ТЕОРЕТИЧНИ И ПРАКТИЧЕСКИ АСПЕКТИ НА КОМУНИКАЦИЯТА НА РЕЛИГИОЗНИЯ ТУРИЗЪМ В ЮГОЗАПАДНА БЪЛГАРИЯ

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM COMMUNICATIONS IN SOUTH-WEST BULGARIA

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Abstract: *More and more the meaning of life is sought in leisure, situated in close relation with group experiences of joy and joint communications of the persons involved in them. In general, the search for a meaning in life is very important for religious tourists. This worldly wisdom is directed inward to the heart of the worshiper or religious tourist. This means that practicing religious tourism the person communicates with himself. The majority of the few studies in the field of communications and tourism deal with the relationship between visitors and guest-serving residents. The growing importance of intertnet in the life of each of us also influenced the types of communication in the church. For the purpose of the evaluation of the religious tourism communications in South-West Bulgaria a set of criteria and indicators has been chosen. The evaluation of the communication policy in terms of the competitiveness of different religious sites became a subject of study in the last two or three decades.*

In summary we can say that the quality of interpersonal communication concerning religious tourism depends on the degree of commercialization. Expressed in another way, this means that a true culture of welcoming guests is possible, and only then, when they are not under economic pressure seeking profit. This fact is of great importance for religious tourism.

Key words: *religious travel, religious tourism, communications, cultural studies, evaluation of religious tourism communications in South-West Bulgaria*

INTRODUCTION

In the past, communication and travel were used as synonyms. The communication channels were postal routes by land and water. Later the

railway tracks appeared, and in the past century – the highways. The pace of travel determined the pace of communication (Internet source).

Communication share an important component of tourism. If we take into account what has been written on this subject before, the following work fields stand out (Internet source).

- Communications as a type of learning process
- Communications regarding the mutual exchange between travelers and hosts
- Religious travel and related media
- Cultural studies

Beside the above theoretical aspect of the religious tourism communication, the present paper also regards a more practical approach of the evaluation of religious tourism communication in South-West Bulgaria? These both sides of the religious tourism ….are presented in order to provide a link between the pure theoretical construction and assumptions and the existing problems and issues the ensuring of working communications for the needs of the religious tourists.

RELIGIOUS TOURISM AS A TYPE OF LEARNING PROCESS

Narstedt[1] defines cultural tourism as a transition to a new quality concerning tourism in general. In the past century it was characterized by recreational trips and they clearly delineated its image. Today people are once again interested in the environment, culture, tourism products and are concerned about the problems of humanity such as obvious damage to the environment in a destination. The journey becomes a learning process that incorporates not only history but also the present and future.

More and more the meaning of life is sought in leisure, situated in close relation with group experiences of joy and joint communications of the persons involved in them (Internet source). Tourist kinds of trips like the ones for the purpose of language learning, or those at the time of study, as well as short stays abroad are a good example of the fact that travel is closely intertwined with the educational process of the individual.

The relationship between religion and learning must once again be emphasized here, albeit only briefly and in very fragmented way. For a very large interval of time, the church played an important role of being the only

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[1] Nahrstedt, Wolfgang: Die Kulturreise, in: Dreyer: Kulturtourismus, 2000, p. 11

educational monopolist, i.e. teaching itself was mostly been oriented towards knowledge with religious content, which is why the denomination of a religion was the only way for an individual to receive any education, though laden with strong religious color.

In general, the search for a meaning in life is very important for religious tourists. This worldly wisdom is directed inward to the heart of the worshiper or religious tourist. This means that practicing religious tourism the person communicates with himself, calling into question the personal experience and the overall outlook of the practitioner as well as contributing to possible new benchmarking in terms of religion and church affiliation.

Pilgrimage and stays in monasteries are good examples of this kind of trips that serve to implement communication directed inward to the heart of man. By themselves they are particularly his self-reflection.

Religious trips enable the individual to become familiar with cultural differences, social norms and way of behavior and coexistence in a community, to respect the rest of the group and to respect their traditions and local customs. The reason why these pilgrimages are predominantly aimed at such places for self-examination and training is the fact that the commercial side in this kind of travel is highly neglected and left behind.

RELIGIOUS TRAVEL AS EXCHANGE BETWEEN TRAVELERS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The majority of the few studies in the field of communications and tourism deal with the relationship between visitors and guest-serving residents. In this regard, the foreground highlights the meeting of tourists coming from modern industrialized countries with the local community, which belongs to the underdeveloped or developing countries. As such, the study focuses on intercultural communication.[2]

However, communication is also carried out between travelers and local people with the same cultural background; as an example we can give those who grew up and still live in Germany. Considering the object of study in this article we would like to clarify the specifics of personal communication between guests practicing religious tourism and hosts that meet them.

Gir, who spoke of a "culture of tourism" back in the eighties,

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[2] Luger, Kurt: Kommunikation im Tourismus, online im Internet: http//www. aurora-magazin.at.

interpreted tourist behavior as "ritualized", where everyone just follows their established roles. The interaction between travelers and "residents" is reduced only to the exchange of consumer goods, cultural symbols, folklore, souvenirs and more.[3]

According to him, no communication actually takes place, which leads to consolidation of prejudices and other subjective judgments due to lack of real communication.

Tourists want above all to be individually serviced and receive attention and understanding by local hosts, which can lead to the emergence of problems between the two parties.On the one hand one should be approached individually to purely personal desires of the guest; on the other hand it is very urgent to provide good and compact service to all guests. If you look at a tourist stay in the confines of a monastery, comparing it to that of an ordinary hotel, it is more than obvious why it gives a great opportunity to establish personal contact between guest and host. The number of visitors in a monastery is limited; the hosts (mostly local clerics) share the same building with the guest and are not employees in any department, but perform their "spiritual duty in the service of neighbor," which allows for a deeper and more personal communication between clergy and interested tourists.

The reason why monastery stays enjoy increasing popularity and preference is connected with the personal contact between the two parties, which is an important indicator for the benefit and satisfaction of such a stay in the monastery. When asked about their impressions of their stay in a certain monastery, tourists say they feel much better accepted and cared for than in a hotel.

This special aspect affecting personal communication can also be seen very well during the pilgrimage. During travelling, communication takes place between the traveler and the local resident and in addition the former meets with other brothers in destiny and communicates with all surrounding him, albeit only briefly. The difference between travel and pilgrimage becomes apparent with regard to finding shelter for these two types of passengers. The traveler would look for a chalet, hotel or boarding house to spend the night, a kind of shelter for which he would normally have to pay. The pilgrim, on the other hand, often spends the night without paying

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[3] Adelheid: Gäste und Gastgeber: touristische Ritualisierungen diesseits und jenseits der Bezahlungen, in Tourismus Yournal 1/1997, p. 210

anything at strangers who offered him a bed and stand at his disposal in his every need. In this case, there is a special relationship between guests and hosts that is not tied to the economic side of things, but allows understanding between travelers and locals.

In religious tourism the pursuit of profit is left in the background, the pastor as representative of his church parish is much more closely linked to the church and the people who visit it than an outdoor guide during the tour around it. Its staff aim not to emphasize only historical and artistic facts, which are a rather dry and uninteresting matter, but to represent the church as very charming and sacred place, where it joins history, art and spirituality. Its exploration should not be performed as a kind of monologue, giving information about the history and past, but rather be a dialogue between visitors and church curator (tour guide), whose priority should be rather less transmission of notorious information than the opportunity for each visitor to touch the sacred and the invisible power of this holy place.

In summary we can say that the quality of interpersonal communication concerning religious tourism depends on the degree of commercialization. Expressed in another way, this means that a true culture of welcoming guests is possible, and only then, when they are not under economic pressure seeking profit. This fact is of great importance for religious tourism.

RELIGIOUS TRAVEL AND RELATED MEDIA

Colorful tourist catalogs, TV series, where the main action is happening in incredibly beautiful and exotic places, and colorful tourist guides wake up longings and turn tourism into an industry that promises not so much break but rather the fulfillment of dreams long wished for.Largely the supply of tourist products is dependent on the communication tools and know-how. Trips are available at the tourist office, supermarkets, on television, the internet, the bank, in various associations and even the workplace, and what is quite striking, even in churches.

The presentation of tourist offers coming from church must however be precise linguistically. Occupants of monasteries are reluctant to adopt the word "tourist", but consider as accepted the word "guest". While in everyday language it is quite common to use the word tourist, which is of relevance for the guest who wants to relax and entertain, from a theological point of view, this designation is negatively charged, because it wakes up negative

associations such as consumerism and entertainment.[4]

For religious tourism also apply proposals coming from all media and directed to various target groups who wish to practice just such tourism. For example, the Internet is able to be reserved in advance pilgrimages to Rome and stay in a monastery. Looking carefully these communication tools becomes clear that they are completely similar to those used to the usual traditional tourism .Yet there is a certain restraint. While many church wardens publish their tourist offers, deliberately exclude the use of the word "advertisement" in their preparation.[5] On the other hand, there are church members who use proven marketing tools in their work .While in principle the church advertisements for religious and pilgrimage tourism are much more restrained and modest, yet there are travel agencies and tourist associations who use equally the existing advertising and technical resources both in secular and in religious tourism without any difference in their use.

The growing importance of internet in the life of each of us also influenced the types of communication in the church. The presentation of a parish church on the Internet is no longer a rarity. Various places of worship as dioceses, monasteries and a large number of churches are published and advertised with this most modern and powerful media tool. In this case, however, we can talk about some humility, because it seems the great opportunities offered by the internet for this type of communication has not yet been exhausted.

CULTURAL STUDIES

The interdisciplinary nature of both cultural studies and sociology is supposed to test relations and elements of lifestyle, as well as its structures with small trivialities of everyday life and big plans for the future, and all other ideologies. In this connection, the influence of media on the culture of a society is explored among other things.

Since there are no cultural studies focused primarily on tourism as an interdisciplinary scientific branch, here we should just briefly discuss this really exciting and interesting topic.

Without mentioning once again the links between religion and culture, it can be found that only a general compact study combining

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[4]Mundt, Jörn: Einführung in den Tourismus, 2001, pp. 3-9. Studienkonferenz, Wittenberg, 20-22.02. 2006.

sociologists, cultural anthropologists, theologians, sociologists and religious tourism experts can present religious tourism in a complete complex form. Most of all, between theologians and tourism representatives there is misunderstanding and unfounded fears, which is the main reason for the extremely insufficient research on religious tourism.

While for economists in tourism the theme of religion is partly alien and unattractive, theologians, in turn resist calling the church offers "tourist." Apparently the fear of commercialism comes into the role of tripping factor. Statements such as "churches have more tourists than Christians" unleash fear of selling religious traditions and values and lead logically to distinguishing between visitors and tourists; "Only the others are tourists" - that is the position this time from the perspective of the church community. Representatives of both sides refuse to think in perspective on the subject of religious tourism. They should enter into dialogue with each other to remove and eliminate mutual prejudices and operational barriers between them because both sides agree on one thing: both religion and tourism have a particular effect on the emotional world of man. Therefore they should jointly take responsibility for the mental balance and comfort of the individual.

PRACTICAL APPROACH TO EVALUATION OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS

For the purpose of the evaluation of the religious tourism communications in South-West Bulgaria a set of criteria and indicators has been chosen.

These very same criteria and indicators for evaluation and management of the communication policy for the needs of religious tourism have been defined in regards to the fact that each religious site may be considered as a separate tourism micro destination.

The competitiveness of the religious product of each tourist destination that offers it can be evaluated using predetermined criteria, which have both verbal and numerical expression. M. Ribov[6] gives the following definition of "criterion". He takes it as a "verbally expressed measure that allows to bring varieties of a product with the same purpose under a common denominator and to undergo assessment for the decision to purchase." According to M. Ribov the criterion represents unity achieved

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[6] Ribov, M.: Competition and tourism product competitiveness, Sofia, 1997, p. 57

between those qualitative and quantitative parameters in which things attain their optimal state. The indicators that are used quantify the criteria and at the same time give qualitative characteristics with respect to the properties of competitiveness.

The evaluation of the communication policy in terms of the competitiveness of different religious sites became a subject of study in the last two or three decades. The subject of these studies is focused primarily on evaluating the investment suitability of particular religious destinations, rich in popular religious sites that attract all kinds of tourists. Starting from a strongly believing worshiper, through the religious tourist and reaching the mass, secular tourist, whose variety is the secular scholar, be he a historian, archaeologist, icon-painting artist or ordinary statistician.

Table 1. Criteria and indicators for a comprehensive evaluation of the attractiveness of the communication policy of religious sites

	Criteria / indicators
1.	**Presence of the monastery in the press of our country?**
1.1	Does the monastery publish periodically printed edition?
1.2	Is the monastery present in the press of the BOC?
1.3	Is the monastery present in the press as a whole, with its own section or individual publications?
2.	**Presence of the monastery in specialized printing religious literature**
2.1	Does the monastery issue its own enlightening religious literature?
2.2	Does the monastery issue its own scientific religious literature (specialized religious research)?
3.	**Presence of the monastery in the radio broadcasting (inbroadcasts of radio stations in the country)**
3.1	Does the monastery participate in a separate radio transmission (does it produce a separate radio broadcast)?
3.2	Does the monastery have its own radio?

3.3	Are the events and activities of the monastery presented in specialized radio broadcasts and news?
4.	**Presence of the monastery in TV broadcasting (programs of Bulgarian TV channels)**
4.1	Does the monastery participate in a separate television program (monastery TV program produced by the monastery)?
4.2	Does the local Diocese, to which the monastery belongs, have its own Orthodox television?
5.	**Presence of the monastery on the Internet**
5.1	Does the monastery have its own web-site?
5.2	Is it present in other electronic web-sites?
5.3	Does it have a Facebook page?
5.4	Are there links and banners in other web-sites redirecting to the web-site of the monastery?

The evaluation for each of the above criteria is performed using the following formula:

$$I_{sc} = \sum_{i=1}^{n} W_i \cdot E_i \qquad (1)$$

where:

I_{sc}– complex group indicator for each of the criteria

W_i– the weight, presented as absolute decimal of each individual, single indicator used in the complex evaluation of the criterion;

E_i– evaluation in units on a ten-point scale (i.e. 1 to 10) of each individual, single indicator used in the complex evaluation of the criterion .

The evaluation of the attractiveness of the communication policy of religious sites includes positive indicators and is calculated by the following formula:[7]

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[7] Kostadinova, O.: Building up of an effective policy for religious tourism, Blagoevgrad, 2015 pp. 127-129

$$I_{OPKO} = (I_{C1} + I_{C2} + I_{C3} + I_{C4} + I_{C5}) \qquad (2)$$

where:

I_{OPKO} complex group indicator of total weighted complex estimate

IC1– the value of the single indicator of the presence of the monastery in periodicals of the country;

IC2– the value of the single indicator of the presence of the monastery in the specialized print religious literature;

IC3 – the value of the single indicator of the presence of the monastery in the radio space (in broadcasts of radio stations in the country);

IC4– the value of the single indicator of the presence of the monastery in the TV space (broadcasts by television channels in Bulgaria);

IC5– the value of the single indicator of the presence of the monastery on the Internet

Figure 1. Weighted aggregate complex evaluation of the communication policy of the six monasteries selected for evaluation in the provinces of Kyustendil and Blagoevgrad

Source: author's study (2015)

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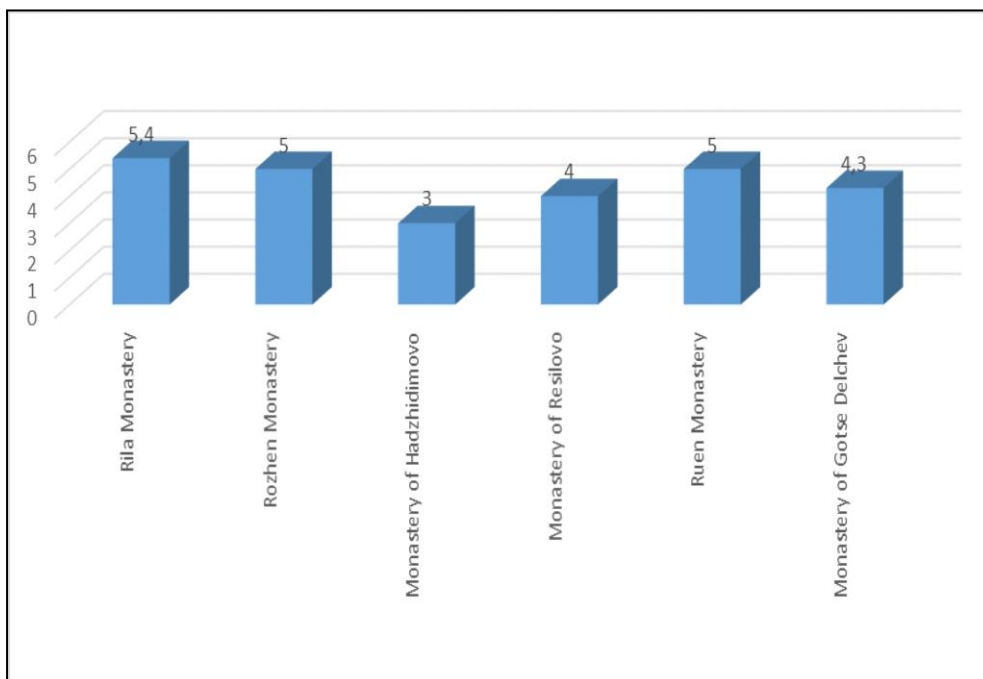
The above presented criteria, indicators and methodology for calculation of the aggregated complex evaluation of the communication policy is used for evaluation of six monasteries in South-West Bulgaria. The concrete evaluations are presented in Figure 1 According to the obtained aggregates for complex evaluation for the six monasteries considered (Tables from 2 to 8) the Ruen Monastery has the highest score of 5.95,followed by the Rila Monastery -5.4, Rozhen Monastery with 5, the Monastery of Hadzhidimovo with 4.5, the Monastery of Gotse Delchev with 4.3 and the Monastery of Resilovo with 3.55.

Table 1. Comprehensive Evaluation of the Rila Momastery

	Criteria / indicators	Weight	Evaluation in scores	Weighted Evaluaton
	2	3	4	5 = (3 x 4)
1.	**Presence of the monastery in the press of our country?**	0,25	4	1,0
1.1	Does the monastery publish periodically printed edition?	0,10	2	0,20
1.2	Is the monastery present in the press of the BOC?	0,10	1	0,10
1.3	Is the monastery present in the press as a whole, with its own section or individual publications?	0,05	1	0,05
2.	**Presence of the monastery in specialized printing religious literature**	0,15	2	0,30
2.1	Does the monastery issue its own enlightening religious literature?	0,10	1	0,10
2.2	Does the monastery issue its own scientific religious literature (specialized religious research)?	0,05	1	0,05
3.	**Presence of the monastery in the radio broadcasting (inbroadcasts of radio stations in the country)**	0,10	5	0,50

3.1	Does the monastery participate in a separate radio transmission (does it produce a separate radio broadcast)?	0,025	0	0
3.2	Does the monastery have its own radio?	0,025	0	0
3.3	Are the events and activities of the monastery presented in specialized radio broadcasts and news?	0,05	5	0,25
4.	**Presence of the monastery in TV broadcasting (programs of Bulgarian TV channels)**	0,10	1	0,15
4.1	Does the monastery participate in a separate television program (monastery TV program produced by the monastery)?	0,05	1	0,05
4.2	Does the local Diocese, to which the monastery belongs, have its own Orthodox television?	0,05	0	0
5.	**Presence of the monastery on the Internet**	0,35	10	3,5
5.1	Does the monastery have its own web-site?	0,15	4	0,60
5.2	Is it present in other electronic web-sites?	0,05	3	0,15
5.3	Does it have a Facebook page?	0,10	2	0,20
5.4	Are there links and banners in other web-sites redirecting to the web-site of the monastery?	0,05	1	0,05
	Aggregated weighted complex evaluation (Summation of the weighted evaluations in column 5, rows 1, 2, 3, 4, 5):			5,4

Source: author's study (2015)

Table 2. Comprehensive Evaluation of the Rozhen Monastery

	Criteria / indicators	Weight	Evaluation in scores	Weighted Evaluaton
	2	3	4	5 = (3 x 4)

1.	**Presence of the monastery in the press of our country?**	0,25	4	1
1.1	Does the monastery publish periodically printed edition?	0,10	0	0,10
1.2	Is the monastery present in the press of the BOC?	0,10	3	0,30
1.3	Is the monastery present in the press as a whole, with its own section or individual publications?	0,05	1	0,05
2.	**Presence of the monastery in specialized printing religious literature**	0,15	1	0,15
2.1	Does the monastery issue its own enlightening religious literature?	0,10	1	0,10
2.2	Does the monastery issue its own scientific religious literature (specialized religious research)?	0,05	0	0
3.	**Presence of the monastery in the radio broadcasting (inbroadcasts of radio stations in the country)**	0,10	3	0,30
3.1	Does the monastery participate in a separate radio transmission (does it produce a separate radio broadcast)?	0,025	0	0
3.2	Does the monastery have its own radio?	0,025	0	0
3.3	Are the events and activities of the monastery presented in specialized radio broadcasts and news?	0,05	3	0,15
4.	**Presence of the monastery in TV broadcasting (programs of Bulgarian TV channels)**	0,10	4	0,40
4.1	Does the monastery participate in a separate television program (monastery TV program produced by the monastery)?	0,05	4	0,25

4.2	Does the local Diocese, to which the monastery belongs, have its own Orthodox television?	0,05	0	0
5.	**Presence of the monastery on the Internet**	**0,35**	**9**	**3.15**
5.1	Does the monastery have its own web-site?	0,15	4	0,60
5.2	Is it present in other electronic web-sites?	0,05	3	0,15
5.3	Does it have a Facebook page?	0,10	2	0.20
5.4	Are there links and banners in other web-sites redirecting to the web-site of the monastery?	0,05	0	0
	Aggregated weighted complex evaluation (Summation of the weighted evaluations in column 5, rows 1, 2, 3, 4, 5):			5.0

Source: author's study (2015)

Table 3. Comprehensive Evaluation of the Monastery of Hadzhidimovo

	Criteria / indicators	Weight	Evaluation in scores	Weighted Evaluaton
	2	3	4	5 = (3 x 4)
1.	**Presence of the monastery in the press of our country?**	**0,25**	**4**	**1,0**
1.1	Does the monastery publish periodically printed edition?	0,10	3	0,30
1.2	Is the monastery present in the press of the BOC?	0,10	1	0,10
1.3	Is the monastery present in the press as a whole, with its own section or individual publications?	0,05	1	0,05
2.	**Presence of the monastery in specialized printing religious literature**	**0,15**	**3**	**0,45**
	Does the monastery issue its own	0,10	2	0,20

2.1	enlightening religious literature?			
2.2	Does the monastery issue its own scientific religious literature (specialized religious research)?	0,05	1	0,05
3.	**Presence of the monastery in the radio broadcasting (inbroadcasts of radio stations in the country)**	0,10	4	0,40
3.1	Does the monastery participate in a separate radio transmission (does it produce a separate radio broadcast)?	0,025	1	0,025
3.2	Does the monastery have its own radio?	0,025	0	0
3.3	Are the events and activities of the monastery presented in specialized radio broadcasts and news?	0,05	3	0,15
4.	**Presence of the monastery in TV broadcasting (programs of Bulgarian TV channels)**	0,10	2	0,20
4.1	Does the monastery participate in a separate television program (monastery TV program produced by the monastery)?	0,05	2	0,10
4.2	Does the local Diocese, to which the monastery belongs, have its own Orthodox television?	0,05	0	0
5.	**Presence of the monastery on the Internet**	0,35	7	2,45
5.1	Does the monastery have its own web-site?	0,15	2	0,30
5.2	Is it present in other electronic web-sites?	0,05	2	0,10
5.3	Does it have a Facebook page?	0,10	2	0,20
5.4	Are there links and banners in other web-sites redirecting to the web-site of the monastery?	0,05	1	0,05

	Aggregated weighted complex evaluation (Summation of the weighted evaluations in column 5, rows 1, 2, 3, 4, 5):			4,5

Source: author's study (2015)

Table 4. Comprehensive Evaluation of the Monastery of Resilovo

	Criteria / indicators	Weight	Evaluation in scores	Weighted Evaluaton
	2	3	4	5 = (3 x 4)
1.	**Presence of the monastery in the press of our country?**	0,25	4	1
1.1	Does the monastery publish periodically printed edition?	0,10	0	0
1.2	Is the monastery present in the press of the BOC?	0,10	3	0,30
1.3	Is the monastery present in the press as a whole, with its own section or individual publications?	0,05	1	0,05
2.	**Presence of the monastery in specialized printing religious literature**	0,15	2	0,30
2.1	Does the monastery issue its own enlightening religious literature?	0,10	2	0,20
2.2	Does the monastery issue its own scientific religious literature (specialized religious research)?	0,05	0	0
3.	**Presence of the monastery in the radio broadcasting (inbroadcasts of radio stations in the country)**	0,10	3	0,30
3.1	Does the monastery participate in a separate radio transmission (does it produce a separate radio broadcast)?	0,025	2	0,05
3.2	Does the monastery have its own radio?	0,025	0	0

3.3	Are the events and activities of the monastery presented in specialized radio broadcasts and news?	0,05	1	0,05
4.	**Presence of the monastery in TV broadcasting (programs of Bulgarian TV channels)**	0,10	2	0,20
4.1	Does the monastery participate in a separate television program (monastery TV program produced by the monastery)?	0,05	2	0,10
4.2	Does the local Diocese, to which the monastery belongs, have its own Orthodox television?	0,05	0	0
5.	**Presence of the monastery on the Internet**	0,35	5	1,75
5.1	Does the monastery have its own web-site?	0,15	3	0,45
5.2	Is it present in other electronic web-sites?	0,05	1	0,05
5.3	Does it have a Facebook page?	0,10	1	0,10
5.4	Are there links and banners in other web-sites redirecting to the web-site of the monastery?	0,05	0	0
Aggregated weighted complex evaluation (Summation of the weighted evaluations in column 5, rows 1, 2, 3, 4, 5):				**3,55**

Source: author's study (2015)

Table 5. Comprehensive Evaluation of the Ruen Monastery

	Criteria / indicators	Weight	Evaluation in scores	Weighted Evaluaton
	2	3	4	5 = (3 x 4)
1.	**Presence of the monastery in the press of our country?**	0,25	4	1
1.1	Does the monastery publish periodically printed edition?	0,10	3	0,30

1.2	Is the monastery present in the press of the BOC?	0,10	1	0,10
1.3	Is the monastery present in the press as a whole, with its own section or individual publications?	0,05	1	0,05
2.	**Presence of the monastery in specialized printing religious literature**	**0,15**	**3**	**0,45**
2.1	Does the monastery issue its own enlightening religious literature?	0,10	2	0,20
2.2	Does the monastery issue its own scientific religious literature (specialized religious research)?	0,05	1	0,05
3.	**Presence of the monastery in the radio broadcasting (inbroadcasts of radio stations in the country)**	**0,10**	**7**	**0,60**
3.1	Does the monastery participate in a separate radio transmission (does it produce a separate radio broadcast)?	0,025	4	0,125
3.2	Does the monastery have its own radio?	0,025	1	0,025
3.3	Are the events and activities of the monastery presented in specialized radio broadcasts and news?	0,05	2	0,10
4.	**Presence of the monastery in TV broadcasting (programs of Bulgarian TV channels)**	**0,10**	**4**	**0,40**
4.1	Does the monastery participate in a separate television program (monastery TV program produced by the monastery)?	0,05	4	0,20
4.2	Does the local Diocese, to which the monastery belongs, have its own Orthodox television?	0,05	0	0
5.	**Presence of the monastery on the Internet**	**0,35**	**10**	**3,5**

5.1	Does the monastery have its own web-site?	0,15	4	0,60
5.2	Is it present in other electronic web-sites?	0,05	2	0,10
5.3	Does it have a Facebook page?	0,10	3	0,30
5.4	Are there links and banners in other web-sites redirecting to the web-site of the monastery?	0,05	1	0,05
	Aggregated weighted complex evaluation (Summation of the weighted evaluations in column 5, rows 1, 2, 3, 4, 5):			5,95

Source: author's study (2015)

Table 6. Comprehensive Evaluation of the Monastery of Gotse Delchev

|	Criteria / indicators	Weight	Evaluation in scores	Weighted Evaluaton
	2	3	4	5 = (3 x 4)
1.	**Presence of the monastery in the press of our country?**	0,25	3	1
1.1	Does the monastery publish periodically printed edition?	0,10	0	0,30
1.2	Is the monastery present in the press of the BOC?	0,10	1	0,10
1.3	Is the monastery present in the press as a whole, with its own section or individual publications?	0,05	2	0,05
2.	**Presence of the monastery in specialized printing religious literature**	0,15	2	0,30
2.1	Does the monastery issue its own enlightening religious literature?	0,10	2	0,20
2.2	Does the monastery issue its own scientific religious literature (specialized religious research)?	0,05	0	0

3.	**Presence of the monastery in the radio broadcasting (inbroadcasts of radio stations in the country)**	0,10	6	0,60
3.1	Does the monastery participate in a separate radio transmission (does it produce a separate radio broadcast)?	0,025	2	0,05
3.2	Does the monastery have its own radio?	0,025	0	0
3.3	Are the events and activities of the monastery presented in specialized radio broadcasts and news?	0,05	4	0,20
4.	**Presence of the monastery in TV broadcasting (programs of Bulgarian TV channels)**	0,10	3	0,30
4.1	Does the monastery participate in a separate television program (monastery TV program produced by the monastery)?	0,05	3	0,15
4.2	Does the local Diocese, to which the monastery belongs, have its own Orthodox television?	0,05	0	0
5.	**Presence of the monastery on the Internet**	0,35	6	2,1
5.1	Does the monastery have its own web-site?	0,15	4	0,60
5.2	Is it present in other electronic web-sites?	0,05	2	0,10
5.3	Does it have a Facebook page?	0,10	2	0,20
5.4	Are there links and banners in other web-sites redirecting to the web-site of the monastery?	0,05	0	0
Aggregated weighted complex evaluation (Summation of the weighted evaluations in column 5, rows 1, 2, 3, 4, 5):				4,3

Source: author's study (2015)

Table 7. Aggregated weighted complex evaluations of the monasteries in South-West Bulgaria, namely in Kyustendil and Blagoevgrad regions

Name of the monastery	The Rila Monasery	The Rozhen Monastery	The Monastery of Hadzhidimovo	The Monastery of Resilovo	The Ruen Monastery	The Monastery of Gotse Delchev
Aggregated weighted complex evaluation	5,4	5	4,5	3,55	5,95	4,3

Figure 2. Relative assessment of the Rila Monastery to the other five monasteries
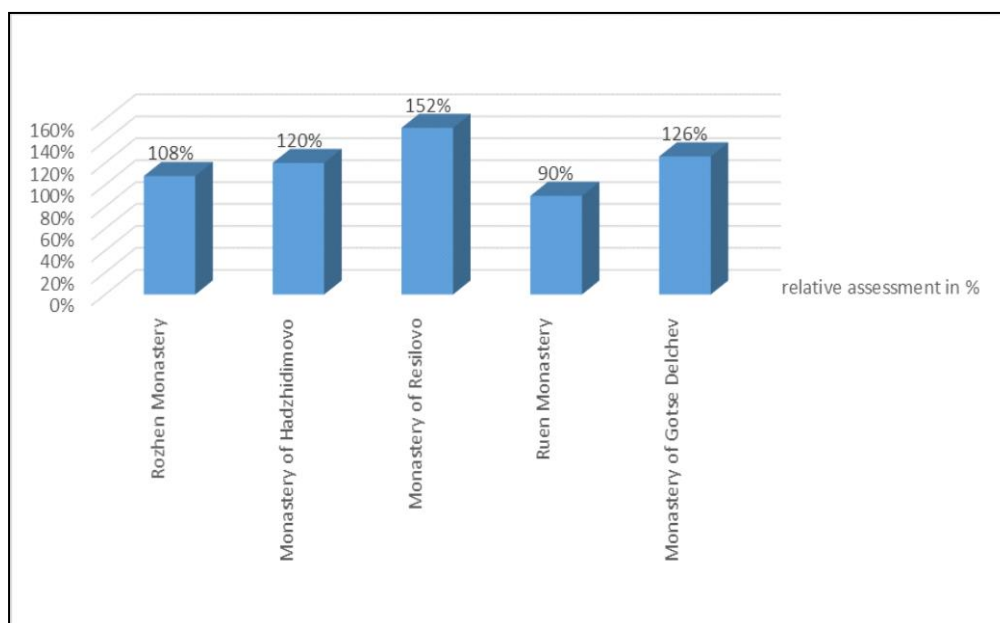
Concerning the relative assessment of the communication policy it becomes clear that the Rila Monastery has an obvious advantage over the other monasteries excluding the Monastery of Ruen, where the relative assessment of 90%.

CONCLUSION

In general, the most ancient kind of travel known to man for thousands of years is a pilgrimage. One of the motives for pilgrimage is the desire to visit religious centers, religious ceremonies and holy places such as Jerusalem and Mecca.

From the perspective of tourism research the religious trip can be understood as a continuation of the cultural one. In this respect a strong public communication is needed. Travelers confront their culture and traditions, the community, and finally himself. This trend is complemented by the desire of many people to be poised and balanced in their lives and to have spiritual experiences during a pilgrimage. These trends are answered by religious tourism offers. Over the years a stable market in this respect has developed, to justify the segregation of religious trips as a separate tourist segment.

There are foundations and tourist agencies experienced in the development of religious tourism in the country who organize and offer sites and routes for cultural and religious tourism. There are tours with visits to monasteries, churches with unique icons and wooden iconostasis, synagogues, participation in interesting rituals and customs.

As a political structure religious tourism opens new interesting opportunities. Many religious sites stay away from the established tourist routes. This is the reason why not very well developed tourist regions have the chance to develop attractive travel offers.

The possibilities for combining religious, nature, sports, cultural and recreational tourism makes it possible to reach new target groups.

Religious travel is respected only insufficiently. Theologians and church as an institution deny tourism based on its economic aspect and negative influences; its researchers underestimate its economic potential and put religious tourism in a scientific niche.

Whether the current state of the religious journey could continue, time will tell. However, research has shown that from time immemorial, one feels the need to achieve peace of soul and turn inside to himself that he meets in the form of travel. In this sense, the religious journey is an expression of a primary human need. Therefore, religious tourism is and will remain an eternal topic for generations.

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