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Religious Tourism – Problems with Terminology

This article presents a terminological discussion connected with the idea of *religious tourism*. It is an attempt to present the similarities and differences between two forms of migrations, which are *pilgrimage* and *tourism*, within the context of the centuries-long development of these ideas. It also presents the conditions that are indispensable for considering peregrinations to the centres of religious worship as forms of tourism which is referred to as *religious tourism*.

Introduction

In the migration processes in many countries, migrations conditioned by religious motives have played an important role. Pilgrimages can be classified as very steady religious practices. They belong to the phenomena of supra-confessional and timeless nature. Peregrinations to holy places have been made from the earliest days of mankind. Such journeys were probably known in prehistoric religions. Thus, we can consider those wanderings as one of the oldest migration forms stimulated by non-economic motifs. The antique world played an important role in the development of pilgrimages. Until the present day, some sources have been preserved which make it possible to “reconstruct” the ancient pilgrimages undertaken among others in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Palestine, Arabia, Persia, India, China, the country of the Mayans, Greece or Rome. Archaeological research confirms the existence of such places of worship, which must have involved pilgrimages, among the people of pre-Christian Northern Europe, e.g. among the Celts, Germanic and Slavonic people. Pilgrimages became an even more significant phenomenon after the great religions of the contemporary world had emerged.

At present, making pilgrimages is one of the most important religious, cultural, social and economic phenomena. Every year around 220-240 million people go on pilgrimages. 150 million (ca 60-70%) out of that number are Christians, 40 million – the Muslim and around 20-30 million the Hindu. It is estimated that in Europe only, about 30 million Christians, mostly Catholics, devote their holidays,

on the whole or in part, to go on pilgrimages. In Poland, 6-7 million people take part in pilgrimages every year.

Thus, the peregrinations based on beliefs and religion have been part of human life on all stages of cultural and civilisation development. But can we venture a statement that they have also been tourist journeys? This question can also be paraphrased in the following way: Are there any grounds for seeking any common roots of the peregrinations stimulated by religious motives (pilgrimages) and tourist journeys?

1. Historical background

Let us analyse for a moment the chronology of the journeys which we could consider as religious and tourist journeys. All accessible sources do not leave us any reason for doubting that the *religious motive* came first chronologically, since journeys to holy places date back to prehistoric times. We can find a lot of information about religious journeys in the *Old Testament*, the Hindu *Vedas* or in the preserved testimonies of ancient writers. In his *History*, Herodotus mentions the fact that some of the celebrations in ancient Egypt attracted as many as 700 thousand pilgrims to the holy places. The wells and springs situated in the vicinity of many temples and their great therapeutic reputation allow us to perceive them as the first spas. This is also true about ancient Greece and Rome. In Greece, sports and cultural events were one of the forms of the worship of gods. The most popular ones were the sports contests held every several years in Olympia and Nemea (places dedicated to the worship of Zeus), in Delphi (a place dedicated to the worship of Apollo) and in Corinth (a place dedicated to the worship of Poseidon). The holy truce that was in force during the contests guaranteed large attendance. In this case we can already observe a phenomenon in which the *religious and tourist (cognitive) motives* overlap. Groups of the sick and disabled, cherishing the hope for healing, wandered along the roads of Greece, heading for one of the many temples. The temple of Asclepius in Epidaurus attracted the largest numbers of such wanderers. Archaeologists have found plaques with information about the instances of miraculous healing – e.g. about the restored eyesight or the removal of an arrow-head from the lungs. In the times of the Roman Empire, there existed two more famous temples dedicated to Asclepius – one on the Island of Kos and the other in Pergamon. The ancient sources let us hold the view that the profile of the groups of pilgrim-patients reflected the spectrum of the society of that time, including both the uneducated paupers and the representatives of the most distinguished elite. Other temples attracting the sick were oracles. Those pilgrimages can be considered as a “prototype” of *specialised pilgrimages* which can now be observed in many sanctuaries. In connection with the fact that springs of mineral water, used by the priests for treating sick pilgrims, could be found near the temples, the writings pertaining to that subject often identify them as the oldest forms of spa therapies and the primary forms of *health resorts*. Thus, elements of tourism inter-

mingle with the wanderings of which the utmost purpose was religious in nature. Ancient *tourism* experienced its vivid development in Roman times. The wanderings were undertaken mostly in order to admire the works of architecture and art, wonders of nature, historic battlefields, tombs of mythological heroes and museum exhibitions. The *Seven Wonders* of the ancient world enjoyed the greatest popularity. They were: the pyramids in Egypt, the lighthouse in Alexandria, the Hanging Gardens of Semiramis in Babilon, the statue of Zeus in Olympia sculpted by Phidias, the temple of Artemis in Ephesus, the Mausoleum in Helicarnassus, and the Colossus of Rhodos (a statue of Apollo). The first guidebooks were also written then. The only one which has been preserved from antiquity until the present time is *A Guidebook to Greece* written by Pausanias in the years 160-180 AD. The journeys of religious nature became more frequent only at the end of the Roman epoch. They were mostly connected with the pilgrimages to the Holy Land, whose development was notable during the reign of Constantine (in 313 AD he granted freedom of worship to Christians), and in particular after the pilgrimage undertaken around 326 AD by his mother Elena, a future saint. She was the first person to take care of the places connected with the life, passion and resurrection of Christ and she had numerous buildings erected to serve the needs of the pilgrims. She also found the wood of the Holy Cross. Special trails of peregrinations to the Holy Land were established and their descriptions have survived until now. Latin works connected with pilgrimages to the Holy Land came into being as early as the times of Constantine the Great. The *itineraria*, written by pilgrims themselves, constitute a large group among those works. The best known ones are: the description of the journey from Bordeaux to Jerusalem, dating from 333 AD, written by an anonymous inhabitant of Bordeaux, and *A Pilgrimage to Holy Places* by Egeria (381-384). The decision to undertake the dangerous wandering to the Holy Land was conditioned almost exclusively by a *religious* factor, since it was a desire of any Christian to reach the places connected with Christ. It can be assumed that for most of those wanderers only the goal of their peregrination mattered and not the journey as such. It is, however, often emphasised that many pilgrims had a subconscious wish to *get acquainted with the world they were "passing through."* The same mixture of motives concerned the medieval pilgrimages to Rome or to Santiago de Compostela and later it became characteristic of most wanderings to holy places. It was exactly that curiosity of the world that in the past inspired the pious wanderers to make written records of the undertaken pilgrimages. Those descriptions (the above-mentioned *itineraria*) soon became popular forms of guidebooks for the future pilgrims.

2. Problem of Motivation

So far our discussion has been almost completely focused on the issue of motivation. This should, however, not be surprising, since this is precisely the condition that allows us to discern and characterise the previously-discussed types of

human spatial mobility. Above, we have managed to prove that *the religious motive was primary* and that it appeared much earlier than *the motive pertaining exclusively to a cognitive journey*. It should be remembered, though, that the journeys whose religious aspects intermingled with those cognitive and therapeutic also have a very long tradition. Researchers concerned with antiquity point out that in ancient times, in some of the sanctuaries, it was already difficult to distinguish the “*proper pilgrims*” from the people who were just sight-seeing. This *motivation duality* has survived for millennia and at present it is as visible as it used to be in antiquity or in the Middle Ages. It is especially noticeable in the Christian religion and especially within the Roman Catholic Church. This is particularly true about the upper classes of Catholic societies whose level of cultural awareness and education accounts for combining both *religious and cognitive (tourist) motives* within a journey.

If we agree that the nature of a journey is determined by *the motivation of undertaking it*, then we must ask a question pertaining to the *relationship between the motive of choosing the journey and the level of development of the religious, social and cultural awareness or the education level of the society of a given country or region*. This question can be phrased in the following way: *Can a pilgrimage be identified with a tourist journey, if the traveller is not aware of the possibility of using the journey undertaken for religious reasons also for getting acquainted with the historic monuments, cities and regions passed on the way?* In other words: *Can a wanderer going to a holy place be considered a tourist, if he is not interested in the monuments passed on the way, not doing any sight-seeing and, above all, is not aware of the status and value of those sights?* As opposed to what may be expected, the answer to this question is not quite obvious. In the Middle Ages, every year, more than 500 thousand pilgrims traversed Europe in their peregrinations to Santiago de Compostela or on their return journey from there. Most of them were pilgrims-penitents, often flagellating themselves on the way. Let us remind the fact that in the Middle Ages pilgrimages also constituted a form of punishment for committing murder. Even if such pilgrims stopped in towns or settlements, they had neither the strength nor the means necessary to do any sight-seeing or to make use of any facilities available in the town. They wandered to St. Jacob’s grave, which was the destination of their journey. For that group of pilgrims, their pilgrimage was exclusively the “road of faith” and the “road to salvation.” The level of geographical awareness of the average European at that time was such that the pilgrims in their imagination located Compostela somewhere at the “end of the world”, where “the sun dies every day.” Therefore many pilgrims would stay in the vicinity to die there. Hence a question, if an average “pilgrim of St. Jacob” was also a tourist? Can we also perceive as tourists the pilgrims of rural and uneducated urban background, going on foot to Jasna Góra since the 17th century? Their main destination was the sanctuary at Jasna Góra and the only architectural objects visited on the way were churches in which they participated in holy services. Are the Muslims going on a pilgrimage to

Mecca also tourists? And were they tourist in the past, when in order to get to that holy place they had to travel in caravans through a desert? Those caravans consisted of sometimes as many as 60,000 pilgrims struggling through the sands of the desert. On the way they frequently died of exhaustion or were killed by bands of Beduins. Are the Hindu, whose pilgrimages along the holy rivers often take many years (e.g. it takes 6 years to walk along the Ganges River), also tourists? The majority of those pilgrims devote the entire time of their wanderings to meditations and prayers, in a way “ignoring” the cities and sights passed on the way. Are the Buddhist pilgrims on the Island of Sikoku, who come here from all over Japan also tourists? And how about the Jews from the Diaspora, who come from all over the world to their main holy city, Jerusalem, to pray at the Wailing Wall? These are rhetorical questions only in appearance.

3. Problems of Terminology

The doubts presented above result mostly from heterogenous terminology, which often did not adequately nor timely reflect the dynamic development of various kinds of journeys not connected with undertaking any paid employment.

Then, let us begin with the *pilgrimage* and the *pilgrim*. The etymology of the notion of *pilgrimage* goes back to remote antiquity. The Greek term *per-epi-demos* (literally – a foreigner, non-resident) was used to denote a pilgrim or a casual traveller. The primary Latin word *peregrinus* denoted a person travelling either through foreign lands or not having the rights of citizenship. It came into being as a combination of two words: *per-agros*, meaning someone who goes across a field, outside his residence place, far away from home (*peregre* = in foreign lands, abroad, not at home). The notion *peregrinatio* means a spell away from one’s homeland, a wandering, a journey and a visit to a foreign country. For Cicero *peregrinatio* was synonymous to permanent exile (*perpetua peregrinatio*). Probably as early as the 11th century, the notion *peregrinus* was understood as a person travelling for religious purposes. Later there appeared such notions as *itinerarium* and *peregrinatio sacra (religiosa)*, connected with religious journeys undertaken on one’s own will, while the word *peregrinatio* alone was sometimes applied to journeys which were in some way imposed, as they were undertaken as a form of penance. They could also be a form of ascetic life (*peregrinatio ascetica*). In fact, it was only in the 12th century the notion *peregrinatio* came to be understood unequivocally as the religious practice of visiting holy places. Often a participant of such journeys was called *Homo viator*. The Latin word *via* means a way, a road, a street, a path and sometimes also a journey, a march or a pageant. *Viator* is a cognate word denoting a traveller, a wanderer, a messenger and in a religious sense also a *pilgrim*. Recently, this notion has become very popular as a synonym used to denote all participants of tourist migrations. In Polish literature, especially of the early 20th century, one can also find such notions as *pielgrzymstwo*, *peregrynacja*, *pańnictwo* [into English the three words are translated as *pilgrimage*] or *pańnik* [in English *pilgrim*]

used alternatively to *pielgrzymowanie*, *pielgrzymka* [in English *pilgrimage*, *pilgrimage*] and *pielgrzym* [in English *pilgrim*]. Historians also willingly use an old Polish word *pać*, meaning a *pilgrimage to holy places*¹.

Let us now concentrate on the terminology connected with *pilgrimage* phenomenon. In general, a *pilgrimage* is understood as a journey undertaken because of religious reasons. It leads to a place considered holy (*locus sacer*) because of the special activity of God or deity there. The ultimate objective of that journey was performing some prescribed religious acts of piety and penance². In other words, the essence of a *pilgrimage* was always related to the desire of the faithful to come into communion with the *sacrum*³. Some religions encourage pilgrimages through strict commandments of faith (e.g. in Islam) or through ascribing to those migrations a role of an essential factor for attaining eternal salvation (e.g. in Hinduism and Buddhism). In Christianity, from the very beginning, pilgrimages were a “peripheral” religious practice as opposed to the central liturgical worship in the Church (A. Witkowska, 1995). They often resulted from the spontaneity of the faithful, which had its source in human spiritual needs. For a Christian a *pilgrimage* is a special form of journey, whose aim is to search for God. In the early Middle Ages, a pilgrimage constituted a kind of a “sacrifice and mortification of the body.” Some researchers (e.g. I. Baumer, M. Ostrowski) even claim that a *pilgrimage* is a special form of spiritual ascending towards God and one of the higher forms of piety. For a longer period of time it allows to enter a communion with God in a deeper way. Even nowadays, going on a pilgrimage is thought to lead to the spiritual renewal of an individual. Certainly an important factor here has always been the teaching of the Scriptures according to which the earthly life is a constant *pilgrimage* under the leadership of Christ to the real homeland of the “heavenly Jerusalem” (Hbr 12, 22-24).

The pilgrimage migrations consist of three basic components: *man* (“*homo religiosus*”), *space* and *sacrum*. The *pilgrimage space* (“*espace du pčlerinage*”) provides the condition for sanctification. That space is usually homogenous and as a rule it is framed by two points: the starting point and the destination. The latter one is at the same time the starting point of the return, though it sometimes happens (especially in Islam and Hinduism) that pilgrims remain in a holy place to await their death. In other words, completing any pilgrimage requires covering some *sacred space* (“*espace sacré*”). In general, some established borders separate the holy places from the external world (the “*profanum*”).

The terms *tourism* and *tourist*, appeared in literature only at the end of the 18th century and their popular use began in the 19th century. The word *tourism* itself has its origins in the French word *tours*, meaning a journey. In the early 19th century, the notion of *tourism* (French - *tourism*) comprised the entire body of excursions or journeys to attractive places, as well as all research or pleasure trips. In fact, there was no room for pilgrimages here. In the second half of that century, anyone who travelled for pleasure, in order to satisfy one’s curiosity or just to “kill

time” was a *tourist*. *Tourism*, on the other hand, was understood as the likes and habits of a tourist or as the love of changing places of stay and a “very pleasant sport.” The definition of the notion of a *tourist* announced in 1937 by the Economic Committee of the League of Nations (valid till 1963) expressly considered the people undertaking journeys because of religious motives as tourists. Religious journeys are also taken into account by the definition of the United Nations of 1963 as well as by the later ones. The chief theoreticians of tourism, W. Hunziker and K. Krapf, mention pilgrimages among the tourist journeys. Another theoretician, P. Bernecker, is of a similar opinion and he claims that “practising religious worship” is one of the motives of tourist journeys. Geographers, on the other hand, agree that all tourist phenomena take place in a *tourist space*, which is part of the geographical, social and economic space.

4. Pilgrimages versus tourism

The considerations presented so far constitute a sufficient basis for attempting to determine the relationships between *pilgrimages* and *tourism*. First it has to be established if each *pilgrimage* can be looked upon as one of the forms of *tourism*? This matter is still controversial, especially according to church circles and clergymen of many religions. According to all definitions *tourism* involves various kinds of journeys undertaken *on one’s own will, except for paid employment or because of the change of the place of permanent residence*. Can the Muslim *hajaj* therefore be perceived as a type of a *tourist* journey, if it is one of the five pillars of that religion and it is *obligatory for all* adult Muslims? Similar questions can be put forward in case of several other pilgrimages and religions, e.g. Judaism, Hinduism, Shintoism, Sikhism, etc. Some of the pilgrims remain in a holy place and await death there (e.g. in Mecca, Medina or Varanasi). Thus, we can see that the answer in this case is by no means simple or unequivocal. Probably for that reason, geographers in the Muslim countries, in Japan or in India prefer to refer to those wanderings as *sacred journeys*, *religious migrations* or simply as *pilgrimages*, instead of calling them one of the forms of *tourism*. On the other hand, many researchers of almost all religions emphasise the fact that for the poorest groups within societies pilgrimages were, as if unintentionally, the only form of tourist activity. Since there is a lot of doubt as to perceiving the participants of Islamic, Buddhist or Hindu pilgrimages as tourists, further in our discussion we will limit ourselves to Christian pilgrimages, and in particular to those Catholic.

Beginning in the interwar period, the forms of migrations undertaken out of purely religious motives began to fade. More and more often, people started coming to pilgrimage destinations in order to rest or for cognitive purposes, since apart from the religious function those places also played the role of tourist centres, because of the qualities of their natural environment, historic places or traditions (e.g. Santiago de Compostela, Rome, Jerusalem, Czestochowa and Cracow).

Some pilgrimage centres, which are situated in the mountains, have also become winter sports centres (e.g. Mariazell, Einsiedeln). Thus two, often overlapping, streams of travellers started pouring into such centres. This became a very distinct phenomenon. Those migrations came to be referred to – at first only sporadically and later more and more often – as *pilgrim tourism* or *religious tourism*, and sometimes even *religious and pilgrim tourism* (*tourisme de pèlerinage*, *Pilgertourismus*, *tourisme religieux*, *turismo religioso*, *turismus religiosus*, *Wallfahrtstourismus*). At present the term “*religious tourism*” is commonly used, since it is considered to be a wider than the term *pilgrim tourism*.

Undoubtedly, the process of progressive religious indifference in the countries of Western Europe after the Second World War, involving the diminishing of the number of people participating in various religious practices and celebrations, had a major influence on the development of that term. That phenomenon resulted in the diminished level of pilgrimage activity and the fading of the traditional forms of those peregrinations. Most of the journeys were done in cars or buses and more and more often their programmes included also non-religious elements. The general increase in the popularity of tourism in a way “automatically” imposed the term “*religious tourism*” on the previously-discussed journeys, which combined both spiritual and secular elements. On the one hand, that form was accepted by the potential participants and on the other by the Church authorities, who saw in such journeys a new field for ministration.

A common feature of *religious* and *tourism* migrations is the very act of undertaking a journey, which involves moving within a determined space (*pilgrimage* and *tourism*), making use of the same basic elements of tourism infrastructure and of the same means of transport. The season of the most intensive “activity” is also similar (spring-autumn) and so is their influence on the functional structure of the localities, which manifests itself mostly in the development of the third sector. However, the two types of migrations are also considerably different because of the motivation aspect of the undertaken peregrination, its objective, as well as the pattern of behaviour during the journey and at the place of destination.

In the migrations to worship centres we can point out *three fundamental, distinct aspects* which make the objective and the method of peregrinating considerably different. One of them is the *aspect resulting exclusively from religious motives*, the second one is the *religious and cognitive aspect* and the third one results from *cognitive, recreational and other motives*. In some Christian countries the *religious aspect* is clearly the dominant one. This is particularly true about Latin America and also about many pilgrimages in Poland, especially the pedestrian pilgrimages. The participants of those migrations devote the time spent on a pilgrimage to prayers, religious rites or meditations. Usually, the trails of such pilgrimages avoid the urban centres and they lead through the centres of religious worship of different status and of various degrees of popularity. The *exclusively religious aspect* is also typical of the so-called *specialised pilgrimages* connected mostly

with the journeys of the sick to various holy places. It has frequently been proposed in specialised literature related to the subject that for such peregrinations we should reserve the term *pilgrimages*. This name in itself points in a way to the *exclusively religious aspect* of these journeys. According to some authors the term *pilgrim tourism* corrupts the perception of the motivation aspect, focusing not on a journey resulting only from *religious* reasons but rather on a tourist journey, in which the religious motive fades into the background, giving way to the purely secular elements.

A different type of journeys is motivated mostly by *religious and cognitive* reasons. In such migrations a holy place is not usually the main destination, but it is a part of the itinerary of the journey undertaken in order to get acquainted with a given country, region or places situated on some particular tourist route. Although every day the participants of such journeys take part in a holy mass and in common prayers and they visit the sanctuaries passed on the way, the main aspect of their journey does not have a “purely” religious character. We can observe such a situation in the countries of Western Europe and in this case there is practically no disagreement that these journeys should be termed *religious tourism*.

The centres of religious worship are also visited by people who undertake their journey out of *different motives: cognitive, recreational, therapeutic, connected with sports and others, which are not related to the religious function of the place*. They are only *tourists* and they cannot be treated as participants of religious tourism. The approach towards the members of excursions following, for instance, the routes of baroque churches, wooden churches or a Cistercian route, should be analogous. Usually these journeys are designed for special professional groups and their participants can also be described just as *tourists*. This is mentioned at that point, because it frequently happens that such journeys are mistakenly classified as religious tourism. It should also be reminded that the Roman Catholic Church was of that opinion already in the interwar period. *The Decree of the Council Congregation* (dated February 11, 1936) issued by the Apostolic See, was supposed in the first place to maintain the religious character of the pilgrimages to sanctuaries in the context of the mass development of tourism. It is clearly pointed out in the *Decree* that a journey to a sanctuary undertaken only out of the broadly understood *cognitive motives* cannot be called a pilgrimage. The same *Decree* excluded from the group of sanctuaries those sacred buildings that were visited in masses exclusively for non-religious reasons.

The above-presented forms of journeys undertaken by Christians to the centres of religious worship or following pilgrimage trails allow us to draw the first general conclusions:

1. All the enumerated forms are journeys undertaken voluntarily, not resulting from economic motives or from the desire to change the place of residence. Thus they constitute such forms of peregrinations that can be called *tourism migrations*.

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2. Particular forms of journeys differ from each other because of the *motive* out of which they are undertaken.
 3. The journeys undertaken out of *religious or religious and cognitive motives* constitute a special type of tourist journeys. We can generally term them *religious tourism*.
 4. The journeys to the centres of religious worship undertaken exclusively out of *non-religious motives* constitute one of other forms of *tourism*, usually *cultural tourism*.

In other words, a journey that we classify as *religious tourism* is strictly connected with a *religious and spiritual aspect*. On the other hand, a journey undertaken exclusively for *cognitive* (or other) reasons is conditioned by *secular motives*.

The next stage of our discussion should now be concerned with the internal diversification of the forms and characteristics of the journeys included in *religious tourism*. Relating to the discussion that has been going on for years, first of all we have to answer the questions if *pilgrimages* constitute a form of *tourism* at all and if considering them as tourist migrations does not depreciate their status as a form of religious practice?

Let us remind the fact that the Roman Catholic Church has for a long time presented a positive attitude towards the mass phenomenon that we call tourism. Many times Pope Paul VI emphasised the spiritual values of tourism. Pope John Paul II has been involved in tourist activity since his youth. They both considered a pilgrimage as a special form of tourism. However, the representatives of the Church point to the fact that a pilgrimage is mostly a religious act, while religious tourism puts more stress on the experiences of general cultural and cognitive nature (M. Ostrowski 1996). This is reflected in the post-Council document of the Congregation concerned with affairs of the Clergy, dated March 27, 1969, and entitled *Directorium Generale pro Ministerio Pastoralis quoad "Turismum"* (*General Guidelines for Tourist Ministration*). A wider discussion connected with that was presented in the papers from the successive Congresses of Tourist Ministration, organised by the Apostolic See since 1970. In the interwar period, the Church in Poland co-operated with the League for Supporting Tourism, as far as the organisation of pilgrimages (one of the forms of "mass tourism") was concerned. Till 1996, a separate Commission of Tourist Ministration existed within the Conference of the Polish Episcopate. In 1996, it was replaced by the Council for Migration, Tourism and Pilgrimages. Commissions of the Episcopate Conferences connected with tourism and pilgrimages exist in many European countries and the same is true about particular dioceses.

The several examples provided above show that the Church circles do not object to considering the journeys undertaken out of *religious motives* as one of the forms of *tourism*. In fact, the differences between *pilgrimages* and *religious*

tourism are not defined in the above-mentioned documents. They two notions are discussed together, which may suggest that they are synonymous terms.

So can we really consider *pilgrimages* as a form of tourism? The discussion presented above authorises us to put forward such a claim. We can assume that: “*Pilgrimages constitute a special form of religious tourism. Their characteristic feature is a clearly determined and foregrounded religious aspect. The objective of the journey is reaching a holy place (a sanctuary). The time of the journey and of the stay at the worship centre must be devoted to prayers, meditation, doing penance and to other forms of religiousness. As opposed to other forms of religious tourism, each pilgrimage constitutes at the same time one of the most important religious practices.*”

It may, however, be supposed that probably for many years the terms *pilgrimage* and *religious tourism* will be used interchangeably. There will still be authors using just one of these two terms. The term *pilgrimage* is still preferred in some Christian countries. It seems that a lot of patience and understanding is necessary here, since the reason for that situation belongs to the sphere of our consciousness, which since our childhood years has been fed with the word *pilgrimage*, used frequently in church, at school and at home. Let us also remember that pilgrimages, as one of the oldest forms of travelling, were the ancestors of tourism. Hence, the term *pilgrimage*, whose tradition is several millennia old, is a “more important” term, which expresses the religious character of a journey in a more complete way. The unsatisfactory level of “tourist awareness” in quite a number of societies in Christian countries, the lack of knowledge concerning the basic documents on tourism issued by the Apostolic See, the United Nations or the World Tourism Organisation accounts for the fact that the term *religious tourism* is still seldom used in some countries.

Conclusion

In the discussion presented above we made an attempt to establish the criteria on the basis of which a journey undertaken out of religious motives can be considered a form of tourism called *religious tourism*. It was proposed that *pilgrimages* should be considered a special form of *religious tourism*. The religious status of pilgrimages is by no means diminished. My intention was mostly to impose some order on the terminology, which had so far been applied to religious journeys and their connections with tourist migrations.

Following the development of religious tourism in Europe, we can observe an interesting phenomenon of a gradual return of peregrinations based on purely religious motives. This is particularly true about youth communities. Simultaneously with the process of dechristianising and in the view of the dwindling number of religious people, we can observe a deeper religious motivation in those who are still

religious. Thus, we can hope that in the future religious practices, especially the optional ones, including pilgrimages, will live on and the discussion pertaining to the subject presented above will be continued.

References:

¹ *Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku* [Dictionary of the 16th-Century Polish], Warsaw 1995 IBL, p. 357.

² The very word *pilgrimage* is also frequently used to denote a *group of pilgrims going together in order to pay homage at some place of worship*. (see *Słownik języka polskiego*, [Dictionary of the Polish Language], Warsaw 1979, PWN).

³ According to the same source, a *pilgrimage* means a *wandering to places of worship*, and *to go on pilgrimage* means *to wander to places of worship*, while a *pilgrim* is a *person wandering to places of worship*.

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