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**CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES ON
PROTECTION AND MANAGING OF THE NATURAL
AND CULTURAL HERITAGE**

- Conference Proceedings -

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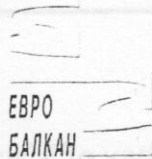
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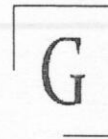
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RUSSIAN POLITICAL SCIENCE

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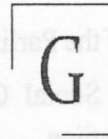
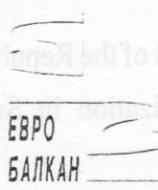
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ON PROTECTION AND MANAGING
OF THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL
HERITAGE**

-Conference Proceedings-

Editor

Rubin Zemon

Struga, 17-19 January, 2020

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Zoran Matevski

Faculty of Philosophy, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, R. North
Macedonia

Dushka Matevska

Faculty of Pedagogy, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, R. North
Macedonia

MANAGEMENT OF RELIGIOUS CULTURAL HERITAGE FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

ABSTRACT

Sacred architecture refers to the design of objects of religious cultural heritage, and temples or houses of God have always been built throughout history. Such architecture is almost as old as humanity, more precisely as old as culture, and an essential part of human culture and art. An essential part of what defines man in addition to the material goods of the earth. Sacred architecture is one of the displays of the magnificent interior of man, an essence that invokes the greater of us and constantly points us upwards, toward heaven, toward God. As it has been emphasized for a few times so far, subjects which take care of religious cultural heritage, create the immeasurable social benefit which reflects in the spheres of culture and education, but also the activities of building and strengthening religious identity, branding and positioning. Besides the usual, non-material benefits, during last decades one has expected also different, material benefits from heritage subjects. Individually or, which is more efficient, in the synergy with tourist subjects, heritage institutions offer a nicely packed tourist product, which offers additional content to tourists who came because of other attractions and by enriching the complete experience, it lengthens the time of their stay, but it more often represents also the supreme primary tourist attraction which attracts visitors to the destination and contributes to the environment development, causing introduction of function of other existing tourist resources, building of accompanying superstructure and infrastructure, the development of service activities and staff employment. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) estimates that religious tourism generates 600 million faith-motivated travelers annually, of which 280 million are actual pilgrims. In history, destinations with religious tourism have become the center of religious, commercial and cultural events of importance for the economic development of the country.

Key words: religious heritage; religious identity; religious tourism

INTRODUCTION

There is certainly no sphere of human activity in which, during last few decades, there have been no big changes caused and quickened by "the explosion" of technological innovations. New scientific and technological discoveries led to the end of the industrial era and the transfer into a new, postindustrial society which, along with the multiplication of innovations and the change of economic relations, among other things is also characterized by the increase in the quantity of free time, bigger movability of the population, the tendency for the faster approach to knowledge, new quality of leisure implementation. General social changes also cause the appearance of new activities, changes of the manner of action at already existing, as well as more expressed interdisciplinary connecting. Earlier mutually distant, unconnected activities get mutual factors which bring them closer and permeate them. In that way these processes led to the connecting of tourism field with numerous other fields, among which are heritology and ecology (Mathieson and Wall, 1982).

In previous periods, tourism development was based on various types of using natural and cultural resources. By the comparative insight in the list of the registry which classify tourismology in the category of tourist attractions and those elements which are categorized by heritology and ecology as the heritage, i.e. heirdom, there can be seen that they are the same subjects, depending on the approach and aims, various expert activities and scientific disciplines use different terms for them, but they had a bit different relation with them. As it has been emphasized for a few times so far, subjects which take care of natural and cultural

heritage, create the immeasurable social benefit which reflects in the spheres of culture and

education, but also the activities of building and strengthening identity, branding and positioning (Geić, 2002).

Besides the usual, non-material benefits, during last decades one has expected also different, material benefits from heritage subjects. Individually or, which is more efficient, in the synergy with tourist subjects, heritage institutions offer a nicely packed tourist product, which offers additional content to tourists who came because of other attractions and by enriching the complete experience, it lengthens the time of their stay, but it more often represents also the supreme primary tourist attraction which attracts visitors to the destination and contributes to the environment development, causing the putting in function other existing tourist resources, building of accompanying superstructure and infrastructure, the development of service activities and staff employment. The proof for that were examples of Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, annex of the Louvre in Lens or Pont du Gara. Presented experience indicated a significant increase in the visits of tourists and opening of new catering capacities. Upon the opening of the Louvre in Lens, because of visiting it, in only one year came 900.000 visitors to this French town with 36.000 citizens, which led to the increased cash

flow, new investments and decreased unemployment. By the managerial reorganization of business activities of the complex Pont du Gara in its rural environment, there were activated 1.600 workplaces. Construction, furnishing and arrangement of museum surroundings in Bilbao cost 132 million euro and its visitors spent 433 million in the town

during the first year of work; on the basis of further general development, the unemployment rate was decreased from over 20% to 5% in the period between 1997 to 2005 (Mustonen, 2006).

1. TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Non-profitable heritage subjects themselves have the benefit in all that. The profit which they achieve by charging entrance tickets, giving additional services as well as sponsorships and donations represent the supplement for budget funds by which the founder finances their work. Those additional funds are insofar more precious when one bears in mind that the quickened society development led to a certain crisis of public finances, because of which the increase in public expenses does not follow the adequate increase in public income, so that gained own income represents the necessary supplement for refinancing socially useful non-profitable work of heritage institutions. In accordance with that, Jorvik Viking Centre has regularly invested one million in further archeological research from its annual income which amounts 2.5 million pounds. The mentioned facts directly imply the manifold benefit which heritage field and tourism field have from the tourist valorization of heritage subjects, as well as the whole narrow or wide environment (Hawkins and Middleton, 2009).

Yet, one must always bear in mind that the heritage represents the non-renewable or

slowly/hardly renewable resources and that its unplanned, unskilled, immoderate and/or inappropriate usage may lead to the devastation and/or degradation. Because of that the primary imperative at its usage must be presented in the form of conservation, both the classic, preparatory one, by which the heritage is consolidated and brought into the useable state and the further, preventive, which disables later damages emerged because of the public presentation, and which implies the wide spectrum of activities of space planning and their usage, including also restrictive measures, from physical protection, over planning portable capacities, to determining the protection zone and approach limitation, moreover, as it is the case with caves Lascaux and Altamira, the complete ban but also with building adequate approaches. All that is in complete harmony not only with basic postulates of heritology and ecology but also with more expressed tendencies of modern tourism (Sharpley, 2006).

Until a few decades ago, activities of tourism development, directed towards the massive scale and a quick profit earning, were in collision with the tendencies of heritology and ecology whose basic postulate was:

preservation of the heritage taken from previous generations and its transfer to the future generations. However, with the development of new tourism which incorporates the postulates of sustainable development and introduces the imperative of satisfying the needs of the present, without putting in question the ability of future generations to satisfy their own needs, these, recently "opposing" activities find the ways of mutual efficient and effective action with the aim of achieving ecological, tourist and economic sustainability. In doing so, the additional developmental character is directed not only towards the problem of heritage tourist activity, with the accent on preserving and further usage, but also towards the issues of a wide benefit for the environment development.

After the implementation of work of classical conservation and restoration and planning of the measures of preventive conservation, the next step in the implementation of a unique heritage tourism product represents the prevention of heritage good, i.e. the preparation for the acceptance of visitors. In the first place, the needs of modern audience, which is not exclusively tourist one, ask for an attractive, modern, dynamic, interactive manner of presentation and interpretation, accompanied by animation, so that the heritage would be experienced both intellectually and emotionally. These activities must be accompanied not only by the adequate organization of the space of the presented heritage, but also its environment (Walchester, 2018). Because of that the important steps for the development of heritage-tourist product are connected with the construction of the necessary superstructure and infrastructure, whereby one must not neglect, in the modern time, necessary internal services of support as well as the access service infrastructure facilities. In that way, we make the conditions for the heritage facilities, without threatening the values, to accept a big number of visitors and for the encounter with the heritage not to cause the experience of full intensity which leads to the wish of the repeated visit and recommendation.

The examples of the realization of such approach are met at a new interpretative centre near Stonehenge, at the site Pont du Gard, at the Cliff More, as well in numerous American, Australian and New Zealand national parks. However, quality protection, modern interpretation and infrastructural arrangement are not sufficient measures for a heritage subject to become a visited tourist attraction which contributes the development of a destination. At the time when citizens, on a daily basis, get numerous various information which occupies their attention and the offer for leisure activities becomes rich, heritage institutions must put an additional effort to point at their existence, programmes and mission and to attract visitors in that way (Shinde, 2007). That is the reason why one must not neglect an increasing role of marketing, above all its function of promotion. It is necessary to make the existing heritage subject famous and attractive for the audience. Heritage which is a potential tourist attraction develops into a real tourist attraction which the audience massively visits by putting into function three attraction factors and by the usage of attraction markers. For the successful work of a heritage subject, the adequate inner organization

has the key importance. Former practice of the existence of a unique expert service, within which the work of protection and the work with public could be realized, was largely abandoned, whilst the latter was mainly neglected. It is necessary to form an independent service for the work with the audience which takes over the realization of increasingly numerous and versatile tasks of public activities, but they do not include only leading of visitors but also the organization and realization of a number of various educational and animation programmes. If there are not conditions or a need to form a separate department for marketing, that service appropriates these jobs, too.

Activation of new innovative obligations which take over heritage institutions opens the issue of the necessity of new types of staff education which must respond to the challenges of innovated obligations by their knowledge and skills. The solution for that are introducing heritage and ecological studies on all levels of regular and permanent education, which involves learning the skills of management, marketing, communication and the trends of modern tourist practice, while the staff of the tourist field should be familiar with the specialized work of heritage institutions. If the mentioned recommendations are to be applied in the conditions which prevail in Serbia, comprehensive reforms "from above" are needed. Rare efforts of some institutions for them to apply "from above" give isolated results and their success remains exceptions which depend on the current enthusiasm, knowledge and skill of individuals (Stamenković, 2006). If we want to change that, we need the initiative of the state which must, by working both horizontally (inter-ministry cooperation) and vertically (inter-governmental cooperation of various levels of rule, from local administration, through a region to the central authority) set system foundations and make the frames of the future development through strategic plans, legislation, innovations in the education system, financing, as well as the development of conditions for a wide level of other forms of the operative cooperation which implies various types of networking on other levels (Geić, 2002).

The next important prerequisite for the development represents networking of subjects within the same fields – activities, but for strengthening the destination of key importance there was developed the active interagency cooperation, where the role of the subject from various departments must be unambiguously determined. Non-profitable heritage department must, at first place, take over the tasks of creating and development of the product and implementation of protection measures, while the profitable department of tourism would take over the obligations of market research, providing additional funds, the sale and promotion. What is also important is that the cooperation should be criss-cross, so that besides the intra-department and inter-department cooperation, the inter-sector cooperation should be established, above all the subjects from the public and private sector (public private partnership), but also from the civil sector, which is the key of sustainable development (Гиревски, 2008).

2. METHODOLOGICAL STRUCTURE OF RESEARCH

For the study of religious tourism in the Republic of North Macedonia, the interview was used to examine the views of religious dignitaries, clergy, and representatives of the monastic ranks of the Macedonian Orthodox Church - Ohrid Archbishopric. The interview also included representatives of state institutions dealing with this issue, of the Ministry of Culture, the Institutes for the protection of cultural monuments and museums. Research questions: §How much pilgrimage as part of the ritual element of religion is important for the development of religious tourism in R. North Macedonia?

* How important is the doctrinal element of religion for the development of religious tourism in the Republic of Macedonia?

* How important is the psychological-emotional element of religion for the development of religious tourism in the Republic of Macedonia?

* What is the attitude of the Macedonian Orthodox Church Synod towards religious tourism?

* What is the attitude of the monastic representatives as part of the MOC - OA to religious tourism?

* To what extent do religious events associated with visiting sacred places contribute to the development of religious tourism?

* What is the attitude of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of North Macedonia towards religious tourism?

* What is the contribution of the Institutes for protection of the cultural monuments and museums of the Republic of North Macedonia to the development of religious tourism?

* How much does the Tourism Alliance of the Republic of North Macedonia invest in the promotion of religious tourism?

* To what extent do cultural events related to particular sacred sites contribute to the development of religious tourism?

* How well-thought-out marketing by the state allows for the development of religious tourism?

* To what extent does the state through its competent institutions invest financially in the promotion and development of religious tourism?

3. SURVEY RESULTS

Based on the analysis of the answers received to the questions asked by the representatives of the **Synod and the clergy of the MOC-OA**, pilgrimage as a part of the ritual element of religion has always been an important segment in the tradition of Orthodox Christianity. They also believe that the doctrinal element of religion, that is, the knowledge of one's own faith is important in many areas of the Christian living of the believer and, of course, of religious tourism. Regarding the psychological-emotional element of religion (the belief that by visiting sacred places one may be healed of a disease) as important for the development of religious tourism, according to the responses of MOC-OA Synod and clergy representatives, most of

the believers' desire for miraculousness have emphasized the healing. In fact, they believe that it is not about tourism but about devaluing religious feeling and dignity. Also regarding the attitude of the Macedonian Orthodox Church - Ohrid Archbishopric towards religious tourism, they consider that visiting sacred places has never been considered as tourism, but there are still conditions for visiting sacred places. Of particular importance was their stance on the organization of religious events by the MOC-OA, related to visiting sacred sites and their contribution to the development of religious tourism. Representatives of the MOC-OA Synod and clergy involved in the interview considered the contribution to be certain, but only as a collateral benefit. Occasion and purpose have always been solely related to respect for a particular saint or holiday.

Of particular importance are the attitudes of the **MOC-OA monks and nuns**. According to them, the worship as an expression of the devotion of the faithful people is not identical with the so-called religious tourism. So, a distinction is made between genuine worship and organized religious tourism. An authentic worshiper cannot be a tourist. The worshiper, unlike the tourist, is not very interested in the social, moral-ethical and esthetic spaces he travels on during his pilgrimage journey. He is not an observer but a participant in worship events. The worshiper is a member of a specific community. He freely identifies as a believer, whatever the consequences. Aforementioned cannot be requested by the tourist. He is by definition an individual. Unlike worship, religious tourism is a natural necessity of modern man and here comes the organization of this type of tourism, looking primarily at profit as a way of prosperity. There has always been interest in such visits. Nowadays for the development of society the number of those worshipers is increasing. Representatives of the MOC-OA monks and nuns involved in this interview expressed the view that, if theological truths are only known, not lived and practiced, the mere knowledge of the doctrine as information will not affect the ethos of the believer. The spirit and ethos of Orthodoxy do not allow the Church to be used as a means of gaining political or economic power. Getting acquainted with the theological truths acquires a different view of the sociological aspect of religious tourism. This would differentiate Orthodox religion from religion, worship from religious tourism, and of course would also define cultural identity. The connection of the psychological-emotional element of religion with healing makes sense only in the matter of the victory over death. In this worldview, man guided by the Spirit passes through the psycho-emotional state and transcends it unharmed, not falling into the traps of superstition and reaching the sources of pure and authentic faith in the living God.

Based on the analysis of the questions answered by the **representatives of the Faculty of Theology**, we would like to emphasize their position that pilgrimage is a positive example in the country, especially with visiting and staying in several monasteries, since the restored lodgings offer the most favorable conditions for guest stay. They also emphasize that the doctrinal element of religion (knowledge of theological truth) has a decisive factor in

the development of religious tourism, and that the psychological-emotional element of religion (the belief that sacred healing is possible in the holy places) is particularly important for development of religious tourism in R. North Macedonia, especially as it is a complex psychological state - a psychological construct in which there are many components, the most important being cognition, feeling and activist motivation. In fact, before going to worship, the pilgrim has the feeling of a purpose ahead. Go there with love, faith and hope, to return changed, renewed, different, healthy. The representatives of the Faculty of Theology included in the interview are unique in their view that the Holy Synod of the Macedonian Orthodox Church - Ohrid Archbishopric, should form a body that should prepare a feasibility study on the possibilities for development of this type of tourist-pilgrimage. The monasteries in R. North Macedonia have not yet been sufficiently put to the service of the people. However, a shared vision is being built between competent persons who would combine religious tourism with cultural and environmental tourism, following the example of many countries in the world. In highly developed European and world tourism centers, significant national sanctuaries are an important factor in choosing a tourist destination. The contribution of religious events (organized by MOC-OA) related to visiting sacred places for the development of religious tourism is large, especially in view of the direct motives for worship: participation in religious festivals and celebrations (in Orthodoxy they are attending temple celebrations, the relocation of relics to a saint); the need for immediate meeting with specific sacred places; traditional respect for the designated sanctuary, such as the fame of the day (patron) of the national or local sanctuary; getting to know the roots of their own religious community, especially those who live in other religious communities and return to their home country (in their homeland) to learn about their own faith, language, culture, tradition, and of course the customs of their fathers.

In the following presentation, attention will be paid to the analysis made on the questions answered by the representatives of the **Ministry of Culture**. The relation of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of North Macedonia is particularly devoted to religious tourism. Pursuant to the Law on Protection of Cultural Heritage and within its Annual Work Program continuously through its competent institutions (institutes for protection of cultural monuments and museums), it pays great attention to the affirmation of sacred objects as cultural and historical values in R. North Macedonia. This can be seen through the efforts for their immediate protection, adequate treatment within the framework of the World Heritage Site, their popularization and revitalization. Ministry of Culture officials believe that municipalities can be active promoters of religious tourism by organizing events on the occasion of traditional religious celebrations that affirm the specifics of a particular micro-region, often by organizing more cultural events marking the patron of their town and village. Of course, the role of the Chamber of Tourism in promoting and religious tourism should not be neglected. Therefore, greater efforts should be made to promote this branch of tourism,

thereby enabling the development of religious tourism and thereby raising it to a decent level. Also, this group of respondents believes that tourism organizations and agencies in coordination with relevant state, social and religious stakeholders will contribute to the affirmation and promotion of this tourist segment, especially considering the numerous sacred objects on the territory of R. North Macedonia, both in the larger and the larger ones in smaller municipalities, where each has its own story and meaning. They also point out that thoroughly thought out marketing will enable them to get acquainted and informed about certain destinations that would be important to visit. The decisive factors that influence the development of religious tourism are: accommodation organization and adequate infrastructure, sustained tourism promotion marketing, tourist map with sanctuary map and organized events.

Representatives of the **Institutes for the protection of cultural monuments and museums** also believe that their role in the development of religious tourism is particularly important. It is manifested through the realization of projects for the conservation and revitalization of church complexes and their frescoes. Thus, as seen through their program activities, they play a major role in the development and promotion of this type of tourism. Their activity is primarily focused on the protection and conservation of cultural and historical monuments and their scientific and expert presentation. Representatives of the Institutes for the protection of cultural monuments and museums point out that the infrastructure needs to be improved, since many of the attractive sites, shrines, churches and so on are found in mountainous areas. It is necessary to cover all the capacities that are ready to be offered in one group through print and online media. Tourist agencies also play an important role in promoting North Macedonia and specifically in religious tourism. Unfortunately, very few of them offer this type of tourism. This is primarily about local religion, religious events, religious objects, and anything that might arouse a visitor's interest in coming to visit them. That is one of the key factors, a good enough organized offer that will be affordable for them. It implies good marketing of that offer, advertising in that tourist market and a greater interest from the agencies themselves of the country to form such an offer.

CONCLUSION

And finally, as a **conclusion** from the research of the topic, it can be concluded that the development of religious tourism is particularly important for R. North Macedonia. So the representatives of all the groups included in the interview, starting with the Synod and the clergy of the MOC-OA, the Faculty of Theology, the monks and the nuns of the MOC-OA, the representatives of the Ministry of Culture, the representatives of the Institutes for the protection of cultural monuments and museums, are positive. The attitude and taking into consideration the pilgrimage as a part of the ritual

element is particularly important for the development of religious tourism. They also believe that knowing the theological truth and the psychological - emotional element is particularly important for the development of religious tourism. Concerning the attitude of the MOC-OA Synod towards religious tourism, it is concluded that the MOC-OA is aware of the need and importance of religious tourism, but it has not been sufficiently developed so far. Concerning the attitude of the monastic representatives as part of the MOC-OA towards religious tourism, it can be concluded that the monasteries are not sufficiently put into function of tourism. Concerning the organization of religious events by the MOC-OA, the cultural events organized by the Ministry of Culture and the mayors of the municipalities, which are related to the visit of sacred places from the answers above, concluded that their organization especially contributes to the development of religious tourism, because a visit to those events will also contribute to a mass visit to the sacred places. The attitude of the Ministry of Culture and the contribution of the Institutes for the protection of the cultural monuments and museums were positively expressed by the persons involved in the interview, especially considering that, in accordance with their responsibilities, both of them take particular care for the preservation of cultural and historical monuments - religious sites. Regarding the role of the Tourism Chamber in the promotion of religious tourism, representatives of all survey groups were unique in the view that they were not familiar with the activities of the Tourism Chamber for the promotion of this type of tourism. The analysis also found that travel agencies were not sufficiently interested in religious tourism arrangements. They have a lot more to do and even stressed the need to open travel agencies that deal exclusively with religious tourism arrangements. The state through its competent institutions invests in the development of religious tourism. It is particularly important that the state invests much more in recent years than in previous years. Also, well-designed marketing plays a particularly important role in the development of religious tourism. Regarding the crucial factors that influence the development of religious tourism in the Republic of North Macedonia, the following were emphasized: to improve the infrastructure, since many attractive sites, sanctuaries, churches are located in cut off mountainous areas; to cover all capacities that are ready to bid and to be offered in one group through print and internet media; to improve the role of travel agencies; increase the number of cultural and religious events; a well-organized offer of religious facilities and anything that might arouse the interest of the visitor to visit them; good marketing of that offer and advertising in that tourist market; more interest from the agencies themselves in the state to form such an offer.

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