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**GEOCULTURAL ASPECTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF SACRED TOURISM IN THE CHERKASK REGION**

**Abstract.** The article analyses the geocultural aspects of the formation and development of the sacred tourism sphere in the Cherkasy region. The object and subject of scientific research, its main tasks, as well as its structure have been laid out. The factories and minds that directly contribute to the development of sacred tourism in Cherkasy region are examined. Particular respect is given to the ongoing development and historical developments of sacred tourism. The prospects for the development of sacred tourism in the Cherkasy region and in Ukraine have been revealed in general, the main aspects of further development and practical significance have been seen. This research has revealed officials who are involved in the development of the functioning of the territorial organization of the sacred tourism sector in the Cherkasy region; the historical and geographical features of the functioning of religions and denominations in the Cherkasy region have been studied; a system-structural study of the geography of the religious sphere in modern Ukraine was carried out.

It has been established that historical-geographical research into the sacred sphere of tourism in Ukraine has begun to develop widely since the early 90-s of the twentieth century. The essence of geographical research on sacred tourism lies in the designated spatial-hour differentiation of religious and cultural centres, which, by the same token, has always been present in the warehouse of research. knowledge of geographical sciences. The research contains the main approaches to the geographical tracking of religious activities and the exploration of sacred spaces. These approaches make it possible to specify the object and subject of study in the geography of culture and religion and showing the feasibility of other sciences in whose direct investigation. It has been established that the current issues of today include the investigation of the geo-religious situation of the Cherkasy region, the improvement of the administrative-territorial structure of religious denominations and, if possible, the development of the full scale of puppies of sacred spores.

This study highlights the relevance of the historical and cultural decline as a resource basis for sacred tourism. The theoretical and methodological foundations of a new alternative type of tourism – sacred tourism, its potential and territorial aspect of development have been revealed and systematized. That is why the performed research is relevant and distinguished by its scientific nature novelty.

**Key words:** geography of religion, religious space, sacred sphere, sacred sporadic, sacred objects, sacred tourism, geocultural factors, tourist and recreational activity, Cherkasy region.

**Максютов Андрій. ГЕОКУЛЬТУРНІ АСПЕКТИ РОЗВИТКУ САКРАЛЬНОГО ТУРИЗМУ  
В ЧЕРКАСЬКІЙ ОБЛАСТІ**

**Анотація.** У статті проаналізовано геокультурні аспекти становлення та розвитку сакральної туристичної сфери Черкаської області. Обґрунтовано об'єкт і предмет наукового дослідження, його мету й основні завдання, а також структуру. Розглянуто фактори та умови, які безпосередньо впливають на розвиток сакрального туризму Черкащини. Особливу увагу приділено дослідженню становлення та історичним витокам сакрального туризму. Розкрито перспективи розвитку сакрального туризму в Черкаській області та в Україні загалом, встановлені основні аспекти подальшого розвитку й практичне значення. Виявлено чинники, що впливають на розвиток та функціонування територіальної організації сакральної туристичної сфери в Черкаській області; досліджено історико-географічні особливості функціонування релігій і конфесій в Черкаській області; проведено системно-структурне дослідження географії релігійної сфери в сучасній Україні.

Встановлено, що суспільно-географічні дослідження сакральної сфери туризму в Україні набули широкого розвитку з початку 90-х років ХХ століття. Сутність географічних досліджень сакрального туризму полягає у визначенні просторово-часової диференціації релігійних та культурних осередків, що тією чи іншою мірою завжди були

присутні в складі досліджень різних географічних наук. У дослідженні містяться основні підходи до географічного дослідження релігійної діяльності та використання сакральних просторів. Виділення підходів дало змогу конкретизувати об'єкт і предмет вивчення географії культури та релігій. Встановлено, що актуальним завданням сьогодення є дослідження географо-релігійного положення Черкаської області, удосконалення адміністративно-територіально-географічного устрою релігійних конфесій і при можливості вивчення доцільності розміщення сакральних споруд.

**Ключові слова:** географія релігій, релігійний простір, сакральна сфера, сакральна споруда, сакральні об'єкти, сакральний туризм, геокультурні фактори, туристсько-рекреаційна діяльність, Черкаська область.

**Relevance of the research topic.** Currently, the tourism industry is developing dynamically all over the world, becoming an important source of income, accounting for a significant share of the gross national product of many countries. The development of tourism in a certain region, as well as its direction, tourist attraction is influenced by a complex of conditions and factors, in particular natural-geographical (climatic, balneological, ecological, etc.) and social-geographical, which include historical, social, religious, ethnic, cultural, economic, political and others. Taking into account the peculiarities of the physical-geographical and social-geographical position of Ukraine, it can be noted that our state also has favourable conditions and significant potential for the development of tourism, but as reality shows, tourist resources are not yet used effectively enough.

World experience shows that tourism, under the conditions of proper organization and use of all available resources, can bring considerable income to the economy of the region. In addition, creating a positive image of the region is an important aspect regional development. Taking into account the complex nature of the phenomenon of the development of the tourism industry, in our opinion, it is socio-geographic research that has the appropriate theoretical and methodological foundations for its study. In our opinion, the question of the study of the territorial organization of the religious sphere of Ukraine (in particular, Cherkasy region), which is the basis for the development of the sacred tourism sphere of our country, remained without due attention.

**Analysis of the latest research and publications on the research topic.** Given the important role of religion in society, it is studied by many sciences, including economic and social geography. The geography of culture and religion as an integral part of the system of geographical sciences in Ukraine has not acquired sufficient development, although there is a large number of domestic studies of the territorial organization of the religious and cultural sphere at various geo-spatial levels. These are, in particular, works: K. V. Mezentseva [8], S. V. Pavlova [9], O. I. Shabliia [11], L. T. Shevchuk [12], S. P. Romanchuk [10], M. D. Hrodzyskoho [3], H. I. Denysyka [4], Y. L. Kohatko [8], V. M. Volovyka [2], A. S. Kovalchuka [6], O. V. Braslavskoi [1] and others.

Studies of the territorial organization of sacred objects of the religious sphere are presented in the works of O. I. Shabliia [22], L. T. Shevchuk [269] and others. S. P. Romanchuk [10] investigated the material aspect of sacred landscapes, presented possible options for the sacralisation of landscapes and singled out practical approaches to their study [10]. The importance of religious heritage is explored in the works of scientists: S. Aulet, D. Vidal, [13]. M. D. Grodzinsky [3], developed the concept of sacred landscape. G. I. Denysyk [4] considered the meaning of the concept of "sacred space" and its models. K. V. Mezentsev and Y. L. Kogatko consider sacred places as sacred and connected with socio-historical events and geographical characteristics of a certain territory [8]. V. M. Volovik [2] investigates the history of the formation of the sacred landscape, its definition and classification. A. S. Kovalchuk [6] carried out an analysis of the functioning of religious buildings in Ukraine as objects of religious and pilgrimage tourism, reflecting the history and culture of a certain region. O. V. Braslavskoi [1] investigated the tourist and recreational potential of sacred objects.

Therefore, a comprehensive study of the territorial organization of the religious sphere of Ukraine is one of the important conditions for solving many socio-economic problems of the territorial organization of Ukrainian society.

**The purpose and objectives of the research** is to identify geocultural factors in the development of sacred tourism in the Cherkasy region.

Objectives of the article: 1) to analyze the existing geocultural factors of the development of sacred tourism in the Cherkasy region; 2) characterize the main socio-geographical factors and prerequisites for the emergence of sacred objects in the Cherkasy region; 3) reveal the role and place of sacred objects in the formation of the religious and confessional sphere of the region; 4) find out the tourist attractiveness of the Cherkasy region in view of the presence of sacred objects.

**Research methods and materials.** Cartographic materials, statistical data and stock sources were used during the research. The basis of the methodological approach is the systematic method, according to which the totality of sacred objects of the Cherkasy region forms a specific spatio-temporal system that functions according to the laws of interconnected development. General scientific methods are also used: analysis, synthesis, comparison, generalization. When carrying out the research, special and interdisciplinary methods were used: historical and political, graphic and other methods.

**Presentation of the main material with justification of the obtained scientific results.** In the conditions of independent Ukraine, there is an active development of a large number of religious currents, which represent a spiritual phenomenon of society, a belief in the existence of a certain natural or supernatural being, which rules the fate of each person and the entire society. During the last two decades, religious organizations not only restored their pre-Soviet positions, but also established themselves as a significant factor in the socio-political situation in the country, and significantly diversified the religious sphere of our state. Religiosity of the population determines the level of spiritual and cultural development of the nation, has a significant impact on social activity and is one of the factors (in some cases – decisive) in the development process of the entire society [12].

In the process of complex socio-historical development, under the influence of internal and external factors, many regions of Ukraine formed their own ethno-cultural features, mental distinctions, and religious preferences. One of the ways of familiarizing Ukrainian society and foreign tourists with the cultural and historical heritage, spiritual heritage of Ukraine and its regions is sacred and religious tourism, which allows popularizing knowledge about religious buildings and monuments, religious shrines of various cults, sacred places, and at the same time introduce tourists to Ukrainian traditions, customs, rituals, features of architecture, temple construction [7].

To study the tourist attractiveness of the territory, the classification of types of tourism is important, since a certain type of tourism can be attributed to one or another group, which is especially convenient when developing the tourist sphere of the territory or region, highlighting its main features and targeting a certain consumer of the tourist product. The revival of religious life in Ukraine during the years of independence also led to increased interest in domestic sacred and religious tourism. Sacred and religious tourism combines spiritual, aesthetic, cognitive, informational and recreational components, performs a social function, which gives it a special meaning [9].

One of the forms of the tourism industry is tourist-excursion activity, which includes the organization and conduct of tourist routes and excursions. The organization of religious tourist routes of individual regions of Ukraine is based on studies of modern religious studies, geography of culture and religions, sacred geography, ethnography and ethnogeography, retrospective methodology, using the heritage of the history of Ukraine and the culture of the native region, philosophy, psychology, sociology, which take into account and explain specific historical, social, ethnic and cultural phenomena [1].

The humanistic role, the cultural, informative and educational function of excursion activities related to the peculiarities of religious life is gaining significant importance in our time [10].

Historically, Cherkasy Region cannot compete with Lviv, Ternopil, Khmelnytskyi, Kyiv, or Ivano-Frankivsk regions in terms of sacred tourism potential, and moreover, for a long time in the central part of Ukraine, atheistic ideology prevailed, which could not but affect religious preferences population and their church affiliation. And the number of religious organizations in the Cherkasy region is insignificant compared to other regions of Ukraine, the provision of them to the population of the region is also low, which amounts to about 2.5 religions organizations per 10 thousand population. But despite the above, there are enough religious buildings in the territory of the region, which are

real works of architectural art and deserve the special attention of tourists. Therefore, sacred tourism can become an additional way to attract investments into the economy of the region, to increase cultural and religious interest in the spiritual heritage of Cherkasy region [11].

On the territory of the Cherkasy region there is a significant number of cult objects that have significant cultural and spiritual value. In particular, the following religious and cult objects are located only on the territory of Cherkasy: St. Michael's Cathedral, St. Trinity Cathedral, Church of the St. Varvara, St. Anatolyivska Church, Strytenska Church, Chapel of St. Cyril and Methodius, Chapel of Sergius of Radonezh and all saints of the Ukrainian, St. Michail Cathedral, Church of the Nativity of the Most saints Theotokos, Church of the Nativity of Christ, Church St. apostle Andrey, Church of St. Apostle Luka, Church of the icon of the Mother of God "Vsecaritsa", Church of the icon of the Mother of God "Unburnt Kupina", Church of St. John the Warrior, St. Transfiguration Church, Church of the Intercession of the Most Holy Theotokos, Church of the Intercession of the Most saints Theotokos. The most famous Orthodox sacred objects of the region are: Cyril and Methodius Church (Uman), Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Marii (Uman), Intercession Church (Uman), St. Nicholas Cathedral (Uman), St. Michail Church (Uman), St. Church of the Assumption (Uman), Trinity Church (Uman), Church of All Saints (Uman), Church of the Nativity of St. Ivan the Baptist (Smila), Illinsk Church (Subotiv), Church of the St. Intercession (Horodetske), Church of the St. Righteous Peter the Great Sufferer (Holodny Yar), Church of Paraskeva Pyatnytsia (Zarubyntsi), Church of the St. Archangel Michail (Mykhailivka), Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Marii (Medvedivka), Church of Peter and Pavel (Chygyrin), Kaniv Assumption Cathedral of St. George (Kaniv), Pokrovsky Krasnohirsky women's monastery (Zolotnosha), St. Dormition Cathedral (Zolotonosha), St. Michail's Church (Horodishche), Peter and Pavel Church (Talne), Pokrovska Church (Tarasha), Transfiguration Church (Kornylivka), St. Trinity Church (Helmyaz), Spaso– Transfiguration Church (Moshny), Trinity Church (Drabivtsi), The Church of the Nativity of the Virgin Marii (Verbivka), the Church of the St. Archangel Michail (Mykhailivka), the Church of St. Oleksii (Bogoduhivka), the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Maii (Zhabotyn), the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Marii (Medvedivka), the Church of St. Peter the many-suffering (Buda) and others.

In Cherkasy region, there are many historical and cultural objects that reflect various stages of development of the history and culture of the region, the life and activities of famous people, have artistic and scientific value: Shevchenko National museum (Kaniv), National Historical and Cultural museum "Batkivshchyna Taras Shevchenko" (Moryntsi), Trakhtemyriv State historical and cultural museum (Monastyrok), Chygyrin national historical and cultural museum (Chygyrin), Kamianka State historical and cultural museum (Kamianka), Korsun-Shevchenkiv State historical and cultural museum (Korsun-Shevchenkiv), Historical and architectural museum "Old Uman", Vasilian monastery (Uman) and others.

Also, a large number of other religious buildings function on the territory of Cherkassy: Catholics, churches, kirkhs, prayer houses, chapels, campaniles, laurels, synagogues, kenas, mosques, minarets, dastans, stupas, bell towers and others.

This is far from the entire list of objects that should be used for the planning and development of sacred tourism in the Cherkasy region. It is worth emphasizing that the largest centre of foreign religious pilgrimage in the Cherkasy region and throughout Ukraine is the city of Uman, where the Jewish New Year Rosh Hashanah is celebrated every year. The historical roots of Hasidism come from Ukraine, it traces local Ukrainian influences on their religion. The history of the Hasidic pilgrimage begins in 1810, after the death of the leader-preacher Rabbi Nachman, who is buried in Uman. He bequeathed that the pilgrimage should be made here. For Jews who gravitate towards mystical meanings, such places are special. About 30,000 to 50,000 pilgrims from all over the world come to Uman every year [2].

Cherkasy region is traditionally considered the cultural and historical center of Ukraine, there are many opportunities for the development of many types of tourism, and the rich historical past and multi-confessional population contribute to this. Unfortunately, a significant number of unique

objects were lost and have not survived to this day. In particular, only in Cherkasy there are about forty outstanding buildings architects, were not preserved and remained only in photographs and archival documents. Analysis of literary sources shows that as of 1917, the religious sphere of Cherkasy had a rather extensive character, represented by a significant number of churches and monasteries and an active religious life. The church took an active part in the social life of the population of the region, carried out missionary, educational, and charitable activities, and was an integral part of Ukrainian society [4].

But even today, the religious needs and preferences of the Cherkasy population are quite broad, and therefore the sacred tourism of the region includes the following main directions: international, interregional, and local tourism. International tourism in the region is realized mainly outside of Ukraine in the form of educational and pilgrimage tours to Jerusalem, Mecca, Medina, to monasteries and other sacred shrines.

Certain religious communities, for example, the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Orthodox Jewish Church, and others invite foreign pastors who come to the territory of Ukraine for missionary purposes and to visit local religious buildings of their faith [9]. Interregional sacred tourism is carried out to spiritual shrines located within the borders of Ukraine. Cherkasy region with its glorious monasteries is of particular value [6].

There are frequent religious tours from the Cherkasy region to the Christian churches of the Lviv region, including the Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in Drohobych, and others; to the Mgar Monastery in Poltava; to the shrines of Chernihiv, etc. Domestic regional tourism is expressed in excursions to the sacred objects of Cherkasy, as well as pilgrimages to spiritual centers of the region. Modern architectural sights are very interesting and attractive for tourists in the Shevchenko district, in particular, the Holy Trinity Church and the Holy Kazan Church. These temples were built in the late 90s of the 20th century and are examples of modern temple architecture [3].

Considering the religious and touristic potential of Cherkasy region, it should be noted that churches and monasteries have long been shrines, centres of spirituality and talismans of the Ukrainian people. Therefore, they arose simultaneously with the settlements of Ukrainians in this territory. When creating temples, people found the best ones for them places on elevations, giving great importance to their architecture and interior. The first churches were built of wood, and church items, icons, books, bells, which immigrants often brought with them. Together with the traditional national traditions, this left an imprint on the formation of the religious church culture. Unfortunately, the first wooden temples have not survived to our time, only schematic images and brief descriptions of some of them remain [8].

It is worth noting that the appearance and features of the architectural style of the churches of the Cherkasy region until the second half of the 18-th century were determined by the traditions of original folk creativity, and then the Baroque style left its mark and classicism. From the second half of the 18th century, classicism began to prevail in temple construction, which was replaced by a mixture of styles, among which the Russian-Byzantine style became the most widespread. The characteristic features of this style were the use of a cross-domed structure with a five-headed finish. At the end of the 19-th and the beginning of the 20th century, there was a departure from the Russian-Byzantine style and the predominance of the "neo-Russian-Byzantine style" and the Art Nouveau style [5]. Of course, the architectural styles of temple construction were also influenced by the migration processes that took place at that time. Immigrants of other nationalities and religions tried to bring elements of their culture, built their own temples. The specified historical events brought diversity both to the religious life of the population and to the architectural ensemble and appearance of settlements in Cherkasy region. The largest number of religious buildings was located in the historical centre of the city. Thus, in the middle of the 19-th century, there were about 30 churches in Cherkassy, and in the 20s of the 20-th century there were about 60 of them, not counting house churches, bell towers and prayer houses. During the years of Soviet power, the religious sphere of Cherkasy and the region suffered significant destruction and looting, loss of spiritual and religious values, historical and architectural monuments.

The objects of sacred tourism in Cherkasy include a significant number of Orthodox churches and monasteries, miraculous icons and sacred places, as well as religious buildings of other denominations. Objects of sacred tourism can be religious buildings with an ancient and unique history, or completely new modern buildings. All this testifies to the multifacetedness, uniqueness and ancient roots of religious life on the one hand, and on the other – to the expansion of the influence of the religious sphere and the religious needs of the population.

**Conclusions.** Summing up, it should be noted that Cherkasy region has favourable socio-geographic conditions, a strong historical, cultural and religious potential for the development of sacred tourism, one of the forms of which is the organization of tourist and excursion activities in this direction, which today is extremely necessary to adapt to the spiritual content of social life. When organizing religious (sacred) tours, it is necessary to take into account the peculiarities of the national population of the region, the multi-confessional nature of the religious sphere, in order to ensure, in turn, a tolerant attitude towards different religious denominations, freedom of religion, and the establishment of democratic principles civil society, taking into account national traditions. In our opinion, sacred tourism in the Cherkasy region should be organized also within the framework of pilgrimage tours and excursions on religious topics.

Among the main restraining factors of the development of pilgrimage movements, it is worth highlighting low awareness of the population, low interest in society in visiting religious objects. Excursions on religious topics require the development of interesting sacred tourism routes and the availability of professionally trained tour guides. The development of routes requires comprehensive research into the historical ethno-cultural past of Cherkasy region. The specified routes must include objects that have national spiritual and cultural value and are unique in their sacred architecture.

**The scientific novelty.** In this study, for the first time, the relevance of the use of historical and cultural heritage as a resource basis of sacred tourism is highlighted. The theoretical and methodological foundations of a new alternative type of tourism – sacred tourism, its potential opportunities and the territorial aspect of development have been identified and systematized.

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