UNIVERSITÄT AUGSBURG
Universitätsbibliothek

OPEN ACCESS
OPUS AUGSBURG

Branding the sacral landscape: religious content in regional tourism marketing, set in a post-secular society

Markus Hilpert

Angaben zur Veröffentlichung / Publication details:

Hilpert, Markus. 2020. "Branding the sacral landscape: religious content in regional tourism marketing, set in a post-secular society." *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage* 8 (4): 6. https://arrow.tudublin.ie/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1349&context=ijrtp.

Nutzungsbedingungen / Terms of use:

CC BY 3.0

Dieses Dokument wird unter folgenden Bedingungen zur Verfügung gestellt: / This document is made available under these conditions:
CC-BY 3.0: Creative Commons - Namensnennung
Weitere Informationen finden Sie unter: / For more information see:
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/de/deed.de

International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage

Volume 8 | Issue 4 Article 6

2020

Branding the Sacral Landscape: Religious Content in Regional Tourism Marketing, Set in a Post-secular Society

Markus Hilpert
University of Augsburg, Germany, markus.hilpert@geo.uni-augsburg.de

Follow this and additional works at: https://arrow.tudublin.ie/ijrtp

Part of the Human Geography Commons, and the Tourism and Travel Commons

Recommended Citation

Hilpert, Markus (2020) "Branding the Sacral Landscape: Religious Content in Regional Tourism Marketing, Set in a Post-secular Society," *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*: Vol. 8: Iss. 4, Article 6.
Available at: https://arrow.tudublin.ie/ijrtp/vol8/iss4/6

© International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage
ISSN : 2009-7379
Available at: http://arrow.tudublin.ie/ijrtp/ Volume 8(iv) 2020

Branding the Sacral Landscape: Religious Content in Regional Tourism Marketing, Set in a Post-secular Society

Markus Hilpert
University of Augsburg, Germany
markus.hilpert@geo.uni-augsburg.de

There is a paucity of research on the branding of sacral landscapes as a regional strategy in tourism marketing. On the one hand, the concept of place branding, to date, has been transferred very little to sacred destinations, while on the other hand, religious content and modern tourist marketing barely fit together. Nonetheless, the perception of religion in a postmodern society opens up new opportunities for sacred places to reposition themselves in the competition faced by tourist destinations. The aim of this article is to show how German tourism regions with a religious focus build their brand. Through analyzing six case studies and distilling the extant literature, this study aims to investigate whether sacral messages really do have religious depth, or whether the sacral landscape is only used superficially to attract attention.

Key Words: branding, sacred landscape, religious tourism, sacred sites, Germany

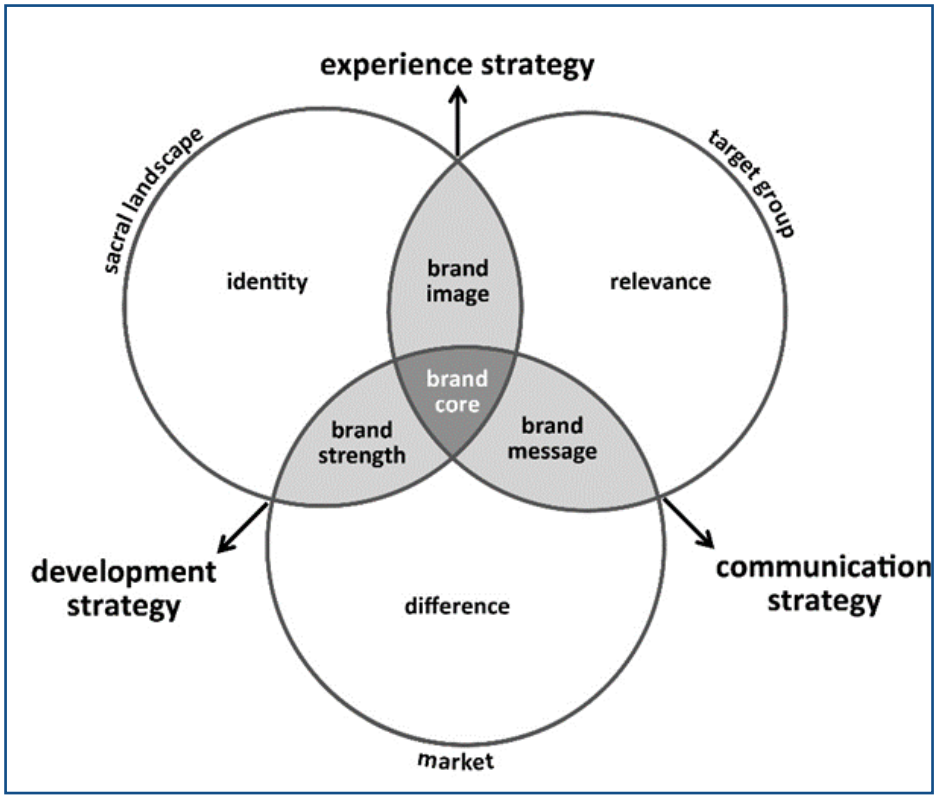
The Sacral Landscape: structure and perceptions

The sacralisation of a landscape is a space-shaping confession of its inhabitants to certain religious beliefs at a given time. Fickler (1947) showed in his religious geography studies that the physiognomy of entire landscapes can be determined by religious customs and institutions. Additionally, their imprinting power is expressed in a variety of ways (Hoheisel & Rinschede, 1989). Above all, Catholicism has a 'will to physical manifestation' (Kühne, 2013:7) in the European landscape, and its direct influence is based on landscaping, mostly built artefacts such as monasteries, churches, sanctuaries, pilgrimage routes, cavalries, wayside crosses, statues, chapels and other religious cult structures. Their specific combinations and regional characteristics create sacred landscapes, each of which differs in its unique form and structure, and the combination of practiced religion and nature creates a unique space. These singularities are of interest to tourism strategies in terms of place branding.

Although sacred landscapes are visible and physical, they include not only the material realm, but also immaterial elements such as traditions, customs, linguistic expressions or spiritual heritage (Duda, 2014). Furthermore, a sacral landscape can be perceived completely differently by each individual. Sacred landscapes are therefore not only physical structures, but also mental constructions (the social constructionist perspective). The basis for the individual construction of a sacral landscape is a socially mediated grid of observation and interpretation – an approach that also plays an important role in place branding, because this perspective no longer centres on the space itself but on the minds of target groups. This concept of the landscape reflects the self-definitions of people, because its meaning is not inherent (Greider & Garkovich, 1994); it is humans who give meaning to the landscape, depending on their own perceptions based on self-definitions, and they read it accordingly and interpret its symbols individually. This symbolic landscape is important to tourism, too (Greer *et al*. 2008). For example, Seidenspinner (2004) shows how a specific interpretation of religious artefacts in a rural area can generate an identity-creating image: using the example of the *Madonnenländchen* (Madonna Country, which is a region in southern Germany with many Virgin Mary statues), he demonstrates how a regional brand is created not by its physical properties but by a directed process of interpretation of its symbols. This image-building process transforms a meaningless space into a symbolic landscape replete with its own brand.

Obviously, both perspectives are important for the place branding of sacred landscapes (Anderson, 2014). Of course, on the one hand, it needs a special physical structure, such as a monastery, pilgrimage church or other place of particular religious significance, but on the other hand, spatial structures alone have no meaning, which they get only through a cognitive process that can be controlled by place branding. Therefore, only a combination of different perspectives leads to the successful branding of sacred landscapes.

Figure 1: From Brand Core to Brand Strategy



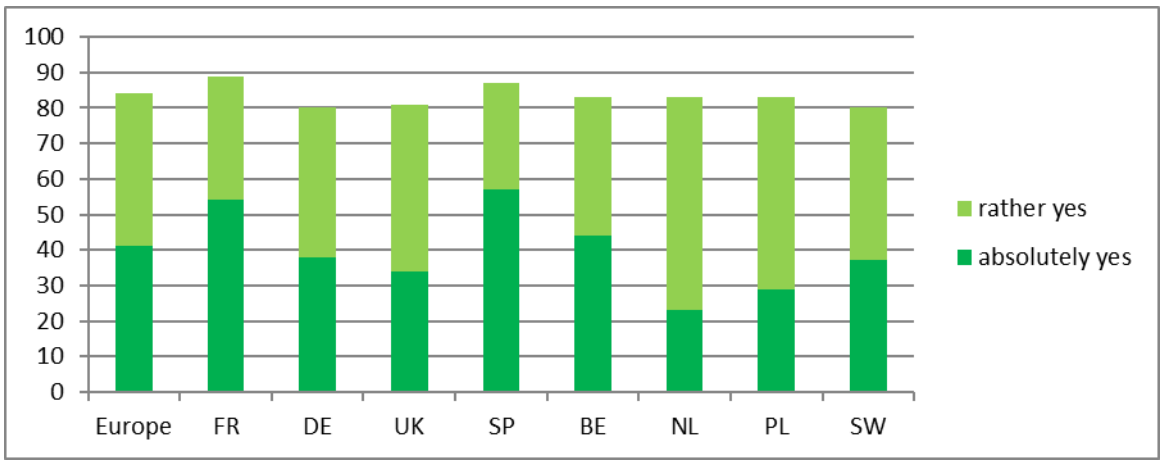
Based on Eitelbuss, 2017

Modern branding with religious content?

Branding is a communicative strategy employed to position a product in order to differentiate it from competing products (Siegert, 2000). According to this understanding, place branding emphasises the importance of branding in location marketing. In contrast to location advertising, which focuses mostly on certain location factors as unique selling propositions, place branding focuses on the image of a location in terms of a corporate reputation (Bell, 2016; Pereira *et al*., 2012). The regional brand can be conceived of as a constituted site not merely represented by particular characteristics that are configured in ways that seek to create differentiated meaning and value vis-á-vis competitors in particular market contexts (Pike, 2015); rather, it is no longer only the individual location factors of the sacred landscape that are advertised in a branding process. More so, a total brand message is communicated in the form of a promise that the location gives to potential visitors, investors or other target groups. This communication strategy is based primarily on the demands of target groups and on the peculiarities of the location in comparison to other sacred landscapes (Figure 1). Finally, the location brand is intended to meet subjective expectations (rather than objective or measurable facts relating to the site of the sacral landscape), because, in the modern consumer economy, the intangible or symbolic qualities of a destination play a decisive role in its success (Clifton, 2011). However, do religious expectations still play a role in marketing in the modern consumer economy?

Religious landmarks still influence the image of European regions. More than four out of five Europeans think of religious buildings when they are asked about the cultural heritage of their country (Figure 2), which seems to be somewhat surprising in modern society. Just a few years ago, the decline of religion in European society was seen as an unceasing process. Meanwhile, religious sociology and religious science have discussed post-secularity, according to which religion does not disappear from all social spheres (e.g. Woodhead, 2016). In any case, in post-secular societies, religion is no longer the polar opposite to modernity, which also explains why non-religious groups (e.g. hiking associations, historical clubs) are committed to preserving elements of the sacred landscape; for example, non-religious groups

Figure 2: When asked about your country's cultural heritage, do you think about churches and other religious buildings?



Future for Religious Heritage 2014:13

and actors often take care of field crosses, chapels or other religious landmarks (Hilpert & Mahne-Bieder, 2014), and they see religious objects not purely as Christian manifestations. Postmodernism provides new and individual interpretations of the sacral landscape (Kühne, 2013:13), and so instead of purely rational perspectives, which clearly distinguish between the religious and the non-religious, many other approaches (emotional, historical, etc.) are possible nowadays. Davie (2001) suggests that a weakening link to traditional religious institutions also plays an important role, which enables actors to gain individual access to the sacred landscape. As a result, not only does the significance of the sacred landscape change, but also its appreciation increases.

Not only are the actors in sacred landscapes changing, but target groups also have quite different interests. As a survey of 266 visitors to six pilgrimage churches in Bavaria illustrates, only about half (56%) visited for purely religious reasons (Mahne-Bieder & Hilpert, 2013), and the non-religious visitors had very different motivations (architecture, paintings, sports, leisure, family outing, etc.). Sometimes, the respondents did not even know it was a pilgrimage church, which is not surprising, because the boundaries between religious and secular motifs are disappearing as a result of the dwindling demand for authenticity in postmodern societies. This individual combination of *sacrum* and *profanum* fits perfectly in the global tendency to combine the different incentives behind tourism and travel (Duda, 2014).

However, for the rural area economy, these themes play virtually no role whatsoever. Our case study, set in a very small pilgrimage site called *Wigratzbad* (Bavaria), shows – regardless of the type of visitor – that even small sanctuaries contribute to the regional value added, since close to 15,000 visitors annually make their way to this minor place of pilgrimage. Nevertheless, the region benefits from the spending power of the visitors, because they contribute about €431,000 each year to the small village, especially in local restaurants and shops. This corresponds to about 6.6 jobs created by a small pilgrimage in this rural area. Considering the fact that there are many pilgrimage sites with more than 100,000 visitors, it becomes clear how important these are for the economic development of rural areas, which is why many tourist marketing strategies in these regions are based on religious destinations. However, while the first scientific studies have already been undertaken for the branding of single sacred places (for example, pilgrimage churches) (Hilpert, 2017; Hilpert, Mahne-Bieder & Stifter, 2016), the branding of entire sacral landscapes is still scarcely explored.

Target groups with different demands

Religious tourism is probably one of the oldest forms of its kind; however, in the recent past, it has become one of the most rapidly developing forms of tourism in Europe. Worldwide, every fifth tourist is guided wholly or partly by a religious motivation (Duda, 2014), so it is therefore not surprising that there is a multitude of religious destinations across the globe which have become tourist destinations. This is the

reason why sacral landscapes in peripheral areas have gained in importance too, because they want to benefit from this growing market. Religion is increasingly important for tourism, and it is estimated that each year approximately 600 million religious trips are made in the world, almost half of which take place in Europe (Akbulut & Ekin, 2017:106-107).

Although religious tourism as a term refers mostly to travel undertaken for religious purposes, surveys of visitors to religious sites show that a multitude come for non-religious reasons, such as sightseeing, or they combine religious interests with secular motifs (Mahne -Bieder & Hilpert, 2013). Numerous studies also emphasise the strength of sacral sites in attracting a considerable volume of less fervent or non-believers (Akbulut & Ekin, 2017:106), which seems to contrast with the fact that Western Europe has been engaged in an intense process of religious individualisation and the unchurching of the population (Marine-Roig, 2015; Casanova, 2006). The reason for this alleged contradiction is a changed meaning of religion. In a postmodern society, sacral artefacts are no longer just a symbol of religious conviction, but they can also be understood as part of cultural heritage. Therefore, as Duda (2014) confirms, the wide range of choices on offer through cultural tourism is a great alternative to leisure tourism in terms of eliminating problems associated with weather-dependent seasonality. In particular, (former) religious destinations enable new opportunities for rural areas to increase their attractiveness in terms of visitor numbers. According to the results of his case study in Western Pomerania, year-on-year, more tourists visit this rural region, which promotes its sacral heritage, because elements and structures that enjoy the greatest popularity among pilgrims are in many cases most attractive to tourists, too. In addition, Seidenspinner (2004) shows in his regional study of the *Madonnenländchen* (Madonna Country) in southern Germany how religious landmarks have gradually synthesised into a cultural image of the sacred cultural landscape, which today also attracts non-religious tourists.

For the branding of sacral landscapes, it is often difficult to discern whether it is a question of tourism, of secular pilgrimage or of religiously motivated journeys. These visits range from voyeuristic sightseeing to pious tourism, and it is not possible to delimit every single aspect (Smith, 1992). Therefore, in most of the literature, tourists and pilgrims are considered one and the same (Marine-Roig, 2015:26). There are certainly tourists with exclusively secular interests (for example, architecture), and there are also pious pilgrims with exclusively religious interests; nonetheless, there are much greater numbers of tourists for whom both aspects – more or less – play a role. Therefore, a distinction between religious or non-religious themes seems relatively unimportant for these destinations, especially since many regional brands nowadays appeal to all groups, because social reality no longer recognises this strict distinction between believers and non-believers (Woodhead, 2016). In a post-secular society, the boundaries between the two extreme positions have become more and more permeable: for most visitors to sacral landscapes, the boundaries between religion, tradition, art and sightseeing are fluid.

Religion-based tourism marketing strategies

Brands have to communicate their core message widely through different media, such as travel guides or adverts, especially nowadays on websites and social media platforms (Akbulut & Ekin, 2017:105). These possibilities enable the tourist industry to form an image of what to expect when visiting a sacral landscape, therefore manipulating not only tourists, but also destinations (Hospers, 2011:28). However, a manipulated image of a destination hardly seems compatible with the claim of authenticity; furthermore, and above all else, the brand should actually be authentic! Legitimacy, however, is not easy to define, and non-religious tourists seek an alternative authentic image to that sought by religious tourists, varying from historical architecture through to current rites of piety. Therefore, the search for authenticity is not crucial for destination managers, because visitors – irrespective of whether they are religious or non-religious – are just searching for something that is different to home (Urry, 1990). Travellers have various motives for visiting sacral landscapes, but they have one thing in common: they seek this difference, which, as well as distinctiveness, is the result of a branding process (Figure 1) generated by publicity, not advertising. Moreover, in order to generate publicity, the sacral landscape has to announce a new category, not a new offer, the former of which is the brand core. What (potential) visitors think and say about this brand is much more powerful than what the region can say about it itself, which is why publicity is very important (Regionalvermarktung Unseld, 2007).

Today, the internet provides completely new opportunities for publicity in terms of the branding of

Figure 3: Examples of regional brands with sacred content (Germany)

1) 2) 3) 4)

Translation of these brands is difficult, since some terms only work in the German language:
1) Monastery Landscape Ostwestfalen-Lippe 2) Valley of the Priests – All Glory on Earth
3) Monastery region in the Passau Country 4) Abbey City Waldsassen... come and enjoy.

sacral landscapes. It is not only the most useful tool, but also the most popular source of information for travellers and therefore the most important platform for destination management actors. This is why destinations are highly dependent on information technology, because it is the most powerful tool for branding sacral landscapes. Furthermore, the internet determines their competitiveness, because it has an inevitable impact when potential visitors select destinations (Akbulut & Ekin, 2017:105). The mediatisation of religious content offers the possibility of branding a sacral landscape more than any other communication channel (Hoover, 2006), and brands again make religious content pointedly communicable in a fragmented media landscape (Hepp & Krönert, 2008), because they provide orientation. Nonetheless, this is a contradiction, because while the religious content of a brand has a smaller profile in a mediated society, its message should be clearer. Branding as a pattern of mediatisation implies that religious content loses its sacred space of communication (Hepp & Krönert, 2008).

What seems theoretically contradictory, however, proves to be feasible in practice, since many rural regions manage this balancing act between a religiously based brand and mass marketing. In Germany, for example, numerous tourism regions advertise religious content. On the one hand, they often use them in their name and logo (Figure 3 shows a selection), both of which are important, since our brains respond more differently to names than to any other words. Especially in terms of brands, our brains respond very well to the sound of positively associated names or names that have a deep meaning (Stibel, 2017). Therefore, it is not surprising that all sacred landscapes have a brand name containing a religious word (monastery, priest, etc.). On the other hand, the logo is used as an emotional trigger, which of course shows a religious motif (cross, church tower, etc.). Both the name and the logo provide some form of religious content to offer orientation, to make decisions easier and to build trust and confidence. The social constructionist perspective of the landscape enables the brand to provide guests with certainty about who they are and who they want to be when visiting this region. The brand is the reflection of their cultural identity (Greider & Garkovich, 1994), and it is precisely this cultural component that is particularly significant for sacral landscapes in tourism marketing. For example, in Waldsassen (No. 4 in Figure 3), there are currently efforts to have the monastery landscape (and not the monastery itself!) recognised by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site, which also underlines the importance of sacral landscapes not only as cultural areas worth protecting, but also as regional brands.

However, a detailed analysis of their websites reveals that – as described above – religious content has only a weak profile (Table 1), in that all brands have a religiously connoted name, but they usually use only the non-religious or interesting parts of religion on their websites. Thus, all religious regional brands advertise through some sort of religious building, such as an old monastery or baroque church (which may also be interesting for non-religious tourists because of their art-historical values). In addition, some regional brands also promote special religious art, such as museums or concerts (which may also be of interest to non-religious tourists) or links to nearby religious destinations. The analysis of these homepages shows, however, that religious offerings in the real sense (for example, prayers or pilgrimages) or religious symbols (for example, crosses) are advertised far less frequently, while religious texts (for example, psalms or prayers) are hardly found at all.

It transpires that messages that are too religious are avoided, so as not to discourage non-religious tourists. The brands can therefore be described as 'religion light', since they pick out those elements of religion that are acceptable to non-believers. Consequently, it is

Table 1: Homepages of regional brands with sacred content, displaying religious

Regional brand	Monastery Landscape Ostwestfalen-Lippe	Valley of the priests	Monastery Region in the Passau Country	Abbey City Waldsassen	Swabian Baroque Region[1]	Madonna Country
brand names with religious connotations?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
brand logos with religious connotations?	✓	✓	✓	✓	no logo	no logo
buildings (e.g. churches)?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
content on first sight?	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓
art (e.g. museums or concerts)?	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
links (e.g. to sanctuaries)	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
symbols (e.g. crosses)?	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓
actors (e.g. nuns)?	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
activities (e.g. prayers or pilgrimage)?	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗
texts (e.g. psalms)?	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗

1. In southern Germany, this usually means baroque churches.

no longer the sacred at the centre of regional marketing but the regional destination, which is somewhat sacralised. As a result, one can understand Hospers (2011:28) when he says that it is not the sacral site itself but the 'site sacralisation' that is the engine behind religious-based marketing strategies, i.e. what is religious is determined by the brand, not by the destination. This strategy also makes it possible to attract new target groups, since building up a well-balanced image of a site encourages tourists to visit churches, not only to pray, but also to photograph them. Thus, through their religious heritage, many rural regions can also recruit non-religious guests with their sacralised brand.

Obviously, this is the goal of regional brands, because behind most of them there are of course no religious organisations but regional tourism associations (Table 2). Accordingly, their target groups in most cases are not religious people but tourists (and also the local population, for which the regional leisure offer is advertised). Therefore, it is not surprising that these sites' homepages usually contain almost exclusively non-religious information (for example, holidays, overnight stays and bicycle tours). Of the six regional brands studied in Germany which are based on the sacral landscape, only one has a decidedly religious message (Monastery Landscape Ostwestfalen-Lippe). It is also the only one that is not driven by a commercial or governmental organisation. The professionalisation of marketing therefore leads not only to a diversification of topics and target groups, but also to the de-sacralisation of the brand.

One danger remains: commodification

The communication in digital media of a sacral landscape as a brand is currently an increasingly a commercialised process. Branding a sacral landscape means presenting the target region in the non-religious space of mostly commercialised media platforms, without losing the sacred aspects of the attraction (Hepp & Krönert, 2008). This is a new challenge for many destinations, as it sits between selling through modern strategies and holding on to religious content. Commodification can damage the brand itself, but it

Table 2: Organisation, target groups and topics

Regional Brand	Supervisor	Target groups	Focus on religious topics	Homepage categories
Monastery Landscape Ostwestfalen-Lippe	Private actors	People interested in spirituality, culture and history	Yes	Monasteries, Events, Network, News
Valley of the priests	Tourist office	Tourists	Partially	Nature, Culture, Family
Monastery Region in the Passau Country	Tourist office	Tourists	No	Holidays, Meals & Overnight Stays, News & Dates, Picture Gallery, Service
Abbey City Waldsassen	City of Waldsassen	Tourists and locals	No	Leisure/Culture, Tourism, Business, Civic Service
Swabian Baroque Region	Regional Marketing Association	Tourists and locals	No	Family Vacations & Leisure, Cycling, Local Discovery, Planning & Booking
Madonna Country	Tourist office	Tourists and locals	No	Destination, Accommodation, Adventure, Map & Tours, Events, Information & Service

can also lead to broader and new target groups. As the examples from Germany show, regional brands have a strong tendency to keep their religious content low or to communicate only those religious topics that are also of interest to non-religious visitors. The promotion of just slightly religious or even secular tourism offers is changing the behaviour of visitors, to the point where pilgrims are becoming tourists (Qurashi, 2017). Such new visitors often seek historical aspects, cultural events, architectural insights, entertainment or simply variety, without having to deal too deeply with the religious background. In this case, commodification can increase the vulnerability of a brand.

Innovative approaches to tourism management at religious sites have to balance heritage preservation and tourism development, because many tourist destinations still serve their original religious purpose; for example, cathedrals are tourist attractions as well as places of worship. Often, there is even a prevalence of cultural (e.g. architectural) over religious motives for visiting sacral sites (Marine-Roig, 2015), which is a challenge for decision-makers and marketing managers to grasp regarding visitors and worshippers' needs. The sustainable branding of a religious landscape therefore requires the identification of critical sites and the exploration of methods suitable to manage a diverse range of visitors (Akbulut & Ekin, 2017:108-109). Critical to the brand's success for sacred and secular visitors is the ability, capacity and commitment of brand managers to meet the needs of these different people (Wiltshier & Griffiths, 2016). Therefore, tourism stakeholders create several different versions of the destination, albeit this diversity branding does not reduce the multiplicity of the region (Ren & Blichfeldt, 2011). Since in a postmodern society the claim to clear distinctions diminishes and the boundaries between religious and non-religious become softer, it seems to be easier to combine different demands, because authenticity is perceived subjectively by the individual. On the one hand, this offers the opportunity to develop a brand for different target groups, but on the other hand, it hides the danger that the brand may then lose its uniqueness as a result of commodification.

Conclusion

Regional destinations in Germany use religious topics in tourism marketing to attract non-religious tourists as well religious visitors. As a rule, the role of the sacral cultural landscape is condensed into the historical or artistic appeal of its buildings and its art (for example, churches, monasteries and concerts). The brand core therefore does not represent the entire sacral landscape but only non-religious, interesting objects. Mass-compatible attractions are brought to the fore in location marketing, and the underlying landscape concept is very much focused on the singularity of places. The chances of a postmodern society in which the boundaries between the religious and the non-religious become increasingly softer, are therefore only being used in their beginnings. Instead, these sacred offerings are advertised as part of the brand that should

also interest non-religious visitors, thereby reducing it to a few architectural or artistic elements and threatening to sink it in a sea of interchangeable destinations. Ultimately, this commodification strategy does not upgrade the sacred landscape but levels its specific values in order to make them consumable for the supposed interest of mass tourism. The actual meaning of a brand, namely to be something special, is lost in the end.

Bibliography

Akbulut, O. & Ekin, Y. (2017) How visible are sacred sites online? Availability of European sacred sites websites. In: *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*. Vol 5(1) Article 10: 105-124.

Anderson, I. (2014) Placing place branding: an analysis of an emerging research field in human geography, *Geografisk Tidsskrift-Danish Journal of Geography*, 114 (2): 143-155, DOI: 10.1080/00167223.2014.895954

Bell, F. (2016) Looking beyond place branding: the emergence of place reputation. *Journal of Place Management and Development*. 9(3): 247-254.

Casanova. J. (1994) *Public Religions in the Modern World*. Chicago.

Casanova, J. (2006) Religion, European secular identities, and European Integration in Byrnes T.A. & Katzenstein P.J. (eds) *Religion in an expending Europe,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 65-92

Clifton, N. (2011) Regional Culture in the Market Place: Place Branding and Product Branding as Cultural Exchange, *European Planning Studies*, 19(11): 1973-1994, DOI: 10.1080/09654313.2011.618689

Davie. G. (2008) From believing without belonging to vicarious religion: Understanding the patterns of religion in modern Europe in Pollack, D. & Olson, D. (Eds) *The role of religion in modern societies*. New York: 165-176.

Duda, T (2014) Sacral landscape and its influence on the tourism space development in the region (based on the example of Western Pomerania region NW Poland). *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage,* 2(2), Article 4: 35-49.

Eitelbuss, W. (2017) Mit System zur erfolgreichen B2B-Marke. Absatzwirtschaft, 8th August, http:// www.absatzwirtschaft.de/mit-system-zur-erfolgreichen-b2b-marke-111601/

Fickler, P. (1947) Grundfragen der Religionsgeographie. *Erdkunde. Archiv für wissenschaftliche Geographie*. Vol. 1/1947: 121–144.

Future for Religious Heritage (2014) *Secular Europe backs Religious Heritage*. Survey report with key results. Brüssel.

Greer, C., Donnelly, S. & Rickly, M. (2008) Landscape perspective for tourism studies in Knudsen, D.C. (*et al*.) (Eds) *Landscape, Tourism, and Meaning,* Bloomington: 9-18.

Greider, T. & Garkovich, L. (1994) Landscapes: The social construction of nature and the environment. *Rural Sociology,* 59(1): 1-24

Hepp, A. & Krönert, V. (2008) Media Cultures and Religious Change: Mediatization as Branding Religion. Paper presented at *Religion, Media Process and the Transformation of the Public Sphere*, ESCR, London, 9. January 2008

Hilpert, M. (2017) Wallfahrtsorte als Marken. Place Branding durch Volksfrömmigkeit in einer postsäkularen Gesellschaft. *Standort. Zeitschrift für Angewandte Geographie,* Vol. 4: 287-292.

Hilpert, M. & Mahne-Bieder, J, (2014) Sakrale Kulturlandschaftselemente. Kontextualisierte Wahrnehmung christlicher Artefakte in religiösen Topographien am Beispiel katholischer Glaubenszeugnisse in der Region Augsburg. *Berichte. Geographie und Länderkunde,* Vol. 3/4, Leipzig: 353-366.

Hilpert, M., Mahne-Bieder, J. & Stifter, V. (2016) Regionalökonomische Bedeutung kleiner Wallfahrtsorte. Lokale Wertschöpfung am Beispiel Biberbach (Bayerisch-Schwaben). *Standort. Zeitschrift für Angewandte Geographie,* Vol. 3: 184-188.

Hoheisel, K. & Rinschede, G. (1989) Raumwirksamkeit von Religionen und Ideologien. *Praxis Geographie* 9/1989: 6 –11.

Hoover, S. (2006) *Religion in the Media Age*. London

Hospers, G.J. (2011) City Branding and the Tourist Gaze, in Dinnie, K. (Ed.) *City Branding. Theory and Cases*. New York: 27-35

Kühne, O. (2013) Religion und Landschaft – Überlegungen zu einem komplexen Verhältnis aus sozialwissenschaftlicher Perspektive in Bund Heimat und Umwelt in Deutschland (BHU) (Ed.) *Religion und Landschaft*. Bonn: 7-15.

Mahne-Bieder, J. & Hilpert, M. (2013) Regionale Verteilung von Wallfahrtsorten. Choristische Prinzipien der räumlichen Sortierung christlicher Heiligtümer. *Mitteilungen der Österreichischen Geographischen Gesellschaft*, Vol. 155/2013: 243–262.

Marine-Roig, E. (2015) Religious Tourism versus Secular Pilgrimage: The Basilica of La Sagrada Familia. *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*, 3(1), Article 5: 25-37.

Pereira, R.L.G., Correia, A.L. & Schutz, R.L.A. (2012) Destination Branding: A Critical Overview. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 13(2): 81-102, DOI: 10.1080/1528008X.2012.645198

Pike, A. (2015) Economic Geographies of Brands and Branding. *Economic Geography*, 89(4): 317-339, DOI: 10.1111/ecge.12017

Qurashi, J. (2017) Commodification of Islamic Religious Tourism: from Spiritual to Touristic Experience. *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage,* 5(1), Article 9: 89-104.

Regionalvermarktung Unseld (2007) *Branding the Landscape – a guide*. Langfurth.

Ren, C. & Blichfeldt, B.S. (2011) One Clear Image? Challenging Simplicity in Place Branding. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 11(4): 416-434, DOI: 10.1080/15022250.2011.598753

Seidenspinner, W. (2004) *Die Erfindung des Madonnenländchens. Die kulturelle Regionalisierung des Badischen Frankenlandes zwischen Heimat und Nation*. Buchen.

Siegert, G. (2000) Branding – Medienstrategien für globale Märkte? In Brosius, H.B. (Ed.) *Kommunikation über Grenzen und Kulturen*. Konstanz: 75-91.

Smith, V.L. (1992) Introduction: The quest in guest, in Pilgrimage and Tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 19(1): 1-17

Stibel, J. (2017) Why brand names are so important. *USA TODAY*, 11th September: 2B.

Urry, J. (1990) *The Tourist Gaze*. London.

Wiltshier, P. & Griffiths, M. (2016) Management practices for the development of religious tourism sacred sites. Managing expectations through sacred and secular aims in site development; reports, store and access. *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage,* 4(7), Article 2: 1-8.

Woodhead, L.J.P. (2016) Intensified religious pluralism and de-differentiation: the British example. *Society*, 53(1): 41 -46.