



INTERPRETING SACRED STORIES: RELIGIOUS TOURISM AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

Neus Crous Costa¹,
Silvia Aulet Serrallonga¹,
Dolors Vidal-Casellas¹

¹University of Girona

Abstract:

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) estimates (2014), between 300 and 330 million tourists visit the world's key religious sites every year. In the late 80s, tourism was officially recognized as a potential factor for the world peace. In 1988, the announcement for the upcoming conference Tourism: A Vital Force for Peace (organized by the International Institute for Peace through Tourism) was published in several academic journals, namely Tourism Recreation Research and Annals of Tourism Research. In spite of that, tensions between visitors, pilgrims, devotees and residents frequently arise. They have been acknowledged and thoroughly analysed from many perspectives during the past decades. Sources of these tensions are complex and stem from a wide array of causes. However, different understanding of tourism sites cause divergent behaviours and contradictory expectations. The idea of this paper is recognising religious tourism as a form of intercultural interaction and dialogue. In this setting, interpretation is seen as one of the keys to successful understanding of abstract concepts that appeal to human sensitivity and intimate feelings.

Keywords:

intercultural dialogue, interpretation, peace, religious tourism.

Correspondence:
Neus Crous Costa

e-mail:
neus.crous@udg.edu