al-Pasha is still seen as a tangible representation of Old Akko's heritage. A common theme throughout our interviews with Akko's residents was a discussion of the cultural importance of the Hammam al-Pasha, either through the retelling of memories or through an expression of frustration (sadness?) over the loss of the 'hammam tradition'. As a center of social life for the Akko community, the Hammam al-Pasha was socially and spiritually important for Akko's residents; people would go once a week for a full bathing, leaving with "new skin, new soul, new body" (Local Baker, 23 June 2011). As explained by one local resident: it is only by restoring the building to a functioning hammam will it be "relevant and appropriate for my life" (Local Baker, 23 June 2011).

Conclusion
Conserving the Hammam al-Pasha

The Hammam al-Shaabi, Akko's oldest existing bathhouse, served as a functioning Turkish bathhouse from the 18th to the 20th century. Located west of Khan al-Umdan and north of Khan al-Shuna, the structure contained a number of steamed chambers, cold-water baths, furnace rooms, and relaxation rooms, many of which were for the private use of wealthy patrons. The Hammam al-Shaabi, with its multiple domes embedded with colorful glass, is often described as being larger and more opulent than the Hammam al-Pasha (Dichter 2000:206). However, the 1950s brought the demise of the Hammam al-Shaabi; the bath attendant family did not have any children to continue the profession after they passed away (Local Baker, 23 June 2011). Today, the fate of the Hammam al-Shaabi differs starkly from that of the Hammam al-Pasha: the building lies abandoned and in an advanced state of decay. While it remains unclear why the building of the Hammam al-Pasha (instead of the Hammam al-Shaabi) was favored for re-use and conservation, the recent histories behind these two buildings reveal an internal tension between the importance of 'saving' buildings versus the importance of 'saving' social function.

The Head of the Old Acre Development Company admits that restoring the Hammam al-Pasha into a functioning Turkish bath is a wonderful idea. In fact, the Old Acre Development Company even explored to possibility of returning the Hammam al-Pasha to its original function. A physical survey of the building, however, revealed an extensive amount of structural damage to the heating and water systems supporting the hammam; repairing these problems would necessitate the physical destruction of the building. The Old Acre Development Company, in accordance with the Law of Antiquities for Akko, decided to protect the "building's authenticity" at the expense of its original function, reserving the restoration of an "authentic, functioning

hammam" in Old Akko for the already destroyed and dilapidated Hammam al-Shaabi (Head of OADC, 27 June 2011).

During the process of conserving the Hammam al-Pasha, the biggest challenges were primarily architectural: restoring the glass in the ceiling, the tiles on the walls, and the marble floors. According to the Head of the Old Acre Development Company, locals were involved in each step of the conservation process. Not only did they compose fifty percent of the workforce responsible for conserving the hammam, but they were also represented by a "Committee of Local Arabs," who had the opportunity to make changes to the Master Plan of the Old City before it was finally approved (Head of OADC, 27 June 2011).

Nonetheless, the local Arab residents with whom we spoke expressed frustration at the direction of tourism development in Akko, as exemplified through the Hammam al-Pasha tourist attraction. These residents highlighted the role of the "controlling powers" of the city (i.e., the Municipality, the Old Acre Development Company, and the Israel Antiquities Authority), who manage the tourism and conservation planning of Old Akko under an implicit policy of "investing in stones before humans"—buildings before culture (Local Resident, 22 June 2011; Social Activist, 26 June 2011). These actors have facilitated the development of a cultural landscape which symbolizes a "nonfunctioning" community, a culture emptied of life and frozen in the past. For example, backed by the motto that "a museum designer should be a storyteller" (Programa1 2011), the exhibit designer of the Hammam al-Pasha tourist attraction aimed to "tell the history of Acre in the Ottoman period as the walls of the bathhouse would have 'heard' it from the bathers" (Programa1 2011). As the Hammam al-Pasha presents a chapter of Ottoman history through the story of an "imaginary dynasty of bath attendants" (Programa1 2011), the attraction freezes the Hammam al-Pasha (and its clients) in a specific moment in time

discursively (i.e., through the selected history presented) and physically (i.e., through the placement of aluminum-cast statues of 'traditional' Ottoman clients). Thus, the Hammam al-Pasha tourist attraction is not simply conserving just the physical building. It is also conserving—as its primary cultural value—authentic evidence for Ottoman life and culture, a symbol of wealth and prosperity, rather than a functioning Turkish bathhouse of cultural and social importance for Akko's current residents.

In many ways the conservation of Old Akko through the development of Ottoman-era themed tourism creates a self-fulfilling prophecy: each decade the Turkish bathhouse remains in-operational, another generation of Old Akko residents become distanced from the Turkish bath traditions of their (presumably) Ottoman ancestors. While our informants were certain the bleak economic conditions of Old Akko would encourage someone to take responsibility for running a revitalized bathhouse, one question remains (albeit, beyond the scope of this paper): if the Turkish bathhouse is such an integral part of the Old Akko residents' cultural heritage and traditions, then why have the bathhouses throughout Akko closed?

Whether or not our informants worked from within the system, outside of the system, or ignored the system all together, each individual did not see the current methods of conserving the Old City for the development of tourism in Akko as economically, politically, or socially beneficial (for them). While there are community leaders in Old Akko working to organize the residents in ways where they can actively engage with the power institutions of Akko, the general consensus amongst our informants was that meaningful change (i.e., ensuring tourism in Akko reflects and addresses community concerns and needs) will not occur unless instigated by the Old Acre Development Company, the Akko Municipality, or the Israel Antiquities Authority. If these powerful institutions are able to listen, the residents of Old Akko have many innovative

ideas about the development of tourism in Old Akko; these residents have a direct stake in preventing the preservation-of-buildings-before-cultures policy from transforming the (their?) Old City into another Jaffa: a city with buildings but with no soul (Social Activist, 26 June 2011).

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Appendix

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> Turkish tiles, a domed roof inlaid with glass circles, and marble floors are what made the the Pahsa's [sic] Hammam the most magnificent bathhouse of the land, in its day.

> Ahmad Pasha Al-Jazzar built it in 1781, apparently on top of an ancient bathhouse. This was also the largest Hammam in the country and part of a series of important civic buildings in the city. There have been suggestions that Al-Jazzar himself was the architect and engineer who oversaw construction of both the bathhouse and the mosque that bears his name.

> Like other bathhouses of the day, this was more than just a mere place where people went to went to bathe. This was an important meeting place, where people congregated to discuss the issues of the day, rest, and enjoy a meal.

> Its location here in Akko, is indicative of the city's importance – at the time. In fact – this was the larger of two bathhouses in the city. It continued to function until 1947, when it was damaged by the blast from the prison outbreak.
> In 1954, the bathhouse was converted to a municipal folklore museum. In the 1990s, the museum was disbanded and now plans are underway for a new experiential museum that will replicate the bathing experience in the life of the Ottoman residents.

Eshet Incoming. 2007. "Eshet Incoming - Destinations - Acre (Akko)." Accessed from <http://www.eshetincoming.com/template/default.aspx?catId=8> on 11 June 2011.

> Hamam al Basha (The Turkish Bath) - One of the most fascinating sites in the Old City…Enjoy a fascinating and educational Sound and Light experience of the history of Old Acre through the eyes of the Bath Attendant, Haj Bashir, who weaves the story of the Turkish Baths with the history of Acre and its active social life

Fodor's Travel Guides. 2011. "Turkish Bathhouse Review." *Haifa and the Northern Coast*. Accessed from <http://www.fodors.com/world/africa-and-middle-east/israel/haifa-and-the-northern-coast/review-460289.html> on 11 June 2011.

> Built for Pasha el-Jazzar in 1781, Akko's remarkable Turkish Bathhouse was in use until 1947. Don't miss the sound-and-light show called "The Story of the Last Bath Attendant," set in the beautiful bathhouse itself. You follow the story, with visual and audio effects, from the dressing room decorated with Turkish tiles and topped with a cupola, through the rooms with colored-glass bubbles protruding

from the roof domes, sending a filtered green light to the steam rooms below.

Frommers. 2011. "Municipal Museum (Turkish Bath), Akko, Israel - Things to Do Reviews." *Nile Guide*. Accessed from <http://www.nileguide.com/destination/akko-israel/things-to-do/municipal-museum-turkish-bath/1027097> on 11 June 2011.

> Down at the end of Al-Jezzar Street, just around the corner, is the Municipal Museum, originally the hammam, or Turkish bath, built by Ahmed al Jezzar Pasha as part of his mosque complex in the 1780s. The museum's collections, including antiquities, an exhibit on Napoleon's attack, the Museum of Heroism, and a folklore exhibit are often closed as the building undergoes repairs, but the building itself is fantastic. Visiting art exhibitions are also displayed here.

> Turkish baths were modeled after the Roman plan, with three distinct rooms. The first was the entry and dressing room, the next was the tepidarium (its Roman name), with warm steam, and the last was the caldarium, with hot steam. The hot room was always the most ornate.

> As you walk through the first two rooms, note the tiny glass skylights in the domes. The third room, the one for hot steam, is rich in marble and mosaic work. In the center is a circular platform for steam bathing. The heat source was beneath it. Some Turkish baths have a small swimming pool here instead. Four private steam cubicles occupy the four points of the compass.

Semplici, Andrea and Mario Boccia. n.d. *Akko: A City with a Dual Spirit*. Med Corporation: Tuscany.

> It is a pity that the splendid Hammam al-Pasha is just a splendid representation of the pleasure derived from a real Turkish bath. Visitors have to content themselves with admiring the building's marvelous restoration and the amazing rooms, marble floors ad tiled walls of this splendid hammam. It is likely that the hammam was built on the ruins of an ancient Roman and Crusader *tepidarium*. Situated near the walls of the ancient Crusader Citadel, it was built in 1780, at the behest of Sultan al-Jazzar. He may have been a bloodthirsty character, but he certainly knew how to enjoy life's pleasures and could not forego a good Turkish bath.

> The Hammam al-Pasha, as it must have been, is evoked through a video and light show, featuring the ghost of Hajj Bashir Awad, the last bath attendant to have worked here. With a voice made rough by life in a steamy environment, he recounts the story of Akko and its hammam, revealing the secrets of a good massage and describing the pleasure of smoking a narghilah water pipe and sipping tea in the reception room.

> Bashir was the last heir to a family of bath attendants, a dynasty that spanned

three centuries. Al-Jazzar selected this bath attendant personally: Omar Awad, a loyal soldier in his army, could not of course oppose his sovereign's wishes, though he did try to wriggle out of the job. He was, after all, just 36 years old, and had never thought he would end up running a Turkish bath. He traveled to Constantinople to learn the secrets of the trade and was ready when the hammam opened in 1782. His family was never to leave the domed rooms of the Hammam al-Pahsha: in 1952, the last attendant, Hajj Bashir, extinguished the flame that heated the water. The hammam was abandoned for many years, then turned into a museum, and eventually restored to its former splendour.

Now we can only imagine the everyday life of this hammam, as statues, rather than loyal clients, laze in the entrance room to the bath. Other statues depict bodies waiting to become accustomed to the change in temperature, while in the *calidarium*, they lie sprawled on the burning-hot marble.

The hammam was the centre of social life of a small community, a place for rest, for idling the time away, but also for light entertainment, parties, a mix of business and trade. Wrapped in hot towels, rich a poor were indistinguishable: the steam of the Turkish bath did away, as, at least for a few hours, it still does today, with differences of social class. [33–35]

Thomas, Amelia, Michael Kohn, Miriam Raphael, Dan Savery Raz. 2010. *Israel and the Palestinian Territories*. 6th edition. Lonely Planet.

From the end of the Turkish Bazaar, turn right and look out for the Hammam al-Pasha (Turkish Bath), housed in the 1780 bathhouse built by Al-Jazzar, which remained in use until the 1940s. The Hammam now contains a worthwhile 30-minute multimedia show (adult/child 25/21NIS) called 'The Story of the Last Bath Attendant'. The creatively designed exhibit leads you from the dressing room through the steamy rooms, all brilliantly lit with coloured glass.