
С РАБОЧЕГО СТОЛА СОЦИОЛОГА

FROM THE WORKING TABLE OF A SOCIOLOGIST

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ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ ПОВСЕДНЕВНЫХ ПРАКТИК: АНАЛИЗ ПРАКТИК РЕЛИГИОЗНОГО ПУТЕШЕСТВИЯ В БЕЛОРУССКОМ ОБЩЕСТВЕ

Е. В. ШКУРОВА¹⁾, Т. В. БУРАК²⁾

¹⁾Институт социологии НАН Беларуси, ул. Сурганова, 1, корп. 2, 220072, г. Минск, Беларусь

²⁾Белорусский государственный университет, пр. Независимости, 4, 220030, г. Минск, Беларусь

Рассматривается значение практик путешествия в структуре социальных связей религиозных субъектов в сфере вовлеченности в межконфессиональные отношения. Представлены результаты социологического исследования путешествий к святым местам в сочетании количественной и качественной методологий, анкетного опроса и семиотического анализа текстов. Качественный подход к изучению этого явления обеспечивает глубинную интерпретацию особенностей религиозных практик, однако их количественная репрезентация актуальна для определения общих тенденций в формировании стратегий религиозного поведения. Модель сочетания качественно-количественных методик исследования туристических практик обеспечивает возможности их комплексного анализа. Опыт проведенного социологического мониторинга показывает, как качественные данные исследования могут дополнять структурные характеристики религиозных путешествий (количественные показатели) особенностями субъективности таких путешествий. В ходе исследования установлено: 1) религиозное путешествие предполагает осуществление повседневных практик воспроизводства смыслов и участия в межкультурном взаимодействии, а также реализацию сакральных ритуалов; 2) заметное количество верующих Беларуси имеют опыт религиозного путешествия, но для

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Авторы:

Елена Валерьевна Шкурова – кандидат социологических наук, доцент; заведующий отделом оперативных исследований.

Татьяна Викторовна Бурак – кандидат социологических наук, доцент; доцент кафедры социологии факультета философии и социальных наук.

Authors:

Elena V. Shkurova, PhD (sociology), docent; head of the department of operational research. vogel_82@mail.ru

Tatsiana V. Burak, PhD (sociology), docent; associate professor at the department of sociology, faculty of philosophy and social sciences. taburak@mail.ru



значительной части из них паломничество не является регулярной практикой; 3) в виртуальных вербальных текстах белорусов, вовлеченных в повседневную практику путешествия к святым местам, конструируется знаковая структура паломничества, образованная несколькими значениями слова «путь»: жизнь, духовный путь, поиск, познание, общение, единство, коллективные эмоции.

Ключевые слова: религиозное путешествие; повседневная практика; кросс-конфессиональная модель религиозности; репрезентация опыта паломничества; паломничество.

EVERYDAY PRACTICES RESEARCH: THE ANALYSIS OF RELIGIOUS TRAVEL PRACTICES IN BELARUSIAN SOCIETY

E. V. SHKUROVA^a, T. V. BURAK^b

^a*Institute of Sociology, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, 1 Surhanava Street,
2 building, Minsk 220072, Belarus*

^b*Belarusian State University, 4 Niezaliežnasci Avenue, Minsk 220030, Belarus*

Corresponding author: E. V. Shkurova (vogel_82@mail.ru)

The article discusses the importance of travel practices in the structure of social relations between religious subjects in the field of involvement in interfaith relations. The results of a sociological study of travels to holy places are presented in a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology, questionnaire survey and semiotic analysis of texts. A qualitative approach to the study of religiosity provides an in-depth interpretation of the religious practices peculiarities. However, the quantitative representation is relevant to identify general trends in the formation of strategies of religious behaviour. The model combining qualitative and quantitative methods of studying tourist practices provides the possibility of their complex analysis. The experience of carried out sociological research shows how qualitative research data can clearly complement the structural characteristics of religious travel (quantitative indicators) with the features of the subjectivity of such travel. The study found: 1) a religious journey involves the implementation of everyday practices of reproduction of meanings and participation in intercultural interaction, as well as the implementation of sacred rituals; 2) a notable number of the religious population in Belarus has experience of religious travel, but pilgrimage is not a regular practice for a significant part of them; 3) the iconic pilgrimage structure is constructed in the virtual verbal texts of Belarusians involved in the daily practice of travelling to holy places. It is formed by several components of the meaning of the «path»: life, the spiritual path, search, cognition, communication, unity, collective emotions.

Keywords: religious travel; everyday practice; cross-confessional model of religiosity; representations of pilgrimage experiences; pilgrimage.

Introduction

Belarusian religious environment has formed in the process of social changes related to the peculiarities of the statehood becoming. Its specificity is determined by the secular orientation of state-confessional relations and the multi-confessional nature of society. The religious sphere was restored after a period of forced secularisation, its confessional composition was differentiated, and the number of religious population increased significantly. At present, the indicators of the quantitative growth of the religious environment have stabilised; it is entering the phase of qualitative transformations.

The mechanisms for the development of religiosity today form a complex mosaic. This is largely due to the dominance of integrative processes: the spread of the symbols of mass Western culture to national cultures, the increasing importance of interactivity and visibility of public communications, the formation of a responsible and respectful, non-consumer attitude to

otherness, the erasing of the spatio-temporal boundaries of interpersonal interactions, and the preservation of intercultural differences. As a result, we are dealing with the fragmentation of modern everyday life, which is manifested, for example, in the increasing importance of «flexible» religious practices. This trend indicates the development of individually-oriented, non-standardised actions and interactions aimed at deep immersion, living through new experiences, the search for identity and a strong involvement in the process of direct interaction.

Religious practices can be defined as routine, ritual, repetitive actions aimed at the reproduction of sociocultural meanings in the process of direct interactions and due to them. On the one hand, religious practices characterise collective behaviour due to the normative structures of the institution of religion. On the other hand, they form an area of interpretations that endow the actual actors themselves with



social reality. The second dimension is the subjectivity of social space, reproducing the understanding of the relationship of everyday and transcendental worlds. It is the everyday life of religious experience that forms the ability of religious consciousness to respond to social changes.

The semantic structures of everyday life reveal themselves in the sphere of social relations of religious subjects, in the sphere of involvement in interfaith relations. One of the sides of the intersection of religion

and everyday life today is travel. An analysis of the everyday forms of religious travel will reveal the significance of religious practices, forming complex combinations of public and private, festive and everyday, secular and religious, spiritual and commercialised in modern everyday life.

The described features of the religious field naturally actualise the question of finding explanatory mechanisms that allow them to be taken into account when building research strategies.

Research methodology

The methodological basis of the research is formed by the unity of qualitative and quantitative approaches, which provides the possibility of interpreting religiosity as a multi-dimensional phenomenon that functions at the level of the institutional structure and also manifests itself in everyday practice. The conceptualisation of the phenomenon of religiosity began within the framework of religious studies, as well as sociology, psychology and anthropology of religion, from about the 1920s. The scale, multi-dimensionality and multi-functionality of this category led to the formation of a number of approaches to the interpretation and operationalisation of the categories of religion and religiosity. The far from exhaustive list of variations includes the following concepts: civil religion¹, pseudo-religion², invisible religion³, public religion⁴, religious supermarket⁵, religious bricolage⁶, cognitive religion (in conscious)⁷, hyper-real religion⁸, political religion⁹.

Methodological guidelines for a qualitative study of the internal structure of religious travel are sociological theories of everyday life, based on the starting points of phenomenology, ethnomethodology, structuralism, theories of speech act and symbolic interactionism.

Theories of practices by P. Bourdieu¹⁰, H. Sacks and H. Garfinkel¹¹, the theory of frames by E. Goffmann¹², the theory of speech behaviour by R. Barthes¹³ and the semiotic analysis of U. Eco¹⁴, the theory of visual methods by P. Sztompka¹⁵ justify the understanding of religious travel as a practice of everyday interaction, realised at the level of individual behaviour and participation and carried out through the traveller's interpretation of his experience of living and residences. This approach is presented in several areas of modern sociological research, justifying the need to study the traveller's understanding of religious practice:

- the study of travel as a way of interacting with one's or someone else's is based on the methodological premises of S. Simmel¹⁶ and A. Schütz¹⁷, who argued that differences in the code system mark the boundaries of interaction between my and someone else's everyday life. The work of the French semiotics T. Todorov¹⁸, who interpreted the journey as a way to discover the Alien, different depending on the type of traveller, is devoted to the significance of the search for something new for oneself in the differences «friend or foe»¹⁹;

¹Bellah R., Hammond P. Varieties of civil religion. N. Y. : Harper and Row, 1980. 208 p.

²Wach J. Sociology of religion. Chicago : Univ. of Chicago Press, 1944. 412 p.

³Luckmann T. The invisible religion: the problem of religion in modern society. N. Y. : Macmillan, 1967. 128 p.

⁴Casanova J. Public religions in the modern world. Chicago : Univ. of Chicago Press, 1994. 330 p.

⁵Mathews G. Global culture / individual identity: searching for home in the cultural supermarket. London ; N. Y. : Routledge, 2000. 240 p.

⁶Hervieu-Leger D. Individualism, the validation of faith, and the social nature of religion in modernity // The Blackwell companion to sociology of religion / ed. R. K. Fenn. Hoboken : Blackwell Publ., 2003. P. 161–175.

⁷Sørensen J. Religion in mind: a review article of the cognitive science of religion // Numen. 2005. Vol. 52, No. 4. P. 465–494.

⁸Possamai A. Religion and popular culture: a hyper-real testament. Brussels : P. I. E.-Peter Lang., 2005. 176 p.

⁹Stowers S. The concepts of 'religion', 'political religion' and the study of Nazism // J. Contemp. Hist. 2007. Vol. 42, No. 1. P. 9–24.

¹⁰Бурдье П., Болтански Л., Кастель Р., Шамборедон Ж.-К. Общедоступное искусство: опыт о социальном использовании фотографии. М. : Праксис, 2014. 456 с.

¹¹Sacks H., Garfinkel H. On formal structures of practical action // Ethnomethodological studies of work / ed. by H. Garfinkel. London : Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986. P. 158–189 ; Garfinkel H. Seeing sociologically: the routine grounds of social action. [S. l.] : Routledge, 2005. 256 p.

¹²Goffman E. Frame analysis: an essay on the organisation of experience. N. Y. : Harper and Row, 1974. 568 p.

¹³Barthes R. Camera Lucida: reflections on photography. N. Y. : Hill and Wang, 1981. 119 p.

¹⁴Эко У. Отсутствующая структура. М. : АСТ, 2019. 704 с.

¹⁵Sztompka P. Socjologia wizualna. Fotografia jako metoda badawcza. Warszawa : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2017. 150 s.

¹⁶Simmel G. Exkurs über den Fremden // G. Simmel. Soziologie. Untersuchungen über die Formen der Vergesellschaftung. Berlin : Duncker and Humblot, 1908. S. 509–512 [Elektronische Ressource]. URL: <https://userpages.uni-koblenz.de/~luetjen/sose14/sifre.pdf> (Datum der Bewerbung: 03.02.2019).

¹⁷Schütz A. Der Fremde, ein sozialpsychologischer Versuch // Gesammelte Aufsätze. Bd. 2: Studien zur soziologischen Theorie / Hg. A. Schütz. Haag : Springer, 1972. S. 53–69.

¹⁸Todorov T. Podbój Ameryki: problem innego. Warszawa : Fundacja Aletheia, 1996. 197 s.

¹⁹Podemski K. Socjologia podróży. Poznań : Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 2004. 366 s.



- the study of travel as a way to search for identity is based on the theoretical approaches of Cohen²⁰ and Turner²¹. The substantiation of a new type of modern traveller was dealt with by Z. Bauman²² and Z. Urry²³, who believed that several figures intersect in the world due to the nature of the relationship of a modern traveller with it. There are a tramp and a flannere symbolise freedom of movement, a tourist means comfortable consumption, a player means willingness to take risks;

- the study of travel as an intercultural communication in which the usual everyday interactions take place in an unusual social context. Travel is considered in the relationships between everyday worlds, between perceptions of the same situations at the same time as «familiar» (visible and unnoticed) and unusual (surprising and considered) in studies of photographs by P. Bourdieu and L. Boltanski²⁴.

Various aspects of everyday practices (V. Vakhstein; V. Volkov and O. Harkhordin; V. Ilyin; D. Ivanov and others), new forms of interaction in tourism (O. Lysikova), tourist practice of consumption (T. Chernyaeva) and maintenance of social differences (A. Fenko), spatial patterns of travel (D. Zamyatin) are studied in Russian sociology. The research interest of Belarusian sociologists is focused on the issue of the meanings of individual everyday practices (M. Berezetskaya; E. Lebedeva). Religious travels are mainly analysed from the perspective of management and marketing of tourist services carried out in the context of globalisation processes, and from the point of view of the history of the development of tourism and travel. Everyday travel is studied in the works of M. Więckowski²⁵, K. Podemski²⁶ and others in Polish sociology. The development of a methodology for researching tourism trends was facilitated by the work of German sociologists Z. Krippendorf²⁷ and H. Müller²⁸.

The quantitative research model is based on sociological strategies for understanding religiosity as a multi-dimensional phenomenon that developed by the 1960s. In religious studies under the influence of anthropology, psychology and sociology of religion. Their conceptual basis is the consideration of religiosity in the diversity of its forms, which manifests itself not only from one denomination to another, but also within each religion, and even within each of its directions from follower to follower. The following approaches turned out to be the most common in Western religious studies in the second half of the 20th century: the idea of searching for the mechanisms of religious systems influencing on the social environment, taking into account the uniqueness of each individual religious choice, in the anthropology of religion by C. Geertz²⁹, T. Asad³⁰; the dichotomous model *religion as a means – religion as a goal* in psychology and sociology of religion by G. Allport³¹; the multi-dimensional model of religiosity in the sociology of religion by C. Glock and R. Stark³², Z. Faulkner and G. Dejong³³.

Models of interpreting religiosity as a system of measurements, ranging from two to ten are popularised by the 1980s. Aspects of these measurements are manifested in different religious traditions and are comparable among themselves. The most complete version of the experience in developing research tools (questionnaires) based on multi-dimensional models is presented in the collection «Measures of religiosity»³⁴. The standardisation of religious study models was carried out in the framework of large-scale European and international values research programs – European Values Study³⁵, World Values Survey³⁶, European Social Survey³⁷, International Social Survey Program³⁸. A feature of the models was the ability to compare the characteristics of religiosity in a number of European states, including in the post-Soviet space.

²⁰Cohen E. Towards a sociology of international tourism // Soc. Res. 1972. Vol. 39. P. 164–182.

²¹Turner V. The center out there: Pilgrim's goal // Hist. Relig. 1973. Vol. 12, No. 3. P. 191–230.

²²Бауман З. От паломника к туристу // Социол. журн. 1995. № 4. С. 134.

²³Урри Дж. Взгляд туриста и глобализация // Массовая культура: современные западные исследования / отв. ред. В. В. Зверева. М.: Фонд научных исследований «Прагматика культуры», 2005. С. 136–150.

²⁴Бурдьё П., Болтански Л., Кастель Р., Шамборедон Ж.-К. Общедоступное искусство: опыт о социальном использовании фотографии. М.: Праксис, 2014. 456 с.

²⁵Więckowski M. Przestrzeń turystyczna – próba nowego spojrzenia // Turyzm. 2014. T. 24, No. 1. S. 17–24.

²⁶Podemski K. Socjologia podróży. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 2004. 366 s.

²⁷Krippendorf J., Kramer B., Müller H. Freizeit und Tourismus. Eine Einführung in Theorie und Politik (Berner Studien zu Freizeit und Tourismus, überarbeitete Neuauflage als Heft 28). Bern: Forschungsinst. für Fremdenverk. der Univ. Bern, 1986. 212 S.

²⁸Müller H. Freizeit und Tourismus: eine Einführung in Theorie und Politik (Berner Studien zu Freizeit und Tourismus). Bern: Univ. Bern Center for Reg. Econ. Dev. (CRED), 2005. 302 p.

²⁹Geertz C. Religion as a cultural system // The interpretation of cultures: selected essays. N. Y.: Basic Books, 1973. P. 87–125.

³⁰Asad T. Genealogies of religion: discipline and reasons of power in Christianity and Islam. Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1993. 344 p.

³¹Allport G. W. The individual and his religion: a psychological interpretation. N. Y.: Macmillan Co., 1960. 142 p.; Allport G. W. The nature of prejudice. 25th ed. London; Amsterdam: Addison-Wesley Publ. Co., 1979. 537 p.

³²Glock C., Stark R. Religion and society in tension. Chicago: Rand Mc. Nally & Co., 1965. 316 p.

³³Faulkner J., Dejong G. Religiosity in 5-D: an empirical analysis // Soc. Forces. 1966. Vol. 45. P. 246–254.

³⁴Hill P., Hood Jr. R. Measures of religiosity. 1st ed. Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1999. 531 p.

³⁵European VALUES Study (EVS) [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu/> (date of access: 24.02.2020).

³⁶World Values Survey: all rounds-country-pooled datafile version [Electronic resource] / eds. R. Inglehart [et al.]. URL: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWVL.jsp/> (date of access: 24.02.2020).

³⁷European Social Survey [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/> (date of access: 24.02.2020).

³⁸International Social Survey Program [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://www.issp.org/> (date of access: 24.02.2020).



Russian and Belarusian studies in the post-Soviet space became widespread in the same tradition. The following projects can be noted among the most ambitious Russian studies of religiosity: D. Furman, S. Filatov, R. Lunkin, L. Vorontsova, M. Tarusin, V. Chesnokova, Y. Sinelina, etc. In Belarus, the development and implementation of such projects were carried out by the employees of the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Centre for Sociological and Political Studies of the Belarusian State University, and primarily, L. Novikova, S. Morozova and others.

The qualitative research, presented in this publication, assumed the analysis of verbal narratives about the religious experience posted on Internet forums: two of them are the sites of religious pilgrims of Belarus PILIGRYMKA.BY (<https://piligrymka.by>) and Ioannov Rodnik (<https://www.palomnik.by>), forum of independent travellers (forum of the site Globus of Belarus, <https://fgb.by>). Generally, 51 representations of pilgrimage experiences and 3 texts about self-organised travel were analysed.

The quantitative research strategy is based on a multi-dimensional cross-confessional model of religiosity [1]. Religion in the framework of this model is understood as a two-aspect phenomenon, including religious experience (internal, latent aspect) and a system of articulation and transfer of experience (external, measurable aspect). This system is formed by a set of inalienable and not reducible to each other dimensions that form a unity of religious beliefs (express the transcendent idea of religion), activity (performs the principles and methods of embodying the idea), institutions (organise the followers of an idea into societies). Religiosity presumes the involvement into each dimension of religion. And it can have a differ-

ent degree, forming religious traditions, offshoots (directions, or confessions), movements and amorphous environments, in different religious systems. Such an extremely broad approach to the interpretation of religiosity allows one to take into account various aspects of the content of the religious system. And understanding it as a multi-dimensional phenomenon makes the characteristics of religious involvement comparable for different religious denominations and their followers.

The model is represented by a set of measurements, corresponding indices and variables that characterise aspects of involvement in religion. Despite the fact that the values of all indices serve to identify the integral characteristics of religiosity, their universality makes it possible to separately represent several positions within the model. The study of religiosity is often associated with the study of forms of religious activity. The nature of the performance of religious actions is mainly considered as such: individual (prayer, meditation, etc.) and collective (participation in various types of religious services). The measurement of involvement in the system of religious activity, as one of the key for the study of religiosity, includes in the presented model a wider set [2] than only indicators of individual and religious activity [3]. In particular, we are talking about a composite index of compliance with the norms of religious piety, which is revealed in a whole set of forms of religious activity, one of which is the experience of travelling to holy places. Its peculiarity lies in the fact that, being the norm of religious precepts, it is not strictly regulated and manifests itself first of all in everyday practices, forming the basis of the individual experience of inclusion in the religious system.

Travel as a form of religious practice

Pilgrimage travels of representatives of various religions at the beginning of the 21st century are becoming a mass phenomenon that affects all spheres of social life. This justifies the need to study pilgrimage as a socio-cultural practice to understand the significance of the trend in the spread of mass forms of religious travel.

We will distinguish between two forms of religious travel:

a) a journey involving visiting holy places and sacred objects, in addition to other cultural objects, in the general sequence of acquaintance with various cultural objects – secular religious tourism;

b) a journey to sacred objects organised by a religious community (organisation, group) and based on the traveller's stable ties with the institution of religion – a religious pilgrimage.

Religious tourism is carried out in the form of an organised mass and individual tourist trip or an independently organised trip and is characterised:

- by the perception of sacred objects in the structure of the settlement and understanding of their significance as part of the culture;
- cognitive purposes of travel (acquaintance with the history of confession, religion); general motivation for the search for a new cultural experience, which is characteristic of any type of travel to one degree or another;
- an organisation according to the laws of the tourism industry (travel is a tourist service intended for consumption, travel as an offered product, as entertainment);
- weak connection with the institution of religion (this is a secular journey, of which religious practice can be part, but it is not required);
- the desire to keep cultural distance without trying to live a different life [4].

Religious pilgrimage is a type of travel that is carried out with the spiritual purpose of visiting holy places and objects, characterised by an increase in



sacred character as one approaches the object of worship. The special features of pilgrimage trips are as follows:

- the main goals of the trip are visiting a sacred site, including certain practices of missionary work, preaching, and prayer worship;
- integration into the institution of religion, conscious participation in practices;
- travel is prepared by a religious community (organisation, group) or independently;
- the journey begins and ends with religious practice;
- search for a new experience by approaching the spiritual centre, «the centre of one's religion» [4].

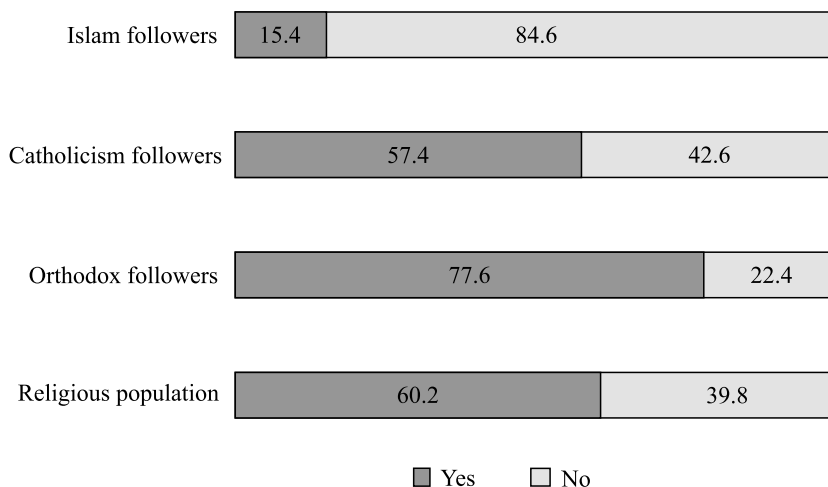
At the same time, it should be borne in mind that any type of travel involving religious motivation is implemented in the form of practices of action and interaction. These everyday practices have common features. First, they are always carried out in the pro-

cess of moving to another country or to another locality, without commercial purposes, in order to visit historical and cultural places and objects related to religious cults, divine events and stories, the life and death of saints. Secondly, religious travel is based on the direct participation and strong involvement of the traveller in the ritual practice of reproducing intercultural interaction in the sequential transition of the typical stages of travel. Thirdly, the main sacred rituals are prayers, «worship» and veneration of religious relics, reverence, humility and humility before God. Travel itself as a daily practice is realised in the rituals of transition, movement, the formation of the status of a traveller. Fourthly, the form of interaction with a sacred object is perceived as a way of a person's relationship with the world. And finally, the content of the daily practice of religious travel is a system of cultural codes containing sacred meanings.

Analysis of the results of a quantitative study of everyday travel practices to holy places

The empirical basis of the study is a questionnaire survey conducted in all regions of Belarus. As a result, 2723 respondents were interviewed, of which 2013 were representatives of the traditional dominant confessions (Orthodoxy, Catholicism), 710 were of other confessions (the selection was carried out according to the number of registered religious organisations in each of the regions). The practice of religious behaviour within the framework of a multi-dimensional model of religiosity

is one of the forms of behaviour that characterise religious piety. The universality of the indicator allows us to compare the features of the behavioural strategies of followers of different confessions, in this case, the main confessions for Belarus (Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Islam). The respondents are not very active. Two-thirds of the religious population, 77.6 % of followers of Orthodoxy, 57.4 % of Catholicism, and only 15.4 % of Muslims have travel experience (see figure).



Distribution of respondents' answers to the question: «Have you ever travelled to holy places?», %

A little more than 40 % of the religious population and Catholicism followers, about a third of the Orthodoxy followers and only 13.3 % of Muslims were able to determine the regularity of travel. In addition, for the majority of those who answered the question, this practice is not permanent. About two-thirds of the religious population travel to holy places on occasion, and a third – regularly. Travels of Orthodoxy followers are less frequent: more

than 70 % according to circumstances, about a quarter – regularly; slightly more Catholics: more than half – regularly, 45.2 % due to circumstances. The lowest frequency is characterised by the travel of Islam followers: 18.8 % of the respondents, from the small part who answered the question, travel regularly, more than a half – according to circumstances, and about a quarter stressed that they have no such experience (table 1).



The respondents were asked about their exact location to clarify the actual purpose of visiting the holy places. The answers were assessed according to the degree of specificity and meaningfulness of the information provided, as well as the geographical and financial accessibility of the reported places for Belarusian respondents on average. The more accurate the information about the place of travel, the more accessible it is geographically and financially, the more likely it was a pilgrimage rather than a tourist destination. In addition, within the framework of the research model, first of all, the indicator of a specific place reflects the highest degree of religious involvement in this measure (table 2).

Even fewer respondents could define specific places to visit: 45.2 % of the religious population, 57.4 % of Orthodox Christians, 47.0 % of Catholics and 11.7 % of Muslims. The distribution of respondents answers to the question significantly depends on the religious tradition. In general, a significant number of answers contain an indication of a specific (24.9 % of the number of choices of the answer option) and accessible (33.1 % – Belarus, 17.2 % – Russia, Ukraine) place. Regarding the

respondents who indicated both specific and accessible places, it can be assumed that they are travelling with a religious purpose. A similar trend is characteristic of the followers of Orthodoxy: the majority indicated specific (35.6 %) and accessible (29.6 % – Belarus, 23.3 % – Russia, Ukraine) places (table 2).

None of them indicated a visit to the Islamic world. Among the followers of Catholicism, the number of those respondents who identified specific shrines is minimal, about half of the respondents travelled to accessible places (Belarus), about a third visited holy places in Eastern and Western Europe. Among the small number of Islam followers who answered the question, half travelled to the Middle East (to the Islamic world), 18.8 % visited holy places in Belarus, 12.5 % – specific shrines. Thus, the practice of travelling to holy places has a confessional specificity and is not a normative form of religious behaviour, it is carried out mainly situationally and at the same time is embedded in the structure of everyday activities. This raises the question of finding qualitative parameters for studying the practices of religious tourism.

Table 1

Distribution of respondents' answers to the question: «How often do you travel to holy places?», %

Respondents' answers	Religious population		Orthodox followers		Catholicism followers		Islam followers	
Regularly	15.2*	32.5**	15.1*	25.1**	24.1*	52.6**	2.5*	18.8**
Due to circumstances	30.2*	64.8**	44.1*	73.4**	20.9*	45.6**	7.5*	56.3**
My religion doesn't require it	0.2*	0.4**	0.0*	0.0**	0.1*	0.3**	0.0*	0.0**
Never	1.1*	2.4**	0.9*	1.4**	0.7*	1.5**	3.3*	25.0**
Total	46.7*	100.0**	60.1*	100.0**	45.8*	100.0**	13.3*	100.0**

Note. * – of the total number of respondents; ** – of those who answered the question.

Table 2

Distribution of respondents' answers to the question: «What holy places did you visit?», % of the number of answers

Respondents' answers	Religious population	Orthodox followers	Catholicism followers	Islam followers
Pointing to certain (specific) shrines	24.9	35.6	2.6	12.5
Belarus	33.1	29.6	47.5	18.8
Russia, Ukraine	17.2	23.3	6.7	0.0
Eastern Europe	7.6	1.6	22.8	0.0
Western Europe	5.1	2.0	11.8	0.0
Middle East-Islamic world	0.8	0.0	1.1	50.0
Middle East-Judaism	5.7	4.0	2.4	0.0
Asia (Turkey, India, Nepal, others)	1.0	0.3	0.2	0.0
Other	4.6	3.5	4.9	18.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0



Interpretation of a journey to sacred objects in the public space of communications

Verbal representations of a religious pilgrimage are a complete construct in which the author (traveller) encodes his own understanding of what is happening (experience and travel) using various sign systems. The main content of the interpretational structure in the texts under consideration is formed by a verbal image expressed in meanings. And the method of structural analysis of representations of religious travel makes it possible to identify the components of understanding pilgrimage from the point of view of the traveller himself. This means that it opens up the prospect of answering the question of how the structure of signs of the daily practice of pilgrimage organises the subjectivity of travel.

Travel is defined by the authors of verbal texts as a *path* (*flight, road, life*), which means moving towards a goal, overcoming difficulties and constant search. And the structure of understanding the daily practice of modern pilgrimage to holy places in the interpretation of travellers who have experience of such a journey includes the following codes and formulas for understanding the path:

a) pilgrimage is a journey of life. This sign system of the verbal image contains the meanings of spiritual search, enrichment and testing («this is a road that does not tire», «the path to the Heavenly City») for a lifetime («we are all pilgrims of our life»). A journey to holy places is understood, obviously, not only as a path of physical and geographical travel, but also as a familiar path (like a road to a church near a house, like life itself);

b) pilgrimage is the spiritual path to God. The verbal representation of a religious journey contains linguistic forms of expression of meaning: paths to peace of mind («pilgrimage is a desert in which you learn to be different, to be better», «this journey is simply necessary for the soul, this is its rest and work at the same time»); ways to a relationship with God (to get closer to God, to communicate with him, to touch, «the opportunity to open my heart for Him», «God gives us the opportunity not only to contemplate and enjoy all that is beautiful, but also asks to get closer to Him in order to acquire that transformational energy that will allow us to chant and praise God in His creations»);

c) pilgrimage journey as a search. The concept of «search» has a spiritual character and consists, in the

understanding of travellers, of several significant elements: the search for God («the caress of God», «all together are looking for the One whom they lose in everyday life», the search for relations between man and God, the love of the Creator); the search for feelings and meanings (like the search for new meanings, answers to questions, the search for faith, happiness, the search for oneself, love for the world, «travel is an unusual feeling of a guaranteed life»);

d) religious travel as knowledge. The semantic structure of travel interpretation contains the meanings of the cognitive process. The goals of the journey to holy places are determined in the categories of understanding oneself and the world: «to put things in order in the head and heart», «this is a time of reflection and new discoveries», «cognition of the reason and meaning of one's existence». To substantiate the motivation of travel, the authors of representations use the concepts: «self-knowledge», «self-determination», «understand», «cognise», «with open eyes».

e) pilgrimage as communication is perceived as a journey not alone, but in community, together. This is an opportunity to meet new people, find new relationships, exchange experiences;

f) religious pilgrimage as a practice of unity and transmission of cultural experience. The presentation of the trip is organised by a symbolic structure, which consists of the meaning of «we» and its elements: spiritual unity with all people, regardless of confession («I feel like a particle of something big, light, powerful, because when we are together, there is no can defeat us») and integration («unite your heart with others», «I always wanted to show it to someone else», «the pilgrims bring culture to the earthly world»);

g) travel as an experience. It consists of emotionally coloured meanings that express feelings, impressions and state of mind, felt and lived by travellers, and also expresses the depth and fullness of collectively shared emotions associated with co-presence in events and situations: «You need to feel this, feel at least once and experience all that what the pilgrims are experiencing», «A feeling of lightness, even weightlessness», «The heart is overwhelmed with a sense of calmness, joy and trust in God».

Conclusion

The study shows that stable religious norms that support traditional models of interpretation of beliefs and religious texts coexist and enter into complex relationships with religious experience, corresponding to the needs of modern identity and the fluid structures of everyday life. This is reflected, among other things, in the proximity of two forms of religious travel practices – secular (religious tourism) and sacred (religious pilgrimage). An approach that allows analysing the varia-

bility of religiosity opens up opportunities for modelling the processes of transforming religious practices in the context of the formation of new matrices of everyday life.

A high level of involvement in the practice of religious travel, measured through the signs of regularity of implementation and the dominance of the pilgrimage goal, is characteristic of a third of the religious population in Belarus. Practitioners of everyday experience on a religious journey produce and reproduce sacred



signs that convey an understanding of pilgrimage as a path. In the interpretations of Belarusian travellers, the everyday life of pilgrimage means for them the path of the human life world, the integrity of the content

of which is determined by the movement towards life, towards God, towards search and knowledge, towards communication and unity, towards living and experiencing spiritual experience.

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