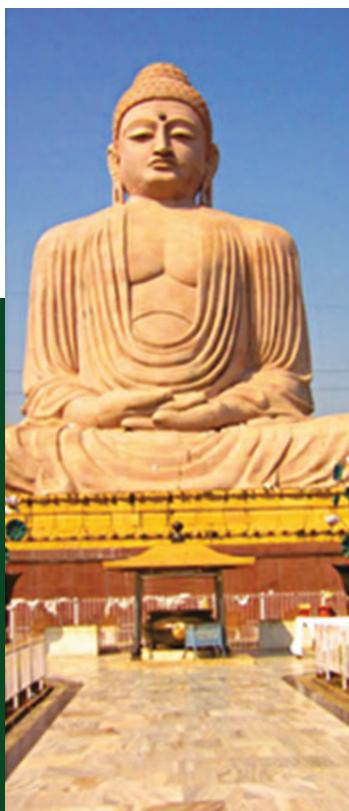
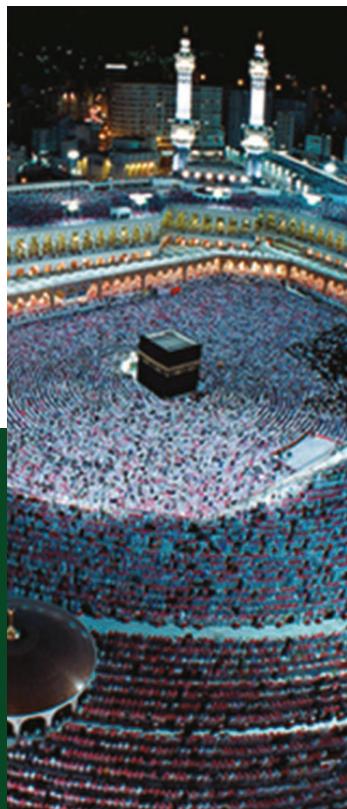


Anatolian Landscape and Faith Tourism: Ancient Times to Present

Conference Proceedings

August 25-28, 2022



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Faith Tourism Potential of Cappadocia Region

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Abstract

All the varying beliefs of the new world aside, Anatolia is the apple of humankind's eye due to it witnessed numerous civilizations and their religions. Anatolia has a great importance in the spread and transmission of cultural heritage in context of both faith and its physical infrastructures. Cappadocia located in the central part of Anatolia, is full of landscape with fairy-chimneys, unusual underground settlements, rock churches decorated by fascinating frescoes. After all Cappadocia is a world-renowned destination with Hacı Bektaş Veli, one of the greatest representatives of the spirit of humanism in Anatolia, and countless tangible/intangible cultural heritage. Tourists used to visit Cappadocia to see the rock churches which was built in the Early Christian period and to experience the rich cultural heritage. It seems that these ones have left their place to different profiles looking for activities such as taking pictures with balloons and concept suits or ATV rides. This study aims to understand the potential of faith tourism as an alternative to unsustainable tourism activities in Cappadocia. In this research we present an inventory of places that can be visited for faith tourism in the region. Main sources for determining the visiting centers are current literature, newspapers, magazines, internet archives and the cultural inventory created by the Tourism Ministry. Moreover, we discussed the potential of religious tourism in the region based on the findings acquired by 9 interviews. The main findings are region has a great potential in terms of religious tourism, it seems local people and administrators used to give value heritage properties more in the past, however they have different attitudes today for various reasons. Christian heritage is more prominent than Islamic, but we claim Islamic ones' potential will be improved if promoted and stakeholders step forward on this issue. Even Hacı Bektaş Veli alone has a great potential for religious tourism. Further research may investigate whether Cappadocia can turn into a pilgrimage center due to its rich Christian cultural heritage.

Keywords: religious tourism, Cappadocia region, Christianity, Islam, Hacı Bektaş Veli, cultural heritage