

RELIGIOUS TOURISM AND PILGRIMAGE IN RUSSIA: CULTURAL-HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

Yakunin V.N

Volga Region State University of Service, Russia

Yamashev V.M

Volga Region State University of Service, Russia

Anuchin O.I

Volga Region State University of Service, Russia

Adaevskaya T.I

Volga Region State University of Service, Russia

Ovsyannikova N.V

Volga Region State University of Service, Russia

ABSTRACT

The status, trends, organization and prospects of religious tourism in Russia and classification of religious tourism are considered in the article; religious tourists' and pilgrims' motivation is examined. Meeting the needs and capabilities of Russia and the main trends in the development of religious tourism and preservation of historical-cultural heritage the recommendations which can be used to prepare new tourism products are offered on the basis of cultural-historical analysis.

Keywords: *culture, traditions, landscape, religious tourism, pilgrimage, churches, monasteries*

1.INTRODUCTION

Speaking about the historiography of the problem of the tourism classification on types, it should be noted that nowadays there is a sufficient amount of literature about indexed tourism types. However, the development of religious tourism and pilgrimage in the Russian Federation is still insufficiently studied problem [1, pp. 1638-1645; 2, pp. 1147-1151; 3, pp. 1097-1101; 4, pp. 3-5; 5; 6, p. 88; 7, pp. 60-71; 8, pp. 677-684; 9; 10, pp. 187-200; 11, pp. 95-99; 12, pp. 995-1004; 13, pp. 1375-1381; 14, pp. 71-80; 15, pp. 12-18].

At the modern stage Russian citizens have a growing necessity for spiritual values, an increasing interest in the monuments of religious culture, Church life, monasteries in particular which became important centers of spiritual revival. Penetrating deeper into public relations the religion opens new horizons for tourism exchanges.

It is extremely important for professionals of the tourism industry not only to be skilled in the practical organization of the tourist trips, but also to have a clear idea about what is the religion, what motivates people to go on a pilgrimage or tour the Holy places. This knowledge will help them better to understand the tourists' needs for the development and promotion of tourism products and to identify the target market segments. They also need to get knowledge on the geography of religious centers, as they are the

objects of attraction in this tourism type. To prepare a competent specialist of the tourism industry – is the overriding objective for the higher school [2, p. 1147-1151; 3, p. 1097-1101].

The objects of religious tourism are in growing demand and in the literal sense of the word the religious tourism becomes a part of the modern tourism industry. Monuments of religion, history and culture represent an important motivation for visiting a particular region or city. Many religious monuments are the objects of the tourist facilities and are under the state protection. So the development of the worldwide interest in religious tourism is also spared in Russia. In our country there is a process of formation of tourist firms on the organization of pilgrimage tours, religious and pilgrimage services, organized in monasteries, churches and other religious organizations. Over the last decade in Russia the number of tourists making a pilgrimage to the Holy sites of Russia and also travelling abroad with religious educational purposes was significantly increased. [12, pp. 995-1004; 13, pp. 1375-1381].

2.CLASSIFICATION OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM

A person traveling outside of usual territory for a period of not more than a year to visit the Holy places and centers of religions is the tourist who travels for religious objectives. The utterance “religious tourism” is to denote the activities associated with the provision of the services and needs of tourists travelling to the Holy places and religious centers outside their usual territory. Religious tourism — is an independent type of tourism. It has its varieties like the other types as the following: pilgrimage tourism and religious tourism excursions and orientation.

The utterance of pilgrimage tourism – the visits to Holy places - is negated so many of those who involved in its organization: "pilgrimage" and "tourism" – are different concepts for them, sometimes even mutually exclusive. Du to these considerations we use the term with the same content - a religious tourism or tourism of religious shrines places.

Do not mix the utterances of "religious tourism" and "pilgrimage" as many modern scientists do. Pilgrimages to "Holy places" - is perhaps the oldest form of tourism, known since ancient Egyptian times. Religious motivation had already had a significant impact on the "tourist flows" that time. Therefore, the history of religious tourism is rooted in centuries.

A pilgrimage implies a certain relation of man to reality. In most cases pilgrim is deeply religious person with an already established system of values. Currently, the pilgrims widely use the services of the tourism industry. Some tourist offices and most services arrange pilgrimage tours for believers.

Religious tourists and first of all the pilgrims go on a religious tour when they have a need to do something more than the usual cult activities in the conditions of the normal environment of their residence. People go on tours to Holy places with different motives: to pray, to solve personal problems, find a suitable religion, theological school and a system of values, to get acquainted with the cultural heritage of the country.

Religious tourists use the services of the tourism industry: the sectors of transportation, accommodation and catering, entertainment, as well as tour operators and travel agents who implement such tourist product. The pilgrims, in many cases, use other services: live and eat in churches, monasteries, sometimes getting to destinations by means of transport provided by these organizations. Pilgrims can also perform some work in the obedience of service; sometimes it is mandatory for them.

Tourist trip is based on motivation which is one of the most important factors in making travel decisions and choice of tourism product and its constituent elements. Choice motivation of tourist travel (time,

duration, direction, type, cost, nature of activities) – are the most important characteristics influencing behavioral initiatives of the tourist in the selection, acquisition and execution of the tour.

The personal motives to a certain extent shape his/her behavior as a buyer and consumer of goods and services, especially the services of tourism. Understanding of motives of the potential client is of great importance in the planning, formation and organization of the process of implementation of the tourism product. It helps to ensure match of supply and demand and as a result, to increase of competitiveness of the enterprise at the expense of meeting the needs of the tourist in a specific touristic product.

Attractive objects for religious tourists are the Holy places and the centers of religions. Such trips can be explained by the religious acts, celebrations, festivals, taking place at certain time of the year .

Considering the fact that religious trips involved both the believers and secular people, the purpose of religious trip can be classified as follows:

1. The celebration of religious rites (such events will be open for the pilgrims with religious purposes and tourists as viewers).
2. Self-improvement and affirmation of spiritual state (this motivation in religious tourism of both pilgrims and ordinary tourists). This motive is associated with spiritual development.
3. Raise of personal status in the religious community (the motive of the trip is relevant only to Church people).
4. The worship of the Holy place, the church, the relics, receiving their healing, spiritual and physical (aspiration only of believers, pilgrims).
5. Knowledge of the spiritual "new", getting a charge of spiritual energy (motivation belongs to the believers and secular tourists.)
6. Secular motives: curiosity, getting aesthetic pleasure of architecture, painting, icon-painting, Church singing.

Going to a religious visit as pilgrims or as ordinary tourists the people are unwittingly transferred from the world of reality into the world of the goodness and beauty of religious abodes. Secular people flock to the shrines to see the unique architecture of religious buildings, their monumentality and grace, to hear the bell ringing out all around. Not only religious monuments are reborn from the former the ruins and oblivion – the great beauty returns to the world of beauty, embodied not only in stone, but most importantly – in the hearts of people. Besides, during visiting the Holy places the natural environment and the historic landscape of the area play an enormous role .

All this creates a special atmosphere of an Orthodox monastery. That is why the Church has always chosen the most beautiful place in the surrounding landscape. Orthodox Christianity became the dominant feature of the landscape and at the same time its organizing part. Many famous monasteries are located on the tops of high hills or steep banks of rivers. Providing beautiful views of the surrounding countryside the temples seem to merge together with the heavens. No wonder most of the temples were built on elevated area that is largely determined by the sense of reuniting the human spirit with God, the harmony of man with nature. On the other hand, if Church domes cause just aesthetic admiration of a secular person, the pilgrims inspired the idea of a dominant supremacy of God over man.

Under the urbanization influence many churches have lost their original, natural environment and are often crushed by urban development. Surely if it is possible this should be avoided. Religious buildings must be protected from “visual pollution” of the city.

Thus, the relevance and practical importance of motivational aspects in religious tourism are obvious. Understanding, knowledge and use of tourist motives in the tour with a religious purpose can be the key to successful promotion and popularization of this tourist destination. Only by identifying the motives of religious travel, tourism organizations can develop effective techniques for attracting customers and making it permanent, that eventually directly or indirectly may affect the nature and volume of demand and sales.

During international travel, these tourists have to go through the customs, currency, visa and other formalities. The firms involved in the practical organization of the trips of pilgrims and tourists with the specialization in providing services in the field of religious tourism have already been formed in the Russian tourist market.

Religious tourism can be classified into the following types :

- domestic tourism – travelling of residents of the country within the country;
- local domestic tourism – travelling of residents of any region on this region ;
- inbound tourism – travel in any country of persons who are not residents;
- outbound tourism – travelling of residents of a country to another country.

These types of tourism can be differently combined, forming a category of tourism that is not specific to any country but to the region, the utterance "region" – is applied to any district within a country or group of countries. The definition of "tourism within the country" includes a domestic and inbound tourism.

The problem of religious tourism classification is undeveloped. The sources in the tourism business literature the utterance "religious tourism" is replaced by the utterance "pilgrimage", people make no difference between a tour with a religious theme and religious trip.

V.S. Senin believes that religious tourism has three forms:

- 1) tours of pilgrimage,
- 2) excursion tours on religious subjects,
- 3) specialized tours uniting the pilgrims and tourists [5].

Based on the above, we can agree with the researcher if we assume that:

- 1) the tours of pilgrimage are necessarily long journeys where only believers go, and where the excursion with education purposes are generally not offered ;
- 2) Sightseeing tours are only for tourists, excursion tour should be a component of as a long trip or a short stay in trip.

The visit religious shrines and places where the tourists will be able to see religious objects – monuments, to visit museums and exhibitions are planned in the framework of religious tourism with excursion

direction. It allows the secular people to join the spiritual values. The objects of the tourist interest in these trips can be: architectural ensembles, monasteries, churches, icons, relics of saints, sacred springs. These trips are usually not as long as the pilgrimage, they are for children and adults and can be arranged at any time of the year and are not connected to religious holidays. If a spiritual moment is an important for the pilgrim, a tourist travels to the Holy places with cultural-informative purpose.

Religious tourism is close to the scientific tourism for religious purposes. Such visits are few, but they are expanding the geography of tourist trips. Scientists are interested in religious heritage – the objects found, including archaeological excavations.

Religious tourism can be as organized and unorganized from the point of view of features of organization. Organized trips are strictly regulated and are usually carried out under an advanced payment. The seller and the customer are to discuss the itinerary, dates of stay, the services in advance. During the informal visits the tourists do not resort to the help of intermediary firms realizing their tourist product. They plan and independently carry out their trip.

So religious tourism can be classified: according to the world's religious faiths, duration, participants (respectively, the motivational aspects of travel), according to the characteristics of the organization.

3. FEATURES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM

The pilgrim service at churches and monasteries, tourist firms are engaged in organization of religious tourism in Russia. There are examples of pilgrimage services with independent status of organization, having the blessing of the ruling Bishop. Very few of the pilgrimage service are registered as tour operators, this activity does not require licensing. The pilgrimage service, in fact, functions as tourist agencies. In this regard, it is easier than tourist companies to organize their work. The majority of tourist firms offering religious tours, do not have the blessing of the Church.

Peculiarities of organization religious tour come from the reasons why people make religious trips. For believers, the main goal of the pilgrimage is the performance of religious rites, participation in the Liturgy. The tours of religious subjects are offered to ordinary tourists with a secular purpose (obtaining aesthetic enjoyment and familiarity with the unique monuments of ancient architecture, wall painting, iconography, introduction to religious culture). This is the origin of differences between the internal principles of organization religious tourism in pilgrim and tourist service firms.

As the clients of pilgrimage services are mainly people of faith the trip programme is accordingly planned. The pilgrim service is organizing a trip for the believers so that it starts from the congregational praying on the prayer rule developed before. An information sheet with hymns and praying dedicated to the feasts and saints is developed in addition to the planned trip. Then there is the accompanying story on the theme of the trip: about the life of the Saint or way to the Shrine or the history of a monastery or church formation. The group leader or assistant reads a short rule for traveling with an explanation of the praying content, talks about the saints and history of the Orthodox Church, local history of monasteries and churches, provides the necessary information about the places visited in an accessible form, tells about the life of devotees and answers the questions. On arrival at a Holy place people take part in worship with confession and communion for those who wish. After the praying Church employees guide the excursion tours, the pilgrims communicate with the clergy and visit Holy springs. The hymns are read to the saints at whose Shrine they prayed or to wonder-working icons at which celebration was attended on the way back. Many people visit these Holy places independently after such joint pilgrimage.

Pilgrimage service as well as tourist firm should prepare the group leader for religious travel. He/she needs to be clear about the task in the religious trip is not personal praying and participation in divine services, but this is a care for the group.

The specialists of travel companies in a religious trip pay a special attention to the organization of excursion work. The excursion combines such functions the implementation of which allows to implement secular goals of tourists. Firstly, it is a function of organization of cultural activities. The tour takes an important place in the leisure activities with the purpose of acquaintance with objects of culture, art, natural landscapes. Secondly, it is a function of expanding cultural horizons. A momentary interest in a particular phenomenon, event, creativity can become sustainable, permanent, to help in mastering new knowledge. Thirdly, it is a function of education. As the excursion is part of the category religious tour organized by the travel Agency, the supervisor should have the skills of the guide. Travel company gives priority to the necessity of your professionalism.

The preparation of the route is connected with the peculiarities of organization of religious tour and pilgrimage. It starts the preparatory phase after the decision on the trip to a new place is made. It is the itinerary, that is the most convenient route for the group that disclosures issues. The itinerary defines the order of visiting objects, the sequence of their examination. The address and the access road is specified, the route is marked on the map-scheme. The next step is a detour or a bypass route, the state of the roads is checked, potential sanitary stops is discussed, a rough calculation of time spent on the road is made. Prior to departure, the organizers have the blessing for the pilgrims' and tourists' arrival, clarify the possibility of organizing food and lodging. They are acquainted with the persons responsible for the reception if it is possible, and clarify the possibility of rapid communication by telephone. The organizers consider on what shrines will be open access, schedule of services.

On preparing the trip the agreement about the meal arrangements is reached with the monasteries. The tourists and pilgrims with the blessing of the monastery leadership can participate in the refectory of the monks. During religious multi-day trips the tourists and pilgrims are provided with the accommodation in the monastery hotel or, if it is not available - in local hotels.

The main stream of religious tourism is accounted for domestic destinations. Surely the determining factor here is the financial component of any travel .

Only 10-15% of travel agencies are tour operators in Russia, that is, the firms which are able to create and offer their own tourist products.

The consumers of religious tourist services are the people with the middle income and below, who are not on leader position as a rule. Taking into account the classification of religious travel let's analyze the proposals of tourist firms on religious tourism.

Nowadays a day trip is the most popular tour among the residents of Russia. These trips are organized on the routes with the biggest distance from the city. Relatively low cost and the ability to see the religious shrines in the short term are attracted the tourists and pilgrims .

The following tasks should be assigned to create favorable terms for the development of religious tourism:

- formation of the mechanism to manage the tourism industry development,
- legal base formation of religious tourism in order to stimulate industry and to attract investment to this industry,

- encourage the development of entrepreneurship in the sphere of religious tourism,
- encourage the development of the material base of the tourism sector by attracting Russian and foreign investments for reconstruction, maintenance of technical condition of monuments of religious architecture as objects of religious tourism, creation of new accommodation facilities,
- term creation for tourist zones development in the regions of Russia on the basis of agreements in the tourism sphere,
- decision of the questions about the preservation of historical-cultural heritage and environmental protection,
- creation of information support system for the tourists, the introduction of integrated computer and information systems
- carrying out an active promotional activity aimed at the formation of the tourist image of Russia and the development of interest in religious and cultural values of various religions,
- Improvement of the system of education and vocational training in the area of religious tourism.

The system of program activities should be developed to achieve these objectives. These activities will include the sections, development of which will allow to get the tool for forming a new tourist product that meets the needs and capabilities of our country, as well as the main trends in the development of religious tourism:

1. Organization of the competitions for the best tourist routes on religious subject as in the scale of the Russian Federation and at the regional level.
2. Promotional advertising activities as in the scale of the Russian Federation and at the regional level. The activities this section is aimed at providing tourists information space on the territory of Russia, favorable view of religious, cultural and historical sites. Implementation mechanism of this section includes the following set of activities: international exhibitions and fairs, accompanied by advertising campaigns in the media, on radio, in newspapers, production of brochures, booklets, books about the religious routes; promotion of the network "Internet" tourist site dedicated to the shrines, religious sites in Russia.
3. Management of the organization for the development of religious tourism, including the creation of normative-legal acts, documents, contributing to the development of domestic religious tourism, assistance in organizing free pilgrimage tours for socially unprotected groups of the population.

These activities are aimed at establishing a management system for the coordination of all direct and indirect efforts to develop religious tourism in Russia, improvement of normative-legal base, regulating and stimulating the activities of organizations whose activities contribute to the development of religious tourism, the allocation and development of tourist and recreational areas of particular importance for the development of religious tourism.

4.CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the proposals of tourist firms and pilgrimage services showed that in recent years there was an increase of interest in religious domestic routes. The development of interest in religious tours among the citizens will greatly benefit from the support of the government, including the direction of budgetary funds on the maintenance of monuments of religion, history and culture and infrastructure development of tourist accommodation. It should be noted that in our country there is a progress in the politics of capital city and regional authorities, under their supervision in some regions is developing programs for the development of religious tourism.

Monuments of religion, history and culture represent an important motivation for visiting a particular region or city. Many religious monuments are the objects of the other tourist facilities and are under the state protection. Four directions of activities in the field of religious tourism and pilgrimage are implemented in Russia: 1) Local routes within the regions; 2) Routes on the territory of Russia; 3) the Routes to the monasteries and Holy sites abroad; 4) Routes abroad.

Religious domestic tourism is quite promising for the regions. This activity contributes to the presence of attractive tourist religious sites, travel agencies and pilgrimage services, an organization dedicated to religious routes within the region, as well as the presence of a constant demand. Religious tourism helps people to touch the tradition, to restore the connection of times. Now creates a unique situation for a number of Russian regions to use their rich cultural resources.

5.SUMMARY

The main stream of religious tourism in Russia accounts for domestic destinations. Regular visits to the Holy places were a part in people' everyday life. The traditional and everyday culture since childhood do brings up the ethnic and ideological (religious) stereotypes that make the person a representative of a particular ethnic group, denomination. But the most important the person will carry in his heart the image of homeland, which is known starts, including with the natural and cultural landscape regardless of ethnicity or religious denomination .

A CONFLICT OF INTEREST. The author confirms that the submitted data does not contain any conflict of interests.

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