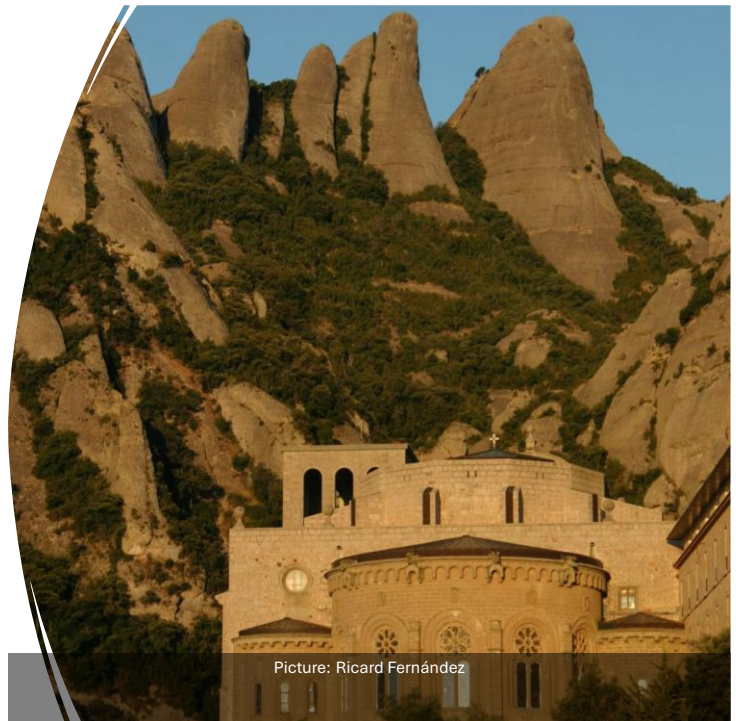




1

# 1. Introduction

- Sacred spaces transmit both cultural heritage and personal transformation.
- They embody tangible (monumental) and intangible (religious) values.
- Modern tourism challenges and reshapes their roles.



2

## 2. Theoretical Background

Eliade: Sacred/profane dichotomy, hierophany.

MacCannell: Authenticity, tourist gaze.

Transformative tourism: spaces as catalysts for inner change (Zahra & McIntosh, 2007; Willson et al., 2013).

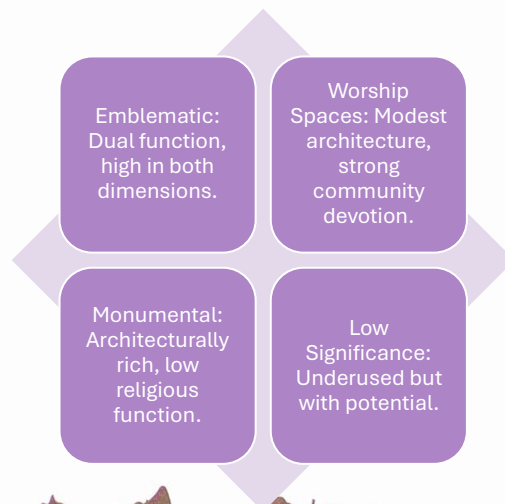
Visitor experience — spiritual, emotional, and reflective — central to sacredness.

3

## 3. Methodological Core: Catalonia Sacra



325 sites evaluated by tangible and intangible heritage (0–10 scale).



Goal: understand spiritual and cultural roles of sites.

4

#### 4. New perspective: Transformational Encounters

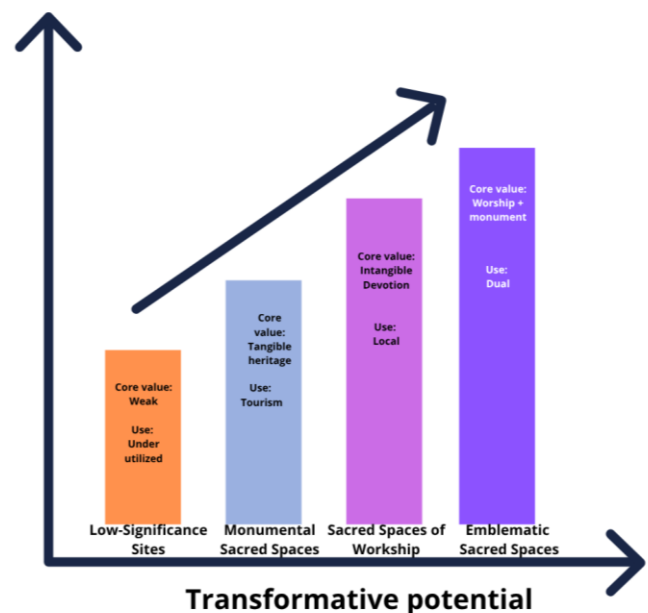
- Sites enable healing, peace, identity reflection.
- Function as liminal spaces — thresholds for change.
- Visitors report shifts in time perception, empathy, worldview.
- Transformative potential not limited to religious visitors.



5

#### 5. Results and analysis

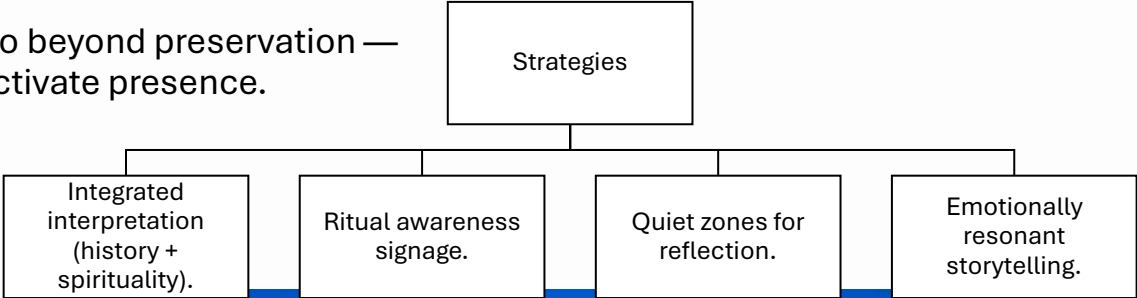
- All sites can be transformative if curated properly.
- Narrative, silence, symbolism deepen experience.
- Architecture or ritual alone are not enough — integration matters.



6

# 6. Experiential Heritage Management

Go beyond preservation — activate presence.



Picture: Ricard Fernández

7

# 7. Final Reflections

Sacred sites mediate between:

- Tradition and innovation
- Ritual and reflection
- Community and global visitors



Picture: Silvia Aulet

8





***"The sacred  
manifests itself as  
something wholly  
different — but deeply  
needed."***

**Mircea Eliade**

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