

Istanbul In Russian Hojdenies Within The Scope Of Religious Tourism¹

İnanç Turizmi Kapsamında Rusça Hacnamelerde İstanbul

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Abstract

Istanbul was an important stop for Russian pilgrims from the eleventh century to the fourteenth century. In this study, the aim is to contribute to the enrichment of the narratives of tour guides serving for faith tourism by investigating certain elements such as holy places, holy relics, the architectural features of holy places and legends written about them, and the social, cultural and political structures of the period in the pilgrimages (hojdenie) written by Russian Orthodox pilgrims visiting Istanbul. For this purpose, four pilgrimages written in Russian between 1200-1389 were selected as the main data source. In this qualitative study, inductive thematic analysis was applied to the data and nine main categories were identified under three themes: 'religious elements', 'historical elements' and 'artistic elements'. As a result of the research, it was understood that Russians had adopted Istanbul as one of the most important pilgrimage centres after Jerusalem since the tenth century, when they accepted Christianity as the official religion, and made pilgrimages to Istanbul for many centuries. It is thought that the information obtained from the hojdenies will add diversity and richness to the narratives of tour guides in tours for tourists visiting Istanbul for religious tourism.

Keywords: Russian Pilgrimage, Travelogue, Pilgrimage, Tour Guide, Istanbul.

JEL Codes: L83

Özet

İstanbul, XI. yüzyıldan XIV. yüzyıla kadar Rus hacılar için önemli bir durak olmuştur. Bu çalışmada, İstanbul'a gelen Rus Ortodoks hacılar tarafından yazılan hacnamelerde yer alan kutsal mekânlar, kutsal emanetler, kutsal mekânların mimari özellikleri ve haklarında yazılan efsaneler, dönemin sosyal, kültürel ve siyasi yapısı gibi unsurlar araştırılarak inanç turizmine hizmet eden turist rehberlerinin anlatılarının zenginleştirilmesine katkı sağlanması amaçlanmıştır. Bu amaçla 1200-1389 yılları arasında Rusça yazılmış dört hacname, temel veri kaynağı olarak seçilmiştir. Nitel yöntemin benimsendiği bu çalışmada verilere tümevarımsal tematik analiz uygulanmış, 'Dini unsurlar', 'Tarihi unsurlar' ve 'Sanatsal unsurlar' olmak üzere üç tema altında dokuz ana kategori belirlenmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda Rusların, Hristiyanlığı resmi din olarak kabul ettikleri 10. yüzyıldan itibaren İstanbul'u Kudüs'ten sonra en önemli hac merkezlerinden biri olarak benimsedikleri ve uzun yüzyıllar boyunca İstanbul'a hac ziyaretleri gerçekleştirdikleri anlaşılmıştır. Hacnamelerden elde edilen bilgilerin, inanç turizmi için İstanbul'a gelen turistlere yönelik turlarda turist rehberlerinin anlatımlarına çeşitlilik ve zenginlik katacağı düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Rusça Hacnameler, Seyahatname, Hac Seyahati, Turist Rehberi, İstanbul.

JEL Kodları: L83

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Introduction

The history of travelling goes back thousands of years. According to Löschburg (1998), this history extends from the expeditions of nomadic communities of hunters and gatherers to the tourist organizations in Ancient Rome, from pilgrimages and pilgrim caravans in the Middle Ages, to travelling scholastic students, jugglers and craftsmen, to educational trips during the Enlightenment and Renaissance. The history of travelogues, which consist of the notes kept by people who set out on these journeys with different motives, is also quite old. According to Blanton (1997), Herodotus, Strabo and Pausanias gave the first examples of these travelogues. These travel notes recorded by travellers have undergone changes over time, both in terms of their quality and the purposes for which they were written. Despite these changes, the impact of the narratives on readers has not diminished. From Marco Polo to Bruce Chatwin, stories written by travellers regarding distant places and exotic cultures are still popular among readers. This is undoubtedly due to the curiosity of human beings, although there are other factors as well (Blanton, 1997).

In travelogues, the traveller tries to explain the differences that attract his own attention and that he hopes will attract the attention of the reader while discussing the life, customs and traditions of the society in the place he visited from different aspects (Yılmaz, 2013; Kaya, 2021). Travelogues are also described as the transmitters of scientific and cultural developments because they play an important role as a means of communication since there were not yet such communication opportunities in the past (Maden, 2008). Yirmisekiz Çelebi Mehmet Efendi's 'Expedition to France' introduced the progress of the West in science and technology to the Ottoman society, while Marco Polo's travelogue describing the Far East encouraged Westerners to organize crusades and geographical discoveries.

From the earliest examples to the present day, many travelogues have been written in Western and Eastern civilisations. When these works are analysed, it can be seen that the purpose of travellers' journeys differ. As a result of this situation, the travel notes kept by the authors also have different qualities. In general, it can be seen that travelling for diplomatic missions, pilgrimages, missionary activities, commercial trips, military expeditions and scientific reasons are effective in the writing of travelogues (Yılmaz, 2013).

The first examples of the tradition of writing travelogues in the West are associated with pilgrimage travelogues written during the pilgrimage as part of the Christian faith (Yıldız, 2023). When the historical process of Russian travelogues within the scope of the subject of this study is examined, it can be seen

that the works of the *hojdenies* genre, which describe the pilgrimage journeys of Russian pilgrims, are the first examples of travelogues in Russian literature.

Russians' interest in Istanbul and its holy places dates back to the times before they accepted Christianity. Commercial relations with Byzantium constitute the source of this interest. However, this interest was reinforced when the Russians officially accepted Christianity in the tenth century. In other words, the Russians became attached to Constantinople with a spiritual bond. From this date onwards, the first pilgrimages called '*hojdenie*' began. In this context, Istanbul, one of the most important centres of the Orthodox faith, has become the most important travel route for Russians together with Jerusalem and the Middle East, which are accepted as the first holy places of Christianity (Yıldız, 2023).

Tour guides, one of the key actors of the tourism sector, contribute to a change in the opinions that tourists already had about the destination in question by providing them with information about the place in the destinations they visit, while increasing the quality of tourists' tour experiences with their narratives (Yetgin, 2017). Tour guides assume many roles during a tour. When the tour guide conveys elements such as the history, culture, economy, social structure, and geographical features of the place travelled to based on the first source, it enriches his/her narrative. In this context, travelogues add diversity and richness to the narratives, thereby increasing the satisfaction levels of tourists. In this respect, travelogues should be examined more closely as auxiliary sources.

Turkey was the most popular destination for Russian tourists in 2023 (The Republic of Türkiye Directorate of Communications, 2024). The number of Russian tourists visiting Turkey for tourism purposes tends to increase continuously, except for periods of global crisis and crises between the two countries. As can be seen in Table 1, there has been an increase in the number of Russian tourists visiting Turkey in the last three-years period since 2022. (Table 1). In the first five months of 2024, the Russian Federation ranked second after Germany in the ranking of foreign visitors to Turkey with 1,817,311 people (www.tursab.org). However, this tourism mobility from Russia to Turkey remains within the 'sea-sand-sun' triangle within the scope of classical tourism understanding. Russian tourists come to Turkey with motivations such as the presence of 'sea-sand-sun', affordable tour package prices and the quality of the service received in return for these prices, transportation facilities, ease of obtaining visas, facilities that appeal to families with children, the command of the Russian language by tourism personnel, cuisine, and cultural and historical values (Yaşar & Yaşar, 2017).

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Table 1. Number of Tourist Arrivals to Turkey by Year

Years	Number of Russian Tourists Arriving in Turkey	Total Number of Foreign Tourists Arriving in Turkey
2022	5,232,611	44,564,395
2023	6,313,675	49,209,180
2024 (6 Months)	2,688,924	21,644,659

Source. Association of Turkish Travel Agencies (www.tursab.org)

Apart from the sustainability debates regarding mass tourism, diversification of tourism activities in Turkey is of great importance for the Russian market. In this context, cultural tourism emerges as an alternative to the 'sea, sand and sun' trio. Looking at the number of foreign tourists visiting Istanbul, which is an important destination in terms of cultural tourism, it can be seen that Russian tourists have the highest rate (10.48%) with 171,633 people according to the latest data (June 2024) (www.tursab.org). In line with these data, it can be seen that Russian tourists visiting Turkey in general and Istanbul in particular have an important potential to participate in religious tourism as an alternative to the 'sea-sand-sun' trio. This is because Istanbul is the belief centre where Russians accepted Orthodox Christianity in the tenth century. Hojdenies, in which pilgrimage journeys are described in detail in the period until the conquest of Istanbul, have been handled by disciplines such as history, literature, art history and architecture, but have not been evaluated in the field of tourism. This research is one of the pioneering studies evaluating the depiction of Istanbul in the pilgrimages written by the first Orthodox Russians in the field of tourism. From this point of view, the aim of the research is to analyse the elements such as holy places, holy relics, architectural features of holy places and legends written about them, the social, cultural and political structure of the period in the pilgrimages written by Russian Orthodox pilgrims coming to Istanbul, and to enrich the narrative of tour guides serving for religious tourism.

Literature Review

Faith Tourism

Throughout human existence, belief and related practices have continued uninterrupted since pre-historic times. Among these practices, visits to places and to places considered sacred by different religions and belief systems have an important place. Therefore, faith and/or religion has been one of the main motivations for travelling since the beginning of human existence. These faith-motivated visits,

which found their basis in the pilgrimage phenomenon of early periods, have led to one of the oldest types of travel, religious tourism. In general, religious tourism is within the scope of tourist activities to the centres where religions are born and the events mentioned in the holy books of those religions had taken place. In this context, according to Güzel (2012), faith tourism is the evaluation of the travels and stays they make in order to fulfil their religious duties and relax spiritually by going to the attraction centres of the religions they have been involved in since early times within the concept of tourism. Usta (2005), in his master's degree study on faith tourism, defined faith tourism as the following:

"The whole of economic and social events and relations arising from temporary travelling outside the permanent living areas of people, which is not based on the purpose of commercial gain, and whose starting point consists of staying at least one night in sacred places that they consider religiously important in order to fulfil or visit religious obligations in accordance with their beliefs."

As mentioned above, the starting point of religious tourism is the visits of people to fulfil a religious duty, such as a pilgrimage for spiritual purposes. However, faith tourism has become an alternative phenomenon with new forms and understandings over time (Tarcan & Atılgan, 1999). In fact, religious structures, rituals, festivals and ceremonial events are important tourist attraction elements that attract a religious believer as well as an ordinary enthusiast to travel (Henderson, 2003). Throughout history, an important cultural heritage has been created by the members of any faith by building temples, shrines, mausoleums and statues. These structures are still used for religious purposes and are also extremely interesting due to their historical, architectural and artistic values. In this respect, tourists' interest in these structures and their visits to them are important connection points between tourism and faith (Okuyucu & Somuncu, 2013). From this point of view, the reasons that lead people to faith tourism are grouped under two main headings; travelling with the desire to fulfil religious duties, and cultural trips made as a result of curiosity and interest in religious or sacred places (Yılmaz, Erdinç & Küçükali, 2013).

Regardless of the motivation, according to the World Tourism Organisation (UNTWO, 2016), faith tourism, which has a significant potential that increases every year, has the capacity to develop tolerance and understanding between different beliefs and cultures as well as the economic welfare and added value it provides to countries. According to the World Tourism Organisation, it is estimated that between 300 to 330 million people travel annually in the world within the scope of religious tourism, which has become a constantly growing and developing market, and that it causes an economic impact of

approximately eighteen million dollars (WTO 2014 as cited in Güzel, Köksal, & Şahin, 2019).

Making tourism sustainable with tourist product diversification is of great importance today (Yüksek, Dinçer, & Dinçer, 2019). In this context, faith tourism, which is among the alternative tourism types that have developed as an alternative to mass tourism, has increased the interest in faith tourism for countries, especially for reasons such as its spread ability throughout the year and the fact that tourists participating in faith tourism are not limited in their expenditure (Usta, 2005).

The fact that the geography in which Turkey is located has hosted important civilisations and their religions, starting from prehistoric times, places it in a special position in this market. In Anatolia in particular, many holy places, pilgrimage centres, objects related to prophets or saints and the structures in which they are located are important attraction factors in the context of faith tourism. Turkey has the potential to gain more of a share from the religious tourism market by utilising this existing potential effectively.

Travelogues and Hojdenies

Travelogues are books in which a traveller brings together his notes, travel memories and impressions written during his travels. The word 'travelogue' is a combination of the Arabic word *seyâhat* meaning 'travelling or trip' and the Persian word *nâme* meaning 'treatise or letter'. Therefore, *seyâhat-nâme* means 'travel letter, travel work' (Yazıcı, 2009). According to the TLA, travelogues are defined as 'a work in which an author describes the information and impressions gained from the places he has travelled to and seen' (Turkish Language Association-TLA, 2024). Travelogues are texts in which a traveller or observer conveys his impressions of a certain geographical area and a certain historical period (Kaya, 2021). Texts with literary and historical features that meet the need of people to see and get to know new places since the early ages are called travelogues (Maden, 2008).

When the thesis studies on travelogues are examined in the literature, it can be seen that most of the research is conducted in the fields of history, literature, art history, sociology and linguistics. However, in recent years, travelogues have started to be used as a source in the field of tourism. When tourism studies are examined as scientific articles, travelogues mostly deal with a geographical region/city through a traveller and/or a travelogue or within a certain historical period (Kutluk & Avcı Kurt, 2014; Yılmaz & Yetgin, 2018).

Erbay Aslıtürk and Dikyar (2014) propose a sightseeing route by making use of the travel notes of travellers such as İbni Batuta, Tavernier, Evliya Çelebi,

Joseph de Tournefort, Charles Texier, and Charles Fellows covering the İzmir and Aydın provinces. In a similar study, Erbay Aslıtürk and Gökçe (2014) present an alternative route for cultural tourism tourists by developing a special interest tour proposal that can be applied on the European side of the city as a result of their analysis of various travelogues written about İstanbul. In addition, Çalık, Çiftçi, and Yetgin (2020) researched on the Ottoman cultural heritage through the eyes of women travellers; Yılmaz, Yetgin, and Kozak (2018) researched on the history of hotel management in the light of travelogues, intangible cultural heritage research (Kaya, 2023) and tourist guidance (Yılmaz, 2018; Kaya & Yetgin, 2021).

There are few postgraduate theses in which travelogues are used as the main data source in the field of tourism. The first of these is Kaya's (2020) doctoral thesis entitled, 'A Cultural Route Proposal for Turkey Based on German Travelogues (1850-1912)'. In his thesis, Kaya created a cultural route based on the writings of seven German-speaking travellers. Although there are few postgraduate thesis studies based on Russian travelogues, they are concentrated in the fields of history and linguistics. Bars (2019), in his master's thesis in the field of history entitled 'Religious Places in Medieval İstanbul According to the Works of Russian Pilgrim Candidates', created a list of religious places recorded by Russian pilgrim travellers in their hojdenies and made a comparison between different travellers. Yıldız (2023) with 'Russian Orientalism: Turkey and Turks in Russian Travelogues of the Second Half of the 19th Century', examined Russian travelogues regarding Turkey in the context of orientalism. In the literature review, no postgraduate thesis on Russian travelogues in the field of tourism was found. Therefore, it is thought that this study will fill the gap in this field.

The first travelogues written in Russian appear in the form of pilgrimages (*putşestviya palomnikov*). Hajnames are travel notes kept by Russian pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem by way of İstanbul. In Russian literature, these notes were first named as pilgrimage (Hojdenie or Hojenie) and in later periods as travelogue (*Puteşestvie*). Hajnames are writings with religious content that provide information regarding the holy places visited until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. At the same time, it is a guide for those who will make a pilgrimage (Ünal, 2015).

Hajnames are recognised as the only examples of this genre in Russia from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries and were a common literary genre in medieval Russia. The earliest surviving example of Russian pilgrimages is the Pilgrimage of Priest Daniil (Hojdenie igumena Daniila), which dates back to the twelfth century. During his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Abbot Daniil attached special importance to Jerusalem and described the holy places there in detail. During his journey to and from Jerusalem,

there were many places from Anatolia on his route (<http://lib.pushkinskiydom.ru>, 2023). For example, he included Ephesus and the historical monuments there in his travelogue. However, although it is mentioned, there is no information regarding Istanbul in Daniil's travelogue. For this reason, this work is excluded from the scope of this study.

The literature review of medieval travelogues regarding Istanbul shows that Hagia Sophia is predominantly described for understandable reasons, but Russian pilgrimages, which are predominantly religious in content, offer a rich content on other holy places, relics and saints other than Hagia Sophia. In this context, the fact that the research area covers almost all the holy places of Istanbul of the period constitutes the unique value of this study. The research is important in terms of enriching the narrative of tour guides as primary sources of four Russian pilgrimages translated from Russian into Turkish by the author and contributing to the tourism literature.

In this study, four travelogues written about Istanbul in the thirteenth to the fourteenth centuries are analysed. Russian travelogues, which appeared as a major literary genre as early as the twelfth century, opened the doors of unknown worlds to the people. Inevitably, these travelogues basically reflect the medieval point of view, the moral values, political and artistic thinking of the period. Of course, over time, the content and quality of Russian travellers, and therefore of travelogues, changed. In the period of the Kievan Knezate and the Mongol-Tatar Invasion (the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries), travellers were pilgrims on their way to visit the holy lands in the Middle East and Asia Minor. After the beginning of Byzantine-Russian relations, Constantinople became one of the most popular pilgrimage destinations. As a result of these visits, the Russians acquired extremely important information regarding the country they had visited. Thanks to the pilgrimages to Constantinople, or Tsargrad as the medieval Russian writers called it, the medieval Russians reflected what they saw and experienced, and the impressions and thoughts they gained from all this in travelogues, which have an important place in ancient Russian literature as a genre. According to Prokofyev (1984), the anthology of Russian literature of the eleventh to the seventeenth century contains more than seventy examples of various travelogues. About fifty of these are of historically original origin, and more than twenty are translations and legendary-apocryphal genres. It is not possible to cover all these travelogues in this study. Moreover, except for the travelogues regarding Istanbul, they are not within the scope of this study. In the selected travelogues, religious elements are predominant and they show integrity in terms of content and quality. This situation was effective in making this selection.

Methodology

In this study, in which the qualitative method was adopted, an answer was sought to the question of how Russian pilgrims described Istanbul between 1200-1393.

Population and Sample

In this study, in which the qualitative research method was adopted, four pilgrimages (thirteenth and fourteenth centuries) related to the medieval world were used as the main data source. Information regarding Istanbul of the period was sought in these travelogues. The selection of the travelogues was influenced by the periodic distinctions made by Russian researchers in the genre of travel notes. Accordingly, the earliest examples of Russian travelogues from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries, consisting of notes kept during pilgrimages to the Holy Land, were selected. During this period, Constantinople (Istanbul), the capital of the Byzantine Empire, was one of the most popular pilgrimage destinations for Russian people. Moreover, this time period dates back to the period before Istanbul was taken by the Turks. After this date, visits decreased, although they did not stop (Kandemir, 2008). While making the selection, initially travelogues containing important information with regard to Istanbul were identified. The study was limited to four of the identified travelogues. This limitation is due to the time and volume constraints of the study as well as the difficulty in translating these works. These works, which were originally manuscripts, were later published in printed form. In addition, the fact that the researcher is proficient in the Russian language and that the Russian pilgrimages contain a wealth of information on medieval Istanbul are important factors in the choice of these pilgrimages.

Data Collection

The main data of this research are pilgrimages written in Russian. During the Middle Ages, pilgrimages to cities such as Jerusalem and Istanbul, which were considered sacred for Christians, played a leading role in the emergence of the travel genre in Russian literature. The first examples of pilgrimages were encountered in the twelfth century (Maletto, 2005), and original sources of pilgrimages written in Russian have been found. Since the period before the conquest of Mehmed the Conqueror in 1453 is analyzed, present-day Istanbul is referred to as Constantinople both in the travelogues and in this study. The authors of the travelogues are also referred to as travelers. In these types of travelogue, called Hojdenie (хождение), Russian pilgrims include detailed descriptions of many religious shrines, especially Hagia Sophia, and the objects and relics inside the-

se buildings, which are considered sacred by Orthodox Christian Russians. Although religious elements are dominant, these works also provide information in regard to the history, settlement, architecture and art history of Istanbul (Kandemir, 2008).

The pilgrimages subject to this research are as follows: The Pilgrim Book of Anton of Novgorod ('Книга Паломник' Антония Новгородца); Anonymous Tsargrad Travelogue (Анонимное хождение в Царград); Wanderer of Stephen of Novgorod (от странника Стефанова Новгородца); Tsargrad Travelogue of Ignatius of Smolensk (Хождения Игнатия Смольнянина в Царград).

The travelogues analysed in this study include travels between 1200 and 1393. The authors of the works are clergymen and merchants. The content of each work consists of pilgrimages to lands considered holy. For a better understanding of the study, information concerning the four travelogues used as data sources is given below.

The Pilgrim Book of Antony of Novgorod ('Книга Паломник' Антония Новгородца)

Born as Dobrynya Yadreykovich (Andreykovich), the traveler took the pseudonym Antony when he retired to a monastery (İnanır, 2013, p.27). In this study, the traveler will be referred to as Antony. Antony visited Constantinople between 1200-1204. Although there is insufficient biographical information in regard to the pilgrim, who was the Archbishop of Novgorod and the author of the *hojdenie*, the name and church activities of the pilgrim, who was among the first to visit the Holy Land, are found in the Novgorod annals as well as in the Moscow annals (Matsuki, 1988). There are nine copies of the work (Belobrova, 1974), dating from the late period (sixteenth to seventeenth centuries), of which no original copy exists. The translation and analysis of the Hajname is based on P. Savvaitov's compilation of 1872 (Savvaitov, 1872).

Anonymous Tsargrad Travelogue (Анонимное хождение в Царград)

It is not known for certain who the author of the travelogue (also known as the *hojdenie* of the late thirteenth and early sixteenth centuries) was, but Russian researchers believe that it was written by the Novgorod bishop Vasiliy Kaleka (Prokofyev, 1984). The author did not explicitly state the purpose of the trip, but basically it was a pilgrimage to visit churches and shrines, which are considered sacred in Christianity. In his pilgrimage, he describes the layout of the city, its main churches and the artifacts left after the sack of Constantinople by the Crusaders. He mentions that many of the remaining artifacts were damaged. He also mentions the ancient statues in detail and tells the stories of these statues. It is understood

from his narrative that he is interested in artistic work, such as carving on stone as well as sculptures. The translation of the Hajnam is based on the compilation of N.I. Prokofyev (Prokofyev, 1984).

Wanderer of Stephen of Novgorod (От странника Стефанова Новгородца)

We learn the name of the author of the travelogue from the title of the work. Nothing is known about the status of the traveler from Novgorod who, like the other travelers, was an Orthodox Christian. Although the exact date of the journey is unknown, it is understood from the narrative that he made this visit in 1348 or 1349. As in the previous writings, the narrative is centered on the numerous shrines, mausoleums, and relics in the Byzantine Empire, which was considered the center of Orthodox Christianity in the Middle Ages. The travelogue contains detailed information about Hagia Sophia, especially about its interior architecture and ornamentation. It also touches upon Russian-Byzantine relations. While Dobrynya Yadreykovic (Antony), who visited Tsargrad in the early years of the thirteenth century (before 1204), was more interested in painting and the author of the Anonymous Tsargrad Pilgrimage was more interested in sculpture, Stephen focused more on architecture and mosaics. The translation of the work is based on the compilation of N. I. Prokofyev (Prokofyev, 1984).

Tsargrad Travelogue of Ignatius of Smolensk (Хождение Игнатия Смольнянина в Царград)

During Metropolitan Pimen's third trip to Tsargrad in 1389, his delegation included Archimandrite Sergiy of the Moscow Spas Monastery, Bishop Mikhail of Smolensk, and the scribe Ignatius of Smolensk, the author of the pilgrimage. Ignatius wrote detailed notes on this trip on the instructions of Metropolitan Pimen. For this reason, the work is referred to as both the 'Travelogue of Ignatius of Smolensk' and the 'Travelogue of Pimen' in reference to Metropolitan Pimen's name.

The travelogue first describes the journey from Moscow to Tsargrad. During the journey, when he was near Tsargrad, he learned that Sultan Murad I had been stabbed to death in the Battle of Kosovo. He also gives information about the Black Sea coast and the cities they passed through on their way to Istanbul. After arriving in Tsargrad, the work describes the main shrines and mausoleums of Tsargrad, especially the Hagia Sophia, as well as relics. There is also a great deal of political, social and historical information about Byzantium of the period. The translation of the work is based on the compilation of N. I. Prokofyev (Prokofyev, 1984).

Data Analysis

In order to obtain the data, the four pilgrimages mentioned above were translated into Turkish by the researcher. In addition, the pilgrimage written by Antony Novgorodskiy, which was written in old Russian and whose contemporary Russian was not accessible, was translated first into contemporary Russian and then into Turkish with the help of an expert in old Russian studies. The translated texts were uploaded to MAXQDA, a qualitative data analysis program. Inductive thematic analysis was applied to the data. Inductive thematic analysis is an analysis technique that enables the researcher to see and make sense of meanings and experiences in a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this context, codes were extracted from the texts transferred to the MAXQDA Program, and the codes were grouped under categories and themes. Experts in the field were consulted for the accuracy of the themes and categories obtained.

Validity-Reliability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) mention the concepts of credibility, reliability, consistency, transferability, confirmability, and objectivity to ensure validity in the qualitative research. In this study, the Russian language originals of the pilgrimages analyzed in this study were accessed. They were then translated into Turkish by the researcher himself, and two experts assisted in checking the translations. For certain incomprehensible concepts and events, sources written in the fields of the history of religions, the history of art, as well as various studies examining Constantinople of the period, which constitutes the focus of the study, were consulted. The data in the reference sources were compared with the translations. In this context, the reliability and consistency of the translated data were ensured. In addition to these, direct quotations from the pilgrimages were made and references were cited. Therefore, the transferability of the study was ensured. In order to reduce bias, in addition to the researcher, the consultant and two experts were consulted in the coding process, thereby fulfilling the criterion of confirmability.

Findings

In this study, the findings obtained from the pilgrimages written in Russian were categorized and grouped under three themes. These are; (1) religious elements, (2) historical elements and (3) artistic elements. The findings are presented by quoting the most striking sample statements for each category, and the quoted pilgrimages are coded as H1, H2, H3 and H4:

H1: The Pilgrim Book of Antony of Novgorod

H2: Anonymous Tsargrad Travelogue

H3: Wanderer of Stephen of Novgorod

H4: Travelogue of Ignatius of Smolensk

Religious Elements

The codes and subcategories obtained for the religious elements in the pilgrimages analyzed were grouped under the categories of 'entrance to the city', 'religious rituals', 'religious buildings' and 'sacred relics'.

Entrance to the city

The 'Hagia Sophia' and 'Greeting' subcategories stood out in the category of entering the city. Sample expressions related to these are given below.

Hagia Sophia

According to the information from the pilgrimages, the first stop of the travelers when they arrived in Tsargrad was Hagia Sophia. Travelers who arrived in the city first visited this holy shrine of Christianity. It is possible to see the reverence for Hagia Sophia and the sanctity attributed to it in the following sample statements:

"Whoever goes to Constantinople, which is called Tsargrad, to worship the sufferings of Christ and Hagia Sophia, should go to the Holy Sofia upon his arrival in the city. When he approaches Hagia Sophia, he should enter the narthex through the south door." (H2)

"I, Stephen the sinner from Veliky (Great) Novgorod, together with eight companions, came to Tsargrad to worship in holy places and lay hands on holy relics. And God had mercy on us through the intercession of holy Sofia. In Holy Week (the Week of Suffering) we came to the city and went to Hagia Sophia." (H3)

Salutation

Russian travelers entering the city stated that when they arrived at their first stop, Hagia Sophia, they greeted it with reverence and bowed before it. This can be seen in the following examples.

"When this unworthy, sinful servant, Archbishop Antony of Novgorod, by the grace of God, came to Tsargrad, he first bowed before the Hagia Sophia, called the Holy Wisdom, and kissed the seals of the holy tomb of the Lord (Jesus) and the icon of the Theotokos holding Christ." (H1)

"We went to Hagia Sophia. And when we reached the great doors, we greeted the miraculous icon of Mary, Mother of God, from which came the voice that forbade Mary of Egypt to enter the holy church in Jerusalem. We also greeted there, inside the holy church, the icons of Jesus and the honored Saints." (H4)

Religious Rituals

In the category of religious rituals, the subcategories of 'Rituals', 'Holy Days' and 'Reverence for Sacred Relics' came to the fore. Sample statements related to these are given below.

Rituals

It is understood that during their visits to Hagia Sophia and other sites, Russian travelers observed the religious rituals performed there with great attention and admiration. Detailed descriptions of the rituals can be seen in the following statements.

"The scribes were holding the tablets of Moses while the hymn was being sung in Ambon. The scribes sang first, the monks stood behind them, and then the gifts of the Lord were presented by the popes and deacons. [...] In Hagia Sophia, there are no bells, but they hold a small bell in their hands and strike it, calling people to the morning service, but not to the noon and evening services. In other churches, they strike the bell at both noon and evening prayers, the bell is held according to the Angelic Doctrine and Latin bells are rung." (H1)

It is understood that people were also in search of healing during religious rites. In the following excerpt from the traveller Stephen, it is explained that there is a church in the name of St. Virgin Theodosia, who was martyred during the iconoclasm period and there are narratives about her healing, and that the sick seek healing and are healed by touching the relics of the Saint.

"We went to St. Virgin Theodosia, and this women's monastery, founded in her name, is located by the sea. And every Wednesday and Friday, just like on holidays, many men and women bring candles, oil and alms. There are many people here suffering from various diseases. Those who lie in beds are healed, those who are sick are taken into the church and placed before St. Theodosia. She invisibly touches people's sore spots and heals them." (H3)

Holy Days

Holy Friday, Holy Thursday and Holy Week are mentioned in the pilgrimages, as in the following examples.

"In the Shrine of the holy Resurrection of the Lord lies St. Auxentius the Monk, who lived on a hill with St. Stephen the Nazarene. This church was built before Hagia Sophia. There is a nail from the Passion of the Lord and the blood of the Lord, which they commemorate on Good Friday/Great Friday." (H1)

"Near here is a plank of Noah's ark. On Holy Thursday they place on it the instruments with which Jesus was tortured; a sponge, a cane and a spear. On that day, many Christians from all over the world gather to worship the Lord's Passion. From them the

sick are healed, and believers are forgiven for their sins and relieved of their troubles." (H2)

Reverence for Sacred Relics

Visiting holy relics is an extremely important part of the pilgrimage of Orthodox Christian pilgrims. In fact, many places are visited by pilgrims because of the relics they contain. In the pilgrimages analyzed in this study, there is a wide range of expressions related to these visits. A few of these expressions are given below.

"Inside the church lies St. Theophanida, who holds the key to Hagia Sophia. People kiss this key with respect." (H1)

"From there we went to the Monastery of the Virgin Mary called Pereç, where there is the head of St. John Chrysostomos, which we venerated and touched with respect." (H3)

"On the third day we went to the patriarch St. Antony and received a blessing from him. On the fourth day we venerated the icon of the great archangel who appeared to the young man guarding the tools of the builders of the church. On the sixth day we went to the holy Mother of God Hodegetria, worshipped and anointed ourselves with myrrh. We went to the monastery of Pantokrator, where we reverently kissed the sacred wood on which the body of Jesus Christ was placed after it was taken down from the cross." (H4)

Religious structures

In the category of religious buildings, 'Churches' and 'Monasteries' stand out. In addition to the detailed descriptions of Hagia Sophia, the hojdenies analyzed also include accounts of many churches and monasteries in the city. Since the terms 'church' and 'monastery' are used intertwined in these accounts, the following examples are not titled separately.

Churches and Monasteries

There are about one hundred churches and monasteries mentioned in the pilgrimages. The following are a few of the most prominent ones: Digitria (Hodegetria) Monastery; Pantokrator Monastery; Peribleptos Monastery; Church of the Virgin Mary; Church of the Apostles (Havriyun Church); Church of St. Nicholas; and the Church of St. John the Baptist.

"If you go east from Hagia Sophia towards the sea valley, there is a monastery called Digitria (Hodegetria) on the right." (H2)

"We went to the great monastery of the Savior, also known as Pantokrator. If you enter through the first gate, you will see that above the gate the Savior is depicted in a mosaic of very large size and height." (H3)

"On the eighth day we went to the Monastery of Peribleptos, kissed the hand of the Forerunner (John the Baptist), the head of Gregory the Theologian, the forehead of Stephen the Younger and the icon of Christ addressed to Tsar Mavricius (Mauricius)." (H4)

"Emperor Constantine lies in a single tomb with his mother in the Church of the Holy Apostles." (H1)

Sacred relics

The category of holy relics is one of the most dominant codes in pilgrimages. The main motivation of pilgrims during these visits is to see and venerate relics. The most important objects attributed sacredness are the 'Passion of Christ' and the 'Relics of Saints', which symbolize the sufferings of Jesus Christ. Examples of the expressions describing these relics are given below as separate subcategories.

The Passion of Christ

"In the Emperor's golden hall there are fragments of the true cross, a crown, a sponge, nails and other blood; a purple robe, a spear, a walking stick, a pivoi (headdress) of the Blessed Mary, a sash, the Lord's shirt, a scarf, a towel and the Lord's sandals... The altar is in the center of the church, in front of the altar there is a marble slab on which Christ was bound, this is the slab on which the Lord was laid after He was taken down from the cross. Then the holy Mother of God, touching the body of her Son and the body of God, wept and her tears flowed over the slab. And that slab is kept in the Monastery of Pentocrator." (H1)

"We kissed the table where Christ's sufferings were gathered together and where Christ's apostles, transformed into the Trinity, sat down to eat, then we reverently kissed the saintly patriarch Arsenius, the table of Abraham and the iron bed where Christ was tortured." (H4)

Relics of the Saints

"At the back of the hill is the church of the holy martyrs Sergius and Bacchus, and their heads are there, and the hand and blood of Sergius and the blood of holy Epimachus are in a box. Next to the Apostolic Church is the Church of All Saints there is the head of the saintly Apostle Philip and the relics of other saints." (H1)

"To the south of Hagia Sophia, in the direction of Constantine's palace, on the left is the Church of St. Euphemia. Here lies the head of St. Euphemia framed in gold. The relics of St. Michael are also here. Christians believe in these relics and receive healing from them." (H2)

Historical Elements

Pilgrimages are texts that are dominated by religious elements in terms of their content. This is related to the main motivation of the people who perform the pilgrimage. They perform pilgrimage in accordance with their own beliefs by visiting the lands that are considered sacred and seeing and touching the holy relics found there. Nevertheless, historical elements specific to the period were inevitably included by the authors in these pilgrimages. In the pilgrimages analyzed in this study, the categories of 'Historical Events' and 'Historical and Religious Characters' were found under the theme of Historical Elements.

Historical Events

The codes obtained in the category of historical events and found remarkable were 'Byzantine-Russian Relations', 'Byzantine-Turkish Relations', '1204 Latin Invasion', and 'Coronation Ceremony'. Statements related to these codes are given below.

Byzantine-Russian Relations

"And then the holy patriarch of Tsargrad saw us, his name was Isidor, and we kissed his hand, because he loved Russia very much... When Olga the Russian went to Tsargrad she had a big golden tray from which she received tribute. There is a small town on the Ispigan side of Tsargrad, the land of the Jews. On this tray of Olga's was a precious stone on which Jesus was depicted, and from Jesus goodness and light radiates to all people." (H1)

Byzantine-Turkish relations

"In the summer of 6898 (1390) Kalujan, the son of Emperor Andronikos, with the help of the Turks, began to obtain a tsarate in Tsargrad... At midnight on Wednesday, the second week after Easter, loyal men opened the gates of the city to Kaluyan Andronikovich and let him in together with the Greeks, but the Turks were absent and did no harm. Manuel fled on ships to the island of Limnos... Manuel took Chargrad and crushed many of Andronikos' followers near Chargrad. Manuel went to the Turkish sultan with a bow, the Turks detained him, they sent word to Manuel's father saying, 'Manuel will not escape from my hands until you destroy your palaces.' And the old emperor reluctantly ordered the palaces to be demolished, and he himself went into the old palace and was overwhelmed with grief. The Turks released Manuel and he is still ruling." (H4)

1204 Latin invasion (The Fourth Crusade)

"The Crusaders smashed it when they captured

Tsargrad. And they destroyed many other decorations. Tsar Constantine had a bathhouse, very high, close to the wall; Tsar Leo used to direct the water there, the water went up to the marble bathtubs, and the gutters were made of marble... On the left there is a big marble stone pillar, resting on four pillars made of copper. And these pillars are like big temples joined together. They were built by King Leo the Wise. On this pillar there are sixteen men, eight of copper and eight of stone, and in each hand there is a broom made of an unknown wood, as if filled with wax... But now, as I said before, all this has been destroyed.” (H2)

Coronation

“In the summer of 1392, on February 11, during the week of the Prodigal Son, Manuel was married to the Tsarina by Patriarch Antony. The wedding was a spectacular spectacle. There was an all-night vigil in Hagia Sophia. It was very crowded with the men inside the church and the women in the upper gallery. The hymn singers were dressed in magnificent costumes; their dresses wide and long, all belted, the sleeves of their dresses wide and long, the others silk, and the shoulder pads gold and lace. There were Franks from Galata and Tsargrad, Genoese and Venetians... The Emperor entered the holy church through the great front doors. On either side of the Emperor were twelve armored men in iron armor from head to toe. In front of the Emperor marched two bannermen with black hair and red shafts, robes and hats. In front of these two bannermen were the deputy bannermen with staffs of silver.” (H4)

Historical and religious characters

The most frequently repeated codes under the category of historical and religious characters were ‘Emperors’, ‘Prophets’, ‘Saints and Saints’.

Emperors

Russians refer to the Byzantine emperors as tsars, which is the Russian way of addressing emperors. For this reason, the quotations are faithful to this name.

“And towards the gates stands a great icon, depicting Tsar Corleus (Emperor Leo VI), his face made of precious stones, illuminating the Holy Sofia at night... On the holy great altar, above the catapetasma, hangs the crown of Constantine, a cross and a golden dove under the cross, and the crowns of other tsars.” (H1)

“In the summer of 6898 (1390) Kaluyan, son of the emperor Andronikos, with the help of the Turks, began to establish a tsarate in Tsargrad... On Great Thursday, Manuel (Manuel Paleologos II), son of the former tsar Kaluyan (Ioannis Paleologos V), arrived from Limnos with ships to help Tsargrad...” (H4)

Prophets

The Prophet Jesus is naturally at the center of the pilgrimages. The Prophet Jesus is also referred to as ‘Lord’, ‘Messiah’ and ‘Savior’ in the pilgrimages. Apart from the Prophet Jesus, another prophet whose name is repeated most frequently is the Prophet Danyal. Excerpts from the pilgrimages regarding the Prophet Danyal are given below.

“At the Roman gate lies the holy great Prophet Danyal and the holy Roman saints and Nikita.” (H1)

“We went to St. Prophet Danyal; when you come to the church, you have to walk with a candle and go twenty-five steps down from the ground. There on the right side is the tomb of Prophet Danyal’s grave.” (H3)

“On the seventeenth day of December we saw the tomb of the great Prophet Danyal and touched it reverently. Here is the Church of the Holy Mother of God (Mary). Inside there is an icon of the Mother of God painted by Luke the Evangelist.” (H4)

Saints

Saints was the most frequently repeated code among the findings. It is not possible to include all of them under this heading, but the most striking examples are given below.

“And on the holy altar in St. Sofia, the blood and milk of St. Panteleimon remain unmixed. There is also his skull, the skull of the Apostle Kondratos and other relics... Far away from here, near the sea, the virgin St. Anna lies bent double, as if in a living body.” (H1)

“On these mattresses St. Georgios and St. Nikita were tortured... Here is the tomb of St. Ioannis Chrysostomos (John of Goldenmouth), covered with a slab and covered with gold and precious stones.” (H2)

“St. Theodosia pushed the ladder and brought the pagan to the brink of death. That’s when they stabbed the saint with a goat horn... There is a monastery of the Virgin Mary called Iterapiotica where the relics of St. Evdokia are found...” (H3)

There are also the heads of Saints Sergius, Bacchus and James of Persia... On the twenty-second day we reverently kissed the relics of St. Anastasia and Ignatius of Antioch.” (H4)

Artistic Elements

In this study, the theme of ‘Artistic Elements’ emerges as one of the three main themes. Artistic elements such as icons and mosaics that pilgrims saw during their visits to the holy places in the city, as well as various public buildings and sculptures they encountered on the streets, did not escape the attention of the pilgrim writers. In addition, religious narratives, which have an important place in pilgrimage narratives, are another code found under this

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theme. In the analysis conducted in this direction, codes entitled Religious Rumors, Visual Arts and Architecture were found under the theme of Artistic Elements.

Religious myths

In the category of religious myths, 'The Founding of Hagia Sophia', 'The Unbroken Candle', 'Icons that Create Miracles', and 'The Stabbed Icon' were identified as the most recurring subcategories. Sample statements related to these categories are given below.

The Hagia Sophia foundation myth

"St. Michael said to the young man: 'Where are the masters of this church, and what is the name of the church?' The young man said: 'The masters have gone to the tsar's palace and the church has no name.' St Michael said to the young man: 'Michael, go to the Tsar and tell him to order the craftsmen to build this church in the name of Hagia Sophia, and I will be the guardian of Hagia Sophia and the work of your hands in your place. The power of Christ my God has commanded me to do this and I will not leave this place until you come'." (H2)

The myth of the unbroken candle

"... And if you go to the left from the great altar in the direction of the sun, there is a large glass lamp filled with oil; once it fell from above and did not break, nor did the fire in it go out. If it had been of iron, even then it would have broken, but some invisible power had placed it on the stone unharmed." (H3)

Icons that work miracles

"... I have seen the icon of the Virgin Mary work extraordinary miracles and heal the sick." (H2)

"We went to the portable icon of the Virgin Mary, painted by the evangelist Luke looking at her while she was still alive. This icon is unveiled every Tuesday. The icon is very large and skillfully carved. The chanters walking in front of the icon sing beautiful hymns and all the people cry out tearfully: 'Lord, have mercy!' The icon is placed on the shoulders of a man, who stretches out his arms as if he were crucified and passes out, so that it is horrible to look at him and he is tossed back and forth across the square." (H3)

The myth of the stabbed icon

"In the Church of St Nicholas on the right side is an icon of the holy miracle-working Saviour. This icon was pierced above the left eyebrow by a Jew. When the Jew pierced the icon, blood and water flowed

from the wound. When the Jew saw this terrible miracle, he was horrified, took the icon, threw it into the well and hurried home... The Tsar, the patriarch and many people went to the well. When they arrived, they took the icon of the holy Saviour out of the well and saw that the image was stained with blood. The blood of the holy image was sealed with the blood of Christ and the icon was placed in the church of St. Nicholas. This icon heals many sick people." (H2)

Visual arts

In the visual arts category, the subcategories 'Icons', 'Mosaics' and 'Sculptures' stood out. Sample expressions related to these are given below.

Icons

"Lazarus, the icon painter; first in Tsargrad, in Hagia Sophia, he painted the holy Virgin and two angels holding Christ on the altar." (H1)

"If you go to the right side of the altar, there is an icon of the Holy Trinity, in front of the icon is the tray of Abraham, on which Abraham puts bread before the Trinity and eats with the Trinity." (H2)

"When we reached the great doors, we venerated the miraculous icon of St. Mary, from which a voice came to Mary of Egypt forbidding her to enter the holy church in Jerusalem. There we also venerated the icon of Jesus and other icons of saints inside the holy church." (H4)

Mosaics

"And there is a mosaic image of the great Savior, in which a finger of his right hand is missing. The painter looked at him and said, 'Lord, how beautifully I have painted him, as if he were alive!' And a voice from the image said, 'When did you see me?' Then the scribe became dumb and died. And that finger was not drawn but framed with silver and gilded." (H1)

"And on the same side of the wall was a mosaic figure of the Saviour, and holy water was flowing from the wounds of the nails in his feet, and we touched him, anointed him with oil, and gave him to drink of the holy water." (H3)

Statues

Statue of Justinian

"On the right side of the exit from the south gate of the Hagia Sophia church, there is a high stone column, and on the column stands Tsar Justinian on horseback. The copper Tsar holds a golden apple with a cross on it in his left hand, and his right hand is raised to the south. In front of him are three stone columns, and on the columns are three pagan tsars. All of them are made of copper, standing as if they

were alive, and kneeling before Tsar Justinian, surrendering their city to him." (H2)

Other statues

"A copper column is erected here, three columns intertwined. The columns are separated from each other at the top, each has a snake head at the end, stones and pearls come out of their mouths; again, snake venom is hidden in this column." (H4)

"On the tomb of the prophet Daniel, there are two statues of angels made of stone, one at the head and the other at the feet, as if they were two living boys. These statues were made by Tsar Leo the Wise. Christians worship the prophet Daniel here." (H2)

Architecture

In the architecture category, the of subcategories 'Palaces', 'Hippodrome', and 'Ayasofya Architecture' stood out. Examples of these statements are given below.

Palaces

"Tsar Constantine's palace is located right above the Great Sea; there are decorations in the Tsar's palace. There is a high column of an obelisk above the sea and four stone capitals on that column, and on those capitals there is a stone of blue marble and winged dogs, eagles and rams are carved on this stone. The horns of the rams were broken and the columns were shattered. The Crusaders broke these when they captured Tsargrad." (H2)

"There is also a palace here called the 'palace of the Orthodox King Constantine'." (H3)

Hippodrome

"To the west of the Tsar's palace, close to it, is the Hippodrome. This Hippodrome is decorated with many wonderful things and many more things from the old days are preserved here. There are thirty columns towards the Great Sea and each column has rings of iron, and there are passages paved with stone railings from one end to the other on the columns." (H2)

"After listening to the holy mass, we went to the Palace of Constantine and saw a building belonging to the Tsars there; this place called the Hippodrome is a playground." (H4)

The Architecture of Hagia Sophia

"In front of the western door of the great entrance of Hagia Sophia, there is a baptismal font made of aspid stone, and the crosses are immersed in this font. There is a lintel of lead over the basin, and here the kings are baptized." (H2)

"There are three hundred and sixty-five doors in Hagia Sophia, and the doors are very carefully glazed. Some of them are bricked up for lack of funds. The human mind cannot tell and list everything about the holy Sophia of God, but we have written down what we have seen." (H3)

"On the thirty-first day, we went up to the dome of the Hagia Sophia Church and saw the forty windows there; we measured them with a column, and they were two spans short of two fathoms high." (H4)

The Wells in Hagia Sophia

"There are many wells in the holy Hagia Sophia." (H1)

"In Hagia Sophia, except for the ones in the church walls and galleries, there are many wells with very tasty water, and it is impossible to see them because they are at the bottom level, that is, on the floor of the church... If you go from there to the altar of the church, there are very beautiful columns standing as if they were made of jade. There is a well in the great altar; it is filled with water from the holy river Jordan (the Jordan)." (H3)

Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions

The main data sources of this research are hojdenies. The results of the research are given under three themes.

Religious elements

The most recurrent sub-codes in 'religious buildings' under the theme of 'religious elements' are 'churches' and 'monasteries'. After the Russians adopted Christianity as the official religion in the tenth century, Istanbul, the capital of the Byzantine Empire (Constantinople, which was the originator of the Orthodox faith) became one of the most important pilgrimage centres after Jerusalem. During these pilgrimages, Russian pilgrims visited dozens of sanctuaries and places in the Holy Land and in Istanbul, which are considered sacred by the Orthodox faith.

Among these temples, Hagia Sophia has a special importance. In addition to being a patriarchal and imperial cathedral, Hagia Sophia has a historical and spiritual significance for Russians. After Valdimir, the great Kievan knight, converted to Christianity in 988AD, pilgrimage gained great importance in line with the Christianisation policy. Accordingly, with a spiritual motivation, many pilgrims travelled to Constantinople to see the holy places. Although this route was quite far and difficult, it was popular among Russian pilgrims. In the analysed pilgrimages, Hagia Sophia is seen as a must-visit shrine for every Russian pilgrim.

Hagia Sophia, which is obviously the most central

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and most important religious structure of the city, is also a centre of attraction due to the holy relics it contains. In this study, the code 'holy relics' under the theme of religious elements was the most recurrent code after 'religious buildings'. The 'Passion of Jesus', which represents the prophet Jesus and his sufferings in the process leading to the cross, and the relics and body parts (relics) of people who are considered saints in the Orthodox faith have an important place in pilgrimages as holy relics.

Apart from Hagia Sophia, another church visited by all travellers is the Church of the Holy Apostles (Havariyyun). Dedicated to the Twelve Apostles, the church was built by Constantine the Great as a funerary church. Many emperors were buried in the church, which became an important place of pilgrimage for Byzantine emperors from Constantine until the eleventh century. According to the accounts of travellers, there are many relics in the church.

A number of the many religious buildings mentioned in the pilgrimages are as follows: the Church of Saints Sergius and Bakhus; the Blakherna Church of Our Lady of Blakherna; the Prodromos Church of St John the Baptist; the Hodegetria Church of Our Lady of Hodegetria; the Monastery of Saints Kozma and Damian; the Pantokrator Monastery; the Studios Monastery; the Peribleptos Monastery; the Philanthropos Church of Christ the Saviour; the St Theodosia Church; and the St Georgios/Mangana Monastery. It can be seen that a number of churches are known by more than one name. This is evident from the fact that pilgrims have mentioned the same relics in these buildings. During their visits to these sacred buildings, it was observed that the believers were in a state of awe and approached these holy relics with reverence. Another dimension of this respect is related to forgiveness and healing through the relics attributed to holiness. It has been observed that the authors of the Hajjname describe in detail the various rituals performed on daily or holy days that they witnessed in Hagia Sophia and other temples. The way these rituals were performed, the objects used during the ritual, the icons or the clothes of the clergy are included in these descriptions.

Historical Elements

We see the information given by the travellers mostly about worldly life under this theme. These include important political and historical events such as Byzantine-Turkish relations, Byzantine-Russian relations, the Latin Invasion of 1204 and the coronation of Emperor Manuel II Paleologos. Among the four pilgrimages analysed, Ignatius of Smolensk's pilgrimage contains the most information in this sense. He mentions the Battle of Kosovo and the death of Murad I, the feud between Ioannes IV and Manuel II and the enthronement ceremony, as well as the earthquake in 1390. In the Anonymous Chargrad Pilgrimage,

the damage caused to the city by the Latin invasion is frequently mentioned.

The most frequently recurring sub-code under the code 'historical and religious characters' is 'saints and saints'. These people, who were mostly tortured and killed by the Romans in the period before Christianity was accepted as an official religion, are regarded as religious martyrs

by the believers and are highly loved and respected by Orthodox Christians. In addition, through these saints, believers expect mercy and forgiveness from God. Another important point is that people expect healing by touching the icons or relics of saints and saints. Within the 'Prophets' code, the Prophet Jesus, who is central to the Christian faith and who is referred to with titles such as 'Lord', 'Messiah', 'Saviour', and 'Son of God', and related quotations from the Old and New Testaments, legendary stories and relics representing his ordeals are at the centre of the narratives.

Artistic elements

The codes reached under this theme, which cover a wide area, were 'religious myths', 'visual arts' and 'architecture'. In terms of frequency, the most recurrent code is 'religious myths'. Among these myths are those related to the foundation of Hagia Sophia, miracle-performing icons and legends on different subjects. In the case of Hagia Sophia in particular, there are still many legends told by tour guides even today. The blending of human imagination and religious and historical facts with fantastic elements over time has led to the formation of these legends. Since pilgrimages are written as a result of the travels of people who grew up listening to these legends for years, they are an integral part of these texts. In fact, the same myths are told over and over again in each hojdenie.

Under the theme of artistic elements, 'icons' was the most recurrent sub-code. Icons and their worship have become a manifestation of piety in Christian Orthodoxy. Therefore, pious pilgrimage writers frequently mentioned this subject. In particular, in all the texts analysed, the icon of Mary Hodegetria, which means 'guide', is frequently mentioned. In the Hodegetria composition, which is one of the most widely copied icons in Byzantium, Mary is standing or sitting, holding the Child Jesus with one hand and showing him with the other. It is believed that the first image of Hodegetria was painted by the Evangelist Luke, one of the writers of the Canonical Gospel, by looking at Mary (Işık Şen, 2017). All the authors mentioned this icon, apart from Stephen Novgorodets, in his hojdenie, described a religious ritual accompanied by this icon in great detail.

Mosaics and 'sculptures' are other sub-codes under the theme of artistic elements. Among the mosai-

cs, the mosaic of Christ the Saviour in particular is frequently depicted. Among the sculptures, the expressions depicting the equestrian statue of Emperor Justinian come to the fore. This monument, which preserved its place in front of Hagia Sophia for more than a thousand years, seems to have fascinated Russian travellers with the height and beauty of the column carrying the statue (Oktan and Derviş, 2015). The most repeated subcode under the theme of 'artistic elements' is 'the architecture of Hagia Sophia'. Hagia Sophia, which is the Imperial Cathedral and symbolizes the power of Orthodoxy, has a magnificent architecture. Russian travelers provide detailed descriptions of the interior and exterior architecture of this structure in their notes. In particular, since the date Antony Novgorodskiy visited Istanbul coincides with the time before the city was looted by the Crusaders, his description of the old state of Hagia Sophia places it in a special place. This is because many pieces that cannot be seen in Hagia Sophia today were stolen and taken to various places in Europe at that time.

It was understood that Russians adopted Istanbul as one of the most important pilgrimage centres after Jerusalem since the tenth century, when they accepted Christianity as the official religion. As a result, they made pilgrimages to Istanbul for many centuries. In this study, the travel notes kept by travellers/pilgrims during the journeys between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries are analysed. The evaluation of the Russian pilgrimages written in this period in the field of tourism constitutes the original value of this study. These travel notes, which give detailed information about Istanbul, provide valuable information to be told to foreign and domestic tourists, especially Orthodox Christians who come to the city as faith tourists. In this direction, it is thought that the research findings could be a source for enriching the narratives of tour guides working in Istanbul.

Suggestions for Future Studies

Research could be made on the pilgrimages written in the period between 988AD, when Russian Orthodox converted to Christianity, and 1453, the conquest of Istanbul, which were left out of the scope of this research, bringing them into the literature; researching the examples of pilgrimages in different languages and evaluating them in the context of tourism; conducting research in different fields such as architecture, art history, history of religions on the Istanbul of the period in the pilgrimages; researching the first example of a pilgrimage, the XII. century 'The Life and Journey of Abbot Daniil from the Russian Country' (Jitie i hojenie igumena Daniila iz Russkoy zemli), in the context of religious tourism; accessing pilgrimage writings written for different religions and beliefs; and conducting interdisciplinary comparative studies.

Suggestions for the Sector

It is suggested that the findings and results of this research should be shared with the Istanbul Chamber of Guides and transferred to tour guides with a niche tour programme being developed within the scope of faith tourism. These results, which will shed light on the history of Orthodox Christianity, should be shared with Russian travel agencies and Russian tourists should be informed about these tours through cooperation. The protection of the architectural structures, in the findings, which can still be seen today, and the revitalisation of religious rituals can contribute to the protection of cultural heritage. In addition, other stakeholders in the tourism sector can utilise these narratives by integrating them into modern tourism.

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