

Religious Tourism - a Finnish Perspective

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<p>This thesis deals with religious tourism. The objectives of this study are firstly to understand what religious tourism is, who the tourists attracted to religious tourism are, what the destinations and motives for religious holidays are and what the future of religious tourism looks like. This study is limited to dealing with Christian religious tourism.</p> <p>There is a survey made to find out firstly how religious tourism is understood and what the important destinations for religious tourism are. Secondly, it is to find out how much interest there is for different forms of religious tourism, what destinations are interesting and what else is important when travelling for religious motives. A questionnaire is formulated and distributed in two different churches in Finland. The questionnaire consists of mainly structured questions and two open-ended questions. The results are calculated and evaluated using quantitative method with the help of Excel.</p> <p>There are 78 respondents in this study, all Finns by nationality. According to this study, religious tourism is mainly understood to be about Israel, pilgrimages, missionary travel and Biblical tours. The most important destinations according to this study are Israel, Greece and Finland, which are all also seen as the most interesting religious tourism destinations. As for the most interesting forms of religious tourism, religious conferences and events together with visiting Biblical places are seen as the most appealing. The “dream come true” religious holiday for the respondents would be about traveling together with 1-2 other people, contain taking part in a church service, meeting local people and having fellowship with others. The most suitable length of a religious holiday would be one week. Among the recipients of this study, the motives for taking a religious holiday are mostly spiritual. According to the results, three propositions for possible religious holiday packages are made for tour operators.</p>	
<p>Key words Religious tourism, religion, spiritual tourism, pilgrimage</p>	

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	3
1.1	The research problem and aim	4
1.2	The limitations	5
1.3	The structure of the thesis	5
2	The religious life and religious tourism in Finland	7
2.1	Religion generally	7
2.2	Religion in Finland	7
2.3	Religious tourism in Finland	10
2.4	The Evangelical Free Church and the Pentecostal Church	12
3	Characteristics of religious tourism	14
3.1	Religious tourism and pilgrimages	14
3.2	Categories in religious tourism	16
3.3	Spirituality, authenticity and secular pilgrimage	19
3.4	Destinations for religious tourism	22
3.5	The religious tourist	23
3.6	Motives behind religious tourism	27
3.7	The future of religious tourism	29
4	The methodology	31
4.1	Choosing the quantitative research method	31
4.2	Survey as a way of data collection	32
4.3	Development of a questionnaire	33
4.4	Data collection and analysis	34
4.5	Reliability, validity and objectivity	35
5	Finnish views on religious tourism	39
5.1	The demographics of the respondents	39
5.2	The perceptions about religious tourism	40
5.3	Important and interesting religious destinations	43
5.4	Interest for religious tourism in the past and in the future	47
5.5	Motives for a religious holiday	49

5.6	Important aspects during a religious holiday.....	49
5.7	A “dream come true” religious holiday.....	52
5.8	The prototype respondent of this study.....	52
6	The conclusions.....	53
	Bibliography.....	57
	Appendices.....	62
	Appendix 1. The questionnaire in English.....	62
	Appendix 2. The questionnaire in Finnish.....	65

1 Introduction

I have a personal interest for religious tourism, as I worked years in Greece for a mission organization, where part of my responsibilities had to do with organizing short term volunteer programs in co-operation with local churches. These experiences drove me to undertake my thesis on religious tourism, as I wanted to combine two of my major passions in life: spiritual matters and tourism.

Religious tourism is very little researched in Finland; in fact, I could find only two theses about religious tourism made at bachelor or master level in Applied Universities in Finland. The first deals with a religious event called Lähetysjuhlat and organizing a related sub-event as part of its main program. The main theoretical concentration is to identify how religious tourists differ from other tourist groups and whether there are differences in the organizing of religious and non-religious events. The other is conducted for Toiviomatkat, a travel agency concentrating on religious tourism, to assess out the motivational factors of tourists traveling to Israel. I also found a doctoral thesis about religious tourists in Hungarian Catholicism, where the concentration is mainly for understanding religious tourists as a traveling group, their motivations and how they interpret the places they visit and what it means to be a pilgrim of today.

Personally I have got the impression during my bachelor studies in the early 21st century, that it is mainly elderly women with good income who are interested in religious tourism. They prefer high level accommodation and travel arrangements via tour operator. I would be very excited to find out whether this is the case nowadays too and whether there is growth potential for organizing religious trips to youth as well.

The idea of this thesis is to find out how people in Finland understand religious tourism and how interested they are in its different forms. The main term is religious tourism. However, religious tourism to me refers to religion and I am not particularly interested in religion as such, but rather I am interested in Christian spiritual matters. Perhaps this is the reason also why spiritual tourism is often used instead of religious tourism. Spiritual tourism might also refer to tourism outside the Christian religion or

in fact, outside any religion, thus Christian spiritual tourism could also be used to define the type of tourism this thesis is about. I believe this wording would have a greater potential for attracting those interested in this form of tourism. In fact, religious tourism in my mind refers to Catholicism and pilgrimages related to Muslim religion and their holy travels to Mecca. Nevertheless, in this study, I will use religious tourism as the main term, as it is the term mostly used in English literature.

Religious tourism is, I believe, a growing sector in tourism, as more and more niche markets are developing when tourists need something that meets their specific needs. Religion as such does not attract people so much anymore, in fact, the numbers of people attending the Western churches are declining, but spirituality, on the other hand, is a growing trend. In the midst of hectic everyday life, many are seeking solitude and deeper meaning for life. Religious or spiritual tourism definitely has growth potential in the future.

1.1 The research problem and aim

The research problems can be formulated in the form of following questions: What is the Finnish perspective of religious tourism? How do a certain group of Finns understand religious tourism? How interested are they in religious tourism and in what sectors of religious tourism are they mainly interested? What do they prefer during their religious holiday? Who are the people by sex, age and education most interested in religious tourism? What would be a dream come true religious holiday from the Finnish perspective?

The research aim is to deepen the understanding of religious tourism from the Finnish point of view. The aim is to find answers to how people understand religious tourism, whether they have already been on religious trips or holidays and to find out how much interest there is for such holidays in the future and lastly what kinds of things are seen important on such holidays. Further, another important aim is to find out who the people groups are by age, sex and education the least and most interested in religious tourism and how these people would prefer to travel during their religious holidays. I am interested in finding out whether my old perception is still true; whether

there is there is interest among the younger generations' too, or whether religious tourism continues to attract mainly the older generation.

A questionnaire is formulated to find out answers to these research questions. There are couple of open-ended questions for the respondents to answer more detailed on how the respondents understand religious tourism and what would be their dream come true religious holiday like, but otherwise the questions are pre-coded.

1.2 The limitations

In the theoretical part I am concentrating on Christian religious and spiritual tourism and have left other religions out of examination. There is also more concentration on protestant religious tourism and very little about Orthodox or Catholic religious tourism, even though many parts of the theory can be understood from many branches of religions. Also more concentration is given to religious travel where the main motive is religious or spiritual rather than travel, where only part of the holiday includes a trip to a religious site. The latter is often understood under the branch of cultural tourism.

In the research part, however, all forms of the Christian religious tourism are presented at the same time. Also in the research part I don't give options in the questionnaire that lead the respondent to think about other religions. However, the respondent can refer to these in the open-ended questions. I have limited the research firstly to Finland and secondly the questionnaire is handed to only those attending the Evangelical Free Church of Lahti and Pentecostal Church of Joensuu. It might be that some respondents are only visiting the church and not members of it, which might affect to the answers being collected.

1.3 The structure of the thesis

Chapter 2 'The religious life in Finland', will give some basic information generally about what religion is and further, its place in the Finnish society and lives of people. Some recent researches are presented to show the general meaning of religion among Finnish people. Then the main tour operators organizing religious holidays in Finland are presented. Later on, there will be general information about Evangelical Free

Church and Pentecostal Church given as well, as they are the churches where the questionnaires were given out.

Chapter 3, 'Characteristics of religious tourism', will show where religious tourism can be placed in the broader sector of tourism. The chapter will answer to questions such as: what is religious tourism and pilgrimages? What kind of different types of religious tourism are there? What are the destinations of religious tourism? Who are the religious tourists and how can they be defined? What motivates religious tourist? Further on in the same chapter, the elements of spirituality, authenticity and secular pilgrimage as important parts of religious tourism that shape and give it character are also presented. Finally there will be predictions presented concerning what the future of religious tourism might look like.

Chapter 4, 'The methodology', will explain how the research was done from choosing the research method till developing the questionnaire. Further on, the reliability, validity and objectivity of this study will be evaluated. Finally, chapter 5 about the results of the research is called 'The Finnish views on religious tourism'. The conclusions of the thesis together with three suggestions for religious holiday packages for tour operators will be presented in chapter 6, 'The conclusions'.

2 The religious life and religious tourism in Finland

2.1 Religion generally

In defining what religious travel is, it is good to understand what religion is. Religion is described briefly by Richards as: “a system of beliefs in a higher being that are held with great faith and commitment. There is an universal belief in a higher being in all religions.” According to Ketola religion can be understood as divided set of viewpoints that include supernatural beliefs and answers related to them that give answers to the basic questions of human existence. These definitions leave atheism outside of the classifications of religions. (Ketola, 2008, 19, Richards, 2007, 216.) The religions can be divided into ten historic traditions that are Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Christianity, western esoteria, the modern religions, Sikhism, Taoism and Neopaganism (Ketola, 2008, 22).

2.2 Religion in Finland

In the end of year 2011, altogether 77, 3% of Finnish people, which means 4 173 300 people belonged to the Evangelical Lutheran Church, which is the official church of Finland. According to the research made by the research center of the Evangelical Lutheran church of Finland together with TNS-Gallup in November 2011, the main reason a person belongs to the church in Finland is the humanitarian work done by the church such as the work with the elderly people, people with special needs, poor and the socially marginalized. The majority of the members of the church feel the services of the church such as wedding, burial and baptism are important reasons to be a member of the church. Many also feel the cultural and educational tasks of the church are important reasons to belong to the church. These are the maintenance of the cemeteries and church buildings, the tradition of Christian holidays and the possibility to be a godparent. It is estimated that the changes in the motivational reasons for the membership are due to the fact that the humanitarian help of the church is emphasized more than before. The religious motives for the membership, on the other hand, are continuously decreasing. (Auttamistyö on tärkein syy kuulua kirkkoon, 2012; Luterilaiseen kirkkoon kuuluu 77,3% suomalaisista, 2012.)

Religions and denominations are in fact, increasing their numbers in Finland. This is explained on one hand, by the numbers of Muslim immigrants moving to Finland and on the other hand, due to the modernization and fragmentation of religious traditions to growingly smaller subcultures in Finland such as in different New Age-based movements. Also, many people might belong to more than one religious group, yet not be very active member in any of them. Religious books continue to be among the most popular books being sold, so clearly there is some sort of interest for spiritual matters. At the same time the critics towards churches and religion are increasing rapidly. (Ketola, 2008, 338-353.)

Years 2010 and 2011 show a big loss in the numbers of members belonging to the Evangelical Lutheran Church. In 2010 all together 80 612 left the church which was about the double amount of an average year. In 2009 the number was 43 650 and 42 693 in 2011. The resigning was exceptionally popular after a TV discussion show about homosexuals and the church in October 2010. The main reasons for resigning from the church are disappointment for the decisions or statements of the church. This has changed, as earlier years the reasons mainly had to do with teachings of the church, or, the church itself as an institution had no meaning for an individual. However, the following year saw a record of a life time, when 14 082 new members joined the church. The personal practice of religion has not decreased according to the researches. In fact, searching for the meaning of life has even increased, which explains the increase in members. (Luterilaiseen kirkkoon kuuluu 77,3% suomalaisista, 2012; Kirkosta eronneiden määrä lähes kaksinkertaistui, 2011.)

Researches about how Finns view their relations to religion show that there are very few very religious people and those without any religion. The majority of Finns belong to the so called moderately believing group who take part in the church services seldom. (Ketola, Niemelä & Palmu, 2011, 23). The older generation practices the religion more actively and believes in God more than the younger generation, however, there are no big differences in believing in heaven, hell and life after death and how much church is seen helpful during different times. Younger generation does, however, believe in alternative myths and beliefs than the older generation. (Ketola, Niemelä & Palmu, 2011, 57).

According to the research made in 2007, all together 4004 Finns classified their religious identity as is presented in the figure 1. The biggest percentages are to be seen in the negative answers: 86% of respondents do not consider themselves atheists, 82% are not fundamentalists and 81% are not charismatic Christians. As many as 68% see themselves as Christians, 55% as traditional Finnish Lutherans and 51% as Lutherans. The image shows that there are just a few newborn Christians, believers, charismatic Christians, conservatives and fundamentals in Finland. The religious identity of Finns is thus mostly understood by a religion rather than spirituality or ideology. It could probably be concluded that Finns are moderately religious and mildly passionate what it comes to religious or spiritual matters.

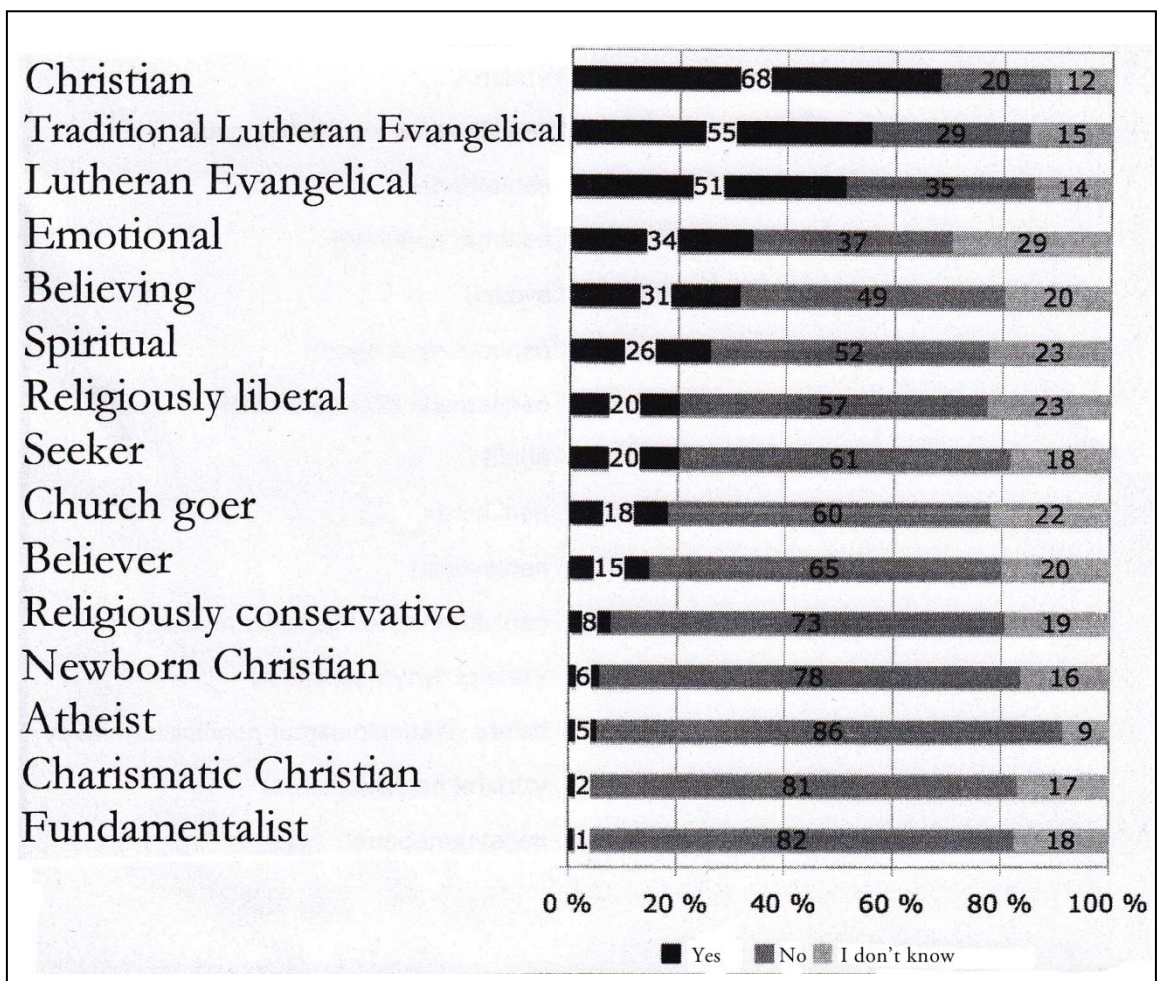


Figure 1. The religious identity of Finnish people (n=4004) (Kirkkomonitor 2007)

2.3 Religious tourism in Finland

Religious tourism in the tour operator level in Finland is relatively small. There are three tour operators concentrating on religious travel, which are Toiviomatkat, Caleb Tours and Kinneret Tours. Other main organizers for religious trips are churches and mission organizations, who mainly organize mission trips, where often the travel product is bought from the organization and the flights are bought individually.

Toiviomatkat is the biggest and offers travel packages to Israel, Turkey, Greece, Italy and Central Europe. All the destinations are important destinations because of their biblical history. The tours are organized for groups according to their wishes yet they once the tours are marketed, they are open for any individuals to take part.

(Toiviomatkat, 2012.)

Caleb Tours is smaller tour agent run by a couple, which organizes trips only to Israel. The tour packages include the guided tours in the destination, accommodation, tour services and transportation and they do not include the flights, but certain flights are recommended for each tour. During the whole tour the same hotel is used and daily tours are done so that the tourist will be back at the accommodation for the night.

(Caleb Tours, 2012.)

Kinneret Tours also organizes tours to only Israel, but their specialties are different theme holidays in Israel while also getting to know the biblical sites. They offer for example nature and experience holidays, getting to know the local people, trips to local health spas and so on. A theme tour that they organized on September 2012 was concentrating on women of the Bible in Israel and was targeted exclusively for women.

(Kinnerettours, 2012.)

Karmel Association of Finland (Suomen Karmel-yhdistys) is association concentrating on Israel and Bible. They have an institute in Israel where they organize courses, lectures, congresses and different kinds of events that deal with Israel. The association does not claim to be political; however it promotes the legality of Israel as a state and the legal right for every Jew to return to live in Israel. The association organizes several tours to Israel and other countries of the Bible and major centers of Jewish life. Some

specialties they organize in Israel are confirmation camps for Finnish youth and hiking trips. All the travel arrangements are done by either Toiviomatkat, Lomamatkat or Kinnerettours. (Karmel, 2012.)

Suomen matkatoimisto also has a church team, which organizes religiously orientated trips to groups interested in such. Other tour agents as for example Aurinkomatkat and Lomamatkat also have their group sales departments, which can organize religious holidays exclusively planned for each group according to their needs. (Suomen matkatoimisto, 2012; Aurinkomatkat, 2012; Lomamatkat, 2012.)

Lomalinja had several religious trips on offer in 2011, such as pilgrimages to several different monasteries both in Finland and abroad, getting to know the roots of Christianity in Ethiopia and Christianity of the past and today in Egypt just to give some examples. Currently they are marketing only one religious tour package to China via Kotimaan matkaklubi, which is part of a Christian publishing organization called Kotimaa. (Kotimaa-yhtiot, 2012; Lomalinja, 2012.)

Akasia association works in co-operation with local churches offering training in counseling, Bible lessons and theme lectures. Their representatives can be booked for different church services, camps or events. In addition to these, they also occasionally organize trips abroad with certain religious themes. In 2010 they organized one to Germany and in the fall 2013 they will be organizing one to Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. (Akasia, 2012.)

Kansan raamattuseura, which is a movement operating under the state church of Evangelical Lutheran Church, also organizes some religious trips. Mostly the trips are concentrating on Israel, but at the moment they are also advertising a trip to Gran Canary, Spain. The official tour agents for the trips of Kansan raamattuseura are Toiviomatkat and Aurinkomatkat. (Kansanraamattuseura, 2012.)

Other organizations organizing religious trips in Finland are as an example Xenia Tours, which provides accommodation services such as cabins and hotel rooms in Parikkala area and also organizes religious trips to Old Valamo, Russia to get to know

the life in a monastery and also visit some churches. Also the Orthodox union of youth is currently advertising a religious trip to Istanbul. (Xeniatours, 2012; Ortodoksisien nuorten liitto, 2012.)

Probably there are other small travel agencies, tour operators and associations organizing and advertising religious trips from Finland too, but these were arguably the biggest ones and the most readily found in the Internet.

2.4 The Evangelical Free Church and the Pentecostal Church

The Evangelical Free Church and the Pentecostal Church are one of the many protestant movements in the country. Other churches that belong to the protestant movements in Finland are the Anglicans, Quakers, Methodists, Salvation Army, Baptists, Adventists, Raamattu puhuu and Majakka-church. Originally the protestant movements started in 1500s as protest movements in the Catholic Church. The main matters were disagreements about the status of Pope and the doctrine of salvation. Today their typical characteristics are the importance of personal belief, central importance of the sermon at the services and their desire to not establish a close relation to the state. They each have their individual characteristics, but the doctrines are all mainly based on reformed branches and Calvinism. (Ketola, 2008, 29, Suomi sanakirja, 2012.)

The history of the Evangelical Free Church of Finland goes back over 120 years. During that time there were lot of changes and ideological movement in the church culture and not only in Finland, but in England and United States as well. The religious authorities wanted to be re-evaluated and the individual's personal commitment of faith became important. There was a social need for different forms of Christianity. The Evangelical Free Church became officially independent from the Lutheran church of Finland in 1923. The main doctrine is based on Bible as the authority and individual's personal commitment for Jesus Christ. There are around 100 Free Evangelical Churches around the country and via missions and humanitarian projects the work reaches around the world. In the end of 2011, there were total of 15 000 members in the church. (Suomen vapaakirkko, 2012; Suomi sanakirja, 2012.)

The Pentecostal Church like the Evangelical Free Church was established in the early 1900's in Finland, where the movement became from the United States. The historical background is similar to the Evangelical Free Church except that Pentecostal movements have more clearly its roots in the events of Pentecost, meaning its main characteristics are on fulfillment with the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. As with the Evangelical Free Church, the Bible is the authority and personal commitment for Jesus Christ is emphasized. There are around 237 Finnish speaking Pentecostal churches and 46 000 members in Finland. (Suomen helluntaikirkko, 2012.)

3 Characteristics of religious tourism

3.1 Religious tourism and pilgrimages

Religious tourism is not easy to define. In the literature of tourism studies it is often categorized in different ways by different authors, thus religious tourism, pilgrimage tourism, cultural tourism, cultural heritage tourism and spiritual tourism are often used interchangeably. The reason why especially cultural and religious travel are often used synonymously, is because the majority of cultural tourists visit religious sites as part of their itinerary, and are thus often referred as religious tourists. In this study I am concentrating on religious tourism, where the driver for travel is merely religious and not cultural and thus I will not take time to explain the broad sector of cultural nor heritage tourism in more detailed.

Religious tourism is one of the least studied areas in tourism research, which is interesting as it is also the oldest form of tourism (Timothy & Olsen, 2006, 1). This is also the case in Finland, as mentioned earlier, where only a few studies have been done in this sector of tourism.

In this thesis, religious tourism is categorized according to Novelli (2005), where it is segmented separately under cultural tourism. In figure 2. tourism is firstly divided into two different segments, mass tourism and niche tourism. Poon (1993, in Novelli, 2005, 2) describes mass tourism as “large-scale phenomenon, packaging and selling standardized leisure services at fixed prices to a mass clientele”. Niche tourism, on the other hand, is understood to cater to more specifically defined groups where individuals are identified by the same specialized needs or interests for certain products. Secondly, niche tourism is further divided into five different sectors. Finally, cultural tourism is divided to micro-niches, where religious tourism also belongs as seen in the figure 2. (Novelli, 2005, 2-9.)

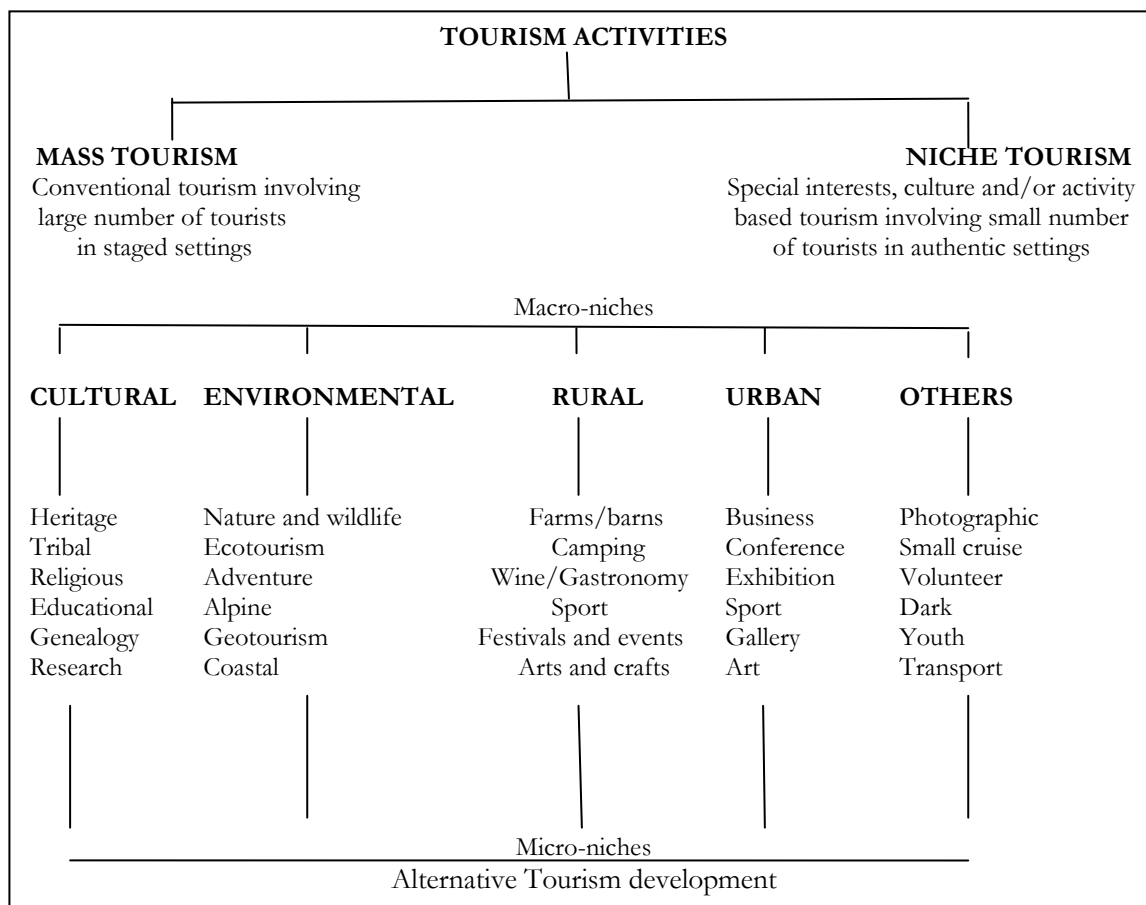


Figure 2. Niche tourism components (Novelli, 2005, 9)

Religious tourism at its simplest can be explained as Yeoman (2008, 181) puts it: “traveling to visit a place, a building or a shrine, which is sacred”. This form of travel is either about observing or participating according to ones belief and is about sharing a religious experience with someone and witnessing the faith. (Kasim, 2011, 441, 446; Yeoman, 2008, 181.) However, a tourism package might include a visit to a religious site, like a church or cathedral, but this does not make the trip religious, but rather cultural, as people visit a church as part of their itinerary and they don’t travel for religious purposes. In fact, most cultural trips involve a visit to such religious place, which does not make them religious trips. (Richards, 2007, 215, 217.) Visiting the Vatican as a sightseeing trip is not a pilgrimage. If there is a spiritual motive combined, it can be referred to as a pilgrimage. (Liguorian, 2012.)

The word pilgrim itself comes from Latin ‘peregrinus’, which means traveler or stranger, although a combination of these two would probably be the best explanation. The Latin term is said also to refer to “the idea of wandering over a distance”. (Yeoman, 2008, 181; Liguorian, 2012.)

Thus Wright (2008, 10) makes the definition broader: “Pilgrimage is a journey to a holy site with a spiritual intent or purpose”. Murray and Graham (1997, in Richards, 2007, 223) define pilgrimage as: “a religious phenomenon in which an individual or groups sets forth on a journey to a particular cult location to seek the intercession of God and the saints of that place in an array of concerns.”

For some, the journey itself to the location is equally important, as for example the pilgrimage routes have become famous as part of the concept of religious tourism. The most known of these is the route to Santiago de Compostela. It is claimed, however, that the focus on these routes is often on physical achievement rather than any spiritual motivation, which could question the categorization of them belonging to religious tourism. (Richards, 2007, 223.)

As a summary, it could be highlighted that pilgrimage and religious travel are driven by a spiritual or religious motives where often God is sought and faith strengthened. The main difference between cultural and religious travel lie in the motivation, which also makes the categorization difficult as nobody can ultimately define other people's motives. It might be that the religious or cultural tourist does not always identify his motives himself either, but simply wants to travel to a certain destination and sometimes the motives will be clarified only then, raising the question of whether this categorization between religious and cultural tourists is needed in the first place.

3.2 Categories in religious tourism

There are different categories under religious tourism. Combining three segmentations of religious tourism, the categorization of the most popular forms could look like the following:

1. pilgrimages and tours,
2. missionary and volunteer travel,
3. religious events and
4. fellowship travel.

(Yeoman, 2008, 181; Wright, 2008, 10-15; Papathanassis, 2011, 50-53.)

Pilgrimages and missionary travel are the two biggest forms of religious tourism (Papathanassis, 2011 49). Christian pilgrimages can be some of the following: exploring the roots of Christian faith, discovering the contributions of Christianity to Western civilization, seeking inspiration from some great man, woman or saint of Christianity, learning about radical Christians in the past, searching for spiritual or emotional healing or it can be combining physical holiday with a pilgrimage like as an example Santiago de Compostela trail. Europe offers almost 20 centuries of Christian heritage, history and faith, including the roots of many Christian denominations. The Vatican, Martin Luther and C.S. Lewis's home are just a few major interests for Christian pilgrims to Europe. (Wright, 2008, 110.) Thus, according to professionals, pilgrimages are indeed much more than hike to Santiago de Compostela or Mecca. Tours to Biblical sites, for example can too be defined as pilgrimages. These tours can be for example tours in the footsteps of apostle Paul or Martin Luther, where the tourist will get to know the places and the history and their significance for today while traveling. More detailed information about the destinations for pilgrimages and tours will be dealt with in chapter 3.4. Destinations for religious tourism.

The main purpose of missionary travel is Christian evangelism, church planting and humanitarian work. The opportunities for such trips today are countless, as there are hundreds of organizations for this purpose. Missionary travel could be categorized in both long and short term missions. (Wright, 2008, 187.) In volunteer tourism people offer their help in different humanitarian needs, such as in the chaos caused after the hurricane Kathrina in New Orleans, where Christian love is proclaimed in action. Both missionary and volunteer travel are organized by churches and missions organizations. (Papathanassis, 2011, 52; Wright, 2008, 187.)

Religious events, like camps, conferences, and retreats form a large part of religious tourism today. The significance of these is crucial for the whole sector of tourism, as tour operators, hotels and airlines are often all included. Some international religious events, like World Youth Day can draw as many as one million people. (Papathanassis, 2011, 50-51.) However, traveling domestically to religious events of some kind seems popular in almost any country, yet it is impossible to get exact numbers of people traveling for this purpose.

There is a growth of popularity in fellowship tours where people of the same interests and goals embark on religious tours. Participating together with same minded people also for recreational reasons makes the experience more joyful and meaningful and in itself strengthens the faith and the purpose of the trip. (Wright, 2008, 9, 12.) It is emphasized that in order to religious tourism to have any spiritual meaning for the tourist, it should combine the past with participation in the present. In fact, the element of fun, via recreation or play or simply being happy while on religious tour is important as a part of more serious travel agendas. (Kasim, 2011, 449; Jafari, 2000, 438.) This is guaranteed at its best while fellowshipping with others. The most popular forms of fellowship tours are cruises. No matter what the itinerary, in fellowship tours there is often common time for devotions, or lectures by theologians included in the program (Wright, 2008, xiii).

It must be added here that Wright often writes about religious travel from the American view point. I don't see fellowship tours and especially cruises very important form of religious tourism at least from Finland, although I do have seen some advertisements of cruises to Stockholm that have an agenda on missiological themes using lectures and workshops on several themes concerning missions as part of the cruise itinerary. One organizer for such cruises in Finland is OM, Operation Mobilisation, which is an international missions' organization. They regularly organize a cruise trip on route Turku-Stockholm-Turku where the main idea is to have lectures around a certain theme, this year the concern was about the human rights and freedom of religion. (Operaatio Mobilisaatio, 2012.) Also church groups often travel as a group, where fellowship is important part of the motive to travel, yet I see camps and different events more popular in Finland than just making a day trip to another town in country as an example. I believe churches, different movements and Christian organizations other than official businesses are the ones organizing fellowship tours in Finland. I could not find any travel agency or business that does these kinds of trips.

3.3 Spirituality, authenticity and secular pilgrimage

In understanding religious tourism, spirituality as a major driver has to be explained too, as it seems to be a current trend that is linked to all aspects of life. Spirituality seems to be less about attending formal ceremonies and more about adding a general sense of spirituality in daily lives. The importance of religion is losing its meaning. For example 20% of UK population has “a desire for more spiritual content in their lives and a sense of purpose”. (Yeoman, 2008, 183.)

Spirituality as a term originates from Christian vocabulary and is used today in all religions. Today it can often be understood as individual life fulfillment, a search for one's own life path and a transformation of one's life. It can be about searching, practicing and experiencing the truth. The modern concept of spirituality does not always imply searching God, but at least a spiritual reality or higher dimension. It can include religion, but not necessarily. Spiritual tourism as such is not a segment of its own, but is closely linked to culture, education, nature and event-tourism as can be seen in figure 3. Sacred people, a certain place and an event are in the core of spirituality. Secondly important are the motives, the places and the attractions. Spirituality today seems to be even more than a consumer trend; in fact it is becoming a global value. (Trends and Issues in Global Tourism 2011, 2011, 202-204.)

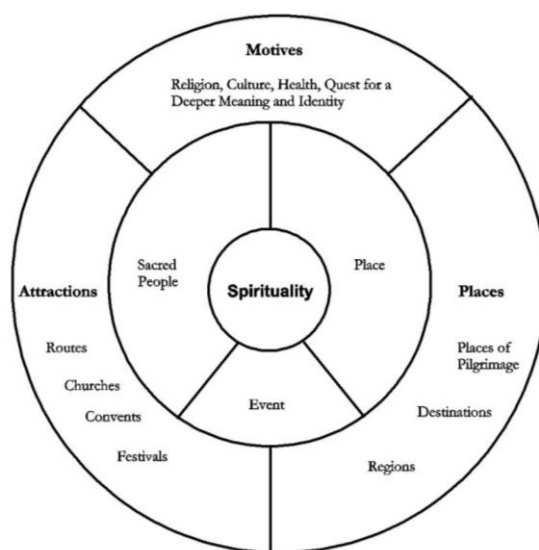


Figure 3. Elements of spiritual traveling (Trends and Issues in global tourism, 2011, 204)

This shift to “non-denominational” spirituality is interesting: one tries to find one’s own spirituality and own truth and find peace and happiness from within, concentrating on himself. Trends feeding the need for spiritual tourism according to Graf are a growing longing for: meaningfulness, worthwhile events, spiritual and mind relaxation, going into one's inner core, slowing down, themselves and nature (Trends and Issues in Global Tourism 2011, 2011, 222, 224). Some of the possible spiritual offers that Graf mentions are trips concentrating on nature & exercise, counseling, music, creativity, physical exercise and spiritual exercise as seen in the table 1.

Table 1. Possible spiritual offers (Trends and Issues in Global Tourism 2011, 2011, 226)

Spiritual offers	
<p>...with nature & exercise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pilgrimages • meditative hiking • meditative walking 	<p>...with counseling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talk with pastoral worker • talk with shaman • talk with spiritual coach
<p>...with music</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • singing mantras • chanting, tones 	<p>...with creativity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meditative painting • ikebana
<p>...with physical exercises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • yoga • tai chi • meditative dances • circle dances 	<p>...with spiritual exercises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spiritual exercises (in silence) • contemplation • meditation • trips to shamans

Many of these spiritual offers have to do with faith and religion, but not all of them. In fact, Graf suggests that the offers for spiritual holidays should be without moral and dogma, but rather teach and let people experience spirituality as such. Such options when they are well targeted and marketed can among others, according to Graf, shape one's life, give meaning, orientation and support on handling everyday life. They can also give support on how to cope with diseases, lead into one's innermost depths, help to find peace of mind, who one really is, to formulate one's own life-plan and help the

healing process. Lastly, Graf leaves the question in the air as to whether spirituality will be the next megatrend in tourism. (Trends and Issues in Global Tourism 2011, 2011, 219, 226-227.)

From a touristic point of view, spirituality can be seen in the concept of getting away from it all, finding new ways to develop ones spirituality and getting in touch with one's true self. Authenticity and spirituality go hand and hand as tourists are rejecting the fake destinations and attractions and looking for something real that can be of personal development for them as well. Here volunteering is also closely linked as a way of self-actualization and helping those less fortunate. Further, spirituality and tourism are connected when people are looking for quiet and contemplation at the religious sites. (Yeoman, 2008, 190-192.) Both Yeoman and Richards agree that there is a current trend towards spirituality in tourism, rather than interest for religion or traditional church going (Richards, 2007, 219-220). Spirituality in tourism, especially in religious tourism, is important for its future development. The spiritual reasons for travel are making the traditional religious activities less important when spirituality is becoming growingly linked to all aspects of life (Richards, 2007, 219, 220).

What is important in this shift towards more active and spiritual tourism is that visitors want to know more about the background of the site or event, and they want to be actively involved in the religious or spiritual life of the place they are visiting. Passive cultural tourism is slowly shifting to the background as material possessions of many tourists grow and many are able to concentrate on more immaterial and spiritual matters. Search for meaning in life in general, as also the general longing for spirituality, has implications on tourism as these same aspects are searched in religious tourism as well. (Richards, 2007, 220-221.) Many are longing for a more spiritual content in their lives and sense of purpose, which religious trips or pilgrimages can offer. Pilgrimages are indeed often taken in the hope of spirituality transforming journey. (Richards, 2007, 215-216.) Some people might, however, start their journey as a pure culture tourist and become pilgrims on the way (Richards, 2007, 218). The driver of spirituality is shaping religious and pilgrimage tourism, as many tourist are abandoning the hedonistic travel styles and are seeking more holistic depth in their travel (Smith 2003 in Richards, 2007, 219).

It is worth noticing here though, that not all pilgrimage is religious or even spiritual. Secular pilgrimage concerns visits to places such as Graceland to remember Elvis Presley or the underpass in Paris, where Princess Diana was killed or visits to prisons and cemeteries, which can also associate with dark tourism. Secular pilgrims are those who are searching for an authentic experience, or focusing on personal journeys rather than religious or spiritual ones as the goal of the trip. (Yeoman, 2008, 181; Jafari, 2000, 438; Carr, 2004, 480.)

3.4 Destinations for religious tourism

A sacred space is a site, where a pilgrim finds access to God. Traditionally this sacred space is a place of worship of some kind. It is discussed how this space in addition to the traditional religious sites, can also be a natural landscape, like a mountain, where an individual can passively gaze at nature's wonders and have a religious experience. The sacred sites work as magnets to draw religious tourists, but it is also the people who attend, the journey itself and the destination village or town, which all together create the pulling power to attract the visitor, and not simply the site itself. (Digance, 2003, 144-146.)

In addition that the destinations for pilgrimages and tours are form of sacred space, they can further be categorized into several groups as Jakowski (2002 in Richards, 2007, 221-222) does:

1. global centers, like major Christian sites based in history and tradition or their special nature
2. international centers, whose range does not exceed one continent
3. superregional centers, which are known outside their region, but attract only a few from abroad and
4. regional centers.

The missionary and volunteer travel together with religious events and fellowship tours are forms of worldwide religious tourism. Here I will concentrate little bit more detailed on the destinations of pilgrimages and tours.

For Christian religious tourism, Israel is the main site, as it is where Christianity has its roots. The most popular sites in Israel for religious tourist are the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Among the sites in the Vatican City, the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes has become popular among the Roman Catholics. Israel, Vatican and Lourdes are the biggest magnets in religious tourism globally. (Yeoman, 2008, 188-190.)

In addition to what has been said before about the destinations of pilgrimages and tours, Christians' religious travel destinations can be divided into three bigger categories according to their popularity: biblical, Catholic and Christian tours. This categorization might sound strange, but this is the way Globus journeys, who are the biggest organizer for religious tourism categorizes them. Biblical tours include visiting Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey and Greece, where there are destinations of major importance to Christianity. Packages like a journey through the Holy Land and in the footsteps of Apostle Paul in Greece and or Turkey are the most popular ones. Catholic tours include destinations in Ireland, Italy, France, Spain and Portugal, that have special interests for Catholicism such as the Vatican, St. Peter's Basilica, Marian shrines, Assisi, Lourdes and Fatima, where Virgin Mary has appeared. Christian tours concentrate on sites mainly in Germany that have importance for protestant Christianity and the reformation, like Nuremberg, Augustinian Monastery, Augsburg or C.S. Lewis' home in England. (Globus, 2012; Wright, 2008, xiii)

3.5 The religious tourist

In 2004, 43% of international travelers to Saudi-Arabia were pilgrims or motivated by religious reasons, where as in Israel, pilgrimage accounts only 10% of international arrivals. Thus clearly outside the Middle East, pilgrimage and religion are not the main reasons for traveling. Christians are the biggest religious group in the world with 2.1 billion followers. (Yeoman, 2008, 188-190.)

There are estimations that 220-250 million travelers, of whom 150 million are Christians, embark on pilgrimage annually. The figures on European levels estimate that about 30 million Christians give all or part of their holidays for pilgrimage

annually. Jacowski (2002) has estimated that about 300 million pilgrims visit religious sites in Europe each year. (Richards, 2007, 222.)

Christian religious tourism can be divided into two bigger groups: Catholics and Protestants. Catholics are mainly interested in visiting churches and cathedrals and Protestants in biblical scenery. According to Papathanassis, Catholics are mostly interested in places where events of the Bible took place, as their sacred space. (Papathanassis, 2011, 47-48.) It is interesting that travel in the Orthodox context is very seldom mentioned in the literature concerning religious tourism.

Often worldwide pilgrims travel as groups and most of them are from the traditional and conservative social groups, most trips lasting average of ten days, unless just one city is visited, then the trip might be just five to six days and on the other hand, if several countries are covered, they can last as long as fourteen days or even longer. (Jafari, 2000, 438; Wright, 2008, 113.)

There are distinctions to be made between *pilgrim*, *religious tourist* and *tourist*. Religious tourists, according to Cohen (2001, in Richards, 2007, 218) are those who come to observe, but who will also time to time take part in worship. Pilgrims are those who are worshipping the gods/God at the site whereas tourists simply spectators who remain uninvolved. However, the character might change on the way. According to Haab (1996, in Richards, 2007, 218) a person starting the tour as a cultural tourist, might change to a religious tourist on the way due to some kind of enlightening. What characterizes the true pious pilgrims is that they often interact only with the holy places, and the religious tourists and tourists engage less of their time at these sites, as they want to visit other attractions as well (Digance, 2003, 145).

Here one can question the earlier statement of Wright, Jafari and Kasim, who all agree that religious travel should include the element of fun too, in order to it have any meaning for the traveler. We could say that the travel even though sacred can and in fact, should also have fun while traveling. Naturally if a pilgrimage lasts only for a day, it might be concentrating solely for visiting the holy places, but even for a one-day-trip one usually uses restaurants too, unless one decides to fast the whole day. Nevertheless,

I find it difficult to fully agree with the statement that the true pilgrims interact only with the holy places.

The religious tourist can also be defined by the level of religious motivation when traveling to a destination. Some are motivated by materialistic motivations, which makes them secular tourist, whereas on the other edge are those driven by faith, religion and spiritual fulfillment, which makes them pilgrims as shown in figure 4. Pilgrim-tourist continuum. In the middle are those who could be called religious tourists, as they are little less motivated by spirituality than actual pilgrims or little more motivated than the tourists. (Simone-Charteris & Boyd, 2011, 461.)

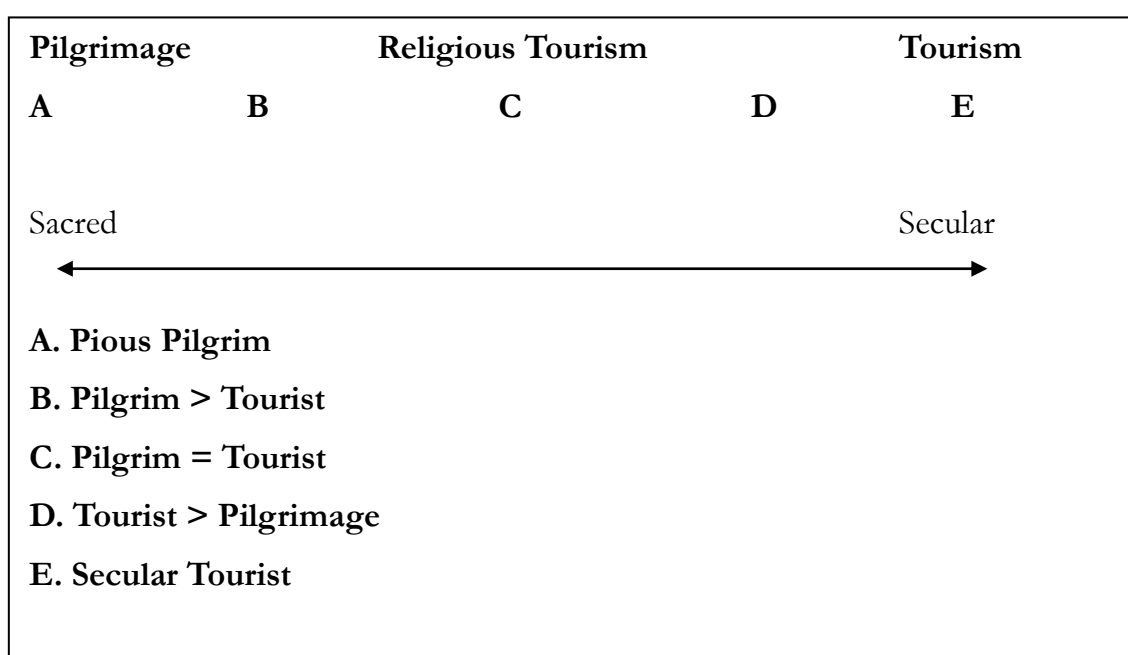


Figure 4. Pilgrim-tourist continuum (by Smith (1992) in Simone-Charteris & Boyd, 2011, 461)

Another figure to make the distinctions more clear is made by Richards in figure 5. Pilgrimages are more spiritual and individual in their character than religious or cultural travel and are also more inner journeys than journeys to attractions. Although here it should be noted that many of the pilgrimages organized today don't differ much from secular tours in the way they are packaged. They are often organized just as mass tourism packages including flights, hotel bookings and attraction fees for example when traveling to biblical destinations. So here in the figure 5. pilgrimages seem to mean traveling alone, all though it is important to note that even in an organized biblical tour, the inner journey of the tour is important and often sought after.

One can travel as part of the group and still be motivated mainly for individual inner journey rather than fellowship.

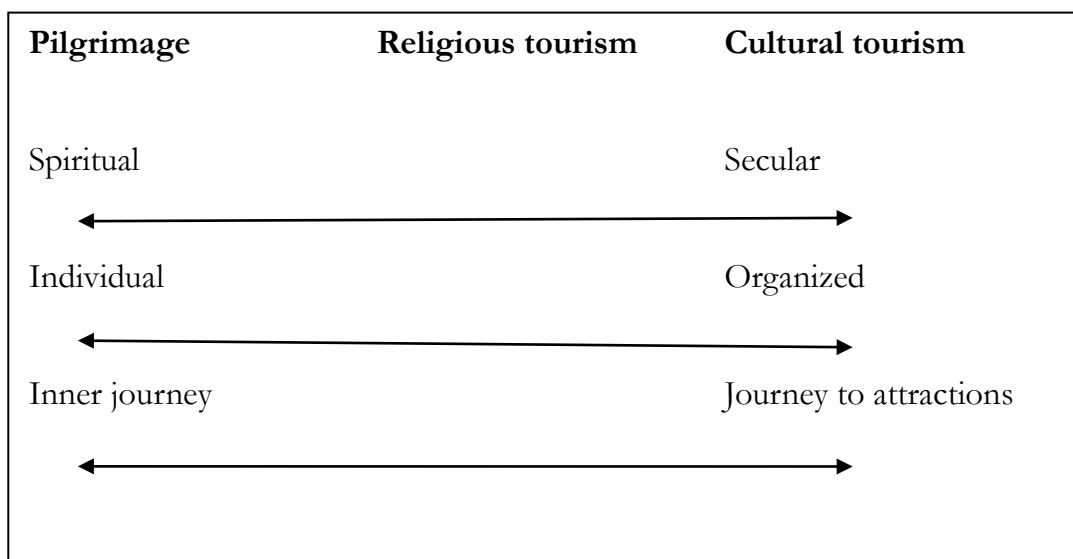


Figure 5. Dimensions of religious tourism (Richards, 2007, 219)

In the case of religious tourism research in Northern Portugal, one survey was made in six religious sites in Northern Portugal. Out of respondents about 41% had completed their tertiary education, women were 52% out of men and over 55% were forty and over. Pilgrimage accounted for only 10% of the respondents as the purpose of the visit to the site. Main motivations of 82% of respondents included learning about local culture and experiencing the atmosphere. Only 20% indicated that a spiritual experience was important in their decision to travel. Those with religious motives were more likely attending the sites in order to go and pray, whereas the majority could be categorized as cultural tourists. In the research the two tourist categories, cultural and religious tourist, were simply divided by those showing that religious holidays were their first choice, as religious tourists, and those showing culture first, as cultural tourists. Although there is much discussion about how cultural and religious tourism is so often difficult to separate, there was no overlapping in this research related to the motivation, activities or experiences, on the contrary, the two were easy to separate. (Richards, 2007, 230-231, 233.)

Another study made by the Ministry of Tourism in Israel between 1995 and 2000, shows that amounts of tourists, 18 years and older, who visited there and who defined themselves as pilgrims rather than as other tourists, were equally split in all age groups and not only among the older generation. Also, the study shows that religious tourists use hotels much more intensively than Christian hospices or youth hostels, meaning that they are willing to spend more on accommodation than earlier. (Papathanassis, 2011, 48-49.)

In summary, when categorizing religious tourist, the motivational aspects are important, but also their actions, which also divide the religious tourists from secular tourists. The latter are merely spectators, when pilgrims and even religious tourists, to some extent, are more actively seeking for an inner journey. There seems to be the perception that religious tourism attracts mainly older women, which might be true in some cases, but earlier mentioned newer study shows that in fact, religious tourism attracts people from all age groups. Catholics and Protestants are the two biggest groups in religious tourism and most of the religious tourists are traditional and conservative from their social group.

3.6 Motives behind religious tourism

The number of people traveling purely for religious reasons is small. Spiritual motivations for pilgrimage often outweigh the religious ones. According to Santos' research (2002 in Richards, 2007, 217), motivation for religious tourism is often purely religious in about 50% of cases and is mixed religious and cultural motivation in about 20%. Religious tourists also often have cultural motives and not only vice versa (Richards, 2007, 219).

Today's pilgrimages often combine a spiritual focus with a traditional sightseeing. The most important element of such trip is spiritual gain such as renewed spirit, deepened faith, better knowledge of the Bible, theology, conversion or other life changing experience. (Wright, 2008, 10, 192.) Motivator factors are often such things as a search for comfort, blessing, seeking for answers, and faith (Yeoman, 2008, 181). They can also be practical, like healing, fulfillment of a wish or even because of a religious obligation (Jafari, 2000, 438). Pilgrimage is not just about the destination, but it is as

much it is about the journey starting from planning the trip, departure, the travel itself as a whole and the aftermath - the blessings or spiritual gains that follow long after one has returned home (Liguorian, 2011).

In addition, the motivations for religious tourist can be:

- deep soul-searching,
- intimacy with deity,
- admiration of architectural or natural wonders,
- educational interest in the history of the site,
- motive to observe and search understanding of other cultures, different ways of life, traditions, values and belief systems,
- political,
- nostalgic/patriotic/commemorative reasons/desire for authentic experiences or
- curiosity (Simone-Charteris & Boyd, 2011, 465; Kasim, 2011, 442).

Thus as a summary, we could say the motives for religious tourist are either

- spiritual,
- intellectual,
- physical or
- emotional reasons (Wright, 2008, 111).

There are inevitably some problematics concerning the access and usage of pilgrimage sites, which often show in issues such as parking problems around the sites and thus locals often having problems accessing the sites due to the masses coming from abroad. These, together with the motivational differences between the visitors of the sites, raise the interesting question as to whom the site really belong to and who has the most right to visit the places. The motivations of pilgrims differ, as some just want to admire the architecture and some are expecting a miracle of some kind. The interests and motivations of different people often do collide, as some find it disturbing when others' motivations are less spiritual. This raises a question about whose motivations are the most urgent, such as a real need for prayer and spiritual peace versus admiring

the scenery for example. Good examples are Santiago de Compostela, or big masses of tourists spoiling the atmosphere at a cathedral because of the excessive noise that they create and thus hindering an individual's desire to have a religious experience. (Digance, 2003, 143-155.)

In summary, motives for religious trip are very diverse and it could be that an individual taking such trip, might not even know the ultimate motivations that drive him or her to take such trip. The different drivers for religious tourism are good to understand in order to better market religious tourism packages. Also, not all tourists embarking on so called religious trip are religious or at least they might not all admit this. Rather many might have spiritual longing for something deeper and meaningful they hope they would find while traveling.

3.7 The future of religious tourism

The interest for religious tourism can be explained by seven drivers which are:

1. the changing face of world religions,
2. growing seek for spirituality,
3. search for more authentic experiences through spiritual and cultural traditions,
4. the emerge of niche markets,
5. the well-traveled consumer and the increased frequency of short breaks,
6. trust and religion and
7. self-actualisation and volunteerism (Yeoman, 2008, 182).

As mentioned earlier, religion is becoming less popular, while spirituality or the search for belief through spirituality is more of a trend which will reshape the characteristics of religious tourism in the future. Authenticity together with the latter is desired. It is estimated that for example, if tourists took four short breaks a year, religion and spirituality will be one of the main reasons for travel for one of those holidays.

Volunteering is seen as a way of self-actualisation by putting something good back into the community that is visited by doing good for the society. Authenticity and authentic experience among faith is one of the key push factors for religious tourist. More people are wanting to participate rather than just view. (Yeoman, 2008, 184, 186, 187.)

Religion manifests itself in all aspects of life such as births, weddings and funerals, so it is very likely it will stay in tourism, although new forms of religious tourism are likely to be developed. Religious tourism, even though relatively small in numbers, such as in cases of Poland or Ireland, where only 0,001% of visits are made from religious reasons, will develop, as there is growing interest for spirituality and thus new packages in this sector of tourism are likely to be developed, as there is a need for escapism, relaxation, meditation and well-being. (Yeoman, 2008, 194.) New ways of religious tourism are being developed and the definition is becoming broader. (Richards, 2007, 216).

The ongoing change from religious motives to spiritual and also toward individuality in tourism indicate that the needs of an individual traveller must be considered more carefully and that there is also more interest for authenticity and custom made tours along with the mass forms of religious tourism. In the case of religious attractions, this implies that visitors want to know more about the background of the site or event, and they also want to be actively involved in the religious or spiritual life of the place they are visiting. (Richards, 2007, 220-221.)

Even though some say religious tourism is turning into booming business, the traditional role of religious tourism should remain the same and should be guarded to be about promoting spiritual healing and piety. The excitement of making profit in this field should be kept under control, so that the product of religious tourism can be kept real. (Kasim, 2011, 441.)

4 The methodology

4.1 Choosing the quantitative research method

Quantitative research method is a way of research where the data is examined numerically. The results are gathered in numbers or qualitative data is grouped in numeric form. Afterwards the essential numeric information is explained verbally. The recommended minimum amount of sampling units, such as respondents, is 100. Surveys are often used in quantitative researches to collect data, but these two are not the same thing. Often the quantitative research problem is presented in the form of hypothesis, which is a presumption of research results. This is especially the case in explaining and comparing quantitative researches. The aim of quantitative research is to find the general patterns from the research material. (Vilkka, 2007, 14, 17, 26, 174.)

Other central aspects of quantitative research are the conclusions from the previous studies from that topic, earlier theories and explaining the main concepts. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara, 2007, 136.) The theoretical concepts, which have been formed as a result of research, have a central role in quantitative research, which help the researcher to find new similarities and differences between different phenomena, characters, events or objects. (Vilkka, 2007, 26.)

In my bachelor thesis I used the qualitative method, which was one reason for choosing a quantitative method this time in order to get experience in both main research methods. I like playing with numbers and analyzing them so it felt like a natural choice this time. The quantitative method is also a quick way to collect a lot of information and as the time was limited, it felt like the best option. The main questions in this research are in the form of how much, how interested and how important, which are the questions often being answered in quantitative research. (Vilkka, 2007, 13.)

However, there are also two open-ended questions in the questionnaire, but they will also be analysed quantitatively as much as possible. Perhaps the answers for these two questions will not be discussed and analyzed as deeply as the other questions, but they will be categorized by grouping them and then I will calculate how often they appear in

the answers. Firstly, I wanted to find out what the respondents first think of when they hear about religious tourism, which is the first open-ended question. Secondly, I wanted the respondents to describe the religious holiday of their dreams in a few words.

4.2 Survey as a way of data collection

Survey is a way of collecting data, where the data is collected standardized. It means that every respondent is asked the same questions in exactly the same way. The purpose of gathered research material collected by a survey is then to describe, compare and explain some phenomenon. There are many different forms of surveys available for a research, as it has such a long historical tradition in the academia. The strengths of using survey as a way to collect data are its possibility to collect a lot of data and efficiency as it spares time from the researcher, compared to making interviews, for example. If planned properly, a survey is relatively quick to analyze as there are already available IT-programs that can be used to help analyze the data. Weaknesses, however, might be the problems of interpreting the results, not knowing how seriously the respondents have answered the questions, how well the different options for answers serve the respondents, the slowness of developing a good survey and, very likely, the big amount of unanswered forms. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 188 – 190.)

Population in research language is a group of people who is researched. The population includes all of their information that is needed in the research in order to make conclusions. In this research the population is the church attending people of Lahti Free Evangelical Church. (Vilkka, 2007, 51, 177.)

Sampling is a group of collected data, which has been gathered from the population using some of the different sampling methods. The different sampling methods are simple random sampling, systematic random sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling. In this research no sampling methods were used, as all the respondents who wanted to fill in the questionnaire automatically became sampling units. (Vilkka, 2007, 51-55, 176-179.)

4.3 Development of a questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed in the middle of May 2012. I searched little to see what kind of questionnaires were available and started to develop my own. I tried to make questions in accordance with the theoretical part of the thesis trying all the time to keep the research questions in mind. I realized I had to give out and collect the questionnaires from the denomination before summer, as it is the time when many people don't attend the church and I was afraid of not getting enough questionnaires back. After the formulation of the questions, they were checked and improved together with Eva Holmberg, the thesis supervisor, and then again further developed on my own.

The questionnaire was first done in English and then I started translating it into Finnish and realized that I had to change religious tourism to spiritual tourism (*hengellinen matkailu*). I know my target group very well, so I suddenly realized that if I did a survey about religious tourism, I would probably get very few if any questionnaires back. The other risk was that they would fill in the questionnaire thinking about other religions or denominations other than their own. I would have gotten zero response in the question where it is asked if one has already been on a spiritual holiday had I used the term religious. I know that many of the church members have indeed been on spiritually motivated holidays. Religious tourism as such among this target group is very distant and they could't relate to that. I believe that none or at least very few of the members could understand that their spiritual tourism experiences are in fact religious tourism. The people attending this church are very little religious, in fact many are not interested in religion at all, but I dare say that all are very spiritual and interested in spiritual matters, including tourism.

The problem of the wording comes from the fact that in English literature religious tourism is more extensively used than spiritual tourism. The challenge that I faced was that I didn't even know the exact equivalent for religious tourism in Finnish, so I decided to use spiritual tourism. After all this problematics, the questionnaire was checked by two friends of mine, who gave feedback about it. I wanted to give it to a third friend of mine, who is very good at these kinds of things, but I simply had no more time, so some changes were done and the questionnaire was ready. Later on I

have been thinking about whether I should have taken more time for the formulation of the questionnaire, as I felt a little insecure about whether it was going to measure what it was supposed to measure. I was not perfectly happy with how it turned out to be and later on, after going through the answers, I felt I should have not given the option 'I don't know' in the answers, as there were so many such answers.

4.4 Data collection and analysis

Somewhere in the middle of formulating the questionnaire, I asked permission from the senior pastor of Evangelical Free Church of Lahti to hand out questionnaires at the church and his response was not only positive, but he also gave me some tips and instructions on how to do it.

The first questionnaires were given out 24th May. I attended a spring trip of mothers and toddlers of Evangelical Free Church of Lahti. On the way to our destination, I gave out questionnaires to all mothers together with three church workers in the bus and on the way back, I received 10 questionnaires back.

On Saturday 26th of May I had a lunch meeting with my friends, where six friends of mine filled in the questionnaire. All are originally from the same church of Lahti, but three have moved elsewhere. The same evening I attended a youth evening at the Evangelical Free Church of Lahti and gave a little speech about spiritual tourism and asked people kindly to fill in the questionnaire at the end of the evening. I had laid questionnaires with pens on the tables at the end of the room and was also handing them out personally at the doorway after the service. I then stayed in the event until the very end collecting the questionnaires. To my surprise, I received 29 questionnaires back. The estimation of the youth pastor was that I would get the maximum of ten questionnaires back.

The next morning I attended a morning service at the Evangelical Free Church of Lahti, and again gave a little speech about what I was doing and after the service laid questionnaires with pens on the tables at the coffee room, where people gather after the service. I also put some on the table where other printed material was available at the gathering hall. That day I received 16 questionnaires back. Many took

questionnaires home with them. I had instructed all that there was a box available on the table where the questionnaires could be returned.

The following Sunday after the morning service I stood at the doorway and personally handed out questionnaires to all people leaving the service until I had no more to give out. I also reminded them of the possibility of returning them to the box at the table if they did not see me personally. During the week I got a phone call, when one lady personally wanted to return the questionnaires filled in by her family. At the same time, I gave 20 questionnaires to my mother who attends the Pentecostal Church of Joensuu and in early June, I received ten questionnaires back from her. The rest of the questionnaires I picked up from the box at the church, where six people had left them. I knew that if people took the questionnaire home with them, it was likely I was never going to see those papers. Still, I was disappointed that out of probably at least 30 questionnaires that I distributed at the door way on the previous Sunday, I received back only six.

4.5 Reliability, validity and objectivity

Reliability in a research means repeatability of the research results. Thus, a reliable research gives out results that are not coincidental. It can be found out in many ways. For example, a research can be proved to be reliable if two different researches get the same results. Validity, on the other hand, means the ability of the research method to measure exactly what it is meant to measure. Sometimes the survey questions are understood in the wrong way, which will lead to invalid research results. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 226-227.)

Some of the issues when evaluating the reliability of a research are to be considered are how carefully all the information of the respondents is entered into the analysing program, how successfully the sampling represents the population, what the response rate is and what kind of measurement mistakes there might be in the research (Vilkka, 2007, 150).

I went through all the variables of every sampling unit twice to make sure all the information is correct in the matrices. The reliability of the research might be slightly

weakened by the fact that I had only 78 respondents, 57 of them women and 39 from the age group from 18 till 34. Thus, the results do not represent 'the world out there' as well as they could if the numbers were more balanced. I gave out probably close to 200 questionnaires, but received back only 78. Those that I didn't receive back were the ones I distributed at the doorway at the church and they were the majority. It was a busy situation, people were busy going out and just took the questionnaire without thinking too much. Here the biggest mistake was the lack of a covering letter with clear instructions on where to return the questionnaire and what the research is all about. I took the risk of probably not getting many questionnaires back and I was right, I didn't get any of those questionnaires distributed at the doorway back. The only questionnaires I received back were the ones distributed in closed environment, where people had time to sit down and fill in the forms and give them back to me immediately.

I don't believe I made actual measurement mistakes in the questions and answering options of the questionnaire, but there was lack of planning as so many either first or last questions of each main question were left unanswered. The font of the questionnaire was small in order to fit as much text in three pages as possible and so it was too unclear and the respondent simply did not see all the questions. Especially the questions before the questions with an empty line were so close to each other that the previous question was often left unanswered, simply because the eye of the reader saw accidentally that the line belonged to the previous question.

I received feedback from a respondent, who felt she didn't like the main theoretical concepts of the questionnaire. She said the word tourism did not go well with religion or spiritual matters. In her mind, she felt she is not practising tourism, when she takes part in a mission trip, for example. To her, a better term would be spiritual traveling. She answered she had not taken part in a holiday, where the main motive was spiritual, as we discussed the answers after she had filled in the form. I then told her that she had taken a mission trip to Russia, when she answered she did not feel like it was a spiritual or religious holiday. I understood that my wording in question 9 was misleading. Perhaps a better word for a holiday would have been a trip, if I wanted to include people who have also taken part in mission trips and not only Biblical tours,

where I could see the word holiday would be suitable. Also the word holiday does not necessarily include religious concerts or conferences. This discussion with this respondent made me feel the validity of this research is in some parts questionable. I have not succeeded in operationalizing all the theoretical concepts in a language which everybody can understand in the same way, which is one of the main aspects when evaluating validity of research. Furthermore, the researcher and the respondent should understand the questions the same way and for this either I have no guarantee. I received feedback from one respondent, which revealed she had understood the concepts differently, but I don't know how the other 77 respondent understood the questions. (Vilkkä, 2007, 150).

However, the meaning of this research was partly to find out how the respondents understand religious tourism and partly in which aspects of religious tourism is there interest. For the first part, I believe I received valid answers. The respondents could describe what came to their mind when they first heard the term religious tourism. They could also defined to what extent the different forms of tourism are religious tourism and name the important countries for this type of tourism. The second part was the one which might have caused some problems due to the terms used, as mentioned earlier.

As for the objectivity of research, Vilkkä says that it is best reached, when the researcher and the respondent have as distant a relation as possible during the research process (Vilkkä, 2007, 16). In my research, I believe many people answered to the questionnaire because they know me personally and wanted to help me finish my research. The fact that many gave the questionnaire back to me personally, or filled it in my presence, might have also affected their answers, as I would in some cases find out who filled which questionnaire at least by the question of town of residence. Also, as mentioned earlier, I made assumptions of the attitude of the respondent towards the term religious tourism and thus changed the whole term in order to get more real answers, which I believed would be the best thing to do in this case. This is also something researchers seldom do. The researcher should probably not claim to know his respondents so well that the changing of a keyword in the questionnaire is needed.

It was slightly problematic while doing the thesis in English and then having the questionnaire and the answers in Finnish, while personally knowing my respondents.

As a summary, I believe the dependability of this research is reached in a level a scientific research requires. The research problem is clarified accurately, the research produced some new information and it gives enough information to the respondents. Lastly, it uses theories and theoretical concepts, it measures what it is meant to measure and the research results are beneficial for further research. It also follows good research ethics (Vilkka, 2007, 154).

5 Finnish views on religious tourism

5.1 The demographics of the respondents

There were all together 78 respondents in this study, out of whom 20 were men and 57 were women. This can be explained by two factors. Firstly, the majority of people attending the church are often women; this is the case both in youth meetings as also in the weekly Sunday morning services. Secondly, I believe women are generally more willing or interested in filling different questionnaires. Equally, the way I appealed to the audience by asking them to help me with this study by filling in the questionnaire might have caused more willingness in the women (many of whom I know personally) to participate and help as opposed to the men.

The age groups of the respondents were divided as is shown in the figure 6. The biggest amount of questionnaires received back were gathered in the youth evening, which explains the big amount of people aged under 34 in this research.

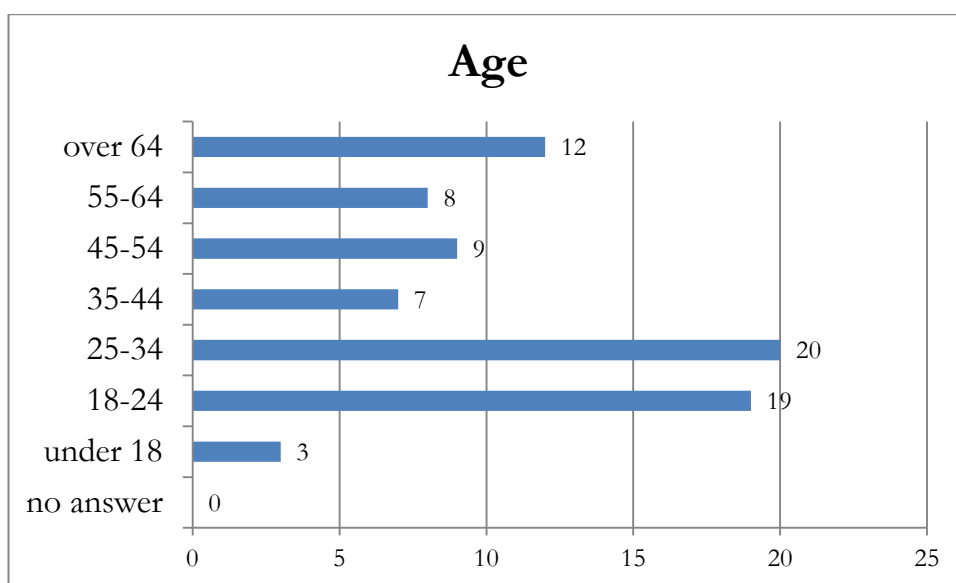


Figure 6. Age classes of the respondents in numbers (n=78)

All respondents were Finns by their nationality; although as many as 14 had left the question of nationality unfilled. With the question of place of residence, there were more variation. The majority of the respondents were from Lahti (42). The next biggest group of 17 people had left the question unanswered. The other places of

residences with the number of respondents were Hollola (7), Joensuu (6) and Asikkala (2). Tampere, Nastola, Espoo, Helsinki and Vantaa all had one respondent.

The educational background of the people taking part in this study was divided as is shown in the figure 7. There were no respondents with a doctor's degree, but otherwise the amounts of people with different educational background were divided relatively evenly.

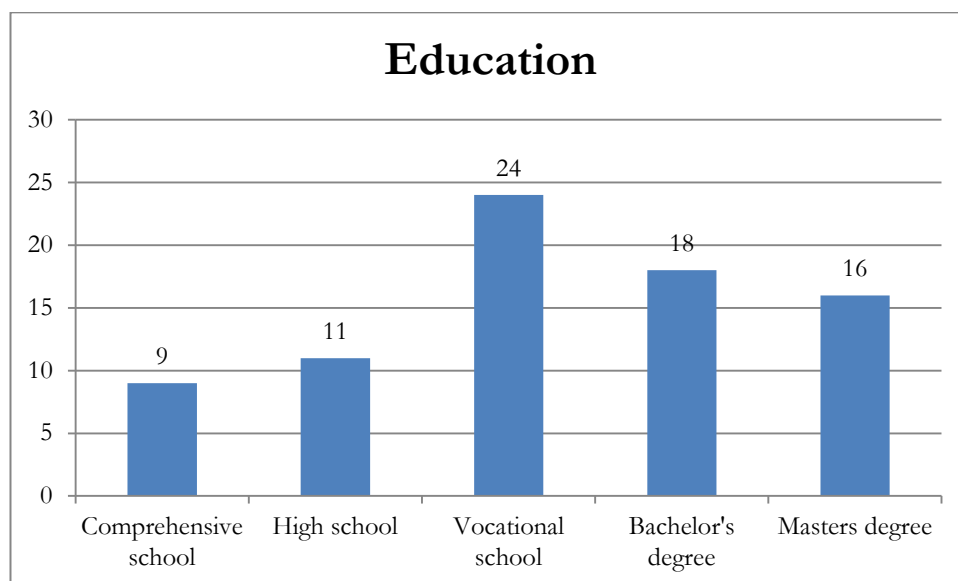


Figure 7. Education of the respondents (n=78)

5.2 The perceptions about religious tourism

When asked about what first comes to mind about religious tourism (hengellinen matkailu – spiritual tourism in Finnish) in an open question number 5., only six people did not answer anything. The most common answers were:

1. Israel,
2. pilgrimage and
3. missionary travel.

I was surprised of how many people mentioned pilgrimage and thought that maybe some of those who didn't know what to write there started to scan the questionnaire further down, and maybe saw the first word in the following question 'pilgrimage' and thus received a little help from there and simply wrote it down. I was equally surprised

of how many answered missionary travel. The explanation might be that many of the respondents are themselves very aware of mission work and short-term missionary travel and thus have missions strongly in mind when talking about religious travel.

The questions from now on were structured questions, except the very last question about the “dream come true” religious holiday , which was an open question. The results for the question concerning to what extent the different forms of religious tourism are in fact religious tourism according to the respondents are shown in the figure 8.

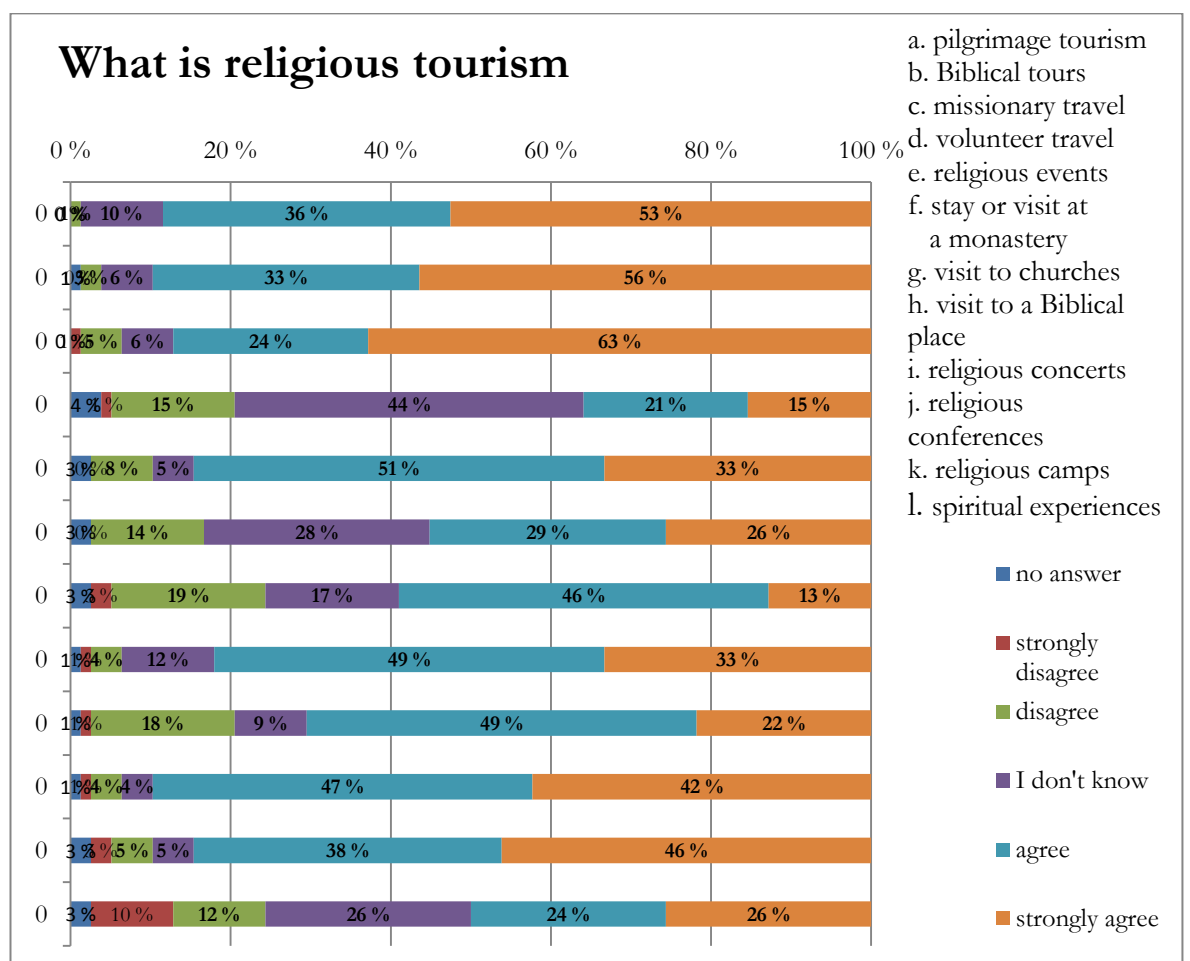


Figure 8. Perceptions about religious tourism (n=78)

The forms of tourism that were most understood to be religious tourism were:

- missionary travel (63% strongly agree),
- Biblical tours (56% strongly agree) and
- pilgrimages (53% strongly agree).

On the other hand, visiting churches and spiritual experiences were disagreed or strongly disagreed by 22% of the respondents to be religious tourism.

As many as 44% did not know if volunteer tourism could be categorized as religious tourism. A stay or visit at a monastery, as well as, spiritual experiences also raised a lot of uncertainty, as 28% stated they didn't know if visiting monasteries and 26% in spiritual experiences are religious tourism. Nobody strongly disagreed that a stay or a visit at a monastery is religious tourism. Religious events were agreed to be religious tourism by as many as 51% of the respondents and strongly agreed by 33% of the respondents, whereas 8% disagreed it to be religious tourism. Religious events together with religious concerts and conferences were the most clearly considered to be or not to be religious tourism, as the percentages of answers "I don't know" in these questions were the lowest, from 4-5%.

Answers about visits to Biblical places were mainly divided into three opinions: 33% strongly agreeing, 49% agreeing and 12% not knowing if it belongs to religious tourism. Religious concerts were almost as clearly understood as the previous with 22% strongly agreeing, 49% agreeing and 18% disagreeing it to be religious tourism.

In summary, it can be concluded that the forms of religious tourism that were mostly understood as religious tourism were missionary travel (63%), Biblical tours (56%) and pilgrimage tourism (53%). Spiritual experiences were most often not understood as religious tourism. As many as 10% of the respondents strongly disagreed it to be religious tourism.

5.3 Important and interesting religious destinations

In the questionnaire there were two types of questions about important and interesting destinations for a religious holiday. I will here deal with answers to both questions together to see if there are similarities in the answers.

As for the important destinations for religious tourism, Israel was by far the most important destination. As many as 96% of the respondents agree or strongly agree on the importance of Israel as a religious tourism destination as is seen in the figure 9. Consequently, 85% are interested in Israel as a destination for a religious holiday. The next important and also interesting religious destination by 58% of the respondents was Greece and the third, interestingly, Finland with 51% of the respondents considering it important and 53% considering it interesting.

Probably the reasons why the respondents of this study feel Finland is such an important and interesting religious tourism destination is mainly because of the large group of young people as respondents. Knowing many of these people personally and their enthusiasm for God and missions and also taking the open comments of these people into consideration, I think their thoughts of Finland as an important and interesting religious destination is due to missiological reasons: they view Finland as a mission field, where God and the gospel needs to be preached. The open questions and voluntary comments in the end of the questionnaire were mainly written by the young respondents and were very enthusiastic and God-centered in their style.

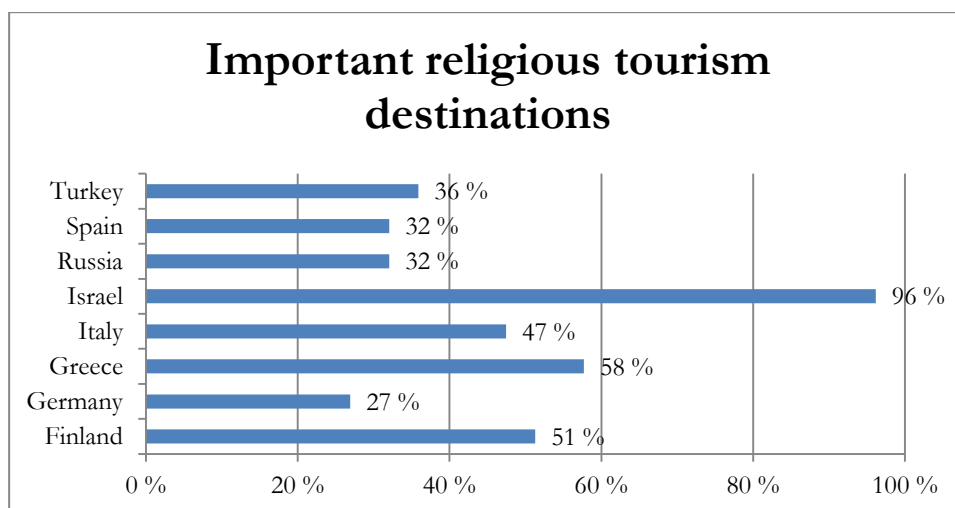


Figure 9. Important religious tourism destinations (n=78)

The more detailed presentation of the answers about the important countries for religious tourism can be seen in the table 4. Israel is the most clearly understood as an important religious tourism destination with very little variety in the answers.

Table 4. The important religious tourism destinations by question in percentages

	Finland	Germany	Greece	Italy	Israel	Russia	Spain	Turkey
0=no answer	8%	12%	9%	9%	4%	9%	8%	17%
1=not important at all	4%	6%	3%	3%	0%	6%	6%	4%
2=not important	13%	14%	3%	8%	0%	10%	15%	13%
3=I don't know	24%	41%	28%	33%	0%	42%	38%	31%
4=important	28%	15%	29%	28%	21%	19%	18%	17%
5=very important	23%	12%	28%	19%	76%	13%	14%	19%

When it comes to the least important countries as a religious holiday destination, in this survey the least important destination was Germany, which was also the least interesting destination. Seven respondents commented that any country is or can be important for religious tourism and two mentioned that any missiologically important country is an important religious destination, too. Other countries or continents mentioned were the developing countries in general, America, Asia, Africa, Egypt, Arabia (presumably meaning Saudi-Arabia) and generally the countries were the Apostle Paul visited. As for the interesting religious destinations, the following countries or areas were mentioned: China, Taiwan, Indonesia, Estonia, France, Norway, Egypt, Japan, Asia, America, developing countries, mission fields and the Taizé-community.

In the question 12 about the interesting destinations for religious tourism, the answers were not as clearly divided as in the question 8 about the important countries for religious tourism. Israel gathered again most points as an interesting religious tourism destination. Other countries and their interest can be seen in the figure 10.

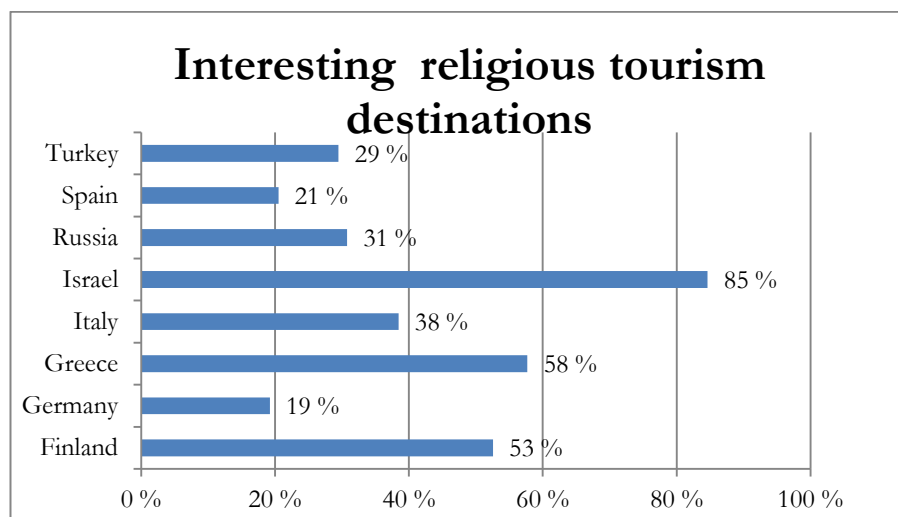


Figure 10. Interesting religious tourism destinations (n=78)

Nobody claimed to be not at all interested in Israel as a destination for a religious holiday and only 4% of the respondents felt they were not interested in Israel as can be seen in the table 5.

Table 5. The interesting religious tourism destinations in percentages

	Finland	Germany	Greece	Italy	Israel	Russia	Spain	Turkey
0=no answer	9%	10%	10%	12%	6%	10%	9%	14%
1=not interested at all	12%	19%	10%	10%	0%	18%	15%	14%
2=not interested	12%	24%	10%	19%	4%	21%	26%	21%
3=I don't know	15%	27%	12%	21%	5%	21%	29%	22%
4=interested	35%	14%	46%	29%	33%	28%	15%	19%
5=very interested	18%	5%	12%	9%	51%	3%	5%	10%

In both of the above-mentioned questions 8 and 12, however, the amount of people who had left some of the questions unanswered, was quite high, it varied from 3 till 13 by a question. So in a question 8.h, for example, the importance of Turkey as a religious destination was left unevaluated by 13 respondents, and altogether, 11 respondents left the question 12.h unanswered. The reason for not answering some of the questions might be the fact that the font of the questionnaire was relatively small and so the questions and numbers were put together quite tightly. For this reason, the respondent might not simply “see” all the options, especially in the end, as in the questions 8.h and 12.h the eye and the mind of the reader might easily already go to the next question, which has an open space to fill in some other country of interest or importance. This might make the respondent simply to forget to answer the previous question.

Interestingly, the percentages of people answering “I don’t know” were high in the question number 8. For example, 42% did not know if Russia and 38% did not know if Spain is an important country for religious tourism. This can be due to this particular sample in this study, as the respondents might simply not know if there are any attractions of religious importance in these countries.

5.4 Interest for religious tourism in the past and in the future

The question 9 dealt with the respondents' past and whether they had already been on a religiously motivated holiday. The answers were divided as follows:

- 55% had taken a holiday where the main motive was religious,
- 10% did not answer this question at all, and
- 35% had not been on such a holiday.

The results to the question number 10 on how much interest there is for different types of religious tourism are presented in the following figure 11.

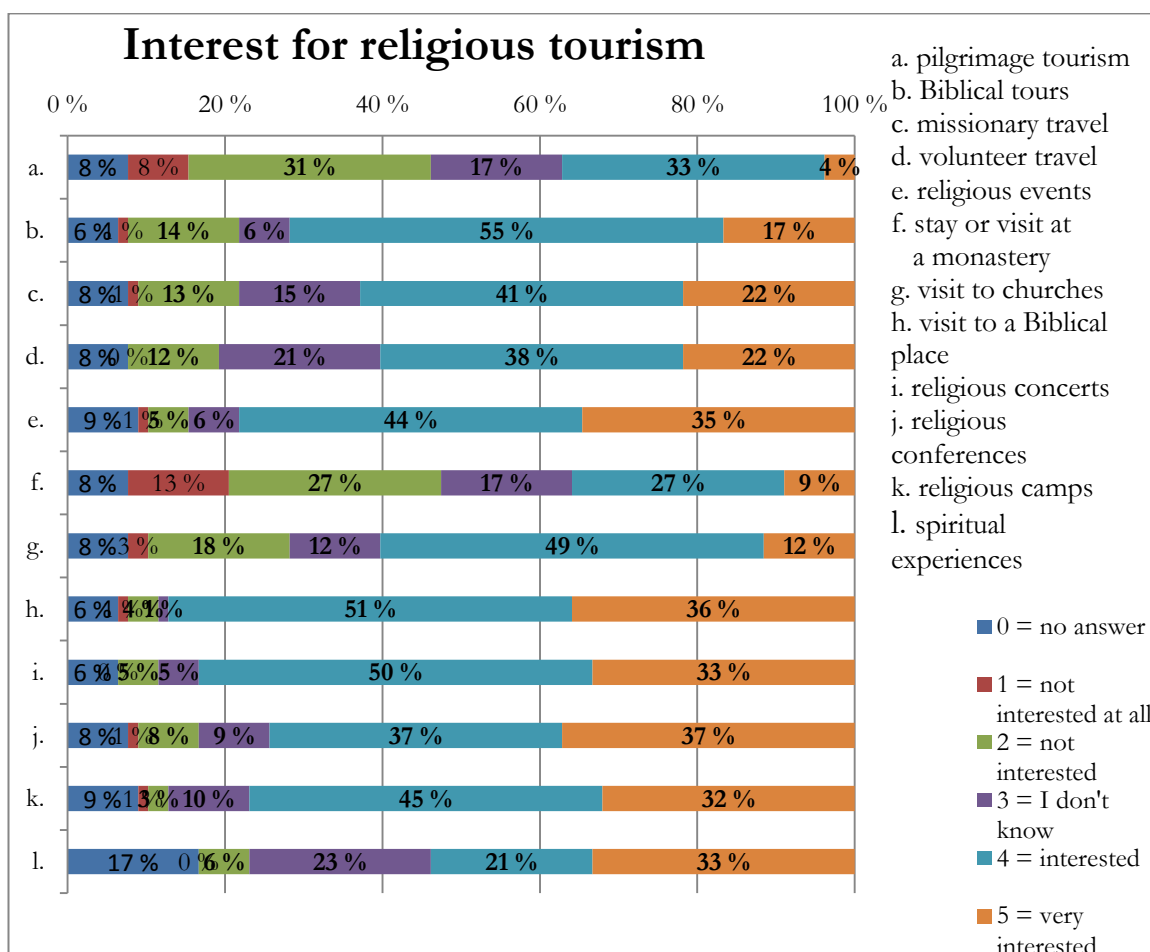


Figure 11. Interest for religious tourism

The most interesting forms of religious tourism according to this study were:

- religious conferences (37% very interested),
- visiting biblical places (36% very interested) and
- religious event (35% very interested).

Interestingly, the forms of religious tourism the respondents were very interested in, gathered relatively small percentages of answers, varying only from 9 till 37%. In addition to this, as many as 55% of the respondents were interested in Biblical tours, 51 % in visiting Biblical places and 50% in religious concerts. The biggest percentages in this question were in the answers of 'interested'.

The least interesting form of religious tourism among the recipients was a stay or a visit at a monastery with 40% stating to be not at all interested or not interested for that sort of tourism (13% not at all interested and 27% not interested). Another form of religious tourism almost as little interesting among the recipients was pilgrimages with 39% being not at all interested or not interested in that kind of tourism. The forms of religious tourism that gathered the most I don't know answers were:

- spiritual experiences (23%),
- volunteer tourism (21%),
- pilgrimage tourism (17%) and
- a stay or visit at a monastery (17%).

5.5 Motives for a religious holiday

The question 11 dealt with the motives for taking a religious holiday. The ultimately most popular motive for a religious holiday was spiritual. As many as 91% agreed or strongly agreed in this as is shown in the table 6. The next important motive was emotional, with 51% of the respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with this. On the contrary, religious motive was disagreed or strongly disagreed by 44% to be an important motive in the religious (spiritual in the Finnish questionnaire) holiday. This question had some of the biggest percentages in neutral answers, for as many as 36% felt neutral about the importance of physical aspects in religious holiday. Other important motives for a religious holiday mentioned were factual, holistic and a chance to get some new ideas.

Table 6. The motives for a religious holiday in percentages

	no answer	strongly disagree	disagree	I don't know	agree	strongly agree
a. religious	12%	17%	27%	14%	26%	5%
b. spiritual	8%	0%	0%	1%	38%	53%
c. intellectual	12%	4%	14%	28%	36%	6%
d. physical	10%	8%	15%	36%	29%	1%
e. emotional	13%	1%	6%	28%	41%	10%

5.6 Important aspects during a religious holiday

The question 13 was about evaluating the travel companion for a religious holiday. From the results it can be concluded that most people would rather travel for a religious holiday with either:

- 1-2 people (79% of the respondents strongly agree or agree) or
- a church group (74% strongly agree or agree).

Traveling with a tour group was also seen relatively positive, as 56% agreed or strongly agreed with such travel companion as an option. As many as 40% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that traveling with another group would be pleasant. The least interesting option was to travel alone with 62% of the respondents strongly disagreeing or disagreeing on that option. As many as 33% did not know if they

wanted to travel with another group. Probably it was unclear to many what this group would be like and felt it was difficult to say if they wanted to travel with such a group.

As it is shown in the figure 12, the three most appreciated aspects during a religious tourism according to this study were:

- taking part in a church service (94% strongly agree or agree),
- meeting local people (93% strongly agree or agree) and
- fellowship with others (87% strongly agree or agree).

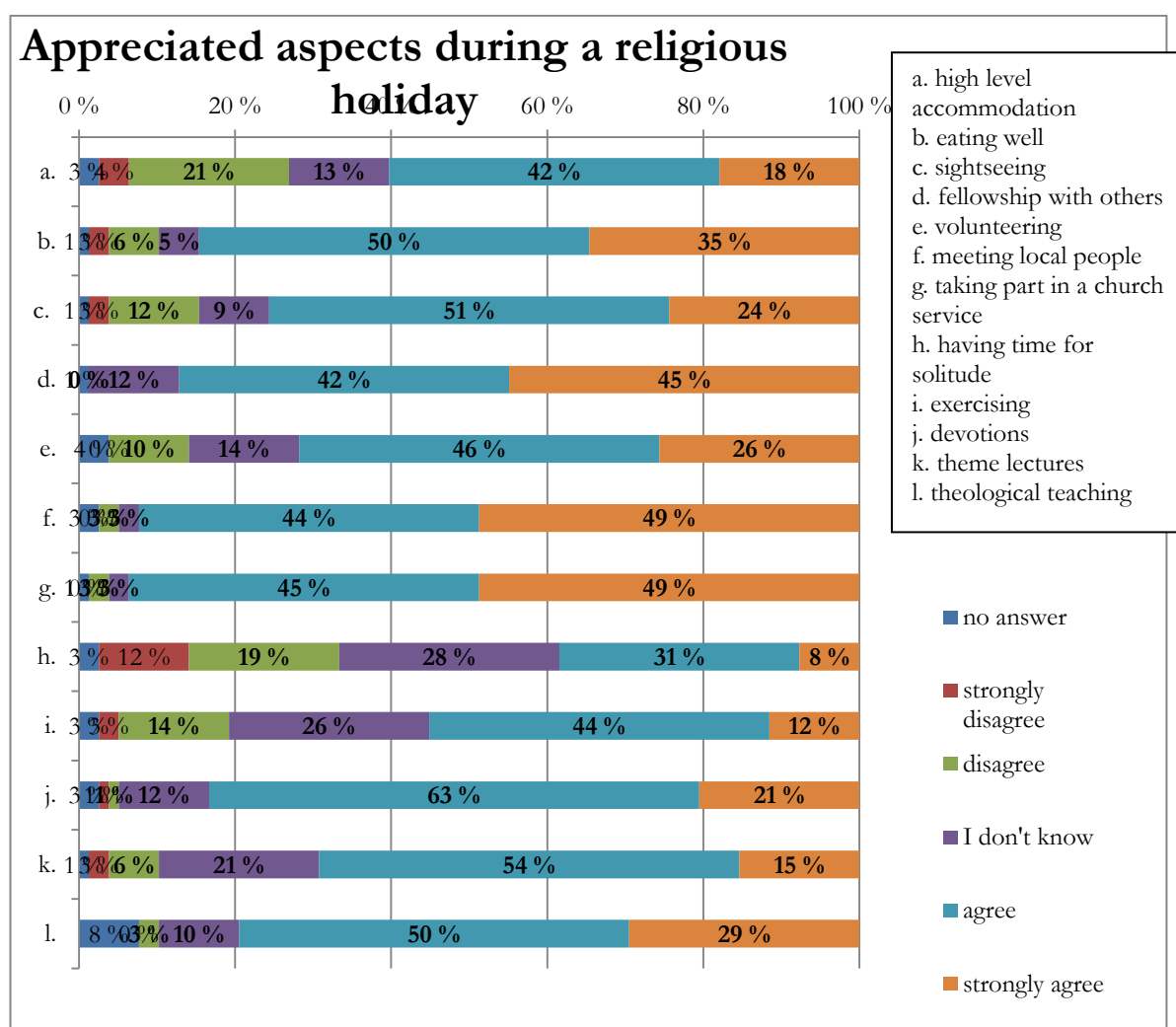


Figure 12. Appreciated aspects during a religious holiday (n=78)

Other important aspects during a religious holiday were eating well with 85% of the respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing on its importance, devotions with 84% and theological teaching with 79% of the respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing on its importance.

The least appreciated aspect of a religious holiday was solitude with 31% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing on its importance. However, as many as 28% also answered “I don’t know” on its importance during the holiday. Maybe it was unclear in the minds of the recipients what kind of solitude it would be. Solitude can be understood for example so that the tour program consists of a couple of hours of solitude per day or that the program consists mostly of such hours. Exercising and theme lectures gathered many “I don’t know” answers. Further on, as many as 15% of the respondents felt that sightseeing is not an important aspect of a religious holiday. Another factor that didn’t seem so important was high level accommodation with 24% of the recipients disagreeing or strongly disagreeing on its importance.

Lastly, the most suitable length of a religious holiday among the respondents was one week with 44% of the respondents choosing this option as is shown in the figure 13. The next suitable length of a religious holiday was two weeks or more with 30% of the respondents stating it. Nobody considered the suitable length of a religious holiday to be only one day. In fact, the whole option of length can be questioned by asking whether any holiday can last only for a day. A religious travel can consist of forms of religious tourism, such as a concert, in which case the length of such a trip could be a day. Giving such an option here was probably the wrong decision, given the form of the question, which clearly talks about a holiday and not religious travel in general.

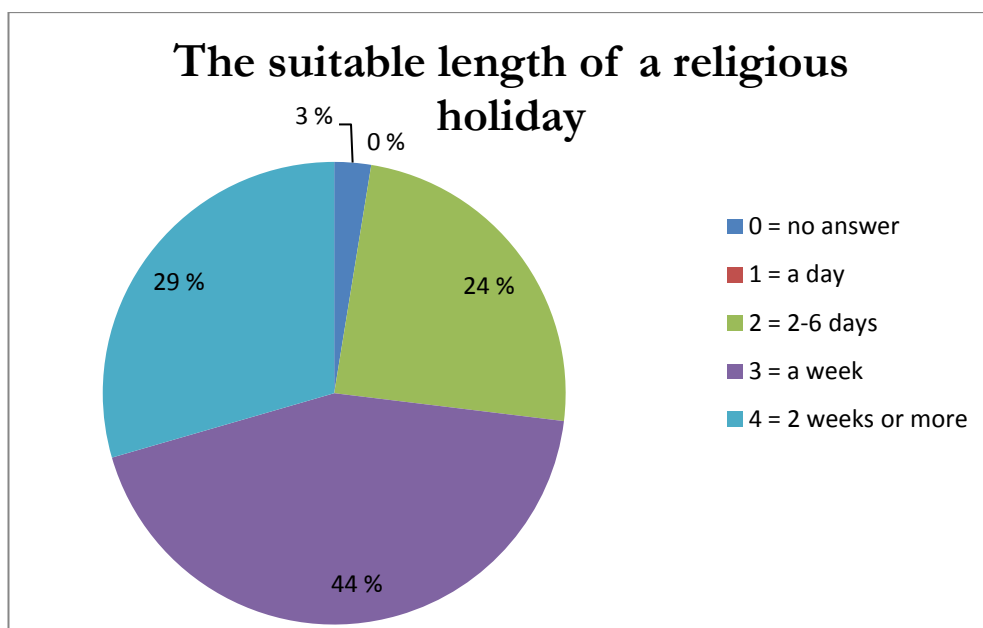


Figure 13. The suitable length of a religious holiday

5.7 A “dream come true” religious holiday

In an open-ended question number 16 about a “dream come true” religious holiday, as many as 58 respondents out of 78 filled in some hopes and ideas. A “dream come true” religious holiday according to those who answered would most preferably contain the following aspects:

1. spiritual and God-centered element of some kind: experiencing God in one way or another, being led and changed by God, having time for solitude and refreshment with God (23 comments)
2. visiting Israel (12 comments) and
3. visiting Biblical places (11 comments).

Other aspects mentioned more than once were missionary work, volunteer work, and meeting local people. Having a good guide during the holiday was mentioned five times, as was also physical activities during a holiday. Things mentioned only once were a monastery trip, getting to know a missionary and his work, a retreat in solitude, Asian Buddhism and yoga, for example. Twenty respondents left this question unanswered.

5.8 The prototype respondent of this study

The prototype respondent of this study was a Finnish female, aged 25-34 from Lahti, who has a vocational degree. She has already been on a religious holiday. The first thing that comes to her mind when talking about religious tourism is Israel. The way she understands the core of religious tourism, is by Biblical tours or religious conferences. The most important and also the most interesting country for religious tourism for her is Israel, where she would like to visit Biblical places with 1 or 2 other people during her “dream come true” religious holiday. She would also appreciate taking part in a church service, meeting local people and having fellowship with others during her holiday. The religious holiday of her dreams would most preferably last one week. An important aspect of her religious holiday would be to have a spiritual experience of some kind and to experience the presence of God during her holiday.

6 The conclusions

I will now go back into the theoretical part of this thesis and deal with the results of this study together with the theory to see how well the statements of the theory are true in the light of this particular study made only about Finnish respondents and their views on religious tourism. In the end, I will suggest some possible religious tourism packages for tour operators for which there could be demand for based on the results of this study.

According to the theory, pilgrimages and missionary travel are the biggest forms of religious tourism. In this study, the recipients were asked what first comes to their minds when they hear the term religious tourism, the most popular answer was Israel followed by pilgrimages and missionary travel. Also in the question of how much they agree that the given forms of religious tourism are religious tourism; missionary travel, Biblical tours and pilgrimage tourism were the best understood as forms of religious tourism. However, volunteer travel raised a lot of uncertainty among the recipients, as almost half of the recipients did not know if it is religious tourism, although in fact it is categorized together with missionary travel to be religious tourism. According to the theory, the other most popular forms of religious tourism are religious events and fellowship travel. Religious events were also very well understood by the recipients to be religious tourism, whereas fellowship travel was left out of the list of options, due to the translation problems. Fellowship travel was, however, mentioned a couple of times in the answers for a “dream come true” religious holiday. Thus, in these aspects the theory and the research results meet each other relatively well. (Yeoman, 2008, 181; Wright, 2008, 10-15; Papathanassis, 2011, 50-53.)

Of the possible spiritual offers that were shown on table 1 on page 18, only a few, such as pilgrimages, yoga and physical exercises, were mentioned in the research answers. The recipients were mostly from the devoted Christian church circles, which explains why chanting, mantras and talks to shamans were not mentioned in the answers. Talks with pastoral workers or a possibility to counseling during a religious holiday could have been mentioned in the answers of the recipients, but they were not. (Trends and Issues in Global Tourism 2011, 2011, 226.)

What comes to the importance of nature as a sacred space, a destination for religious trips and holidays, the recipients of this study also recognized the meaning of quietness and nature as meaningful aspects of religious experience during their religious holiday. (Digance, 2003, 144-145.)

As for other destinations, Biblical countries such as Israel and Greece were very often understood to be important religious tourism destinations by the respondents, but countries with rich protestant Christian history, such as Germany, were not understood to be important. In fact, Germany was seen as the least important country for religious tourism of the given eight countries. It is an interesting question why so many felt Finland is the third important country for religious tourism right after Israel and Greece. One reason for this might be that there was a big amount of young enthusiastic and devoted Christians with missiological ideology who took part in the study. They might view Finland as a mission field, where missionary work is needed and thus view Finland as an important religious destination. Therefore, according to the categorization of Globus, it is mainly by Biblical importance, rather than Catholic or important Christian sites that the recipients of this study understand the important religious tourism destinations. However, it could be added that also missiological meaning was important for the recipients of this study when evaluating religious importance of a destination. (Globus, 2011; Wright, 2008, xiii.)

The characteristics of the recipients of this study according to Cohen's tourist typology can be explained as follows. The recipients of this study are not true pious pilgrims who only want to interact with the holy places, as the three most appreciated aspects of a religious holiday were meeting local people, taking part in a church service and fellowshiping with others. Probably the closest characterization would be that the recipients of this study are mainly religious tourists, as they also take part in worship and do not just remain as spectators as secular tourists do. According to the pilgrim-tourist continuum by Smith's typology, the recipients of this study are probably mostly pious pilgrims, who are driven by faith, religious and spiritual fulfillment. Some could also be called religious tourists as they are more motivated by spiritual matters than secular tourists are. (Cohan 2001 in Richards, 2007, 218; Smith 1992 in Simone-Charteris & Boyd, 2011, 461.)

The tourists traveling solely for religious motives are small in numbers, whereas the spiritual motives are more common, which this study also proves. In fact, the religious motives were seen as the least important reasons for taking a religious holiday in this study, as spiritual motives were by far the most important factors. (Richards, 2007, 217).

It was mentioned that worldwide religious tourists often travel as groups, however, in this study most people would rather travel with 1 or 2 other people. Most religious trips generally last about ten days, whereas the recipients of this study would rather go for a religious holiday that lasts a week. The element of fun was mentioned in the theory as an important aspect of a religious holiday. It was not given as an option in the question for the important aspects during a religious holiday, yet a couple of respondents commented on its importance in the last question of a “dream come true” religious holiday. Also, fellowshipping with others was an option and in fact, it became the third most important appreciated aspect of a religious holiday. The study made by the Ministry of Israel showed that religious tourists are willing to spend more on accommodation than earlier, yet the respondents of this study showed no particular interest in high level accommodation during a religious holiday. As also the newer studies show, and what this research also proves, religious tourism no longer only attracts the older generation, but appeals to people from all age groups. (Jafari, 2000, 438; Wright, 2008, 113; Papathanassis, 2011, 48-49).

Finally, based on the results of this study, I would like to suggest the following religious tourism packages for tour operators:

- A tour package advertised for 2 to 3 people to Israel, where they could get to visit the main Biblical sites with a tour guide. The holiday would also consist of meeting local Christians by taking part in a church service, for example. There could be an option to take part in volunteer work of some kind. The holiday would last one week and the accommodation would be organized in an affordable hotel.

- A tour package to Greece, where one could take part in a religious youth conference or an event and visit Biblical sites. An important aspect of the holiday would be meeting local Christians and getting to know the food culture of the country. The holiday would last approximately for five days. The accommodation could be organized at a camping site, for example. Some of the costs of the events could be lower if one wanted to do some volunteer work at the event.
- A weekend trip in Finland to a religious event, perhaps some kind of retreat where one could attend theological lectures, have time for solitude and also fun via fellowship. The most important aim of this trip would be to have a spiritual element of some kind and experience God in a new way.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. The questionnaire in English

QUESTIONNAIRE: Religious tourism

1. Gender male female
 2. Age under 18 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 over 64
 3. Nationality
 4. Country of residence
 5. Education Comprehensive school
 High school
 Vocational school
 Bachelor's degree
 Masters degree
 Doctor's degree
 Other

6. What first comes to my mind about religious tourism?

7. To what extent the following are religious tourism

	strongly disagree	disagree	I don't know	agree	strongly agree
a. pilgrimage tourism	1	2	3	4	5
b. biblical tours	1	2	3	4	5
c. missionary travel	1	2	3	4	5
d. volunteer travel	1	2	3	4	5
e. religious events	1	2	3	4	5
f. stay or visit at a monastery	1	2	3	4	5
g. visit to churches	1	2	3	4	5
h. visit to a biblical place	1	2	3	4	5
i. religious concerts	1	2	3	4	5
j. religious conferences	1	2	3	4	5
k. religious camps	1	2	3	4	5
l. spiritual experiences	1	2	3	4	5

8. Destinations of importance for religious tourism

	strongly disagree	disagree	I don't know	agree	strongly agree
a. Finland	1	2	3	4	5
b. Germany	1	2	3	4	5
c. Greece	1	2	3	4	5
d. Italy	1	2	3	4	5
e. Israel	1	2	3	4	5
f. Russia	1	2	3	4	5
g. Spain	1	2	3	4	5
h. Turkey	1	2	3	4	5
I. none					
j. Something else, what?					

9. I have taken a holiday, where the main motive was religious yes no

10. How interested am I in the following forms of religious tourism

	not interested at all	not very interested	I don't know	interested	very interested
a. pilgrimage tourism	1	2	3	4	5
b. biblical tours	1	2	3	4	5
c. missionary travel	1	2	3	4	5
d. volunteer travel	1	2	3	4	5
e. religious events	1	2	3	4	5
f. stay or visit at a monastery	1	2	3	4	5
g. visit to churches	1	2	3	4	5
h. visit to a biblical place	1	2	3	4	5
i. religious concerts	1	2	3	4	5
j. religious conferences	1	2	3	4	5
k. religious camps	1	2	3	4	5
l. spiritual experiences	1	2	3	4	5
m. something else, what?					

11. For me, the experiences during a religious holiday should primarily be

	strongly disagree	disagree	I don't know	agree	strongly agree
a. religious	1	2	3	4	5
b. spiritual	1	2	3	4	5
c. intellectual	1	2	3	4	5
d. physical	1	2	3	4	5
e. emotional	1	2	3	4	5
e. something else, what?					

12. How interested am I in the following countries as destinations for religious holiday

	not interested at all	not very interested	I don't know	interested	very interested
a. Finland	1	2	3	4	5
b. Germany	1	2	3	4	5
c. Greece	1	2	3	4	5
d. Italy	1	2	3	4	5
e. Israel	1	2	3	4	5
f. Russia	1	2	3	4	5
g. Spain	1	2	3	4	5
h. Turkey	1	2	3	4	5
i. Something else _____					

13. If I took a religious holiday, I would rather travel

	strongly disagree	disagree	I don't know	agree	strongly agree
a. alone	1	2	3	4	5
b. with organized tour group	1	2	3	4	5
c. with 1-2 other people	1	2	3	4	5
d. with a church group	1	2	3	4	5
f. with other group	1	2	3	4	5

14. During a religious holiday I would also appreciate

	strongly disagree	disagree	I don't know	agree	strongly agree
a. high level accommodation	1	2	3	4	5
b. eating well	1	2	3	4	5
c. sightseeing	1	2	3	4	5
d. fellowship with others	1	2	3	4	5
e. volunteering	1	2	3	4	5
f. meeting local people	1	2	3	4	5
g. taking part in a church service ¹	1	2	3	4	5
h. having time for solitude	1	2	3	4	5
i. exercising	1	2	3	4	5
j. devotions	1	2	3	4	5
k. theme lectures	1	2	3	4	5
l. theological teaching	1	2	3	4	5
k. something else, what?					

15. The suitable length of the holiday would be

	strongly disagree	disagree	I don't know	agree	strongly agree
a. one day	1	2	3	4	5
b. 2-6 days	1	2	3	4	5
c. a week	1	2	3	4	5
d. two weeks or more	1	2	3	4	5

16. Finally, please describe briefly a religious holiday of your dreams

Other comments:

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND EFFORT!

Appendix 2. The questionnaire in Finnish

KYSELY: Hengellinen matkailu

1.	Sukupuoli	mies	nainen		
2.	Ikä	alle 18	18-24	25-34	35-44
		45-54	55-64	yli 64	
3.	Kansallisuus				
4.	Asuinpaikkakunta- ja maa				
5.	Koulutustaso	peruskoulu			
		lukio			
		ammattitutkinto			
		alempi korkeakoulututkinto			
		ylempi korkeakoulututkinto			
		tohtorin tutkinto			
		muu, mikä?	_____		

6. Mitä hengellisestä matkailusta tulee ensimmäisenä mieleeni?

7. Missä määrin seuraavat ovat mielestäni hengellistä matkailua

	täysin eri mieltä	eri mieltä	en osaa sanoa	samaa mieltä	täysin samaa mieltä
a. pyhiinvaellusmatkailu	1	2	3	4	5
b. raamatulliset kiertomatkat	1	2	3	4	5
c. lähetysmatkat	1	2	3	4	5
d. vapaaehtoismatkailu	1	2	3	4	5
e. hengelliset tapahtumat	1	2	3	4	5
f. luostarissa käynti tai viipyminen	1	2	3	4	5
g. kirkoissa vierailu	1	2	3	4	5
h. raamatullisissa paikoissa vierailu	1	2	3	4	5
i. hengelliset konsertit	1	2	3	4	5
j. hengelliset konferenssit	1	2	3	4	5
k. hengelliset leirit	1	2	3	4	5
l. hengelliset kokemukset	1	2	3	4	5

8. Hengelliselle matkailulle tärkeät kohdemaat

	täysin eri mieltä	eri mieltä	en osaa sanoa	samaa mieltä	täysin samaa mieltä
a. Suomi	1	2	3	4	5
b. Saksa	1	2	3	4	5
c. Kreikka	1	2	3	4	5
d. Italia	1	2	3	4	5
e. Israel	1	2	3	4	5
f. Venäjä	1	2	3	4	5
g. Espanja	1	2	3	4	5
h. Turkki	1	2	3	4	5
i. joku muu, mikä?	_____				

9. Olen ollut lomalla, jonka tärkein motiivi on ollut hengellinen kyllä en

10. Kuinka kiinnostunut olen seuraavista hengellisen matkailun muodoista

	en ole lainkaan kiinnostunut	en ole kovin kiinnostunut	en osaa sanoa	olen kiinnostunut	olen erittäin kiinnostunut
a. pyhiinvaellusmatkailu	1	2	3	4	5
b. raamatulliset kiertomatkat	1	2	3	4	5
c. lähetysmatkat	1	2	3	4	5
d. vapaaehtoismatkailu	1	2	3	4	5
e. hengelliset tapahtumat	1	2	3	4	5
f. luostarissa käynti tai viipyminen	1	2	3	4	5
g. kirkoissa vierailu	1	2	3	4	5
h. raamatullisissa paikoissa vierailu	1	2	3	4	5
i. hengelliset konsertit	1	2	3	4	5
j. hengelliset konferenssit	1	2	3	4	5
k. hengelliset leirit	1	2	3	4	5
l. hengelliset kokemukset	1	2	3	4	5
m. jokin muu, mikä?					

11. Kokemukseni hengellisellä lomalla pitäisi ensisijaisesti olla

	täysin eri mieltä	eri mieltä	en osaa sanoa	samaa mieltä	täysin samaa mieltä
a. uskonnollinen	1	2	3	4	5
b. hengellinen	1	2	3	4	5
c. älyllinen	1	2	3	4	5
d. fyysinen	1	2	3	4	5
e. tunnepitoinen	1	2	3	4	5
f. jotain muuta, mitä?					

12. Kuinka kiinnostunut olen seuraavista maista hengellisen loman kohteena

	en ole lainkaan kiinnostunut	en ole kovin kiinnostunut	en osaa sanoa	olen kiinnostunut	olen erittäin kiinnostunut
a. Suomi	1	2	3	4	5
b. Saksa	1	2	3	4	5
c. Kreikka	1	2	3	4	5
d. Italia	1	2	3	4	5
e. Israel	1	2	3	4	5
f. Venäjä	1	2	3	4	5
g. Espanja	1	2	3	4	5
h. Turkki	1	2	3	4	5
i. joku muu, mikä?					

13. Jos lähtisin hengelliselle lomalle, matkustaisin mielelläni

	täysin eri mieltä	eri mieltä	en osaa sanoa	samaa mieltä	täysin samaa mieltä
a. yksin	1	2	3	4	5
b. matkanjärjestäjän ryhmän kanssa	1	2	3	4	5
c. 1-2 muun henkilön kanssa	1	2	3	4	5
d. seurakuntaryhmän kanssa	1	2	3	4	5
e. muun ryhmän kanssa	1	2	3	4	5

14. Hengellisellä lomalla arvostaisin myös

	täysin eri mieltä	eri mieltä	en osaa sanoa	samaa mieltä	täysin samaa mieltä
a. korkeatasoista majoitusta	1	2	3	4	5
b. hyvää ruokaa	1	2	3	4	5
c. nähtävyyksiä	1	2	3	4	5
d. yhteisöllisyyttä	1	2	3	4	5
e. vapaaehtoistyötä	1	2	3	4	5
f. paikallisten tapaamista	1	2	3	4	5
g. jumalanpalvelukseen osallistumista	1	2	3	4	5
h. yksinäisyyttä	1	2	3	4	5
i. fyysisiä aktiviteettejä	1	2	3	4	5
j. hartaushetkiä	1	2	3	4	5
k. teemaluentoja	1	2	3	4	5
l. hengellistä opetusta	1	2	3	4	5
m. jotain muuta, mitä?					

15. Sopiva hengellisen loman kesto olisi

- a. päivä
- b. 2-6 päivää
- c. viikko
- d. 2 viikkoa tai enemmän

16. Lopuksi, kuvaile lyhyesti unelmiesi hengellinen matka

Muita kommentteja:

KIITOS VASTAUKSISTASI!