Lucrezia Lopez *Editor*

Geography of World Pilgrimages

Social, Cultural and Territorial Perspectives

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Contents

Chapter 1
Introduction: Geography of World Pilgrimages. Social, Cultural and Territorial Perspectives

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Abstract Since the beginning, geography studies on pilgrimages have diversified the topics of interest and their study approaches, thus confirming their progressive, and almost inevitable interdisciplinarity. As spatial phenomena, its study is located within a network connected with an increasingly complex environment. In fact, today it is possible to find pilgrimage research combining social, cultural and territorial perspectives. In any case, it should be noted that these approaches can be further declined in anthropological, sociological, economic and literary terms, among others. Thus, pilgrimage studies represent a well-established and multidisciplinary field of research. The diversity of themes corresponds to a methodological diversity, as depending on the interest, we find quantitative procedures or more qualitative techniques. From the spatial dimension to the subjective dimension, there are different study methodologies in pilgrimage studies which researchers are ready to try to deepen in this reality. Indeed, the sources of studies also vary, alternating more classical literary works with statistical sources, interviews and travel literature or travel diaries, empirical observation and so on. As a result of this different combination, the studies differ from one another, producing different conceptual proposals.

Keywords Geography of pilgrimages · Interdisciplinarity · Multiple research perspectives · Diverse study methodologies

There have been different definitions of the term pilgrimage throughout the years, although it could be said that the main feature is movement, by different means and at different scales (Arellano 2007; Scriven 2014). It is also important to highlight the spatial dimension of this type of journey that has connected countries and continents over time, thus determining routes and itineraries (of different distance and scale), stages and destinations (Coleman and Eade 2004; Scriven 2014).

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All great religions have their pilgrimages, generally based on the association of a God to a place or an object (Coleman 2007). The origins of pilgrimages can be found in cultures of the past, usually related to agricultural cycles, according to which the initiates (knowledge custodians) were responsible for the harvests and sanctuaries. According to the religious culture of the Middle Ages, life was a journey, and the pilgrimage was a mission to atone for one's sins; also, unlike other journeys, the pilgrimage was considered unidirectional (Dotras 1993). Pilgrimages had been forms of devotion since as early as the fourth century, but during the seventh century sacred places that allowed to venerate the relics of saints and their disciples proliferated. In Europe, the intention of the Church was to create a "network of sacred places" that would reinforce the Christian community throughout the West. Therefore, they undertook this European territorial organisation through the vertebration of pilgrimage routes, becoming axes that linked East and West within Western Christendom. In this "macroterritorial" project, religion was a sign of collective identity, meaning many local and individual phenomena became part of the major routes. Sanctuaries throughout Europe lost their autonomy and were integrated into the *major pilgrimages*: Santiago, Rome and Jerusalem. According to its symbolic denominations: the "Way of Christ" went to Palestine, the "Way of Man" led to the apostolic tombs in Rome and the "Milky Way" went to Santiago de Compostela and Finisterre. The endpoint of the three major pilgrimages were geospiritual centres, which fulfilled the religious necessity of getting closer to God, but also established a Christian dominance in the territory. During the Middle Ages, the pilgrimage developed new meanings, not only the divine meaning but as a collective sociological phenomenon (Barreiro Rivas 1997); it was also a way to overcome cultural, social and economic stagnation.

The pilgrimage became a subject of study for geography in the 1960s, first as a sub-branch of the geography of religions, and later became a subject of study in human geography, particularly within cultural geographies (Kong 2010; Scriven 2014). Furthermore, the pilgrimage has become a historical and geographical process whose development has also been linked to anthropological, sociological, economic, political factors, and, as we have found out recently, to health situations that affect international mobility (Lopez and Lois González 2021; Mróz 2021). No less relevant is the "mobility turn", which according to Maddrell (2011, p. 28) "has been useful in re-examining the nature of pilgrimage", hence pilgrimage studies have been leading the way in the "new mobility turn" of the social sciences (Hyndman-Rizk 2012). In addition, traditional religious pilgrimages (with routes that have become cultural itineraries with an increasingly international projection) are shared with post-contemporary pilgrimages that honour memories or tombs of national martyrs or commemorate the diaspora (*root-pilgrimage* or *diaspora tourism*) to recover the ethnic roots of a population (Basu 2004; Wagner 1997). Current religions and pilgrimages are based on cultural motivations and nationalist sentiments that continue to legitimise reality through new places of worship (Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2004; Scriven 2014).

The evolution and progressive maturity of the studies have revealed a change in trends over the years, from general approaches to approaches focused on the

complexity and specificity of the phenomena (Kong 2001; Scriven 2014). The geography of pilgrimage has been responsible for investigating spatial and experiential pilgrimage issues, in part as a result of the extensive use of the term pilgrimage in different secular contexts (Collins-Kreiner 2010). The proliferation of these new spaces is also due to the production of privatised religions, in which power resides in the individual and not in the transcendent (Farias and Lalljee 2008). Among them, it is worth mentioning the "New Age" movements, which from the 1960s and 1970s delved into the search for a new "self-spirituality" and the need for introspection (Arellano 2007; Digance 2003). Individuals were attracted by the New Age, because of its system of beliefs and magical practices, which gave meaning to unusual ideas and experiences (Farias et al. 2005). Emphasising the importance of autonomy and self-development, the New Age is an exemplary religion of modernity. Such a proliferation of movements and religions implies in several cases the need to share and move in the same spaces, where individuals with different motivations and internal attitudes meet (Chemin 2011). Hence, several pilgrimage studies address issues and problems associated with *sacred sites* and *secular sites*. Recent processes of transformation of pilgrimage spaces have raised a series of questions about their inclusive and hybrid character, in which different religious and non-religious expressions coexist (della Dora 2016). And hence, nature and the transformations of places play an important role in understanding the different feelings and attachments that are associated with these transforming spaces (Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2004).

Since the beginning, geography studies on pilgrimages have diversified the topics of interest and their study approaches, thus confirming their progressive, and almost inevitable interdisciplinarity. This is due to the fact that, as spatial phenomena refer, its study is located within a network connected with an increasingly complex environment. Above all, since the incorporation of a more secular vision, researchers have had to explore new possible relationships between disciplines, in order to dig deeper into the attractiveness of pilgrimages. Below are some of the topics of interest for the geography of pilgrimage, whose approaches have gone from more positivist and spatial, to more qualitative and subjective studies.

1. The geographical study of pilgrimages analyses the distribution and location of sacred and secular sites and the making of maps of pilgrims' mobility and means of transport (Bhardwaj 1997; Preston 1992).
2. Pilgrims' mobility creates spatial relationships and for this reason lead to analysis of distance and behaviour (Collins-Kreiner 2010; Stoddard and Morinis 1997). Pilgrimage routes articulate the territory by connecting or creating new spaces and organising them hierarchically (Stoddard and Morinis 1997). They are developed at different scales, and, in some cases, they become a space of intercultural and interreligious encounter.
3. Geographical research on pilgrimages deals with the evolution and spatial organisation of pilgrimage site activities, religious tradition and the characteristics of the journey (Stoddard and Morinis 1997).
4. Pilgrimages "force" the study of mobility because pilgrimages are displacements *to* and *from* places (Coleman and Eade 2004). They are space-temporal

movements (Morinis 1992) between two extreme points from a physical and concrete point of view (Stoddard 1997), or from a metaphysical-spiritual point of view (Coleman and Eade 2004), that is, symbolic.

5. In addition to being space phenomena, they are also intercultural phenomena: pilgrimages redirect the flow of commercial and cultural activities (Collins-Kreiner 2010), as confirmed by the historical evolution of the territories crossed by the different pilgrimage routes.

6. Pilgrimages redirect to a complex system of rituality, acts and practices (Holloway and Valins 2002; Wagner 1997). Initially, from the point of view of the geography of pilgrimage, the sacred space was considered a social space where the meanings, values, objectives and purposes of human action would have to be studied (Bhardwaj 1997). This space is created and produced continuously thanks to the pilgrims who are responsible for keeping its *existence* by resorting to the symbolic religious system, reiterating rites and practices that show their experience and the sacredness of the place (Campo 1998; McKevitt 1991).

7. Studying pilgrims and pilgrimages requires paying attention to the complex network of personal beliefs and self-identification, since from there, spaces and places of pilgrimage are created and renewed (Scriven 2014).

8. Pilgrimage is a social phenomenon related to other activities, including tourism (della Dora 2012) and well-being (Foley 2011; Williams 2010). In the first case, pilgrimage tourism has been consolidated as one of the areas of research with the greatest interest for tourism and religion (Nilsson and Tesfahuney 2017).

9. Pilgrimage is a transformative experience, enabled by the environment and rhythms different from those of everyday life (Nilsson and Tesfahuney 2019; Scriven 2014). The post-contemporary pilgrim seeks a unique and satisfying experience. As a transformative event, pilgrims' personal experiences, encounters and satisfaction are some of the most qualitative aspects of interest for the geography of pilgrimage. The intensity of this transformation and its traits are some of the attractions of post-contemporary pilgrimages.

10. The space of pilgrimage underlies changes and transformations that are also a consequence of motivational transformations of the post-secular pilgrim. In this regard, among the territorial aspects of the pilgrimage space, more and more attention is paid to the landscape, as a factor that participates in the experience of the pilgrimage.

11. The repositioning of interests from the spatial to the human dimension involves thoroughly investigating the meaning of the mobility of the pilgrim, a meaningful mobility, since "movements in and through a place define our engagement with it and help to constitute it as a place" (Spinney 2006, p. 709).

Pilgrimage studies represent a well-established and multidisciplinary field of research. The diversity of themes corresponds to a methodological diversity, as depending on the interest, we find quantitative procedures or more qualitative techniques. From the spatial dimension to the subjective dimension, there are different study methodologies in pilgrimage studies which researchers are ready to try to

deepen in this reality. Indeed, the sources of studies also vary, alternating more classical literary works with statistical sources, interviews and travel literature or travel diaries, empirical observation and so on (as can be seen in the chapters that make up this work). As a result of this different combination, the progress of case studies differs from one another, producing different conceptual proposals. The complexity and diversification of possible study approaches in the geography of pilgrimage confirms that pilgrimage is an attractive activity (Scriven 2014), and the territorial and social implications it presents are a great advantage to ensure its permanence over time.

The Aims and the Structure of the Book

This volume originated from the conviction that we are living in a phase of pilgrimage rebirth, as we will see throughout this work. Likewise, this progressive departure from a strictly religious vision has turned pilgrimages into more inclusive and open activities, in a reality more in tune with social and tourist trends, opening up to a global scale (Campo 1998; Lopez and Lois González 2021). In this current climate of anxiety and restlessness, reinforced by uncertainties caused by the pandemic or by the continuous threats of wars, the pilgrimage remains an escape route to externalise feelings and live new life experiences (Reader 1993). The general research questions to be answered are, therefore: how are pilgrimages changing on a global scale? How are the pilgrimage spaces (sacred and secular) changing? What trends do we have today? What are the new points of view today?

Considering that over the last few decades pilgrimage has aroused different academic interest, the aim of the present book entitled *Geography of World Pilgrimages. Social, Cultural and Territorial Perspectives* is to point out the interdisciplinary character of pilgrimage studies. In fact, today it is possible to find research combining social, cultural and territorial perspectives. In any case, it should be noted that these approaches can be further declined in anthropological, sociological, economic and literary terms, among others. The adjectives "social, cultural and territorial" have been expressly chosen as macrocategories of study, and although they are not exclusive, they are intertwined in a different way in the present work.

As aforementioned, and can be seen throughout the following pages, pilgrimage studies are closely related to mobility issues, even though it is a mobility with different typologies and at different scales. With regard to scale, this work aims to open a window on the international scene to appreciate the diversity of pilgrimages and of their meanings. Moreover, the aim of this international approach is to compare the current situation in other religions, and not only. Therefore, the work brings together research that presents the pilgrimage as a polysemic area, alternating more theoretical approaches and case studies to stimulate reflection and action. In order to offer a more up-to-date view, some research will present dynamics more linked to the pandemic, and other chapters will introduce new study perspectives and new destinations. The work is divided into three parts, each of which aims to address different interests

and approaches to the geography of pilgrimage, thus emphasising what is indicated above.

The first part, *Geography of Pilgrimages: Spatial Dynamics at Different Scale,* brings together studies and research that adopt an evident spatial approach, and whose case studies analyse sacred spaces located mainly in Europe. In this section, the central role of mobility and the theme of travel, understood as basic factors in establishing the spatial relationships that the authors present, should be noted.

Mariano Barbato pays special attention to the relationship between Marian sanctuaries and papal journeys. In his contribution, these sanctuaries are the nodes of papal pilgrimages. Therefore, he presents a series of papal journeys, pointing to reflections that highlight the importance of the communication policy of these pilgrimages. The communication of the journey, and the signs that these leave, is another aspect of great value, since they give meaning to a space that "after the papal journey" revalues the Marian pilgrimage. Physical space (the sacred space) and virtual space (the Internet) reinforce the relationships between pilgrimage and communication, ensuring the local memory of the journey.

Retief Müller presents the case study of a pilgrimage in South Africa, which, in his view, is a complex context due to the coexistence of different indigenous belief systems and ritual practices, as well as a political history that sometimes-had ritual tendencies, including the construction of nationalistic, pseudo-sacred sites and their related pilgrimage. In his diachronic and sociocultural analysis, he clarifies that his case study must be understood as one of other possible expressions and that, above all, it is placed in a culture that has had to adapt and reinvent itself taking into consideration past traditions and biblical narratives.

Antonietta Ivona uses the expression "network" to analyse the geography of pilgrimage in the southern Italian region of Apulia. In this border land, where land and sea routes cross, a meeting point between East and West, different pilgrimage itineraries have crossed it over time, thus delimiting a territory with its pilgrimage centres. Adopting a historical and territorial perspective, the objective of the text is to analyse how the geography of pilgrimage in a region rich with strategic ports for the embarkation and disembarkation of pilgrims, along with its traditional hospitality that has lasted until today, has changed.

The section concludes with Darius Liutikas, who presents an extensive review of the Christian sacred space and the material elements that reinforce and transmit this sacredness (Churches, monasteries, Calvaries, Grottos, crossroads, crucifixes and chapels). In addition, he proposes the application of these concepts to the main traditional Christian religious sanctuaries from a theoretical discussion. In fact, the author reviews the characterisation of the sacred Christian landscape in Europe, understanding that the development of the network of sanctuaries differs throughout the period: the landscape changes, and so does the value of its elements.

The aim of the second part, *Geography of Pilgrimages: Landscapes, Rituals and Embodiment*, is to highlight an increasingly important aspect of pilgrimages: the relationship with the environment, which is usually an inspiring landscape. The environment of the pilgrimage gains importance when it becomes the protagonist

of ritualised actions that strengthen the relationships between human beings and landscape, placing the process of embodiment at the centre of the debate.

In this regard, Richard Scriven analyses the case study of the pilgrimage of Lough Derg (Ireland) through a phenomenological geographical approach, which allows the importance of the interaction between space and body to be highlighted. The process of embodiment is at the centre of a pilgrimage that puts bodies in the foreground, allowing human experiences of and with the world. Body, spatial and spiritual experiences interact with each other to feed a pilgrimage based on embodied localised practices: fasting before the pilgrims reach the lake, walking barefoot, prayer rituals, vigils and liturgies, among others.

Also in Europe, Nanna NKD Jørgensen analyses the psychological geography and therapeutic topography of the Norwegian Way of St. Olav (Norway). The author presents the results of her doctoral research (and the fieldwork carried out) including the motivations, the processes (mental, physical, spiritual, social and sensory) experienced by the pilgrims, as well as the effects and the therapeutic benefits perceived by the people who have made this journey. Likewise, the results are explained considering therapeutic landscapes, relational ontology and the mobility turn.

In Cynthia Nkiruka Anyadi's contribution, the author analyses a little studied type of sacred mobility: funeral processions. They present aspects of the pilgrimage, including rites, practices and performances. Also in this case, concepts such as *liminality, communitas* and attachment are addressed. Hence, the contribution aims to investigate the dynamics of these sacred mobilities and their relationships with the self and with the landscape, addressing the elements that differentiate pilgrimages. As in the case of pilgrimages, funeral processions also produce an internal (experiential and bodily) and external change (perception and one's status within a wider social community).

Katsuyuki Takenaka focuses his research on the characterisation and valorisation of the Kumano Kodo Routes (Japan). Throughout the text, its importance as a cultural landscape, originally forged with the pilgrimage of the medieval nobility, dominates. The author traces the events of this cultural landscape, in which human beings have used the paths in different ways over time to organise the space they inhabit and feel part of it. The result is a landscape as an idealised model in the historical pilgrimage imagery, a place built on the experience of the pilgrims; and the way of life of the population that acts daily upon it.

In the chapter signed by Joel Palka, Josuhé Lozada Toledo and Ramón Folch González, the case study presented is the ritual landscape of the Maya pilgrimage (Mexico) from the past to the present. The historical events analysed by the authors explain the production of a ritual and cultural landscape, through which it is possible to interpret the relations of the Maya people with their divinities. To this end, the Maya people gave ritual and cultural value to places distant from their settlements, characterised by significant elements (such as mountains, caves, springs and cliffs) that would enable ritual communication and social relations with local spiritual forces. It is from this necessary communication with the gods that people have built many pilgrimage sanctuaries.

The third and final part of the volume concludes the previous reflections and approaches by presenting *Contemporary and Future Pilgrimage Directions*. This section introduces some current readings of the pilgrimage: planning and tourism, as the routes that cross a space in an increasingly globalised world are considered interterritorial resources that continue to register a growing mobility that needs management.

Lucrezia Lopez and Rubén C. Lois González present a case study referring to The Way of St. James (Spain), the main pilgrimage route in the world, that has undergone several changes throughout time, the most evident one being its secularisation, its changing motivations and, most of all, its consolidation as an alternative form of sustainable travel. Thus, the authors explore and detail the main transformations that are affecting The Way of St. James from a post-contemporary point of view, drawing on the profile of the "post-secular pilgrim". They advance a systematisation of the main changes of the Way that frame it into the category of an "infrasecular pilgrimage space", pointing out its dynamic cohabitation and coexistence of beliefs and values.

From Brazil, Lisandra L. Carvalho Passos and Mirian Rejowski explain the case of the Catholic pilgrimage Path of Faith, and the cultural and ecotouristic Way of Cora Carolina. The desire to make these two routes important territorial resources is inspired by the model of the Way of St. James which, as the authors will show, is very present in the current planning of some paths that provide different experiences for the pilgrim, whether hiker or cyclist. The result of their research introduces a Brazilian (re)invention of the pilgrim and the Way.

In her work, Rossella Moscarelli considers the case of another European cultural itinerary: the Via Francigena, and its path through Italy. Again, we are faced with an ancient, mostly religious pilgrimage that has undergone a process of secularisation and tourism. In the wake of the model of the Way of St. James, the pilgrimage route has become a secular tourist resource open to anyone who wants to embark on an experience of travel and discovery of the territory. In addition to presenting the richness and opportunities in terms of cultural and historical heritage of an ancient pilgrimage route, the author points out the need to plan and design a precise strategy to develop slow tourism projects.

Singh Rana P. B. and Rana Pravin S. propose a geography of the Hindu pilgrimage places (India) which, as in the case of other pilgrimages, establishes a participation in the spiritual realm, associated with the sacred land. In their view, the *sacredscapes* are at the same time *faithscapes*, in which material and immaterial dimensions are related in a taxonomy of places of pilgrimage. Likewise, the authors analyse the functioning, importance and role of Hindu pilgrimages, in relation to the historical context, the contemporary situation and perspectives relating to sustainability and pilgrim tourism, initiated by the government.

The main concern raised by Islam Elgammal in her chapter is the sustainability of pilgrimage; in fact, the author introduces a reflection raised from the restrictions and measures to prevent the spread of the virus in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. These considerations apply to the case of Saudi Arabia, where one of the biggest pilgrimages is held, and which when it coincided with the pandemic, recorded the highest number of COVID-19 infections in the Arab world. Since this moment,

measures have been implemented to manage mass meetings, marking a new model of Hajj pilgrimage management.

The case studies gathered in this work present different paths and routes of pilgrimage originated (and perhaps we could say created) in earlier times or as a result of more recent territorial planning. Despite this difference, they all act as a stage for the movement of people that does not cease. As presented in the pages of this volume, pilgrimages along routes of different origins and nature are spatial and social dynamics of the different continents, thus revealing a modus operandi of marked cultural character.

The results of the research collected here aim to reflect on how the contemporary mobile world is altering and re-signifying pilgrimage dynamics and meanings. It also points out how the term "pilgrimage" evokes key concepts deriving from different fields, all of which are collated in the final glossary. The general outcome is a proposal that introduces a comparative international breath to reflect upon such complex phenomenon that since ancient times still permeates the history of human being across the world. In conclusion, the work addresses the different facets of the geography of pilgrimage, a growing field of research and still has much potential for the future. From the spatial dimension to territorial planning, from cultural reading to the tourism implications, the departure from a strict spatial and religious conception of pilgrimage has provided the scientific community with new challenges in increasingly varied areas. Another of the differences that can be highlighted from this work is the different protagonism of space (understood in the broadest sense of the term), of the history and culture of a territory as factors that act in the configuration of a pilgrimage route, and, of course, of human action, both of the pilgrim and of other territorial actors who embrace pilgrimage spaces to meet their needs and realise their projects, adapting spaces, practices and behaviours to a changing scenario.

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Part I
Geography of Pilgrimages: Spatial Dynamics at Different Scale

Chapter 2
After the Journey. Marian Shrines as Spatial Nodes in Papal Pilgrimage and Communication

Mariano P. Barbato

Abstract Since Paul VI reinvented international papal journeys, popes are frequent travellers around the globe. The ability to attract large masses of pilgrims has become one of the most important tools for the pope to gain public attention and political influence. Marian shrines are among the most important destinations on the papal travel schedules. Some of the papal journeys are dedicated to Marian sites like the great pilgrim destinations Lourdes or Fatima. Other journeys use more regional, national or even local shrines as hubs for the popes to engage with pilgrims of one region. However, travelling is not everything. The shrines become spatial nods in a network of papal communication as they continue to provide a hub for papal messages after the journeys. Marian shrines are part of the virtual space of communication, they furnish their space with papal memories, and their messages continue to provide challenging opportunities for the popes to engage the public.

Keywords Pilgrimage · Communication · Pope · Marian Shrine · Catholicism

Introduction: Marian Shrines and Papal Pilgrims

Popes need to communicate constantly. Communication in its various forms is the mode through which popes are present in public (Barbato 2018; Pollard 2010; Schlott 2013). The Propaganda Fidei, established as a platform to contain the reformation, was an early starting point of the modern papal communication. From L'Osservatore Romano to the papal YouTube channel, from the nunciatures to digital diplomacy, the popes developed a wide-ranging network of communication.

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Papal pilgrimage is a key activity that attracts attention and provides opportunities for communication (Barbato 2020a; Lynch 2019). Marian sanctuaries rank high in the list of destinations for papal journeys. Pope John XXIII was the first pope after the fall of Rome in 1870 to leave the eternal city. At the beginning of the Second Vatican Council, he made a pilgrimage by train to Loreto, once the most important Marian shrine of the Papal States; during the same journey he visited also Assisi. Paul VI restarted papal international travelling by plane with global journeys to all continents. He visited the Marian shrines of the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth, Fatima, Ephesus, and Bonaria in Caligari, Sardinia. Since then, popes are frequent travellers and serial pilgrims to Marian destinations.

Marian shrines and papal pilgrimages have attracted pilgrims' and scholars' interest. The literature is thus impressive (Bennett 2012; Harris 1999; Hermkens et al. 2009; Kaufman 2005; Margry 2020; Zimdars-Swartz 2014). However, the reflection on the impact of the Marian shrines on papal communication only started to gain attention. The limited aim here is to contribute some preliminary thoughts to develop a research agenda of pilgrimage and communication by reflecting on some empirical examples of papal communication in relation to papal pilgrimage and Marian sanctuaries.

Travel communication does not only have to be understood as sermons and addresses to pilgrims during a papal visit. The journeys delve into a landscape and connect those lands to a wider network of communication. This connectivity creates nodal points of papal travelling and communication, which in turn create a global space of Marian devotion and papal influence. Three empirical case studies should help to develop a framework of analysis.

The first case gives an outline on papal Marian networking of the great Marian shrines. In May 2021, during the pandemic situation, Pope Francis invited to pray the rosary within a virtual global network of Marian shrines. Each day during May, one shrine was broadcasted to lead the global virtual rosary. The study of this network can shed light on the relation of papal travelling, virtual pilgrimage, and papal networking with Marian shrines and the selection of a global sample of Marian devotion. Methodologically, the analysis is based on a qualitatively contextualized quantitative internet research collecting data from the papal homepage of the prayer marathon.

The second case focuses on the durability of papal visibility at Marian shrines in a traditional Catholic landscape, the dioceses of Munster, Germany, and its neighbourhood. The question is here how papal travelling left a footprint on a Marian landscape and thereby allows the continuous encounter of Marian pilgrims with the popes. Based on a selection of the most important Marian shrines of the dioceses, the questions are probed if popes were there and if they have left footprints, direct or indirect, due to their visit or even without a visit. The qualitative research is based on field studies at the shrines conducted between 2019 and 2021.

The third case looks at Marian apparition sites with a political impact and how the popes are challenged but also supported by the seers. The focus is on apparition messages and spatial furnishing of the site, and how they relate to the popes. Two shrines, which are most different, are brought together to reflect on these challenges: Fatima in Portugal and Sievernich in Germany. While the first shrine is a major

destination with global outreach and a history of more than 100 years, the latter one is a small shrine with ongoing apparitions and growing attraction due to its prophetic messages. Both shrines are linked by their reactivity to the Russian-Ukrainian war. The study is based on field study in Sievernich and Fatima and on qualitative analysis of the messages of Sievernich.

Together these examples should inform a research agenda of travelling, communication, memory, and spatiality. Popes travel to interact with the people that flock together during their stay. However, they delve also into a landscape that is frequently visited by Marian pilgrims. The ongoing communication links those places with the popes by wide-ranging ways of communication, from internet events to spatial furnishing. Those nodal points come also with a message, which might challenge the papacy due to the authority which the seers drew from the apparitions. However, they provide the popes also with options to react to political crises.

Papal Pilgrimage and Virtual Rosary

The Catholic orbit has countless Marian shrines. Popes concentrate their travelling on major Marian destinations, but sometimes they also visit remote unknown shrines to pay tribute to a landscape and its people and interact with them.

Pope Francis proclaimed the importance of the periphery. However, his predecessors also visited remote places. Pope Benedict XVI, for instance, visited the very remote shrine of Etzelsbach in Eichsfeld that belongs to the previously communist-ruled part of Germany, in order to honour the resistance of the Catholic population of that region. This produced a memorial landscape that tries to attract visitors by memorizing the papal visit (Barbato 2020b, pp. 252–254).

Despite such interactions with the periphery, the nodal points of the papal landscape of Marian shrines correspond with the major shrines. However, contingencies of networking seem to play a major role, too. There is no direct and determining causal relationship of being a major site and becoming a nodal point for the papacy. As an illustrative case, a virtual papal rosary prayer during the Covid pandemic is presented here to show how major sites, most of which have received papal visits, are integrated into the virtual landscape of communication.

Major Shrines and Papal Visits

To get the virtual pilgrimage of Marian Catholics and popes (Kratochvíl 2021; Löffler 2021) into context, an overview of Marian shrines and papal travelling seems to be in order. The major shrines devoted to the veneration of the Virgin Mary measured in the numbers of pilgrims—these numbers are always rough estimates—are Guadelupe in Mexico and Aparecida in Brazil. Both traditions go back to the sixteenth and seventeenth century. While the miracle that established Aparecida is based on the

agency of a man-made Marian statue that requested where it wanted to be placed for veneration, Guadelupe is based on an apparition. John Paul II (1980 Aparecida, 1979 and 1999 Guadelupe), Benedict XVI (2007 Aparecida, 2011 Guadelupe), and Francis (2013 Aparecida, 2016 Guadelupe) visited both shrines.

In Europe, the most important shrines are based on apparitions, while the major regional shrines are related to old traditions of miraculous icons and statutes. Fatima, established in the first half of the twentieth century, is the shrine that has been visited most frequently by pilgrims and popes. Paul VI was there in 1967, John Paul II in 1982, 1991, and 2000, Benedict XVI in 2010, and Francis in 2017. Lourdes, established in the second half of the nineteenth century, is almost as important for popes and pilgrims: John Paul II was here in 1983 and 2004, Benedict XVI in 2008. Both shrines are crucial for the public impact of Catholic mass pilgrimage as contestations of a secular modernity. They stand for a great wave of Marian apparitions that swept over Europe in high modernity.

Two other shrines represent the attraction of regional and more traditional shrines for popes and pilgrims. Loreto in Italy, located in the former territory of the Papal State, is a kind of local papal Marian sanctuary, regularly visited by the popes since John XXIII. The sanctuary is famous for the House of Mary, miraculously transferred to Italy from the Holy Land, and a major pilgrim destination in Italy, for global pilgrims, tourists, and Italians.

Of course, Rome itself has many Marian shrines. Santa Maria Maggiore counts as the site of the oldest Marian devotion in the West. On the top of the hill of the Vatican Gardens a Lourdes Grotto has been erected under the pontificates of Leo XIII and Pio XI.

A site of national Polish pilgrimage, but also with attractiveness for European pilgrims, is Jasna Gora, the White Mountain of Częstochowa. John Paul II established the site as a major papal destination, Benedict XVI and Francis followed.

Almost all European nations have their national or regional shrines of Marian devotions and the popes frequently visit those shrines during papal visits of the countries.

Currently, Medjugorje in Bosnia Herzegovina is the most active Marian shrine with probably the most important impact on European Catholicism. A final judgement of the Church concerning the apparitions has not been made, but due to the massive impact and the constant flow of pilgrims since the 1980s, Pope Francis established a pilgrimage regime that allows the integration of the site into a papal orbit. However, a papal visit is still not possible as this would anticipate the final papal acknowledgement of the apparitions.

Also, the churches of Asia and Africa have their Marian sites and shrines. Our Lady of Good Health in Vailankanni, Tamil Nadu, India, is an old apparition site which attracts annually millions of visitors but, so far, no papal visit.

The most prominent African Marian apparition site is Kibeo in Rwanda, which is acknowledged by the Church but not visited by a pope. John Paul II blessed, however, the first stone of the National Marian Shrine of Abidjan, Ivory Coast, where the Virgin Mary is venerated as Our Lady of Africa. In Ivory Coast, he also consecrated the Basilica of Our Lady of Peace in Yamoussoukrom, the largest church

of Africa. Africa has many other Marian shrines but African pilgrimage is due to lacking infrastructure still more locally structured.

While in Africa Catholic mass mobilization is possible, this is less the case in Asia apart from Catholic strongholds in India or in the Philippines, the only Asian country with a Catholic majority, where an archipelago of important shrines structures the Marian landscape. Travelling popes find a well-established infrastructure in Europe and the Americas, when they visit Marian shrines. This is less the case in Africa and Asia. Due to these reasons, the dense network of Marian shrines is still located in Europe and, to a lesser extent, in the Americas.

The Virtual Rosary of Marian Nodal Points

The Covid crisis hit hard on the pilgrimage schedule of the pope and papal and Marian pilgrims as travel restrictions and prohibitive regulations of mass gatherings made travelling impossible. Among various attempts to find alternatives, Pope Francis called for a hybrid rosary marathon to pray for an end of the pandemic in May 2021 (Vatican News 2021). Connected virtually by streaming on YouTube, each day of the month another Marian sanctuary prayed the rosary and invited the Catholic world to join virtually in prayer. This spiritual event of Marian piety was also an opportunity to present the global landscape of Marian shrines and the papal Marian network of shrines linked to Rome. As Fig. 2.1 indicates, most of the shrines were in Europe.

A total of 15 shrines out of 31, almost fifty percent, were located in Europe, among them the Vatican is included twice. Eight shrines were located in Asia, six in America. Two shrines are in Africa, one in Oceania, more precisely Australia. The European bias indicates the long-standing Catholic Marian tradition in Europe,
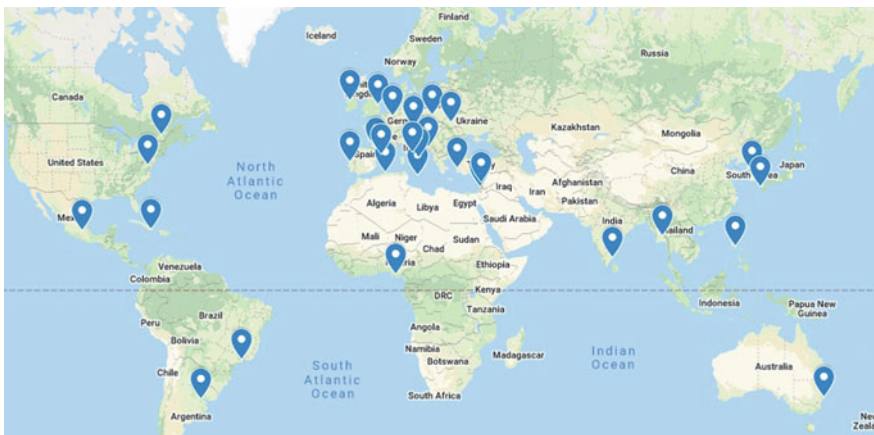
Fig. 2.1 World map of virtual rosary, May 2021. *Source* Author based on Vatican news data and Google Maps

but also contingencies of papal Marian networks and, given the variation of the approaches to contain the pandemic situation and ascribe importance to it, and the specific case.

The link of papal travelling and papal networking can be illustrated to a certain extent by the match of participation of the marathon and a former visit of the pope. All American shrines which joined the rosary marathon with the pope were visited by at least one pope before. St. Mary Cathedral, Sydney, who represented Oceania, has been visited by John Paul II and by Benedict XVI during World Youth Day 2008. All European sites were also visited by popes, apart from Medjugorje and Walsingham, England. The integration of Medjugorje indicates its new status as a papal Marian shrine and to some degree also with regards to the authenticity of the apparition. Walsingham in England is a remote and smaller place of veneration with a history of persecution and destruction of the Roman Catholic Church by the Anglican Church. John Paul II did not visit the sanctuary during his first visit in England 1982, the first of a pope since the spilt of the Anglican Church from Rome, but placed the current icon on the altar during his mass in Wembley station. The Asian sites of the Middle East were visited by popes, however, those from East and Southeast Asia were not, apart from the Nagasaki Cathedral, which is also a memorial site due to its nuclear destruction 1945. None of the two African sites, in Algeria and in Nigeria, have been visited by popes before. Asian and African Marian landscape are in flux and have difficulties to integrate the shrines in their papal network. Even major sites like Kibeo were not integrated. America and Europe have an established and well-structured landscape, in which, however, Europe still can dominate. Latin America, for instance, has much more Marian sites, which were also visited by popes, which could have been participating within the prayer marathon but did not.

Table 2.1 lists all shrines which participated in the virtual rosary and marks if they have been visited by a pope (last visiting pope) and can count as a major destination (estimate of 1 million annual visitors or more for the Marian sanctuary). As the table indicates, being a major site and having been visited by a pope makes it more likely to be integrated in the network of nodal points that became visible in the virtual rosary. However, the popes seem to have no comprehensive or systematic approach to structure the network of nodal points accordingly. Many major sites which have been visited by popes were not integrated while less important shrines never visited by popes participated in the virtual rosary. Contingency might play a role. There is no significant correlation for a minor shrine to be integrated if a pope has visited the shrine: Five out of eleven minor sanctuaries have been visited by a pope. Three major shrines participated which no pope has visited before: Medjugorje, the leading ongoing apparition site, made its way slowly into the papal connectivity, and Asia's two major shrines: The Basilica of Our Lady of Health, Vailankanni, India and Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage in Antipolo, which has been declared by the Vatican as the first international shrines of the Philippines in 2022.

The virtual space of the papal rosary event during the pandemic crisis has an overlap with the spatial network of Marian shrines. However, the virtual space does not mirror the nodal points of global and papal pilgrimage to Marian shrines. It added an opportunity to show, as Pope Francis often proclaimed, the importance of

Table 2.1 Virtual rosary May 2021, without Vatican Sites

	Name of the Shrine	Papal visit	Major/minor
1	The Catholic National Shrine and Basilica of Our Lady, Walsingham, England	None	Minor
2	The Sanctuary of Jesus the Saviour and Mother Mary, Elele, Nigeria	None	Minor
3	The Monastery of Jasna Góra, Częstochowa, Poland	Francis	Major
4	The Basilica of the Annunciation, Nazareth, Israel	Francis	Major
5	The Shrine of our Lady of the Rosary, Namyang, South Korea	None	Minor
6	The National Shrine of Our Lady of Aparecida, Aparecida, Brazil	Francis	Major
7	Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage, Antipolo, Philippines	None	Major
8	The Basilica Our Lady, Luján, Argentina	John Paul II	Major
9	The Basilica of the Holy House, Loreto, Italy	Francis	Major
10	The Sanctuary of Our Lady, Knock, Ireland	Francis	Major
11	Virgin of the Poor, Banneux, Belgium	None	Minor
12	The Basilica of Our Lady of Africa, Algiers, Algeria	None	Minor
13	The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fátima, Portugal	Francis	Major
14	Our Lady of Health, Vailankanni, India	None	Major
15	Our Lady of Peace, Medjugorje, Bosnia	None	Major
16	Immaculate Mother of God, Help of Christians, Sydney, Australia	Benedict XVI	Minor
17	The National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C., USA	Francis	Major
18	The Sanctuary of Our Lady, Lourdes, France	Benedict XVI	Major
19	Mother Mary's House, Ephesus, Turkey	Benedict XVI	Major
20	The National Shrine Basilica of Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre, Santiago de Cuba, Cuba	Francis	Major
21	Immaculate Conception Cathedral, Nagasaki, Japan	Francis	Minor
22	Santa Maria de Montserra, Montserrat, Spain	John Paul II	Minor
23	The Basilica of Notre-Dame-du-Cap, Trois-Rivières, Canada	John Paul II	Minor
24	Our Lady of Lourdes, Nyaunglebin, Myanmar	Francis	Minor
25	The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Blessed Virgin of Ta' Pinu, Għarb, Malta	Francis (postponed and made after the virtual rosary)	Minor

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

	Name of the Shrine	Papal visit	Major/minor
26	The Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mexico-City, Mexico	Francis	Major
27	The Shrine of the Mother of God, Zarvanytsia, Ukraine	John Paul II	Major
28	Black Madonna, Altötting), Germany	Pope Benedict XVI	Major
29	The Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon, Harissa, Lebanon	Pope Benedict XVI	Major
30	The Pontifical Shrine of the Blessed Virgin of the Holy Rosary, Pompeii, Italy	Pope Francis	Major

Source Author based on Vatican News Data

the periphery, even though most of the shrines were still European or part of the network of major shrines. The virtual space of the papal rosary allowed to develop the connectivity of the centre and the periphery.

Marian Shrines of Munster and Its Neighbourhood

The Marian landscape is a global space, but its laguna is composed of many regional landscapes. The diocese of Munster serves here as a case to illustrate such a regional Marian landscape and the impact popes can have on it through travelling. Established in 800 by Pope Leo III, the diocese of Munster has a long and eventful history. Illustrative is the area also due to its diverse denominational setting. Broadly speaking, Germany is today divided in a Protestant North and East and a Catholic West and South.

Munster is an interesting case as it lies, divided in two non-contiguous parts, in the northwest of Germany where very Catholic neighbourhoods of the West are located right next to extreme diaspora areas of the North (Fig. 2.2).

In its Northern part, a Northwestern stronghold of German Catholicism lies in the direct vicinity of diaspora areas. The most northern Marian sanctuary is located here: Bethen, part of Cloppenburg. To the west of this part, in the Osnabrück diocese, lies the Emsland region, with one of the highest percentages of Catholics in Germany. Here one can find Heede, one out of several non-approved Marian apparition sites of Germany, a country where no Marian apparition has ever been officially acknowledged.

The Southern part of Munster is part of the Western Catholic heartland of Germany. Kevelaer, the most important Marian shrine of Germany apart from Altötting in Bavaria lies here. Telgte and Werl are also important shrines with an impact beyond the region. Eggenrode and Warendorf are selected as they belong to the several shrines with a more local tradition. Eggerode is a small village part of Schöppingen, in the
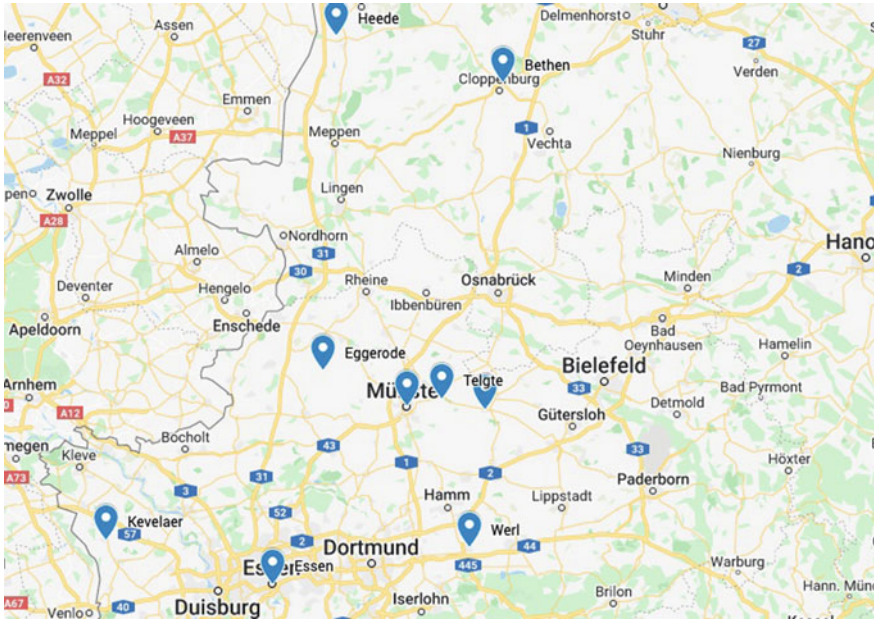
Fig. 2.2 Marian Shrines of Munster and its Neighbourhood, 2022. *Source* Author based on google maps

rural and traditionally very Catholic County (Landkreis) of Borken, while Warendorf is a town and the administrative centre of a county named after the town.

South of Munster, is the diocese of Essen, erected by the end of the 1950s but also with a long tradition. In Essen Abbey, now the bishop's church of Essen, the Golden Madonna is venerated, the oldest known sculpture of the Virgin Mary, a wooden plastic covered in gold and made around 980.

Given the latest trends of secularization, Catholicism is in decline in the diocese and the area. Thus, this area brings everything together a long-standing Catholic landscape can have. It can shed a light on the question if papal visits and papal networking have a durable impact on the shrines itself. Visits to these shrines were made in order to see if papal interaction left some marks on the stones of the shrines and if a Marian papal network has emerged. The result is mixed and telling.

Table 2.2 enumerates the shrines and indicates if a pope visited the shrine in modern times and papal traces are visible at the location. Not many of the shrines have been visited by a pope and visits did not necessarily have a continuing impact. Pope Benedict XVI once was professor in Munster and visited also later as Cardinal shrines of the area but never returned as pope. John Paul II visited Munster, Kevelaer, and Essen. As pope, Francis, who studied in Germany, has not visited the country. However, he has promoted the Augsburg icon—Mary Untying the Knots (Barbato 2017, p. 373).

Table 2.2 Marian shrines in Munster and its neighbourhood

Name of the Shrine	Papal visit	Papal traces
Munster	1987	Yes, prominent related to visit at tomb of Cardinal von Galen
Essen	1987	Yes, but marginal and not related to visit but to erection of the Dioceses
Kevelaer	1987	Yes, prominent related to visit and other
Werl	–	Yes, prominent related to Basilica Minor
Hede	–	Yes, Basilica Minor, prominent other
Bethen	–	Yes, prominent other
Telgte	–	–
Eggerode	–	–
Warendorf	–	–

Source Author

John Paul II travelled the region during his second visit to Germany in spring 1987. The dome of Munster itself is not a Marian shrine as such. John Pope II came to Munster in order to visit the grave of Blessed bishop Cardinal Clemens von Galen. The papal visit is prominently remembered at the grave.

John Paul II visited also Essen during his stay. He celebrated mass in the Gelsenkirchen Parkstadion, a huge soccer arena, but he also came to the city centre of Essen, the Burgplatz, next to the bishop church, where he gave an address. In this address, he remembered the Golden Madonna. The sculpture is venerated at the dome. However, the place-makers of Essen seem not particularly keen on supporting the Marian icon. Apart from its exhibition, no supportive activities or additional street furniture in- or outside the church is presented. The furniture presented around the dome are aiming at memorizing the history of the Church of Essen instead. The most important issue is, however, not the papal visit, the Marian icon or the old Catholic tradition of the place, but the newly erected diocese dating only back to the pontificate of Pius XII, more precisely 1958. Due to this erection of the dioceses in his pontificate, Pius XII is memorized. However, these papal traces in the cloister behind the dome are not very visible in contrast to the celebrated first bishop of the dioceses, Franz Hengsbach, who is memorized by a colourful larger-than-life statue right in front of the dome. The visit of John Paul II is not remembered at all.

This reluctance to show a strong bond to the papacy stands in contrast to Kevelaer, the most important Marian shrine of the region. The sanctuary there maintains a close relationship with the papacy in its ecclesiastical art. Here, the papal visit left a trace almost literally. A memorial plaque is embedded on the pavement directly in front of the shrine (Fig. 2.3). Papal motifs are also part of the main church's interior.

Hede is located in the Osnabrück neighbourhood of the northern part of Munster and belongs to the rural area of the Emsland which is a Catholic stronghold within a more Protestant Northern landscape. The Marian shrine of Heede dates back to an unapproved apparition in the context of Catholic resistance to Nazism.

Fig. 2.3 Kevelaer, Memorial of the Visit of John Paul II in 1987 as traces on the street in front of the sanctuary, 2019. *Source* Author

Although the apparition has not been recognized by the Church, it is recognized as a place of worship. A large church with park-like grounds was built, which includes the old graveyard where the seer is buried. John Paul II did not visit this Marian shrine and did not support its apparition. However, his larger-than-life statue stands prominently in the park and is included in processions. His devotion to Mary is emphasized by the heraldic motto (Totus Tuus is translated in Totally yours Mary) and the rosary in his hand. The statue is also embedded in the rosary motifs of the Marian theme park, so that the rosary worshipers in the park can understand themselves as under the pope's prayer leadership.

Werl is a shrine at the Southern border of the dioceses of Munster and a major sanctuary of the region. It belongs to the dioceses of Paderborn but the website of the dioceses of Munster lists it among the sites of its own dioceses (Münster 2022) which indicates the close relationship beyond borders of dioceses and the attractivity of the shrine. It dates back to the Catholic reform after the reformation. No pope ever visited the shrine but Pius XII made it a basilica minor, which is one way of the papacy to express veneration and connectivity. The usual way to show the status of a papal basilica minor is to place the coat of arms of the sitting pope on a more or less prominent place next to the entrance. The papal approval was highly appreciated in Werl. The courtyard walls, which generously enclose the entrance area, are decorated with the coats of arms of the popes since the church was elevated

Fig. 2.4 Papal Coat of Arms in the Yard of the Werl Sanctuary, 2021. *Source* Author

to the basilica minor (Fig. 2.4). There are many papal basilicas minor but only a few of them might collect the papal coat of arms and display them prominently. Werl also participated in the extraordinary year of mercy celebrated by Pope Francis in 2015/ 2016. Then, the pope also invited shrines worldwide to open a Holy Door in order to allow devotees to receive indulgence close to home. Werl did so by decorating a side entrance accordingly. This decoration remained.[1]

Bethen, part of the city of Cloppenburg, is a Marian shrine in the centre of the Northern part of the dioceses of Munster. It is the centre of a Catholic stronghold in the Northern diaspora. It is a place of worship that upholds the memory of German history by commemorating particularly the dead of the First World War, which dates back to the interwar period. However, it is also a lively place of the current Catholic landscape of Germany which is in the diaspora of the north also a migrant community. Bethen is a place where the Catholic language communities of non-German mother tongue from the big cities of the North can come together for a pilgrimage. Bethen is, like Werl, a papal basilica minor, elevated by Paul VI in 1977. The visitors of the mass look up to a picture of Pope Francis, which hangs large and prominently above

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[1] Munster and Telgte participated, too. Munster even constructed a new side entrance, but they do not keep the memory alive.

one of the side entrances to the right of the chancel. Such a picture arrangement would be more expected for a canonized pope and hardly for a reigning pope, or at least it is very unusual. In any case, it expresses a particularly great attachment to the papacy.

Telgte is a prominent Marian shrine of the dioceses and close to Munster. No popes have been there, it's not a papal basilica minor and papal traces are not visible. Warendorf celebrates a large pilgrimage festival around the date of the Assumption of Mary, completely without papal references. Also, the smaller regional sanctuary of Eggerode goes well without a special relationship to the papacy.

These examples show that a journey to a shrine can even be less effective than the much easier elevation of a shrine to a basilica minor. Regional or local shrines rarely show an interest in the papal connectivity. In the case of Essen, the papal visit did not pay in the long run. Papal visit and Marian sanctuary were overridden by the bishop's interest to support the newly erected dioceses. Time will tell if this was a successful strategy. Church membership has more than halved since 1958, from 1.5 million to 700,000 in 2021. Werl's Marian sanctuary, in contrast, is even independent from the local parish and can concentrate on the Marian pilgrim alone. Papal connectivity might work here well. Nevertheless, the impact of secularization and a shrinking attractivity to pilgrims is also visible there. The papal connectivity is no automatic mechanism for Catholic resilience, but the landscape of Munster and its neighbourhood indicates that papal interaction left durable traces which do not easily vanish under the impact of secularization.

Fatima and Sievernich

Fatima is a globally known and established site of Marian pilgrimage in Portugal with a history of more than 100 years (Barbato 2021a; Bennett 2012). Since Paul VI, all popes have visited the shrine. Pope Francis canonized Jacinta and Francisco, the two seers who died shortly after the apparition at a young age. In contrast, Sievernich is a small and rather new site of Marian devotion in Germany, not known beyond a small, however growing, circle of devotees (Hesemann 2022; Zander 2011). The two sites could be used for a comparison of most different cases. However, they have one aspect in common, which generated an ambivalent impact for papal policies: Both sanctuaries are based on apparitions, their messages criticize developments within Church and politics, and warn about chastisement. The Fatima case is well-known. Three children, Lucia, Jacinta, and Franciso, had several public apparitions. The last apparition in October 1917 was witnessed a vast crowd. The "Mirical of the Sun" made the site together with prophecies and warnings into one of the most famous shrines of the Catholic Marian landscape. Regarding Sievernich further analysis of its background is necessary.

Sievernich

Sievernich is, like Fatima in its beginning, a small village. It is located in the countryside on the Western banks of the Rhine. The place is small but dates back long in history, including memories of the Battle of Tolbiac, due to which the Frankish king Clovis I who prayed to the God of his Catholic wife in a desperate situation became baptized and laid the foundation for Catholic Europe North of the Alps. The path which Charlemagne used to travel his lands leads through the village, too. This information is taken from a local notice board near the shrine. The path is proudly marked with seesaws. However, after these dates of the Early Medieval period history happened elsewhere. Apart from some quarrels about belonging to one area or the other, including a French occupation under Napoleon Bonaparte—the most beautiful house of the village is a small French town hall—and the shelling at the end of World War II, which destroyed a few old farm houses but left the character of the village untouched, rural life continued only changed by technical innovations. Then, Manuela Strack (born 1967), a housewife from nearby Düren who had already an apparition at child age during a pilgrimage with her parents in Banneux, came to Sievernich. From 2000 to 2005, she had regular apparitions there which attracted thousands of visitors.[2] The messages were in accordance with the baseline of Marian apparitions like those in Fatima about praying the rosary in order to avoid chastisement and the call to turn back to God. In particular, the messages centre around the Eucharist and warned that a plotting within the Church might threaten the proper celebration of the Eucharist. In 2004, a Eucharistic miracle happened which has been experienced by several people who were part of the prayer community. The seer met the later Pope Benedict XVI at the Campo Santo Teutonico in Rome. After those years, the apparition stopped, the prayer group around Manuela Strack, however, continued (Zander 2004).

In 2018, a new series of apparitions started (Hesemann 2022). Already in the first series, the Virgin Mary was not alone. Angels, saints, and also Jesus Christ appeared. In the current apparition series saints and angels appear, too. On 3 March 2022, when the field study was done, the Archangel Michael appeared according to the seer's proclamation at the construction site of the prayer group's house of mercy, bringing warnings but presenting himself also as the patron of Europe. All these messages can be read online at the website.

The new series is, however, dominated by the apparition of Jesus Christ as the Infant Jesus of Prague. The form of the infancy is explained as a hint to the evil of abortion. The apparitions are clearly contextualized in the ongoing struggles within

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[2] This data is taken from the website of the seer and her supports. Förderverein Gebets- und Begegnungsstätte Sievernich e.V.: https://maria-die-makellose.de/kontakt.html. The website is in German. However, information considered as important are also provided in Dutch (border region), Spanish, English, French, Slovenian, Polish, Italian, Croatian, and Hungarian. See also Hesemann (2022) and Zander (2011).

the Catholic Church if and how the Church has to be reformed. The messages of the apparitions strongly oppose any of the reforms discussed and asked for a return to the old faith. Usually, the apparitions happen on the 25th of each month, but also on irregular dates.

The War in Ukraine, Marian Messages, and Papal Options

The messages gained broader public attention, at least in circles of Marian devotion, when the disastrous flood of summer 2021 was forecasted a few days before it happened. The site is close to the region and its rivers but was spared by the disaster (Hesemann 2022).

An additional alarming prophecy was proclaimed in April 2021 during the first build-up of Russian troops at the Ukrainian border. On Sunday, 25th of April 2021, the seer saw the infant Jesus pointing at Russia, the Ukraine, the USA and Europe, which is presented like being one country. The seer's website, regularly updated after an apparition with a message, presented the seer's description:

> When the priest raised the chalice of the Precious Blood of Christ, I saw the Child Jesus hovering over the chalice. He dipped His scepter into the priest's chalice like an aspergill and sprinkled some countries of the earth, which I now saw arranged around the priest's chalice. They were Russia, Ukraine, America (USA), Europe. It sprinkled each country three times and had an eager expression on its face. When I received the Holy Host, it beat like a heart three times in my mouth. I worshipped the Lord […]
>
> Many people do not understand Me. Worried about their lives, they do not realize how Satan is trying to lead them into a war. This spark of the adversary could ignite the whole world. That is why I desire indemnity from you. This spark of all evil can become a scourge for the entire earth. Pray, sacrifice, repent, make amends. (Förderverein Gebets- und Begegnungsstätte Sievernich EV 2021)

In this perspective, the Russian-Ukrainian war became part of a metaphysical scenery in which the devil is seducing people to fight each other. In contrast to some conservative fractions, Putin's Russia is not presented as a remedy but as part of the problem. The remedy is a metaphysical return to God which means giving up the reform agenda more progressive fractions of the Catholic Church hold dear. During the same apparition, a public act of German Catholic priests and parishes in support of same sex marriage and in disobedience to the papacy was sharply criticized.

The relationship between the seer and her supporters with the local parish was good until spring 2022 when the warning of a severe chastisement was propagated by the seer. It soured afterwards. As it was announced at the prayer during the field study at 5th of March and later on the website, the parish priest left the prayer group's steering committee and withdrew parish support. The apparitions continued to attract people who are in an uneasy relationship with the reformist bishops of the Catholic Church in Germany. Rome has not reacted to the activities in Sievernich so far.

Pope Francis reacted with a strong gesture to the Russian-Ukrainian war, not based on Sievernich but on Fatima. On 25 March 2022, the Solemnity of the Annunciation, Pope Francis responded to the request of the Catholic bishops of Ukraine to make a Marian consecration of Russia in accordance with the message of Fatima to end the war (Francis 2022a, 2022b). Such a consecration has already been carried out several times by Popes Pius XII and John Paul II. However, not even John Paul II dared to mention Russia by name out of diplomatic consideration for Russian Orthodoxy. Each time the consecration was carried out as a consecration of the world; in the case of Pius XII Russia was paraphrased. The clear naming of Russia with the inclusion of Ukraine, which is also Orthodox dominated, marked a break in church policy. Francis recognized the opportunity to send a strong religious-political and diplomatic signal with a religious gesture and did not hesitate to put aside century-old concerns (Barbato 2021a).

It is a well-established argument that Marian apparitions attract attention during turmoil and crisis. But how can the papacy react to this challenge? Usually, visionaries and messages are initially ignored by the church, like today in the case of Sievernich. If the attraction to the site causes a mass mobilization the papacy has to react. In support with the local bishop, the apparition has to be approved or disapproved. As it can be studied in the case of Fatima, the popes have the opportunity to develop a relationship at least to a certain extend under their control. Until now, the popes did not dare to speak about Russia due to diplomatic reasoning towards the Russian Orthodox Church. When the Russian patriarch was more or less isolated within the Orthodox community due to his support of the war, Pope Francis acted.

The message of Fatima was not more modest than the message of Sievernich. Both have a strong tone of calling for penitence and warning for chastisement. Fatima warns explicitly of war, hell, the errors of Russia. The message is an urgent call to accept God also in the public and political sphere as orientation. In effect, Fatima calls not just to go on pilgrimage but for a return of Catholicism as the dominant public religion. The popes are interested in mobilizing masses, but they prefer to water down the message and tame mobilization as they are afraid of returning to the intransigent position of the nineteenth and early twentieth century towards secular modernity and prefer a more diplomatic approach. For that reason, papal sermons and addresses at Fatima are much more modest than the message of Fatima. The popes are not keen on creating liminal experience in the sense of Victor Turner's "liminality" (Turner 2017) based on the urgent call for conversion. They are not interested in creating a liminal moment between them, the pilgrims, and the broader audience that intends to break with secular modernity.

Following the Ukrainian plea to consecrate Russia under the circumstances of war changes the picture dramatically. Now, the popes' relation to Fatima does not challenge secular modernity but defends the liberal world order based on international law and state sovereignty. In addition, the relationship to Orthodoxy as a whole is not risked as the internal relations to the Russian patriarch turn sour for most of the Orthodox Churches, too (Barbato 2022).

Furnishing Fatima. Papal Sculptures and Papal Control

Pope Francis' move in the consecration policy is not an individual speech act, but it is integrated in a long history of papal relations to Fatima. The papal ties to Fatima are strong and might be closer than to any other Marian sanctuary beyond Rome and the lands of the former Papal States. Pius XII consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary in 1942 via Radio Vatican. All travelling popes visited the place. Paul VI started with a pilgrimage in 1967 and celebrated the 50th anniversary of the apparition. John Paul II visited Fatima three times. In 1982, the Pope thanked the Virgin Mary for his survival of the assassination attempt in 1981 bringing the bullet which hit his body with him. The bullet was placed in the crown of the Marian statue. He consecrated the world in 1982 and repeated the consecration in 1984 to demand all aspects that have been asked for but he avoided to utter the word "Russia". He came back in 1991 to remember the assassination attempt and to give thanks to the Virgin Mary again. In the Holy Year 2000, John Paul II visited Fatima and beatified the seer children Jacinta and Francisco. Also, the third secret, in which the execution of a pope took place in a destroyed city, was published by the then prefect Joseph Ratzinger and later Pope Benedict XVI. In 2010, Benedict XVI travelled to Fatima for the anniversary of the beatification. In 2017, Pope Francis visited Fatima for the celebration of the 100th anniversary and canonized Jacinta and Francisco.

The papal relation to a sanctuary as important as Fatima has also a spatial dimension which shows not only traces of connectivity like in the case of Munster dioceses and its neighbourhood. The sanctuary of Fatima shows a massive papal furniture. The place-makers of a site have an enormous impact on the spatial dimension of the connectivity of a sanctuary to the papacy (Barbato 2021b). The memorizing of papal visits or papal devotion to Our Lady of Fatima is only one aspect. The impact, particularly around the new basilica at the opposite end of the main square of Fatima, but also diverse other traces, of papal statues and decoration express also a power relation (Fig. 2.5). The popes grant approval and they profit from the devotional boost that mass mobilization can cause. However, the pope have to become entangled with the site in order to establish a close relationship under papal control. While it is up to the popes to decide how the Church interprets the message and how it will be presented to a wider public, it is up to the place-makers of a site how supportive they are with furniture at their side that supports papal connectivity. The readiness of the place-makers to support the popes varies, as we have seen in the case of the dioceses of Munster. In contrast, it is very high in Fatima.

The Fatima place-makers continuously show their papal devotion by allowing and supporting papal statues which show at the same time the devotion of the popes to Fatima but also the obedience of Fatima to the popes. The space of Fatima, especially around the new basilica at the end of the square, represents the papal connectivity to the Marian shrines.

This place-making activity involves the pilgrims. The statue of Pius XII shows as its donor a German auxiliary bishop from Cologne. The rather remote place of the statue is at the back of the basilica but on the way to Ajustrel, the little village

Fig. 2.5 Monument in Memory of Pope Francis visit in Fatima, located on the way from Fatima to Ajustrel, shortly after the sanctuary, 2019. *Source* Author

where the children lived. Some of the apparitions also happened on this way. Pilgrims who stay longer usually walk along this path. It is prepared for rosary prayers and has several sites to commemorate and pray. Between the prepared way in the rural landscape and the sanctuary, the town has to be crossed. A major statue of the seers and the apparition has already been erected at a junction to mark the way. Most recently, after the visit of Pope Francis in 2017, a statue in memory of his visit has been erected on this way crossing the town (see Fig. 2.5). This is a furnishing activity of Fatima's place-makers that shows the vibrant papal connectivity, but also the need to develop the site and its spatial connections on the spot. The street with newly planted trees is uplifted by the papal monument.

The major papal objects are, however, Paul VI and John Paul II, the pope who visited the shrine first and the pope who visited it three times (see Fig. 2.6 for the statue of John Paul II). Both kneel in front of the new basilica but looking towards the old basilica next to which the sanctuary is located. These statues help to structure the huge square between the sanctuary and the old basilica on one side and the new basilica with the papal statues on the other side. Looking on their knees to the sanctuary in prayer shows the papal devotion to the square, but the two papal statues are somehow also overlooking the square and watching the site and its pilgrims.

Fig. 2.6 John Paul II Memorial, Fatima. In front of the new basilica praying towards the sanctuary, 2019. *Source* Author

Conclusion: Pilgrimage, Connectivity, and Communication

Popes have a special relationship to Marian sanctuaries. Marian shrines are nodal points of papal pilgrimage and communication. Travelling to the site is important but not the only way to establish a connection to the shrines. After the journey, the interaction of popes and shrines, the pilgrims and the wider public audience is not over. The spatial site and virtual space of the internet, the local memory and wider discourses are interwoven to create a connectivity of pilgrimage and communication.

The virtual rosary during the pandemic showed that sanctuaries which have been visited by the popes rank high but that a visit is neither a precondition nor a guarantee for participating in the connectivity of the virtual space. The papal connectivity is not steered by a far-reaching administration but is based on a more informal network of the laguna of Marian sites that is supported by travelling but not completely structured around it.

Papal traces in the space of the sanctuaries are also not determined by pilgrimages but can be established also by declaring a site a papal basilica minor. Important is also the agency of the local shrines which corresponds to the Marian devotion of the papacy and popes like John Paul II. The connectivity rests on a co-constitutive relationship of popes and shrines.

Particularly in the case of an apparition-related sanctuary, papal control of the connectivity is important as the messages potentially have a strong impact on the public standing of the Church, Catholicism, and the papacy. However, the power

relations start at the site as the seers of an apparition claims to have an authority from heaven. It is difficult for the place-makers to get Church approval for this in order to develop the site. Thus, they are in high demand to create a connectivity for them with the popes. As soon as the popes approved the shrine, it is important for them to keep the sanctuary and its message under their control. The messages have generally an urgent tone of conversion and penitence including a public and political appeal. The diplomatic status of the popes and Catholicism are at stake. If new events emerge, the popes are challenged; however, they have also an option to react and to integrate the sanctuary and its message into their communication, as Pope Francis did with the final consecration of Russia and the Ukraine at the beginning of the war. In the context of a crisis, like war between states and quarrels within the Church, new sites can emerge. It is open how emerging sanctuaries like the one of Sievenich will develop and if and how the popes will establish a relationship and integrate it into the spatial connectivity of pilgrimage and communication.

The cases indicate that papal travelling matters not only during the journey but also afterwards. The connectivity of papal outreach finds nodal points of pilgrimage and communication at Marian shrines. They work after and before a journey, for instance, in the virtual space of the internet where old centre and emerging sites of the periphery can meet and join. Local shrines or bishop's churches are less open for the papal connectivity than Marian shrines of regional importance. The need for approval of apparitions turns such claims into challenges but also into opportunities of papal connectivity. The laguna of Marian sites has many opportunities for papal connectivity. The aim here was to collect some new data in order to illustrate and reflect how connectivity works, especially after the journey of the papal pilgrim to the shrine.

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Chapter 3
Pilgrimage in Southern Africa: Socio-cultural Perspectives Within the Context of African Religion

Retief Müller

Abstract Pilgrimage in southern Africa is an imported construct, which is indicated in this essay as an evolving phenomenon with much transregional variance and sway. Certain common features are assessed here such as the preponderance of San sacred sites and associated rituals that were in some cases reappropriated by subsequent inhabitants and newer religious groups. Rainmaking has been an age-old ritual drawing pilgrim-like activity. Although various natural features of the landscape have the potential to become pilgrimage sites within this context, mountains, hills, and caves play a disproportionately large role. Judeo-Christian symbolism, particularly as connected to Jerusalem, Zion, and the Biblical Israel is often reallocated with new significance to specific features of the land in southern Africa. Person-centered pilgrimage is also indicated as a feature of some significance with certain church leaders drawing large crowds on specific occasions. The need for rain continues to inspire much of this activity, but traditional rainmaking rituals have for the most part been supplanted by Christian rain prayers.

Keywords AmaNazaretha · Pilgrimage · Religion · Sacred Sites · South Africa · Zion Christian Church

Introduction

In this chapter on geographical perspectives in pilgrimage the focus is on southern Africa. This particular geographical context is indelibly tied to a socio-cultural and political context that has evolved much over time, and which continues to evolve. Pilgrimage as a ritual activity and cultural practice is usually tied to one or more of the world's major religions. This is also true in the case of southern African pilgrimage as I shall illustrate below. However, what complicates the southern African case is that this context additionally involves indigenous belief systems and ritual practices as

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well as a political history which at times acquired ritualistic tendencies, including the construction of nationalist, pseudo-sacred sites and accompanying pilgrimage. This last category, although interesting and significant, is too complex to afford proper attention in this chapter. It is also less tied to features of natural geography than to architecture, legend, and quasi-nationalist discourse. Therefore, for the sake of expediency it will not receive further attention here.

Christianity is the dominant religion in this region, and it has been so at least since the middle-late nineteenth century when protestant missionaries representing a diverse array of European and North American societies entered territories that were for the most part ruled under the auspices of the British Empire (Elphick 2012). There were also other enclaves such as Portuguese East Africa where Roman Catholicism became the established religion, and the mountain kingdom of Basutoland/Lesotho, which was partly Catholic and partly Protestant and a British colony from 1884 to 1966. Then there were the two erstwhile Boer republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, located in land-locked central and northern territories of what would become the Union of South Africa in 1910, as a final addition to British imperial control in these parts. In these territories as well as among most of the Dutch speaking settler population elsewhere in the region, the Dutch Reformed Church was one of the dominant religious entities.

In the region under discussion and in the specific cases to be mentioned various forms of Protestantism provided much of the religious foundation. However, added to this and of crucial importance within the pilgrimage culture encountered here one might refer to a substrate of indigenous perspectives coinciding in existence and constantly interacting with the formalized religious expressions of churches and Christian missionary institutions. These 'indigenous' expressions are sometimes referred to as African Traditional Religion and sometimes as African Indigenous Religion, or simply African religions or spirituality. None of these designations are entirely satisfactory and problem-free. Religion, whichever way one wishes to define it, is a construct when applied to any context outside of its original heritage of European Christendom. Terms such as traditional and indigenous convey connotations of primordialism, which is best to avoid where possible, although it must be acknowledged that they have been applied across the board in discussions of African realities by scholars including myself. One problem is that this type of terminological avoidance is not always possible when we wish to discuss the type of phenomena under discussion in this chapter. Yet even a theme like pilgrimage is an artificial construct in this context. Although it is remarkably easy to point to activities and rituals such as the ones that I will mention soon as pilgrim-like phenomena from an outside perspective, an open question is whether the participants see themselves as pilgrims who are engaging in pilgrimage, or do they understand things differently? It is less easy to answer this question conclusively either way, and it may not be necessary either. I mention this issue not to overcomplicate things, but merely as a prefaced caveat to explain that any discussion about so-called African religious phenomena and experiences should proceed as humbly as possibly. When we refer to it within the context of pilgrimage then we are inevitably relying on imported notions regarding culture and religiosity. However, this idea, the reliance on imported notions in religiosity is not

necessarily a problem, conceptually. Consider the fact that pilgrimage, in addition to its connection to sacred spaces, objects or persons, is primarily about movement through space and time. In other words, pilgrimage would not be pilgrimage without the crossing of boundaries. These are most typically physical boundaries, but the pilgrimage experience is always meant to be internally transformative, even transcendental. Therefore, the pilgrim while traversing physical space and time is also confronted with internal challenges demanding change, renewals of life direction, commitments, and so on. It requires an openness to change, which may imply an openness to the acceptance of new, imported notions regarding religiosity.

Pilgrimage in a Protestant-Dominant Region

I mentioned the heavy preponderance of protestant Christianity in this region, particularly within the borders of South Africa. The importance of mentioning this denominational feature within the local forms of Christianity simply relates to the fact that Protestantism was historically averse to pilgrimage. It was explicitly rejected as a practice with salvific value by the early Reformers, contrary to the reigning belief in the Roman Catholic Church according to which pilgrimage could be undertaken as penance, for example. Early Protestantism opposed this understanding and practice, as they did all practices that approximated what might be regarded as so-called works righteousness (Suykerbuyk 2020). This remained the reigning trend within the mainstream forms of Protestantism on the European continent and also in North America since its transplantation there. Anglicanism in England was a slightly different case, since that tradition encouraged less of a ritualistic and liturgical break from Catholicism than was the case with Calvinism and even Lutheranism. Hence, pilgrimage did indeed become a feature of Anglicanism but obviously not with Rome as the magnetic sacred space. Local abbeys and cathedrals were instead imbued with sacral status and were popularized as pilgrimage destinations. Otherwise, within mainstream Protestantism, notions of pilgrimage became internalized, reinterpreted within the way an individual Christian was supposed to live their ordinary life as an ongoing pilgrimage of moving ever closer to God. This understanding was exemplified in the profoundly influential, The Pilgrim's Progress by Bunyan (1678).

Protestantism once transplanted to the southern African soil became a different version of itself. Theologians studying cross-cultural movements in Christianity refer to the process of contextualization to explain subtle changes and local adaptations within the faith as part of this process (Bevans 1996). This partly explains why pilgrimage could proliferate in a context that was ostensibly protestant-dominated in terms of nominal religious affiliation. Another reason, perhaps even more significant, is the fact that a very important strain of Protestantism that ended up making huge inroads among the local populations was itself a new religious movement of proto-Pentecostalism emerging under the Scottish-born faith-healer, John Alexander Dowie. He established a movement best known by the term Zion, first in Australia in the late nineteenth century and then after some further movement across the world

for a time on the American West Coast and finally north of Chicago at a localized settlement called Zion City. This became something of a self-sustaining settlement and religious enclave. Joel Cabrita's recent book, A People's Zion describes this movement from these early years onward in terms of its dynamism over space and time (Cabrita 2018).

Emissaries from Dowie's Zion movement arrived in South Africa in the early twentieth century. The movement became active on the Witwatersrand, the goldmining area surrounding Johannesburg and eventually elsewhere on the South African Highveld and in the Basutoland/Orange Free State area. The message of healing which integrated people's everyday concerns with a spiritual message of salvation spread like wildfire among both black and white South Africans. Over time and taken together Zion, comprising numerous larger and smaller denominations, would represent perhaps the largest religious grouping in the entire region. What makes it particularly significant within the context of this chapter is that pilgrimage would become an important factor within this group, even somewhat central to their spiritual life and religious culture. This is the basis of my own argument with respect to what could be considered the largest single formation within this broad group, the Zion Christian Church. More on this church and my own ethnographic research will follow below along with commentary on pilgrimage within related religious groupings.

Some Basic Tenets in African 'Traditional' Religious Setting Making It Attractive for Pilgrimage

Before exploring pilgrimage in the Christianity of Zion, it would be important to mention a couple of features regarding the kinds of religious (or proto-religious) activity to be found in southern Africa prior to the introduction of Christianity. This is of relevance in terms of the contextualization I alluded to above. From early on ritual in these parts revolved around spaces that might now be deemed sacred, although what they would have been seen as in earlier times is less clear. What is clear is that there existed spaces, typically caves in rocky areas throughout the region where some of the earliest known inhabitants would occasionally produce what is now known as rock art or engravings. Archeologists have excavated many such sites and their surrounds, which revealed human activity over ongoing periods in the surrounding areas. Since the early inhabits, often indicated as the Khoi or the San, tended to live nomadic lifestyles, longer periods of residence at spaces like these which also have rock art might indicate that there occurred events beyond the ordinary. The art itself, sometimes portrays hunts and wild animals, but also in some instances one could find depictions of human bodies with peculiar characteristics. Some of these are sometimes indicated as showing visions induced under conditions of trance or hallucination (see below). It may be deduced that communities might return on occasion to the same place where engravings are known to again attain

trance which might perhaps reveal information about a forthcoming hunt, where a specific animal might be found, or such related insights.

Retrospectively, such gatherings at 'sacred' sites where rock art is found might perhaps be interpreted as proto-pilgrimage. This, of course, would be something of an anachronistic treatment of archeological findings. So, let me not push this idea too far. The point to convey here is simply that long before Europeans or world religions typically associated with pilgrimage arrived on the southern African scene, there are indications of sites that represented some form of special or even ritual status. Since pilgrimage as a practice is itself typically interested in visiting special or sacred sites, there may be interesting connecting points for cultural translatability in a southern African historical consciousness with this kind of pre-colonial/pre-Christian history.

Sacred persons, such as powerful rainmakers, have furthermore been important centrifugal points for pilgrimage-like activity. There are numerous historical examples of this throughout southern Africa and also beyond. Modjadji, the rain queen of the Lovedu in South Africa's northern Limpopo province is perhaps the best example (Krige and Krige 1943), but one might also refer to what has been described as the Mwari cult in the Motopo hills of southeastern Zimbabwe (Daneel 1970), as well as rainmaking rituals in late nineteenth century Mberengwa district in that same country (Takuva 2021). Rainmakers, who sometimes but not always also served in chieftaincy capacities, became recipients of sacrifices, prayers, and other forms of appeasement since they were understood as conduits or mediators to the ancestors/gods. Rituals would typically take place at or in fixed geographical spaces such as Modjadji's Royal Kraal in the area near Modjadjiskloof, or at secret pools and caves (Rain Queens 2022), for example within the Motopo Hills.

In addition to persons who attracted pilgrim-like activity due to their perceived power to grant rain, fertility, health, and healing, there were sites, independent of a specific person or persons, understood to be imbued with powerful properties. Researchers have commented on the proliferation of such sites. Walter van Beek, for example, writes: 'Quite a few holy places in Africa are what Colson (1997) calls "places of power": mountaintops, caves, waterfalls, pools, springs and the like; a very African item on the holy list is the sacred grove,…' (van Beek 2014, p. 42). I have encountered narratives and experiences related to some of these during my own ethnographic research among Christians who self-identify as Zionists, and more on this will be mentioned below. Regarding sacred groves, it is worth mentioning here different encounters during fieldwork in Malawi in 2016 when I observed while journeying by car through the central region of that central African country that much of the landscape was quite barren except for some patches of land with dense growths of apparently undisturbed trees in specific areas. Upon enquiry, it was pointed out by our Malawian guide that these areas were in fact burial sites, and that the areas including all trees growing there were left undisturbed in accordance with the locally prevailing Chewa belief of respecting the ancestors and their resting places. The surrounding areas were for the most part put to agricultural usage and remaining trees that grow in unrestricted areas might be targeted for firewood which is a primary source of fuel in these rural landscapes. Hence, in addition to being informal pilgrimage sites for family members paying their respects to departed ancestors,

these patches of indigenous forest grove might serve as the literal last stand in the protection of remnants of biodiversity in such locales. Writing more generally about the connections between ecology and African spirituality a group of Kenyan authors state the following:

> The killing of sacred animals, felling of sacred trees and destruction of sacred spaces in the forest only meets with spiritual disapproval, which manifests itself in the form of great droughts or disease outbreaks. Degradation of natural resources used for spirituality, for example deforestation and unexpected fire breakage, would naturally destroy traditional shrines set aside for spirituality. (Gumo et al. 2012, p. 527)

Seen in such a light the 'sacred' status of the Malawian forested burial sites is evident in more than one respect. That is especially so if one goes along with Matthew Evans (2003) whose typology of the sacred also receives the green light from the editors of the book *Sacred Spaces and Contested Identities.* Accordingly:

> The sacral can be denoted in a very general sense as 'things set apart'. This concept can then be expanded to a matrix containing four types: the 'personal sacred' and 'civil sacred' (both connected with the 'natural' dimension), and the 'religious sacred' and 'spiritual sacred' (both involving 'the supernatural'). (Post et al. 2014, p. 4)

Indeed, it may be confusing the issue when one relies overly much on concepts such a secular and sacred in consideration of African realities, which do not lend themselves easily to such binary configurations. Instead, there is a sense that all of reality is somehow imbued with the 'sacred', divine power, or however one wishes to define such unseen factors of influence. There is for example a prevailing belief that deceased ancestors continue to play a role in the everyday affairs of flesh and blood people. All of this relates to a prevailing perspective of interconnectivity or relationality, sometimes referred to by the term *Ubuntu*, in African contexts. This has implications for identity and human self-conception. As one group of Kenyan authors put it:

> Humanity is only part of the universe which is full of animals, plants and inanimate objects. All these components are related to each other in various ways, and all these are dependent on the Supreme God for their appearance and their continued existence. (Gumo et al. 2012, p. 525)

Yet, even so, interconnectivity does not imply full cosmic equality. It is clear that some places and people are more thoroughly imbued with power than others. And it is such places and people that have the potential to become centers of pilgrimage. The earliest known human inhabitants of this region are the San, mentioned above, semi-nomadic hunter gatherers who are especially well-known for producing rock engravings or rock art, dating back several millennia in some cases. Archeologist, Sven Ouzman, among others, observed that the San were held in esteem as particularly powerful in the spiritual sense by subsequent inhabitants such as Tswana-speakers in South Africa's Northwest province. 'There appears to be a common fund of religious beliefs throughout much of southern Africa. There is, for example, a common perception in Southern Africa that the autochthonous inhabitants, often San... had greater and privileged spiritual influence…' (Ouzman 1995, p. 59). Ouzman also

comments on the importance of hills and caves within this context and in turn their connection to San conceptions:

> Hills and caves are also associated with San people for at least two reasons. First, their artefacts and art are often found at such places and secondly, there appears to have been a widespread perception that there is a supernatural realm within certain hills… (Ouzman 1995, p. 55)

Pilgrimage like Activity and Places in Southern African 'Indigenous' Religious Settings

Ouzman (1995) conducted field research in a town and ritual center in Northwest province called Thaba Sione, which if translated means Mount Zion, in reference to the biblical hill inside Jerusalem. This site has a remarkable history of San activity including engravings spanning back 10,000 years. It appears that the site was used as a center for rainmaking rituals, an activity that have always precipitated pilgrimage-like activity in this water sparse part of the world. San engravings are found throughout the area, often depicting a hunt. Ouzman (1995) states that a common belief among both San and Tswana-speakers were that a successful hunt might be crucial element in rainmaking. Different horned animals were considered ritually powerful in this regard, including, perhaps par excellence, the rhinoceros (Ouzman 1995). In the case of the San, such hunts were then depicted in engravings and Ouzman claims regarding this: 'I offer that both engravings and San-ness were crucial factors in determining the location of certain Tswana rain-making localities' (Ouzman 1995, p. 60).

Ouzman writes that the Tswana-speaking chief at Thaba Sione from the early 1930s to the early 1960s, Gilbert Mshwete, was a notable rainmaker who also showed awareness of the ritual history associated with rainmaking at this site as seen in the way he constructed his 'rain kraal'.

> Three engraved rocks were incorporated into the foundation walls of the rain-kraal…. The choice of this specific type of engraving... one of only two such depictions at Thaba Sione… can hardly be coincidental and probably indicates an awareness of older (not necessarily, but probably, 'San') rain-making beliefs. (Ouzman 1995, p. 62)

Another notable feature of Thaba Sione is that it plays host to ritual activities conducted by members of the Zion Christian Church (ZCC), which is a strong presence among Sotho-Tswana communities across southern Africa, and apparently especially at Thaba Sione as observed by Ouzman (1995). Significantly, the ZCC's headquarters, Zion City Moria in Limpopo Province, to be discussed below, is also occasionally referred to as Thaba Sione in colloquial language by church members. So, it is no surprise that Zionists would also be interested in laying claim to the official Thaba Sione in Northwest. Ouzman (1995) shows an engraving of a cross alongside the older San engravings of hunts and people undergoing trances. Purportedly the cross engraving was done by a ZCC member. Regarding what might be described as the pilgrimage-implicated importance of Thaba Sione, Ouzman relays a quote

of a ZCC member by the name of Paul Mkone as follows: 'The mountain [Thaba Sione] is a sacred place. When there is no rain, the chief convenes a *pitso* [public assembly] there, a meeting to pray to the God of their ancestors to bring rain' (quoted in Ouzman 1995, p. 62).

ZZC members, other Africans broadly affiliating with churches under the wider affiliation of Zion, and even those belonging to more mainline protestant denomination are known to frequent related sites around the region in the pursuit of prayers for rain, healing, and other causes of concern and affliction. These are often hills, mountains, streams, rivers, and so forth. Such areas are not always characterized by San engravings. When asked about the importance of such features of the land for self-described Christians my own ethnographic research conducted in 2005 invariably indicated that Zionists would give biblical analogies to substantiate their answers. And of course, both the Christian Old and the New Testaments contain plenty of references to mountains and hills of importance, including Moriah, which is associated with the origins of the Passover, Zion associated with the city Jerusalem, Sinai where Moses received and transcribed the Ten Commandments, and the river Jordan where Jesus was baptized.

At least one author has described recent interest in sacred sites and associated pilgrimage along the lines of 'black re-appropriation of the land' (Coplan 2003, p. 980). While Coplan (2003) refers to a specific context of a border-region between Lesotho and the eastern part of South Africa's Free State province the idea of remapping or reappropriation may also on some levels influence the imaginary and ritual power of Zionists, typically from the bottom of the social strata, in southern Africa more generally. I would suggest that if one looks at it from the point of view of Zionists at Thaba Sione and elsewhere then the picture that emerges is one modeled on biblical promised land imagery. The land is to some extent being resacralized. I shall return to this point in the conclusion.

The sites that Coplan (2003) referred to are mountainous caves seen as sacred shrines and frequented by an apparently diverse range of pilgrims from different religious affiliations and background. Among other scholars, these sites have received focused research attention especially by Shirley du Plooy (2014, 2016), and Philip Nel (2014). Du Plooy, an anthropologist, discusses the pilgrim narratives and the culture the pilgrims inhabit at some length. She mentions that colloquially among the Basuto in the eastern Free State the practice that we refer to as pilgrimage goes by the name of *leeto*, which could basically be translated as 'journeys' (Du Plooy 2014, p. 118).

Du Plooy observes that unlike some well-known soon to be mentioned formally organized communal pilgrimages in southern Africa, the eastern Free State pilgrimages, or rather 'the journeys to Mautse, Motouleng and Mantsopa should rather be conceived of as domestic or localized pilgrimages' (du Plooy 2014, p. 118). This is not to say that people do not also travel in groups to these sites. Evidently, they do. Du Plooy mentions for example pilgrims arriving by the bus load and other means 'already dressed in their Zionist or Apostolic church-specific dress... and some traditional practitioners... unselfconsciously travel in their full cloth-bead-and-bear-foot attire' (Du Plooy 2014, p. 122).

What does seem somewhat unique about the eastern Free State pilgrimage situation is that there are sites that even where they ostensibly belong to one group, such as Modderpoort where Mantsopa is located under Anglican ownership (see below), this in no way restricts a wide diversity of groups from visiting the sites for their own ritual purposes. We may perhaps refer to this as a democratization of sacrality, where accessibility to spiritual power is not overly controllable or restricted despite the fact that attempts in this direction have been made, including by some of the white landowners on whose farms some of the sites are located (Coplan 2003).

The diversity of pilgrims includes Zionists of different denominations, African traditionalists, Catholics, and Anglicans, among others. A common theme for pilgrims is to seek blessings from God and/or the ancestors at a diversity of sites.

> I have not ascertained the exact number of these shrines, though I am told there is a chain of sacred sites stretching from well north of Lesotho along the entire length of the Caledon River border until it trails away into the Free State at Wepener in the south. (Coplan 2003, p. 981)

Coplan (2003) mentions the following aspect of the spiritual sensibilities in the eastern Free State region which connects significantly with the above discussion regarding Thaba Sione. In this case, it relates specifically to one of the primary pilgrimage sites he discusses, Badimong (place of the ancestors). Let me quote this at some length:

> [T]he Basotho find it appropriate to draw a spiritual connection between themselves and the San, among whom they first lived and later replaced, by using San artefacts and scrapings of pigment in their medicine and acknowledging that the San were the first to 'write' the sacred visions of the ancestors upon the walls of the caves. The names of churches, preachers and individual pilgrims inscribed as graffiti upon the walls of Badimong are regarded as their own successive form of such 'writing'. Said one pilgrim, 'It is like the Bushmen; you draw for remembrance'. (Coplan 2003, p. 985)

In other words, the connection is drawn between the present-day inhabitants of the land, in this case the Basuto, and the historical San [Bushmen] who left their engravings in the area just as they did at Thaba Sione. Ouzman (1995) mentioned the later addition of an engraving of a cross at Thaba Sione possibly by a recent pilgrim belonging to a Zionist church, and Coplan (2003) here refers to 'graffiti' added by contemporary pilgrims. All of this has implications for the appropriation or reimagination of identity, and pilgrimage to reinvented sacred sites such as Badimong becomes a way of concretizing the historical connections both in terms of the San-Basuto history of association but also in terms of the history of religions among peoples and cultures that have moved incrementally from older belief systems to newer versions of Christianity. It seems clear that the link to the older systems is strengthened by these pilgrim-like activities.

Coplan writes that: 'Mantsopa's "cave church", located at the old Anglican priory and mission of St. Augustine's at Modderpoort near Ladybrand, is surely the most famous of the cave shrines in the eastern Free State' (Coplan 2003, p. 988). Mantsopa was a high-ranking nineteenth-century Basuto prophetess whose fame grew as she prophesized a number of military victories for Moshoeshoe, the king of the Basuto.

When she correctly, but unpatriotically, predicted the defeat of the Basotho by the Free State in the wars of 1865–1868, [Moshoeshoe] 'exiled' her to her original home at Modderpoort, now in the Conquered Territory. There the Anglican mission soon claimed her allegiance, and she was converted on 13 March 1870, the day after the death of her cousin Moshoeshoe. (Coplan 2003, p. 988)

Despite the Anglican mission's wish to portray her as a prime convert, Mantsopa did not meekly submit to colonial designs. She maintained an independent stance and played a role in fomenting a certain amount of rebellion against the colonial and missionary authorities by allegedly raising up 'crowds of female prophetesses' (Coplan 2003, p. 989). Nevertheless, when she died, she was afforded a grave alongside graves of white people at Modderpoort. Her grave itself is not the primary pilgrimage site but the 'cave church', which according to Coplan was not evidently ever used by Mantsopa despite being named after her. Instead, it served as a shelter and eventually a chapel for Anglican missionaries. More recently it has become a contested site, with at least one prophetess claiming to be a spiritual heir of Mantsopa staking a claim to the site. Furthermore, despite officially belonging to the Anglicans the members of the Zion Christian Church have at times expressed ownership of it, holding services there, and the local ZCC has even constructed a pulpit in the cave (Coplan 2003). For archeological descriptions and photographs of Modderpoort, Mantsopa's Cave Church, her grave, and other sacred sites, including engravings see Ouzman (1999).

John Alexander Dowie's Zion movement has been indicated as primary source for much of the twentieth century growth in southern African Christianity. Locally the Christian groupings that have emerged out of Dowie's emissaries' turn of the century missionary projects are commonly referred to as Zionists, or AmaZioni in some parts of the region. A unique feature about the Zion movement is the way in which it was able to inspire the imagination of several local figures who became adherents and eventually leaders of large and significant churches that operated beyond the control of any foreign mission agencies.

The Zion movement had particular success among the Witwatersrand goldmine-working migrants who dislodged from their ancestral lands and disaffiliated from family and familiar kinship connections found within Zionist churches new centers of belonging and spiritual healing. One such a mineworker was one Isaiah Mloyiswa Mdliwamafa Shembe, originally from the Drakensberg region of what is today KwaZulu-Natal. In the East Rand town of Boksburg, Shembe joined one of these Zion influenced churches under the leadership of William Leshega. Shembe became an evangelist and preacher, but when Leshega's church along with many other former Zion adherents joined the more recently arrived Pentecostal movement under the auspices of the Apostolic Faith Mission in 1909, Shembe went his own way, initially situating himself in the area of Witzieshoek, adjacent to northern Lesotho. Greg Marinovich describes what happened next as follows:

Shembe claimed that God's Word told him to go to Natal and free his people of the yoke of the white man. Shembe resisted until a lightning strike to his leg prompted his obedience. Blending Zulu traditions and culture with the elements of the Old and New Testaments, his

charismatic leadership saw the rapid growth of The Nazareth Baptist Church, known more commonly simply as AmaNazaretha or Shembe. (Marinovich 2018, p. 35)

The AmaNazaretha has received much scholarly attention over the years, including in recent times from Tishken (2013), Morton (2014), Cabrita (2014) and Sithole (2016). They have developed more than one sacred site in the Kwazulu-Natal midlands. The church headquarters, eKuphakameni, established in 1911, could be translated as 'Place of Spiritual Upliftment'. Additionally, Shembe initiated an elaborate pilgrimage spanning the course of three days and to be walked barefoot to a 'Holy Mountain, Nhlangakazi'. This annual pilgrimage became central to the AmaNazaretha's annual calendar drawing hundreds of thousands of pilgrims at a time. Marinovich writes the following about Nhlangakazi: 'Shembe said the Word had led him to this low, flat-topped mountain, as it was the place God would communicate his instructions to his prophet, just as Moses had to climb Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments' (Marinovich 2018, p. 36). In more recent times after a series of court cases and schisms over succession struggles, a separate yet similar pilgrimage has been initiated by one group known as the Ebuhleni/kaBhuhleni group (Fig. 3.1) to Mount Khenana, which occurs annually in January (Sithole 2016).

This connection to biblical mountain imagery is significant and resonates with much of what occurs in the name of pilgrimage-like religious activity in southern Africa. It also allows me an entry point for a brief discussion of the pilgrimage culture in what is indeed the largest African church in the region, the Zion Christian Church. This church has been mentioned several times already, in connection with pilgrimage at Thaba Sione in Northwest province and also in connection with Modderpoort in the eastern Free State. However, far and away the most important and popular pilgrimage related activity conducted by members of this church concerns their official pilgrimages to the church headquarters, Zion City Moria (ZCM) near Polokwane in Limpopo province. There are three large-scale pilgrimages annually

Fig. 3.1 Members of the Shembe church during their annual January Pilgrimage. *Source* Government 2019a, CC BY-ND 2.0

to this venue of which the one occurring during the Easter weekend is typically the largest with pilgrims traveling from all over the region, including from far beyond the borders of South Africa. My own fieldwork involving the pilgrimage culture of this church revealed that members often refer to ZCM as Thaba Sione (see above), Jerusalem, or simply Moria, which is a local spelling in reference to the biblical mountain, Moriah. These official pilgrimages proceed in highly structured time-honored fashion. Moria is located in the north, part of what were designated a black 'homeland' in apartheid era terminology, in other words where blacks were allowed land ownership. Although this policy full of unjust and restrictive land allocations could in no way be exonerated, it is notable that a group like the ZCC managed to in some ways to turn that disadvantaged state of affairs into something of an opportunity. My fieldwork contacts who were ZCC members invariably testified to the strong feelings evoked for them by being associated with Moria. It is 'home' to them in a deep spiritual sense (Müller 2011).

Similar to the abovementioned AmaNazaretha, the ZCC also underwent a leadership struggle resulting in schism when two of the founder's sons competed for the role of succeeding him after his death. Both groups have their headquarters at Moria, on neighboring premises. Figure 3.2 features the St. Engenas ZCC, which is somewhat smaller in membership than the ZCC but in many other ways quite similar, including in their respective dress-codes.

A primary reason why Moria is considered so sacred for both the St. Engenas ZCC and the ZCC concerns the fact that this is the residence and burial site of the founder. Both churches have followed patterns of dynastic succession. The current leader of the larger ZCC, Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane, has succeeded his father,

Fig. 3.2 Members of the St. Engenas ZCC on pilgrimage at Moria. *Source* Government 2019b, CC BY-ND 2.0

Edward, in this role, who in turn had succeeded his own father, the founder of the church, Engenas Lekganyane, who somewhat similar to the abovementioned Shembe also became converted to Zion during time spent on the Witwatersrand in the early twentieth century (Müller 2011). The church leader exercises much influence within the context of this church, so much so that there is a certain amount of sacrality associated with his person by many followers. For example, his prayers for healing and especially for rain are seen as particularly powerful prayers and they are sought after by local chiefs and even mayors and provincial administrators in water stressed parts of the region. This may result in invitations issued to the Bishop for visits to far flung areas, which in turn leads to different types of outward-bound pilgrimages, where tens of thousands of church members travel in the wake of their Bishop. During my field research, I visited the cities of Kimberley in South Africa's Northern Cape, and Gaborone in neighboring Botswana. On such occasions, the pilgrims would camp out on the grounds adjacent to sports stadiums for a weekend, with the main event occurring on a Sunday with the Bishop delivering a speech and praying for rain (Müller 2011).

Much like the above references regarding the blending of San and Sotho-Tswana traditions, surrounding rainmaking, it seems plausible that this more contemporary belief in the Bishop's powerful rain prayers is in some ways a further transformation in the southern African rainmaking tradition. Whatever the case, the ZCC might be said to cater both for place-centered and person-centered forms of pilgrimage, and often, of course, place and person overlap due to Moria being the Bishop's place of residence.

Conclusion: Pilgrimage and a Reconstructed Sacred Landscape

To briefly conclude this chapter about pilgrimage in southern Africa, I should first emphasize that what has been relayed above barely scratches the surface. The cases I mentioned may be seen as among the best known but there are much more to be said on this topic and the people and places involved in such activities. It should also be clear that what I describe as pilgrim-like activity should not be seen as a decon-textualized transposition of a familiar ritual practice in the history of Christianity to the southern African landscape. This is rather ritual practice embedded within a culture that has continued to reframe and reinvent itself in conversation with past traditions of the land but also with the biblical narratives that constitute the backbone of Christianity. In important ways, it is perhaps appropriate that so much of recent and contemporary pilgrimage in southern Africa has occurred in connection with the broader Zion movement and its various affiliates. Zion and its references to the biblical Israel and features of land, including mountains in the Holy Land are important frames of reference for understanding the connection between people, land, and spirituality or religion that this movement apparently helps to facilitate. This is a part

of the world where many people have been uprooted and displaced over centuries of colonialism and apartheid. Therefore, a self-identification with a biblical Israel traversing pilgrimage-like through the wilderness in search of the promised land might look attractive for the identity formation of many local pilgrims. This may well be one way in which people seek to reconceive and reintegrate a world that has been fractured and damaged on multiple levels. To be sure this is symbolic action, but symbols have power. They drive the imagination and real action for healing of land and people would likely not be achieved without people whose imaginations have first been infused in some transformative way.

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Chapter 4
Network of Saints, Network of Roads. Apulia Crossroads of Pilgrimages

Antonietta Ivona

Abstract A transit land for an ancient vocation and tradition, a meeting point between East and West, Apulia has seen the passage of countless travellers, traders, and pilgrims over the course of its millennial history. Since the time of the Crusades, Apulia had a role of considerable importance: its ports allowed the embarkation of pilgrims and knights for the Holy Land, it was the outpost of the monastic-knightly orders whose traces in many cases are still visible in the area north of Bari. Its location in the final stretch of the Via Francigena was fundamental; that pilgrimage itinerary that linked Canterbury to Rome and then to the ports of Apulia, allowed the arrival in the Holy Land. Apulia was crossed by the Via Francigena del Sud connecting Rome and the Apulian Adriatic ports, retracing the road system that remained from the Roman age through the consular roads such as the Via Appia and the Via Traiana. Apulia, in addition to strategic ports for embarking and disembarking pilgrims, offered hospitality and above all devotional sanctuaries among the most revered in Christianity. The article intends to analyse how the geography of pilgrimages in Apulia has changed over time; how many and which of those ancient networks of roads still crossed the Apulian territory today.

Keywords Geographical dynamics · Cult · Pilgrimages · Network · Nodes

Introduction

The origins of pilgrimages are difficult to determine, but visiting sacred sites has been a widespread practice since ancient times. Pilgrimages have long been a common feature of many world religions, including Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Shintoism. The pilgrimage was undertaken for various reasons; to fulfil a vow, as an expiation for sins, as a gesture of thanksgiving for positive events or as a means of intercession between man and the divine. Before the spread of travel in the modern sense, pilgrimage was the motivation of human movements for

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"fun", according to the Latin etymology of the term ('to turn elsewhere'). It was not a prerogative of the wealthy social classes (as it would later be for the Grand Tours) and played a significant role in local economies and in the transmission of culture (Coleman and Eade 2004; Collins-Kreiner 2010a, b).

The practice of pilgrimage is still very widespread since pilgrims are still linked to sacred places and their centrality in religious beliefs and identities. This approach can still be found in many types of pilgrimages, not only Christian ones. For example, the sacred city of Mecca continues to play a significant role in the identity of every Muslim cleric who is obligated to visit the city at least once in his life. Likewise, in the Jewish tradition, Jerusalem is frequently cited as the holiest city, and both the Yom Kippur prayer and the Passover Seder end with the phrase "next year in Jerusalem". In short, sacred places, perhaps always, are filled with meanings and signifiers (Gavinelli 2012); they become objects of sacred value only if shared by the same human group. According to Bronzini (1980, p. 178), then:

> The religion of pilgrimages has a prominent historical, anthropological and phenomenological importance of popular religion. Its peculiarity, and therefore its diversity not only with respect to ecclesial religion, but also with respect to other static forms of popular religion, is due to its formation in movement, on the way and on the journey, between two calamitating poles for the pilgrim, such as they are the sanctuary, the miraculous house of God, presided over by the Saint or the Madonna, and one's own house. Within the religion of pilgrimages, as in any other historical-anthropological form of popular religion, it is possible to distinguish the differentiation of value and function of the acts according to the different social classes.

Many authors emphasize the social constructivist approaches of places; Tuan (1977) argued that the place is not an intrinsic part of the environment but is centred on the human interpretation of it "What begins as undifferentiated space becomes a place when we give it value" (1977, p. 6). Other scholars focus on the meanings of places as social spaces (Lefebvre 1974) and how they are influenced by one's experience in a particular environment (Brandenburg and Carroll 1995; Eisenhauer et al. 2000). Belhassen, Caton and Stewart (2008) use the concept of 'Theoplacity', (from the Greek "theos", God, and from the Latin "placea", place), to emphasize how experiences during visits to holy places are influenced from three interrelated components: the theopolitical ideology at the basis of the pilgrimage, the places visited, and the activities undertaken by the pilgrims. The pilgrimage, therefore, as a result of socio-religious and socio-spatial components. It is a "complex and changing phenomenon, with different implications on a religious, political, social and territorial levels" (Moscarelli et al. 2020, p. 1).

The Pilgrimage, History of Humanity

The pilgrimage belongs to the history of humanity, where there is man, there is his setting out on a journey. It is the sign of an almost innate deep need and of a movement that allows us to grasp the spiritual depth of which man is the bearer. The pilgrimage constitutes an important moment in the collective and individual religious experience

of man. Paying attention to Christian pilgrimages, they had their maximum diffusion in the Middle Ages, when the relationship with the supernatural was strongly felt and the earthly world was considered the reflection of the spiritual one. With the eleventh century, a peaceful period began for Europe thanks to the reduction of the barbarian and Arab invasions; this allowed the widespread practice of pilgrimage because of an effective spiritual need in search of places linked to the life of Christ and of the saints for a more intimate and more direct knowledge of one's faith.

There are usually two types of pilgrimage: devotional and penitential. The first has existed since the early Christian era and was part of the conversion process: to free oneself from the anxieties and tensions of the world, the pilgrim left for Jerusalem, where he lived as "foreigners" (according to the etymology of the term "pilgrim"), maybe until the rest of life. A famous example of devotional pilgrimage was made by Saint Helena, mother of Constantine I, in the fourth century AD. To her is attributed the discovery of the tomb of Christ carved into the rock and shortly after the Cross of the Lord and those of the two thieves, which occurred in 326. This event produced great emotion in all of Christianity; for this reason, the first and natural destinations of the pilgrim were the two "sacred stones": that of Calvary, on which the cross was raised, and that of the Sepulchre, which remained empty after the resurrection.

With the Islamic conquest of Jerusalem in 637, the *palmieri* (as the pilgrims who went to Jerusalem were called and whose name derives from the practice of collecting and returning the palms of Jericho to their homeland) encountered many difficulties in fulfilling their pilgrimage. However, starting from the fourth century, other cult destinations had achieved a certain notoriety; in Italy mainly Rome, with its *memoriae apostolorum* and martyrs, and the rock sanctuary of San Michele Arcangelo on the Gargano. For other destinations, the prerequisites for the pilgrimage were the cult of the relics of saints and martyrs, which had significant dimensions throughout the Middle Ages: it was rare that a city did not celebrate the remains of a saint, a confessor, or the Virgin Mary.

Instead, the penitential pilgrimage, or expiatory, has later origins linked to Anglo-Saxon and above all Irish customs, then exported by missionaries to the rest of Europe starting from the sixth century AD. It was originally a form of harsh condemnation of a very serious offence (from murder to incest), in which the ecclesiastics mainly incurred since they were not subject to the right of the laity. The offender was condemned to wander continuously, through unknown and dangerous lands, living in poverty thanks only to alms, unable to settle elsewhere, work and rebuild a life, in all similar to the life made by Cain after the murder of Abel (Gen 4.12-14). They had to bear the signs of their sin clearly visible. The first reports of penitential pilgrimages directed to a specific destination date back to the eighth century.

With the custom of penitential pilgrims going to Rome, they overlapped the devotional pilgrims, who visited there the tombs and relics of the apostles Peter and Paul. During the Middle Ages, the two forms of pilgrimage converged until they became confused and uniform: each pilgrim sought the expiation of something (Fig. 4.1).

Fig. 4.1 Pilgrims on their way to Sanctuary of San Michele on Mount Gargano. Fresco in the Mitreo rock church in Sutri, Italy. *Source* Ivona

In addition to the pilgrimages to Rome and the Holy Land during the eleventh century, the mighty Cluny Abbey promoted another destination: the city of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, where the (alleged) tomb of the apostle James existed. Santiago had the advantage of combining the flow of pilgrims with the Reconquista process of then Muslim Spain.

Later, the Church recognized pilgrimage as a fundamental experience of religious life and disciplined it, providing it with a special vow and related spiritual indulgences. After the year 1000, pilgrimages were one of the engines of the new-found mobility of people and accompanied the rebirth of trade. The pilgrimage routes were equipped with *hospitalia* (hospices) where travellers could refresh themselves and take care of themselves, if sick.

Until the late Middle Ages, the religious journey was an event that was one of the most widespread customs of the religiosity of the time, whose motivations were different and intertwined both the spiritual and the human spheres. The reasons that led men to undertake the pilgrimage have been influenced by historical events, by the evolution of society as well as by the indications of the church; therefore, over the centuries, some motivations prevailed over others or, it could happen, some of them (relics, fear of the end of the world, the forgiveness of sins, participation in jubilees, penitential and judicial pilgrimages) combined in the same ages. The Doctrine of the Saints, dating back to the early history of the Church, supported in the sixth century by San Gregorio Magno and San Gregorio di Tours and confirmed by the Council of Trent (1545–1563), expressly allowed their veneration also through the form of pilgrimage because they could come to their aid thanks to the strength that God had given them (Duccio 2005).

Pilgrimages increased especially in the years close to the year 1000, when the fear of the end of the world intensified religious practices aimed at the salvation of the soul. Even more so in the following centuries when the whole of Christianity experienced an undoubted devotional fervour and a certain economic recovery. Thus, the religiosity and the desire to wander awakened. Figures such as Peter the Hermit, Peter the Venerable Abbot of Cluny, and Bernard of Clairvaux represented the spiritual renewal and religious and ecclesiastical rebirth of the eleventh century, with a significant increase in pilgrimage vows. The twelfth century was also the scene of a strong spiritual dynamism following the distinction between the vow of crusade (which provided for a plenary indulgence) and the vow of pilgrimage. The crusade became a real institution within the Catholic Church, which provided for an armed pilgrimage with the aim of liberating Jerusalem and could only be launched by the pontiff.

The crusade can generally be understood in relation to the authoritative call of the pope and the vow that those who embarked on that type of enterprise took. That vote was not separated from the penitential and indulgent dimensions connected with the pope's invitation. The Crusades were a very special form of pilgrimage: a pilgrimage with weapons. Primarily, it was a pilgrimage itinerary to reach a holy place for ascetic and penitential reasons. To this intent was often added the willingness to fight in a military enterprise or a very particular holy war in the name of God (Cardini and Musarra 2019; Flori 2003).

It is significant that in contemporary historical sources referable to the first three crusades, those who left for the East were indifferently called *peregrini*, *bellatores Domini* or *milites Christi*, almost as if the crusade were a type of armed pilgrimage.

To do penance, besides the Holy Land, other Italian places were reached on foot or on horseback; beyond Rome, we must remember above all Assisi, which had known the exploits of San Francesco, and Loreto, where the Holy House of Nazareth was found in the laurel woods (lauretum). Tradition has it that the transfer of the Holy House from Nazareth (where the Virgin and Mary was born, lived and received the announcement of the Archangel Gabriel) to Loreto was a work of angels. A second historical interpretation highlights that in 1291, the crusaders were expelled from the Holy Land by the work of Muslims and that some Christians saved the house of the Madonna from destruction, first transporting it to ancient Illyria; later in the night between 9 and 10 December 1294, it was transported to the ancient town of Recanati (in central Italy), first at the port, then on a hill where it is still kept today (https://www.santuarioloreto.va).

Around 1300 AD, the pilgrims who went to Rome, the so-called Romei, were further motivated to leave also by the Jubilees. On 22 February 1300, with the papal bull of Boniface VIII, the first Jubilee in history was announced, which should have ended on Christmas of the same year; the Romans were granted a plenary indulgence with the obligation to visit the Basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul on pilgrimage. During the sixteenth century, Lutheran criticisms of the pilgrimage reduced its importance and flow.

The Routes of Pilgrimages

Although there has never been a conventional path, from late antiquity and along the network of ancient Roman roads real pilgrimage routes have gradually been defined. Certainly, those journeys weren't easy; the roads were for the most part simple tracks covered with mud or ice, and it was obligatory to face, especially in winter, almost insurmountable natural obstacles such as the Alps. Usually, the journeys involved composite paths: a stretch of road, the ferrying of a watercourse, a path through a forest, a stretch of river navigation. In any case, the awareness of the risks to be faced was such that those who had to leave for a long journey prepared for it (for example by making a will) knowing that he could not return. Before leaving, confession and blessing by a priest or a bishop were necessary. The blessing was also imparted to the essential objects of the good pilgrim: the staff, the saddlebag containing food and money; the cloak, the 'petaso' (the wide-brimmed hat to protect yourself from the sun and rain). They could vary according to the chosen destination. In addition to the possible routes on the remains of Roman roads, pilgrims identified other parallel roads along which villages, *xenodochia* (assistance and rest facilities later called *hospitium*), inns, churches, and abbeys rose.

In other cases, pilgrims used roads already identified by traditional routes converging on Rome from most of the peninsula. An example is the 'Via Francigena' whose route crossed the Alps in Valle d'Aosta (Gran S. Bernardo pass) descended from Piedmont and Lombardy into the Po Valley, crossed the Apennines towards Berceto, flowed along Tuscany and Lazio to reach Rome (Fig. 4.2).

Fig. 4.2 Main stages of the Via Francigena. *Source* Ivona

The Via Francigena has represented over the centuries, since the early Middle Ages, the itinerary followed by pilgrims from central-northern Europe to reach Rome, the seat of the Papacy and the heart of Christianity. What is known today as Via Francigena is the 1800 km itinerary (80 stages) covered in 79 days by Archbishop Sigerico in the year 990 to return to Canterbury from Rome after the investiture of the Archbishop's Pallium by Pope John XV. Sigeric, at the invitation of the Pontiff, noted all the stages, one for each day, which brought him back to Great Britain through Europe. His diary is therefore the most authentic testimony of the route of the Via Francigena from Rome to the English Channel. The name "Francigena" did not just indicate a devotional route for the exclusive use of pilgrims, but a route travelled by merchants, armies, politicians, and men of culture, thus creating a primary channel of communication and exchange and allowing all those interrelationships that led to the substantial unity of European culture between the tenth and thirteenth centuries. With men and goods, the Via Francigena brought ideas, technical and ideological innovations, favouring the comparison and integration of the various cultural currents (Berti 2012; Trono 2012).

The spread, from the end of the fifth century, of the cult of the Archangel Michael, venerated in various sanctuaries on the Gargano in Apulia, Campania and Basilicata, and the political settlement of the South, between the sixth and seventh centuries, with the domination of the Byzantines first and then the Lombards, made transit safer and favoured various forms of pilgrimage, of lay and religious, along the most important roads in Southern Italy. To these destinations were added several other holy places and sanctuaries where apparitions and wonders of powerful intercessors of God had been ascertained; among them the most visited were Canterbury in England, Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres in France, Cologne and Aachen in Germany, Loreto, Assisi, the Grotta dell'Arcangelo San Michele in Monte Sant'Angelo, the Basilica of San Nicola di Bari and many others in Italy; such shrines have drawn the spiritual maps in the Western world.

The network of pilgrimage routes in northern Italy also included another alternative route that, in the past, connected to the Camino de Santiago arriving in Italy from Montgenèvre (in France) and the two roads then joined at Vercelli. Another road of great importance was the Via Postumia, the road that connected Aquileia on the Adriatic Sea with Genoa passing through Verona, Cremona, Piacenza, and Tortona. It assumed great importance as it was the only entirely terrestrial route that connected Rome to the eastern part of the Italian peninsula, across the only bridge over the Adige built near today's Verona.

Umbrian notary sources reported that, between 1374 and 1499, the Grotto of San Michele Arcangelo and the Basilica of San Nicola di Bari (Fig. 4.3) were the most important pilgrimage destinations in Italy (Parrot 1999).

As early as 500 A.D. the first began to be a destination for pilgrimages with the Lombards who, converted to Christianity, elected the Archangel as their patron-protector; the Basilica, on the other hand, was visited more and more starting from the second half of the tenth century when the movement of the Crusaders headed for the Holy Land to free the Holy Sepulchre from the Muslims began. More generally, the importance achieved by the Apulian ports as well as by the itinerant testimonies
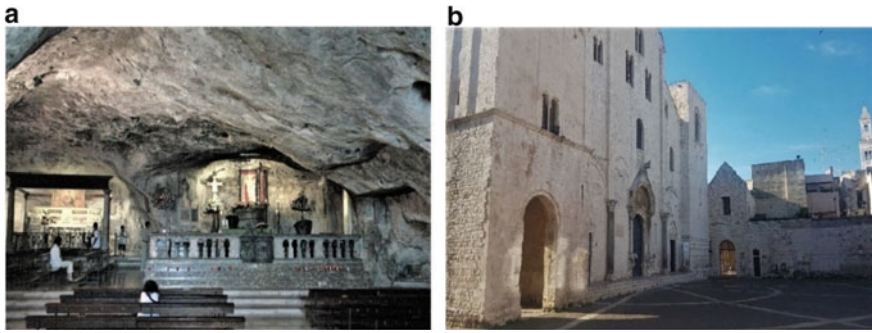
Fig. 4.3 Grotto of San Michele Arcangelo (**a**) and the Basilica of San Nicola di Bari (**b**). *Source* Ivona

is also attested by the numerous '*mansiones*' (the buildings managed by the warrior-monks founded in 1099, in the most important cities of Europe) founded by the Templars in Bari, Barletta, Trani, Brindisi and along the Appia Antica and Appia Traiana route.

The cultural importance of pilgrimage is also clearly found in the so-called pilgrimage literature. By historians, the itineraries, diaries and other accounts of more or less illustrious pilgrims are considered a real literary genre, distinct from the great literature which also deals with and shows the significant role of this inexhaustible social phenomenon. In any case, among the specific itineraries and guides, it is necessary to distinguish purely geographical descriptions (such as the Peutinger Table or the Ravenna Chronograph), and the compositions whose character is rather hagiographic (as are certain works by Prudenzio, Paolino di Nola and Venanzio Fortunato), in which topographical information is secondary to other purposes (Caucci von Saucken 1999; Chélini and Branthomme 2004; Liccardo 2018).

The pilgrimage experience still remains a significant phenomenon today; just think of the thousands of visitors per year in the *albergues* along the Way to Santiago de Compostela and the pilgrims who reach traditional sanctuaries on foot.

All Roads…Lead to Apulia

The pilgrim routes that connected the three most important destinations of Christianity, Jerusalem, Rome and Santiago de Compostela, known as the *Peregrinationes maiores* were roads of primary importance; the other destinations of great pilgrimages lost importance over time. The most important routes used to reach the destinations were essentially what remained of the network of highways built by the Romans with their *stationes*, to which other roads and sheep tracks were added; these were soon enriched with hospices and shelters to meet the different needs of travellers

who travelled around Europe on foot. In general, it can be said that the paths developed mainly on land with few passages in the sea. The choice was mainly dictated by economic reasons; the penitents who did not have economic means followed the land routes less expensive than the sea ones. They consisted of two paths; the first flowed along the Adriatic coast the so-called Via Egnatia passing through today's Slovenia, Croatia, Greece, Constantinople, to finally reach Jerusalem; the second route crossed the plains of Hungary, then Serbia, Bulgaria, Constantinople, and then Jerusalem. Those who had greater wealth paid for a passage by ship to reach the port of Venice or the ports of Apulia; from there they found an embarkation for the Holy Land. In the Middle Ages, the sea voyage was far from easy, but the Venetian shipowners specialized in the perfect organization of the pilgrimage with a formula similar to today's 'organized travel'. The fee paid included food, accommodation for the entire trip, tolls and stays in the Holy Land. Due to the difficulties of the journey and the increasingly expensive tolls required by the caliphs, interest in sacred places in the Holy Land was progressively reduced and around 1500 the Franciscan friars of Jerusalem no longer saw the pilgrims (Sumption 1993).

The strategic position of southern Italy as a shore in the Mediterranean towards the East was of central importance in the pilgrim movement. It was located at the crossroads of the main trade routes of the Mediterranean. Oldfield (2014, p. 182) states that "Southern Italy also occupied an integral position in the 'Christianized topography' of medieval Christendom. Cult centres often emerged at key nodes of passage and communication; islands and peninsulas were thus endowed with particular sacred qualities". Undoubtedly, the centres of worship in southern Italy were also the end points of the travels of many pilgrims who came from foreign countries attracted by the sanctuaries present throughout the area and who have lavished their mystical charm throughout Christianity. However, for an even greater number of pilgrims, southern Italy was experienced as part of that crucial phase of transition that created the penitential dimensions of a journey that had its destination elsewhere. In short, it would seem that Southern Italy in medieval times was a sort of crossroads for the atonement of sins or as Oldfield defines it as 'a bridge to salvation' (Paul 2014).

Among the southern Italian regions, Apulia had more functions than that of eastern *finis terrae*. Especially in the Crusade era, it had a role of considerable importance; its ports allowed the embarkation of pilgrims and knights for the Holy Land; it was the outpost of the monastic-knightly orders whose traces in many cases are still visible in the area north of Bari. Its location in the final stretch of the Via Francigena was fundamental; that pilgrimage itinerary that linked Canterbury to Rome and then to the ports of Apulia, allowed the arrival in the Holy Land. In particular, Apulia was crossed by the southern part of the Via Francigena connecting Rome and the Adriatic Apulian ports, which retraced the roads of the Roman age through the consular roads such as the Via Appia and the Via Traiana. The first was built in 312 BC by the censor Appio Claudio Centemmano to connect Rome with Capua, the most important city of the then conquered Campania. The original function was therefore military, that is to connect the centres of the military expansion of Rome. Overall, the entire journey from Rome to Brindisi was about 580 kms (360 miles) long, and required about

15 days of walking, considering an average distance of 35/40 kms per day (25–30 miles). The final stretch that connected the Ionian to the Adriatic was faster, 70 km (44 miles) long, that is, according to Strabo, in one day's travel.

The definitive arrangement of some fundamental road axes for Apulia was carried out during the II and partly in the I century BC. In the imperial age, they formed the backbone of that road network, no longer local, but of reference for the entire south-eastern sector of the peninsula; the three roads Via Appia, Via Litoranea and Via Minucia (later revived in imperiale from the Via Traiana) allowed, in fact, rapid connections with central Italy (Campania area and Adriatic area) and, therefore, with Rome.

Still according to Strabo to reach Rome from Brindisi, as an alternative to the Via Appia, it was possible to take a second road: precisely that Via Minucia, attested by different literary sources (Ceraudo 2014; Musti 1988; Stopani 1992).

Between 108 and 110 A.D., the emperor Trajan wanted to create a smoother and faster itinerary that linked the capital of the empire to the important port of Brindisi. A branch was created in Benevento, starting from the triumphal arch of Trajan, and it used existing and modernized routes (such as the ancient route of the Via Minucia) that made it possible to avoid some mountainous stretches.

Passing through Troia (Aecae), Canosa (Canusium), Ruvo di Puglia (Rubi), Bitonto (Butontum), Bari (Barium), Egnazia (Gnatia), and Santa Sabina (Speluncae) and a series of post stations called '*stationes'*, the journey was at least one day shorter than the original route, for a total of 206 Roman miles (just over 300 km). Overall, the alternate route was shorter than 45 km (28 miles). The roads that until then had been of beaten ground were completely renovated. The Via Traiana thus quickly became the most important road axis of crossing in northern and central Puglia, favouring the development of the cities that were located along its route.

In addition to the Via Appia, the Via Minucia and the Via Litoranea, thanks to the discovery of some milestones other *viae publicae* are known in northern and central Apulia: the Via Aemilia, probably along the border between Apulia and Campania, but there is no certain historical and archaeological evidence; the Via Gellia was a coastal road axis that united Egnatia to Butuntum passing through Barium, an alternative road to the internal variant to be identified with the stretch of the Minucia described by Strabo. Another road was the so-called short route Barium-Tarentum (Bari-Taranto) which was a shortcut for those who wanted to reach Taranto directly from Bari, avoiding the longer passage through Brindisi.

Still from Strabo we get the news of the existence in the late Republican age of a road, conventionally called Via Sallentina, which was to connect *Terentum* (Taranto) to *Hydruntum* (Otranto) (Ceraudo 2014; Musti 1988; Stopani 1992). The road reorganization policy initiated by Trajan at the beginning of the second century AD, the organization of a pre-existing road axis that connected the two lower Adriatic ports of *Brundisium* (Brindisi) and *Hydruntum*, passing through Lecce (*Lupiae*), is attributable; the artery is mentioned as via *publica* by Pliny and commonly known as Via Traiana Calabra (Fig. 4.4).
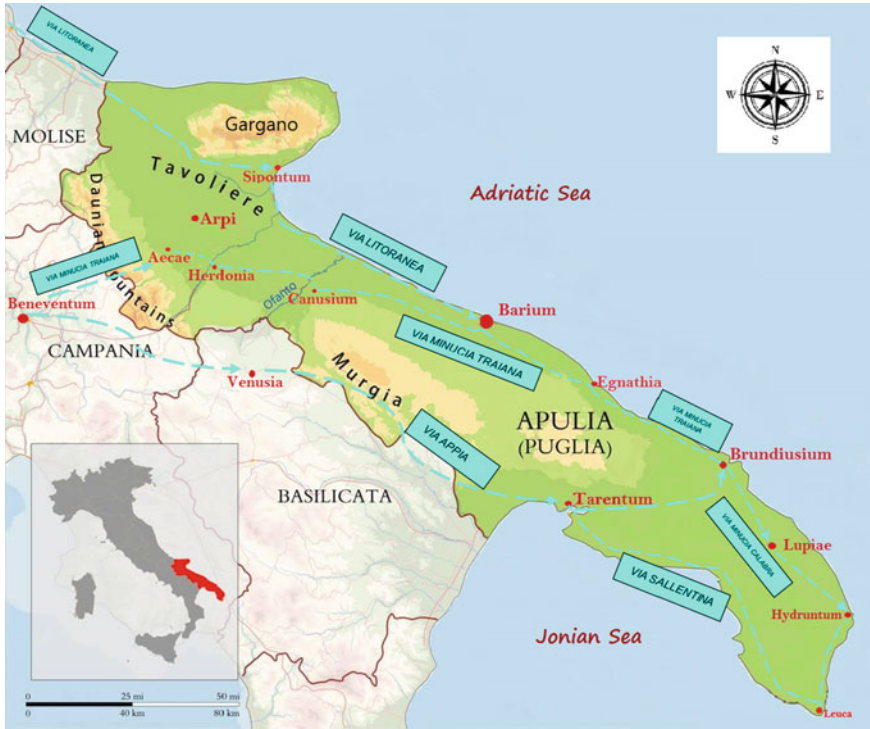
Fig. 4.4 Reconstructive hypothesis of the main viability of the Roman Age in Apulia. *Source* Ivona

The Roman roads described above represented all commercial and military routes, but, over the centuries, they had become paths already traced and usable as pilgrimage networks.

The centrality of Apulia as a hub for religious destinations in the Mediterranean is also evident in the Via *Burdigala* or *Itinerarium Burdigalense*, written by an anonymous pilgrim during his journey from Burdigala, today's Bordeaux. It describes the pilgrimage from Aquitaine to the Holy Land made in the years 333–334 AD (immediately after the Edict of Constantine recognized freedom of worship for the new religion) to Jerusalem, where he was headed to venerate the Holy Sepulchre. In the *Itinerarium*, the overnight stations and the stages for changing horses are listed precisely, along a very long route that goes from the western end of Europe to Palestine.

During the Middle Ages, the *Itinerarium Burdigalense*, also called *Hierosolymitano*, was used a lot, depending on whether the city of departure (Bordeaux) or the destination of the journey (Jerusalem) was favoured. The Itinerarium is the oldest known story of a Christian itinerary (Fig. 4.5).

Fig. 4.5 Itinerary described in the *Itinerarium Burdigalense. Source* Reproduced from: burdi-gale.weebly.com, with modification

The outward route first wound up in Gaul along the Via Domitia; subsequently, having crossed the Alps at Montgenevre, northern Italy was crossed along the Via Postumia from Turin to Aquileia, then entered the Danube valley and turned south towards Constantinople. On Asian soil, passing through the Anatolian peninsula and Syria, we finally reached Jerusalem. The return followed a different path that passed along the Via Egnatia through Macedonia; then the pilgrims ferried to Aulona (Valona); from there, after crossing the sea and disembarking at Hydruntum (Otranto), they went up the Italian peninsula along the major roads: they continued along the Via Traiana Calabra and the Via Appia, up to Rome, to continue along the Via Flaminia and the via Emilia up to Mediolanum (Milan), then the Alpine passes, retracing the same itinerary backwards.

The *Burdigalense Itinerarium* was an easy guide for groups of pilgrims, providing them with information on the distances between the various stopping points and horse changes, as well as the imperial post stations, located along the consular roads. The entire pilgrimage journey was completed in just under two years, including sea crossings and stops in the holy place (Gelsomino 1966; Uggeri 2005).

The penitential journey of another future saint, Guglielmo da Vercelli, to the Holy Land, was interrupted precisely in the Apulian *finisterre*. The first goal of his journey had been Santiago de Compostela; later Guglielmo decided not to stop in Vercelli but continued, following the voice of the Spirit, towards the Holy Land. He then travelled

the Via Francigena and the Via Romea (he stopped in Rome visiting the main holy sites in 1106) and took the road to Jerusalem (Via Appia) towards the port of Brindisi, thus crossing Irpinia, Lucania and Apulia. Some misadventures convinced him not to embark for Jerusalem but to continue his penitential path along all the roads of Southern Italy by founding many monasteries (including the most important one of Montevergine in Campania) and forming what will be called the Benedictine Congregation of Montevergine which will have life centuries old (Andenna 1983).

The geographical dynamics of the time and the inscrutable decisions of fate made it possible for the two future saints to meet in Apulia; Guglielmo da Vercelli and Giovanni da Matera; in fact, they met in Brindisi where both had arrived for the same reason (the departure towards the Holy Land) and both gave up. Giovanni then continued his wanderings throughout Puglia, reaching the sanctuary of the Archangel Michael in the Gargano, already famous in his time.

In short, the vocation of Apulia's *fines terrae*, the last strip and frontier between the Christian world of the West and that of the East, is evident through the network of roads that crossed it.

But Apulia was also a land of welcome. In addition to strategic ports for the embarkation and disembarkation of pilgrims, it offered hospitality and above all devotional sanctuaries among the most revered in Christianity. Just think of the sanctuary of San Michele in Monte Sant'Angelo and that of San Nicola in Bari, a crucial stage for European pilgrimages; it was also a place of presence of the military orders of the hospitals, the Templars and the Teutonics who built various structures intended to welcome pilgrims both departing and returning from the Holy Land and to supply their homes in the East with products from the region (Lavermicocca 1999) highlighted how in Apulia:

> There was a fusion between land routes and maritime routes to the Holy Land: the geographical position of the region, projected towards the East with the Salento peninsula, somehow predestined it to become a sort of "carrefour" of the circulation linked to the Jerusalem pilgrimage. (Stopani 2005, p. 25)

Over time and with the evolution of society, pilgrimages lost their attraction. It was also opposed by legislative provisions that forbade begging, the exodus of people and currency without however ever disappearing definitively in popular piety and faith. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, there was a growing interest in cultural journeys motivated more by curiosity for the discovery of the ancient vestiges present along the itineraries than for pilgrimages in a religious sense.

The complex network of pilgrimage roads envisaged Apulia as its important hub in the composite network of the veneration of the saints. In addition to the routes already mentioned, Apulia hosted other religious routes or segments of them. For example, the Via Lauretana already mentioned above. Built as a commercial and postal road, it connected Rome to the port of Ancona, and became a privileged route for pilgrims who wished to testify to the faith, uniting the three spiritual centres of Christianity in Italy in a single path: Rome, Loreto and Assisi. With the Via Francigena and the Via Romea, the Via Lauretana was the major itinerary of faith in Italy.

Based on the legendary tale and with the favour of popes, bishops and religious orders, the Lauretan cult experienced a particular diffusion between the two shores of the Adriatic, arriving early also in Apulia, which, between the Middle Ages and the modern age, became a frontier land, an obligatory stop on commercial and political routes, as well as linked to the pilgrimage routes that often favoured the landing and the spread of cults and legends.

> The region, already part of the *peregrinationes maiores* towards the destinations of the holy places, of Rome and Santiago de Compostela, defines its sacred geography through a network of terrestrial itineraries punctuated by intermediate stages, coinciding with important regional sanctuaries: San Michele Arcangelo a Monte Sant'Angelo, Santa Maria dei Martiri in Molfetta, San Nicola in Bari, Santa Maria di Leuca in the extreme edge of the region. The pilgrimage itineraries and transhumance trails that crossed central Italy, but also the Adriatic routes that connected the regions overlooking the Adriatic, were the backdrop to the movement of these pilgrims. (Laterza 2013, p. 251)

In support of the long-lived fortune that the Lauretan cult had in Puglia from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century, there are numerous architectural testimonies (several churches were erected in the Apulian territory to venerate the cult of the Madonna of Loreto) but also documentary and archaeological. As emerges from some historical documents, not only religious but also economic and cultural relations existed between Puglia and the Lauretan sanctuary (Grimaldi 1993).

The Sanctuaries of San Nicola and San Michele Arcangelo, Junctions in the Network of Apulian Routes

During the Middle Ages, Apulia, with its ports and roads, with its holy places, was naturally receptive, open to exchange and confrontation with the East. The cave of the Archangel Michael on the Gargano and the tomb of St. Nicholas in Bari, the most revered saint in the East as in the West, were fundamental stops in the southern stretch of the Via Francigena before the embarkation of pilgrims and crusaders towards the Holy Land or on the way back to the West.

The cult of the Archangel Michael was widespread throughout Europe, fuelled by pilgrimages along the system of roads that connected the three mountains dedicated to him: to the south the Gargano, towering over the Adriatic Sea, San Michele alla Chiusa in Val di Susa, along the alpine stretch of the Via Francigena, Mont Saint-Michel on the Atlantic coast, in Normandy. Not only innumerable images, but also places of worship often rupestrian and scattered in Europe give the measure of a special devotion (Sensi 1999). In the name of St. Michael, various paths in medieval Europe have unfolded, pilgrim journeys that were also of communication and commerce and which had the nodal points in the places of worship of the Archangel.

From the Lombards to the Normans, from the eighth to the thirteenth century, the "Micaelica", "Michelita", or "Angelica" street is a fundamental route in European history. The routes are intertwined with multiple Francigena ways or with the roads

leading to the ports from which ships depart for the East. Observed on a map, the most significant Micaelic places in Europe come together along an ideal diagonal axis in the north-west and south-east direction.

It starts from the monastery of Skellig Michael, a rocky islet in Ireland, to pass through the fortress (once an abbey) St Michael's Mount on the Cornish coast. On the other side of the coast on the English Channel, the ideal axis continues to Mont Saint-Michel. To the south, however, beyond Monte Sant'Angelo, it touches the Greek islands of the Dodecanese where in Simi there is a monastery dedicated to the archangel. To ideally reach the Holy Land, precisely on Mount Carmel, near Haifa. According to the legend, that line, so straight, was drawn by the archangel's sword while driving the devil out of Heaven. In the middle of this imaginary diagonal, which from Ireland arrives in the Holy Land, and in the centre of a more indented geographical route that descended from the coast of the English Channel to the ports of Apulia, is the abbey of San Michele della Chiusa.

However, following a first apparition of the Angel, the place that most congealed the cult was the ancient settlement in the Gargano, Monte Sant'Angelo. He is usually depicted with the armour and the sword or spear of a fighter, in the act of trampling on Satan represented in the form of a snake or a dragon. His weapons have a symbolic value: with them the dragon is pierced and pierced the darkness of darkness. He restores light and hope to men (Fig. 4.6).

At Monte Sant'Angelo, pilgrims received special blessings and absolution for even the most serious sins. Graffiti of hands and feet, crosses are engraved on the stones of the sanctuary and recall the passage of many devotees. There are the oldest known runic inscriptions in Italy which show how they reached Apulia as far back as Anglia, long before Sigeric of Canterbury, a witness of the Via Francigena in the tenth century, set out towards Rome. Francis of Assisi also passed through Monte Sant'Angelo, to whom an altar in the sanctuary is dedicated. The Apulian sanctuary was near the port of Siponto (now disappeared), one of the embarkation points for ships bound for the East, an approach to Jerusalem for crusaders, merchants, and dignitaries, as well as for men of faith (Berardi 2019; Pistocchini 2019).

The history of pilgrimages to the Gargano sanctuary begins with the birth of the inhabited nucleus of Monte Sant'Angelo, formed by hospices for pilgrims, and has continued uninterruptedly until today; it is linked to a very intense devotion among all classes, which has grown over time with different reasons.

In the inseparable knot of the Apulian port cities with the Mediterranean countries, the sanctuary where the remains of St. Nicholas rest, moved to Bari from Mira (1087) (Fig. 4.7), became the meeting point of the land routes and the routes of water that connected Jerusalem and Santiago de Compostela: extreme destinations in the great itineraries of medieval pilgrimage. In short, the geographical dynamics of that era had made Apulia the crossroads of Christianity on the move, meeting point of peoples and exchange of different human and cultural experiences.

The pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Nicholas is a classic pilgrimage from both the Middle Ages and the modern era. Catholic and Orthodox pilgrims came to Bari from the northernmost countries of Europe and from Russia. Then, around 1890, things changed. All the assets of the Basilica were expropriated by the Italian state

Fig. 4.6 The Statue of San Michele Arcangelo in the Homonymous Cave on the Gargano. *Source* Ivona

and the reception of pilgrims entered a period of crisis. However, still today many thousands of faithful visits the Basilica of San Nicola in Bari, to pay homage to his remains, especially on the two holidays of 8th May and 6th December; some groups of pilgrims reach the city still on foot (such as, for example, the companies of Vasto, San Salvo, Monteodorisio, Gissi, Fragneto Monforte) (Cioffari 1997; Di Fazio 2018; Pappagallo 1999).

The fame of St. Nicholas in both the western and eastern world is very ancient and preceded the translation of his bones in 1087. The numerous churches dedicated to him, already present on the Bari and Italian soil, bear witness to this. A testimony of the antiquity of the cult of San Nicola emerged, for example, during the archaeological excavations under the Palatine Hill in Rome, with the discovery of a fresco dedicated to him dating back to around 760 AD; thus confirming that St. Nicholas was venerated in Italy four centuries before the translation of his bones. Currently, this fresco is considered the oldest existing image of St. Nicholas in the world (Bronzini 2002; Melchiorre 1986).

Fig. 4.7 Translation of the relics of Saint Nicholas of Myra to Bari. *Source* Reproduced from: https://www.geographicguide.com/ with modification

The Basilica of San Nicola (Fig. 4.3b) became, therefore, a destination for devotional pilgrimages since the bones of San Nicola were placed in its crypt by Pope Urban II, on 1 October 1089. Since then, an intense and continuous pilgrimage developed and the relics of the Saint became an obligatory stop and object of veneration by leaders, princes, sovereigns and popes who, before embarking for the Holy Land, asked the great thaumaturge for protection and blessing. The particular geographical position of the city of Bari has meant that in history it has become a crossroads of people and therefore a meeting point for cultures. Its value as a transit location for pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem is already well evidenced in the ninth century. Then, with the presence of the relics of St. Nicholas it itself became a destination for pilgrimages. Subsequently, with the so-called Clermont Appeal of 1095 with which Pope Urban II invited "The whole West to march in defence of the East to go and free the holy places", Bari became a meeting point for the Crusader army thanks to the '*Portus Sancti Nicolai*' from which they embarked for the Holy Land.

The translation of the relics of St. Nicholas had an extraordinary echo throughout Europe and in the Middle Ages the Apulian sanctuary became an important pilgrimage destination, with the result of the spread of the cult of St. Nicholas of Bari (and not of Myra).

The enterprise of the sailors also had a huge impact on the image of the city, and its businesses, considering that St. Nicholas, according to the preachers of the time, was at the top of popular devotion to the Saints. With the stealing of the bones of St. Nicola, Bari, while retaining its characteristics of a western city, consolidated its projection towards the east. The Saint, in fact, who lived in Asia Minor between about 260 and 335, was of Greek language and culture. Since then, the cult of St. Nicholas also spread to the West and an impulse to increase the cult started from

Bari. The enterprise of the translation was, however, the effect and not the cause of the exceptional cult of the Saint of Mira, already very much alive in the West.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, there were also many "judicial pilgrimages" to Bari, imposed on sinners from Flanders and other European regions to replace serious convictions. The pilgrim obliged to take solemn leave from the authorities who had condemned him wore the habit of the penitent, publicly acknowledging his sins with the simultaneous request for conciliation to the offended party; when he arrived at the Basilica, he presented himself to the civil and religious authorities of Bari. The canons, custodians of the relics of St. Nicholas, issued a certificate to the condemned pilgrim attesting to his arrival and prayers in the sanctuary, that is, the expiation of the sentence (Bacci 2009; Vantaggiato 2010).

The holiness of St. Nicholas known and venerated all over the world has never ceased to be the object of pilgrimages. Even today the city celebrates its patron saint on two occasions: December 8th is the typically religious holiday according to the tradition of the Christian calendar of organizing the liturgical year day by day; from 6 to 9th May, the city of Bari celebrates its patron saint by recalling the translation of the relics of the saint from Myra. The people of Bari and pilgrims from all over the world participate in the solemn religious celebrations and cultural events in honour of the saint. On 7th May, the historical parade commemorates the life of the saint, his miracles and the epic feat of the sailors. On 8th May, the Saint is carried in procession through the streets of the Old Town until he reaches the sea. It is here that pilgrims with their boats pay homage to the saint who came from the sea, protector of sailors. On 9th May, the celebrations continue with the solemn Eucharistic celebration in which the pastor of the diocese invokes the Holy Spirit to renew the "miracle of the Manna" that exudes from the bones of St. Nicholas.

For almost a millennium, the Basilica dedicated to the Saint (where his relics are kept) and with it the city have been the destination of an ever-growing pilgrimage (Cioffari 2007). Here the steps of pilgrims of different nationalities and religions cross, especially considering that it is the only Catholic church in whose crypt Orthodox worship can also be celebrated. A fact that highlights the city's bond with Eastern Europe, making the Basilica a place of meeting and dialogue of different faiths.

The Ecumenical Lamp, or Uniflamma Lamp, located in the crypt of the Basilica (Fig. 4.8) is a symbol of the uniqueness of the Catholic and Orthodox faith, nourished by two traditions, the Eastern and the Western.

The lamp is in the shape of a boat and represents the Church. And on the boat Nicola's testimony excels. On the shoulders of the saint, in fact, there are two bowls that represent one the Church of the East and the other the Church of the West with written, in Greek and Latin, the prayer of Jesus to the Father, before dying, "Let them be one." These bowls are fed by different oils, and this demonstrates the diversity of rites of which the Church is composed.

A consistent influx of pilgrims also comes from Russia. From the mid-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, many Russian aristocrats and intellectuals came on pilgrimage to Bari; after the communist revolution of 1917 which had completely interrupted all types of pilgrimage, from the beginning of the 90s the flows from

Fig. 4.8 Ecumenical Lamp in the crypt of the Basilica of San Nicola. *Source* Ivona

Russia started again without interruption. Since 1998, Russian pilgrims have also been welcomed again by the Orthodox priests of the Moscow Patriarchate who are based in the so-called Russian Church in the city of Bari. Inside the crypt of the Basilica of St. Nicholas, then, there is a Russian Orthodox chapel and is a unique case in the world that testifies to the peaceful coexistence of two religious' faiths in the same place (Fig. 4.9). In 2003, Russian President Putin donated a bronze statue of St. Nicholas to the city to seal the ancient tradition of the Russian pilgrimage to Bari and to remember the sense of welcome towards Orthodox pilgrims. In that dedication Putin addresses the citizens of Bari with these words: "May this gift be testimony not only to the veneration of the great Saint by the Russians but also to the constant aspiration of the peoples of our countries to consolidate friendship and cooperation".

The cult of St. Nicholas is practically widespread all over the world but the testimonies of faith in the countries of Eastern Europe are particularly numerous. From Constantinople and Greece, the cult of St. Nicholas passed into the Slavic world starting from Bulgaria, as evidenced by a Sermon of Clement of Ochroid. Other

Fig. 4.9 Russian Orthodox Chapel inside the crypt of the Basilica of San Nicola. *Source* Ivona

popular traditions are found in Wallachia. In Moldavia, there is also the feast of the transfer of St. Nicholas to Bari. In many churches in Romania, there are frescoes representing the life of the saint. Czech and Slovak Republics, due to their particular geographical position between Germany and the Slavic world, knew St. Nicholas from the earliest times. St. Nicholas Church in Prague is one of the most significant monuments of the Czech Baroque. Several other testimonies of the cult are present in Poland, Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia. St. Nicholas is highly revered in the republics of South Slavia, albeit with some different nuances. For example, Slovenia is affected by Austrian folklore; Croatia is particularly linked to the Saint as the protector of those who travel by sea; Serbia and Bosnia Herzegovina are still affected by the Byzantine spiritual heritage; the churches of St. Nicholas in Albania

are mainly Orthodox. The church of St. Nicholas in Štip in Macedonia is of exquisite workmanship.

Without dwelling further on the list of each country, it can certainly be affirmed that the testimony of faith and worship for the Saint of Myra are present, with greater or lesser intensity, throughout the rest of Europe and in the world. The name of St. Nicholas is also known in the Middle and Far East, although much less so than in Europe and America. Armenia, for example, includes St. Nicholas among the most revered saints.

In the Italian geography of the Nicolaian cult, the greatest diffusion occurred in the southern regions. Many think that the cult in Puglia was among the oldest and most consistent. In reality, the Apulian testimonies are later than the Sicilian, Calabrian, and Neapolitan ones. The first references to churches date back to the first half of the eleventh century, with Taranto (already existing in 1029), Bari (founded in 1026), then Brindisi (already in 1054), Monopoli (1059), and Troia (1067). The transfer to Bari revived the already existing cult.

Conclusions

Pilgrimage is a universal religious experience, known not only to Christianity, but also to all religions of antiquity, both monotheistic and polytheistic. Over the centuries the pilgrim, mostly male, driven by various motivations that are individual, intimate or social ones, undertook his journey with great tenacity usually in the months of April and May, in small groups, the so-called companies that they formed right along the roads; sometimes with some animals carrying the necessary baggage or children and the sick, walking many kilometres a day. The trips were organized by the same people, often called 'priors' to whom the community recognized a precise function of religious order.

As Turner states "In every pilgrimage system, even in declining ones, a thin thread of popular devotion persists that recalls the original ardour and sense of *communitas*" (Turner 1973, p. 193).

The numerous studies on the Christian pilgrimage from its origins to our days show how pilgrimage has changed considerably compared to its origins: if before it was carried out in a more spiritual sense on foot, taking the most disparate risks, already after the year 1000 the situation had improved. With the reopening of the roads and the development of internal trade, better services were available also due to the presence of a dense network of hospices along the main roads; pilgrims also began to travel in more organized groups. After the Second World War, pilgrimage progressively transforms itself into religious tourism also in the light of the progress made by means of transport and with the birth of organizations specialized in assisting pilgrims; the journey is therefore faster, and the risks and difficulties are fewer. A wealth of stories, of religiosity, of respect for the traditions of these people who,

perhaps unwittingly, in their wanderings renew an ancient history which, thanks to them, reaches up to the modernity of our days and which cannot and must not be lost.

A transit land for an ancient vocation and tradition, a meeting point between East and West, Apulia has seen the passage of countless travellers, traders and pilgrims over the course of its millennial history. Since the time of the Crusades, Apulia had a role of considerable importance: its ports allowed the embarkation of pilgrims and knights for the Holy Land, it was the outpost of the monastic-knightly orders whose traces in many cases are still visible in the whole region. In short, that ancient weave made of lattices to and from the significant places of worship has drawn the geography of pilgrimages in Apulia. How many and which of those ancient networks of roads still crossed the Apulian territory today is difficult to establish exactly; what however remain unchanged are the geographical dynamics of this land. A place of welcome, of movements of people, of cultural and commercial exchanges over the centuries, still today it has not renounced its geographical vocation as a frontier land.

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Chapter 5
Sacred Space in Geography: Religious Buildings and Monuments

Darius Liutikas

Abstract Sacred space includes both the natural and cultural environment. The sacred spaces are distinctly visible in the landscape, the process of sacralization of place is full of various discourses and interpretations. Sacred places are tangible, whether they be natural objects, or created by human. This chapter presents man-made religious structures (buildings and sacred monuments). The chapter analyses the main traditional Christian religious shrines. The analysis focuses on the Christian sacred spaces as Churches, monasteries, and also peculiarities of Calvaries, Grottos of Lourdes, roadside crosses, crucifixes and chapels. Churches and chapels, along with roadside crosses and crucifixes have different forms, building traditions and sacred elements. Christian churches have exclusive architectural forms and central location in the geographical space. The article presents the statistics of the church buildings in some European countries. The article also presents the main historical reasons for the change of the number of shrines. The author discusses the main structural elements of sacred space and the existential circle of sacred spaces.

Keywords Sacred space · Geography of Religions · Shrines · Christian Churches · Crosses and Roadside Chapels

Introduction

The influence of sacred space in the landscape is vast and varied. Shrines and various religious monuments are the most noticeable in the landscape. In Christianity, these include churches and chapels, monasteries and tombs, Calvaries and the replicas of the Grotto of Lourdes, roadside crosses and chapels. The religious landscape is constantly changing, and is influenced by natural and various social, political, demographic and religious processes. Symbols of religion in the landscape mark territorial distribution and development of particular religion.

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Religious pilgrims choose to visit sacred places for fulfilment of their spiritual needs. Quite often they also create their own meaning for sacred places based on their beliefs, experiences, religious values and personal characteristics. According to Tuan (1977, p. 152), religion can either bind people to a place or free them from the same location. Different religions strive to capture and control the manifestations of sacred elements.

Sacred places and pilgrimage are one of the topics of the *geography of religions* (Park 1994). Although, the *geography of religions* can be defined as a branch of social geography that studies the relationships of religions with different elements of social, economic, cultural and physical environment, and their mutual influence (Liutikas 2004, p. 48), some authors (Isaac 1960; Kotlyakov and Komarova 2006; Matsui 2014) highlight the analysis of spatial factors and characteristics of religion in the definitions.

The natural landscape is influenced by the different conceptions of sacred spaces, burial traditions and various religious practices (e.g., the Way of the Cross, Calvary, in Europe). Park (2005, p. 440) noticed that representatives of the theory of natural determinism believe that the physical environment influences religious thought (e.g., the influence of the Ganges River on Hinduism). However, German sociologist Weber (1993 [1922]) was the first who highlighted the influence of religion on social and economic structures. The most important works in this field of the *geography of religions* were published after World War II: *Fundamental Questions in the Geography of Religions* (article written in German in 1947 and translated in English in 1962) by P. Fickeler, *Geographie et religions* by P. Deffontaines (in French, 1948), *Geography of Religions* by Sopher (1967) and *Geography of Religions in England* by Gay (1971).

The topics of research on the *geography of religions* are very diverse (e.g., the spread of religions and their territorial development models, observance and transmission of religious practices and traditions, manifestation of religion in everyday life), but majority of them are related to geographical space and landscape (Fickeler 1962; Isaac 1960, 1962, 1965). Other pioneers of the *geography of religions* paid great attention to the other aspects of religion as the spatial distribution of various denominations and beliefs (Brook 1979; Deffontaines 1948), their local distinctiveness (Brush 1949; Gay 1971), their relationship to social structure (Jordan 1973) and the traditional way of life (Deffontaines 1948). Kong (1990) researched historical development of the relationship between religion and geography, Stump (2008) researched the contextuality of religion or adherence to religious rituals and traditions, religious territoriality in secular space and the meanings and uses of sacred space.

The analysis of religious objects and shrines in space is one of the most obvious topics in the geography of religion. In addition to shrines, there are many other buildings in landscape related to religions. In Christianity, there are Christian universities, schools and pre-school educational institutions, museums and cultural centres, retreat houses, seminaries of priests, clergy houses, parish houses, beguines, headquarters and houses of various religious organizations, pilgrim centres and hostels for pilgrims. However, the main object of analysis of this chapter is the network

of sacred places and their development in different centuries. The chapter briefly introduces other elements of sacred heritage, such as Calvaries, Grottos of Lourdes, roadside crosses, and chapels.

Sacred Space in Geography

Space and place are the essential concepts in geography. Space defined as a boundless three-dimensional extent (Merriam-Webster 2022a) and place is a bounded space or a designated portion of space. Analysis of earthly locations supplemented by different forms of representation is the key geographical method. Places are full of meaning (Relph 1976) and sense of place is developed in a relationship with a place itself (Tuan 1977). Places are the object of visual consumption or tourist gaze (Urry 1990). Williams (1998, p. 173) noted that we gaze and record places in a highly selective fashion, the process of visualization is socially constructed and mediated by cultural filters. The perception of sacred space related to such categories as perceived space (Lefebvre 1991), mental maps (Gould 1966; Gould and White 1974; Lynch 1960), imagined landscape (Eck 1998) and socially constructed space (Harvey 1990). Analysis of sacred places includes the main themes and methods of geography: spatial differentiation and distribution, features of landscape and environment and the meanings of place.

The construction of sacred places is a socio-cultural process. Sacred space is a category existing in the human mind. Different people perceive sacred spaces in distinct ways. The creation and meaning placed upon sacred spaces have been analysed by scholars from many disciplines (Coomans et al. 2012; Cosgrove 1984; David and Wilson 2002; Eliade 1987 [1957]; Knott 2005; Knudsen et al. 2008; Lefebvre 1991; Park 1994; Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2004; Soja 1989; Tuan 1977, 1978, 2009). The main research focus amongst these scholars has been how to define sacred spaces and places and how to select them (Liutikas 2018).

Experience of place is related to the image and narrative. Places gain their importance in narratives, whilst stories give places their meanings and influence their future. As such, terms such as "sense of a place", "spirit of a place" and the "sacredness of a place" socially form the attribute of these locations (Liutikas 2018). The production of social meanings of place has become an important societal characteristic and the generator of destination marketing. The invention of story has become the important element of the tourism industry. The managers of places seek to achieve images that are projected for the place. Often the image of sacred places becomes self-reproducing and self-reinforcing. However, as Kong (2001) noted the narratives of the sacred places require management and maintenance.

The meanings of places are related to social identity (Cosgrove 1989). Physical symbols in space serve as a social construct, helping to create and maintain our social identity. Bremer (2006) emphasized that places can perform a function of an integral element in social relations, as both a determinant of those relations and a product. Usually, the meanings of sacred spaces are collective, constructed by the social

community and based on their understanding of religious tradition. Sacred buildings become symbols of social (communal, national, regional, local) identity. Shrines, religious monuments and various religious images in the landscape become signs of religious identity (e.g., Hill of Crosses in Lithuania, Czestochowa in Poland, Chimayo in United States, Rocamadour in France, Walsingham in England, Trondheim Cathedral in Norway, Lalibela in Ethiopia, Lough Derg in Ireland, Sanctuary of Atotonilco in Mexico and many others). Viewing these religious signs people can locate and embody their social identity, to recognize the power of the social community to which they belong (e.g., Catholics in Philippine, Coptic Catholic Church, Greece Orthodox Church, Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Lutheran Church of Sweden, Church of England, Mennonite Church USA and Australian Baptist Ministries). Sacred places become the one of the ways to represent religious and cultural attitudes and ethical norms. The famous Qoyllor Rit'i festival in Peru attracts thousands of pilgrims. Dressed in indigenous costumes pilgrims dance, sing and pray, and go to processions. Believers hike to Mount Sinakara to visit Qoyllor Rit'i Sanctuary and also to pray the celestial spirits for the health of their animals and a good harvest (Vargas, 2023).

The migration of people, various short-term journeys also affect the transmission of religious customs and traditions. Worship houses (such as Muslim mosques in Western countries) and new cemeteries are being built in immigrant neighbourhoods. New shrines, uncharacteristic of the local landscape, are created by missionary activities (for example, the Mormon Churches in Europe). Human displacement and deportation of people during natural disasters and wars is marked by the construction of sacred buildings and monuments (for example, Lithuanian Catholic crosses in Siberia).

One of the most significant and most quoted is M. Eliade concept of sacred space. M. Eliade in the book *The Sacred and the Profane* (1957) researched how ordinary (profane) space becomes sacred space. He used a term *hierophany* (Gr. *Hieros*—sacred, *phainomas*—appear) to describe the manifestation of holiness. According to him, holy sites and shrines stand in the centre of the world and are real points of connection between earth and heaven (Eliade 1987). Man takes responsibility to sanctify his small universe, making it similar to the world of the Gods. The formed shrines gain a power to attract pilgrims and devotees. This power or spiritual magnetism emanates from human concepts and values, influenced by historical, geographical, social and other forces that band together to create a sacred centre (Preston 1992).

There are different typologies of sacred spaces (Jackson and Henrie 1983; Mishchenko 2018). Various elements of classification of sacred space could be used (Table 5.1). The table summarizes the main elements of classification of sacred spaces related to the nomination or selection of the space, its organization and its rank. For example, one of the main distinguishing factors could be valuistic ideal. Earlier, the term *sacred* was as the opposition to the *secular* and *profane*. Sacred spaces were related to religious objects. Recently, sacred space became more related to values and identity of visitors (Liutikas 2021). If we choose *the narrative* as the main distinguishing factor of classification, the important element in the formation of sacred spaces becomes story—historical facts related to the place, earlier myths

and legends, testimonies from locals and pilgrims. If we choose *the geographical structure* as the main distinguishing factor, various components on different levels are involved. On a macro level, sacred spaces are landscape elements (woods, rivers, hills), whole towns or cities (Rome, Jerusalem, Lourdes). Churches, chapels and other houses of worship belong to the category of sacred buildings, which brings us to the intermediate level of sacred space. And finally, on the micro level, we attribute holiness to particular items, such as images, relics, home altars, roadside shrines and crosses. The classification mostly includes physical spaces, but sacred places also exist in the mindspace or social space (Table 5.1).

Voyé (2012) noticed that religious buildings induce a large range of representations which give them a socio-cultural value. In addition to religious value, she identifies aesthetic dimension (architectural and artistic), linkage to the history of a locality, region or country, support for religious and secular collective memory and the identity marking function of an individual, a group, a region, a country or a part of the world.

Sometimes places and spaces become so powerful to manifest values and identities, getting free from one's wishes. The pilgrimage site of Fatima shaped the image of the whole Municipality of Ourém in central part of Portugal. This municipality first presents itself as the place where Fatima is, one of the main strategic goals is set as the "affirmation Fatima as a world centre of spirituality" (Municipality of Ourém 2023). They demonstrate their own character and strong identity (e.g., Lourdes as the world's most famous healing shrine). Sacred sites serve as enduring symbols (Bremer 2006, p. 30) of the continuance of the religious community itself. Symbols at sacred places are usually long-lasting and influence social imagination. The most important sacred places are being incorporated into the tourism industry. Destination marketing helps to shape the perception of place suitable for a wide range of visitors. New distribution channels, such as the internet, have opened up new opportunities for cultural attractions (Richards 2001, p. 245). The meanings and stories of the sacred places and the rituals performed there become a cultural tourism product consumed by mass tourists.

Christian Churches

We can define shrine as a place of religious devotion or commemoration (Merriam-Webster 2022b). In this case, shrines encompass all places of worship, and not just those that become objects of pilgrimage due to associations with a sacred person or object. The most noticeable objects in the cultural landscape of Christian countries are churches and chapels. Their distinctive architecture, characterized by religious symbols, often becomes a hallmark of the area and the sign of religious identity. The churches themselves can be vastly different in functions and size, also in architectural style, form and shape, building materials and location (Table 5.2). Churches also vary in their Christian denomination and visibility in the landscape. The Roman Catholic Churches are the houses of God (*domus Dei*), so they are visually dominant and exceptionally decorated. Sacralized spaces have to lead on spiritual matters. Another

Table 5.1 Classification of Sacred space

The main distinguishing factors	Elements of classification
Nomination	
Human Intervention	• Mindspace (thoughts, spiritual and metaphorical space, meditation, meaning of life). • Social spaces (symbolic capital in social arena, interpersonal relations, traditions, customs and social rituals). • Natural physical objects, natural environment (mountains, rivers, springs, groves, trees, rocks, cliffs). • Physical objects created by human (buildings, gardens, parks, cemeteries, bridges, places of cultural interest, places of religious objects). • Other space created by human (virtual and hyper-real reality, combination of virtual and physical activities in a special equipment).
Narrative	• Natural origin (places of life and death of saints, graves, houses of worship and other buildings). • Miraculous origin (healing objects in nature, places of apparition and places of mystical manifestations, places of miraculous images and relics)
Valuistic Ideal	Related to: • Religion, God(s), sacred figures, various faith systems. • Secular values (nation and homeland, culture and art, sport and other personal or collective ideals).
Religious figures and cult objects	In Catholic tradition relation to: • Christ and the symbol of the Cross (Calvaries—the Way of the Cross, roadside crosses, places of images of Christ). • St. Virgin Mary (places of apparitions, places of miraculous images, replicas of the Grotto of Lourdes). • Saints and spiritual authorities (tombs and relics, places of residence of spiritual authorities, images of saints).
Organization of Space	
Position	• Horizontal directions/axes (east/west axis, north/south axis, the path of the sun, everyday human relations and relations amongst different human structures). • Centrality (crossroads, actual centre, the centre of cosmos). • Verticality (seaward/mountainward, humans/deity).
Functionality	• Functional permanent places of worship. • Recycled earlier religious sites (conversion of pagan sites to Christian use, re-use of churches of different Christian denominations). • Historic non-functional and abandoned shrines. • Replicated spaces (Grottos of Lourdes and Calvaries in Catholic tradition, Shikoku pilgrimage route in Japan). • Temporary created event places for religious gatherings

Table 5.1 (continued)

The main distinguishing factors	Elements of classification
Rank	
Values and identity	Related to: • Personal values and identity. • Communal values and social (collective) identity.
Geographical structure	• Micro (images, relics, home altars, roadside chapels, statues and places of religious symbols in landscape). • Intermediate (shrines, other places of worship). • Macro (large landscape elements as forests, mountains; holy cities as Jerusalem or Rome, sacred area in Japan, pilgrim routes, Ways of the Cross in Christianity).
Importance	• Individual (e.g., sacred places at home environment, place of baptism, place of ordination, shrine of wedding ceremony, shrines visited by fathers or forefathers). • Local and Communal (local shrines). • Regional (shrines visited by pilgrims from the region on special occasions). • National (the main national pilgrim places). • International (international places of pilgrimage). • World (Rome and Vatican, Jerusalem, Mecca, Varanasi, other sacred places included in the UNESCO World Heritage list).

Source Author's research

conception of *domus ecclesiae* (house of the Church) could be seen as complementary to the concept of *domus Dei* (Stroik 2009).

Construction of parish churches in particular areas is always carefully considered. The specific location of churches within an area is determined by the topography of the area and accessibility. It is desirable that the place would be the central location of the parish and easily accessible from all sides. Churches are usually built in a higher rural or town location. This allowed them to be seen and recognized from afar as the most important building in the area. The church becomes significant in the composition of the square or street, and also in the composition of the whole village or town. The shrine visually appears in various positions and angles in the different streets. So, its visual impact extends far beyond the central square or the street on which it was built (Jankevičienė 2007, pp. 13–14).

Catholic Churches are usually built on a central square or street. The church becomes the symbolic centre of the town or its district. Church building could serve as a landmark or milestone in the landscape. Markets or fairs were often held in the square next to it. Usually along with religious building, there was the market square, important shops and inns, post office and also some form of political power e.g., town hall. The church towers dominate against secular objects, church buildings are traditionally linked with the centrality of inhabited locations (Voyé 2012). Many

Table 5.2 The main characteristics of the Christian Church Buildings

Function	Architectural style	Building materials	Location
• Cathedral • Parish Church • Non-Parish Church • Monastery Church • Collegiate Church	• Greek • Roman • Byzantine • Romanesque • Gothic • Renaissance • Mannerism • Baroque • Rococo • Neoclassicism • Romantcism • Historicism • Neo-Gothic • Modernism • Postmodernism • Mixed • Other	• Wood • Brick • Stone • Marble • Concrete • Mixed • Other	• Urban area • Rural area • Central (historical centre, old city) • Other part of settlement • Peripheral area

Source Author's research

Churches usually are surrounded by churchyard, which often housed a parish cemetery. However, later, due to sanitary reasons and insufficient space, parish cemeteries were moved to the outskirts of towns and villages. Bell towers and various crosses also usually stand in the churchyards. Churches are built in a central part or on the side of the churchyard, but they can always be bypassed for processions. Depending on the region and traditions, the church surroundings may also have such elements as gardens (especially monastic churches).

New modern churches are built more freely, they are characterized by a variety of modern or postmodern architecture. In cities, churches are built according to the needs of believers on plots in the city centres or in residential zones where places are found. Construction can take place in a variety of squares and plots, which are often located near streets and roads. Most often, newly built churches are surrounded by other buildings: rectories and parish houses, funeral houses and belfries. Such attributes as parking lots are often designed nearby. Modern churches are also distinguished by the fact that they usually do not have a fence around the churchyard (Fig. 5.1).

The features of sacral architecture are determined by both traditions and design drawings, as well as the course of the liturgy. When analysing churches in the landscape, it is important to pay attention to elements such as church type (basilica, Cathedral, parish church, monastery church, other), architectural style, building materials, floor plans, facades and portals, windows, roof constructions (domes and cupolas, towers and spires), belfries, ornaments and symbols (McNamara 2017). Christian churches and cathedrals usually are built in a Latin cross plan. However, churches could be built in a square plan, Greek cross plan, and plans of various geometrical figures. The tower or towers of the church often determine the peculiarity of cultural landscape of villages and towns. The Cross became the dominant Christian symbol

Fig. 5.1 Modern Elektrėnai Church in Lithuania was built in 1996. *Source* Author

in Early Middle Ages. This symbol is usually constructed on the rooftops or towers of churches.

It is important to understand the geographical development of the network of Catholic churches. The early Christians met in private homes, occasionally such houses were turned into a permanent place of worship (Hitchcock 2012). The example of such buildings could be found at Dura-Europos (in Syria), dating from the second century. There was the persecution of Christians till the conversion of Constantine in 313. Christian catacombs served as burial sites for martyrs as well as places of worship. Constantine, his mother Helena and his son built the major churches in Rome, Jerusalem and Constantinople. It was believed that the church building could encourage the growth of Christianity. Armstrong (1967, p. 3) calculated that there are 23 church buildings which may be attributed to Constantine as patron or founder, and several others may be considered as possibilities. The great churches (basilicas) were erected in Rome (amongst others Basilica of St. John the Baptist in Lateran and Basilica of St. Peter), Aquileia, Trier, Mamre and Nicomedia (Turkey). Churches were also built in Cirta (Algeria), Jerusalem (Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Church on the Mount of Olives), Bethlehem (Church of the Nativity), Heliopolis (Phoenicia), Antioch on the Orontes, and Constantinople (amongst others Hagia Eirene ("Holy

Peace") and Hagia Sophia ("Holy Wisdom")). Churches often had separate baptistries (Hitchcock 2012).

The construction of churches has been intertwined with the development of Christian principles throughout history. The Western Church buildings started from the Roman basilicas and later developed various styles. The Eastern Church contented itself with the Byzantine style and more used the forms of the round temples, baptisteries and mausoleums (Schaff 1867). The earlier Christian architecture followed the Roman basilicas (public halls of justice), and included a nave, one or two side aisles, a narthex (entrance vestibule) and an apse (reserved for the clergy). Later a transept was introduced, projecting a Latin cross plan. Byzantine style was also influenced by the Roman architectural traditions and is recognizable by the hemispherical dome. Other characteristics of this style are the symmetrical central plan and the Greek cross structure, with a square central area and four arms of equal length. The early Christians sanctified the space. The Church buildings usually were centred with the altars inside, which had an imposing canopy and were surrounded by various images. Burial took place in the underground vaults or cemeteries next to churches. The major historical events influenced the development of Christianity and building of churches (Table 5.3).

McNamara (2017) noticed that church building styles not only describe the facts of a building but show how people in a particular time and place represented theological thoughts to the world. Gothic churches can be recognized by their pointed arches and pointed rib vaults, elaborated tracery and stained-glass windows. Renaissance architects showed attention to Roman proportions and emphasized symmetry and aesthetics. Decorative and theatrical Baroque style was the architectural response to the challenges of the Reformation. Neoclassical architecture was characterized by exceptional scale, simplicity of geometric forms, use of columns and a preference for blank walls (Dhillon 2016). Romanticism associated with the imitation of older architectural styles, especially medieval Gothic. Modern architects used various variations of traditional styles and structural plans and sometimes their architectural solutions were far away from imagining what a church building is. Modernist architects tried to experiment on materials and forms. Some churches have a variety of architectural styles (Fig. 5.2).

The architectural style and surrounding landscape may have the impact of general attractiveness of the church and its visitation. A direct indicator of the attractiveness of churches is the number of visitors. Another indicator of church visual attractiveness could be the number of marriages by couples from outside the parish. The most attractive churches are also depicted in tourism presentations, various publications and video material.

The building materials of churches are also constantly changing. The use of building materials depends on countries and regions, historical period and Christian denomination. The new materials such as steel, concrete affected the architectural design of churches in the twentieth century. Wood had been a preferred church building material in some regions and countries, e.g., Norway, Poland, Lithuania, Czech Republic and Ukraine. Wooden churches in Jawor and Świdnica, and Southern Małopolska (Poland), wooden Tserkvas of the Carpathian region in

Table 5.3 Historical periods and development of the Roman Catholic Churches

Historical period	Date	Main events	Comments
The First Ages of the Church	30–313	Destruction of the temple of Jerusalem (70). Missionary Journeys of St Paul (51–57). Persecutions of Christians. Conversion of Constantine (313).	Private homes as worship places. 40 Catacombs in Rome.
The development of the Church	313–1450	Beginning of Christian monasticism (fourth century) Schism of East and West (1054). Beginning of First Crusade (1096). Franciscans founded by Francis of Assisi (1210). Proclamation of Jubilee Year (1300). Christianization of Lithuania—the last pagan country in Europe (1387).	The first Churches built of Constantine (23). Construction of Christian Churches over old pagan temples. More abundant construction of the Christian churches began. Different architectural styles were used.
Reformation and Counter-Reformation	1450–1789	Publication of Luther's theses (1517). Independent National Church of England (1534). Society of Jesus (Jesuits) Order was founded (1540). The Council of Trent (1545–1563). Completed construction of St Peter's Basilica in Rome (1626). Suppression of Jesuits (1773).	Some of the Catholic churches were taken and used by Protestants. Baroque architecture flourished as the symbol of Catholic Counter-Reformation.

Table 5.3 (continued)

Historical period	Date	Main events	Comments
Enlightenment	1789–1914	Marian Apparition in Lourdes (1858)	A ban for the construction of a new churches, closures of the Catholic churches and conversion of Catholic churches into Orthodox churches in Russia. The revival of Gothic architectural style.
World War I	1915–1918		Destruction of church buildings.
Between the Wars	1919–1939		New churches were built.
World War II	1939–1945		Destruction of church buildings.
The Post-War	1946–present	Soviet regime and occupations, atheism propaganda and closure of the churches (1940–1989). Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). Independent States (in various Continents). Travels of Pope John Paul II (from 1978 till 2005).	Suppression of Christianity in Eastern Europe during the Communist regimes. New Churches are being built.

Source Author's compiled table

Poland and Ukraine, the Kizhi Pogost in Karelia (Russia), Urnes Stave Church in Norway, wooden Churches of Maramureş (Romania), Petäjävesi Old Church (Finland), wooden Churches of the Slovak part of the Carpathian Mountain Area (Slovakia) as well as churches of Chiloé (Chile) are included in the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites (UNESCO 2023).

Case Study: Development of Catholic Church Buildings in Lithuania

Every Christian country has its own history of the landscape of worship. For example, Christian churches in Lithuania were built even before the introduction of Christianity at the end of fourteenth century. However, more significant construction of the first Christian churches in Lithuania is related to its Christianization in 1387. The first churches were built by the help of the foundations of the rulers of the Grand Duchy of

Fig. 5.2 Palermo Cathedral is characterized by the presence of different architectural styles (Norman, Moorish, Gothic, Baroque, Neoclassical). *Source* Author

Lithuania, later by the foundations of bishops and noblemen. At the end of fourteenth century there were 20, fifteenth century—90, sixteenth century—160, seventeenth century—320 and eighteenth century 499 Catholic churches in the present territory of Lithuania (Liutikas 2022). The number of Catholic churches grew extremely rapidly in the eighteenth century. New monasteries were also established. In 1773, the Jesuit order was abolished, it was the year from which the number of monasteries, as well as churches belonging to monasteries, began to decrease. The Russian tsarist occupation had a significant negative impact on the development of Catholic churches during the nineteenth century in Lithuania. The development of the number of churches and monasteries and their closure was greatly influenced by the uprisings of 1831 and 1863–1864 years. Tsarist Russia's response was to close Catholic churches or to convert them into the Orthodox churches after these uprisings. The ban for the construction of new churches was set. Such measures have influenced that the number of Roman Catholic churches has changed insignificantly over 100 years, from 499 churches in 1800 to 497 churches in 1900. However, the number of both newly built and destroyed churches needs to be considered here. Thirty Roman Catholic churches were destroyed, and forty churches were closed or converted into Orthodox churches in the nineteenth century (Liutikas 2022).

The twentieth century in Lithuania is characterized by the two recurring periods. After the tsarist occupation and World War I, the recapture of former Roman Catholic

churches and the construction of new churches took place. The number of church buildings started to grow. In total, there were 599 churches in 1924, and already 684 churches in 1940 (Liutikas 2022). During World War II, many churches were destroyed and closed after the war by the Soviet occupiers. The Soviets believed that the process of desacralization of shrines would contribute to the spread of atheistic thought. Vilnius Cathedral was transformed into the Picture Gallery. The Museum of Atheism has been established in St. Casimir's Church. More Lithuanian churches had been turned into museums or exhibition halls. Other churches were used as warehouses, gyms, educational institutions, book warehouses, cultural institutions or for other purposes. Some of the closed churches were not used at all. The end of the Soviet period marked the beginning of the possibility of building new churches. The processes of the restoration by the state began in October 1988. In the period of 30 years (from 1991 to 2020), 73 churches were built in Lithuania (Liutikas 2022). In total, the Roman Catholics had 721 functioning church buildings in 2021 (Table 5.5).

In Lithuania, wood church constructions began from the introduction of Christianity and continued to be widespread, particularly in rural areas (Fig. 5.3). The wooden churches were rebuilt several times as they decayed over the centuries or were destroyed by wars and fires. However, even today there are some surviving wooden churches built in the eighteenth–twentieth centuries. There was a total of 271 wooden and 447 brick (stone) Catholic churches in Lithuania in 2021 (Liutikas 2022). Today, the number of brick churches is constantly growing, and the number of wooden churches is decreasing. Wooden churches are particularly vulnerable to natural processes and the flow of time. They are affected by moisture, the change of seasons and natural fires. Most churches from the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries that have survived have been refurbished, restored or repaired. Abandoned and disused churches are disappearing especially fast. The wooden churches were also affected by natural disasters. For example, the wooden St. Lawrence Church in Kriukai was destroyed by a hurricane in 1993.

Fire-raisings and wars also affect the number of churches. A lot of churches were destroyed during World War I and World War II. Not all the destroyed churches were rebuilt. Since 1990, in the period of 30 years there have been 15 fires in Lithuanian Catholic churches, during which 8 wooden churches were completely burned down and 2 brick churches were severely burned. In other cases, the fires were not exceptionally large. In some cases, church fires were caused by natural factors (e.g., lightning), in other cases by humans' actions (e.g., arson).

Church Buildings and Chapel in a Specified Territorial Area

One of the issues is the dispersion of church buildings in the selected area. The peculiarities of the territorial structure of the Catholic Church may help to answer this question. Territoriality plays an important role in the development of the Catholic Church (Bruce 2017). The most known administrative territorial unit in the Roman

Fig. 5.3 Wooden Dubičiai Catholic Church in Lithuania. *Source* Author

Catholic Church is the parish. Though it is the smallest unit within the Church's forms of organization, it is the most important for believers. The parish priest leads the parish, he is responsible for the activities of the parish. For example, there are 693 parishes in Lithuania. Several adjacent parishes form a deanery (decanate), and several deaneries form a diocese. There are 55 decanates and 7 dioceses in Lithuania. The Military Ordinariate of Lithuania also has the same status as a diocese and military chaplain areas are classified as parishes. Several dioceses form an ecclesiastical province. In this case, the central diocese of the ecclesiastical province has the status of an archdiocese. As the example, the Catholic Church in Germany has 7 ecclesiastical provinces and 7 archdioceses (20 bishops), 27 dioceses, 410 decanates and 9858 parishes (Katholische Kirche in Deutschland 2021). The ecclesiastical province is the largest administrative territorial unit of the Catholic Church. However, territory is not the only constitutive characteristic of parishes. The conception of *personal parish* is related to the selection of the membership of the people who belong to them (Bruce 2017). The examples of such parishes could be national parishes related to the services for a certain ethnic group or national origin and parishes of university students. These parishes are intentional parishes where a group of believers gather bypassing the territorial parishes.

Statistics on church buildings do not always coincide with the number of parishes. It is most likely that there is at least one church built or located in another building

in one parish. For example, Lithuania has 708 parishes (including military chaplain areas) and 721 functioning churches (Table 5.5). There were 223,777 Catholic parishes in the world in 2018 (Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate 2022), so we can assume that at least a similar number of church buildings existed in the world. However, it should be noted that some parishes also have non-parish churches, and some parishes do not have a separate church building. In some countries, the number of churches is much higher than the number of parishes. For example, there were 26 dioceses, covering 1365 parishes with 2646 churches in Ireland in 2017 (Kennedy 2022). So, the actual number of churches in Ireland was almost twice higher than the number of churches as parishes. Many of the parishes with two, or even three, churches are in rural areas where a church was built at each end of the parish before the arrival of the motor car (Kennedy 2022).

The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) (2015) calculated distribution of Catholic parishes in World regions. Europe had the most significant numbers of parishes in 2012 (Table 5.4).

The important question for geographers is to research the optimal density of churches. This assessment should include the needs of the believers, evaluation of

Table 5.4 Catholic parishes in the different world regions 2015

Year	1980	1990	2000	2010	2012
Africa	7162	8967	11,022	14,401	15,217
Americas	46,351	51,543	54,682	57,683	57,769
Asia	11,854	16,734	20,543	23,675	24,169
Europe	138,828	136,178	129,565	122,881	122,159
Oceania	2308	2383	2384	2415	2426
World	206,503	215,805	218,196	221,055	221,740

Source CARA

Table 5.5 Roman Catholic Churches and Chapels in Lithuania (2021)

Main Data	Numbers
Number of parishes and military chaplain areas	$693 + 15 = 708$
Functioning churches	721
Functioning chapels	546
Area of Lithuania, km^2	65,300
Average number of churches and chapels in 1 km^2	0.02 (1 Church or chapel in 51 km^2)
Total population	2,795,000
Number of Catholics	2,350,000 (in 2011)
Average number of Believers per 1 Church	3259

Source Author

societal changes associated with the number of believers and the number of priests. Indicators such as the number of believers per parish as well as the number of believers per priest are most used to answer this question. An important indicator is the area covering parishes, and the number of believers in the parish.

According to Agenzia Fides (2021), the global Catholic community was made up of 1,344,403.000 persons, the number of Catholics per priest was made up to 3245 persons average (Agenzia Fides 2021). The number of Catholics per priest on average is 1697 in Europe, 2123 in Asia, 2378 in Oceania, 5086 in Africa and 5318 in Americas (Agenzia Fides 2021). The Roman Catholic Church has the average 3259 believers per 1 Church or 3391 per 1 parish in Lithuania in 2021 (Table 5.5). This figure is similar to Polish (neighbouring Catholic country) statistics, where there were an average of 3134.5 believers per parish in 2019. On the other hand, according to the author's calculation, there were an average of 1056 Catholics per priest in Poland, and 3081 Catholics per priest in Lithuania, which is almost three times more.

Some researchers calculate countries' inhabitants per church buildings (Lindblad and Löfgren 2018). However, such statistics (Table 5.6) do little to reflect the real need of religious buildings for believers. The European network for historic places of worship—Future for Religious Heritage—regularly produce factsheets on the religious heritage in Europe including the number of religious buildings in each country. They calculated that the density of churches per square kilometre varies enormously within the EU. Malta has more than 1 church per square kilometre and Finland has about 3 churches per 1000 km^2 (FRH Inform 2021). The total number of Christian places of worship (churches and chapels) in the EU is more than 500,000, as well as more than 3000 Muslim places of worship and more than 12,000 synagogues and other Jewish prayer rooms (FRH Inform 2021). There are more than 10,000 Catholic church buildings in 5 European countries. Italy has 67,474 church buildings (Chiese Italiane 2022), France—42,258 (Conférence des évêques de France 2016), Spain—22,988 (number of parishes) (Conferencia Episcopal Espanola 2022), Germany—22,800 (Katholische Kirche in Deutschland 2021) and Poland—10,361 (number of parishes) (Instytut Statystyki Kościoła Katolickiego 2020).

The necessity of churches can be assessed by the demographic changes or economic conditions, but also by the pastoral activity of existing priests, their readiness to meet religious (traditional), intellectual, political, social and community challenges and their activism related to communal initiatives and support (Lazega and Wattebled 2011).

Changes in religiosity need to be considered in the long-term perspective. For example, the Pew Research Center in USA projects Christians of all ages shrinking from 64% to between a little more than half (54%) and just above one-third (35%) of all Americans by 2070 in some scenarios (Pew Research Center 2022). Over that same period, "religious nones" (people who are religiously unaffiliated) would rise from the current 30% to somewhere between 34 and 52% of the U.S. population (Pew Research Center 2022).

Table 5.6 Statistics of Church Buildings of the dominant communities in selected countries

Country	Dominant Community	Church Buildings of the Dominant Community	Inhabitants per Building
Finland	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland	818	6632
Netherlands	Protestant and Catholic	4167	4027
England	Anglican	15,861	3396
Norway	Church of Norway (Protestant)	1620	3118
Belgium	Catholic	3700	3016
Sweden	Church of Sweden (Protestant)	3377	2829
Denmark	Church of Denmark (Evangelic Lutheran)	2352	2382
Germany	Protestant and Catholic	45,500	1802
France	Catholic	45,000	1456
Italy	Catholic	65,000	918

Source Lindblad and Löfgren (2018)

Other Religious Buildings and Constructions in Landscape

Chapels

In addition to churches, there are many chapels belonging to the Roman Catholic Church. We can classify chapels in various types (Table 5.7). First, we distinguish between chapels built and chapels installed in various buildings. For example, apart from inoperative and abandoned chapels, there are 219 chapels built and intended for religious rites in Lithuania. The largest number (134) of such chapels is in cemeteries of various settlements and rural areas.

The installed chapels are in different houses. It is most evident when chapels are installed in church buildings and monasteries. McNamara (2017) pointed out that often side chapels are added to a building later in its life, so they can look different in style from the church or interrupt the regular outline of the main building. Side chapels are used for private and smaller ceremonies, commemoration of saints, church founders or famous clergymen. Quite often these chapels contain a sacred image or relics. Some of the chapels in Lithuania are installed in the former cultural houses, village clubs, former offices of collective farms, kindergartens, schools and other administrative buildings. Such chapels are mainly established in rural areas. Some chapels are installed in hospitals, treatment and health centres, various care and nursing homes and social service centres. Chapels are also installed in isolated institutions (e.g., jails, interrogation isolators). The other part of the chapels is established in various places related to religion (retreat houses, pilgrim houses, parish houses,

Table 5.7 Types of Chapels

Types	Function	Buildings and constructions that usually house chapels	Possible location in landscape
• Chapels built as separate buildings • Chapels installed in other buildings	• Roadside Chapels • Cemetery Chapels • Tomb Chapels • Chapels used for religious services (chapels of ease). • Chapels as a place of worship • Chapels used for other cultural purposes • Abandoned and non-functional chapels	• Churches • Monasteries • Monastic houses • Seminaries • Bishop's houses • Funeral homes • Headquarters of Army Ordinary • Educational institutions (e.g., schools and kindergartens, universities and gymnasiums) • Cultural and administrative buildings • Hospitals, treatment and health centres • Nursing and care homes, social centres • Jails, interrogation isolators • Embassys • Retreat houses, parish houses, pilgrim houses • Community centres • Airport buildings • Castles and mansions • Private houses • Military ships • Cruise and other commercial ships • Other	• By a church or monastery • Cemetery • Calvaries—the Way of Cross • City Gate • In other place of village or town • Roadside • Bridge • In natural places (forests, fields, mountains) • In the apparition places of Virgin Mary • In the places of the copies of the Grotto of Lourdes

Source Author's research

and prelature). Chapels are also installed in educational institutions, and other places (Table 5.7).

Monasteries

Early Christian monasticism took inspiration from stories about the men who lived alone in deserts and later in desert hermits. Around the year 270, in the Egyptian desert, Paul became known as the first Christian monk to have been living in a hermit. Later St. Anthony the Great (died in 356) lived in a hermit in the desert and gradually gained followers (Hitchcock 2012). Basil the Great, monastic founder in Cappadocia, wrote principles of ascetic life in 370. Saint Benedict (c. 480–547 AD) lived as a hermit in a cave near Subiaco (Italy) and founded several communities there. His *Rule of Saint Benedict* became guideline for monks living in community.

   The location of monasteries in space depends on their type and traditions. Contemplative orders (e.g., the Benedictines, Cistercians and Camaldolese) were established farther from settlements in isolated communities. Mendicant orders (the Dominicans, Franciscans, Bernardines, Capuchins, Augustinians and Carmelites) were in urban areas, cities and their suburbs. However, recently mendicant orders can be found in rural areas and vice versa, contemplative orders sometimes establish their communities in urban areas (e.g., the Benedictines in Vilnius). Such changes are also related to the changed concept of geographical space. Overcoming the distance to the city is no longer a big obstacle, and contemplative life can be lived in a more remote place in the city area. It is important to note that religious orders usually have monasteries in different geographical locations, and some communities live in a monastic house.

Calvaries—Stations of the Cross

There are also many other larger or smaller religious Catholic objects in European landscapes. These are Calvaries or the Ways of the Cross, Grottos of Lourdes, various roadside chapels, crosses and chapel-pillars. Calvaries and Grottos of Lourdes are an attempt to bring important holy places closer to the faithful. The creation of these places considers the natural elements of the landscape.

   Calvaries are specific landscape elements whose meanings are intentionally conceptualized by pilgrims (Liutikas 2015a). The Calvaries seek to replicate the main elements of Christ's suffering path in Jerusalem: the hilly landscape, the Hills of Olives and Golgotha, the Cedron Stream. The chapels, gates and church on the Way of the Cross symbolize the suffering of Christ. The number of stations (chapels) usually varies between seven and forty. The history of Calvaries is related to the Holy Land history. Pilgrimages to the Holy Land, which began in the fourth century, have become particularly difficult and dangerous since the fifteenth century, when the Ottoman Empire started to control Palestine. Because of these hardships, the search for substitute practices began. Visiting Calvaries became an alternative pilgrimage to the Holy Land, it was much easier to reach localities and sanctuaries nearby home.

   One of the first Calvaries outside Jerusalem was built in Spain near the monastery of Santo Domingo de Escalaceli (Córdoba) in 1423. At the end of fifteenth century, the Franciscan friar Bernardino Caimi of Milano, carefully replicated the holy places of Palestine in Piemonte (Italy). The Sacred Mount, or the "New Jerusalem" of Varallo Sesia was established (Kvaerne 2010). The complex named as "gerosolimitano" had topographical similarity to the original site. The idea of replicated sacred place spread around Europe, especially after the Council of Trent (1545–1563). During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Calvaries were established in different countries. The main initiators of the building of Calvaries were Franciscan and Dominican Orders. The design and the construction of the devotional complex was as similar as possible to the topography of the original sites in Jerusalem. In 1686, Pope Innocent XI by a special decree enabled the Franciscan Order to set Stations of the Cross in all of their churches.

Some Calvaries were built in very picturesque areas (Fig. 5.4) such as at the Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Monte, Portugal. Valuable architectural and art heritage together with attractive scenic landscape form a unique destination area for pilgrims and tourists. The nine Sacred Mounts of Northern Italy (Sacred Mounts of Piemonte and of Lombardia) constructed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Kalwaria Zebrzydowska (Poland, built in 1601–1641), and Calvary Mount of Banská Štiavnica (Slovakia, built in 1744–1751) are included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

There are four Calvaries (Samogitian, Vilnius, Beržoras and Vepriai) and the Way of Cross in Šiluva town in Lithuania. All of them are located in a natural landscape. Several more Ways of the Cross are installed in churchyards and in the yards of monasteries. Lithuanian Calvaries are the furthest European Calvaries in North-East direction of the European map (Motuzas 2003). In addition, the stations of the Way of the Cross are installed inside every Catholic church.

Fig. 5.4 Calvary Chapel at the Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Monte, Portugal. *Source* Author

Grottos of Lourdes

A grotto is a wide and shallow cave. It can be natural or artificial, usually with a vaulted ceiling. Artificial grottos are created to imitate the Grotto of Lourdes, but also to decorate parks, gardens, swimming pools or fountains. Imitations or copies of the Grotto of Lourdes spread in the world after the apparition of Virgin Mary in 1858. Replicas of grottos spread over the world: in Europe, the United States, the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

Grottos of Lourdes are usually built on hill slopes or made from stones. There is often a spring or a stream next to the Grotto of Lourdes. The first artificial Lourdes Grotto in Lithuania was founded on the slope of Birutė Hill in Palanga, in 1900. There is a total 33 Lourdes Grottos in Lithuania, most of them (27) dislocated in the Samogitia region (Liutikas 2014). Grottos of Lourdes have also been installed as tombstones in several cemeteries. During the Soviet era times Lourdes Grottos were installed in churchyards.

Crosses and Small Sacral Architecture

Crosses, chapel-pillars, small wooden and brick chapels are also typical elements of the European religious landscape. Most often, these monuments of small sacral architecture are studied by ethnologists, art critics, historians, they often attract the attention of artists and photographers. Crosses, chapel-pillars or small chapels are usually built in homesteads, at roadsides and road junctions, although they can also be found in fields, forests, near streams or springs. Sometimes these objects could serve as a territorial border or road markers. In Western Europe, we see small chapels installed in the walls of houses. Crosses and chapel-pillars are also built today in squares, parks of cities or towns, as well as next to various public buildings. They are intended to commemorate an important historical event, to honour a prominent personality who lived in this place or on other occasions. Many such monuments were erected in memory of tragic events or in the birthplaces of famous persons. Sometimes crosses are built on the sites of extinct villages or former homesteads. Various forms of wooden and stone monuments, crosses and chapel-pillars are in cemeteries. The cemeteries themselves are a sacred space where the memory of the dead is honoured.

The specific place where a cross is erected or chapel is built depends on the motives of the construction and the builder's personal relationship with the place. This relationship usually is determined by personal wishes, memories and spiritual experiences related to a place. The motives for construction are very diverse: the

need of protection, the gratitude for grace, the request for grace, the promise given, the commemoration of tragic events (e.g., those were killed in car accidents) and the honour of important historical events of the nation, region or religion (Liutikas 2014).

Of course, the number of erected crosses and built chapels is constantly changing. Old crosses are newly re-erected and new ones are constantly being erected. Wooden crosses are the most abundant, but crosses are also made from stone or iron. Crosses made from cement or other modern materials also occur. Various hills and fields of crosses with several or a dozen crosses, chapel-pillars or roof-pillars are being formed in some places. The examples of such places could be the Holy Hills, places of the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary or at the places of former churches. The unique landscape object in Lithuania and in the world is the Hill of Crosses, where hundreds of thousands of crosses have been erected (Liutikas and Motuzas 2014).

The Christian cross represents the crucifixion of Jesus. There are differences in the forms of cross. Latin cross (unequal arms) and Greek cross (equal arms) are the most common. Tau cross (T-shaped cross) is also called Saint Anthony's cross and is used by the Franciscans. We also can find double-barred cross (patriarchal cross) and triple-barred cross (papal cross) in the European landscape (Fig. 5.5). The Russian Orthodox cross has three horizontal crossbeams, the lowest of them leaning down. Crosses can be also grouped according to their ornaments and other symbolic meanings. Elements of pre-Christian culture, interpretation of sacred art styles, original and creative ideas of folk masters intertwined in the tradition of cross making. Wooden and iron crosses have a variety of ornaments, symbols and attributes. For example, the tops of iron crosses are often decorated with monogrammed symbols (JHS, IHS, M), as well as various other symbols (heart-shaped, dewdrop, lyre, and oval, world tree, crown, sun, tree crown) (Kynas 2002). The elements of the decoration of the cross itself can be geometric figures (triangles, arcs, trapezoids), stylized animals (birds, snakes), plants (leaves, flowers, buds of various shapes), celestial bodies (sun, moon, stars) or other Christian symbols (ladders, spears). The first crosses in open landscape were built in Scotland and Ireland in the seventh century and they became more abundant since the fourteenth century.

We can examine the differences between countries in cross making in the context of the geography of religions. Different carving traditions have formed in different regions of Christian Europe (Hasluck 2012). The construction of roadside chapels also has regional peculiarities. Chapels of various shapes are built on the ground. However, small chapels could be constructed in the trees or in the chapel-pillars. Sculptures of holy patrons usually are erected both on the ground and in the chapels on the chapel-pillars. Every saint provides some protection, e.g., Saint Rock from disease, Saint Florian from fires and the miracle worker Saint Anthony of Padua protects against thieves, helps women who do not have children for a long time, or helps to find one's spouse. John of Nepomuk protects from water disasters, floods, Saint Isidore the Farmer is the patron saint of farmers, Saint Barbara protects from lightning or fire, St. George is the guardian of the household and animals (Liutikas 2014). St. Joseph is the patron of the Catholic Church, workers, married people or

Fig. 5.5 Double-barred cross in Dzūkija region, Lithuania. *Source* Author

persons living in exile. A sculpture of the thoughtful seated Christ the Caretaker is common in Lithuania. Chapel shapes vary, although they are usually rectangular or square. Some chapels have an exclusive decor, their niches are decorated with curtains, flowers or ribbons. The saints in them were honoured by dressing them in clothes. Sometimes the crosses are decorated with strips from fabric, miniature towels and aprons.

Chapel-pillars, roof-pillars and small chapels can be related to Jesus, Virgin Mary or saints. In some areas we can also find sculptural compositions from the stories described in the Bible. Chapels in chapel columns can vary not only in shape, but also could be open or framed in glass walls. The stem of the chapel-pillars can also be both round and polygonal, usually the chapel-pillars are 3–5 m high. There are also chapel-pillars in which both the stem, the chapel and the saint are carved from one tree. The distinguishing feature of roof-pillars is roofs of various shapes. They can be a single-storey roof-pillars or two- or three-storey roof-pillars up to 7–8 m high. They are richly decorated. The roofs of roof-pillars can be round (conical), square or multi-sloped. Roofs are often supplemented by ornate supports. Sculptures of saints are placed in the shelter chapels on one, two or all four sides, so there are four to twelve sculptures in the roof-pillars of several floors. At the top of roof-pillars are common to construct iron crosses (Liutikas 2014).

Of course, it is difficult to answer the question of how many crosses and crucifixes, chapel-pillars, roof-pillars and small chapels are built in particular areas. It could be assumed that the largest number of the small sacral landscape monuments are crosses and crucifixes, after them goes chapels or chapel-pillars with St. Virgin Mary, and finally various chapels and chapel-pillars with various other saints (Liutikas 2014). There are currently more than 200 brick chapels of small sacral architecture in Lithuania (Jankevičienė and Kuodienė 2004, p. 9), but further research is needed to determine their exact number. During the Soviet era religious symbols in the open landscape were destroyed as it was forbidden to build new crosses. However, even during the period of prohibition, crosses were built in secret, the erection of the cross became a sign of national identity, a symbol of resistance.

Shrines of Other Denominations and Religions

After the East–West Schism of the Christian community in 1054, the Eastern Orthodox Church, operated as a group of autocephalous congregations (e.g., the Greek Orthodox, the Russian Orthodox) each governed by its bishops and patriarchs and guided by councils (Ross 2009). The majority of Eastern Orthodox congregations are in Eastern and Southeast Europe, the Caucasus region and Russia including Siberia. In some parts of the Tsarist Russian Empire (e.g., Lithuania), especially after the uprising of 1863, Catholic churches and shrines of Old Believers were converted into Orthodox churches (Liutikas 2022).

The impact of Reformation on the network of the church buildings varied from country to country, and even from region to region within a country (Yates 2017). At the end of the sixteenth century Lutheranism spread in Scandinavia and large parts of Germany. Zwinglianism or Calvinism was prevalent in Scotland and Switzerland and the Northern Netherlands and reformed church in England and Ireland (Yates 2017). For Protestants, the church building is a place to gather for worship. Protestant churches are less decorated than Catholic churches and more functional. Protestant reformers inherited and occupied the buildings from the Catholic Church. Church buildings had to be adapted according to liturgical requirements of Protestants, in some cases medieval church furnishings survived, in other cases the statues and pictures were removed (Yates 2017).

The Protestant movement had a special significance for the change in the number of Catholic churches in the sixteenth century. For example, at the end of the sixteenth century 38 Catholic churches were taken and used by Protestants in the present territory of Lithuania (Liutikas 2022). In the seventeenth century, struggles between the proponents of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation continued. Most Catholic churches returned to Catholics after various court disputes in Lithuania. Around 1670 most of the taken Catholic churches had already been returned or new ones built in those areas.

Some other Christian religious communities in Europe build their church buildings. Some communities and spiritual groups have built various houses of worship,

and some communities gather in apartments, private houses or various public halls. Amongst religious communities of Christian origin, the Brotherhood of Priests of St. Pius X, the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) and some more have churches or chapels in the European landscape.

Jewish congregations build synagogues and religious schools throughout the Diaspora lands including Lithuania. Kinsky (1996) noticed that synagogues have been hard to identify because for hundreds of years they tended to be small and modest. Jewish worship has traditionally been an activity directed inside, they have avoided converting others, so there was no need to build very beautiful synagogues (Kinsky 1996). Unlike Christianity and Islam, which has universalizing missionary systems targeting all humanity, Judaism is not. Usually lands were owned by Christians, or discriminatory political systems prohibited Jewish people from owning land, so modest synagogues were a prudent investment because the land rent could be terminated, and the building taken away. Jewish districts and synagogues had specific locations. In the Middle Ages, the Jewish quarter in towns usually had a central location, in some areas near the city centre or in suburban locations. Synagogues could be varied in their architecture, however they always have an ark, the cabinet for the Torah scrolls and a bimah, the table and platform from which the scrolls are read. However, there have been periods in European history when the construction of synagogues was prohibited. Thousands of large and small synagogues were built in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Large synagogues were built from the nineteenth century on. A lot of synagogues in Europe were destroyed between 1933 and 1945. On the Night of Broken Glass (Kristallnacht) alone on November 9, 1938, over 1400 synagogues and prayer rooms were burned, and more than 7000 Jewish businesses were either destroyed or damaged (Turner 2020).

The changes in the number of synagogue buildings over time are well illustrated by the example of Lithuania. The synagogues have been built since the fifteenth century in Lithuania. Jewish communities and synagogues were already present in almost the entire territory of Lithuania in the eighteenth century. Most of the synagogues had quite simple architectural forms externally, the wooden synagogues were more expressive. By legislation, it was required that the synagogues could not be higher than the churches and they had to stand away from them. The Great Synagogue of Vilnius was built in the sixteenth century and a brick synagogue was built in 1633. This synagogue was destroyed or damaged for various reasons, but was rebuilt several times, and reconstructed at the end of the nineteenth century. The synagogue was badly destroyed during World War II, and the Soviets demolished it in 1955–1957. This synagogue was part of the multi-synagogue complex. It is estimated that in total more than 500 synagogues and other Jewish houses of worship stood in the present territory of Lithuania before World War II (Vitkutė 2004). The Jewish community was the largest religious group in Lithuania after Catholics. However, the fate of the Jewish synagogues in Lithuania is exceptionally tragic. Most of them were destroyed during World War II and during the Soviet era. There are 96 surviving synagogue buildings (79 brick and 17 wooden) in Lithuania (Kravtsov et al. 2010). Some of the surviving Jewish synagogue complexes were renovated and adapted for cultural needs.

Migration processes and related religious changes also pose new challenges. Göle (2011) noticed that Islamic signs and symbols in European public life became a major source of cultural dissonance and political dispute. Such examples are the construction of minarets and mosques in the European landscape. According to Göle (2011), constructing a mosque and a minaret in Europe requires a series of negotiations, especially when a mosque is to be built in the city centre. A referendum against minarets was held in Switzerland in 2009. Some 57.5% voted in favour of a ban. Allievi (2013) calculated almost 17 million Muslims and 11,000 mosques in Europe or one prayer hall per 1720 potential Muslims in 2013. The specific space-related requirement of mosque building is its orientation to the holy city of Mecca. The architectural forms and styles of Islamic mosques vary widely (Ross 2009). Minarets and fountains for cleansing are also customary aspects of mosque architecture. There are also Buddhist centres, International Krishna Consciousness Organization (ISKCON) centres and temples, as well as various meditation centres, the Bahá'í Faith Centres and others.

Existential Circle of Sacred Spaces

Religious values and the way of life of believers constantly affect the landscape. Cult buildings are being built, religious symbols are being set up, separate spaces are being set aside for religious practices and personal or communal sacred spaces are being created. Sacred places and sacred spaces are a cultural construct (Liutikas 2009), holiness is given to them by people according to their religion, culture, experience and goals. Various shrines as well as cemeteries are consecrated to the communication between God and man.

In analysing the future of sacred places, one must first examine the future of religion in general. We are the witnesses of the survival of religion in the postmodern era and the age of techno science. The symbolic power of religion is strongly incarnated in the landscape. Five main tendencies could be identified related to sacred landscape: (1) Creation; (2) Affirmation; (3) Preservation; (4) Re-use and (5) Destruction (Fig. 5.6).

(1) **Creation of New Sacred Spaces (Main features: extraordinary events, promotion, consecration, rituals and symbols)**.

The creation of sacred spaces related to incarnated meanings and symbols. Symbolic meaning of sacred places related to transcendency, evocative power and emotional response (De Dijn 2012). This sacred label is associated with exclusivity, a different experience, the community of believers. The creation of sacred places is related to the sacred objects (relics and images), miraculous events (Liutikas 2015b) and various traditions, e.g., indulgence feasts. Sacred places create a transcendent meaning, sacralization process includes imagination, rituals and construction of symbols. Some authors (Smith 1992) argue that ritual is essential to the consecration of sacred space. The religious buildings become a communication place of the human and the divine. Chidester and Linenthal (1995) noticed that sacred space is a contested space, a

Fig. 5.6 Existential circle of
Sacred spaces. *Source*
Author elaboration
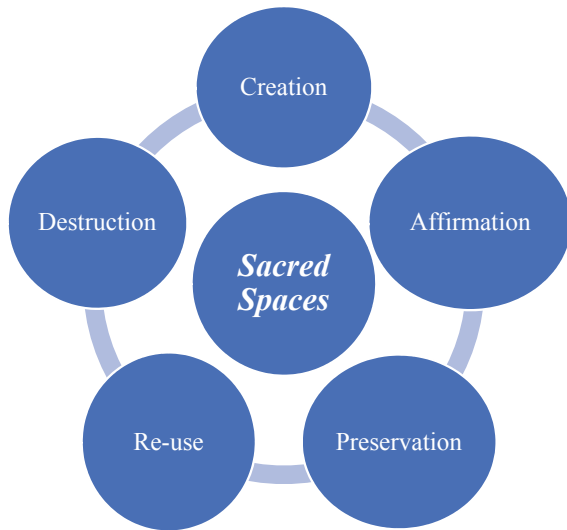
place of negotiated contests over the legitimate ownership of sacred symbols. A
sacred place becomes open to unlimited claims and interpretations on its signifi-
cance. Delbeke (2012) noticed that the church dedication is a primary vehicle in the
sacralization of architecture. There are numerous stories of miraculous dedications
of churches.

(2) **Affirmation of the Sacred Landscape (Main features: everyday devotion
    and rituals, pilgrimage)**.

The significance of the sacred spaces is affirmed by religious rites and their visitation.
Churches and other religious buildings are used for individual or communal worship.
Rituals take place in a specific space and time; they have specified order and specific
means of expression. The main characteristics of rituals include repetition and the
ability to transmit symbolic codes within a cultural group (Rickly-Boyd et al. 2016).
Such developed ritual structures as Catholic Liturgy strengthen the sacredness of the
place.

Clift and Clift (1996) notice that rituals are a way of bringing symbolic meanings
into our everyday reality. Sacred spaces draw religious pilgrims. Through the ritual
actions, the visitor acknowledges the sanctity of the place. The Catholic tradition
includes a broad range of devotional practices and rituals related to the sacred place.
Such Catholic practices like praying the rosary, singing hymns, participation in a
Holy Mass, penitence, or confession of sins could be performed both on the trip
and in the sacred place. Others such as placing flowers and lighting candles before
a Holy image, touching or kissing statues, images or relics, participation in special
processions, crawling on the knees in special places, or having special family or
community gatherings could be performed only at the sacred sites (Liutikas 2021).

The most common Catholic religious practices performed in a holy places are: (1) Participation at the Holy Mass and receiving indulgence (including confession, Eucharistic communion and prayers for the intentions of the Holy Father, blessings); (2) Praying (including rosary, singing hymns and private prayers in silence); (3) Processions and the Way of the Cross (including processions carrying a cross or a holy image, candle processions and walking on the knees); (4) Usage of water (including baptism, drinking, taking baths, collecting holy water to bring home, wading, washing faces and blessing); (5) Leaving votive amulets and offerings (including leaving written or internal intentions, prayers, leaving inscriptions of gratitude on tiles or walls, lighting a candle, making offerings and donating money) and (6) Obtaining souvenirs and devotionalias (including holy images, badges and taking photographs) (Liutikas 2021). Some other models of behaviour could be noticed as donation to beggars, praying for the dead and common eating after the religious service (Liutikas 2021). Some ritual forms are related to piety and the honour of the shrine (circumambulation, walking on the knees the last metres) and strengthening the collective identity (common prayer and singing, holding each other's hands).

(3) **Preservation as the Cultural Heritage (Main features: granting special status for protection, tourism)**

Preservation of sacred heritage includes associated activities, such as physical protection, conservation, restoration and reconstruction and adaptation to visitors. First of all, heritage status identifies the importance of preserving the site, but it also can create contestation of discourses (Maddrell et al. 2014). A lot of sacred spaces are included in UNESCO's World Heritage list. Cultural value of religious buildings creates interest from the tourist industry. Some sacred spaces become symbols of the city, region or country, to visit them becomes a must-visit touristic object. Such examples could be Saint Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, Notre Dame and Sacré Coeur basilicas in Paris, Meteora monasteries in Greece, Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, Cologne Cathedral and the Hill of Crosses in Lithuania. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) prepared recommendation No. 1484 (2000) on "Management of cathedrals and other major religious buildings in use". It is stated that "cathedrals and other major religious buildings are amongst the most significant constructions of the European architectural heritage" and the various models of their maintenance, conservation and repair should be examined (Parliamentary Assembly 2000).

Sacred heritage is related to history, memory, identity, tradition and the interpretation of these elements. Shrines are central to the cultural and historical landscape, they are the symbols of religious communities and denominations. Heritage is territorial. Even officially, about 40% of Christian churches are recognized as cultural heritage and included in the Lithuanian Register of Cultural Heritage. The analysis shows that the religious landscape is changing, it is not static and permanent but

dynamic, contesting and dependent on both social and cultural priorities of society and political power.

(4) **Re-use (Main features: new functions)**

De Dijn (2012) noted that symbolic meanings are intrinsically vulnerable, they can be taken out of their proper context, or they can be contaminated. The new use of the sacred spaces is related to the peculiarities of their location, such as excessive density in the city centre or a decrease in the number of believers. Some church buildings in Europe are no longer used for religious services, their new function mostly related to cultural representation (e.g., The Old Church in Portland converted to a performance hall, Metropolitan United Church converted to concert halls of the Victoria Conservatory of Music in British Columbia). Such church buildings serve as cultural halls for concerts and other events, and specific ceremonies (e.g., wedding ceremonies). A lot of former church or chapel buildings were converted into hotels, e.g., the Kruisherenhotel in Maastricht (Netherlands), Sozo Hotel in Nantes and Hotel Mercure Poitiers Centre in Poitiers (France), Augustine, a Luxury Collection Hotel in Prague (Czech Republic). Voye (2012) found that more than 1600 churches have been formally declared redundant by the Church of England, they serve as concert halls, bookshops, warehouses, chic apartments, cafés, hotels, sport halls or even a circus school. Some of the new secular features of church buildings cause various debates, and sometimes dissatisfaction of believers. Sometimes a church building is reused by a community of another congregation (e.g., Roman Catholic and Lutherans) or even another religion (Christian and Islam as in a case of Hagia Sophia in Istanbul). Christian shrines in Lithuania changed the denominational dependence from Catholics to Protestants and vice versa, from Old Believers and Unitarians to Orthodox, from Orthodox to Catholics.

(5) **Destruction (Main features: ruin, abolishment)**

In some cases, one reason or another leads to the complete destruction of the sacred space. The transfer of a community is one of the reasons for abandoning a church (Coomans 2012). Residences are usually abandoned for political, social or economic reasons (e.g., after wars, occupation of the territory, ethnic change of the population, abandonment of old mining areas). Church buildings could be destroyed by earthquakes, hurricanes or fires. A new church built in a better located place can cause abandonment of the old one. Closure of monasteries and suppression of religious orders could cause demolition of monasteries and abbeys (e.g., almost 100 monasteries were closed or destroyed during the reign of tsarist Russia in the nineteenth century in the territory of present-day Lithuania). We can distinguish two main reasons for the changes of the network of shrines: natural processes and human activities, which were influenced by both social (political, demographic, urban) and religious (coercive and voluntary) changes. For example, dilapidated wooden crosses are not restored. Human factors led to the fires and wars caused, as well as the targeted demolition of shrines. Ruined churches can become places for memory or places for cultural attractions (e.g., former Caucasian Albanian churches in the current territory of Azerbaijan).

Conclusions

The sacred landscape is filled by various meanings, symbols, rituals and traditions of reverence. The most notable ones in the landscape are various buildings dedicated to worship and religious monuments. Churches and other sacred buildings are highly visible expressions of religious identity. Their visibility is part of the institutionalization, acceptance and manifestation of symbolic power. In addition to churches, the landscape of Catholic countries is filled with chapels, monasteries, Calvaries, Grottos of Lourdes and other sacred monuments—crosses, small roadside chapels and chapel-pillars.

The meanings given to the sacred space are constantly defined and reviewed by society or individuals. In some cases, when personal or social identity changes, there are also changes in the notion given to places in the past (Liutikas 2009). Although the meanings given to places and spaces are formed by societies and cultures, often the constructed spaces occupy the position of providers of values and identities and become an instrument of cultural power (Kilde 2008). The signs and symbols provided by sacred spaces are usually long-lasting and affecting social imagination. Sacred spaces are dominant spaces equipped with power and maintained by constant social discourse and interpretations. Pre-Christian pagan faith was intertwined with the worship of nature. The hills, solitary trees and groves, rivers and lakes, stones were considered as sacred. The land was divided into holy and daily, own and foreign. Today, the same meanings are given to religious buildings and monuments. The concept of site sanctity often remains unchanged despite the changing religion and traditions. For example, in many places, churches were built on former pagan shrines (Liutikas 2014).

A place empowered by religion has its own evolutionary dynamics. The possibilities of building shrines and other houses of worship are related to the political, social and economic situation. The construction of new shrines is related to their need, and this depends on the population and the number of believers. Creation of sacred space is both a social and spatial act, an expression of social relations. Some historic periods directly affected the building and functioning of shrines. Same religious buildings may belong to different denominations in separate periods. The existential circle of sacred spaces also includes such stages as the affirmation, preservation, re-use or demolition of them.

What will be the main changes in the network of sacred places in the future? To answer this question, we can assess the impact of secularization and religious revival, demographic and migration trends and other socio-economic changes related to values, lifestyle, transport system, vitality of communities and the number of participants in worship. However, sacred spaces will remain important objects both as part of the cultural landscape and as spaces for traditional, communal and religious values. It can be predicted that the network of sacred places of the future will follow the same stages outlined above.

The Christian landscape in Europe displays a high degree of variety in terms of church characteristics and density. In the context of the analysis presented in this

chapter, it is important to understand that the development of the network of shrines differs in various historical periods. Sacred spaces are not static. Churches address changes of social and liturgical requirements, developed understanding of worship, technological advancements (Kilde 2008). As for religious buildings and monuments, we can discuss the possibilities of relocating them in future. This idea could serve for tourism development and better preservation of such objects. In the future, it is possible to deploy such objects in special open-air museums, parks or other spaces. Research on the possible re-use of religious buildings, the optimal density of worship houses and peculiarities of spatial religious practices are the goals of future research of geographers.

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Part II
Geography of Pilgrimages: Landscapes, Rituals and Embodiment

Chapter 6
Prayer of the Body: Located Corporeal Practices on the Lough Derg Pilgrimage, Ireland

Richard Scriven

Abstract This chapter considers how embodiment is central to an Irish pilgrimage by situating prayer and ritual as corporeal spatial practice that transforms participants into pilgrims facilitating numinous experiences. Lough Derg, or St. Patrick's Purgatory, is a Roman Catholic three-day pilgrimage consisting of cycles of prayers, going barefoot, fasting, and keeping a twenty-four-hour vigil on a lake-island. This tradition reaches back centuries allowing pilgrims to retreat from the world, reflect on life, and encounter spiritual renewal. Ethnographic fieldwork provides an insight into the reality of the pilgrimage, motivations of participants, and the distinct religious and spiritual feelings associated with the site. Meanings and spiritualities become embodied in the pilgrims and emplaced in the site through the practices. The chapter will begin by outlining the nature and features of Lough Derg, followed by an overview of recent research on pilgrimage as embodied spatial practices. An account of the pilgrimage's corporeal practices explores how prayer and performance overlap and entwine on the island. The analysis is enhanced by a selection of interview excerpts demonstrating the motivations and experiences involved.

Keywords Pilgrimage · Embodiment · Performance · Lough Derg

Beginning

Moving bodies define the Lough Derg pilgrimage. Sets of prayer rituals demand repeated circling and kneeling at features of the site, careful barefoot walking slows everyone down, and moments of stillness enable reflection. The three-day practice consists of specific requirements that each pilgrim completes, including Roman Catholic prayers and liturgical services. Outer physiological journeys, shaped by these enactments and challenges, facilitate inner spiritual ones. An abundance of bodily features serves to highlight the corporal and spatial aspects of pilgrimage. This

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paper considers how embodiments are foundational to delineating the experience as spiritual and emotional qualities manifest in the pilgrims and the site.

Lough Derg, or St. Patrick's Purgatory, is a Roman Catholic three-day pilgrimage that happens during the summer months on a lake-island in the northwest of Ireland. It is a distinctly physical and intricate routine consisting of prayer cycles, going barefoot, fasting, and keeping a twenty-four-hour vigil. The island location provides a break with the outside world creating a liminal context for reflection and mindfulness. Both theologically and conceptually, these practices are generative elements enabling transformative journeys of faith, contemplation, and personal intentions. It helps make more accessible the immateriality and transcendence of the sacred and abstract components of ordinary life.

I examine this process through a geographical phenomenological lens that highlights the multifaceted role of the body interacting with the space. Recent considerations of embodiment and developments in pilgrimage studies are deployed to analytically foreground the corporeal layers in understanding Lough Derg as a case study for other pilgrimages. On the lake-island, each participant is brought into extensive and intimate contact with the island and its history. Within these performances, individuals become pilgrims, and the site itself is (re)constructed as a pilgrimage place. The concept of the "prayer of the body" is explored as a means of understanding how the spiritual/emotional and the incarnate merge in the purposeful practices. Ethnographic observations and interviews with pilgrims illuminate the experiences and purposes to interrogate the nature of embodiment and emplacement at Lough Derg.

The chapter next discusses conceptual appreciations of pilgrimages as embodied journeys with reference to phenomenological and other embodied schools of thought, as well as recent trajectories in pilgrimage studies. A brief overview of Lough Derg and the research process follows. Then, the "Prayer of the Body" is introduced as an idea within the pilgrimage that unites the physiological and spiritual dimensions in a meaningful journey for each participant. A focus on the barefoot aspect reveals the visceral connections of people and place on the island which crafts reflective moments and group solidarities. Next, the performing pilgrim bodies are explored as manifesting beliefs, intentions, and religious-spiritual and cultural significances. Through these entanglements the substance of the pilgrimage emerges while the participants become pilgrims. I close with some general conclusions and indications of potential research on embodiment and pilgrimage.

Embodied Journeys

Understanding the geographical nature of pilgrimage necessitates an appreciation for its embodied facets. The Hajj involves the performance of rites across several days around Mecca, while participants in the Shikoku Pilgrimage engage in established practices at each of the temples on the route and Char Dham pilgrimage sites in India are laced with ritual requirements. In these examples and others, the interactions of bodies and places are central to the pilgrimage process. As Harris (2019,

p. 85) outlines "Bodily practices and gestures are theologically and practically important in both Eastern and Western religious traditions." A focus on these landscape corporeal interfaces reveals not only the experiential dimension of pilgrimage, but its geographical manifestation as a relationship between people and place.

Embodiment became an analytical instrument when geographers engaged with different philosophies to articulate a fuller understanding of how people interact with their environments. Phenomenology, in particular, provides the conceptual language to locate and interrogate individuals as embodied subjects at the centre of geographical experience/meaning (Soren and Johnson 2012). At an existential level, these approaches posit that we exist in relation to the world and the world in relation to us. Being is inherently corporeal and located. Merleau-Ponty (2002, p. 94) describes the body as "the vehicle of being in the world, and having a body is, for a living creature, to be intervolved in a definite environment". This position elevates the role of the body as central to being as we come to be by perceiving the world around us (Cresswell 1999). It enables explorations of how "experience is constituted by, and of, place" (Lea 2009, p. 373).

Consideration falls on understanding people as embodied beings who become through interactions with environments, material, and human and non-human actors (Abrahamsson and Simpson 2011). Bodies emerge, for example, as gendered or disabled through performances in conjunction with locations and materials, such as skirt or white cane, respectively (Macpherson 2010). This framework can easily be applied to pilgrimage contexts. We can appreciate how participants develop into pilgrims through the physical components in conjunction with specific locations. They become pilgrims through performance and rituals rooted in landscapes, buildings, and objects.

In these embodied activities between people and places, both "constitutively come into being in this process of physical interaction" (Maddrell and della Dora 2013, p. 1115). The process is inherently and necessarily corporeal. The "human body is the agent, medium, and means of pilgrimage" (Terreault 2019, p. 6). Kapusta's (2022, p. 182) exploration of the Maya New Year's pilgrimage presents a similar ontology illustrating how it is innately embodied and emplaced, articulating the ongoing formative interlinks of people and the natural world. Similarly, Vargas (2022, p. 242) illustrates how Latin American pilgrimages involve "deliberate and intentional movements of the body, accompanied by other community members, material objects, and historical and ritual memory". This understanding is found across pilgrimage studies from valuing the physical role of walking on the Camino de Santiago (Smith 2018) to the range of sensory and corporeal encounters at Mount Kailash in Tibet (Wang et al. 2020).

Through the enactments and rituals, the beliefs and meanings of pilgrimage become embodied in the person as a pilgrim. Martin and Kryst's (1998) foregrounding of the role of the body in their study of a Marian pilgrimage site in the US illustrates how pilgrims are ritualised in the experiences of the place. Sanctity is felt within the pilgrim emerging through the located practices in a mutual process between self, others, and place. Similarly, Foley (2011) illuminates the imbrications of the physical, spiritual, and therapeutic in practices at Irish holy wells through

which the body can take on multiple intersecting roles. Such understandings are reinforced by work in the geographies of religion and spiritualities that locate the body as a focal point for numinous experiences and the generation of sacred spaces (Holloway 2003; Pile et al. 2019).

The pilgrimage as a phenomenological process provides "the catalyst for certain kinds of bodily experiences" (Coleman and Eade 2012, p. 16). The felt, haptic, and performed connections between participants and the material and immaterial create the meaningful experiences of these places while enabling spiritual and other encounters. Pilgrimage is a reciprocal and fluid process in which the carnalities, struggles, and commitment of corporal travel facilitate personal and spiritual journeys (Frey 1998; Gale et al. 2016; Vistad et al. 2020). Journeys are found to have impactful effects on people as the different strands combine to create distinct experiences (Brumec 2022). This understanding aligns with broader research on the embodied dimensions of walking as an involved and emergent process (Liu 2018; Mason 2020; Rose 2020).

Outer journeys are appreciated as facilitating mental, emotional, and spiritual journeys (Maddrell 2013). On one level the physiological interaction of person and terrain is a generator of positive experiences through contact with nature and the pilgrimage milieu (Chang et al. 2020; Harris 2019) which recognises the health-fostering and self-therapeutic aspects (Eade 2017; Jørgensen et al. 2020). While they also form a structure for spiritual growth and renewal through the beliefs of participants and cultural contexts (Favraud 2022; Lois-González et al. 2016; Scriven 2018). These considerations also allow for appreciations of the diverse reasons people participate in contemporary pilgrimages (Farias et al. 2019; Wu et al. 2019).

A distinct understanding of pilgrimage is articulated by foregrounding the body. Examinations of the interactions of people and place through embodiment by geographers enable an appreciation for the rich interlinks between individuals, as corporal entities, and their surroundings. On pilgrimage trails, participants become pilgrims, and landscapes become spiritual spaces in embodied practices through and with places, objects, and other people. The three-day Lough Derg pilgrimage presents a layered case study to help illustrate these processes.

Lough Derg

Lough Derg is a pilgrimage in County Donegal, in the northwest of Ireland. The main activity associated with the sites is a three-day pilgrimage which is completed during the summer. It follows a centuries-old practice which combines retreating from everyday concerns, fasting, keeping a twenty-four-hour vigil, being barefoot, and completing a series of prayer stations. The lake-island which creates a natural barrier between pilgrims and the world is entirely devoted to the pilgrimage with the layout and structures facilitating the pilgrimage.

It is believed St. Patrick spent time on the island during his evangelising mission in the fifth century. There he retreated into a cave for the liturgical season of Lent,

during which he was granted a vision of purgatory and hell. His disciple, St. Davog, then set up a pilgrimage of fasting and prayer in imitation centring on the belief that Patrick's vision had marked the location as a numinous place. The modern pilgrimage is rooted in this tradition in a format that can be dated from the sixteenth century (Cunningham and Gillespie 2004). More recently, reflecting generally changes in the beliefs and discourse on pilgrimage, it is presented a spiritual retreat rather than an arduous penitential undertaking. It is currently being defined as providing "a kind of breathing space in which people can calmly explore and reflect on where they find themselves in their lives at that moment in time" (Lough Derg 2022).

Pilgrims begin their journey by fasting before arriving with only one meal each day of bread or oatcakes with tea, coffee, or water. Once on the island, participants go barefoot and begin a series of prayer stations involving circling features of the site reciting prayers, including the ruined remains of monastic huts on rocky ground. That night a twenty-four-hour vigil is kept with the group of pilgrims saying prayers throughout, and into the following day. There are Roman Catholic masses and other liturgical services also. On the third morning, pilgrims leave for home while maintaining their fast for the rest of the day.

Lough Derg has been explored as a liminal and ascetic experience (Smith 2019; Taylor and Hickey 2015; Turner and Turner 1978). People sacrifice and disengage from the world in a unique way on the lake-island. In these enactments, people experience intimate, social, and spiritual episodes of meaning which gives them strength, helps them express concerns, and revitalises their faith (McGettigan and Griffin 2012; Scriven 2018). Religion and spirituality are not vague concepts here; they are performed realities, practiced by believing people. The aesthetics and conditions immerse the participants in circumstances which have monastic and Celtic qualities giving the pilgrimage an otherworldly character.

I adopted an ethnographic framework to examine pilgrim experiences on Lough Derg by combining participant-observation and interviews, both during and after the three days. This approach draws on a strand of studies that prioritise direct engagements with the experiences of pilgrimage (Frey 1998; Maddrell 2013; Maddrell and della Dora 2013; Jørgensen et al. 2020). Detailed observations and photographs of the practices present across the three-day pilgrimage offer an avenue to locating the embodiments, while insights are gained by using the interview conversations to reflect on the different aspects. A located account of the site's corporeal and experiential dimensions is assembled using these different methods. They enable understanding centred in individual and collective bodily interactions between people and place.

Prayer of the Body

Bodies are fundamental to the Lough Derg pilgrimage. It is lived in the performance of rituals, struggling with the physiological effects of sleep loss, and overcoming pangs of hunger. In both activity and inactivity, over the three days, the corporeal asserts itself. This creates the experience as each aspect impacts pilgrims to enable

spiritual and emotional encounters. The "prayer of the body" is integral to the merging of these elements. The body is the prayer of Lough Derg.

The physical aspects are underscored by the shrine policy that "Pilgrims must be fit and able to walk and kneel unaided. Pilgrims must be able to fast and endure twenty-four hours without sleep" (Lough Derg 2022). While different and nuanced understandings are presented, including acknowledgements of the struggles involved, the pilgrimage nonetheless consists of centuries-old practices that are to be followed. This seemingly uncompromising stance, especially to contemporary sensibilities and awareness, is seen as preserving the authenticity and heritage of the site. Also, in recent decades, the shrine has run one day retreats as an alternative.

Observing the events, the place is animated by the mobility of pilgrim bodies. Individually and collectively, they are performing the ritualised practices as countless. Our Fathers, Hail Marys, and the Apostles' Creeds are recited in combination with sets of kneeling and walking (Fig. 6.1). These actions imbue the movements with significances beyond mere motion or repetition of specific formal prayers (Maddrell and Scriven 2016). Similar to centres such as Mecca or Lourdes, or Orthodox Christian shrines (della Dora 2012), it is the performances and encounters at the site, rather than the site itself which are of significance. Although happening on a confined scale these "journeys" are nonetheless multifaceted, consisting of embodied spatial practices that immerse beliefs, performers and locations (Gale et al. 2016; Vistad et al. 2020). The place is felt at the rhythm of the pilgrimage.

My understanding of these features was enriched by insights from the experiences pilgrims shared with me. The meaning they encountered and generated expanded the rituals and gestures into components of more significant journeys. The priest who was in charge of the pilgrimage for over twenty years, Monsignor Richard Mohan, explained his perspective of the practices:

> There are prayers said while doing these things. But, it's the doing these things I think are important and it's praying with the body; because, the fasting is more than just not having food, it's, it's making a statement. The, the keeping awake, staying awake…the vigil, that in itself is a big, big effort, and that, that's a statement to make.

He moves the emphasis away from prescriptive performance. To be a pilgrim is more than the performance of activities and gestures that could be done anywhere else. The prayer of the body is performed. Prayer, usually defined in terms of an act associated with stillness and the quiet or silent reciting of words in Roman Catholic traditions, becomes something more. Its character and components are broadened to encompass the different performances of the pilgrimage. There is no distinction between thought and practice, between devotion and mobility. As Russell (2004, p. 250) describes, prayer "is defined not by its form but by its intention". Pilgrims, in all they do on the island, are performing the prayer of the body.

These themes also arose in discussions with research participants who were in the middle of their pilgrimage. Intrinsic tensions in the prayer of the body illustrate how the different forces and practices at work were reconciled in the performance. Joe provides insight when explaining his feelings at the beginning of a station:

Fig. 6.1 Prayer stations: pilgrims perform the "penitential beds" as part of the prayer rituals involving kneeling and circling each round ruin and the cross inside several times reciting specific prayers. In this practice, the tradition and intentions of the pilgrimage become embodied in the participants and their interaction with the island features. *Source* Author

> Starting off all of those Hail Marys and Our Fathers, and knowing you've got countless number…Your brain is thinking I've got to get to the end of this and you want to get to the end as quick as possible, but then you want to do it, you want to do it the proper way because that's why you came here and you know that [pause] somehow, there's a gain in this.

The unease between the awareness of the sheer volume of prayers that are awaiting completion and the desire to do things "the proper way" is resolved through the value placed on the pilgrimage that is then mobilised in the believing and practicing body. This guiding belief ensures he is not an agency-less passenger whose purpose was to verbalise a list of prayers, but rather is an active believing pilgrim who is corporeally articulating faith and intentions. Barriers between the bodily and spiritual, and the practice and prayer, are broken down and replaced with an involved milieu in which the material and numinous entwine in these performances. There is a very purposeful act that gives physical form to the prayer. It is in the very doing that the prayers are made manifest: the body is the prayer.

Although sometimes portrayed as the antithesis of the spiritual, the bodily is also frequently the means through which spiritual enlightenment progress is achieved. Across many pilgrimages, the effort and concentration involved in the performance is understood as a central pillar of the process (Favraud 2022; Smith 2018). Within

the Christian tradition, the physical element is relevant as can be linked with the suffering of Christ and the saints (Harris 2019). While, Wang et al. (2020) illustrate how physical exertion is connected with spiritual growth at Mount Kailash. Through the corporeal requirements, they overcome physical limits to develop a sense of identity and belonging. These elements are comparably found in Lough Derg as participants become pilgrims.

Conditions that facilitate reflection are crafted in the practices as different feelings arise. The site is experienced as the combination of physiological challenges and faith affirming moments. Another research participant, Mary, outlined the pilgrimage as provided the time, space and mind-set to contemplate larger issues and nourish her faith:

> Yeah, it helped me in that I was doing something…maybe family or things if there was something that was threatening to go wrong or whatever. It was an opportunity to prayer and reflect, and do a bit of penance. Certainly, you'd say well it mightn't do any good, but it's not going to do any harm, but I think that it does good, I think that it's a positive thing to do, and I'd recommend it, yeah.

She articulates the reflective nature of her pilgrimage which takes a traditional form of revitalising personal faith. The deliberately slower pace of the site combined with the practices give her time to reflect and pray in a more rewarding and resonant way. This aligns with broader traditions when pilgrims "intentionally submit themselves to bodily and psychic dislocation and dispossession…and they journey with and towards other bodies, desiring self-transcendence in and through their bodies" (Terreault 2019, p. 6). Belief and spirituality are reaffirmed in these visceral and intense moments. The enlacing of the physical and metaphysical aspects contributes to these meaningful and transformative encounters. Pilgrims experience their faith in distinct ways that reinforce the role that it plays in their lives.

While watching the pilgrims, the movements and gestures of prayerful performance are palpable. There is a purposeful and reverent nature to their micro-mobilities on this small enclave. Insights and conclusions from the interviews reveal the interior aspects, highlighting both the unseen struggles of hunger and sleep deprivation, and the larger contemplations. Each physical exercise and physiological register present spiritual and emotional resonances. Sanctity is felt within the pilgrim emerging through the located practices in a mutual process between self, others, and place (Martin and Kryst 1998). This is an inherently embodied process as each of the participants becomes a pilgrim through the enactments. Not only is the pilgrimage manifest in their performances, but it is lived and understood in themselves. The prayer of the body, then, is about the relationality between these features, as it is corporeal and spiritual, embodied and emplaced, practiced and thought.

Praying Barefoot

Participants remove their shoes on the island, and it is one of the clearest indicators of the status of pilgrim. The space is known through the feet as contours and textures of the site are directly felt in prayers, rituals, and liturgies. It is a simple embodied action that incarnates not only beliefs, but also generates very distinct experiences. The unusual feeling of being barefoot shapes interactions with the island, which obviously become more tactile as pilgrims encounter different grains with each step. Individual feelings of connectivity facilitate personal reflexivity and the emergence of solidarities (Fig. 6.2).

The removal of footwear, an artificial barrier attached to "feet in order to enhance their effectiveness in specific tasks and conditions", opens up senses to more engaged and purposeful interactions with the terrain (Ingold 2004, p. 331). Every placing of the foot is a corporeally rich meeting of individual person and world which has intrinsic sensory aspects that facilitate spiritual sensations. As Maddrell and della Dora (2013, p. 1107) outline in such practices "the body of the pilgrim becomes itself a permeable surface inscribed by the time–space marks of pilgrimage, whether ritual markings or blistered feet". Every step becomes a more conscious act, which is perceived more vividly: the awkward rocks of the penitential beds, the paths warmed

Fig. 6.2 Kneeling at St. Patrick's Cross: barefoot pilgrims pause in prayer as part of the traditional practice. At Lough Derg, the feet become a connective medium bringing participants into direct contact with the substance of the place and all who have visited here before them. *Source* Author

in the afternoon sun, and the polished wooden floors of the church. Feet are pilgrim feet in the meeting of body and place.

Meaning and substance readily intermix in these encounters. There is an imbrication of features as the surfaces become porous with material and incorporeal substances of the island and person intertwining and cultivating new emotional and spiritual encounters. One of the research participants, Ger comments on how the removal of shoes is a stimulating experience for him:

> I love the bare feet. And I really do, I really love it. It doesn't matter what the weather is like because, I really, I feel free, once I take my shoes and socks off. I really feel connected, just kind of earthed and free, and I don't know, that really does something for me.

It is an enriching experience that has distinct meaningful dimensions. It is liberating and connecting, and it is physical but also numinous. Ger can verbalise some of the affects and sensations, while also acknowledging that there are more undefined, and perhaps undefinable, elements. Similarly, Mark puts considerable emphasis on the role and power of being barefoot during our interview:

> It's simply about connecting with the earth: it's an old Irish, say Celtic if you want, I think it's more human. You know, as basic way of connecting with the earth, it really is ashes to ashes, dust to dust; and it grounds you…

The act becomes a connective encounter through which the corporeal senses lead him to a more fundamental sense of being human. In connecting with the ground, that is being grounded, he occupies a more contemplative state. It is both corporeal and incarnate: the pilgrim is viscerally present, but also more than remaining open to and experiencing spiritual immanences. This corresponds with anthropological works that describe footwear as modern, typically western products that artificially insulate people from their surroundings, creating the bifurcations of human and natural, self and surroundings (Ingold 2004). In contrast, being barefoot is phenomenological as pilgrim and place not only meet but intertwine. The practice is a distinct act of pilgrimage in which an embodied interaction with the environment facilitates numinous episodes.

The immediacy and directness of contact with the surfaces of Lough Derg evoke considerations of other pilgrims, especially those of previous pilgrimages. The exposition of skin on the substance of the island combines with the timeless quality of the practice. It connects each of the pilgrims participating together in the present and with past pilgrims who walked the same paths reaching back decades and potentially centuries. This corresponds with the assurances that such sites offer as links to the past with different stories and traditions amassing over centuries (Dunn-Hensley 2018).

Solidarities are fostered in going barefoot. Conversations with pilgrims described it as a social leveller, something which cuts across backgrounds and classes, rendering all equally shoe-less. Lough Derg is an individual and shared journey as it is performed with others going through the same conditions. In this way, bare feet align with the concept of *communitas* in pilgrimage studies—a recognition of the fellowship generated among participants (Turner and Turner 1978). While the idea has been

critiqued (Maddrell 2013), it nonetheless touches on the shared bonds people feel at Lough Derg. Experiences of being barefoot together are shared and mutually appreciated in the spiritual context of the pilgrimage, enabling pilgrims to appreciate more than just as a physical action but a meaningful exercise of expression and potentially a movement "towards a mystical *communitas*" (Russell 2004, p. 238).

In discussing the barefoot aspects of Lough Derg, Tiernan (2000, p. 29) comments on how "these very feet are propelling us towards eternity as we make our stations—a fruitful subject for meditation". He indicates the significance attached to this practice. More than being an occasionally challenging and even penitential exercise, it involves rich interplays of the embodied pilgrims and world which produces spiritual and emotional encounters, as well as shared conditions. Through the naked foot the pilgrims are "fundamentally and continually 'in touch' with our surroundings" (Ingold 2004, p. 330), and within these moments, they are equally attuned to their fellow pilgrims and open to spirituality, community, and ethereality.

Corporeal Encounters

Pilgrimages bring bodies and places together to entwine creating distinct experiences. Crossing the lake, pilgrims enter into a located relationship as the site is felt through the enactments and features of the three days. It captures the liminality of a temporary monastic type life (Fig. 6.3). It is the tangible expression of withdrawing from the world, fasting, and keeping vigil. The textures become intimately known in prayer and walking barefoot (Maddrell and Scriven 2016). Lough Derg presents a particular manifestation of this relationship found in many pilgrimages. Research has conceptualised such activities as a constellation of interacting features in which the performing body takes a central role linking locations, objects, and other actors all occurring within the affective environment of the cultural context (Vargas 2022). This appreciation foregrounds the interplay between participants and environment as the foundation of many pilgrimages (Damari and Mansfeld 2016; Scriven 2014) as a multifaceted and sensory experience (Cianca 2019).

At every stage there are meanings and reflective moments induced through the embodied activities. Each step or placing a hand on a cross takes on a significance. Individuals bring their own motivations, beliefs, and histories to the journey which are refracted through the encounters with the island and fellow participants. Claire, a pilgrim I talked with, explains that she completed the pilgrimage in thanksgiving. This traditional reason allows the person to express gratitude and connect with the divine:

> Lough Derg was a place to get close to God and to say thanks, and to show, you know, to make a sacrifice that showed that you were thankful…I think you always find something that you are grateful for and that you say, "Do you know what, you know, I'm really pleased that worked out and I need to say thanks for that."

Fig. 6.3 Reflecting: pilgrims sit out on the second day as they keep their vigil. Some sit in quietness while others chat with their fellow participants. The lake-island is valued as enabling people to withdraw from everyday demands and consider aspects of their lives and faith. *Source* Author

Significantly, Lough Derg provides an architecture for the expression and exploration of these intentions. It allows emotional abstractions to be channelled through religious enactments. Claire and other's performances are laced with personal concerns for family, well-being, and life events. The physical and the spiritual intermix in her actions. The transcendent is made immanent as feelings and beliefs become embodied through circumstances of the pilgrimage. This aligns with Wang et al.'s (2020, p. 7) discussion of pilgrimage as an "amicable interaction between pilgrims and the environment evokes a sense of belonging" with the location being "a peaceful and harmonious place where they can reflect and meditate".

It is through an embodied state that the research participants perceive Lough Derg in a process that produces the practices and meanings involved. Pilgrims are in a performed, liminal state of being in which rituals, beliefs, and experiences become incarnated in the pilgrims themselves. The physical journeys are fundamentally connected to the spiritual counterparts as the process flows and merges together. Faith, larger emotional intentions, and even connections with the divine become embodied, rather than being transcendent abstractions (Klingorová 2020; Pile et al. 2019). The gaps between the everyday material world and the spiritual are reduced on pilgrimage as belief or a looser desire to commune with ethereal presences is experienced. Lough Derg and other pilgrimages provide a framework to

develop and nourish faith through both a combination of physical requirements and cultural context. The openness to the location facilitates these types of journeys as ranging from firm Roman Catholics to those with a disposition to the spiritual and people with motivations only they know.

Different modalities and registers emanated in the pilgrims interacting with the site. This leads to different threads of meaning, spirituality, and sanctity becoming embodied in the participants and emplaced in the island. It is an encompassing and reinforcing process. People partake in a tradition drawing on the reflective and historical nature of the practices, while also contributing to location. Pilgrims and place dovetail in the pilgrimage. It is immersive with the interweaving of individuals and their surroundings (see Cianca 2019; Maddrell and della Dora 2013). The body, in this context, is the site of human experience and as the producer, and co-product, of sacred space (Kong 2001). As Martin and Kryst (1998, p. 219) demonstrate in their study of a Marian apparition site in Georgia (US), there are blurrings of "different kinds of bodily boundaries: between self and other; spirit and materiality; bodies and places".

Pilgrims have a strong awareness of these connections as they interact with the island. They feel the site in their feet and pangs of hunger creating deep resonances. It generates a specific time–space framed by a religious-cultural heritage to facilitate personal reflection and spiritual nourishment. Comparably, research on the St. Olav Way, Norway, reveals how pilgrims had a clear appreciation for the interconnectedness of physical, mental, and spiritual well-being (Jørgensen et al. 2020). Pilgrimages present particular frameworks for individuals and groups to experience specific places in spiritual/emotional journeys. Sites such as Lough Derg become loaded with these meanings that are felt in the performance while simultaneously being a thread in a larger tradition. Each pilgrim is an embodied participant adding to the texture and substance of the island.

Closing

This chapter builds on recent trajectories in geography and pilgrimage studies to illustrate the centrality of embodiment to pilgrim spatial experiences. Lough Derg presents a case study of a ritualised and involved practice where multiple bodily registers are invoked in conjunction with the site. The pilgrimage begins corporeally with fasting even before pilgrims reach the lake. Once on the island, it is three days of further fasting, going barefoot, prayer rituals, keeping vigil, and liturgies. The process enables understanding of how the corporeal, spatial, and spiritual interact and overlap. Phenomenological and related approaches enable the foregrounding of the bodies not just physical presences but as foundational to human experiences of and with the world. In the case of pilgrimages, this foregrounds how people become pilgrims through embodied located practices.

Pilgrimage exists in the corporeal enactments with places. At Lough Derg, through performance, the embodied aspects of the tradition assert themselves. This pilgrimage

is *of* the body. Conceptual distinctions between the prayer and the body are blurred. From this perspective, flows fresh appreciations of how spiritualities, faith, and emotions are embodied. Spirituality moves beyond symbols and words to become manifest and immanent. Outer physical journeys are merged with inner journeys. Prayerful bodies, physical rituals, and visceral interactions with the island generate the pilgrim and pilgrim experience. Different motivations and experiences intermingle among these enactments, which in turn overlap with the island's larger tradition and religious-cultural context. It is a place of Roman Catholic devotion but also an openness to numinous encounters; it is about specific intentions and reflective moments. Crucially, these sentiments and affirmations are intrinsically connected with the body and place. It is an interlaced and continuing process in which the corporeal and material are imbricated with the intangible, ethereal, and sacred.

There are two key points I wish to highlight in concluding. First, examinations of pilgrimages must interrogate the complexities of bodies and physical experiences. My focus on embodiment at Lough Derg illustrated the physiological and challenging segments of the process and the meanings created in the located performance. However, critical studies of the bodily demands engagements with age, gender, capacities, and other socio-political characteristics that inherently impact on how pilgrimages are undertaken and experienced, if at all. Contemporary research on corporeal matters from intersectionality to biopolitics can and must enrich understandings of pilgrimages and comparable phenomena. While some of these connections are being developed, there is need for more engagements that deploy contemporary understandings of bodies to pilgrimages. Secondly, both conceptually and practically geographers and others must continue the development of analytical interventions with bodily experiences and sensory aspects. Discussions of categories, such as feelings, spirituality, or abstractions, cannot be divorced from their tangible and lived dimensions. Any research that foregrounds embodiment needs to insist on recognition of the bodily in social, cultural, and political discourse. These different threads are united in bodies and bodily experiences which generate a diverse range of places and spatial encounters.

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Chapter 7
The Psychological 'Geography' and Therapeutic 'Topography' of the Norwegian St. Olav Way

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Abstract This chapter is based on the author's doctoral thesis and depicts the psychological 'geography' and therapeutic 'topography' of the Norwegian St. Olav Way, describing people's motivations, processes, effects, and perceived therapeutics associated with walking this way. Qualitative open-ended questionnaires were sent to all pilgrim shelters along this way in 2017. 53 pilgrims from 13 countries and of different beliefs responded. Motive, process, effect, and therapeutic categories were generated through a thematic text analysis of their answers. Main motivations resulted to be contemplation, health, social/solitary walking, pilgrimage walking/ repeating, and nature. Pilgrims experienced mental, physical, spiritual, social, and sensory processes. Mental processes were the most reported and included self-immersion, self-release, and self-restoration. Physical processes involved improved shape, sleep, persistence, and coping skills. Spiritual processes comprised of religious reflection and spiritual enrichment. Sensory processes contained stimulation of the senses, sense of coherence and belonging. Social processes composed a community feeling, sharing of experiences, an educational and social practice, and re-evaluation of values. After-effects encompassed improved health, health assets, and a more positive outlook. Therapeutics were identified as walking, nature, and community. Given the therapeutic, relational and dynamic nature of the findings, the results are explained in light of therapeutic landscapes, relational ontology, and the mobility turn.

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Introduction

Geographically speaking, most foreigners are able to place Norway on the map. However, most people, even Norwegians, are unaware of Norway's walking pilgrimages (WPs). The longest stretches itself from Oslo to Trondheim and is known as the St. Olav Way. To people who have walked the famous but cramped Camino de Santiago in Spain (travelled by ca. 300,000 walkers a year), this less known and secluded Norwegian trail stands out as a quieter alternative and a fairy-tale with its majestic nature (walked by ca. 1000 people a year). Still, the St. Olav Way has many similarities to the Camino concerning people's motives and their experienced health processes and effects with pilgrimage walking (PW). Moreover, people indicate a 'topography' of therapeutic mechanisms associated with walking this route that apparently bring about these processes and effects. Interestingly, these features coincide with those found in the author's previous Camino M.Phil. study (Jørgensen 2008) and other related Camino and outdoor studies.

This chapter is based on the author's doctoral thesis (Jørgensen 2022) and depicts the psychological 'geography' or character of the Norwegian St. Olav Way and the way's therapeutic 'topography' or features as experienced by both Norwegian and international pilgrims. It describes people's motivations to walk this trail, their processes enroute, their perceived effects post-journey, and how they define the therapeutic mechanisms associated with walking this way. In order to answer this, a set of qualitative open-ended questionnaires were distributed to all the pilgrim shelters along the St. Olav Way in the spring of 2017. In total, 53 pilgrims from 13 countries and of different belief systems responded. Motive, process, effect, and therapeutic categories were generated through an inductive thematic text analysis of their answers. Given the therapeutic, relational and dynamic nature of the findings, the results are explained in light of therapeutic landscapes (Gatrell 2013), relational ontology (Sidorkin 2002), and the mobility turn (Urry 2002).

The St. Olav Way

The St. Olav Way—Olavsleden or Gudbrandsdalsleden in Norwegian (with both a Western and Eastern variant)—stretching itself ca. 643 km from Oslo to Trondheim in Norway is so unknown that it is almost a secret (Kehoe 2019) despite its vast significance in the past. Olav II Haraldsson (c. 995—29 July 1030)—later known as St. Olav—was a Norwegian Viking warlord who reigned as king of Norway from 1015 to 1028. During one of his many raids, he was baptized in Rouen in 1014 and then returned to and converted Norway to Christianity, becoming king in 1015. His hard rule, however, made him unpopular and he had to flee the country. In an attempt to regain power in Norway, Olav fell in the Battle of Stiklestad in 1030. His body was rescued from the battlefield and buried on the banks of the Nidelva River. A wooden chapel (today Nidaros Cathedral) was built over his tomb. Shortly after King Olav's

death, signs and miracles were told of near his remains. He was declared a saint in 1031 and people came on pilgrimage from all over Europe to his tomb, mainly to seek health and give thanks in the belief that images of him or visiting his burial place could bring healing (Raju 2015).

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Trondheim became the holy centre of the North, a deliberate attempt to create a centre of gravity for Christianity in Northern Europe, aligned with Santiago de Compostela in the West, Rome in the South and Jerusalem in the East. The itineraries leading north to St. Olav's grave were an important and integral part of the St. Olav cult. Traces along the Way speak of an impressive route system with churches and places of remembrance dedicated to St. Olav, who was widely popular throughout Scandinavia and the Norse and Anglo-Saxon world (Orrman 2003). Though, with the Reformation and the rise of Protestantism, PW was abandoned across most of Northern Europe (Gilhus and Kraft 2007).

Later, in 1994, the work of reviving and marking the Norwegian St. Olav Way began. It now consists of paths through Norway, Denmark, and Sweden marked with the St. Olav logo (a simple wall knot and the Olav cross). In 2010, the Way was declared a European Cultural Route. All approved St. Olav routes must have Nidaros Cathedral as their goal and be linked to the saint (Pilegrimsleden.no 2021a). As for Norway, many aim to arrive in Trondheim within St. Olav's feast day on July 29 (known as Olsok). People, who have walked at least the last 100 km by foot (or 200 km by bike) until Nidaros are entitled to the Norwegian pilgrim certificate, 'Olavsbrevet' (The Olav Letter)—confirming a well completed pilgrimage—upon presenting their pilgrim passport that documents their trajectory with seals and signatures collected underway from hostels and parishes, etc., similarly to the Camino (Pilegrimsleden.no 2021b).

Today's Norwegian PW phenomenon can be understood in terms of three trends, according to the Norwegian theologian Jensen (2021): (1) Spiritual (a search for answers in light of global change and ecological crisis and where government/church has lost trust), (2) Ecological (a desire for closeness to nature, sustainable and short-distance travel), and (3) Simplification (a cultural critique and wish to free oneself from materialism, distancing oneself in a natural space). Secularization is challenging these issues (Taylor 2018); the uncertainty or basic questions about being human creates a need for belief. However, belief is now highly individualized and no longer governed by established religion (Hervieu-Leger 2000; Reader 2005). Subjective spirituality is superseding church religion and consequently affecting the trends of the modern pilgrimage phenomenon (Heelan and Woodhead 2005).

Thus, PW has undergone a historic change. While the St. Olav Way remains grounded in religious tradition, it attracts and is open to anyone with faith or no faith, reflecting the secular nature of the way/today's society. At the same time, the meaning of the term PW has changed. While the emphasis used to be on the pilgrimage destination and religious rituals, for many people the focus is on being underway and the personal experience. 'People have such different life paths, history

and background, though we all long for the same: finding our place and purpose in life and longing to be loved unconditionally, just for who we are, not for how we perform' (respondent 34). We now turn to the motivations people hold with the St. Olav Way.

Motivations with Walking the St. Olav Way

There is a plethora of motives that makes people walk the St. Olav Way (Jørgensen et al. 2020a). They are full of complexity, like the Camino (Jørgensen 2008), confirming that pilgrimage is a space full of contrasting individual needs (Eade and Sallnow 1991), not predominantly religious (Amaro et al. 2018), but more spiritual in nature (Slavin 2003) and to a large extent self-, health, relationally-, and meaning-oriented as seen in the St. Olav results.

The main St. Olav motives revolved around: (1) contemplation (time to think, clarity, time-out, and the inner journey); (2) health (processual and self-therapeutic motives, mental strength and balance, physical challenge, rebirth, and shape); (3) fellowship and solitude (social walking, inspirational encounters, supportive fellowship, and solitary walking); (4) walking long-term long-distance pilgrimages; (5) repeating the pilgrim existence; (6) nature (nature-bathing, self-immersion, mental rest, and alone-time). Whereas the less significant motives were grounded in: (7) historical/cultural/travel interests; (8) spiritual/religious reasons; (9) a more present/simple/slow life; and (10) life celebrations/crossroads/challenges/transitions (Jørgensen et al. 2020a).

These findings are supported by a few other studies and literature on the St. Olav Way, stating that the motives also involve connecting to nature and introspection (Nidaros Pilegrimsgård 2018), spirituality, health, wellbeing, and a reaction to a frantic lifestyle (Uddu 2018). People are motivated by a different life, personal growth, fellowship and solitude, respite, adventure, and exercise, in addition to historical/cultural interests (Pettersen 2012) and the overcoming of crisis (Paulsen 2005). Similarly, Olsen (2011) arrived at six motivational categories: time, reflection, spirituality, social aspects, nature and walking, religious aspects (figuring the least), history/tradition/culture, destination, and journey. Hafskjold (2015) adds coping/challenge, company or to walk for someone, celebration of self/a life event, lifestyle-change, time-out, insight and meaningful presence through motion, and nature as the main motives (religious reasons also scoring the lowest). Vistad's (2015) and Vistad et al.'s (2020) pilgrim survey scored high on long-distance walking (LDW), slow travel, nature experiences, knowledge and joy, the inner journey, meeting locals, and cultural heritage, while less on religion, solitude, social hiking, and meeting others. The low score on the social aspects can be explained by the fact that some seek the less trodden St. Olav Way due to the increasingly overfilled Camino.

In comparison, the Camino motives (Jørgensen 2008) centred around the same aspects as the St. Olav ones, respectively: (1) clarity of thoughts, time-out to self-reflect and connect with one's self/inner voice; (2) time to process and restore oneself

from life challenges, seek mental peace/inner balance/healing, mental/physical/social challenge, spiritual rebirth, self-consciousness, personal change; (3) find existential meaning/answers through solitude/company; (4) walking long-term long-distance WPs; and (5) repeating the Camino, was not expressed explicitly (probably because it was the participants' first WP); (6) contact with nature. Whereas (7) certain cultural/historical interests; (8) spiritual/semi-religious motives; (9) a wish for a simpler existence, less routines/society-imposed values, to live the moment; and (10) celebrate life, were also mentioned as motives among the Camino walkers.

Similar motives have been found in other Camino studies (some mentioning several of the motives stated separately in the following), people seeking: a personal testing ground (Frey 1998); self-health/therapy (Jørgensen 2008; Mikaelsson 2012); self-transformation (Margry 2015); healing, sense of perspective, answers, respite and recovery from trauma (Bielefeld 2012; Prieto 2020; Sørlle 2018); recovery from crisis/sorrow; to treat depression (Sørensen 2021); to find themselves, calm, a pilgrim fellowship, to be with family (Gamper and Reuter 2012); life improvement (Blom et al. 2016); clarification (Schnell and Pali 2013); union with nature (Murray 2014); spiritual growth, life direction (Oviedo et al. 2014); life evaluation, meaning, self-discovery (Nilsson and Tesfahuney 2016); self-realization, faith reflection (Sørlle 2018); sports, culture/history, new people and places, escape routine, to fulfil a promise (Amaro et al. 2018); leisure, recreation (Fernandes et al. 2012); countryside and gastronomy (Lois-González and Santos 2015); in addition to adventure, affordable holidays (Gamper and Reuter 2012); joy (Moulin-Stożek 2019); prestige (Gomes et al. 2019); and giving thanks (Mróz 2021). The study by Farias et al. (2019) shows that atheists undertaking the Camino are also motivated by new experiences and sensations, existential exploration and being close to nature. Thru-hikers (LDW hikers along an end-to-end trail, similar to LDW pilgrims), on the other hand, are found to seek nature, freedom in the face of life transitions, emotional healing from trauma, self-reliance, and physical challenge (Bader 2018). These multifaceted motives indicate that WPs, such as the St. Olav Way and the Camino, offer people a space through which to create, define, and perform their own narratives and experiences according to their unique intentions, hopes, expectations, and desires.

Processes Experienced While Walking the St. Olav Way

Even though PW is a global phenomenon, we still know little about its psychological processes. PW is a highly complex and processual process on the move (Preston 1992). Developmental processes occur due to different ongoing processes over time, but that are hard to study in real time (Robson 2002), such as the biopsycho-social functions during PW (O'Mara 2021). Very few studies describe, in specific terms, the ongoing processes taking place in PW, despite thousands of people sharing their WP experiences (Bowman and Sepp 2019) as well as research calls stressing the need to understand the dynamics at work in PW (Jørgensen 2008; Warfield et al.

2014). Thus, we are dependent on people's reported experiences enroute to and after their pilgrimage goal, as with the Olav walkers.

The St. Olav respondents, like the Camino interviewees, underwent a series of mental, physical, spiritual, social, and natural/sensorial health processes while PW. The different process categories were first found in the Camino data (Jørgensen 2008) and were later identifiable in the St. Olav data (Jørgensen et al. 2020b). These categories have not been discussed in-depth by other scholars, although Maddrell (2013) does touch upon these categories, describing PW as an emotional/affective, corporeal, spiritual, social, and sensorial practice and process. Although separately addressed here in order to obtain a systematic overview of the dynamics at work in PW, the mental, physical, spiritual, social, and natural/sensorial processes are nonetheless intrinsically linked with, and dependent on, each other and constitutes the whole PW experience.

Mental processes while PW were the most reported among the Olav walkers (Jørgensen et al. 2020b) and consisted of self-immersion (self-reflection and processing of problems), self-release (catharsis and mind liberation), and self-restoration (wholeness, empowerment, mental peace, healing, presence, and simplicity). In comparison, those walking the Camino (Jørgensen 2008) experienced self-awareness of thoughts, problem-solving and creative thinking, formed and triggered by movement; the reduction of mental and psychosomatic problems; a more stable mood, increased life joy, self-esteem and self-worth; wellbeing, empowerment/emotional strength, healing; and a blissful meditative flow through the physical transcendence of a 'walker's high'. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) explains that flow experiences often arise in situations where there is a balance between a task and a person's skills to perform it. This results in a person forgetting about their surroundings, even the task, transcending oneself and experiencing wellbeing and meaning (as occurs in PW).

Vestøl's (2013) pilgrims reported feelings of balance, meaning, continuity, and presence from walking the St. Olav Way, whereas Sørlle's (2018) participants mentioned empowerment. The literature also confirms that walking, in general, facilitates idea production (O'Mara 2021)—the body on the move, makes the mind/thoughts move (Martinsen 2004). As Slavin (2003, p. 11) writes: 'By submitting to the rhythm of the walk …, a way of seeing and organizing thoughts and experiences emerges'; it centres the self and 'the walk becomes meditative' (p. 9). Walking in nature improves affect and cognition (Bratman et al. 2015). Further, PW improves self-awareness, creative thinking, and problem-solving and is by many pilgrims considered as a cleansing of emotions, a letting go of the past, and a tool that makes whole, empowers and heals, bringing people back to their core and to a simpler life (Lunga 2005). Whereas reflection and problem-solving is considered key to personal growth/transformation (Saunders et al. 2013).

A survey concerning the benefits of thru-hiking confirms the above processes. It shows that hiking elicits mental flow, life appreciation, joy, peace, satisfaction, self-reliance, and self-fulfilment (Gómez et al. 2010; Mills and Butler 2006). As the Irish geographer Scriven (2020) points out, a WP is the emergence/formation of self. Sørensen (2021) also discovered that those she met on the Camino experienced

self-development, serenity, fellowship, simplicity and authenticity. She also found that they experienced positive mental changes both during the Camino and later in their daily lives. A systematic scoping review of LDW's relation to mental health (Mau et al. 2021), in fact, shows that PW is positively related to mental health reducing emotional distress, anxiety and fear, improving mood as well as self- and body-awareness, verging into the physical processes discussed next.

Physical processes involved improved shape and sleep, greater persistence and coping skills among the Olav walkers (Jørgensen et al. 2020b). Additionally, the Camino walkers (Jørgensen 2008) felt a physical presence by becoming more in-tune with their bodies and less their thoughts, underlining the embodiment process taking place during a WP (Scriven 2020). It is well-known that walking is good for keeping fit and induces healthy sleep by which we also restore our mental functioning (O'Mara 2020). Sleeping soundly and reconnecting with a natural cycle and pace is also part of the slowing down processes and simplification of life that comes with LDW (Saunders et al. 2013). As for persistence, tasks that we can cope with, endure in or feel we master, result in strengthened coping and resilience skills, reinforcing our self-esteem and spirit (Bandura 1995). This is confirmed by the LDW scholars Saunders et al. (2013), who hold that the development of courage and persistence seems to facilitate problem-solving and therapy, challenges and achievement, and health and fitness. Thus, physical challenge/persistence is relevant in enhancing mental resilience.

Spiritual processes comprised religious reflection and spiritual enrichment among the Olav walkers (Jørgensen et al. 2020b). For the Camino walkers (Jørgensen 2008) this meant self-discovery, self-regulation and self-transformation, and a synchronization of body, mind, and soul, becoming one with self and nature/God through walking in nature. These descriptions are easily associated with Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) definition of flow, making people feel at one with themselves, nature, the world and a greater whole, by transcending themselves through the act of walking. Slavin (2003) reflects that the act of walking allows pilgrims to fall into a rhythm that opens them up to the present across time and space, allowing deeply spiritual experiences to emerge, also underlining the relationship of spiritual processes with walking and nature. An engagement with the setting can generate spiritual awareness of an embodied sense of connection with the infinite, creating meaning and connection with something bigger (Saunders et al. 2013). The spirit grows by walking (Jørgensen 2008) or spirituality arises from PW (Slavin 2003), stimulating self-development, serenity, simplicity, and authenticity (Sørensen 2021). Some come closer to God, become moved or spiritually renewed (Maddrell 2013). As Scriven (2014) writes: the temporary liminal pilgrim existence enables spiritual explorations of the self, inner transformation, and self-realization which again enhances a sense of identity and of being in the world—or re-imagining or reconstructing a sense of who we are, could be (O'Neill and Roberts 2019) or wish to be (Leach 2006) in light of our fluid society (Bauman 1996).

Social processes involved a feeling of community, sharing of experiences, and an educational and social practice, including a re-evaluation of values for the Olav walkers (Jørgensen et al. 2020b). In a similar manner, the Camino walkers (Jørgensen

2008) felt part of a common good, an anonymous moving community, which encouraged openness and the rehearsal of human relations, independence, boundaries, and self-performance. Dialogues with walkers from different cultures and belief systems also made them review and negotiate between personal and external values. The Olav walkers, however, mentioned that days could pass before they met anyone and that this could be both liberating and lonesome. However, the few social encounters they did have were very rewarding and revelation-like. Many pilgrims consider WPs as identity building or formation journeys/'grand tours' (Nasjonalt Pilegrimssenter 2020; Im and Jun 2015).

The now deceased Norwegian psychologist Lunga (2005), who used PW in his work with psychiatric patients and, later, in dealing with his own cancer, first talked of the psychotherapeutic and altering quality the PW social dialogues can have, similar to WTT. The only difference is that one can walk and talk for hours on end on a WP and, most often, do not cross paths with one's fellow walkers again, making opening-up and the sharing of experiences and values easier. This can be explained by the liminal existence the pilgrims find themselves in (van Gennep 1960), connected by a pilgrim communitas of fellowship (Turner 1969) in which they can confirm, negotiate, or alter personal values together with others (Barth 1969). As Mróz (2021) writes: people emphasize that the Camino is a way that transforms, but also a way in which pilgrims are changed by the people they meet from all over the world.

Social PW can also produce a feeling of existential communion and universal connectedness of an effervescent experience increasing feelings of wellbeing and meaning (O'Mara 2021). Saunders et al. (2013), therefore, suggest that some social walking situations may produce a co-active social flow and in-depth conversations that may produce interactive social flow and feelings of social unity. The American LDW and wilderness researcher Redick (2016) writes that the bonds formed with fellow pilgrims are based on seeking communion and self-emptying (kenosis), where kenosis moves the ego from the centre as to come into an open and reciprocal relationship with others on the way. There is a common good and empathy happening on the way (Galbraith 2000) a healthy atmosphere in which people feel energized and motivated to do and reciprocate good (Sørensen 2021).

Natural/sensorial processes consisted of a stimulation of the senses (seeing, smelling, hearing, touching, and tasting nature) and a sense of coherence and belonging (by some, referred to as flow) in the Olav walkers (Jørgensen et al. 2020b). In comparison, the Camino walkers (Jørgensen 2008) experienced enhanced sensory impressions of nature, dissolution of time and space and connecting with something bigger, giving a sense of purpose, unity, and integration. This reveals a strong sense of coherence (SOC) (Antonovsky 1990) or oceanic feeling (Locke 2005), making individuals feel oneness with, and a meaningful relatedness and belonging to, their natural and social surroundings, that everything is interconnected/intermeshed (Ingold 2007). The American psychologist Maslow (1970) called this intermeshed oceanic feeling for mystical peak experiences, often leaving a life mark, changing the individual for the better. He believed these experiences are significant for self-transcendence and a sense of purpose, and that they ought to be sought and studied as to achieve personal fulfilment, growth, and integration.

Slavin (2003), also confirming the dissolution of time and space, explains that this process shows the importance of paying attention to the immediate, to what is present at any given moment: 'When the infinite, in all its intensity, can be apprehended then the finite nature of existence is revealed' (p. 16). The American naturalist Thoreau (1982), who would walk into the woods to 'shake off the village', called this a 'return to the senses'. Also, sensory experiences in nature nurture our basic need for natural contact (Zhang et al. 2014) and are related to positive feelings (Ballew and Omoto 2018). However, some research implies that spending time in nature can also evoke discomfortable thoughts (Lorentzen and Viken 2020), or even anxiety connected to personal security (Yang 2020).

The umbrella review of nature's role in outdoor therapies (Harper et al. 2021) adds that nature and the use of the five senses helps to engage and mood-regulate, reduces anxiety, stress, blood pressure, and boosts the immune system and is positive for cognition, agitation, cancer, depression, dementia, schizophrenia, and psychosocial wellbeing. Walking programmes have also been shown to assist vascular and neurorehabilitation where deficits are absent in walking (Fakhry et al. 2012). PW the Camino has, for example, proven to favour stimulation of feelings in people with early Alzheimer's disease (Moreno 2014). Thus, as O'Mara (2021) states: there are clear positive, even synaptic, feedback loops between walking, nature exposure, and mental health.

Negative experiences were not reported apart from different physical ailments by the Camino walkers (Jørgensen 2008) and certain services and churches being closed, some challenging stretches and a few insensitive hosts additionally mentioned by the Olav walkers (Jørgensen et al. 2020b). Indeed, commonly reported pitfalls by pilgrims are: tendonitis, joint pain, blisters, dehydration, etc. (Harris 2019). However, as respondent 17 writes in a follow-up email: 'the positive experiences outweigh [the negative] in the end' (also confirmed by Saunders et al. 2013). A common 'side-effect' of these positive experiences is the need or wish to repeat WPs or reproduce the pilgrimage existence on retreats/periodical pilgrim reunions (Galbraith 2000).

The literature is not overrun by negative experiences connected with PW and neither confirmed by the review of LDW by the Danish psychologist Mau et al. (2021). However, similar to the point made by Eade and Sallnow (1991) that contestation and competing discourses may develop at pilgrimage sites, Havard (2018) says that conflicts and contestations may arise during a WP due to, for example, personality and cultural differences, scarce resources, stress of transformation, and a myriad of other reasons. Thus, differences in personal and group identity do not necessarily diminish or vanish during a pilgrimage as Turner and Turner (1978) claimed; they may become even more evident. Also, while PW can be perceived as therapeutic by many, others may have counter-perceptions (Grau 2021).

The afore-mentioned processes are partially confirmed by what Løvoll and Torrissen's (2020) study identified as eight psychologically supportive processes for subjective life quality among their Camino contestants: life skills, community, self-acceptance, physical challenges, sensory experiences, experiences of meaning, joy and laughter, and playfulness. Lunga (2006) believed the intense and enduring PW experience, the physical striving and overcoming of challenges, taking control

over one's own performance together with the absence of hierarchies, stress, mass-consumerism and media, and the experience of slow time and original rhythm of the soul and body, reflection and finding meaning in the trivial and simple, lies at the base of the above-mentioned processes. According to him, these processes lead to effects such as the rehabilitation and recruitment of mental resources, affecting and stabilizing the body's and brain's chemical metabolism, as confirmed by O'Mara (2021). We now turn to the after-effects of PW the St. Olav Way.

Effects Perceived After Walking the St. Olav Way

Transformations following nature-based travel experiences are many (Manning 1999). As seen above, PW affects a person, regardless of their motivations and beliefs. Most people also undergo change during their WP (Nasjonalt Pilegrimssenter 2020), and the 'pilgrim effect' does not vanish once they go home. Their daily life is affected by the PW experience and the various people and views met (Frey 1998; Lopez 2013; Mróz 2021; Reader 2005). PW is a transformative event (Scriven 2014), one first walks the pilgrimage, and then, the WP walks/shapes the person (Stortz 2014). However, research does not specify what these changes entail (Mikaelsson 2011; Sørlle 2018). Thus, it is vital to explore the after-effects and the short-, long-term, and lasting effects of PW. Concerning perceived after-effects and changes, affecting people's daily life, behaviour and future actions as a result of PW, clear parallels are also found in these respects between the St. Olav Way (Jørgensen et al. 2020b) and the Camino (Jørgensen 2008).

Improved mental, physical, spiritual, and social health was the most important after-effect among the Olav walkers (Jørgensen et al. 2020b). This meant better mental functioning, increased physical activity, spiritual strength, and strengthened social ties. Similarly, the Camino walkers (Jørgensen 2008) reported psychological, physical, spiritual, and relational effects in terms of mental confidence, physical power, endurance and fitness, a strengthened spirit, and nurturing friendships. Many of Sørlle's (2018) contestants expressed that PW to them was like a sort of therapy or practice for improving their mental health. LDW has proven to make people gain fitness and health, incorporate physical exercise into their daily activities to maintain their improved health, change priorities in life, and spend more time with family. In addition, making them more courageous, strong, and determined in following through with personal goals and having a positive effect on self-esteem (Saunders et al. 2013).

A recent scoping review considers LDW, such as PW, to be positively related to mental health, improving mood and reducing emotional distress, depression, anxiety, and fear while eliciting body/physical health awareness (Mau et al. 2021), increasing cardiovascular fitness (Harris 2019), and lowering cholesterol and weight (Bemelmans et al. 2010, 2012), as confirmed by Lunga (2005). It has also been proven that the psycho-physiological effects of visiting parks, for example, lead to a reduced risk of heart attack, stress, depression, and other mental disorders (Kaplan and Kaplan

1989; Wolf and Wohlfart 2014). Whereas spiritual health in terms of stress reduction, wellbeing, support, optimism, empowerment, and life-coping tools through pilgrimage is supported by the 2017 study by Moaven et al., which overlaps with the two following after-effects found in the St. Olav study.

Strengthened personal health resources such as increased self-strength, self-coping, and self-awareness were further reported by the Olav walkers (Jørgensen et al. 2020b). Equally, the Camino walkers reported increased mental and physical strength, self-efficacy, and self-consciousness (Jørgensen 2008). Thru-hikers have also reported increased personal awareness, mental peace, and good health (Gómez et al. 2010). This is supported by studies where LDW, being in one's body, has strengthened self-awareness (Redick 2016), enabled self-discovery, self-efficacy, capability, and independence (Mau et al. 2021). Also, completing an LDW, conquering fears and putting resolutions into practice, generates a strong sense of achievement which is empowering and transferable to other areas of life (Saunders et al. 2013). In other words, the PW experience awakens an awareness around self and personal self-coping skills in the participants, which reflects Bandura's (1995) self-efficacy theory: that tasks which meet a person's skills produce efficacy in the person and strengthen their sense of self-reliance. Self-reliance, or self-efficacy, is associated with a higher form of wellbeing (Ryan and Deci 2001) as it equips a person with the personal resources, such as optimism, to deal with the ups and downs in life. This is also related to meaning, which takes us to the next finding.

A more positive outlook on life such as new perspectives, existential meaning, trust in life, a confirmation of self and personal values, more presence and simplicity, and a slower lifestyle was also mentioned by the Olav walkers (Jørgensen et al. 2020b). This was confirmed by the Camino walkers (Jørgensen 2008) who reported new perspectives, life hope, courage, simplicity and presence, and existential truths in terms of a redefinition of self and a reappraisal of personal values and experiences. Moving in a natural and social landscape appears to elicit self-reflection and dialogues around life and values, making people re-evaluate their existence to either appreciate what they have or make the necessary changes to achieve the life they wish for.

Life contentment and positivity, being less concerned with health problems, was also reported by Preda's (2009) Camino participants. Sørensen (2021) found that people experienced positive mental changes both during the Camino and later in their daily lives. A more positive outlook on life, a reappraisal of values, and a greater self-confidence as a result of LDW is also confirmed by LDW studies, which emphasize the importance of space and distancing to/disengagement from ordinary life without daily distractions and obligations (Mau et al. 2021). This underlines the importance of being away for a sufficient amount of time when undertaking a WP (Saunders et al. 2013), allowing for engagement with something new and different (Bridges 2004) such as experiences of flow and meaning (Redick 2016).

Considering meaning, Schnell and Pali (2013) found that their pilgrims experienced significantly more meaning after PW the Camino and overcame crisis, an effect that was present 4 months after the journey. These pilgrims experienced the WP as transformative and constructive. Similarly, Prieto's (2020) Camino respondents described their PW experience as meaningful, from which something was gained

(for some unexpectedly). To many of Saunders et al.'s (2013) LDW contestants, regular doses of LDW were seen as important in coping with life stressors, and the knowledge that one can always go for a LDW in difficult times was seen as valuable in stress management. All this indicates that PW has a positive health/life impact on many. One can then ask what mechanisms bring about these beneficial processes and effects? With this, we turn to the therapeutics behind PW the St. Olav Way.

Therapeutics Associated with the St. Olav Way

The Camino is often referred to as 'la ruta de la terapia' (Frey 1998). Donovan (2020) calls it the 'talking walking cure', underlining its physical, social, and therapeutic aspect. Moaven et al. (2017) claim spiritual health can be attained through 'pilgrimage therapy', offering stress reduction, wellbeing, support, optimism, empowerment and life-coping skills, also underlining PW's mental and spiritual aspects. Warfield et al. (2014) even view pilgrimage journeys as therapeutic on all levels: mental, physical, spiritual, and social and call for research on the 'precise mechanisms of how pilgrimage is therapeutic' (p. 873). It is thus essential to inquire what pilgrims define as the exact therapeutic mechanisms of PW.

When the Olav walkers (Jørgensen et al. 2020b) were asked how they would define the therapeutic mechanisms that bring forth the afore-discussed health processes and outcomes, they mostly responded *walking*, *nature*, and *community*: the physical effort of a mindful, reflective, present, slow, long-term LDW, the enriching encounters with nature, and the inspiring encounters with people. Perhaps, not surprisingly, the same therapeutic categories were mentioned by the Camino walkers (Jørgensen 2008, 2017) although in a different setting a decade earlier: long-term *walking* (enabling meditative flow, transcendence, and self-dialogue); self-reflective *nature* (alternating between past, present, and future, giving a sense of coherence and oneness with oneself, nature, and a greater whole); and self-regulating conversations with *co-walkers* (of a psychotherapeutic quality). Interestingly, both study groups said one has to walk for a considerably long enough time and length to experience the therapeutic mechanisms of PW, with the Camino walkers specifying that flow or self-transcendence usually sets in first after 10–14 days. As Slavin (2003, p. 11) writes (also referring to PW as 'walking in the present'): letting the system or rhythm of walking establish itself 'is the first step towards grounding oneself in the present and then commending oneself to something deeper, simpler and more fundamental'. Both groups describe PW in terms of self-therapy/self-healing.

There are no existing studies explicitly specifying or confirming these PW therapeutics or healing as a result of PW, and even less regarding operationalized theoretical frameworks explaining these therapeutics' role as, for example, nature's role in outdoor therapies (Harper et al. 2021). However, outdoor therapies are based on these three therapeutics as they are defined as intentional/motivational therapeutic processes that feature active engagement, are place/nature-based, and recognize the nature–human kinship (and often the social relationships found in PW) (Harper and

Doherty 2020). Saunders et al. (2013, p. 139) write that people, who feel that they have had personally significant experiences from LDW, 'have engaged deeply with the *task* of walking, with other *people* or with the setting of the walk, and often with all three'. Whereas the most valued attributes of thru-hiking have been found to be: hiking, the beauty of/immersion in nature, and interactions between the hikers and survival (Hill et al. 2009). Feliu-Soler et al. (2018) suggest that the Camino has many potential therapeutic factors, also identifiable within the above-stated therapeutics: consisting of daily *physical exercise* and reconnection with the body's natural rhythm and meditation (attending to the present moment, awareness, silence, and repetitive action), *forest-bathing*, and increased frequency and quality of *social interaction*, being part of a group with deep historical, cultural, spiritual, and social connotations, in addition to self-perspective changes, breaking with routines, and a simpler living. This also implies that healing from PW is found in the relation between present bodily performance, nature immersion, and social interactions.

Pilgrimage Walking as a Relational and Therapeutic Mobility

There is now an extensive literature on therapeutic landscapes, that is, restorative places that hold 'the promise and possibility of more restful psychosocial states' (Conradson 2005, p. 35) and can contribute to wellbeing and health (Gatrell 2013). Little attention, however, has been paid to the therapeutic qualities of mobility from place to place within such settings, even less along WPs. The recent emergence of the significant mobilities 'turn' in social sciences has revealed relatively little about the consequences of walking for health and wellbeing, that can be theorized in terms of so-called therapeutic mobilities or therapeutic landscapes (Gatrell 2013). Therapeutic landscapes were coined by the American health geographer Gesler in 1992 when exploring why certain environments seem to contribute to a spiritually healing sense of place (Bell et al. 2017). Therapeutic mobilities, on the other hand, focus on the beneficial, salutary and restorative qualities, and effects of movement, whereby these qualities and effects are relational achievements/outcomes (Gatrell 2013).

Conradson (2005) argues that therapeutic landscape experiences should be approached as a relational outcome, having emerged through the complex set of connections and transactions between people and their broader socio-environmental context. Gatrell (2013) argues movement itself can be conducive to wellbeing and explores walking's therapeutic mobility along the continuum of three elements, similar to the ones recognized as the PW therapeutics: activity, sociality, and context, that can be paraphrased with walking, people/relatedness, and nature in PW. The Canadian outdoor therapist Harper et al. (2021), however, emphasizes the lack of causal and operational theories in outdoor therapies and suggests arriving at an overall ontology of interconnectedness as a meta-theory for outdoor healthcare—or

PW. There are not many papers addressing or explaining PW, per se, from a perspective of interconnectedness using the relational and mobility turn approach. However, a few scholars such as Maddrell (2011, 2013), Scriven (2014, 2021), and Badone (2014) have engaged in the initial explorations of shorter and longer Celtic WPs in the Isle of Man, Ireland and Wales, and Brittany, respectively. Still, their empirical findings, experiences and thoughts on the matter are relevant and transferrable to longer WPs such as the St. Olav Way and the Camino to understand people's PW motives, processes, and, to some extent, effects.

Relational pilgrimage research, drawing on the relational ontology approach (Sidorkin 2002), explores people's intimate engagements with pilgrimage sites and landscape/nature. Nature is not a mere material object but is actively intertwined and involved in dialogue with us (Eade 2018; Maddrell et al. 2015). Nature is our natural habitat, we evolved in an outdoor environment (O'Mara 2021), and thus, we naturally connect with and are affected by nature through our senses. The same way we are, for example, discouraged by noises that alarm us of dangers, we are attracted to the sounds, scents, and the changing seasons of nature. We are all the time in relation to our surroundings if we desire it or not, either by nature, urban life, or people. Not only is the physical ground, but also the physical WP destination in relation to the pilgrim, to reach a goal, an end, to finally meet the end-point one has walked towards through kind and rough nature. Sjøtveit (2021) writes we can experience nature 'speaking' to us while PW. Harvey (2014) rethinking relations and debating a new animism would say that nature speaks back at us as believed in indigenous cultures. It is, indeed, encountered that contact with the reflective quality of nature elicits inner dialogues and impressions that evoke feelings and thoughts about the past, present, and future (Jørgensen 2008). Although the act of walking can be interpreted as a process of representation through which people construct sacred places in nature, Maddrell (2011) explains that the landscape people walk through possesses its own innate more-than-representational aura and features. Similarly, people's walking experiences are not determined by an objective reality: despite having walked the same WP, pilgrims notice different things that appeal to them during the trajectory (Sørlle 2018). The walkers encounter the landscape relationally: visually, materially, kinetically, sensorially, and imaginatively, both experiencing and becoming part of it. This reminds us of the false dichotomy of the separation between the two (Harper et al. 2021).

The mobility turn, on the other hand, inspires us to understand our dynamic world through how we move, who we move/affect, and the outcomes of our movements (Sheller 2017; Urry 2002) also in embodied practices across time and space, such as during pilgrimage (Coleman and Eade 2004; Gale et al. 2015; Tingle 2018). Walking is the quintessence of human mobility. Walking mobility is regarded as an embodied act and practice that merges together mental, physical, and communal benefits, and a way of experiencing a slower pace and engaging with natural and social surroundings (Gatrell 2013; Hall et al. 2017; Macpherson 2016). To Ingold (2010), walking is a process in which surroundings/surfaces—visible and invisible, touchable and untouchable (Merleau-Ponty 1968)—are created as the walking body continually breathes, steps, and interacts with the surface materially and ephemerally.

For instance, the breathing of air, touching of a plant, placing of a footstep all continually alter the surface of the earth. According to the French philosophers Barthes (1986) and de Certeau (1984), walking is an articulation of space, like our words and utterances are an articulation of our language. PW can thus be considered a form of individual and social expression and appropriation of space, a way to modify its meanings and material structures (Nilsson and Tesfahuney 2019).

While moving, we also participate in the creation of 'soundscapes', contributing to the ongoing constellation of sounds (Rodaway 1994). In fact, hearing others walk also activates brain networks supporting social cognition and interpersonal synchronization of walking/pace movements in relation to the environment (O'Mara 2021). Whereas seeing/interpreting/experiencing the walking ground bodily affords us how to place our feet (Gibson 1979); we attune to our surfaces/surroundings. Thus, movement is more than mere physical locomotion: 'Movement creates relationships—it is the mechanism or quality through which phenomena of all kinds continually align or position themselves in relation to others' (Skousen 2018, p. 4). PW is hence an embodied spatial practice of engaging with and experiencing the world, that forges both pilgrim and path, where knowledge is emplaced and elicited in the interplays of self, others, and the world (Scriven 2019). At the same time Solnit (2001) reflects on how humans have built interiors up against the world that many of us live in a series of interiors (home, office, and school) that disconnects us from each other. Some are so disconnected from nature that they have to get to nature through other faster and industrial means to enjoy engaging in it with the slower mobility of our feet. Whereas on foot, everything stays connected and locates us in the world, in communities, in relation to each other (Gros 2015).

Community/interconnectedness constitutes us as human beings. Social fellowship is crucial for our survival and societal structure, wellbeing, and functioning. Social inclusion and involvement create meaning, confirm, and define us as human beings (Schnell 2020). We exist in relation to others, and everything stands in relation to each other. Alderman (2002) introduced the term 'pilgrimage landscape' to highlight the relationship between people and place and sees it a therapeutic landscape pertinent to PW. During social PW, intrapersonal processes reciprocally support social relationships and interpersonal connectedness (O'Mara 2021). Urry (2002), the father of the mobility turn, talks of 'socio-spatial practices' and globalized or intermittent 'corporal co-presence' involved in mobility. This moving bodily co-existence creates social spaces of 'confluent co-presence' (Wheeler 1999), such as people coming in and out of WPs from all over the world, creating a symbiotic co-presence.

Drawing on the mobility turn (Urry 2002), there is a mobility (and exchange) of motivations, thoughts, affirmations, and confirmations happening in the relational interaction of people on WPs like the St. Olav Way and the Camino. By narrating their life and mobilizing their mental and physical resources, the walkers improve their psychological functioning, spiritual wellbeing, self-efficacy, and coping, which again affects their life choices, functioning, motivation, and sense of meaning (Bandura 1995). Social walking in nature has, indeed, been found to be integral to many therapeutic landscape experiences. Doughty (2013) states that shared movement can produce supportive social spaces that are experienced as restorative, supported by

group walking within communal therapeutic mobility initiatives (Pollard et al. 2020). Social walking has, further, a significant impact on social interaction and the shared embodied landscape, transforming the 'walkscape' into a mobile therapeutic land-scape, and can be ascribed to the PW dynamic between walking, nature, and social interaction. As Bell et al. (2017, p. 13) write in their scoping review over how, where, and to what benefit therapeutic landscapes have been applied: 'pilgrimage constitutes a therapeutic mobility that connects the pilgrim through social interactions, phys-ical activity, and direct engagement' spiritually in silence and space. They stress at the same time that one person's good can be another's ill with regard to the same therapeutic landscape.

Moving in and sensing the world belongs together in a dynamic relation: without our bodies, we cannot sense the world or self-reflect (Martinsen 2004). We experience the world through our bodies and senses, the bodily experience coming before reflec-tion (Merleau-Ponty 1994), dismantling Descartes' 'cogito ergo sum'. Reflecting on it: walking, nature, and community mirrors our existence, being moving bodies in and both connected to and affected by a natural and social world and vice-versa. Since the PW therapeutics were found in these three aspects, underlines the importance of our relatedness to ourselves, our surroundings and social ties. As Slavin (2003) writes, the practice of PW allows us to understand and explore the nexus between our body, self and world. Being part of and in relation to a greater whole characterizes and confirms us as human beings. Thus, it should perhaps not sound as Decartes' 'cogito, ergo sum', but 'ambulo, ergo sum (*in relatione ad* me, naturam et mundum)': 'I walk, therefore I am (*in relation to* myself, nature and the world)'?—in other words: 'I move/exist-in-relation-to-the-world' as opposed to just 'being-in-the-world' as Heidegger formulated it. Walking from place to place through the therapeutic land-scape of a WP, relating to nature and social others, makes PW a highly relational and therapeutic mobility and the manifestation of the therapeutic landscapes/mobilities concept itself, and an act of seeking and attaining meaning, relatedness and healing through these intermeshed therapeutic dimensions. This can be summarized in the following model suggested by the author (Fig. 7.1), illustrating the interconnected-ness and dynamics at work in PW (from motives to outcomes through processes) as a potential framework for understanding the therapeutics behind PW, that could also lay the ground for a PW theory and PW therapy (PWT).

The pilgrimage walking change process model should be read from the bottom and up (like following the yellow arrows/sign marks of the Camino), the motivations often being the pilgrims' drive for action/PW, followed by their experiences/processes and outcomes/effects. The blue pyramid in the background reflects Maslow's (1943) pyramid of needs, to which the PW model can be compared, beginning with the most basic needs at the bottom until the highest needs of self-actualization and meaning are realized at the top, with which pilgrims often exit their WP.

Given the similarity of motives, processes, effects, and therapeutics associated with the St. Olav Way and the Camino, it should be investigated further if we can speak of PW universals. This could lay the grounds for a future PW therapy in terms of 'PW on green prescription' (Jørgensen 2017). The therapeutic features of PW—walking, nature, and community—are considered as health-promoting by
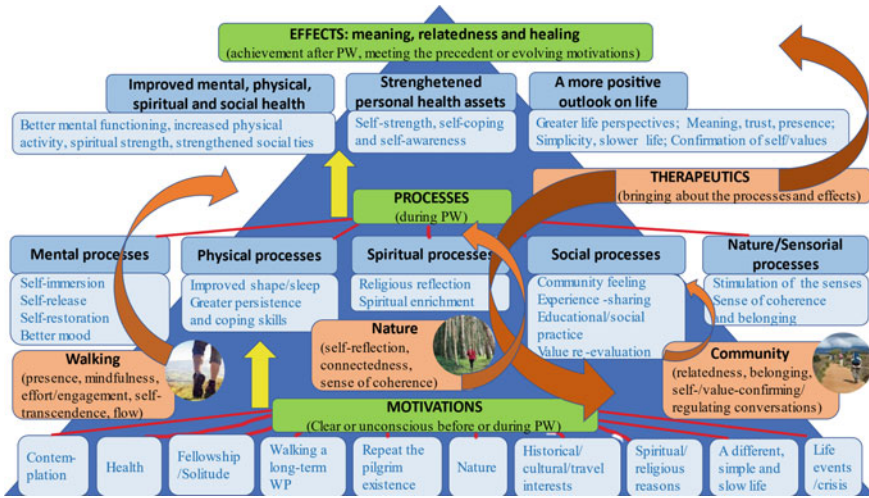
Fig. 7.1 Pilgrimage walking change process model (© Jørgensen 2022)

health authorities and are often recommended or sought-after for a complete and healthy life (Public Health Report 2018–19). PW could serve a larger public or set of patients as a therapeutic alternative or even intervention, like National Health Services Shetland having recently authorized its doctors to issue 'nature prescriptions' such as rambling to patients to help treat mental illness, diabetes, heart disease, stress, and other chronic and debilitating conditions (Carrell 2018) as well as the growing disconnection with nature and unhappiness throughout society (Nutt 2018). Prieto (2020, p. 29), assessing the Camino's viability as an adventure therapy, concludes that the 'transformative power of the Camino (…) strongly indicates that it could be highly beneficial as a prescriptive therapeutic process'. This is left to explore through a common effort of international studies of other world WPs.

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Chapter 8
Sacred Mobilities, Movement, and Embodiment in the Twentieth- and Twenty-First-Century English Christian Funeral Procession

Cynthia Nkiruka Anyadi

Abstract While pilgrimage as a spatial phenomenon has long been at the centre of interdisciplinary debate, processions have received far less attention. This type of sacred mobility nonetheless plays an important part in religious experience. With pilgrimage, religious processions share a liminal status; they are temporary phenomena grounded in and at the same time transforming local topographies. How does this transformation take place in both the self and the landscape? How do the mobilities of the procession differ from those of pilgrimage? The chapter examines the Christian funeral procession as an articulation of mobile sacred space through notions of affect, flow, *communitas*, and liminality. Where graveyards, crematoriums, and other places commonly associated with death and mourning remain (physically) static within the landscape, the funeral procession, like pilgrimage, is unique in its mobility. This mobility is explored as both the moving material procession and as the embodiment of mourning, which becomes a continuous bodily experience that extends beyond the temporal and physical boundaries of the procession.

Keywords Deathscapes · Funerals · Funeral processions · Mobility · Sacred space · Urban space

Introduction

In many Western cultures we respond to death with stasis. We memorialise the dead in stone and marble, say our final goodbyes in cordoned off graveyards, and stand still in our silences in the face of tragedy or loss. But mourning is a fundamentally mobile process, and grief does not abide by the material boundaries of brick walls or closed doors. While the geographies of the funeral itself have been the subject of wide discussion across various contexts and periods, the funeral procession as a part

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of the grieving process is often lost. As rituals within the home, church, and burial place are analysed, we rarely spare a thought for the space and time in between. In order to do so we must begin by situating the funeral procession within a broader field of the sacred mobilities. It is by learning from the insights within this field that we can begin properly attending to the funeral procession.

The conversation around sacred mobilities frequently turns in the first instance to pilgrimage. Given the vast cultural, spiritual, and even economic, influence pilgrimage has had for centuries throughout the world this is perhaps unsurprising. But pilgrimage is only one route through which we can explore how sacred space becomes mobile. This chapter turns its attention to the funeral procession as an alternative route. Although rarely looking at the funeral procession specifically, other forms of processional sacred movement have been explored within the subfield. This existing work has analysed the different manifestations of the procession, from those which move towards a specific shrine site, to those which are focused more on simply displaying a sacred object (Gunkel 2003; Rodriguez 2002; Salinas 2012). Adopting the frameworks and discussions which have driven existing sacred mobility studies, the chapter seeks to demonstrate not only the possibilities for existing knowledge to be applied to the funeral procession, but also to build upon the expanding geographies of pilgrimage.

The choice to compare pilgrimage and the funeral procession specifically does not stem solely from the fact that both are mobile sacred spaces. Progress in cultural geography over the last 30 years has seen the expansion of notions of both sacrality and mobility. This contemporary idea of sacred landscape finds that spaces are sacralised through embodiment, affect, emotion, and personal transformation, as much as they are through formal designation and demarcation. The sacred and profane are no longer held from one another as separate planes, because they are seen to exist simultaneously as a multitude of individual perceptions upon a single surface. The result is an understanding that any number of moving or embodied sites can be considered sacred, so long as a person experiences them as such. Instead, pilgrimage and the funeral procession are compared because the two are able to reveal and reflect meaning in one another. Both demonstrate parallels in the movements, embodied experiences, and affective encounters which produce them. As Plate (2009) wrote, "pilgrimages operate in a tension between the movement of unsure feet and the promise of arrival, at a place where certainty abounds" (pp. 264–265). Scriven (2014) adds that "[i]t is, in an idealised form, a journey to a distant exceptional location, which entails meaningful interactions, authentic experiences and 'extraordinary' encounters" (p. 251). If these are some of the key diagnostic traits through which we have come to understand the pilgrimage, then its connection to the funeral procession becomes clear. Both are, fundamentally, journeys of transformation of both the landscape, self and the body.

This chapter explores the funeral procession through these contrasts, as well as through its contradictions. It focuses specifically on twentieth- and twenty-first-century Christian funerals in England, with particular reference to urban funeral processions. The chapter begins with two key discussions, first of affect and then mobility, considering how both produce and are produced by the funeral procession.

It goes on to consider movement and embodiment in more depth, borrowing ideas of flow, liminality, communitas, and ritual from pilgrimage studies, in order to unpack the complex processes and experiences within the funeral procession. The chapter concludes with a call to think about what more we can learn about sacred mobilities through the funeral procession, and how further explorations of other similar processes can contribute to, contradict, or qualify existing discussions within the field.

Funeral Processions

In its simplest form the funeral procession is the movement of a dead body to its final resting place. More often than not it is moving not only the dead, but also those who have come to mourn them. Though thought of in conjunction with the funeral service, it is experienced as an entirely different space, both materially and architecturally, as well as emotionally. As this chapter goes on to explore, the funeral procession as both part of and more than the funeral event lies at an interesting juncture of sacred space. It is at once tied closely to religious ritual and the sacredness of death, while necessarily moving through every day, profane space.

It is, admittedly, problematic to define the funeral procession so literally as a movement of a body between two places, not least because there remains a question of when exactly the funeral procession begins and ends. It is a movement with numerous stops and starts; from coroner to church, maybe passing by key landmarks in that person's life, then on to a graveyard or crematorium. In addition, with cremation as an increasingly popular choice in contemporary Britain, the end of the procession becomes even harder to define. In some families, for example, the argument around where ashes should be scattered goes on for years. Planning regulations and legal restrictions around the dispersal of human remains further complicates this process (Maddrell et al. 2021). Does the funeral procession continue indefinitely, then, until there is consensus that a final resting place has been reached? These are important questions to consider, because they begin extricating the funeral procession from the funeral as a singular event, allowing us to begin exploring the full breadth of its mobility.

The common imagining of an English Christian funeral procession is a fairly sombre scene: a black hearse, followed by black vehicles, carefully manicured flowers—perhaps spelling out 'Nan' or 'Dad'—and silence or hushed voices. Yet funeral processions differ so vastly, not only across cultures and times, but also from individual to individual. In fact, it would be a valuable exercise in itself to explore the various materials, rituals, and traditions which produce funeral processions around the world. In lieu of being able to do so here, we can consider instead, if only briefly, the diversity of Christian funeral processions in England alone.

The aforementioned scene of hearse and cortege has gone through many iterations over time, the most obvious being the transition from horse-drawn carriages to motor vehicles over the last century. Now, a sedate limousine hearse might be replaced by

motorbike, bicycle hearse, or even barge, for example, in a nod to the deceased's life and interests. This transition was not necessarily welcomed by all; to quote from a 1949 obituary, the deceased opted for a horse-drawn carriage because "there was nothing dignified about the motor-car" (Picture Post 1949). Despite inevitable changes over the last century, the typical 'layman's' Christian funeral in England has also maintained many traditions. The mourning garb is still often in stark contrast to profusions of flowers, and there is still the ever-present demand on mourners to act and interact in a particular way—to be mindful of their part in a culturally sacred ritual. In some instances, the cortege may still be led by the funeral director for part of the procession. Many of these choices are influenced by the same factors that they were a hundred years ago: certainly, wealth and community standing, but also the age and cause of death. The funeral procession of a 95-year-old grandparent still looks (and feels) different to that of a young person who has died unexpectedly.

This type of funeral would of course differ significantly from a state or military funeral. The state funeral procession is both a nation building exercise and a performance of patriotism (Jenks 2000), and therefore its landscape is shaped in relation to this. The typical hushed soundscape is often transformed by the presence of military bands, as well as larger surrounding crowds. The elaborate material architecture of costumes and objects aims to reflect empire and nationhood as much as it does the deceased themselves.

The changing landscape of funeral processions comes alongside a broader change in English funeral practices. We can think again about cremation, for example. As of 2020 around 80% of deaths in the UK had a cremation, as opposed to a traditional coffin burial (The Cremation Society 2022). As was previously mentioned this change in funeral practice fundamentally disrupts ideas around the funeral procession and the arrival to a final resting place. It has been a development led not only by logistical factors such as money, space, and transport, but also by a change in perspective, which saw cremation slowly becoming a religiously permissible way to treat a dead body. Consumerism, the acceptance of more personalised mourning practices, the anonymity of urban living (and death): all of these have also shaped the funeral and all of its associated practices. Parsons' *The Evolution of the British Funeral Industry in the 20th Century* (2018) analyses these changes in great depth, exploring how material changes have produced a contemporary funeral which is in many ways experienced very differently to how it would have been a century ago.

Analysing the funeral procession with a singular focus on aesthetics and form is interesting, but it can miss some of the meaning of the funeral procession beyond just as a performance. The processional event is an assemblage, not only of these culturally identifiable objects or movements, but also of emotions. Whether the funeral is an elaborate state affair or a small cortege, what might catalyse a deep emotional response in one passer-by is simply an inconvenience during the commute for someone else. The funeral procession, then, like the pilgrimage, is made up as much by the feelings of those involved as it is by the materials which are involved, and both are fundamentally connected.

Affect and the Sacred

Central to this discussion is the concept of 'affect'. Emerging out of a shift in the way cultural geographers thought about landscape and representation, affect refers to our pre-cognitive, unconscious understandings of space and place (Lorimer 2005). Put simply, it is the feelings which emerge from the encounter between our body and the world around it. This emphasis on understanding before cognition is essential because it acknowledges just how important our bodies are in mediating our interpretations of landscape meaning. The connection between affect, or feeling, and the body means that affect is constant, changeable, and, above all else, entirely personal. Affect has been so important in cultural geography because it challenges the framing of landscape as a plane containing fixed meanings, awaiting a universal reading (Anderson and Harrison 2010; McCormack 2003). It highlights not only the coexistence of many responses, but also stresses their temporality. Affect reveals the potential for landscape meaning to shift entirely through time in response to both the changing body, as well as the changing cultural context in which the body resides (Dewsbury et al. 2002; Wylie 2005).

Adopting the notion of affect in a discussion of sacrality is particularly valuable because it enables us to know sacred space in novel ways. Eliade's seminal work, *The Sacred and the Profane* (1959), for example, describes sacred space as a preordained 'sacred realm', separate from the space and time of the mundane every day. It was only through this realm, Eliade posed, that the individual might experience sacrality. Others, like Durkheim (1995), instead understood sacrality as the product of collective social processes and sacred space as entirely socially constructed, rather than a divine consecration. Neither of these perspectives are wrong or mutually exclusive, but they construct hard boundaries between sacred and profane space. In doing so they limit the many other possible ways to conceive of sacrality.

An alternative approach, one which encompasses affect, understands the sacred instead as a product of the body. Holloway (2003), for example, writes that "the sanctity of space is corporeally enacted and physically sensed as sacred" (p. 1965). If our bodies have the power to consecrate or desecrate space, to feel what is sacred and what is profane, then the two cannot be held so separately as opposing worlds. They are instead simply meanings working upon the same plane, where both are constantly reproduced, renegotiated, and reinscribed by us on an individual basis. Consider, for example, a waiting passenger at a bus stop who, looking up towards the stars in a dark Winter sky, experiences transcendence in the face of such vastness (Klingorová and Gökariksel 2019). Or imagine instead an impassioned preacher looking out into a congregation so unmoved and unaffected that half have drifted into sleep (Jütte 2020). It is not to say that spaces are not curated to affect a particular response, of course they are. A church generally works much harder to produce feelings of awe and sacrality than a bus stop (Lang 2014). But it is solely through our own transcendent bodily response that a space (or place, object, ritual etc.) is experienced as sacred.

Explorations of pilgrimage as a spiritual experience have often been framed within these notions of affect and sacrality (Maddrell 2013; Martin and Kryst 1998). The individual and collective body are centred in these contemporary discussions, in order to understand how sacred space emerges and becomes mobile through affect. There is so much still to explore around how our bodies change through ritual movement, as well as how this change produces sacred space, and the funeral procession can contribute some valuable insights.

Sacred Mobilities and the Funeral Procession

Death is closely associated with the sacred for a number of reasons. Spaces of death are often prescribed as inherently sacred simply because they represent a closeness to another, non-earthly plane. The heavily ritualised process and spectacle around dealing with both death and grief are also the means through which we are then able to socially construct sacrality in the landscape. Furthermore, 'meeting' death is accompanied by a powerful bodily experience—the upending of reality, the challenge to our ontological security, the reproduction of identity. It is these same experiences which create a sense of transcendence and liminality, inducing the feeling of sacrality (Mellor and Shilling 1993). Thus, simply in its proximity to death the funeral procession is, at the very least, socially and religiously ascribed sacred meaning.

The connections between mobility and death often contradict our idea of the static, sanitised and depersonalised way in which Western European cultures treat death. Mobility and death are, in fact, intimately connected in many ways. Proof of this begins even in the way we speak about death, adopting the language of mobility to represent the transition into the afterlife. We do this not only when talking about dying, for example, we 'pass away' or 'move on', we 'journey through life towards death' (Laviolette 2003; Maddrell 2011, 2016) but also when talking about mourning. As Ingold and Vergunst (2008) wrote: "even as we mourn those whom we have lost, they live on in the memories of those who follow in their footsteps" (p. 18). Through mobility studies we come to understand the myriad ways in which bodies, ideas, components (both material and immaterial), and affect are mobile and mobilised over, through, and by space. In the case of pilgrimage studies, discussions thus far about mobility have provided a way for understanding how sacred space can be extended across the landscape (Coleman and Eade 2004; Turner and Turner 1979). Furthermore, in connecting such discussions to broader cultural geographies of, for example, affect, religion, performativity, etc., we come to understand how the mobilisation of sacred events facilitates a performance of communal spiritual identity across a more expansive space. Through mobility we begin to think about how sacred space is made through movement across space. The mobilities discussion also broadens our vision of what moving sacred space is, encouraging attention towards how embodiment is an integral form of sacred movement.

Discussing pilgrimage, Coleman and Eade (2004) break down the importance of movement to the experience and cultural performance of sacrality. From this

they identify some of the functions of sacred movements, including as an embodied action and as a metaphorical evocation for one's spiritual journey. Both movement and embodiment are central and thus provide two different means through which to understand the mobility of not only the pilgrimage, but also the funeral procession. Similarly, through movement the logistical and material mobilities of the funeral procession, such as mode, contribute significantly to the procession's affects. Exploring embodiment, on the other hand, exposes how these affects impress upon the body and extend sacred space (Napolitano 2009; Saint-Blancat and Cancellieri 2014).

Sacred mobilities are by no means only confined to pilgrimage and existing work around processions already begins the work of differentiating the two (Rodriguez 2002). Pilgrimage is often defined by a difficult journey towards a distant otherworldly place, where the unknown awaits. Though it is not uncommon for contemporary pilgrimages to involve cars, buses, and planes, the long association between pilgrimage and walking long distances has tied it closely to beliefs around suffering and holy reward. By comparison, processions are shorter and intended as a display, usually of a particular group identity, whether religious, ethnic, or otherwise (see, for example, Saint-Blancat and Cancellieri 2014 on procession as a demonstration of Filipino identity in Padua, Italy), but also sometimes of particular sacred objects (Salinas 2012). Although it is valuable to recognise the differences between pilgrimages and processions, it would be difficult to separate them entirely. Even those differences discussed above are contradicted by some. Stoddard (1997), for example, refutes the idea that a pilgrimage is defined as such by any particular metric of time or distance. The idea of the procession as cyclical, in comparison with a linear pilgrimage, is also flawed. The funeral procession is a useful example of this since neither all of the mourners nor, of course, the deceased will necessarily return to the procession's start. This is increasingly true as it becomes less common for families to display the deceased's body at home for a time before the funeral. The procession and the pilgrimage need not be defined in opposition to one another, since there are so many overlapping practices which differ according to each specific event. Most importantly, both are processes during which sacred and profane space interact and negotiate with one another. It is for this reason that pilgrimage studies as a whole is still so valuable in offering relevant contributions when it comes to understanding elements of the procession.

Sacred Space and the Mourning Body: *Communitas* and Liminality

Embodiment and sacred space go hand in hand, and one of the key contributions of pilgrimage studies is to the notion that the moving body is a medium for the production of sacred space (Holloway 2003). Through taking part in the sacred ritual, whether it is pilgrimage or procession, the body itself is transformed into sacred space, and as it moves it carries this sacrality with it (Maddrell 2011). The

funeral procession, like pilgrimage, creates the conditions for this transformation in particular through facilitating an experience of communitas and liminality.

Maddrell (2011, p. 26) writes that "transformation is at the heart of Christian theology". Just as transformation has been used to frame the experience, mobility, and scale of the pilgrimage, it can also help in a similar analysis of the funeral procession. Communitas as a transformative process is one such example. Introduced through Victor and Turner's work around pilgrimage (Turner 1969; Turner and Turner 1978), it refers to the idea that during the pilgrimage social boundaries and hierarchies are discarded, and a new community is formed in which all pilgrims are socially equal in their journey. Turner describes the process of producing communitas as both the ceasing of the social bonds which divide us, e.g. those of class, caste, race, etc., and the emergence of a new society comprising of "equal individuals who submit together to the general authority of the ritual elders"—it is the creation and experience of a human bond (Turner 1969, p. 96). This concept has been criticised, principally because when people gather together they are always going to exist and operate within a broader social hierarchy (Coleman 2002; Eade and Sallnow 2000). In the funeral procession, these markers emerge through spatial positioning, spatial practice, and costume, among other things, as signifiers of the individual's status or connection to the deceased. However, even if spaces like the funeral procession or pilgrimage do not entirely eschew socially and culturally implicit or designed societal roles, the notion of communitas is still a valuable framework for understanding the experience of transformation within the funeral procession. It is particularly useful when thinking about communitas as a commonness of feeling within the 'bubble' of sacred processional space.

Turner (1969) also introduced the idea of liminality as an integral part of producing sacred space within the pilgrimage. The value of analysing liminality as a lens through which to understand pilgrimage has been recognised even among those critical of the Turners' other assertions (Slavin 2003). By its very nature liminality is hard to define; as Turner writes, liminal spaces "elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space" (1969, p. 95). The notion of liminality emphasises that some spaces are experienced as peripheral, even if materially or physically they are not, because those within it have the feeling of being disconnected or free from normal society. They are gateways and threshold spaces, existing uncertainly in between places.

The funeral procession is a liminal space because it is experienced as a place within and yet simultaneously beyond the everyday cultural landscape. This sense of producing or occupying a peripheral space emerges within the funeral procession as a consequence of its negotiation of death. In de-privatising death and bringing it into public space, the procession is productive of an uncommon middle ground that is at once a sacralised death space while still recognisable as a profane urban space. Communitas is created in such a peripheral space because of the novel affects it produces, as all of those within the funeral procession are synchronously feeling through a situation, a liminal space, unlike anything they would usually encounter.

Although Turner (1969), and many others, have discussed communitas and liminality as a production of pilgrimage, their reference to the emergence of these specifically through ritual and sacrality opens the possibility for observing them both within the funeral procession as well. The focus for both of these concepts is always on the body. Both hinge on how the person within the ritual, whether pilgrim or mourner, feels. Regardless of whether one is walking in silence along the *Camino del Santiago*, or stuck in a hearse in rush hour traffic, the feeling of transcendence which creates sacred space emerges from within and therefore is as present within the funeral procession as it is anywhere else.

Sacred mobilities are not only the product of bodies, and they are also productive of bodies. The embodied change resulting from the funeral procession is both internal, in one's own transformative bodily experience and, external, in one's perception and status within a broader social community. Of course, in pilgrimage studies the focus has generally been on how the pilgrim's body becomes an inscribed surface through this experience (Maddrell and della Dora 2013, p. 1119; Scriven 2014), but the same can be said of the mourner's body. Grief maps itself within the body of mourners. There are feelings of sickness, numbness, and tangible physical pain, and some may experience changing appetite and sleep patterns (Pearce and Komaromy 2020). The grief becomes a physical, bodily manifestation in the aftermath of loss. Essentially it is also difficult to articulate; it is a sensory, corporal experience that also fails to conform to any linear temporal limit. This mapping within the body, though intertwined with the procession, is also far more expansive than it. As Gharmaz and Milligan (2006) write "[w]hen we say that grief lasts, we mean that it re-emerges and floods the person—again and again for moments, hours, and days" (p. 519). The mourning body as a part of the funeral procession, then, is not created and discarded from departure to arrival; it begins to form from the moment of loss and continues indefinitely for many (Rugg and Jones 2019, p. 57). This again challenges how we understand mobility within the funeral event, as well as what we understand as the beginning or end of the procession.

The dead body is also produced in unique ways during the funeral procession, for example, as cultural artefact. In studies of death, it is important to understand that the body is not only a material reality, i.e. a form of skin, flesh, and bones, but it is also much more than this (Hockey 1996). The dead body is an ongoing project of meanings and relations and a product of different perspectives and affects. All of the above are also unfixed and changing over space and time, and thus the body as an artefact or socially inscribed surface changes alongside them. While the processional journey may be the last movement of this material, physical form, even after death the body remains a meeting point of these numerous factors and mobilities.

On this idea of the ritual and mobility, Holloway (2003, p. 1964) writes that "physical action is central to ritual, often the body is left to repeat or mimic a historical genealogy of gestures, stances, movements". In this way the pall bearer is another example of where mobility, sacrality, and ritual find juncture within mourners, and the ritual, sacred body is produced. Moving the coffin in tandem, in the same practiced motions that have been performed in long tradition, they carry along with them the

sacred processional space. The next section delves with more detail into how sacrality is produced within the funeral procession through the movements of mourners.

Moving the Funeral Procession

This chapter has already mentioned some of the problems with thinking of the funeral procession as simply the movement of body and mourners between places. Far from it, the procession is a ritual with deep cultural, personal, and spiritual significance. Nevertheless, it is essential to recognise how literal, physical movements shape the procession through their influence over affect or on the bodily experience of the procession. Three particular facets of movement are explored here: movement as metaphor, movement as a type of flow or rhythm, and movement as a means of interruption.

Movement as Metaphor

Like many other religions, within Christianity there is a belief that death is followed by the movement of the human immortal soul onto a different plane. The deceased's spirit begins a vertical journey where it will, eventually, either ascend into Heaven or descend into Hell. The outcome of this journey, i.e. finding one's place in Heaven, has historically been an essential part of religious teaching. The importance of finding this final physical resting place at the end of the procession, as a metaphor for the soul also finding its final resting place, may shed light on why so many people are reticent to cremate their loved ones. Beyond just contravening a belief in the resurrection of the body, the lack of finality may feel directly at odds with the funeral as a ritual through which to close the deceased's chapter on earth.

During this same period after death, the funeral procession moves across the earthly landscape, simultaneously moving the physical body perpendicular to the movement of the spirit. The purposes of these concurrent movements are connected; both are ultimately aimed at ensuring the appropriate place for eternal rest. The vertical journey of the deceased's immortal soul towards an otherworldly plane is mirrored in the horizontal journey of their mortal body towards a final resting place. This idea of different axes of movements has also been relevant in pilgrimage studies. Schnell and Pali (2013), for example, discuss how, through pilgrimage, pilgrims orient themselves both vertically and horizontally, connecting with a higher power while simultaneously realising their connections to other worldly affairs. The vertical, or supernatural, and horizontal, or naturalistic, though fundamentally different, unite in one space within the mobile, ritual body.

Flow

Contemporary pilgrimage studies often emphasise the role of walking in producing sacred space. But in the UK, in English Christian cultural practices, the majority of funeral processions are now conducted using a vehicle, rather than on foot as they were in the past. Nevertheless, analysing walking as a catalyst of a transcendent or sacred experience still holds relevance for the contemporary procession, particularly in its contribution to an idea of 'flow'. Flow is the rhythms, patterns, and pace of movement. It shines light on the physical experience of walking, specifically how such a method of encounter with the landscape is capable of engendering reflection or meditation (Maddrell 2011; Scriven 2014; Slavin 2003). But, where walking is no longer part of a mobile ritual, how might flow still emerge in an alternative movement of the body, for example, within a hearse?

As a mode of mobilising sacred space, the car is unique in its ability to produce an affective 'bubble' for mourners within the broader processional landscape. Bijster-veld (2010) notes that the "acoustic cocooning" of a car affects a sense of isolation and separation, rendering the outside world "into some sort of movie, not quite completely real" (p. 191). In the context of the procession, this divorced sense of reality is compounded by a sense of 'un-realness' or a shattering of perspective that often accompanies the mourning process. This movement seems, then, entirely at odds with the very reason why the flow of walking is deemed productive of sacrality. Where the car is perceived as separating the mourners' body from the surrounding landscape, walking does the opposite for the pilgrim: intimately connecting the individual to the world around them.

Yet the hearse is not necessarily a separation between the body and its surroundings. In fact, the creation of such a 'bubble' within the car may further contribute to the feeling of sacrality. Sheller's Automotive Emotions (2004) proposes that cars act as mediators of affect in the same way our own bodies do. The feeling of synchronously moving through and 'becoming one' with the world is possible even in a different mode. It is this feeling which pilgrimage studies tie to walking and hold central to the production of sacred mobile space. For Sheller, "we not only feel the car, but we feel through the car" (ibid., p. 228). This is certainly a different embodied experience to that of the earlier walking funeral processions, but that does not preclude the ability to have a sacred experience. Liminality is experienced within the hearse space precisely because it might further remove a person from the space around them. The sense of being outside of reality, in a place that is entirely new, is a feeling that is tied closely to the production of sacred space in the pilgrimage.

Interrupting Boundaries

Flow is a useful concept when thinking about sacred mobilities, but it can sometimes be misleading because it gives the impression of a fluid motion that must be continuous and undisturbed. In reality, both the pilgrimage and the funeral procession are marked by disruption and interruption. Processions in particular encourage attention towards interruption because they move through urban spaces more often than pilgrimages tend to. In fact, one of the key purposes of processions is the performance and demonstration of identity or faith (Kong 2005). The funeral procession, moving through urban space, is constantly disturbing and being disturbed. As the hearse moves quickly through the landscape it picks up and redeposits the same stones and gravel as every other vehicle on the road, and it is just as easily interrupted by someone rushing across the road or by a traffic light turning red.

However, the funeral procession has the power to disrupt its surroundings in ways which are different from other kinds of processions, specifically due to its connection to death. Within many Western cultures death is perceived as fundamentally disruptive both to our personal lives (Mellor and Shilling 1993) and our social, collective lives (Laviolette 2003; Seale 1998). The confinement of death and its processes within particular places, e.g. memorials, graveyards, and churches, has emerged, then, as an attempt for the living to fix their grief and mourning. The funeral procession undoes this by producing spaces for affective encounters with death, in a way that is largely prevented when it is otherwise sequestered or sanitised.

The feeling of the moving cortege as an interruption of space is further heightened by its momentary, spontaneous appearance, and disappearance. While the mourners remain ensconced within the sacred space of the hearse, for those outside of this space it appears without warning in an otherwise everyday landscape. It has this in common with other spontaneous memorial sites, for example, the roadside memorial. For those who observe the passing of the procession, it "signif[ies] that a life or the possibility of survival ended here, while you, the traveller, continue onwards beyond the here and now" (Gibson 2011, p. 150). Like the spontaneous memorial, the funeral procession quite suddenly lays claim to public space, transforming it into a private space for death, transgressing those unspoken prescribed boundaries between the sacred and profane.

Focusing on movement can aid in understanding the funeral procession as an interruption of the landscape. But the procession, like the pilgrimage, is equally an interruption of the body. Through movement and embodiment together the body is interrupted, transformed, and mobilised, and in this way the sacred space of the funeral procession continues to expand and transgress boundaries.

Conclusions: Beyond Pilgrimage

This chapter has sought to introduce the funeral procession as a valuable site for further exploration in the midst of an established sacred mobilities field. While sacred mobilities have been explored through a variety of other pilgrimages and processions, the funeral procession is under-researched. The chapter represents a call for geographers to explore other ways in which we can expand our knowledge through the funeral procession. There is great opportunity, for instance, to unpack the funeral procession as a performance and how that has influenced the rituals and traditions. The conversation must also be expanded beyond a narrow attention on English Christian funeral processions. Considering the practices and norms which are prevalent both in other religions and in other parts of the world would be imperative in building a representative understanding of funeral processions. Nevertheless, in situating this discussion within an existing field, the chapter demonstrates how valuable current frameworks of affect, sacrality, and mobility can be for these future explorations.

Like the pilgrimage, the funeral procession is ultimately a process of spatial and bodily transformation. Through its movements the funeral procession constructs a mobile sacred landscape in which novel relations and congregations of people, things, and feelings are established or revealed. Our bodily interactions within and responses to the funeral procession extend sacred space through time and space in new ways. This extension of space occurs in part as movement. Far from a simple, linear movement from one location to another, the funeral procession is a complex negotiation of continuous arrivals, departures, and disruptions. Things and bodies move across space, carrying themselves in an arrangement and flow that is capable of producing a sacred experience. Embodiment and movement go hand in hand in this process. The ritual body within the funeral procession becomes a mobile sacred space within itself and, as it moves through the landscape, undoes the perceived boundaries of sacred place.

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Chapter 9
The Ancient Routes of Kumano in Japan as a Cultural Landscape: A Multidimensional Approach

Katsuyuki Takenaka

Abstract The Ancient Routes of Kumano (Kumano Kodô) in Japan were inscribed in 2004 on the UNESCO World Heritage List along with the main sanctuaries embraced by the Kii Mountain Range. Although the consideration of a cultural landscape was conferred on the whole property, characterisation and valorisation of the landscape of these pilgrimage roads presents an enormous conceptual complexity. In this chapter, the author attempts an in-depth study of this question distinguishing three complementary dimensions present in the Kumano landscape: landscape as an idealised model in the imaginary of the historical pilgrimage; landscape as a place built through the experience of pilgrims; and landscape as a lifeworld of the population that acts daily on it.

Keywords Ancient Routes of Kumano · Cultural landscape · Shinto–Buddhism · *Shughendô* · Walkscape · Timber rafting

Ancient Routes of Kumano as a Cultural Landscape

The Ancient Routes of Kumano consist of a set of pilgrimage roads running through the Kii Peninsula, at the south end of the Honshu Island in Japan (Fig. 9.1). Five main routes originate from the ancient capital of Kyôto and other important Shinto and Buddhist centres, and all of them converge in three sacred sites in Kumano: Kumano Hongû Taisha, Kumano Hayatama Taisha, and Kumano Nachi Taisha (Fig. 9.2a–c). Although *Taisha* means a grand Shinto shrine, the three Taishas actually symbolise a mixture of faiths characteristic of Japan, where until the beginning of modern times the syncretism between Shinto and Buddhism showed an intense cultural manifestation in both architectural and ritual aspects. Despite a physical distance of 20–30 km separating one another, the three shrines share a strong spiritual bond represented by their common *kamis* (Shinto divinities). These, in turn, are supposed to embody

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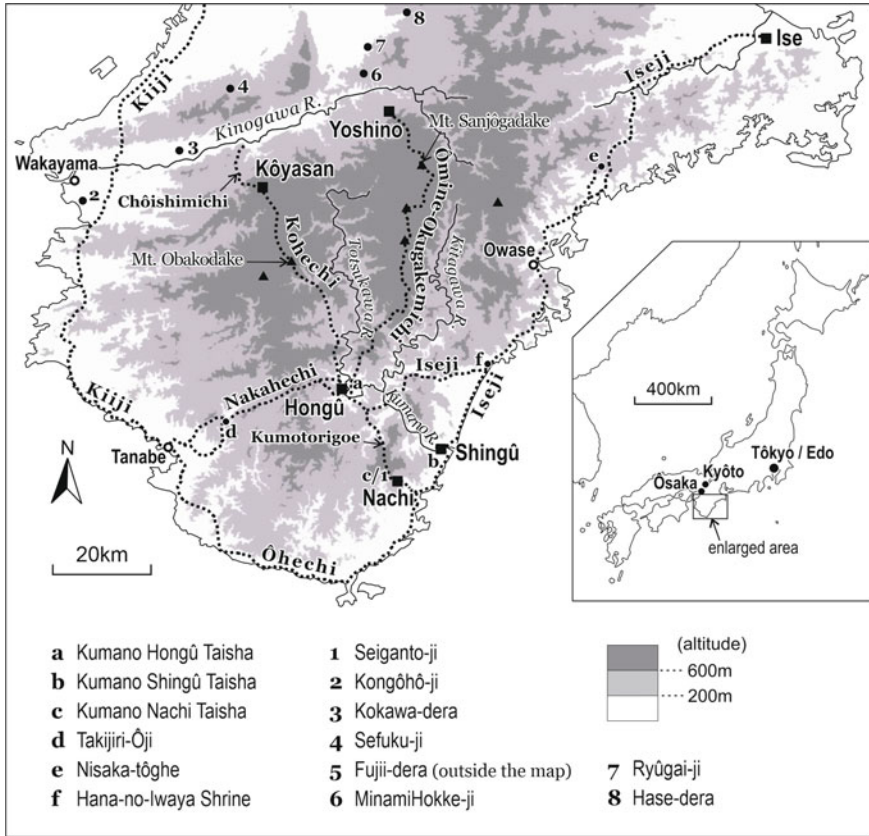
Fig. 9.1 Situation of the Kii Peninsula and the Ancient Routes of Kumano. *Source* Author based on cartographic data of the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan

their respective Buddhist deities, which descended on the Japanese land with the appearance of native *kamis*.[1]

The Ancient Routes of Kumano (hereinafter "the Routes" or "the Kumano Routes") pass through areas of rugged orography covered with leafy dense forests, the growth of which has been favoured by a humid climate with a rainfall of 3000–4000 mm a year. Numerous water courses born in those forests flow towards the coastline of the Kii Peninsula, eroding the mountains into more or less abrupt valleys. The most representative is the Kumano River. Its modest length of 183 km and average

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[1] The theoretical foundation of the Shinto–Buddhism syncretism is called *Honji Suijaku* philosophy. The original *kamis* of Kumano Hongû Taisha, Kumano Hayatama Taisha, and Kumano Nachi Taisha are Kuamno Ketsumiko no kami, Kumano Hayatama no kami and Kumano Fusubi no kami, respectively. The *Honji Suijaku* philosophy assumed that the three *kamis* embody their respective Buddhist deities: Amida Nyorai, Yakushi Nyorai, and Senju Kannon. Nyorai (tathāgata in Sanskrit) and kannon (avalokiteśvara) are different concepts meaning Buddhist deity.

Fig. 9.2   Scenes of the Ancient Routes of Kumano. **a** Kumano Hongû Taisha; **b** Kumano Hayatama Taisha; **c** Kumano Shingû Taisha; **d** Hosshinmon Ôji; **e** Kamikura Shrine; **f** Nachi Waterfall; **g** Kimpusen-ji; **h** gate to Mt. Ôminesan; **i** monument to "eight-time-visit"; **j** stone pavement in Magose mountain pass; **k** Seiganto-ji viewed from Kumano Nachi Taisha; **l** *Sandanbo* boat guided by a local shipwright; **m** Buddhist complex in Kôyasan; **n** Hamanomiya Ôji. *Source* Author

Fig. 9.2 (continued)

discharge of 88 m^3/s are somehow misleading, because of the highly fluctuating water regime that characterises this river.[2] In fact, the population living on the riversides of Kumano suffered throughout history due to enormous damages caused by heavy rainstorms. The forest resources favoured by the humid climate were exploited to the maximum degree, and the logs felled from steep mountains were sent downstream by timber rafting, a local activity that persisted until the water courses were torn into short pieces by a number of dams built at the mid-twentieth century.

[2] Data from the Basic Plan for the Improvement of the Shingû River System (Shingû gawa Suikei Kasen Seibi Kihon Hôshin), October 2021, Water and Disaster Management Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism.

Taking a trip along the Routes is a polysemic act practiced by humans from ancient times. The motives that drove them along the way are far from unequivocal: desire for a spiritual journey towards the Pure Land; interest for taking a tour of temples according to a predefined programme; or necessity of trips as a livelihood like shipping of timber or collection of edible wild plants, among many others. The Routes are not homogeneous in physical features either. Apart from the well-defined pilgrimage paths, there are also rough paths deep into the mountains preferred by ascetics. Even courses of the Kumano River were among the routes most frequently used by the medieval nobility on their journey throughout the region.

The Routes along with the main sanctuaries were inscribed in 2004 on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The official denomination of the property is "Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range, and the Cultural Landscapes that Surround Them". In terms of the categories of cultural property defined in Article 1 of the 1972 World Heritage Convention (WHC),[3] the whole set inscribed constitutes a "site", that is, a set of works of man or combined works of nature and man which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnographic, or anthropological point of view. Within the basic framework of the WHC, the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the convention introduced in its revision of 1992 the concept of "Cultural Landscapes", defining them as cultural properties that illustrate the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic, and cultural forces.[4] Making use of this new normative instrument, the consideration of a cultural landscape was conferred on the whole property of the Kii Mountain Range.

This chapter is dedicated to the characterisation and valorisation of the Kumano Routes as a cultural landscape, a concept that presents an enormous conceptual complexity. Our attention will be focused not only on the recognition granted by the WHC, but also on different ways in which humans open, use, and remember roads in their attempts to organise the space they live in and feel part of it. Particularly three complementary dimensions will be distinguished in analysing the cultural landscape of the Routes: landscape as an idealised model in the imaginary of the historical pilgrimage; landscape as a place built through the experience of pilgrims; and landscape as a lifeworld of the population that acts daily on it. Although the three are present in all of the Routes converging in Kumano, in discussing each one we will focus on a specific route for its high representativity of the theoretical aspect that concerns us.

A variety of documental sources were used to undertake the proposed work: historical travel records; reports of archaeological, historical and architectural investigation centred on the Routes; and local archives, mainly of the municipality of

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[3] The official name of the convention is the "Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage."

[4] Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage: "Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention", 2 February 2005, paragraph 47.

Totsukawa. A field survey was conducted in March 2022 for the specific purpose of this work and complemented by records of the on-site activities that the author organised from 2015 to 2017 with the exchange students from Aichi Prefectural University, Kanazawa University, University of Santiago de Compostela (Spain), and University of Minho (Portugal).

Imaginary of the Kumano Routes: Nakahechi

The ninety-nine *ôjis* are what best defines the landscape of Nakahechi, one of the five main Kumano Routes. The *ôjis* are ceremonial spots located along the pilgrimage roads. They lack a solid architectural structure unlike settlement-based Shinto shrines, although we can locate each one of them by a simple *torii* (gate to a shrine) or a modest stone monument placed by the road (Fig. 9.2d). Ninety-nine does not indicate an exact number either. It just means "a great amount", without any intention to be a religious nor practical signage.

The most valuable documental source for understanding what the *ôjis* were and other aspects of the pilgrimage in the Middle Ages are travel diaries of Medieval emperors emeritus and members of the nobility. Among the most relevant chronicles, the followings are worth mentioning: *Taigyoki* (pilgrimage by Fujiwara no Tamefusa, 1081), *Chûyûki* (Fujiwara no Munetada, 1109), *Gotoba-in Kumano Gokôki* (Gotoba-in, 1201, chronicler: Fujiwara no Teika), *Shûmeimon-in Kumano Gokôki* (Shûmeimon-in, 1210, chronicler: Fujiwara no Yorisuke), and Kitano-dono Kumano Môde Nikki (Kitano-dono, 1427, chronicler: Jûshin-in Jitsui). A remarkable fact here is that the number of *ôjis* recorded shows a considerable variation according to the period from which the diary is. In *Taigyoki*, the oldest pilgrimage diary that allows us to know the whole travel itinerary, just one *ôji* is mentioned, while *Chûyûki* gives accounts of the events celebrated at more than 25 *ôjis*. Then, the number of *ôjis* amounts to 80 in *Gotoba-in Kumano Gokôki* and 86 in *Shûmeimon-in Kumano Gokôki*. This variation reflects clearly an evolving and sometimes ephemeral, not fixed and absolute, character of the *ôjis* as something conceived and created with the rise of the pilgrimage to Kumano itself.

Some of the above-mentioned diaries are especially rich in describing the rituals performed at *ôjis*. According to *Gotoba-in Kumano Gokôki*, the ceremony was basically composed of offering to the deity (*hôhei*) and bowing, reciting of a sutra, performance of sacred music, and dancing in group. Among these acts, the essential were offering to the deity and reciting of a sutra, a fact which can be easily deduced from a well-known passage of *Chûyûki* (Fig. 9.3).

In this record of the pilgrimage conducted by Fujiwara no Munetada, the pilgrim realised, when crossing the river before dawn to worship Haya Ôji, that his attendant in charge of the offering dropped behind him. Then, he decided to devote twice the normal sutra, ten volumes instead of five and, thinking of the long journey planned for the day, left one of his subordinates at the same *ôji* to make sure the offering and continued the trip.

廿二日　天晴、夜半出宿所、依今日行程遠也、閑與殘
月行、遙望浮雲走、過南陪野山出早海濱、起河參早王
子社欲奉幣處、御幣持已遲參、仍陪心経卷數、日者五巻、
今十巻、留下人於此處、慥可奉幣押心経供御明之由仰置
了過之、次行田之陪、於王子社又奉幣、於此處天漸明
……

Fig. 9.3 Extract from *Chûyûki* corresponding to October 22nd, 1109

In the public media, there seems to be confusion about the real meaning of *ôji*. Experts in Japanese medieval history, however, have reached an agreement after analysing literature of the time, including the well-known collection of poems, *Ryôjinhishô*. According to that thesis, the *ôjis* are alter egos of the Kumano *gonghens*, that is, the three Kumano *kamis* (divinities), which in turn embody their respective Buddhist deities. The *ôjis* are therefore the result of a spiritual process of dividing the Kumano *kamis* to re-enshrine them at different points of the pilgrimage itinerary. The three Kumano *Taishas* are devoted to five other minor divinities in common, which are also divided and worshiped at a considerable number of *ôjis*.

This rough sketch of the *ôjis* allows us to understand that the Kumano Routes, especially in its original version forged with the pilgrimage of the medieval nobility, represent a cultural landscape created as a spiritual world that connects people living in cities with the sacred place located in the Kii Mountain Range. Then, what drove people to the physiologically hostile journey to Kumano? And who were behind the invention of that travel programme reified in the materiality of the Routes? To decipher these interrogations, reference should be made to the Pure Land Buddhism and a primitive institution of Shinto–Buddhism syncretism called *shughendô*.

The origin of the three Kumano *kamis* is veiled in the remote past. Legends referenced by the sanctuary authorities place the appearance of their divinities in different salient elements that configure the area's geomorphological settings, such as a rock on the upper side of Mt. Kamikura (Fig. 9.2e), or the Nachi Waterfall (Fig. 9.2f).[5] Kumano Hayatama Taisha conserves in the treasury a set of seven wooden figures representing ancient divinities, of which those corresponding to Hayatama no Kami and Fusubi no kami date from the beginning of the tenth century. However, when the influence of the Kumano *kamis* went beyond the strictly local sphere and reached the urban orbit centred in Kyôto, the determining factor that allowed that advance was

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[5] Kumano Hongû Taisha: www.hongutaisha.jp; Kumano Hayatama Taisha: kumanohayatama.jp; Kumano Nachi Taisha: kumanonachitaisha.or.jp. The three dedicate a section of their Web site to explain the creation myth.

the acceptance of Buddhism, especially the Pure Land philosophy, into the Shinto tradition deep-rooted in Japan.

A key to understand the union of the two faiths is offered by *Chokan Kanmon*, an official report prepared in 1163 by experts of the Imperial Court. This document, the oldest one concerning the rise of Kumano worship, makes an extensive quote from the "History of the appearance of Buddha embodied in Kumano Shinto *kamis*" (*Kumano Gonghen Gosuijaku Enghi*). Unfortunately, the original text of the "*History*" is not preserved, nor we can know exactly when the alleged history took place. The most important fact here is that the upper classes of the early Middle Ages were already aware of the unquestionable importance of Buddhism that considerably increased the spiritual and moral power of the ancient divinities of Kumano. Moreover, the three Kumano Buddhist deities were outstanding figures of the Pure Land Buddhism: Amida Nyorai (Hongû) is the founder of the Western Pure Land; Yakushi Nyorai (Hayatama) is that of the Eastern Pure Land; and Senju Kannon (Nachi) is that of the Fudaraku Pure Land. Koyama (2000), in his synthesising writings on the Kumano Routes, asserts that the linkage of the three sites to the Buddhist doctrine facilitated popular identification of the entire Kumano region with the Pure Land. Koyama argues that what the pilgrims expected was, in general, graces for the present life, such as healing of an illness, recovery of eyesight, or simply peace of mind.

The Shughendô monks were the agents who interpreted the imagined long way to the Pure Land, translating it into a material, although consciously hostile, programme of the journey along the Kumano Routes. The origin of Shughendô is in the ancient Japanese veneration of nature as a place inhabited by divine souls. Situations like the foot of a mountain or a waterfall are suitable to receive a soul residing in forest and water. The arrival of Buddhism, particularly its esoteric variant, meant an important change in that religious tradition of Japanese people. Along the Heian period (ninth–twelfth century), a considerable number of monks began to practice asceticism in deep mountains and finally constituted an institution of its own within the complex Shinto–Buddhism syncretism. Kumano was the main field of ascetic exercises in Shughendô along with Yoshino, where Kumpusen-ji, head temple of a leading Shughendô sect, was located (Fig. 9.2g). Another important sect of Shughendô, the Honzan-ha, established its headquarters in Shôgo-in in Kyôto, and with their confidence guaranteed by ascetic practices deep in the Kumano mountains, kept a close relationship with the nobility of the ancient capital.

A group of Shughendô monks, called *yamabushi*,[6] acted as guides for nobles who wished to undertake the pilgrimage to Kumano. This is particularly the case of Honzan-ha sect. Not only did they work as escorts, but they were raised by the Imperial Court to the rank of Administrator of the Three Kumano Grand Shrines (Table 9.1). Although these monks resided in Kyôto, it was in the mountains of Kumano that they had trained as ascetics. Precisely, among the different Kumano Routes, the hardest one, known today as Ômine-Okugake michi, is the path of asceticism connecting Kumano Hongû Taisha and Yoshino Kumpusen-ji, that is, the two symbolic places of Shughendô. The entire Ômine-Okugake michi was, and still

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[6] When a yamabushi guides pilgrims, he is called *sendatsu*.

Table 9.1 Administrators of the Three Kumano Grand Shrines (1090–1221)

No.	Name	Service period	Training experience	Retired emperor for whom guided the Kumano Routes
1	Zôyo	1090–1116	Shughen	Shirakawa
2	Gyôson	1116–1135	Asceticism in Ômine-Katsuraghi	Shirakawa, Toba
3	Sôkaku	1135–1152	Asceticism in Ômine-Katsuraghi	Toba
4	Kakusan	1152–1180	Training in Ômine-Katsuraghi-Kumano (2000 days)	Goshirakawa
5	Jikkei	1181–1199	Asceticism in Ômine-Katsuraghi-Kumano	Goshirakawa
6	Katujitsu	1199–1219	Master of Shughendô	Gotoba
7	Chôghen	1219–1221	Monk of Shughendô	Gotoba

Source Elaboration based on Miyake (1992, pp. 16–17)

today is, a place of physical and spiritual exercise for ascetics, full of salient natural elements such as rocky ridges, huge stones, caves, giant trees, waterfalls, etc. For Shughendô, with its ancient root in a primitive animism, these spots in the natural environment were where divinities lived and thus ideal places to mortify flesh.

The asceticism was practiced in numerous spiritual spots along Ômine-Okugake michi, which were later organised in 75 fixed locations called *nabikis*. The path is very harsh and poorly indicated. It represents an exclusive world of *yamabushi*, far from the secular life, and practically inaccessible to an average pilgrim. Even today some areas inhibit, although legally questionable, the entry of women, as shown by the gate to Ôminesan (Mt. Sanjôgadake) that explicitly forbids the access by female members (Fig. 9.2h). Toda, expert in the Japanese medieval history, argues that Shughendô monks were those who brought the Kumano *kamis* to Kyôto, diffused the veneration of those divinities among the nobles, and finally, invited them to the Kumano pilgrimage (Toda 2010). The rituals to set out on the arduous journey, the performance at different stages of the path, and the ascetic exercise as a whole were transferred by those *yamabushis* to Nakahechi, that is, the main route followed by the nobility, and reinterpreted at *ôjis* in a more accessible and conventional format. Therefore, Nakahechi was in a certain sense the double of Ômine-Okugake michi, where the peculiar manner of the *yamabushis* to submit to the force of nature was conceived and developed.[7]

To complement our survey of the Kumano landscape as an idealised model of the historical pilgrimage, let us make a brief reference to the mandalas. Two types of Kumano mandala are known to us: *Kumano Kanjin Jikkai Mandala* and *Nachi*

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[7] The Historiographical Commission of the Kumano Routes edited a guide in which the historical profile and current situation of each one of the *ôjis* is explained (Historiographical Commission of the Kumano Routes 1973).

Sankei Mandala.[8] The *Kanjin Jikkai* interprets the cycle of death and rebirth, an important aspect of Buddhism. The upper part of the work represents the human life from infancy to old age, while the lower part describes paradise and hell. Despite several expressive elements alluding to the fate that somebody may suffer, the entire work is configured as an abstract representation of life according to the Buddhist doctrine.

The other mandala, the *Nachi Sankei*, denotes a much more secular character than the *Kanjin Jikkai*. Following step by step the pilgrimage itinerary painted on the work is a real sensorial and intellectual pleasure, since it perfectly connects the imagined model of pilgrimage with the real experience of travellers. Noble and common pilgrims guided by a *yamabushi*; wooden gates and bridges separating the sacred realm from the secular; historical figures just about to embark on a small boat in search of the Fudaraku Pure Land; monks practicing asceticism under the waterfall; pilgrims worshipping the *kami* upon arrival at the Kumano Nachi Taisha, etc. All this is represented in an illustrative and didactic way against the background of the Kumano mountains and the Nachi Waterfall.[9]

Under the same title of *Nachi Sankei* some 36 copies, each slightly different, are preserved, of which quite a few were elaborated in the Edo era (seventeenth–nineteenth century). An interesting new figure, women called Kumano *bikunis*, appeared around the sixteenth century. They interpreted the aforementioned mandalas in front of women living all over Japan to disseminate the spiritual benefit of the Kumano pilgrimage (Kondô 1990). The period in which the Kumano *bikunis* began to work coincides roughly with the decline of the role played by the *yamabushi* guides, because the travel along the Kumano Routes, better equipped and indicated, no longer needed so much the accompaniment of a guide. Another relevant feature of the *Nachi Sankei Mandala* is the representation of the real world in which they lived, that is, the territory of Nachi through which pilgrims travelled, superimposing it on the imaginative journey in search of the Pure Land. In my opinion, this meant the birth of the landscape of the Kumano Routes in its scenic and experiential dimension, a second aspect of landscape that we will be discussing in the next section.

Walkscape of the Kumano Routes: Iseji

To proceed with our survey on the Kumano landscape, primary attention will now be paid to Iseji from the perspective of experience of the pilgrims. As a road connecting major cities with Kumano, Iseji is the main alternative to Kiiji (Fig. 9.1). Originating in the Ise Grand Shrine, the most important reference of Shinto, Iseji was considered

[8] The two mandalas can be visualised in detail on the Web site of "Cultural Heritage Online" (bunka. nii.ac.jp/heritages/detail/389928), provided by the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs.

[9] Kumano Nachi Taisha edited a complete guide to the Nachi Sankei Mandala, in which each one of the numerous scenes integrated in the work is described in detail (Cultural Property Section of Kumano Nachi Taisha 2010).

the right option for travellers coming from the east, while the combination of Kiiji and Nakahechi was preferred by pilgrims from Kyôto. Numerous stone pillars standing throughout the road give us a cue to explore the experience shared by travellers of premodern times, not because of their material presence that is certainly remarkable, but for its ability to evoke the collective memory of the pilgrims.

Today, the entire Iseji belongs to Mie Prefecture. The prefectural Board of Education undertook from 1980 to 1981 a major research project of this route, recording on the field survey visible elements associated to the historical pilgrimage (Educational Board of Mie Prefecture 1981): checkpoints on the road, milestones, crossing points of a river, lodgings, teahouses, signposts, stone pavements, kshitigarbhas, houses of village governors, etc. These memories of the past forcefully recount at once hard and hopeful experiences of the travellers. For example, pilgrims were charged a toll at various checkpoints created by authorities. Milestones (*ichirizuka*) mark the passage of a distance unit "ri" (approximately 4 km). They were installed by the Edo Shogunate Government to provision national roads and control the mail service. Lodgings and teahouses were an essential part of the infrastructure that supported the long journey.

Signposts and kshitigarbhas are worth special attention. The presence of a large number of signposts reflects the changing character of the Kumano pilgrimage, which gained popularity around the fifteenth century. A meaningful expression "ari no kumano môde" (pilgrims like ants queue walking to Kumano) appears in the Japanese-Portuguese dictionary edited in 1603 by Jesuit missionaries living in Japan. The phrase refers to the rising Kumano pilgrimage, first among warriors in the Kamakura period from late twelfth century to mid-fifteenth century, and later extended to many other groups of the society. The geographical origin of the travellers was also spreading to larger areas of Japan. In Kumano Hayatama Taisha, a small monument was erected to honour a person from Ôshû (northern part of the Honshû island) for the deep faith manifested in his journey to Kumano repeated up to eight times (Fig. 9.2i).

A figure called *oshi* was among the most determinant factors that favoured the diffusion of the pilgrimage towards groups of diverse social status. *Oshi* is a kind of agency that organises the journey of the pilgrims and offers services, mainly accommodation, upon arrival of the travellers. Each *oshi* had his own "fief", that is, an area of influence in different parts of Japan, within which he controlled a more or less large community of faithful. That right of control was an object of sale, as demonstrated by historian Koyama in his analysis of original documents of the period (Koyama 2000). According to this study, at the beginning of the Kamakura period, the right of control offered for sale generally concerned services for lineages of faithful warriors. However, decades later, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the right of control was already extended to all kinds of social classes and groups living in a specific region. A precapitalist as yet efficient travel agency system described here was what fuelled the rising Kumano pilgrimage in the early modern times.

Contrary to the essential role played by *oshis*, the *yamabushi* guides acting on the road lost the importance they had for the Kumano pilgrimage repeated many times by prominent members of the medieval nobility. Instead, the forementioned survey

records by Mie Prefecture include almost unaccountable signposts standing along Iseji. These markers might have been a key element to guide humble travellers at every corner of the road to Kumano. Another part of the infrastructure characteristic of Iseji are the stone pavements. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, the Kii Peninsula, particularly its south-eastern sector, is one of the rainiest regions in Japan. Natural stones of different sizes combined and fixed on the ground, either in flat form or stairs, prevented the soil from collapsing in rainy seasons and served to make travellers feel safer when facing the journey full of risks. Some sections of these stone pavements, such as Magose mountain pass (Fig. 9.2j) or Yakiyama-goshi, are today kept in fair conditions and known as popular hiking routes.

Kshitigarbhas set by a road are considered in Japanese popular faith guardians of children or travellers. Pilgrims travelling with scarce resources had to depend on any help or almsgiving of neighbours they encountered along the way. Actually, some of the *shôyas*, village governors, showed empathy with those pilgrims and acted in a generous manner. An illustrative example is given by the documented event of the Owase governor, a case studied by an official and researcher of the Kumano municipality (Mitsuishi 2013). In 1830, three members of Momosuke family, originally from Isahaya in Kyûshû, were going on the pilgrimage route throughout the West Japan. After visiting the Ise Grand Shrine and traversing some of the steepest mountain passes, they ran out of money upon reaching Owase and begged lodging for the night to Shôji family, the village governor. As they continued the journey after receiving a night's shelter, Momosuke fell ill because of the exhaustion from a long journey, and the three got back to Shôji's house. Wahê, head of Shôji family, called the doctor and gave care to Momosuke until he finally died. The governor's family buried Momosuke, and after Momosuke's seventh death day, sent off the mother and her son, wishing them a safe travel back home. Eight years later, in 1838, Ihachirô, the son, returned on his own to the land of Kumano and visited the governor's family to give them his deep gratitude for the favour they had received.

Accounts like this show that there were free accommodations offered to piteous pilgrims. The memory of them is stored today, among other elements, in the pillars dedicated to deceased pilgrims on their way to Kumano. However, for our purpose in this work, it is important to know how travellers lived and live today the experience of landscape, rather than the objects that indirectly bear witness to acts of the past. A vital source for studying this dimension of experience is given by the travel guides published in a large number in the Edo period. Itô, expert of Mie Prefecture in cultural property, carried out in his doctoral thesis (Itô 2018)[10] a detailed analysis of seven guides issued from the end of the seventeenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century. According to Itô (2018), regardless of the reasonable variations in content among the studied documents, they all coincide in some fundamental points: All the guides present the towns and villages through which the road continues, specifying the distance that separates each one from the other, and, above all, they narrate the

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[10] The entire text of the thesis is available on the University of Tsukiba Repository (http://hdl.handle.net/2241/00156927).

journey through Iseji in the unique direction from Ise to Kumano, without considering the option of the opposite or return to Ise.

The "one-way" character of Iseji has to do with the popularity gained by the "Pilgrimage of Thirty-three Buddhist temples throughout the West Japan" (*Saigoku Sanjûsan-sho Junrei*). The "thirty-three" refer to a whole set of temples dedicated to Kannon, bodhisattva of compassion, located in the contemporary 6 prefectures of the Kansai Region.[11] Encompassing the two ancient capitals, Nara and Kyôto, the historical region of Kansai was regarded as the spiritual and cultural cradle of Japan at a time when the political control of the country was in hands of the warrior government established in Edo, present-day Tokyo. Pilgrims from eastern Japan first visited the Ise Grand Shrine, which was relatively accessible, and then continued their journey to Kumano via Iseji. Seiganto-ji Buddhist temple, built right next to the Nachi Grand Shrine (Fig. 9.2k), is the starting point, temple No. 1, of the Saigoku Pilgrimage. From there, the pilgrims followed the route throughout the 33 temples, often combining it with other sacred sites like Itsukushima (Hiroshima) or Zenkôji (Nagano) before getting back to their country of origin. It is worth remarking that Shinto and Buddhism were intertwined in the pilgrimage itineraries, with the sacred site of Nachi as the main nexus between the two. Nowadays, the Grand Shrine and Seiganto-ji occupy each half of the extensive mountainside of Nachi, connected each other by a gateway. Until the beginning of the Edo period, however, the two formed a more united religious complex, and the temple was represented in the *Nachi Sankei Mandala* as a facility that shared the same central square with other Shinto-style buildings.

The travel along Iseji we have been describing clearly suggests the emergence of a culture of "tour" organised around the visit to holy sites. A sort of modern tourism, in its incipient phase, was fed by the phenomenon of mass pilgrimage, which in the case of Ise reached several million people in certain years (Tsujibayashi 2013). The travel guides already mentioned should have worked as efficient media to disseminate the vision given by real travellers and then reproduce the collective act of pilgrimage. The climax of the media development concerning the Ise-Kumano journey was the illustrated book, *Drawings of the Thirty-three Temples of the West Japan (Saigoku Sanjû-sansho Zue)*. Published in 1853, just before the end of the Edo period, the *Drawings* was a collective work of a writer, Akatsuki Kanenari, and two *ukiyoe* painters.[12] Contrary to what the title suggests, the book covers in its eight volumes just up to the 8th temple, Hase-dera, near Nara (Fig. 9.1: 1–8). The first three volumes actually constitute an effective illustration of what the pilgrims of that time viewed and experienced travelling along Iseji from Ise to Nachi, then from Nachi to Hongû through a harsh mountain path, and from Hongû to Tanabe, following roughly what had been the main pilgrimage route in the Middle Ages.

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[11] Except for the temple No. 33, the last one in the pilgrimage route, which is in Ghifu prefecture.

[12] The entire work composed of eight volumes is available on Japanese and Chinese Classics database of Waseda University (www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kotenseki/index_en.html). A transcription to the contemporary Japanese writing system is provided by Hayashi (1980).

Let us take a look at how the authors of the *Drawings* represented the Iseji landscape, from Ise to Shingû (Table 9.2). The seventeen illustrations corresponding to that section describe in detail the elements that the pilgrims must have encountered walking: mountain ranges, crossing points of a river, post-towns and commercial streets, mountain passes, teahouses, Kannon temples, Shinto shrines, pineries, waterfalls, old trees, huge rocks, etc. More than the quantity and variety of the things drawn, what is critical here is the clear sequence along which the different scenes of the travel are ordered. In reality, the drawings are not separate representations of each site, but rather an expression of the experience shared by the travellers as they were making forward movements along the way. The pilgrims always occupy a central place in the narrative of the journey, although in some pages they appear in quite a reduced size. The sight of the Kumano Sea that suddenly opens up as they go through the Nisaka mountain pass cannot be separated from the harshness of the path they came on nor the hope that awaits them ahead. Like in the chronicles of the Middle Ages, the location of temples and shrines indicates how the journey from Ise to Kumano should be organised according to the pilgrimage model forged centuries ago. However, those iconic sites are now immersed in the physical settings of the area, and they all together make up a single pictorial composition in travel literature.

Images of Iseji described in this section are something constructed through the experience of the people who walk, with their senses and emotion. This essential part of the landscape of the Kumano Routes can be conceptualised as a "walkscape", which, stored in people's memory, never constitutes a fixed reality. When those same images are represented, particularly in accessible media like travel guides, they transform the meaning and value socially conferred on the Routes. Dialectical relationship between the subject and the media is an important aspect of landscape. The Kumano Routes stand for a paradigmatic example that allows us to delve into the dimension of experience in the construction of landscape.[13]

Lifeworld of the Kumano Routes: The River and Kohechi

When a road comes into use, gains its social utility, or on the contrary loses the importance it had before and finally falls into disuse, the people who act daily on the territory give the motive that most determines those changes. Although the pilgrimage had a critical importance in constructing the collective imaginary of the Kumano Routes, the same roads had broader and more immediate users than travellers who came from afar. The existence of daily actors must have been a guarantee of the material subsistence of the roads even in the lowest moments of the pilgrimage. More importantly, the roads acquired the character of a lifeworld, thanks precisely to the diverse uses given by the local population.

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[13] The concept of walkscape was theoretically developed by, among others, the Italian architect Careri (2006). Application of the concept to the case of the Saint James' Way in Spain can be found in Doi (2015) and Takenaka and Kamikawa (2018).

Table 9.2 Representation of the Iseji landscape in *Saigoku Sanjû-sansho Zue* (1853)

Page	Name	Brief description
1 (30)	Yanaghi no Watashi	Crossing point of the river Miyakawa next to Yamada (Ise). Pilgrims are on both sides of the stream and free boats. A busy post-town is across the river
1 (31)	Tamaru-jôka	Busy commercial street next to Tamaru Castle, where pilgrims, merchants and neighbours come and go
1 (32)	Kano-no-Matsubara	Pilgrims are going on a wide road through an extensive pinery. A sign pole prohibiting the entrance in the pinery because of the highly sought mushrooms in it
1 (33)	Hara no Ôtsuji Kannon-an	A Kannon temple at the east entrance of Hara village, introducing the way to Kumano
1 (34)	Muryô-zan Sempuku-ji	Another Kannon temple for pilgrims
1 (35)	Mise-gawa	A river crossing point at the end of Mise village. A scenic place with a waterfall downstream of the point
1 (36)	Mise-tôghe	The Mise Mountain pass. A kshitigarbha in a rock hut, a tea house on the other side of the road with pilgrims taking a rest
1 (37–38)	Takihara-no-miya	Takihara Shrine located in Nojiri village. Associated to Ise Grand Shrine, it has a common architectural style established by Ise
1 (40)	Nisaka-tôghe	The Nisaka mountain pass, the dividing point between Ise Province and Kii Province. To the south, a splendid view over the blue sea. The towns of Nigô and Nagashima in the foreground of the coast and different sections of seashore in succession to the distance
1 (44)	Magose-tôghe Iwabune Jizô-dô	Magose mountain pass. The approach, although harsh, is fully stone-paved. A kshitigarbha is housed in a small temple called Iwafune, in front of which a tea house is open. In the background a rocky peak associated to the *tengu* (a figure in Japanese popular belief)
1 (45)	Yakiyama	The road approaching Yakiyama mountain from the town of Owase, passing through Hachinohama village. The mountain path is paved but very harsh
1 (46)	Yakiyama-tôghe	Yakiyama mountain pass. A tea house selling rice cakes. Its name "Kôjin" derives from Sanpô Kôjin (a set of three Buddhist deities) worshiped in a temple near there

(continued)

Table 9.2 (continued)

Page	Name	Brief description
1 (48)	Saigyô-matsu	An old pine tree, known as the "Saigyô-matsu", stands on the Ôbuki mountain pass. On the other side of the road, a tea house is open
1 (50)	Kinomoto-no-hama	A thriving coastal town, Kinomoto, where fish shops sell huge tunas displayed on outdoor stands
1 (52)	Shichiri-no-hama	A seven-ri-long coast with a great view of the sea. Pilgrims go between the shore washed by sea waves and the pinery stretching along the coast. In the distance the Shingû promontory
1 (53)	Hana-no-iwaya	A huge rock with a height of 25 ken (45 m), which in itself constitutes an object of worship. Considered to be the tomb of Izanami-no-mikoto, a female divinity described in *Nihon-Shoki* (*Chronicles of Japan*)
1 (55)	Kumano-Shingû	Kumano Shingû Taisha, a grand Shinto complex, is over the Kumano River, to the right. A neighbourhood of merchants developed in the access area towards the Grand Shrine. Where horses are dismounted, an *oshi* lodging is located

Source Elaboration based on Akatsuki, Kanerari [drawings by Matsukawa Hanzan and Urakawa Kôsa]: *Drawings of the Thirty-three Temples of the West Japan* [*Saigoku Sanjû-sansho Zue*] 1853, Vol. 1, and Hayashi (1980, pp. 9–51)

To deepen our understanding of the Kumano landscape from the aforementioned perspective, attention will be focused on two of the variants of the Routes: the Kumano River and Kohechi. The Kumano River, especially the section between Hongû and Shingû, was the option preferred by the medieval nobility who went downriver after worshipping Kumano Hongû Taisha. Kohechi is one of the five main variants of the Kumano Routes, the shortest and steepest one. As we will see later, cases of pilgrimage via Kohechi are not known until well into the Edo period.

The Kumano Routes are generally a succession of climb and descent and traverse a lot of mountain passes. The preference for highland common to historic roads of the area stands in stark contrast to the modern highways, which almost always seek to pass through the bottom of river valleys or, in more recent times, through long tunnels and high bridges that make the route shorter and easier for automobiles. We should remember that the changing design of basic road infrastructure was a result of the application of modern engineering that made it possible to build roads along steep mountain slopes rising on both sides of a river. Until then, the alternative to going on mountain paths was to travel by boat on fast streams. The best-known case is the boat service along the Kumano River. In Kumano, three types of boat are known

from modern times: *danbei-bune*, propeller boats, and water jet boats. To this short list we can add rafts if we consider them a type of vessel to go down a river.

Danbei-bune is a wooden boat perfectly adapted to the characteristic of the Kumano River, turbulent with numerous shallows. It is 5–6 ken long (about 9–11 m) and less than 1 ken wide (1.8 m), with a very shallow draft and a lifted prow.[14] The vessel is equipped with a sail, a set of three separated vertical pieces tied one another, which allows the air escape in case of strong winds. An essayist from Kumano, Ue Katsutoshi (Ue 2007), collected testimony of several boaters born between the end of the Meiji period and the beginning of the Showa (ca 1900–1940). They carried on the boat merchandise, such as rice, *sake*, coal, fish, medicines, as well as persons, even patients who needed urgent treatment. The downstream trip was the least difficult part, although with not a few risks, of the work: half a day from Hongû to Shingû on the river currents, helped by favourable wind depending on the season and the hour. Upon arrival in Shigû, they used to disembark at a stretch of the riverside known as "Kawaramachi", an area occupied by instant stores set up on the riverbed and dismountable in case of flooding. The hardest part was the upstream trip. They had to pull the boats for most part of the route, using oars and paddles where steep slopes on both sides of the river made it impossible to carry out the task of towing.

In 1920, propeller boats began service. We should not think of screws set at the bottom edge of the boat, but a machine to gain driving force like an aircraft. The shallowness of the river was what led to the invention of this particular system. The propeller boats carried persons as well as merchandise and connected upstream from Shingû to Hongû in just three hours and a half, when a conventional boat towed by operators would need two days to cover that distance. However, both types of vessels shared the market to a certain extent, due to the drawbacks of the new invention, especially the enormous noise emitted by the propellers and the expensive fare of the service. When the communication through the valleys of Kumano depended on the river, the *danbei-bune* had the advantage, not only of lower fare, but also of its adaptability to the unpredictable needs that arouse from the local people. Then, the daily life of the Kumano River was characterised for a time by a strange coexistence of the apparent stillness of the *danbei-bune* with the extravagant loudness of the propellers moved by diesel engines. Water jet boats, which catch water in the lower front part and release it in the back, were the solution introduced in 1965 to replace the noisy propeller boats and are still in service today for tourist purpose in Dorokyô, which is the lower section of Kitagawa-river, tributary of the Kumano (Fig. 9.1).[15]

However, what radically transformed the fluvial landscape of Kumano was the construction of the national highway N168 after World War II. In 1925, the highway reached from Shingû to Miyai, 12 km downstream of Hongû. The *danbei-bune* covered for a time the sections where the road was not completed but lost their usefulness at the full opening of the highway in 1959. With the decline of the fluvial transport, the shipwrights could not hold their job any longer. The exception was given

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[14] *Hirata-bune* is the specific name for the smaller five ken sized boat.

[15] The operating company halted the service in December 2020 due to the increasing sedimentation on the riverbed and the crisis provoked by the COVID-19 pandemic.

by the festival boats of Shingû, to which tour boats have recently been added. The Holy Boat Festival is the climax of the main fete of Kumano Hayatama Taisha, celebrated every year in mid-October. Nine boats carrying the divine spirit are launched on the river for a race and turn three times around an islet called "Mifune-jima" (Holy Boat Island). The only shipwright still working, Tanigami Yoshikazu, has been running for 15 years the Kumano Interpretation Centre (Kumano Taikan-juku), which allows visitors to take a tour on a "Sandanbo" (literally three pieces of sail) down to the mouth of the Kumano River (Fig. 9.2l).[16] We do not know exactly the technical design of the boats on which the medieval pilgrims made their journey, nor if they had a certain recreational sense of the trip. In any case, the Holy Boat Festival, as well as the tour organised by Tanigami, are acts not only of honouring the historical pilgrimage, but also of inheriting the sensitivity of our predecessors towards the lifeworld of Kumano of which they were part.[17]

To complete our modest reflection on the river landscape, reference should be made to the timber rafting. Probably rafting is the best synthesis between the resources of Kumano, the consumer market, and the means of transport that unites both. Here again, the study by Ue (2007) is illustrative, as it intertwines testimonies of a mountain worker, a rafter, and a timber merchant. Among natural resources of the region, timber stands out for its abundance favoured by the humid climate. The city of Shingû acts as the main centre of exchange between inside and outside of Kumano. And the river was the ideal means of transportation, since the supporting infrastructure, like railways or highways, was provided by the course of the river itself, and the logs felled from the mountain and tied one another on the water were both merchandise and a vehicle, like wagons or trucks.

The history of the rafting in Kumano came to an end in 1964. The factors of the decline, although common to some extent with that of the *danbei-bune*, are rather complex. We should consider first the crisis of the Japanese timber industry in general, which, after works of massive plantation, lost progressively profitability due to its much higher operating costs compared to those of the imported wood. However, the most critical event for the decline of timber rafting was the construction of dams (Koyama and Kasahara 2003). After the initial attempts to exploit hydropower upstream of the Kumano River, the construction of large dams was undertaken after the war by Kansai Electric Power Company and authorised by the governmental General Development Plan for Yoshino-Kumano Region. The completion of the Kazeya Dam (1960) and the Futatsuno Dam (1962) altered drastically people's life in the Kumano mainstream, and the tributary Kitagawa suffered the same fate. Until 1980, a total of 11 dams were built in the entire Kumano water system, with the consequent breaking of the navigability in a large part of the watercourses. The importance

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[16] Based on the author's interview with Tanigami conducted on 13 March 2022.

[17] Study of landscape as a lifeworld is widely developed from the phenomenological perspective, of which Ingold (2000) is one of the most representative works.

of this change should never be underestimated, since with that the Kumano River ceased to be a road.[18]

From the geomorphological viewpoint, the opposite of the water courses in Kumano are the mountain paths, full of climbs, and descents. Kohechi is a perfect example of the latter. It symbolises in a certain sense the harshness of the Kumano pilgrimage, contrary to the ease that the travellers enjoyed when boarding a boat that led them down to the coast. However, there is a common point between both types of transport infrastructure apparently opposed: the leading role played by the local population in the historiography of the road.

The first record of the pilgrimage to Kumano by Kohechi dates from 1573 (Koyama 2004). It is the chronical of Doi Kiyoyoshi, a warrior from Iyo (Island of Shikoku) who made a journey to Kôyasan, Kumano and Ise to safeguard the soul of his father killed in a war. Then the entire country was immersed in continuous battles among warrior lords, a situation that would be settled decades later by the victory of Tokugawa family. During the Edo period, several pilgrims from different social groups, such as monks, writers, or tradesmen, left accounts of their journey through Kohechi. Thanks to their records, we know now that the use of Kohechi as a spiritual road to Kumano is much more recent than the medieval Nakahechi, even though the former is the shortest route from either Ôsaka or Kyôto. In fact, throughout 70 km of the route there are hardly elements alluding to the veneration of Kumano as a holy place, except for signposts that indicate Hongû together with other destinations.

Although a fair amount of academic work has been produced on Kohechi,[19] the one that best interprets in my opinion the historical importance of this road is the book written by two experts of Kôyasan University (Murakami and Yamakaghe 2001). This volume, based on their extensive archival and field research, analyses the evolution of the different roads that converge in Kôyasan, which is a place of Buddhist spiritual exercise for the esoteric Shingon School founded in the early ninth century by monk Kûkai (Fig. 9.2m). Among the roads studied by Murakami and Yamakaghe (2001), the best known is the one called "Chôishimichi" (Fig. 9.1). It departs from a temple located near the Kinogawa River and as was usual with ancient roads, follows exactly the mountain ridge until getting to Kôyasan. The guideposts set each 1 cho (109 m) symbolises the unquestionable character of Chôishimich as a pilgrimage road. After analysing other roads that emerged in different moments of the history, the authors of the book begin describing Kohechi in a somewhat reluctant tone. Their hesitation may be motivated by the legitimate objective of studying the paths converging in Kôyasan, which alone stands as an outstanding spiritual centre since the early Heian period. Another reason should be sought in the historiography of the road in itself.

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[18] The newspaper company Asahi published in 1954 a photography book, compiling vivid images of Kumano in a period in which the *danbei-bune* and the timber rafting were still doing their work (Tsutsui 1954).

[19] Among others, the Educational Board of Nara Prefecture published an extensive research report on Kohechi (Educational Board of Nara Prefecture 2002).

One of the chronicles cited in the aforementioned book is attributed to a *sake* brewer of Itami (Ôsaka), Yao Hachizaemon. Its documental relevance derives partially from precise description of the people he encountered on his way to Kumano: humble people turning wheels to make wooden utilities, or harvesting carrots to sell to Ôsaka, etc. The document also presents details on the practical aspect of the journey undertaken by the brewer from Ôsaka. Considering that richness in anthropological and touristic content, what is striking is the almost complete absence of reference to elements of veneration contrary to Nakahechi, where a considerable number of *ôjis* were deliberately created in the Middle Ages. Therefore, I share the interpretation of the two experts of Kôyasan University that Kohechi gained a certain relevance, although not to be exaggerated, as a pilgrimage route, just when the journey to Kumano ceased to be an ascetic exercise to be carried out at each one of the numerous steps set along the way. When the visit to the main sacred sites of Kumano was assumed to be the main objective for a majority of the faithful, Kohechi was presented as a valid and even convenient alternative to reach in a short time the destination.

However, visiting sacred places is not a privilege reserved for people who come from far away. Local people also have their spiritual world rooted in the physical and human geography of the place they inhabit. A noteworthy case from this viewpoint is the village of Totsukawa. In the 1950s, the municipal council commissioned the Educational Board of Nara Prefecture an extensive study of the geography and history of Totsukawa, the result of which was published several years later (Educational Board of Nara Prefecture 1961). The volume, when it comes to the analysis of the premodern roads, gives the name of Kôyasan-kaidô (road to Kôyasan) to what we know by Kohechi. We should not neglect this detail. In the people's faith, local divinities, Buddhist deities, and the syncretism represented by the Kumano shughendô tradition were bound into a complex system. In such a framework, Kôyasan held a prominent place, the access to which was provided precisely by the Kôyasan-kaidô, that is, Kohechi. In fact, there is a small temple called "Taishidô" (temple dedicated to Kôbô-Daishi, Kûkai) standing by a variant of Kohechi, near Totsukawa-Onsen (hot spring). Findings like this, both material and narrative, related to the veneration of Kôbô-Daishi indicate that Totsukawa, at least its western part, is reached by the influence of Kôyasan.

The event that most decisively claimed Koechi as a lifeline of the local people was the catastrophic flood disaster in 1889. Concerning this calamity, Uchi-Yoshino County elaborated a detailed report consisting of 11 volumes, one for each settlement, which have today enormous documental value.[20] That year on 18–19 August, a huge storm attacked Yoshino region with more than 1000 mm of rainfall in a single day. Large-scale landslides were caused at 1147 points of the Totsukawa River, the main tributary of the Kumano, and huge masses of land filled the muddy stream. In a very short time, as many as 53 new lakes emerged and, likely to break soon, threatened the

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[20] *Records of the Flood Disaster in Yoshino County (Yoshino-gun Suisai-shi)*, 11 vols. Uchi-Yoshino County, 1891. The municipality of Totsukawa reprinted the entire volumes in 1977. Kabata and Kobayashi (2006) is an analysis based on the *Records*, with a focus on the emigration to Hokkaido.

life of the people living downstream. Finally, the storm left 255 dead and 564 houses destroyed in the affected area, with the Totsukawa settlements the most severely damaged.[21] Along the same course of river some 20 km downstream, Kumano Hongû Taisha, until then erected on an extensive sandbank of the river, was washed away by the flood and rebuilt several years later on a nearby hill.

Among different ideas for the recovery of Totsukawa, the option of emigration to Hokkaidô, the northmost island of Japan, soon gained official support. The promoters of the proposal were some central government officials coming from Totsukawa, the governor of Hokkaidô, Nara Prefecture, and Uchi-Yoshino County. Various reasons justified the option: Investing in a new life was considered the best way to make an effective use of the economic aid granted by the Government to the people affected; those who lost their house would have a difficult time during the harsh winter if they did not have first a perspective towards their future; the empathy of a wide sector of Japanese people would facilitate the assistance necessary in different moments of the emigration. The determining factor, however, was the desire shared by the majority of the local population to remain united as a people with pride, rather than to disperse to seek life as each one could.

From October 18 to October 29, a total of seven groups of Totsukawa residents left for a trip to Hokkaidô. Together with those who departed in July of the next year, the emigrants summed a total of 2667 people. For the trip on foot to Ôsaka, all but one group walked along Kohechi, among other reasons, because it was this premodern path through the ridge of the mountains that was least affected by the disaster two months ago. The new town founded by the emigrants to Hokkaidô took the name of "Shin-Totsukawa" (new Totsukawa), and still today, it maintains symbolic and emotional ties with its village of origin in the Kii Mountains.

Cultural Landscape in Eternal Construction

The three dimensions considered throughout this chapter, that is, idealised model, place built through experience and people's lifeworld, are intertwined and all together configure the cultural landscape of the Kumano Routes. For our analysis, a specific route was selected in each section, the one that best highlights the theoretical aspect of the landscape that concerns us.

Obviously, none of the three dimensions is exclusive of a given route. Nakahechi was certainly where the model of the pilgrimage to the Pure Land arose with the creation of numerous *ôjis*. In that historical process, the asceticism along Ômine-Okugake michi practiced by *yamabushis* worked as an archetype to be reproduced on Nakahechi. However, we have no reason to suppose that the nobles of the Middle Ages did not have a sense of enjoying the scenery through the walking path, however, rough this might be. The Iseji travel guides illustrated the sequence of sights in such a way as to encourage people of all social classes to undertake a journey to Ise and

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[21] Based on the summary table by Kabata and Kobayashi (2006, p. 177).

Kumano. What moved the pilgrims of that time, however, was not only the desire to satisfy their aesthetic sensibilities. The trip also responded to the model of pilgrimage diffused as a programmed tour of sacred sites, where elements of Buddhism were incorporated into Shinto. The Kumano River and Kohechi stand out for their practical utility exploited by local inhabitants, those who needed them as a transportation route or simply a lifeline. That does not mean, however, that the other Kumano Routes did not work as roads for daily use throughout their long history. In sum, the three dimensions as a whole lead us once again to a theoretical reflection on the concept of cultural landscape, a reflection that is especially relevant when we are facing a reality like road.

As already noted at the beginning of this article, the Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Convention defined cultural landscape as follows:

> Cultural landscapes are cultural properties and represent the "combined works of nature and of man" designated in Article 1 of the Convention. They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/ or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal.

The quoted phrase expresses the legitimate position of UNESCO, as an international authority whose fundamental mission consists in evaluating different elements of cultural heritage to safeguard them. However, if we consider culture in its broadest sense of enduring codes that originate by the intervention of humans, aspects such as perception of the environment or habits created around it take on vital importance. Considering that human perception or habits are present in all types of landscape, the qualifier "cultural" added to landscape comes to be a redundancy, which, in a certain sense, could be understood as a vocabulary devised to manage landscape intervention distinguishing the natural and cultural aspects of it. In fact, the European Landscape Convention upholds a universalist definition of landscape, according to which all types of landscape can be an object of intervention, be it exceptional or ordinary, sophisticated or banal, or ordered or degraded.[22] Then, "cultural" seems to be an unnecessary adjective and can even be considered incidental.

When approaching the Kumano Routes, we have always attempted to understand them from a broad perspective of landscape studies in geography, where the concept of culture undoubtedly plays an important role, but not exactly as defined by the WHC. It was not necessary for us to put aside those sections of the Routes that, due to their insufficient state of conservation, are excluded from the inscription on the World Heritage List. The cultural meaning of a road goes far beyond a simple material medium for communication and the visibility created around it. Road is a key element for the interpermeating relationship between the human being and the physical environment of the Planet, a device that helps multiply a network of relations among humans and non-humans. The agents involved in this complexity in evolution are not only direct users of the road, such as travellers, boat operators, or

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[22] Takenaka (2021) makes a detailed analysis of the official recognition of the landscape in the WHC and the European Landscape Convention, as well as the landscape intervention in public policies based on both international agreements.

people forced to emigrate. Different groups working on the territory, like owners of lodging business, retail traders or timber brokers, are also crucial agents in motivating active uses of the infrastructure. In this long list we also must include the material elements that configure the proper road. The selection is not justified merely by the fact that the physical framework of the territory, with the circulation of air and water, has its own dynamism of transformation, but also because they act as a powerful communicator between human agents belonging to different generations, sometimes separated by a long time.[23]

The Kumano Routes offers us a paradigmatic example of cultural landscape, understood as manifestation of an interpenetrating relationship among different agents through both space and time, a system that is certainly complex but whose survival is ensured by enduring codes in permanent evolution. At the end of this modest contribution to the study of world pilgrimage, we can recall some aspects of the Routes analysed along this chapter in an attempt to intertwine them across human and non-human agents and different times.

When we set out a pilgrimage route, what we actually do is to mark in our imagination the destination where we wish to go in search of material or spiritual benefit. This imaginative action, however, needs to materialise on the territory to gain its sensorial value. In fact, a road created in our spiritual world indicates how long we should spend for the journey, which are the steps to follow, and even how we should be dressed. The Kumano Routes were for the members of the medieval nobility a way to reach the Pure Land, the land of the Kumano *kamis* that the *yamabushis* propagated in Kyôto taking advantage of their position of Kumano administrator. The *ôjis* stand as the most visible symbol of this idealised model of pilgrimage, and fixed on the earth as small sanctuaries, facilitated the reproduction and dissemination of the same model through vital experience of pilgrims. In premodern Kumano, there were even monks who, from Hamanomiya Ôji located at the coast near Kumano Nachi Taisha, sacrificed their life on the navigation tied to a small boat, believing that the currents of the ocean would lead them to the Fudaraku Pure Land (Fig. 9.2n).

Today the itinerary marked by the *ôjis* continues to be a fundamental piece that allows travellers to approach the spiritual world of Kumano, despite the long time that has elapsed since its creation and the enormous changes in the society in which we live. And we should not dismiss the power of language and illustration of the travel literature which, written by travellers of the past and today, have been connecting imagination and actuality, two spheres of the world that share the common programme of pilgrimage.

As the agents involved in the construction of cultural landscape are relentlessly interacting, a fixed separation cannot be established between actors and receptors, or active agents and passive ones. If pilgrims travelling like "ants queue" were the main actors along Iseji in the Edo period, the receptor was not limited to elements of the physical environment they passed through, such as mountains, rivers, and big trees or rocks. Workers who welcomed them in a teahouse or lodging, and people

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[23] To delve into reciprocal relationship between humans and non-humans, reference should be made to actor-network theory developed, among others, by French philosopher, Latour (2005).

who showed exceptional generosity helping humble pilgrims cross a river, offering overnight shelter, and even burying perished travellers were an essential part of the receptor. For the vital experience of the pilgrims, physical and human elements must have formed an ensemble that was difficult to separate. Local inhabitants cannot be reduced to their role of assisting visitors either. In modern times, people acting on the territory could also be active users of the road. Entrepreneurs of the forest industry and merchants of Shingû, along with boat operators, ensured the life of the river as a means of communication. The rafts and the rafters perfectly represent the synthesis between the human agents, the physical infrastructure, and the exploitation of resources that motivated the union of both.

Finally, attention should be paid again to the reciprocity between the human being and the physical environment, a relationship that does not stop evolving with the feedback that one exerts on the other. Located in the extreme south of the Kii Peninsula, Kumano is characterised by the rugged terrain of the mountain range and a humid climate. The records of the catastrophic flooding in the Meiji period recall the harsh natural conditions of the area and its geographical remoteness from the centre of political and economic power. That feeling of distance, combined with outstanding elements of the area's natural geography, such as a high mountain, a large rocky formation, or a waterfall, etc., works as a fundamental factor by which some specific places are recognised by many people to be sacred. The same happens with numerous well-known pilgrimage sites in the world. In almost all of them, it is a sense of magnificence, sublime, or divinity, rather than a physical feature in itself, that raises a particular site on earth to the position of a holy place.

The popular belief of Japanese people has been characterised for centuries by a polytheism rooted in the archipelago's geography, where the divinities, the *kamis*, are considered inhabitants of nature. The presence of countless divinities is what gave rise to an extraordinary variety of Shinto-related landscape throughout Japan. The syncretism with Buddhism further increased that diversity, while endowing the spiritual practices of people with a specific programme legitimised by the Buddhist doctrine. Therefore, we can consider the Kumano pilgrimage as an act of performing the journey to the Pure Land on a territory we can access with physical and spiritual efforts. The provision of the road with symbolic icons became an essential feature of that territory and served to perpetuate the popular loyalty to the programme of pilgrimage. Over a long time, the performing method increased its degree of artificiality and procedural perfection. This evolution is well present in the passage, for example, from the *nabikis* (outstanding elements of the natural environment) to the *ôjis* (small shrines located along the path), and later, to the textual and graphic representation of the "tour" in travel literature. The progressive articulation and sophistication of the pilgrimage programme was in no way an obstacle for people to identify and communicate with the physical environment of which they themselves are a part.

Far-reaching changes in spatial organisation that have taken place from modern times until today have facilitated gradual opening of the locality, including places considered sacred, towards the rest of the world. The origin of the people visiting Kumano is more and more wide-ranging, which is a positive fact to maintain the

dynamic relation of humans with this emblematic place of worship that emerged in Japan in ancient times. What needs criticism from the perspective of reflexive modernity is the exercise of overwhelming political and economic power tied up with the modern capitalism that, in the name of the construction of an efficient state and the progress of society, imposed uniform criteria of decision and standards for policy implementation. Caught in that dynamism, the Kumano Routes were cut off in numerous points by forestry roads and hydroelectric dams. The enormous power of modern engineering was mobilised for the sake of the demand of the urban and industrial society, rather than the development of the proper area as a territory inhabited by countless lives. Recognition of the cultural landscape as a whole set of locally stratified codes in permanent construction is an essential step to rehabilitate ourselves in our ability to better manage the diversity of the lifeworld born on this Planet.

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Chapter 10
Maya Pilgrimage, Ritual Landscapes, and Relations with Deities in Chiapas, Mexico

Joel W. Palka, Josuhé Lozada Toledo, and Ramón Folch González

Abstract Pilgrimage has been important in Maya cultures in Chiapas, Mexico, for over 2000 years. In this region, as in other parts of Mesoamerica, people have visited significant landscape shrines for rituals as part of their daily lives. Movements to sacred places, including mountains, caves, rock shelters, islands, and ancient ruins, have been necessary for Maya to maintain social relations with deities attached to these locales. Maya must interact with their deities at these ritual landscapes to provide them with offerings and prayers so that in turn the gods will give people rain, food, health, and prosperity. The authors show the significance of Maya pilgrimage and relationships with deities in case studies from Mensabak, Miramar, and Lacandon shrines in ancient Maya sites in Chiapas. The archaeological, historical, and ethnographic information used in this essay demonstrates that pilgrimage must be considered for comprehending many aspects of Maya culture over time, including settlement patterns, economic life, social organization, and cosmogony.

Keywords Maya pilgrimage · Chiapas · Ritual landscapes

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Introduction

Our chapter focuses on Maya pilgrimage to culturally significant shrines in geographical areas close to and distant from settlements in the Mesoamerican cultural area. One reason for Maya pilgrimages is not to journey to a distant place for personal or purely religious purposes, but for indigenous practical reasons related to interaction with deities attached to ritual landscapes (Figuerola Pujol 2010; Palka 2014). Maya maintain covenants and social relations with ancestors, gods, and non-human entities tethered to or residing within these geographical features to obtain things people need, including rain, food, health, and cosmic unity (Astor Aguilera 2010; Monaghan 2000). The gods must be appeased by Maya people who honour the covenants. Ultimately, these interactions are necessary for Maya to understand their world and create social cohesion. Hence, pilgrimage and communications with spiritual forces in the landscape are just as necessary as sharpening tools for agriculture and making pottery to carry water.

To have relations with the spiritual forces in order to maintain the cosmos and society, Maya must travel to the gods' homes or where they can be found and contacted. We refer to their pilgrimage shrines as *communicating places* where Maya social relations and connections with spiritual forces occur in ritual visits. The ritual landscape features important to Maya cultures include unusual geographical features, such as caves, mountains, water holes, and cliffs, which are frequently present in the karst topography of Mexico and Central America or Mesoamerica. These places have been culturally selected by Maya for deities' homes and pilgrimage shrines making them central ritual landscapes in this part of the world.

Maya Ritual Landscapes and Pilgrimage Shrines

Landscape features important for Maya cultures and ritual across time are similar to societies around the world: mountain tops, large caves or caves with water, springs, sheer cliffs near water, isolated boulders, and islands (Palka 2014). Maya and other people in Mesoamerica and around the world make pilgrimages to these natural geographical places where they have created shrines. Importantly, Maya have selected specific landmarks to be ritually important; not all mountains and caves, for instance, have been used in ceremonies or for pilgrimages. Some landscape features draw human attention for visits and ritual, such as tall pyramidal mountains, deep caves with water, and springs that initiate rivers (Taube 2004).

However, Maya have chosen their ritual landscapes not only for their natural geographical traits but due to their cultural and historical connections to certain locales (Figuerola Pujol 2010; Wilson 1995). They believe some significant places with definitive features, such as pyramidal mountains with caves and springs, are animate forces themselves, or they contain powerful non-human entities, including deities and ancestors (Taube 2004). Maya have what can only be described as social

relations with non-human beings and spiritual forces that they believe permeate or reside (*casas de los dioses*; *yatoch k'uh* in Lacandon Mayan, for instance) at these sites (Astor Aguilera 2010). Interaction with these forces at specific places in the ritual landscapes has been maintained over time. Also, the material evidence for this ritual interaction, including shrine constructions, art, and pilgrims' object deposits, draws additional Maya worshipers to them over time. These art works, buildings, and artefacts allow pilgrims to communicate with and placate deities and ancestors. The "spiritual magnetism" of early Maya rock art, for instance, has attracted pilgrims to shrines for centuries where people continue to perform rituals and leave material traces of this behaviour (Palka 2014; Preston 1992).

With the presence of shrine architecture and ritual objects, investigators have identified many Maya ritual landscapes for pilgrimage archaeologically. The immense Naj Tunich cave in Guatemala, for one, contains altars, human burials, artefact deposits, and paintings on its interior walls (Brady 2010). Maya hieroglyphs on the walls record arrivals and the overseeing of rituals by Maya elites (Stone 1995). These ritual episodes are viewed as pilgrimages to the cave, especially since no sizeable Maya settlements exist in or near the cave. The Naj Tunich cave has an impressive entrance, but it also has some large inner chambers, is deep, and contains water. Ancient Maya likely believed that this cave was a living entity, a home for gods and ancestors, and was a place where life-giving water and things such as food and soul energies were found, if we use ethnographic analogy with modern Maya societies seen below.

In another example, ancient Maya in Chiapas pilgrimaged to the Joljá caves, which are located within a mountain where a river emerges (Bassie-Sweet 2015). Here too, Maya created rock paintings on cave walls that depict people who have arrived within the cave to conduct ceremonies and communicate with cosmic forces at the cave shrine. Artefact deposits and signs of burning have also been noted in the caves. Investigators have not found Maya settlements at the base of the mountain with these caves, underscoring its importance as a ritual landscape. Through pilgrimage ritual, Maya created ties with resident spiritual entities at Joljá Cave. The geographical context of this shrine, especially the fact that the cave is inside a majestic mountain and has a waterfall that initiates a river, helps explain why Maya found this shrine spiritually, geographically, and socially important.

Archaeologists have also recovered ancient Maya deposits of pilgrimage ritual at Lake Amatitlán in highland Guatemala (Carpio Rezzio and Román Morales 1999; Mata Amado 2011). Visually impressive mountains, cliffs, and volcanoes surround this beautiful lake, which drew Maya worshippers. Shrines and ceremonial deposits dominate the archaeological finds at the lake. Cliffs and boulders around the lake contain rock art created by Maya pilgrims. Divers have also found numerous offerings of whole ceramic anthropomorphic effigies and stacked bowls placed in the lake's waters by Maya pilgrims in canoes. The rock art and ceramic offerings were left by Maya pilgrims at these important geographical features to communicate with gods and ancestors for positive outcomes for their lives, such as water for crops and the health of their communities through mediation with these spiritual forces found at these shrines. However, in this area, archaeologists have found habitation sites, but

the largest settlements, such as the ancient Maya capital of Kaminaljuyú, are more distant.

Contemporary Maya continue some ancient pilgrimage practices at the various ritual landscape features. Tzotzil Maya, for instance, still pilgrimage to mountain tops, and some with caves, to provide offerings for deities and ancestors (Holland 1964; Vogt and Stuart 2005). Their shrines contain altar constructions and deposits of ceramics, candles, crosses, and food offerings much like archaeological examples. Here, Tzotzil people pray for rain, agricultural abundance, and their family's health. They believe these mountains contain thirteen levels or compartments where gods, spiritual forces, and specific goods, including water, corn, and human souls, can be found (Vogt 1965). Pyramid-shaped mountains with archaeological deposits are particularly significant for the Tzotzil Maya. Social interaction with spiritual forces here is necessary for people to acquire what they need and to continue cosmic and social unity in the Maya world.

Contemporary Q'eqchi' Maya in Guatemala also undertake pilgrimages to and rituals at culturally important caves in animate mountains (Wilson 1995). Specific caves have been historically important to Q'eqchi' communities who have visited them over the long term. Caves are where Q'eqchi' ancestors and the earth lord, for example, can be contacted. The Q'eqchi' Maya appease these spiritual forces with prayer and offerings, including food, drink, and candles, to provide people what they need. These pilgrimages are especially important to obtain bountiful harvests and health for their communities. If Q'eqchi Maya migrate, they have to establish communication and ties with local ritual landscapes and their resident gods.

Currently, different modern Maya communities carry out pilgrimages to lakes for ritual purposes. The lakes often exist on the edge of or beyond Maya communities, much like the mountain and cave shrines discussed above. K'iche and Kaqchikel Maya in highland Guatemala, for one, walk to lakes to build elaborate altars with offerings on lakeshores (Molesky-Poz 2006). The offerings include salt and food placed on the ground towards the cardinal directions. These Maya people also make ceremonial fires nearby. Contemporary Lacandon Maya have also pilgrimaged to ritually important lakes in Chiapas (Petryshyn 2005). People from one settlement within a few days walk from Lake Pethá pilgrimaged to this lake to conduct rituals at several shrines in the area (Cook 2004). They gave offerings to resident gods in a ruined Maya temple at a large archaeological site, within cave entrances on the edge of the lake, and at cliffs decorated with rock art, including god images and hand prints. One cliff contains a late Precolumbian crocodilian design (*Itsam cab ayin* or *Itsamna* in Yucatec Maya culture to the north) who the Lacandon state is a manifestation of their god *Itsanok'uh* or *Itsanal*, who is a god of hail and cold winds that has crocodilian aspects (Palka 2005b). These beliefs demonstrate the continuities between ancient and modern Maya and their ritual landscapes. Pilgrimages to these culturally significant places revolve around maintaining social ties and covenants between Lacandon people and the spiritual forces who are found there.

Covenants and Social Interaction at Pilgrimage Shrines

As established in the previous section, Maya people over time have held that spiritual forces, including animate geographical features, ancestors, and gods, reside in or are attached to culturally significant landscape features (Figuerola Pujol 2010; Molesky-Poz 2006; Palka 2014). They have created shrines at these geographical locales in order to pilgrimage to and give ceremonial offerings to these non-human entities. Maya communicate with these entities through ritual to maintain covenants, or reciprocal relations, to achieve important goals: secure rainfall and abundant crops, acquire wealth and prosperity, and seek personal and community well-being, among other reasons (Monaghan 2000). Maya acquire these necessities by providing the spiritual forces residing in these landscape shrines with what they need from people: incense, food, beverages, and other offerings for their sustenance. People can also pray, sing, and dance to appease these non-human agents to obtain what they want. It is important to reiterate that Maya believe that significant geographical places, which in Chiapas are often mountains with cliffs and caves, in addition to springs and lakes, contain the powerful cosmic forces that provide Maya with food, vitality, and cosmic balance. Maya maintain close social relations with these forces as part of their quotidian lives, and thus they often visit the gods' ritual landscape abodes. Maya make constructions, altars, trails, and cemeteries at the locales as part of the constant social nexus with the spiritual forces, which have been called "ecological beings" tethered to these features (Astor Aguilera 2010; Figuerola Pujol 2010; Palka 2014).

These beliefs help explain why Maya go on frequent pilgrimages—they have to provide offerings to spiritual forces at their homes in important landscape features and Maya have to return there if they perceive that these forces do not help them. Furthermore, Maya's souls and bodies, especially in Chiapas, are linked to these landscape features and their resident spiritual entities, requiring social interaction between them (Figuerola Pujol 2010; Vogt 1965). Many Maya pilgrimage shrines exist on the landscape, and some are nearby and some are far away so that people can seek specific cosmic forces in each. Maya name these locales according to their anthropomorphic spiritual denizens, including "the house of the earth lord" and "Don Juan mountain" (Bassie-Sweet 2015; Figuerola Pujol 2010; Vogt and Stuart 2005). These practices emphasize the social relations that Maya have with the perceived beings in the topographic shrines (Astor Aguilera 2010). In other words, Maya have not just visited geographical shrines because of their awesome physical nature. They have to interact with non-human forces in these places to achieve cosmic balance and survival through pilgrimage to enact rituals according to the covenants with these beings (Monaghan 1995). This behaviour demonstrates that for Maya people their religion cannot be separated from the geography, economy, and social life, or the "practical" aspects of society in a Western sense, such as seeding a field or building a house. In order to get rain and food, Maya not only have to work the earth and cook, they have to make pilgrimages to landscape shrines to maintain covenants with their gods.

Maya rites at these pilgrimage shrines accentuate their complex social relationships with the local animate forces (Hamman 2002; Monaghan 1995). Comments in prayer at the shrines in these significant landscape features include "Earth lord, I have arrived to provide you with food" and "Sky god, I have come to burn incense for you". Maya people state that these places are houses with doors, roofs, and hearths, and that people cannot see the structures or the beings that live there (Pitarch Ramón 2010). Maya worshipers must visit these forces at their homes and entertain them, much like they have to do at their settlements. Their words at the shrines, the leaving of food offerings, and their perceptions of the shrines as deity houses indicate that Maya have social relations with spiritual forces like they do with people in their communities.

The following case studies from our research point out the importance of Maya pilgrimage to culturally important ritual landscapes as god residences in Chiapas, Mexico. Maya have selected numerous significant landscape features due to their unusual geographical nature that indicates they are the locales of myriad, powerful spiritual forces. Maya have to pilgrimage to these places to visit the abodes of non-human agents to maintain social relations and the covenants to acquire what they need and preserve their lifeways.

Lacandon Maya Pilgrimages to Ritual Landscapes

Contemporary Lacandon Maya are Yucatec speakers living in the forests of Chiapas. These people differ culturally and linguistically from the Ch'olti-Lacandon who resided at Lake Miramar in the colonial period (De Vos 1996; Thompson 1977). Although anthropologists have studied Lacandon Maya religious practices (Boremanse 2020; Bruce 1979; Bruce and Perera 1982; Marion 1991; McGee 2005), their pilgrimages have received little attention (Núñez et al. 2013; Palka 2005a, 2014; Petryshyn 2005; Straffi 2007; Tozzer 1907). The vestiges of Lacandon pilgrimage to landscape shrines include the presence of their incense burners, rock art, and graffiti. Of these three material elements, Lacandon incense burners and their use have received the greatest amount of study (Boremanse 2006; Bruce 1973; Fournier 1985; Fournier et al. 1987; García Moll and Fournier 1984; Lozada Toledo 2017; Núñez Ocampo 2015). Only recently have investigators analysed Lacandon rock art (Folch González 2018; Folch González and Lozada Toledo 2022; Lozada Toledo 2017; Palka 2005b, 2014) and graffiti (Lozada Toledo 2017; Palka 2005a; Scherer and Golden 2012). The objectives of Lacandon pilgrimages include agricultural fertility, curing illnesses, sustaining the gods, and maintaining cosmic equilibrium. These pilgrimages have been undertaken by small groups of adult men led by a settlement leader, called *t'o'ohil*, who officiates over the prayers, chants, offerings, and feeding the gods with incense burners.

Lacandon deities reside in two general geographic zones: the earth and the sky. The earth-places for gods of the earth and subterranean karstic areas are called *aaktun* ("cliffs, caves, boulders"). On the other hand, the sky-places are called *tunich*

("stones, Maya ruins") by the Lacandon. This term symbolizes areas, some with ruins like at ancient Maya sites, occupied by gods in the upper skies (Soustelle 1933). Celestial deities, such as *Hachakyum* (supreme deity of the Lacandon pantheon), inhabit the ruins of past Maya cities scattered throughout the rainforest, including the major site of Yaxchilán, Chiapas (Boremanse 1998; Núñez Ocampo 2015). Lacandon have often made pilgrimages to Maya ruins; material evidence of Lacandon shrines can be found at the sites of Mensabak, Kanankax (Lake Pethá), Budsilhá, Piedras Negras, Yaxchilán, Lacanhá, Bonampak, Lake Miramar, Dos Pilas, Palenque, and Tikal, among others (Fig. 10.1).

The best evidence for Lacandon pilgrimages is the presence of their ceramic incense burners at a geographical shrine (Butler 1935; Grube 1999; Maler 1901; García Moll and Fournier 1984; Tovalín and Ortiz 2009), which they call *yatoch k'uh* "god house". Lacandon use these incense burners, or "god pots" (*u lakil k'uh*), to provide offerings, food, and drink to the gods. Lacandon decorate the ceramic god pots with incisions, paint, and modelled heads and other features, such as hands, that represent their gods. Interestingly, Lacandon at Naja, Chiapas, use the term "*u k'abah*" (its/his/her name) to describe the painted designs on the ceremonial incense burners (Bruce 1968). Hence, the painted designs represent the names of the gods
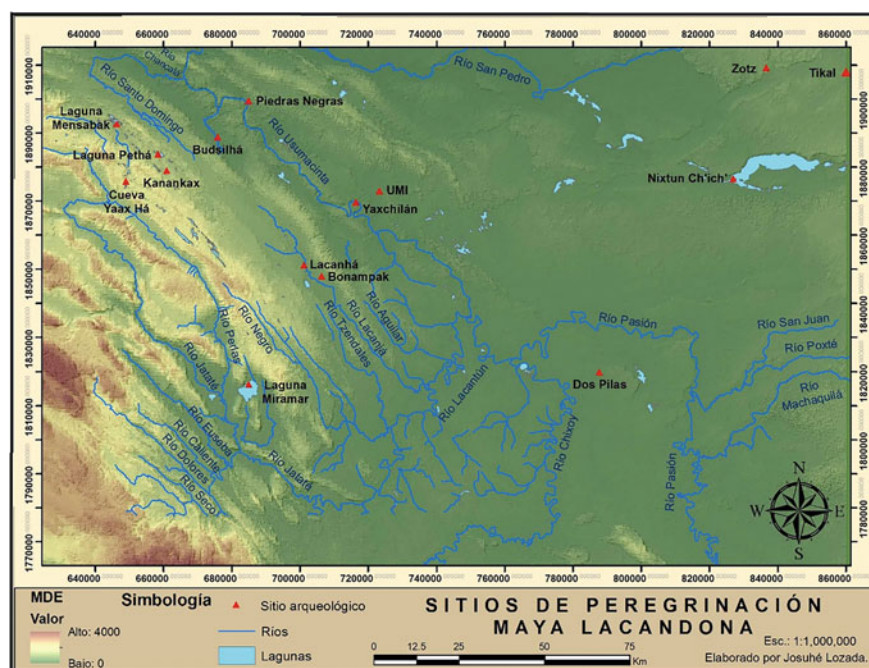

Fig. 10.1 Ancient Maya sites with evidence of Lacandon Maya pilgrimages and places mentioned in the text, including Yaxchilán, Lake Mensabak, and Lake Miramar in Chiapas, Mexico. *Source* Authors

shown on the different incense burners, which are perceived to be like persons, or living entities, according to Lacandon relational ontology.

It seems likely that Lacandon Maya created rock art designs at some of their pilgrimage shrines, as seen in other cultures. Some of these designs in the Lacandon region date to late Precolumbian times and into the historic period, likely in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The painted designs occur in red and black (Fig. 10.2). A selection of these rock art designs, including anthropomorphic stick figures, closely resemble designs from Lacandon incised gourds used to serve ritual drinks and painted designs on their ceremonial dress (Palka 2005a; Tozzer 1907). In these rock art designs there are many anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figures in scenes that may depict hunting or conflict between people.

Rock art designs that can possibly be attributed to Lacandon Maya include hand-prints (Folch González 2018; Lozada Toledo and Palka 2022; Palka 2014). These prints consist of positive prints from hands dipped in paint and negative handprints where the artists blew paint from their mouths over hands touching the shrine surfaces. The function of the act of painting handprints on shrines perhaps signifies the touching of sacred substances—the shrine itself—to receive spiritual power through the hand.

Fig. 10.2 Red and black rock art, possibly made by historic Lacandon Maya, on the Tsibana ritual limestone cliff, Lake Mensabak, Chiapas, Mexico. *Source* Josuhé Lozada Toledo
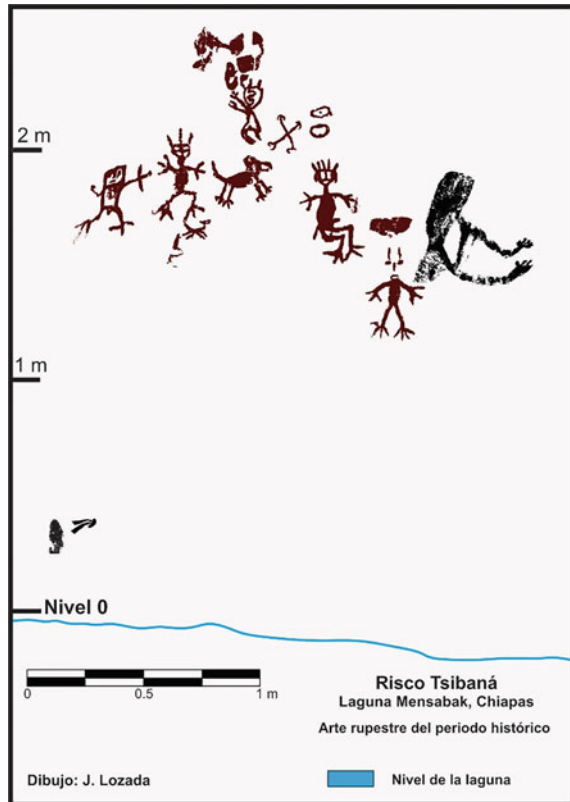
The significance of putting hand symbols, and actually feet too in this case, likely also alludes to the arrival and presence of pilgrims at the shrines who gain merit by showing the gods that they arrived at the shrine to communicate with them to maintain the religious covenants between people and the gods.

Besides Maya ruins, ancient objects have been venerated by modern Lacandon Maya as deities with animate powers and objects of communication with their gods. At Dos Pilas, Petén, Guatemala, it appears that historic Lacandon living nearby could have carved a round "sun" symbol and zoomorphic designs (Palka 2005a), possibly a monkey similar to rock art paintings on the Tzibana cliff at Lake Mensabak (Lozada Toledo 2017; Palka 2014). Lacandon have painted or incised similar designs on their ceramic incense burners, gourd bowls, and ritual cotton tunics (Tozzer 1907). Lacandon also incised round solar icons and zoomorphs on an ancient ceramic bowl from a cave near Lake Miramar, Chiapas, which Lacandon religious specialists used for ceremonial purposes (Soustelle 1937). Still more of these designs were discovered in red paint on the stone blocks of a ruined wall in a building at the site of Budsilhá, Chiapas (Scherer and Golden 2012), which also may have been created by Lacandon pilgrims carrying out rituals there.

Investigators have ethnographically reported Lacandon Maya pilgrimages to their major shrine at the ancient Maya ruins of Yaxchilán in Chiapas (Boremanse 2020; Charnay 1887; McGee 2005). The sheer quantity of their incense burners found within and over ruined structures and near stone monuments attests to the ritual importance of this site for historic and modern Lacandon people. Lacandon from settlements in northern and southern Chiapas have pilgrimaged to Yaxchilán. The ethnographic accounts indicate that Lacandon created shrines at specific buildings at this ruin, which they believed were the houses for specific deities that they visited on a ritual circuit.

McGee (2005) went on a pilgrimage to Yaxchilán with Lacandon men and boys from Naja, Chiapas, and he recorded events that took place on this trip to this ruin, or *tunich* in Lacandon. The pilgrimage circuit began in Structure 19, called the Labyrinth by archaeologists. Lacandon pilgrims believe they visit the house of their god *Itsanal* in Str. 19 and his kitchen in nearby Str. 78. After giving offerings for *Itsanal* in these structures, the pilgrims proceeded to Structure 23, which is the house of the god *Bol*, the god of the fermented *balché* tree bark and honey drink used in rituals. Then they stopped at the house of *K'in*, the sun god, in Str. 11. Following visiting this shrine, they went to Str. 6 where *Sakapuk* lives in the lower part and *Ak'inchob* lives in the upper part of the building. Following the offerings to these gods, the Lacandon next went to Str. 21 where they believe *K'ayum*, the god who plays the drum and sings during *balché* drinking rituals, resides in his house.

Finally, the Lacandon pilgrims arrived at Str. 33, the house of the creator god *Hachakyum* ("Our true lord/god") where a head-less stone statue representing the god is found (Fig. 10.3). Archaeologists found a large number of Lacandon pottery fragments associated with this building; thus, it has always been an important shrine for historic Lacandon Maya (Fournier 1985). In fact, explorers likely named this site after realizing the importance of the ruins to the Lacandon and their visits to *Hach Bilam (Yaxchilán) Hachakyum*. The adjacent Strs. 25 and 26 are considered to be the

Fig. 10.3 Str. 33 at Yaxchilán, Chiapas, the house of the Lacandon God *Hachakyum*, and the Lacandon "navel of the trees and earth" represented by Stela 31. *Source* Josuhé Lozada Toledo

kitchen structures belonging to *Hachakyum*. In front of Str. 33 rests Stela 31, which is a large carved stalactite taken from a cave by ancient Maya pilgrims. The Lacandon believe this monument is the "navel of the trees and earth", and they leave offerings here as well. To finish their ceremonial circuit, the Lacandon make their way to Str. 41 at a high point at Yaxchilán, which is the house of *Hachakyum's* helper called *K'ulel.*

Ancient Maya ruins, like significant mountains, caves, and lakes, were conflated with geographical features by Lacandon as communication places for pilgrims to interact with the gods. The Lacandon shrines at Yaxchilán as homes of the gods in the ritual landscape demonstrate the importance of Maya pilgrimage as social interaction with spiritual forces at important geographical places. Significantly, the Lacandon pilgrimage to the site and back to their settlements, in addition to their movements about the site, follow a general east-to-west direction like the movement of the sun. People travel east to the site like the rising sun and then west like the setting sun. Furthermore, Str. 33, the house of Hachakyum and the location of the world navel, acted as the *axis mundi* or cosmic centre in Lacandon religion, cosmogram, and ritual. Lacandon needed to travel to this site and its god houses to leave offerings for their deities to communicate with them, continue social interaction with the gods, and maintain the covenants by feeding the gods so that they would give people what they required.

The Timeless Maya "Small Sea": Lake Miramar

Lake Miramar stands out among the many lakes of the Lacandon rainforest in eastern Chiapas because it is the largest (6 km in diameter), hundreds of metres deep, shaded blue and yellow in its crystalline warm waters, and lined by unusual rock formations, such as mountains with cliffs and caves (Fig. 10.4). At an elevation of 230 m, the bottom of the lake actually rests below sea level; local hearsay mentions that "*ingenieros*" used a 500 m long cable to measure the lake depth and did not reach the bottom. In 2019, investigators led by Folch González used a handheld depth gauge with a 260 ft/80 m range, which we reached merely 150 m from shore. Miramar is geologically similar to Lake Lachúa in Alta Verapaz, Guatemala (250 m in depth for a diameter of 2.3 km; Machorro 2005). No rivers feed the lake; the water comes and drains from underground sources. Water levels fluctuate less than a metre between seasons, which is rare in the Lacandon rainforest. A constant water level is appealing for Maya who believe supernatural entities inhabit the place and maintain the lake water.

The mountains surrounding the lake include Cerro El Mirador in the north and Chuncerro in the south. Both have natural springs in addition to hundreds of caves and white cliffs. In the southwestern side of Chuncerro there is a sulphur water spring where the Lacandon Maya have claimed that the sun enters the underworld

Fig. 10.4 The prominent Cerro El Mirador ("The Look Out") peak and large rectangular cave entrance (centre-right) at Lake Miramar, Chiapas, Mexico. *Source* Ramón Folch González

to the west at night (Soustelle 1971; Blom and Duby 1957). These geographical attributes contribute to Lake Miramar's significance in Maya lowland ritual landscapes, religion, and pilgrimage.

On the west lakeshore, cliffs contain "*El Muñeco*", an Olmec style high relief usually found in the Pacific Coast of Guatemala (Stein 1979) and in the Grijalva River Valley (Jones 1979). It is also similar to Monument 40 of La Venta (Clewlow and Corson 1968). Olmec men sitting at the entrance caves are found in other sacred places, like Chalcatzingo, Oxotitlan, or La Venta. They represent ancestors whose spirits were believed to reside in the earth, mountains, and otherworldly locations (Gillespie 2008). Examples of this specific figure are usually up to 45 cm in height (Navarrete 1972), but the one in Miramar is 1.5 m tall, the largest known. Contemporaneous large format examples of rock carvings next to water in the Maya region include Tzibana (Lozada Toledo 2015), San Diego (Palka 2014), and Xoc (Ekholm-Miller 1973), which show the importance of elites and gods being depicted in sacred waters since Preclassic times (ca. 800 BCE--200 CE). A face painted in the Miramar cliff "*Las Pinturas*" from the Preclassic period (Folch González 2018) shares similarities with the ones reported by Niederberger (2006: 175) in Tlapacoya. This site was also a Preclassic sanctuary on a lake in Central Mexico with Olmec art where water deities were worshipped (Barba 2002). Some Maya pilgrims from a large Preclassic site nearby likely made or visited the lake's early shrines (Rivero Torres 1993).

The rocky shores of Lake Miramar host hundreds of caves which contain ossuaries (Blom 1956; Folch González 2018; Peterson 1955a, b). Some of these were reported to be used for cremating human remains as follows:

> …we saw that the floor was composed mainly of/bones, in some places several feet thick - - many incrusted with limestone drippings, many calcinated, and some burnt. The/way piles of bones were placed into natural niches on the side of the main chamber - - and taking into account the/profuse scattering and number - - and the fact that much ash was found and partly calcinated and burnt bones. (Peterson 2019, p. 6)

In caves, we also found sculptures in springs and carved stalactites with human faces (Folch González and Lozada Toledo 2022). In another case, water exits from a cave and covers a small stone sculpture of a water god where rites for acquiring water, rain, and agricultural fertility likely took place (Fig. 10.5). During the rainy season, this sculpture is in the water. Importantly, the water god shrine is found next to the Preclassic "*El Muñeco*" carving and a cave ossuary, providing ritual stops in a Maya pilgrimage circuit to visit different deities. The amounts of bones deposited inside these caves exemplify the image of a mountain of ancestors. Spirits of the earth, water, the sun, and ancestors were consulted in these places.

During the Late Classic (ca. 600–900 CE) period at Miramar a large sanctuary was built at the *Isla de los Templos*; this island was terraformed where two plazas, platforms, canoe landings, and one temple were built (Rivero Torres 1992). Tombs, architecture, and statues were made in the Toniná style, a major Classic Maya site found to the northwest (Just 2005; Folch González 2018). This polity (100 km away) possibly made the Miramar Island sanctuary or at least managed it as some of their elites were likely buried there. Possible mentions of Miramar as *Lakam-Tun* are
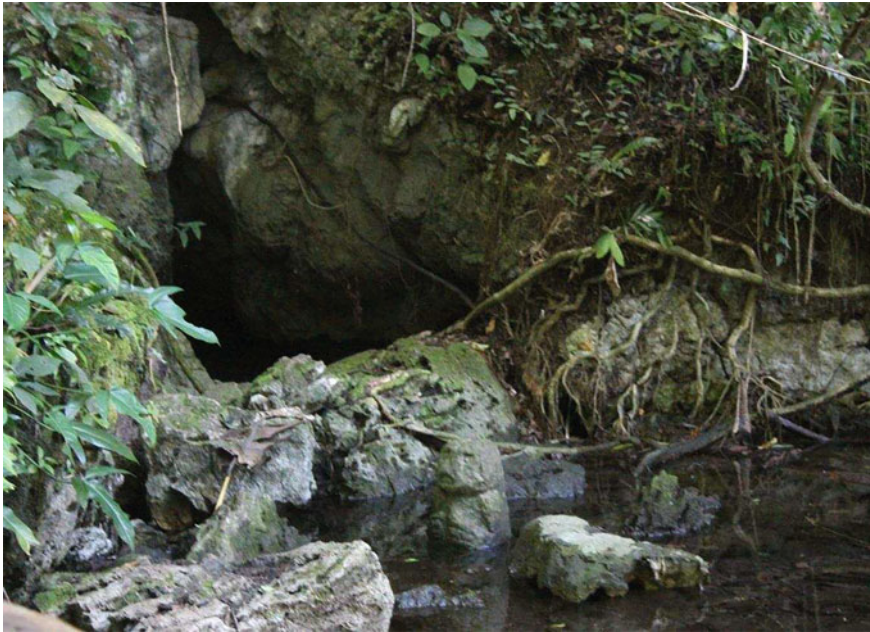
Fig. 10.5   Water deity sculpture (lower centre) shrine at a cave on the shore of Lake Miramar, Chiapas, Mexico. *Source* Ramón Folch González

found in Classic Maya texts from Yaxchilán, Seibal (Ceibal), and Itzán (Stuart and Houston 1994). The location of the place name in texts from the Usumacinta region near Miramar makes it likely this island site, and since historic documents name this lake as *Lakam-Tun*, suggesting the site was important enough to be recorded as the origin of certain nobles over a long period. A Classic period Zoque vase showing evidence of foreign visitors to Miramar at this time was found in the Cave of the Sun in the western cliffs of Chuncerro Mountain. People placed it to collect water in the same context as similar vessels are found in Zoque caves in Western Chiapas almost 300 km away (Folch González 2018).

During the historic period we know of Miramar, or *Lakam-Tun* in Ch'olan Mayan languages, as a fortified village within a region known as *Tezulutlan* or "Land of War" during the early sixteenth century (AGG 1936–1937; De Vos 1996; Lee 1996). Tzeltal and Tzotzil people living nearby called this area and its people *Lakanton*, which probably resulted in the contemporary Spanish ethnic term *Lacandon* for local Yucatec speakers (see below). The islands and mountains provided defence during these unstable times, and these sanctuaries used as fortifications could be to protect the temples and also be under divine protection (Hernandez and Palka 2019; Palka 2023). Living in the sanctuary meant access to the economic exchange and the markets generated by pilgrims. In this period most of the rock art was painted on the northern shore of the lake (Folch González and Lozada Toledo 2022). Changes in the painting's colours, designs, and locations show new uses of the landscape, the

abandonment of the terraced Classic Island and the new settlement of *Lakam-Tun* on another island. Postclassic pottery from this period shows foreign influence, notably a "Mixtec" incense burner with the shape of a bird head that likely came from the Guatemalan Highlands (Folch González 2018).

The importance of Miramar was likely religious, and it was not a primary political power at a regional scale. The place acted as a sanctuary, or a circuit of shrines, within a visually striking landscape likely associated with water and underworld abodes. The presence of material culture from distant areas like the Pacific Coast, the Zoque area, and Olmec civilization suggests access to Miramar was not restricted. As mentioned in Spanish documents, Ch'olti-speaking Maya here in the historic period also spoke Nahuatl, indicating contact with people of this linguistic group from Chiapas, Guatemala, and Central Mexico. The management of the sanctuary was likely in the hands of a regional ritual centre at or near the lake, which must have benefited from the markets and trade that tend to form in these places as well as privileged access to shrines and burial spots. The religious and economic importance of pilgrimage shrines also can lead to local political prominence.

The sacredness of a site far from the Spanish control can be studied through local oral histories and the few reports from expeditions to the lake. Modern Lacandon Maya legends and the 1586 report of a Spanish conquest expedition to the lake shed some light on the subject (Peterson 1952). The surrounding mountains and rivers play a central role in most stories as well as the violence and possibly armed conflicts of the past.

The story "The Origin of Lakes" (Boremanse 1986, 2006) as told by the southern Lacandon mentions how Lake Miramar was formed after the *wayantekob* (group of minor elemental gods) threw a star at a mountain near San Quintin where the house of *Bayubanuk* (a fellow *Wayantekob*) was located. Having been wiser than them, this god saw the star coming towards his house and deflected it, making it crash at the base of a mountain. Where the star crashed, the lake was formed with all its fish, frogs, turtles, and crocodiles. This short story is significant to understand Miramar as significant place, the *Wayantekob* are a group of fire, earth, and water gods which live on earth, but can travel to the sky (Boremanse 1986, 2006), and *Bayubanuk* is a minor water deity which gives moral counsel to men and also communicates with the gods (Boremanse 2006). The star is possibly the planet Venus or the morning star (Boremanse 2006). A similar version of the star-throwing myth exists in the Metzabok (also Mensabak) area with *Hachakyum* and *Mensabak* as the protagonists.

On a previous work (Folch González and Lozada Toledo 2017) we have discussed the presence of snakes and water monsters in Miramar in local lore; additional information is given by Bruce (1968) about a *k'uk'ulkan* (feathered serpent), a malicious being (unlike the civilizing hero Quetzalcoatl), a two-headed snake that inhabits *Chan k'ak'na* (Small Sea, i.e. Lake Miramar) which devours men.

Other Lacandon myths recall the *Nawat-o*, a group of Lacandon who spoke a different dialect perhaps with more Nahuatl loan words than other Lacandon areas (De Vos 1996). They are described as wielding long spears that could pierce a tree and as worshippers of a god called *Mex K'uk Chan* (Boremanse 2006). The mentioning of arrows shot by a "*caña de carrizo*" refers to the use of *atlatl*, the dart propeller

typically used by Nahua and Maya warriors since the Early Postclassic Toltec art present at Chichen-Itza. *Ah Mex K'uk Chan* ("One of the squirrel/quetzal beard") was the ruler of Chichen-Itza and later worshipped as Quetzalcoatl, the feathered serpent (Piña Chan 1980) in Yucatan. These unusual references of Yucatecan people living in Miramar could refer to refuges from the Kowoj Maya who were Yucatecan speakers that fled the Peten Lake's area in 1697 or a reference to a much older group that brought the cult of the feathered serpent into the area.

We already mentioned the aquatic monster that is said to live at Miramar, and another monster in Lacandon myths is an Iguana that lived on the eastern edge and once swallowed the moon (Boremanse 2006). This could be a reference to the moon being swallowed by the earth just like the sun does at night. Ethnohistorical data is rich picturing Miramar as the place where supernatural beings and landscape creating gods live. They have agency on the landscape and were an integral part of life for the societies that once inhabited the area and for foreign visitors. The materiality accumulated over millennia is still seen in the appeal this site has for tourism and the newer interpretations of the non-human beings living there. The absence of important Maya capitals around the area of Lake Miramar can therefore be due to it being an important neutral sanctuary and pilgrimage site.

Mirador Mountain and Cliff Shrines at Lake Mensabak

Preclassic Maya (ca. 800 BCE—200 CE) travelled up the Tulijá River in north-eastern Chiapas, Mexico and encountered the impressive pyramidal Mirador Mountain with caves on an island in a beautiful lake at the river's headwaters—all important ritual landscapes (Fig. 10.6; Palka 2014; Palka and Sánchez 2012). Mirador Mountain is the quintessential Mesoamerican landscape of origin since it is stained red on its east cliff, hollow with numerous caves, has water at its base, and is cleft at the top where gods opened it to release water, food, and spiritual essences. Modern Lacandon Maya living here state that their rain and war god called *Mensabak* threw a star or meteor and sheered off the side of the mountain. The ritual Mirador Mountain landscape features recall those of the sacred mountains in the Aztec myth of their origin place at *Aztlán* and the ancient Maya concept of origins and renewal of life at Flower Mountain (Elzey 1991; Taube 2004).

The Preclassic Maya extensively modified Mirador Mountain by constructing a ceremonial complex with temples, plazas, and canoe ports at its northern base and thirteen terraces up the northern side of the mountain. These terraces correspond to the thirteen levels, or compartments, in the Maya overworld (Konrad 1991; Vogt 1965). These terraces also contain temples, altars, cave entrances, and boulder shrines, which served as ritual stops as Maya moved up and down the slope during their pilgrimages. Maya constructors also levelled the mountain summit and built a plaza and temple near a massive vertical cave entrance and split at the mountain top. These Maya placed offerings of ceramics, and perhaps food and incense, at the shrines and in the vertical cave shaft at the mountain's summit.

Fig. 10.6 Mirador Mountain on an island in Lake Mensabak, Chiapas, Mexico. Note the artificially levelled summit, the red stain on the exposed east cliff, and raised terrace construction area on the north (right) side. *Source* Joel Palka

Later, Late Postclassic Maya (ca. 1300–1700 CE) returned to Mensabak to carry out pilgrimage rituals on Mirador Mountain (Palka 2014). These Maya, too, went up the Tulijá River in search of its source and discovered the large hollow mountain, or they already knew about this major pilgrimage shrine. It is even possible that the name of the Tulijá River comes from the Postclassic Nahua terms *Tula*, or *Tollan*, meaning "place of the reeds" (Becerra 1980, p. 345), related to the place of *Aztlán*. They left offerings of ceramics and likely food in the shrines and caves just like the Preclassic Maya. However, the Postclassic Maya buried some of their dead within select caves on the mountain. These later Maya also buried their dead in other ritual caves and cliff shrines with rock art around the Mensabak Lake (Cucina et al. 2015). Maya pilgrimaged to these shrines to leave offerings of ceramics and food for their ancestors and deities who resided in the cliffs and caves. They also burned offerings, incense, and human bones at these sacred sites. To further communication with the powerful entities located here, the Postclassic Maya painted designs and handprints on the cliff faces. One of these icons depicts the Mesoamerican rain god, Tláloc, who has round eyes, a diamond-shaped headdress with a curl, and carries a water jar that releases rain. Contemporary Lacandon Maya (see below) believe this painting is a manifestation of their rain god Mensabak, who maintains the world of the dead

(Boremanse 2020). Thus, they maintain beliefs at this cliff shrine related to hundreds of years of religious ritual.

It is very likely that Maya believed Mirador Mountain was a significant origin place for water, rain, food, deities, and people (Taube 2004). They may have felt it was an animate mountain with spiritual powers in itself. The large boulders on its north slope and the extensive caves represented spiritual forces with whom the Maya had to maintain covenants and social relations for cosmic balance (Astor Aguilera 2010; Monaghan 2000). Maya rituals allowed for the feeding and appeasing of specific spiritual forces connected to this place. The cliff shrines likely were seen by the Maya as the abodes of additional gods and ancestors who were the mediators between people and the gods who brought the necessities to Maya communities.

Contemporary Lacandon Maya living near Lake Mensabak continued these religious pilgrimage traditions at the geographical shrines located here (Boremanse 2020). Lacandon have pilgrimaged to the summit of Mirador Mountain where they burned incense in ceramic incense burners so that resident deities would cure sick relatives. They also burned incense and gave food offerings to deities related to land and water, such as a lunar goddess *Akna*, on a small island in front of the mountain. Lacandon also travelled to various cave shrines around the lake, many with ancestral skeletal remains (Fig. 10.7), to visit deities living there to ask them for rain, bountiful harvests, and the health of their communities. They also visited the gods *Tsibana* (also *tzibana*), who lives in a cliff with rock art of the same name, and *Mensabak*, who lives within the cliff with the Tláloc design, to petition them to take their dead and care for them (Boremanse 2020; Palka 2014).

Some Lacandon also believe that a water serpent called *Kanija* lives in the lake. Interestingly, the Tsibana rock art panel contains a monumental Postclassic feathered serpent (*Quetzalcoatl* or *Kukulkan*) design that remains submerged unless the region has experienced prolonged droughts (Palka 2014). Perhaps Postclassic and historic Maya provided offerings to this entity at this shrine to appease it so that it would help the rains return. Clearly, social relations with non-human beings at these shrines have been important for the modern Lacandon Maya, and their pilgrimages are not just personal visits to impressive geographical features. Communicating with the animate landscape has been important too, since some of these places also were living energies that needed to be visited, fed, and placated (Brown and Emery 2008; Molesky-Poz 2006).

Conclusions: Maya Pilgrimages to Communicating Places

The discussion and examples in this study are important to understand Maya pilgrimage to ritual landscapes from the past to the present. Maya and other Mesoamerican people have incorporated pilgrimage to shrines in areas surrounding their settlements, in addition to travelling to distant places, to communicate with spiritual forces with whom they need to interact. Maya must sustain contact with their ancestors, deities, and other similar non-human entities to get things they need

Fig. 10.7 Lacandon man visits a cliff shrine, called Sak Tat, which has human skeletons and historic Lacandon incense burners. Postclassic Maya buried dead relatives and undertook communication rituals there. *Source* Joel Palka

from the spirit world (Astor Aguilera 2010; Monaghan 1995; Sandstrom 2005) and sustain their bodies, souls, and future generations (Figuerola Pujol 2010). For the covenants where humans and gods receive things they require, Maya interact ritually and socially with the gods at culturally selected places that include mountains, caves, springs, and cliffs (Brown 2004; Monaghan 2000). Maya feel these places are made up of animistic forces; hence, they are seen as living geographical locales (Wilson 1995). Often Maya complete circuits to visit various spiritual forces at their abodes in the landscape (Boremanse 2020; Wilson 1995). The interaction is viewed as more powerful, and the rituals more efficacious in appeasing spiritual forces, if the communication and social relations occur at the gods' houses, which are often located away from Maya settlements (Palka 2014).

We have shown that Maya pilgrimages involve frequent travels to culturally significant landscape shrines for ritual communication and social relations with local spiritual forces, so people can maintain cosmic balance and acquire things they need. Since the Maya gods have many homes, or places of access, and they are contacted at numerous significant places, people have constructed a large number of pilgrimage shrines. The shrines contain architecture, art, and offerings that allow communication with the cosmic forces. Hence, geography, pilgrimage, and ritual artefacts permeate

the Maya world and are important for social relations between people and their deities for the continuation of the world and society.

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Part III
Contemporary and Future Pilgrimage Directions

Chapter 11
The Post-contemporary Way of St. James and Its Future

Lucrezia Lopez and Rubén C. Lois González

Abstract Mobility is a peculiarity of the post-secular pilgrimage, and pilgrimage is a model of transnational mobility. As several studies have proven, mobility and pilgrimage are two related aspects of the post-contemporary era. Both satisfy the anxiety of the post-contemporary human being, making it possible to adapt spaces, practices and behaviours to a changing scenario. This case study refers to The Way of St. James, the main pilgrimage route in the world, that has undergone several changes throughout time, the most evident one is its secularisation (and its manifold implications). Indeed, its motivations have increasingly diversified. Moreover, the route offers an alternative form of sustainable travel, away from crowded centres, and in full contact with rural areas, it is a fashionable travel alternative, with plural and transversal consumption patterns. Considering these premises, the main aim of the present research is to explore and detail the main transformations that are affecting The Way of St. James from a post-contemporary point of view. Thus, we intend to draw the profile of the "post-secular pilgrim", his/her *quest* and the possibility to experience such a cathartic moment along a pilgrimage route that, once again, has adapted its being to history. Therefore, we advance a systematisation of the main changes of the Way that frame it into the category of "infrasecular pilgrimage space", pointing out its dynamic cohabitation and coexistence of beliefs and values. Finally, we propose a taxonomy of pilgrimage mobilities and introduce future directions.

Keywords The Way of St. James · Mobility · Infrasecular pilgrimage space · Post-secular pilgrim · Taxonomy of pilgrimage mobilities

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Introduction

Since the 1960s in Western Europe, beliefs and practices towards achieving new values associated with integrity, health and the well-being of body-mind-spirit have developed, thus highlighting the emergence of a progressive interest towards a more holistic and subjective dimension that has reached its *climax* in present days (Harris 2013; Kong 2010; Peach 2002). The result is a change in the relationship between sacred and religion. For example, traditional religious legitimisation, based on institutions regulating how society functions (Croatto 2002; Geertz 1987), has seen its balances altered as its canon has been challenged by religious individuals and pluralisms (Asad et al. 2009; Gallagher and Newton 2009).

Different authors have questioned the death of religion, but religion does not die but is transformed: we are witnessing a post-contemporary secularisation of its meaning (Kong 2010; Milbank 1990; Rorty and Vattimo 2005). While religion remains important, it is no longer strictly understood from an institutional point of view, but reaches a subjective dimension, which repositions the individual at the centre of its interests. Thus, religion remains a cultural system that contributes to social cohesion (Berger 1971; Durkheim 1915). Proof of this is the proliferation of personal religions, more or less secularised, which confirm the persistent need for religiosity for mankind. We are therefore witnessing a post-secular return of religions (Taylor 1989): post-contemporary religiosity is associated with greater spirituality. As a result, new subjectivities proliferate as expressions of the "subjective turn" (Heelas and Woodhead 2005; Taylor 1991). Traditional narratives, rituals, myths and religious symbols provide a setting where post-secular religiosity is played out; however, while they are contingent, they are not necessary (Gökariksel 2009).

In this scenario, pilgrimage routes assume a central role because they satisfy different subjectivities; the wide offer of a cultural route and pilgrimage responds to several *quests*,[1] and, with it, different motivations and travel expectations. In this sense, pilgrimage is a physical and metaphysical journey, which for centuries has hidden and revealed (at the same time) a certain potential for transformation (Maddrell 2013; Scriven 2018). This feature has contributed to the popularity of routes, understood as opportunities to achieve a personal and/or spiritual renewal. In this process of transformation, post-contemporary perceptions and legacies of the past alternate, including rites, practices and symbols continue to feed social and spatial interactions. These transformations (detailed below) reveal how tourism is a contemporary metamorphosis of pilgrimage and travel; the secularisation of pilgrimage has modified the structural themes of symbolic meaning and mystical power, transforming originally sacred places into secular, and in most cases, tourist sites.

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[1] It is one of the first definitions of pilgrimage as a spiritual journey that involves the search for oneself, and as such, is part of a process of formation of the individual (Morinis 1992; Osterrieth 1997; Turner and Turner 1978), as evidenced by the narrative of the Middle Ages and the pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela and Jerusalem. At the end of this process, and thanks to the encounter with the sacred, the new identity or status originates.

Based on these premises, the main objective of this contribution is to analyse and detail the main transformations of the Way of St. James from a post-contemporary point of view. We also intend to draw the profile of the "post-secular pilgrim", his or her intimate search and the possibility of living such a cathartic moment along a pilgrimage route that, once again, has adapted its essence to history. From a theoretical point of view, we highlight conceptual pillars to understand post-contemporary dynamics: mobility, pilgrimage, and motivation. Supposedly far from each other, these pillars actually feed each other because every movement has its motivation, which, in turn, also characterises the pace and the sense of movement (as will be shown in the case study). Mobility is a characteristic of the inner dimension of the post-contemporary pilgrim, and pilgrimage is an example of transnational mobility (alongside its different impacts) (Coleman and Eade 2004). In our hypermobile society, or one that, after the COVID-19 crisis is returning to its hypermobility, the close relationship between mobility and motivation is, in some way, the basis of a continuous redefinition of space and its values. In regards to the case study, we analyse how, after its resurgence, the Way of St. James has become more popular in recent decades (an increase in international pilgrims, explosion of tour operators who offer organised walks, growing literary production, etc.). Today, the experience of the Way is within reach of an increasingly varied and diversified public. As a result of this review, we advance a systematisation of the main post-contemporary changes of the Way. These changes induce us to refer to the Way as "space of infrasecular pilgrimage" thus highlighting the dynamic coexistence of beliefs and values. Finally, we advance a systematisation of its different mobilities and introduce some reflections on the future of the Way, considering post-contemporary cultural transformations and the trends to which current behaviours seem to point towards.

Pilgrimage and Mobility: A Brief Overview

The term pilgrim derives from the Latin *peregrinus*, which comes from *peragrare*. Etymologically, this refers to those who through the fields *per agrum* (*or per agere*), came to the Roman civitas from another political region (García Cantero 2010); for this reason, it ended up describing those who came from or went abroad (Caucci von Saucken 1989, 1993), the people travelling or people without the right to citizenship (Oursel 1978). In short, initially the pilgrim was an unknown foreigner, for whom no one responded and who, coming from another reality, was a cause for concern (Hernando 2007). This origin alludes to a legal value of the term, since it refers to foreigners who, not being Roman citizens, did not enjoy the relative rights, for which *ius gentium*[2] was valid, against the *ius civile* of the Romans. To legally regulate this figure, in the year 242 BC the *praetor peregrinus*, that is, a judge of foreigners who

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[2] According to Pardo Gato (2005, p. 220): "it could be said that the Way of St. James was the genesis of a "ius gentium", since with it a kind of European private international law was born", also the Italian historian Cherubini (1998) affirms that the pilgrimage contributed to the affirmation of an international law, whose provisions sought to protect and save the pilgrim (Valiña Sampedro

regulated and judged the relations of pilgrims, was created through a special Roman law. But this status disappeared in 212 AD when, with the edict of Caracalla, all free citizens became Roman citizens (Corriente Córdoba 2007). During the following centuries, the term pilgrim ceased to have any legal power to designate those people who set out and made a journey to temples or specific places, as it had also taken place in ancient times.

These semantic digressions show that there has always been some reference to the journey (from the Latin *viaticum*) and to a path that is made on foot. Over time, via, *viator*, *peregrinus* and *peregrinatio* have shaped the main aspects of the Christian mentality, which identified spiritual itineraries with terrestrial itineraries. For Oursel (1978), the essential and vital character of the pilgrimage can be summed up in a definition proposed by Labande in (1958), in *Cahiers de Civilisation médieval*. According to Oursel (1978), pilgrims are Christians who at a given time decide to go to a defined place (a sacred place) and subordinate their existence to this journey. From Oursel's (1978) point of view, the pilgrimage is a voluntary act through which human beings leave their daily places and customs, as well as their emotional environment and live a total change due to the abandonment of all their assets (Hernando 2007). Likewise, pilgrimage symbolises the existential and itinerant condition of the human being (Vicente Rios 2003), who is a *homo viator*, that is, he or she is a walker, pilgrim or continuous traveller, whose earthly life is a "way" that will lead him or her to divine salvation in the celestial world (Caucci von Saucken 1993; Dotras 1993; Plötz 1993).

This modern mentality gave rise to a new conception of space and travel; new physical and moral horizons opened, and the monastic ideal was replaced by Renaissance curiosity. Since the fifteenth century, travellers have been visitors and romantic explorers (Antón i Clavé and González Reverté 2008). One of the best examples was the "Grand Tour", a custom inaugurated by the English aristocracy according to which young nobles travelled for an extended period around European countries to improve their training and education (Vera Rebollo et al. 2011). These educational journeys continued during the sixteenth century, when journeys to thermal spas also originated, thereby revealing a more secular character (Cohen 1992; Rinschede 1992).

In recent decades, pilgrimage studies have explored new implications, including issues of mobility. Pilgrimage was, and is, a movement and a journey of people and ideas, which keep the sacred value of the space and place alive and which create spatial relationships (Barreiro Rivas 1997; Coleman and Eade 2004; Esteve Secall 2002; Stoddard and Morinis 1997). By means of these logics of spatial creation, according to Eade and Sallnow (1991), pilgrimage creates a sacred space in which religious and secular discourses meet, in addition to debates within a religion itself. In this context, Lorimer (2005) uses the expression "more than representational" to indicate the importance of the metaphorical and physical manifestations of a place, to which the subjective dimension of the sacred (della Dora 2011, 2012; Maddrell 2009) is added. The mobility of pilgrimage routes and the traits of pilgrims are

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2000). Over time, *Ius gentium* has given rise to the "Right of the Gentiles", in a right accessible to foreigners, created by Roman and non-Roman institutions.

important to understand a pilgrimage that is considered the first form of tourist travel (Apollo et al. 2020; Collins-Kreiner 2010; Collins-Kreiner and Wall 2015; Timothy and Olsen 2006), a variant of cultural and spiritual tourism.

Mobility is a consequence of distance, which in the case of pilgrimage can be either psychological or absolute (Lopez 2012). In 1970, the geographer Waldo Tobler stated that: "all things are related to each other, but the closest things in space have a greater relation than the distant ones" (1970, p. 236). Using this law, the interaction between places should lose intensity as the distance increases: *distance decay*. In the case of the spatial relations for pilgrimages, *distance decay* loses its value (Stoddard and Morinis 1997) and distance is also treated from a relative and psychological point of view, which can even reinforce the desire for pilgrimage. In the case of sacred places, distance determines the behaviour of the faithful and the territorial relations; for example, in the Christian imagery, the pilgrimages that involve a longer journey are also the pilgrimages that give the biggest "reward" and save the spirit; this positive image of distance is based on the difficulties and threats that are usually attributed to it (Lopez and Lois González 2021). We must not forget that pilgrimage is mobility insofar as it involves leaving one's own routine: leaving the *domi*, that is, the familiar space of everyday life, where everything is well structured (a kind of comfort zone) to enter the *foris*, the unknown space. *Limen* is the limit between *domis* and *foris*; it is a psychological limit that, driven by different motivations, determines movements (Lopez 2012). For this reason, mobility is a characteristic of the interior dimension of the postmodern pilgrimage, turning the pilgrimage into a model of transnational mobility (Coleman and Eade 2004).

Displacement (both physical and metaphysical) *to* and *from* sites (Coleman and Eade 2004) is a complex mobility, resulting from the interaction of several phenomena that generate spatial and cultural relationships at different scales and, for this reason, leads us to analyse issues associated with distance and behaviour (Cohen 1992; Collins-Kreiner 2010; Digance 2003; Eade and Sallnow 1991; Stoddard and Morinis 1997). This mobile nature explains the fall of the pilgrimage movements towards the main Catholic destinations during and after the first wave of the pandemic (Mróz 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has altered and affected global relations and territorial balances as well as mobility.

No less relevant is the role of mobility in the process of significance of the Way of St. James. Once the double approach has been taken: physical mobility and metaphysical (or introspective) mobility, it is necessary to highlight the slow pace and slow mobility as factors of attraction for current pilgrimages (Lois González and Lopez 2012). To this end, pilgrims have different modes of travel, the choice of which determines the authenticity of the pilgrimage. Traditionally, pilgrimage on foot is considered the most authentic form of pilgrimage, being a way of sacrifice that puts one in contact with the past. Walking is a practice, almost a ritual, that is part of the pilgrimage (Coleman 2004; Frey 1998). Likewise, although there are religious centres that are reached by car or bus, the most traditional destinations are known above all for being the final destination of a pilgrimage on foot (Coleman 2004). As

far as this case study is concerned, the Way of St. James has always been considered the most difficult pilgrimage, it is the true pilgrimage, because its traditional significance is to travel thousands of kilometres on foot.

Slow physical mobility is both a consequence and a cause of internal and introspective mobility; it is a consequence insofar as introspective mobility fuels the desire to begin (Lopez and Lois González 2021). It is because, as it supports a spiritual dimension not only for spiritual walkers, but also for those who are pilgrims for other motivations, and who unexpectedly find themselves on a deeper journey (Chemin 2011; Doi 2011). Today, many of these original pilgrimage features are no longer indispensable, because the very meaning of the pilgrimage space has changed. Added to this is the fact that the current frantic mobility produces a proliferation of "mobile individuals": pilgrims, tourists, religious tourists; all share the same desire to live an authentic experience (Collins-Kreiner 2010), so how are they different? Today, it is difficult to distinguish between authentic pilgrims and tourists pilgrims. In addition, several religious centres have been converted into amusement centres, equipping them with what is necessary for tourism, so pilgrims will be able to act like tourists (della Dora 2012; Schramm 2004). Indeed, Santiago de Compostela (the final destination of the Way) has undergone a strong marketing process and with it a process of touristification (Lopez et al. 2019).

Research in the geography of pilgrimage has conveyed these debates about similarities and differences between tourists and pilgrims, with categories blurring and dividing into different contexts and practices (Collins-Kreiner 2010; della Dora 2012; Liutikas 2017). Researchers such as Bowman (1991), Rinschede (1992) and Coleman and Eade (2004) have revealed these complicated relationships between pilgrimage and tourism. According to some authors, pilgrimage and tourism are convergent phenomena, although a gap between pilgrimage (sacred) and tourism (secular) stands out (Collins-Kreiner 2010). According to Cohen (1992), tourism and pilgrimage are two distinct movements because pilgrimage is a movement towards the centre (source of the sanctified order of the cosmos and centre of divine power), and tourism is a movement towards the other (a more ambiguous dimension, destined for fun and entertainment).

Likewise, some of the main differences between tourism and pilgrimage can be classified as follows (Cohen 1992; Turnbull 1992): (1) *Compulsory travel*: pilgrimage is a more or less compulsory activity, while tourism is a fun activity; (2) *Institutionalisation of the movement*: pilgrimage is institutionalised through rules and rites, tourism is not; (3) *Motivation*: pilgrims travel for basically spiritual reasons and tourists for secular reasons; (4) *Season*: in the case of pilgrimage, religious traditions and seasons are related. Pilgrimage events reveal patterns of seasonal expression that change depending on the sanctuary and the region (Nolan and Nolan 1989). The tourist activity takes place at any time according to the desire of the human being; (5) *Behavioural patterns*: the pilgrimage presupposes an existential modality, and tourism presents recreational and diversionary modalities; and (6) *Relations with co-travellers*: tourists and pilgrims try to travel together and with someone, but the value of the company changes according to the trip; for the pilgrim, the group is part of the experience.

The boundaries between pilgrimage and tourism are not well marked, since a tourist may also be interested in visiting a church (Davie 2000) mainly because religious and pilgrimage tourism is considered a subgroup of cultural tourism (Gil de Arriba 2006; Rinschede 1992). In addition, pilgrimage tourism is spreading around the world due to the diversity of motivations and growing interest in visiting religious sites (Bideci and Albayrak 2016; Nyaupane et al. 2015). Also, the nature of a pilgrimage route allows incorporating and combining spiritual and religious motivations, with recreational walks (Gale et al. 2016; Kato and Progano 2017; Lois González and Santos 2015; Maddrell 2013). To this end, according to Gil de Arriba (2006) the expression religious tourism highlights places of worship, while the expression pilgrimage tourism, in addition to considering these places of worship, proposes the link between some religious places and others and the need for travel to visit them, which leads to establishing pilgrimage routes, itineraries or circuits, among which the Way of St. James is one of the best known.

According to Nilsson and Tesfahuney (2017), we are witnessing a post-secularisation of tourism, characterised by overcoming the division between secular space and sacred space, and religion becomes one more attraction factor for a tourist space: "The post-secular tourist seeks authentic experiences in the spaces of modernity, that is, traditional religious and sacred places" (Nilsson and Tesfahuney 2017, p. 13). The sacredness of a place is increasingly anchored to the perception of the individual and, therefore, images of places whose nature moves between sacred, and secular proliferate (Fig. 11.1). Added to this is the growing tendency towards spirituality (Slavin 2003) and spiritual travel tourism is the result of new forms of spirituality that go beyond the religious dimension.

Fig. 11.1 Queue to attend the Mass at 12.00 h, Santiago de Compostela Cathedral, September 2022. *Source* Authors

The Motivations: The Real Place-Shaping Force?

Among the factors that drive the movement, motivation is perhaps the most important, since it conditions a series of decisions, for example, the destination, the mode of travel, the travel company, etc. In this regard, Ingold (2007) believes that motivations are the real forces that explain the displacement and encouragement to set off. Traditionally, according to Turnbull (1992), pilgrims and tourists are united by personal satisfaction; they both seek something, even if the nature of this "something" changes. For pilgrims, it is "something sacred", while in the case of tourists, it is "something secular"; as a result of this different nature, Cohen (1992) highlights a structural opposition between pilgrimage and tourism. However, we have witnessed a semantic evolution of the sacred, for example, the fact that for an individual, the gravesite of a hero can also be sacred (Alderman 2002).

Pilgrimages differ according to motivation, which also determines a different experiential value of the pilgrimage. Morinis (1992) defines six types of sacred journey: (1) *Devotional*: aims to honour the divinity, character or symbol of the sanctuary. This type of pilgrimage has motivated many Christian pilgrims who sought places that testify to the life and passion of Christ; (2) *Instrumental*: "serves to" achieve certain objectives, including curing an illness; (3) *Normative*: is part of a ritual cycle, which is determined by the life cycle or the annual calendar of celebrations (e.g. in the Christian religion, the Old Testament attributes the pilgrimage to calendar rituals and some pilgrimage festivals are celebrated on the occasion of weeks, tabernacles and passion); (4) *Mandatory*: is regulated by religious norms, such as the pilgrimage to Mecca in the Muslim religion and penitential pilgrimages for the Catholic religion; (5) *Vagabond*: has no predetermined objective, since the pilgrim is led by the "path"; (6) *Initiator*: aims to transform the pilgrim's state, to save their human condition.

From the historical point of view, there are other motivations underlying the pilgrimage, among them: (1) *Penance*: in the Catholic tradition, the pilgrimage has always been considered a form of penance; it used to be a punishment, because it involves suffering, dangers and difficulties, apart from deprivation. Through suffering he or she would find the divine and obtain God's forgiveness and grace, but this suffering also served as a bargaining chip for the favours asked of the saint (Stoddard 1994); (2) *Request for favours*: the sacred centres were, and still are, intermediaries between the earthly dimension and the divine dimension. They are the centre of the "economy of religion", a market in which there is demand (for pilgrims' favours) and supply (intercession). The currency of exchange used by pilgrims is physical punishment or money, through donations, candles and offerings. These contributions are both a way to ask for favours and a way to thank the sanctuary mediator; (3) *Healing*: one of the most common favours that is asked for and that motivates the visit to the sanctuary is healing (Preston 1992). The relationships between health and well-being are the main characteristics of sanctuaries that are known for these attributes (Gesler 1996; Rinschede 1985); (4) *Seeing and touching the relic* for which the pilgrimage has been made.

Some of these macrocategories remain today, so nowadays, old and new motivations coexist as a result of the reformulation of the meaning of pilgrimage, and its contextualisation, to a secularised society increasingly in need of introspective encounters and internal journeys. Therefore, despite the dynamics of change, the pilgrim is the emblem of the postmodern human being, a great seeker of their identity (Digance 2003). They consider displacement as constituting practices of their culture and therefore leave a sedentary and established life and move to satisfy such inner anxiety. This introspective mobility generates new motivations for pilgrims (Nilsson and Tesfahuney 2019; Smith 2018). In this way, the pilgrimage becomes an occasion of spiritual, social or natural encounter and a way to achieve a personal or spiritual transformation that allows reaffirming beliefs or emotional states (Osterrieth 1997; Scriven 2018).

With reference to the motivations indicated above, there are still those who go on a pilgrimage to ask for favours, to find some healing and to see and touch the relic. This last motivation is halfway between the sacred and the secular, because the worship/visit to the relics is no longer only a religious act but can be one of the tourist activities carried out at the pilgrimage destination, or even along a stage. However, the most consolidated historical motivation is healing, which (as for *pilgrimage mobility*) we can understand from a physical point of view and from a metaphysical point of view. As far as physical healing is concerned, modes of travel along pilgrimage routes are actually healthy practices (Sousa et al. 2017). The growing popularity of walking fulfils social and health functions, as it interweaves physiological, psychological and community benefits (Gatrell 2013; Hall et al. 2017; Ingold and Vergunst 2008; Macpherson 2016). From the most traditional hike to horseback riding or cycling, it is not just a route, but sport (Amaro et al. 2018), with the advantage of it being done it at a slow pace. In this way, the popularity of pilgrimage routes also promotes *healthy mobility*. This sport begins with some training prior to starting the Way; in fact, one of the new pre-pilgrimage rituals is physical preparation. Post-contemporary pilgrims know in advance the difficulties and physical effort involved in the Way, or any other pilgrimage, and therefore prepare for such an experience in order to enjoy it. *Healthy mobility* is a post-contemporary attraction of the Way, as the training is considered a new Jacobean practice, followed by the pilgrimage, and, once it is over, the legacy remains.

As for metaphysical mobility, the healing of the soul, well-being and the recovery of one's own subjectivity that pilgrims seek when they set out on the Way come into play (Devereux and Carnegie 2006; Kurrat 2019). To this end, it should be noted that Alderman (2002) introduced the definition of *pilgrimage landscape* to refer to the physical environment suitable for pilgrimage, considering that no place is intrinsically sacred, but that the pilgrimage landscape is a social product that underlies a sacralisation, where a physical environment characterised by rites, practices and values is theatralised. An affirmation that alludes to the clear cultural value (and not only) of the landscape, whose interpretation and "uses" are adapted to the times. We could define the landscape of the Way with several adjectives: historical, religious, cultural, and in recent times, it is becoming a *therapeutic landscape* in which the physical and built environment, social conditions and human perceptions produce an

atmosphere conducive to healing (Gesler 1996; Lopez et al. 2017). The current "healing" has more secular characteristics and, for example, is based on the enjoyment of landscape elements, the slow pace and on the revaluation of social relationships, possible cures for the soul, hence landscapes play an important role as mediators and interpreters of the expectations of the pilgrim during the pilgrimage (Terkenli 2002). Along this pilgrimage landscape, there is a continuous crossing of the threshold between pilgrimage life and real life, while maintaining a movement or passage which involves temporal and spatial dimensions of liminality, thus characterising liminal landscapes as in-between spaces (Johnson 2010; Thomassen 2012).

Pilgrimage routes, which make getting in touch with the landscape during the journey possible, have become very popular in the Western world because they are considered personal and community journeys, which enable emotional and personal reflection (Davidsson Bremborg 2013; Nilsson 2016). Thus, they respond to post-secular sensitivities as potentially significant activities that are performed in close contact with the environment, i.e. cultural and spiritual landscapes, that enrich the experience and that individuals or groups live and consume differently (Badone 2014; Greenia 2014; Kato and Progano 2017; Lois González et al. 2016; Nilsson 2016; Nilsson and Tesfahuney 2016; Scriven 2020). They favour a "form of human landscape interaction" (Scriven 2014). In short, the original religious motivation coexists today with other more secular factors, namely: cultural, spiritual, health, a holiday or to have fun (Antunes and Amaro 2016; Nilsson 2016; Warkentin 2018).

Sources and Methodology

For this study we have adopted a qualitative research method that, in the social sciences, aims to explain, predict, describe or explore the "why" of events and, in this way, advance possible answers to some problems posed by the research undertaken (Álvarez-Gayou 1999; Denzin and Lincoln 1994). Therefore, considering the objectives mentioned in the introduction, we opted for a qualitative methodology with interpretative (and epistemological) value, through which we can describe, analyse, decode and synthesise facts and events referring to the case study (Creswell 1998; Denzin and Lincoln 2018; van Maanen 1983; Vasilachis 2006). Focusing on a case study makes it possible to approach it as fully as possible in terms of its attributes (Walker Janzen 2016).

In addition, we apply participant observation to the research methodology, a research technique widely used in sociological and anthropological studies (Fernández Droguett 2009). This type of ethnographic research is based on the researchers' own experience of the reality under analysis and provides an in-depth understanding of the feelings and environment of a particular experience (McCall and Simmons 1969). Likewise, through this, it is possible to understand various social realities, as in the case of Santiago de Compostela.

The combination of both follows explanatory narrative patterns that respond to the objectives of our research to approach and interpret outstanding issues and

phenomena that act as comprehension keys (Creswell 2014). To this end, we reviewed the main previous studies relating to the Way of St. James in order to understand the scope and characteristics of the Jacobean pilgrimages. As a first result, we propose a systematisation of its success factors. These reading keys also help to deepen the contextualisation of the Way in the current world; hence, we advance a series of theoretical conceptualisations that can facilitate the understanding of the phenomenon, including the *infrasecular pilgrimage space* and the *pilgrimage mobility paradigm.* A further result is, therefore, the taxonomy of mobilities of the Way. Finally, we advance further reflections regarding the future of the Way.

We complete this qualitative analysis by exploiting a series of statistical data from different sources. As for the current data on pilgrims, we have used the statistics published by the Pilgrims' Office regarding the collection of *Compostelas.* The data of the Pilgrim's Reception Office (Compostela) are not only numerical, but also provide information on nationality, motivations, sex, age, employment status, the mode of transport of the Way (on foot, by bicycle or on horseback), the starting point of the route and the chosen itinerary. They, together with the statistics of the Way of St. James Observatory and other researches, help reconstruct an interesting pilgrim trend, evidencing changes in the type of users who have chosen to undertake the Way. From a methodological perspective between the Observatory's methodologies and the Pilgrim's Reception Office, the latter refers to the people who collect the Compostela, while the Observatory's surveys (2007–2010) include even those who are not interested in the credential. The statistics of the Pilgrim's Reception Office are of general interest; while the Way of St. James Observatory was responsible for defining the pilgrim profiles and for planning, managing and improving the offer and experience of walkers. Unfortunately, the Observatory did not last long, and 2010 was its last year of surveys. Despite this, its usefulness is undeniable as it provided new data. For example, the motivations shown by the Observatory were richer and more varied compared to those by the Archbishopric. Furthermore, the data show substantial differences between a Holy Year and a regular year; therefore, the more detailed survey of the Observatory results in more in-depth analysis (Lopez et al. 2017). To complete the information regarding the post-secular pilgrim, we present the statistical evolution of the number of pilgrims who collect the *Fisterrana*, as gathered by the Fisterra shelter and the Tourist Office. Similar to the Compostela, it is a credential that the pilgrim collects, with the difference that is granted to every pilgrim who arrives, regardless of the motivation.

Finally, we analysed the statistical series published by the Galician Institute of Statistical Studies (IGE: Instituto Gallego de Estadística) regarding the types of tourist accommodation in five stages of the Ways to highlight new trends in the accommodation offer along the Way.

The Case Study: The Way of St. James

The Way of St. James: Introduction

Pilgrimage studies have been consolidated in recent times mainly as a result of the recovery of mediaeval routes in Western Europe (Collins-Kreiner 2010; Scriven 2020). In this sense, the Way of St. James was the first one, giving rise to a current interest in the recovery of other routes, such as the Via Francigena or the St. Olav Way. Today, the Way of St. James refers to a network of routes that large numbers of pilgrims walk or travel to reach the city of Santiago de Compostela, their final destination (Fig. 11.2).

From a historical point of view, the city of Santiago de Compostela, and its cathedral, was the final destination of the main European pilgrimage route in the Middle Ages, since the twelfth century (Moralejo 1993; Soria y Puig 1993). This fact, demonstrated by many investigations, served as a basis for the real (re)construction of a route of mediaeval and religious origin in the second half of the twentieth century and in particular since 1990. The Way has become a cultural and tourist route, in accordance with the demands of the new contemporary (post-secular) *pilgrim* (Lois González and Lopez 2012; Lois González 2013). In fact, the renewed route is designed and produced by the public authorities to enhance its historical and patrimonial value and to favour slow mobility, which is one of the main attractions and keys to the success of the Way of St. James today (Lois González et al. 2016; Moscarelli et al. 2020; Somoza Medina and Lois González 2018).
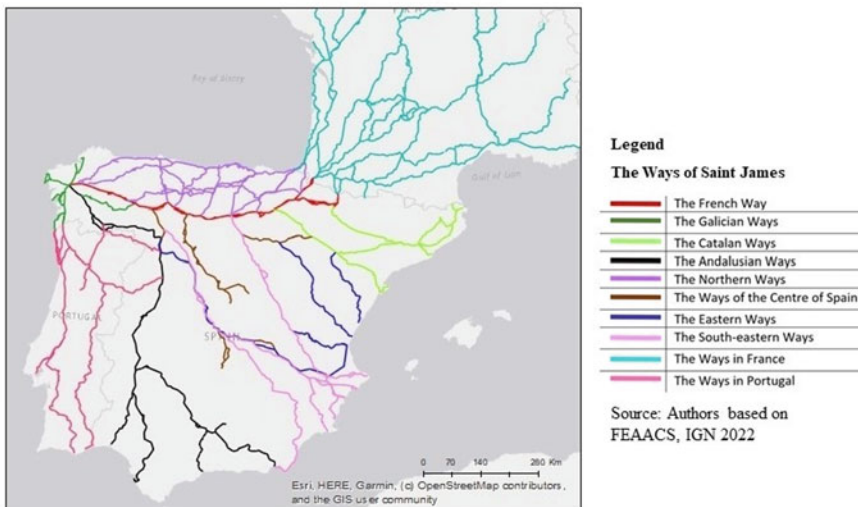

Fig. 11.2 The Way of St. James. *Source* Authors based on FEAACS, IGN (2022)

The Way has become the most important mediaeval pilgrimage route in the world in recent years, and it was named the First European Cultural Route in 1987. The historic urban centre of Santiago de Compostela and some of the other Ways have been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS). First, the French Way was declared a World Heritage Site (WHS) in 1993, then in 2015 the Northern Way received the same international award. The turning point was the 1993 Jubilee Year, when the combination of different circumstances and a significant public invest-ment (Escudero Gómez 2013; Lois González and Somoza Medina 2003) made the Way and Santiago de Compostela a project of great success and original tourism phenomenon (Tilson 2005). Lois González and Santos (2015) have described the elements that characterise the Way of St. James, making it different, original and unique: slow movement; experiential character; recovery of sociability scenarios; the role of the landscape and nature; the importance of ethnographic and gastro-nomic elements; the plural character of religion and culture; and a low-cost tourist trip. Consequently, during the twentieth century, the Way was subject to an intensive promotional campaign, which broadened its significance by turning it into a tourist product (Lois González 2013; Lois González and Santos 2015; Lopez et al. 2017).

The success of the Way is mainly due to the different rehabilitation and recovery processes of the material heritage of Jacobean itineraries. Its objective has been to embellish environments rich in heritage elements. Also, infrastructures have been improved, and pilgrimage amenities have been put in place (Lois González 2000). As a result, the Jacobean space today is an area that holds a rich cultural heritage, both tangible (churches, hospitals, hostels, monasteries, bridges, etc.) and intangible, represented by the stunning natural landscapes seen along the Way. This process of transformation and the success has been so intense that it has been considered "the rebirth of the Way of St. James" (Lois González 2013), a material rebirth, as well as a rebirth of the number of pilgrims.

Figure 11.3 shows the positive trend in the arrival of pilgrims. The statistical source used is the number of *Compostelas*[3] that pilgrims collect upon arrival at the destination. This counting system was introduced in 1970, when 78 pilgrims arrived in Santiago, and is still maintained today, being the only statistical source that measures the flow of pilgrims.[4] As can be seen, the main change was recorded

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[3] The *Compostela* is a certificate that shows that the holder has completed at least 100 km of The Way on foot or on horseback, or 200 km by bike. The *Compostela* is a way of revealing only the pilgrims who end up in Santiago but not the ones who travel part of The Way without reaching Santiago. For this reason, they do not consider some contemporary provisional variants.

[4] The data relating to the number of pilgrims who collect the *Compostela* upon their arrival in Santiago is the only statistical source that we currently have to get an approximate number of pilgrims. We must consider this data as an approximation and not as an absolute value, as many pilgrims are not recorded. Many pilgrims are not interested in collecting the *Compostela*, either because they are not interested in its symbolic value, or because they have already received it in the past or because the motivation of their pilgrimage does not correspond to what is required by the Archdiocese of Santiago. In fact, the *Compostela* is only issued when the pilgrims confirm that they have done the Way for "religious" or "religious and other" reasons. This criterion alters the truthfulness of the values, especially in terms of the motivations stated when issued, because when obtaining this document, the pilgrims do not always state their real reason (Lopez 2014; Santos and
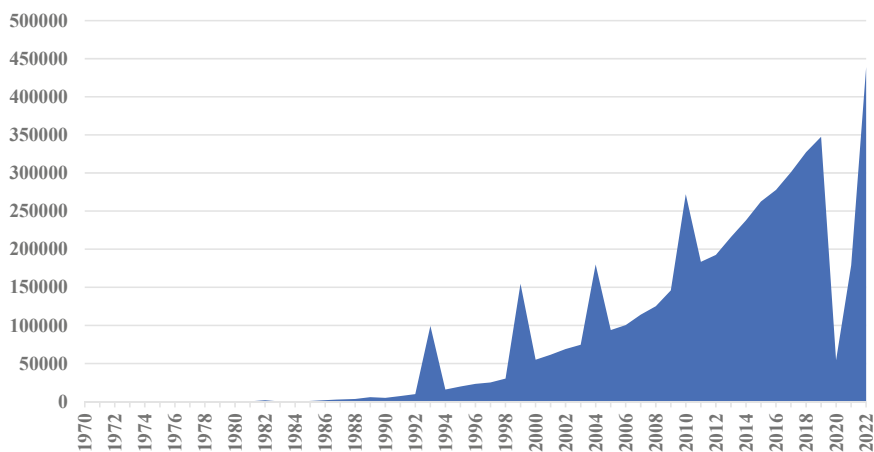
Fig. 11.3 Historical evolution of the number of pilgrims collecting their *Compostela* (1970–2022). *Source* Authors' elaboration based on data published by the Pilgrim's Reception Office in Santiago de Compostela

in 1993, going from 9764 pilgrims in 1992 to 99,436 during the 1993 Xacobeo Holy Year.[5] From this moment, the number of pilgrims continued to increase, reaching its historical highs in the following Holy Years: in 1999, 154,613 pilgrims arrived in Santiago, and in 2004 the figure reached 179,944. During the 2010 Xacobeo Holy Year, 272,135 *Compostelas* were given, but this data was exceeded in the year 2019, when 347,578 pilgrims who collected their certificate arrived in Santiago. At this time, this figure represented a historical record, since it was not a Holy Year, and it was not due to any religious festivities or any event associated with the celebration of a Jacobean year. From the point of view of tourism managers and actors, this data gave many hopes for the following years, especially regarding the 2021 Holy Year. After 11 years of waiting, the 2021 Holy Year brought many expectations for the Galician and Compostela tourism sector. But unfortunately, the Black Swan of the COVID-19 pandemic completely altered the forecasts of planners, managers, hoteliers and all the workers who have made the Way their main source of income. The Way of St. James, as the main pilgrimage and pilgrimage tourism route, has not been foreign to the economic crisis in tourism caused by the reduction of mobility. So, if until 2019 the concern was "overtourism" and its impact on the pilgrimage experience, the impact of COVID-19 has introduced signs of undertourism, altering the dynamics until 2021.

Lois González 2011). Ultimately, the symbolic meaning of the *Compostela* ensures that the pilgrims with more secular motivations declare different reasons (Castro Fernández et al. 2016; Santos and Lois González 2011).

[5] The Holy Jacobean Year is essentially a Jubilee Year extended uniquely to the city of Santiago de Compostela. It represents a privilege granted in 1179 by Pope Alexander III. The Holy Years are also called Jacobean Years, which are celebrated every 6, 5, 6 and 11 years when the feast of Saint James (25th July) falls on a Sunday.

As expected, during 2020 the number of *Compostelas* given dropped considerably to 54,144, and confidence did not fully recover until 2021, with the 178,912 pilgrims who collected their *Compostela* very similar to the data from 2004. Assuming that the persistence of the pandemic was going to affect the number of pilgrims during the 2021 Holy Year, Pope Francis authorised the extension of the Jacobean Holy Year, from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2022, through an Apostolic Penitentiary decree. Although from the Catholic religious point of view, this extension was welcomed as an opportunity for a greater number of worshippers to come to Santiago and receive the indulgence through the Holy Door (Fig. 11.4), and it was a sigh of relief and happiness for workers of the "Way's economy". And for this reason, and beyond the religious aspects, the extension of the Holy Year to 2022 makes it possible to recover the economic losses of 2021, even considering that many shelters had made investments in adapting their facilities to the arrival of pilgrims (Lopez and Lois González 2020). Today, we can affirm that this extension of the Holy Year has had positive consequences, at least from the point of view of hoteliers, restaurateurs and business owners, among others. In fact, in 2022 438,323 *Compostelas* were granted; therefore, 2022 ended with the best data since records began.

The routes that for centuries have led to Santiago de Compostela cross different cities, regions and territories, and their identity is manifested through a great wealth of heritage and ethnography, among others, which explain why in many cases we refer to *open-air museums* along the different routes. This represents an obvious attraction factor for pilgrims who can choose between different options and make the most of the Way to get to know new regions and cities, doing the Way on different occasions, but choosing different itineraries. In fact, pilgrims who do the Way several times (making it their holiday modality) change routes to explore different contexts (Bermejo Díez 2022; Escudero Gómez et al. 2020). Intensive promotional campaigns have also contributed, and continue to contribute, to the diversification of pilgrimage routes, and the tourism plans are aimed at protecting and preserving the identity of the

Fig. 11.4 Queue to enter the Holy Door, Quintana Square, Santiago de Compostela, September 2022. *Source* Authors

Way, establishing guidelines for the enhancement of its cultural and natural heritage. Also relevant is the possibility of making the Way an "international journey", an added value that should be capitalised on. Although initially this international (and cross-border) experience used to be associated with the French Way, which became the main Jacobean route after the revival of the Way, in recent years this factor has also been advantageous to the Portuguese Way, now a booming route (Fig. 11.5).

As stated in the questionnaire prior to receiving the *Compostela*, the certificate that proves that the traditional pilgrimage has been completed, pilgrims can choose between eight route options (French Way, Portuguese Way, English Way, Silver Way, Northern Way, Primitive Way and Portuguese Way of the coast). As can be seen in Fig. 11.5, the French Way is usually the busiest route; therefore, before the pandemic, problems relating to its carrying capacity and the saturation of public shelters began to manifest, issues that seemed to put at risk its heritage (Fraternidad Internacional del Camino de Santiago 2014; Martín Duque 2017; Porcal et al. 2012). Until the beginning of the pandemic, the second most travelled route was the Portuguese Way, which has three variants, and one of them is the Portuguese Way of the Coast, which
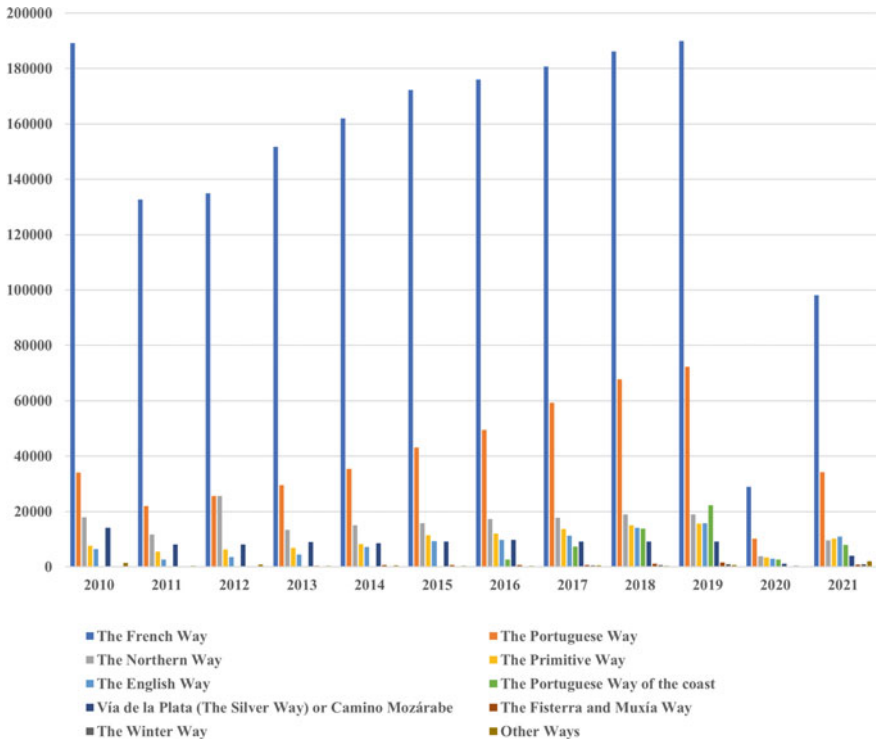

Fig. 11.5 Jacobean routes travelled by pilgrims who collected their *Compostela* (2010–2021). *Source* Authors' elaboration based on data published by the Pilgrim's Reception Office in Santiago de Compostela

was introduced for the first time as an option in the questionnaire in 2016. In four years, it has overtaken other routes such as the Northern Way, the Primitive Way and the English Way (Fig. 11.5). At the planning level, to avoid the overcrowding of the main route, tourism planners and managers have opted for a progressive improvement and diversification of the routes. The *2015–2021 Way of St. James Galicia Strategic Plan* (Xunta de Galicia 2015) includes the promotion of all the pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela through the revitalisation of the Ways and the dissemination of their values, thus showing the uniqueness of the less popular routes, as a line of action.

With regard to the Way of Fisterra-Muxia, this Way has been consolidated in recent years, as shown by the registry of the credential: the *Fisterrana*, which the pilgrims collect upon their arrival at the Fisterra shelter (Fig. 11.6). Fisterra is a peripheral place, which has taken advantage of its location and the speculation about a mystical past to attract a growing number of pilgrims (Margry 2015a), thus favouring its international projection. According to the data provided by the pilgrims' shelter and the tourist office, in 1997 (the year of the first registration), 367 pilgrims received *Fisterranas*. This figure has grown considerably, reaching 25,327 in 2019 (before the pandemic) and 23,046 in 2022. However, this is a seasonal destination, as accessibility problems, as well as climate-related ones, generate significant imbalances throughout the year. According to Margry (2015b), the main motivation for this "post-Santiago" route lies in the spiritual pluralism of the Way.
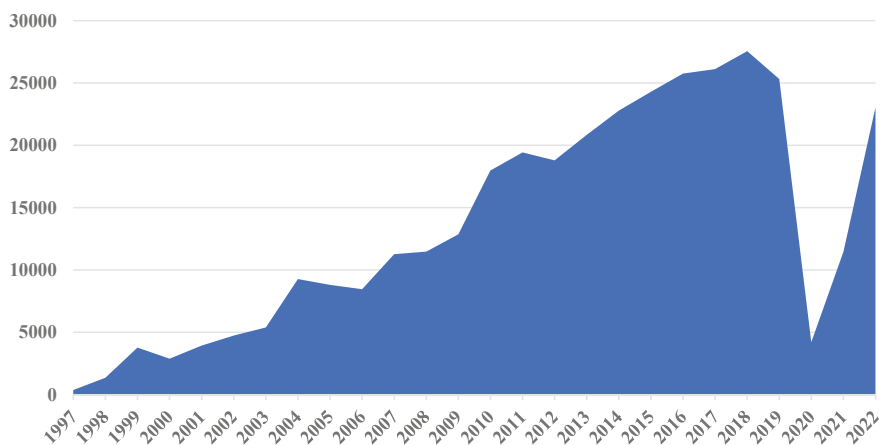

Fig. 11.6 Evolution of the number of *Fisterranas* (1997–2022). *Source* Authors' elaboration based on data provided by the Fisterra Office of Tourism and the Fisterra Shelter

The Success of the Way: Reading and Interpretation Keys

The success of the Way is due to its polysemic and inclusive character that favours the participation of increasingly different pilgrim profiles (Lois González and Lopez 2012; Moscarelli et al. 2020). The key factors of this inclusiveness can be differentiated as follows: (1) internationalisation of markets; (2) diversification of confessions and religions; (3) slow mobility; (4) diversification of motivations; and (5) *Caminonisation* (that is, influenced by the Way, also called *Camino*) of creative and cultural industries (Lopez and Lois González 2020). These aspects should not be considered in isolation but are interrelated and feed off each other. The resulting combinations have created an international and multi-faith space, in which pilgrims and tourists interact to co-create a postmodern identity and personality of the route.

(1) *Internationalisation of the markets*: the internationalisation of the pilgrim collective is due to different factors that over the decades have made it possible to improve and expand its image worldwide. From an initially European scale, in which the pilgrims' main countries of origin were France, Italy or Portugal, today we are witnessing a globalisation of pilgrims from different continents. Inclusiveness, openness, increased mobility and the dissemination done by cultural industries are some of the factors that have enabled such internationalisation. For example, the sudden increase in Brazilian pilgrims since the late 1980s is due to the publication of the book *The Pilgrimage*, (*O Diário de um mago*) by Paulo Coelho (1987); in the same way that, years later, the film *The Way* by Martin Sheen has generated American and Canadian market flows, and the same dynamics are seen from other distant markets, such as South Korea (Lois González et al. 2016). Data referring to the origin of pilgrims in 2020 and 2021 reveal a contraction of intercontinental markets. At a European level, the number of pilgrims has decreased along cross-border routes (Way of St. James, Via Francigena, etc.), since pilgrims have chosen more local and national routes (Mróz 2021). At present, this internationalisation is gradually recovering, as the lifting of restrictions has made the recovery of many intercontinental markets possible.

(2) *Diversification of faiths and religions*: this international visibility has contributed to strengthening the multi-faith and multi-religious character of the Way. It has become a space of tolerance in which pilgrims and tourists of different faiths live together (Lois González 2013; Nyaupane et al. 2015). This spiritual and confessional inclusiveness has created an ideal space for post-contemporary religions. A secularisation that in recent years has become evident with the increasing number of pilgrims who decide to continue to Fisterra (as noted above). In this regard, walking towards Fisterra is a way of reinforcing the individual character of post-contemporary spirituality, detached from the power of the Catholic Church (the route is not officially recognised by the Church) (Blom et al. 2016; Margry 2015a). The coexistence of these spaces (religious, spiritual and cultural) along the Way creates a journey towards Santiago totally unique in richness of meanings and values.

(3)   *Slow mobility*: this characteristic of the Way responds to the need to break with the daily pace of life. People today usually live in cities, with scheduled timetables and move continuously from one place to another using mechanical means of transport. The walk, the pilgrimage to Santiago, entails a radical break with this everyday life. It implies mental rest, continuous physical exercise that takes us to our corporeality, returning to the human scale of things and sensations, moving at 5 or 6 km per h, with enough time to think about our surroundings and the nature we are part of. The men and women who have decided to travel the route experience a return to their own material essence, a direct and peaceful relationship with the places they cross and the real dimensions of time and space (Lois González and Lopez 2020). The traditional modality of doing the Way is walking, and even today it is the pilgrims' main form of movement (Fig. 11.7). Taking as a reference the 2019 data, 95% of the pilgrims still prefer to walk the Way. However, the post-contemporary pilgrim has introduced some variations on this issue, reinterpreting this aspect of the Way: today it is possible to do the Way by bicycle and horseback, but also by sailboat (as in the case of the maritime route). Choosing the bike or horse can reduce the time to do the Way (or at least to cover the 200 km required in this case to obtain the *Compostela*), but they are also modalities that reinforce the sporting character of that the Way. Finally, there is no lack of pilgrims who make the Way in a saddle, a fact that raises other issues rather related to the accessibility of the Way.

(4)   *Diversification of motivations*: motivations have changed over time, thus interpreting the paradigms of new religious, spiritual and secular currents (Farias
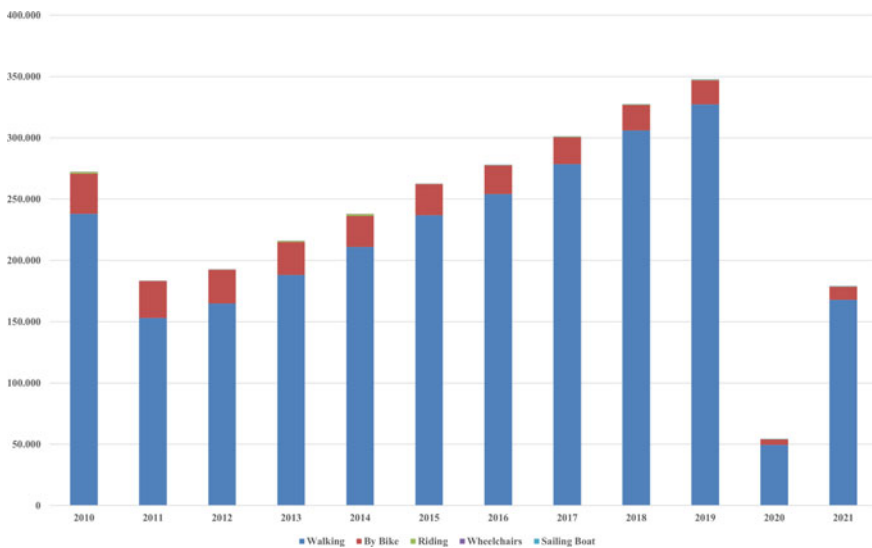

Fig. 11.7   Modalities of doing the Way of St. James, 2010–2021. *Source* Authors' elaboration based on data published by the Pilgrim's Reception Office in Santiago de Compostela

et al. 2019; Possamai 2003). Regarding the case study, more than two decades ago, Frey (1998) admitted the difficulty of categorising the motivations to do the Way, due to the variety of pilgrims. Doi (2011) also confirmed this problem when characterising the profiles of pilgrims. Despite this, several studies investigate the motivational profiles of Jacobean pilgrims (Amaro et al. 2018; Casais and Sousa 2020; Chemin 2011; Egan 2010; Kurrat 2019). The Christian faith encouraged walkers throughout the Middle Ages and modern times; therefore, it has been hegemonic and today the Catholic faith persists as an important component of the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. But religion is no longer the only reason to make the pilgrimage to Santiago. According to a study carried out for the 1993 Holy Year (Blanco Chao and Garrido Faraldo 1994), religious reasons decreased to 50%; however, there was a strong presence of dioceses and parish organised groups. In another study, Fernández Ríos and García Docampo (1999) point out elements of attraction of the Way of St. James that include nature/landscape (71.4%), sociability (46.2%), religion (44.1%), art (32.4%) and others (21%).

The results of the research conducted by the Way of St. James Observatory are particularly interesting in regard to the pilgrim profiling data from 2007 to 2010 (CETUR and Xacobeo 2007, 2010). The first dossier referring to 2007 presents a framework with various reasons. Table 11.1 and Fig. 11.7 summarise the reasons given by pilgrims interviewed by the Observatory staff from 2007 to 2010. Pilgrims could choose from eight options. As it is possible to appreciate, in the data from the four-year reports, "spiritual motivation" is the dominant one. This is due to the fact that there are pilgrims that do the Way as an initiatory route to escape from their daily life, full of problems and distress, for the purpose of finding some answers from within (Lopez et al. 2017). Spiritual motivations recorded a slight decrease in their trend. In fact, spirituality seems to have decreased in favour of religious motivations. Indeed, this duality is due to the very nature of the Way. It has gone from being a religious spirituality to now embodying a more secular spirituality. In addition, according to Frey (1998), it is more difficult to define what is understood by spiritual motivation: "it is generally related to this idea of the uncontained, non-structural, personalised, individual, and direct relationship one has to ultimate reality" (Frey 1998, p. 31) (Fig. 11.8).

There are, therefore, different ways of interpreting the meaning of spirituality and, above all, different moments in which pilgrims become aware of spiritual change (Haab 1996). Other relevant motivations, such as "historical-artistic heritage" and "natural heritage", point to the cultural and ethnographic richness of the Way. Similarly, material (churches, monasteries, cemeteries, etc.) and immaterial (rites, practices, legends, etc.) heritage are at the centre of the management of sites where spiritual and patrimonial values coincide.

The following Fig. 11.9 shows an evolution of the motivations of pilgrims when collecting their *Compostela* (Pilgrim's Reception Office in Santiago de

Table 11.1 Main reasons for doing the Way of St. James.

	2007 (%)	2008 (%)	2009 (%)	2010 (%)
Historic-artistic heritage	25.8	25.0	23.9	21.2
Natural heritage	39.3	33.7	36.0	31.3
Spiritual reason	50.3	53.1	49.4	48.5
Religious motivation	38.1	38.3	39.5	47.6
Popular culture	16.2	15.7	14.6	14.7
Sport	22.8	19.8	20.8	19.7
Fun	17.1	14.8	19.2	17.1
Other	7.2	8.0	9.0	8.8

Source Authors' elaboration based on data published in CETUR and Xacabeo (2007, 2010)
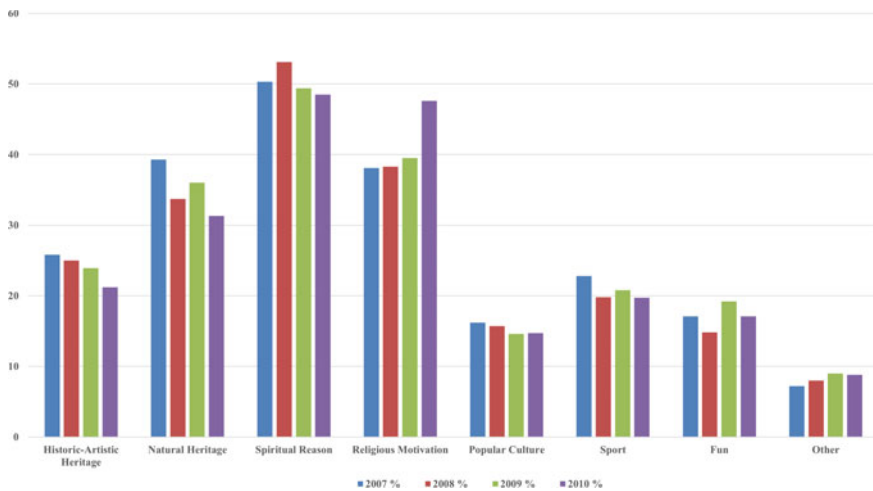
Fig. 11.8 Main reasons for doing the Way of St. James. *Source* Authors' elaboration based on data published in CETUR and Xacabeo (2007–2010)

Compostela). As already indicated, in this questionnaire the possible answers are: "religious", "religious and others" and "non-religious". Despite the relative limitations already indicated, these values show a secularisation in the figure of the pilgrim. If in 2010, the pilgrims who completed the Way for religious reasons represented 54.74%, in 2019 this value dropped to 40.31%. It is important to highlight a clear change of trend since 2020 (the year of the pandemic), when 24.19% of the pilgrims who collected the Compostela declared to have made the Way for "other motivations". The change in trend continued in 2021, when the main motivation was "religious and others" (43.2%), followed by "religious" (36.37%) and thirdly "non-religious" (20.43%). Religious motivation loses its centrality in favour of a more secularised and clearly "non-religious" motivation

that pilgrims are no longer shy to affirm, quadrupling in 10 years. The "other" response alludes to other beliefs and values that drive them to walk the Way. Among them: cultural and spiritual motivations, being with oneself, contemplation and communion with the landscape and nature, return to the sense of the body moving slowly or faith in cooperation with others. The Pilgrim's Way is being consolidated as an opportunity to rediscover oneself, an experience that makes it possible to have a balanced relationship with nature, a different way of living ones social life, time and the landscape environment (CETUR and Xacobeo 2007, 2010; Lois González et al. 2016; Lopez and Lois González 2020) and achieve a transformation, although that transformation is not conceived in specifically Catholic terms, but rather spiritually (von Laer and Izberk-Bilgin 2019; Lopez et al. 2017; Smith 2018).

In this "other" category we also find the desire to break away from a stagnant life, seeing the pilgrimage as a kind of "absence from normal life", and with it a way to temporarily suspend various aspects of their identities (Egan 2010). In this sense, the pilgrimage to Santiago responds to the definition of liminality, which van Gennep (1960) describes as a psychological limit, a state between two realities divided by an imaginary line. Turner (1979) developed this definition introducing the movement or transition from one stage of life to another or better "a state which is betwixt-and-between the normal, day to day cultural and social states and processes of getting and spending, preserving law and order, and registering structural status" (Turner 1979, p. 465). For pilgrims, one of the attractive factors of the Way of St. James is the possibility of living a spatial and temporal separation from the ordinary: a "post-contemporary liminality".
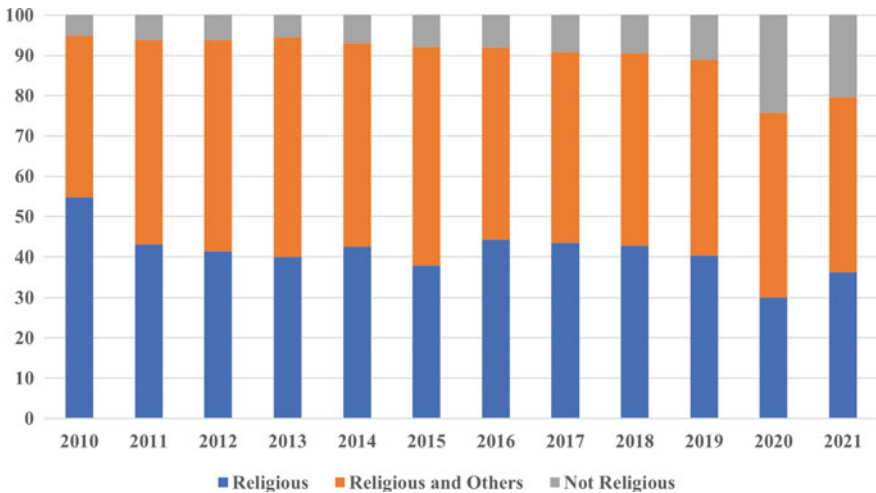

Fig. 11.9 Main reasons for doing the Way according to pilgrims collecting their *Compostela*, 2010–2021. *Source* Authors' elaboration based on data published by the Pilgrim's Reception Office in Santiago de Compostela

In addition, numerous in-depth studies of the profile of the walker to Santiago show an overrepresentation of young people at the stage of completing of studies, older pilgrims or people seeking to turn a new page in their lives (CETUR and Xacobeo 2007, 2010; Lois González et al. 2016; Lopez et al. 2017). Along the Jacobean route, non-believers can enjoy being close to nature; in fact, one of the most valued attributes of the Way is the landscape (Xunta de Galicia 2019), thanks to which spiritual peace is also fostered (Farias et al. 2019). Landscapes and natural elements facilitate this introspective experience and help physical and spiritual healing (Milani 2001; Lois González et al. 2016; Sobrino and López 2006). These motivations are fundamental today, since the pandemic has had many consequences for health and the contemporary human being seeks a cure. After the pandemic, pilgrims admit the importance of the Way in terms of well-being, arguing that it can significantly improve one's quality of life by making it possible to escape the difficulties and mandatory isolation after the pandemic (Oviedo 2022; Seryczyńska et al. 2021a, b). After the restrictions of the pandemic, the Way was affirmed as a new form of pilgrimage that adequately responded to the reality of COVID-19 due to its individual character. Perhaps, this is why in recent years the most secular motivation is rising.

(5) *Caminonisation of the creative and cultural industries*: for a long time, the Way of St. James has been the subject of works of literature and the object of inspiration of different artistic works, giving rise to a great production of cultural material that has favoured the dissemination of its customs, legends, art and spiritual life throughout Europe (Lopez et al. 2017). As a result, Jacobean legends and traditions have contributed to making the Way of St. James a route with consolidated religious and spiritual meanings. Its historical legacy consolidates it as a space of memory, rich in monuments and rituals (Lois González et al. 2016). Both factors have coexisted during these centuries reinforcing the pilgrimage as an act rich in symbolic references (Coleman and Eade 2004). If on the one hand this Jacobean cultural and artistic legacy is preserved today, on the other hand it is enriched with cultural expressions and media more in line with the times in which we live. The growing secularisation of pilgrimage and the spatial turn have contributed to making the Way a very present theme in the creative industries, including literature, cinema and the arts, in response to the trend towards spatialisation in the arts and humanities (Lois González and Lopez 2020; Murray 2014). Encounters, emotions, fears and events inspire the pilgrim, writer or artist or cartoonist who takes advantage of these types of spaces to share their intimate geography with their audience (Lopez 2019). Post-contemporary motivations and attitudes are contributing to make the Way a *Leitmotiv* of the creative industries and at the same time produce new ways of exploring and approaching the intimate dimension of pilgrims, giving way to a cultural turn in productions linked to the Way.

Post-contemporary Pilgrimage and Pilgrimage Mobility Paradigm. Interpretations and Considerations Applied to the Way of St. James

The current post-secular turn seems to coincide with a "religion return" in the social, cultural, economic and political spheres of Western societies (Nilsson and Tesfahuney 2019). So many pilgrims continue to be attracted by the traditional and authentic pilgrim experience and try to reproduce it (Mendel 2010). Although according to Graham and Murray (1997) there is no consensual definition of an "authentic pilgrim", it is possible to trace the traits of an authentic approach to the Way (Mendel 2010). This resides in the tradition of the Jacobean route, that is, an arduous task that involves walking several hours a day, carrying a large backpack, not staying in the same place more than one night, sleeping in uncomfortable accommodation, not spending money, seeking suffering and walking alone (Graham and Murray 1997; Overall 2019). Pain and suffering nourish the conviction of an authentic experience, which strengthens the sense of *communitas* among pilgrims (Fleischer 2000). In fact, thanks to this companionship and feelings of equality, social interactions are simpler (Liutikas 2017; Maddrell 2013).

Far from these guidelines, we find the "unauthentic pilgrims". However, we must be cautious when pigeonholing pilgrims in these terms, because we could discover that, at present, most pilgrims are not authentic, since authenticity seems to be linked to rites and practices of mediaeval heritage that preserve the symbolism of the past, assuming new meanings in the present. Pilgrims who want to live an authentic experience try to do the Way of St. James in a similar way to traditional mediaeval pilgrims and, during the trip, escape from modern comforts. But are we sure that the post-contemporary pilgrim is willing to put aside present-day comforts? Below, we provide a series of reflections and interpretations that can help answer this question.

Studies on pilgrimages and ways show the procedural character between human beings and landscape: the act of walking unites participants and place through social, natural and spiritual encounters. The (performative) act of walking and the slow pace rehabilitate the cognitive abilities of the pilgrim, awakening new feelings. With the expression "walkscape", Careri (2006) describes an introspective and experiential landscape resulting from the aesthetic act of walking, a simultaneous act of reading and writing of the surrounding environment. Thus, in their search for alternative ways of being and relationships with the world, post-secular subjects resort to their subjective landscapes resulting from the interaction between the individual and landscape environment. More specifically, each post-secular pilgrim embodies their own "walkscape", that is, their intimate and personal territoriality coming from the walk through which they explore new values such as discovery, experimentation, self-reflection and alternative temporalities and spatialities, that is, alternative ways of being, doing and imagining the place (Devereux and Carnegie 2006; Nilsson 2016). It is a "meshwork" in the words of Ingold (2007), according to which walkers can forge a path while the activity, the physical routes and the new layers of meaning and experience merge to form paths in the landscape. Both in the case of "walkscape"

and "meshwork", the result comes from "multiple interactive mobilities" that at the physical and metaphysical level (intimate and personal) feed each other to create a personalised experience. As previously stated, the pilgrim wants the Way to be a moment of rest from the routine, so rather than "walkscape", we could talk about *walk-e-scape.* In this expression, the use of the *hyphen* indicates a movement of the flowing process from the walk to the landscape, and from the landscape to the "escape", alluding therefore to the conviction that doing the Way means to escape from the routine, creating a personal temporary retreat, to stimulate self-reflection and internal growth. In reality, this idea would evoke the aforementioned "post-contemporary liminality", but in view of the following considerations, it would be more convenient to talk about an *imagined post-contemporary liminality* as the post-secular pilgrims are "trapped" in *mobility networks* that anchor them in their time and connect them in a more present environment than ever before.

The growing interest in the Way and the persistence of a pilgrimage on foot have modified contemporary cultural and physical landscapes through the emergence of numerous facilities and companies that offer networks of low-cost shelters, restaurants and shops to meet the needs of pilgrims, making the Way a popular tourism product (Duda 2014; Guichard-Anguis 2011; Oviedo et al. 2013). But these landscape transformations also include public transportation, luggage transportation services, luxury hotels and high-end private accommodations available to pilgrims who do not want to sleep in budget shelters. In other words, the economy of the Way is diversifying, providing services that, far from preserving its authenticity, prefer to satisfy the demands of post-secular pilgrims and tourists, who prioritise the enjoyment (and comfort) of the experience, without worrying about the safeguarding of authenticity.

In the table below, we compile a statistical series relating to the type of tourism establishments in five stages of the different Ways. These stages have been selected because they are representative of the busiest Ways in recent years (Arzúa and Portomarín for the French Way, Tui for the Portuguese Way of the Coast, Caldas de Rei for the Portuguese Way and Fisterra for the Fisterra-Muxía Way). In total, six types of accommodation are registered (hotels, lodgings, tourism shelters, rural tourism, tourism camps, tourist apartments, tourist homes and homes for tourist use). If it is obvious that the increase in pilgrims implies an increase in the supply of accommodation, but we must highlight the diversification of the offer since, at these route stages, the pilgrim can stay in accommodation that is no longer only shelters, but also hotels, holiday homes, etc. The main difference between the more traditional shelter and these new accommodation modalities is the fact that the pilgrim is not obliged to only stay a single night. In addition, these accommodations have several amenities with respect to shelters, among others: the pilgrim does not have to share rooms with numerous beds, or no longer shares facilities with other pilgrims (which in many cases are strangers).

Among the types of tourism establishments that have increased the most in recent years are tourist apartments, tourist homes and, above all, homes for tourist use (Table 11.2). These types of accommodation solutions are quite common in the general tourism sector, as they add a more personal (and intimate) dimension to the tourist experience in general and to the pilgrimage in this case. Considering that, except for

Fisterra (a summer destination), the selected stages are stages of the Way and not tourist destinations, and we highlight a change in the accommodation habits of the pilgrims. As we have already indicated, thanks to these accommodation formulas, the pilgrim can stay longer, and "do tourism", while enjoying the wide cultural, natural and gastronomic offer that the stages of the Way usually offer. Time management according to one's own needs is a feature of the post-contemporary pilgrim; in fact, in the case of not having much time (a full-time pilgrim), there are temporary modalities such as *part-time pilgrims*, who come to Santiago in stages, when time allows, and doing the Way at different times. For example, Frey (1998) calls those who do the Way during the weekends *weekend pilgrims*.

The choice of accommodation is a way of expressing preferences and expectations, but also faiths and confessions, as it can be interpreted as a clear reflection of the diversification of the profile of the pilgrim and a progressive departure from the traditional (or authentic) accommodation formula during the pilgrimage. In some aspects, it confirms the fact that pilgrims plan a Way tailored to themselves, because staying in hotels or in homes also means "choosing" with whom to share the space and time, or at least, with whom to share those more traditional moments as part of a community: dinner and breakfast. A behaviour that questions the desire for *communitas*, at least for non-purist pilgrims. In this regard, we briefly recount some studies that have investigated the possible conflicts caused by the different motivations of pilgrimage: the opposition between *purist and non-purist pilgrims*, which would explain the difference in values, behaviours, pace and preferences (Smith 2018). According to Casais and Sousa (2020), a non-purist posture would be characterised by the search to escape from it all, social interaction, contact with nature or a sports experience such as walking or cycling. Elements, which as we have seen, have become very common along the Way. To this motivational non-purism, we add staying in hotels, eating in restaurants and transporting luggage by bus or booking logistics companies.

In fact, the increase in logistic companies responsible for carrying pilgrims' backpacks on the different stages is an indication of a change in habits (Fig. 11.10). Among post-contemporary pilgrims, it is common to carry smaller backpacks than the ones usually used, delegating this service to logistics and transport companies (Roszak and Huzarek 2022). A behaviour that only feeds the *pilgrimage mobility paradigm*, considering that this service involves the displacement of workers, and backpacks, between the different stages. The stages are nodes around which new forms of social life are organised (Sheller and Urry 2006), and the displacements of things and people between them reinforce the connection of the pilgrimage network. In addition, this new behaviour suggests two aspects: firstly, the post-contemporary pilgrim has learned to do without elements that used to be attributed to the authenticity of the pilgrimage (the weight of the backpack), and secondly, it confirms the interest in enjoying the experience and the walk, without weight or problems. A behaviour that reveals the Way as a space for fun, where different natural and heritage resources are combined, which attract people and allow them to know the territory. Another change that will make it more difficult to establish the limits between pilgrims or tourists.

Table 11.2 Typologies of tourism accommodation in five stages of the Ways of St. James

	Hotels					Lodgings				
	Arzúa	Portomarín	Tui	Caldas de Rei	Fisterra	Arzúa	Portomarín	Tui	Caldas de Rei	Fisterra
2010	..	..	..	..	..	16	1	4	3	0
2011	..	..	..	..	..	16	1	4	3	0
2012	13	10	0	0	7	17	1	4	3	1
2013	12	12	0	0	11	16	1	4	3	1
2017	19	21	5	3	14	17	1	4	3	1
2018	21	23	6	4	15	18	1	4	3	1
2019	22	24	6	5	16	18	1	4	3	1
2020	24	23	9	4	16	18	1	4	3	1
2021	25	25	8	5	16	17	1	4	3	1
2022	26	26	8	8	16	17	1	4	3	1
	Tourism shelters					Rural tourism				
	Arzúa	Portomarín	Tui	Caldas de Rei	Fisterra	Arzúa	Portomarín	Tui	Caldas de Rei	Fisterra
2010	..	..	..	..	..	16	1	4	3	0
2011	..	..	..	..	..	16	1	4	3	0
2012	13	10	0	0	7	17	1	4	3	1
2013	12	12	0	0	11	16	1	4	3	1
2017	24	23	9	4	16	18	1	4	3	1
2018	25	25	8	5	16	17	1	4	3	1
2019	26	26	8	8	16	17	1	4	3	1
2020	..	..	..	..	..	16	1	4	3	0
2021	..	..	..	..	..	16	1	4	3	0
2022	13	10	0	0	7	17	1	4	3	1
	Tourism camps					Tourist apartments				
	Arzúa	Portomarín	Tui	Caldas de Rei	Fisterra	Arzúa	Portomarín	Tui	Caldas de Rei	Fisterra
2010	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
2011	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
2012	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
2013	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
2017	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	6
2018	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	6
2019	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	7
2020	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	7
2021	1	1	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	7

(continued)

Table 11.2 (continued)

	Tourism camps					Tourist apartments				
	Arzúa	Portomarín	Tui	Caldas de Rei	Fisterra	Arzúa	Portomarín	Tui	Caldas de Rei	Fisterra
2022	1	1	0	0	0	3	1	1	0	7
	Tourist homes					Homes for tourist use				
	Arzúa	Portomarín	Tui	Caldas de Rei	Fisterra	Arzúa	Portomarín	Tui	Caldas de Rei	Fisterra
2010	..	..	..	..	..	–	–	–	–	–
2011	..	..	..	..	..	–	–	–	–	–
2012	..	..	..	..	..	–	–	–	–	–
2013	..	..	..	..	..	–	–	–	–	–
2017	3	0	0	0	1	–	–	–	–	–
2018	3	0	0	0	1	16	4	5	14	91
2019	3	0	0	0	2	34	8	13	26	153
2020	3	0	0	0	2	54	11	19	36	206
2021	3	0	0	0	2	64	15	31	62	245
2022	3	0	0	0	3	66	16	43	67	277

Source Authors' elaboration based on data published by the IGE 2010–2013, 2017–2022. Data for the years 2014–2016 are not available

Fig. 11.10 Logistic companies delivering pilgrims' backpacks in Santiago de Compostela, October 2022. *Source* Authors

Also relevant is the ubiquitous use of new technologies during the pilgrimage. No matter how authentic they want to be, post-contemporary pilgrims travel with their mobile devices and are always connected with the world "they have taken a break from". Hence, the use of different mobile and technological devices (mobile, iPod, tablet, personal computer, etc.) raises another issue in regards to authenticity (Fig. 11.11). The use of the Internet is part of our daily lives and reinforces the sense of belonging to a world constantly moving in a virtual reality, connected and informed 24 h a day. However authentic he or she may be, the pilgrim belongs to a historical era in which it is difficult to avoid technology, which, in turn, intensifies the mobility of the pilgrimage, through the production and sharing of online content between different parts of the world. The increase in the number of pilgrims and their international profile explain how, through the figure of the pilgrim, the physical space of the Way is connected to the virtual space of the Internet and its essence reaches other parts of the world. Not only do the numerous apps to help do the Way confirm it, but also websites, forums and blogs with contents generated in real time (*on the road*) have undermined other features of the Way: the mystery and the unexpected. They are more effective sources of information and communication than any other, which thanks to the dissemination of increasingly interactive content (photographs, videos, maps, etc.) virtually bring the reader or viewer closer to the physical reality of the Way. The post-contemporary pilgrim, accustomed to new technologies, remains connected to social networks, sometimes checking their emails and reading the news (Antunes and Amaro 2016). As a result, it seems difficult to remain a true pilgrim in a modernised world as technology has changed the pilgrim's experience. Of course, the intensive use of ICT encourages the advertising of the Way, providing details and information that can be used to promote and attract potential pilgrims (Lois González and Somoza Medina 2022).

Post-contemporary pilgrimage is a spatial narrative in which "mobility, fluidity and liquidity" coexist (Sheller and Urry 2006, p. 210) insofar as in its inclusive and flexible space, different religious faiths coexist, new habits are introduced, and previous patterns are altered by representing alternative ways of being and occupying the place in which sacred and secular coincide (Gallagher and Newton 2009). This results in a negotiated space: values, beliefs, uses and practices are negotiated, while "aspects of historically dominating religion that are so deeply embedded in a society's collective memory, culture, values, institutions, everyday speech, and in the landscape" remain (della Dora 2016, p. 5). In order to highlight this dynamism and complexity in which the secular and sacred coexist, overlap and compete, we take up the definition of *infrasecular* proposed by della Dora (2016) and consider that the case study responds to an *infrasecular pilgrimage space*. This expression highlights the dynamic and mobile dimension of space and the different processes of significance that pilgrims perpetuate, considering their diversity of profiles and behaviours (nationality, religions, ages, motivations, among others).

Almost 20 years ago, Sheller and Urry (2006) highlighted the need to investigate the different expressions of *the new mobility paradigm* in the social sciences, which had to include a dynamic component. Pilgrimage studies are one of these areas, and in recent decades, many advances have been made in this regard to highlight

Fig. 11.11 Pilgrims in Santiago, after walking the Way with their PC, September 2022. *Source* Authors

the relationships between pilgrimage and mobility. In the light of the considerations presented, pilgrimage is indeed a spatial practice characterised by significant movements and practices of interest from a material and immaterial perspective (Scriven 2014). As we have just shown, in the case of the Way of St. James, *the pilgrimage mobility paradigm* is articulated through different vehicles (related to each other) that make these networks interlace. Next, we propose a taxonomy of the *pilgrimage mobility paradigm.*

1. *Embodied mobility*: the body of the pilgrim is the main vehicle of movement when physically progressing along the Way. Their displacement, or rather their performance, gives meaning to the space through practices and behaviours that produce and reproduce the space (Butler 1990; Holloway 2003). Therefore, the mobility of the body involves movement of symbols, practices, values and feelings (Gökarıksel 2009). The latter are also generated along the Way, so the body is an affective vehicle through which emotional walking geographies are built.
2. *Transport mobility:* this expression refers to the modes of transport, and in the case of the Way, it alludes to the modes of travel that pilgrims prefer.
3. *Communication and information mobility*: *embodied mobility* in turn generates a relevant *communication and information mobility*, capable of connecting the world on a larger scale, with wide-ranging consequences and repercussions. Intense communication and the circulation of information today make use of ICTs, which reduce physical and temporal distances.

4. *Cultural mobility*: during the Middle Ages, pilgrimage contributed to overcoming cultural, social and economic immobility, since the Way has always involved the movement of ideas, values and culture. Today, this cultural mobility is intensifying and becoming more international, taking advantage of the new media and a kind of cultural democratisation that allows writing and publishing books, among others, in which personal experiences whose perceptions are often associated with cultural belonging are conveyed (Lopez 2019). Thanks to ICTs, the current cultural mobility has a clear reduction in time and space in relation to the past.

5. *Service mobility*: with this expression, we describe the movements necessary for the exchange and supply of goods, transport and services that work so that "the pilgrim society" can meet its increasingly complex needs and in line with the times.

Future Directions

In the current not entirely post-pandemic scenario, the Way is being confirmed as an opportunity for reflection, leisure and fun. Enjoying some freedom of movement and the continuous diversification of its offer seems to respond to the demands of tourists and pilgrims that are nurturing a certain holistic motivation (Lopez and Lois González 2021). Looking to the future, the inevitable motivational transformation reflects popular post-contemporary values: an eagerness to walk and reaffirmation of oneself (Lorimer 2011). We believe that the Way will continue to be the benchmark for cultural and pilgrimage routes for the following reasons:

- *Slow mobility*: this factor will remain attractive in future making it possible to rediscover new values (Badone 2014). Of these, we would like to highlight the renewed interest in exploring and getting to know landscapes with cultural and natural qualities (Dewsbury and Cloke 2009; Pile et al. 2019). Pilgrims, purists or not, want to recover a slower temporal dimension to make an immersive experience in the rich landscape environment of the Way, thus participating in the process of significance of these spaces (Egan 2010; Macpherson 2016; Maddrell and della Dora 2013; Slavin 2003): "Walking tourism along the pilgrimage routes may be seen as a co-creation process and development process by walkers, surrounding communities and the environment" (Kato and Progano 2017, p. 247).

- *Experiential tourism*: the Way of St. James interprets the values of experiential tourism of the twenty-first century (Lois González and Lopez 2020). The polysemy of its character, from the cultural to the sporting, from the spiritual to the tourist, explains its endurance. In addition, the nuclei of the Way are magnificent examples of well-preserved historic centres, rich in Romanesque churches, Gothic cathedrals and buildings, monasteries and large baroque civil buildings, together with bridges, fountains and historic lodges in a space of enormous heritage value (Franco Taboada and Tarrio Carroeaguas 2000; Somoza Medina and Lois

González 2018; Soria y Puig 1993). The Jacobean pilgrimage is a complete spiritual and tourist experience. Thanks to the diversity of territories that it crosses, it is possible to learn about new cultures and discover new territorial identities. It is a particular tourist activity, during which it is also possible to attend performances by folk groups, orchestras or small shows (Lois González and Lopez 2020). Finally, doing the Way also helps to experience many continued satisfactory feelings, linked to the most current leisure practices in developed societies. Among them, enjoying the local gastronomy, having typical drinks and the celebration of collective meals where pilgrims meet. The gastronomy is highly valued by a walker who also suffers the intense physical strain of the route.

- *Post-secular therapy route*: post-secular pilgrims are mainly driven by the search of a spiritual experience (Nilsson 2016): the aforementioned *quest*. After this cathartic pilgrimage, the experience does not end with the arrival at the destination, or with the return home, it affects the pilgrims' perception of the world, leads to deep inner experiences and encourages them to rework the past and to have a renewed vision of the future (Frey 1998). Among others, the pandemic provided the opportunity to capture the essence of the Way (Doburzyński 2021). For this reason, the Way is able to respond to concerns, characterised by being a "post-secular therapy route". According to Mikaelsson (2012), the therapeutic route has two elements: the understanding of a personal issue (such as divorce, death, loss of work, etc.) and the experience of renewal or transformation. As shown in the previous pages, the Way of St. James presents both elements. In many cases, post-contemporary pilgrims have reached a point of stagnation and notice the need for a spiritual and personal experience: the pilgrimage (Egan 2010). The reopening of the Way after the pandemic has shown that it is considered an opportunity to go out, walk and be in contact with nature. It offers an alternative form of sustainable travel, far from crowded centres and in full contact with the rural, which is why it has become fashionable again, reconfirming plural and transversal consumption patterns. In this context, we find the Way to Fisterra, characterised in a symbolic way by the contact with the maritime landscape (and water as a cathartic element). The enchanting landscape of Fisterra and the very name of Costa de la Muerte (Coast of Death) are accompanied by a great symbolism that arises from being located in one of the most western regions of Europe, with a rich tradition of myths and legends (Alonso 2002; Sánchez Carretero 2015). In an increasingly secularised dimension, reaching the ocean regains its cathartic and ancestral meaning. Spiritual regeneration is an expectation of pilgrims who, following ancient rituals associated with fire and water, would take another step towards the conceptualisation of post-contemporary spirituality (Margry 2015a, 2015b). Both elements converge in this historical moment, conceiving the Way as a gradual therapy that brings benefits for physical, mental and spiritual healing.

Conclusions

Since its first definition, the term pilgrim has changed its meaning, from being a foreigner to being a tourist (cultural, religious, etc.). This change goes hand in hand with a progressive institutionalisation and secularisation of his or her *being*, which possesses a series of prerogatives, and today has become the true protagonist of the pilgrimage space, whether secular or sacred. For the social sciences, and for geography, the secularisation of pilgrimage has revealed new ways of studying and interpreting cultural routes and pilgrimages in general and the Way in particular. After assuming its inclusive, dynamic and polysemic character, it has helped to investigate more deeply, and from different points of view, the articulated network that underlies the pilgrimage, understood as a typology of an increasingly complex mobility, as confirmed by the taxonomy of the *pilgrimage mobility paradigm* presented here.

The Way of St. James, the main pilgrimage route today, has undergone numerous changes throughout the centuries, which have been necessary to ensure its survival (Roszak and Huzarek 2022). It is a pilgrimage that represents and welcomes alternative ways of being, that compete and coexist with each other; hence it is a dynamic, fluid and mobile space: an infrasecular *pilgrimage space*, as we have defined it. Throughout this research, we have presented some of the main transformations of the Way; among them, we highlight the motivation, accommodation preferences and some other behaviour that questions the authenticity of the current pilgrim, in favour of a more post-secular and post-contemporary vision. As for the diversification of motivations, there is currently a different way of relating to the landscape and its natural, cultural and spiritual dimensions; in short, it is a personal interpretation of the space of the Way, and the pilgrimage is an act "more than walking" (Maddrell 2013), insofar as each pilgrim manifests his or her way of relating to the landscape and its natural, cultural and spiritual dimensions along the route. This "experience personalisation" is evident in other aspects of the Way. In fact, although the more traditional pilgrims (or purist) do not cease to exist, the number of pilgrims (not purists) who seek a more personal and intimate dimension of the experience, planning a tailor-made trip with their own rhythms to fully live the experience, regardless of traditional customs, has increased. We thus find pilgrims who travel without the traditional large backpacks, who do not have much time and make the Way at different times of their lives, and others who prefer more comfortable accommodation. A progressive departure from the purist vision, which also begins to emerge in the statistics of the *Compostela*, with an increase in other motivations.

The Way of St. James is the emblem of a change of identity from a purely religious destination to a post-secular tourism destination with spiritual attributes (Kim et al. 2019; Lois González et al. 2016; Lopez et al. 2017). All these progressive transformations generate new, increasingly personalised narratives, which move differently, while confirming this route as a unique, atypical product, but one perfectly integrated into the most current motivations of tourism practice.

In conclusion, we know that throughout these pages we have raised several issues and addressed different topics, some of which need more careful consideration for

their potential interest (as is the case of the phenomenon of tourist homes along the Way, or the behaviour of non-purist pilgrims). However, here the main objective has been to analyse the Jacobean pilgrimage in its many aspects and transformations, in an alternation between sacred and secular, purist and non-purist, opening the way to the new problems presented, which can be detailed in future research.

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Chapter 12
(Re)Invention of the Way of Saint James Between Religion and Poetry: The Way of Faith and the Way of Cora Coralina in Brazil

Lisandra L. Carvalho Passos and Mirian Rejowski

Abstract The Way of Faith has been a Catholic pilgrimage route for 19 years, and the Way of Cora Coralina was inaugurated in 2018. Both trails are located in the Brazilian countryside and were inspired by the Way of Saint James, in Spain. As long-distance trails in Brazil, they provide different experiences for pilgrims, be they hikers or cyclists. This study investigated these two paths, one of religious pilgrimage and the other focussed on culture and ecotourism, to identify their similarities and differences relative to the Way of Saint James, which inspired them. Along these trails, the pilgrims connect with nature, culture, local communities, the places visited and with themselves, until they arrive, by the Way of Faith, at the Basilica of Our Lady of Aparecida and, by the Way of Cora Coralina, at the Casa de Cora Coralina Museum. Through interviews with board members of the trail management associations, as well as the documents they made available, we present the trails' conception and history, their central characters, the paths themselves and the entities responsible for their upkeep. There are references to the Way of Saint James in their design, signposting, creation of the friendship associations and documentation for the hiker or cyclist. Notably, the three stages of the Way of Cora Coralina and the professionalisation of the managing entity of the Way of Faith are directly correlated with the respective characteristics of the Way of Saint James.

Keywords Way of Faith · Way of Cora Coralina · Long-distance trails · Religion · Poetry

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Introduction

Geography is a field of knowledge that constantly seeks to understand the world and its contradictions, which are at the core of social relations, appropriation and use of the environment. It is necessary, however, to clarify the aspects related to the nature of cultural geography, underlining their relevance to this study.

Although cultural geography has its origins around 1890 (Claval 2007), it only emerged in Brazil in the 1990s as a subfield analysing the spatial dimension of culture (Corrêa and Rosendahl 2003), with a focus on material and non-material aspects, in the present and past, on objects and actions, within local, regional and global dimensions, as well as other objectives or intersubjectivities "seen in terms of meanings and as an integral part of human spatiality" (Corrêa and Rosendhal 2003, p. 13; our translation). Topics such as religion, cinema and genres related to memories, perceptions, representations and cultural identities have drawn the attention of researchers (Benatti 2016).

The topic of pilgrimages appears among the many paths within cultural geography, without limiting the idea of pilgrimage to religious purposes and expanding it to encompass the paths where the pilgrims seek that which is important to them, where they can encounter themselves and nature, reflect on what they feel and engage in introspection and detachment. In a journey of self-discovery, the pilgrim faces both physical and psychological difficulties, which may include a "reencounter with one's inner self and conference with nature, while slowly progressing along the route" (Moscarelli et al. 2020, p. 3).

The Way of Saint James in Europe is a legendary pilgrimage route that attracts not only religious people; it is not bound to the limits of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Spain: "For pilgrims who go to Santiago, the essential ritual acts are contained within the journey—during travel, time and space are resignified, acquiring a symbolic dimension for those who make the pilgrimage" (Calvelli 2006, p. 46; our translation). It is a route adopted as a reference model for the design, implementation and management of many pilgrimage routes, be they religious or ecotourism trails, including paths in Brazil.

Given this context, two long-distance Brazilian trails were selected in different regions of the countryside: the Way of Faith, inaugurated in 2003 in the southeast region, and the Way of Cora Coralina, inaugurated in 2018 in the Midwest, both with different proposals. The former attracts a large flow of pilgrims moved by faith in Our Lady of Aparecida (Alvarez 2014; Calvelli 2006; Chiminazzo 2022; Steil and Carneiro 2008), and the latter draws a flow of ecotourists in search of contact with nature, culture and self-discovery (Freitas et al., 2022; Mendonça, 2021).

For the Way of Faith—which attracts believers, sportsmen and tourists (or ecotourists)—the ultimate goal is to reach the National Shrine of Our Lady Aparecida, as a demonstration of faith, gratitude, penance, recognition and bestowed grace (Moreira 2007; Steil and Carneiro 2008). The basilica is the largest Catholic temple in the country and the second largest in the world, located in Aparecida do Norte, in the countryside of the state of São Paulo. Devotion to this saint dates back to

the eighteenth century with the appearance of its image, but saw its first pilgrimage in 1873, with a group of devotees from the Parish of St Anthony in Guaratinguetá (Alvarez 2014, 2017).

The Way of Cora Coralina is an ecotourism trail for nature contemplation, which passes through eight cities and eight villages, including historical cities from the gold mining period (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries); the route displays 60 plaques with excerpts of poetry authored by this nationally renowned poet. The route ends at the museum in honour of Cora Coralina, based in her former house on the banks of the Vermelho River, in the City of Goiás (Mendonça 2021).

Considering that both trails were inspired by the Way of Saint James (Spain), their conception, implementation and management are analysed in comparison with their source of inspiration. As such, exploratory-descriptive qualitative research was developed, based on a bibliographical search and on physical and virtual documents, complemented by semi-structured interviews with people considered key for trail management. Each of the paths is presented according to their main character, history and managing entity. Next, we analyse the aspects convergent with or divergent from the Way of Saint James, discussing the paths' influence as religious and an ecotourism routes. In the end, we agree with Calvelli (2006, p. 45) in that, despite this reference, both paths "while being '(re)invented' resignify local symbols, enabling the articulation between the local and the universal. Thus, the Way of Saint James is 'reinvented' in several ways within the Brazilian context" (our translation).

The Way of Faith

The Way of Faith is a pilgrimage route to the city of Aparecida do Norte (State of São Paulo) that was made official on 12 February 2003.

Our Lady of Aparecida

The city of Aparecida do Norte is a strong reference point for Brazilian Catholicism, with a great influx and manifestations of devotion to Our Lady of Aparecida. The devotion began with three fishermen who, in October 1717, were tasked with fetching fish for the Count of Assumar, ruler of the Captaincy of São Paulo and Minas Gerais, who was passing through the village of Guaratinguetá on his way to the gold mines (Silveira 2019). The presence of authority meant a plentiful feast. They did not obtain any fish but found parts of an image of Our Lady in the Paraíba do Sul River—more precisely, in the Port of Itaguaçu. After they encountered the body of an image, the fishermen found the head of the saint and had successful fishing. According to Father Brustoloni (*apud* Santos 2007, p. 88), "the fishing, thereafter, proved so fruitful that they had to return in fear of sinking the vessel, such was the amount of fish" (our translations). It was an episode similar to the fishing of the disciples, narrated in the

Bible (John 21:1–14), in which Jesus fills the fishing net abundantly, after a night without being able to catch anything. The fishermen's success was considered a miracle.

The fisherman Domingos Garcia sheltered the 35 cm tall terracotta image in his house between the years 1717 and 1732, but in 1732, the fisherman Felipe Pedroso gave the image to his son, Athanasio Pedroso, who built the first oratory open to the public (Ribeiro 2021), at which point it was a 36 cm tall image made of clay, weighing about 2.50 kg (Bernardo 2017). In 1745, a chapel was built, and the image gained more importance as the first residents were settling in the region. A pilgrimage route began to visit the saint and the space became crowded. In 1888, the first church was inaugurated, now known as the Old Basilica, under the command of the canon Joaquim do Monte Carmelo, after 43 years of construction (Alvarez 2017).

In 1930, Pope Pius XI consecrated the image of the black saint as "Queen and Principal Patroness of Brazil". In 1946, the project of the Basilica Cathedral began, designed in a neo-romantic style by the architect Benedito Calixto Neto and characterised by buildings of monochrome bricks and stones, with arches over the openings in the doorways and windows and polygonal towers on the sides of the façades and with roofs of various shapes (Silveira 2019). In 1980, Pope John Paul II consecrated the Basilica and the then president, João Baptista Figueiredo, recognised 12 October as a national holiday in honour of Our Lady of Aparecida (Brazil 1980). This basilica is the largest Catholic temple in Brazil and the second largest in the world, second only to St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican; the Sanctuary contains 143,000 m^2 of space. In 2019, the year before the COVID-19 pandemic, it received about 12 million visitors (Castanho 2022), many of whom walked the Way of Faith (Fig. 12.1).

Fig. 12.1 Cathedral Basilica of the National Shrine of Our Lady Aparecida. *Source* Assignment of image rights Istock. *Photo by* Gisele Flissak 2020

History of the Way

Including all of its branches, the Way of Faith is 2500 km long; the main branch is 318 km long and is located in the State of São Paulo, between Águas da Prata and Aparecida. It consists of 19 branches, which depart from several cities in São Paulo and Minas Gerais, most of which connect to the main branch in the city of Águas da Prata (Fig. 12.2).

Between the States of São Paulo and Minas Gerais, 400 km of the Serra da Mantiqueira is travelled by vicinal roads, bridges, narrow stretches, woods, trails and asphalt. The developer of the idea of the Way of Faith was Mr Almiro José Grings, resident of Águas da Prata (Calvelli 2006; Gonçalves 2003; Lima 2015; Moreira 2007), who travelled the Way of Saint James twice and devised a path that could take devotees to Aparecida do Norte. The purpose was to provide structure for people who were already making pilgrimages to the National Shrine of Aparecida and offer them resting points along the way. The Way of Faith project, the name for which was approved in the assembly, involved three dioceses, 16 parishes and 16 municipalities in its first stage (Calvelli 2006). In July 2022, the path encompassed 72 cities—of which 72% were in the state of São Paulo and 28% in the state of Minas Gerais—and 11 conservation units (AACF 2022).

The Way of Faith, a self-guided trail, is a pilgrimage or religious tourism route that passes through peaks, lookouts and historic towns, in which the pilgrim can also observe birds and animals and has rural experiences. The trail is fully marked, and every 2 km there are signs indicating the distance left to the Basilica, as well as yellow arrows on poles and posts indicating the direction to be followed. In the early

Fig. 12.2 Map of the Way of Faith—Brazil. *Source* AACF 2022

2020s, pilgrims were made up of 44% hikers and 56% cyclists, with an estimated average expenditure of 272 euros, and there were 242 accommodation facilities and 146 rest points along the trail, according to data from the Progress Report of the Path of Faith (AACF 2022).

To earn the credential for completing the pilgrimage, the pilgrim must fill out a registration form and sign an acknowledgement of risk and responsibility, which must be delivered to the selected starting point. In each location, the credential receives a stamp that can be obtained in establishments at the resting points listed on the official website, especially in the last 135 km; the lack of stamps can prevent the issuance of the Mariano Certificate.

The Managing Entity of the Way

The Friends of the Way of Faith Association (*Associação dos Amigos do Caminho da Fé*—AACF), established on 15 August 2003, is the institution responsible for the Way of Faith and has the mission "to provide a safe and accessible pilgrimage to those who, in it, seek the renewal of faith and self-knowledge by providing adequate infrastructure and a trail with favourable conditions" (AACF 2017, our translation). It aims to implement the project of strategic development along the path to systematise its management, promote it as a pilgrimage route in Brazil, increase the flow of pilgrims, stimulate economic growth and promote the human development of all involved.

The AACF is composed of a Deliberative Council, represented by the mayors of the cities along the Way, and an Executive Board. The participating members are the municipalities of the participating cities, and their public fundraising format is still maintained. Over the years, ways to raise new revenues have been improved, conforming to state and federal laws and jurisdictions; however, the management of resources and path development assignments remains under the responsibility of AACF. According to an interview with Mrs. Camila Bassi Teixeira, planning advisor at AACF, in its first seven years, the association had its resources managed exclusively by the Voluntary Executive Board. After an attempt at external management, they returned to management by the Executive Board, but with the aid of a secretary and an accountant.

In 2004, the president of the Banco do Brazil Foundation, Mr. Jaques Wagner, walked the Way of Faith and supported the proposal to submit a project, the approval of which led to the purchase of a truck, investment in signs and partnership with Minas Gerais Power Company (CEMIG). In 2013, a new appeal was requested for this Foundation, initially denied, that was subsequently revised and rewritten with propositions such as: educational actions, a course of excellence in the means of lodging and a course in attendance, business planning and market research. The project was approved, and its execution was coordinated by Mrs. Camila Bassi Teixeira. The business plan was then elaborated, which was a beacon of information on

tourism, pilgrims, the entrepreneurial network and the cities. The new data allowed AACF to establish a professional management system for the social tourism business.

There have been four pillars of growth in recent years: the "development of communities, the research and development of routes, the economic movement for the generation of employment and income and the valorisation and conservation of the environment" (AACF 2022, p. 5; our translation). Furthermore, criteria were established for the admission of cities to the Way, such as having a religious event occur, attractiveness, location on the map, articulation of the cooperation network and acting in the Municipal Tourism Council.

According to Mrs. Camila Bassi Teixeira, recent years have seen an increase in the work of tour operators on the Way of Faith, who act as mediators between the pilgrim and the hike, with the offer of services and facilities. The conflict in this situation was the use of the brand "Way of Faith" by these operators without proper accountability for problems during the trip, which made the AACF co-responsible. The accreditation of service operators for the Way of Faith began to be conditioned by the presentation of a safety management programme by the operator[1] (ABNT 2016). According to the 2021 Activity Report (AACF 2022, p. 7), as demand grows, payback is offered to the market, "stimulating the adjustment of supply for each locality" (our translation), in which the action of the entrepreneurs' strength lies and vice versa. At the time of this work, the AACF was rebuilding its form of communication to adapt to each of its audiences, configuring a personalisation of economic, social, cultural and environmental development data.

The Way of Cora Coralina

The Way of Cora Coralina is an ecotourism route that was made official in 2018 and leads to the City of Goiás (in the state of Goiás).

Cora Coralina.

The city of Goiás is the homeland of Cora Coralina, the pseudonym of Anna Lins dos Guimarães Peixoto Brêtas, who was born in 1889 and died in 1985 at the age of 95 (Britto and Seda 2009). In 1907, at the age of 18, Cora and three other young writers—Leodegária de Jesus, Rosa Godinho and Alice Santana—became editors of the literary newspaper *A Rosa*, considered by critics to be the "vehicle of the ideas of the Goiano intellectuality" of the time (Britto and Seda 2009, p. 71). Journalist, writer, intellectual, speaker and performer, Cora Coralina was a lodestar among her peers,

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[1] This programme should follow the technical standard NBR ISO 21101:2016, which deals with the minimum requirements of a safety management system for adventure tourism service providers (ABNT—Associação Brasileira de Normas Técnicas 2016).

occupying an important role in Brazilian literature for the simplicity with which she portrayed her daily life in the countryside of Goiás (Britto and Seda 2009). The house where she was born[2] was the scene of her childhood and adolescence until 1911, when she moved to the State of São Paulo with the lawyer Cantídio Tolentino de Figueiredo Brêtas, whom she married and with whom she had six children in the city of Jaboticabal. She returned to Goiás after 45 years as a widow at the age of 67. After the closure of a long inventory, she bought the old house on the bridge, remaining its sole owner. To survive, she continued her craft as a candy maker and published short stories and poems in local newspapers between 1956 and 1959. In June 1965, at the age of 75, she published her first book, *Poema dos becos de Goiás e Estórias mais*, with the publishing house José Olympio, in São Paulo.

Cora was the fourth woman to publish a book of poetry in Goiás (Britto and Seda 2009), and in 1970, she was recognised by the Women's Academy of Letters and Arts of Goiás (*Academia Feminina de Letras e Artes de Goiás*; Arantes 2007). She received an Honorary Doctorate from the Federal University of Goiás in 1982, and the following year, she was the first woman to receive the Juca Pato Award from the Brazilian Union of Writers with the book *Vintém de Cobre: Meias Confissões de Aninha* (Britto and Seda 2009). Considered a symbol of the rural working woman, she was honoured by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and, in 1984, she became a laureate for the Academy of Letters of Goiás. The poet of "sweet verses" achieved dozens of honours, and various editions of her works have been published. She was a speaker (or lectured) in several Brazilian cities, and her work reached reference centres such as the New Sorbonne University, the Complutense University of Madrid, Havana University, and the Universities of Iowa, Harvard, Illinois and Arizona in the USA (Britto and Seda 2009).

After Cora's death in April 1985, friends and relatives met and established the Casa de Cora Coralina Association, a private legal entity for cultural service, with the aim of preserving its movable and fixed assets, retelling her work and life story, guarding her documentary collection and continuing "the realization of the poet's ideals, with the purpose of preserving her memory and disseminating her work" (Delgado 2005, p. 104; our translation). The Museum's inauguration took place on 20 August 1989, the date that celebrated the writer's centennial anniversary, in a process intended to inscribe the memory and legacy of Cora Coralina as a symbol belonging to the City of Goiás. The Museum has 16 rooms, a large backyard and a fountain of drinking water, totalling 3000 m^2, with a personal collection given by the family that includes personal objects; an archive of books, manuscripts, newspapers, magazines, periodicals, photographs, negatives and correspondence; a library and household furniture and items. The museum is open to tourists and residents, and it is the place of arrival and departure for those who make the route, as well as being stamping point for the Pilgrim's Passport (Fig. 12.3).

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[2] The house on the bridge, where Cora Coralina was born, dates from 1751; according to existing documents in Casa da Ínsua, Portugal, it is "possible to identify the built house" (Britto and Seda 2009, p. 18) as being one of the first buildings in the city. In other documents from the collection of

Fig. 12.3 Casa de Cora Coralina Museum. *Source* Antônio Ricardo Borges de Souza, 2019

History of the Way of Cora Coralina

The State of Goiás, where the Way of Cora Coralina is located, is one of the three states in the mid-western region of Brazil, in addition to the Federal District. It has a population of around six million inhabitants, in an area of 340 km^2 (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics [IBGE], 2010).

The idea to establish a touristic route arose from a set of political factors between the historical cities of Corumbá de Goiás and the City of Goiás. The State Department of Management and Planning hired the company of the architect Mr. Aldo Rebello, who had recently travelled the Way of Saint James, Spain, to pursue the enterprise. The winning company hired a team to execute the route, with the participation of Mr Bismarque Vila Real, engineer and scholar of the history of Goiás, and the historian Sandra Nui Asano. It was decided that the Way should pass through cities linked to the eighteenth-century mining cycle[3] and portray the history of the architectural urban nuclei and the nature of the Brazilian countryside in the region.

There was a need, however, to name the Way after a reference character from the history of Goiás, and Cora Coralina was then selected. The conceptual plan for

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the Lisbon Overseas Archive, dating back to 1770, the space where the house is located is "clearly built" (Bertran and Faquini 2002, p. 151).

[3] The mining cycle in Brazil originated from the inland expeditions seeking metals and precious stones found in the early eighteenth century in areas of the then Captaincy of São Paulo. The peak of the gold cycle occurred in the mid-eighteenth century in areas of Minas Gerais, Goiás and Mato Grosso.

the regional development of the Way of Cora Coralina was then elaborated in 2013 between Corumbá de Goiás and The City of Goiás. However, due to a change in public management, no governmental action was taken to continue the project. Only in 2014, at Bismarque's insistence, were tourist signs placed within the cities, towns and on the forks in the road along the Way, which was then 266 km long Mr. Bismarque Villa Real continued to pressure government bodies to continue the path project, and in Pirenópolis, the city where he lived, he began to receive groups interested in taking walks or bicycle rides. In 2017, he met with Mr. João Bittencourt Lino, manager at the Goiás State Tourism Agency, who allocated resources for the execution of the Way. The initial project, however, included the construction of several high-cost works, which led to its reformulation and a budget feasibility assessment. The elaboration of plates (or signs) with yellow arrows, excerpts of poetry by Cora Coralina and indications of cities and towns were prioritised.

The project was then implemented based on activities with the residents of the cities and towns and partnerships with the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (ICMBio 2021).[4] On 18 April 2018, the Way of Cora Coralina was officially inaugurated, with a group of cyclists travelling the entire 300 km route, departing from the square of the Mother Church of Our Lady of Penha of France in Corumbá de Goiás and arriving at the City of Goiás (Fig. 12.4).

The Way of Cora Coralina, in addition to the Planalto Central trails and the Veadeiros Trail, form the structure of the Goyazes Trail, which is currently being developed. The Goyazes Trail is part of the National Long-Distance Trail Network, encompassing five ecological corridors, along 1100 km long route within the state of Goiás itself.

The Managing Entity of the Way

The Way of Cora Coralina Association (*Associação Caminho de Cora Coralina—ACCC*) was established on 28 March 2019 to manage the trail. The private non-profit civil society based in the city of São Francisco de Goiás (ACCC 2022), and funds are raised through a monthly payment by the accredited members, which include the owners of hotels, inns, hostels, resting posts and restaurants along the trail. According to an interview with Mrs. Cirene Gomes Mendonça, regional director of the ACCC, the organisation has more than 30 entrepreneurs and about 50 volunteers and employees who provide support in various areas such as reinforcement and maintenance of the signs, fence and post-repair and cleaning and mowing of vegetation. Considered a self-guided trail aimed at hikers and cyclists, its signposting is subsidised by ICMBio in the use of yellow and black colours and a boot with the stylised name of Cora, the official brand of the Way of Cora Coralina.

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[4] ICMBio is an agency linked to the Brazilian Ministry of the Environment and is responsible for the activities of the National System of Conservation Units; it may propose, implement, manage, protect, supervise and monitor these units (ICMBio 2021).
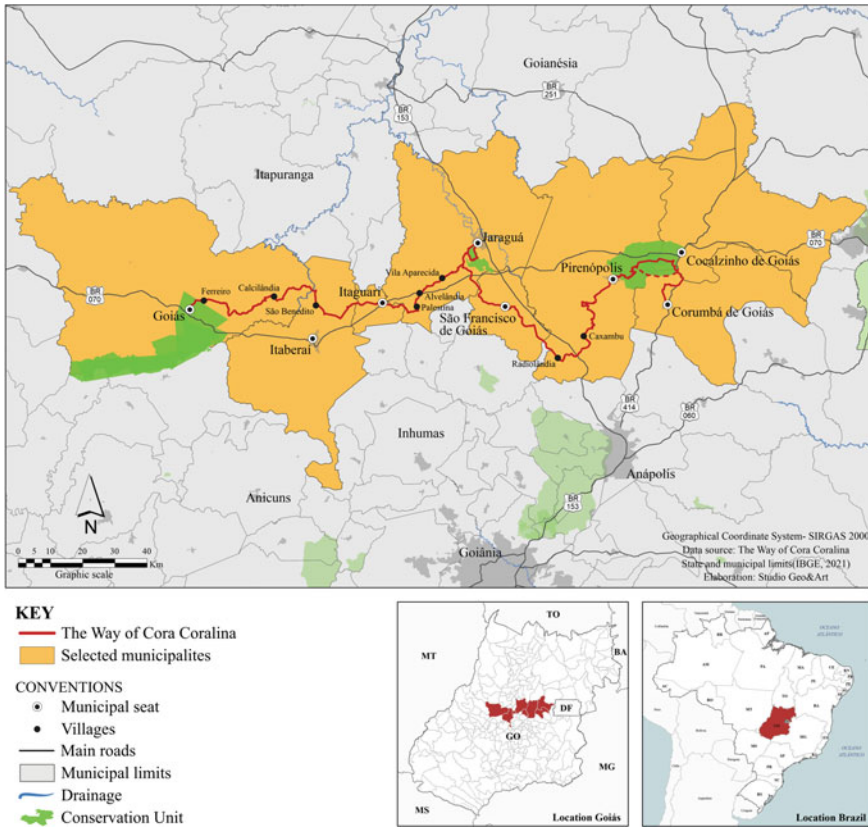
Fig. 12.4 The Way of Cora Coralina. *Source* Authors' elaboration according to data from the IBGE and Way of Cora Coralina website 2021

The Pilgrim's Passport is sold online and can be picked up at the pilgrim's chosen location, depending on the availability of the hiker or cyclist. The places where one passes are registered in the Passport, being marked by stamps that prove the entire route. If the pilgrim completed the Way before the existence of the passport, they can send photographic proof of the cities and towns through which they passed and pay the fee for issuing the document. After an analysis by the ACCC, the stamped passport is then sent to the pilgrim who can print it. A certificate of completion of the path is issued by the Secretariat of Tourism and Economic Development of Goiás, located near the Casa de Cora Coralina Museum.

(Re)Interpretations of the Way of Saint James

Both the Way of Faith and the Way of Cora Coralina were inspired by the Way of Saint James. The Way of Faith originated from the spontaneous influx of Catholic devotees who walked to a church, Our Lady of Aparecida, moved by faith, as in the case of the Way of Saint James. Conversely, the Way of Cora Coralina was established based on a political project for economic development, without any religious linkage and without previous spontaneous movements.

The geographical path of the main extension of the Way of Faith was elaborated to be the most logical route between the city of Águas da Prata and Aparecida do Norte, with no reference to the Way of Saint James. According to an interview with Mrs Camila Bassi Teixeira, a line was drawn on a map with the cities of the route and then the stretch was travelled by car by Mr Almiro José Grings to determine the difficulties, distances and the geography of the Serra da Mantiqueira in Minas Gerais and São Paulo.

The team that elaborated the Way of Cora Coralina, however, sought geographical similarities between the Cerrado of Goiás and the route of the Way of Saint James through Spanish lands. This approach divided the Way of Saint James into three stages according to its geographical characteristics: fauna and flora, slopes and declines and degrees of difficulty. The Way of Cora Coralina was also divided into three stages following the same characteristics.

The first stage of the Way of Saint James, which begins in the Pyrenees Mountains and crosses the Region of Navarra, is called the "Stage of Physical Exertion", due to the extremely rugged topographic conditions, which require a lot of preparation by and physical fitness of the traveller (Agência Goiana de Desenvolvimento Regional, 2013, p. 4; our translation). On the Way of Cora Coralina, the first stretch, between Corumbá de Goiás and Pirenópolis, which extends to the region of the village of Caxambu, is also known for its more rugged topography between the Serra dos Pireneus and the Serra de Caxambu, with steep and rough terrain that is difficult to access for some stretches of the mountain's slope. This stretch has dense vegetation, is narrower and is quite steep, requiring greater physical effort from the traveller (Agência Goiana de Desenvolvimento Regional 2013).

The second stage of the Way of Saint James is the stretch that crosses the Region of Castilha and Leon, where we find areas "of agricultural production, with extensive fields of wheat plantation and pastures" (Agência Goiana de Desenvolvimento Regional 2013, p. 4). The consistency in the landscape leads the traveller to greater concentration and is therefore called the "Stage of Mental Effort". On the Way of Cora Coralina, the second stretch, from the village of Caxambu, crosses an agricultural region between the municipalities of São Francisco, Jaraguá and Itaguarí. It also stimulates contemplation, with a combination of landscapes, including the cerrado vegetation and a diversity of flora and fauna. After the village of Palestina, the landscape changes to corn, sorghum and cassava plantations, with few trees and little shade.

The third stage of the Way of Saint James, which crosses the region of Galicia, represents the "most mystical part of the Camino and is known as the Magic Stage" (Agência Goiana de Desenvolvimento Regional 2013, p. 4; our translation). Trails and stunning landscapes create a special scenery, which peaks with the arrival at the Cathedral Square of Santiago de Compostela, where pilgrims gather to celebrate the goal of completing the Way. In the Way of Cora Coralina, the similar passage starts at the Village of São Benedito, beginning in a stage of introspection and reflection on the history of Goiás and the ancient route of *tropeiros*, *bandeirantes* and naturalists, travelled repeatedly by gold explorers and slaves. The landscape "is again more rugged and the ruins of the ancient Arraial de Ouro Fino mark the beginning of a "Magical Path", such as the stretch of Galicia" (Agência Goiana de Desenvolvimento Regional, 2013, p. 4; our translation). The Way passes through the Cross of Chico Mineiro, a character in a country song, by the Church of Saint John the Baptist, in Arraial do Ferreiro. After 12 km, the path reaches at the Cora Coralina Museum in the City of Goiás.

In both paths, symbols are used for the signs, such as yellow arrows on trees, fences, poles, spikes in the ground, walls and gates, to indicate the correct direction, similar to the yellow arrows of the Way of Saint James.[5] Along the Way of Faith, the yellow arrows are juxtaposed with the footprints of the Brazilian Long-Distance Trails Network. These footprints represent the relationship of the pilgrimage routes with a focus and determination in religious tourism, with the image of Our Lady of Aparecida in the shape of the boot footprint. The initial signposting of the Way of Cora Coralina, with a logo consisting of double quotation marks and green arrows indicating the direction, was replaced in 2017 with the support of ICMBio and Trails Network. A yellow and black logo with Cora's name stylised in the shape of footprint was elaborated, in addition to the yellow arrows. Because this path can be travelled in both directions, the yellow background of the footprint indicates the path from Corumbá to the City of Goiás and the black background, the reverse direction (Fig. 12.5).

In 1991, the Way of Saint James was consolidated with the creation of the *Spanish Federation of Associations of Friends of The Way of St James* (Moscarelli et al. 2020). In brief, the activities of these associations involve providing information and help to pilgrims, creating hospitable volunteers interested in providing free service in public hotels, collaborating with the church, creating reception places for pilgrims, publications on Jacobean history and culture and recovering symbols, such as the arrow and shell along the route (pp. 12–13). The Way of Faith was similarly consolidated with the creation of the AACF, a private association that is managed with public funds raised by the municipalities involved. The entity responsible for the management of the path became professionalised with the hiring of an advisor and the development of planning, evaluation and certification actions. For the Way of Cora Coralina, the AACC's resources come from a monthly fee from the 30 members and not the

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[5] The signage of the Way of Saint James first started to be place in 1980, with Father Elias Valiña Sanpedro, parish priest of Cebreiro, the first Galega locality of the French Way (Moscarelli et al. 2020).

Fig. 12.5 Logos of the Brazilian Ways. *Source* Way of Faith 2022; Way of Cora Coralina 2022

cities along its route. The associates are volunteers who perform various maintenance actions in the sections under their responsibility. According to an interview with Mrs. Cirene Gomes Mendonça, the municipalities help sporadically with maintenance service or with a car for displacement, but these activities are not guaranteed through institutional cooperation.

Looking at pilgrim support along the trails, the Way of Faith allows pilgrims to be autonomous along the trail, with updated information and content on the extensions of the route. The same occurs in the Way of Cora Coralina, with information on the cities and towns, lodging and other services. Volunteers are present on the Way of Faith, as a spontaneous action of people along the route, who work to welcome pilgrims on the road offering water, coffee, juice, fruits, rest area and first aid care. This does not happen on the Way of Cora Coralina. Although these two Brazilian trails are self-guided, tour operators offer reservation services, car support, guidance and travel organisation for hikers and cyclists. The Way of Faith, however, created strategies for operators to be certified through a safety management programme and to provide their service with responsibility for its dynamics and scope. The Way of Cora Coralina does not require this certification, and the operators offer packages for hikers with lodgings, food, water and luggage transportation.

As in the Way of Saint James in Spain, the routes provide a Pilgrim Credential that is stamped in the inns, restaurants, tourism departments or places of support, and upon arriving in Aparecida or the City of Goiás, pilgrims receive a certificate as proof of completion of the pilgrimage. Similar to the Way of Saint James, the pilgrim who walks at least 100 kms can apply for the certificate of completion for the Way of Faith, however; for the Way of Cora Coralina, the hiker has to perform the full 300 km to gain a certificate of completion.

Final Considerations

Such routes are considered fertile land for research, due to the historical, cultural and motivational distinction that surrounds them, and the Way of Saint James has been a recurring theme in tourism research (Santos 2021). Considering that this route is a point of reference for long-distance trails in Brazil, the Way of Faith, a religious tourism route, and the Way of Cora Coralina, a cultural and ecotourism route, were selected to explore similarities with and differences from the Spanish trail.

The two Brazilian trails analysed here were established in different periods and conditions, but in both, hikers and cyclists encounter history, culture and nature; acquire knowledge and experiences; embody perceptions and contemplate the diversity of environments, people and their inner self. This marks an expansion of the notion of the pilgrim beyond that of one moved by faith: the pilgrim is one who travels long journeys.

Among the various aspects to be considered in the description of the paths, we chose to approach the history, from conception to implementation; the central character, Our Lady of Aparecida and Cora Coralina; and the entity responsible, AACF and AACC. Even when considering only these strata, one can understand these routes and analyse their similarities to the Way of Saint James. The Way of Saint James served not only as an inspiration for these Brazilian trails, but also as a guide for the routes, signposting system, friends associations, passport and pilgrim's certificate. Such aspects, however, were reinterpreted or reinvented, to suit the Brazilian reality in which they are circumscribed, both in terms of cultural and historical characteristics, as well as environmental and political-institutional characteristics.

Despite adopting the model of the Way of Saint James as a reference, the articulation between the destination—Basilica Cathedral of Our Lady of Aparecida do Norte and Casa de Cora Coralina Museum, for example—and the universal, an apotheotic point of completion of the path, is observed. However, in the case of Cora Coralina, this culmination may be the end or the beginning, because the route runs in both directions, from Corumbá de Goiás to the city of Goiás, or the other way around, so the symbology of the Casa de Cora Coralina Museum may be an initial stimulus or the final culmination and provides different meanings for the pilgrim.

Even if we consider that only the Way of Cora Coralina depicts the three stages of the Way of Saint James—the stage of physical effort, the stage of mental effort and the magic stage—they can also be noticeable on the Way of Faith, although the geographical characteristics differ from those of the Way of Saint James. Finally, it comes to mind that the Way of Faith, a (re)invention of the Way of Saint James may turn out to be an inspiration for long-distance trails that are not only motivated by faith, because the professionalisation of its management can inspire other management entities, such as the Association of the Way of Cora Coralina.

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Chapter 13
Planning a Pilgrimage Route: Public Policies and Actors to Develop the Via Francigena in Italy

Rossella Moscarelli

Abstract The chapter analyses the process by which the legacy of an ancient pilgrimage, of a mainly religious nature, has been transformed into a tourism project, a secular resource open to anyone wishing to undertake a travel experience and discovery of the territory. In particular, the case study of the Via Francigena in Italy is considered, by describing its main historical characteristics and the contemporary regeneration. The analysis demonstrates the richness and the opportunities in terms of cultural and historical heritage of an ancient pilgrimage route, but also the need to plan and design an accurate strategy to develop slow tourism projects. The results are part of a broader debate on new practices of sustainable, slow and religious tourism and on the possible interconnections between these different experiences of the territory.

Keywords Via Francigena · Religious tourism · Slow tourism · Slow travel · Public policies

The Concept of *Travel* as Connection Between Religious, Sustainable and Slow Tourism

The chapter aims at discussing the transition from an ancient pilgrimage route, of a strongly religious root, to a contemporary and secular experience of tourism. In particular, the analysis focuses on the case study of the Via Francigena in Italy (Fig. 13.1). Thanks to this case, it is possible to reflect on the processes and public policies supporting the development of a slow tourism project.

The Via Francigena, as well as other examples of ancient pilgrimage routes such as the Way of St. James in Spain, is today regarded as a tourist resource, namely as an attractor capable of generating tourist flows (Gazzola et al. 2018; Rizzi and Graziano 2017). In the academic debate, such experience born by the reuse and

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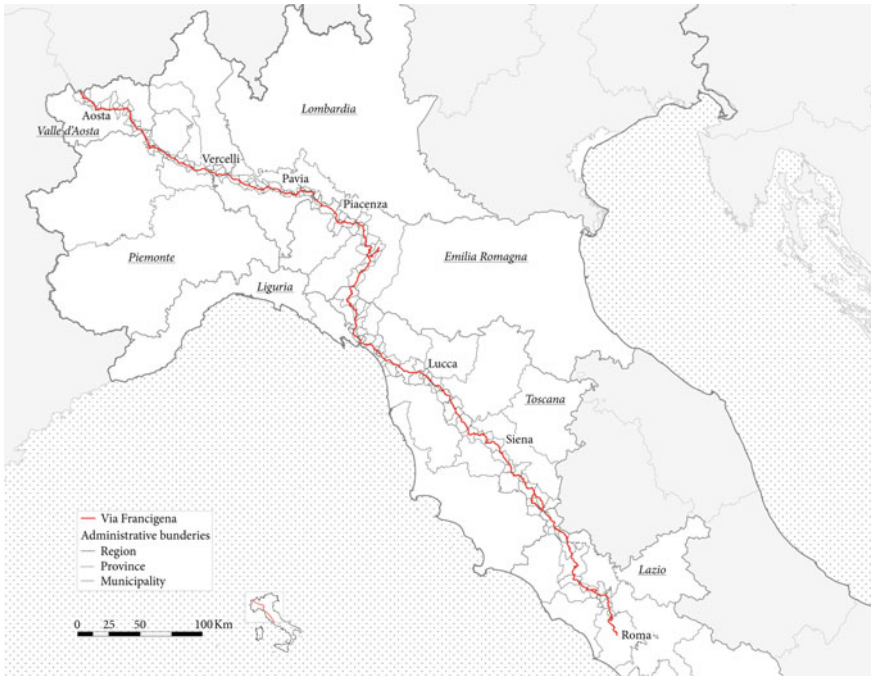e-mail: rossella.moscarelli@polimi.it

Fig. 13.1 Path of the Via Francigena in Italy (reference is made to the pilgrimage of Archbishop Sigeric who set out from Rome to Canterbury in 990 and who described all the stages of his travel in a diary). *Source* Elaboration by author on the base of the route proposed by the European Association of the Vie Francigene

regeneration of an ancient pilgrimage route is associated to different types of tourism, sometimes defined as "religious", sometimes as "sustainable" or as "slow" (Camarda 2009; Esteve Secall 2005; Lois González and Lopez 2012; Pardellas 2005; Santos Solla 2002). There is no single and shared definition of religious, sustainable and slow tourism, and in different senses, they can be associated to the contemporary experience of a pilgrimage: as religious tourism when the main motivation is to reach a sacred place; as sustainable and slow when the means of transport have a low-carbon impact, such as by walking or cycling along the path. In any case, the idea that can support all the different kinds of tourisms, that can also overlap, is the authenticity of the experience of a pilgrimage intended as a travel, both spiritual and physical. In this regard, it is interesting to reflect on the relationship between the concept of pilgrimage and travel and how this has changed over time and studied so far in literature.

Strictly speaking, making a pilgrimage meant undertaking a journey to a sacred place, a sanctuary, more or less distant, or moving towards a holy relic, offering the sacrifice of the travel (dangerous and very expensive) in exchange for a grace (Soria y Puig 1993; Stopani 1988a). From this perspective, pilgrimage seems a rite strongly linked to the religious dimension. Nevertheless, the paths, both in the past

and now, are recognised not only as a religious experience, but rather as polysemic places where numerous functions and activities coexisted (Cazaux 2011; Coleman and Eade 2004; Eade and Sallnow 1991). Already in the past, the characteristic of a path was its public function, being a public road used by everyone, not just pilgrims who were making a religious journey to arrive at a sacred place (Soria y Puig 1993; Garcia de Cortazar 1992; Suárez-Otero 2004). As happens today in a crowded street, not only pilgrims moved along the pilgrimage routes, but also soldiers, traders, shepherds, thieves. In other words, the idea that for medieval people a pilgrimage has an exclusive religious meaning is quite reductive. In the true, already in the Middle Ages, making a pilgrimage also represented a way to discover the world, to "escape" from the monotony of daily life (Stopani 1995, p 11). In this sense, it appears quite similar to the contemporary idea of travel. Not by chance, many scholars (Álvarez Sousa 2004; Barreiro Rivas 1997; Esteve Secall 2005) agree that pilgrimage can be regarded as the first form of travel.

Such a relationship between pilgrimage and travel is investigated in a particularly interesting way by Arturo Soria y Puig (1993), who through an etymological reconstruction traces an archaic and intense similarity between these two practices. Soria y Puig discusses the etymology of the word "pilgrim" (in Latin "peregrinus" and then in Italian "pellegrino" and in Spanish "peregrino"), or more exactly, of its first phoneme "per". He explains:

> Of the ancient root "per", which in Latin means "through", live and nourish themselves, as Ortega y Gasset observes, different and significant words such as "danger" (in Latin "per-iculum" [A/N in Italian "pericolo" and in Spanish "peligro"]),"perito" [A/N "perito" in the sense of able], "expert" or "experience" [A/N in Italian "esperienza" and in Spanish "experiencia"]. As if to say that from the common root "per" derive on the one hand words meaning "to travel" - it is the case of "pere-grinare" [...] - and from other, terms such as "danger" or "experience" (Soria y Puig 1993, p. 28)

As investigated by Ortega y Gasset (1958), this relationship between travel, danger and experience is not exclusive to Latin languages, but is also found for example in German where the equivalent of the phoneme "per" is "farh" from which it derives the verb "farhen" (to travel), the nouns "Gefahr" (danger) and "Erfahrung" (experience).

The relationship between travel and danger appears clear by thinking about the risks of those who decided to move in the past, due to the lack of road infrastructure and possible attacks by bandits or wild animals. At that time, a long journey involved a very serious danger and was a real adventure. Insofar as the journeys implied this danger, one should not be surprised to find a relationship between traveller and death, which implied a strong religious component in travel that was present beyond the reasons for the journey (Uggeri 2005). Sacred buildings, newsstands, crosses, etc., along the paths represent traces, still present today (Melgar et al. 1999), of this religious component.

On the one hand, there is therefore this strong relationship between the dimension of the travel/pilgrimage and that of danger/death, but on the other hand, the travel is intertwined with experience and skill. In other words, travelling was what made one skilled, and conversely, only by setting out one could gain experience. This concept of knowledge that occurs through the travel experience takes up the idea of the line

trace that allows us to inhabit places. At the same time, it should be remembered that one of the differences between travel and tourism is also in the idea of experience itself (Christin 2019). In fact, if travel, as its root and historical significance also confirm, is linked to the concept of the unexpected, therefore of adventure, tourism offers adventure as a planned (and very often paid) experience in which it completely loses the dimension of the unexpected and real discovery.

This introduction intents to reconstruct a certain continuity between the concepts of pilgrimage, linked to strongly religious values, to that of travel, understood as a secular practice of experience and knowledge of the territory. The case study of the contemporary regeneration of the Via Francigena in Italy allows us to closely observe the transition from the historical-religious values of the pilgrimage route to the contemporary secular ones with which today we mean the experience of slow tourism and travel.

The chapter shows an analysis of the process by which such transition took place, focusing first on a brief introduction to the history of the Via Francigena, then moving on to its recent regeneration, by analysing the main public actions and actors who have intervened in this process.

A Methodological Note: The Choice of the Case Study and the Main Sources

The choice of case study, the Via Francigena in Italy finds its reasons in three main arguments:

- The relevance of the case. The Via Francigena is one of the best-known Italian cases of tourism paths born from an ancient pilgrimage, with a strong recognition, in terms of history and territorial identity.
- The recent history of the reactivation process. The transition from a historical pilgrimage route to a contemporary tourist resource can in particular be found in the public policies that the Tuscany Region has implemented. These are rather recent actions, activated in the early 2000s and, more concretely, from the 2010s. Public funds and policies made possible the means to rediscover this ancient route that had been partially forgotten over the centuries
- The originality of the case. As a matter of fact, the Via Francigena was so far little investigated in the scientific literature (Lemmi and Tangheroni 2013), especially comparing to other examples such as the Way of St. James in Spain. The Via Francigena was well studied just in its historical aspects (indeed for what concerns the ancient roots of the pilgrimage it was possible to consider many bibliographical sources).

If such lack of critical reflections about the most recent development can represent a factor of novelty and interest of the case, it makes also more difficult the availability of the sources and data necessary to reconstruct the process. Thus, numerous

Table 13.1 Interviews carried out by the author to analyse the recent regeneration of the Via Francigena

Body of reference	Role	Interviewed	Date
Tuscany region	"Tourism, trade and services" executive	Raffaele Mannelli	24/4/20
Tuscany region	"Tourism, trade and services" executive	Andrea Carubi	20/5/20
Tuscany region	Ex "Tourism, trade and services" executive	Giovanni D'Agliano	3/6/20
European association of Vie Francigene	Staff (Project development and graphics)	Luca Faravelli	4/5/20
Municipality of Siena[13.1]	Ex city planning councillor	Stefano Maggi	29/4/20
Municipality of Siena[13.1]	Tourism policy councillor	Sonia Pallai	4/5/20
Municipality of Pontremoli[13.1]	Technical office staff	Ramona Martinelli	22/10/20
Municipality of Colle Val D'Elsa[13.1]	City planning office staff	Rita Lucci	27/4/20

[13.1]Tuscan municipality crossed by the Via Francigena
Source Elaboration by author

interviews with the main actors involved in the various phenomena and policies were necessary. Most of the analyses carried out refer to rather recent phenomena, which are still underway. Also, for this reason, the interview tool was fundamental in order to outline the profiles of the phenomena studied and to enter into the plots of the ongoing processes. Table 13.1 shows some of the most relevant interviews carried out.

This programme of interviews was updated and integrated thanks to an official document elaborated by the Tuscany Region itself (e.g. Regional Laws and Decrees, Strategies, Plans, etc.). In many cases, precisely because they refer to public policies and actions, these are institutional sources. This type of source appears very rich for the contents, but almost always represents descriptions rather than interpretations and reflections on the topic. Moreover, it provides a clear orientation of the data that must demonstrate in some ways all the positive aspects and impacts generated by the public action.

The Analysis and the Main Results

The main results of the analysis are discussed by considering the various aspects necessary for understanding the process of contemporary development and planning of the Via Francigena. The case is introduced with historical notes with which we understand the importance of the ancient pilgrimage route and its cultural and architectural heritage that has reached till today. The main actions promoted and financed

by the Tuscany Region that have allowed the conversion of the Via into a contemporary tourist resource are then discussed: the inclusion of the Via in a regional tourism programme, the financing of actions on the infrastructure and on services to make the path accessible and usable and, finally, the governance model.

The History of the *Via* Francigena: Not Only a Religious Path

The Via Francigena was born as a pilgrimage route connecting continental Europe (the Frankish territory as the name indicates) to the holy city of Rome (Stopani 1991). Rome became a destination for Christian pilgrimages at least from the fourth century AD on, that is, from when the emperor Constantine made Christianity the state religion. In that period, where the remains of the martyrs who died in Rome, such as the apostles Peter and Paul, were found, Constantine and his successors built the first basilicas which helped to strengthen the central role of the city in the religious context (Stona 2011). Originally, the reasons that prompted the first groups of faithful to go to Rome were precisely the presence of the tombs of the martyrs (Storioni 1988). Later, the pilgrimage to Rome was strengthened with the affirmation of the Roman diocese over the others and, consequently, with the recognition of its bishop as the highest pontiff of the whole Church (Stopani 1988a; Lanzi and Lanzi 1999). Rome also represented an important step on the way to Jerusalem, the holy city par excellence (Uggeri 2005), at least until the city passed under Islamic rule in the seventh century AD.

Beginning in the ninth century, the Church committed itself to converting local and individual phenomena of travel towards the holy cities into something universal and collective. The great development of pilgrimages then took place between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries when the phenomena of plenary indulgences and jubilees were added to the traditional reasons (Plötz 1984).

It is worth remembering that Rome and Santiago de Compostela, the other holy city to which many pilgrims have travelled in the ages, are the only places to which the jubilee privilege was granted. The institution of the jubilee years, namely a holy year during which it is possible to obtain the total remission of sins if you make a pilgrimage to that place, should not be interpreted exclusively in a religious key as it also represents a political tool that testifies how pilgrimages were not exclusively lines of devotion, but also strategic tools for controlling the territory (Barreiro Rivas 1997). In fact, another significant aspect that is found in the medieval pilgrimage paths is the political importance of the destination city, Rome in the case of the Via Francigena.

However, we need to remember that the development of the path that we now recognise as the Via Francigena took place gradually, so much so that the main routes to reach the holy cities developed centuries after the discovery of the holy relics and the construction of the first basilicas. This is also explained by the fact that the definition of the routes also corresponds to a development, such as the birth of monasteries, urban and hospitable nuclei (Fig. 13.2), and to a control and protection

Fig. 13.2 Path and the transformation of the territory. Hospitals and monasteries have often sprung up near bridges and river crossings as happened in the case of the church of the Santissima Annunziata, in Pontremoli (Tuscany), an ancient hospital along the Via Francigena. *Source* Photo by the author

of the territory (Stopani 1988a, 1988b) which once again testifies to the strategic importance and politics of these religious path.[1]

The Contemporary *Via* Francigena: A Tourist Resource for the Tuscany Region

After the widespread diffusion of the pilgrimage, due also to the institution of the jubilees (thirteenth–fourteenth centuries), the Council of Trent (1545–63) created order in the unmanageable phenomenon of indulgences and consequently also modified the types of pilgrimage. In fact, the great pilgrimages were gradually discouraged, in favour of pilgrimages to local sanctuaries. Also, for this reason, even if pilgrimages to Rome never completely died out, it is nevertheless undeniable that the flow of pilgrims suffered severe setbacks between the fifteenth and twenty-first centuries (Lanzi and Lanzi 1999). The fading of the flow of pilgrims generated an almost total disappearance of the physical traces of the Via Francigena, which was associated with a loss of links between the places and the Via itself (Uggeri 2005).

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[1] The definition of the Via Francigena, or the directrix that from the Europe of the Alps (from France precisely from which the Via takes its name), took place on the basis of political needs. This is how Patitucci Uggeri describes the birth of the Via Francigena: "The Via Francigena par excellence, that of the Bardone Mount pass, came about in the Lombard age for political reasons; but soon, connecting with the routes across the Alps, it played an essential political and economic role as a link between Italy and Europe" (Patitucci Uggeri 2005, p 11).

In the twentieth century, the Via Francigena has not played such an important role for the places it has passed through for centuries. It is perhaps in the wake of the development of the Way of St. James, that happened from the early 1990s, and the emergence of new forms of tourism and experience in the territory (Moscarelli 2021), that the idea of a rediscovery of the Via Francigena in a tourist key begins to emerge at the end of the twentieth century. Some important events in the rediscovery of the Via Francigena can be found in its recognition as a European cultural itinerary, in 1994, in the establishment of the European Association Vie Francigene, which took place in 2001, or in the Jubilee 2000, "which prompted sponsorship of this historical route" (Bruschi 2011, p. 47). In general, however, we can say that starting from the 2000s, discussions began on a certain tourist revival of the ancient medieval pilgrimage route that led to Rome from the Gran San Bernardo pass, on the border with France (Lucarno 2016). In the absence of national coordination actions, each Region crossed by the Via handled the issue differently. It has almost always been a proposal for tourism rediscovery that has not produced any concrete action on the territory, neither for what concerns the interventions on the infrastructure of the path, nor the actions of a wider territorial regeneration. The Tuscany Region, considering the Italian context, is the only one so far to have added a certain project dimension to tourism promotion.

In the case of the Tuscany Region, in fact, the Via Francigena has effectively become a tourist resource, so much so that in 2016 it was defined as the first "Homogeneous Tourist Product" (PTO using the Italian acronym) of the region. The PTO is one of the two key elements of the new Law on Tourism in Tuscany: according to Article 15 of such law, a PTO is "the set of goods and services of a territory that make up an offer able to respond to the needs of specific segments of tourism demand" (Tuscany Regional 2016).

The recognition of a tourist product was anticipated by two fundamental actions promoted by the Region itself with which the recovery process of the Via Francigena began: the elaboration of the Masterplan of the Via Francigena, which took place in 2009, and the Operational Plan, adopted in 2012 (Bruschi 2014).

The Masterplan (Tuscany Region 2009) was developed as a strategic document with which an abacus of interventions was drawn up to standardise some elements along the Via such as rest areas or signage, almost assuming that the Via already existed, and was passable in safety. The Masterplan referred, rather peculiarly, to the car route of the Francigena. In fact, in Tuscany, concerning the Francigena issue, reference is made to four different routes, namely hiking, cycling, horseback riding and finally for the car. The Masterplan in particular identified the car route, the signs along it and the rest areas where the car route crossed the excursion route. In reality, the Masterplan was never used for the actual construction of the infrastructure but served to put the Via Francigena and its rediscovery on the table of the regional political agenda. Starting from this fact, within the Tourism Department, a technical team was created to develop the Operational Plan, which was then adopted in 2012. With this plan, which also allocated 16 million euro, the fundamental actions were determined to make usable the Via in the Tuscan part. Unlike the previous Masterplan, priority was given to securing the hiking route and only afterwards to signposting

and promoting it. Part of the Via Francigena infrastructure programme also involved the creation of a network of public hostels along the Via.

The Contemporary *Via* Francigena: From the Infrastructure to the Network of Public Hostels

The main objective of the Operational Plan was to create a hiking route of the Via Francigena. This is also reflected in the way in which it was decided to divide the total investment of € 16 m: € 8 m to make the route safe for the pilgrims, € 6 m for the construction of accommodation facilities (such as hostels) and € 2 m for services, parking areas equipped and signage.

In 2012, when the concrete actions of the Operational Plan began, there was already a hiking route of the Via Francigena that had been proposed by the European Association of Via Francigene and that the Tuscany Region acquired as a line to determine the implementation interventions. Starting from that line which reconstructed the historical route, the Region established the official route of the Francigena on the basis of compatibility with the interventions selected for financing. The Region therefore, through the Operational Plan, established an intervention approach on the Via Francigena, which, unlike the Masterplan, was based on the safety of the route and which did not take its walkability for granted. Starting from this, a series of priority interventions, which the Region fully financed, was identified. Then, in second and third phases, the Region established other interventions on the basis of the requests of each municipality.

During the first phase, the Region chose 33 priority safety objectives. These were the first interventions to be financed and they constituted the nodes that were considered the most critical, on which it was essential to intervene to ensure the safety of the pilgrim. This first phase ended in 2014 and sanctioned the safety and definition of the route of the Via Francigena in Tuscany.

The second phase included a series of interventions that were reported by individual municipalities and which were verified by the regional technical department through inspections. In this case, the interventions were 50% co-financed by the Region. The second phase of implementation of the Operational Plan also includes tenders for the construction of public hostels along the Via. These calls, which once again provided for 50% co-financing by the Region, led to the construction of 14 hostels, for a total of 489 beds, partly newly built, partly for the recovery of existing buildings.

Then, there was a third phase in which the remaining funds (of the € 16 million invested by the Region) were put up for bids, which took the form of a continuation of the second phase. With the end of the third phase, which took place recently and, in some municipalities, still in progress, the intervention process on the territory of the Via Francigena was also concluded.

The Governance of the Via Francigena: The Aggregations of Municipalities

Once the Operational Plan was implemented, the actions of the Tuscany Region regarding the Via Francigena, with the exception of those concerning tourism promotion, were concluded. The issues therefore arose of how to manage the infrastructure created. As we have already said, in 2016 (in implementation of article 15 of Regional Law 86/2016 on tourism) the Region created the first "Homogeneous Tourist Product" (PTO using the Italian acronym), which also included the Via Francigena. With the creation of the PTO called "Via Francigena Toscana", the 39 signatory municipalities (the Tuscan municipalities crossed by the Via) were entrusted with the associated exercise of functions relating to the management of hospitality and tourist information, promotion and communication of the tourist product, ordinary maintenance of excursion itineraries and monitoring and analysis of tourist flows. On this occasion, the 39 Tuscan municipalities affected by the hiking route of the Via Francigena were divided into four territorial sections, called "aggregations", each with a leading municipality: the North section, led by the municipality of Pontremoli, the Centre North, with the municipality of Lucca as leader, the Central South, led by the municipality of Fucecchio and the South, led by the municipality of Siena (Fig. 13.3).

Regional resources dedicated to ordinary and extraordinary maintenance are therefore managed through aggregations. Annually, the Tuscany Region dedicates a total of about € 120,000 to the maintenance of the path. This annual subsidy is divided among the municipalities according to a sectional study of the route which has made it possible to identify those areas that have greater costs than others. For example, where the way passes inside a park or along a provincial road, where therefore it is the park managing body or the Province that with its own resources must maintain the route or ensure that the grass is mowed, the Region does not plan to allocate additional funds. On the contrary, where the Via Francigena passes over areas of exclusive municipal management, the Region provides a subsidy which, through the individual aggregations, is distributed according to quotas established for each municipality. Once the regional funds are received, each aggregation distributes them to the municipalities and independently decides how to manage the maintenance (for example, by involving a voluntary association or third-party companies).

Discussion on the Case: Reflections to Plan a Contemporary Pilgrimage Route

The chapter intends to discuss how an ancient pilgrimage route can be renovated and intertwined with contemporary practices of slow tourism. This reflection is deepened by observing the specific case of the Via Francigena in Italy, considering the process of the recent regeneration that has led the path to take on new meanings: from a medieval pilgrimage route to a tourist resource aimed at all those who intend to enjoy an experience of slow travel and discovery of the territory.
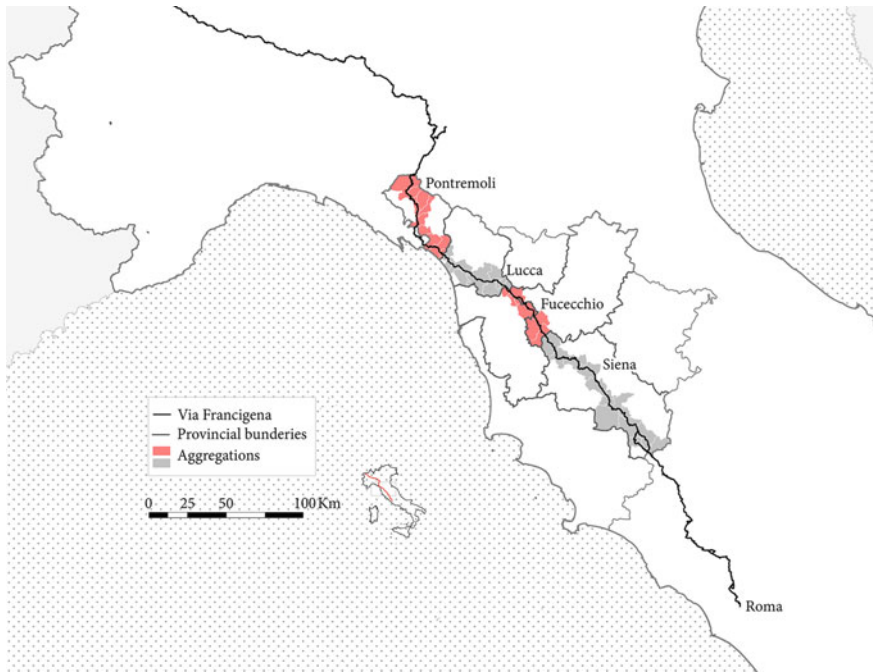
Fig. 13.3 Aggregations of Tuscan municipalities along the Francigena. It should be noted that the aggregations almost completely respect the provincial boundaries. *Source* Elaboration by the author

From the literature review, it was possible to detect a certain overlap between the concept of pilgrimage, with a strictly religious value, and of contemporary travel. Indeed, even in the past, the pilgrimage was never an exclusively religious experience: setting out on a journey towards a destination in a holy city represented a real adventure, with dangers and risks, capable of becoming an experience of formation and growth. From this perspective, we find the values and characteristics of the idea of contemporary travel. The case study of the Via Francigena shows how the contemporary rethinking of the journey has particularly insisted on the creation of a tourist product with which the idea of travel is reinterpreted in a contemporary key. It is interesting to highlight the main issues of the contemporary regeneration of the Via Francigena that we can summarise in these points:

- The intervention of the public entity, in particular the Tuscany Region.
- The investment in the safety of the infrastructure and in the creation of services for travellers.
- The creation of a promotion system and the proposal of a governance model.
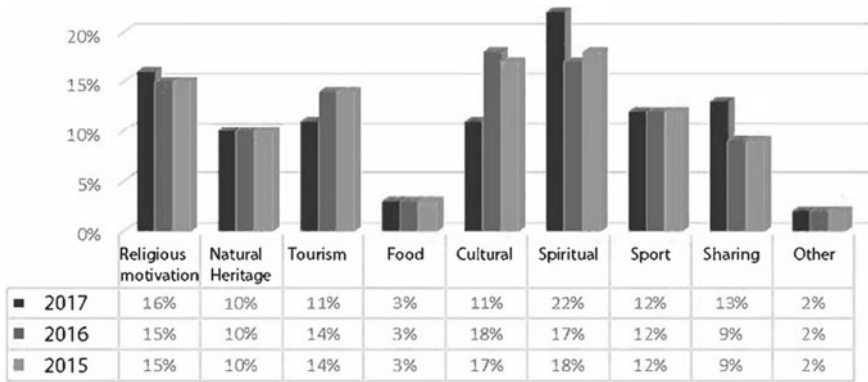
	Religious motivation	Natural Heritage	Tourism	Food	Cultural	Spiritual	Sport	Sharing	Other
■ 2017	16%	10%	11%	3%	11%	22%	12%	13%	2%
■ 2016	15%	10%	14%	3%	18%	17%	12%	9%	2%
■ 2015	15%	10%	14%	3%	17%	18%	12%	9%	2%

Fig. 13.4 Main reasons for doing the Via Francigena. AEVF 2019. *Source* Proper elaboration based on AEVF 2019

This investment, in terms of funds and projects, has led to the enhancement of the historical, cultural and architectural heritage of a significant asset such as that of a medieval pilgrimage route. The turnout data (albeit within their harvest limits) show how this project is having a good success. For instance, in 2019, 19,100 official certificates were distributed by the European Association of the Vie Francigene, whereas, in 2018, 16,900 were given (AEVF 2019). Moreover, surveys carried out on the basis of a sample of credentials along the Via Francigena by the European Association of the Vie Francigena give data about the profile of the contemporary pilgrim. From the comparison between the data of 2015, 2016 and 2017 (Fig. 13.4), it emerges that the spiritual motivation, different from the religious one, is the main reason to undertake the journey along the Via Francigena (AEVF 2019).[2]

What emerges from the profile of the contemporary pilgrim just outlined and confirmed by more detailed data about the Way of St. James in Spain, is that of a curious traveller, interested not only in reaching the final holy destination, but also in living the intense and profound experience of the travel itself. This confirms how the regeneration of these types of religious heritage has to pass through a secular re-semantisation. Just as in the past it would have been misleading to imagine that pilgrimage routes were travelled exclusively for religious reasons, in the same way even today these paths are polysemic places (González and Lopez 2012), namely places where multiple meanings and uses are intertwined. In this sense, it is possible to renew the values and the characteristics of ancient pilgrimage routes, making them again alive and active part of the territory they crossed.

Despite the positive results just discussed, to conclude the analysis of the public policies that have developed the contemporary design of the Via Francigena, it is possible to also note some critical issues.

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[2] The data collection allows us to reconstruct an inaccurate and approximate picture. However, it should be remembered that these numbers refer to the entire Via Francigena, not just the Italian part that is focus of this analysis.

The first one concerns the fact that these policies, although still recent, in their early days and not entirely assessable, appear exclusively aimed at the construction of a tourist product without any effort in the regional planning or in the coordination between the different actors involved. It is true that compared to other Italian regions crossed by the Via Francigena, Tuscany is the only one to have really invested in the development of the path and not only in marketing and tourist promotion. But the focus on the way's design does not generate any other territorial or urban redevelopment actions. Likewise, it will be evident that it does not produce coordinated planning actions or cooperation between management bodies of that territory. In other cases, such as the Way of St. James in Spain, these aspects were part of the public policies supporting the relaunch of the historical path (González and Medina 2003; Moscarelli 2020). In this sense, it can be said that the Via Francigena fails to trigger a real project of territorial regeneration and rethinking that is inspired by the line as a new generating dimension.

Another critical point is the definition of a governance approach in which the Via Francigena appears divided into several micro-paths and segments, following the local administrative boundaries. Indeed, it appears quite peculiar the decision of the Region of creating additional borders, the aggregations, through which the municipalities organise their own governance of the way, not only in terms of maintenance, which is entrusted to the individual municipalities, but also in terms of projects and actions linked more broadly to the Via Francigena. Even within the same Region, there is therefore no single Via Francigena, but rather four different parts that identify themselves with their route and manage it independently. Tourism projects that move along a territorial line cannot be developed without a clear idea and vision of governance. Such a vision must respect the boundaries determined by the line and not those determined by the administrative boundaries. The risk is to produce infinite fragments of territory that fail to enjoy the unifying power of the line (Fig. 13.5).
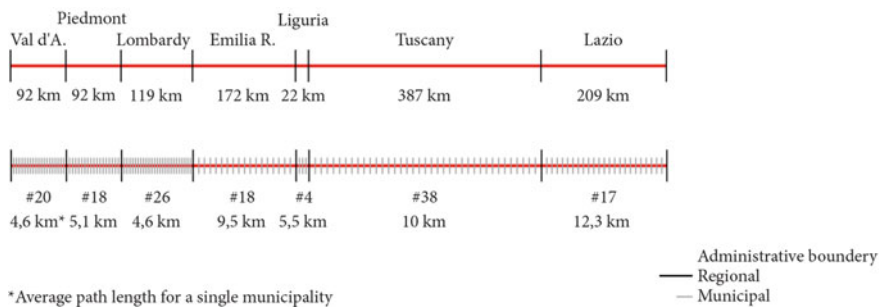

Fig. 13.5 From line to fragments: scheme that represents the line of the Via Francigena in Italy divided due to the different regional and local governances. *Source* Elaboration by the author

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Chapter 14
Geography of Hindu Pilgrimage Places (*Tīrthas*) in India

Rana P. B. Singh and Pravin S. Rana

Abstract Hindu pilgrimage, *Tīrtha-yātrā*, is a liminal process that establishes participation in the spiritual realm, associated with the sacred land. It engages with sacredscapes that are partly defined by the material world but rather more strongly by sacred symbols, cosmogonic and cultural astronomy, traditions, festivals, and the belief that these places are spiritual crossing places into the transcendent realms of the divine. India's geography may be conceived as a '*faithscape*', a nested series of pilgrimage places and their hinterlands. Topographically, pilgrimage places may be classified into three groups: (i) water sites usually associated with sacred immersion on auspicious occasions, (ii) shrines dedicated to particular deities, which are visited by pilgrims of particular sects or with particular needs, and (iii) Kshetra, sacred territory, usually defined by an archetypal mandala, travelling along which brings special merit. This chapter discusses the functioning, importance, and role of Hindu pilgrimages, concerning historical context (e.g. religious texts and their uses), contemporary situation, and the prospects on the line of sustainability and pilgrimage tourism, initiated by the government, e.g. PRASHAD, 'Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive'. This mission aims to fulfil one of the Sustainable Development Goals that refers to the 'integrated development of pilgrimage destinations in planned, prioritised and sustainable manner'. This chapter synthesises all our previous works (1980–2023) in the systemic form.

Keywords Faithscape · Hindu pilgrimage · Pilgrimage tourism · PRASHAD · Sacredscapes · Sanātana Dharma · Taxonomy · *Tīrtha-Yātrā*

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Hindu Pilgrimages: Emergence and Continuity of Tradition

This paper is substantially based on the last four decades of works on pilgrimages (primarily by Singh), which started with mapping sacred space (1980, 1997a, 1997b), and passing through historical links (2006), sacred space and system (2013), symbolism and food (2022), interfacing sacred environment (Singh et al. 2022), reached recently to the study of religious functionaries (Singh and Rana 2023).

Touring is an outer journey in geographical space primarily for pleasure-seeking or curiosity. Pilgrimage in the traditional sense is an inner journey which manifests in exterior space in which the immanent and the transcendent together form a complex phenomenon. Generally speaking, human beings need both—outward and inward journeys. Hinduism, or more appropriately *Sanātana Dharma* ('the eternal religion'), has a strong and ancient tradition of pilgrimage, known as *Tīrtha-yātrā* ('tour of the sacred fords'), which formerly connoted pilgrimage involving holy baths in water bodies as a symbolic purification ritual. Faith is central to the desires, vows, and acts associated with pilgrimage, and pilgrimage is a process whereby people attempt to understand the cosmos around them. The number of Hindu sanctuaries in India is so large and the practice of pilgrimage so ubiquitous that the whole of India can be regarded as a vast sacred space organised into a system of pilgrimage centres and their catchment areas (Bhardwaj 1973; Singh 2006). Many of these "catchment areas of India's pilgrimage landscape are very extensive; while others are more local and create a sense of regional identity" (Eck 2012, p. 12). If a map of India is drawn today to show the places having divinity association, hardly any space would be left vacant. In the majority of the cases, some kind of ages' old sacred tradition will be found attached.

According to the *Mahābhārata* (13.111.18), a twentieth-century BCE epic, pilgrimage places are auspicious for Hindus because of the extraordinary power of their soil, the efficacy of their water and because they were made holy by visits by the sages (holy wise men, *rishis*). By journeying to these powerful places and performing sacred rites, pilgrims obtain what are called 'fruits', or a transformation of themselves or their life situations (Sax 1991). Through the combined processes of sacralisation, ritualisation, and deeper interconnectedness, places become distinct 'scared places' or *sacredscapes*, possessing the characteristic of an eternal bond between the human psyche and the spirit of nature (Singh 1995). For Hindus, pilgrimage (*Tīrtha-yātrā*) is an act and process of spiritual crossing; to cross the *sacredscape* is to be transformed. Pilgrimage in a form of a spiritual quest is a guiding force unifying divinity and humanity; it is a search for wholeness. Ultimately, the wholeness of landscape and its sacred and symbolic geography creates a '*faithscape*' that encompasses sacred place, sacred time, sacred meanings, sacred rituals and embodies both symbolic and tangible psyche elements in an attempt to realise humankind's identity in the cosmos.

Most Hindu Pilgrims aspire towards transcendence of the mundane and often express their experiences in purely spiritual terms, perhaps as a dialogue with their Deity or greater Self. Such deep pilgrimages, whether motivated by a sense of duty, hope, or devotion, are rites of passage involving a cycle *(mandala)* of three

stages: *initiation* (from awareness to start), *liminality* (the journey and its experiences), and *reaggregation* (the homecoming) as well as the upward path of liberation *(moksha)* (Fig. 14.1). This is a sacramental process that involves the pilgrim in the liminal dimensions of each *faithscape* (cf. Singh and Haigh 2015). Pilgrimage seeks to develop a two-way relationship between the pilgrim and the divine, howsoever conceived, and it offers two means of departure, one back to the mundane world and the other to the spiritual realms. Singh's model of Hindu perspectives on pilgrimage charts (a minimum of) four layers, interconnecting through sacred space and sacred time (cf. Singh 1980), that link the individual believer to the Ultimate (Fig. 14.2). These two process systems bind sacred space, time, territory, and religious functionaries together into a sacrosanct spatial organisation in a cyclic frame, called the *'pilgrimage mandala'* (Fig. 14.2). The pilgrimage places are overall run and regulated by religious functionaries, who are responsible for the maintenance and continuity of age-old traditions; moreover, they also maintain client–patron relations with pilgrims' families (Singh and Rana 2023).

In Hindu tradition, pilgrimage is believed to be the most important and merit-giving act. Pilgrimage as a rite of passage involves three stages of function: *initiation* (from awareness to start), *liminality* (the journey itself and experiences), and *reaggregation* (the homecoming). A model of Hindu perspectives on pilgrimage (Fig. 14.2) would explain this issue. Starting from a believer (person) to the Ultimate, at least four layers exist, but they are interconnected through sacred space and sacred time. In theological context, this is the eternal will to interconnect a person to the Ultimate, while in a social context, it refers to a march from individual to universal humanity.

Fig. 14.1 Pilgrimage as religious duty. *Source and courtesy* Singh 2013, p. 50
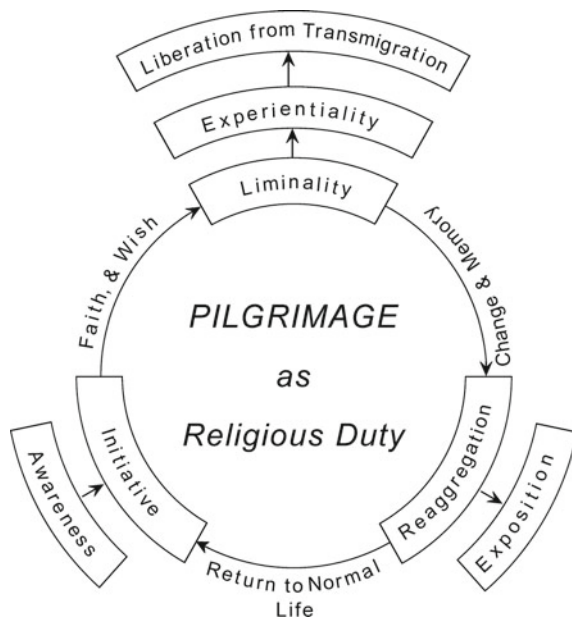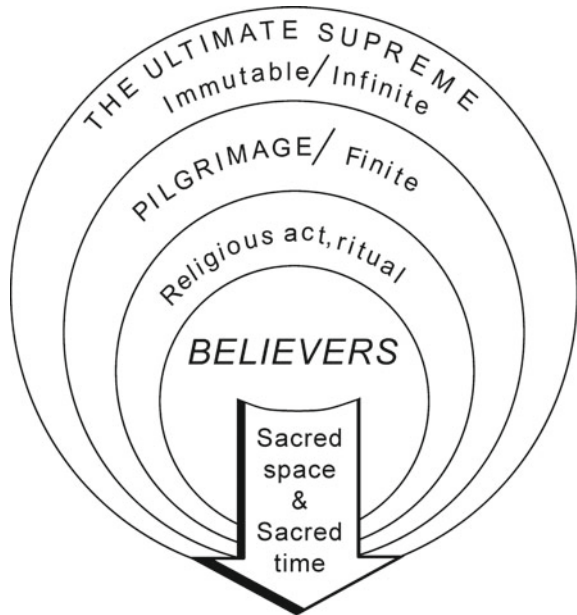
Fig. 14.2 Hindu outlook of pilgrimage. *Source and courtesy* Singh 2013, p. 51

The act of pilgrimage starts from inner space (*home*) to the outer territory (*bāhya kshetra*) and later in the reverse manner returning to the home. Pilgrimage is a *way* to heal the body and the soul by walking and opening the soul to the spirit inherent in Mother Earth. Sacrality binds space, time, territory, and the functionaries—altogether converge into a sacrosanct spatial organisation—*sacredscapes*, as illustrated in the case of the Kumbha Mela, the biggest festival of sacred bath (Lochtefeld 2010). Sacred food is one of the attributes of sacredscapes. The pilgrimage places and the patron temples there record a tradition of specialised sacred food offered (*prasāda*) to deities, and as blessed items distributed among the pilgrims that they distribute among other devout friends (Singh 2022).

With the revival of traditional Hindu belief systems during the 1950s, pilgrimages became more popular. Of all domestic travels in India, over one-third is to perform pilgrimage (Rana 2014). The growth and importance of pilgrimage tourism may be related to an increased desire among Hindus to assert their identity against an ever more visible Muslim population. Such competition emerged more actively after the destruction of Babri Mosque at Ayodhya on 6 December 1992, by awakened nationalist Hindu groups who wished to build a temple on this sacred site, which is assumed to be the birthplace of Lord Rāma. This act of aggression resulted in civil disturbances throughout the country. Since then, large numbers of Hindus have become more conscious of their Hindu heritage, which resulted in increased participation in traditional rituals, celebrations, the construction of temples, and course pilgrimages.

The great epic of the past, the *Rāmāyaṇa* (dated ca. 2500 BCE) does not directly describe pilgrimages, but it does narrate the routes traversed and the places visited by Lord Rāma during his exile (Fig. 14.3). It also draws attention to the natural beauty and inherent powers of important sacred places (Singh 1991). These places (e.g. Ayodhya, Prayagraj, Chitrakut, Panchavati, Nasik, Kishkindha, and Rameshvaram) over time developed as important sites of pilgrimage, and many of them are still known throughout all of India as significant places to visit. In April 2022, the Government of India started a special pilgrimage circuit based on this ancient 'sacred path' *(pāvan-path)*, linking all the places by the railway routes, covering two weeks. The *Mahābhārata* epic (ca. twentieth-century BCE) contains several detailed sections about the 'grand pilgrimages'; the '*Book of the Forest*' (3.82) and the '*Book of the Administration*' (13.108) are especially important as they provide descriptions of some 330 places and 12 grand pilgrimage routes covering all corners of India, from Kashmir (north) to Kamarupa (east), Kanyakumari (south), and Saurashtra (west) (Bhardwaj 1973).

The perception of and awareness to pilgrimage in Hindu tradition may be generalised under the four broad perspectives (Singh 2013):

- Pilgrimage as a ceremony is an interlinking web of sacred space, sacred time, and sacred nature where interrelatedness among the five gross elements of life organism (*pañchamahābhūtas*), i.e. earth (land), water, air, fire, and sky (ether), is remembered, celebrated, and experienced (Singh et al. 2022). As the community of action, pilgrimage is lived in and experienced as a whole system of interrelated types and varieties of divine energies.
- Pilgrimage is an *open* system in the sense that it takes and gives divine energy and matter. It is open as far as the bonds of the cosmos, but it is also enclosed within a hierarchy of internal boundaries—space within spaces, the time within times, and system within systems. The pilgrimage as a system can regulate the harmonic relationship between man and divine nature and make visible their manifestation on the earth.
- Pilgrimage is an understanding of meaning as occurring within the sacredscapes through its imageability and expressive qualities. This together with the concomitant gain of a "moral sense of nature" has been the 'major discovery of the great seers and sages of the past.
- The system of pilgrimage is a 'whole of reality' where holiness gets resort in a *field* that is latently alive, filled with expression and meaning, and certainly deserves human reverence.

In the life context, pilgrimage involves all the matter, substance, and consciousness of human beings in its drama of eternal journey. It embodies the domain of divine life—only those having potential can experience and understand the meaning: meaning is a form of being, and for this, we need an eye of the *clairvoyance*—"Clear Seeing." However, "lest they be trivialized by a secular society that destroys the inner meaning of everything it touches. But the reality is there" (Berry 1992, p. 131).
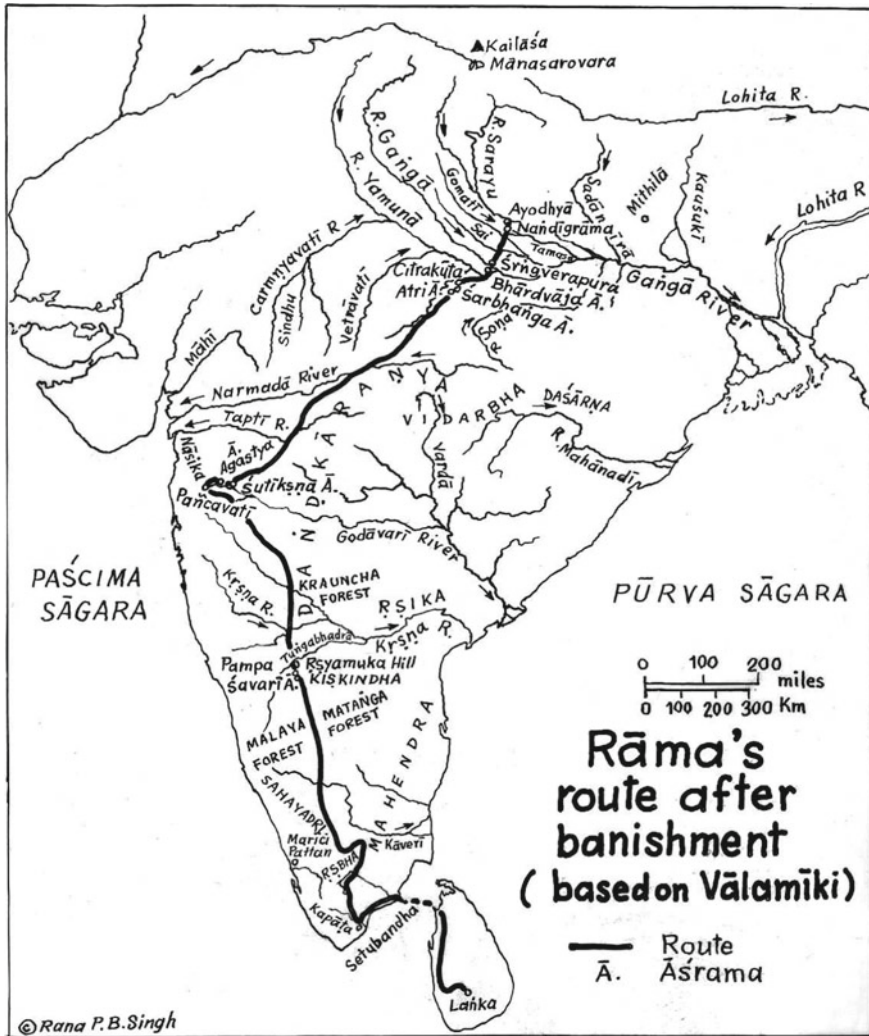
Fig. 14.3 Ancient route followed by Lord Rāma and later considered the pilgrimage route. *Source and courtesy* Singh 1991, p. 40

The most common ritual act in any form of Hindu pilgrimages is *darshan* ("auspicious glimpse") performed by pilgrims. The *darshan* has at least three categories, viz. *samparka* (direct contact, touch), *dristigat* (visual, without touch), and *durasta* (seeing from distance).

A Taxonomical Assessment of Hindu Sacred Places

Classifying holy places has been an important theme of geographic concern in terms of origin and location, motive, association, and the manifestation of power. According to the *Brahma Purāṇa* (70.16–19), pilgrimage sites may be classified into four categories: (i) *divine sites* related to gaining blessings from specific deities; (ii) *demonic sites* associated with the mythological demons who performed malevolent works and sacrifices there; (iii) *sage-related sites* associated with the lives of important spiritual leaders; and (iv) *human-perceived sites*, which are not believed to be "chosen" but merely discovered and revered by humans. This taxonomy is not watertight, as some places may overlap categorical lines, being important divine and sage-related sites, for example.

The most ancient parts of the *Vedas*, the *Rig Veda*, (ca. 2500 BCE), attach four chief connotations to the notion of *tīrtha*. It is: (1) a route or a place where one can receive power (*Rig Veda*, 1.169.6; 1.173. 11); (2) a place of purification where people can dip in sacred waters as a rite of purification (*Rig Veda* 8.47.11; 1.46.8); (3) a sacred site where God is immanent through possessing the power of manifestation (*Rig Veda*, 10.31.3); and (4) places associated with the religious territory (*kshetra*) that sacralised based upon divine happenings and work of the god(s) that took place there (*Shatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 18.9). In all these connotations, spatial–cultural dimension lies in the background. As in many other religions, place and space are an integral part of Hindu pilgrimage. A huge, if not quite as ancient, the literature describes the many and varied blessings awarded by taking a Holy dip at different pilgrimage *tīrtha*. These include the *puranic Tīrtha Mahātmya* texts dating from the first millennium or so CE, which dominate the *Skanda* and *Padma Purāṇa*s. In addition to spiritual gains, Hindu pilgrimages have always been concerned with gaining social status and the relief of worldly cares (Haigh 2011). In these texts, very many of the blessings described concern the relief of sins or the fulfilment of wishes for health, wealth, success, and so forth (Jacobsen 2013).

Topographically, holy *tīrthas* may be classified into three groups: (i) *Jala Tīrtha* (water sites), associated mostly with a sacred bath on an auspicious occasion, (ii) *Sthan Tīrtha* (temple/shrines), related to a particular deity or sect and mostly visited by pilgrims that belong to, or are attached to, that particular deity or sect, and (iii) *Kshetra* (sacred grounds/territory), areas usually shaped by the form of the cosmic *mandala*, the travelling of which brings special merit.

The first exhaustive and annotated list of about 2000 Hindu sacred sites, shrines, and places was presented by Kane (1974). The other catalogue-type descriptive works on Hindu holy places include Dave's (1957–61) four-volume work (in English) and the Gita Press's (1957) *Kalyāṇa Tīrthāṅka* which consists of short and popular essays on 1820 holy places of India (in Hindi). According to the *Kalyāṇa Tīrthāṅka* list, 35% of all sacred places are associated with the god Shiva, followed by Vishnu (16%), and the goddess (12%). Along a similar line, a recent work attempts to introduce eighty pilgrim centres, sacred shrines, and holy sites connected with different faiths and traditions in India, like Hindu, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh, Jewish, Christian,

and Sufi, including several even in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal. Bamiyan in Afghanistan has been described in an appendix. Every place is described in the context of mythology, archaeology, history and art, and heritage values. For helping general readers and pilgrims, one should be acquainted with short stories and glories of sacred places, and some publications made to satisfy the demand; one such example is by Bansal (2008), who described eighty such holy places, of course lacking authentic historicity, cultural appraisal, and contemporary scenarios. Another similar book deals with the tradition of four *dhāms* (sacred abodes), scattered in the four cardinal directions of India, viz. Badrinath, Puri, Rameshvaram, and Dvarka (Gupta 2003).

The feminine spirit of nature has received special attention in the books of mythology. There are 51 special sites on the earth, which symbolise the dismembered parts of the goddess's body; every region has its tradition of varying forms of the goddess (e.g. the state of Maharashtra) (Feldhaus 2003). The Tantric tradition symbolised these sites as resting sites of pilgrimage by the goddess, resulting in a transformation of energy (Dyczkowski 2004). These 51 goddess-associated sites later increased to 108 (Singh 1997a, 2010, 2012a). During the medieval period, all these sites were replicated in Varanasi and are still active sites of pilgrimage and other rituals (Singh and Singh 2006).

Concerning belief systems and practices as prescribed in the Sanskrit texts and as experienced by pilgrims, holy places may be classified into three groups: water sites, associated primarily with sacred baths on auspicious occasions; shrine sites related to a particular deity and mostly visited by pilgrims who belong to or are attached to a particular sect or deity; and circuit areas *(Kshetra)*, the navigation of which gives special merit based on some form or system of a cosmic *mandala* as in case of Varanasi, Mathura, and Ayodhya (Salomon 1979).

Cohn and Marriott (1958) utilised micro to macro-level acceptance and attractive fields as the scale of classification of the Hindu sacred places. Bharati (1963, 1970) also applied a similar approach. In terms of geographic scale, frequency, and routing, Stoddard (1968) proposed a typology of twenty-four categories. He concluded that factors such as minimal aggregate travel distance, closer to larger urban centres, and social characteristics, like the dominance of a particular cohort of the Hindu population, are not influential upon the distribution of holy places in India. This classification gives less emphasis on the belief systems and phenomenology of religion. In his pioneering study, Sopher (1968) used simple statistical indices to measure pilgrim regions in Gujarat and classify them. A more detailed and integrated frame of six hierarchical classes of holy places was presented by Preston (1980)—a notion that needs more serious attention by geographers in explaining the intricacies of location, institutional base, and specific characters and sacred geography of holy places in India.

Bhardwaj (1973) described and classified Hindu holy places in historical context, albeit evolution and distribution are not properly emphasised together. Since there are several religious traditions and sects within Hindu tradition, it would be more satisfactory to account for the distribution of their sacred places about their development

and regional representation, their sacred topography, and perceived and imposed meanings—local and universal both.

In general, from the perspective of geographical scale and coverage, Hindu pilgrimage places may be seen in the four-tier hierarchy as *pan-Indian*, those attracting people from all parts of India and glorified in the classical Hindu scriptures (Fig. 14.4); *supra-regional*, referring to the chief places of the main sects and mostly linked to founders of various shrines (e.g. Pandharpur, cf. Mokashi 1987); *regional*, connoting the site's dominance in a particular culture or language group and perhaps narrated as representative of pan-Indian places; and *local spots* associated with ordinary sacred geography, attracting people from nearby villages or towns. Of course, there do exist superimposition and transition among these groups, and over time the categorical status of these places may change as well. Moreover, there also exist multilevel places whose identity changes according to the sacrality of time and specificity of celebration; nevertheless, these sites maintain, of course loose, hierarchy and traditionally generated appropriate relationships among them (Preston 1980). Pilgrimage is an aspect of the pilgrim's consciousness, which may be constructed at different levels.

The seven sacred cities (*Sapta-purīs*) include Mathura, Dvaraka, Ayodhya, Haridvar, Varanasi (Singh 2009b), Ujjain, and Kanchipuram (Singh 2013). Similarly, the twelve most important Shiva abodes are scattered all over India and are known as *Jyotirlingas tīrthas*. The four abodes of Vishnu in the four corners of India are another group of popular pilgrimages (Fig. 14.4). These are the examples of pan-Indian pilgrimage places (for the Gazetteer of Pilgrimage Places, see Singh 2013, pp. 355–376).

The motivations for pilgrimage are complex. Schmidt (2009) classifies them into several types: devotional, healing, obligatory or socially required, ritual cycle—whether related to the calendar of stages of human life or 'wandering'—freeform. Bhardwaj (1973) suggests that pilgrimages to the highest-level shrines are made more for spiritual gains, while pilgrimages to lower-level shrines have tended to seek more material goals. Respecting this, recently Singh and Haigh (2015) have proposed a typology of five classes arrayed as a spectrum, denoting five groups:

(1) *Tourists*: those who are there to see the sights, take a picture, buy a souvenir, eat some food but who have no major spiritual or emotional engagement with the sacred messages of the site.

(2) *Pilgrims of Duty*: people who travel to the sacred not necessarily through belief but out of respect to their *Social Dharma*. It is something they must do and be seen to be done by their community. Their pilgrimage is not especially spiritual, but it is expected of them, and it is a display of social conformity.

(3) *Pilgrims of Need*: Spiritual Supplicants—people who travel on a pilgrimage to gain some result in the material world. They are believers—but their mind is troubled by rough weather in the ocean of material life. In the Indian Himalaya, Uttarakhand's Chital temple, which is devoted to Shri Golu Dev, the Kumauni God of Justice, is covered in *manautīs*—requests for success in legal disputes,

Fig. 14.4 Important Hindu places of pilgrimages (After Singh 1997b, p. 194; Singh 2013, p. 59)

examinations, interviews, etc.—all backed up with promises of gifts, usually, a new temple bell, if the wish is granted (Agrawal 2010).

(4) *Pilgrims of Hope*: Spiritual Tourists are those who seek spiritual uplift from association with the Supreme, and they have spiritual goals and seek things that are mainly outside the mundane world, but they are part-timers. They access the liminal mainly to leaven otherwise worldly lives.

(5) *Pilgrims of Union*: True Spiritual Seekers who all experience is a spiritual journey, who follow *moksha dharma*, a path that seeks escape from the material world and the Hindu cycle of rebirth.

Most, Hindu pilgrimages are performed on auspicious occasions (*shubha kāla*), sacred times that are often defined in terms of astronomical–astrological correspondences, which underpin their associated qualities of sacredness (*pavitrika*) and merit-giving capacity (*punya-phala*). These special occasions very often coincide with the timing of sacred festivals and share the belief that, at such times, the spiritual benefits of a particular *tīrtha* are most powerful. This, of course, can lead to the development of mass pilgrimages like those of the Kumbha Mela and Panchakroshi Yatra. Of course, the many and varied regional traditions of Hinduism, together with the rival claims of each *tīrtha*, contain many such occasions and festivals (Singh and Haigh 2015).

Sacredscapes and Natural Sites

One can argue that the evident connections between the place-geography and the spirit of place (*genius loci*) were formulated in ancient times. Geography provides a material symbol to explain a certain religious, philosophical and theological idea, or thesis. Automatically, the nature-gifted physical peculiarity becomes valuable and is interpreted as special to a given place. In this context, it would be inappropriate to overlook the significance of the classical and mythological texts. Such texts have woven religious tales eulogising the divinities and their place association. And, thus, we find some places very important as sacred places. If a map of India is drawn today to show the places having divinity association, hardly any space would be left vacant. Now, the problem is to discern how the earth or at least the Indian subcontinent (*Bhārat Kshetra*) is projected as the sacred body of the goddess (*Mātā*), and the distinct sites are known as *pīthas* (literally 'seats', symbolising her body's parts). The holy centres/places (*tīrthas*), in general, cover whole of the subcontinent to which the devotees visit—pilgrimage (*tirtha-yātrā*).

The reverence for the sacredscape (*pavitrasthān*) or the inherent spirit at a natural site in Hindu tradition is as old as the foundations of the religion, that is how one finds several hymns in praise of the goddess Prithvi ("mother Earth") in the *Rig Veda* (1.185, 6.70, and 5.84). She has perceived as a great and mighty goddess and also a living being—a cosmic organism. Reverence to Prithvi is continually found in early medieval mythological literature and she is often mentioned as Bhūdevī ("Earth Goddess"). The Great Goddess is identified with the world spirit and/or cosmic force in the texts. According to the *Devī Mahātmya*, DM (11.5), the world is filled by her, and she constitutes everything created (DM, 11.6).

The prevalence of nature worship is common across all civilizations and cultures. In Hindu tradition, with special reference to the goddess worship, divine power is directly associated with natural features—ponds, lakes, mountains, hills, rivers, oceans, etc. (cf. Table 14.1, and Fig. 14.5), that is how the nature-related goddesses qualify to be separated from others. At the same time, the probability of some cases fulfiling the criteria of a regional as well as nature-related goddess is noteworthy. With the belief that *devis* at all shrines (in the Indian subcontinent) are manifestations

Table 14.1 India: typology of Hindu goddess sites and association with nature attributes

	Associated nature attributes	Goddess shrines[1]		*Shakti Pīthas* (Fig. 14.5)	
		No	%	No	%
1	River	179	45	15	29
2	River bank	96	24	11	21
3	River's confluence	8	2	3	6
4	Sources of rivers	6	2	3	6
5	Lake (and Holy Tank)	13	3	2	4
6	Mountain/springs	3	1	1	2
7	Sea coast	16	4	6	12
8	High mountain	7	2	2	4
9	Hilly tract	60	15	6	12
10	Hilly cave	7	2	2	4
Total		395	100	51	100

Note 1. as in the Gita Press' *Kalyāṇa Shaktiaṅka* 1935 and Singh 2013, p. 131

of the goddess in different forms, the tradition of 51 Shakti Pīthas is supposed to have come into existence sometimes in the early medieval period. This tradition is related to the mythology that affirms the basic unity among all places sacred to the goddess. Besides, it suggests that the Earth, especially India, is the mother—who has the power to procreate, produce, and protect.

All of the 51 *pīthas* are closely associated with natural objects and indigenous local tales (Fig. 14.5). Most of the shrines occupy either hill/mountain tops or an elevated point. The history of peopling of India suggests that the aboriginal population moved further east with the Aryan invasion either being forcefully driven or willingly in search of safer places. Probably, with their eastward movement, the goddess cult (which is associated with them rather closely and strongly too) also moved and later on developed well. The scattered pattern of the 51 most important goddess shrines in the country and attached religious merit to pilgrimage to them must be seen concerning their role in focussing the Greater India (*Brihad Bhārata Kshetra*) as a singular cultural entity. Furthermore, they have also held Indian people together, who otherwise belong to multiple and diverse ethnic-cultural groups with intra-social rampant divisions, for several hundred years.

Kumbha Mela, Allahabad (Prayagraj)

Festivals (*melās*) at sacred sites are a vital part of Hindu pilgrimage traditions. Celebrating a mythological event in the life of a deity or an auspicious astrological period, *melās* attract around 450 million pilgrims from all over the country (Singh and Haigh 2015, p. 783). The greatest of these, the Kumbha Mela, is a riverside festival held
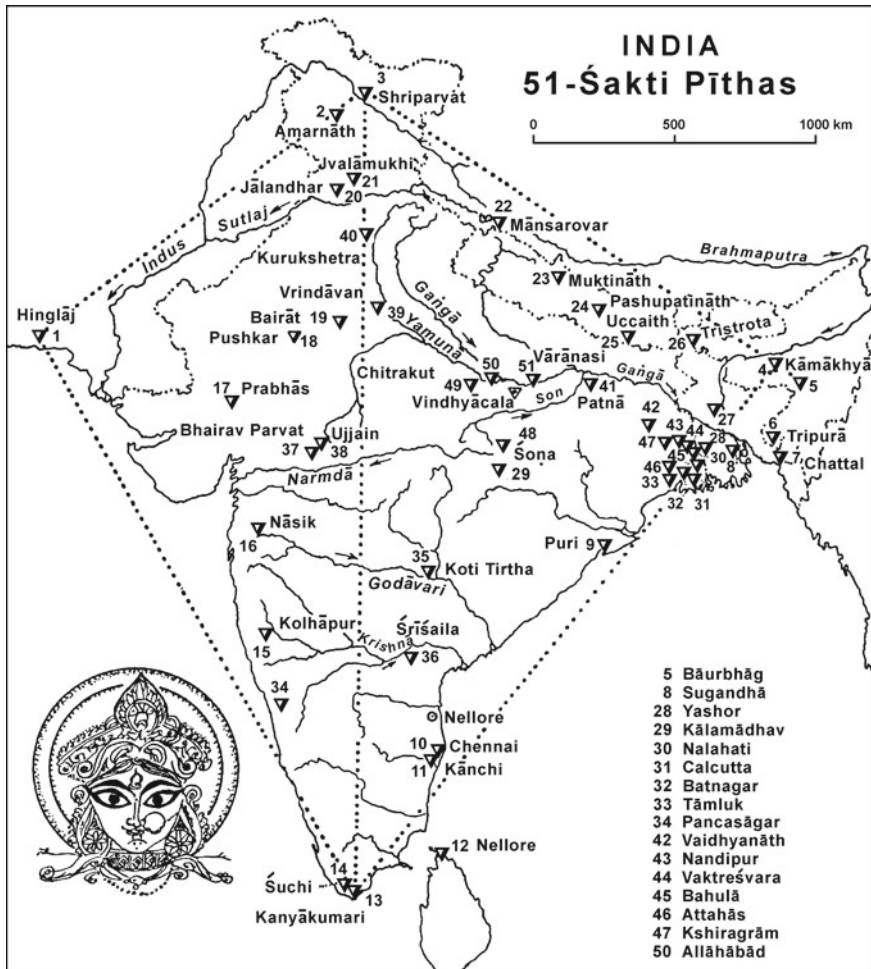
Fig. 14.5 India: 51 Shakti Pīthas. *Source and courtesy* Singh 2013, p. 135

four times every twelve years, rotating between Prayagraj (Allahabad) located at the confluence of the rivers Ganga, Yamuna, and the mythical Sarasvati (Dubey 2001), Nasik on the Godavari River, Ujjain on the Shipra River, and Haridvar on the Ganga (Fig. 14.6). Bathing in these rivers during the Kumbha Mela is considered an endeavour of great merit, cleansing both body and spirit (Singh and Rana 2020).

The Ganga in India functions as the archetype of sacred waters. Through the process of the spatial transposition of her identity in different parts of India, the major rivers of a given part represent her. For instance, the Ganga in the east is the Mahanadi River, in the south is the Kaveri, in the west is the Narmada, in the north is the Mandakini, and in the centre is the Godavari River (Fig. 14.6). In the source area itself there are 108 channels and tributaries named with the suffix Ganga, with
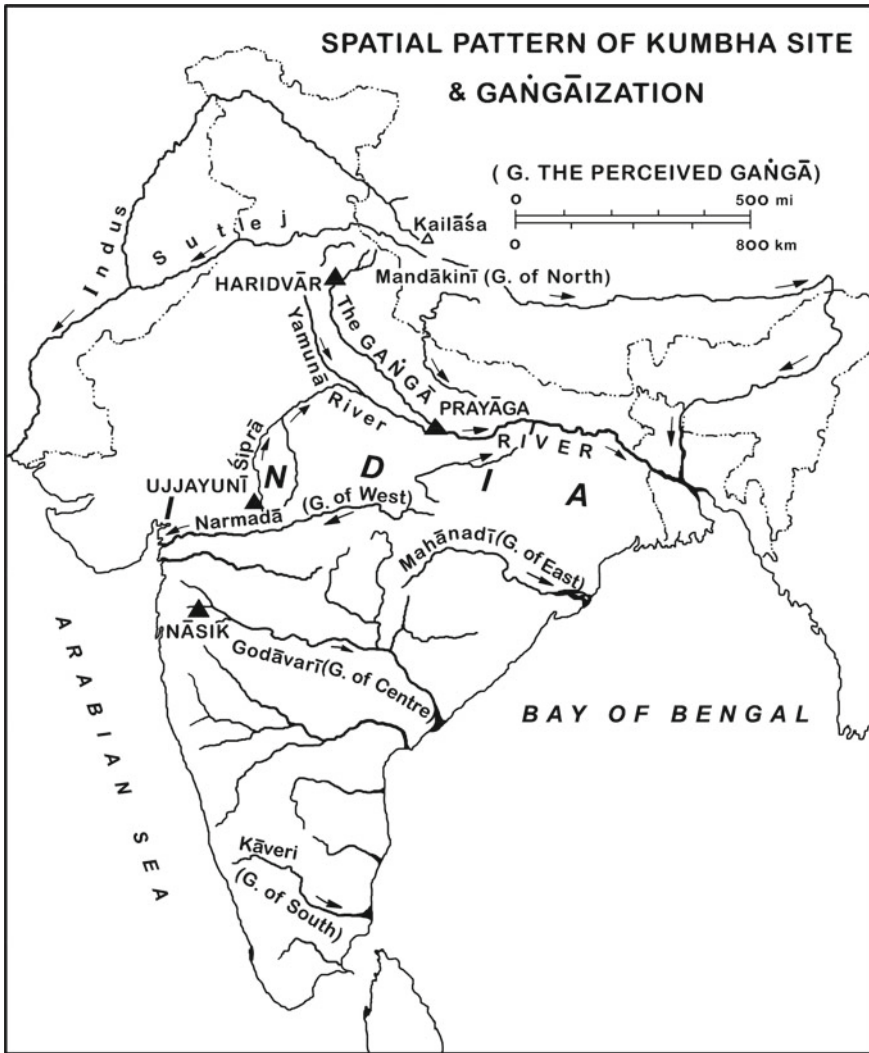
Fig. 14.6 Kumbha Mela sites in India. *Source and courtesy* Singh 2013, p. 168

the two main tributaries the Bhagirathi and Alakananda, and where the two main tributaries meet is thereafter called the Ganga.

The Prayagraj (Allahabad) and Haridvar festivals are routinely attended by millions of pilgrims (13 million visited Allahabad in 1977, some 18 million in 1989, over 68 million in 2001, over 74 million in 2013, and over 105 million in 2019), making the Kumbha Mela the largest religious gathering in the world. It may also be the oldest. The 2019 [15 January–4 March] event was spread over an area of 45 km^2 and an 8 km length of bathing *ghats* (stairways). Twenty-two million people

resided in a temporary tent city has divided into 22 sectors and infrastructural facilities included 122,500 toilets, 20,000 sanitation workers, 20,000 dustbins, 90 parking lots for 500,000 vehicles, 22 pontoon bridges on the two rivers, 500 shuttle buses, and 22 hospitals (with 450 beds each) (cf. Singh 2020, p. 88).

Two traditions determine the origin/location and timing of the festival. The origins of the location of Kumbha Mela are found in ancient texts known as the *Purāṇas*, which tell about a battle between gods and demons wherein four drops of nectar (*amrita*) were supposed to have fallen to earth on these *melā* sites (Singh and Rana 2002). The second tradition establishes the timeframe and is connected to astrological phenomena. The following list demonstrates the astrological periods of the four *melās* and the years of their most recent and near-future occurrences (Singh 2006; Fig. 14.6):

- *Prayagraj* (Allahabad): when Jupiter is in Aries or Taurus and the Sun and Moon are in Capricorn during the Hindu month of *Māgha* (January–February): 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013, 2019, 2024, 2036.
- *Haridvar:* when Jupiter is in Aquarius and the Sun is in Aries during the Hindu month of *Chaitra* (March–April): 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998, 2010, 2021, and 2033.
- *Ujjain:* when Jupiter is in Leo and the Sun is in Aries, or when Jupiter, the Sun, and the Moon are in Libra during the Hindu month of *Vaishākha* (April–May); 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004, 2016, 2028, 2040.
- *Nasik*: when Jupiter and the Sun are in Leo in the Hindu month of *Bhādrapada* (August–September): 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2003, 2015, 2027.

Its primary bearers, however, belong to *akhāḍās* and *ashrams*, religious organisations, or individuals living on alms. Kumbha Mela plays a central spiritual role in the country, exerting a mesmeric influence on ordinary Indians. The event encapsulates multiple aspects of the country's intangible heritage—the science of astronomy, astrology, spirituality, ritualistic traditions, and socio-cultural customs and practices—making it extremely rich in knowledge. As it is held in four different cities in India, it involves different social and cultural activities, making this a culturally diverse festival. Knowledge and skills related to the tradition are transmitted through ancient religious manuscripts, oral traditions, historical travelogues, and texts produced by eminent historians. However, the teacher–student relationship of the *sadhus* in the *ashrams* and *akhāḍās* remains the most important method of imparting and safeguarding knowledge and skills relating to Kumbha Mela.

Pilgrimage Tourism: A Perspective

The pilgrimage is such an act that explains deep feelings, faith, belief, respect for the divine, and above all sincerity of devotee(s). The tradition of pilgrimage along with mythology maintains the sanctity and significance of sacredscapes. This way promoting a deeper sense of tourism (spiritual) in the form of 'Pilgrimage Tourism' (*Tīrtha-yātrā Paryaṭan*) will be an alternative way of leading to the sustainable frame of integrating humanity and divinity. It is now empathetically accepted that

popular tourism leads to consequently promotes rash commercialism having the least concerns for nature, centuries-old repositories of human culture, and the more comprehensive and transcendental mother Earth. Hereby, it is also meant that the current tourism and environment, at large, are essentially hostile to each other. For popular tourist activities, the quality of the environment, whether rural/natural or urban, remains at best marginal and at worst irrelevant (Singh 2012b).

The significance of the (Hindu) religion in the (cultural) heritage of India cannot be denied. So are the holy centres and places for their built structure, natural or geographical context, and ages-old genius loci possessed therein? Temples, gigantic in form and detailed interiors and exteriors with symbolic meanings stored in them, are excellent pieces of masonry work and architectural expertise of the Indians. It is a brief statement on the richness of purely religious components of 'our heritage'. The 'eco-healing package' discussed above shows the workable way to protect the mother earth. Here, it is to be argued that in the backdrop of the malevolent character of popular tourism, a kind of tourism for the next millennium has to be evolved along the lines of the religious practice of pilgrimage. The 'eco-healing package' discussed above shows the workable way to protect the mother Earth. Here it is to be argued that in the backdrop of the malevolent character of the popular tourism, a kind of tourism for the next millennium has to be evolved on the lines of religious (*dhārmic*/ cosmic) practice of pilgrimage having a deeper quest to experience and reveal the spirit of the feminine divine.

Pilgrims play an important role in the system of pilgrimage and the same is true for tourist in tourism. Pilgrims become crucial in the maintenance and continuity of pilgrimage. In the case of pilgrimage, the maintenance and use of sacred places rather than the sacredscapes go home in hand, simultaneously. The visiting pilgrims' goal is to experience the supreme spiritual bliss and the actions guided by the ethics they learn from traditions and mythologies, that is how conservation of the environment is intrinsic to pilgrim behaviour and furthers the system of pilgrimage. The deep senses are their characteristic attribute, which has helped the divine spirit of place to survive and sustain for many centuries.

Tourists commonly move in search of entertainment and sensual pleasures. They seek higher returns from every bit of money and time spent. The physical comfort is the main concern. They are important for tourism as 'consumers', and hence, their purchasing capacity makes them crucial for pure business purposes.

Because of the merits of the pilgrimage system and economic benefits involved in tourism, blending these systems to extract greater advantage is already suggested under the banner of 'tourism-pilgrimage'. Based on a simplified system of commonalities between these two and envisaging a greater role of pilgrimage, the idea of pilgrimage tourism is thought over and accepted in some of the states of India. It is expected to have an effective check on individual behaviour and attitude. Its structural network is planned in a manner to form the cultural capital, cultivate a deeper understanding, and initiate changes in lifestyle which will censure rationality in use/ consumption furthering (re-)investment processes, etc. (Fig. 14.7). A pilgrim tourist
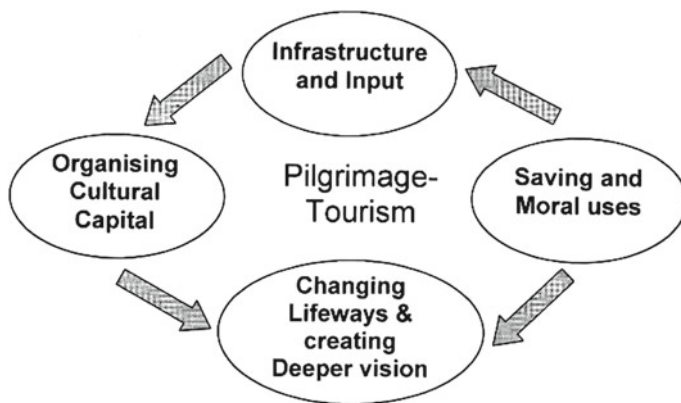
Fig. 14.7 Pilgrimage vis-à-vis tourism: structural network. *Source and courtesy* Singh 2004, p. 217, and Singh 2013, p. 317

shall have an attachment, respect, and the sense of sharing with the repositories of faithscape. These qualitative modifications at an individual level are capable enough to bring forth miraculous changes, particularly in terms of the generation of human values and eco-healing.

This kind of visitation and quest for deeper envisioning through pilgrimage tourism is still in the prenatal stage and possesses a good many fruitful promises and prophecies. With deep feelings and intimate sensing, it is to act as an imbiber of cross-cultural understanding. Similarly, it will create the feeling of our global heritage—a significant step in the direction of 'saving our mother Earth'—aptly idolized in the philosophical conception of *Bhū Devī* goddess in Hindu *dharma* and Gaia, the Greek goddess (of the) Earth (Lovelock 1979). In this way, the fostered idea of our common heritage and our common future would get strengthened. The present age of vanishing (socio-cultural) boundaries demands on us to share the responsibility of saving our home, the planet Earth, and passing our heritage intact to the future generations. Pilgrimage tourism is one of the alternative ways to contribute to the effective furtherance of these global humanistic causes.

Framing the Sustainable Religious/Pilgrimage Tourism

Pilgrimage tourism is in no way separate from sustainable heritage tourism, at least in the case of India. Knowing that pilgrimage and nature are integral and reciprocal, this should be kept in mind that if nature is in danger, culture has to pay its price and vice versa. If both are to be taken in an integrated way, it would result in more beneficial in the preservation of the sacredscapes and their sustainable use in the long-term by mankind. The following major criteria for the development of sustainable religious

tourism facilities should be taken into at least ten-point consideration (Rana and Singh 2000):

1. Site building and other structures should avoid cutting significant tress and minimise disruption and loss of heritage ruins.
2. The maintenance of the ecosystem and serenity of nature should be given priority.
3. In the hilly region, trail systems should respect travel patterns and the sacredness of wildlife and nature.
4. The building should be spaced to allow the wildlife travel pattern and forest growth and maintenance of the serenity of nature.
5. Use of automobiles and other vehicles (ships in the holy river, like the Ganga) should be strictly limited and not allowed after a certain distance from the pilgrimage route and pathways.
6. Provide ecologically sound restroom and trash disposal facilities at the trail-head and consciousness among stakeholders be awakened through religious and spiritual insights.
7. Designate a clear area for medical emergencies and aids and spiritual healings based on a nature therapy.
8. Site lighting should be limited and controlled to avoid wildlife diurnal cycles and the local religious traditions.
9. The design of the house should be made of local construction techniques, materials available and befitting cultural images, and keeping the archetypal symbolism and religious notions (spacing the divine beings at proper places).
10. Involvement of local people and their religious traditions at different levels and in different activities should be given priority; future policy and strategy can always be made from the local environmental and religious perspectives.

Pilgrimage tourism sites are not only designed for the sole purpose of religious motives, but they are the paths to discover our past and a way to learn about the land, people, culture, and history of a specific place. Pilgrimage tourism allows a specific region to combine its unique pilgrimage places with the tourism industry to create social, economic, and environmental benefits sustainably. It creates travel experiences based on the authenticity, learning and discovering our culture, ecological, artistic, ethnic heritage and religious scenarios, and the ritual traditions and also creates a distinct identity for a specific place. These sacred sites, of course, are to be used as resources for promoting pilgrimage tourism; moreover, these sites and areas need to be given special consideration under the wider strategy of sustainable resource conservation. Like what Graham et al. (2000, p. 259) says about heritage "It must always be remembered that because all heritage is someone's, it cannot be someone else's. As a result, we are observing more and more cases of the problems raised by the sacred and profane connotations of heritage in which someone's consecrated heritage is sold as someone else's entertainment"; this may also be implied to pilgrimage-tourist sites too. In the present scenario, the idea of pilgrimage tourism is closely associated with its definition as a resource, religious identity, and educational and socialisation process. The interconnections among them can be
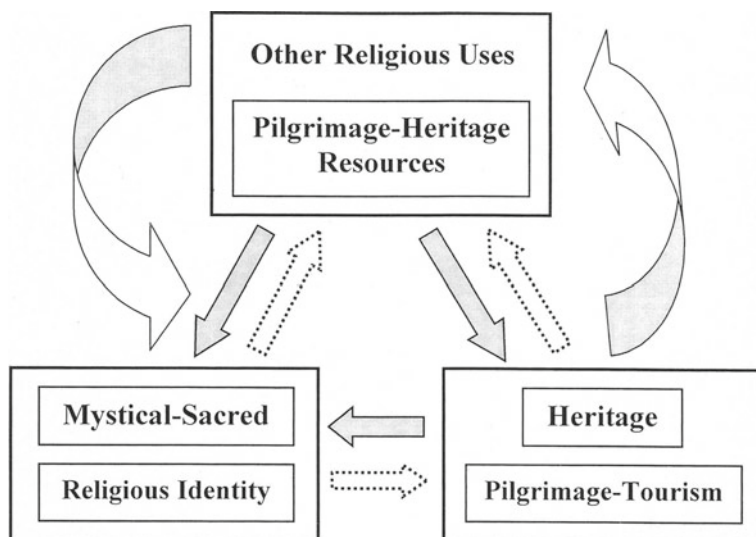
Fig. 14.8   Pilgrimage tourism, heritage, and place identity. *Source and courtesy* Singh 2013, p. 340

represented by the triangular connections among pilgrimage sites, place identity, and tourism (Fig. 14.8). On one scale, pilgrimage contributes towards religious identity and further supports the associated components.

PRASHAD Scheme: A March to Promote Pilgrimage Places

A recently founded USA-based Global Hindu Heritage Foundation (GHHF 2008) has taken the initiative and used compassionate actions of mass awakening and realisation to preserve the cultural heritage and pilgrimage places among the Hindu communities all over the world. The GHHF's objective is to protect, preserve, conserve, promote, and maintain Hindu culture, Hindu temples and sacred places, monasteries, temple institutions, endowments, trusts, and other such related institutions globally (Rao 2007). It is expected that the GHHF's attempts will help to conserve and preserve Hindu religious and associated heritage sites making Hindu heritage ecology in the service of humanity through the ethics of integrating humanity and divinity (Singh et al. 2021, p. 246).

Aiming to beautify and improve the amenities and infrastructure at pilgrimage centres of all faiths, a national mission on '*Pilgrimage Rejuvenation And Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive*' (PRASHAD) has been announced in the Union Budget 2014–2015, modified in 2017, and an amount of INRs. 1000 million (equals to US$ 13 mill., at the present rate, May 2022) has been allocated for this initiative. Over time, this sanctioned amount is increased in terms of the requirement of a particular region and specific site. It aims at the 'integrated development of

pilgrimage destinations in a planned, prioritised and sustainable manner' to provide a complete religious tourism experience. Under PRASHAD, the old historical–cultural pilgrimage routes and associated sites would also be developed through pilgrimage tourism as a strategy for heritage awakening, deeper experiences, and transferring the religiosity into global humanism and spirituality (Singh et al. 2020, p. 289, and 2021, p. 233). The scheme is especially aimed to enhance tourism as well as boost economic growth and sustainable development that would further give a boost to employment generation for the local communities.

The mission of PRASHAD has the following seven basic aims: (i) integrated development of pilgrimage destinations in a planned, prioritised, and sustainable manner to provide a complete religious tourism experience; (ii) harness pilgrimage tourism for its direct and multiplier effects on employment generation and economic development; (iii) follow community-based development and pro-poor tourism concept in the development of the pilgrimage destinations; (iv) leveraging public capital and expertise; (v) enhancing the tourist attractiveness in a sustainable manner by developing world-class infrastructure in the religious destination; (vi) creating awareness among the local communities about the importance of pilgrimage tourism for them in terms of increase in sources of income, improved living standards, and overall development of the area; and (vii) promote local arts, culture, handicrafts, cuisine, etc., to generate livelihood in the identified places.

As an extension to this mission, the central government has made a plan for 'Potential of Tourist Spots in the country—Connectivity and Outreach' on 27 July 2021. Together with a broader vision of tourism, including pilgrimage tourism, the committee has made the following five major recommendations:

1. *Swadesh Darshan Scheme (SDS)*: this scheme was launched for the integrated development of theme-based 15 tourist circuits in the country to see closely the distinct places in different parts of the country, especially linking ancient routes and pilgrimage places, e.g. the Rāmāyaṇa Circuits, the Krishna Circuit, the Goddess Circuit, the Buddhist Circuit, etc.

   Under the scheme of experiencing the pilgrimage places, the Government of India has started the Rāmāyaṇa (pilgrimage) Circuit through special train (all two-tier AC bogies) on the auspicious day of 21 June 2022 (Unesco's International Day of Yoga, and summer solstice), from Delhi railway station in North India, and would reach to Rameshwaram in the south, thus covering ca 8000 kilometres in a period of 18 days. The train carries 600 persons. The train will stop at 15 sacred places, including the one in Nepal (Janakpur). The total cost ranges between Rs 71,820 and Rs 62,370 (i.e. US$ 910 and 790, at the present rate), which will cover all sorts of hospitalities, logistics, stay, bus services, and vegetarian meals.

2. *Development of tourism infrastructure*: to promote optimal infrastructure through (i) engaging the private sector under the SDS and PRASHAD schemes and to make them commercially viable, (ii) augmenting accommodation capacity by constructing budget hotels and rest houses for pilgrims, and (iii) providing financial support to meet funding gaps for development of tourism infrastructure.

3. *Air connectivity*: the Regional Connectivity Scheme was launched in 2016 to enhance regional air connectivity, to meet emerging tourist demand in less connected and inaccessible regions.
4. *Land connectivity*: the Committee recommended: (i) introducing more semi- and high-speed trains on the routes where maximum tourists travel, (ii) ensuring intra-state rail connectivity, and (iii) developing roadside amenities like cafeterias along highways and expressways for long-distance travellers.
5. *Cruise tourism*: the Committee recommended: (i) revamping India's port infrastructure, (ii) making cruise facilities representing the region and speciality and affordability of the masses, (iii) providing a complete cruise logistics service, and (iv) setting up a special government unit for the industry.

Additionally, three more recommendations are made, referring: (i) outreach and publicity (e.g. digital marketing); (ii) strategy for the impact of Covid-19 through economic compensation and special arrangement of medical facilities; and (iii) adventure tourism, as an additional resource through promoting amusement park, and water resorts. However, the success and performances of these projects will be measured over time, as all these plans are overemphasising economic structure, and less concern for the pilgrimage and spiritual, or nature-based ecotourism in a responsive way! Also, these schemes are marginally concerned with public participation and keeping loose coordination with local people and their cultural traditions.

Concluding Remarks

With the growth of global tourism and widespread interest in seeing culture in the mirror of history and tradition, religious heritage resource management becomes a critical issue in two primary ways: protection and maintenance of sacred sites and the survival and continuity of pilgrimage ceremonies that preserve centuries-old human interactions with the earth and its mystic powers (Mukhtar 2012). Fostering a rediscovery of forgotten (or, about so) common cultural heritage and practices at sacred places that centred on reverence to and harmony with the Earth as source and sustainer of life, the conservation, and preservation of such holy sites would put a strong step in this direction. There are examples of grand Hindu pilgrimages at the regional level, such as Sabarimalai in Kerala (South India), in which even Christians and Muslims participate (Sekar 1992). Such places are the nexus of cultural integrity. Sopher (2011) has provoked two contrasting messages in Hindu pilgrimage: searching for the roots in place as a basic religious impulse and the other ironic form of the mental construct of mystical tradition where a place has no value. One is free to choose any of the approaches, but for understanding the cultural system in both intrinsic and extrinsic ways, or an insider and outsider, a human science paradigm would be better as it covers the totality thus attempting to reveal the "whole" of the

culture, human psyche, and functions at play. It is noted that "pilgrims, with strong ties to their home places, seek distant destinations of sanctity, and the magnitude of Hindu pilgrimages attest to the strength of this message" (Sopher 2011, pp. 59–60; also, Singh 2009a).

As globalisation accelerates, the expansion of pilgrimage tourism has encouraged 'heritage-making' ('*heritagisation*' or '*patrimonialisation*' in French) within an international framework. Five of the chief pilgrimage cities of India are now part of a Green Pilgrim Cities Initiative (GPCI), namely Dvaraka, Somnath, and Ambaji (in Gujarat), Amritsar (in Punjab), and Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) (Finlay 2011). The GPCI aims to help different faiths to make their holy cities and sacred sites as environmentally sustainable as possible. The GPCI is affiliated with the Interfaith Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC), which has worked for the environmental conservation of sacred sites and pilgrimage routes for over thirty years. Adoption of the GPCI framework has encouraged these Indian cities to awaken, activate, and start educating their communities about the conservation of their sacred places and the need for eco-friendly pilgrimage (cf. Singh 2013, pp. 333–368). However, the National Government of India has still to institute its 'heritage act', and because India was initially founded as a secular-based system, it finds it hard to legislate on matters in the religious domain. A strategy for managing the development of the economic enterprises associated with pilgrimage tourism may be another matter.

Conserving heritage renews a sense of identity and can inspire new smart and sustainable pilgrimage city and sacred town development patterns, with an emphasis on the valorisation of the assets of the poor. In the other context of SDGs, the social sustainability of heritage cities is based on social groups of local living peoples, pilgrims, and *sādhus* (Hindu religious ascetic), resulting in social beliefs in the form of intangible cultural heritage (cf. Singh, et al. 2020, p. 291). Over time, the expansion of pilgrimage has encouraged environmental cleanliness and eco-development programmes committing to protect our living planet sustainably and awakening ourselves through deeper experiences–from realisation to revelation, ultimately that foster peace. The Green Pilgrimage Network initiative (GPN) has made the path easy and accessible (Singh, et al. 2022: 143).

Meanwhile, in India, while pilgrimage tourism remains centred on devotion-based informal activities at pilgrimage centres; however, the two aspects of religious travel exist, i.e. religious tourism (*dharma-yātrā*) and spiritual tourism (*moksha-yātrā*). Of course, they are intertwined, and they need different infrastructural, require different services, different driving forces, organisers, managers, and modes. In practical terms, understanding these differences is a necessary prerequisite for the effective development of strategies for sustainable development within the overall framework of India's national development where such religious institutions and charitable trusts have a vital role to play (Shinde 2011).

Carl Jung's provocation (1970, paraphrased in Swan 1991, p. 304) expresses a moral and ethical concern for the sacred places and an associated faith system:

> People of our earth would never find true peace until they could come into a harmonious relationship with the sacred places where they live. Learning to encourage, harmonise with

and perhaps even converse with the spirit of each place may be an essential survival skill to create a future world of peace where people live an ecologically sustainable lifestyle.

Injunctions to think *cosmically*, see *globally*, behave *regionally*, and act *locally* but *insightfully* appeal to a cosmic vision, global humanism, and self-realisation. Jung's implicit promotion of an ecospiritual worldview, a spirit of wholeness, and a sense of holiness grounded on an evolutionary cosmology are embedded in the Hindu conception of sacred place and sacred geography (Singh and Rana 2020, p. 85). This is an appeal for cosmic vision, global humanism, and self-realisation— that altogether will pave the path of lifeways based on co-existentiality. Pilgrimage and pilgrim places also need to be attuned to this system what Green Pilgrimage paradigm is now being accepted through GPN initiatives expanding its horizon in the frame of environmental planning and ecological sensitivity (Singh 2013). A recent study has argued for a balanced and innovative interconnectedness among people, products, and events (e.g. rituals, performances, and pilgrimages) to carry on the status of multifaith-purpose spiritual tourism destinations, which will fulfil the requirement of the increasing pace of urbanisation and mass of religious tourists (Haq and Medhekar 2017).

The concluding remarks that "pilgrimage sites are being transformed by tourism, exploited by politics and challenged by environmental destruction" (Jacobsen 2013, p 169), are a hard reality and are used as means and tools for the political contestation, holding, and control over the Hindu sentiments, which results into a complex web of contestation. The strong ties between *dharma* (moral duty) and *karma* (phenomenal action) that was once the nucleus of Hinduism has now loosened its ties in the current era of globalization (Singh and Aktor 2015, pp 1928–1929). Jacobsen's (2013, p. 162) statement provokes the contemporary condition of pilgrimage sites: "The polluted state of many *tīrthas* in India is due to several factors, such as tremendous population growth, urbanization, industrial production, poverty, mismanagement and corruption, and is not largely caused by religion. But it leads to a questioning of religion: How is it that a *tīrtha* site can purify invisible moral impurity, but is not able to handle the visible environmental pollution?".

Our present Prime Minister Hon'ble Narendra Modi proclaimed a decade ago: "Our pilgrim cities will be models of care and respect for the environment that will showcase environmentally sound technologies and practices and in doing so pilgrims, local officials, faith leaders and millions of faithful around the world will be inspired to be part of an unprecedented collaboration to combat climate change and loss of biodiversity" (see Singh 2013, p. 363). If we want to keep alive, survive, and continue the salvific power of pilgrim places, we should minimise human greed and awaken ourselves through changes in our lifestyles and a deeper quest for realisation.

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Chapter 15
Pilgrimage During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Do Mitigation Plans Lead to Greening of the Pilgrimage?

Islam Elgammal

Abstract Each year, Saudi Arabia arranges for Hajj, which attracts more than 2.5 million pilgrims from all over the world, making it one of the largest yearly mass gatherings. In 2020 and 2021 the Saudi government continued to plan for Hajj despite the COVID-19 pandemic by using a special care strategy that ensured the season was successful and free from COVID-19 and other contagious diseases. This was accomplished by limiting the number of pilgrims (and restricting them to domestic residents only) during Hajj, utilizing digital technologies to manage large gatherings, implementing an advanced healthcare system at the sacred sites, and employing skilled medical personnel. This chapter investigates if the new Hajj season management can be seen as a step toward achieving a green pilgrimage.

Keywords Islamic pilgrimage (Hajj) · Umrah · COVID-19 · Mass gatherings · Green pilgrimage

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Introduction

On March 11, 2020, coronavirus disease (COVID-19) was declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) to be a global pandemic, as it was affecting almost all countries around the world (WHO 2020a). The highly infectious disease (Cheng et al. 2020) has been negatively affecting the world socially, economically, and politically (Kassem 2020). Saudi Arabia, where the annual Islamic pilgrimage (i.e., Hajj; one of the five major pillars of Islam) takes place, was reported to have the highest number of COVID-19 infections in the Arab world (Karadsheh and Qiblawi 2020). Hajj is one of the largest religious gatherings in the world. The annual ritual takes up to five days during the Islamic month of Zul-Hijjah (the 12th month in the Islamic calendar), two months and 10 days after the end of the holy month of Ramadan. Pilgrimage—defined as visiting sacred places to perform a specific ritual—is considered a key element of spiritual or religious visits (Griffin and Raj 2017; Heidari et al. 2018; Secall 2003). It is a growing area of study that has recently attracted, marketing scholars' attention to investigating the antecedents and factors affecting the pilgrims' experience, attitudes, and behaviors (Alhothali et al. 2022a; Elgammal et al. 2022). For example, based on pilgrims' experience in Makkah, Elgammal et al. (2022) segmented pilgrims undertaking the Islamic Umrah (i.e., small pilgrimage) performers into four categories which are—real, occasional, rational, and passionate performers—to understand their behavior and intention to revisit Saudi Arabia for other purposes.

The Saudi Ministry of Hajj recognized the risk associated with arranging Hajj for the Muslim community worldwide after the first case of COVID-19 in Saudi Arabia was detected on March 2, 2020 (Atique and Itumalla 2020). Threats were related to the spread of the disease among pilgrims, as the virus has high transmissibility (Cheng et al. 2020). Hence, the Saudi government had to involve various stakeholders in planning for a unique Hajj scenario, and this resulted in zero infections among pilgrims. While the mitigation efforts have included mostly actions to prevent infection, it is suggested that they might be related to the actions required to achieve a green pilgrimage.

To gain in-depth knowledge about how COVID-19 mitigation can also achieve the greening of an event, the Islamic pilgrimage (Hajj) to Makkah during the pandemic is used as a case study (Elgammal 2022; Yin 2003). The practical courses of action and the key planning recommendations for the Hajj 2020 and 2021 seasons used by the Saudi government along with other public-sector stakeholder agencies provide new insights into the link between the mitigation actions and the actions required to achieve a green pilgrimage.

In addition to the main ritual of Hajj, Saudi Arabia is the site of the Umrah, which can be performed at any time of the year (Alhothali et al. 2021). Hajj is performed at a specific time of the year and lasts for about five days; it involves visits to Al Masjid Al Haram (the Great Mosque of Makkah), Al Masjid Al Nabawi (the Prophet's Mosque of Madinah) as well as visits other sacred places such as Muzdalifa and Mina Arafat. In contrast, the Umrah ritual involves a visit to Al Masjid Al Haram and can take only three hours or so. This chapter considers both pilgrimages.

This chapter aims to shed light on the parallels between the mitigation plan for COVID-19 during Hajj 2020 season and the framework suggested in previous literature to achieve a green pilgrimage (Elgammal and Alhothali 2021). It first introduces the concepts of green pilgrimage and public health measures at mass gatherings, before setting out the case study. The link between the mitigation actions and green pilgrimage is discussed through the stages of Hajj (i.e., before, during, and after the Hajj ritual). The chapter ends with a summary of the study and areas for future research.

The Concept of Green Pilgrimage

Adopting green practices and sustainability during events has been explored in different contexts, such as conventions (Mair and Jago 2010), festivals (Elgammal, 2012), and hospitality (Kasim 2007). For example, during the International East Coast Blues and Roots Festival (Bluesfest) in Australia, event organizers incorporate green practices within their strategic management plans. The goals are related to core concepts and priorities such as maintaining the carrying capacity, reducing waste, conserving the ecosystem, and benefiting the local community (Laing and Frost 2010). Nevertheless, scholars have reported the challenges associated with implementing green practices and sustainability at events (Li and Liu 2020; Zamzuri 2020). Laing and Frost (2010) and Mair and Laing (2012) report that these challenges are mostly related to the inability to secure the required finance for greening the venue, a lack of time, and a lack of awareness of the available green options, while Li and Liu (2020) similarly suggest that, from the perspective of events planners, a lack of finance, a lack of awareness, and insufficient governmental support are the key challenges.

The UNWTO in 2014 called for mass pilgrimages to achieve sustainability, and in 2017 the UNWTO stressed the importance of sustainable management of sacred places to preserve their authenticity for future generations (UNWTO 2014, 2017). Following these calls, scholars have looked at the concept of green pilgrimage which can be defined as the inclusion of the principles of sustainability in the management of pilgrimage events (Agarwala et al. 2019; Elgammal and Alhothali 2021). Adopting green pilgrimage principles and practices would positively influence destinations' development and capabilities and have sustainable consequences for society and the environment (Alliance of Religions and Conservation 2014). Nevertheless, it is expected that simply reducing the number of pilgrims to decrease the carbon footprint

and pollution would lessen the economic benefits of such mass gatherings. This was echoed by Fernandes et al. (2012) and Rifai (2015) when they reported that while religious mass gatherings such as pilgrimages are opening doors for social benefits (i.e., cultural understanding and preserving shared tangible and intangible heritage), they are often problematic in terms of both the conservation of the sacred sites and their carrying capacity. In other words, environmental conservation may be at the expense of the economic benefits that can be generated for the local community, and vice versa.

Several green pilgrimage best practices at sacred sites have been suggested by scholars, but the actual actions for their implementation remain unknown (Agarwala et al. 2019). For example, a green pilgrimage framework was suggested by Elgammal and Alhothali (2021), who identified stakeholders' green actions and responsibilities during the Hajj in Saudi Arabia, across each of its three phases (before, during, and after the event).

While scholars have called for the implementation of green practices, which include reducing the number of visitors and considering the carrying capacity of sacred sites (Elgammal, 2008; Elgammal and Alhothali 2021), previous studies have focused on the pilgrims' intentions to revisit the pilgrimage destinations, the religious service scape in sacred sites (Alhothali et al. 2021), and the extent to which pilgrims can help sacred destinations to achieve the goals of sustainable tourism development (Alhothali et al. 2022b).

Public Health Measures at Mass Gatherings

Previous studies have focused on preventing the spread of contagious diseases, such as the flu, colds, or strep throat (Yezli and Alotaibi 2016; Bieh et al. 2019). Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the literature has focused more on estimating the COVID-19 risk during pilgrimages (Khan et al. 2020). Using previous Hajj records and based on WHO's key guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Global Center for Mass Gatherings Medicine (GCMGM) in Saudi Arabia has undertaken a Hajj health risk assessment to estimate the risks associated with the spread of COVID-19 among pilgrims (Jokhdar et al. 2021). This has been done using hazard approaches and capacity assessments for infrastructure and healthcare facilities, as COVID-19 is highly transmissible. The Saudi government and GCMGM used the lessons learned from previous pandemics (principally the H1N1 pandemic in 2009) to assess the situation with the COVID-19 pandemic (Fineberg 2014).

That assessment clearly showed the insufficient capacity to accommodate the usual number of pilgrims—some 2.5 million. Hence, in 2020 (at the peak of the pandemic) the number of pilgrims was reduced (Khan et al. 2020; WHO 2020b) to 1000 domestic pilgrims (i.e., residents and citizens within Saudi Arabia's borders), based on a rigorous selection process (Jokhdar et al. 2021; Karadsheh and Qiblawi 2020) and in 2021 to 58,745 pilgrims (*Saudi* Gazette 2022). In previous years,

pilgrims from over 160 different nationalities performed Hajj. By 2022, the COVID-19 pandemic was felt to be under control, and the limit was set to one million (Table 15.1) (AFP 2022).

In March 2020, the preventive measures adopted by the Saudi government included restrictions on gatherings and the suspension of international travel (Meo 2020), and hence, international pilgrims were not permitted to undertake the Umrah or Hajj. In addition to the suspension of prayers, the two mosques in Makkah and Madina required their Imams and employers to strictly follow the prevention measures (Memish et al. 2020). The safety concerns and suspension of prayers had dramatic psychological impacts on Muslims around the world (Algaissi et al. 2020). Hence, in 2020, the stakeholders (Table 15.2) decided to continue arranging for Hajj but with a greatly limited number of pilgrims (i.e., 1000), strictly selected from all nationalities living in Saudi Arabia, to get full control of the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic (Jokhdar et al. 2021).

Table 15.1   Number of Hajj pilgrims 2019–2022

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of pilgrims	2.5 million	1000	58,745	1 million
International pilgrims allowed	Yes	No	No	Yes
Domestics/citizens and resident pilgrims allowed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Sources AFP 2022; Elgammal et al. 2022; *Saudi* Gazette 2022; Statista 2022

Table 15.2   Public-sector stakeholders involved in planning for the yearly Hajj season and their responsibilities

No.	Stakeholders	Responsibilities
1	Ministry of Hajj	Main organizer: provide professionals with special training to accompany each group of pilgrims
2	Global Center for Mass Gatherings Medicine (GCMGM)	Recommend preventive measures (for example, hygiene, social distance of approximately 1.5 m from others, and face masks)
3	The Ministry of Health	Develop eligibility criteria for pilgrims willing to perform the Hajj ritual (i.e., ages of 20–65 years with negative PCR test)
4	The Regional Health Command and Control Center (CCC)	Mentor and receive digital reports if pilgrims violate quarantine measures

Source Jokhdar et al. 2021

The Link Between Mitigation Actions and a Green Pilgrimage

Following the recommendation of WHO (2020c) for arranging mass gatherings during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Hajj along with the Saudi Ministry of Health used various techniques to manage the 2020 and 2021 Hajj seasons and control the spread of infection among pilgrims in sacred places. Practices were divided into three stages, i.e., before, during, and after the Hajj ritual. In this chapter, the matching between the COVID-19 preventive measures and the principles and practices of green pilgrimage is looked at across the same three stages.

Before the Hajj Ritual

Decreasing the number of pilgrims and setting strict eligibility criteria (i.e., only individuals with no chronic diseases and with a negative COVID-19 test could visit the sites) were the starting point in the planning of the prevention measures (Meo 2020; Jokhdar et al. 2021). Stakeholders adopted modern and digital technologies in planning and managing the Hajj season. Examples include an application named "Tetamman" (the Arabic word for "reassure") for monitoring and ensuring that all pilgrims were following instructions and reporting daily symptoms if required, that application involved all pilgrims' wearing smart electronic bracelets. These bracelets provided information about each pilgrim and generated alerts at the regional Health Command and Control Centre (CCC) if a pilgrim violated quarantine procedures (Ministry of Health 2021). Wearing face masks and ensuring a social distance of at least 1.5 m were mandatory prevention measures. Instructions and educational information mainly about quarantine, safety, and preventing infection were distributed among pilgrims (Jokhdar et al. 2021), and pilgrims' environmental awareness could be raised in the future using similar modern technologies.

During the Hajj Ritual

Various measures were also implemented during the 2020 and 2021 Hajj seasons to prevent the spread of COVID-19. For example, group numbers were reduced to 20 pilgrims, to allow the group to be easily tracked by their assigned service providers (Khan et al. 2020). Well-trained hospitality staff, organizers, and healthcare professionals were assigned to each group to ensure a maximum level of communication and service while guaranteeing adherence to preventive measures (Jokhdar et al. 2021). The reduced number of pilgrims and the suspension of buffets implemented for health purposes are also ways to improve waste management (Elgammal and Alholthali 2021).

Figure 15.1 shows pilgrims during Hajj 2019 (which received the usual high number of pilgrims), while for comparison Fig. 15.2 shows the situation in 2020 when a social distance of one and a half meters was obligatory. The reduced number of pilgrims during 2020 and 2021 was the best scenario, considering the carrying capacity of the two holy mosques in Makkah and Madina. In addition, the use of digital technologies and providing pilgrims with smart cards and bracelets helped to maintain safety and security. While the use of green and digital technologies is a key principle of green pilgrimage, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Saudi government went beyond that by developing robots with artificial intelligence technology to help to keep religious places clean and sanitized and to distribute water bottles among pilgrims (Arab News 2021). Similarly, for the Umrah, before the COVID-19 pandemic, pilgrims were allowed to enter the holy mosque of Makkah without any restrictions, regardless of the site's carrying capacity (Fig. 15.3), while in 2022 they were required to book for their Umrah through the "Nosok" application, which helps in maintaining and conserving the sacred mosque and achieve one of the concepts of green pilgrimage (Fig. 15.4).

Fig. 15.1 Pilgrimage (Hajj) in the Holy Mosque of Makkah, 2019. *Source* Author

Fig. 15.2 Pilgrimage (Hajj) in the Holy Mosque of Madina, 2020. *Source* Author

After the Hajj Ritual

The use of modern innovative technology continued after the Hajj, for assessment and control purposes. Pilgrims were required to continue using the Tetamman tracking application and wearing their electronic bracelets to enhance the self-reporting of symptoms. The outcome was a successful Hajj season, with zero COVID-19 cases reported (Jokhdar et al. 2021; El-Ziq 2021). The steps made to achieve this outcome are similar to the practices required for a green pilgrimage season. Table 15.3 summarizes the similarities between the prevention measures taken by Hajj stakeholders and the principles and practices of green pilgrimage.

Unlike previous studies where the primary challenges have been the inability to secure funds for green practices and the lack of time and awareness and governmental support (Laing and Frost 2010; Li and Liu 2020; Mair and Laing 2012), Saudi Arabia allocated the funding and allowed the time necessary to achieve two successful Hajj seasons in a row (2020 and 2021), free of COVID-19 infection, and, at the same time, implemented the green pilgrimage principles suggested in previous studies.
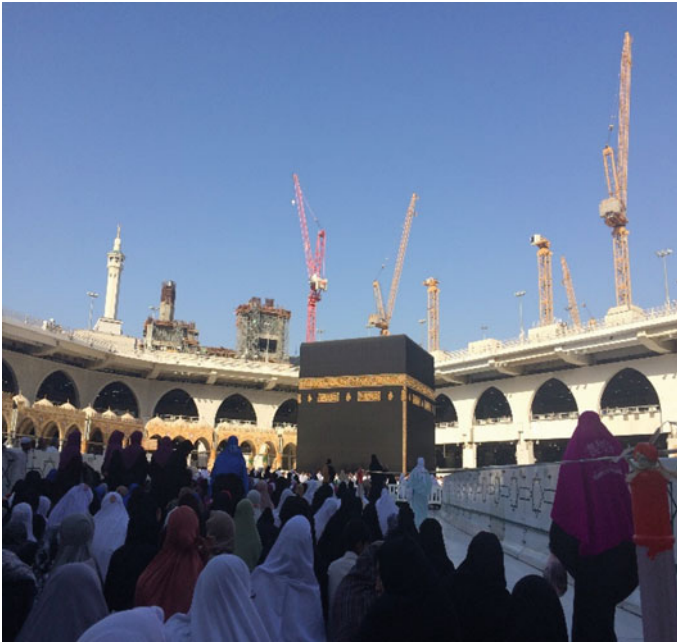
Fig. 15.3 Umrah at the Holy Mosque of Makkah, 2019. *Source* Author

From pilgrims' perspective, Hajj 2020 is considered a special life event even with the rigorous selection process and the long procedures enforced by the Saudi government on international pilgrims. CNN undertook several interviews with pilgrims in which they reported positive word of mouth (PWOM) about the process:

> [An Australian pilgrim said] "This is a very special situation we find ourselves in, we also have the privilege to perform Hajj on behalf of the entire Muslim world". A Saudi pilgrim also indicated: "Honestly with everything that I went through, going through the isolation and having family so far away, the opportunity to perform Hajj made up for everything". Another Moroccan French female pilgrim indicated "everything happened so fast in the process of applying, getting selected and then going through the medical tests and getting ready, so the quarantine is a valuable time to pause and rest and think". (Karadsheh and Qiblawi 2020, p. 1)

Such quotes suggest that Muslims who are willing to perform the Hajj rituals are ready to follow all safety measures enforced by the Saudi government; hence, the Saudi government can take into consideration enforcing green pilgrimage actions in the arrangements for future Hajj seasons, even after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Interestingly, several green pilgrimage initiatives took place in Saudi Arabia during the Hajj seasons before the pandemic. This included investigating pilgrimage

Fig. 15.4 Umrah at the Holy Mosque of Makkah, 2022. *Source* Author

green management principles (i.e., waste management, sustainable water consumption, energy efficiency, and recycling) through establishing research centers in addition to the Hajj and Umrah Institute in Makkah at Umm Al-Qura University (Alsebaei 2016; Ouda et al. 2016).

By doing this, attention could be shifted toward the potential social, economic, and environmental benefits for the destination (Elgammal and Jones, 2008; Elgammal 2022). Therefore, raising pilgrims' awareness of the green practices that could be adopted during their spiritual visits to sacred sites should be the focus of the government in the next pilgrimage season. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic can be considered an opportunity for destinations to rethink their future agendas in light of the successful practices adopted and found to be useful (Elgammal and Refaat 2021).

Table 15.3 Association between the COVID-19 mitigation plan (2020–2021) and green pilgrimage principles Arab

No.	Mitigation actions (MAs)	Green pilgrimage principles (GPPs)	Association between MA and GPP
Before Hajj			
1	Public-sector stakeholders are involved in planning for the Hajj season	Involving key stakeholders	Yes
2	Clear instructions and informative materials about how to ensure safety during the ritual	Promoting green wisdom, education, and awareness	Yes
3	The use of improved group transportation (i.e., buses) Enhanced energy conservation strategies Developing 800 special manual and electric vehicles to improve access for special needs and elderly pilgrims	Energy efficiency and transport	Yes
4	Initiating the "Tetamman" application and pilgrims' electronic tracking bracelets	The use of green technology	Yes
During Hajj			
5	Restricting groups of pilgrims to a maximum of 20 Prohibition of touching the Holy Kaaba to prevent the spread of infection Sterile pebbles for each pilgrim for the throwing ritual A personal prayer mat for each pilgrim	Green rituals	Yes
6	The use of pre-packaged meals and the prevention of buffets to reduce food waste Using local food	Greening food	Yes
7	Preventing access to the Zamzam water (i.e., spiritual water that pilgrims used to drink freely from disposable plastic cups) The use of personalized re-fillable water bottles	Greening water resources	Yes
8	Reduced number of pilgrims Prohibition of food buffet	Waste management	Yes
9	Assessing and monitoring the pilgrims at sacred places via wide screens and dashboards Activating all monitoring centers within the boundaries of sacred places Robots are used to distribute sterilized Zamzam/holy water (bottled water) Robots help to keep sacred sites well-sanitized	Using green technologies Artificial intelligence technology	
After Hajj			

Table 15.3 (continued)

No.	Mitigation actions (MAs)	Green pilgrimage principles (GPPs)	Association between MA and GPP
10	Monitoring post-Hajj quarantine measures and pilgrims' health using the "Tetamman" application and pilgrims' electronic tracking bracelets	Using green technologies	Yes

Source Alliance of Religions and Conservation 2014; News 2021; Elgammal and Alhothali 2021; Jokhdar et al. 2021; El-Ziq 2021

Conclusion

The decision to organize a pilgrimage season during the COVID-19 pandemic challenged the Saudi government with multiple risks. Based on a rigorous risk assessment, the mitigation plan followed by the Saudi government can be considered as best practice not only for other pilgrimage destinations but also for destinations that are willing to open their doors to safer international tourism while using green practices. Various stakeholders collaborated on the mitigation plan and actual practices during the pilgrimage season, which was considered successful.

By comparing Hajj mitigation plans and green pilgrimage principles, it seems that the restrictions imposed by the Saudi government can be considered steps toward achieving green pilgrimage. The prevention measures and the plan implemented were similar to the principles and practices of green pilgrimage, which is another challenging concept that brings social and environmental benefits to host destinations (Elgammal and Alholthali 2021). Pilgrimage, which usually involves managing mass gatherings, needs to be promoted in a manner that uses green technology to facilitate more green practices for maximizing the social and environmental benefits for all destinations hosting sacred sites around the world. Nevertheless, with the universal control of the COVID-19 pandemic, the vaccinations developed, and the overall reductions in travel restrictions by all countries, Saudi Arabia has started to open its doors to pilgrims around the world to perform Hajj and Umrah. In addition, the Islamic 2022 pilgrimage was expected to be different to the 2020 and 2021 seasons. The number of pilgrims was expected to reach one million from all countries around the world (AFP 2022; Arab News 2022).

Future research could look at the assessment of the economic benefits of pilgrimage during the COVID-19 pandemic to examine the losses resulting from the reduced numbers of pilgrims. Pilgrims' green awareness could be also examined to find ways to improve their green attitudes, practices, and behavior. In addition, other green pilgrimage practices could be investigated at other destinations, such as the Christian pilgrimage to the Vatican in Italy, particularly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Glossary

This glossary is the result of a collective effort of the authors who have contributed to this book. Each author explains terms and concepts that, from his or her point of view, are relevant to understand the geography of pilgrimage and, more specifically, his or her research. Hence, theoretical-conceptual entries and other ones more linked to the case studies are here presented. The main aim of this glossary is to offer a support tool for reading the whole work, allowing a better understanding of the different and varied aspects raised by the authors.

A

Affect

Affect refers to our pre-cognitive, unconscious understandings of space and place; it is the feelings which emerge from the encounter between our body and the world around it. Through emphasising that understanding can come before cognition affect acknowledges the importance of our bodies in mediating our interpretations of landscape meaning. The connection between affect, or feeling, and the body means that affect is constant, changeable, and, above all else, entirely personal. It therefore reveals the potential for landscape meaning to shift entirely through time in response to both the changing body, as well as the changing cultural context in which the body resides. Explorations of pilgrimage as a spiritual experience have often been framed within these notions of affect and sacrality. The individual and collective body are centred in these contemporary discussions, in order to understand how sacred space emerges and becomes mobile through affect (*Cynthia Nkiruka Anyadi*).

Amanazaretha

This is one of the largest 'indigenous' African churches in southern Africa. Different groups affiliating with this church conduct annual pilgrimages to certain mountains in rural Kwazulu-Natal, which is one of South Africa's provinces. The original and still best-known mountain for their pilgrimage is called iNhlangakazi. More recently, certain schisms occurred which resulted in Mount Khenana becoming the primary pilgrimage destination for one of the major emerging groups (*Retief Müller*).

Ancient Routes of Kumano

The Ancient Routes of Kumano consist of a set of pilgrimage roads running through the Kii Peninsula, at the south end of the Honshu Island in Japan. Official presentations usually list five main routes to Kumano, which are the followings: Kiiji, Iseji, Nakahechi, Ôhechi, and Kohechi. Kiiji departs from Ôsaka and approaches Kumano along the western coast of the peninsula, while Iseji originates in the Ise Grand Shrine and borders the eastern coast. Nakahechi and Ôhechi are ramifications of Kiiji and connected to this at the coastal town of Tanabe. Kohechi is a crosscut from Kôyasan across the Kii Mountains. Kiiji-Nakahechi/Ôhechi, Iseji and Kohechi all converge in three sacred sites in Kumano: Kumano Hongu Taisha, Kumano Hayatama Taisha, and Kumano Nachi Taisha. Despite a physical distance of 20–30 km separating one another, the three grand shrines share a strong spiritual bond symbolised by their common Shinto divinities (kamis). In addition to the five main routes listed above, Ômine-Okugake michi and the Kumano River should be mentioned as pathways to Kumano. The former is a mountain path for asceticism connecting Yoshino and Kumano Hongû, which are both symbolic places of shughendô. The latter is the most important water course in the Kii Peninsula and was intensively used by members of the medieval nobility as a pilgrimage route. The Ancient Routes of Kumano along with the main sanctuaries were inscribed in 2004 on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The official denomination of the property is "Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range, and the Cultural Landscapes that Surround Them". In terms of the categories of cultural property defined in Article 1 of the 1972 World Heritage Convention (WHC), the whole set inscribed constitutes a "site", that is, a set of works of man or combined works of nature and man which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnographic or anthropological point of view. Within the basic framework of the WHC, the consideration of "cultural landscape", introduced in 1992 by the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the convention, was conferred on the whole property of the Kii Mountain Range (*Katsuyuki Takenaka*).

C

Casa de Cora Coralina Museum

The current museum is the birthplace of Anna Lins Guimarães Peixoto, also known as Cora Coralina, located in the City of Goiás, in the state of Goiás. It was inaugurated on 20 August 1989, in honour of the poet's centennial anniversary. It is a private, non-profit entity governed by a statute, with the purpose "to design, execute, collaborate, and encourage cultural, artistic, educational and environmental activities, aiming, above all, at valuing the sociocultural identity of the people of Goiás, as well as preserving the memory and disseminating the life and work of Cora Coralina" (Delgado 2005, p. 104). The museum is part of the architectural ensemble of the City of Goiás, declared a World Cultural Heritage site by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Science and Culture Organisation). The Museum has 16 rooms, a large backyard, and a spout of drinking water, totalling 3000 m^2 of area with the personal collection given by the family, which includes personal objects; archives such as books, manuscripts, newspapers, magazines, periodicals, photographs, negatives, correspondence, library; in addition to household furniture and items. Open for tourists and residents, it is the place of arrival and departure for those who make the Way of Cora Coralina, an ecotourism trail of the state of Goiás (*Lisandra LC Passos and Mirian Rejowski*).

Cathedral Basilica of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Aparecida

It is the largest Catholic religious temple in Brazil. Located in the city of Aparecida, in the countryside of the state of São Paulo. Catholics and devotees go on pilgrimages during the entire year to the church, especially on October 12th, recognised as a national holiday in honour of Our Lady of Aparecida, sanctioned by Law No. 6802, June 30, 1980. Its construction began in 1946, by the architect Benedito Calixto Neto, in neo-Romanesque style characterised by buildings of monochrome bricks and stones, arches over the opening of doorways and windows, and polygonal towers on the sides of façades with roofs of various shapes, with over 143,000 m^2 of area built throughout the Sanctuary (Silveira 2019). The Basilica of Aparecida received, three times, the Golden Rose, one of the oldest and noblest of the papal decorations. The first, in 1967 by Pope Paul VI, on the occasion of the jubilee of 250 years of the appearance of the image of Our Lady of the Conception. The second, in 2007, by Pope Benedict XVI during his visit to Brazil, and the third, in 2017 by Pope Francis, for the jubilee of 300 years of the appearance of the image (*Lisandra LC Passos and Mirian Rejowski*).

Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation—ICMBio

It's an autarchy under a special regime. It was created on 28 August 2007. ICMBio is linked to the Ministry of the Environment and is part of the National Environment System (SISNAMA). The responsibility of which is to execute the actions of the National System of Conservation Units, and may propose, implement, manage,

protect, supervise, and monitor the CUs instituted by the Union. Additionally, they can promote and execute programs for research, protection, preservation, and conservation of biodiversity and exercise the power of environmental police to protect federal Conservation Units; implement policies related to the sustainable use of renewable natural resources, to extractivism, and to traditional populations in conservation units; and promote and execute the articulation between the agencies and the entities involved with the activities of ecotourism and recreation in conservation units considered for public use (ICMBio 2021) (*Lisandra LC Passos and Mirian Rejowski*).

Christian Churches

They are buildings in which Christian's worship (Collins 2022a). Also, they could be a group of people within the Christian religion, for example Catholics or Methodists, that have their own beliefs, clergy, and forms of worship (Collins 2022a). Churches and chapels are the most noticeable objects in the cultural landscape of Christian countries. Their distinctive architecture, characterised by religious symbols, often becomes a hallmark of the area and the sign of religious identity. The churches themselves can be vastly different in functions and size, also in architectural style, form and shape, building materials and location (urban or rural) (*Darius Liutikas*).

Christianity

It is the religion revealed by Jesus Christ which subsequently becomes his object of adoration. From the typological point of view of religions, Christianity presents itself as a founded and revealed religion, that is, dating back to a person who first preached it to men, the bearer of a dogmatic, missionary and universalistic divine revelation. For all these characters, to which the possession of a canon of sacred Scriptures must be added, it can be classified among the religions of the "modern" type (typologically, rather than chronologically), from which, however, it differs in that, while neither Moses neither Mohammed nor the Buddha aspired to have divine worship, Christ is instead worshiped as God. Another differentiating element is that Christianity is historically born within a religion that is revealed and founded in turn—Judaism—and with its own canon of sacred Scriptures, towards which Christianity presents itself as innovator and conservative at the same time. In the early days of Christianity, the term "saint" generically indicated any Christian, as "sanctified", that is, "consecrated" and not only because it was made sacred by God through baptism, as subsequently indicated by the Catholic Church (*Antonietta Ivona*).

Communicating Places

Communicating places in Mesoamerican indigenous cultures are specific locales with shrines, temples, or altars where people communicate and interact socially with each other and spiritual forces through prayer, offerings, and performances. Cultural, sacred, and ritual landscapes describe distinct geographical features utilised by people in this region for pilgrimage and ceremonies for maintaining covenants, or reciprocal exchanges for mutual benefit, with their gods and ancestors. However, the

concept of communicating places directly explains how Mesoamerican cultures ritually use these spaces. They pilgrimage to these locales to speak to, provide offerings to, and pray to gods and ancestors during rituals, performances, and social interaction. The spiritual forces then communicate with people through divination, dreams, natural signs, and if people's desired outcomes have been achieved or not. Well-known from Maya, Mixtec, Aztec, and Huichol cultures, communicating places are special ritual landscapes where people pilgrimage directly to connect with the spiritual forces at their homes, which are distant from people's houses. Mesoamerican people believe these places, such as caves, mountain tops, cliffs, and springs, have doors, roofs, and household items that only the gods can see and use (*Joel Palka, Josuhé Lozada Toledo and Ramón Folch González*).

Communitas

Communitas is a widely debated theory introduced by Victor and Edith Turner (1969) through their work around pilgrimage. It refers to their idea that during the pilgrimage, social boundaries and hierarchies are discarded, and a new community is formed in which all pilgrims are socially equal in their journey. The Turners describe the process of producing communitas as both the ceasing of the social bonds which divide us, e.g., those of class, caste, race, and the emergence of a new society. This concept has been criticised, principally because when people gather together, they are always going to exist and operate within a broader social hierarchy; however, the notion can still be useful in understanding how a 'commonnesss of feeling' might arise within sacred spaces (*Cynthia Nkiruka Anyadi*).

Cora Coralina

Anna Lins dos Guimarães Peixoto (1889–1985) adopted the pseudonym Cora Coralina when writing poetry and short stories and is considered one of the main Brazilian writers. Cora Coralina means red heart. She was born in the old Vila Boa (Goiás) in the house on the bridge, now the Casa de Cora Coralina Museum. She moved to Jaboticabal, in the countryside of São Paulo, in 1911 in the company of the lawyer Cantídio Tolentino de Figueiredo Bretas, where their six children were born. She returned to Goiás in 1956 and began making sweets to support herself. Her first book was published at the age of 75. She was honoured by the Council of Culture of the State of Goiás with the Jaburu Trophy, received the title of Honorary Doctorate awarded by the Federal University of Goiás, and was awarded the Commendation of the Order of Merit for Labour in the promotion of the culture of Goiás. She became a member of the Academy of Letters of Goiás at the age of 94 and was recognised as a Symbol of the Working Women by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). She is one of the highlights of the modernist movement for breaking down aesthetic barriers and creating a literature which addressed everyday life and gave voice to the marginalised. She died in Goiânia, at the age of 95 (Britto and Seda 2009) (*Lisandra LC Passos and Mirian Rejowski*).

Covenants

Covenants can be described as reciprocal agreements between people and their spiritual forces (gods, ancestors, and natural energies, such as wind and rain spirits) in Mesoamerican cultures. Throughout this region, people believe that these spiritual forces affect people's lives and bring benefits or calamities to society and the cosmos in general. The gods and ancestors do things to help or impact individuals and communities depending on if they receive offerings and have either been placated or offended. At the same time, in this culture area people understand that spiritual forces rely on them for sustenance, recognition, and entertainment since the gods' behaviours and needs parallel those of humans. Mesoamerican people believe they cannot exist without the assistance of spiritual forces and in turn they feel that the gods and ancestors recognise the importance of human offerings and communication. Therefore, the covenants between people and their gods has led to Mesoamerican people's beliefs of mutual benefit through agreed-upon reciprocal exchanges. These behaviours help explain why people in Mesoamerica pilgrimage to ritual landscapes to maintain social interaction with spiritual forces to obtain the things they need with their spiritual forces' help. Maya people, for instance, perform rituals and give food offerings to communicate with and sustain deities living in caves to obtain rain and bountiful harvests (*Joel Palka, Josuhé Lozada Toledo and Ramón Folch González*).

Crosses and Roadside Chapels

Crosses, chapel-pillars, small wooden and brick chapels are typical elements of the European religious landscape. Crosses, chapel-pillars, or small chapels are usually built-in homesteads, at roadsides and road junctions, although they can also be found in fields, forests, near streams, or springs. Sometimes these objects could serve as a territorial border or road markers. In Western Europe, we see small chapels installed in the walls of houses. Crosses and chapel-pillars are also built today in squares, parks of cities or towns, as well as next to various public buildings. Various forms of wooden and stone monuments, crosses, and chapel-pillars are in cemeteries. The motives for construction are very diverse: the need of protection, the gratitude for grace, the request for grace, the promise given, the commemoration of tragic events (e.g., those were killed in car accidents), and the honour of important historical events of the nation, region, or religion (Liutikas 2014). Christian cross represents crucifixion of Jesus. Wooden and iron crosses have a variety of ornaments, symbols, and attributes. Chapel-pillars, roof-pillars, and small chapels can be related to Jesus, Virgin Mary, or saints (*Darius Liutikas*).

Cult

Cult generally means adoration of God, relationship with what is sacred, and in this sense, it is equivalent to "religion"; but it also means, in particular, the customs and acts by which religious sentiment is expressed. It can express itself as an internal cult or as an intimate feeling of devotion, and as an external cult with the outward manifestations of this feeling. The Christian phenomenon of the cult of saints a Christian phenomenon was the result of a spontaneous process that recognised in

them a close intimacy with God. This privileged relationship with divinity allowed these personalities to be intermediaries between the common man and God. The saints are human and historical figures, they are neither gods nor angels, and therefore they owed their privileged status only to their actions. Furthermore, being intermediaries with God, they represented a continuing testimony of the resurrection *(Antonietta Ivona)*.

Cultural Landscape

The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention introduced in its revision of 1992 the concept of "Cultural Landscapes". According to the UNESCO Guidelines, cultural landscapes are cultural properties and represent the "combined works of nature and of man" designated in Article 1 of the Convention. They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal. Stimulated by the WHC, Japan also gave legal coverage to cultural landscape (*bunka-teki keikan*) revising in 2004 the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties. Both the WHC and the Japanese law apply restrictive criteria on cultural landscape to select only the most outstanding assets with the objective of preserving their purportedly original state. The definition of cultural landscape by UNESCO expresses the legitimate standpoint of an international authority, whose fundamental mission consists in evaluating cultural assets reported from the whole world to highlight those nominated for special measures of protection. However, if we consider culture in its broadest sense of enduring codes that originate by the intervention of humans, aspects such as perception of the environment or habits created around it take on vital importance. From this viewpoint, the Ancient Routes of Kumano, and many other pilgrimage roads, can be considered important cultural landscapes, since they synthesise different ways in which humans open, use, and remember a road to organise the space they live in and feel part of it. Particularly three complementary dimensions are worth distinguishing in the Kumano cultural landscape: landscape as an idealised model in the imaginary of the historical pilgrimage; landscape as a place built through the experience of pilgrims; and landscape as a lifeworld of the population that acts daily on it (*Katsuyuki Takenaka*).

D

Dioceses of Munster

The diocese of Munster was canonically erected in 800 by Pope Leo III. Parts of it were lost to the newly erected diocese Essen in the South. In the South, the diocese borders also to Aachen and Paderborn, two Catholic dominated regions. In the North, its neighbours are Osnabrück and Hildesheim, which are Catholic diaspora areas.

Munster has many Marian shrines and a rich tradition of pilgrimage. The most important Marian shrine of the northwest, Kevalear, is also located in the area. Due to the latest church data, Munster had 1.763.393 registered Catholics in 2021 and was the second largest dioceses of Germany (*Mariano Barbato*).

E

Eastern Free State Pilgrimage

This concerns a series of sites along the mountainous border separating Lesotho and South Africa's Free State province. Pilgrimages are conducted on an individual and communal basis to, among other sites, Mautse, Motouleng, and Mantsopa (*Retief Müller*).

Existential Circle of Sacred Spaces

The five main tendencies of the existence of sacred spaces: (1) Creation; (2) Affirmation; (3) Preservation; (4) Re-use, and (5) Destruction. Creation of new sacred spaces related to extraordinary events, promotion of the place, consecration, rituals, and symbols. Affirmation of the sacred landscape is also related to everyday devotion and rituals, pilgrimages. Preservation of sacred heritage includes such activities as physical protection granting special status, conservation, restoration and reconstruction, adaptation to visitors including sustainable tourism activities. Re-use of sacred places is related to the granting the new functions to the place (e.g., church buildings serve as cultural halls for concerts and other events). The main features of the destruction are the ruin and abolishment of the sacred space (*Darius Liutikas*).

F

Faithscape

It encompasses sacred place, sacred time, sacred meanings and sacred rituals, and embodies both symbolic and tangible psyche elements in an attempt to realise man's identity in the cosmos (*Rana P.B. Singh and Pravin S. Rana*).

Fatima

Fatima, Portugal, is one of the most important Marian shrines of the Catholic world. In 2017, Pope Francis celebrated the centennial of the apparitions and canonised Jacinta and Francisco Marto. Both seer children died at a young. The third seer child, Lucia dos Santos, died at an old age 13 February 2013. She became a nun and had later also apparitions at her monastery. The messages of Fatima are based mainly on her testimony. Thus, she became the key witness of Fatima, also acknowledged

by popes in that role, in particularly by John Paul II who consecrated the world accordingly to her testimony in 1984. The messages of Fatima demand a return to God by penitence, rosary and a devotional life (*Mariano Barbato*).

G

Geographical Dynamics

Generally speaking, dynamics is the work of forces (or energy) that produces movement and change in a system and manifests interrelationships among the elements of space, time, and forces. Geographic dynamics is multiscalar, multidimensional, and complex. From local and regional to global scales, geographic dynamics is displayed in human activities, urban sprawl, land use and land cover change, transformation of cultural, biological, and physical landscapes, and environmental changes in human dimensions. Geographical phenomena, both physical and human, are not static but highly dynamic. They change over time due to the interactive processes between human activities, nature, and the historical evolution of society (*Antonietta Ivona*).

Geography of Religions

Geography of religions is a branch of social geography that studies the relationships of religions with different elements of social, economic, cultural, and physical environment, and their mutual influence (Liutikas 2004). Some other authors (Isaac 1960; Kotlyakov and Komarova 2006; Matsui 2014) highlight the analysis of spatial factors and characteristics of religion in the definitions. The topics of research on the geography of religions are very diverse (e.g., the spread of religions and their territorial development models, observance and transmission of religious practices and traditions, manifestation of religion in everyday life), but majority of them are related to geographical space and landscape (Fickeler 1962; Isaac 1960, 1962, 1965). Liutikas noticed that the analysis of religious objects and shrines in space is one of the most obvious topics in the geography of religion (*Darius Liutikas*).

H

Heritage

Assuming the etymology of the term, heritage (translation of the Latin *patrimonium, from pater-monium*) is what we inherit from the past (literally from the *pater*) with the task of making others known and of passing on to future generations. The world of definitions and meanings with which it is possible to observe the concept of heritage is among the widest and most complex, especially after the historic stage of the European Convention of Faro (2005) which, speaking of cultural heritage, has extended

its definition and horizons. An example of this approach is present also in the Italian legislative that has applied the European directions by defining cultural heritage as "the set of resources inherited from the past that some people consider, regardless of the property ownership regime, as a reflection and expression of their values, beliefs, knowledge, and traditions in continuous evolution. It includes all aspects of the environment derived from the interaction over time between people and places" (Law 133/2020). In this definition, it is possible to read the dimension of the question: heritage, which is not only made up of tangible and material artefacts, is the expression of a relationship, which is considered worthy of value as it can narrate a certain identity and trace that has emerged from the interaction between man and territory. This broad idea of heritage helps us to recover the fundamental concept of context. Linking heritage to its context (from the Latin *con-texere*, meaning to hold together, to intertwine), reveals a deep bond, a plot, which allows us to fully understand the history of a certain asset with the places and, consequently, also with contemporary reality and with ourselves. From this perspective, with the term heritage we mean the tangible and intangible inheritance that characterises each territory. In the same way, in the definition of material and intangible heritage of UNESCO it is intended to include not only monuments and collections of objects but also all the living traditions transmitted by our ancestors: oral expressions, including language, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festivals, knowledge and practices concerning the maintenance and care of the landscape, traditional crafts, etc. (*Rossella Moscarelli*).

I

Infrasecular Pilgrimage Space

This definition recovers the definition of infrasecular proposed by della Dora (2016). The infrasecular Pilgrimage Space is characterised by the spatial dynamism and complexity. Here the secular and sacred coexist, overlap, and compete. Post-contemporary pilgrimage is a spatial narrative in which "mobility, fluidity and liquidity" coexist (Sheller and Urry 2006, p. 210) insofar as in its inclusive and flexible space different religious faiths coexist, new habits are introduced, and previous patterns are altered by representing alternative ways of being and occupying the place in which sacred and secular coincide (Gallagher and Newton 2009). This results in a negotiated space: values, beliefs, uses, and practices are negotiated, while "aspects of historically dominating religion that are so deeply embedded in a society's collective memory, culture, values, institutions, everyday speech, and in the landscape" remain (della Dora 2016, p. 5). The expression infrasecular pilgrimage space highlights the dynamic and mobile dimension of space and the different processes of significance that pilgrims perpetuate, considering their diversity of profiles and behaviours (nationality, religions, ages, motivations, among others). The space of Way of St.

James is an example of an infrasecular pilgrimage space as it represents and welcomes alternative ways of being, that compete and coexist with each other; hence, it is a dynamic, fluid and mobile space (*Lopez Lucrezia and Rubén C. Lois González*).

Islamic Pilgrimage (The) (i.e., Hajj)

A key Muslim spiritual and one of the five pillars of Islam, performed only one time a year and takes up to five days during the Islamic month of Zul-Hijjah (the 12th month is the Hijri/Islamic calendar). Saudi Arabia is the only destination for the Hajj spiritual which is attracting millions of Muslim believers around the world. Hajj includes several rituals such as wearing a white garment, a circular, counterclockwise procession around the holy Kaaba (i.e., Tawaf), and the symbolic stoning of evil (i.e., Rami Algamarat) (*Islam Elgammal*).

L

Liminality

Liminality in the context of sacred spaces and mobilities is a concept introduced by Victor and Edith Turner (1969). The notion of liminality emphasises that some spaces are experienced as peripheral, even if materially or physically they are not, because those within it have the feeling of being disconnected or free from normal society. Liminality, or the production of liminal spaces, has been associated with sacrality because both are framed as being unique experiences, productive of or produced by novel affects, where the individual is feeling through a situation unlike anything they would usually encounter (*Cynthia Nkiruka Anyadi*).

Long-Distance Walking (LDW)

Although the definition of LDW is not precise, it is often distinguished by the time it takes, the distance walked, or both (Mau et al. 2021). However, Nidaros pilgrimage office defines a 'long-range' walking pilgrimage (WP) by 14–16 days' duration (Nidaros Pilegrimsgård 2017). Pilgrimage walking (PW) is also classified in terms of LDW. According to the author's Camino walkers, a WP should last for a minimum of 2 weeks since this enables the PW processes to set in and produce the perceived changes and health gains (Jørgensen 2017). LDW can also be associated with thru hiking, meaning hiking through a long-distance trail in one direction from one end to the other for weeks/months (Bader 2018) (*Nanna Natalia Jørgensen*).

M

Mahābhārata

It is a fifteenth-century BCE text that described in detail the pilgrimage places, the linking routes and the surrounding landscapes (*Rana P.B. Singh and Pravin S. Rana*).

Marian Shrines

Marian shrines are sanctuaries with a relationship to Marian devotion. The veneration is often boosted by miracles around an object like a statue or a painting of the Virgin Mary. Often also an apparition is the reason of the special Marian veneration at the sacred place. Many of the major global Marian shrines are related to apparitions. The apparition is usually scrutinised by the local bishop, the popes have the last say to decide about an approval. Together with the mobilisation effect of Marian shrines, this approval capacity establishes are special relationship of Popes and Marian shrines, which can be developed by popes and place-makers (*Mariano Barbato*).

Maya

Maya is an ethnic term describing indigenous peoples and cultures of southern Mexico and northern Central America who speak closely related Mayan languages and follow similar cultural practices. The Maya region is one of the more extensive culture areas with some of the largest populations in Mesoamerica. Maya populations are concentrated in Chiapas and the Yucatan peninsula in Mexico and in the countries of Guatemala and Belize. Maya cultures can be recognised archaeologically around 1000 B.C. Maya populations have been concentrated in large centres that had temples made of stone blocks, ball courts, palaces, plazas, and house clusters of extended families. They also lived in a multitude of villages and hamlets. Maya adorned their buildings with carved stucco figures, stone sculpture, multi-coloured murals, and carved monuments with hieroglyphic writing. Archaeologists have excavated Maya temples, houses, and tombs, which had painted pottery, carved shell, jade artefacts, and incised bone artefacts. Maya civilisation was sustained by maize agriculture, cotton production, cacao growing, fishing, and the hunting of animals such as deer, peccary, and birds. These people participated in local and long-distance trade in animal skins, tobacco, shell, colourful bird feathers, jade, salt, grinding stones, and obsidian and chert cutting tools. Because of their dispersed populations in a large geographical area governed by small states, Maya populations were difficult to conquer and colonise by other indigenous Mesoamerican societies in addition to Spanish invaders. Today, Maya people preserve their population and cultures despite globalisation and outside cultural influences that lead to assimilation. Maya continue to pilgrim to ritual landscapes to communicate with spiritual forces to maintain the covenants to acquire things they need and to maintain cosmic balance (*Joel Palka, Josuhé Lozada Toledo and Ramón Folch González*).

Mesoamerica

Mesoamerica is the indigenous culture area encompassing the Southwest USA, Mexico, and Central America. This region consists of many different environments, including arid lands, mountain valleys, rainforests, and coastal zones. Cultures here include Maya, Aztec, Mixtec, Zapotec, Huichol, Cora, Tarascan, Teotihuacan, Olmec, Totonac, and Yaqui. People in this area interacted with neighbouring cultures, including the South-eastern U.S. and lower Central America, which explains some similarities in their religious beliefs, plant cultivation, iconography, and trade items. While Mesoamerica is home to different cultures and languages, people living in this region are united by numerous behaviours and social practices. This culture area is known for its cyclical calendars, ballgames, jade ornaments, maize agriculture, metallurgy, writing systems, and pyramidal constructions. Ancient Mesoamerican people domesticated corn, cotton, tobacco, chocolate, chilis, tomatoes, manioc, avocados, pineapples, dogs, and semi-domesticated turkeys, deer, and parrots. Pilgrimage has been important in Mesoamerica for thousands of years as people have visited religious shrines in caves, on mountains, near cliffs, and at lakeshores in the ritual landscape to provide offerings to their ancestors and gods to maintain reciprocal covenants. While not strictly a personal religious journey, pilgrimage in this region has been a central part of people's lives. In Mesoamerica, people must pilgrimage to receive things they need from spiritual forces, such as rain, food, protection, prosperity, health, and the continuation of human lives and cosmic balance (*Joel Palka, Josuhé Lozada Toledo, and Ramón Folch González*).

Myth

The term "myth" derives from the Greek mythos, which means 'word, story' and in the common language the word "myth" indicates something fabulous or unattainable, which is somehow amplified and removed from reality. In its primary meaning, this term refers instead to the sacred power of the word (which says, communicates, narrates and, by telling, creates worlds), and to the very origins of humanity. Unlike the legend, the myth takes on a universal and not just a local dimension; the real events (e.g., historical events, biographies of exceptional characters, and so on) usually take on a wider value that is handed down over the centuries. Myths belong to the collective heritage of peoples: they are "places" exemplary of culture, archetypal expressions, typologies (including social ones) full of cultural, religious, moral and social references (*Antonietta Ivona*).

N

Network

A network is a specific set of links between a defined set of people, with the added property that the characteristics of these links as a whole can be used to interpret the social behaviour of the people involved. This definition implies that relationships rather than actors are at the centre of the analysis and that the specific structure of relationships can be used to predict hypotheses about individual and collective actions (*Antonietta Ivona*).

O

Outdoor Therapy

Outdoor therapy (also called Wilderness therapy) is an effective group treatment that may hold appeal for at-risk people who are less responsive to conventional forms of psychiatric treatment (Fernee et al. 2015). Outdoor behavioural healthcare is a multi-treatment approach within wilderness environments and backcountry travel that facilitates progress towards individualised treatment goals. The approach incorporates evidence-based clinical practices, patient assessment, individual and group psychotherapy by licenced clinicians, and the development of individual treatment and aftercare plans (Russell et al. 2008). Wilderness therapy primarily operates in remote wilderness settings, where basic outdoor life and nature experiences are integral to the treatment process (Harper 2012). However, the therapies share important commonalities: nature as a restorative environment, outdoor life with tasks and challenges, individualised therapy, and a supportive peer group and group therapy—all of which having the potential to facilitate therapeutic change (Harper et al. 2007; Russell 2001) (*Nanna Natalia Jørgensen*).

P

Papacy

The papacy is a religious, juridical, and political institution referring to the Roman Pontiff, the Pope, and his administration, the Roman Curia. The bishop of Rome is the pope of the Roman Catholic Church. Enabled and constrained by Christianity's Holy Scriptures and the tradition of the Catholic Church, but also by its own legal system, Canon Law, and international treaties, the papacy reigns over three distinct

but intertwined bodies: The Catholic Church, the Holy See, and the Vatican City State (*Mariano Barbato*).

Pilgrimage

The devotional practice of pilgrimage, consisting in going, alone or with other devotees, to a sacred place, mainly for a votive or penitential purpose, is typical of Western Christianity. The final destinations of these religious journeys were linked to three main types: places marked by a supernatural presence, historical places of a sacred nature and, finally, places consecrated to the worship of holy bodies, and where it was believed that miracles took place (*Antonietta Ivona*).

Pilgrimage Mobility Paradigm

It refers to different forms of mobility characterising the pilgrimage movement. In recent decades, pilgrimage studies have been recognised as a field of interest of the mobility studies. Pilgrimage is a spatial practice characterised by significant movements and practices of interest from a material and immaterial perspective (Scriven 2014). Pilgrimage was, and is, a movement and a journey of people and ideas, which keep the sacred value of the space and place alive, and which create spatial relationships (Barreiro Rivas 1997; Coleman and Eade 2004; Esteve Secall 2002; Stoddard and Morinis 1997). The mobility of pilgrimage routes and the traits of pilgrims are important to understand a pilgrimage that is considered the first form of tourist travel (Apollo et al. 2020; Collins-Kreiner 2010; Collins-Kreiner and Wall 2015; Timothy and Olsen 2006), a variant of cultural and spiritual tourism. Moreover, pilgrimage is mobility insofar as it involves leaving one's own routine: leaving the domi, that is, the familiar space of everyday life, where everything is well structured (a kind of comfort zone) to enter the foris, the unknown space. Limen is the limit between domis and foris; it is a psychological limit that, driven by different motivations, determines movements (Lopez 2012). For this reason, mobility is a characteristic of the interior dimension of the post-modern pilgrimage, turning the pilgrimage into a model of transnational mobility (Coleman and Eade 2004). Displacement (both physical and metaphysical) to and from sites (Coleman and Eade 2004) is a complex mobility, resulting from the interaction of several phenomena that generate spatial and cultural relationships at different scales and, for this reason, leads us to analyse issues associated with distance and behaviour (Cohen 1992; Collins-Kreiner 2010; Digance 2003; Eade and Sallnow 1991; Stoddard and Morinis 1997) (*Lopez Lucrezia and Rubén C. Lois González*).

Pilgrimage Tourism

It is a form of religious tourism, but more inclined to spiritual and transcendent gain, and marginally enjoying leisure and recreation. This is more common in Hindu pilgrimage system (*Rana P.B. Singh and Pravin S. Rana*).

Pilgrimage Walking (PW)

Pilgrim/age comes from the Latin 'peregrinus', which draws on the two words 'per agri', meaning 'through the fields'—in other words, landscape (Wheeler 1999).

While walking is a fundamental part of PW, can be linked to experience: the German word for experience 'Erfahrung' derives from the Old German 'irfaran', which means to 'wander' or 'travel' (Jørgensen 2008). Pilgrimages, in general, can be defined as liminal journeys to particular places that embody religious, cultural, social, and/or personal experiences and values containing a meaningful and mystical quality for the traveller (Digance 2006; Morinis 1992; Turner 1969). PW can, thus, contemporarily, be defined as gathering experience through walking in nature and a social context. PW is increasingly recognised as a multifaceted sociocultural spatial practice playing a significant role in the life of its performers in regard to the activity's authentic experiences, extraordinary encounters, and meaningful interactions (Scriven 2014). This sets PW apart from other walking activities, and last but not least, its many health benefits (Jørgensen 2017) (*Nanna Natalia Jørgensen*).

Pilgrimage Walking Therapy (PWT)

Pilgrimage walking therapy is a term introduced and used by the author in her constant attempts to persuade Norwegian health authorities to recognise PW as a therapeutic mean as other outdoor health interventions. Three factors seem to lie at the base of PW's therapeutic effect: long-term walking in nature and a social context, where people can walk, reflect and interact with nature and social others, creating meaning, a revaluation of values and new perspectives (Jørgensen 2008, 2017, 2022). PW's therapeutic potential was initially promoted by psychologist Lunga (2005). He piloted PW as therapy on a group of outpatients at Førde psychiatric clinic inspired by Marien hospital clinic in Germany that uses the Camino in their therapy. Lunga (2005) also used PW to deal with his own disease. Unfortunately, he left only raw data material and his peripatetic notes before he died to cancer and asked the author to bring on his research and legacy *(Nanna Natalia Jørgensen)*.

Prasāda

It is a specialised sacred food offered to the deity and taken back as blessed one item (*Rana P.B. Singh and Pravin S. Rana*).

Prashad

'Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive', a mission national mission of the government of India started in 2014–2015, which aims at the 'integrated development of pilgrimage destinations in a planned, prioritised and sustainable manner' to provide a complete religious tourism experience (*Rana P.B. Singh and Pravin S. Rana*).

R

Rāmāyaṇa

The most famous epic of Hindu tradition, dated ca 2000 BCE, described the grand journey of Lord Rāma across India; the sites on the route became famous places of pilgrimage (*Rana P.B. Singh and Pravin S. Rana*).

Ritual Landscapes

Ritual landscapes in Mesoamerica include specific geographical features of cultural importance for ceremonies, pilgrimages, and mythology, including mountain tops, caves, springs, cliffs, ancient ruins, boulders, and islands. Ritual landscapes have also been referred to as cultural or sacred landscapes in the pilgrimage and geography literature. However, while these landscape features are important religiously, they are not sacred things worshiped directly by Mesoamerican people. Ritual landscapes have been culturally constructed or selected as important places for people in this region, but they have ritual significance as central locales for pilgrimage shrines. Some mountains of historical or phenomenological importance have been selected for ritual use, but others have not. Ritual landscapes are the abodes, or communicating places, for Mesoamerican gods and ancestors. These spiritual forces are tethered to ritual landscapes, which people describe as homes or places of the gods and ancestors. Hence, people in this culture area make pilgrimages to shrines that they have constructed in these geographical features to communicate with their gods. These rituals are believed to help maintain reciprocal covenants to acquire what people need in their daily lives. Mesoamerican people travel to ritual landscapes and give offerings, prayer, and dance for spiritual forces found here in order to receive the things that gods provide to them. These communicating places in the ritual landscape, which are far from people's settlements, can be identified with ceremonial architecture, altars, platforms, heaps of ritual artefacts, and rock art (*Joel Palka, Josuhé Lozada Toledo, and Ramón Folch González*).

Rock Art

Rock art includes carved and painted designs placed on ritually important rock panels on cliffs, cave walls, mountain tops, and boulders. In Mesoamerica, especially the Maya area, both carved and painted designs have been equally important, whereas in some parts of the world one form of rock art dominates over the other. Mesoamerican carved rock art designs include faces, the human body, deities, cupules, and geometric shapes. Some carvings allowed pilgrims to remove sacred substances with their potent ritual power from important shrines to take back with them to put in their houses, temples, fields, and graves. Pilgrims painted designs in this culture area have a great variety of designs and themes, such as gods, animals, hieroglyphs, people, handprints, and geometric shapes. With regard to this iconography, pilgrims left rock art as an offering or things personally connected to them at important shrines. Mesoamerican rock art commonly is found in ritual landscapes and communicating places

that are distant from people's settlements. Pilgrims, religious specialists, artists, and community members created rock art during ceremonies at these ceremonial locales. Mesoamerican people created rock art while communicating with spiritual forces, to reinforce their connections to ritual landscapes, to indicate they participated in rituals there, mark territory, and present information and their identity to others (*Joel Palka, Josuhé Lozada Toledo, and Ramón Folch González*).

S

Sacredscapes

They are landscapes that are partly defined by the material world but rather more strongly by sacred symbols, cosmogonic and cultural astronomy, traditions, festivals, and the belief that these places are spiritual crossing-places into the transcendent realms of the divine (*Rana P.B. Singh and Pravin S. Rana*).

Sacred Space

Sacred space includes both the natural and cultural environment. The sacred spaces are distinctly visible in the landscape, the process of sacralisation of place is full of various discourses and interpretations. Sacred places are tangible, whether they be natural objects, or created by human. The perception of sacred space related to such categories as perceived space (Lefebvre 1991), mental maps (Gould 1966; Gould and White 1974; Lynch 1960), imagined landscape (Eck 1998), and socially constructed space (Harvey 1990). The construction of sacred places is a socio-cultural process. Different people perceive sacred spaces in distinct ways. The main research focus among scholars has been how to define sacred spaces and places and how to select them (Liutikas 2018) (*Darius Liutikas*).

Sanātana Dharma

It refers to the "eternal" truth and teachings of Hinduism, also translated as "the natural and eternal way to live", connoting absolute duties and righteous practices (*Rana P.B. Singh and Pravin S. Rana*).

Shinto-Buddhism

Overviewing the diversity of religious and spiritual traditions in Japan, the syncretism between Shinto and Buddhism stands out as its most outstanding characteristics. Shinto is a polytheism deep-rooted in the archipelago's geography, where the divinities, called kamis, are considered inhabitants of nature. The presence of countless divinities is what gave rise to an extraordinary variety of Shinto-related landscape throughout Japan. As for Buddhism, the well-known book of Japanese classical history, The Chronicles of Japan (Nihon Shoki), gives an account of the arrival of this worldwide religion, dating the event in AD 552. From a logically complex relationship between the Shinto and Buddhism, a particular model of syncretism emerged

in the Middle Ages, whose paradigmatic example can be found, among other places, in the three Taishas of Kumano: Kumano Hongu Taisha, Kumano Hayatama Taisha, and Kumano Nachi Taisha. Although Taisha means a grand Shinto shrine, the three Taishas actually symbolise a mixture of the two faiths, in which until the beginning of modern times Shinto-Buddhism showed an intense cultural manifestation in both architectural and ritual aspects. The physical distance separating one another did not prevent the three Taishas from sharing a strong spiritual bond represented by their common kamis. These, in turn, are supposed to embody their respective Buddhist deities, which descended on the Japanese land with the appearance of native kamis. A key to understand the union of the two faiths is given by Chokan Kanmon, an official report prepared in 1163 by experts of the Imperial Court. This document, the oldest one concerning the rise of Kumano worship, makes an extensive quote from the "History of the appearance of Budda embodied in Kumano Shinto kamis" (Kumano Gonghen Gosuijaku Enghi). The original text of the "History" is not preserved, nor we know exactly when the alleged history took place. The most important fact revealed by the "History" is that the upper classes of the early Middle Ages were already aware of the unquestionable importance of Buddhism, which considerably increased the spiritual and moral power of the ancient divinities of Kumano (*Katsuyuki Takenaka*).

Shrines

Places for worship that is holy because of a connection with a holy person or object (Cambridge Dictionary 2022). Any site or structure used in worship or devotion, any structure or place consecrated or devoted to some saint, holy person, or deity, as an altar, chapel, church, or temple (Collins 2022b). Places of religious devotion or commemoration (Merriam-Webster 2022). All places of worship, and not just those that become objects of pilgrimage due to associations with a sacred person or object (*Darius Liutikas*).

Shughendô

Shughendô is a school within the complex Japanese Shinto-Buddhism syncretism, known by its ascetic practices in rough mountains. Legends says that it was founded in the seventh century by monk En'no Ozuno, although historical accounts thereof are available only from the Heian period (ninth–twelfth century). In any case, the origin of Shughendô is related to the ancient Japanese worship of nature as a place inhabited by divine souls. Situations like foot of a mountain or a waterfall are considered appropriate to receive souls residing in forest and water. The arrival of Buddhism, particularly its esoteric variant, meant an important change in that religious tradition of Japanese people. Along the Heian period, a considerable number of monks began to practice ascetism in deep mountains, and finally constituted an institution of its own. Kumano was the main field of ascetic exercises in Shughendô along with Yoshino, a locality where Kumpusen-ji, head temple of a leading Shughendô sect, was located. Another important sect of Shughendô, the Honzan-ha, established its headquarters in Shôgo-in in Kyôto, and with their confidence underpinned by practices in the Kumano mountains, kept a close relationship with the nobility of the ancient capital. A group of Shughendô monks, called yamabushis, acted as guides for nobles who

wished to undertake the pilgrimage to Kumano. This is especially the case of Honzan-ha sect. Not only did they work as escorts, but they were raised by the Imperial Court to the rank of Administrator of the Three Kumano Grand Shrines. Although these monks resided in Kyôto, it was in the mountains of Kumano that they had trained as ascetics. Precisely, among the different Kumano Routes, the hardest one, known today as Ômine-Okugake michi, is the path of ascetism connecting Kumano Hongu Taisha and Yoshino Kumpusen-ji, that is, the two symbolic sites of shughendô. The entire Ômine-Okugake michi was, and still today is, a place of physical and spiritual exercise. For Shughendô, with its ancient root in a primitive animism, salient natural elements such as rocky ridges, huge stones, caves, giant trees, or waterfalls, are where divinities live and thus ideal places to mortify flesh (*Katsuyuki Takenaka*).

Sievernich

Sievernich is a new apparition site in the Rhineland, Northwest of Cologne in the dioceses of Aachen, not approved by the Church but supported by the bishop and until spring 2022 also by the local parish. Manuela Stracke, born in 1967, established the site with a prayer group. She had regular apparitions of the Virgin Mary between June 2000 and October 2005. After a long break during which the prayer group continued, Jesus has been appearing in the form of the Infant Jesus of Prague since 5 November 2018, until now, regularly on the 25th of the month. The messages reflect on the crisis of the Church, particularly the decline in the Eucharist. The most important prophecy of the first series was that Rome will abandon the mass instead only one loaf of bread is to be broken, together with the congregation, since many do not believe in the Eucharist (*Mariano Barbato*).

Slowness

The slowness can be seen as a choice in reaction to the cult of speed. Indeed, with the inherent fast nature of many Western cultures that leisure, unhurriedness, and slowness are becoming increasingly attractive concepts. The modernity of this present time has accustomed us to pressing on the accelerator, trying to fill every moment with more actions within a time unit, but without ridding us of that sense of time loss. Technology simply helps us deceive ourselves in thinking we are optimising time that, despite this, is not as free as before. In slowness, this happens less or not at all, and time belongs to us again. Deciding what to do with our time goes back to being a great and satisfying form of power. Slowness is not synonymous with immobility. A movement of 20–25 km/h is suitable to a slowness idea since it is a speed that can easily be achieved and maintained physically or using a modest quantity of energy: on foot, by bicycle, canoe, small motor or sailboats, by horseback or pack-mule, and so on. Low speed is still a speed, connected to a movement that makes its way through locations that belong to geographies. Every slow movement follows a trace or a line or a beam of lines that are themselves within a plan which, if we look closely, is the territory. Slowness allows us to fully savour the complexity of the territory that is made up of feeling, selection, and perception. When moving in a hurry, the feeling we often call fleeting prevails, as it escapes without leaving anything. Slowness, instead, allows us to dwell on particulars that we can therefore learn and recognise to then

interpret, through the cultural experience we gain, to the point of perceiving them completely. Slowness is therefore a teaching tool and mental energy because it feeds memory, a vitamin in turn for perception (*Rossella Moscarelli*).

Slow Travel/Tourism

Slow travel and slow tourism are usually used as synonyms, even if it is possible to find some differences between them especially if we consider the definition of the two terms (see the words "Travel"/"Tourism"). In this definition, we will use the two terms as synonyms. Depending on the aspect we decide to emphasise, we can find different approaches by which slow tourism or slow travel have been defined: (1) in opposition to traditional and mass tourism; (2) as tourism with low-carbon impact; and (3) as an experience where the most relevant aspect is the authenticity of the journey. Starting from the first, several studies focus on the idea that slow tourism is an attitude, an ethical choice, in opposition to traditional tourism, the so-called mass tourism. Slow tourism, as a matter of fact, is usually seen in contrast with the negative externalities of mass tourism, which is characterised by the extensive structural and infrastructural development of a territory based principally on economic interests, with an adequate consideration of environmental and social factors. The second approach emphasises the mode of transport with a low environmental impact. This aspect focuses on alternatives to air and car travel, such as trains, buses, cycling, walking, boat both to and within a destination, and where travel to and from a destination becomes part of the holiday. From this perspective, slow tourism is seen as an environmental choice in order to reduce the huge amount of carbon emissions related to the traditional tourism sector. In addition, this approach is also related to the choice of destination that should be close to home or reachable by low-carbon methods of transport. This appears in contrast with tourism distance that recently has grown as travel speeds have increased and travel costs decreased. Finally, the third approach defines slow tourism mainly as a tool to experience the territory, where visitors engage in a deeper experience of place. In this sense, slow tourism is mainly an experience of the territory that involves people, services, and locations. Moving slowly in the territory, travelling slowly, implies immersion in the environment, where participants become physically a part of the experience itself (*Rossella Moscarelli*).

Spiritual Forces

Spiritual forces is specific terminology describing what have been called gods, super-naturals, ancestors, sacred energies, and non-human entities in studies of Mesoamerican culture and religion. The concept of spiritual forces accurately describes these beings since Mesoamerican people do not believe they are supernatural beings, but natural entities found everywhere that affect people's daily lives. In this culture area, spiritual forces are not seen as gods in a pantheon or as single individual entities but are conflated into composite entities or united as similar beings. Spiritual forces are more like powers found everywhere in the universe, even in wind, water, rocks, places, and objects. These spiritual forces in Mesoamerica are often attached to certain places in ritual landscapes where people can pilgrimage to and contact them through ritual and prayer. Spiritual forces are not disconnected from people, their

needs and problems, and their existence as a whole. Mesoamerican people believe that the covenants they have with spiritual forces can bring them health, food, prosperity, and protection. Some Maya spiritual forces include rain deities, ancestors, and animate powers within the earth and stone (*Joel Palka, Josuhé Lozada Toledo and Ramón Folch González*).

T

Taxonomy of Pilgrimage Mobilities

It is a clarification of the type of mobilities that can be traced within a pilgrimage. This classification pretends to point out the kind of movements that make up a pilgrimage.

1. *Embodied mobility*: the body of the pilgrim is the main vehicle of movement when physically progressing along the Way. Their displacement, or rather their performance, gives meaning to the space through practices and behaviours that produce and reproduce the space (Butler 1990; Holloway 2003). Therefore, the mobility of the body involves movement of symbols, practices, values, and feelings (Gökariksel 2009). The latter are also generated along the Way, so the body is an affective vehicle through which emotional walking geographies are built.
2. *Transport mobility:* this expression refers to the modes of transport, and in the case of the Way, it alludes to the modes of travel that pilgrims prefer.
3. *Communication and information mobility*: *embodied mobility* in turn generates a relevant *communication and information mobility*, capable of connecting the world on a larger scale, with wide-ranging consequences and repercussions. Intense communication and the circulation of information today make use of ICTs, which reduce physical and temporal distances.
4. *Cultural mobility*: during the Middle Ages, pilgrimage contributed to overcoming cultural, social, and economic immobility, since the Way has always involved the movement of ideas, values, and culture. Today, this *cultural mobility* is intensifying and becoming more international, taking advantage of the new media and a kind of cultural democratisation that allows writing and publishing books, among others, in which personal experiences whose perceptions are often associated with cultural belonging are conveyed (Lopez 2019). Thanks to ICTs, the current *cultural mobility* has a clear reduction in time and space in relation to the past.
5. *Service mobility*: with this expression we describe the movements necessary for the exchange and supply of goods, transport, and services that work so that "the pilgrim society" can meet its increasingly complex needs and in line with the times. (*Lopez Lucrezia and Rubén C. Lois González*).

Thaba Sione

This is a sacred site and town in South Africa's Northwest province. It is known for the engravings of San, the original inhabitants of the region. It is also known as a 'rainmaking' site by both San and Tswana-speakers, currently the major group living in the area (*Retief Müller*).

Timber Rafting

Unlike roads created by engineering techniques, a natural river acquires the character of road only when people know how to make use of it as a means of communication. Rivers are important for the geography of pilgrimage, precisely because they can be used as a road. This is particularly the case of the Kumano River, the most important watercourse of the region, which was preferred by the medieval nobility as the best solution to cover the trip from Hongû to Shingû, two of the three main sacred sites in the Kumano pilgrimage. However, to guarantee the material subsistence of a road along the history, it needs users and their livelihood which act daily on the territory, even in the lowest moments of the pilgrimage. Among natural resources of the Kumano region, timber stands out for its abundance favoured by the humid climate. The city of Shingû located at the river mouth acts as the main centre of exchange between inside and outside of Kumano. And the river was the ideal means of transportation, since the supporting infrastructure, like railways or highways, was provided by the course of the river itself, and the logs felled from the mountain and tied one another on the water were both merchandise and a vehicle, like wagons or trucks. The history of the rafting in Kumano came to an end in 1964. As factors of the decline, we should consider the crisis of the Japanese timber industry in general, which, after works of massive plantation, lost progressively profitability due to its much higher operating costs compared to those of the imported wood. However, the most critical event for the decline of timber rafting was the construction of dams. After the initial attempts to exploit hydropower upstream of the Kumano River, the construction of large dams was undertaken after the war by a major electric company and authorised by the governmental General Development Plan. Until 1980, a total of 11 dams were built in the entire Kumano water system, with the consequent breaking of the navigability in a large part of the watercourses. The importance of this event should never be underestimated, not only for the drastic changes in the local people's life, but mostly because, fragmented by the dams, the Kumano River ceased to be a road (*Katsuyuki Takenaka*).

Tīrtha-yātra

It is 'Tour of the sacred ford', i.e., the Hindu pilgrimage tradition, developed in the ancient past, and continued (*Rana P. B. Singh and Pravin S. Rana*).

Travel (Tourism)

Travel and tourism are two different concept that are used in many cases as synonyms (see the words "Slow travel/tourism"). There is not any clear definition of either tourism or travel. Nevertheless, it is useful to reflect on the possible differences

between the two terms. Tourism is an economic sector involving all the activities and services relating holiday trips or journeys. Tourism is seen as a way to enhance the territorial capital of a place and it is usually proposed as a valid driver of development. Even where tourism is an effective factor of success and economic growth, the potentially negative impact must not be overlooked. Indeed, the concept of sustainability related to tourism, which gives life to so-called sustainable tourism, can seem like an oxymoron, as tourism, being an activity that exploits resources, has necessary negative impact on the territory (environmental, economic, social and cultural impact). Travel can be seen as integral to the tourist experience, and, in some instances, it might be the main purpose. Moreover, the idea of tourism implies a consumption where people, the tourists are consumers. On the contrary, travel can be seen more as an experience, where people are not seen only as consumers, rather as travellers discovering the territory. The travel narrative focuses on the so-called "art of travel", in opposition to the loss of such "art" in the case of "mass tourism". It is also possible to distinguish tourism from travel by introducing the three stages of the journey. The first stage is the departure. The stage of abandonment of what we know and cherish to face the unknown. The second is the passage, meaning the path that serves as a link between the act of departing and the act of arriving. The third is, precisely, the arrival, or, in other words, when we try to integrate with the place of destinations. The cornerstone of the travel experience is the passage, towards which less and less interest is shown nowadays, gradually reducing itself to a merely symbolic aspect of many journeys. That is the case of tourism, where the most important phase is the experience of the arrival destination (*Rossella Moscarelli*).

U

Umrah (Small Pilgrimage)

It refers to an Islamic ritual that is voluntary, practised in AlMasjid AlHaram (i.e., Holy Mosque/Great Mosque of Makkah) and can be performed any time of the year. It involves mainly going around the Kaaba seven times and walking between the two mountains of Alsafa and Almarwa seven-time which takes up to three hours to be performed (*Islam Elgammal*).

V

Virtual Rosary

The Dicastery of the New Evangelisation organised a virtual rosary marathon in May 2021 in order to pray for an end of the pandemic. Starting and ending at the Vatican, 30 sites worldwide participated. Each day of the Marian month May at 6:00

p.m. (CET) one sanctuary prayed the rosary and was broadcasted around the world in order to allow everyone to join in the virtual space of the internet (*Mariano Barbato*).

W

Walking Pilgrimage/S (WP/S)

A walking pilgrimage explicitly "combines physical activity, personal and spiritual encounters, and natural and spiritual landscapes" (Scriven 2021, p. 64) along a spiritual/religious route to a sacred destination sparked off by an inner or outer motive (Slavin 2003), and it begins wherever people start walking despite WPs' fixed endpoints (Gitlitz and Davidson 2000). Goethe once said that Europe was born in pilgrimage, meaning by people walking to different holy destinations, and thus creating today's European itineraries (*Nanna Natalia Jørgensen*).

Walkscape

Landscape is a multifaceted reality, in which both material and cognitive aspects are essential. Physical elements on the Earth are necessary for a landscape to emerge, but that alone is not enough. To understand the critical importance of human cognition, landscapes associated to the experience of people in movement provide a perfect example. When we find buildings standing along a road, they sometimes form a sequence too long to capture in one view. However, if a person is able to recompose in memory fragmentary elements that he or she came upon moving along a road, those artefacts, no matter how ordinary or banal they may be, can all together become a landscape. The cognitive capacity of a person is mobilised with the experience of moving, and thus gives rise to an "autoscape", a concept claimed by the North American architect, R. Venturi. The emergence of an autoscape is linked to the high speed of cars. Precisely for this reason, main roads in peri-urban areas are full of extravagant buildings converted in 3D advertising with huge signboards that are easily recognisable from a driver. Contrary to driving, walking allows not only to recognise more precisely the surroundings, but also to share among many people with different cultural backgrounds the experience of moving along a way. This is the particularity of "walkscape", a concept theoretically developed by, among others, the Italian architect F. Careri.

The illustrated book published in 1853, Drawings of the *Thirty-three Temples of the West Japan* (*Saigoku Sanjû-sansho Zue*), is a vivid expression of the experience of pilgrims who made a journey along Iseji, one of the main routes to Kumano. Numerous illustrations inserted in the volume describe in detail the elements that the pilgrims must have encountered walking, from salient features of nature to busyness of the post-towns. More than the quantity and variety of the things drawn, what is critical here is the clear sequence along which the different scenes of the travel are ordered. In reality, the drawings are not separate representations of each site, but rather an expression of the experience shared by the travellers as they were making

forward movements along the way. The pilgrims always occupy a central place in the narrative of the journey, although they may appear in quite a reduced size. To pick up just an example, the sight of the Kumano Sea that suddenly opens up as they go through a mountain pass cannot be separated from the harshness of the path that they came on nor the hope that awaits them ahead (*Katsuyuki Takenaka*).

Way of St. James (The)

The expression Way of St. James is used to refer to a network of itineraries that a large number of pilgrims walk or travel to reach the city of Santiago de Compostela, their final destination. The origin of St James's Way goes back to the ninth century, after the discovery of the remains of the body of the Apostle St James, an event known as the inventio: the relics of St James's and of his disciples were found in Galicia, as they had been preaching in the western lands (Gusman et al. 2016). Once he died, his followers transferred his relics from Jerusalem to the north-western Iberian Peninsula. The relics were officially recognised during the twelfth century. By the time, different routes were developed to get to the sacred place of the Apostle, the following movement of people and knowledge, among another, was gradually transformed into a pilgrimage phenomenon. The Way of St. James, as the Way is known in Spanish, played an important role in the construction of Western European culture during the Middle Ages as Goethe once stated: "Europe was made on the pilgrim road to Santiago de Compostela". A major pilgrimage movement emerged, reaching its heyday in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, moreover, the Way of St James contributed to the development of cities and villages along the route (Lois González 2000). After a period of oblivion, the number of pilgrims walking the paths to Santiago de Compostela started to decrease until the second half of the nineteenth century (Lois González 2013). The real revival of the Way arrived during the twentieth century, due to greater interest from various spheres, including the political, economic, and religious sectors. Moreover, The Way has been the subject of renewed interest by the Franco government since 1950, which was committed to monumentalising the city and its symbolic places (Castro Fernández 2010; Lois González 2013; Lois González and Lopez 2012; Murray 2014). The Holy Years 1954, 1965, and 1971 prepared the great Holy Year of 1993, when the Way was officially present on the international tourist scene (Lois González and Santos 2015). In fact, this Holy Year of 1993 was a turning point, as the conjunction of various circumstances and the common link of an important public investment (Lois González and Somoza Medina 2003; Escudero Gómez 2013) led both Camino and Santiago de Compostela to become into a highly successful project and original tourism phenomenon (Tilson 2005). It marks the beginning of the contemporary enhancement of the Camino and Santiago de Compostela, taking advantage of a religious event to promote other forms of tourism (Graham and Murray 1997; Santos 2006). This revitalisation has contributed to the recovery of tangible and intangible heritage along the route, to the improvement of infrastructures and equipment and their requalification in tourist terms, to the rehabilitation of ancient communication routes and to the construction of dotaciones camineras (Lois González 2000). In addition, the historic urban centre of Santiago de Compostela and some of the other Caminos have been named a World

Heritage Site by UNESCO (WHS). First, in 1993 the Camino Frances was declared a World Heritage Site (WHS), then in 2015 the Caminos del Norte received the same international award. At the present, the success of the Way lies in gathering and satisfying the tourist requirements of the twenty-first century (Graham and Murray 1997; Lois González and Santos 2015; Murray 2014). It is based on slow mobility, and therefore, it becomes an opportunity to contemplate the landscape and nature, in addition to exploring culture in an ethnographic sense (Lopez et al. 2017). It is a tourist, economic, global and non-mass-produced product; and this tourist versatility makes it a unique tourist product (*Lopez Lucrezia and Rubén C. Lois González*).

Z

Zamzam water

It is a holy water from a sacred well in Makkah. Based on Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) saying: "Water of Zamzam is good for whatever (purpose) it has been drank." and "Water of Zamzam is a healer of every disease", Muslims use it to recover from various illness and diseases (*Islam Elgammal*).

Zion

Zion, Zionists, Christianity of Zion, all refer to a broad group within twentieth-century evangelical Christianity that had a great impact on the South African religious landscape, including on the AmaNazaretha. The largest single religious group associated with this movement today is the Zion Christian Church (*Retief Müller*).

Zion City Moria

The headquarters of the Zion Christian Church and the primary location for this church's official three annual pilgrimages, of which the one during Easter typically draws the most people. It also generates more individualistic, smaller scale pilgrimages by church members throughout the year (*Retief Müller*).

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