

## Book Review: *Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Management*, edited by Razaq Raj and Kevin Griffin

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The 2nd edition of *Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Management: An International Perspective* (Wallingford, England: CAB International, 2015) with 21 chapters written by 342 internationally renowned scientific researchers and contributors, presents different areas of religious tourism and pilgrimage management. The book consists of three parts: the theoretical sections are presented as the first and second parts, encompassing concepts in religious tourism and pilgrimage management representing the motivation and experience of religious sites. The third part of the book is dedicated to international case studies; this is the largest part and has ten contributors.

The chapters of the first part lay the entire basis of religious tourism, beginning with the introduction of the contents, religion, tourism and explanation of the experience industry. Combining scientific knowledge and practical research, the authors of the first part present the benefits but also the threats and doubts about masses of tourists visiting sacred places and buildings, competition between faiths for a location, and conflicts between pilgrimage and commercial tourism. The authors discuss the motivation for religious travel, events, globalisation through religious tourism, British and Irish pilgrimage tourism, but also tolerance gained through religious tourism and its opposite: terrorism and the mechanisms to limit acts of crime against pilgrims, which one case study describes.

The chapters of the second part lead the reader to the experience economy within pilgrimage and religious tourism and the co-operation with stakeholders. One of the authors discusses the WTO's definition of spiritual tourism (p. 147), which is (in the opinion of this reviewer) *contradictio in adiecto*, since spiritual

travel is a path to oneself, not around the world as a tourist. It is a place where groups of people cannot penetrate, and it does not include 'entrance fees but meditation or contemplation. This is a good point for further discussions.

Nine chapters of the last part present case studies and lessons for the readers around the world, beginning with the pilgrimage experience and consumption of travel to the city of Makkah for the Hajj ritual. Through the religious tourism experiences in South East Asia, a Nordic Pilgrimage to Israel (A case of Christian Zionism), Religious Tourism Sites in Africa, Northern Portugal, Argentina, South Lebanon, and Malta, the authors present international perspectives on religious, cultural and pilgrimage tourism. Two of the case studies explore a broader aspect of religious tourism: one describes Ashura, a religious observance marked every year by Shia Muslims and its commemoration in Iraq, and the other presents comparison of classic Western insurance and Islamic insurance, followed by a case study of the Takaful insurance company in Bahrain.

Lessons learned from the book are useful for scholars, students, event organisers, researchers, religious and pilgrimage intermediaries, and the tourism industry in general. The book offers excellent themes for discussions of some recognised definitions, which need new descriptions to present a deeper meaning of tourism connected to religions and pilgrimages.



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