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Exploring The Motives Of Religious Travel By Applying The Ahp Method – The Case Study Of Monastery Vujan (Serbia)

Sanja Božic

University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Sciences, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management,
sanja.bozic.89@gmail.com

Bojana Spasojević

Griffith Institute for Tourism, Griffith University Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia,
bojana.spasojevic@ymail.com

Miroslav D. Vujičić

University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Sciences, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management,
miroslav.vujicic@dgt.uns.ac.rs

Igor Stamenkovic

Department of geography, tourism and hotel management, Faculty of sciences, University of Novi Sad,
igorroggi@yahoo.com

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Cover Page Footnote

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Exploring the Motives for Religious Travel by Applying the AHP Method: A case study of Vujan Monastery (Serbia)

Sanja Božić*, Bojana Spasojević**, Miroslav D. Vujičić* & Igor Stamenković*

*Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, Faculty of Sciences,
University of Novi Sad, Serbia

**Griffith Institute for Tourism,
Griffith University Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia

sanja.bozic.89@gmail.com, bojana.spasojevic@ymail.com, miroslav.vujicic@dgt.uns.ac.rs, igorroggi@yahoo.com

Religious tourism is considered as the oldest form of people's travel. Thousands of years ago people travelled miles led by religious motives. Even though pilgrimage is older than most of the other tourism forms, research on the major motives for religious travel still occupies scientific attention. Vujan Monastery represents one of the main riddles among religious tourism researchers in Serbia. After the mysterious healing of Serbian Patriarch Pavle in 1946 who suffered from tuberculosis, this monastery became one of the most famous sacred places for orthodox Christians. The principle aim of this paper is to propose a new way for exploring and ranking the religious motivation using the Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) approach. In addition, the study proposes a set of motives – both religious and secular, which can be applied for exploring the motivations for visiting any sacred site. The method was applied to discover the main motives which drive people to visit Vujan Monastery, get their rankings, as well as their preferences between different types of secular and religious motives. The results indicated a strong preference for religious motives compared to secular motives of visit of this sacred site. On balance, the research provides us with a complete ranking structure, encompassing all analyzed motives of visit which show us a clear picture of the main motivation for visits to Vujan monastery.

Key Words: religious tourism, religious motives, analytical-hierarchy process, monastery Vujan, Serbia

Introduction

Religious tourism is mostly considered as the oldest form of people's travel (Blackwell, 2007). Thousands of years ago people were travelling miles away from their homes led by religious motives. Religious travel of all kinds has a long history: experts point to pilgrimage being institutionalised in parts of India more than a 1000 years ago, whilst some sources trace travel to sacred sites back 30,000 years (Blackwell, 2007). Pilgrimage was common in traditional tribal societies, in the ancient societies of Egypt, Babylon, Meso-American and pre-Christian Europe and remains a feature of each of the contemporary world's major religions (Ambrosio, 2007; Turner, 1973). Quintessential examples of pilgrimage include the medieval Christian pilgrimage to Jerusalem; the Hajj of two million Muslims each year to Mecca; and the journey of 20 million Hindus each year to the River Ganges (Collins-Kreiner, 2010a; Rinschede, 1992). Even though, pilgrimage is older than most of the other tourism forms, the major motives for religious travel still remain under-explored.

According to Blackwell (2007) it is believed that, since the dawn of time, human beings have defined some elements of the natural and built environment as spiritual sites, regarding them as sacred and, in many cases, endowing them with supernatural qualities. Even though the spiritual meaning of some of them has been lost over time, there is still immense interest in many of these sites.

Olsen and Timothy (2006) also assert that religious travel is not a new phenomenon. They claim that religion has long been an integral motive for undertaking journeys and is usually considered the oldest form of non-economic travel. Every year millions of people travel to major pilgrimage destinations around the world, both ancient and modern in origin. It is estimated that approximately 240 million people per year go on pilgrimages, the majority of them being Christians, Muslims, and Hindus. Religiously or spiritually motivated travel has become widespread and popularized in recent decades. Many of those people travel to sacred places in strong

belief they will be cured, to pay respect to God etc. but some of them are just curious to see those sacred places. Olsen and Timothy (2006) also note that the main motives such as search for truth, enlightenment, or an authentic experience with the divine or holy, leads people to travel to sacrosanct sites. Collins-Kreiner (2010b) notes that pilgrims are generally not considered tourists, or, at least, they are regarded as being different from tourists. This view suggests that pilgrims are not tourists because they travel for spiritual reasons, while tourists travel (or visit a site) for more secular reasons such as curiosity or pleasure. However, the shrines, temples, churches, landscape features, and religious festivals that they visit, are among the most complex of attractions because of their appeal to a spectrum of visitors. Pious pilgrims on a quest for a religious experience may cross paths with secular tourists who seek to satisfy their curiosity about the holy place and, perhaps, about the pilgrims as well (Nolan and Nolan, 1992).

In connection to this, it is important to mention that motives of modern religious tourists differ from medieval pilgrims. Nowadays, religious tourism refers not only to the form of tourism with strong or single-minded religious motives of pilgrimage, but also to people who undertake non-pilgrimage tourist activities, such as travelling to religious sites for sightseeing, cultivation and recreation. A religious tourist attraction may be regarded as

a place that draws tourists by virtue of some aspect of site such as an architecturally exceptional church building, an outstanding art collection, an important historical association, or, in some cases, a spectacular view from the terrace (Nolan and Nolan, 1992:72).

This indicates quite a wide array of motives which can drive people to visit the religious sites.

Serbia is a country with numerous sacred sites which have a great potential to be included in the world's religious tourism map. Certainly, one of those spiritual places located in the Central part of Serbia is the monastery Vujan, famous for its mysterious spiritual healing and numerous religious tourists who visit it every year. However, not all people who visit this monastery are driven by the same motives.

The principle aim of this paper and its main theoretical contribution is to propose a new way for exploring religious motivation - the ranking of motives by the *Analytical Hierarchy Process* (AHP) approach.

Moreover, the research motives are discussed in connection with a typology of religious tourists proposed by Stoddard (1996). In this current study the authors explore the main motives which drive people to visit Vujan Monastery, as well as their preferences for different types of secular and religious motives. The model developed in this paper might be useful for some further research in religious tourism motivation, and it should be applicable to other similar religious sites.

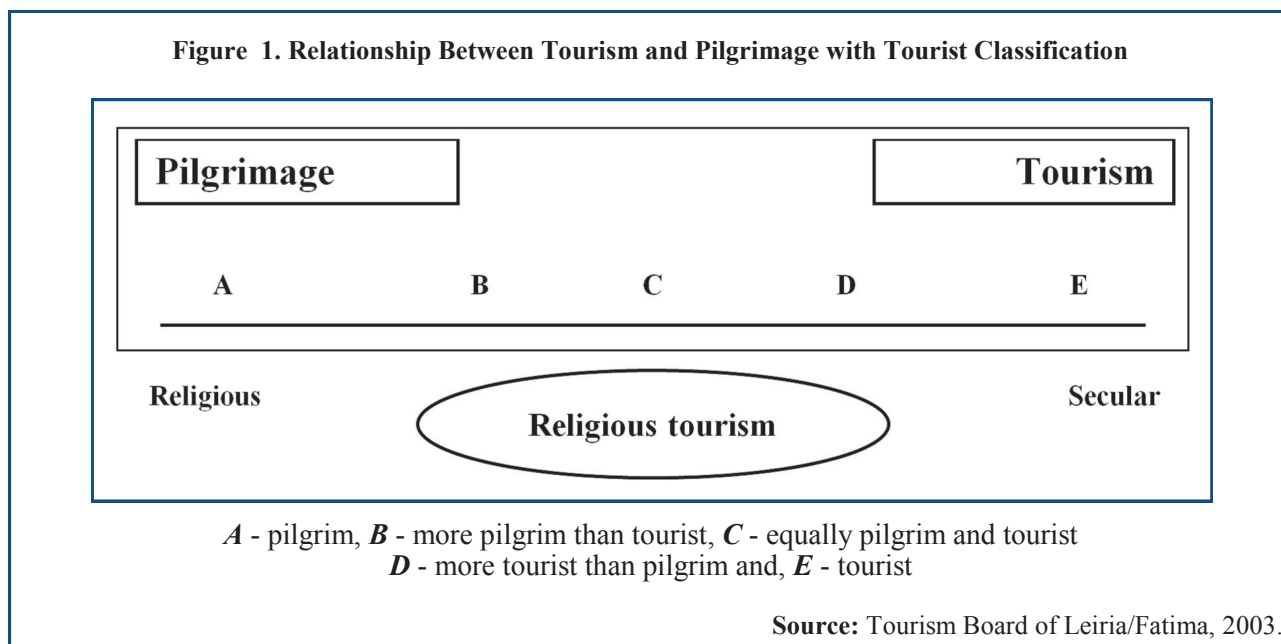
In order to obtain information about the main motives for visit of this monastery and get their rankings, the study proposes the Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) approach, a decision-making method based on pairwise comparisons between criteria, to construct an evaluation structure with criteria and associated weights, based on the tourists' preferences. The AHP method, a tool which quite recently has found its application in the tourism field, in this study showed to be a useful method in exploring religious motivation, as it gives a clear ranking of the motives, according to visitors' preferences (pairwise comparison of motives). Moreover, the fact that the method does not require a large sample makes it convenient for exploring motivation, especially in religious tourism (due to the special conditions for doing research in these places - sacred sites). The paper presents a questionnaire, consisting of a large range of motives (both secular and religious) which were derived and adapted from the existing literature on religious motivation in order to achieve the previously stated goal of the paper.

Literature Review

Nowadays, pilgrimage is often identified with the term religious tourism. However, there is a difference between 'pilgrimage' in modern times and in the past, with the key distinction lying in motivation. Some authors, such as Bauer (1993) emphasise that pilgrimage and tourism are two opposite concepts in the world. This was also the attitude at the 1981 International Christian Conference of Asia in Manila, where it was stated that the modern tourist is not a pilgrimage as pilgrims

step the sacred soil smoothly [while the tourists] trample these places, photograph them, travelling in an arrogance and in a hurry (Vukonic, 1996, p.135).

On the other hand, some authors (Murray and Graham, 1997) state that tourism and pilgrimage are not incompatible activities, although there are differences



which should not be seen as negative, as tourism often connects these religious places with modern society.

Modern specialists, however, consider that there should be some intermediate categories between those two terms. As a result of this aspiration, Santos (2003) connects types of travellers with their motives (both religious and recreational), indicating the existence of three types of traveller - one at each side of the spectrum - secular tourist, pilgrim, and a transitional one - religious tourist. This division better explains the various motivations of today’s numerous visitors to the world’s sacred sites, indicating that visitors can be driven by both secular and religious motives.

In connection with this, Smith (1992) has derived a scheme from which suggests three variations between Secular Tourist (category **E**) and Pilgrim (category **A**) (Figure 1). Religious tourists are tourists who are motivated not only by pure religious motives but who

also incorporate the elements of classical tourism in their pilgrimage journey. Smith pointed out that there are religious tourists who are more pilgrims, and less tourists (**B**), those who are equally pilgrims and tourists (**C**), as well as those who are mainly tourists, but use pilgrimage as an opportunity for traveling (**D**) (Analysis of Smith, 1992, by Fernandes *et al.*, 2003). We can clearly see that motives of these types of visitors are very diverse, depending on their religious beliefs and attitudes.

Stoddard (1996) proposed a slightly different scheme, which also includes motives for travelling of different types of visitors (pilgrims, religious tourists and tourists). He divided the motives into Profane and Religious (Table 1).

From Table 1 we see that secular travellers (Smith’s category **E**) have profane motives, belong to the recreational category and do not include religious

Table 1 : Types of Traveller and Motives of Trip

Category	Travellers	Motives
Recreational	Secular tourists	Profane
Religious	Religious tourists	Religious
	Pilgrims	

Source: Tourism Board of Leiria/Fatima, 2003

beliefs. On the contrary, pilgrims have religious motives, belong to the religious category and include strong religious beliefs. Religious tourists belong to both categories and are driven by both groups of motives (Smith's category B, C, D).

Pilgrimage and religious motivation

Both Olsen and Timothy (2006) and Gallagher (2009) define religion and spirituality as one of the main and most common motives for travel, and because of this, many destinations have developed, and in so doing, have included spiritual sites and events in their tourism offer. Pilgrimage is one of the oldest forms of tourism (Cohen, 1992a; Collins-Kreiner, 2010a; Digance, 2003; Olsen and Timothy, 2006; Pourtaheri, Rahmani and Ahmadi, 2012; Rinschede, 1992; Sharpley and Jepson, 2011) and most often this is defined as a journey to a sacred place (Eliade, 1959; Smith, 1992; Turner, 1973). Nowadays, pilgrimage is not just a religious phenomenon, predicated on religious elements (Collins-Kreiner, 2010a, 2010b; Hyde and Harnan, 2011; Okamoto, 2015), but rather two alternative forms of pilgrimage can be recognized: the religious and the secular, linked to different motive sets.

In order to define what drives a person to undertake a pilgrimage, further explanation of pilgrim's motives is needed. Various motives have been defined in the literature through history. For example, Brown (1998) and Pesut (2003) directed their research towards tourist motives hence expanding the concept of spirituality. Spirituality emphasises the experience of the relationship with the transcendent accompanied with the sense of wholeness. Pilgrims undertake a journey of pilgrimage with strong expectations that they will experience something extraordinary and likely life-changing (Digance, 2003; Turner, 1973; Turner and Turner, 1978). The pilgrim seeks to touch and feel the sacred, or to visit the singular physical location they imagine embodies their deep religious values (Digance, 2003; Eliade, 1959; 1964; Morinis, 1992; Smith, 1992). In so doing, many pilgrims seek an encounter with the divine (Ambrosio, 2007; Digance, 2003; Turner, 1973; Turner & Turner, 1978). Thus, religious pilgrimage is often a spiritual quest and existential search for meaning (Cohen, 1992a; Devereux *et al.*, 2006; Digance, 2003; Turner, 1973). All these motives can be defined as something transcendental, but religious pilgrims can have other motives for their journeys. For many nations, pilgrimage is a culturally-pre-ordered social obligation, on occasions a *rite de passage* (Ambrosio, 2007; Cohen, 1992a; Morinis, 1992; Smith, 1992; Turner & Turner, 1978). Some

pilgrims try to gain religious merit or penitence for their sins (Cohen, 1992b; Digance, 2003; Tomasi, 2002; Turner, 1973). Other pilgrims seek healing from illness or resolution of their worldly problems (Morinis, 1992; Smith, 1992; Tomasi, 2002; Turner, 1973). Certain authors found that some pilgrims see the journey as an adventure, an escape, or a chance to experience worldly pleasures denied them at home (Digance, 2003; Smith, 1992; Tomasi, 2002). In their empirical study of visitors to the Da-Lin Temple in Taiwan, Shuo *et al.* (2008) observe touristic motives such as sightseeing and seeking friendship, which are of a cultural nature, rather than religious. They also found religious motives such as seeking to experience a holy atmosphere; and seeking to strengthen one's beliefs by being close to God (Shuo *et al.*, 2008). Collins-Kreiner and Kliot (2000), in their study of visitors to the Holy Land of Israel and Palestine, observed a number of motives amongst religious pilgrims, including, seeking to experience the sacred places where Jesus walked; understanding one's spiritual being and; seeking to strengthen one's faith.

The above highlighted literature indicates that religious visitors can be driven by a whole spectrum of different religious motives, but highlights that visitors can also be driven by non-religious motives - secular motivation.

Secular motivation in religious tourism

Nowadays religious tourism is closely connected to holiday and cultural tourism, as spiritual journeys and visits are not the main and dominant motives for travel. For example, pilgrims at Fátima visit the Atlantic coastline and culturally interesting cities in the neighbouring area (Rinschede, 1992). Keeling (2000) argued in his study that while the core activity for most religious sites is worship and prayer, he also found that when visitors go to cathedrals in England, spiritual motives are not the only reasons why people visit them. This indicates that religious and secular motives are often intertwined.

There are many factors that motivate tourist to undertake a religious journey, like: it being a spur of the moment decision; family connections with a site (for example, visiting gravestones of ancestors); famous people or events connected with the site and; cultural motives such as personal interest in architecture or historic art works (stained glass). Similar motives for visitation have been reported by Nolan and Nolan (1992), Shackley (2002), Smith (1992), and Vukonić (1996) who all found that many

people tend to visit religious heritage sites for recreational, educational or cultural interests, rather than spiritual reasons. For example, Voase (2007) found in his study that Lincoln Cathedral was just part of the attraction of visiting the city of Lincoln and not the dominant motive for visit and therefore not the primary reason for choosing the destination.

Interesting research was undertaken by Andriotis (2009), who, in his study, examined the experience of visitors, both religious and non-religious during their visit to Mount Athos. He identified five interconnected factors that represent the journey to the mentioned place: spiritual; secular; cultural; educational and; environmental. From all the above mentioned research, we can clearly see that there is a plethora of different motives which drive people, both religious and non-religious, to visit sacred places. Thus, for the purpose of this study the authors adapted some of the motives from the existing literature in this field (encompassing both religious and secular motives), while some new motives, specific for the study area, were derived and included in the research.

Description of Study Area

Vujan Monastery is located half way between the cities of Čačak and Gornji Milanovac, deeply hidden in the wooded mountain of Vujan (Glišić, 1994). It is supposed that the first monastery was built on the place where an unknown saint monk lived. According to the oral tradition, a group of monks from the Ovčar-Kablar Gorge settled under the mountain of Vujan before the Turkish invasion. One of the brothers left the monks' brotherhood and settled down deep into the forest near the water spring. On the site of today's monastery he built a cottage where he lived and prayed until the end of his life. When other brothers found him deceased, his body was unaffected and with a very characteristic smell. Monks decided not to bury him in the ground, but instead they made him a rock tomb (Glišić, 1994). Since this mysterious event, people have believed in the power of prayers to Vujan's Saint. Beside the tomb of the unknown saint, stands the biggest treasure of Vujan Monastery - a wooden cross made by Gojko Stojčević - who later became his majesty Serbian patriarch Pavle. Gojko made this cross during his two-year-long life and prayer in the Vujan Monastery (1944-1946). Young Gojko suffered from tuberculosis and doctors' diagnosis was that there was no cure for him. After he spent two years in prayer at the tomb of the unknown saint, completely isolated from the other brothers, his disease mysteriously disappeared

(Radulović, Knežević-Monašević, 2011). Vujan Monastery attracted many pilgrims before the miraculous healing of patriarch Pavle. However, before the patriarch's death the site was only known to a limited number of believers and pilgrims who tried to find their salvation near the tomb of the unknown saint. In 2009, when Serbian patriarch Pavle died, all media outlets published the story about his recovery in the monastery Vujan, and this contributed to a large increase in the number of visitors.

According to abbot Jovan Nikitović, the principal of the monastery, around 5,000 to 6,000 people visit the monastery annually. A significant number of visitors come on the recommendation of the monks of other monasteries, but also on doctors' recommendations. However, no one can specify the exact number of cured people, since the monastery's monks do not keep this kind of record (Interview with Vujan monastery's principal abbot Jovan Nikitović). Beside the value of the monastery for pious visitors, the site also attracts a lot of visitors driven by: the unspoiled nature of its surroundings; its great historical importance; its



architectural value as well as; interesting legends and stories about the monastery and miraculous spiritual healings etc.

Methodology

When it comes to complex decisions, which involve a lot of criteria and alternatives, decision-making becomes a complex process which contains a number of interrelated and interdependent factors. These various elements can more or less influence the final decision (Jandrić and Srđević, 2000) and special software - Decision Support Systems (DSS) can be used to analyse this process. The AHP approach, developed by Saaty (1980), is one of the best known commercially available DSS, as well as one of the most extensively used MCDM (multi criteria decision making) methods. This approach represents a 'qualitative' technique that relies on the judgment and experience of the researchers.

The concept of AHP

The AHP approach is used to construct an evaluation model and related criterion weights. It integrates different measures into a single overall score for ranking decision alternatives. Applying the approach, usually results in simplifying a multiple criterion problem by decomposing it into a multilevel hierarchical structure (Harker and Vargas, 1987).

The goal is at the top of the hierarchy, while the criteria, sub-criteria and alternatives are on the lower levels and sub-levels of the hierarchy (Figure 3). AHP

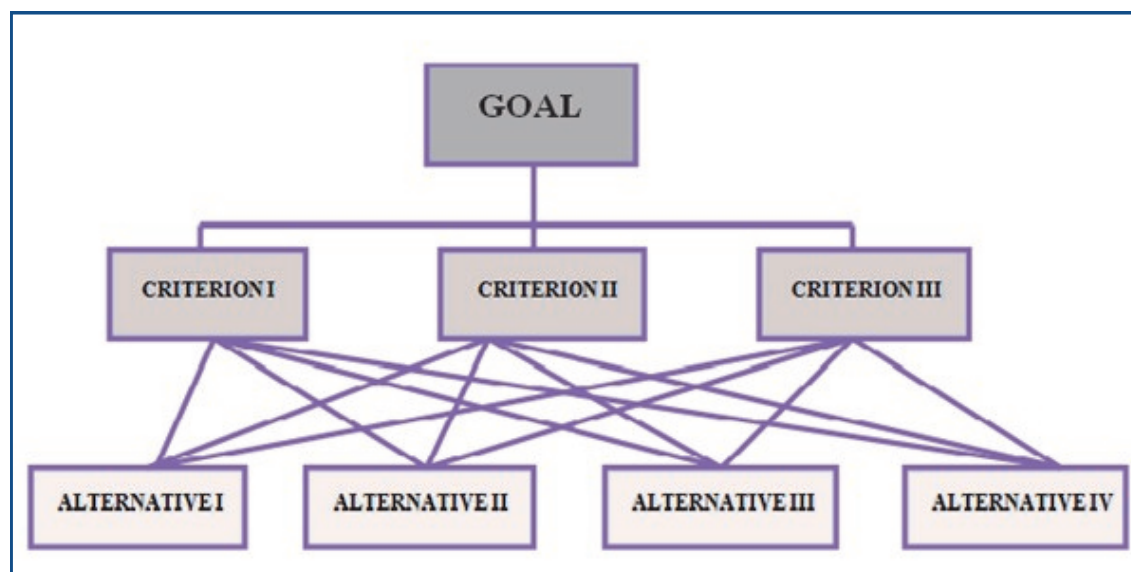
gradually compares alternatives and measures their impact on the goal, which helps one to make the right decision (Saaty, 1980).

When the hierarchical model of the problem is established, the researcher can compare the elements in pairs at each level of the hierarchy with the element in the higher level of the hierarchy. The criterion weights represent a measure of the relative importance of the elements (Jandrić and Srđević, 2000).

AHP is a rather subjective method which does not require a large sample, and it is useful for research focusing on a specific issue where a large sample is either difficult to attain or is not mandatory (Cheng and Li, 2002; Lam and Zhao, 1998). Cheng and Li (2002) point out that the AHP method may be impractical for a survey with a large sample size as 'cold-call' respondents may have a great tendency to provide arbitrary answers, resulting in a very high degree of inconsistency (Wong and Li, in press).

In this study, the goal is to obtain a ranking of motives for the visit of sacred sites. Religious and secular motives are two criteria, while sub-groups within the two major criteria are sub-criteria. As a result the criterion weights are derived based on a survey done in Vujan Monastery. This means that the research did not include many alternatives in the comparison, but the emphasis was on the comparison of criteria; in this case, motives for visit. However, these criteria can also be used for comparison with different sacred sites, which would represent alternatives in the AHP hierarchy.

Figure 3. Application of Hierarchy in AHP



Source: Authors

Sampling profile

The survey for this project was conducted during the authors' visit to Vujan Monastery in April, 2014. The reason for choosing this period was the fact that the majority of visitors come to this place during spring, the most pleasant and convenient time for visit. In addition, Easter took place in April for both Catholic and Orthodox faiths, which also contributed to the high level of attendance of the monastery. 54 potential respondents were asked to participate in this research. 24 of these visitors refused to take part in the survey, as they did not want to discuss the preferences and motives involved in this research, especially their religious motives, which they considered to be private and confidential. Thus, the final results of the study were based on the responses of 30 visitors of different ages (from 20 to 70) and nationality. The majority (21) were from Serbia, while 9 respondents were foreign visitors (from Macedonia, Greece, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Montenegro and Hungary). Moreover, a slightly higher number of respondents were female (19).

Research phases and questionnaire design

The first phase of this research was the selection of a wide array of motives which drive people to visit sacred sites. All motives were divided into two major groups: religious motives and secular motives. It is important to mention that religious motives characterise pious pilgrims with pure religious motives, while secular motives are common for 'secular' tourists whose motivation besides religion can include diverse 'non-pilgrimage' activities. The final choice of motives came as a result of reviewing and consulting the existing literature regarding religious motivation, consulting experts in religious tourism field, and also, suggesting some new motives by authors of the paper. The final questionnaire (see Appendix A) might

contribute to further research in religious tourism motivation, as it is applicable to other similar religious sites.

Many authors (Digance, 2003; Eliade, 1959, 1964; Morinis, 1992; Smith, 1992) wrote that pilgrims seek to touch the sacred, or to visit the singular physical location which they imagine embodies their deep religious values. Based on this, the authors included in the survey the motive: *Expressing love and respect for God*, as a pure religious motive characteristic for those pious tourists. *Searching for forgiveness* was mentioned as an important motive of visiting religious sites in many papers (Cohen, 1992; Digance, 2003; Tomasi, 2002; Turner, 1973) which indicates that pilgrims may be motivated to gain religious merit or penitence for their sins. The motive *Getting closer to something sacred* was derived and adapted from the claim that many pilgrims seek an encounter with the divine (Ambrosio, 2007; Digance, 2003; Turner, 1973; Turner & Turner, 1978) while *Healing from illness*, as a motive of religious travel was mentioned by Morinis (1992), Smith (1992), Tomasi (2002) and Turner (1973). The religious motives included in the study are also *Pilgrimage* as a very common motive for visit of any sacred site as well as *Prayer at the tomb of Vujan's saint* which is specific for this monastery.

When it comes to secular motives, Nolan and Nolan (1992) indicate that a religious tourist attraction may be a place that draws tourists by virtue of some aspect of site such as an architecturally exceptional church building, an outstanding art collection, an important historical association, or, in some cases, a spectacular view from the terrace. These motives are specific for each sacred site, thus, the authors derived secular motives which are specific to Vujan monastery: *Historic value; Cultural value and architecture; Interesting visit; Beauty of the nature surrounding the*

Table 2. Overview of Motives Included in Research

Religious motives	Secular motives
Expressing love and respect for God	Historic value
Searching for forgiveness	Cultural value and architecture
Getting closer to something sacred	Interesting visit
Pilgrimage	Beauty of the nature surrounding the monastery
Healing	Following the modern trends in traveling
Prayer at the tomb of the saint	Exploring the legends and interesting stories about the monastery

Source: Authors

monastery and; *Exploring the legends and interesting stories about the monastery*. The motive *Following the modern trends in traveling* was included in the survey due to the growing interest in religious travel, and the characteristic of modern travellers to follow trends in tourism. After choosing the motives which were included in the questionnaire, the second phase of research was a survey among visitors to the monastery, and entering the obtained data into the 'Expert Choice 2000' statistical software. The next phase was establishing the consistency of the decision-making process and deriving the final ranking between criteria, as well as their weight values. Table 2 shows the overview of motives included in the research.

Procedure

The pilot survey was in the form of an interview. Firstly, the respondents were asked to express their preferences, using Saaty's scale (1980, 1992), between religious and secular motives for their visit. After that, they were also asked to express their preferences between different religious secular motives. The pilot project was undertaken before the survey was carried out, to make sure that the questions were understandable. Due to the fact that the feedback from all of the respondents was satisfying, the survey was considered to be clear and appropriate for this research.

Results and Discussion

As was mentioned before, the main aim of the paper is to develop an overall ranking of motives for visits to Vujan Monastery, based on visitors' opinion of their importance. The results of the study show that religious

motives significantly prevail (67.3%) in comparison to secular motives of visit (32.7%). This indicates that religious travellers are more frequent visitors to the monastery than secular tourists, which seems to be a quite logical finding, as this monastery is widely known as a place of several miraculous healings and a sacred site where people come to pray in front of relics of Vujan's Saint.

Figure 4 shows the ranking of the religious motives for visiting Vujan Monastery. As we can see, *Expressing love and respect for God* is by far the most dominant religious motive for visit to the monastery. This especially refers to local people, but also to people from the wider region that come here to pray, driven by their strong faith and consideration of this monastery as a sacred site where they can make their connection with God. Also related to this, are the two following motives: *Getting closer to something sacred* and *Prayer at the tomb of the Vujan's Saint*. We can also see that there is just a tiny difference between the motives of *Pilgrimage* and *Healing*. After the mysterious recovery of Serbian patriarch Pavle (1914-2009) in 1946, who suffered from tuberculosis, this monastery became one of the most famous sacred places for orthodox Christians and since then it attracts a huge number of visitors.

The stories about miraculous healing connected with prayer at the relics of the Saint became widely known and have also enticed numerous pilgrims. Some of them come here to pray for their recovery but some of them are led by their curious nature, searching for proof of mysterious stories and legends. The motive *Searching for forgiveness* got the lowest ranking, as

Figure 4. Ranking of Religious Motives for Visit to Vujan Monastery

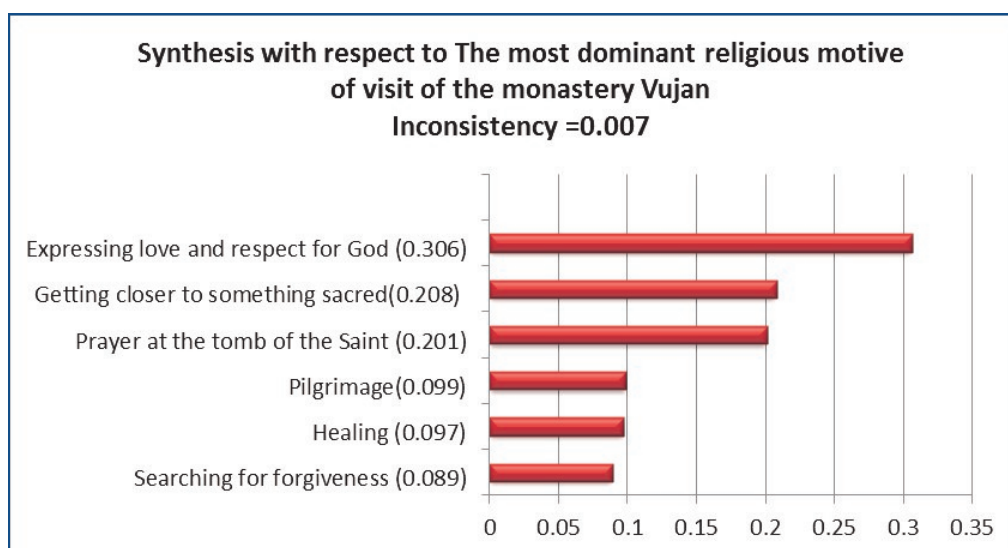
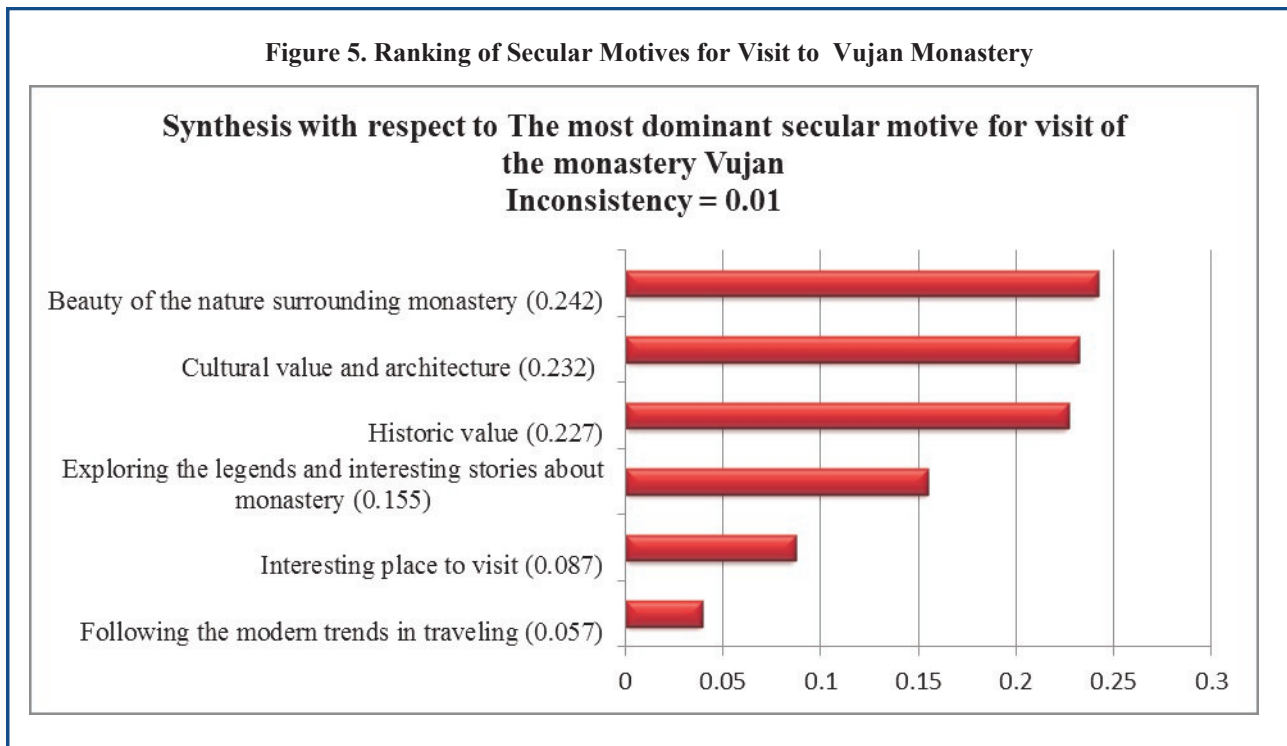


Figure 5. Ranking of Secular Motives for Visit to Vujan Monastery



the least dominant religious motive. When analysing this motive we should bear in mind that its lowest position may be partly the result of the delicate and confidential nature of this theme - people may not be willing to confess that they did something for which they need to pray for God's forgiveness.

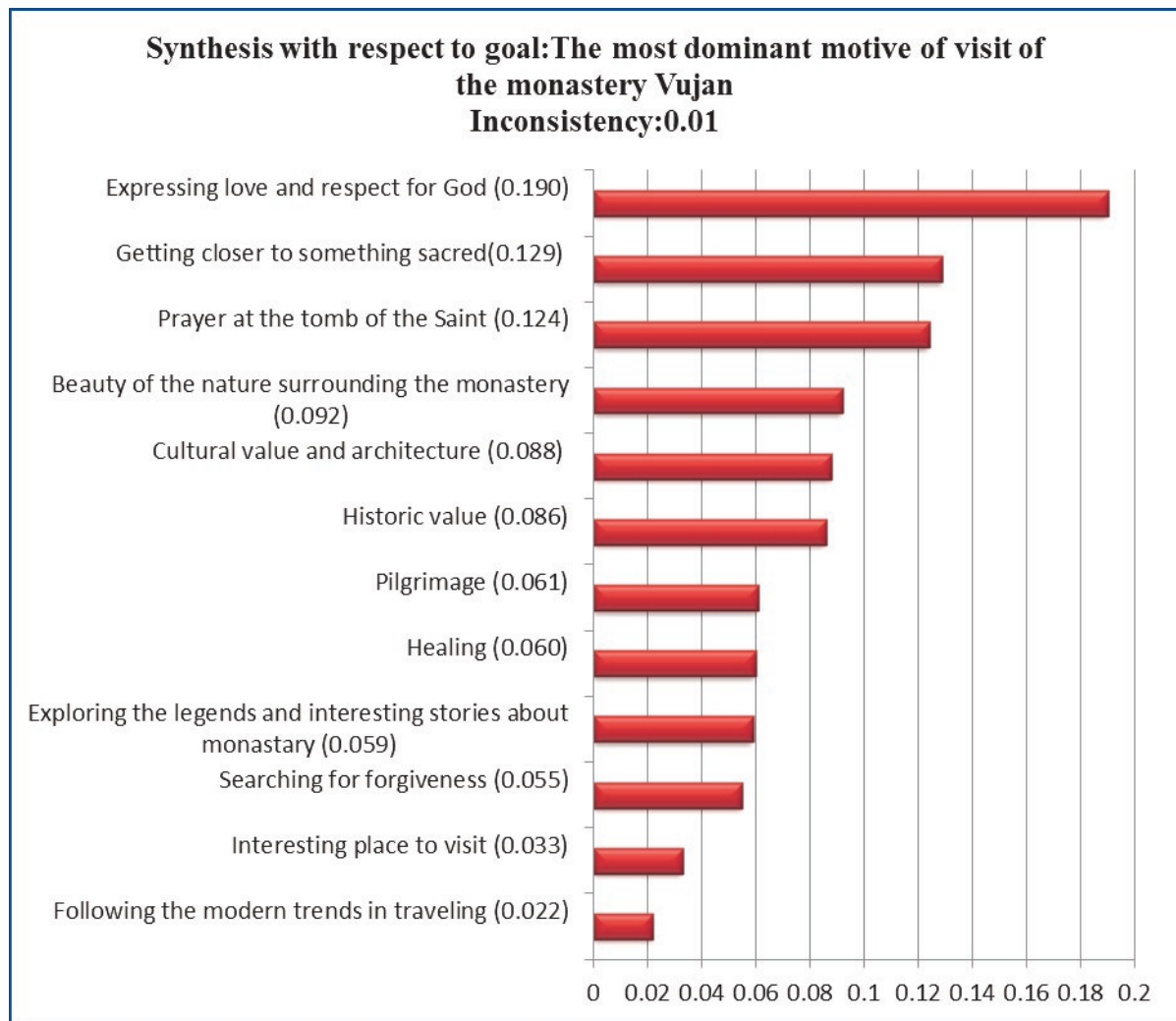
The religious motives which were ranked in this part of the study are motives which, according to Stoddart (1997), drive Religious tourists and Pilgrims to travel. In his pilgrimage typology, he proposes that Religious tourists are motivated by both religious and secular motives (Smith derived three more subgroups – categories B, C,D). Motives such *Getting closer to something sacred*, *Pilgrimage* and *Healing* might be considered as motives of those tourists which belong to Smith's category B (more pilgrims than tourists). On the other hand, motives specifically for pilgrims (Smith's category A) are *Expressing love and respect for God*, *Prayer at the tomb of the Saint* and *Searching for forgiveness*. Pilgrims (or devotees, as they are called in the Orthodox religion) have stronger religious beliefs and very often take part in different religious rituals (Stamenkovic, 2006). This is why their main motives for visit of sacred sites are prayer, seeking forgiveness and salvation from their sins. Religious tourists can be attracted by motives that are not purely religious but have elements of the secular - *Getting closer to something sacred*, *Pilgrimage* and *Healing*.

When it comes to secular motives for visiting Vujan Monastery (Figure 5), we can see that *Beauty of the*

nature surrounding the monastery is rated as the most dominant by the majority of visitors. This is not a surprising fact as the monastery is located in a beautiful meadow at the foothills of Vujan Mountain, surrounded by deep woods. This contributes to the beautiful scenery and the high scenic value of the ambience around the monastery. *Cultural value and architecture* was the second most important factor. It is important to note that the monastery is under state protection and it is proclaimed as a cultural monument which indicates its great cultural value.

However, the artistic value of the site, was significantly higher in the past, as the original frescoes from 1805 were destroyed, while part of the old iconostasis, the work of the izografists Stojan and Jeremia Mihajlovic, was transferred to the church of the Holy Virgin in Gornja Trepca in 1808. Today, the monastery keeps just a pillar of the altar table as a memory of the Nemanjić dynasty. The *Historic value* of the monastery got a slightly lower ranking, followed by the motive *Exploring the legends and stories about the monastery*. As mentioned before, there are numerous stories about cases of miraculous healing at the monastery, but also many legends connected with this sacred site. One of them is a legend about the monk who occasionally appears around the monastery walking above the earth and carrying the Golden Cross moistened with tears in his hand. These, as well as similar stories and legends creates a veil of mystery around this monastery, which can entice tourists to visit this place, especially those of curious nature.

Figure 6. Overall Ranking of Motives to Visit Vujan Monastery



Interesting visit as well as *Following the modern trends in travelling* gained the lowest ranking and did not prove to be of great importance as motivations for tourism.

The secular motives in this study, might also coincide with Stoddart (1997) typology, where *Beauty of the nature surrounding the monastery*, *Interesting visit* and *Following the modern trends in travelling* are typical for secular tourists (or Smith's category E), while *Cultural value and architecture*, *Historic value* and *Exploring the legends and stories about the monastery* are motives which are characteristic for both religious tourists and secular tourists (or Smith's category C, E and A). Religious tourists can be motivated, not only by pure religious motives, but, also to visit sacred places due to educational purposes (learning about historic and cultural value, interesting stories). Secular tourists have cultural and education motives when visiting sacred sites, they travel to learn something, to follow the trends etc.

Figure 6 shows the overall ranking of the motives for visit of Vujan Monastery, both religious and secular. The rankings indicate once again the predominance of religious motives, as the first three motives have religious grounding and they represent 44.3% of all motives for visit of the monastery. They are followed by the three cultural motives: *Beauty of the nature surrounding the monastery*, *Cultural value and architecture* and *Historic value*, as important motives for visit of the monastery. *Pilgrimage*, *Healing*, *Exploring the legends and interesting stories*, and *Searching for forgiveness* have a quite similar positions in the overall ranking, while *Interesting visit* and *Following of the modern trends in travelling* are the least common motives for visiting this monastery.

Conclusions and Managerial Implications

As mentioned before, the principle aim of this paper was to develop a model for exploring the main motives

(both religious and secular) which drive people to visit religious sites. In this study, we explored the main motives for visiting Vujan Monastery, as well as examining the relative importance of secular and religious motives. The study showed the strong prevalence of religious motives (67.3%) which can be explained by the fact that the monastery is perceived as a holy place famous for its healing powers and widely known for Vujan's Saint, which indicates its great religious significance. This is why people mainly come here to pray and pay respect to God. This finding might be very important for management of the site, as it indicates the need to keep the image of the site as a sacred place. There should be a balance between the people who come here to pray (real pilgrims) and those visitors with secular motives. This can be achieved by applying some practical measures:

- There should be a defined time when secular tourists visit the monastery (it should not coincide with times for prayer or religious ceremonies)
- Transparent rules for secular tourists should be defined in order to avoid disturbing the atmosphere of the sacred place (i.e. dress code, prohibition of taking photographs, etc.)
- There should be special interpretation of the historical and cultural values of the site for secular tourists, as well as presentation of the religious sense of the place. This is highly recommended by authors Write (2008), and Raj and Morpeth (2007), who suggest that all sacred sites should have better communication with tourists, as well as tourism stakeholders.
- As tourists nowadays search for an authentic experience, they should be encouraged to pray in order to experience something new and the real atmosphere of the place
- The monastery should work on supporting tourism infrastructure, as the surrounding nature, architecture and cultural value has been ranked highly on the motivation scale. There should be a souvenir shop with adequate literature on the architecture, history and spiritual and cultural significance of the monastery. There should be more resting places (benches and tables), where visitors can better connect with the monastery and enjoy the surrounding landscape.
- Monks, who are seen as tour guides at the site, should develop different kind of stories which can be presented to different kind of visitors. Not all visitors want to hear about the spiritual side of the monastery, some of them want to hear about the architecture, legends, life of the monastery etc. and also want a first hand experience of monastic life.

- Some visitors can stay within the monastery and experience the life of the monks, work with them, pray with them and for certain time leave the material world behind.

It is paradoxical that secular motives such as surrounding nature, cultural value and architecture as well as historic value are better ranked than the motive of healing, even though this place is famous for its healing powers and healing was expected to be the most popular motive for visit. This indicates the significant presence of secular tourists who visit this monastery driven by non-religious motives. Curiously, however, Orthodox sacred places are not usually characterised by impressive architecture as is the case with Islamic, Buddhist or Catholic sacred objects, which are usually included as part of city's tourist attractions because of their cultural, historical and architectural values, rather than religious significance.

The authors consider it interesting to direct further research towards exploring and comparing visitation motives at sacred places of all the major world religions - Catholic, Orthodox, Islamic and Buddhist in order to see if there is a major difference between them - are they mainly visited by religious or non-religious tourists and which motives prevail. This is a very important finding for the tourism industry, as marketing strategies and actions should be shaped according to the major motives, needs and preferences of visitors to these sacred places.

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Appendix A : Survey



Dear tourists,



Questionnaire

Thank you for taking your time to answer a few questions about the motivation for the visit of the monastery VUJAN. The data obtained will be used solely for the purpose of scientific and expert purposes. This survey is a part of the research carried out by researchers of the Department of Geography, tourism and hotel management, the Faculty of Sciences in Novi Sad. We please you to answer the questions objectively and honestly!

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

Gender: Age: _____
 1. Male
 2. Female Country of residence: _____

Please circle the adequate number on the following scale which shows extent to which one of the motives of your visit to the monastery is dominant over the other (1=equal importance, 3- moderate dominance, 5 – strong dominance, 7- very strong dominance, 9- absolute dominance)

Secular motives						Religious motives				
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9

1. Secular motives

Please circle the adequate number on the following scale which shows extent to which one of the motives of your visit to the monastery is dominant over the other (1=equal importance, 3- moderate dominance, 5 – strong dominance, 7- very strong dominance, 9- absolute dominance)

Historic value						Cultural value and architecture				
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9

Historic value						Interesting visit				
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9

Historic value						Beauty of the nature surrounding the monastery				
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9

Historic value						Following the modern trends in traveling				
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9

Historic value						Exploring the legends and interesting stories about the monastery				
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9

Cultural value and architecture						Interesting visit				
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9

Cultural value and architecture						Beauty of the nature surrounding the monastery				
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9

Cultural value and architecture						Following the modern trends in traveling				
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9

Cultural value and architecture						Exploring the legends and interesting stories about the monastery				
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9

Interesting visit						Beauty of the nature surrounding the monastery				
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9

Interesting visit						Following the modern trends in traveling				
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9

Interesting visit						Exploring the legends and interesting stories about the monastery					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Beauty of the nature surrounding the monastery						Following the modern trends in traveling					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Beauty of the nature surrounding the monastery						Exploring the legends and interesting stories about the monastery					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Following the modern trends in traveling						Exploring the legends and interesting stories about the monastery					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	

2. Religious motives

Expressing love and respect for God						Searching for forgiveness					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Expressing love and respect for God						Getting closer to something sacred					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Expressing love and respect for God						Pilgrimage					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Expressing love and respect for God						Healing					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Expressing love and respect for God						Prayer at the tomb of the saint					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Searching for forgiveness						Getting closer to something sacred					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Searching for forgiveness						Pilgrimage					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Searching for forgiveness						Healing					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Searching for forgiveness						Prayer at the tomb of the saint					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Getting closer to something sacred						Pilgrimage					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Getting closer to something sacred						Healing					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Getting closer to something sacred						Prayer at the tomb of the saint					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Pilgrimage						Healing					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Pilgrimage						Prayer at the tomb of the saint					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	
Healing						Prayer at the tomb of the saint					
9	7	5	3	1	0	1	3	5	7	9	