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THE LEGAL REGULATION ASPECTS OF PILGRIMAGE AND RELIGIOUS TOURISM AT THE CONTEMPORARY STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

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ABSTRACT: The article deals with the legal regulation issues of relations in tourist activity, especially such varieties as religious tourism and pilgrimage. The article substantiates the conceptual difference of these concepts, from which the need for differences in the approaches and principles of providing the corresponding tourist services.

KEYWORDS: *tourism, religious tourism, pilgrimage, tourist activity*

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, you can often hear such phrases as "pilgrim tourism", "pilgrim tour", and "pilgrim excursion" and so on. All of them stem from a pilgrimage essence misunderstanding, from its rapprochement with tourism by purely external resemblance. Both pilgrimage and tourism are related to the travel theme. However, despite the similarities, they are in a different nature. Even when visiting the same holy places, pilgrims and tourists do it differently.

Tourism is a journey for educational purposes. And one of the most popular tourism types is religious tourism. The main thing in this type of tourism is acquaintance with the holy places history, the saints' life, architecture, church art. All this is told on excursions, which are the most important element of the trip for the tourist.

Tourism is much younger than pilgrimage, the history of which goes back more than one millennium. Tourism is a set of people relationships and phenomena that arise during the movement and people stay in places other than their permanent residence and work places. Philosophical understanding of tourism refers to this type emergence era of human activity. According to many researchers, the main type's genesis of tourism dates back to the late Renaissance. It was at this time that a certain number of educated people were gradually changing their motivations to travel. A tourist traveling for religious purposes is a person who travels outside the usual environment for a period not exceeding one year to visit holy places and centers of religions. Religious tourism should be understood as activities related to the services provision and the needs satisfaction of tourists traveling to holy places and religious centers outside their usual environment. Like pilgrimage, religious tourism is currently experiencing a rapid development period. It is an integral part of the modern tourism industry.

An excursion can also be part of a pilgrimage - but not the main one and not at all obligatory, but only auxiliary. The main thing in pilgrimage is prayer, worship and religious worship of shrines. In the process of making a pilgrimage, the main thing during prayer is not the external performance of the rituals, but the mood that reigns in the heart, spiritual renewal.

Visiting holy places has long been one of the most important and revered society traditions. After all, a person is always in search of truth, he tries to understand various phenomena, to combine them together, like a mosaic, in order to get a complete picture of life. The interest in the divine, unearthly - to know, see, take communion - is very great, because not everyone can find a final solution for themselves, not everyone is able to answer those who doubt. But in every normal person there is an ineradicable need to find truth, meaning and a rational explanation for everything. The growing need for religious tourism makes it an important factor in ensuring social stability and interfaith dialogue. Pilgrimage is a journey to famous places of worship for the purpose of worship and participation in religious ceremonies. Pilgrimage is the oldest form of cult activity. As a rule, the pilgrimage is aimed at participating in religious rituals performed in the most famous religious shrines (temples).

In the pilgrimage process, worship is performed to places associated with the life of the largest religious figures. Pilgrimage is common among followers of all known and modern religions. The pilgrimage organization is occupied by religious organizations and travel companies, among which there are those that are specifically engaged in precisely pilgrim tourism.

The pilgrimage purpose is to fulfill the religious duty of believers, to receive special grace for providing those difficulties that hinder the pilgrimage, as well as to participate in cult activities that have the most blessed, consecrated character.

The meaning of pilgrimage is determined by the religious consciousness nature. The believer sees God as some otherworldly beginning, which is in a completely different reality than the believer. But it can be a worship object only if it is given to the believer, in the life conditions familiar to him. This otherworldly combination and this-worldly and appears as a consecrated place, a place endowed with grace, the greatest stay place of the deity. It becomes the worship object of believers.

The pilgrim wants to touch those places that were, as it were, consecrated by his religion founder and his closest followers, in order to be filled with grace and take communion of holiness. He participates in religious rites and ceremonies, receives instruction from the priests and monks who are in this holy place. Sometimes a pilgrimage is made in order to gain confidence in the important decision correctness, in order to receive healing (physical and mental), in order to overcome a spiritual crisis or to thank the deity for the recovery that has occurred.

Pilgrimage tourism in Uzbekistan has a significant development potential thanks to its ancient Muslim holy cities of Bukhara and Samarkand. As well as there are many holy places for the followers of Islam here. Uzbekistan has always been the intersection center of many cultures and civilizations, different religions were

preached here and therefore unique monuments related to both Islamic, Buddhist and Christian religions have been preserved.

Nowadays Uzbekistan is intensively opening up to the world and its famous religious sites can become the basis of the tourism boom in the country. On the territory of Uzbekistan, there are many holy places related to Islamic culture and its current Sufism, as well as other religions. The most valuable monuments are recognized as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Among them is the city of Bukhara, called Bukhara Sharif in the Islamic world, which means Blessed Bukhara. Samarkand city which has a huge number of priceless monuments. Shakhrisabz city is the birthplace of Amir Timur. Of course, these cities have an ancient and rich history; have undergone significant changes throughout their lives. Also such famous scientists of the Muslim world as Imam al-Bukhari, Imam at-Termizi, Imam al-Maturidi, Bakhaiddin Naqshbandi, al-Zamakhshari and others lived and worked in Uzbekistan. Their mausoleums will play an important role in the tourism development in the country. In addition, Uzbekistan is located in the center of Central Asia. The country has a rich cultural and historical heritage. Today, the authorities are making certain efforts to open the country to the world, paying special attention to the tourism sector.

According to Crescent Rating forecasts, by 2026 the number of pilgrim tourists will reach 230 million. Considering the centuries-old Islamic heritage of Uzbekistan, the development of pilgrim tourism has great prospects for the country. However, Uzbekistan is not yet a benchmark in this area. In a survey conducted by the Center for Business and Tourism Development among those who visited Uzbekistan in 2017, only 2.2% answered that they would like to visit the country as a pilgrim tourist. At the same time, according to the "Crescent Rating" on the World Muslim Tourism Index for 2017, Uzbekistan ranked 29th, while Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were in higher places.

Since 2017, tourism has become a strategic sector of the national economy. The President signed a decree aimed at the active development of this industry. The main directions here are khalal certification introduction, training of khalal tourism guides and the construction of khalal hotels. Uzbekistan is actively developing bilateral relations with other states in the field of pilgrim tourism. For example, agreements on the special pilgrimage tours organization in Uzbekistan were concluded with Pakistan and Turkey.

In 2018, a draft Action Plan for the voluntary certification system development and implementation for products and services, including "khalal", "kosher" and "vegan", was submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan for approval. This project requires joint efforts of the State Committee for Tourism, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Construction, as well as the Committee for Religious Affairs.

Today, most of the tourists visiting Uzbekistan come from the CIS countries. While close interaction of Uzbekistan with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in this area will contribute to: a) an increase in the flow of tourists from Muslim countries; b) expansion of mutually beneficial trade and investment relations within the OIC. Support for specialized tours of important Islamic shrines in Uzbekistan could increase the overall flow of tourists. The country has unique holy places, especially for Khanafi Muslims, including Sufis.

The long absence of a unified tourism policy and strategy in the country is considered an urgent problem hampering this sector development. The government of the country is taking significant measures to improve Uzbekistan attractiveness in the religious (ziyosat) tourism direction. By the President Decree of the Republic of Uzbekistan PD №-5611 on 5 January 2019, a Pilgrim visa was introduced, which issued for a period up to 2 months to foreign citizens who come to make pilgrimages and study the cultural, historical, religious and spiritual heritage and traditions of Uzbekistan. And also under President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, more than 50 bylaws and laws were adopted in relation to tourism, and additional work is currently underway.

Possessing a rich cultural, historical and religious heritage, Uzbekistan is high time to take its place among the peoples of the world. The government understands the tourism importance to economic growth and national

prestige, and is moving decisively forward with a focus on the Islamic world and promoting pilgrimage tourism. The Great Silk Road is attractive for both religious and secular tourism.

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