

CHANGES IN JERUSALEM’S JEWISH HOLY PLACES: THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE TOMBS OF THE RIGHTEOUS IN THREE OF THE CITY’S CEMETERIES, 1967–2017

By Doron Bar

The article analyzes the change in the map of Jewish holy places in Jerusalem during the last fifty years. It focuses on the development of the tombs of the righteous in three of Jerusalem’s cemeteries and describes how they have evolved as sacred places and central pilgrimage destinations. Besides the historical cemetery on the Mount of Olives, the article addresses the development of Har Ha-menuhut cemetery, in western Jerusalem, where during recent decades dozens of such tombs were established as pilgrimage sites; and the Sheikh Badr cemetery, where the sanctification of the tomb of the Zhviller Rebbe turned this rather neglected cemetery into a prime pilgrimage destination. I claim that while in the past, pilgrimage was focused on holy places connected to the city’s biblical-mythical past, the current map of pilgrimage is based not only on historical sites but also on sacred tombs of rabbis and zaddikim from the recent history of the city.

Doron Bar
The Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies
Jerusalem, Israel