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Pilgrimage and Beyond: Going Places, Far and Away

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Introduction

Going Places and Far & Away are two main issues of interest in this volume, generated from our 7th Global Sacred Journeys Conference, but our first digital or remote conference entitled *Pilgrimage and Beyond*. Originally, the plan had been to convene in lovely Piran, Slovenia, hosted at the University of Primorska, from 29 June to 1 July 2020. A common saying is that the plan will never survive the battle, and so it was that Covid-19 did indeed upset the applecart. We had to resort to holding Sacred Journeys 7 via a digital platform in the same summer of 2020. Thanks to great efforts, especially those of Chadwick Co Sy Su and Ian McIntosh, we managed to create a memorable event, spread out over a couple of days. The fruit of these efforts are presented here, split in two sections, *Going Places* and *Far and Away*, since both phenomena walk along the same path, albeit in different dimensions. Although many papers on pilgrimage would typically have practical and theoretical elements, it just happened that the current papers had rather clear-cut distinctions. This does not mean, of course, that the papers fail to cover the complexity of pilgrimage, as the current selection traverses over several geographical areas, pilgrimage phenomena and concepts. The editors did not shy away from the notion of the ‘unity of contrasts’, where we allowed the academic scope to widen, for instance, to include articles on non-academic professions which use pilgrimage as a tool.

Going Places

Going Places is opened by Evy Håland, who presents her *Pilgrimage to a Greek Island Shrine*, an account of her longstanding research on festival-pilgrimage to the Greek island shrine of Tinos, part of the Cycladic Islands in the Aegean Sea. In modern Greece, the festival dedicated to the *Dormition of the Panagia* (the All-Holy One), i.e. the Virgin Mary, is celebrated on 15 August. On Tinos, this fertility- and healing-festival is particularly important due to several reasons. The Church of the Panagia, *Euangelistria* (the Annunciation), owes its fame to a miraculous holy *icon* (image) of the Annunciation, which was unearthed in a field in 1823. Since then, the perceived miracles worked by this icon have made Tinos a centre of Pan-Orthodox worship. Annual pilgrimages are particularly made to this greatest shrine of Greek Orthodoxy during the Dormition (the festival that celebrates the belief that the Virgin Mary died without suffering). The Dormition of the Panagia is also an important ideological manifestation for the ‘new Greek nation-state of 1821’, as demonstrated through several ceremonies of the state, military and church during the festival, particularly the procession when the icon is carried from the church to the harbour. The festival is also a significant occasion to study gendered spheres, as well as the relationship between various Greek population groups. Evy’s article is based on several periods of fieldwork in Tinos, carried out since 1990 to the present, and it explores some of the festival’s main aspects, including a socio-economic and political framework.

The paper of Nour Farra-Hadad, *Mount Hermon (Jabal El Sheikh) in Lebanon: A sacred biblical mountain. Pilgrimages, traditions and rituals*, explores the inter-sectarian conviviality and natural dialogue that takes place through shared activities, pilgrimages, and rituals around Mount Hermon, contributing to the construction of local and national identities, and preserving the sacredness of the site. Mount Hermon, also known as *Jabal El Haramoun* or *Jabal El Sheikh*, is the highest peak in the Anti-Lebanon eastern mountain chain, located between Lebanon, Syria, and the Israeli-Palestinian territories. Since antiquity, this mountain has been considered holy, a fact to which many archaeological remains bear witness. At present, one can count hundreds of religious sites from different religious communities including Christians, such as Maronite, Orthodox, Catholic and Evangelical, as well as Sunni Muslims and Druze. In the Bible, we can find more than 70 references to Mount Hermon. It is held locally that Jesus Christ experienced his Transfiguration at its top. The security issues related to this sensitive area notwithstanding, pilgrimages and rituals take place around Mount Hermon on the western Lebanese slopes, revealing the importance of this sacred mountain for the beliefs of the faithful.

Anna Bochkovskaya's paper *The Kartarpur Pilgrimage Corridor: Negotiating the 'Line of Mutual Hatred'* discusses the history and the potential perspectives of the Kartarpur pilgrimage corridor drawing upon the concepts of borders as processes, sets of sociocultural practices, symbols, institutions, and networks that permanently adopt new meanings and functions. After the partition of British India in 1947, many pilgrimage sites important for the Sikhs – followers of a medieval poet-mystic and philosopher Guru Nanak (1469-1539) – turned out to be at different sides of the India-Pakistani border. The towns of Nankana Sahib and Kartarpur (Guru Nanak's birthplace, and residence for the last eighteen years of his life, respectively) remained within Pakistani territory. Gurdwaras located there represent highly important pilgrimage destinations - the Sikhs' 'Mecca and Medina'. Owing to deteriorating Indian-Pakistani relations since partition, pilgrimage to Kartarpur has been extremely difficult for India's citizens. Nevertheless, in the late 1990s, official negotiations were launched concerning the possibility of setting up a visa-free pilgrimage corridor that would allow Indian Sikhs to easily reach the Kartarpur Sahib gurdwara. The potential corridor was also perceived by many as a channel for cultural cooperation and embodiment of the zone of peace at the

'line of mutual hatred' – as the India-Pakistan border has often been referred to. Negotiations received a new impetus when the Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI) party headed by Imran Khan came to power in 2018. On 9th November 2019, three days before Guru Nanak's 550th birth anniversary, the Kartarpur corridor was inaugurated by the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan.

Celia Bonilla's contribution *Pilgrimage to and with the Black Nazarene: The Aesthetics of Devotion in Quiapo, the Philippines* studies the polysemic behaviour of people going to Quiapo Church in Manila, the Philippines. In particular, it focuses not only on the processions of epic proportion, participated in by tens of thousands of the faithful, in a show of devotional fervour, but also the aesthetic experience of devotion, capturing the embodied values as annotated by the pilgrims. The three embodied values are a sense of personal miracle, a need to reciprocate, and a sense of community with and through the wooden life-size statue of the Black Nazarene (a kneeling Jesus Christ of a dark complexion, carrying the Cross), and with fellow devotees. This pilgrimage represents a radical levelling of social classes for the duration of participation in the ritual.

Ken Wilson and Matthew Anderson, both Canadians with settler roots, propose in *The Promise and Peril of Walking Indigenous Territorial Recognitions carried out by Settlers* the following: With permission and guidance of local Indigenous groups, and while observing their protocols, a collaborative, physical act of settler, or Indigenous-settler, walking across their territory could be achieved. These events would constitute a more constructive form of 'territorial acknowledgement' than just a verbal statement read out at such an event. By drawing sustained attention, not only to Indigenous land but also to Indigenous title, resources, and jurisdiction, and by pointingly underlining the actual land in question, walking territorial acknowledgements can help settlers to develop an embodied sense of place-in-relation. In doing so, they can move forward both the relationality implicit in Indigenous territorial recognition and the claims territorial recognitions make on settler bodies. These walk-acts diminish the superficial 'virtue-signalling' and public performance of contrition, which too often are attached to such acknowledgements, threatening to render them obsolete and irrelevant.

Far and Away

In *Far and Away*, the contributions deal with the more theoretical aspects of pilgrimage. James M. Gehrke in *The Leadership Pilgrimage: How a Virtual Pilgrimage Transforms Leaders*, tests his thoughts on connecting pilgrimage with leadership in business. Contrary to more academic contributions, this paper represents a commercial and entrepreneurial outlook on pilgrimage as an instrument to inform leadership skills. Therefore, it contains many issues with which pilgrimage researchers are very familiar, but presents practical business studies with totally new grounds and perspectives. Gehrke's paper is a *de facto* commercial paper, and the editors thought this would be of interest for academics to note how pilgrimage knowledge is weaved into very different learning materials. Gehrke sees leadership as a journey, best described as a leadership pilgrimage. A pilgrimage is a sacred journey with a purpose, one that requires vision, focus, and perseverance to complete, akin to the trajectory of leadership. During the walk, pilgrims share a common experience: enlightenment through solitude and sacrifice, such as on the Camino de Santiago. It is a powerful metaphor for a leadership pilgrimage: a self-reflective journey directed towards leadership enlightenment. This paper explores the impact of a virtual pilgrimage on the Way of St James on leaders, as they study five parallels between the Way of St James and corporate leadership development. The Virtual Leadership Pilgrimage was created during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time of writing, the first group of participants was enrolling. Participants, like pilgrims, should stretch themselves in both body and spirit as they travel on their road to personal enlightenment. The virtual experience will mimic the pilgrimage experience through course materials, exercises and reflection, while following the Way of St James virtually.

André Brouillette has produced a historical account in *(Re)creating a pilgrimage: A century of pilgrimage reports from Jesuit novices in Canada (1864-1968)*, documenting a new type of pilgrimage being implemented in Canada in 1864: The Jesuit novitiate pilgrimage. Since the creation of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in 1540, a month-long pilgrimage is one experience required of new members. This formative moment has been enshrined in the Constitutions of the Order. The experience is also reminiscent of the journey of the founder, St Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556), who went to Jerusalem as a

young man, desirous to imitate Christ, and later applied the moniker 'the pilgrim' to himself in an account of his life confided to Luis Gonçalves da Câmara (1555). Pilgrimage was designed as a formative tool to prepare the novices for a life where apostolic availability and poverty were paramount. The experience was often realised after a month-long silent retreat called the *Spiritual Exercises* that nurtured their spiritual life. In the Canadian novitiate of the Society of Jesus, 1,456 novices undertook such a pilgrimage between 1864 and 1968. After the conclusion of their journey, they would write a report on their experience. The Archive of the Jesuits in Canada contains an extended and coherent collection of 1,078 pilgrimage reports that have survived to present and provide invaluable information about the journeys of these pilgrims. This article explores the creation of this pilgrimage as a vernacular adaptation of a formative pilgrimage grounded in a long tradition, codified in the Jesuit Constitutions, and adapted through local *Rules for Pilgrims*. The archival material demonstrates the crystallisation of pilgrimage report as a genre, offering a narrative of the experience in an apostolic key. The Canadian novitiate pilgrimage shares many characteristics with other types of pilgrimages but shows its originality in its consistent care for personal reports and its core experience of discovery of the local Church through its parishes and pastors.

Dane Munro, in *Pilgrim coaches: a new phenomenon*, introduces the relatively new phenomenon of pilgrim coaching, i.e., a recently developed profession, in which practitioners help people along the mental trajectory of pilgrimhood. Historically, the pilgrim was subject to codified forms which governed conduct, termination, and purpose, instructions by their local church how they best could fulfil their vows along the way and at the various shrines. In Belgium and the Netherlands, new pilgrim routes are being created for both the religious and the non-religious, for the purpose of (re-)connecting people to a life's purpose or philosophy through pilgrimage. Related to these new routes, the profession of walking coach or nature coach has become popular in the last ten to fifteen years, and accredited courses have emerged. The aim of these coaches is to re-acquaint people with nature's stress-relieving and health-bringing effects. Pilgrimage coaching is then its natural off-shoot, blending nature coaching knowledge with other academic disciplines, such as psychology and a range of therapies, and offer this to pilgrims, people who walk through nature with an added purpose. In the low countries, several natural

routes and pilgrim tracks include these services in their vision and mission. This article discusses mainly the Walk of Wisdom, initiated as a non-religious but spiritually-rich circular pilgrim route in the Netherlands, driven by environmental sustainability. Simultaneously, it provides the services of professional pilgrim coaches. Besides confirming the benefits of pilgrimage as we know it, the pilgrim coach also offers new insights in the psychology and therapeutic values of pilgrimage. Pilgrim coaching could thus be regarded as *accompanied self-therapy*.

Helena Guzik, in her paper *Memory, Imagination, Identity: Pilgrimage and Portraiture in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, argues that, despite the wealth of material and textual evidence attesting to the practice of Christian pilgrimage throughout history, comprehending individuals' understanding of pilgrimage in relation to their own identity, has always proved challenging. Pilgrimage studies scholars have tended to look to travel accounts, chronicles, and collected pilgrim souvenirs to discern how pilgrims were affected by and responded to their experiences. One form of source material that has gone largely underexamined in this regard is the genre of portraiture. This paper explores how and why the concept of pilgrimage could be incorporated into the self-fashioned images of patrons in medieval and early modern Europe. Building on foundational but geographically and temporally specific studies of Jerusalem confraternity portraits, it aims to consider both overt and subtle iconographic references to pilgrimage, to broaden our understanding of what constitutes a pilgrim portrait. By engaging with the flexibility of pilgrimage iconography and the multifaceted motivations behind it, invoking a permanent likeness, this paper argues for the dual faculties of memory and imagination present in portraits that manifest allusions to an individual's pilgrim identity. Furthermore, it paves the way for future studies of pilgrimage iconography generally, and specifically of pilgrim portraits in a more abstract, allegorical sense.

Going Places, Far and Away

In brief, the nine chapters in this volume provide a diverse perspective on the practice and theory of pilgrimage, a boundless activity with ancient roots. Since humankind is always evolving, so is pilgrimage.

Devotional fervour, the embodiment of suffering and aesthetic experience of devotion in pilgrimage reach from island to island, from Tinos in the Aegean Sea to Quiapo in the Philippines. Single sacred places seem able to reach out to a great diversity of people and religions, from Mount Hermon to the plains of the border region of two uncomfortable neighbours, India and Pakistan at Kartarpur. Canada is an active pilgrimage area, where pilgrimage scholars are very well aware of efforts to (re)creating historic pilgrimages of Jesuit novices, part of the settlers' issue and endeavours to reconcile, at least partly, with the Indigenous people, through pilgrimage. We are also aware that pilgrimage has healing qualities, and at present one can book a pilgrimage coach to instruct one in the essence of pilgrimage and commercial companies can use pilgrimage as a metaphor in their leadership courses. To close this brief, we have to return to the link of pilgrimage and the earliest manifestations of humankind. Memory and identity play a significant role in pilgrimage, and capturing these aspects in portraiture or images, is as old as humankind.

Hence, we dedicate this volume to everybody, past and present, far and away, who is going places, went places, got stuck in places and returned from places, all in the spirit of pilgrimage.

Dane Munro, Ian McIntosh, Chadwick Co Sy Su

Sacred Journeys Editors