



## **PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PILGRIMAGE AND RELIGIOUS TOURISM**

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**Annotation:** This article presents important insights into the economic, spiritual, and social significance of sacred pilgrimage sites, as well as the mechanisms for enhancing tourism potential and effective ways to utilize them. Additionally, by studying places of worship and sacred sites of various religions, we can observe pilgrimage regulations, achievements, and shortcomings. Therefore, pilgrimage tourism is one of the most active forms of travel, and all available opportunities should be utilized for its development.

**Keywords:** Pilgrimage tourism, religious tourism, tourist migration, travel destinations, regional pilgrimage sites, pilgrimage regulations.

**INTRODUCTION.** History shows that nearly all nations have sacred sites, religious pilgrimage destinations, and traditions. Sacred places generally refer to locations considered holy and revered by believers. By visiting pilgrimage sites, pilgrims not only have the opportunity to explore and study the history of architectural monuments but also gain insights into centuries-old religious beliefs, customs, and traditions. Additionally, the architecture of these sacred places, which preserves rare examples of material culture, serves as an essential subject for studying their historical and traditional aspects.

**LITUTURE REVIEW:** Rituals in the Christian pilgrimage are inseparable from the church liturgical tradition. E.A. Torchinov, considering the typology He wrote that "the connections of ritual with the psychological core of religion are represented by those liturgical traditions that also objectively contribute to the experience of certain deep states, but they do so indirectly; in these traditions, there is no awareness by the adept of the psychotechnical nature of the ritual and its impact on believers is explained by the impact on The sacred powers of divine grace, the grace of the gods, etc. Belong to rituals of this type. Christian sacraments (first of all, baptism and the Eucharist as a mystical act, modeled by a work that reproduces by liturgical means the redemptive sacrifice of Jesus'Christ)[4].

Many scholars from various fields study all kinds of tourism, but there are still questions for which answers are not always easy to find. One such serious question is the distinction between religious tourism and pilgrimage. To date, a unified opinion has not been formed, primarily regarding the status of pilgrimage tourism: is pilgrimage tourism a part of religious tourism, or is it an independent field? Scholars have differing views: tourism specialists believe that pilgrimage is part of religious tourism, while theologians hold the opposite opinion. The first group of specialists

includes A.Yu. Aleksandrova, V.S. Senin, A.V. Babkin, T.T. Khristov. The second group mainly consists of clergy members, such as Patriarch Kirill, Bishop Mark of Yegoryevsky, and others [15].

Mac Connell argued: "The search for authenticity is what defines the pilgrimage of the modern person". A pilgrim is also perceived as a tourist in the modern secular world. Tourism is an activity dependent on three elements: the necessary level of income, free time, and social sanctions that allow travel. Pilgrimage also requires these elements. Turner argued: "A tourist is half a pilgrim if a pilgrim is half a tourist" [12].

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.** This article, dedicated to the historical development of pilgrimage sites and their role in the tourism industry, uses methods such as comparative analysis, synthesis, and analysis in its scientific research. These approaches were employed to explore and assess the evolution of pilgrimage sites and their impact on the development of tourism.

**ANALYSIS AND RESULTS.** "By studying the historical composition of sacred sites and places of worship, as well as their economic, spiritual, and social significance in pilgrimage tourism, the conclusion was reached that pilgrimage tourism is currently a widely spread sector of tourism. Essentially, pilgrimage tourism is the process of visiting pilgrimage sites."

"Currently, more than 200 million people worldwide travel to various pilgrimage sites and sacred places that they consider holy, specifically for pilgrimage purposes, each year. Looking at the statistical data, 150 million Christians, 45 million Muslims, 40 million Buddhists, Shintoists, and 30 million Hindus organize religious pilgrimage trips annually" [2].

Thus, religious tourist migration worldwide is considered active, with pilgrims primarily traveling for spiritual purification, fulfilling religious duties, and visiting sacred sites. Religious motivations significantly influence tourist flows. The roots of religious tourism date back to ancient times. The earliest information



about travels pertains to the Ancient period. To study the wide and diverse geography of pilgrims, zoning is used. Eleven macro-regions of pilgrimage stand out in the world:

- Christian Europe;
- North America, which is strongly influenced by Christianity and other major religions;
- Latin America, where Christianity and traditional religions dominate;
- North Africa, where Islam is predominant;
- Western and Eastern Africa, where Islam is dominant and Christianity and traditional religions are also present;
- Southeast Asia, which encompasses Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism;
- Central Asia, which is strongly influenced by Buddhism (particularly Lamaism);
- Central Asia, where Islam is dominant;
- Western Asia, which is strongly influenced by Islam, Christianity, and Judaism;
- Southern Asia, where Judaism and Buddhism are prevalent, as well as Christianity, Jainism, Sikhism, and Islam [1].

Each macro-region is primarily famous for its global pilgrimage centers. They accept the international flow of believers and often merge with the functions of religious specialization in administrative, industrial, cultural, and tourist centers.

In the context of modern realities, tourism occupies one of the most important places in the global economy and makes a significant contribution to its development, being a dynamic and evolving sector. According to UNWTO data, in the early 2000s, the number of tourists worldwide did not exceed 700 million, but by 2017, the total number had reached 1.3 billion. In turn, the tourism service market shows corresponding growth, and today, it is possible to meet all the needs of tourists. In the world market, 80% of pilgrimage tourism is concentrated in 19 countries. This includes not only Muslim regions but also several tourism-developed countries. In 2019, pilgrimage tourism contributed \$148 billion to the GDP of these countries, and the employment in this sector amounted to 4.7 million people. According to forecasts, by 2023, this figure will grow to \$204 billion, and 6.1 million people will be engaged in the halal tourism industry. Additionally, in the USA, 350,000 people are employed in the pilgrimage tourism sector, and the total revenue of this sector amounts to \$52 billion.

Religious tourism is one of the forms of tourism where believers travel individually or in groups for reasons related to religion or spirituality, in search of meaning. This can be pilgrimage, missionary work, or leisure. Many of the most popular tourist destinations today are connected to ancient places of worship or places of apparent miracles. Additionally, pilgrimage, as part of

religious tourism, is the act of moving from one place to another, often traveling through foreign lands, a structured march of a group of people, usually with a religious undertone. It is a ritual journey with a sacred purpose, where every step on the way has meaning. The pilgrim knows that the journey will be difficult and that life's challenges will arise. Sacred sites and pilgrimage destinations are mainly associated with the major religions: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Sikhism. From the perspective of pilgrimage, its inclusion signifies religious involvement in the journey. The motivation for pilgrimage differs from the motivation for religious tourism.

Pilgrimage is not just a vacation; it is a transformational journey during which significant changes occur, new insights are gained, a deeper understanding is achieved, new and old places in the heart are visited, blessings are accepted, healing takes place, and upon returning from the pilgrimage, life is seen through different eyes, and nothing will ever be the same as before. Today, tourism is one of the most dynamically growing sectors of the economy in many countries. The number of tourists is increasing, new destinations are opening, and new jobs are being created. There are qualitative changes in this sector. These changes are facilitated by the readiness and ability of tour operators to meet the growing, diverse, and rapidly changing needs of consumers. Due to this increasing demand, new types of tourism have emerged. A distinguishing feature of the tourist and the pilgrim is the spiritual component of the journey. For the pilgrim, it is important to perform a religious ritual at a holy, famous, or cult site. For the pilgrim, the religious process is important, while for the tourist, the architectural structure, the history of the place, the culture of religious rituals, and the beauty of natural landscapes are of particular value. That is, in religious tourism, a person may not be a follower of the given religion and may be sightseeing, whereas the pilgrim is always a follower of the religion of the pilgrimage tour they are participating in, and their primary focus is worship.

The polarities on the axis of pilgrimage tourism are defined as sacred versus worldly, and between the extremes, there lies an almost infinite possible sacred-secular combination, with central areas that are now usually referred to as "religious tourism" [14]. It is advisable to adopt the viewpoint of experts in the field and consider the concept of "pilgrimage" as a component of religious tourism. This is because, in practice, dividing pilgrims and tourists seems to be a complicated and inefficient process. Moreover, the legislation does not distinguish between these concepts, so in statistical reports on arrivals and departures, they will be considered together. Many religions still regard pilgrimage as a spiritual activity. The Great Islamic



pilgrimage to Mecca is mandatory for every able-bodied Muslim. Other Islamic religious pilgrimages, primarily to the tombs of Shiite imams or Sufi saints, are also popular throughout the Islamic world. In its current use, the term "pilgrimage" means a religious journey. However, its Latin origin from "peregrinus" allows broader interpretations, including foreigner, wanderer, exile, traveler, as well as newcomer and stranger [13]. Religious pilgrimage, at all stages of its preparation and execution, is based on ritual practice and socio-cultural national traditions of different peoples. Pilgrimage in various religions has clear external similarities, in that it almost always consists of four stages: - preparing for the journey, - traveling to a holy place, - performing a sacred ritual near a shrine, - returning to one's homeland. The process of preparing for the trip is an important part of the culture of pilgrimage tours. Preparing for a pilgrimage trip is often associated with receiving the blessing of a priest (lama, imam), which is usually linked to spiritual readiness. This blessing is often given to the future pilgrim as a sign of permission to worship. An equally important aspect of pilgrimage preparation is the choice of travel time, which is typically associated with a religious holiday, an important event, or personal reasons. The most significant for pilgrims are visits to sacred sites dedicated to the major holidays and events of a particular religion. Since ancient times, travel, including religious travel, has been an expensive undertaking, and a crucial part of preparation has been raising funds, as well as providing the pilgrim with clothing, shoes, and food.

Religious pilgrimage is a complex and diverse spiritual and socio-cultural phenomenon in the lives of many people. Pilgrimage as a form of religious activity originated in ancient times and is associated with the emergence of developed forms of religion and a high stage of socio-cultural relations in society. Pilgrimage developed more systematically during the formation and development of the world's monotheistic religions. The modern nature of this research topic is determined by the weakening of the ideological barriers that divided people according to the principle of non-discrimination. The compatibility of political doctrines and "great teachings" opens the consciousness to the logic of meta-historical time, accessible to world religions, as A.S. Panarin notes. Religious traditions are perceived in a new way by millions of people who now have the opportunity and the need to reconnect with the roots of their faith, to restore traditional forms of self-identity. One such tradition, characteristic of the world's monotheistic religions, is pilgrimage, which emerged in ancient times and is connected to the rise of developed forms of religious consciousness. This trend is most clearly associated with profound changes in mass consciousness and spiritual life, particularly with

liberation from excessive political indoctrination and increasing interest in national cultures at the turn of two millennia, in countries that have passed through the era of "state atheism" and are struggling to overcome the legacy of racist ideologies. At the same time, the "cultural and restorative" process, which cannot be reduced to de-ideologization, but implies a departure from the most odious forms of manipulation of mass consciousness, is culturally extremely contradictory. This is mainly due to the underdeveloped humanitarian aspect in public policy as a whole, including in the education system, and the lack of proper education (especially in religious, spiritual, and moral matters), resulting in the effect of "doctrinal eclecticism." One example of this is the so-called "pilgrimage tourism," which involves open commercialization, limiting the sacred nature of pilgrimage activities and potentially offending the feelings of believers [3].

The conclusions show that the development of pilgrimage tourism, which is rapidly gaining popularity today, is a favorable opportunity for countries with high potential in this area.

Pilgrimage in Christianity has never been a mandatory tradition, but it has always been considered a pious act in Russia and other Christian countries. Orthodox piety is understood as the true and holy faith, and most importantly, the fulfillment of the requirements and rules of Christian life, for "faith without works is dead" (James 2:20). "When setting out on a journey, members of godless families invariably received the blessing of their elders and took with them a small travel icon. The Savior, the Mother of God, the Guardian Angel, or various saints could be depicted on it, often St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, who has always been considered the patron saint of all believers." Such icons have been known since the 11th century. In the Orthodox tradition, after the return of a representative of a family or clan from a pilgrimage, the icon or relic often became a family heirloom or ancestral shrine. Russian Orthodox people perceived pilgrimage, unlike the Western Christian tradition, as a holy and divine act. The saint spoke very precisely about this understanding of piety. Dimitri Rostovsky: "Piety means good, that is, good honoring of the Lord. For the word 'piety' consists of two words: good and honest. The good and the honest, combined together, constitute piety. In fact, piety is found in the good, true, and unfeigned worship of God. For there are many of us, Christians, but not all of us honor His 'goodness,' more often we honor Him only with our lips, but with our hearts, we are far from Him; we only preserve a kind of piety, but we renounce Its power; we are only called Christians, but we do the works of the pagans" [8].

Throughout Russian history, worshipers have been considered those who made long pilgrimages to the Holy Land, Constantinople, Mount Athos, and other



sacred places of Ecumenical Orthodoxy. With the establishment of temples and monasteries in Russia, national traditions of venerating the relics of righteous saints, miraculous and revered icons, and holy crosses were formed, first in Kiev and Novgorod the Great, Smolensk and Chernigov, and later in Vladimir and Moscow, as well as many other cities, temples, and monasteries. Pilgrims who made pilgrimages to national shrines were well-respected by their contemporaries[9]. Here is what the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia wrote: "Since ancient times, pilgrimage to holy places has been one of the most important soul-saving traditions of the Russian people. The favorite spiritual feat of Orthodox pilgrims was sometimes extremely long walks through the great streets of Holy Russia. Russian people with a staff and a bag even went as far as ancient Palestine to worship at the places of the crucifixion and the Resurrection of our Lord" [10].

#### RITUALS OF THE MUSLIM HAJJ

The rituals of the Muslim Hajj began to be created during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad, continuing their development in the first hundred years of the formation of Islam as a world religion. Hajj is not the only concept of pilgrimage in Islam. It means a complete ritual pilgrimage ceremony, which is completely performed only at certain times of the year. There is another kind of Muslim woman The Umrah pilgrimage is less ceremonial, more intimate, and performed at any time of the year. The Muslim is at home in his homeland, he declares the possibility and desire to perform Hajj as the rule in the mosque is for the mullah and the community to help him prepare and get ready for a long journey, as well as to get into the quota allocated for this country, that is, a certain number of pilgrims for the current year. Muslims who perform Hajj, strictly performing all rituals, spend two weeks in Mecca. The main rituals of Hajj were performed by the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. After death According to the Prophet, the rituals of Hajj have been refined in detail over the centuries by medieval ulama. To perform rituals The Hajj pilgrims begin at the appointed time and in certain places called "mikat", which were indicated at the time by the Prophet Muhammad. There are five such places in total:

1. Dhulayfa, 450 km north of Mecca, where the residents of Medina begin the Hajj.
2. Al-Juhfa, 204 km northwest of Mecca, is the seat of Syrians, Egyptians, Jordanians and others.
3. The village of Zat Irk, 95 km northeast of Mecca— is the home of the inhabitants of Iran and the countries located to the east of it.
4. Qarn al-Manazil, 95 km east of Makkah — Mikat residents Central Arabia.

5. Mount Yalamlyam, 45 km from Mecca— is the mekat of the Yemenis.

Hajj and Umrah require a preliminary ritual purification for the pilgrim that he makes before mikat. Before crossing the mikat, the pilgrim performs a number of actions that should prepare him for the rites of Hajj, including: cutting his hair and nails, ablution, anointing, changing into white clothes, performing additional prayer.

After crossing the mikat, the pilgrim enters a special state of ritual purity and sanctification, called "ihram", a symbol of which is a special pilgrim's attire, consisting of two unstitched pieces of white cloth and also called "ihram". "Shin's wives can also wear a white robe that completely covers their body and head, however, they are allowed to wear a clean, modest dress in the national style of the countries from which they come. When men wear ihram and women wear their national clothes, Muslims They rejoice in this double symbolism of Muslim unity and equality, existing against the background of a rich and fruitful cultural diversity. Thus, the Sum of which is completely focused on its general appeal to God, is struck by the extreme "diversity" of various cultural forms, each of which fulfills the common task commanded by God in the Quran: "to demand the right and forbid the wrong"[11].

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.** In conclusion, it is essential to emphasize that religious tourism has always been one of the most active forms of travel. From the ideas and examples presented above, it can be concluded that it is necessary to develop significant policies and strategies for the sustainable development of pilgrimage tourism, which should be adhered to not only by each member of the country but also by foreign nations. Additionally, it is crucial to create infrastructure that can attract foreign tourists. For the successful implementation of sustainable development, it should be coordinated by both the government and local authorities.

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