

## **Abstract.**

**Thesis:** "Religious and Cult objects of the North Caucasus as regional tourist resources"

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**Relevance of the research topic:** by popularization of educational & cognitive forms of tourism, with the purpose of introducing & familiarizing people with the material and spiritual values, as well as the need for measures to promote religious and cult objects of the North Caucasus as tourist products. This will contribute to the increasing number of tourist visiting as well as spiritual education and moral/ethical improvement.

**Aim:** to investigate touristic resources which will be the base for the organization of pilgrimage tourism in the North - West Caucasus; to design a pilgrimage tour and to work out all the necessary documentations for its certification.

### **Tasks:**

1. To investigate the history of pilgrimage and origin of pilgrimage tourism.
2. To look at the main types of pilgrimage tourism and the particular qualities of its organization.
3. To give characteristics of holy places and to determine the specificity of pilgrimage tours in Russia.
4. To analyze the stages of the spreading/progression of Christianity in the North-West Caucasus.
5. To become familiar with the spiritual centre of Christianity in the North Caucasus: The Second Athos Monastery of the Dormition on Mountain Beshtau.
6. To monitor religious objects of the North Caucasus and to investigate their main characteristics.
7. To work out the project of the active part of the route.

8. To compose the technological documentation of the pilgrimage tour for its certification.

9. To calculate the cost / price of the tour.

**Practical relevance:** the fact that the developed tour and research findings and suggestions can be used for practical purposes by tourist companies and by anyone who has an interest in pilgrimage tourism, is the main application of the thesis.

**Research results:**

1. Taking into account the social, spiritual and moral aspects of religious tourism, the support for tourists, tour operators and travel agents who deal with pilgrimage tourism has to be provided on the state level. Moreover, the government has to work on the creation of regulatory and legal framework, infrastructure and advertising of Russian Christian shrines

2. It is necessary to work on the participation of Russian tourists, tour operators, travel agents and their associations in the international tourist programs related to pilgrimage tourism.

3. The analysis of pilgrimage tourism resources show that nowadays there are still many priceless Christian shrines which attract pilgrims and believers. The restoration of the routes relevant to these sites is a prerequisite to a boost in tourism in the area.

4. The Caucasus is a special land. It gave Russia a lot, because it is here that one of the oldest cradles of Christianity lies, and there are still many religious monuments and places of worship. Some of them have ancient roots, others have been recreated on the site of the lost, but all of these Christian shrines play an important role in both preserving and augmenting the spiritual culture of our people.