

TOURIST PILGRIMAGE ROUTES OF THE HOLY APOSTLES: TRANSFORMATION OF SACRED ROUTES AS MODERN MEANS OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to examine the pilgrimage routes of the holy Apostles, focusing on the transformation of these paths from their historical significance as physical routes to their role as modern forms of communication. The study analyzes the depiction of the holy Apostles' paths in contemporary cinema, which has effectively captured the concept of path transformation and recreated these events in Christian movies based on the Holy Scriptures. The notion of "a path" serves as a metaphor, representing an exaggeration that transcends into the realm of art and culture. It encompasses the entirety of the cultural landscape and incorporates the idea of an "eternal path," symbolizing perpetual searching and movement. Pilgrimage, comprising a physical journey towards a spiritual destination, represents a novel orientation and route—a fusion of old and new elements constantly evolving amidst contemporary temporal challenges. Utilizing a postmodern format—engaging with a tablet and headphones—one can delve into the farthest corners of our Earth in search of the spiritual essence of art and culture. This involves listening to spiritual music, exploring virtual museums and exhibitions, experiencing theatrical productions, or immersing oneself in feature or documentary films depicting the journeys of St. James and St. Paul. Additionally, it involves revisiting the Acts of the Apostles and reimagining their routes with a focus on the modern context.

Keywords: Religious tourism; Cultural phenomenon; Sacred paths; Social communications; Shrines; Relics; Christian cinematography.





ROTAS DE PEREGRINAÇÃO TURÍSTICA DOS SANTOS APÓSTOLOS: TRANSFORMAÇÃO DE ROTAS SAGRADAS EM MEIOS MODERNOS DE COMUNICAÇÃO INTERNACIONAL

RESUMO

Este artigo tem como objetivo examinar as rotas de peregrinação dos santos apóstolos, concentrando-se na transformação desses caminhos de seu significado histórico como rotas físicas para seu papel como formas modernas de comunicação. O estudo analisa a representação dos caminhos dos santos apóstolos no cinema contemporâneo, que capturou efetivamente o conceito de transformação de caminhos e recriou esses eventos em filmes cristãos baseados nas Escrituras Sagradas. A noção de "um caminho" serve como metáfora, representando um exagero que transcende o reino da arte e da cultura. Ela abrange todo o cenário cultural e incorpora a ideia de um "caminho eterno", simbolizando a busca e o movimento perpétuos. A peregrinação, que compreende uma jornada física em direção a um destino espiritual, representa uma nova orientação e rota - uma fusão de elementos antigos e novos em constante evolução em meio aos desafios temporais contemporâneos. Utilizando um formato pós-moderno - usando um tablet e fones de ouvido -, é possível mergulhar nos cantos mais distantes da Terra em busca da essência espiritual da arte e da cultura. Isso envolve ouvir música espiritual, explorar museus e exposições virtuais, vivenciar produções teatrais ou mergulhar em filmes de longa-metragem ou documentários que retratam as jornadas de São Tiago e São Paulo. Além disso, envolve revisitar os Atos dos Apóstolos e reimaginar suas rotas com foco no contexto moderno.

Palavras-chave: Turismo religioso; Fenômeno cultural; Caminhos sagrados; Comunicação social; Santuários; Relíquias; Cinematografia cristã.

1 INTRODUCTION

An apostle (Greek: ἀπόστολος from ἀποστέλλω – to send) is a messenger (Holobutsky, 2001). The important role played by the apostles in the formation of the Christian doctrine and their place at the top of the hierarchy of Christian saints gave a special sacred meaning to those places that in one way or another were connected with the earthly life of Christ's disciples. Thanks to this circumstance, the use of apostolic travel routes as certain historical paths in the field of tourism makes it possible to combine the possibilities of excursion and religious tourism. It is also worth noting that today, the possibilities of the routes are partially realized in pedestrian tourist routes, however, in our opinion, the proposed option is far from exhausting all the possibilities of this path (Olsen & Timothy, 2021; Tilson, 2022).

In this scientific investigation, we are going try to follow the paths of the apostles





with the help of feature films on this topic, where the events are vividly depicted; viewing the films will allow, in turn, to significantly expand the possibilities of using the specified routes in the field of religious tourism and realize the relevance of these events in modern reality (Dowson et al., 2020; Dunn-Hensley, 2020).

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodological basis of the paper is the dialectical method and the systematic approach. The leading method used was the Desk Research method. It allows to quickly get information, which is very important for achieving the goal of this paper; the comparison of many sources of information allows considering the researched object from different angles and make more valid and well-founded conclusions. The abstract-logical method was used to summarize and formulate the conclusions. The authors applied logic-semantic analysis, the methods of reflection, of textual reconstruction and of comparative analysis to the characterized movies and their combination with the primary sources and the large-scale scientific field (Rizun, 2008; Rizun et al., 2022, p. 64).

3 RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Each country tried to take possession of the relics of apostles, saints, chrism-bearing women, evangelists precisely for the sake of the prestige of the development of pilgrimage, and, accordingly, constant income from pilgrims, constant flows of tourists in their state. The largest number of relics of apostles is in Italy (Chemin Français, n.d.; Griffiths & Wiltshier, 2019).

In Kytayiv hermitage, in the “Holy Trinity Kytayiv monastery” of the city of Kyiv, there are parts of the relics of all twelve apostles (with the exception of St. John the Theologian, taken with his body to Heaven, and the traitor Judas Iscariot, who was left out from the apostolic order) (Wikipedia, 2023).

As for John the Theologian, who is called the Apostle of Love, he, one of all the Apostles, died his own death because he asked for such a death from Jesus and cared for the Virgin Mary. According to legends, during his stay on Patmos, he converted the entire local population to Christianity. According to hieromonk Simeon, the isle of Patmos: “John the Theologian is considered to be the patron saint of the island; a





men's monastery has been operating here since the 11th century, and there are 500 Orthodox churches for a total of 3,000 inhabitants". John is the only one of the apostles who was not killed for Christ; he was destined to live more than 100 years. He died in Ephesus in the 2nd century AD. The church that began with four Galilean fishermen grew to all four corners of the world to the outskirts of the Roman Empire.

In Turkey, the grave of John the Theologian on a hill is called "Ayasoluk"; it is translated as holy breath; it is believed that John did not die, but fell asleep, and holy chrism is released on this grave. Marco Scarpa, a priest from Ephesus says: "The symbol of the Apostle John is considered to be an eagle, which flies high and has very sharp vision." John, like an eagle, saw everything clearly, spiritually deeply at once; believers awarded him the title "the Apostle of Love"; he wrote a lot about Love. Before his death, the disciples asked him to give an instruction, and he said: "My children, love one another. Love is from God, God is Love" (1 John 4:7).



Figure 1. The Basilica of St. John the Apostle consists of parts of the Temple of Artemis in Ephesus. A place of pilgrimage

Source: <https://daisy-tour.com/john-basilika/>.

The Basilica of St. John the Theologian was considered the second largest building in Christendom after Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, and it attracted huge numbers of pilgrims (Figure 1).

Pilgrimage routes of the holy Apostles are becoming popular religious routes. Namely: "The Way of Sorrow" (Via Dolorosa), "The Way of St. James to Santiago de Compostela" (Camino de Santiago), "The Sacred Way" (Via Sacra), "The Sad Way" (Via Dolorosa), "The Way of the Cross" (Via Crucis), "The Appian Way" (Via Appia), "The Lycian Trail," "The Saint Paul Trail".



Cities and places where the relics of the holy Apostles rest are places of world pilgrimage. The relics of the apostles are in Italy: of Andrew – in Amalfi, Bartholomew – in Benevento, James, son of Alphaeus and Philip – in Rome, Matthew the publican – in Salerno, Thomas – in Ortona; in the Vatican: of Simon (Peter), Levi called Thaddeus, Simon the Canaanite; in Spain: of James the Great – in Santiago de Compostela; in Germany: of Matthias – in Trier. The relics of St. Paul, who was counted as the 13th Apostle for his God-pleasing sermons and missionary journeys, are in Rome. The relics of the holy Apostles and Evangelists are in the following places: of Mark – in Venice in St. Mark's Cathedral, of Luke – in Italy, in the Venetian city of Padua. Saint Luke's tomb is located in the Catholic Basilica of Saint Justina (Giustina in Italian). It is known that the skull of St. Luke is located on the Greek Mount Athos in the Orthodox Panteleimon Monastery. But another part of the relics is located in Cyprus, 80 km from the city of Nicosia, in the monastery of Pangia-Kikkos. The Monastery of the Icon of the Virgin of Kykkos is considered the most beautiful and richest monastery on the island of Cyprus. The relics of apostle and evangelist Matthew are located in the town of Salerno, in the South of Italy. Salerno keeps the relics of Matthew and is accordingly a pilgrimage town. There is the tomb and St. Matthew's Cathedral in Salerno; real miracles happen at this place; miraculous chrism appears on the tomb, and the faithful heal their ailments. Pilgrims come here all the time, which testifies to the sacredness and miraculousness of this place of pilgrimage. In Turkey, the grave of the apostle and evangelist John the Theologian is called "Ayasoluk", it is translated as holy breath; it is believed that John did not die, but fell asleep, and holy chrism is released from this grave.

According to biblical scholars, John the Theologian was familiar with the first three Gospels: from Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Saint John the Beloved explained the Christian faith in his Gospel for the Greeks and spoke against the heresies that arose within the Church. John the Beloved highlighted a scientific novelty, his personal scientific view of evangelical events, and it was after this that he was called John the Theologian. The place of honor is given to a chrism-bearing woman Mary Magdalene. An interesting fact is that in the Middle Ages, Mary was called the "Apostle of the Apostles." Unfortunately, she did not leave any texts; she was identified with a stoned harlot, Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, as well as with a sinner who anointed Christ with "chrism". According to tradition, she wrote the "Gospel of Mary





Magdalene", but it did not become canonical and was not included in the New Testament.

There are several versions regarding the relics of Saint Mary Magdalene. Until the 6th century, Christians came to the Tomb of Mary. According to Nikolay Nikishin, an archpriest, Paris: "In the East, they say that she was in Ephesus, and in the West, they say that she was in the South of France". In 869, the Byzantine emperor Leo the Philosopher ordered the transfer of the imperishable relics of St. Mary Magdalene from Ephesus to Constantinople, to the Church of St. Lazarus. It is believed that during the crusades they were transported to Rome, where they were in the temple of St. John Lateran. Later, the church was consecrated in the name of Saint Mary Magdalene. According to another – Latin – version, during persecution of Christians, Mary Magdalene, Martha and their brother Lazarus, escaping from the persecution, reached the south of France, Provence, by sea, where they were washed ashore at the mouth of the Rhone, not far from Arles, to the town, which is now called Le Sainte-Marie-de-la-Mer. The travelers split up. Saint Mary's relics are kept near Marseille; the French believe that it was Mary who led their nation to Christianity. Weddings take place in the church of Saint Madeleine in Paris, where she is the patroness of marriages. This temple was built on the place where she was venerated in the 12th century. In Provence, in the mountains of Moustier-Sainte-Marie, pilgrims from all over the world visit the grotto, where the saint hid from the earthly world and prayed.

Mary Magdalene went to preach in Marseille; to confirm this version, the Cluny museum has a 15th-century painting attributed to King René of Provence (he is generally credited with many paintings) – "Saint Mary Magdalene preaching the Word of God in Marseille". Then Mary settled in a "grotto of seclusion" among precipitous cliffs, near the village of Saint-Bom. Here, she preached the teachings of Jesus Christ and died. Now, the grotto of Mary Magdalene, which is located in the territory of a Dominican monastery, attracts many pilgrims.

In the middle of the 13th century, Dominican monks discovered the relics of Mary Magdalene in an old crypt in the town of Saint-Maximin-la-Saint-Bom. Judging by the miracles that came from the relics, they were recognized as genuine. Already in 1297, a majestic basilica started being built here in honor of the saint. The relics were transferred to an ornate reliquary. But it was these riches that were encroached upon during the French Revolution. The tomb was ransacked. Currently, the head of Mary Magdalene is kept in the lower crypt (Magdalene Publishing, 2023).





Of course, the cinematography did not stand aside, and wonderful artistic movies appeared that depicted sacred routes of the holy Apostles. It is necessary to pay attention to Christian movies that reflect missionary and pilgrimage journeys of the holy Apostles, who preached the Word of God, and were followed by the first believers and pilgrims, who spread the Good News around the world. These are famous movies such as "Paul, Apostle of Christ", "The Passion of the Christ", "The Ten Commandments", "The Kingdom of Heaven", "The Prince of Egypt", "The First Healed", "Man of God", "The Blessing of the Apostle Andrew", "Andrew the First-Called", "Apocalypse: Revelation of John the Theologian", "The Gospel of John", "Acts of the Apostles", "Quo Vadis?", "The Empire of Saint Peter", "Apostle Peter and the Last Supper", "Friends of Jesus – Thomas", "Road to Emmaus", "Paul: the Emissary", "Peter and Paul", "Apostle Paul: Miracle on the way to Damascus", "Pilgrimage to the Eternal City. Apostle Paul", "Mary Magdalene", "Mother of the Apostles", "Mary of Nazareth", documentary series "Apostles". The purpose of these feature movies, of course, is the narration of the New Testament, the Good News about the actions of the Apostles led by the main Apostle-messenger of God – Jesus Christ. These movies show in detail the earthly journey of Jesus Christ from the birth to crucifixion. The route "Via Dolorosa" (from Latin Via Dolorosa – "Way of Sorrow"; Hebrew: וִיאַה דּוֹלוֹרוּזָה; Arabic: تَرْفِيقُ الْعِلاَمِ) is a street in Jerusalem, in which the way of Jesus Christ to the place of crucifixion lay.

In the Old Testament, apostles are those who received an order from God to convey His command to people. In this sense, Moses and the prophets were Apostles. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ Himself acts as an Apostle. Usually, this word is used in relation to the 12 disciples whom Jesus singled out from among His followers to spread the Christian teachings. There are 4 lists of those whom Jesus chose given in the New Testament. These are Simon (Peter), Andrew, James the Great, John, Philip, Bartholomew (Nathaniel in the Gospel of John), Thomas, James Alphaeus, Matthew, Levius Thaddeus, Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus and was replaced by another Apostle – Matthias. Later, Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, joined them. Evangelist Mark points out the purpose of the choosing by Jesus of the 12 Apostles: "And he chose twelve to be with him, and to send them to preach, and to have the power to heal diseases and cast out demons" (The Gospel of Mark, 2023). According to evangelist Luke, Jesus appointed his other 70 disciples as apostles "and sent them two by two before him to every city and place where he was to go" (The





Gospel of Luke, n.d.). The Apostles divided the land into regions and went to preach Christianity; almost all the Apostles were martyred.

In the post-apostolic period until the end of the II century, people belonging to a special category of charismatic teachers, about whom we know from the "Teachings of the Twelve Apostles" – "Didache" – an early Christian work, which was discovered by Greek Metropolitan Bryennios at the end of the 19th century – were also called Apostles.

Other messengers-preachers who at different times Christianized certain peoples were also declared apostles. Thus, St. Boniface is the Apostle of Germany, St. Gregory is the Apostle of Armenia, St. Patrick is the Apostle of Ireland, St. Cyril and Methodius are the Apostles of the Slavs, etc. That is why there are holy paths of these apostles; pilgrims go en masse to the places where the relics of these saints are kept. But this will be detailed in our next scientific explorations.

Grand Duke Volodymyr, the baptizer of Ukraine-Rus, was declared equal to the apostles. Church writers who lived at the end of the 1st and 2nd centuries and were disciples of the Apostles are regarded as ones close to the Apostles. They were called "apostolic fathers" or "apostolic men" (Lyubitseva & Romanchuk, 2011). They include Clement of Rome, Ignatius the God-bearer, Polycarp (a disciple of John the Theologian), Barnabas, Ermas, Papias of Hierapolis and the author of the Didache (Holobutsky, 2001).

In Ukraine, Apostle Andrew the First-Called, who, according to a legend, preached the Christian faith in Scythia, where the Ukrainian people have lived since time immemorial, is treated with special respect. This legend has probably existed since apostolic times, among the Greeks and other peoples who inhabited the northern shore of the Black Sea. It was retold in "The Tale of Bygone Years". It is popular among the population and widespread in church circles that Apostle Andrew is the founder of the Ukrainian Church. The Kyiv Council of 1621 decreed: "Holy Apostle Andrew is the first Archbishop of Constantinople, Ecumenical Patriarch and Ukrainian Apostle; his feet stood on the Kyiv mountains, and his eyes saw Ukraine, and his mouth blessed it, and he planted the seeds of faith in us...". Metropolitan Ilarion (I. Ohienko), answering the question whether Apostle Andrew, called the First-Called, can be considered the founder of the Ukrainian Church, said: "I am of the opinion that it is possible. Apostle Andrew certainly visited our land and preached in it; it is possible that he sailed along





our Dnipro, but we do not know how far he sailed up, we do not know whether he really visited Kyiv (Shytyk & Akimova, 2020, p. 364).

But for the recognition of the Ukrainian Church as the First-Called Church, it is enough that Apostle Andrew really visited our land, really taught the Word of God in Ukraine. In another sense, the Apostle is a book of the Orthodox Church that is read during daily services, as well as a part of a service before reading the Gospel, when a part of some work from the Apostle book is read. The book of the Apostles consists of the following parts of the New Testament: actions of the holy Apostles; seven Council messages; 14 letters of Apostle Paul; sometimes the Apocalypse, which is never read during religious services (Holobutsky, 2001).

The story of Apostle Paul, who is counted among the 13 supreme Apostles, is impressive, unique and full of events. He wrote 14 epistles, which became part of the New Testament; in these missionary stories, the evangelical teaching is clarified (Novyy Zapovit, n.d.).

Apostle Paul made the most missionary journeys of all the Apostles combined – 4 long-term journeys. And the main thing is that he never saw Jesus alive; He appeared to him as a vision, when Paul (Saul) was destroying and persecuting Christians. The relics of Saint Paul the Apostle were discovered in the tomb in the Roman Basilica. According to traditions, the body of the Apostle, after his martyrdom in 65, was buried in the catacombs by the Appian Way (Via Appia), and then transferred to the church consecrated in his honor. In 2006, Vatican archaeologists discovered a stone sarcophagus, after which it was possible to confirm that the relics belonged to the Apostle. By the way, it was from the Appian Way (Via Appia) that the great journey of the Apostle Paul with the preaching of the Gospel began. In the Acts of the Apostles 28: 13-16, it is said that the ship on which Paul sailed to Italy arrived at Puteoli (now Pozzuoli), on the shores of the Gulf of Naples. From there, Paul went to Rome along a paved road, Via Appia (Diyannya Apostoliv, n.d.).

This road was named after Roman statesman Claudius Appius Caecus. He started building it in 312 BC. The Appian Way, 5-6 meters wide, is paved with stones from volcanic rock. It stretched 583 kilometers southeast of Rome and connected the city with the port of Brundisium (today Brindisi), from which a way to the East opened. Every 20-25 kilometers, there were stops where travelers could buy food, spend the night or change horses or carriages.





Paul walked from Puteoli to Rome. He covered 212 kilometers along the Appian Way. Part of the route ran through the Pontine Marshes. One Roman writer, recalling this swampy area, complained about stench and clouds of mosquitoes. To the north of the Pontine Marshes, the Appian Market (65 kilometers from Rome) and the "Three Inns" lodging for travelers (50 kilometers from the city) were situated. It was in these places that Christians from Rome were waiting for Paul. Seeing them, he "thanked God and was lifted up in spirit" (Acts of the Apostles 28:15 (Diyannya Apostoliv, n.d.)).

Interesting for tourists in the territory of Turkey is a route called "Lycian Trail," which allows getting acquainted with the history of ancient Lycia. The Lycian Trail (Likya Yolu in Turkish) is a tourist route with a length of almost 540 km, connecting the cities of Antalya and Fethiye. The advantages of such routes are related to the possibility to simultaneously combine several types of recreation, get acquainted with historical events at the immediate places of the events, and thus get as close as possible to the past. This is considered a road that Apostle Paul walked. Probably, most travelers or tourists have already heard about the "Lycian Trail," which is the longest trekking route in Turkey, but not so many people know about another long route – The Saint Paul Trail.

The length of the route is about 540 km, and it consists of two branches:

- the first one starts in Perge (Aksu) and ends in Yalvac;
- the second one begins in the village of Beskonak before the entrance to the Koprulu canyon and connects with the first branch in the former Roman city of Adada (now near the village of Sagrak) (Pohod v Gory, 2022).

From 64 to 67, Apostles Peter and Paul were both executed during the reign of Nero. For this reason, these Apostles are depicted on icons together and they have a common day of remembrance on July 12. Bernardo Estrada, a professor from Rome, said that "the church of St. Paul is located in the place where he was arrested and was in a free settlement." Apostle Paul wrote a lot about love; his faithful friend, doctor, bibliographer – evangelist Luke – always traveled with him.

According to legend, Peter was executed as a slave in the city of Rome, and Paul, as a Roman citizen, was executed outside the city and beheaded. The tombs of Peter and Paul are undoubtedly places of world pilgrimage; later, the basilicas appeared. Apostle Paul is equated with Apostle Peter, calling the 13th Apostle supreme for his divine deeds; he brought the most pagans to Christianity, he is also called the "Apostle of the Gentiles" (Shlyakh Germanika, 2020).





On June 29, 2009, Pope Benedict XVI announced that the relics of Supreme Apostle Paul had been discovered in Rome. The pontiff testified that, for the first time in history, a scientific study of the sarcophagus, which is located under the altar of the Roman temple, whose full name is St. Paul's Cathedral outside the city walls, had been conducted. In the sarcophagus, which had never been opened before for centuries, a tiny opening for the insertion of a probe was made, which revealed traces of a precious linen cloth dyed purple, a plate of pure gold, and a blue cloth with linen fibers. The presence of red frankincense, as well as protein and lime compounds was also detected. In addition, the smallest fragments of bones were found, which were subjected to research using carbon – by 14 experts who did not know their origin. According to the results, they belong to a person who lived between the 1st and 2nd centuries. "All this fills our soul with deep feelings", the head of the Roman Catholic Church emphasized (Ioannov Rodnik, n.d.).



Figure 2. Fresco of Saints Peter and Paul
Source: Ukrayins'ka Vikipediya, n.d.

Of course, for the spread of pilgrimage and visits by pilgrims to these countries and cities, a very strong struggle was waged for the relics of the saints. Because these lands immediately became attractive for business and rich in tourism.



From the relics of the holy apostles, only the relics of St. Matthias, one of the Apostles who came to replace Judas Iscariot after his betrayal, reached Germany. Here is a little story about the Apostle Matthias. The number 12 has a magical and sacred meaning at the same time. There were 12 tribes of Israel, 12 Apostles, therefore, after the betrayal of Judas Iscariot, it was necessary to supplement the number to get 12; according to the lot cast, Matthias became the 12th Apostle – from the number of 70 Apostles; on the day of Pentecost, Matthias was baptized by the Lord with the Holy Spirit and completed the ranks of the 12 Apostles.

By the way, in the New Testament, he is mentioned only twice. Matthias' discipleship lasted until he was about 20-25 years old; at that time, Simeon the Godreceiver rested shortly after meeting the Infant God. It turns out that by the time he was chosen as one of the 12 Apostles, Matthias was about 55-60 years old, and he was the oldest of them. According to the ancient apocrypha, St. Matthias went with Andrew the First-Called to Antioch and Sinope. According to tradition, he preached in Pontic Ethiopia, Western Georgia. According to tradition, together with Apostles Paul and Andrew, he preached not only in Antioch and Cappadocia, Amasia and Edessa, but also in Sevastia and Pontic Ethiopia (present-day Western Georgia), and even in Macedonia.

Ramaz Halvashi, a historian from the city of Gonio, says in an interview: "According to an ancient chronicle, Apostle Andrew saved Matthias from persecution by pagans, freed him from prison; they visited Georgia together, preached in the tract of the Charoki River, in the city of Sasangeti. Apostle Andrew went farther with sermons along the Black Sea, and Matthias remained in Georgia" (The Quest for the Ark of the Covenant, 2012).

When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) and said, "Brothers and sisters, the Scripture had to be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus. He was one of our number and shared in our ministry."





(With the payment he received for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

“For,” said Peter, “it is written in the Book of Psalms:

“May his place be deserted;
let there be no one to dwell in it,
and,

“May another take his place of leadership.’

Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, beginning from John’s baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection”.

So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. Then they prayed, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs”. Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles (Acts of Apostles, n.d.).

Returning to Judea, Apostle Matthias continued his missionary work, confirming them with unusual signs. In the name of Jesus, he converted many compatriots to faith in Christ. The Jewish high priest Anan, by whose order Apostle Jacob, the Lord’s brother, the first bishop of Jerusalem, was thrown from the roof of a temple, became the main enemy of Matthias. Due to his false testimony, the Apostle was arrested and brought to the court of the Sanhedrin. There the sentence was pronounced: to stone the guilty party.

Georgian scientists have found a lot of evidence that it was Apostle Matthias who brought Christianity to their land. And for many centuries, pilgrims have been visiting the grave of St. Matthias in the city of Gonio, which is not far from the city of Batumi. Early Christian authors Hippolytus of Rome, Safronius, Dorotheus of Kyiv, Epiphanius of Cyprus believe that Matthias preached in the territory of modern Georgia. Safronius writes that Matthias preached in the territory of the Gonio fortress, where his grave is located and is a place of pilgrimage.

In Western Europe, this legend is not recognized; they believe that the relics of Matthias are in the city of Trier and that Queen Helena herself brought them there.





Every year, Catholic pilgrims go to the grave in the city of Trier and honor the memory of mysterious Apostle Matthias. According to legend, Queen Helena brought the relics of St. Matthias from Palestine. St. Helena lived in Germany on the other side of the Moselle River; Athanasius Palag, a monk from the city of Trier, says that it was after Helena's arrival that an ark with the inscription "Apostle Matthias" was found (The Quest for the Ark of the Covenant, 2012).

In the famous rock opera "Jesus Christ Super Star" by composer Andrew Lloyd Webber, the main female character is Mary Magdalene. In this musical, where she is a harlot who became a companion of Christ, a free adaptation of historical events of the 1st century for a modern musical took place. Jesus Christ Superstar is a rock opera with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber and lyrics by Tim Rice. The work describes the last week of the life of Jesus Christ and the betrayal of his disciple Judas Iscariot. The premiere took place in 1970 and caused a lot of discussion and criticism in society, in particular, it concerned the image of Mary Magdalene (Jernigan, 2008).

According to art critic Iryna Yazykova:

What was scandalous for the 1st century – the fact that a woman listens to a preacher, teacher and becomes a student on the same level as men – was transformed in the 20th century through the prism of cultural problems of the 20th century. One of the main problems of the 20th century is the sexual revolution. If a man is next to a woman, then there is no barrier between them. This is precisely an attempt to bring the Gospel closer to the everyday level, not to move upward, where the Gospel calls, but on the contrary, to ground everything through simple human things, instincts; if love is sexual, if a woman is next to you, then it means a partner, a bride, a lover. (Bakhov et al. 2022, p. 551).

These questions are considered in the documentary film "Apostles" by art critic Iryna Yazykova, doctor of theology Sergey Ruzer, biblical scholar Andriy Desnytskyi, professor of the University of Santa Croce in Rome Bernardo Estrada, and priest Nikolay Nikishin. Together with the disciples, Mary Magdalene went to follow Christ when he went around Galilee – this is how Mary appears for the first time on the pages of the Gospel from Luke. As Abbot Theophanes of Jerusalem tells: "Mary Magdalene suffered from an illness called seven demons, and when she heard about the Savior and his healing from demons, she immediately followed him, without thinking, to receive healing and serve him". "He went through cities and settlements, preaching the Kingdom of Heaven and with him 12 and some women whom he healed from evil spirits and diseases. Mary is called Magdalene from whom seven demons came out" (The Gospel of Luke, n.d.).





On the Holy Land, on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, the place where the healing of Mary took place is commemorated to this day. Since 1908, the building of the Russian spiritual mission has been located there. According to legends, the Lord healed Mary of seven fierce demons that came out of her, as she became pure in both soul and body; she saw Tabor's light and followed Him as the Lord. From an interview with nun Theophania from Galilee: "It is at the spring of equal-to-the-Apostles Mary Magdalene that healings from mental and spiritual problems, from demons take place." Western tradition links Mary's possession to her past life of debauchery. Everyone considered her a sinner, and Christ led her away from this vice. According to Constantine Belezis, a bibliologist from Athens: "The Gospel does not say anything about this – that Mary was a harlot – but it is stated that she was a deeply believing woman who suffered from mental disorders, and the Lord healed her and made her His disciple".

After the healing, Mary became very attached to Jesus, but she was not alone, there were other women – Salome, Joanna, Susanna. According to Sergey Ruzer, a doctor of theology from Jerusalem: "These women constantly follow Jesus; he is a wandering preacher; it is not known where they spend the night and eat." Mary supports her Master materially, since she was from a wealthy family, in his services; the disciples of Christ live on these donations – men who became Apostles, left their jobs. The Apostles left fishing, tax collection, and other types of work, so women both provided material support and helped on a household level during their missionary journeys. Most of these women were married, and Mary was the only one identified in the text by the place of birth.

According to biblical scholar Andriy Desnytskyi: "Mary Magdalene was from Magdala, Capernaum near Galilee; she is a local single woman. In the Gospel, she is mentioned as a person with full rights on a par with men, and at that time, it was not easy." Only men became the twelve Apostles of Christ, as women at that time occupied a secondary place in the social, political, and family spheres. In Galilee in the East, women also played secondary roles, even rooms were divided separately for women and men; the women's rooms were closer to the housekeeping area. When women appear in the company of Christ, it becomes a sensation; it was the women who witnessed the crucifixion of Christ; the Mother of God, Mary Magdalene, the mother of John and James sons of Zebedee, were next to Christ. Of the disciples of Christ, only John remained with them, they all ran away because of fear. There were women from





Galilee, among them was Mary; women are also present during the burial; they also come to the tomb on the third day and are the first to learn about the Resurrection.

In all the Gospels, the information is different; somewhere it is noted that Mary comes alone to the Holy Sepulcher, in others – with companions. In the Gospel of Matthew, the women see Christ and prostrate themselves before Him; in the Gospel of John, Mary meets Him alone, and Jesus does not let her touch Him. As Christian Ekhut, theologian, Jerusalem, tells: "She saw a gardener and asked where the body of Christ had been laid, but the gardener turned out to be Christ; she did not recognize Him in the form of a gardener. Jesus explained that it was He, and He was going to go to the Father, and that she should not touch him. He ordered to go to the disciples and tell them that He was alive and would be waiting for them in Galilee. He ordered not to touch Him because He had not yet entered to the Father's, His and theirs. Mary goes to the disciples and informs that she saw the Lord, and that He resurrected and made her say this message.

All the authors of the Gospel agree on one thing: that Mary was the first to learn about the Resurrection of Christ and it was she who brought the Good News to the disciples. According to Bernardo Estrada, a professor from Rome: "This is the only woman whose name appears in all four Gospels; Apostle John mentions the Mother of God as the Mother of Christ, does not call her by name, but calls Mary Magdalene in full. Her key role is that she became the first eyewitness to the Resurrection of Christ and was the first to inform the disciples about it. Later, in the Lives of the Saints, women who were the first Christians, nuns, who lead a righteous way of life, will be glorified." Christianity says that a woman can be a woman and a great Christian. An interesting fact is that in the Middle Ages, Mary was called the "Apostle of the Apostles". Unfortunately, she did not leave any texts; she was identified with a stoned harlot, Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, as well as with a sinner who anointed Christ with "chrism".

According to Nikolay Nikishin, a priest from Paris, ...It was this sinner who washed Jesus' feet at Simon's meal. In the West, they revered this character and believed that it was Mary, and just her image became the iconographic one.

The image of Mary is quite multifaceted; she is depicted crying with a vessel in paintings and icons. A vessel of chrism became a symbol of apothecaries, and Mary became a symbol of penitents in prisons and penitent harlots in Europe.





Mary became a favorite saint of the middle Ages; her life became a bestseller, and she is also the patroness of gardening and gardeners. She is depicted in Titian's famous canvas; El Greco depicted Mary as a woman who repented and is looking at the sky. How did the fate of Mary develop after the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ?

According to tradition, she went from Jerusalem to pagan Rome, and when many did not believe in the Resurrection of the Lord, she claimed: "I've seen the Lord, He spoke to me." With this sermon, she traveled all over Italy; according to legend, she reached Roman emperor Tiberius. At that time, he lived on the island of Capri. According to Constantiano di Losi, a historian from the island of Capri: "Tiberius moved to the island of Capri in 26 AD and did not leave the island for 11 years; he lived at an altitude of 300 meters above sea level and felt safe; no one could get to him. He was famous for his cruelty and threw off a cliff those who did not satisfy him. Tiberius was quite a down-to-earth person; when Mary came to him with a sermon and told about the Resurrection of Christ, he needed proof, and Mary took an egg and said that Christ is risen, and the egg turned red. It is after this incident, according to legend, that everyone gives Easter eggs painted as a sign of the Resurrection of Christ and new life. Mary continued her preaching in Rome until the arrival of Apostle Paul and for two years after his departure. Apostle Paul mentions Mariam in the Epistle to the Romans: that she was a person who worked hard for us. Historians claim that later Mary settled in Ephesus, where the Virgin Mary and John the Theologian lived, and she died there.

According to Iryna Yazykova, an art critic, ...some question whether there were strong Christian communities in Ephesus. Apostle Paul preaches the word of God again; everything is very complicated with Ephesus, only guesses, there are no documentary confirmations.

It was from Ephesus that the veneration of Mary began on July 22, according to the Julian calendar – the day of memory of Mary Magdalene. Until the 6th century, Christians came to the Tomb of Mary. According to Nikolay Nikishin, an archpriest from Paris: "In the East, they say that she was in Ephesus, and in the West, they say that she was in the South of France." In 869, the Byzantine emperor Leo the Philosopher ordered to transfer the imperishable relics of St. Mary Magdalene from Ephesus to Constantinople, to the church of St. Lazarus. It is believed that during the Crusades, they were transported to Rome, where they lay in the temple of St. John Lateran. Later,





the church was consecrated in the name of Saint Mary Magdalene (Zinovieva et al., 2021).

According to another – Latin – version, during the persecution of Christians, Mary Magdalene, Martha and their brother Lazarus, escaping from persecution, reached the south of France, Provence, by sea, where they were washed ashore at the mouth of the Rhone, not far from Arles, in the town, which is now called Le Sainte-Marie-de-la-Mer (Lincoln et al., 2013).

In honor of St. Mary Magdalene, revered as the enlightener of Gaul and Francia, many churches and chapels were built in various regions of southern France in the early middle Ages. A majestic basilica, founded in 1096 in Wesel, also went down in history with the call of Abbot Bernard of Clairvaux to the Second Crusade. It was here in 1146 that he urged King Louis VII, Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine, knights and the people to march to the East to protect the Christian relics.

The cult of Mary Magdalene became especially widespread in the town of Rennes-le-Chateau in the province of Languedoc, where a large temple built in her honor was decorated with wonderful frescoes about the life of the saint. In the legends of Languedoc, Mary Magdalene is mentioned as "Mistress of the waters" and "Mary on the sea" (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Rennes-le-château

Source: <https://frenchtrip.ru/regions/languedoc-roussillon/rennes-le-chateau-ren-le-shato/>

The life of Mary Magdalene still excites the imagination of many scientists and writers. Let us recall at least Dan Brown's scandalous novel *The Da Vinci Code* (Brown, 2009). Its intrigue is based on the fact that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene and their descendants continued His lineage in Western Europe.



It can also be said that her mysterious image reflected the idea of the search for eternal femininity; no wonder, according to some legends, she was also the earthly incarnation of Sophia, the Wisdom of God.

Following Mary's example, among the first Christians, there were precisely women; pagan author of the 2nd century Celsus called it the Christian religion. Pope Gregory I in the 6th century called Mary "a great harlot", and after that they deprived her of the title "Apostle over the Apostles". In the Eastern Church, she has the title of Equal-to-the-Apostles Saint Mary Magdalene, the first witness of Christ's Resurrection.

As for Judas Iscariot, the traitor. Such an interesting pattern can be observed: apostle #1 is Peter (a good disciple), apostle #12 is Judas (a bad disciple); at that time, it was a very common name: a person from Kariot (a stranger), a person from another region. He was the treasurer; Jesus and the disciples needed somewhere to stay for the night, eat; Judas was responsible for the funds in this community. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Judas brought armed guards and betrayed Christ by kissing him for 30 pieces of silver.

Sacred history specialist Yiska Harani from Jaffa explains: "In the 1st century AD, 30 pieces of silver were equivalent to 5 average monthly wages. Judas was not just a greedy man; he was a treasurer by nature".

Artemio Vitores, a biblical scholar from Jerusalem, explains that according to the Gospel, Judas brought the guards and sold Jesus by kissing Him, showing his venality at that moment as well. "Then one of the twelve, whose name was Judas Iscariot, went to the high priests and said: "What do you want to give me so that I give Him to you?" They offered him thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he was looking for a good opportunity to betray him" (The Gospel of Matthew, n.d., Chapter 26, 14-16).

Ilya Hryts, a professor from Jerusalem, explains that the greatest sin of Judas is not that he sold, betrayed Jesus, but that he hanged himself and did not repent, as Peter and the other disciple-Apostles did, who also let Christ more than once down, but they repented, and Judas committed a terrible sin – he hanged himself.

Then Judas, who betrayed Him, when he saw that He was condemned, repented and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the high priests and elders. "I sinned," he said, "by betraying innocent blood." They answered: "What does that matter to us? You will see!" Then he threw the money into the shrine, went away and hanged himself. The high priests took that money and said: "It is not good to put it in the treasury, because it is the price of blood." After consulting, they bought a potter's field for them to bury strangers there. That is why this field is still called the Field of Blood. Then the word of the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled, which says: "And they took thirty pieces of silver, the price of who was estimated by the children of Israel, and gave





them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me". (The Gospel of Matthew, n.d., Chapter 27, 3-10).

It is believed that in each of the 12 Apostles, Jesus depicted character traits, temperaments, images of all humanity. After analyzing the characters and actions of the Apostles, one can recognize oneself in some of their actions and details (Morgan & Peterson, 2020).

Aceldama, Field of Blood, (Haceldama, Akeldama, Haki-ed-damm, from Aram. ܐܟܠܕܡܐ) – according to the New Testament, a plot of land in Jerusalem, bought for money received by Judas Iscariot from the high priests for betraying Jesus Christ.

Now it is a cemetery for pilgrims who come to Jerusalem for various holidays, to see Jerusalem, to visit the shrines. Sacred history specialist Yiska Harani of Jaffa says that in the New Testament, the 12 Apostles are a spectrum of human characters and conditions, from those who sleep in the Garden of Gethsemane instead of praying, to the type of Judas who betrays his Master. But Jesus washes the feet of Judas and gives everyone bread and spiritual food to save all mankind, from the first to the last one (Morgan & Peterson, 2020).



Figure 4. Aceldama
Source: M. Beer (n.d.).

4 CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

In the scientific paper, the authors tried to consider the pilgrimage routes of the holy Apostles from the point of view of the transformation of the path from its historical meaning in the form of a physical path to a means of modern types of communication. The paths of the holy Apostles in this article have a sacred and metaphorical meaning;





they go from physical simplicity to spiritual growth; of course, modern cinema has picked up this idea of the transformation of the paths and successfully recreated these events in Christian movies based on the Holy Scriptures. We can follow this by watching the movies "Paul, Apostle of Christ", "The Passion of the Christ", "The Ten Commandments", "The Kingdom of Heaven", "The Prince of Egypt", "The First Healed", "Man of God", "The Blessing of the Apostle Andrew", "Andrew the First- Called", "Apocalypse: Revelation of John the Theologian", "The Gospel of John", "Acts of the Apostles", "Quo Vadis?", "The Empire of Saint Peter", "Apostle Peter and the Last Supper", "Friends of Jesus – Thomas", "Road to Emmaus", "Paul: the Emissary", "Peter and Paul", "Apostle Paul: Miracle on the way to Damascus", "Pilgrimage to the Eternal City. Apostle Paul", "Mary Magdalene", "Mother of the Apostles", "Mary of Nazareth", documentary series "Apostles",

The twelve Apostles are a prototype of the entire Christian world and even of all humanity. In the images of the holy Apostles, which are depicted in the painting "The Last Supper", one can see the prototypes of all humanity. Leonardo da Vinci mysteriously depicted each Apostle from a spiritual point of view with his features, attitude towards the Teacher, even in the details of clothes, gestures, poses; the attitude toward Jesus, therefore toward spiritual life, is shown. The names of the pilgrimage routes are: "The Way of Sorrow" (Via Dolorosa), "The Way of St. James to Santiago de Compostela" (Camino de Santiago) (Chemin Français, n.d.). "The Sacred Way" (Via Sacra), "The Sad Way" (Via Dolorosa), "The Way of the Cross" (Via Crucis), "The Appian Way" (Via Appia), "The Lycian Trail," "The Saint Paul Trail".

"A path" is a metaphor, an exaggeration that leads to the world of art and culture, covers the entire cultural plane and contains this hyperbole in the form of "an eternal path and, accordingly, eternal search and movement". Pilgrimage, which contains a path, a road, journeys with a spiritual goal, is our new orientation and route, a new and at the same time an old form of something new, which is constantly transformed in the plane of new temporal challenges.

This work allows taking virtual trips to the world of beauty, spirituality, and harmony without leaving one's home, especially during the global pandemic or in the absence of physical, material opportunities, while sitting at a tablet and wearing headphones (postmodern format) and peering into the most remote corners of our Earth in search of the spiritual component of art and culture, listening to spiritual music and looking into virtual museums, exhibitions, theater productions or watching a feature or documentary





film about the way of St. James, the ways of St. Paul, rereading the Acts of the Apostles and recreating their routes focusing on the plane of modernity.

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