

IVO JIRÁSEK

Department of Recreation, Faculty of Physical Culture, Palacký University, Olomouc (Czech Republic)

Correspondence: Prof. Dr Ivo Jirásek, ivo.jirasek@upol.cz

Pilgrimage – tourism continuum once again: matrix of sacred, spiritual and profane connectedness to authenticity

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Abstract:

Background and study aim. This paper attempts to seek connections to the authenticity and spirituality of traveller in one or another mode of experience.

Material and methods. The preparatory terminological background is defined by the distinction of the spheres of the sacred and the profane [Eliade 1957]. The central concept is spirituality, which can be perceived not only as an aspect of religiosity, but also, in relation to the philosophical anthropology of Max Scheler [1981], as a substantially personal way of human existence.

Results. The essential viewpoint stems in the distinction between the individual ways of travelling, since both tourism and pilgrimage can obtain religious as well as secular connotations.

Conclusions. As opposed to the continuum defined by Cohen [1979], this contribution deals with phenomena of authenticity and spirituality.

Introduction

Academic discourses on modes of travelling are abundant and vary immensely. The optics of miscellaneous discourses does not allow finding a unified standpoint, and the research shatters into many diverse approaches. This article will try to give reasons for the claim that most of the usual extremities in a majority of treatises (on tourism and pilgrimage) have failed to adopt a sufficiently justified perspective and have been limited to a superficial comparison of external signs. Traveller means, in this paper, tourist, or pilgrim. The traveller's adherence to a religion is usually considered to be the basic criterion of distinction: the mode of pilgrimage is traditionally associated with religious values, whereas the mode of tourism refers to the profane world. However, personal confessions of respondents to a faith, within a specific religious system, as well as to atheism, do not articulate anything about the deeper levels of values present in the theme of travelling. The conventional view or general understanding of the two terms suggests that both poles differ from themselves in a clear and distinctive semantic way. This is not the case.

Tourism and pilgrimage terminology

The focus and concentration on the religious dimension of pilgrimage (spiritual support within the concrete religious system of the traveller) may help to overcome difficult situations, danger, hardship, pain or suffering. The decrease in religiosity reveals, however, that visitations of places once regarded as holy, sacred or connected to some religious tradition also evolve into the popular perception of the visited space in the intentions of secular tourism. This leads us to the conviction that the mode of travelling is not determined by the place itself (interpreted in the opposition of the profane and the sacred), but by the traveller's experience, the very purpose of the journey. The first doubts concerning the exigency of dividing travellers into pilgrims and tourists with exclusive respect to their own religious concepts arise when we encounter the terminology used in the relevant literature. What used to be a clear boundary between pilgrimage and tourism becomes blurred, and a gradual erosion of clearly defined content occurs. Terms which used be obvious and unambiguous become obscure, their exactness fades away. As the clear contours between profiled religious systems and post-modern forms of individual spirituality disappear, traditional names

are applied to new forms and manifestations of practical life.

The notion of pilgrimage is not associated solely with journeys which are supposed to enrich the religious dimension in the life of the pilgrims and which rely on “supernatural agents” [Nordin 2011]. The word pilgrimage is not used exclusively for journeys conducted within traditional religious systems (Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, or Buddhism). Today, pilgrimages to Neolithic monuments are organized, to places where goddesses were worshipped in ancient Europe [Rountree 2002], and sacred journeys are undertaken within pagan and New Age communities [Zwissler 2011]. The interests of travellers, i.e. the goal, purpose or intention of their journeys, are embedded in terms such as “conference tourism”, “ecotourism” [Stronza 2001; West, Carrier 2004], “ethnic tourism” [Greathouse Amador 1997], “heritage tourism” [Yiping Li 2003]. A specific category is “sex tourism” [Brennan 2004; Pettman 1997], which cannot be, however, simplified as violence committed by men against women [Jeffreys 2003; Sanchez Taylor 2006]. These examples might be perhaps regarded as relatively stable groups of diverse ways of travelling. Pilgrimages involved in these concepts are always connected to a certain religious context, while tourist journeys contain a secular dimension.

How should we, however, classify “travelling to frontiers” [Laing, Crouch 2005] or expeditions and courses organized by Outward Bound [Daniel 2007; Heintzman 2003], which are undoubtedly connected to spirituality or acquisition of a profound experience? How, and by what criteria, do we distinguish the traditional “religious pilgrimage” from “cultural pilgrimages” or even “political pilgrimages”? How does the pilgrimage mode differ from the tourist mode in such journeys? Ambiguity creeps in due to the fact that tourist journeys are often called pilgrimages, or these two phenomena are heterogeneously combined in the form of terms such as “pilgrimage tourism” [Collins-Kreiner, Kliot 2000] or “religious and pilgrimage tourism” [Pourtaheri, Rahmani, Ahmadi 2012], whereas journeys to sacred places are often regarded in the mode of tourism [Sharpley, Sundaram 2005], or vice versa [Allcock 1988]. Phrases such as “secular pilgrimage” and “sacred tourism” [Singh 2005] or “pilgrimage as tourism” [Rountree 2002] might also be comprehended ambiguously. In the post-modern era, the idea of a strict discernment between a religious pilgrimage and a secular journey, between pilgrimage and tourism becomes obscured [Collins-Kreiner 2010]. Even the concept of pilgrimage in its necessity of a physically conducted journey has been abandoned, and travelling via the internet has

entered into the paradigm as “cyberpilgrimage” or “virtual pilgrimage” [MacWilliams 2002; Singh 2005; Ehrenschtendner 2009].

The literature published so far and the terminology used clearly suggest that a simple definition of the difference between pilgrimage and tourism is not possible, and that we should delve into the motivation of the traveller as well as the ontological anchoring of the religious, spiritual and secular spheres.

Sacral, profane, spiritual

I presume that agreement in this area cannot be reached unless we seriously take into account the specifics of the ontological level distinguishing between the sacral (religious, holy) and secular (profane, mundane). These dimensions of the human way of being were discerned by Eliade [1959], when he pointed out the fact that the sacred manifests in the process of *hierophany* as something wholly different from the profane. These two worlds are delineated by a boundary where they differ, yet join, and where it is possible to cross from one world to another. The characteristics of the profane and the sacral involve space (cathedrals and towers interconnecting “heaven and earth” as the symbolical centre of the world, where the ritual connection with the world of transcendence was feasible) as well as time (the sacred time of holidays, mostly periodically repeated, different from the concept of everyday time). This boundary is not distinctly marked: what is perceived as supernatural, is connected to the natural—it is a peculiar transcendental relationship, when for instance a natural reality is worshipped as sacred due to its specific way of being.

At the same time, it involves going beyond the sphere of everyday life into a completely different dimension of “the absolutely different”, the world of religion, to which other ways of being apply (e.g. eternity instead of being in time). The question that inevitably arises in connection to pilgrimage is: Where does the difference between the religious realities, valid in the sacral world, and between the everyday reality of secular life, come from? And above all, what is the relationship of spirituality to the divergence of the sacral and the profane world?

Differentiation spirituality from religion

Religious experience is essentially defined by the relation of man to a deity, to whatever is considered to be divine [James 1985], accompanied with the sense of *mysterium tremendum*—mysterious

terror—caused by the perception of the sacred [Otto 1958]; in other words, it is the relationship of men to what surpasses them and makes them dependent [Heller, Mrázek 1988], a response to the fact of life and existence regarded as a gift [Sokol, 2003]. The act of going beyond, transcending, can be related to various phenomena and diverse levels of reality, such as a human attitude (faith, piousness), quality (sacredness, holiness), sociological aspects and roles (the church, parenthood, priesthood), ritual (death, wedding), cultural products (music, literature) and so forth [Štampach 2008; Sokol 2003; Pargament 1999b; Heller, Mrázek 1988].

Religious people perceive the realities of common life (sexuality, food, work and even games) as sacred, as exceeding the exclusively physical (or physiological) level into the dimension of sacralization, sanctification. For non-religious people, these activities were desacralized, “all these physiological acts are deprived of spiritual significance, hence deprived of their truly human dimension” [Eliade 1959: 168]. The sacral (sacred, holy) is not conceivable without divinity, so entering the dimension of the religious (religion or the sphere of the sacred) is basically defined by the element of transcendence, an experience exceeding the usualness of everyday existence. The religious is very often identified with the spiritual in a simplified way.

The evidence, provided not only by empirical research, shows however that religion and spirituality are not synonyms. For example in one survey, 93 % of the respondents identified themselves with the “spiritual” stance, whereas 78 % of the respondents with the “religious” stance [Zinnbauer et al. 1997]. In another survey, spirituality was relevant for 71 % of the respondents, but only 9 % associated this with a traditional religion, and 74 % indicated that religion is not their primary source of spirituality [Elkins et al. 1988]. The relation between the two areas is now perceived ambiguously. For instance Pargament [1999a] places spirituality in the centre of religion and says its main function consists in the search for what is sacred. On the other hand, Stiffos-Hanssen [1999] confines the sacred to religion, and associates spirituality with other aspects—such as the meaning of life, existence, community, etc. So spirituality does not necessarily require a quest for what is sacred—it simply searches for the spiritual.

The religious dimension is defined by the sacredness of the divine and the element of transcendence, whereas spirituality is essentially realized in the orientation to the spirit. Spiritual values need not be perceived as supernatural, but as something that has a natural sense. The spirit does not have to necessarily be a different ontological reality (sacrum), but a part of the human way of

being. Nevertheless, the spirit sustains the quality of wafting, metamorphosis, flowing. It cannot be bound by a firm definition *sensu stricto*, and every attempt to capture the notion will perhaps always remain a mere approximation, an estimation, a metaphor.

However, spiritual transcendence was identified as an independent factor or dimension in the psychological model of personality [Piedmont 1999]. “Spirituality, which comes from the Latin *spiritus*, meaning ‘breath of life,’ is a way of being and experiencing that comes about through awareness of a transcendent dimension and that is characterized by certain identifiable values in regard to self, others, nature, life, and whatever one considers to be the Ultimate.” [Elkins, Hedstrom, Hughes, Leaf, Saunders 1988: 10] Spirituality implies a care for the human spirit, i.e. “the care of man for oneself and for other men with the aim to come back from alienation to oneself and to step out from oneself in this authenticity. It is caring to be more than ourselves, more human” [Štampach 2006: 104]. From the point of view of philosophical anthropology, the concept of Max Scheler may be much inspiring, as he tried to elucidate the human way of being in terms of phenomenology and used the notion of “spirit” as its specific characteristic.

Max Scheler’s concept of spiritus

I believe that by revitalizing the concept of spirit as the centre of the human way of being, as a manifestation of personality, it is possible to point out the non-religious significance of spirituality, without concurrently evading the vexed expression (“spirit”). In his book *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos* [1981], Max Scheler writes, among other things, about the difference between humans and animals. Scheler claims that the essence of a human being is not exhausted even by practical intelligence (as the culmination of a graded anthropology, following “qualitatively” after habit, behaviour, instinct, and compulsion). In order to name the principle that would specifically characterize the human way of being, he chooses a word that includes not only intellect, but also thinking (in ideas), a certain manner of perceiving the essential content, as well as a group of volitional and emotive acts such as love, respect, blissfulness, freedom, and so forth—and this word is “the spirit” (*der Geist*). At the centre of these manifestations of the spirit is a person, whose basic differentiation is their existential detachment from the organic, thus their is freedom (“openness to the world”). The spirit is a being that is objectless, a genuine actuality; and the way of its being is realized in the performance of its acts.

So it turns out that the spiritual dimension cannot refer to the religious dimension contained in the search for the sacred, but to the vertical dimension of inherently personal being. Spirit as a manifestation of the human way of being is characterized by the search for the sense of life, perception of its depth, revelation of ethical and aesthetic dimensions of the world, desire for harmony, experience of transcendence [Jirásek 2013]. Therefore, it is the spiritual experience which might become the decisive criterion for classification of journeys in the realm of pilgrimage and tourism.

Traveller's experience

What determines in which of the possible spheres (profane / spiritual / sacral) do I dwell? It is experience which brings me into these different worlds. Similarly, the personal experience of travellers is usually used in the surveys of tourist industry as the primary source of information. That is also why respondents in surveys on this issue are divided on the basis of goals and motives, or demographical or socio-economical factors, acquired from the experience of travellers' [Collins-Kreiner, Kliot 2000; Rountree 2002; Sharpley, Sundaram 2005].

If we seriously adopt the mode of experience as the key category for distinction between particular ways of travelling, we will have to (in order to be able to analyse these way of travelling in sufficient depth) add another dimension to the traditional continuum of "tourism—pilgrimage", that is, establish the continuum of "the profane—spiritual—sacral". After having introduced the spiritual dimension in previous paragraphs, we can focus on the dimension of the profane, abundantly reflected in the relevant literature.

Tourism – pilgrimage continuum and its experiencing

The continuum of tourism—pilgrimage observed through the prism of travel experiences was introduced to academic course by Cohen [1979] with his accent on the spiritual centre of the traveller Cohen distinguishes five modes of journey within this continuum, ranging from extension of alienation to a serious search for authenticity:

The *Recreational Mode* is characteristic for travellers whose only concern is for enjoyment and well-being during their journeys; they look for relief and relaxation, not spirituality. The *Diversionsary Mode* is a characteristic mode of a post-modern person: he/she merely wants to escape the alienation

of everyday existence, not to find its meaning. The *Experiential Mode* is a typical form in the case of tourists looking for knowledge; they particularly hope to find inspiration in the meaningful lives of the others. However, this is not done in order to confirm their own mode of spirituality, since their intention is rather to be in touch with "otherness". The *Experimental Mode* characterizes travellers who have lost the spiritual centre of their own culture and look for its alternative. Finally, the *Existential Mode* is a way of tourism equal to pilgrimage. It entails a quest for authentic experience connected to the strengthening of a spiritual centre of one's own culture and society, which can be found somewhere else than in the place of the traveller's residence.

This model has been amply used and cited (e.g. the electronic database ProQuest refers to 201 documents quoting this text as of 22 May 2013). Nonetheless, I would like to point out the fact that this model rather deals with the description of the intentions and goals, not with experiential behaviour. If I happen to decide to travel to a religiously significant place with the aim to strengthen my religious orientation and search for authenticity in my own being, then this model will regard me as a pilgrim no matter how I behave at the given location, no matter how I experience it and whether I perceive it at all. Cohen's description calls attention to the intention for the search of one's own spiritual centre and its strengthening, but apparently it does not assess the specific way of a traveller's behaviour in the visited place. It is possible to read in literature a different set of five signs, characterizing the different behaviour of tourists and pilgrims, entirely regardless of what is their attitude and relation to the religious (sacral, holy) dimension of the world [Jirásek 2011]:

Aim of the Journey—a typical attribute of tourists is their aim *to see* certain monuments (religious or profane), while the pilgrim's behaviour rather shows forms of *experiencing*. Even profane places can offer a possibility of musing, thinking, deep personal experience, as well as certain exaltation—and these are attributes of spirituality. *Attuning*—the tourist arrives at a concrete place to *record* the seen picture, while the pilgrim concentrates on the *present experience*. Attuning to a certain space, openness to *genius loci*, are the essential factors here. *Mode of Experience*—a tourist looks for enjoyment and happiness. The pilgrim's experience, however, tends to involve a genuine passion, and pleasure and happiness are rather a consequence, as they result from perceiving the visited place in a full and complex way. *Approach to the Question*—the tourist is looking for answers (needs assurance that the recommendations of the travel agency

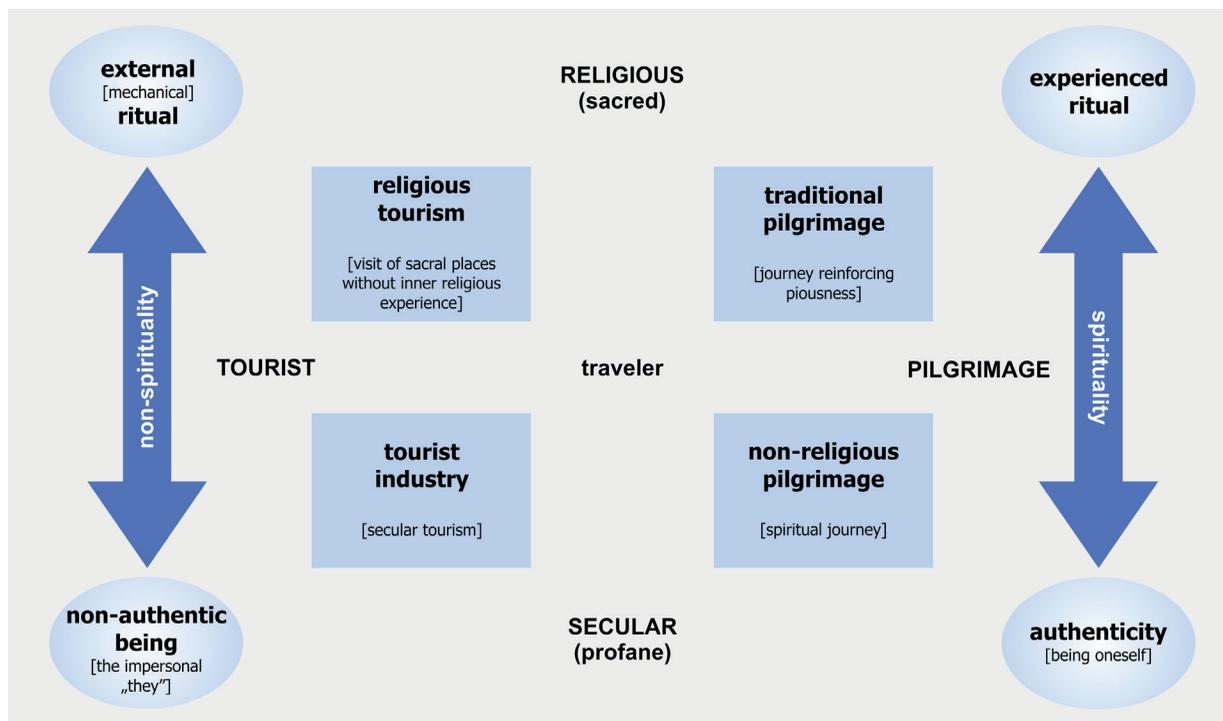


Figure 1. Tourism – pilgrimage continuum based on spirituality and authenticity

are valid). The pilgrim relies on questioning itself, being immersed in the question, which is more important than any answer. The journey to the place and the stay there are experienced as a constant process of questioning. *Focus*—the tourist’s attention is rather volatile, jumping from one attraction to another, watching details in a shallow way without the necessity to synthesize them. On the contrary, a pilgrim’s attention is concentrated on the wholeness of the experience.

Different model

When we try to put both above-described dimensions together, we must admit that both tourism and pilgrimage can obtain religious as well as secular connotations. Therefore I do not find the external religious aspects (the goal consisting in visiting a place and its association with a religious cult) or inner religious experience (pilgrimage as a way of strengthening one’s own religious belief) to be sufficiently plausible in order to describe the journey in the mode of pilgrimage. On the contrary, even a secular journey with no relation to the quest for the sacred may, in fact, involve spirituality, due to which such a journey cannot be classified as conventional tourism. The synthesis of both dimensions results in the following model:

The model is divided by two basic axes, representing the continuum between the poles of tourism and pilgrimage, and the continuum

between the profane and sacral sphere. The traveller can move in this field according to his/her aim and motivation, but mainly with respect to his/her way of experiencing, attuning to the visited place, perception of the genius loci as well as strong and deep relationship to other people (community) etc. The diagram shows, however, that the key factor, in terms of correct classification or adequate understanding, is mainly the bond to spirituality and authenticity. The spiritual dimension of the human way of being has been described above, so it remains to clarify why authenticity should be considered a sign of spiritual experience.

Authenticity

The concept of authenticity in relation to pilgrimage experience has been used quite often [Belhassen *et al.* 2008; Andriotis 2011; Kim, Jamal 2007]. Unfortunately, these texts do not go *ad fontes*, to the original source of thoughts on authenticity, so the primary term has not been used consistently. Similarly, references to phenomenological procedures have not been used accurately and rather represent some form of phenomenism than phenomenology. Analytical approaches interconnect terms which are incongruent with the phenomenological source of authenticity, such as “object authenticity”, “constructive authenticity”, “natural authenticity”, “influential authenticity”, etc. Nevertheless, authenticity in the original sense can only be conceived as the existential dimension of a

human way of being [Heidegger 2008].

Martin Heidegger, in an effort to grasp precisely the meanings of the terms he used, often chose quite extraordinary terminology and introduced a number of neologisms. This factor can significantly hinder the reader's access to understanding; needless to say, the linguistic discomfort one may feel while reading Heidegger is not related to the language, but rather to his non-trivial and quite exceptional way of thinking.

Heidegger perceives a way of human being as his/her existence (*Dasein*) with two substantial modes, one of authenticity and one of non-authenticity. The distinction is not in the scale of the being or its graduated stay and so on, but in the reference to one's own being as opposed to everyday subordination to the non-personal, "the They" (*Man*). Only man cares about his or her own being (the way of life), that is, about being in general. The existence of a man is being-here, dwelling (*Dasein*), the destiny of a creature who is aware of its finality, its mortality. This is the privilege of human beings only: if animals perish and gods are immortal, then only people die because they are aware of their death. This awareness of the approaching end, this standing out into nothingness, this possibility of not being is an experience which only constitutes the possibility of being authentic. Let us not fail to notice, however, that authenticity is not an independent way of existence, but a purposeful pursuit of one's own possibilities realized after accepting one's own finality or mortality. The important fact is that many of the possibilities of our own existence are forfeited in favour of others. Heidegger explicitly points out that these others are not any concrete, specific others, but the impersonal "the They": "The 'who' is not this one, not that one, not oneself [man selbst], not some people [einige], and not the sum of them all. The 'who' is the neuter, the 'they' [*das Man*]." [Heidegger 2008: 164].

If we submit to this dictate, we submit to the mode of mediocrity, and then we do what "they do", we wear what "they wear", and submit to the general conformist taste and morals, the pressure of advertising and social power. We impose limitations on our own personal individuality, uniqueness, distinctiveness and exceptionality: thus we forfeit our authenticity and live in a mode of inauthenticity, in a diffused indefiniteness. And conversely, we live authentically only when we are ourselves.

Spirituality and authenticity as a sign of travelling modus

Then what are the implications for the mode of travelling? In my opinion, the mode of pilgrimage

is not represented by visiting a place with religious context, but by a journey marked by the courage to be oneself, by focusing on the spiritual aspects of the verticality of human existence, by meaningfulness of life (including the meaningfulness of the journey). The pilgrim can travel in both a religious and non-religious context—what matters is the spiritual height of ideals and the depth of thoughts, openness to the visited places, a sincere and open-minded relationship with the fellow pilgrims. The pilgrim becomes a symbol of authentic living in being oneself. This particular aspect, applied in the moral sense, may apparently result in a secondary usage of strict differences between the travelling modes of pilgrimage and tourism as a symbol signifying entirely different realities, as a metaphor of the disparate ways of life, for example in the various possibilities of religious education [Roebben 2009] or in the different approaches of social workers to their clients [Jirásek, Jirásková 2011].

And vice versa, the opposite is the non-spiritual experience of the traveller who may even participate in the formal acts or rites required by a religion, but lacks genuine enthusiasm and integral experiencing. Religious tourism is thus defined by a journey to places connected with a religious cult, conducted by a traveller lacking the mode of spiritual dimension, the dimension of authenticity. Secular tourism hypothetically possesses the potential for transformation into a spiritual journey, if it is undertaken by an authentic personality. Should the opportunity remain not utilized and the journey conducted in the mode of non-authentic existence, then it is a case of secular tourism, when the traveller succumbs to the seduction and pressure of the impersonal "They", i.e. the pressure of advertisement, consumption, comfortable safety; that is, without the effort to truly give oneself to the journey, to cut oneself off from all certainties and open to trust an uncertain future. If the traveller surrenders to the pressure of the environment, to the economical or political tensions, without striving for authentic being (inherently oriented towards the spiritual values of meaningfulness), then the journey is experienced without genuine understanding and impact, hidden in the cloak of external transportation, but without the full personal development that such a journey entails.

Conclusion

Even without resorting to Heidegger's concept of authenticity, I believe that the essence of such a journey has been captured by Eliade [1959: 183]:

"Even the most habitual gesture can signify a spiritual act. The road and walking can be transfigured into religious values, for every road can symbolize the 'road of life,' and any walk a 'pilgrimage,' a peregrination to the Centre of the World."

All the above-indicated correlations make it obvious that, from the point of view of long-term sustainability, I find religious tourism to be less valuable than the pilgrimage or the spiritual secular journey, since it is reduced to scenic externality, without full immersion into understanding and profound experiencing of the visited places.

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Pielgrzymka – ponownie turystyka kontinuum: matryca świętej, duchowej i świeckiej więzi z autentycznością

Słowa kluczowe: turystyka-pielgrzymka kontinuum, duchowość, autentyzm

Abstrakt

Kontekst i cel badania. Niniejsza praca próbuje szukać połączeń z autentycznością i duchowością podróżnika w jednym lub innym trybie doświadczeń.

Materiał i metody. Przygotowawcze tło terminologiczne jest zdefiniowane przez rozróżnienie sfery sakralnej i profanum [Eliade 1957]. Centralną koncepcją jest duchowość, co może być postrzegane jako nie tylko aspekt religijności, ale również w stosunku do filozofii antropologicznej według Maxa Schelera [1981], jako zasadniczo indywidualna droga ludzka.

Wyniki. Główny punkt widzenia wynika z różnicy między poszczególnymi sposobami podróżowania, ponieważ zarówno turystyka, jak i pielgrzymka mogą uzyskać religijne, jak również świeckie konotacje.

Wnioski. W przeciwieństwie do kontinuum określonego przez Cohena [1979], przyczynek ten dotyczy zjawisk autentyczności i duchowości.