

ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКИЕ АСПЕКТЫ ЭКОНОМИКИ И ТУРИСТСКОГО СЕРВИСА THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF ECONOMICS AND TOURIST SERVICE

UDC 338.48+378:662+159.98
DOI: 10.24411/1995-042X-2020-10501

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ESOTERIC TOURISM AS A NICHE TYPE OF TOURISM: OPPORTUNITIES AND WAYS OF HUMAN SELF-IMPROVEMENT

Abstract. Modern tourism is actively expanding the scope of its activities, including through the ever-increasing diversification and specialization of tourist trips and other products. Niche tourism is beginning to become an increasingly important sphere of tourism, annually giving a huge increase even in those areas that were traditionally considered massive. But there are also areas that have never been and can never be massive. These include esoteric tourism. Of course, there is an old tradition of pilgrimages and religious tourism, however, the concept of "esoteric" implies secret, sacred knowledge and skills that are passed on to some, a select few or, in the case of tourists, seeking them. The condition for obtaining this knowledge and skills is self-improvement and self-realization. As a result, esoteric tourism acts as a classic niche type of tourism. Its purpose as a type of tourism of special interests is self-improvement and self-realization as a motive of tourist activity. The purpose of the work is to study the state and prospects for the development of esoteric tourism as a special type of niche tourism, study the specifics of esoteric tourism as a type of niche tourism and identify the prospects for its development in Russia and the world. This type of tourism is intended for tourists with a special type of needs: in the context of A. Maslow's hierarchical model of needs, tourists who demand routes and other tourist offers of this type belong to a group of people who require a special quality of impressions about the world, and, most importantly, about themselves... The tourist travel of such tourists is the integration of health-recreational (healing), cultural and educational (philosophical and esoteric) and extreme mystical (spiritual, magical, shamanistic, etc.) travel. Self-improvement and self-realization as a motive of tourist activity represent the highest level of motivation for tourist activity and, therefore, one way or another, should be understood as elite tourism, along with extreme tourism. This type of tourism has great development prospects precisely as a niche type of tourism, since it involves a person's work with oneself: the organization of such work requires significant efforts on his part and on the part of the organizers of a tourist trip, therefore, not

only highly qualified specialists and special tourist destinations are needed, but also flexible, multicomponent routes, allowing to implement special customer requests so that this type of business remains not only in demand, but also competitive, along with its immanent elitism and other specifics.

Keywords: *niche tourism, esoteric tourism, tourism of special interests, destination, self-improvement, self-realization, tourist product.*

Citation: Arpentieva, M. R., Menshikov, P. V., Kuznetsova, N. V., & Gorelova, I. V. (2020). Esoteric tourism as a niche type of tourism: opportunities and ways of human self-improvement. *Servis v Rossii i za rubezhom [Services in Russia and Abroad]*, 14(5), 6-25. doi: 10.24411/1995-042X-2020-10501.

Article History

Received 11 November 2020

Accepted 13 December 2020

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).



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УДК 338.48+378:662+159.98

DOI: 10.24411/1995-042X-2020-10501

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ЭЗОТЕРИЧЕСКИЙ ТУРИЗМ КАК НИШЕВЫЙ ТИП ТУРИЗМА: ВОЗМОЖНОСТИ И ПУТИ САМОСОВЕРШЕНСТВОВАНИЯ ЧЕЛОВЕКА

Современная туристика активно расширяет сферы своей деятельности, в том числе за счет все большей диверсификации и специализации туристических поездок и иных продуктов. Нишевый туризм начинает становиться все более важной сферой туристики, ежегодно давая огромный прирост даже в тех сферах, которые традиционно считались массовыми. Но есть и такие сферы, которые не были и не могут быть

массовыми никогда. К ним относится эзотерический туризм. Конечно, существует старая традиция паломничеств и религиозного туризма, однако, понятие «эзотерического» подразумевает тайные, сакральные знания и умения, которые передаются не которым, избранным или, в случае туристов, ищущим их. Условие получения этих знаний и умений – самосовершенствование и самоосуществление. В итоге эзотерический туризм выступает как классический нишевый тип туризма. Его целью как разновидности туризма специальных интересов выступает самосовершенствование и самореализация как мотив туристической деятельности. Цель работы заключается в изучении состояния и перспектив развития эзотерического туризма как особого типа нишевого туризма, исследовании специфики эзотерического туризма как типа нишевого туризма и выявлении перспективы его развития в России и мире. Этот тип туризма предназначен для туристов с особым типом потребностей: в контексте иерархической модели потребностей А. Маслоу, туристы, востребующие маршруты и иные туристические предложения этого типа, относятся к группе людей, требующих особого качества впечатлений о мире, и, главное, о самих себе. Туристическое путешествие таких туристов представляет собой интеграцию оздоровительно-рекреационного (целительского), культурно-образовательного (философско-эзотерического) и экстремально-мистического (духовного, магического, шаманистского, т.д.) путешествий. Самосовершенствование и самореализация как мотив туристической деятельности представляют собой высший уровень мотиваций туристической активности и, поэтому, так или иначе должны быть поняты как элитарный туризм, наряду с туризмом экстремальным. Данный тип туризма имеет большие перспективы развития именно как нишевый вид туризма, поскольку предполагает работу человека с самим собой: организация такой работы требует значительных усилий с его стороны и со стороны организаторов туристического путешествия, поэтому нужны не только высококвалифицированные специалисты и специальные туристические дестинации, но и гибкие, многокомпонентные маршруты, позволяющие реализовать особые запросы клиентов так, чтобы данный вид бизнеса сохранял не просто востребованность, но и конкурентоспособность, наряду с его имманентной элитарностью и иной спецификой.

Ключевые слова: *нишевый туризм, эзотерический туризм, туризм специальных интересов, дестинация, самосовершенствование, самоосуществление, туристический продукт.*

Для цитирования: Арпентьева М.Р., Меньшиков П.В., Кузнецова Н.В., Горелова И.В. Эзотерический туризм как нишевый тип туризма: возможности и пути самосовершенствования человека // Сервис в России и за рубежом. 2020. Т.14. №5. С. 6-25. DOI: 10.24411/1995-042X-2020-10501.

Дата поступления в редакцию: 11 ноября 2020 г.

Дата утверждения в печать: 13 декабря 2020 г.

Introduction. Modern tourism is actively expanding the scope of its activities, including through the ever-increasing diversification and specialization of tourist trips and other products. In recent decades, a new, unique direction in tourism has been actively developing - spiritual and esoteric tourism, which combines travel to sacred places and an internal journey (Alaverdov E., 2020; Butler R., Suntikul W. et al., 2018; Di Giovine MA, Choe J. et al., 2020; Vidal-Casellas D., Aulet S., Crous-Costa N., 2019) [20; 21; 22; 23; 60]. This gives the tourist the opportunity to some extent to fulfill the tasks of personal, partner and professional self-improvement, development, as well as the opportunity to relax and enjoy the change of scenery, learn something new in different areas, including the sphere of spiritual development [27; 28; 46; 43; 47; 51; 56; 58]. The main feature of esoteric travel is getting spiritual knowledge and skills, spiritual impressions and experience, self-improvement (Dowson R., Yaqub J., Raj R., 2019; Korstanje M.E., Raj R., Griffin K., 2018; Lester M., 2019; Liutikas D., 2020; Shinde K.A., Olsen D.H., 2020; Van Bühren, R., Cantoni L., and De Ascaniis S., 2018) [29; 31; 34; 44; 45; 59; 60].

Niche tourism in Russia and the world is becoming an increasingly important sphere of tourism, annually giving a huge increase even in those areas that were traditionally considered massive. But there are also areas that have never been and can never be massive. These include esoteric tourism. Of course, there is an old tradition of pilgrimages and religious tourism, however, the concept of "esoteric" implies secret, sacred knowledge and skills that are passed on to some, a select few or, in the case of tourists, seeking them. The condition for obtaining this knowledge and skills is self-improvement and self-realization. As a result, esoteric tourism acts as a classic niche type of tourism. Its goal as a type of tourism of special interests is self-improvement and self-realization as a motive for tourist activities.

In general, esoteric tourism is not only an important part of the development of tourism, but also a part of the cultural development of man and human communities. However, this type of

tourism is clearly underestimated by practitioners and theorists: the degree of scientific comprehension of the problem of esoteric tourism on this, and, moreover, against the general background of work on tourism, its modernity and history in Russia and abroad, is noticeably small: there is an urgent need to develop and implementing a systematic, integrative approach aimed at consolidating the results of existing developments in this area. This problem was dealt with by T.M. Ablueva, M.R. Arpentieva, O.E. Afanasyev, A.V. Afanasyeva A.G., Bobkova, V.A. Vesnovsky, D.A. Ilyin, M. Zya- blov, V.I. Kruzhalin, L.Yu. Makeev, A.K. Matveev, N.S. Morozov, S.V. Oskin, S.S. Petrukhin, E. Prizovaya, O. L. Terentieva, O. M. Farkhitdinova, M.V. Fedorova, V.A. Shaulskiy, T.T. Khristov and others (Arpentieva M.R., 2016; Afanasyev O.E., Afanasyeva A.V., 2019; Makeev L.Yu., 2011; Petrukhin S.S., 2019; Shaulsky V.A., 2013; Khristov T.T., 2008; Fedorova M.V., 2017; Farkhitdinova O.M., 2009) [2; 4; 5; 6; 7; 11; 15; 17; 18; 19]. Abroad, a lot of monographs, articles and conferences, including regular ones, are devoted to this problem, research by R. Balter, L. Beeman, J. Johnson, D. Olsen, D. Lyuticas, M. Korstange, S. Rogers and many others (Alaverdov E., 2020; Butler R., Suntikul W. et al., 2018; Di Giovine M.A., Choe J. et al., 2020; Dowson R., Yaqub J., Raj R., 2019; Johnson J., 2018; Korstanje M.E., Raj R., Griffin K., 2018; Lester M., 2019; Liutikas D., 2020; Rogers, C.J., 2007; Shinde K.A., Olsen D.H., 2020; Van Bühren, R., Cantoni L., and De Ascaniis S., 2018; Vidal-Casellas D., Aulet S., Crous-Costa N., 2019) [12; 21; 23; 27-29; 31; 34; 36; 43-45; 47; 51; 56; 58-60].

The purpose of the work is to study the state and prospects for the development of esoteric tourism as a special type of niche tourism, study the specifics of esoteric tourism as a type of niche tourism and identify the prospects for its development in Russia and the world. This type of tourism is intended for tourists with a special type of needs: in the context of A. Maslow's hierarchical model of needs [46], tourists who demand routes and other tourist offers of this type belong to a group of people who require a special quality

of impressions about the world, and, most importantly, about ourselves. The tourist travel of such tourists is an integration of health-recreational (healing), cultural and educational (philosophical and esoteric) and extreme mystical (spiritual, magical, shamanistic, etc.) travel.

Research results. Esotericism is the sphere of specific views about the deeply mystical (and therefore clearly not obvious) essence of human life. This sphere includes concepts, teachings, doctrines, as well as ways and practices of self-knowledge (comprehension of secret knowledge about the nature of the human world), which (due to the incredible difficulty of expanding the volume of personal consciousness) are available only to a narrow circle of dedicated professionals (masters, teachers). Some "ordinary" and many famous people devote their lives to one of the areas of esotericism, most of the great people encountered it, and advanced in it quite far. It is worth noting that most of this knowledge used to be secret, and around them the opinion was deliberately created that it was better not to touch them. However, now the boundaries of secret and closed from most people are changing.

The concept of "esoteric tourism" was formed relatively recently - about 20-25 years ago, at the intersection of ecology, tourism and yoga. Religious tourism (sacred tourism, pilgrim tourism, esoteric tourism) is a type of tourism associated with the provision of services and satisfaction of the needs of tourists heading to holy places, "places of power" and religious centers located outside their usual environments. This is one of the types of ecological tourism, in which the task is solved - how a person, interacting with nature and his inner world, becomes healthier and grows spiritually, in particular, to raise the level of his ecological consciousness in relation to the planet. The demand for this type of tourism has grown significantly in recent years, and this is because people were concerned about their spiritual growth. These tours combine relaxation and wellness, travel and adventure, various wellness practices that help people become stronger and healthier. Esoteric tourism is often understood as

"travel, in order to find oneself" [22; 25; 26; 28; 45; 50], the tourist is faced with the task of expanding his or her understanding of himself / herself and the world, revising his / her experience and learning to look at things from different positions, discover something special, unique in himself and in other people [2; 5; 8; 10; 52]. It has long been claimed that wandering transforms travelers. The objects of interest of esoteric tourism are places of accumulation of natural strength and energy (pyramids, dolmens, barrows, etc.), places of worship, mysteries and rituals, healing arts, as well as the skills of spiritual practices aimed at physical or spiritual healing of a person, but often not having a clear or sufficiently satisfying scientific substantiation of a person's interests. The main goal of esoteric tourism is self-improvement, purification and clarification, harmonization and healing. Any journey allows man or woman to expand the horizons of his / her knowledge, discover something new and, to some extent, change his / her view of fairly familiar things. Esoteric tourism adds to all these opportunities the search for spiritual enlightenment and finding harmony with the surrounding world. Tireless seekers and lovers of travel not only around the world, but also to the center of their souls on esoteric tours will be able to find their true self and reveal their hidden possibilities. Esoteric tourism is often called sacred, which means "sacred, mysterious". Such travels allow you to get in touch with places endowed with a mystical meaning, and get acquainted with spiritual practices, in which the sublime spiritual beginning is different from the ordinary one. That is why esoteric tours are an opportunity to escape for a while from the hustle and bustle of everyday life into the world of true discoveries. The program of such tours often includes various seminars and trainings on self-development and disclosure of creative potential, teaching the art of meditation in the midst of incredibly picturesque landscapes and many other equally exciting activities and opportunities that will allow you to look at the world in a new way.

The phenomena of Christian, Muslim, shamanistic, yoga travel and travel of other

esoteric directions are considered by scholars investigating the problems of niche tourism as examples of a broader genre of "spiritual travel", including travel to "other places", which is supposed to offer the possibility of multilevel and multifaceted transformation of a person as a person, partner and professional (Beaman, L. & Sikka, S., 2016; Fahey, Fr. 2002, etc.) [22; 25; 32; 49; 50].

These representations are associated with, but are not limited to, the continuing exotisation of Eastern (Asian) and other traditions of spirituality. Researchers identify various themes such as authenticity, suffering, space, material markers, and the idea of the "spiritual", tracing how these ideas manifest themselves in concepts and fetishizations "elsewhere".

Table 1 – Distinguishing pilgrimage from tourism, according to Fr. Fahey (2002) [32]

Element	Pilgrimage	Tourism
Faith	always contains "faith expectancy"	not required
Penance	search for wholeness	not required
Community	often solitary, but should be open to all	often with friends and family, or a chosen interest group
Sacred space	silence to create an internal sacred space	not present
Ritual	externalizes the change within	not present
Votive offering	leaving behind a part of oneself, letting go, in search of a better life	not present; the travel is the good life
Celebration	"victory over self", celebrating to remember	drinking to forget
Perseverance	commitment; "pilgrimage is never over"	holidays soon end

The richness of the historical and cultural heritage of Russia, favorable natural conditions, and various recreational resources create the basis for the development of various types of tourism within these regions, among which sacred or esoteric tourism plays a special role. Esoteric tourism is a new and promising type of tourism, the purpose of which is to discover the significance of human life, teach him to be happy. Esoteric tourism acts as a form of modern pilgrimage of the neo-pagans, whose shrines are often represented by archaeological monuments of ancient eras, but sometimes by their simulations of a later time, including modernity.

Thanks to esoteric travel, a person broadens his horizons, learns a lot of new information about the traditions and experience of ancestors, and learns to think more positively and holistically, no matter how difficult the situation may be. In the modern world, every person is able to recognize himself as a part of the spiritual world, the cosmic universe, the universe, even if he considers himself a materialist. Thanks to such trips, even within their own country, people come to understand

their own integrity. Often, looking into themselves, they can find out the answers to many questions that have interested you for years, and find out their life path.

On esoteric trips, sometimes even the incredible happens, people unexpectedly learn about their unusual or simply unexpected abilities for them, sometimes they encounter the phenomena of the "subtle world", the "third eye" and chakras, "subtle bodies" of a person are activated. This often happens to people who have already dealt with spiritual practices, but it also happens to those who went on an esoteric tour for the first time.

Someone visits esoteric tours for the first time, others annually or even more often practice this type of unusual tourism. On this trip, all people are equal, there is no division into the poor and the rich, beautiful or not so, the main thing for people is the desire to know the spiritual world, to understand their place in it.

Tourists often have to learn what mantras and meditation are on their own experience, they usually have the opportunity to do spiritual yoga

and qigong, other practices offered by a travel company / agency, destination or guide. For people who have already started to engage in spiritual practice, it can be useful to learn something new by going on an esoteric tour. Staying in "places of power" helps to recharge oneself with energy, self-confidence and optimism. Often people go to places of Power who experience some kind of ailment and want to get rid of it. As practice shows, places of Power charged with special energy, as well as healers, shamans, spiritual mentors living next to them or in them, are able to have a healing effect on a person's health, to provide a person with support in solving difficult problems.

Places of power, where the pilgrimage takes place, are "scattered" almost all over the planet. They can also be found in Russia, for example, in the ancient city of Arkaim, which is located in the Chelyabinsk region, stone dolmens are also famous in the Caucasus, in the Omsk region, Lake Shaitan is a famous place of Power, etc. Many tourists often go to Holy Trinity Sergiev Lavra, in search of peace of mind. Places of power are classified as follows: natural (mountains, caves, etc.) and unnatural (places where saints lived or great battles). Usually, the following structures are built on such places: temple complexes; shrines; churches; stone altars. In places of power, one can find such architecture or natural phenomena that amaze with their perfection. Places of power are attractive because they are located in the energy points of the Earth.

J. Johnson (Johnson J., 2018) and many other "non-fiction" - researchers of the experience of spiritual-esoteric travel tell how the journey shocked them, throw off layers of self-accusations and false self-understanding, open up to meet new experiences, cleanse themselves of grief, anger and learn to accept those sides of oneself that were expelled due to shame, fear and social conventions, about the necessary persistence that helps a person in a group or alone break through the barrier of self-forgetfulness, and learn to resist the opinions and will of other people, develop love for to yourself and to life

[40]. On a journey, a pilgrim or a tourist can shed his false "I" layer by layer, at the end of the journey meeting with his real self and with his real companions, so beautiful that he sometimes could not even dream of. Old wounds and excruciating pain of mental, spiritual and even bodily suffering of the past and present come to the surface, the journey cleans and heals them step by step [2; 5; 8; 25; 26; 28]. Positive redefinitions and a positive understanding of oneself and the world in general, the practice of working with mantras, prayer, meditation, etc. form a "spiritual roadmap" that helps a tourist to return to himself and start a new stage in his life (Johnson J., 2018), including changing his tourist career [40].

When a locus or object is called a place of power, it is assumed that it has a potential for spiritual (spiritual) development. This potential is associated with the authenticity of the place itself, since it has a strong connection with the images of antiquity in the imagination of New Agers. An industry has developed around this practice, whose representatives position it as "esoteric" or sometimes "ecological" tourism. Esoteric tourism as a secular pilgrimage allows believers from different directions of the past and modern times ("New Age") and other more or less formed and "patchwork" religious trends of our time to travel to "hot spots of spirituality" in order to heal yourself and the world (Rogers, CJ, 2007) [33; 40; 42; 50]. Travelers and pilgrims often become "ambassadors" for peace: every traveler is potentially such an ambassador (Rogers, C.J., 2007). At the same time, some of the groups set themselves peacekeeping tasks quite consciously and purposefully solving them [40]. In contrary, for the religions and beliefs of the New Age group as a whole, opposition to official institutions (science and education, business and the state) is typical, while, in connection with secularization and the loss of religion's monopoly on the production of knowledge, various religious groups turn to attempts to legitimize own ideas. In this case, scientific data and elements of academic discourse turn out to be a resource for creating our own expert industry and ideas about the system of

"stigmatized knowledge". It is often important to emphasize the fact of stigmatization of esoteric knowledge, in order to confirm the truth of one's own beliefs. This, for example, is the idea of the existence in the past of mankind of the "golden age", a holistic worldview, which presupposes the unity of the spiritual and material sides of life. Therefore, striving to go beyond the category of "religion", followers of the New Age, represented by alternative experts, often position them as a scientific project. The concept of stigmatized knowledge was created by the researcher of conspiracy thinking M. Barkan (Barkan M., 2016). M. Barkan refers to the stigmatized knowledge such statements, the supporters of which are convinced of their fidelity, despite the denial from the authorities. The latter use certain verification methods, assuming that information is divided into true and erroneous [21, p. 22-27]. Knowledge that does not meet the truth criteria adopted by official institutions is designated as incorrect. Examples of such knowledge include conspiracy narratives, alchemy and astronomy, folk medicine, and belief in the existence of an ancient civilization, whose wisdom surpasses modern ones. M. Barkan calls the latter "forgotten knowledge", the tourist deals with it when it comes to travel to "places of power", suggesting belief in the "golden age", etc. New Age is a part of the phenomenon, sometimes referred to as "occult culture" or "occult", within which specific approaches to the production and consumption of knowledge are developed.

They can practice rituals that include, for example, mental and astral travel and abandonment of their bodies, contact with spirits (channeling, obsession, mediumship), recollection of past life memories. Such travel is considered by many practitioners and theorists of tourism, as well as researchers of religious doctrines and practices, as a transcendental process of learning or even self-realization. S. Roger notes, for example, that earlier the idea of spirituality was tied to traditional dualistic religions [40]. "Historically, spirituality did not differ from religiosity" (Zinnbauer B. et al., 1997) [61, p. 550], but recent studies in

Europe, Great Britain, Australia and North America, Russia point to an increasing trend towards this distinction (Hay, D. and Socha, P.M., 2005; Zinnbauer B. et al., 1997) [38; 61]. S. Rogers and other scholars refer to this change as "designer" or "patchwork" religions "(patchworkreligion, Först J., 2013; Kögler I., 2010), created by people of the Western individualized and consumerist community [33; 40; 42]. On the one hand, people "choose" concepts suitable for solving their external and internal problems from a number of philosophical and religious belief systems, developing their own unique combinations. This task was solved, by other people, always, for example, Catholicism and Protestantism as branches of Christianity perform different functions and serve different models of the world, while they are significantly different both among themselves and in relation to Orthodoxy. Orthodoxy itself is different, like others with a long history, from itself: it is enough to recall the Old Believers and schismatic movements of the past, the catacomb Orthodoxy of our time, etc. The patchwork, designer religiosity of the New Age simply continues this line of adapting the models and practices of religions of different times and peoples to solve specific human problems. On the other hand, D. Hay and P. Socha (2005) point to "spirituality as a natural phenomenon" (Hay, D. and Socha, P.M., 2005) [38, p. 589], connected not with religions, but with the essence of a person, even if he is an atheist or hostile to the very concept of spiritual education, science and the development of cultural contacts gave people the opportunity to challenge traditional religious doctrines, to understand life on the planet not in the context of competing ethnic and religious groups, but as the life of mankind as part of the universe as a whole (Dawson, A., 2006) [4; 27]: the realization of the interconnectedness of beings and events came. A. Grayling (Grayling, A., 2003) notes that the confrontation between the secular and religious models of the spiritual world and spirituality gave rise to opposition, as a result, people began to feel more and more like automatons, to feel isolated,

disconnected and alienated [35].

In their desire to reunite, they began to seek the meaning of life. Including - in the process of external and internal travel, the inclination to which, as well as the inclination to search for impressions and new experiences, is the inner essence of human nature (Senn, C. F., 2002) [54, p. 124]. The growth of ecological knowledge, the growing understanding of the negative impact of man on the Earth began to lead people away from the model of manipulating the world to the model of caring for it. People realized that the search for meaning, freedom of choice, the courage of responsibility and openness to change cannot be acquired, gifted or consumed. They must be discovered and implemented by the person himself. It is this search for oneself that is the essence of the outer and / or inner spiritual journey. As a result, two areas arise: belief in the importance of discovering oneself, realizing one's potential, belief in the importance of reuniting with the environment, developing an understanding of universal connectivity, human understanding of "his place" in nature and culture (Kinsley, D., 1995) [41, p. 3]. Travel is viewed by a person as an opportunity to get out of the comfortable zones of his life and explore other cultures and understanding of the world, others - the search for spirituality (West, B., 2005) [60, p. nine]. Sometimes such tourists can travel to places that are sacred only to them, but not to others (Smith, V., 1992) [57]. N. Chesworth (Chesworth, N., 2006) [24, p. 2] defines esoteric, spiritual, or spiritualism as "a secular journey that, intentionally or accidentally, involves experiences outside the norm for the individual traveler (s) that affects a belief system." F. Haq and J. Jackson (Haq, F. and Jackson, J., 2006) [37, p.5), modifying the definition of cultural tourism by B. McKercher (McKercher, B., 2002) [48], note that an esoteric / spiritual tourist "can be defined as a person who visits a place outside his / her usual environment for the purpose of spiritual growth." The focus is on the journey itself, transforming the person's spiritual experience, rather than the destination (Devereux, C. and Carnegie, E., 2006) [28]. The simplicity of the way of life on

the go gives simplicity, clarity of understanding. If we look at the motivation of those who travel for spiritual reasons, we know that "what they are looking for is an inner experience that goes beyond the ordinary everyday existence" (Chesworth, N., 2006) [24, p. 8]. In general, spiritual and esoteric tourism shares the boundaries with educational tourism [4; 40], tourism is a good way to educate "others" through the exchange of cultural knowledge. At the same time, among different groups of tourists, the most common in this type of niche tourism is an allocentric person who is interested in learning, development, he is "internally oriented, self-confident, active and to some extent meditative", and a psychocentric person is a consumer of mass tourist trips, he is more "cautious, conservative and intellectually limited" (Chesworth, N., 2006) [24, p. 7), such a tourist prefers mass tourism and religious pilgrimage in a group. But as N. Chesworth notes, tourists (and consumer society as a whole) may be able to acquire everything they need or need, but they cannot buy experience. "The experience must be experienced... Spiritual tourism is the embodiment of a truly enriching... life-changing journey" (Chesworth, N., 2006) [24, p. eleven).

Tourism also provides an opportunity to explore the modern quest for spirituality (West, B., 2005) [60, p. 9], including in order to improve your understanding of yourself and the world, your progress in the everyday, social world (self-realization) and the inner, spiritual (self-actualization). In general, spiritual and esoteric tourism shares boundaries with educational tourism, tourism is a good way to educate "others" through the exchange of cultural knowledge [4; 40].

Very often, tourist destinations for this type of tourism are associated with "places of power", which are otherwise referred to as "sacred, spiritual, enlightening mystical, fabulous or magical, etc.) (spiritual places; mystical places; mysterious places; hidden places; magical places; fairytale places and other; sacred places; inspiring places or enlightening places) [2; 12]. In the Russian Federation and throughout the world there are many so-called "places of power", places associated

with the spiritual development of mankind in synchronic and diachronic perspectives. So, many famous and unknown yogis, magicians or shamans, priests, representatives of various religions and confessions, philosophical-religious and actually "esoteric" movements, for example, Theosophy, periodically went and are sent to the corners of nature for prayers, meditations, other practices and rituals of yogic, shamanistic, etc. types, to restore and strengthen the body, mental and spiritual balance and potential. It is usually believed that places of power are special zones on the planet that have energy that intensely and irresistibly affects the consciousness and general state of living beings.

A man, woman or other creature, getting to the place of power, feels this impact, at the bodily-physical, mental and spiritual levels. Places of power are both natural and cultural objects, ranging from geological / tectonic faults ("crustal faults") and geomagnetic anomalies to temples and temples. It is sometimes noted that "places of power" are located in the hone of "nodes" of the planet's energy structure, and this structure is in motion, in which some places of power can lose their energy, while others, on the contrary, acquire. Some buildings, for example, pyramids, labyrinths, dolmens, harmonize the energy of the "places of power". At the same time, new temples were often built and are being built on the site of more ancient sacral structures, some religions replace others, but buildings and places remain. This often includes the so-called "wonders of the world" - architectural monuments or natural phenomena that surprise a person with something: perfection, dissimilarity, etc.

Most often, places of power are divided into natural (underwater and inundated mountains, caves, etc.) and non-natural (places of life and death / burial of saints, places of wars, places of storage of shrines, temples and settlements, - ancient burial mounds, megalithic structures, pyramids and dolmens, other monuments of extinct and ancient civilizations, etc.). In such places, one way or another, most often there are temple complexes and individual churches, stone altars,

secret or explicit depositories of shrines (icons and artifacts), books, etc. are "laid". But no less often, among the usual places of power, known to everyone, there are completely "esoteric", secret places, which, according to experts, have at least no less, even more energy of impact. In addition, each person can find his "place of power", suitable for him, resonating with him and not "responding" to others. Almost any place saturated with positive, intense impressions, including memory, can become a place of power.

The popularity of esoteric tours, like other niche tourism tours, is increasing by about a third every year, as is the number of people who are fond of self-improvement, seeking to combine wellness and relaxation, travel and adventure. If we take into account "amateur tourism" (without registering a travel company), then this figure is even more significant. Esoteric tourism therefore often combines wellness (healing sessions, practical seminars and trainings based on the practices of shamans, Sufis, yogis, etc.) and spiritual practices (conducting mystical rituals timed to coincide with the calendar of nature (full moon, solstice, religious and folk holidays) and events of history), including in the context of travel therapy and its analogues [2; 5; 8; 10].

Therefore, there are types / subtypes of spiritual and esoteric tours: introductory, mystical and health-improving. But in reality, these types are usually mixed. Depending on the capabilities of the company and clients, it is possible to develop and implement routes of different types, complexity and duration, use any type of transport or walking option, and also change the form of accommodation from a hotel and glamping to camping and accommodation in motorhomes, huts and caves.

Self-improvement and self-realization are typical motives for esoteric tourism. As the motives of tourist activity, they represent the highest level of motivation for tourist activity and, therefore, one way or another, they should be understood as elite tourism, along with extreme tourism. This type of tourism has great development prospects precisely as a niche type of tourism,

since it involves a person's work with oneself: the organization of such work requires significant efforts on his part and on the part of the organizers of a tourist trip, therefore, not only highly qualified specialists and special tourist destinations are needed, but also flexible, multicomponent routes, allowing to implement special customer requests so that this type of business remains not only in demand, but also competitive, along with its immanent elitism and other specifics.

Most often, ezo-tourists are called "spiritually seekers" as places of power and goals of an esoteric journey, and, accordingly, they visit the Ivolginsky Datsan in Ulan-Ude, Pidan Mountain in Vladivostok, Tutaev's miraculous icons in Yaroslavl, Dzhily-Su's magic country in the Caucasian Mineral Waters, Damanhur - city of light in Italy, Round building in Golovchino, Belgorod, Dolmens of Krasnodar Territory, Mount Vostochka and outlier Frog in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, Arkaim in Chelyabinsk, Mystical Crimea, Ashram of Boris Baba in Pshad in Krasnodar, Mount Belukha in Gorny Altai, The Racheys Alps in Samara, Mount Svetelka in Samara, Vrindavan in India, Mount Shasta in the USA, the Surb-Khach spring in Rostov-on-Don, the Mon Repos nature reserve in St. Petersburg, Lake Baikal in Irkutsk, the Lobsang Rampa monument in Kemerovo, etc. The most in demand are esoteric tours to Egypt, Tibet, Jerusalem, India, China, Burma, Bhutan, Thailand, Nepal, Mexico, Peru, and in Russia - in Altai, Baikal and Seliger, in Karelia, Valdai and the Kola Peninsula, especially interesting in Siberia and the Urals. Such destinations as Thailand (Klong Lam Waterfall, Wat Bupharam Temple, Phi Phi Islands, etc.), Japan (Great Temple of Ise, Enryaku-ji Monastery Complex, Mount Kurama, etc.), China (Xihu Lake, Hangzhou City, Huangshan Mountain, etc.), Tibet (Lhasa City, Mount Kailash, Garuda Valley, etc.), Nepal (Kathmandu Valley, Manakaman Temple, Padmasambhava Cave, etc.), Cambodia (Kings Cemetery, Angkor Wat temple complex, Phnom Kulen mountain, etc.), India (Sabarimala temple complex, Bodhgaya sacred site, Kurukshetra sacred field, etc.), are especially popular. Many places are known, but even more places are not known and

are not even accessible, for example, the fabulous "beyond the distance" - in Transbaikalia, the Putorana plateau and many other internal territories of Siberia, which were once, like the cradle of modern human civilization, enough densely populated, and now, thanks to the falsifications of the national history of the Slavs and the history of all mankind, they are sometimes not recognized as "historical territory".

There are also cultural monuments and places of power, the meanings of which are perverted and in themselves "esoteric": this applies, in particular, to many places in Siberia and the Urals, pyramids in China and Mongolia, as well as the "Great Wall of China", built by the Slavs, consciously and for centuries fenced off from those who are now considered the builders of this wall and who are now actively, in the form of a "friendly exchange" actively "assimilates" the riches of Siberia, its sacred centers, and also continues to create and support myths about the history of mankind, ignoring the role of Slavic culture in its formation and development.

The abundance of these places makes it possible to develop esoteric tourism. An example is, for example, the already mentioned cradle of civilization Siberia and the Urals. The Urals and Siberia abound in a variety of "places of power", they can attract many tourists every year. Tour operators can offer such tourists:

- "simple contact with untouched nature" and with another culture;
- meeting interesting people (shamans, healers, priests, etc.) - bearers of esoteric knowledge and skills;
- prayer and meditation practices,
- ancient Vedic and other individual and group healing and "strengthening", developing rituals;
- traditional training, mediation and even volunteer environmental and ethnographic work individually and in groups.

It uses techniques and practices of communication with your unconscious ("subconsciousness and superconsciousness"); passage of altered or special states of consciousness /

reflection, contact with the world of archetypes and cultural values and artifacts during a visit to "places of power". Here, pedestrian and car crossings along mountain paths and passes, air and water excursions / travels - transfers, descents into ground and underwater caves, swimming in mountain rivers and lakes, healing springs, etc. are practiced. The purpose of visiting such places is to strengthen strength spirit and energy of the body, healing of mental wounds, finding happiness and harmonization, achieving transparency and conformity to oneself, (re) integration of life experience in the course of re (reviewing values and life goals, traumatic / traumatic actions, relationships and situations (Arpentieva M.R. , 2016; Makeev L.Yu., 2011) [2; 9, p. 97] Esoteric tourism often combines visiting historical or landscape attractions with the process of self-knowledge and knowledge of the world, and yoga, shamanism, etc. - with unity with nature, therefore this type of tourism is sometimes called philosophical. Often such niche tourism is engaged in parapsychology centers, leaders of esoteric groups, as well as Separate travel companies camp sites.

- In the world, the problems of esoteric tourism are connected to a greater extent with its essence: the number of people who consider themselves carriers and seekers of "esoteric truths" is growing, but, often, due to the replenishment of the group with "patchwork religiosity": ignorance in the basic, exoteric foundations of religious and scientific knowledge leads to special courage in assessing and transforming one's knowledge and skills in the sphere of the spiritual, mental and bodily being of a person, up to the well-known phenomena of "delusion", in which a person seems to himself to be omnipotent omniscient and "all-accepting" (a co-worker of God or his incarnation , capable of unconditional love, etc.), risking declaring himself a spiritual mentor and gathering groups (including tourist ones). The problem of the quality of spiritual guides and the quality of guides in the spiritual and tourist travel are closely related. The tour guide must clearly understand the essence and tasks of his work, separating them from the tasks of the guru /

mentor and other confusions and deformations. Careful selection of tourists is also necessary, because in the case of "delights" you can definitely stumble upon the type of "problem" tourist, causing trouble to the rest of the group. In this case, no ideas about the "karmic test", "lesson of tolerance", etc. may not help because they can destroy the working atmosphere in the group. No less difficult is the question of "spiritual superiority", leadership: the leader of a tourist group must understand his functions and the boundaries of managing the group so well that he does not give rise to rivalry with potential or real carriers of higher knowledge and skills, be able to cooperate with them, and the main thing is to agree on the route and its details with them as much as possible in advance.

- The main content of mystical tours is the implementation of mystical rituals, which, as a rule, are tied to the calendar of nature (full moon, solstice, religious and folk holidays) and their duration is usually not long (1-3 days). Mystical tours offer to explore the supernatural features of a particular place. The main difference between these tours from the usual ones is that their main goal is to learn the spiritual (theory in this direction is of great importance, especially seminars and training in nature) and to improve practical skills, as well as to raise the spiritual level of a man or woman. During esoteric intensives, tourists can undergo initiation into cosmoenergy, zoroastrianism, reiki, tibetan and slavic priestly practices, practice skills and practice at the sacred point of the planet in order to strengthen their body, soul and spirit, develop their abilities and transform problems

- In the context of esoteric tourism, many scholars and practitioners note that pilgrimage and esoteric tourism, including Orthodox, Buddhist, Muslim, yoga tourism, shamanistic and healing tourism, provide tourists engaged in a particular spiritual discipline (practice and theory) with an environment in which they may experience psychological well-being during and after the trip. The results show that such tourism can change the lives of participants at different levels

(Huang, K., Pearce, Ph., Wu, M.-Y. & Wang, X., 2019; Dillette, A. & Douglas, A. & Andrzejewski, C., 2018) [30; 39]. Important factors of this are the ongoing transformations initiated by communication with a unique nature, relationships with special people and a person's own activity in these "special" environments.

One of the illustrations here is esoteric tourism in Altai. Here it has a rather long tradition, since Gorny Altai simply abounds in "places of power", shamanistic and other religious traditions, centers, and ministers. Several very powerful energy centers or "places of power" are located at once, for example, on the highest mountain of Altai - Belukha (Uch - Sumer, "Three-headed", Kadyn - Bashi or "The head or house of Katun", or Ak - Sumer, "White head »), The sacred mountain of many peoples, from which the Katun originates - the largest river in Altai, at the confluence with the Biya forms the largest river in Siberia - the Ob. Among the ancient Aryans, this mountain - Sumeru - was considered the center of the Universe; according to myths, all the stars and planets revolved around it.

Examples of such travel along the routes running through Belukha often include a variety of types of participation as a tourist. For example, 3-5 day routes often include the following elements:

- pedestrian and road travel and travel using mountain transporters, etc. such trips involve different options for climbing Belukha (Figure 1),
- visiting its peaks, passes, river and lake fragments of destinations, including from observation towers, visiting hiding places, ruins and existing "esoteric" buildings and settlements (Figures 2-4),
- performing, according to the beliefs of a particular target group (like-minded people) or the suggestions of the tour organizer, a program that combines psychotherapeutic, yogic, magical or shamanistic procedures, ritual dances, initiations, "bookmarking" of minerals and the creation of "caches" (secret storage of personal and other items -artifacts) (Figures 5-8);
- passing visits to other places related to

the spiritual, religious and cultural history of the place (Figure 9), as well as meetings with natural phenomena, animal guides, etc.;

- psychotherapeutic practices, for example, mandala therapy (Figure 10), entertainment and discoveries on the territory of the place of residence (in hotels, glamping sites, health and spiritual centers, etc.);
- situations of reflection of experience and analysis of the route traveled, impressions of the day and impressions from acquaintance with this or that place of power, reflection of relations in a group and modification (management) of relations in a group, up to the creation and encouragement of the development of intimate-personal relations between travel participants,
- situations of detecting and resolving conflicts and confrontations between them, situations and actions aimed at stimulating the creative, including professional activities of clients, their development as professionals, work with traumas of microsocial and macrosocial crises, etc.

Frequently encountered problems in the work of these groups are as follows:

- the concept of "esoteric" in one way or another implies that the leader and organizer of the tour has some special / secret / available few knowledge and skills or access to them. This, quite often, gives rise to very personally and even socially significant (reference) relations of worship and / or competition within the group and between the group members and the leader. That is why the organizers are often "amateur" gurus, parapsychology clubs and groups of believers with an already established hierarchy of relationships. However, then the problem of "newcomers" arises, of which, if we are talking about tourism as a business, if possible, there should be a lot of them regularly. Newcomers feel an urgent need to define themselves in the group, including to identify and localize their place in relation to the existing "spiritual" hierarchy and formal structure of the group, to assess the group's reference, the quality of "esoteric" knowledge and skills of its participants, primarily formal and informal



Figure 1 – Climbing Belukha



Figure 2 – Travel to Belukha

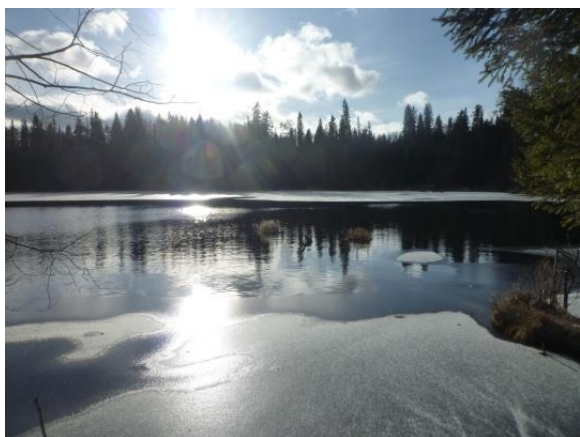


Figure 3 – Lake in the vicinity of Belukha



Figure 4 – Communication with a place of power



Figure 5 – View from the top of Belukha



*Figure 6 – Before one of the rituals in the circle
for the "initiates"*



Figure 7 – Dance of greeting and gratitude to a place of power



Figure 8 – Gifts to the spirits of nature



Figure 9 – Visit to the house-museum of the D.N. Mamin-Sibiryak



Figure 10 – Bright colors of mandalotherapy

leaders and the “stars” around them, to assess the “impact potential” and other characteristics of the “place of power”, the general attractiveness of the places visited and the rituals performed, the idiosyncratic and typical features of the destination and object of worship (healing, etc.), the expediency and goals of group discussions / gatherings, etc. And so on. At the same time, without directed work with them, new members of the group can not only help, but also prevent the group from fulfilling the goals facing it, explicitly or implicitly. If the entire group consists of beginners, then many aspects of the work of the coach-psychotherapist will be included in the work of the guide [3];

- places of (secret) power, being visited regularly and by many people at once, cease to be secret and are “polluted” not only by the products of physical activity of the visitors, but also “energetically”; in any case, they lose their status of secret and esoteric with each new visit that reveals their secrets. Also, many researchers note that the place of power can “shift”, since the energy centers of the planet are mobile;

- even if we are talking about some stationary objects (temples, dolmens, burials, hiding places), these processes can also occur. In addition, the possibilities of “spiritual” understanding of the world and the impact on the world (extra-sensory and bienergetic processes) are different for people, and what “sees / hears”, etc. one tourist does not notice or simply cannot recognize the other, but persuasion and suggestion do not help here either, leaving the smack of disappointed hopes and simply deception;

- An important point is that some of the “places of power” and events are ordinary imitations “for the stage” or falsifications, that is, pseudo-events. It should be noted, however, that in esoteric tourism, some theorists and, especially, practices relate to pseudo-events and other fictions and imitations of sacred objects and spiritual “artifacts”, with a pronounced acceptance and pragmatism, for example, S. Cusack (Cusack C., 2020) notes that imitation or “fake” stone circles built in countries where there are no such monuments (for

example, in America and Australia, in some regions of the UK), enhances the charm of the landscape, prompting people to admire and give them an aesthetic experience, and tourists traveling for "spiritual" purposes and believing Aboriginal people can use these fake circles, pseudo-beasts, etc. for modern rituals [26];

- in the group there are often "like-minded people" who represent the essence of self-improvement and self-realization in completely different ways, who are in completely different parts of the inner journey to them, including more or less interested in correction and development in the spheres of personal, partner and professional activity;

- esoteric tourism is often also called sacred, in this sense it creates one of the special cases of the problem of distinguishing between pilgrimage travel / pilgrimage for worshipping a shrine and tourism itself. In the behavior and attitude of group members, the "worldly", everyday and "sacred" are often superimposed; this must be treated either with a certain condescension, or the rules of behavior and attitudes must be preliminarily stipulated so as not to create dissonances that can sometimes even lead to conflicts on / religious grounds ";

- the guide shares his / her experience with tourists, offering them a large number of techniques and practices for personal development, he / she seeks to tell them the way, and if people like this path, he / she seeks to support them as much as possible along the way. He / she should not impose or dictate the way, but the conditions of travel, rules of conduct and relations, the route, if possible, should be agreed in advance;

- many "places of power" begin to be actively exploited for destructive purposes ("black magic", satanism, voodoo magic, etc.), which is sometimes actively supported by the administrations of tourist destinations, making money and other preferences and benefits on such "visits";

- the inner path should be superimposed on the outer path, esoteric tourism can be considered as a type of travel therapy [2; 10], it is necessary that the participants imagine both the

external and the "internal" route, agreeing to certain collective and individual actions that the excursion or other trip offers, in advance, and not "on the spot". This is necessary to avoid misunderstandings, conflicts and failures associated, in particular, with individual beliefs and frameworks, with confessional beliefs and frameworks (permitted / prescribed and prohibited / prohibited). The problem of cultural and spiritual violence, therefore, is one of the key here: a person should, if possible, know what he agrees to even before the trip: the "wow effect" is important, but less than the client's conscious choice. The task of the tourist operator, among other things, is the development of the tourist's competence in choosing a route, in behavior on a tourist trip, in resolving problem situations of internal and interpersonal, and not only external, social and material-physical plans;

- the leading ezo-therapist or travel-therapist must have the appropriate qualifications and personal resources of a level that allows him not only to balance, harmonize and clarify people's attitudes towards themselves, each other and the world along the route and with the course of circumstances, but also to develop programs that support and providing the solution of these problems "automatically", laying in advance the possibilities of these problems and ways to solve them. The presenter must be ready to work with altered states of consciousness / soul, altered states of the body and spirit of a person; here, such an organization of the tourist route, such a safety technique, which took into account changes in the personal, partner / interpersonal and professional life of the participants, is needed.

Conclusion. The main distinguishing feature of esoteric travel from ordinary tourism is the goal of obtaining spiritual knowledge, practical skills of spiritual practice and, as a result, raising the spiritual level of the individual. It is believed that it is in the so-called places of Power that all spiritual practices have the greatest impact, and therefore people rush to such places. Places of power are special regions of the planet Earth, where strong energy is fixed. These can be natural monuments,

a unique landscape, mountains, lakes, caves, places associated with important historical events or religious activities of people (places of pilgrimage) and much more.

There are several types of esoteric tours. Introductory tours involve various types of guided excursions to places of Power (pyramids, dolmens, etc.) or to outstanding mystics (ashrams of Sathya Sai Baba, Osho, etc.). Tourists are usually taken to the so-called places of power (ancient burial mounds, pyramids, megalithic structures, monuments of disappeared civilizations), to conferences or retreats, etc. This type of tours is often called mystical due to the lack of a clear classification of esoteric tours and because such a name is attractive to the layman. Wellness tours also aim to provide practical seminars and trainings in the bosom of nature. In these types of tours, the most frequently used practices are yogic, although there are Sufi, shamanic and other practices. The main content of such tours is mystical rituals, usually timed to coincide with the calendar of nature. Extreme tours exist for the elite.

These are kind of closed club picnics, which are attended by people already in groups formed for a long time, who know each other well. On these tours, people go to remote places and live in extreme and hard-to-reach conditions for ordinary people, often associated with a risk to life.

Self-improvement and self-realization as a motive of tourist activity represent the highest level of motivation for tourist activity and, therefore, one way or another, should be understood as elite tourism, along with extreme tourism. The esoteric type of tourism has great development prospects precisely as a niche type of tourism, since it involves a person's work with himself: the organization of such work requires significant efforts on his part and on the part of the organizers of a tourist trip, therefore, not only highly qualified specialists and special tourist destinations are needed, but also flexible, multicomponent routes, allowing to implement special customer requests so that this type of business remains not only in demand, but also competitive, along with its immanent elitism and other specifics.

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