

RELIGIOUS TOURISM

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Abstract

Religious tourism is a phenomenon that extends internationally. Religious tourism is a form of tourism that has evolved for centuries and still retains some features, regarding the actual pilgrimage, but which has evolved enormously. Religious tourists have become more demanding about travel requirements, but also willing to spend larger amounts of money. Religious organizations, those who manage the holy places, cannot isolate themselves from the rest of the world; communities need money from religious tourism, and religious organizations need community support.

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I. CONCEPTS RELATED TO RELIGIOUS TOURISM

Religious tourism is a type of cultural tourism that aims to visit religious buildings with spiritual implications. Religious tourism is a complex phenomenon that is constantly changing and diversifying, but it retains the basic element that consecrated it: Religion. The difference between this form of tourism and others is the religious motivation of tourists.

Some types of hospitality industry are influenced by economic instability but this form of tourism is less affected by these economic issues because the reason for travelling is very strong and it plays a very important role in their lives so money does not play a very vital role to stop from visiting a destination.

The relationship between religion and leisure, two social practices and two cultural movements that have renewed importance in the 21st century, is not without ambiguity, even though after Nietzsche (for whom "God was dead") we might consider that the second would either prevail over the first, or erase it by invalidating it as relevant only in the dark ages.

Religious tourism consists in the pilgrimages of believers to places of worship, considered holy by different religions (for example: Rome, Jerusalem and the monasteries in the north of Moldova for Christians; Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia for Muslims; Lhasa and the sanctuaries in India and Indochina for Buddhists; Fuji for the Japanese, etc.).

To the same extent, the great cult holidays (Christmas, Easter, etc.), the dedications of monasteries and churches attract, during the periods of traditional religious holidays, a considerable number of pilgrims.(Nedelea, 2013)

Today, religious tourism represents a dynamic global industry of 18 billion dollars and 300 million travelers, according to the International Religious Tourism Association (WRTA). (Tala, 2012) Calculations, worldwide, despite the difficulty of achieving high precision, show that only religious tourism represents approximately 26% of the total tourist flow, which demonstrates the importance of this topic. Moreover, 25% of the total cultural objectives included in the UNESCO list are religious.(www.worldheritagesite.org)

The Vatican has launched an airline, Opera Romana Pellegrinaggi, which aims to transport pilgrims from Rome to other holy places in the world (for example, to Lourdes). This action was part of the series of measures taken to transform pilgrimage into a more accessible activity. The operation made it possible to reduce costs, so that the pilgrimages using the Vatican airline ended up being 10-15% below the market price.

Religious tourism develops a special demand for accommodation services, transport, food, the sale of cult objects and more, telecommunications, specific prints and confections, incense, candles, sandalwood sticks, inscriptions on special paper, talismans, crucifixes, statuettes, icons and so on.(Ionescu, 2000)

Although the purpose of their journey is the manifestation of faith, the pilgrims' behavior, from the point of view of requests for tourist services, does not differ from the requests of those who participate in other forms of tourism (for accommodation, for food, etc.). Moreover, these pilgrims are willing to spend considerable sums for the purchase of gifts, souvenirs, etc.(Neacsu, 2006)

Religious buildings can be classified into the following categories: sanctuaries, temples, churches, cathedrals, mosques and synagogues, monasteries. The

ritual burial function appears in the case of the following buildings: stupas (dagobes), mausoleums, pyramids and cemeteries. (Cocean, 2006)

Religious pilgrimages or religious tourism annually attract millions of pilgrims or practitioners of religious cults, as well as masses of curious tourists. The destination is represented by the great religious centers of cults around the world. They have a national character, and the most famous have acquired an international character.

Religious attractions generate tourist flows motivated by:

- the existence of relics (relics) with a special, holy character;
- the existence of objectives with miraculous properties;
- the celebration of the character who governs the place;
- traveling a ritual path traversed in other times by different people who acquired a major role in the respective religion;
- cultural curiosity, related or not to the elements presented above.

The great religions create real tourist flows with periodic or conjunctural frequency, among which we mention the trips organized to:

- Mecca, Saudi Arabia, at the holy stone Kaaba, for Muslims;
- Medina, also in Saudi Arabia, at the tomb of Muhammad;
- Jerusalem, belonging to Jordan, Israel and Palestine (at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher for Christians, at the Mosque of Omar - for Muslims, at the "City of David" and the "Wailing Wall" - for Jews, etc.);
- Rome, for visiting the Vatican and participating in some services officiated by the Pope;
- Mount Athos, in Greece, for Orthodox Christians;
- Paris, for participating in the "International Year of Catholic Youth";
- Santiago de Compostela, in the east of Spain (in Galicia), for Catholics from France, especially at the Saint Jacques de Compostelle church.

Depending on the number of visitors, we can make a list of the most frequented religious destinations:

1. Sensoji Temple, Tokyo, Japan ranks first with 30 million visitors a year. This temple was built in honor of the Buddhist goddess of happiness, Khannon.
2. Our Lady of Guadalupe Tomb, Mexico City, Mexico which boasts 20 million visitors annually. The legend behind this location speaks of a poor peasant named Juan Diego, to whom the Virgin Mary appeared. Diego was canonized by Pope John Paul II in 2002.
3. Vatican/St. Peter's Church, Rome, Italy. The Apostolic Palace, the Sistine Chapel, several museums and St. Peter's Church receive 5000 - 20000 visitors daily, and annually their number reaches 18 million.

4. Tomb of Imam Reza, Mashad, Iran. The Imam's tomb is the most important Shia site in Iran, being visited by a number of visitors between 12 and 20 million.

5. The sacred sites and pilgrimage routes of the Kii Mountains, Range, Japan attract approximately 15 million visitors annually.

6. Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris, France, built in honor of the Virgin Mary by the Bishop of Paris in the 12th century, in Gothic style, receives 13 million tourists annually.

7. Sacre Coeur Basilica, Montmartre, Paris, France contains one of the largest mosaics in the world, depicting Jesus with arms wide open. Every year 13 million pilgrims and visitors stop to see the basilica.

8. Sabarimala, Kerala, India, Hindu pilgrimage center that houses the Sastha temple, The pilgrimage period is from November to January, during which the number of tourists varies from five million to 60 million.

9. Aparecida do Norte, Brazil houses the largest sanctuary in honor of the Virgin Mary in the world and receives 8 million visits annually.

10. The tomb of Padre Pio, Rotonda San Giovanni, Italy is visited by six to seven million tourists each year. Padre Pio was a Capuchin monk who bore the stigmata of St. Francis in the 13th century.

11. Cologne Cathedral, Germany - about six million tourists annually.

12. Lourdes, France - 5 million tourists. In France, the cities of Lourdes and Lisieux became important centers of religious activities. Lourdes today represents one of the largest tourist basins of Western Europe, the city receiving every year millions of pilgrims and sick people from all over the world to find their healing there.

13. Santiago de Compostela (Spain) - annually, more than 150,000 pilgrims and almost 3 million tourists from all continents arrive on foot.

14. The monasteries of Meteora, Greece - visited annually by one million tourists. (Nedelea, 2013)

Of the 160-171 million visitors, approximately 100 million are at objectives belonging to the Catholic religion, a fact explained by their location in states that are on the first places in terms of the number of foreign tourists, but also with a strong internal circulation (France, Spain, Italy). (Tala, 2012)

There is no clear distinction between cultural tourism, referring to visiting religious buildings, and religious tourism. For example, tourists who go to monasteries out of curiosity, out of the need to know new places and things, attracted by their beauty through art, by being located in more secluded, picturesque places, but also by the special life that those who live in them, at the moment of meeting with the place of worship they suddenly turn into pilgrims: they change their clothing, light a candle, worship icons. The impact worked something in him.

Religious tourism has been characterized in different ways by researchers. Gisbert Rinschede distinguishes these by duration, by group size, and by social structure. (Rinschede, 1992) Juli Gevorgian proposes two categories that differ in their motivation, namely "pilgrimage tourism" for spiritual reasons or to participate in religious rites, and "church tourism" to view monuments such as cathedrals. (Gevorgian, 2019)

Religious tourism is an important part of the tourism industry it called special interest tourism, which usually related to the followers of particular faiths who visit locations that are considered as holy sites. Religious sites are not only visited by the pilgrims but also visited by non-religious tourists since they have cultural, historical and religious significance.

Religious destinations like Mecca in Saudi Arabia, Fatima in Portugal and Lourdes in France attract many tourists creating a very important income for those regions.

Pilgrimage

Dictionaries present different definitions of pilgrimage:

- a journey that believers make to a place considered holy; travel to a famous place (historically or culturally); travel, walk (in various places); continuous passage, periding;
- a journey made far away, or to foreign lands, to visit a holy place or sanctuary for the purpose of devotion;
- a journey to a sanctuary or other holy place to testify of faith in God;
- a journey to a holy place for reasons of devotion, to obtain supernatural support, or as a form of penance;
- a long journey or journey, especially one in which the traveler never returns to the place of departure. As a symbol of life, a way of living in which everything is judged according to how it relates to the destination, whether it holds it in place or helps the traveler on his way.

A pilgrimage is a journey, often into an unknown or foreign place, where a person goes in search of new or expanded meaning about their self, others, nature, or a higher good, through the experience. It can lead to a personal transformation, after which the pilgrim returns to their daily life.

Pilgrimage is a form of religious procession that presents itself in the form of a movement to the church of a group of faithful pilgrims, on foot or more recently by various means of transport to a place declared holy. It can be a church, temple, mosque, mountain, fountain, spring, cave, etc. Pilgrimage is practiced in all religions of the world, with some roads and places of pilgrimage becoming famous. Thus for Christians there are: Jerusalem, Rome, Santiago de Compostela (with the way of St. James), Lourdes. The aim of Lutheran evangelist

pilgrims is Locum-Volkenroda, and for the Muslim world Mecca, where the largest annual pilgrimage in the world (Hajj) is organized.

As a common human experience, pilgrimage has been proposed as a Jungian archetype by Wallace Clift and Jean Dalby Clift. (Clift, 1996) Some research has shown that people who engage in pilgrimage walks have biological, psychological, social, and spiritual therapeutic benefits. (Fahey, 2002)

Frank Fahey consider that a pilgrim can be transformed in a tourist, and a tourist can become a pilgrim (Fahey, 2002).

A Western theologian describes the participation of people in a place of pilgrimage in these words: "Pilgrimage places attract the tourist and the pilgrim, the young and the old, the healthy and the sick, families and individuals, the pious and the curious, the beggar and the pickpocket, the soul-searcher and the merchant. The pilgrimage itself reflects not only the fundamental reality of the Church, the people of God making the pilgrimage of life, but even more, the reality of humanity itself, the totality of people on their way to the mystery beyond the world. This mysterious beyond of humanity can be seen and experienced somewhat in pilgrimage. In the pilgrimage, the Holy Spirit awakens in man a greater desire for holiness, for the renewal of life."

When the pilgrimage is accompanied by prayers, vigil, confession, Eucharistic communion, spiritual conversations with other pilgrims, it is a source of joy and inner peace, an opportunity for spiritual enrichment.

Pilgrims give money or material gifts to the churches in the places of pilgrimage, as a sign that they receive in return spiritual gifts, blessings for their life and activity. The light and beauty on the faces of the pilgrims during the religious services of the pilgrimage show the light gathered by them in the soul through the common prayer of the celebration. The meeting with the holy places, the relics of the saints, the icons of the saints and persons with a humble and holy life, becomes a source of blessing, love and inner illumination of the pilgrim.

The peace and joy, the light and holiness gathered in the hearts through the pilgrimage to the holy places or in the holy moments of the liturgical celebration are taken by the pilgrims to their homes, to their parishes and monasteries, to society. Thus, pilgrims, bearers and witnesses of the Spirit of Christ in the world, become missionaries without having claimed this.

Pilgrimage in the traditional style meant traveling as a penance, but it seems that today things have started to change. Even if the priest accompanies the group, the lifestyle of the current pilgrim is accepted and three-star hotels, air transport, the use of mobile phones and laptops are opted for. In this way, religious tourism benefits both participants and beneficiaries.

The Church does not want a simple tourism that is reflected strictly at the financial level, and this because

the values that want to be constituted in touristic objectives are not in themselves built for this purpose. This is how religious tourism must also be reflected at the level of intercultural dialogues in which the tourist benefits not only from new objectives or information, but also from contact with the Orthodox Christian way of life.

Interest in religious tourism has expanded worldwide, on the basis of its understanding as a factor of heritage conservation, but also as a source of income. (Tala, 2012) Pilgrims spend money when they travel: they sleep, eat, carry out recreational activities just like other tourists (as long as they do not contradict religious beliefs and norms.

As old as they are profitable, programs with religious content continue to determine the exodus of large groups of people towards consecrated pilgrimage destinations or with special religious heritage. Holy places are often exempt from taxes, due to the double function they perform: religious space, but also a heritage element.

The economic effects of trips with this theme are reflected in the hotel industry, in the sphere of means of transport of people, in the industry of souvenirs and handicrafts with religious content, in the development of some forms of commerce. (Nedelea, 2013)

The International Association of Religious Tourism divides religious tourism into twelve segments of religious tourism: pilgrimages, mission trips, cruises, leisure, conferences, religious tourism destinations, guesthouses, Christian camps, adventure travel, volunteer vacations, trips for students and youth, trips for families.

The pilgrimage also has a cultural aspect because:

- During the journey, the pilgrim meets cultural attractions. In addition, pilgrims often travel with a guide who provides them with cultural information.
- The pilgrim makes contact with the religious objective, appreciating cultural elements related to history, architecture, etc.

The spiritual tourist, more commonly referred to as a **pilgrim**, is the one permeated by the religious feeling, motivated by the connection he feels with the divinity, capable of transforming the lived experiences into unique, special moments. (Tala, 2012)

The pilgrim is a traveler driven by motivations different from those of business, meeting with family or intellectual curiosity, and which spring from a need deeply rooted in the human soul, that of going to a place considered holy, for reasons of devotion, to request supernatural support or as a form of penance.

Religious tourism imposes on the individual certain sacrifices accepted willingly such as: decent even sober behavior, respectful and pious attitude, silence, prayer, meditation, contemplation, internalization, awareness of the good and evil in each individual.

The tourist visiting the religious sites accepts without comment the church rules, he willingly obeys, sometimes with joy and even with hope, the canons indicated by their servants.

The pilgrimage is a visual memory of the places where God's love and wonderful work for people and through people have been shown in the world. The pilgrim wants to touch the holy place or relics of the Saint in which and through which the sanctifying presence of God has been shown, in a particularly intense way, so that he, the pilgrim, may intensify his faith and his love for God.

In other words, the pilgrimage is made to intensify prayer and the spiritual life in general.

Pilgrimage is often a spiritual act of thanksgiving to God for the benefits received from him; as such, pilgrimage is itself an act of asceticism or struggle and an offering of gratitude.

The pilgrimage also includes an act of repentance for sins, being completed with confession of sins and prayers of forgiveness for the salvation of the soul.

The pilgrimage can also be motivated by a strong desire to receive God's help in carrying out important work or receiving healing from a bodily or spiritual illness. (Nedelea, 2014)

The depth of the pilgrim tourist's experiences is immense; he feels that he can reach his goal, that he can solve any problem sooner or later, and even feels that he can spread goodness around him, that he has taken a small step to make the world better. The Church considers that among the reasons for the pilgrimage are the following: "The pilgrimage is a visual memory of the places where God's love and wonderful work for people and through people have been shown in the world. The pilgrim wants to touch the holy place or relics of the Saint in which and through which the sanctifying presence of God has been shown, in a particularly intense way, so that he, the pilgrim, may intensify his faith and his love for God.

Religious tourism continues to have an important share in the total tourist flow (26%), worldwide, its size may be even higher, but the number of tourists is not being recorded very precisely, the exact number of tourists is not known.

The modern pilgrimage has an impact to the tourism industry related with religion. Attracting tourists should be a common goal. Religious marketing, as "real" as tourism, even if less known, should combine with the latter to satisfy the many categories of tourists. Careful management of religious destinations could benefit both tourist operators and religious institutions.

Religious tourism is practiced on the one hand by tourists who want to acquire new knowledge, and on the other hand by tourists who have as their goal spiritual fulfillment.

The religious tourist patrimony includes the cultural and religious objectives, which are divided into:

Churches, cathedrals, hermitages and monasteries, to which are added the museums inside the monasteries. Religious tourism can be divided into several forms, namely distance tourism and long-distance tourism.

Short-distance tourism means tourism which is limited by short journeys of several hours to two days, and long-distance tourism includes the activity of a longer period, in modern means of transport, by visits to monasteries outside the locality of residence, it is less common because it refers to visiting a chain of monasteries and churches in a certain area of the country or abroad.

The religious pilgrimage has deep spiritual significance and is lived intensely by pilgrims. Pilgrimage is the visual moment of places where there is or has been a miracle from God, and pilgrims are those who wish to visit the holy places and tombs of martyrs, relics, miracle-working icons, etc.

Pilgrims desire to touch holy relics or miracle-working icons to intensify their faith and love for God, and pilgrimage is an act of repentance, through confession of sins and prayers of forgiveness, for the salvation of the soul, having a strong desire to receive God's help, for healing the soul or a physical or mental illness.

The profound meanings of pilgrimage are both for spiritual benefit and for the personal and spiritual life of people.

In the search for religious pilgrimage, pilgrims seek faith in God, and the spiritual life of Sacred Scripture, the encounter of man with God, marks a world in which the Kingdom of God is born and where Christians live in their own homeland.

Pilgrims go on pilgrimages to the food of the holy places, the feasts of the saints, the spiritual patrons of certain places.

Pilgrimage sites attract tourists and pilgrims, regardless of age, whether they are young or old, whether they are sick or healthy, whether they are pious or not, because pilgrims experience common faith and spiritual experience. The religious edifices in Romania are the most numerous and diverse, belonging to specific cults of the three ethnicities (orthodox; reformed; Roman Catholic; Greek Catholic).

Religious buildings have gained a strong character over religious tourism, which gathers about 250 million pilgrims annually, who want to visit sanctuaries, temples, cathedrals, synagogues, monasteries and mausoleums.

A stay at a monastery can be a unique experience, especially if it is the first time you choose such a place for accommodation. It doesn't matter much if you're not a very religious person, to feel good. The important thing is to respect the rules of the place and enjoy peace, nature and monastic art. Follow the steps below to find out what you need to know when you are staying at the monastery.

Monasteries can hold museums, public libraries, modern technology, conference room and even organize language courses for adults and children. Some of the most attractive monastic complexes are the centuries-old shrines and monasteries, which offer for rent rooms with antique furniture.

The development of religious tourism requires the adoption of appropriate policies for this area, namely:

- the tourism product policy: Involves the expansion and modernization of the tourist offer on the domestic and international market.
- promotion and marketing policy. making a real image of our country in terms of tourist demand in the country and abroad.
- labor policy: providing qualified personnel in terms of quality and quantity.
- legislative and fiscal policy: identification of new tourism markets, investments in tourism development and development programs.
- state partnership policy: provision of superstructure.

The World Association of Religious Travel (founded in 2007, based in the USA) aimed to bring together tour operators, tourist service providers, travel agencies, but also churches and religious organizations.

II. ACCOMMODATION IN RELIGIOUS TOURISM

A trend of the last decades of the last century is to spend a stay near famous places of worship. Thus, many monastic complexes have created their own guest houses in which they receive a small number of believers and in which certain rules must be respected during the stay, in order not to disturb the order of the monastic activity.

Thus, in this sense, we can remember the archondary which is that building within the premises of a monastery where there are rooms for the reception of pilgrims. This is the place where the nuns and monks show their love for the pilgrims who cross their thresholds, in order to gain spiritual benefit. Each monastery has an archondaric, specially arranged for the reception of pilgrims.

Hospitality was an essential characteristic of life in the monastic environment. Thus, when a pilgrim appeared at the door of the cell, regardless of his social status, the monk would even stop his prayer canon, in order to receive, with great joy, the new arrival. In the older monastic orders, hospitality was valued as a very great virtue.

When the pilgrims arrive at the monastery, the archon welcomes them with great love. In a very welcoming room, pilgrims sit on benches to rest from the fatigue of the journey. The archondar puts water and something sweet, shit or jam in front of them.

In the monasteries of the Holy Mountain, the archon gives the pilgrims water, fruits and a small glass of ouzo, the traditional Greek drink. The water cools the

body, the sweet shit helps to keep the blood sugar in good condition, which, following a greater effort, can decrease, and the ouzo helps against sweating. It is said that a very small amount of alcohol prevents perspiration.

The rooms in the archondaric are usually very good rooms. As it is with the Romanians, each host gives the guest the best room, it is the same at the monastery, the cells are as harsh as possible, but the archondarch has much better reception conditions.

Accommodation structures at religious tourist destinations in Romania are generally small. The exceptions are the monasteries of Putna (over 300 places), Tismana (120 places) or Dragomirna (over 200 places). The comfort offered is often minimal, frequently the rooms have a shared bathroom and more than two beds.

Nowadays, religious tourists are no longer specifically looking for modest accommodation and food conditions, but rather a certain comfort, which will ensure them the necessary powers to visit as many religious sites as possible, especially if they are very far away sites from home.

III. RELIGIOUS TOURISM IN ROMANIA

Religious tourism in Romania, especially in Bucovina, took on a large scale after 1990, when faith experienced a significant increase, with the birth of agrotourism.

In Romania, the pilgrimage takes place every year in October in Iași to the relics of Saint Pious Parascheva. This religious procession is the largest in Romania and one of the most important in this part of Europe. Another moment of pilgrimage is August 15, on the occasion of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. In Maramureș, the religious holiday is popularly called "Sfânta Mărie Mare". On the Roman-Catholic Pentecost, every year a great pilgrimage is organized to the sanctuary in Șumuleu Ciuc.

Romania has many important religious objectives, associating cultural monuments with religious manifestations of national and international interest. On the territory of our country we have 388 Orthodox monasteries, of which we mention:

- Basarabi-Murfatlar, from Constanta county;
- Patriarchal Cathedral, Bucharest;
- Cocos Monastery, from Tulcea county;
- Curtea de Argeș Monastery, Argeș County;
- Nicula Monastery, Cluj County;
- Metropolitan Cathedral, Iasi
- Three Hierarchs Monastery, Iasi;
- Bukovina monasteries (Vroneț, Moldovita, Sucevița, Humor, Putna and Dragomirna, Risca and Probotă);
- Râmeț Monastery, from Alba County;
- Brancoveanu Monastery, Brasov County;
- St. John the new Monastery, the current episcopal cathedral in Suceava;

• Neamt Monastery

Religious pilgrimage is a constant with multiple motivations and deeply intense religious meanings, and pilgrims are those people who want to visit and worship the holy places, the graves of martyrs, miracle-working icons or the places where confessors live.

Pilgrims want to reach those holy places, because in this way they intensify their faith and love for God.

Accommodation at monasteries in Romania is always a unique experience. Monasteries in Romania offer accommodation for pilgrims and visitors. Accommodation prices are modest and at some monasteries or skits accommodation is free. It is good to call ahead to be sure of the availability of accommodation in the monastery.

The touristic objectives that highlight the ancient customs, the popular artistic festivals, the Romanian popular culture and which has the following fundamental features: Authenticity, originality, variety of phenomena, continuity, and all these reflect creations of material civilizations, customs, customs, song and folk dance.

From these habits can be separated the following:

- Museums with a profile of folk art and architecture;
- Wooden constructions;
- Workshops and collections of spoons, forks, torso forks made by talented folk creators from Romanian villages.
- popular ceramics, artistic ceramic objects, black ceramics (Suceava) and Poiana Deleni (Iasi), red pottery from Săcel (Maramureș), white pottery from Horezu, Vlădești (Valcea), Olt.

The tourism potential brings together the creations of man materialized over time in elements of culture, history, art and civilization that attract the attention of tourists through their characteristics.

There are over 150 hermitages in Romania, but access to them is more difficult due to their location on mountainous massifs or in forests, far from human communities. Although some hermitages are known (for example, Daniil Sihăstru's Cell near the Putna monastery), most of them are only visited during holidays, the flows being small, generally local.(Tala, 2012)

The number of tourists involved in cultural and religious tourism in Romania has obviously exceeded the figure of 500,000. This, unfortunately, is not accurate, as it can be amplified by the number of pilgrims who go to the great religious holidays, such as Saint Paraschiva in Iasi, Saint Demetrius the New in Bucharest, August 15 in Nicula or Pentecost in Șumuleu (only in the last case the number pilgrims arriving here exceeds 100,000 people) or who come to the big music festivals (such as the George Enescu festival). It should also be taken into account that the number of tourists visiting Romanian cities is around 2,200,000. Even if most of them are interested in the business segment, it is hard to believe that a part of this number does not also visit the cultural

objectives. In conclusion, it can be said, without error, that the number of tourists practicing cultural and religious tourism in Romania certainly exceeds the figure of 1,000,000. (www.mturism.ro)

Basilica Travel is a Romanian travel agency established with the blessing of the Most Blessed Father Daniel, through Foundation no. 10847/ 2007, being a full service tour operator agency. It exists legally with authorization issued by the Ministry of Tourism.

From the agency's website we find out its mission: "The values we share with everyone are our Christian values, but above all the supreme ideal of our life: salvation. We cultivate human unity and solidarity and insist on the educational value of the pilgrimage. The purpose of our activity is to share the eternal values of the Church with all those who travel with us. For this reason, we seek to make our journeys true schools of the Holy Spirit, being guides to a path that Christ invites each of us to. In this way we will walk together among cultures and civilizations long gone or in full bloom, we will meditate on the significance of some events that have marked and continue to mark the course of history and we will have the opportunity to rest for a while in the unfathomable depths of our souls. We are aware that we and you are together with the Church in a continuous pilgrimage, that we are all travelers and guests on the face of the earth, like all our parents."

IV. RELIGIOUS TOURISM IN BUCOVINA

In recent times, tourism in Bucovina has been greatly promoted, from the perspective of 4 types of tourism, namely: religious tourism, tourism for traditions and customs specific to the area, health tourism and SPA, as well as active tourism. All these types of tourism are important, but in our opinion, religious tourism is the most important in this region, and it is the most representative.

Bucovina is located in northern Moldavia, one of the three major historical provinces of Romania, along with Muntenia and Transylvania. The region was named after its annexation to the Hapsburg Empire in 1775.

Bucovina is currently divided on the territory of two countries: in Romania, in the area adjacent to the Radauti cities, Suceava, Gura Humorului, Câmpulung Moldovenesc, Vatra Dornei, Siret and Vicovu de Sus, and in Ukraine in the area adjacent to the cities Chernivtsi, Cozmeni, Zastavna, Văscăuți, Vijnița, Sadagura and Storoiinet.

Bucovina monasteries: Painted monasteries in Moldova preserve a world in which the exaggerated modernity of our days has not yet altered it. Thanks to their faith, the locals maintained the artistic expressiveness of the places of worship, carrying on the history of those places, the legends of the places and their soul wealth. The painted monasteries resisted Ottoman

expansion shrouded in prayer and songs raised to heaven. In the Bucovina lands there are other places of worship, such as Rasca Monastery or Bogdana Monastery, from Radauti. Voroneț Monastery, which is famous in the world for its unique blue walls (Voroneț blue), among the colors used are also humor red or tree green.

Monasteries in Bucovina

The monasteries of Bucovina (Voroneț, Moldovița, Sucevița, Humor, Putna and Dragomirna, along with which those from Râșca and Probota could be mentioned. Dubbed by Eminescu the "Jerusalem of the Romanian nation", Putna represents the famous foundation of the ruler Stephen the Great and the Holy, his grave is also here. Putna is a pilgrimage center for the 2nd of July every year. It should be noted, among other things, the Miracle-Working Icon of the Mother of God with the Child, brought to Moldova by Maria de Mangop, the second wife of Ștefan the Great.

The painted monasteries in Moldova keep a world unaltered by the exaggerated modernity of our days. The love for the holy mysteries and the faith prompted the locals to maintain the artistic expressiveness of these places of worship and to carry on their history. Simple and welcoming people, Moldovans are always ready to share the legends of the place and to offer you a little of their soul wealth. Bridge between the past and the future, legacy for generations, the painted monasteries that resisted Ottoman expansion are shrouded today by prayers and songs ascended to heaven.

The positive points of religious tourism in Bucovina area are:

- Particularly beautiful paintings both outside and inside monasteries with scenes from the bible;
- Beautiful decorations that have a special charm, some of them are very old and give originality to the place.
- Interesting architecture of religious buildings in this area is unique in the country, it is also found in the area of Ukraine.
- The welcoming atmosphere inside the monasteries is unique and oriented toward humility, and the nuns who care for these places of worship maintain as much as possible the atmosphere of piety, and some of them do not want to interact too much with tourists because, they believe that the monastery is a place to pray, not just take pictures.
- Restoration of monasteries. These sites are very old, many date back to the 16th century, and this is the cause of the degradation of many of them. Restoration processes protect these pictures, because many pictures do not allow their repainting and therefore they must be protected.
- Promotion of UNESCO: Some of the monasteries in Bucovina have been introduced into UNESCO heritage, which benefit from an international promotion which is

economically beneficial, but is also a less pleasant part, namely the degradation that occurs much faster, due to the exploitation of these places.

- Trade: It is a beneficial activity, because at each monastery are sold various objects, books, refrigerator magnets and many other things that remind you that you visited that place of worship, and for the monastery it is an activity that helps to financially support the monastery.

V. CONCLUSION

Religious tourism is a phenomenon that extends internationally, and from a conceptual point of view, the practice far exceeds both theoretical and regulatory advances practical. In this in this field, practice is much more developed than theoretical approaches. Current trends and attempts to solve this situation are not properly correlated, failing to capture the real picture of religious tourism, with its difficulties and potential special. Also, there are difficulties in defining the principles and regulations of tourism, regardless of the religious motivation of the tourist. There are also some reservations in the use of the term religious tourism, in particular due to the connotations associated with this notion by tourism companies and also due to the way in which they structure packages of services. In the context of building a society based on pecknowledge, new epistemological delimitation of concepts is needed the fundamentals of tourism religious. We propose a theoretical development of the main concepts involved.

In conclusion, religious tourism in Romania plays a very important role for religious people, who engage in

hiking such as pilgrimages, who are emotionally and confessional involved, regardless of age, gender or area of origin.

Although there are a variety of centers and agencies that could help them choose and carry out such a route, people are skeptical and often choose to put their trust in close people or online advertisements. but maybe because they do not want to participate in an entire tourist route and only a few points in a certain area.

The accommodation also plays an extremely important role, and again, the square offers more and more an accommodation offer, as well as some monasteries, tourists choosing the hotel regime.

For the rest, who do not tend toward a religious nature, they are indifferent most of the time, or curious in some places.

During the chosen theme, we found a variety of places to visit in Romania, organized by areas of Romania, representing almost all a true history and emotional charge, from monasteries belonging to the Maramures area, to those in Bucovina and so on.

All these gathered together, form a fortune that Romania has, absolutely charming places that can overtake your imagination most of the time. Most of them are extremely old and are kept in the same form as they were left, and this makes you realize that it is really worth visiting them and learning new things about the country you live in.

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