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## Spatial Changes of Pilgrimage Centers in Pilgrimage Studies – Review and Contribution to Future Research

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# Spatial Changes of Pilgrimage Centres in Pilgrimage Studies: A review and contribution to future research

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Pilgrimages and pilgrimage centres are a subject of research often undertaken from the perspective of geographic sciences. Geographical research on pilgrimage movement and sanctuaries is important due to its focus on the spatial aspect. This article analyses the current state of research on pilgrimage centres. The main trends of the current studies include: the phenomenon of pilgrimage in terms of religion, society, culture and tourism; as well as its impact, including on the development of the settlement and; studies of pilgrimage centres, in particular their impact on space in various spatial and temporal scales, as well as; the conclusions drawn from them. These were all examined and discussed. For the first time, special attention was paid both to the research on the sanctuaries of the Roman Catholic church, their spatial organization and the changes taking place in them, and on the works discussing the managing of pilgrimage centres. In addition, the terminology applied to contemporary sacred places was discussed. In the conclusion, gaps in the existing state of knowledge and research questions that still await an answer, as well as directions set for the future research on pilgrimage centres from the perspective of tourism geography and the geography of religion are indicated.

**Key Words:** pilgrimage studies, geographical research, pilgrimage centre, pilgrimage, sanctuary.

## Introduction

The phenomenon of pilgrimage has an impact on the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of life (Vukonic, 1992; Park, 1994; Proctor, 2006; Timothy & Olsen 2006; Collins-Kreiner, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c; Collins-Kreiner & Wall 2015; Griffin & Raj, 2017). In recent years, a resurgence of journeys with religious motives has been observed around the world (Digance, 2003; Eade, 2015; Griffin & Raj, 2017); for example, in Europe, about 50 million Christians a year, mostly Catholics, go on pilgrimages.

Pilgrimages and religious tourism are an important subject of research, especially in tourism geography and the geography of religion, because of their spatial-temporal influence on geographical space (Rinschede & Sievers, 1987; Park, 1994; Rinschede, 1999; Jackowski, 2003; Proctor, 2006; Timothy & Olsen 2006; Collins-Kreiner, 2010a). The impact of religious phenomena on this geographical space, especially those associated with pilgrimage centres, has been emphasised for many years by numerous authors (Von Kasche, 1795; Deffontaines, 1948; Fickeler, 1962; Butnner, 1979; Wirth, 1979; Sopher, 1981; Hoheisel,

1985; Margul, 1986; Rinschede & Sievers, 1987; Eade & Sallnow, 1991; Cohen, 1992; Cooper, 1992; Rinschede, 1992; 1999; Park, 1994; Holloway & Vallins, 2002; Jackowski, 2003). According to them, the proper reading and interpretation of manifestations of worship in space should be the role of the geography of religion. Deffontaines (1948) saw in religious phenomena the source of many processes occurring in the geographical environment, including factors related to the developing of towns and cities. He emphasised their influence on the creation and development of settlement. In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, attention began to be paid to the religious organisation of geographical space. Centres of worship are mentioned as one of the elements that sacralise space (Fickeler, 1962) and their significant influence on the changes in the socio-geographical environment, i.e. the generation of pilgrimage movement, also, as well as the changes in settlement, or the transformation of cultural landscapes (Sopher, 1981), are emphasised.

There is still a gap in research on pilgrimages and sacred space (Proctor, 2006; Timothy & Olsen, 2006) and filling it is the task for geographers (Holloway & Vallins, 2002; Proctor, 2006; Collins-Kreiner, 2010a).

In order to fill this gap in the future, it seems necessary to conduct a review and prepare a summary of the current state of research on pilgrimage centres and their influence on geographical space.

The aim of the article is to discuss the current state of research on pilgrimages and pilgrimage centres in Europe from the perspective of geographic sciences, in particular works on the space of pilgrimage centres and the changes taking place in them. At the beginning, concepts of sanctuaries are introduced and systematised on the basis of the literature. Particular attention is paid to focusing on the spatial organisation of Catholic pilgrimage centres in Europe. Next, the main theories and research approaches as well as conclusions from previous works are discussed. This paper indicates a possibility of conducting geographical research on pilgrimage centres based on the works in which sanctuaries are treated as part of geographical space.

### Terminology

A discussion which explains concepts such as *sanctuary* and *pilgrimage centre* should begin with explaining more general terms such as a *sacred place* and *sacred space*.

#### *A sacred place and the sacred space*

These concepts have been developed on the basis of religious and sociological studies (Van der Leeuw, 1933; Turner, 1969, 1973; Turner & Turner, 1978; Chidester & Linenthal, 1995; Eliade, 1999). In the literature on the subject, they are often treated as identical and used interchangeably in relation to Catholic pilgrimage centres. In terms of religious studies, a sacred place is a place of grace which attracts pilgrims (Van der Leeuw, 1933). As a result of hierophany (a revelation of the sacred), the profane is transformed into the sacred, it becomes significant space, a source of strength and sacredness (Eliade, 1969). These transformations are of qualitative nature, making a specific part of space become sacred in its nature. In the fundamental concepts of *sacred places*, the most important feature is the presence of the *sacred*, broadly understood in various religions. Mircea Eliade (1969) defines a pilgrimage as a religiously motivated journey to a symbolic centre of the world - *axis mundi*, or its representation, i.e. a very sacred place, a place of the sacred, separated from the profane zone. The postmodernist approach is definitely not in favour of separating what is sacred from what is

secular. Chidester & Linenthal (1995) emphasise that a sacred place does not have to be the opposite of a profane zone, and separated from it by a clear border, since the sacred zone is inextricably linked with social and environmental reality.

Hecht (1994) describes a sacred place in situational and relational categories. In this approach, they agree with Leeuw's (1933) theory, in which religious buildings are a consequence of the impact of a sacred place; building a chapel is a consequence of the sacredness of a place. According to Turner (1969), a pilgrimage can be analysed as a process of transition, i.e. it is liminal in nature. Excluded from everyday life, a pilgrim is on the way to direct contact with *the sacred*. The destination of a pilgrimage (*the centre*) is usually '*there*', therefore, a pilgrim must make a journey to a place, but it may also be, not necessarily, spatial and symbolic in nature. A pilgrim, therefore, goes to the periphery of their everyday life (Turner, 1973; Turner & Turner, 1978). Highlighting the migration of a pilgrim to a specific place that can constitute a sanctuary is important in this approach.

In the typology of pilgrimage centres, Cohen (1992) attempted an interpretation of sacred places on the basis of Eliade's (1999 & 1973) theories. The most important pilgrimage centres in the world are places formally approved by religions and the authorities. Cohen (1992) lists the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and St. Peter's Basilica in Rome as the main catholic pilgrimage sites. Today, formal sacred places also constitute smaller pilgrimage centres, i.e. other sanctuaries and shrines (Cohen, 1992). In this matter, he agrees with the statement from religious sciences that each sacred place is one in which divine power is manifested. Soja (1980) describes religious sites as a 'third space', existing beyond and between the lived and anticipated world. Sacred spaces are a unique space in the imagination of religious and secular tourism (Collins-Kreiner & Wall, 2015).

The sacredness of a place is a result of the presence of the broadly understood sacred, and the believers' affection towards it (Van der Leeuw, 1933; Turner, 1973; Cohen, 1992; Vukonic, 1996, 2000; Eliade, 1999). Sacred places and the sacred space are those areas where the sacred (Eliade, 1999) or power (Van der Leeuw, 1933) manifest themselves. The unique character of this space can be perceived only by religious people, since its nature is subjective (Van der Leeuw, 1933). A non-religious person perceives space as homogeneous, while, for a religious person, one's space is varied due to the presence of the sacred

(deity / God) (Eliade, 1999). The need for contact with the *sacred* in sacred places is one of the basic needs of a believer - *homo religious* (Bilska-Wodecka, 2012). In most religions, sacred places are places of prayer, worship and meditation. Their architectural appearance and furnishings can help visitors to be closer to the sacred, develop religiosity, spirituality, sense of community, and help in the reception of the place.

### *A sanctuary and a pilgrimage centre*

*Sanctuary* is a word derived from Latin *sanctuarium*, which is, like most words ending in *-arium*, a container for keeping something in it - in this case holy things or perhaps holy people, *sancta* or *sancti*. A sanctuary may be a sacred place (such as a church or chapel), or a consecrated area of a church or temple around its tabernacle or altar (*The Original Catholic Encyclopaedia*). According to the definition of the Roman Catholic Church (*The Original Catholic Encyclopaedia*), a sanctuary is a church or another sacred place to which believers make pilgrimages by the consent of the authorities of the church, because of the object of worship. A sanctuary can be a church, chapel, cemetery, altar, or another religious structure. The factor generating pilgrimages may be the object of worship, or an special event. From the perspective of geographical research, the requirement of the presence of pilgrimages for a sacred building to be declared as a sanctuary is worth mentioning. The basic value of a sanctuary is its religious value, which is often accompanied by others, including cultural ones.

### **Research on pilgrimages and pilgrimage centres**

Until the 1970s, studies on pilgrimages and pilgrimage centres were undertaken above all by historians, sociologists and anthropologists, mainly based on the concepts of Eliade (1999) and the Turners (1978). Geographical research was more often undertaken afterwards. Geographers analyse pilgrimage centres primarily in spatial, economic, tourist and cultural terms. The pilgrimages and the largest pilgrimage centres of the most important religions became the subject of studies conducted by Park (1994), Rinschede (1999) and Jackowski (2003). In studies of urban geography and tourism, special attention was paid to the functions of sanctuary centres in the urban space (Sorre, 1952, Shwarz, 1959; Beaujeu-Garnier & Chabot, 1971).

In the current state of the research on sanctuaries, the following main trends can be distinguished:

- Research on the phenomenon of pilgrimage:
  - \* in terms of religion, society, culture and tourism, including the examination of the size, structure and motivations of pilgrimage movement,
  - \* the impact of pilgrimage, including the impact on the development of cities, towns and villages.
- Research on pilgrimage centres:
  - \* the occurrence of pilgrimage centres in various areas and monographic works on selected sanctuaries;
  - \* the impact of pilgrimage centres on the organisation of space in various spatial and temporal scales.

These themes are now discussed.

### *Research on the phenomenon of pilgrimage*

The first research on the phenomenon of pilgrimage focused on traditional pilgrimages understood as journeys with religious motives. This trend dominated until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Collins-Kreiner, 2010a). The most extensive group of studies is focused on the spatial range, size and structure of pilgrimage movement (selected papers include: Jackowski, 1984, 1987a, 1987b, 1990a, 1990b, 2003; Rinschede & Sievers, 1987; Jackowski & Smith, 1992; Jackowski *et al.*, 1999; Bilska-Wodecka, 2003; Raj & Morpeth, 2007; Braga *et al.*, 2013; Rizzello & Trono, 2013; Bond *et al.*, 2015).

In pilgrimage focused research, sanctuaries are presented as places of destination of journeys with religious motives. Research on pilgrimages covered various spatial ranges, i.e. it was carried out in individual sacred places, in areas of given countries and regions, and in a global perspective (Osterrieth, 1997; Rinschede, 1997; Stoddard & Morinis, 1997). It introduced into geographical research, definitions and classifications of pilgrimages based on the range of impact of a given sacred place (e.g. a sanctuary) and the size of pilgrimage movement, distinguishing international, national and local pilgrimage centres. In addition, it distinguished three criteria for the study of pilgrimages, such as:

- (1) the length of the journey,
- (2) pilgrimage routes, and
- (3) the number of pilgrims (Stoddard, 1994).



On the other hand, Jackowski (2003) classified Christian pilgrimage centres using the international, national, supra-regional and local scale. Based on the analyses by Nolan and Nolan (1989), Griffin and Raj (2017) distinguished three types of Christian pilgrimage centres in Europe: pilgrim shrines, religious tourist attractions, and sites of religious festivals.

Religious motives are still one of the most common reasons for travelling around the world (UNWTO). More and more research is currently being conducted on pilgrims' motivations (Nolan & Nolan, 1989; Smith, 1989, 1992; Cohen, 1992; Collins-Kreiner & Kliot, 2000; Fleischer, 2000; Collins-Kreiner & Gatrell, 2006; Shinde & Rizello, 2014; Lois-González & Santos, 2014; Abad-Galzacort & Guereño-Omil, 2016; Griffin & Raj, 2017, Liro et al., 2018) and their experience at a sacred place (MacCannell, 1973; Turner & Turner, 1978; Cohen, 1979, 1998; Krešić et al., 2012; Lopez, 2013; Bond et al., 2015; Mora-Torres et al., 2016). The *secular pilgrimage*, however, retaining the structure and behaviour corresponding to pilgrimages, but devoid of religious motivation, is also mentioned (selected: Reader & Walter, 1993; Seaton, 1999, 2002; Digance & Cusack, 2001; Alderman, 2002; Digance, 2003; Stone, 2006; Reader, 2007; Margry, 2008; Hyde & Harman, 2011).

Many authors emphasise that the motivations for travelling to sacred places become diverse and comprise features characteristic of pilgrimages, religious tourism and tourism in the traditional sense (Rinschede, 1997; Tomasi, 2002; Santos, 2003; Shinde & Rizello, 2014; Griffin & Raj, 2017). For example, people travelling along the routes to Santiago de Compostela and along the St. Ignatius trail represent motivations ranging from religious ones to typical tourist motivations, and they are difficult to classify (Lois-González & Santos, 2014; Abad-Galzacorta & Guereño-Omil, 2016). Similar findings were provided in the surveys of people visiting the sanctuary in Krakow (Poland) (Liro et al., 2018). Pilgrimage centres are visited by *pilgrims* with mainly religious motives, *religious tourists* guided by religious and cognitive motives, as well as by *tourists* with tourist-only motives. Religious motivation can be of diversified importance in making decisions. It can be the only major reason (Rinschede, 1999) in the case of pilgrimages in the traditional sense, as well as one of many (Santos, 2003; Timothy & Olsen, 2006) in religious tourism. Religious practices may accompany a tourist trip, and typical tourist behaviour may accompany a religious trip (Santos, 2003; Liro et al., 2018). Apart from religious motives, there may also be

the desire to experience a sense of identity with a place of historical and cultural importance (Nolan & Nolan, 1989). Pilgrimage centres are, in a sense, characterised by tourist values (Timothy & Boyd, 2003). Therefore, today, motivations of people visiting sacred places can co-exist and change from tourist to religious, and vice versa, at every moment of the journey, even without the participants being aware of it (Collins-Kreiner & Kliot, 2000; Poria et al., 2003, 2004; Collins-Kreiner, 2010a).

Based on the significance of the religious factor in the motivations, some authors attempted to identify the types of people visiting sacred places. Among visitors to Christian pilgrimage centres in Europe, Nolan and Nolan (1989) distinguished: *traditional pilgrims*, *members of organised religious tours*, and *mass tourists*. In turn, among the Christians visiting the Holy Land, Collins-Kreiner & Kliot (2000) distinguished five categories: *pilgrim*, *pilgrim>tourist*, *tourist=pilgrim*, *tourist>pilgrim*, and *secular tourist*, which they based on the pilgrims-tourist path (Smith 1992). Next, based on Collins-Kreiner and Kliot's (2000) model, Canoves and Forga (2016) proposed three types of people visiting Montserrat: pilgrims who are mainly guided by religious motives and strongly connected to the sacred place, religious tourists who are guided by the religious motive as one of many and are enjoying the tourist attractions of the place, and tourists who visit Montserrat as one of the items of their tourist itinerary. Similar profiles, supplemented with an analysis of behaviour (i.e. where objects in the pilgrimage centre are visited) were also distinguished among visitors to the sanctuary in Krakow (Poland) (Liro et al. 2018).

### **Research on pilgrimage centres**

The second mainstream section of research to be distinguished is the wide range of studies comprising general information on the history and size of pilgrimage movement in a selected study area (see Table 1).

The comprehensive works of the Nolans, describe a network of 6,150 Christian pilgrimage centres in 16 Western European countries in selected historical periods (Nolan, 1987a, 1987b; Nolan & Nolan, 1989). The publications by Jackowski describes pilgrimage centres in Poland (1987a, 1990b). Case studies and monographs of individual sanctuaries stand out from these works (Table 2). First of all, they present the history of a given centre, and partially a description of the size and structure of pilgrimage movement.

**Table 1. Selected studies comprising general information about sanctuaries and the size of pilgrimage movement in different study areas**

No.	Study area	Source
1.	World, a general study	Aradi, 1954; Park, 1994; Stoddard, 1994; Stoddard and Morinis, 1997; Jackowski <i>et al.</i> , 1999; Jackowski, 2003; Margry, 2008
2.	United States of America	Rinschede, 1990
3.	Europe	Cartwright, 1955, Bilska-Wodecka, 2003, Sołjan, 2012
4.	Western Europe	Nolan, 1987a, 1987b; Nolan and Nolan, 1989, 1992
5.	Great Britain	Hole, 1954; Gillett, 1957; Dowse, 1963; Shackley, 2002
6.	Lithuania	Liutikas, 2015
7.	Poland	Jackowski, 1987a, 1990b; Ciechocińska, 1989; Mróz, 2000; Jackowski and Smith, 1992; Bilska, 1995a; Sołjan, 2001, 2002, 2011; Jackowski and Sołjan, 2000

Source: own study.

There are very few studies on the theoretical features and mechanisms of pilgrimage centre development. The issues of the development of space in pilgrimage centres were tackled only in the few works highlighted below (Table 3). These studies present pioneering research owing to the undertaken subject matter and the methodology used. One should mention here especially the works of Rinschede, quoted earlier, who carried out research on the space and influence of the sanctuaries in Lourdes (1987), Fatima (1988) and

Loreto (1995). He described the space in the analysed pilgrimage centres and the development of the sanctuaries and the cities, towns and villages in which they are located. Additionally, he presented the condition and development of tourist infrastructure on the scale of the sanctuary (micro) and that of the city, town or village (macro).

Rinschede (1987, 1988, 1995) called for the necessity to apply an appropriate methodology to the study of

**Table 2. Case studies of selected sanctuaries**

No.	Sanctuary	Place	Author, year
1.	Shrine of Our Lady Queen of Bavaria	Altötting	Hoeldl, 1962
2.	Shrine of Our Lady	Clearwater	Swatos, 2002
3.	Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima	Fatima	Rinschede, 1988; Sołjan, 2012
4.	Sanctuary of Our Lady of Częstochowa	Jasna Góra	Groch, 1996; Jackowski, 1996; Ptaszycka-Jackowska and Jackowski, 1998; Sołjan, 2011, 2012
5.	Passion and Marian Shrine	Kalwaria Zebrzydowska	Jackowski, 1995b; Bilska-Wodecka, 2003; Mitkowska, 2003; Liro, 2015
6.	Passion and Marian Shrine	Wejherowo	Liro, 2015
7.	Sanctuary of Our Świętokrzyska Lady of Sorrows	Kałków-Godów	Ryszka, 2000; Sawa, 2001; Mergalska and Suligowski, 2013
8.	Sanctuary of Our Lady Consoler of the Afflicted	Kevelaer	Oomen, 1976; Boymann and Boymann, 1979
9.	Sanctuary of the Divine Mercy	Kraków	Janiec, 1995; Jackowski and Sołjan, 2001; 2010; Liro, 2014
10.	Sanctuary of St. John Paul II	Kraków	Sołjan and Liro, 2014
11.	Santa Casa Sanctuary	Loreto	Rinschede, 1995
12.	Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes	Lourdes	Lassere, 1930; Marnham, 1980; Rinschede, 1987; Eade, 1992; Pihet and Violer, 1993; Harris, 1999; Branthomme and Touvet, 2005; Sołjan, 2005, 2009, 2012; Wall, 2010
13.	Shrine of Our Lady Queen of Peace	Medjugorje	Vukonic, 1992
14.	Sanctuary of the Miraculous Medal	Paryż	Zachwieja, 2005
15.	Selected sanctuaries in Quebec	Quebec	Rinschede, 1994
16.	Sanctuary of St. Father Pio	San Giovanni Rotondo	McKevitt, 1991; Sołjan, 2012
17.	Basilica of Sagrada Familia	Barcelona	Della Dora 2011, Marine-Roig 2015

Source: own study

**Table 3. Studies on the spatial development of pilgrimage centres**

No.	Source	Sanctuary
1.	Rinschede, 1987; Wall 2010	Sanctuary in Lourdes
2.	Rinschede, 1988	Sanctuary in Fatima
3.	Rinschede, 1995	Sanctuary in Loreto
4.	Jackowski, 1996; Ptaszycka-Jackowska and Jackowski, 1998	Sanctuary at Jasna Góra, Częstochowa
5.	Jackowski and Soljan, 2010	Sanctuary of the Divine Mercy in Krakow-Łagiewniki
6.	Soljan, 2009	Sanctuary in Lourdes
7.	Soljan, 2011, 2012	The largest European sanctuaries
8.	Soljan and Liro, 2014	Sanctuary of St. John Paul II in Krakow
9.	Liro, 2015	Sanctuaries in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska and Kalwaria Wejherowska
10.	Liro and Soljan, 2016	Marian Sanctuary in Licheń Stary
Source: own study.		

pilgrimage centres. He distinguished three groups of factors conditioning the development of a sanctuary, on the basis of which such centres should be studied. The first one takes into account the spatial structure of a sanctuary, the second - its social aspect, and the third - the range of pilgrimage movement. All these factors should be considered as a whole, while maintaining the historical context (Rinschede, 1987). In his research, he presented the influence of a sanctuary on the development of cities through the example of Lourdes, where the rapid development of the pilgrimage centre and the resultant town emerged due to an increase in pilgrimage movement. The extensive sanctuary and the tourist infrastructure in the entire town are a response to the needs of pilgrims (Rinschede, 1987). The development of Lourdes as a pilgrimage centre based on the condition of tourist infrastructure was also described by Ambrosio (2003) and Wall (2010).

Further studies show the influence of sanctuaries on cities such as Soljan's (2012) study of the 20 largest European Catholic centres. The case studies were based on Lourdes and Częstochowa, where it was pointed out that a sanctuary itself is marked in the structure of a city, town or village, creating a symbolic cultural space of a religious nature. The largest pilgrimage centres are often a factor actively influencing space, affecting its transformations (Soljan 2012). Lourdes, Fatima or San Giovanni Rotondo are examples of pilgrimage centres where the development of the sanctuary and pilgrimage has led to major spatial changes of these places. The most important factors determining these transformations include: genetic-historical determinants of sanctuaries, the period of the city's and the sanctuary's foundation, the rank and range of the centre's impact, and the size and functions of the city (Soljan 2012).

In addition to the studies of Rinschede (1987, 1988, 1995) and Soljan (2011, 2012), spatial organization was also presented on the example of Calvary sanctuaries (Liro 2015), the Sanctuary of St. John Paul II in Krakow (Soljan & Liro 2014), and the Marian sanctuary in Licheń Stary (Liro & Soljan 2016). The terminology and methodologies developed by Rinschede (1987, 1988, 1995) and Soljan (2012), which presents a sanctuary as a fragment of geographical space, allows the conduct of research into the spatial development of pilgrimage centres.

### *Management of pilgrimage centres*

Pilgrimage centres can be also defined as a functioning institution (Park, 1994; Rinschede, 1999; Soljan, 2012). Similarly to the possibility of managing tourist movement and tourist space, much the same actions seem necessary to be taken with regard to pilgrimage movement and pilgrimage centres. They are places of reception of very often large-scale pilgrimages, however, very few works take into account the issues of their management and marketing (Shackley, 2001, 2002, 2008; Brayley, 2010; Lo Presti & Petrillo; 2010). Paying more attention to the management strategy of pilgrimage places (Digance, 2003; Shackley, 2008), and the cooperation of hosts of sanctuaries, tourists, and tour operators in this respect are necessary (Bywater, 1994; Shackley, 2008). It seems that managing a pilgrimage centre which is visited by many people is a necessity today. However, most pilgrimage centres have a traditional and hierarchical management structure due to ownership relationships. Catholic pilgrimage centres may be the property of parishes, and indirectly subjected to diocesan authorities, they may be units directly subordinated to them, or be the property of a religious congregation. Attempting to



explain the lack of management in centres with high numbers of pilgrims and tourists, Shackley (2008) argued that this may be due to a contradiction between the spiritual nature of a place and what would seem a secular need for effective management, in order to achieve economic benefits. Persons managing a sacred place usually see themselves as guardians of the place, and not as managers (Shackley, 2008).

The term *management for religious tourism* came into use in the 1980s, when the hosts of sacred sites in Western Europe and the United States saw the need to attract more visitors and the faithful, in order to maintain their popularity, and generate revenues necessary for the functioning of the place (Shinde, 2012). Taking advantage of their capabilities, sacred sites began to take action to support, organise, and manage pilgrimages and tourism (Nolan & Nolan, 1992). Projects of this type were sometimes joined by local government authorities in order to strengthen the local economy (Nolan & Nolan, 1992; Shackley, 2001; Timothy & Olsen, 2006). The research of Lo Presti and Pertillo (2010) indicated that the cooperation of private, public and church institutions contributes to the revitalization of buildings, and to the development of pilgrimages and religious tourism to the most important churches in Naples (Italy).

Managing pilgrimage centres can ensure positive experiences for pilgrims, and does not need to be in conflict with the spiritual identity of the place, because the revenues generated from this management may be allocated to protect the sacred place. In addition, the lack of management by the host of a place of worship can cause an unplanned and uncontrolled development of services surrounding the sanctuary. Managing a sacred place does not differ significantly from the management of secular tourist attractions, as all such facilities must be directed at satisfying the needs of visiting tourists and pilgrims. Digance (2003) emphasises the importance of proper management of a pilgrimage centre so that pilgrims driven by religious motives, as well as religious tourists who are additionally driven by other motives, could have access to it.

The use of pilgrimage centres by both groups should not violate the needs of its other users, including the local community. The literature on the subject emphasises that effective management of a sacred place should:

- reconcile the interests of all those interested,
- not violate the sanctity of the place,

- provide socio-economic benefits to the local community,
- ensure the long-lasting conservation of the pilgrimage centre.

## Conclusion

Pilgrimage tourism and pilgrimage centres are an interesting and often undertaken research topic in the geography of religion and tourism research, as well as in other sciences. In summary, the following definitions of sanctuaries / pilgrimage centres can be distinguished:

- a formal sacred place, separated from the *profane* zone, in which the presence of the *sacred* (Eliade, 1999) or power, manifests itself, and its reception is subjective (Van der Leeuw, 1997);
- a church or another sacred place where pilgrimage movement occurs owing to special objects of worship (*The Original Catholic Encyclopedia*),
- a fragment of space with a dominant religious function, organised around the most important sacred places. It is, therefore, an area functionally related to the main sacred object, being its immediate surroundings. It constitutes an integral whole, the determinant of which is the religious character of the place;
- an institution operating in social space carrying out specific tasks.

It is worth noting that the cited definitions of a sanctuary are semantically not mutually exclusive, and the differences between them result from different research approaches.

Today, numerous researchers have emphasised the strong need to supplement geographical research on the interaction between pilgrimages and geographical space (Rinschede & Sievers, 1987; Holloway & Vallins, 2002; Jackowski, 2002, 2003; Proctor, 2006, Timothy & Olsen, 2006, Collins-Kreiner, 2010a, Soljan, 2012). This trend also includes research on the sacred places that attract pilgrimage and tourist movement. These are extremely interesting from the scientific and application point of view.

Among many pilgrimage studies, sanctuaries are most often described as places where pilgrimage movement takes place, or these studies are monographs or case studies presenting a given pilgrimage centre in a general way.

In addition to the above-mentioned works (Rinschede, 1987, 1988, 1995; Wall, 2010; Soljan, 2012; Soljan & Liro, 2015; Liro, 2015), there is no geographical research addressing the development and organization of catholic pilgrimage centres. The terminology and methodology developed by Rinschede (1987, 1988, 1995) and Soljan (2012) presenting the sanctuary as part of geographical space makes it possible to conduct new research on the spatial development of pilgrimage centres. Defined in such a way, they are areas with a dominant religious function around the main sacred place (Jackson & Henrie, 1983; Rinschede, 1987; Rinschede & Sievers, 1987; Soljan, 2011, 2012). Highly intensive pilgrimage movement occurs in the area, and there are buildings with religious and other functions. Among the features that distinguish the space of contemporary pilgrimage centres, the following are mentioned:

- domination of the religious function,
- sacralisation of space, which endows it with a new qualitative dimension,
- its real or symbolic separation as a *sacred zone*,
- specific public space within which specific behaviour is required.

For the study to be complementary, pilgrimage centres should be considered in two basic dimensions, namely (1) as specific places in geographical space and (2) as institutions creating social space.

Therefore, it seems necessary to fill this gap in the state of research, especially in respect of the development of

pilgrimage centres. In the present state of geographical research on pilgrimage centres, the following research questions remain still open:

- What is the spatial organization of pilgrimage centres?
- How do changes in the space of pilgrimage centres take place?
- What are the factors controlling these changes?
- What action is taken by the hosts of sanctuaries with regard to their management and administration?

The socio-cultural changes in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century, i.e. the development of mass tourism and transport, and the blurring of the boundaries between tourism and pilgrimages on many levels, have affected the space of pilgrimage centres. Previously, sanctuaries almost exclusively performed religious functions connected with the pastoral care of visitors to them. Their religious role is still valid and most important, but pilgrimage centres are increasingly being extended to include other, non-religious functions. The transformations that have been taking place since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century not only provide pilgrims with an appropriate standard of religious practices. The ongoing transformations are of a qualitative nature and aim at diversifying facilities (in terms of their number and function). In the context of the presented changes, it seems necessary to pay more attention to the possibilities of managing, responding to the multi-faceted needs of visitors, building a wide religious and non-religious offer of these places, while maintaining the sacred dimension of space.

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