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## Introducing the International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage

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# Introducing the *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*

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## **Dr. Kevin A. Griffin**

Lecturer in Tourism,  
School of Hospitality Management and Tourism,  
Dublin Institute of Technology, Dublin, Ireland  
[kevin.griffin@dit.ie](mailto:kevin.griffin@dit.ie)

## **Dr. Razaq Raj**

School of Events, Tourism and Hospitality  
Leeds Metropolitan University, Leeds, UK  
[r.raj@leedsmet.ac.uk](mailto:r.raj@leedsmet.ac.uk)

Wow, so here we are.

It is with incredible excitement and considerable trepidation that we bring to you, the very first volume of the *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*.

## **Overview**

The following sections outline the purpose and aims of this new publication See: <http://arrow.dit.ie/ijrtp/> for more detail

### ***About the Journal***

The *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage* (IJRTP) was founded in 2013 by an international group of researchers (the Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Expert Group), in association with ARROW@DIT. IJRTP is a member of the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), the comprehensive and well-renowned open-access directory. IJRTP meets the range of DOAJ selection criteria based on scholarly research coverage and peer-review quality control. The DOAJ consists of a comprehensive database of over 7,000 high quality, scientific and scholarly open-access journals. Its main purpose is to increase the ease of use, visibility and overall usage of open-access journals.

### ***Statement of Purpose / Philosophy***

The *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage* is a high-quality, international, open access, online, double blind reviewed publication which deals with all aspects of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage.

### ***Aims and Scope***

This journal aims to be the leading international journal for all those concerned with Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage.

The journal takes an interdisciplinary international approach and includes all aspects of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage. It is inclusive of all denominations, religions, faiths and spiritual practices.

The journal's online platform facilitates a truly integrative approach. While the main emphasis is on primary research articles, it also welcomes suitably relevant discussion papers, research / review pieces, industry focused case studies and evaluations, management guides and reports, economic evaluations, book reviews, announcements of forthcoming meetings etc.

Papers / articles should be relevant to both academics and practitioners

All papers are subject to 'double - blind - review'.

Papers can include a variety of media elements including audio and visual files, a range of image formats and hyperlinks to websites and other online resources.

## **Origins**

In 2003 a group of academics, led by Carlos Fernandes and Clara S. Petrillo (RIP) organised a workshop in Fatima, Portugal. The outputs of the conference were published by ATLAS in a volume entitled: *Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage: ATLAS Special Interest Group 1st Expert meeting*, edited by Carlos Fernandes,

Francis McGettigan, and Jonathan Edwards (2003).

Following that event, a number of interesting meetings of the group took place, and in the meantime, one of the group members, Razaq Raj, and his colleague Nigel Morpeth, produced an edited volume, which involved (among others) a number of participants from that first ATLAS workshop. The success of this book, and the continued linkage between colleagues led group members to propose a regular set of workshops, which would further promote and facilitate interaction based on the theme of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage.

Thus, in November 2009, the group held a successful conference in Nazaré, Portugal. The following year, the group travelled further afield, with its first event outside Europe, hosted by the Benedictine monastery of New Norcia, Perth, Western Australia and Monash University<sup>[1]</sup>. In June 2012, the group met in Maynooth, Ireland, organised by the Dublin Institute of Technology and in 2013, an even bigger event took place in the Institute for Tourism Studies in Malta. Plans are already well underway as we go to print, to hold the next event in Hungary, hosted by the University of Pannonia, Veszprém.

Between all of these events, approximately 85 papers were presented, and 48 papers (plus another 17 in Raj and Morpeth, 2007) have been published. This is a sizeable output of papers, and for the foreseeable future, this pattern would appear to be continuing.

Looking at the wider academic world, there are many more conferences and conference sessions dealing with religious and pilgrimage related tourism research which is being carried out by the international academic community. Furthermore, a number of industry related initiatives are also taking place.

Reflecting on the scale of these outputs, and the amount of work which the Editors were putting in to generating outputs for a variety of Journals, it was a reasonably logical progression to producing our own Journal.

Surprisingly, launching the Journal has been a relatively straightforward process, aided by our experience of producing Special Publications for

- *International Journal of Business and Globalisation* (Raj, Griffin, Fernandes and Morpeth, 2011)
- *International Journal of Tourism Policy* (Raj and Griffin, 2012)

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed discussion of the various meetings mentioned here, see Griffin and Raj, 2012 which lists many of the papers / publications discussed.

- *Journal of Tourism Consumption and Practice* (Griffin and Raj, 2013)

In addition we have produced a volume of papers for ATLAS entitled *Reflecting on Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage* (Griffin and Raj, 2012), and a somewhat related book *Cultural Tourism*, (Raj, Griffin and Morpeth, 2013).

## Thank You

It is always dangerous to name people, but we will give it a try - with due apologies to anybody who feels we have forgotten them.

We have been very lucky that this production is generously supported in many ways (conceptually, technically, theoretically etc) by library staff at the Dublin Institute of Technology. In particular we have to thank Yvonne Desmond, who has smoothed the way for us in all aspects of publishing the Journal. From the very first meeting where a journal was suggested, Yvonne's energy and excitement have been a source of inspiration.

We must thank our reviewers. Without a credible and competent bank of reviewers, a journal such as this is worthless. All of our reviewers engaged in the process competently and professionally. Authors received detailed and supportive comments, and each reviewer undertook their job enthusiastically and graciously.

Our Authors deserve mention. Their patience has been stretched to breaking point (over the past couple of weeks in particular), with requests and clarifications, until we are all happy that the papers reflect their original concepts and thoughts as accurately as possible.

Our Editorial Board (see Table 1) have been incredibly supportive in the run-up to this publication date. Any requests for input have received a flow of emails with ideas, suggestions and perhaps more importantly, expressions of support and encouragement.

We must also thank our home institutions: The School of Hospitality Management and Tourism, College of Arts and Tourism at the Dublin Institute of Technology, Ireland and the School of Events, Tourism and Hospitality at Leeds Metropolitan University, UK

THANK YOU to all the above, but, perhaps more importantly we need to express our gratitude to the people in our real homes - our families, who have 'lived' the journey of this Journal with us over the past number of months.

## Feedback

This is the first Volume of our Journal, and as such can be considered a 'test-piece'. We already have a number of papers lined up for our next volume, and a number of authors have promised to send papers to us. We welcome feedback at any time, but in particular, would like to hear comments / feedback / critiques etc of this first volume. Because we are undertaking this venture ourselves, we are in a position to change / alter / amend any and all of the Journal elements. Let us know what you think, and we look forward to hearing your suggestions.

Thank you and enjoy .

**Kevin and Razaq**

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**Table 1 - International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage - Editorial Board**

Editors
Kevin Griffin (Ireland ) Razaq Raj (UK)
Book Review Editor
Carlos Fernandes (Portugal)
Editorial Board - Academic
Vitor Ambrósio (Portugal) Silvia Aulet Serrallonga (Spain) Ernest Azzopardi (Malta) Dino Bozonelos (USA) Alan Clarke (Hungary) Noga Collins Kreiner (Israel) Michael A. Di Giovine (USA) John Eade (UK) Jonathan Edwards (UK) Maureen Griffiths (Australia) Muhsin Kar (Turkey) Yoel Mansfeld (Israel) Frances McGettigan (Ireland) Alison McIntosh (New Zealand) Nigel Morpeth (UK) Daniel H. Olsen (Canada) Tahir Rashid (UK) Ian Rotherham (UK) Xose Santos (Spain) Kiran Shinde (India) Rana Singh (India) Dallen J. Timothy (USA) Alexandra Tirca (Drule) (Romania) Anna Trono (Italy) Roger Vaughan (UK) Craig Webster (Cyprus) Peter Wiltshier (United Kingdom) Vincent Zammit (Malta)
Editorial Board - Industry
Luc Durand (Canada) Christos Petras (Greece) John Winton (Wales) Kevin Wright (USA)

**Delegates at the Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Expert Conference in Malta, 2013**

