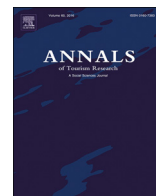


Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com)

Annals of Tourism Research

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/annals

Research Article

Religion and tourism: A diverse and fragmented field in need of a holistic agenda



Noga Collins-Kreiner

Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Haifa, Israel

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Religion
 Religious tourism
 Post-secular
 Politicization of religion
 De-differentiation
 Pilgrimage

ABSTRACT

This review article has four primary goals. First, it seeks to analyze the field of religion and tourism in terms of development and progress according to disciplines, authors, journals, and religions covered. Second, it offers a knowledge map and a metaanalysis reflecting key-areas of academic insight into the religion-tourism nexus. Third, it synthesizes these insights, presents current major trends, and reflects on the fragmented nature of the field. And fourth, it highlights trajectories and areas on the knowledge map - which calls for a holistic approach and new avenues of research. The main contribution is its comprehensive review of the religion-tourism nexus over the past decade, concluding with recommendations for new foci of research such as the politicization of religion.

Introduction: the unfinished business of religion and tourism

Religion and tourism have always been inextricably linked. Religion is among the most common motivations for travel, and religiously motivated travel, which is one of the world's oldest forms of mobility, is emerging currently as a major tourism segment (WTO, 2018; Collins-Kreiner, 2010). Accordingly, a vast number of articles, books, case studies, and research and review papers have been written on the topic.

This article's specific aim is to outline a knowledge map and a meta-analysis reflecting key areas of academic insight into the religion-tourism nexus; to synthesize these insights, present current major trends, and reflect on the fragmented nature of this field of research; and to highlight regions that require future attention.

The linkages between religion and tourism are tremendously varied and have numerous implications for sites, visitors, and locals (Butler & Suntikul, 2017; Timothy & Olsen, 2006). RT (Religious Tourism) is one of the world's fastest growing types of tourism, and the World Tourism Organization (2011) estimates that approximately 900 million tourists visit major religious sites each year.

Religious tourism encompasses a range of activities, such as pilgrimage, missionary travel, faith-based events, gatherings, etc. (Tomljenović & Dukić, 2017). Concurrent with the growth in supply and demand, recent years have witnessed a marked increase in the number of scholars exploring different aspects of the religion-tourism nexus in accordance with their diverse disciplinary backgrounds (history, theology, sociology, psychology, anthropology, economics, and geography to name a few). These scholars publish hundreds of relevant articles each year, making a review paper on the subject almost impossible to compose.

Another major challenge of this review article is the attempt to formulate a clear definition of "religious tourism," which is something that currently does not exist. Over the past two decades, researchers have argued that the differences among tourism, religious tourism, pilgrimage, and even secular pilgrimage are narrowing and analysis of the relationship, similarities, and differences between the tourist and the pilgrim have become a major focus of interest. Many of these scholars have also recognized that the ties

E-mail address: nogack@geo.haifa.ac.il.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2020.102892>

Received 23 September 2019; Received in revised form 16 February 2020; Accepted 17 February 2020
 0160-7383/ © 2020 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

between tourism and pilgrimage are currently unclear and poorly classified (Cohen, 1992, 1998; Digance, 2003, 2006; Kong, 2010; Smith, 1992; Timothy & Olsen, 2006; Tomljenović & Dukić, 2017; Turner & Turner, 1978; Vukonić, 1996, 2002).

Thus, this review paper employs the opposite approach to the question: “What is religious tourism?” Instead of a top-down method of defining the phenomena and analyzing them accordingly, I use the bottom-up research practice of analyzing the existing literature in the field and seeing what's out there. To this end, the present article explores the current trends in RT research by reviewing and analyzing the broad body of literature that has been produced on the subject over the past decade. Because the field has become so holistic in nature and pertains to a growing number of countries and religions, the current need is for comparative holistic research based on theoretical frames for the purpose of moving forward.

The blurred boundaries between religion and tourism and among different tourism segments, which has already been addressed elsewhere (Collins-Kreiner, 2010), is reflected in the many published items that deal with religion and tourism but are classified under different categories. These titles will be analyzed by means of the meta-analysis conducted in this article. Only extremely recently (Durán-Sánchez, Álvarez-García, de la Cruz del Río-Rama, & Oliveira, 2018; Kim, Kim, & King, 2019) have scholars started to examine evolving themes in the scholarly literature on the topic of religion and tourism by content and thematic analyses and to identify research gaps, providing a valuable direction for future inquiry.

To accomplish the goal and overcome the challenges, a diverse assortment of different methods were applied in five different stages, as will be explained in the article's Methodology section. It is hoped that this diverse methodological approach will make this review article a comprehensive one. Thus, the uniqueness of this article lies in the fact that it is not a typical review paper but rather a comprehensive meta-analysis based on a variety of sources, different methods, and varying levels of analysis. It begins with a quantitative analysis, followed by a qualitative assessment of the current literature and a more comprehensive overview of the field, including a discussion and a conclusion calling for the adaptation of new approaches and avenues of research.

The broader goal of this paper is also to heighten our understanding of the link among religion, tourism, social order, culture, and identity politics. As Neusner (2003: 259) claims: “To most of us it seems that religious groups speak a kind of gibberish, intelligible only to themselves, when in fact they mean to make a statement not only to, but about, the social order that encompasses us all.”

Methodology

Analysis of the main themes proceeded according to the following five stages, which employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. First, a Google Scholar search was conducted in an attempt to understand the composition of the field between 2010 and 2018, yielding a total of 71,900 results. Selection of the time period 2010–2018 stemmed from a desire to summarize the latest developments in the field. The aim here was not to review the development of the field over the past decade, as this has already been accomplished by other studies (Collins-Kreiner, 2010; Durán-Sánchez et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2019; Kong, 2010), but rather to present the most current research and thinking on the topic.

The second stage was a thorough analysis using *Web of Science* (2019), a website that provides access to multiple databases that provide comprehensive citation data for a variety of academic disciplines. Originally produced by the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) and currently maintained by Clarivate Analytics (previously the Intellectual Property and Science section of Thomson Reuters), *Web of Science* is currently the most commonly used unifying research tool facilitating the acquisition, analysis, and dissemination of information.

A total of 776 records were retrieved via this platform using the search terms “religio*” (a term that retrieves all the words beginning with “religio-,” such as “religion,” “religious,” “religiosity,” etc.) and “tourism” for the period 2010–2018. This included an analysis of all tourism-related publications regarding different religions published in all categories, and aimed to provide a broad perspective of the field, as well as a focused analysis of the final year of the period surveyed: 2018. The analysis examined the following categories: author diversity, region, language and major subject of publishing journal, chronological development, religious diversity, and citations. These initial two stages are presented together in *Religion and tourism: an overview of the field* section below.

The third stage (presented in *Analyzing the religion-tourism nexus* section) consisted of a quantitative and qualitative analysis of 40 texts published in tourism journals over the past 5 years (2015–2019), accounting for 10% of all of the relevant papers published during this period (Table 1). To select these publications, four different individuals (two males and two females) of different ages (in their twenties, thirties, forties, and fifties) were each asked to select 10 items dealing with tourism and religion. This unstructured sampling was conducted in an effort to better understand and analyze the character of the publications, each of which was analyzed according to different criteria, including country of research, major conclusions, methodology and methods, type of research (case study versus comparative), main topics, research population (visitors versus locals), and others.

The fourth stage (presented in *Main themes in the current religious & tourism research* section) dealt with the main themes of the most current RT research of the recent period, which are presented and analyzed in accordance with the analysis of the previous stages, in the traditional style of the review papers of recent decades. *Conclusions: the new knowledge map of religion and tourism* section (the fifth stage) contains the study's conclusions regarding the new knowledge map of religion and tourism, and *Future research: the need for holistic conceptualization* section offers recommendations for future research, including holistic conceptualization using post-secular tourist theories and post modernism and expansion of the current research to link it to other fields such as the politics of religion, identity studies, and cultural studies. The review concludes with a call for a new agenda and for venturing out of the conventional box of “tourism studies” into less familiar territory. I believe that only complex and comprehensive meta-reviews are capable of truly summarizing a research field and leading it forward.

Table 1

List of the 40 papers analyzed in Stage 3 of this study.

	Authors	Year	Country
1.	Terzidou, M., Styliadis, D. & Terzidis, K.	2018	Greece
2.	Lupu, C., Brochado, A. & Stoleriu, O.	2019	Romania
3.	Shtudiner, Z., Klein, G. & Kantor, J.	2018	Israel
4.	Egresi, I.O. & Kara, F.	2018	Turkey
5.	Huang, K & Pearce, P.	2019	China
6.	Milman, A. & Oren, G.	2018	World
7.	Gozzoli, R.B., Chen, Ka Tat N. & Talawanich, S.	2019	Thailand
8.	Narbona, J. & Arasa, D.	2018	Poland
9.	Koren-Lawrence, N & Collins-Kreiner, N.	2019	World
10.	Štefko, R., Kiráľová, A. & Mudrík, M.	2015	Slovakia
11.	Sati, V. P.	2015	India
12.	Nyaupane, G. P., Timothy, D. J. & Poudel, S.	2015	Nepal
13.	Albayrak, T., Herstein, R., Caber, M., Drori, N., Bideci, M. & Berger, R.	2018	Israel
14.	Blom, T., Nilsson, M., & Santos, X.	2016	Spain
15.	Zamani-Farahani, H. & Eid, R.	2016	World
16.	Bideci, M., & Albayrak, T.	2016	Turkey
17.	Okamoto, T.	2015	Japan
18.	Wang, W., Chen, J. S. & Huang, K.	2016	China
19.	Marine-Roig, E.	2015	Spain
20.	Bond, N., Packer, J. & Ballantyne, R.	2015	UK
21.	Collins-Kreiner, N.	2019	World
22.	Giusca, M., Gheorghilas, A. & Dumitrache, L.	2018	Romania
23.	Hung, K., Yang, X., Wassler, P., Wang, D., Lin, P. & Liu, Z.	2016	China
24.	Vaduva, L. & Petroman, C.	2017	Romania
25.	Collins-Kreiner N.	2018	Israel
26.	Terzidou, M., Scarles, C. & Saunders, M.N.K.	2017	Greece
27.	Vazquez de la Torre, G.M. & Perez, L.M.	2017	Spain
28.	Horak, M., Kozumplikova, A., Somerlikova, K., Lorencova, H. & Lampartova, I.	2016	Czech Republic
29.	Bastaman, A.	2018	Indonesia
30.	Qurashi, J. & Sharpley, R. A.	2017	Saudi Arabia
31.	Alipour, H., Olya, H.G.T. & Forouzan, I.	2017	Iran
32.	Heydari Chianeh, R., Del Chiappa, G., & Ghasemi, V.	2018	Iran
33.	Liro, J., Sojjan, I. & Bilska-Wodecka, E.	2018	Poland
34.	Ambrósio, V., Krogmann, A., Fernandes, C., Braga, C. Norte, C., Leitão, I. & Nemčíková, M.	2017	Portugal & Slovakia
35.	Hitchner, S., Schelhas, J., Brosius, J. P. & Nibbelink, N.	2018	USA
36.	Kato, K. & Prozano, R. N.	2017	Japan
37.	Almuhzzi, H. M., & Alsawafi, A. M.	2017	Oman
38.	Liro, J., Sojjan, I. & Bilska-Wodecka, E.	2018	Europe
39.	Durán-Sánchez, A., Álvarez-García, J., Del Río-Rama, M.D.C. & Oliveira, C.	2018	World
40.	Mora-Torres, V., Serrano-Barquín, R., Favila-Cisneros, H. & Serrano-Barquín, C.	2016	Mexico

Religion and tourism: an overview of the field

A vast field of research

A Google Scholar search for the terms “religion” and “tourism” yielded approximately 217,000 articles. Of these, some 71,900 were published between 2010 and 2018, with 20,700 results published in 2018 alone (see Fig. 1). These statistics reflect the vast quantity of scholarship that has been produced on the topic and the impossible mission of summarizing it all. At the same time, it offers an estimation of the scope, impact, and growth of this popular area of research. The following graph reflects the quantitative development of the field since 1990.

A diverse field dominated by journal papers on hospitality and tourism

This analysis is based on the items retrieved by Web of Science and includes a total of 776 records. As already noted, the search performed was for the topic “religio” and “tourism” for the years 2010 to 2018, with the aim of providing a broad view of the field. Of the 776 items that were published in a total of 94 disciplinary categories, the top 25 are presented in Fig. 2. As shown by the analysis, out of all the papers published on the topic of religion and tourism during this period in question, 295 (38%) fell within the category of “Hospitality, Leisure, Sport, and Tourism” (see Fig. 2), in contrast to only 85 items (11%) published in the category of “Religion.” This reflects the fact that religion is a dominant category in tourism studies, whereas the subject of tourism plays a minor role in religion studies.

Of the 776 items, 71 were published in the category of “Management” (9%), 60 in “Sociology” (7.7%), 51 in “Environmental Studies,” 50 in “Geography,” 40 in “Anthropology,” and 33 in “History” and in all the other fields in the Web of Science database, for a total of 94 categories. In short, the field of religion and tourism, which was once led by Sociology and Anthropology (Collins-

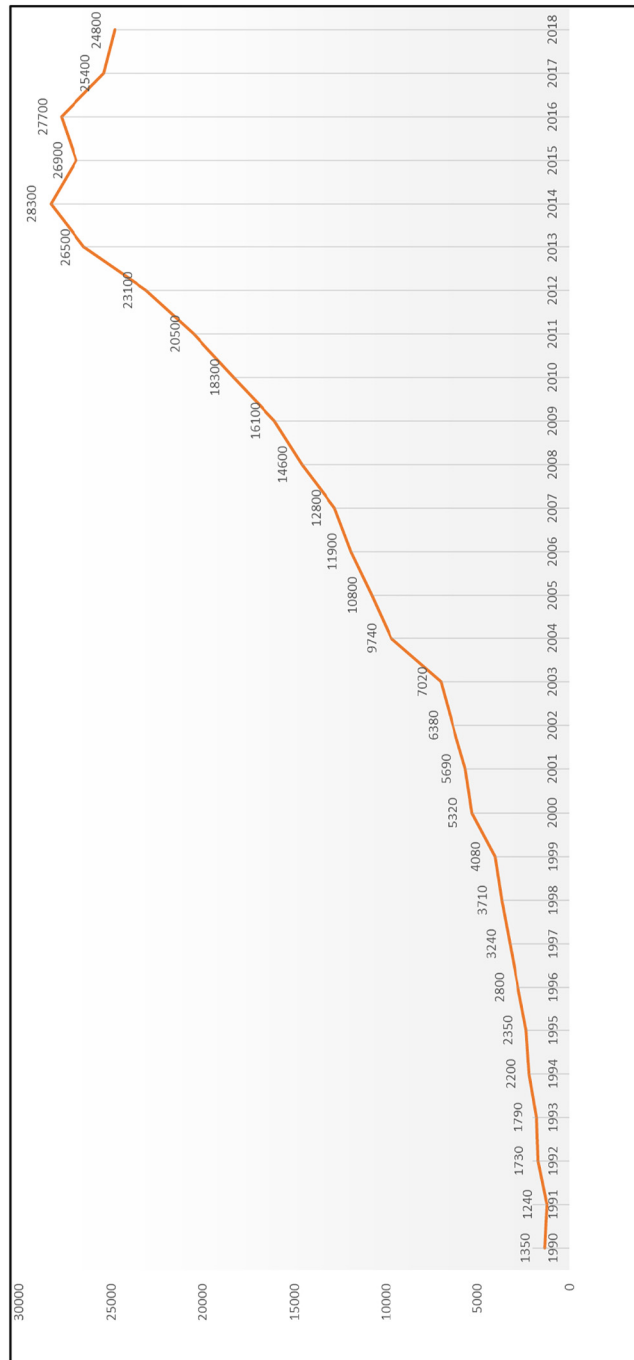


Fig. 1. Number of articles published on the topics of tourism and religion, 1990–2018 (based on Google Scholar).

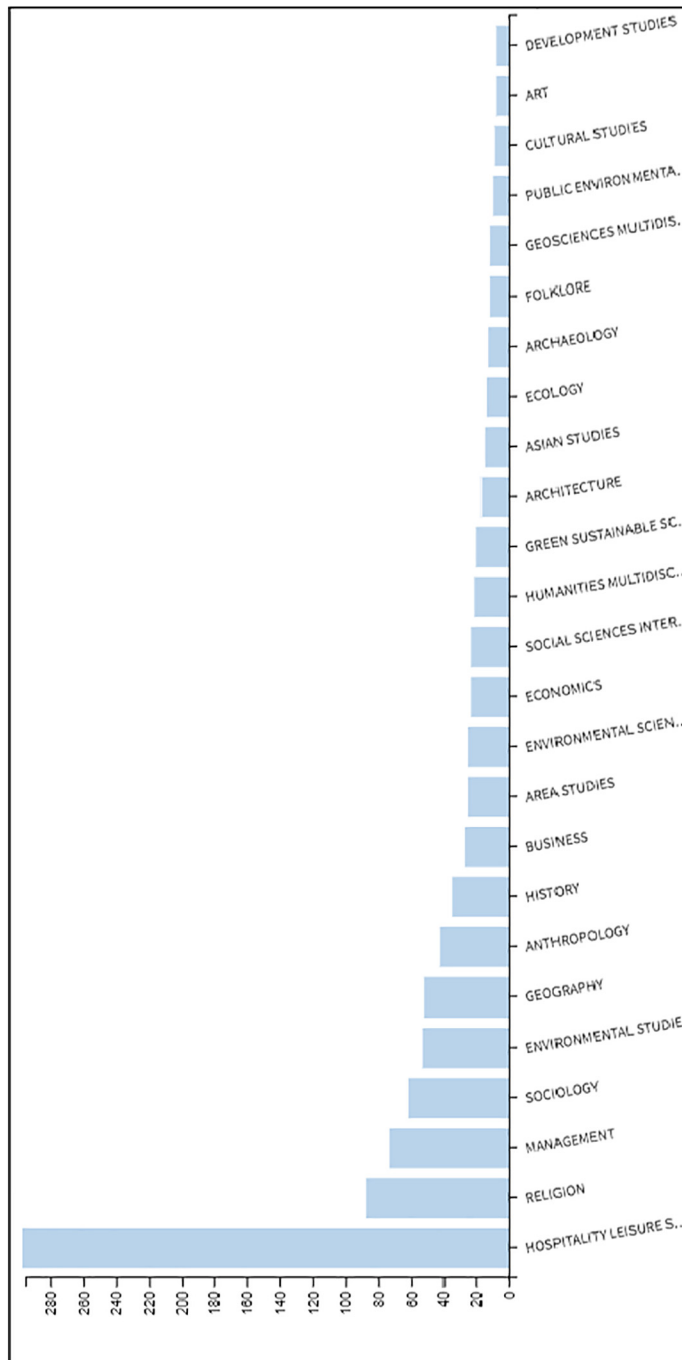


Fig. 2. A diverse field dominated by the "Hospitality, Leisure, Sport, and Tourism" category (based on Web of Science).

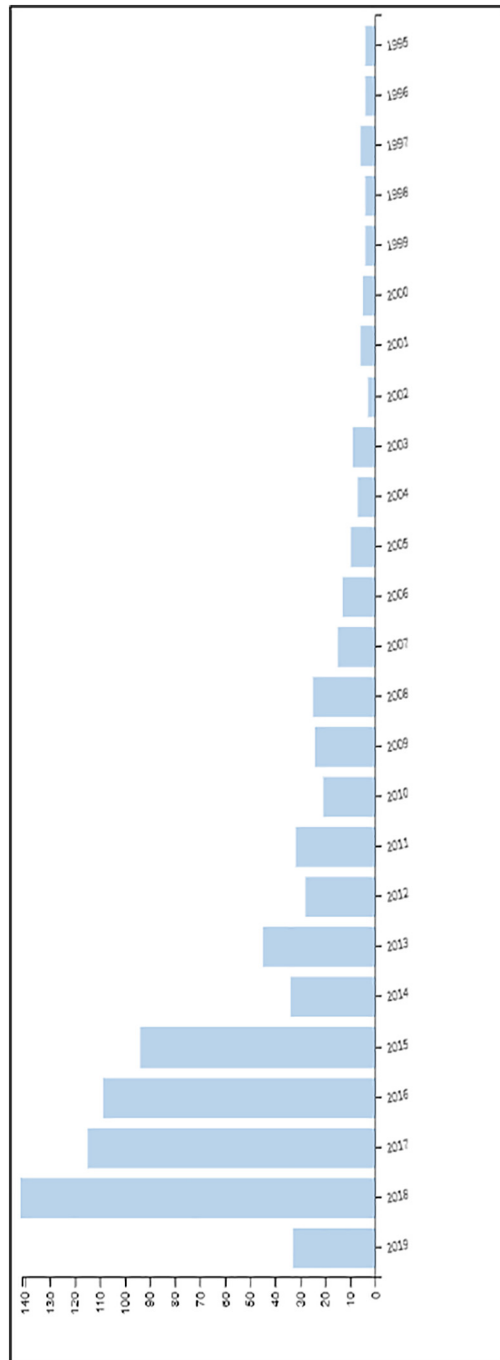


Fig. 3. Development of the field of religion and tourism over the years (based on Web of Science).

Kreiner, 2010), now approaches the subject from a multiplicity of disciplinary perspectives.

Although 675 of the 776 papers (86.873%) that appeared between 2010 and 2018 were published in English, this does not mean that all pertained to English speaking countries, as most journals indexed by Web of Science are published in English. Most of the items were articles (776 items), with a small number of other types of texts that were not analyzed during this stage, including 56 book reviews, 23 review papers, 18 proceedings papers, and nine editorial texts. The most notable distinction between the statistics generated by the two platforms was the large disparity between the numbers of publications indexed by each: 776 by Web of Science and 71,900 by Google Scholar. Whereas Google Scholar contains everything written on the topic, Web of Science is significantly slanted toward established journals, constituting both a limitation and a strength when reviewing a field.

Development over the years

Over the years, we have observed an enormous upsurge in the development of this research topic. This process consisted of three stages (see Fig. 3). In the first stage, from 1990 to 2005, fewer than 10 papers were published per year (with three in 1995 and 9 in 2005), whereas the second period, 2006–2015, witnessed a marked increase (with 12 in 2006 and 93 in 2015).

The third stage, which began in 2015, has witnessed the publication of more than 100 papers per year, with 108 (out of 776–13.918%) in 2016, 114 (out of 776–14.691%) in 2017 (and 141 out of 776–18.170%) in 2018. In other words, almost half (47%) the relevant papers were written in the past 3 years, indicating the heavily researched nature of the topic.

Development over the years is also observable within the “Hospitality and Tourism” category itself, which accounted for 295 of the items published. Prior to 2010, this category witnessed the publication of fewer than 10 papers per year, whereas the period following 2010 has witnessed the publication of more than ten papers per year on the topic, with more than 35 papers per year in 2015 and 55 in papers in 2018. (See Fig. 4.)

Examination of the “Religion” category (See Fig. 5) reveals that one-third of all relevant papers were published in 2018 and that, prior to this year, the topic was not well represented in this category. Indeed, only a few papers (less than 10) were published each year until 2018, when 24 papers appeared (in contrast to 141 papers in the “Hospitality-Tourism” category).

Diversity of authors and journals

A substantial number of authors (31) each published between three and nine articles on the topic, whereas 1332 authors published only one or two items. As a result, the category is extremely fragmented. Thus, the scholar who authored the nine items contributed 1.160% of all the items surveyed, and the scholars who authored three texts contributed only 0.387%.

The diversity in the Hospitality category has been comparable, with the top contributor of six items responsible for only 2% of the field (six out of 295) and the average contribution of each author in the field accounting for less than 1% of the total.

A total of 410 journals published articles on the topic of religion and tourism, another reflection of the fragmented nature of the topic. Fig. 6 reflects the top 25. The two most prolific journals on the topic were the *Annals of Tourism Research* (with 39 articles, or 5.026%) and *Tourism Management* (with 33 articles, or 4.253%). Many more journals published between one and 20 pieces on the topic, such as *Tourism Management Perspective* with 17, the *International Journal of Tourism Research* with 16, and the *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, also with 16. As a result, the *Annals of Tourism Research*, the top contributor, had an impact of only 5% in the overall field of religion and tourism, and most journals were responsible for less than 1% of the relevant scholarship. As reflected in Fig. 6, the leading journals in the field are tourism journals.

Authors' countries of origin

The field is also extremely fragmented in terms of authors' countries of origin, with a total of 86 countries involved in the field of research. Although the authors' country of origin is not always linked to the case study in question, it frequently is, with at least one author hailing from the country where the research was conducted. The largest number of authors were from the United States (138 articles, or 17.784%), England (63 articles, or 8.119%), Australia (53 articles, or 6.830%), and Spain (41 papers, or 5.284%), although many other countries were also represented (61 country/region values could not be included in the top 25 displayed below) (See Fig. 7).

Within the Hospitality-Tourism category, the findings regarding country diversification were even more extreme than in the case of authors' country of origin, with the United States leading with 38 articles (12.881%), England with 33 articles (11.186%), and Australia with 30 articles (10.169%). The remaining 62 countries each contributed less than 8% of the literature, reflecting an extremely diverse field in this respect as well (See Fig. 8).

Diversity of the religions researched

The literature from this period is also fragmented in the religions investigated. During the period in question, the leading religions accounted for between 40 and 110 items each, with Christianity leading the way with 106 items, Buddhism with 75, Judaism with 66, Islam with 65, and Hinduism with 42. It is interesting to note, however, that the most prominently emerging religion explored was Islam, with most items pertaining to this religion published over the past three years (34 items).

Islam is currently the most frequently researched creed, followed by other religions and denominations, such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity (as a whole), Catholicism, Eastern Orthodox Christianity, Anglicanism, Taoism, Judaism, Mormonism, and

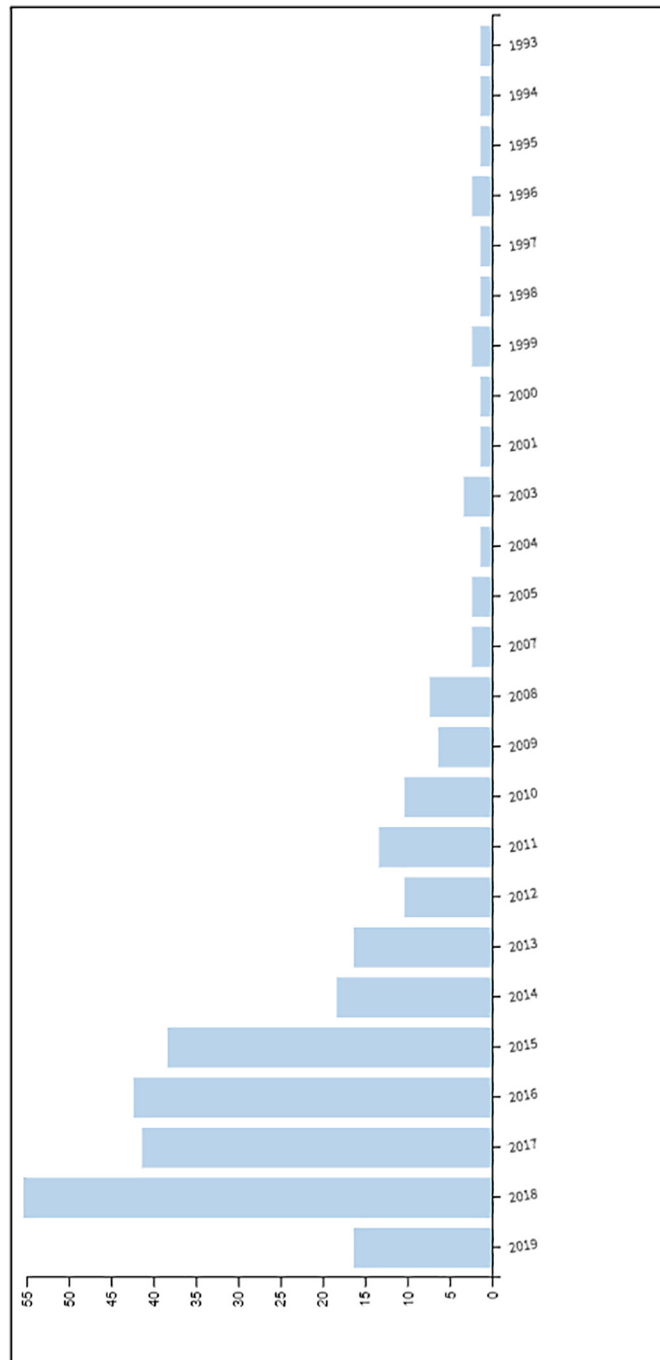


Fig. 4. Chronological development of papers on religion and tourism in the "Hospitality-Tourism" category (295 items in total) (based on Web of Science).

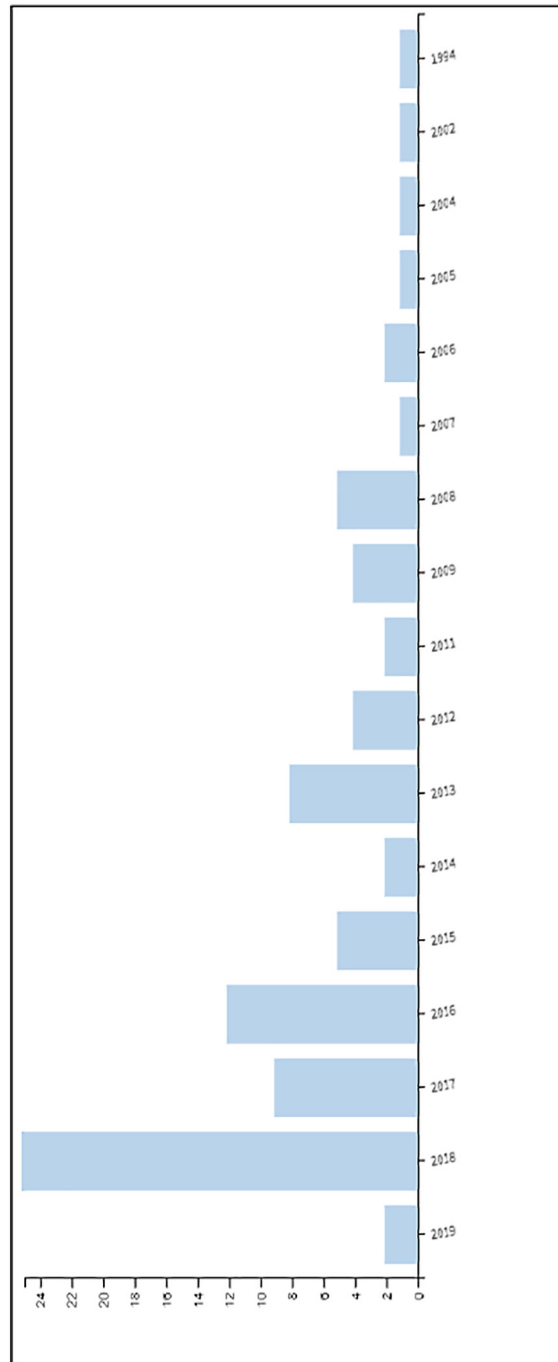


Fig. 5. Items concerning tourism and religion in the Religion category (85 in total) (based on Web of Science).

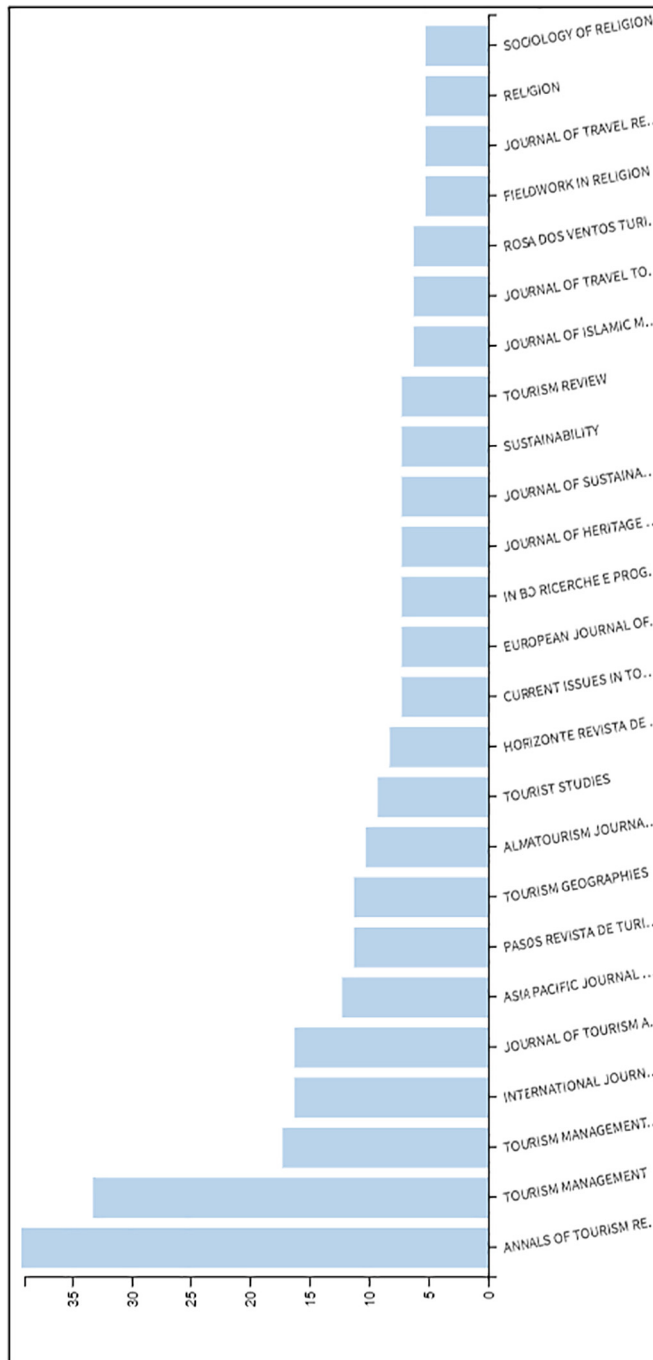


Fig. 6. Diversity of Journals in the field (based on Web of Science).

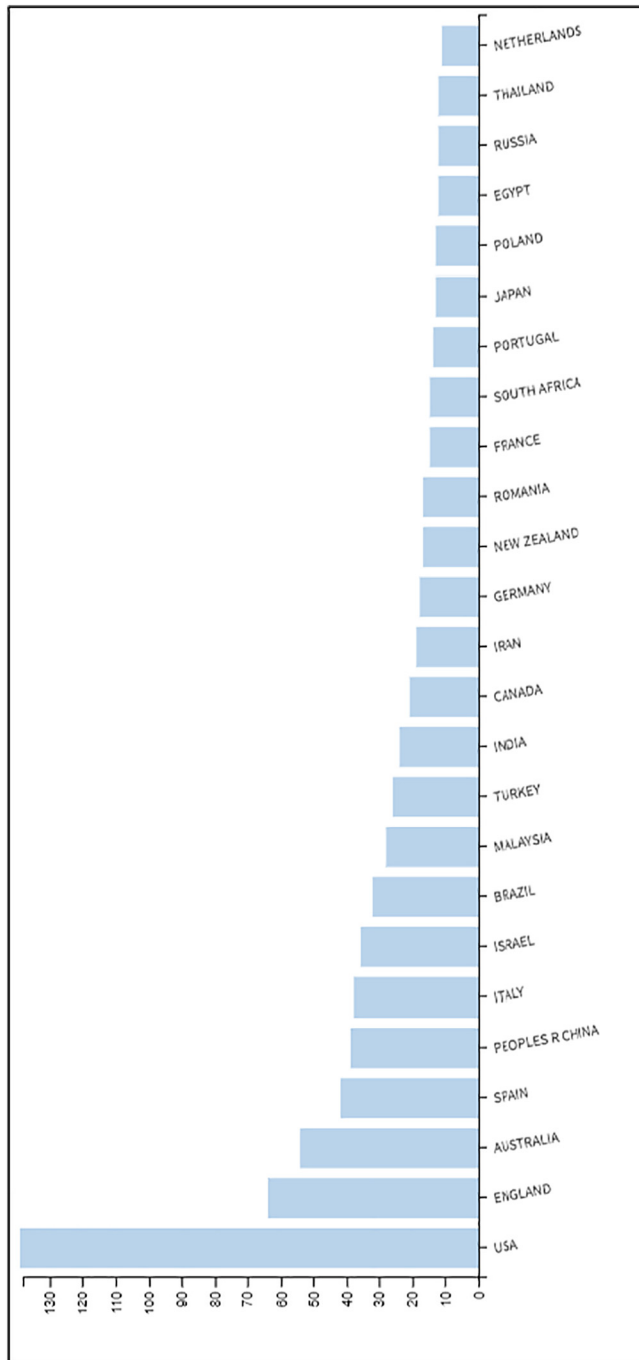


Fig. 7. Diversity of authors' country of origin (based on Web of Science).

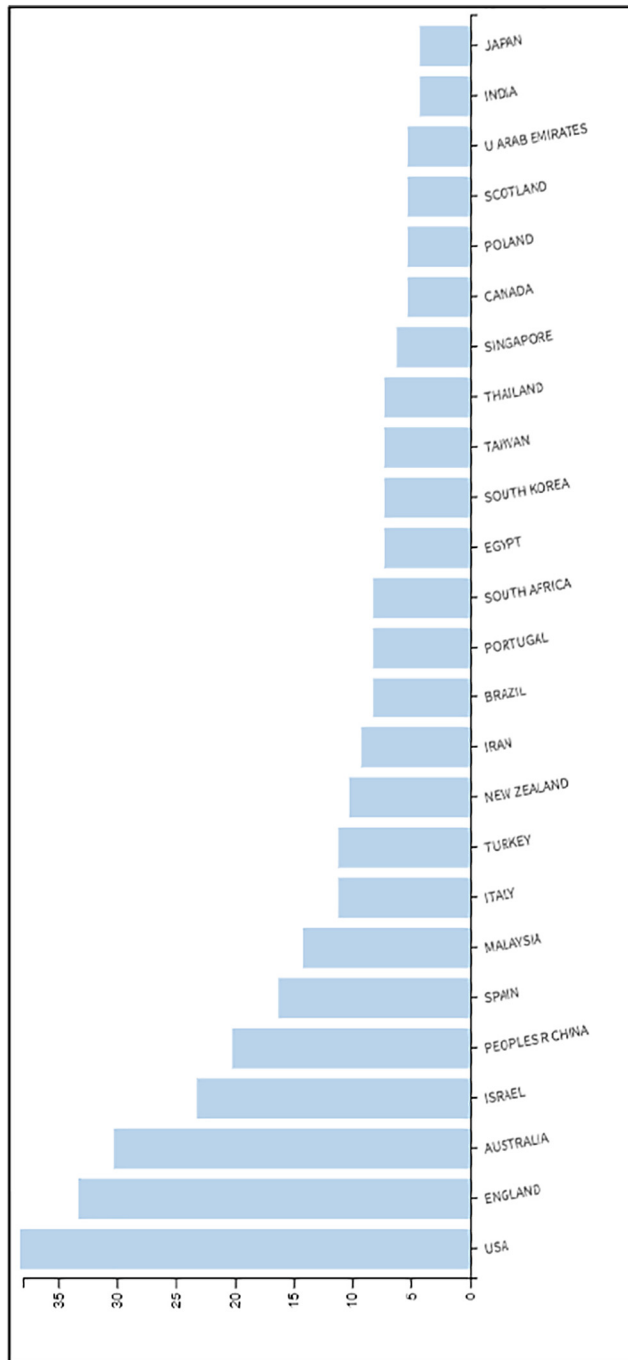


Fig. 8. Diversity of countries of research for the Hospitality-Tourism category (based on Web of Science).

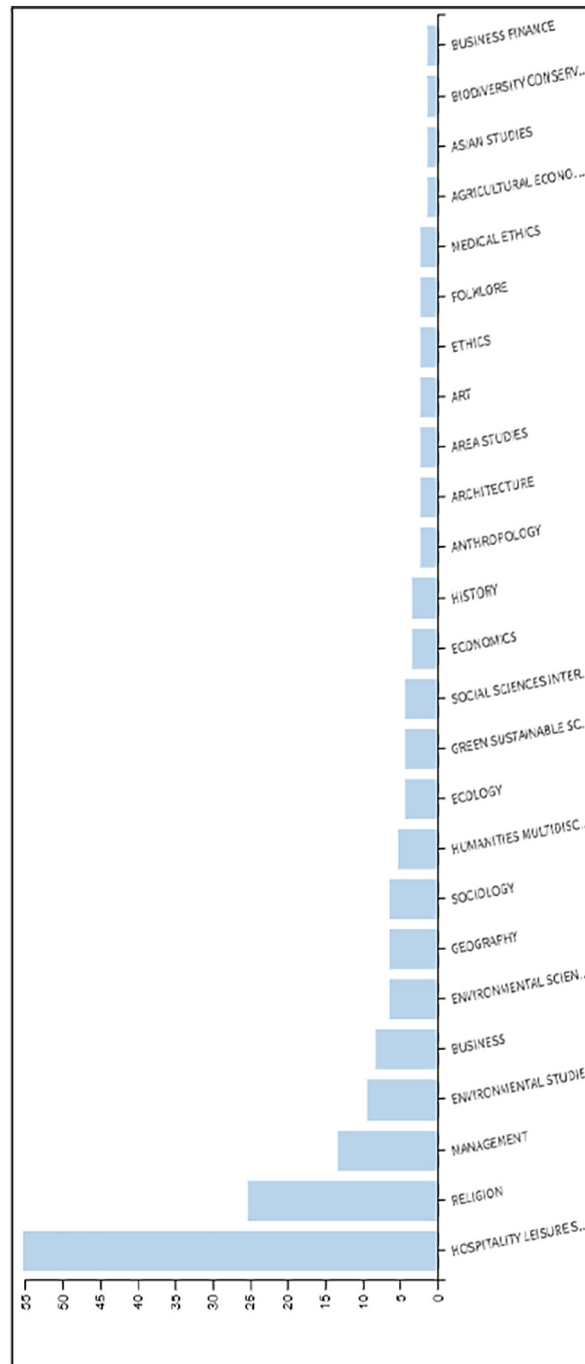


Fig. 9. Topic categories in 2018 (based on Web of Science).

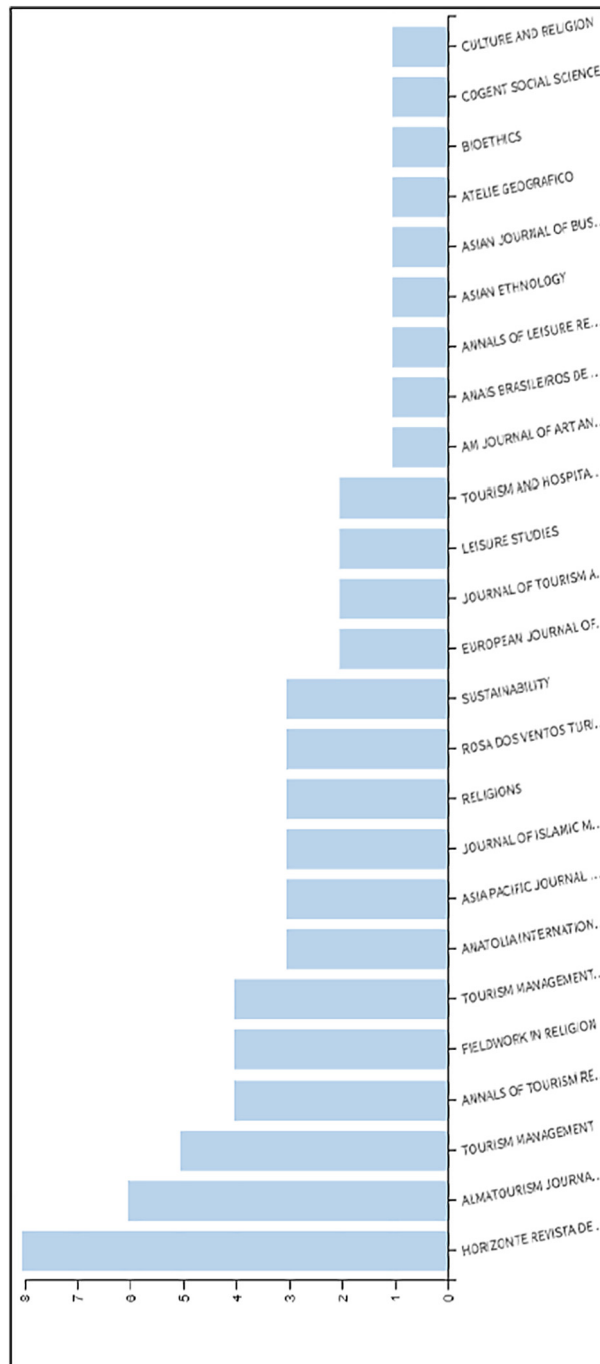


Fig. 10. Leading journals in 2018 (based on Web of Science).

others. The analysis shows that over the years, the number of items produced in non-English speaking countries or regarding religions other than Christianity has grown. Many works are now being produced in Asia, Africa, and South America, although their scope is still somewhat limited. In this expansion of the research, the two leading emerging subject areas are Halal tourism (see for example: [Almuhri & Alsawafi, 2017](#); [Bastaman, 2018](#)) and visitation to Muslim countries ([Zamani-Farahani & Eid, 2016](#)).

2018 as a case study

The dominance of the “Hospitality, Leisure, Sport, and Tourism” category was as clear in 2018 as in the general overview, accounting for 55 of the 141 relevant items published that year, or 39%. As in the general overview, the second largest category in 2018 was “Religion,” with 25 items (17.730%), and the third was “Management,” with 13 items (9.220%). It is interesting to note that the percentage of items published in the hospitality category over the entire period was comparable to the category's percentage in 2018 alone (38% and 39% respectively). At the same time, we can observe the field's immense diversity, with many items published in other categories (See [Fig. 9](#)).

The 141 items published in 2018 had a total of 275 authors, each of which was responsible for between 0.709% and 1.418% of the literature in the field. As in the general survey, this finding again highlights the fragmented nature of scholarship in the field of religion and tourism. Analysis of the journals of publication identified a list of 100 journals. Of these, the leading journal published 8 items on the topic, whereas 84 carried only one each (0.709% of the total literature) (See [Fig. 10](#)).

The authors of the 141 items published in 2018 hailed from 59 countries. The leading countries of origin were Brazil with 15 items (10%), the United States with 14 items, Australia with 11 items, Italy with 10 items, Spain with 10 items, and the UK with nine items, with a clear predominance of authors from the countries of Western Europe and the United States. It is also noteworthy that 82% of the items were published in English (See [Fig. 11](#)).

Analyzing the religion-tourism nexus

In order to identify the religion-tourism nexus even more specifically, the analysis focused on the past five years: 2015–2019. This was due to the fact that although statistics currently exist only for papers published in or before 2018, current papers have also been published in 2019. As this study aims to be as updated as possible, papers from 2019 were also included in the following review procedure.

During this five year period, approximately 200 journal papers were published in tourism journals, and 20% of these papers were analyzed. The aim of the selected method was to serve as a lens highlighting the most recent developments in the field. To this end, this stage consisted of an analysis of 40 texts published in tourism journals over the past five years (2015–2019). In this context, Google Scholar was used as a search engine as opposed to Web of Science, which is a more limited source that would have limited the selection only to texts accepted by this platform.

To select these publications, four students (two males and two females) of different ages (in their twenties, thirties, forties, and fifties) studying in a Religion and Tourism MA program were each asked to select 10 items dealing with tourism and religion that were published in the past five years. If the same paper was chosen twice, they were asked to choose another. This sampling was conducted in an effort to understand and analyze the character of the publications, each of which was analyzed according to different criteria. The papers were read in full both by me and by the student who selected it and were then analyzed using the different criteria analyzed below. The list of papers is presented in [Table 1](#).

The analysis yielded the following insights regarding this diverse field of research. Of the 40 papers considered, only one country was researched three times (Spain), and a number of countries were researched twice (Turkey, Romania, Iran, Slovakia, Greece, Japan, Poland, Israel, and China). However, most of the countries were mentioned only once (Japan, UK, Thailand, India, Czech Republic, Indonesia, Nepal, Saudi Arabia, Portugal, Mexico, the United States, and Oman). This finding is also indicative of the substantial spatial diversity of the current research in the field. Five papers (12.5%) analyzed broader territorial entities such as Europe and Muslim countries.

Twenty-seven of the 40 items considered (67.5%) were based on a single case study, and only 13 (32.5%) were based on intentional comparative research (between sites, religions, religious activities, local groups, and performances). This finding speaks to the case-study research agenda that currently characterizes the overall RT field, in which more than two-thirds of the items surveyed were based on a single case study.

A more balanced division was found to exist between items focusing on destinations (24, or 60%) and those dealing primarily with RT activities and performances (16, or 40%).

In terms of methodology, eight of the 40 items (20%) were general papers dealing mainly with historical description of the researched phenomena or analysis of a specific kind of pilgrimage. The topics considered included: Tourism and pilgrimage among OIC (Organization of Islamic Cooperation) member states ([Zamani-Farahani & Eid, 2016](#)); The relationship between archaeology and RT ([Koren-Lawrence & Collins-Kreiner, 2019](#)); Anime pilgrimage phenomenon ([Okamoto, 2015](#)); The impact of Smart Technologies' on the experience of Hajj visitors ([Qurashi & Sharples, 2017](#)); Cultural and RT development in Iran ([Heydari Chianeh, Del Chiappa, & Ghasemi, 2018](#)); Political and RT in Portugal and Slovakia ([Ambrosio, 2007](#)); Spatial changes at pilgrimage centers in Europe ([Liro, Soljan, & Bilka-Wodecka, 2018a](#)); A bibliometric overview of RT and pilgrimage ([Durán-Sánchez et al., 2018](#)).

The analysis revealed a reasonable balance between quantitative and qualitative studies, with 19 of the 32 research articles (60%) employing quantitative methods and 13 (40%) employing qualitative methods. Of the 19 quantitative studies, a decisive majority (15, or 80%) were based on questionnaires, whereas only four employed content analysis of blogs or other online information.

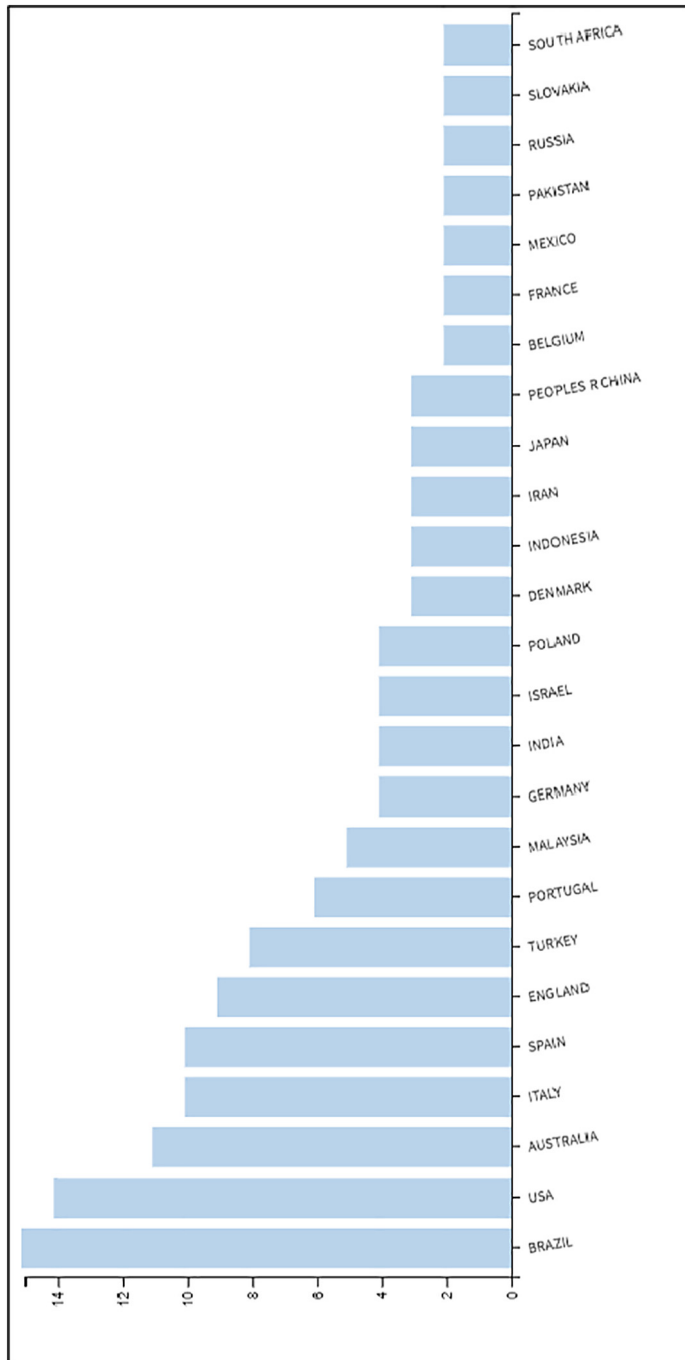


Fig. 11. Authors' countries of origin, 2018 (based on Web of Science).

Of the 13 papers that employed qualitative methods, almost all (11) were based on either interviews or observations, whereas one employed ethnographic analysis, and another employed both. We can therefore conclude that while the field is divided between quantitative and qualitative methodologies, stagnation still exists in the usage of either questionnaires, interviews, or observations, leaving combined methods almost non-existent. Ninety percent of the items (36 out of 40) offered practical recommendations, attesting to the highly practical character of the field.

The most interesting finding is that, currently, the two main subjects of inquiry are sustainable tourism and de-differentiation. The first, sustainable tourism, focuses on the environmental impact of tourism and tourists and was addressed by 50% (21) of the items. Indeed, sustainable tourism, community-based tourism, the attitudes and responses of local residents, and over-tourism are the main issues being discussed in the field today and in the tourism literature as a whole. It is interesting to note that of the 40 texts considered, only five dealt with the local population, whereas 32 dealt with tourist impact and the tourists themselves.

The second main subject of inquiry, the de-differentiation between RT and tourism as a whole, was also addressed by approximately 50% (20 out of 40) of the items, reflecting the emergence of this relatively new postmodern theory as the most widely used in the current research. Other topics explored by the items were the heritage-religion relationship (seven items that deal with WHS sites, UNESCO, and the heritage-religious nexus) and religion, tourism, marketing, and the media (five items, or 12%). Other topics were found to be specific to each item.

Main themes in the current religious & tourism research

In this section, a traditional review was undertaken by analyzing the latest papers written on the topic in the past 10 years. It examines the themes evolving in the scholarly literature and identifies gaps in the research that provide a basis for future investigation. An analysis of the field reveals the following four main themes of research:

De-differentiation: an obfuscated boundary within the tourism arena

The main theme has been the increasingly obfuscated boundary between tourism and religion. This trend was addressed in previous works and reflects current writing in the field (Collins-Kreiner, 2010; Kim et al., 2019). It appears to have stemmed from overall de-differentiation among tourism segments in recent decades and to be part of a mounting inability to differentiate between different markets, different motives for travel, and different sites. Whereas the field concentrates on hardcore RT, many studies today deal with topics that lie beyond it (Hitchner, Schelhas, Brosius, & Nibbelink, 2018). One example is Okamoto's, 2015 article, which analyses travel to locations featured in anime works.

Another study aims to characterize the experiences of Muslim, Jewish and Christian in Jerusalem (Albayrak et al., 2018), found the RT experience to be a multi-faceted construct that consists of mental engagement, belonging, connecting emotionally, and relaxing. Similarly, a study in Krakow (Liro, Sołjan, & Bilska-Wodecka, 2018b) found that each group of visitors had its own motivations, that de-differentiation was at play, and that visitors can and should be classified along a continuum. Terzidou, Scarles, and Saunders (2017) included religiousness as an element of tourist performance and, using a case study of Greek Orthodox tour, highlighted the increasing de-differentiation among visitors.

De-differentiation has been addressed by a number of studies dealing with walking the Camino de Santiago and visitation to Santiago. In one such study, Santiago and the new nearby destination of Fisterra symbolizes perhaps better than anything else pilgrimage's post-secular meaning (Blom, Nilssonand, & Santos, 2016).

Researchers have begun discussing pilgrimage in terms of spiritual rather than religious motivations and actions, closely approaching the existential view of religion. Moreover, pilgrimages are no longer the exclusive domain of religious journeys, and many types of tourists are acknowledged as being motivated to travel to conventionally religious/spiritual destinations by a quest for spiritual wellbeing, enlightenment, knowledge, and social relationships. The concept of secular pilgrimage was developed to emphasize journeys to non-religious sacred sites or "new age pilgrimage" that may hold spiritual significance (Collins-Kreiner, 2016; Kim et al., 2019; Kim, Kim, & King, 2016).

De-differentiation is addressed by most papers and should perhaps now be seen as an over-researched topic. It was first discussed in the 1990s, with research focusing on the differences between tourists and pilgrims, and subsequently advanced (Mora-Torres, Serrano-Barquín, Favila-Cisneros, & Serrano-Barquín, 2016). However, after decades of exploring this topic it seems as if new agendas should be put on the table.

Religious tourism as "exponomy" and transformative travel

Increasing emphasis in the tourism research has been placed on the "tourist experience" (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), which is a trajectory that has grown dramatically along with the understanding that "exponomy" – the experience economy – is the next trend, as various works in the religion and Tourism field now highlight the visitors' experience (Albayrak et al., 2018; Collins-Kreiner, 2010; Qurashi & Sharples, 2017; Hitchner et al., 2018; Kato & Prozano, 2017; Almuhrzi & Alsawafi, 2017).

Notable examples of experience research include: a study that seeks to identify experiences in Jerusalem, which differ according to religion and significantly affect tourist satisfaction; a research by Nyaupane, Timothy, and Poudel (2015), who seeks to understand tourists at religious destinations using the concept of social distance. Wang, Chen, and Huang (2015) have written about the experiences and motivations of religious tourists in Buddhist China vis-à-vis the extent of their religious belief. And a study of visitor experiences, activities, and benefits conducted by Bond in England (Bond, Packer, & Ballantyne, 2014) compared the experiences of

different visitors at different sites, including their mental experiences.

Heintzman (2013) concluded that retreats foster personal transformation and ultimately results in improved self-identity, and that RT could be also viewed as an agent of societal transformation (Reisinger, 2013).

Religion as a “product”

Contemporary research adopts the approach of “religion as a product”, as religion has become one of the products that are offered. “Though packaged differently, the majority of religions offer the same end benefit for the consumer -self-exploration, meaning and purpose, forgiveness and salvation, peace of mind, and similar... when approached in this manner, it is tempting to view religion as a product, with branding as a key marketing technique used to compete for customers” (Ateljević and Tomljenović, 2016; Tomljenović & Dukić, 2017:2).

Accordingly, one growing trend in the scholarship is a movement from theoretical articles to practical studies of practical impact (For example: Almuhri & Alsawafi, 2017; Bastaman, 2018; Heydari Chianeh et al., 2018; Qurashi & Sharpley, 2017), such as the impact of technologies (Qurashi & Sharpley, 2017; Giusca, Gheorghilas, & Dumitrache, 2018). This approach of religion as a product is also reflected in current works on RT, in which marketing and other practical issues predominate. This trend, which was hardly identified by previous works is especially strong, as practical implications are discussed by almost all the articles published over the past 10 years, and the number of papers that seek to contend with practical issues continues to grow.

Expansion into current topics of tourism research: sustainability, over-tourism, and CBT (community based tourism)

The nexus between religious issues and sustainability issues is another field of research that has been expanding over the past decade, although this trend was also not identified by previous works. As “over-tourism” continues to increase, so do the works that deal with its impact. One example is a critical article on the commercialization at Shaolin Monastery in China (Hung et al., 2017), although the over commercialization of such sacred sites may run counter to Buddhist values and philosophy. Other articles have addressed attitudes toward and impacts on the local population and its views (Alipour, Olya, & Forouzan, 2017; Bastaman, 2018), as well as different issues of sustainability, such as the perspective of the local population (Alipour et al., 2017), or implications of tourism in the Garhwal Himalaya (Sati, 2015).

Those topics appear to be the emerging trends, as the questions relate not only to RT but to tourism as a whole, which is currently concentrating on concepts such as sustainability, community-based tourism, sustainable tourism development, etc.

To summarize, the four themes identified – de-differentiation, religious tourism as an exonomy, religion as a product, and expansion into current topics of tourism research – were also identified by recent reviews of the topic to varying degrees (Durán-Sánchez et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2019).

Conclusions: the new knowledge map of religion and tourism

As illustrated above, the research field of religion and tourism has recently experienced immense growth, reflected in the number of published items and the number of authors, as well as in the religions and regions explored. Interestingly, this expansion has taken place during the 21st century, when secular interests might have been expected to play a more dominant role.

Second, it appears that one feature of this growth has been the field’s fragmentation in terms of the countries explored, subject categories, and authors, and a diversification of these aspects of the literature.

Third, and also notable, is the predominance of case studies and the lack of comparative research of sites, religions, customs, and behaviors, meaning that most of the research concentrates exclusively on specific sites. Fourth is the emergence of de-differentiation and sustainability as the most widely used theoretical frameworks in the field. Both emerged in the 2000s, and as a significant amount of time has passed since then, new theories and agendas should be advanced.

Fifth, the literature offers no criticism of the various theories as each scholar offers a unique view when researching RT. As such, issues of “true” and “false” seem to be less important, leaving individual researchers to interpret the world and its social phenomena with their own assumptions and perceptions.

Sixth, RT today cannot be defined as clearly as it was in the past. At this juncture, it is important to understand and internalize the fact that the once used dichotomies of the past are no longer applicable in the postmodern world of today. The meta-analysis reflects that many different types of tourists, and not religiously motivated visitors alone, are motivated to travel to conventionally religious/spiritual destinations for the purpose of seeking spiritual wellbeing, enlightenment, knowledge, and social bonds. The concept of secular visitation has been developed to emphasize journeys to non-religious sacred sites. These approaches have emerged to provide a more holistic understanding of the intersections between tourism and religion and/or spirituality (Kirillova, 2019).

Seventh, the scholarship on religion and tourism appears to be mirroring the tourism field, with the rise of issues of sustainability, local communities, the attitudes and responses of local residents, related impacts, and conflicts between the physical environment and locals. Also relevant are the issues of over-tourism and the sustainable tourism development of religious sites.

The rise of these topics of sustainability in the religion and tourism research is one sign that the religion-tourism nexus has largely been accepted as a tourism segment and a unique field of research. Perhaps more than anything else, this expansion into addressing the most current topics in tourism research reflects increasing obfuscation of the line between RT and other aspects of tourism both in the research and in reality.

Future research: the need for holistic conceptualization

Studying tourism and religion today should transcend disciplinary boundaries and should involve an interpretative methodology to looking for comprehensive meanings. Religious performances are creations of the culture, and as such, they tell “stories” from cultural, political, religious and social perspectives. At the same time, they play a role in shaping our identity, society and culture.

Researchers must begin discussing religion and tourism in terms of their meaning rather than religious motivations and actions, as suggested by the existential view of religion. The major conclusion of this review essay is the need for a holistic conceptualization of the field, which was found to be lacking, and for a better understanding of the universalistic components of the field, which is currently fragmented. Below, I propose two possible holistic conceptualizations: 1) the post-secular tourist and postmodernism, and 2) the politicization of religion and the rise of identity politics through tourism.

The post-secular tourist and postmodernist conceptualizations

The first proposed framework is the use of postmodernist conceptualizations and the notion of the “post-secular tourist,” as the arrival of “post-secular society” has ushered in transdisciplinary research. The academic debate on “post-secularism,” it seems, has not afforded tourism its proper due as a key space in which the “post-secular” is articulated. Thus, “post-secular tourism” transcends standard and old dichotomies of traveling as a religious duty as opposed to pure fun (Nilsson & Tesfahuney, 2018). RT emerged as one of the world's first tourism mobility thousands of years ago. In recent decades, its significance in the tourism arena has decreased as other tourism segments have gained prominence. I predict that it will reemerge when all the similar segments – particularly, spiritual tourism, heritage tourism, pilgrimage, dark tourism, and secular pilgrimage – are re-identified, as they were at the beginning of humanity and for thousands of years, as a mobility of the quest for meaning that contains a measure of transformation that is often deep and enduring (Collins-Kreiner, 2019).

RT has long been identified as a mobility that enhances personal and societal transformation by providing experiences that cause people to reflect on their lives. Though different authors today use a variety of terms (for example: Reisinger, 2013, 2015; Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Terzidou, Scarles, & Saunders, 2018), they all point in the same direction – toward the tourists' motivation to seek a deeper understanding of the meaning of life. In this way, they all contribute further to deconstructionist trends in tourism studies that seek to de-differentiate religious and non-religious types of tourism and travel (Eade & Katić, 2017).

This trend, which was identified by the review paper, illustrates the way in which postmodernism could provide a balancing approach in explaining the characteristics of the postmodern tourist. It also highlights the manner in which the current trends in RT are all consistent with the postmodernist approach, as the difference between RT and other market segments fades and elements of similarity emerge. After all, they all involve a desire to visit sites that are meaningful and to have an emotional experience.

RT lies at the core of the “post-secular turn” and should be studied accordingly. The time has come to allow for broader interpretations in order to meet the growing need to move forward and examine the phenomena in a more holistic manner. It is difficult to distinguish between the different segments of tourists, as they are all part of the exonomy era and are motivated by a wish for an experience that will add meaning to their life. As a result, it seems that the study of religion and tourism is being transformed in the direction of a postmodernist analysis. The underlying change in the theoretical foundation involves the elimination of distinctions between different forms of tourism, as well as an increasing inability to distinguish between different conceptualizations which are now being integrated. The “post-modernization” of approaches allows for a multiplicity of legitimate interpretations and interpreters, which also appears to provide a path of egress from the contest between competing research agendas reflected in questions such as what is and what isn't religious tourism.

The politicization of religion and the rise of identity politics through tourism

The second proposed framework is the use of conceptualizations of the politicization of religion and the rise of identity politics through tourism. Politics' increasing impact on RT has also been a topic of research based on the understanding that religious sites are an arena of conflict arising from the collision of religion, politics, and tourism, in different countries and between different religions (Heydari Chianeh et al., 2018; Mora-Torres et al., 2016; Shmueli, Collins-Kreiner, & Ben Gal, 2014). The subject of tourism, religion, and power has been explored by various authors, (Nyaupane & Timothy, 2010; Pack, 2010) as religious tourism sites are often at the root of violence, upheaval, and demonstrations and as their impact is stronger because of their international profile. Nyaupane and Timothy (2010), for example explore power, regionalism, and tourism using frameworks of power relations and concepts of regionalism.

Thus, the main impetus for the second proposed framework is Kong's (2010: 763) request to “go beyond insightful analyses of the micro-politics of religious spatial expressions to contribute to an understanding of larger social and political events confronting the contemporary world, including religious conflict and religious change.” This appeal should also be considered by tourism researchers, as most papers currently remain within the tourism arena but could benefit from breaching its boundaries. It advocates including an examination of the tourism-related bases and investigating the connections between religion and tourism in religious spaces, as they relate to power struggles among stakeholders from different levels.

RT sites have attracted attention in the literature on identity formation, collective memory, self-empowerment, resistance, exclusion and minority groups (Collins-Kreiner, Shmueli, & Ben Gal, 2013). The establishment or expansion of places of worship of minority-religious groups is often associated with negotiation and competition relating to politics of identity (Shmueli et al., 2014). Hassner (2003) identifies “centrality” and “exclusivity” as measures for evaluating sacred spaces. The three strategies he reviews are

“partition”, “scheduling”, and “exclusion”, which, he maintains, “rather than mitigate the conflict...create incentives for competition over more space and more time as a means for establishing relative legitimacy” (Hassner, 2013: 330).

Though RT appears to play a prominent role in the current landscape, relatively few tourism researchers have contributed to a better appreciation of its broader implications. The time has come for tourism researchers to raise a unique voice regarding the challenges and opportunities presented by the realm of religion and tourism, given the diverse religious expressions across space and place, by aiming to understand how concepts such as scale, space, location, place attachment, place identity, sense of community, identity, and image alter the perception of and further refine the field of religion and tourism. What insights can religious sites provide us about a governing regime? Majority-minority relations? Inter-group tensions and minority conflicts? Local politics? Perceptions of landscape dominance? The politicization of religion? The rise of identity politics through tourism? Answering these questions requires us to consider culture and context, not as homogeneous, stable, and timeless categories but as variables within groups.

RT sites have physical and symbolic dimensions. They are marked, associated with places to which religious community ascribes extraordinary religious significance. Thus, “spaces may be read... not only as sacred or profane, but also as the reflections and reproduction of religious and social desires and anxieties” (Brace, Bailey, & Harvey, 2006).

The major questions that arise after reviewing the tourism-religion literature surveyed for this essay remain unanswered and in need of consideration. Some of these questions are as follows:

- Is the increasing research on religion and tourism a reflection of a growing trend of religiousness? We are already aware of the mounting trend of touristification, but is this phenomenon indicative or predictive of religiosity? Is religious visitation indicative or predictive of a growing importance of religion in other realms of social life?
- Islamic/Halal RT established Islam as the leading religion addressed by the surveyed publications, as most of the texts were published over the past three years. What does this mean? Are there more cases of this phenomenon, or has more literature and research on it simply been carried out? Is the growth in RT related to a growth in Islam? Are increased numbers in RT indicative or predictive of a growth in the numbers of future believers? How can we explain the growing numbers of Islamic religious sites and the growing numbers of visitors to those sites? How is RT connected to politics, and how is it connected to the politicization of religion?
- The main body of research produced in the past few years was conducted in Eastern European countries and is therefore reflective of the social and cultural settings in those post-communist countries. In these locations, there appears to be a close connection among increased RT, increased research of RT, and growing trends of nationalism, the politicization of religion, and identity politics. It has been more than three decades since the fall of Communism, and religion and RT continue to expand in these countries. Is religion, and religious visitation to religious sites, achieving a strong foundation there? How and to what extent are these countries' identities being formed by RT visitation?
- Most of the authors of the published items come from English speaking countries, whereas most of the cases are based in non-English speaking countries. This raises the question of whether the trend is part of a neocolonialist process through which researchers come to 'own' sites by acquiring knowledge about them.
- China is becoming a major supplier of case studies dealing with religiosity and tourism. Is religious visitation increasing in China, and, if so, is this reflective of a growing religious trend in the country or merely an increase in the number of studies being conducted? How is the phenomenon related to the increasing research in these different countries, and which came first? What is the political context underlying this growing trend in China?
- The emergence of sacred sites and increasing visitation is usually predictive of other cultural and social trends. What are these trends, and how does the religion-tourism nexus affect them or perhaps even create them?

These are just some of the questions that tourism researchers should begin answering, or at least asking, if they wish to produce works that are critical and have an impact. Thus far, these questions are only barely being asked by the current literature.

F. Summary: the need for a new agenda

This essay explored the current trends in RT research by reviewing and analyzing the literature produced on the subject over the past decade. A large number of items have indeed been published on the topic, but for the most part these have been case studies examining topics within the category of “tourism.” Although and because the field is becoming more holistic in nature and pertains to a growing number of countries and religions, there is currently a need for comparative holistic research based on theoretical frames in order to move forward.

I am aware of the article's limitations stemming from the diverse and varied methods employed in the comprehensive meta-analysis. Indeed, the study's major limitation lies in the fact that neither Web of Science nor Google Scholar encompasses all of the existing data, although they both provide a general direction. These platforms were used as an accurate method of assessing the state of the art of research on the topic and are accompanied by a qualitative explanation. Another limitation is the fact that the search of the qualitative data employed the terms “religio*” and “tourism,” leaving out concepts such as pilgrimage, transformative travel, and other concepts that have been extensively researched in recent years. This self-imposed limitation proved necessary due to the fact that hundreds of papers were already found to contain the terms “religio*” and “tourism” alone, and expanding the sample would have made the quantitative research unwieldy. The qualitative methods employed here, on the other hand, did take these concepts into consideration.

Another limitation is the fact that the second sample was unstructured and reflects only 20% of all the papers published on the topic between 2015 and 2019. It was clearly understood that the larger the meta-analysis, the more the limitations that would exist.

The preponderance of sectional studies and the popularity of works that examine the phenomenon at a single point in time have kept the field in stagnation, and a “comparative” approach in the sense of comparison between religions, sites, experiences, products, customs, souvenirs, infrastructure, services, and implications is now called for as a first stage. The second stage should be researching the “meaning of the phenomena,” and in the third and final stage the field should advance to a more holistic analysis using new frameworks and theories from fields such as sociology, political science, and cultural studies in order to deepen it and enhance its impact. The field still seems to be waiting for the “next big theory,” and we scholars need to examine our narrow usage of terms so as to allow for wider interpretations.

This call is coherent with other calls for a rethinking of the paradigms shaping the scholarship on other tourism segments such as pilgrimage (Eade & Albera, 2015), dark tourism (Collins-Kreiner, 2016; Stone, 2013), and tourism as a whole (Winter, 2009). Such change requires thinking outside the box of disciplinary fields (e.g. tourism) and employing a post-disciplinary attitude based on flexible forms of knowledge, plurality, synthesis, and synergy (Coles, Hall, & Duval, 2006).

I therefore maintain that the field of tourism and religion is in need of a holistic conceptualization of the overall topic and a better understanding of the universalistic components of the field, which is currently particularistic, fragmented, and scattered. To this end, we must consider adopting new agendas with broad perspectives that are focused neither on case study research nor pure tourism research, as most studies of religion and tourism are today.

Statement of contribution

The main contribution of this essay is its comprehensive review of the religion-tourism nexus over the past decade (2010–2018), concluding with recommendations for new foci of research such as the politicization of religion and the rise of identity politics through tourism. This survey uses a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze the main theories and theoretical frames employed in the field and to identify the major gaps as a basis for proposing new avenues of research. It adopts a social science perspective in terms of data collection and analysis, in its consideration of the relationship between tourism and other social scientific disciplines, and in its view of the religion-tourism nexus as an important topic of current social scientific research.

References

- Albayrak, T., Herstein, R., Caber, M., Drori, N., Bideci, M., & Berger, R. (2018). Exploring religious tourist experiences in Jerusalem: The intersection of Abrahamic religions. *Tourism Management*, 69, 285–296.
- Alipour, H., Olya, H. G. T., & Forouzan, I. (2017). Environmental impacts of mass religious tourism: From residents' perspectives. *Tourism Analysis*, 22(2), 167–183.
- Almuhri, H. M., & Alsawafi, A. M. (2017). Muslim perspectives on spiritual and religious travel beyond Hajj: Toward understanding motivations for Umrah travel in Oman. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 24, 235–242.
- Ambrosio, V. (2007). Sacred pilgrimage and tourism as secular pilgrimage. In R. Razaq, & N. Morpeth (Eds.). *Religious tourism and pilgrimage festivals management: An international perspective*. Wallingford: CAB International.
- Ateljević, I., & Tomljenović, R. (2016). Triple T: Tourism, transmodernity and transformative learning. *Turističko poslovanje*, 17, 25–33.
- Bastaman, A. (2018). Lombok Islamic tourism attractiveness: Non-Moslem perspectives. *International Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 7(2), 206–210.
- Blom, T., Nilssonand, M., & Santos, X. (2016). The way to Santiago beyond Santiago. Fistera and the pilgrimage's post-secular meaning. *European Journal of Tourism Research*, 12, 133–146.
- Bond, N., Packer, J., & Ballantyne, R. (2014). Exploring visitor experiences, activities and benefits at three religious tourism sites. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 17(5), 471–481.
- Brace, C., Bailey, A., & Harvey, D. (2006). Religion, place and space: A framework for investigating historical geography of religious identities and communities. *Progress in Human Geography*, 30, 28–43.
- Butler, R., & Suntikul, W. (Eds.). (2017). *Tourism and Religion*. UK: Channel View Publications.
- Cohen, E. (1992). Pilgrimage centers, concentric and eccentric. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 19(1), 33–50.
- Cohen, E. (1998). Tourism and religion: A comparative perspective. *Pacific Tourism Review*, 2, 1–10.
- Coles, T., Hall, C. M., & Duval, D. T. (2006). Tourism and post-disciplinary enquiry. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 9(4–5), 293–319.
- Collins-Kreiner, N. (2010). Researching pilgrimage: Continuity and transformations. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 37, 440–456.
- Collins-Kreiner, N. (2016). Dark tourism as/is pilgrimage. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 19(12), 1185–1189.
- Collins-Kreiner, N. (2019). Pilgrimage tourism – Past, present and future rejuvenation: A perspective article. *Tourism Review*, 75(1), 145–148.
- Collins-Kreiner, N., Shmueli, D., & Ben Gal, M. (2013). Spatial transgression of new religious sites in Israel. *Applied Geography*, 40, 103–114.
- Digance, J. (2003). Pilgrimage at contested sites. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 30(1), 143–159.
- Digance, J. (2006). Religious and secular pilgrimage. In D. J. Timothy, & D. H. Olsen (Eds.). *Tourism, religion and spiritual journeys* (pp. 36–48). London: Routledge.
- Durán-Sánchez, A., Álvarez-García, J., de la Cruz del Río-Rama, M., & Oliveira, C. (2018). Religious tourism and pilgrimage: Bibliometric overview. *Religions*, 9, 249–264.
- Eade, J., & Albera, D. (Eds.). (2015). *International perspectives on pilgrimage studies: Itineraries, gaps and obstacles*. New York: Routledge.
- Eade, J., & Katić, M. (2017). *Military pilgrimage and battlefield tourism*. New York: Routledge.
- Giusca, M., Gheorghilas, A., & Dumitrache, L. (2018). Assessment of the religious-tourism potential in Romania. *Human Geographies*, 12(2), 226–235.
- Hassner, R. (2003). To halve and to hold: Conflicts over sacred space and the problem of indivisibility. *Security Studies*, 12(4), 1–33.
- Hassner, R. (2013). Conflicts of sacred ground. In M. Kitts, M. Juergensmeyer, & M. Jerryson (Eds.). *Oxford handbook of religion and violence* (pp. 324–331). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Heintzman, P. (2013). Retreat tourism as a form of transformational tourism. In Y. Reisinger (Ed.). *Transformational tourism: Tourist perspectives (68–81)*. Wallingford: CAB.
- Heydari Chianeh, R., Del Chiappa, G., & Ghasemi, V. (2018). Cultural and religious tourism development in Iran: Prospects and challenges. *Anatolia*, 29(2), 204–214.
- Hitchner, S., Schelhas, J., Brosius, J. P., & Nibbelink, N. (2018). Thru hiking the John Muir Trail as a modern pilgrimage: Implications for natural resource management. *Journal of Ecotourism*, 18(1), 82–99.
- Hung, K., Yang, X., Wassler, P., Wang, D., Lin, P., & Liu, Z. (2017). Contesting the commercialization and sanctity of religious tourism in the Shaolin Monastery, China. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 19(2), 127–267.
- Kato, K., & Prozano, R. N. (2017). Spiritual (walking) tourism as a foundation for sustainable destination development: Kumano-kodo pilgrimage, Wakayama, Japan.

- Tourism Management Perspectives*, 24, 243–251.
- Kim, B., Kim, S. S., & King, B. E. M. (2016). The sacred and the profane: Identifying pilgrim traveler value orientations using means-end theory. *Tourism Management*, 56, 142–155.
- Kim, B., Kim, S. S., & King, B. E. M. (2019). Religious tourism studies: Evolution, progress, and future prospects. *Tourism Recreation Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2019.1664084>.
- Kirilova, K. (2019). Existentialism and tourism: New research avenues. *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 5(3), 429–442.
- Kong, L. (2010). Global shifts, theoretical shifts: Changing geographies of religion. *Progress in Human Geography*, 34(6), 755–776.
- Koren-Lawrence, N., & Collins-Kreiner, N. (2019). Visitors with their 'backs to the archaeology': Religious tourism and archaeology. *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 14(2), 138–149.
- Liro, J., Sołjan, I., & Bilska-Wodecka, E. (2018a). Spatial changes of pilgrimage centers in pilgrimage studies – Review and contribution to future research. *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*, 6(3), 3.
- Liro, J., Sołjan, I., & Bilska-Wodecka, E. (2018b). Visitors' diversified motivations and behavior - The case of the pilgrimage center in Krakow (Poland). *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 16(4), 416–435.
- Mora-Torres, V., Serrano-Barquín, R., Favila-Cisneros, H., & Serrano-Barquín, C. (2016). RT in the Hill of Tepexpan: A new research approach - From dedifferentiation. *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*, 4(5), 17–25.
- Neusner, J. (Ed.). (2003). *God's rule: The politics of world religions*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
- Nilsson, M., & Tesfahuney, M. (2018). The post-secular tourist: Re-thinking pilgrimage tourism. *Tourist Studies*, 18(2), 159–176.
- Nyaupane, G. P., & Timothy, D. J. (2010). Power, regionalism, and tourism policy in Bhutan. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 37(4), 969–988.
- Nyaupane, G. P., Timothy, D. J., & Poudel, S. (2015). Understanding tourists in religious destinations: A social distance perspective. *Tourism Management*, 48, 343–353.
- Okamoto, T. (2015). Otaku tourism and the anime pilgrimage phenomenon in Japan. *Japan Forum*, 27(1), 12–36.
- Pack, S. D. (2010). Revival of the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela: The politics of religious, national, and European patrimony, 1879–1988. *The Journal of Modern History*, 82(2), 335–367.
- Pine, B., & Gilmore, J. H. (1999). *The experience economy*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Qurashi, J., & Sharpley, R. A. (2017). The impact of SMART media technologies (SMT) on the spiritual experience of hajj pilgrims. *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*, 6(3), 3748.
- Reisinger, Y. (2013). Connection between travel, tourism and transformation. In Y. Reisinger (Ed.), *Transformational tourism: Tourist perspectives* (pp. 27–31). Oxfordshire: CABI.
- Reisinger, Y. (2015). *Transformational tourism: Host perspectives*. Oxfordshire: CABI.
- Sati, A. (2015). Pilgrimage tourism in mountain regions: Socio-economic and environmental implications in the Garhwal Himalaya. *South Asian Journal of Tourism and Heritage*, 8(2), 164–182.
- Shmueli, D., Collins-Kreiner, N., & Ben Gal, M. (2014). Conflict over sacred space: The case of Nazareth. *Cities*, 41(A), 132–140.
- Smith, V. L. (1992). Introduction. The quest in guest. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 19(1), 1–17.
- Stone, P. R. (2013). Dark tourism scholarship: A critical review. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 7(3), 307–318.
- Terzidou, M., Scarles, C., & Saunders, M. N. K. (2017). Religiosity as tourist performances: A case study of Greek Orthodox pilgrimage. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 66, 116–129.
- Terzidou, M., Scarles, C., & Saunders, M. N. K. (2018). The complexities of religious tourism motivations: Sacred places, vows, and visions. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 70, 54–65.
- Timothy, D. J., & Olsen, D. H. (Eds.). (2006). *Tourism, religion and spiritual journeys*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Tomljenović, R., & Dukić, L. (2017). Religious tourism – From a tourism product to an agent of societal transformation. SITCON 2017. *Religious Tourism and the Contemporary Tourism Market*. 1–8.
- Turner, V., & Turner, E. (1978). *Image and pilgrimage in Christian culture*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Vukonić, B. (1996). *Tourism and religion*. London: Elsevier Science Ltd.
- Vukonić, B. (2002). Religion, tourism and economics: A convenient symbiosis. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 27(2), 59–64.
- Wang, W., Chen, J. S., & Huang, K. (2015). Religious tourist motivation in Buddhist Mountain: The case from China. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 21(1), 57–72.
- Web of Science**. <https://www.webofknowledge.com> (last accessed on Dec. 12, 2019).
- Winter, T. (2009). Asian tourism and the retreat of Anglo-western centrism in tourism theory. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 12(1), 21–31.
- World Tourism Organization (2011). *Religious tourism in Asia and the Pacific*. Madrid: UNWTO.
- World Tourism Organization (2018). *Annual Report 2017*. UNWTO. Retrieved from World Tourism Organizations website: <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284419807>.
- Zamani-Farahani, H., & Eid, R. (2016). Muslim world: A study of tourism & pilgrimage among OIC member states. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 19, 144–149.

Noga Collins-Kreiner is a Professor (PhD), in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of Haifa, Israel, the Head of the Haifa and Galilee Research Institute and the President of the Israeli Geographical Association (IGA).

Her main research interests are: Pilgrimage, Religious Tourism, Heritage Tourism, Hiking and Tourism Development and Management. She is also a resource editor of the “*Annals of Tourism Research*” and published many papers on the topics of Tourism and Human Geography.