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Why Pilgrimage?

The Beginnings of Christian Pilgrimage from a Cultural Memory Perspective

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Why Pilgrimage?

The Beginnings of Christian Pilgrimage from a Cultural Memory Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Until now, there has been little comprehensive study of the beginnings of Christian pilgrimage. This thesis investigates the contribution of cultural memory, biblical narrative and the perceived sacredness of place to such beginnings. What drove the early Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land? Was it a response to cultural memory and the living out of the biblical narrative in a sacred place? Is Christian memory inescapably bound to place? The sociologist Maurice Halbwachs investigated the practice, and he referred to the fourth-century diary of the pilgrim, Egeria. In the present study, the perspective of cultural memory and the biblical narrative act as methodological tools.

Greek religion, processions and visits to martyrs' tombs are discussed as cultural memory precedents. The tombs are assessed in the light of those in the Old and New Testaments, and the power that they were believed to possess. Egeria's diary is considered as a major source of information on early Christian pilgrimage within the context of cultural memory and the biblical narrative. Such data has demonstrated that such memory and narratives were a driving force behind early Christian pilgrimage.

The concept and experience of a sacred place are important elements springing from the Greek and Roman world, but the key difference lies in the memory of written texts: Christian scripture. Christian pilgrimage is then not just a simple continuation of Greek and Roman 'processions' or even travel to sacred shrines, but something fundamentally new, synthesizing different types of cultural memories.

In this study, the relationship between the communal experience of remembering and the beginnings of Christian pilgrimage within the cultural milieu of the fourth century is explored. I propose that an understanding of fourth-century pilgrimage will enhance our current views on Christian pilgrimage in general. The activities and beliefs of those first pilgrims hold the key to such an understanding. The results of my investigations into the relationship between cultural memory, narrative and place can be developed further in the future along fresh trajectories.

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INTRODUCTION

Why Pilgrimage?

The fourth century witnessed the rise of the phenomenon of Christian pilgrimage. A growing number of largely Western Christians undertook long journeys by sea and land to visit Palestine, where biblical events took place. Many of the pilgrims were independent women.¹ These pilgrims were able to use the Roman roads, which covered long distances, and were also safe due to Roman military oversight.² Yet Gregory of Nyssa was concerned about the moral and physical safety of monks and virgins in such a dangerous environment as Jerusalem, with its notorious inns.³ The historical sequence of events that led to this phenomenon is fairly clear. According to Eusebius, the first Christian Emperor Constantine believed that he won a crucial battle at the Milvian Bridge in Rome against Maxentius on 28th October 312 because he saw a shape of the Cross in the sky, and saw the inscription *In hoc signo vinces* (By this conquer).⁴ This seminal moment resulted in the Edict of Milan, which was published the following year. Christians could now worship and be identified in public, without fear of being persecuted.⁵ Up until then, followers of Christ lived in considerable danger as they were not accepted by Roman society.

¹ Noel Lenski states that fourth-century pilgrimage has shown an increase in travel. He comments especially that 'we see in particular the rise of independent travel by women'. See N. Lenski, 'Empress in the Holy Land: The Creation of a Christian Utopia in Late Antique Palestine' in L. Ellis, and F.L. Kidner, (eds.), *Travel, Communication and Geography in Late Antiquity: Sacred and Profane* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004), 122.

² Linda Ellis and Frank Kidner refer to this expansion in travel as they refer to 'a marked increase in long distance travel and the creation of new large-scale communication networks during the late antique period'. Ellis and Kidner, *Travel, Communication and Geography in Late Antiquity*, xiii. David Hunt discusses at length the suitable and relatively safe conditions of travel on major routes enjoyed by pilgrims to and in Palestine. For example, pilgrims used the well-established trading route between Syria and Mesopotamia, where they were protected from becoming lost and from attack by marauders. See E.D. Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire: AD 312-460* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 54-60.

³ Gregory of Nyssa, Letter 2.5-7. Gregory of Nyssa, *The Letters*, trans. by A.M. Silvas (Leiden, NL: Brill, 2007).

⁴ Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* Book I, 28, trans. by A. Cameron and S.G. Hall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 81.

⁵ J. Stevenson, (ed.), *A New Eusebius* (London: SPCK, 1957), 300-302; W. Bright, *A History of the Church from the Edict of Milan, A.D. 313 to the Council of Chalcedon, A.D. 451* (Kindle Ed., Oxford and London: J.H. and Jas. Parker/cabibre 0.7.31, 1860), 66.

Christians met in secret, and to be identified as a Christian in public would be life-threatening. While Christians like Melito of Sardis travelled to Palestine at times, and were interested in biblical sites, they did so individually.

The focus of Constantine's attention moved to the Holy Land after he had defeated Licinius at Chrysopolis in September 324 after years of acrimony and strife between them.⁶ Constantine was now Emperor of the West and East, and could use Christianity as a means by which he could create a unifying identity within his new empire. Christianity now became the official religion of the Roman Empire.⁷ Before the defeat of Licinius, Christianity had three 'patriarchal' cities: Rome, Antioch and Alexandria.⁸ Now the focus was on Jerusalem, as a central place of focus and holiness.⁹ Constantine sent his mother Helena, and his mother-in-law Eutropia, on a long voyage to Jerusalem and its environs. There, Helena was presented with a supposed relic of the True Cross, and the justification for a grand new basilica in the heart of Jerusalem was found. Three further Constantinian churches would be founded. After the journey of the imperial ladies, many would follow in their wake.¹⁰

⁶ C. Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West: From the Beginning to 1600* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p.16; T.D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 214.

⁷ Joan E. Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places: The Myth of Jewish-Christian Origins* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 299.

⁸ P. Walker, 'Pilgrimage in the Early Church' in C. Bartholomew and F. Hughes (eds.), *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004), 77.

⁹ Walker, 'Pilgrimage in the Early Church', 77; B. Bitton-Ashkelony, *Encountering the Sacred: The Debate on Christian Pilgrimage in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley/Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2005), 23. However, Peter Walker argues that Palestine became the Christian centre 'of its own accord'. (P.W.L. Walker, *Holy City, Holy Places? : Christian Attitudes to Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the Fourth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 15).

¹⁰ Many followers were from the Roman aristocracy. Most notably Melania the Elder, together with her granddaughter Melania the Younger, and also Paula who was a friend and confidant of Jerome, together with her daughter Eustochium. Other imperial ladies included Poemenia, who visited in 392 (related to Theodosius I), who built the Church of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives (the Imbomon); Silvia of Aquitaine, who visited in c.392; Fabiola, Flavia and the Empress Aelia Eudocia (the wife of Theodosius II) and her granddaughter also named Eudocia (daughter of the Emperor Valentinian III). See Ellis and Kidner, *Travel, Communication and Geography in Late Antiquity*, 117-122.

Therefore, in the fourth century, under the rule of Constantine, all had changed. Not only was safe travel possible, there were now spectacular buildings and sites, newly made, and the bones of biblical figures and martyrs were discovered, which became desirable destinations for thousands of Western pilgrims.¹¹ The period of this flowering of Christian pilgrimage and devotion, a ‘Golden Age’ in the life of the Church in the Holy Land, existed between the fourth century and the seventh century, when the rise of Islam changed the religious landscape.

However, scholars take differing perspectives on the nature of Christian pilgrimage. For example, David Hunt sees the efforts of early visitors to the Holy Land as being the first pilgrims. He does not differentiate between those whom today we would describe as ‘tourists’, people who visit holy places for their aesthetic and historical attributes. Whereas authentic pilgrims came later, beginning with the Augusta Helena in 326CE and those who followed in her footsteps. These pilgrims came to the holy places to pray and to connect with the memory of what happened there in a deeply spiritual way. Perhaps the most memorable and dramatic account of a pilgrim’s visit to a holy place is Paula’s visit to the supposed Tomb of Christ.¹² Scholars also vary considerably in their understanding of the beginnings of pilgrimage and the speed with which the practice of pilgrimage grew.¹³ They also tend not to answer fundamental

¹¹ The Holy Land was seen as being of special unique importance as it was ‘the supreme site of martyrdom, the supreme treasure-house of relics beside which all the martyr-tombs, reliquaries and cathedrals of the world paled’. See S. Coleman and J. Elsner, *Pilgrimage: Past and Present in World Religions* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 93.

¹²In writing Paula’s obituary, Jerome speaks of Paula’s perception of the Passion of Christ, through meditation resulting in action. He says, ‘Before the Cross she threw herself down in adoration as though she beheld the Lord hanging upon it: and when she entered the tomb which was the scene of the Resurrection she kissed the stone which the angel had rolled away from the door of the sepulchre. Indeed so ardent was her faith that she even licked with her mouth the very spot on which the Lord’s body had lain, like one thirsty for the river which he has longed for. What tears she shed there, what groans she uttered, and what grief she poured forth, all Jerusalem knows; the Lord also to whom she prayed knows.’ *Letter 108.9 to Eustochium*. See Jerome, *The Letters of Saint Jerome from The Principal Works of St Jerome* P. Schaff (ed.), trans. by W.H. Fremantle, G. Lewis and W.G. Martley (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1892. Aeterna Press, 2016), 333-334.

¹³ For example, the view of David Hunt (Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, 3-4), who proposed that pilgrimage in the Holy Land predated Constantine, is challenged by Joan Taylor (Taylor, *Christians*

questions: Why did Christian pilgrims go to the Holy Land in the first place? What forces influenced the pilgrims to make their journeys? What drove them? These are questions that have not been addressed in pilgrimage studies undertaken so far. It is my intention in this study to fill the gaps in the discussion, and to establish firm reasons why the early pilgrims undertook such hazardous journeys.

and the Holy Places, 22). Hunt replies to Taylor, arguing for the existence of early pilgrims, 'Were there Christian Pilgrims before Constantine?' in L. Stopford (ed.), *Pilgrimage Explored* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 1999), 25-40). Brouria Bitton-Ashkelony challenges Taylor for reaching a conclusion, favouring a sudden appearance of fourth-century pilgrims, which, she claims, is unwarranted. See Bitton-Ashkelony, *Encountering the Sacred*, 22.

CHAPTER ONE

Understanding Pilgrimage

1. a. *Pilgrimage*

Studies have shown that Christian pilgrimage can be a response to places made holy by the devotion and presence of pilgrims, especially the presence of martyr's relics. Accounts have been offered, giving theories as to what happened in the fourth century and the creation of a 'Holy Land'. But what was it that drove Christians in the early centuries to risk everything and travel to Palestine? Was it a yearning of those early Christians to ground their faith, based not only on a narrative received from Scripture but also on the cultural memory of late antiquity, in the tangible and real world in which they lived? Did those Christians have a compulsion to experience genuine and long-lasting memories by actually being in the places described in those sources, in the words of Origen, 'to trace the footsteps of Jesus'?¹⁴

Do such Christian activities have a background in history, to which Christians can refer? Were there influences prior to the Christian experience in the ancient world that might have had an effect on the beginnings of Christian pilgrimage? To answer these questions, I need to examine what happened in Greek and Roman society whereby people entered into an experience of pilgrimage. If pilgrimage was part of the Graeco-Roman legacy to the fourth century, then a possible source of influence will have been found. If the reverse is true, then any influence in history before the fourth century will need to be found elsewhere.

¹⁴ R.L. Wilken, *The Land Called Holy: Palestine in Christian History and Thought* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 108.

This thesis claims that, although the exact word ‘pilgrimage’ does not exist within ancient Greece, nevertheless movement and communal action did take place within the sphere of the sacred.

If we are to make sense of the world, we have to understand how we can achieve an accurate sense of history. We can do this by looking at the relationship between hermeneutics and memory.¹⁵ A key phrase, which underpins all methods and systems of historical enquiry and analysis is: ‘There is no understanding without memory.’¹⁶ It follows from this way of thought that there can be no human cognizance of the world without functioning memory. This perceived foundation of human knowledge is fundamental to the proposition being made in this study: that memory is a potent and effective driving force behind knowledge and belief, in this case in the context of Christian pilgrimage, which results in people reacting in spectacular and often dangerous ways.

Are our memories accurate and secure? When we recall and remember certain objects, places or buildings, for example, are they placed in the correct location? As individual human memories are prone to be unreliable, we need to analyse and assess other mnemonic systems in which data held in memory that can be more secure and reliable.

I intend to show a link between the beginnings of Christian pilgrimage and cultural memory as few attempts have been made in this field to identify a clear correlation between the two. By

¹⁵ Jan Assmann and Hans-Georg Gadamer consider that before knowledge can be acquired, there must be memory in the first place. Memory is seen as being a primary source. See J. Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory: Ten Studies*, trans. by Rodney Livingstone (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), ix-x; H-G. Gadamer, “Wahrheit und Methode” in *Gesammelte Werke* (Stuttgart, 1975), Volume I, 478.

¹⁶ Assmann follows the thinking of Gadamer here. See Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 27.

demonstrating that a link exists between the two subjects under examination, answers can be given to the questions raised within this study. Biblical narratives and Christian liturgy enable pilgrims to have reference points with which to link their lives; without such sources of memory there would be no foundation upon which they could relate their spiritual experiences to the real world.¹⁷ I argue in the following study that narrative, and its continuation through repetition, enables cultural memory to be made and developed within society.¹⁸ In this case, the society is that of fourth-century Christians, who become free in the Roman Empire of Constantine to travel widely and be driven by that memory to locate the origins of their narrative in the places of the Holy Land, which came to be acknowledged as sacred.

As stated above, such an exploration of these early pilgrims and their achievements is to be undertaken by examining the relationship between the first Christian pilgrims and the cultural memory which they inherited. A study of ‘pilgrimages’ in ancient Greece is made, together with a brief survey of visits to the tombs of prophets and martyrs in a Jewish context. It is only now, through careful historical enquiry of culture and pilgrimage, that we can appreciate the enormity of the pilgrims’ yearnings and their achievements.

This study focuses especially on two particular areas of enquiry. First, there is a critical analysis of the work of Maurice Halbwachs, whose book *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre Sainte*¹⁹ is the most complete analysis of Christian pilgrimage undertaken from the

¹⁷ R. Audi, *Epistemology: A Contemporary Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge*, 3rd edition (New York/Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 70, 62-81. See especially page 66 where Audi names three modes of memory: Memory, remembering and recalling. He says. “There are, . . . , three memorial notions to be accounted for by a theory of memory: first, remembering of events, things and propositions; second, recalling those items; and third, memory as the capacity in virtue of which remembering and recalling occur.”

¹⁸ Audi makes the crucial claim that the more we remember, the more we can recall. Audi, *Epistemology*, 66.

¹⁹ M. Halbwachs (1941), *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre sainte*, ed. Marie Jaisson, 2nd edition (1971), 1st edition Quadrige, Paris: Quadrige/Presses Universitaires de France, 2008).

viewpoint of cultural memory. Second, there is a detailed and carefully inspected analysis of the account of the first pilgrim, Egeria, who visited the East between 381 and 384 CE, and wrote her account *Itinerarium Egeriae*. By identifying important findings in Halbwachs' work relating to the function of cultural memory in past events, and then correlating his findings in the work of Egeria, I am able to argue that Egeria's experience as a formative Christian pilgrim to the Holy Land can provide evidence of a causal link between cultural memory and Christian pilgrimage.

This is not a straightforward gathering of historical and topographical information, as the character and shape of both landscapes and cityscapes have been in continual flux. As Jerusalem plays such an important part in this project, the constantly changing presentation of the city plays a crucial role in the process of attempting to find the correct appearance, design and usage in the context of both religion and politics. Yet, beyond the ever-changing political and religious landscape in which pilgrims came to see and touch the places believed to be 'holy', there is a deep yearning for rehabilitation within the human heart. Karen Armstrong emphasizes the importance of human imagination in people's struggle to identify themselves within the context of history, not only within the physical world, but also within an existence which has a sense of spiritual reality. Her reasons lie in her view that human beings long to identify our place in the physical world, but also to strive beyond ourselves in our search for a 'spiritual centre of power'.²⁰

Yet the process of remembering and recalling the past is not the only means whereby we can build a clear picture of the world in our minds. The process of forgetting is also important as a

²⁰ Karen Armstrong comments on the importance of this activity when she speaks of 'our need to root ourselves healthily and imaginatively in the past during our search for a spiritual centre of power.' See K. Armstrong, (1990), "A Passion for Holy Places" in *The Sunday Times Magazine*, 15 April 1990, 32, cited in M. Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths: An Anthology of Pilgrimage* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1997), 29.

means of filtering out what is insignificant, so that we can concentrate on important information that can be retained and secured in memory. This process enables a person to conduct critical analysis of the world around them.²¹ So, by using our faculties of remembering, but also forgetting, we can build up an understanding of the world around us. Although such ways of thinking may make our lives more tolerable, in that our memories may be simpler and more focussed on what interests us, there is a significant danger that religious and political elites may use such a mechanism in their control of information to influence this focussing of people's memories to their advantage. The control exercised by elites in the whole project of Christian pilgrimage is featured in this study. To ignore it would be to allow a presence of naïveté which would be unacceptable in the process of a rigorous examination of the subject.

1. b. *Why Pilgrimage? The Status Questionis*

Joan Taylor has commented on the achievement of Constantine in enabling Christian pilgrimage to 'come of age' in the fourth century, 'Constantine brought to Christianity a pagan notion of the sanctity of things and places.'²² Taylor continues by stating, 'the idea of a place sacred to Christians because of its inherent holiness appears to have been his invention, and is essentially a pagan concept grafted on to Christianity.' The history of the Church and the surrounding pagan world in this period is an essential element in gaining an understanding of where pilgrims stood in relation to their previous experience, and the source of concepts which supported and upheld

²¹ Hans-Georg Gadamer argues persuasively, that sifting, keeping and sometimes rejecting information gives us the opportunity of using memory in very positive way. He claims, 'It is time to rescue the phenomenon of memory from being regarded merely as a psychological faculty and to see it as an essential element of the finite historical being of man.' See H-G. Gadamer (1975), *Truth and Method*, (London/ New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2nd edition 1989, revised 2nd edition 2004), 15.

²² Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places*, 308.

the notion of the 'sacred' in relation to place.²³ Could cultural memory be extended beyond the Judeo-Christian tradition in this respect? It would certainly be an authentic question, given the history that we have received from the Graeco-Roman world and its cultic practices.

Furthermore, Taylor discusses the Christian appropriation of martyrs and their relics as being sources of inspiration for pilgrimage. She refers to the Christian catacombs in Rome and to the artwork there that, 'demonstrates a concern with the stories and personalities of the Hebrew Scriptures which were given a particular Christian interpretation by means of typology'.²⁴ Taylor discusses the teachings of Cyril in the paraphrase, 'A pilgrim could see and touch places once seen and touched by Christ, and thereby step closer to the divine.' (cf. *Cat. Xiii. 22*).²⁵

However, Martin Robinson describes the reclaiming of Christian sites under Constantine as 'a power struggle between themselves and the pagans under whose domination they had lived for so long.'²⁶ There appears to be an interplay between the 'struggle' of which Robinson speaks and the influence of paganism on Christian pilgrimage highlighted by Taylor.²⁷ Robinson observes that the indigenous Christians in Jerusalem had experienced the hiding of important sites. For example, the supposed tomb of Jesus would have been remembered by the Christians who remained in the city all through the first centuries after the death of Jesus (according to Robinson), yet they suffered the trauma of seeing their sacred places covered over and ignored

²³ Taylor claims, 'Christian pilgrimage to holy places was a radical innovation, a combination of an ancient story set in one particular landscape and the new Christianized veneration of sites and things. It fused together diverse elements found in Jewish and Samaritan tradition with pagan piety, and became something more significant than the mere sum of its parts.' Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places*, 331.

²⁴ Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places*, 321.

²⁵ Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places*, 315.

²⁶ Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*, 4.

²⁷ Robinson comments, 'For the devout, contact with physical places is a means of making connection with the unseen events commemorated in those same locations, of obtaining benefit and perhaps even personal holiness and renewal.' Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*, 3.

by the general population with their Graeco-Roman cultic practices. The new experience of freedom under Constantine, and the recognition of their sacred sites, together with the massive building programme of constructing places for Christian worship, gave the Christians of Jerusalem new vigour and hope.²⁸ Taylor, by contrast, comments on the way in which sites, used hitherto for Graeco-Roman cultic practices, were either threatened or taken over by the newly empowered Christians, supported by Constantine's plans for the Christianisation of his newly enlarged empire. Taylor claims, 'Christians were keen to convert pagans, but their actions were also motivated by sheer revenge. Pagans had to be punished.'²⁹ Therefore Christians undertook a programme of eradicating paganism from Palestine. The Christians took the view that they were reclaiming, redeeming and restoring sacred sites that had been taken by those who worshipped in the Graeco-Roman cults.³⁰

Yet Robinson makes the distinction between the visit of Melito of Sardis c.179 CE, whose purpose was to catalogue scriptural accounts and relate them directly to evidence of places in Jerusalem, and devout pilgrims who were about to appropriate 'holy places' for themselves, following the work of Constantine and Helena in Christianising sites in Jerusalem and its environs.³¹ The opening up of sites to believing and worshipping Christian pilgrims was enhanced by the activities of monastic communities in nearby Egypt. Robinson refers to the 'desert spirituality' of these communities whose influence over pilgrimage has continued down the centuries to the present day.³² Could such a monastic presence be an effective means of

²⁸ Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*, 4.

²⁹ Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places*, 318-319.

³⁰ Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places*, 318-321.

³¹ Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*, 3-4.

³² Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*, 4-5.

liturgical and cultural continuity, whereby the first pilgrims could link into such a process and enhance of their pilgrimage experience?

Robin Lane Fox sets the Christianity of the fourth century against the background of those who followed Graeco-Roman cultural practices. In his careful and scholarly account, Lane Fox examines the rise of Constantine and his substantial influence in the co-existence of these two great religious disciplines, and the resulting dominance of Christianity after Constantine's death. Lane Fox's work is valuable to any enquiry relating to Christian pilgrimage in Late Antiquity because of his painstaking attention to the relationship between Christianity and paganism. Perhaps Lane Fox's most useful insight lies in his highlighting the fact that Christians remained a minority in Constantine's empire during his lifetime. Although Christians were no longer persecuted after 313CE, that did not result in the new faith becoming ubiquitous. Lane Fox compares pagan sources of spiritual sources with those experienced within Christianity.³³

From a different perspective, Anne Dumoulin describes the Christian pilgrim as follows: 'The *peregrinus* is the foreigner, walking over the land of others, seeking the Other.' Dumoulin posits the view that a person needs to look beyond themselves to find what she calls the 'Centre'. It is only by moving outside oneself that this quest for the Centre can be achieved. The physical movement of pilgrimage actively promotes such an outcome.³⁴ Such a view has also been expressed by Karen Armstrong as discussed above.³⁵

³³ R. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (Harmondsworth: Viking, Penguin Books Limited, 1986), 674-675.

³⁴ A. Dumoulin, (1977), "Towards a Psychological Understanding of the Pilgrim" in *Lumen Vitae* 32 (1997), 112-113, cited in Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*, 30. Dumoulin claims, 'This emergence from himself is essential to the pilgrim, for without it, he could not rediscover himself in other centres than himself. Thus, he experiences a fundamental law of human growth: by endeavouring to reach a centre other than himself, he *moves forward* and finally rediscover himself at that centre.' (Her italics).

³⁵ Armstrong, "A Passion for Holy Places", 29.

In contrast, James Martin writes of Christian perception: ‘... the Christian pilgrim should be prepared to look for the holy thing behind the holy place. It is always there to be found.’³⁶ Martin also invites the reader to consider that the pilgrim is sometimes at a specific place, for example, the roads used by Jesus. Martin claims, ‘At times the pilgrim is aware that he is standing where the Lord once actually stood or is walking where his feet once actually trod.’³⁷ Martin comments that the road from Bethany which goes over the Mount of Olives, via Gethsemane to the Kidron Valley forms ‘part of today’s Holy Land that knew the tread of Jesus’s feet when he was on earth. To walk up that path is truly to walk where Jesus walked.’³⁸ In this respect, Martin is following the testimony and enthusiasm of Egeria, who’s enthusiastic (and naïve) repeated phrase was ‘at the very spot’³⁹. However, Martin does not discuss the impact of imagination or memory in this view of pilgrimage, even though at the beginning of his book, he invites to reader to travel with him ‘in imagination’.⁴⁰ Martin seems to be entirely comfortable writing a book, the purpose of which is promote pilgrimage to the Holy Land, using the idea of the reader entering into his world of Holy Land pilgrimage via their imagination. Regrettably he does not go backwards in time to explore how the original pilgrims had the same response in their lifetimes to the promptings of the Biblical accounts with familiar stories set in the same landscape, Surely it is their response to the cultural memory infusing their whole lives, which gave character and depth to their world.

This is a key point in this study, which is illustrated well by the work of Stephen Davis who gives an illuminating alternative view to cultural memory in his book *Christ Child: Cultural*

³⁶ Martin, *A Plain Man in the Holy Land*, revised edition 1987 (Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1978), 10.

³⁷ Martin, *A Plain Man in the Holy Land*, 25.

³⁸ Martin, *A Plain Man in the Holy Land*, 25.

³⁹ Wilken, *The Land Called Holy*, Press, 113.

⁴⁰ Martin, *A Plain Man in the Holy Land*, 3.

Memories of a Young Jesus. Davis enters the world and the imagination of people in Late Antiquity to investigate and express the stories of Jesus as a child in terms of their experience.⁴¹ He uses the lens of cultural memory through which he can see and assess the character and relevance of the stories of Jesus' childhood, which were often bizarre and violent.⁴² This method of using and interpreting data is precisely the tool that I am using in this study in relation to fourth-century Christian pilgrimage.

The early Christian pilgrims had travelled to the Holy Land in their imaginations long before actually going there. As they read the Biblical stories and learnt the place names, they constructed in their minds a picture of the land to which they would visit in person.

In his critical analysis of early Christian pilgrimage, Glenn Bowman views such activity as being 'journeys to the sacred', but he sees such a concept as being within the confines of human cultural control. He has a cynical view that pilgrims experience nothing other than what they expect to receive at pilgrimage sites.⁴³ This is important because his viewpoint highlights the vulnerability of pilgrims in their quest for satisfying the goals of their pilgrimage, whether it be for redemption, healing, rehabilitation or qualification for their religious beliefs. If the cultural memory governing the pilgrims' action is being controlled by others, then any authenticity of remembering is compromised. However, Bowman also has a clear view on the cultural aspect of

⁴¹ Davis uses information recorded in the *Paidika*, in which he explores 'the difficulties faced in reconstructing the early history and form of the text and in assessing how late ancient and early medieval audiences would have encountered such stories.' Davis uses the concept of cultural memory as a tool in his book to trace 'the idiosyncratic pathways that these stories traveled in their history of interpretation.' See S.J. Davis, *Christ Child: Cultural Memories of a Young Jesus* (New Haven, CT/London: Yale University Press, 2014), 6.

⁴² Davis asks, 'what cultural resources did Graeco-Roman and medieval readers have at hand to help them make sense of Jesus' childhood, and what role did perceptions of the past play in this process?' He answers these questions by stating, 'I utilize methods grounded in the sociology of cultural memory, a field that provides descriptive language well suited for the analysis of the *Paidika* and its history of interpretation.' See Davis, *Christ Child*, 14.

⁴³ G. Bowman, "Christian ideology and the image of a holy land; the place of Jerusalem pilgrimage in the various Christianities" in J. Eade and M.J. Sallnow (eds.), *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1991), 120-121.

Christian pilgrimage in a positive way. It is a view that encapsulates my whole approach to the current enquiry. Bowman claims, ‘Pilgrimages are journeys to the sacred, but the sacred is not something which stands beyond the domain of the cultural; it is imagined, defined, and articulated within cultural practice.’⁴⁴

These studies have examined Christian pilgrimage in Late Antiquity, and they present a description of its nature and some sources of influence, but they have not featured any examination of a possible relationship between cultural memory and the beginnings of Christian pilgrimage. This study intends to fill that gap in such investigations.

1. c. *Cultural Memory: The Status Quaestionis*

Cultural memory is a system of remembrance, which catalogues events in the distant past from a fixed point. The claims of its reliability over direct human memory lie in the nature of its construction. Whereas as individual memories are retained by each person who remembers an event in their own way according to their own unique experience, cultural memories are shared by many people and are maintained through rigorous processes of careful storage and management. First, there is the recording of memory from oral transmission to written texts, which give a permanent source of research and recollection. Second, there are religious rites, which through regular observance enable many people to participate in the memorial of particular events. Third, monuments can be used as permanent sources of information (and visible

⁴⁴ Bowman, “Christian ideology and the image of a holy land; the place of Jerusalem pilgrimage in the various Christianities”, 120.

memorable art) to catalogue and show particular events which are seen as being important in a society.⁴⁵

1. c. i. *Maurice Halbwachs*

A key scholar in the field of cultural memory is Maurice Halbwachs (1877-1945), who was a French philosopher whose contribution to sociology, principally, was through his work on collective memory.⁴⁶ He makes the interesting contrast between the understanding that direct memory is always limited to living memory in individual people, and the wider view that anything else must necessarily belong to tradition. Halbwachs claims that collective memory is something which is constructed by society. But such memory does not come to fruition naturally in the minds of the general population. Rather, it is manipulated deliberately by those in power or in specific groups to express their view of the world, and to create their own history.⁴⁷

Also, within the context of the lives of most people in society, autobiographical memory can only survive in the life of an individual if events are shared with others. Commemorations and anniversaries become important as events in which people can share memories with each other. Without such a system of shared experience, individual memory, Halbwachs claims, would 'fade with time unless it is periodically reinforced through contact with persons with whom one shared

⁴⁵ Jan Assmann claims, 'This memory is 'maintained through cultural formation (texts, rites, monuments)'. Interestingly, Jan Assmann sees these characteristics are formational sources in the life of a society, and their working out in real life, 'recitation, practice, observance', as being 'institutional communication.' Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka. "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity." *New German Critique* ((65) 125-133. 1995), 129.

⁴⁶ Maurice Halbwachs (1877-1945) was a French philosopher whose contribution to sociology, principally, was through his work on collective memory. M. Halbwachs, (1952), *On Collective Memory*, ed. + trans. by Lewis A. Coser, (Chicago, IL/London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 21.

⁴⁷ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 22.

the experiences in the past.⁴⁸ ‘How can currents of collective thought whose impetus lies in the past be recreated, when we can grasp only the present?’ asks Halbwachs. His answer is that such collective memory can only be achieved by the action of groups of people ‘imaginatively re-enacting a past that would otherwise slowly disappear in the haze of time.’⁴⁹

This assumption has been questioned by more recent scholars, who ask if such a demarcation can actually exist. Jan Assmann asks, ‘Is not tradition too always embodied in something?’⁵⁰

Moreover, the central question of contemporary views on human memory can be couched in terms of the differing perspectives of the individual and society: that such differing aspects may be best understood in relationship to one another.⁵¹ As Assmann explores this relational element in the function of memory, and, using the literary tool of the pun, he claims that the word *remembering* can be used to bring *members* back together. When we describe something or someone as being ‘dismembered’ there is a dislocation and fragmentation that occurs. That negative attribute can be enhanced by considering the word ‘re-membered’, where the negativism is changed, and rehabilitated into something strong and unified. This is a most profound insight into the function of memory, where, hitherto, disparate elements can be fused into an organic whole. Dislocated weak unrelated elements become strengthened through unity to become a viable force in the human mind.⁵²

⁴⁸ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 24.

⁴⁹ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 24.

⁵⁰ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 8.

⁵¹ In this respect, Assmann discusses the issue as follows: ‘Our expansion of the concept of memory from the realm of the psyche to the realm of the social and of cultural traditions is no mere metaphor. It is precisely the misunderstanding of the concepts of "collective" and "cultural memory" that has impeded comprehension of the dynamics of culture up to now. What is at stake is not the (illegitimate) transfer of a concept derived from individual psychology to social and cultural phenomena, but the interaction between the psyche, consciousness, society, and culture.’ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 9.

⁵² See Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, page 11, who talks of such stabilizing unity that can ‘span several generations’.

Furthermore, whole human groups can share remembered memories through ‘connective semantics’⁵³, which then survive the death of individual members of society and be transmitted through subsequent generations.⁵⁴ Indeed, when cultural memory becomes a feature of a society’s process of remembering, then the memory span can be vast.⁵⁵ Such an enormous timescale can enable whole tracts of writings and social activities based on acts of repetition, of which liturgy is a prime example, to be used in the process of cultural remembering. The mechanism that cultural memory possesses benefits those who wish to be associated with both past events and present liturgical actions in a remarkable way.

Halbwachs’ contribution to the study of cultural memory is invaluable in that it gives us a sense of hope in the usefulness of cultural memory being a secure depository of human memory. Such a sanguine and potentially naïve view of the secured relevance and accuracy of memory is corrected and tempered by his realistic claims that cultural memory is also a construct, created by the powerful elites for their own benefit. A world is constructed from cultural memory, which can act as a source of security and continuity for the general public whereby they have a constant source of reference. This state of satisfaction among the people can become a normative experience, as they have contributed to the cultural memory themselves, and, crucially, they see no difference between their own memories and that of the memories celebrated and repeated by the society in which they live. Therefore, his ideas and findings are very important for the source data considered in this study.

⁵³ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 11.

⁵⁴ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 11.

⁵⁵ Assmann claims, ‘With cultural memory, the memory spaces of many thousands of years open up, and it is writing that plays the decisive role in this process.’ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 28.

Lewis Coser carries Halbwachs' claims further when Coser posits the interesting idea that collective memory inhabits both the past and the present. He says, '... but successive epochs are being kept alive through a common code and a common symbolic canon even amidst contemporary revisions.'⁵⁶ Collective memory can be a driving force, which cements relationships between very different groups of people. Coser, in the introduction to his book on Halbwachs' *On Collective Memory*, likewise argues such a point from a different perspective. He claims that where memories are not shared, for example in an understanding of American football and the hero worship of some players, difficulties arise in trying to maintain a unified view of American life. Coser talks of blocked communication between himself and his American friends, caused by this lack of collective memory. He also discusses the more sinister practices of the former Soviet Union, where vast numbers of people were forced to learn modified histories of their societies, where collective memories were moulded to the will of their new leaders.⁵⁷

Coser adds to the view that human memory can inhabit different social milieux, yet still retain a thread of thought and believed experience, which is owned (or believed to be owned) by large groups of people and societies. Such a wide-ranging view of the effective storage and reference of cultural memory is remarkable, given the fragility and unreliability of individual memory.⁵⁸

Security of historical information may well reside in collective memories, as opposed to those of individual people. Jacques Le Goff summarizes well the predicament in which modern scholars find themselves in relation to the juxtaposition of collective over individual memories. He encapsulates the views of many scholars when he posits the view that the most effective way of

⁵⁶ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 26.

⁵⁷ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 21.

⁵⁸ This aspect of memory, owned and claimed by whole societies, is argued by Danièle Hervieu-Léger (b. 1947), a French sociologist who specializes in religion.

gathering memories of the past is through communities rather than individuals.⁵⁹ ‘Up until our own time, "history and memory" had practically fused, and history seems to have developed "on the model of remembering, of anamnesis and of memorization." Historians proposed the expression "great collective mythologies," "we were passing from history to collective memory." But the whole evolution of the contemporary world, under the impact of an *immediate history* for the most part fabricated on the spot by the media, is headed toward the production of an increased number of collective memories, and history is written, much more than in earlier days, under the influence of these collective memories.’

Such a sanguine and potentially naïve view of the secured relevance and accuracy of memory is corrected and tempered by Halbwachs’ realistic claims that cultural memory is also a construct, created by the powerful elites for their own benefit, as inferred above. Considering that Constantine created the framework for a ‘Holy Land’ by initiating a project of extensive building work, which have become pilgrimage sites, overseen in large measure by his mother Helena, it would not be surprising to learn of the influence from the elites in the creation of Christian pilgrimage in the fourth century. A world is constructed from cultural memory, which can act as a source of security and continuity for the general public whereby they have a constant source of reference. This state of satisfaction among the people can become a normative experience, as they have contributed to the cultural memory themselves, and, crucially, they see *no difference* between their own memories and that of the memories celebrated and repeated by the society in which they live. For my purposes of enquiry into the formation of Christian pilgrims, the

⁵⁹ J. Le Goff, *History and Memory*, trans. by S. Rendall and E. Claman, (New York, NY: Columbia University Press 1992), 95. ‘Up until our own time, "history and memory" had practically fused, and history seems to have developed "on the model of remembering, of anamnesis and of memorization." Historians proposed the expression "great collective mythologies," "we were passing from history to collective memory." But the whole evolution of the contemporary world, under the impact of an *immediate history* for the most part fabricated on the spot by the media, is headed toward the production of an increased number of collective memories, and history is written, much more than in earlier days, under the influence of these collective memories.’

question can be asked, in the light of Halbwachs' findings, 'Are pilgrims' memories and recollections of past events accurate, or are they constructs of an ecclesiastical elite who have created them for their own benefit?'

In addition, Halbwachs champions the widely held view that memory is composed of two elements: repetition and recollection. However, repetition involves the constant revision of data as it is being repeated, with the result that nothing is transmitted as a coherent whole. Instead, the data becomes conflated and altered. As the details become changed, and perhaps whittled down, a final image is produced, which Halbwachs describes as the 'imago'.⁶⁰ Halbwachs describes the structure created by this process as 'social frameworks' or '*cadres sociaux*', and it is there that individual recollections occur. This understanding of the changing nature and malleability of memory, and its reliance on other structures of, for example, '*cadres sociaux*', impinges directly on the question as to how the first Christian pilgrims had their foundational experience of the Christian faith. Recollection can involve an evocation of the past, which can be selective and focused to present us with useful, positive images that are relevant to our needs in the present. Halbwachs wrote on the subject of commemoration in the social context, and he pioneered the notion that if memory is to last, and to be sustained over a long period, it must be communicated through a social context rather than by individuals attempting to remember the past.⁶¹ He claimed that even in the comparatively restricted area of personal memory, such data cannot survive outside the fabric of the surrounding society.⁶² Furthermore, Halbwachs highlighted the claim that all collective memory is constantly under revision, especially by those who wish to mould such memories for their own purposes or benefit. Therefore, according to Halbwachs, the

⁶⁰M. Halbwachs, (1950), *The Collective Memory*, trans. by Francis J. Ditter and Vida Yazdi Ditter (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1980), 71, 106-120.

⁶¹Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, 22-30, 97.

⁶²Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, 35-49, 55-63, 124-127.

reliability of such re-worked memory is suspect, and can never be an accurate reflection of what happened in the past as an actual event. Such a view highlights two points of view concerning the remembering of events or people within a religious context. First, that any memories relating to events in the New Testament, for example, would necessarily involve the structure of a group in which such memories could be sustained. Second, that such memories can never be demonstrable accurate accounts of actual historical events which may have taken place. Therefore, any structure outside the literary genre, which can be utilised as a vehicle for the useful transfer of memory, from one generation or group to another, could be of profound importance. The activities related to Christian pilgrimage could well provide such an opportunity for the depository and transfer of religious memory as the social experience of travel and the visits to holy places embed memories into the groups involved.

The concept of recollection involves the presence and influence of a strong social group, in which individual members coalesce, so that their memories are not recollection of the past as such, but are data, which are moulded into the requirements of the social group for its own purposes.⁶³ Political and social power plays a sinister, yet enormously important role in the process of proclaiming and preserving events and perspectives which are passed down to subsequent generations.⁶⁴

⁶³ Patrick Hutton claims, 'The prominence of a collective memory, therefore, is a reflection of the social role of a particular group, and accordingly the study of the phenomenology of social representation provides an important cultural perspective on social history.' P.H. Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1993), 7.

⁶⁴ Hutton discusses the politics of memory and the use of commemoration as a political tool by the controlling elites to maintain power over others. He summarizes well the place of 'the politics of commemoration' in historical enquiry: Ultimately the problem of history is a problem of the politics of commemoration, that is, of identifying and inventorying those events, ideas, or personalities chosen by the power brokers of an earlier age for remembrance. See Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, xxiv.

These two concepts of social requirements and control speak much about the underlying ecclesiastical interests of the promotion of Christian pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Namely, that the inheritance of faith and belief promulgated by the New Testament writers can find a structure through which they can ‘earth’ their claims, by being linked to an actual physical place, but this process also enables the ecclesiastical authorities to have control over such acts of remembrance as they influence how religious sites in the Holy Land are identified and used. Such powerful sources of information, and presentation of places and rituals, provide an attractive destination for those planning to embark on a journey to another country to find verification and enhancement of their faith.

Individual memories are transitory and therefore suspect, in Halbwachs’ view. It is only by examining a collective critically, that the past can be understood by historians. Patrick Hutton uses the intriguing term ‘commemorative leavings’ to denote the sources from which history can reconstruct the past, but not experience the mental perspective of those who were alive in the time of investigation.⁶⁵ As individual memories pass from view, it is collective memory which can give a record of human thought and belief. This process cannot involve direct, intimate contact with those who have lived in times past. We cannot enter the minds of those who lived in a different era and society, but we can study the historical records which they have left, and we can follow the changes of those historical traces in their progression (or regression).⁶⁶ Hutton

⁶⁵ Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, 7-8, 76.

⁶⁶ This vital point was made by Alan Kirk in a closing remark at the Conference ‘Memory and Reception of Jesus in Early Christianity’ held in St Mary’s University, Twickenham on 10th-11th June 2016. Members of the Conference agreed that actual, original memories of the historical Jesus were beyond our reach. What is accessible through the New Testament narrative is an assessment and re-working of material that came into existence after the original memory had been lost. I see this secondary material as the ‘commemorative leavings’ expressed by Halbwachs on which the New Testament writers based their writings. Hence, the process of retrieving the original memory is a three-stage process.

describes Halbwachs' theory here as 'a history of commemoration'.⁶⁷ The commemorative aspect of Halbwachs views on cultural memory is important because it lifts the process of cultural memory from individuals to an entire society. When pilgrims decided to journey to the Holy Land, as Christians, they were already aware of being part of a large community: that of the Christian Church. By holding their memories in common, as Halbwachs suggests, questions can be raised as to how the pilgrims' individual memories contributed to the collective memory as a whole. Pilgrims were influenced by the memories of others, and in turn would be able to influence future pilgrims with their own contributions, based on their own memories.

1. c. ii *Cultural Memory: A tool for interpreting the past*

In this section I analyse and critique cultural memory and tradition, which has such a strong bearing on the early Christians' decisions to embark on pilgrimages in the newly experienced freedom offered by the fourth-century Constantinian Roman Empire. I will begin by examining and assessing the nature of human memory from the perspective of cultural memory.

As the subject of human memory has been examined and scrutinised by scientific enquirers, some scholars are concerned that memory has been understood in a form that is too narrow, involving biological neural pathways of knowledge and consciousness, and that a widening aspect including cultural memory would be more useful to us.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, 8.

⁶⁸ For example, see Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 8.

Jan Assmann investigates and assesses, within a detailed scholarly discipline, the attributes and usefulness of cultural memory. By looking back to the age of ancient Greece, we in the contemporary West can see, guided by Assmann, that Homeric epics have been significant tools in the process of cultural memory. They inhabit a time before the Greek ‘dark age’ of four or five centuries, to the Late Bronze Age bringing the Trojan War to what has been described as a ‘normative past’⁶⁹ Yet in the fifth and sixth centuries they achieve the character of ‘connective memory’.⁷⁰ Such a cultural depository of memory has been claimed to be experienced throughout Greece as a ‘panhellenic’ phenomenon in the face of war with the Eastern enemy.⁷¹

Yet, although such memory can be source of unifying human experience, Assmann also asserts that cultural memory is dynamic and possesses multivalent attributes.⁷² Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that limits must be established on the effectiveness and relevance of cultural memory. Assmann claims that there is an horizon beyond which memory cannot be associated. Knowledge can go so far, but no further in its relationship with memory.⁷³

Investigations to retrieve data from cultural memory must be detached from their subject. Culture must be examined ‘from the outside’.⁷⁴

In traditional societies, the creation myth is central to the acceptance of collective memory, which permeates all aspects of those social structures. Danièle Hervieu-Léger claims that it ‘is

⁶⁹ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 29.

⁷⁰ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 29.

⁷¹ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 29.

⁷² Assmann describes these attributes as follows: ‘Cultural memory is complex, pluralistic, and labyrinthine; it encompasses a quantity of bonding memories and group identities that differ in time and place and draws its dynamism from these tensions and contradictions.’ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 29.

⁷³ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 29.

⁷⁴ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 30. Such an astute and focused analysis of the relationship of cultural memory and its mnemonic structure with the world to which it relates, is, in my view, a process which must be undertaken from a detached vantage point. The observer and analyst of cultural memory must be able to view the subject from an objective viewpoint; otherwise, the cultural aspect of the investigation would be compromised or lost.

totally contained within the structures, organization, language and everyday observances of tradition-based societies.⁷⁵ The concept of lineage as an essential element in the transmission of collective memory in religious groups. There is a ‘lineage of belief’ and a ‘lineage of believers’.⁷⁶ Hervieu-Léger takes the backdrop of time further when she says, ‘This continuity transcends history. It is affirmed and manifested in the essentially religious act of recalling a past which gives meaning to the present and contains the future’.⁷⁷ There is a conduit, here, for a ‘lineage of belief’ within religious groups. Hervieu-Léger suggests that if ‘people of faith’ (by which is meant a definition of religious groups) can share the experience of collective and cultural memory as experienced by secular society, then analysis and assessment of such secular memory may well have a similar outcome to that of religious groups, which are the focus of this study.⁷⁸ This characteristic of collective memory is shared by Lewis Coser, who considers the ‘habitation’ of memory in various epochs.⁷⁹

The control of collective memory, within the context of the Church or religious groups, will usually be held by those in authority, i.e. the priesthood. Hervieu-Léger notes that such control is different from the free-ranging influence of charismatic prophets, and she concludes that the location of ‘religious power’ can be found in those who can ‘expound the true memory of the group’.⁸⁰ Yet the disturbances brought about by prophetic utterances will not change the status quo. Moreover, the process of bringing together various aspects of the memory of past events

⁷⁵D. Hervieu-Léger, (1993), *Religion as a Chain of Memory*, trans. by S. Lee (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 124.

⁷⁶ Hervieu-Léger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory*, 125.

⁷⁷ Hervieu-Léger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory*, 125.

⁷⁸ Hervieu-Léger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory*, 125.

⁷⁹ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 26-27. Coser claims, ‘A society's current perceived needs may impel it to refashion the past, but successive epochs are being kept alive through a common code and a common symbolic canon even amidst contemporary revisions. There is hardly a better example of this twofold process than the two thousand years of history of the Catholic Church. The Church has preserved the image of its past, but it has done so selectively, and thus has achieved continuity through selection.’

⁸⁰ Hervieu-Léger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory*, 126.

and teachings, the ‘chain of belief’ in religious systems can be protected across time. The incursions brought about by the mystics, and their claim to having direct access to God or the gods, do not hinder the ongoing life of belief that the ‘chain’ engenders.⁸¹ Therefore, in the light of these comments, one can support the notion that continuity of cultural memory through institutions both secures a constancy of remembered data, but, conversely, also acts as a barrier against new ideas and flexibility where a group (religious or otherwise) is inhibited from changing their structure or content of belief in relation to the wider society around them. Furthermore, in those societies which no longer have a strong sense or experience of collective memory, where the rise of the individual and their importance have replaced the focus of group membership, self-identification has been eroded to give the individual a sense of isolation and confusion.⁸²

The importance of collective memory has a bearing on the function of memory in the lives of the early Christians. On the one hand, individual memories needed to be protected and to coalesce in the structure of collective and cultural memory; on the other hand where collective memory was ‘crumbling’⁸³ in the ancient world, with the eclipse of paganism by Christianity, the threat of Christian memories following a similar route would be seen on the minds of many who were responsible for the teaching of Christian faith and belief. *Anamnesis* and physical action in a religious rite are linked in a crucial way. Repetition in religious rites has an important and relevance which recognizes the passing of time both generally in society and in the life of each

⁸¹ Hervieu-Léger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory*, 126.

⁸² Hervieu-Léger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory*, 127. Hervieu-Léger claims, ‘The growth of secularization and the loss of total memory in societies without a history and without a past coincide completely; the dislocation of the structures of religion's plausibility in the modern world works in parallel with the advance of rationalization and successive stages in the crumbling of collective memory.’

⁸³ Hervieu-Léger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory*, 127.

individual member of the participating group. This repetition creates a strong structure, which can withstand forces which may act against it, either in the present time or in the future.⁸⁴

Patrick Hutton examines Giambattista Vico's work on memory. Vico claims that collective memories cannot be the sole point of development with tradition. For tradition to be continued into the future, society generally reached back to the sources of its cultural tradition, for example, epic poetry.⁸⁵ Vico understood the influence of memory on history as being like waves that form and reform on a beach. There is a 'waning and renewal of collective memory'.⁸⁶ Hutton discusses Halbwachs' use of describing collective memory acting like waves on rocks.⁸⁷ Within such powerful imagery there is the notion that the building of commemorative memory is not linear, as in the example of 'commemorative leavings' discussed above, but rather that it is cyclical. In this process there is both progression and regression, and yet as the tide regresses there is a repository of the 'leavings' of remembered data, which is then subject to the addition of other 'leavings' as the tide progresses and regresses once more. In this model of remembering, data from Christian pilgrimage to the Holy Land can be understood as being major 'leavings' in the cyclical process creating collective and commemorative memory.

From the above, I conclude that there is a link between the past and present through the medium of language, and specifically text. The key driving force behind this phenomenon is the presence of memory, which acts as a 'bridge' between events of the past, even those of long ago, and the present. Information about experiences and events can be retained in the living memory of

⁸⁴ See Hervieu-Léger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory*, 125.

⁸⁵ Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, 50.

⁸⁶ Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, 50.

⁸⁷ Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, 73. See also a discussion by Hutton about the action of waves on a rocky seashore on page 50, with reference to the work of Giambattista Vico.

people, either received as texts or aural messages from an older generation or current experiences, who pass on their stories to the next generation, or even another generation beyond the original. It is in this way that cultural memory is built up over successive generations, where information and stories are shared and inherited across vast amounts of time. Indeed, Jan Assmann summarised his thinking on this view by stating, 'Being that can be remembered is text'.⁸⁸ Current experiences are shared in the course of contemporary life, as part of the natural order of existence. Yet text will, by its very nature, always relate to the past; this is especially the case when a cultural tradition is being nurtured and sustained.⁸⁹

However, difficulties have arisen in the process of evaluating the effectiveness and accuracy of memory. The change to written manuscripts from orality gave the supposed promise of unflinching accuracy, in which a catalogue of information could be made to reflect the past in a new, enhanced way, which perhaps may supersede the oral traditions, which were fluid and changed their reporting of the past, influenced by contemporary circumstances.⁹⁰ Yet, although such recorded written history may well contain recollections of the past, it will not have the repetitions, which were so valuable in an oral culture.⁹¹ The advent of manuscripts, with their evermore widening use, gave possibilities to the development of memory in the following ways: on the one hand, the oral tradition with its use of repetition continuously updating data, enabled people to keep memory relevant and linked to the contemporary needs of society; and on the other hand, the use of manuscripts in the literary tradition enabled memories to be fixed to 'a specificity in recollection that had not been possible in oral culture.'⁹² In addition to the attributes

⁸⁸ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, ix.

⁸⁹ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, ix.

⁹⁰ Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, xxi.

⁹¹ Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, xxi-xxiii.

⁹² Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, xxi.

of oral transmission shown above, with its flexibility and coherence for the ongoing needs of society, is the opportunity for reflection and abstract thought, which became possible once the data has been recorded in manuscripts. The written word enables scholars to view the information from an objective viewpoint, which hitherto, had been inaccessible.

However, the claimed supremacy of orality over literacy in the ancient world (indeed perhaps up to the advent of the printing press), may ameliorate the paucity, or even absence, of early texts and the difficulties presented to us in the broken chain of these literary texts. It is here that the influences that moulded and inspired the early Christian pilgrims can be understood to have been formed by a number of factors in which this study is now engaged: Greek pilgrimage to sacred sites, memory of biblical tradition, oral stories and stories told from apocryphal gospels and early Christian liturgy.

Clearly, the longing of the early Christian pilgrims in the fourth century to locate their treasured memories in the physical world became irresistible, even to the extent of risking their lives travelling thousands of miles over many months in a potentially hostile world. Yet their memories will not be of the founder of Christianity, but the depository of early memories, which coalesced in the cultural and religious milieux of the first three centuries.

1. c. iii *Remembrances of things past*

As discussed above, Maurice Halbwachs claims that individual human memories are frail and are unable to survive with accuracy over an extended period. It is by holding memories collectively,

as a society, that events and important communal statements can be retained and stored. By way of analogy, we can appreciate the issues involved in considering how we “remember” and memorialise historic events today, and also how we fail to do so. An interesting example of such absence of collective memory occurred on 31st January 2020 when the United Kingdom left the European Union. The UK Government was unable to secure the ringing of Big Ben in London, there was no national event, even fireworks were banned. Therefore, this seminal moment in modern British history passed almost invisibly. (The Prime Minister struck a little gong in a private room in 10 Downing Street). The creation of cultural memory requires much larger, significant activities, including participation by a large number of people, and ritual.

A good example of a cultural event enacted each year in the United Kingdom is the Act of Remembrance. It starts with a secular event in the Royal Albert Hall, in which members of the Armed Forces put on a series of displays, accompanied by music, to celebrate the existence and expertise of its members. On the following morning, Remembrance Sunday, there is an Act of Remembrance at the Cenotaph in Whitehall, London, in which wreaths are laid at the place of memorial for those who died in two World Wars who were on active duty. This commemoration of the dead is repeated throughout the whole country in towns and villages, so that everyone has the opportunity to remember the lives and deaths of those on active service who died in the two World Wars and in conflicts since that time. This activity often involves the reading of the names of those who died.

Such an annual, national event has obtained the allegiance of many in British society, not only in the United Kingdom, but in other countries of the Commonwealth. Other nations around the world also hold such acts of commemoration either on that day or at specific dates in their

societies. For example, in Australia and New Zealand, Anzac Day is commemorated on 25th April each year.⁹³

People attend such events knowing that they are participating in acts of remembrance which have a history spanning many decades. Either individual participants, or their relatives, will have had direct experience of war; this is especially so, of course, for members of the Armed Forces. In almost every community in the United Kingdom, attendance at Remembrance Sunday acts of commemoration marks the largest gathering of its members each year. Such gatherings usually outnumber those who attend Christmas celebrations in Churches or elsewhere. The word ‘gatherings’ is important here as it denotes the inclusion of movement in the act of remembrance.

Such national events may have two outcomes. First, to give credence to those who died and sacrificed their lives for freedom. Second, to enable participants to recognise and celebrate their sense of belonging to a community or country. In some counties, Saints’ Days also act as a focus for national celebrations. At these events, people may celebrate their distinctive attributes as a society, or they may invoke the patronage of their particular Patron Saint.

This cultural remembrance is exactly what scholars such as Paul Connerton has in mind when he catalogues another theme of remembrance: that of the Third Reich and its activities.⁹⁴ From Hitler’s seizure of power in 1933 to 1939 at the outbreak of war, the German Nationalist Socialist Party used collective memory to cement its control and influence over German society. It did this by holding many national events, based on its own history and agenda, ranging from

⁹³ This commemoration marks a similar sacrifice of those ‘who served and died in all wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations’ and ‘the contribution and suffering of all those who have served.’ Australian War Memorial.

⁹⁴ P. Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 41-45.

30th January 1933, when Hitler seized power, to his birthday on 20th April. The focus of these events changed between young and old, which enabled all sections of German society to relate to their own relevant celebration. The Third Reich was careful to use existing forms of celebration as experienced in the Christian Church.⁹⁵ Yet the process of using and experiencing cultural memory is the same. These events are examples to show that for a memory to be preserved, it must be held in common, and that physical activity, involving travel to the particular place (be it the Cenotaph or the local parish War Memorial) is essential.

1. d. *Conclusion*

Until now, there is no clear and satisfactory answer to explain why in the fourth-century Christian pilgrimage became such a phenomenon. However, studies in early Christian pilgrimage have not been undertaken from a cultural memory approach. The use of Biblical stories, and travel to places perceived to be holy, in relation to cultural practices designed to secure accurate and long-term memory, have not featured in the minds of those who have examined the outcomes of such processes.

This study brings to the subject of Christian pilgrimage a new perspective which includes and encapsulates the thinking behind a cultural memory approach. I ask whether a cultural memory approach may enable us to understand the beginnings of Christian pilgrimage in the fourth

⁹⁵ Paul Connerton remarks, 'The National Socialist regime was new and its ceremonies newly invented, even though they deliberately took on some Christian components - of timing and of intrinsic character - in the way in which earlier Christian ceremonies took on some pagan ones. Thus Nazi was to Christian as Christian was to pagan. There is a long-standing German *traditio* - thus identified - and it has been in part kept going performatively.' Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 43

century and explain the motivations of pilgrims. I argue that it is through understanding the process of cultural memory and its repository of relatively secure data (referred to as ‘leavings’) that early Christian pilgrimage can be known. Once this approach has been articulated, a new perspective on the motives for Christian pilgrimage becomes possible.

In addition to the brief examination of Cultural Memory theory and its approach above, and the discussion on ‘Leavings’, together with an analysis of Orality, I introduce the framework of discussions to be undertaken in later chapters on the following subjects.

I address cultural heritage and its relevance to Christian pilgrimage in two chapters. In Chapter Two, I suggest that Christian pilgrims used the cultural memory of previous Graeco-Roman practices to inform their experience of Christian travel. I present examples of Greek ‘pilgrimage’ from the historical record. The chapter includes information from the Greek historian Pausanias (even though his view is influenced enormously by feelings of nostalgia). Greek travel is discussed ranging from local to Panhellenic pilgrimages. This includes a discussion on the role of the *Theori*. I present an account of healing pilgrimages and activities relating to consultation of the Oracle at Delphi. Visits to the tombs of Greek Heroes is presented. The use of orality in cultural memory forms part of my argument that the telling of stories is a major conduit for cultural memory, and for its effectiveness in transmitting tradition. I also conduct an analysis of Roman pilgrimage. This chapter concludes with a short account of how Graeco-Roman cultic practices were replaced by Christianity in the Constantinian era.

Chapters Three and Four are the heart of this study into the origins of Christian pilgrimage and its relationship to our inheritance of cultural memory from the ancient world. I concentrate on

two early pilgrims in particular: the Bordeaux Pilgrim and Egeria. It is the careful analysis of Egeria's diary, in the light of Halbwachs' findings and statements on cultural memory, that provides the most useful information to support my argument throughout this study: that cultural memory provides an answer to the questions raised about the origins of Christian pilgrimage in the fourth century.

By this means I hope to shed new light on the question as to why pilgrims undertook such hazardous and arduous journeys from the comfort of their homes to the unknown perils and challenges of a foreign country up to three thousand miles away.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ It is recognised that in the fourth century, such journeys may well have had the protection of the Roman military. Yet many pilgrims who did not have royal patronage, or great wealth, will have travelled in conditions of significant danger. If a pilgrim, especially if they were female, were robbed, their future would have been bleak indeed. For example, the virginity of a woman forced to work in an Inn, through being penniless, would have been compromised severely.

CHAPTER TWO

Cultural Heritage: ‘Pilgrimage’ in Ancient Greece and Rome from a Cultural Memory Perspective

2. a. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the nature and function of pilgrimage in the pagan world of ancient Greece and Rome from the perspective of cultural memory.

Such a discussion will serve as an introduction to the main focus of the study as a whole: namely, to assess how can a cultural memory approach may enable a better understanding of the phenomenon of Christian pilgrimage in the fourth century. I will consider the civilisations of Greece and Rome, in which we can observe people’s practices of travelling to places of special importance for them. Whether such travel in Greece is pure ‘pilgrimage’ is a matter of conjecture, but it may well have been a background to which fourth-century Christian pilgrims were exposed. Did such knowledge affect their way of life and the travel which they experienced and endured? Such an approach is central to this study on the beginnings of Christian pilgrimage.

The location and presence of the sacred is not some esoteric focus of attention lying beyond human experience. Quite the contrary, it is found within the culture of a given society, which in turn is governed by the society’s memory.⁹⁷ It is within the culture of ancient Greece that this chapter discusses the practice of what later became described as ‘pilgrimage’.

⁹⁷ Bowman, “Christian ideology and the image of a holy land; the place of Jerusalem pilgrimage in the various Christianities”, 120.

2. b. *The nature of Greek 'pilgrimage' – sacred or valued?*

A fundamental question is: 'To what extent did the Christians of the fourth century remember elements of religious life that would lead to the phenomenon of pilgrimage?'. If we look first to Greece, any examination into the nature of Greek religion needs to state at the outset that there is no word in the Greek language relating to 'pilgrimage' as it would take shape in Christianity, though there are clearly examples of sacred travel.⁹⁸ We may adopt this view as a fundamental definition of pilgrimage, even without a proper Greek word, but in doing so we impose a more recent conception on ancient phenomena.

Defining 'pilgrimage' then in the Graeco-Roman world is by no means straightforward. Glenn Bowman, defines pilgrimages as being 'journeys to the sacred, but the sacred is not something which stands beyond the domain of the cultural; it is imagined, defined, and articulated with cultural practice.'⁹⁹ Joy McCorrison writes that 'Pilgrimage is a journey to a sacred place to participate in a system of sacred beliefs.'¹⁰⁰

Jaś Elsner and Ian Rutherford, however, note that, 'It is extremely difficult, perhaps impossible, to determine the boundaries between pilgrimage proper (if there is such a thing) and other kinds of travel such as tourism.'¹⁰¹ Although Elsner and Rutherford wish attributes other than 'sacred' to the study of pilgrimage, they admit that without religious imagination, their 'dry and dusty

⁹⁸ M. Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece* (London/New York, NY: Routledge, 1997), xvi.

⁹⁹ Bowman, "Christian ideology and the image of a holy land; the place of Jerusalem pilgrimage in the various Christianities", 120.

¹⁰⁰ J. McCorrison, *Pilgrimage and Household in the Ancient Near East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 11.

¹⁰¹ J. Elsner and I. Rutherford, *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity: Seeing the Gods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 5.

empirical data' would not have the vitality and force to produce results which contained conviction, a 'compelling picture'.¹⁰²

Furthermore, Scott Scullion argues that to posit pilgrimage as 'sacred travel', as Simon Coleman and Jaś Elsner have done,¹⁰³ is to miss the point that such a sense of sacredness is entirely absent in the ancient Greeks' thinking on the nature of religious journeys.¹⁰⁴ For example, Thucydides gives us an insight into Greek understanding of religious travel in his *Peace of Nikias*: the journeys were for 'those wishing to go, to sacrifice, to consult the oracle, to be spectators, at the common sanctuaries'.¹⁰⁵

Ian Rutherford discusses this phenomenon by exploring the Greek word θεωρός and its related terms, θεωρία and θεωρίς, all of which are founded on the verb θεωρέω, which means 'spectate', 'observe' or 'contemplate'. Rutherford speaks of θεωρία as 'a sacred delegation to a sanctuary' quoting Thucydides, with a θεωρός being a member of the delegation. While the word θεωρέω relates to a person who is taking an active role in a sacred delegation,¹⁰⁶ it would imply observation of sacred activities, and probably also includes a sense of active participation. Rutherford, like Dillon,¹⁰⁷ refers to Thucydides¹⁰⁸ in exploring how access to the Panhellenic sanctuaries had four components: θύειν (the act of sacrifice), ίέναι (going), μαντεύεσθαι (the consulting of oracles) and θεωρεῖν κατὰ τὰ πάτρια (take part as your ancestors did).¹⁰⁹ It is the

¹⁰² Elsner and Rutherford, *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity*, 6.

¹⁰³ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 121-122

¹⁰⁴ S. Scullion, "'Pilgrimage' and Greek Religion: Sacred and Secular in the Pagan Polis" in Elsner and Rutherford, *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity*, 121-122.

¹⁰⁵ Thucydides 5.18.2.

¹⁰⁶ Thucydides, Hist. 6.16.2.

¹⁰⁷ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, xvi.

¹⁰⁸ Thucydides 5.18.12

¹⁰⁹ I. Rutherford, "Theoria and Darśan: Pilgrimage and Vision in Greece and India." *The Classical Quarterly, New Series*, ((50) (1) 133-138. 2000).

act of ‘going’ then, which is only one component of the programme, that constitutes the central idea that would form an essential part of Christian pilgrimage.¹¹⁰

State officials, called *theoroi*¹¹¹, often drawn from well-educated and articulate members of the upper socio-economic groups, would arrange truces between states that were at political loggerheads.¹¹² The civic nature of official processing and travelling may seem strange, but given the enormous movements of people throughout the Greek world to sanctuaries, political control and security were necessary requirements for it to take place and be successful. However, although there was much movement involving significant travel with *theoroi* and their retinues, most pilgrims were ordinary individual members of the public. An example of this practice is the city of Athens, which sent *theoroi* to all the important festivals throughout Greece, including Olympia, Pythia, Isthmia and Nemea; later, in the Hellenistic period, the festivals at Magnesia, Kos and Alexandria also received *theoroi*.¹¹³ Therefore, pilgrimages and processions of a public and private nature were enacted at the same time.

These officials were not necessarily distanced onlookers at the religious proceedings, but would participate actively in the offering of sacrifices to the particular god who was the object of such veneration.¹¹⁴ Participation at state level enabled the political entity to express itself within a wider context of the Greek world, especially where a common identity could be established

¹¹⁰ See Chapter One.

¹¹¹ Ian Rutherford encapsulates the identity and function of the *theoroi* as follows: ‘...what was different about state-pilgrims, however, was that for them participating in a festival by assuming the role of spectators was an official duty, the carrying out of which had motivated a journey of more than routine length from one *polis* to another; and hence the term, which could reasonably be applied even to local participants, in practice tended to be used exclusively for official delegates from abroad. Rutherford. “Theoria and Darśan”, 138.

¹¹² Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 16.

¹¹³ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 11.

¹¹⁴ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, xvii, 20.

between those states which attended events at the same sanctuary.¹¹⁵ State officials were sent from Athens to the festivals which took place at Olympia, Pythia, Isthmia and Nemea, and in the later Hellenistic period to the festivals held at Magnesia, Kos and Alexandria.¹¹⁶

Such seemingly secular attendance and behaviour have raised questions as to whether the word ‘pilgrimage’ is fitting in these circumstances. Elsner and Rutherford question whether the term ‘pilgrimage’ should be used for attendance at such gatherings other than those that had functions such as healing or the giving of spiritual sustenance and advice. They question whether the observing *theoroi* or participants at athletic competitions would qualify for the description of ‘pilgrims’ in their seemingly non-religious activities. Furthermore, in their distinctly critical judgement of Christian attributes, they see the term ‘pilgrimage’ as being burdened heavily with Christian overtones, a characteristic which they convey as being most unhelpful and negative in the study of Greek religion.¹¹⁷

But it can be argued that thanksgiving was offered to the gods at the panhellenic festivals, together with the customary processions, contests and sacrifices.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, this positive view is supported by Herodotus, who described the reasoning behind the formation of the ‘pentapolis’. The victors were awarded Triopian Apollo bronze tripods, which should then be dedicated in the temple. One victor went home, ignoring the tradition and taking his tripod with him, resulting in his city, Halikarnassos, being excluded, and thereby, the six cities became five.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Elsner and Rutherford, *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity*, 13.

¹¹⁶ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 11.

¹¹⁷ Elsner and Rutherford, *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity*, 2.

¹¹⁸ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 122.

¹¹⁹ A. M. Greaves, “Cnidus” in M. Gagarin (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece and Rome, Volume 1* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 237; Herodotus, 1.144.

As these Greeks travelled to specific locations to offer sacrifices and thanks to the gods, there is one question that must be answered: did these people behave in the same way that other religious travellers did in future times? In terms of Christian pilgrimage, the answer must be ‘no’ as there is no direct correlation between the two. However, I submit that there are elements within the Greek practice of travelling to special places, perhaps deemed as sacred, because of the presence of communication with the gods, or representatives of the gods, the offering of sacrifices and thanks to the divine beings. The issue is complex as Christian pilgrimage did not include the notion of sacrifice and thanksgiving, yet the central characteristic of travel to the sacred exists between both traditions. Therefore, Greek processions were known in history to the early Christians, and so such practices were present within the memory of the earliest Christian pilgrims.

Furthermore, there is testimony at the time of the Persian invasion of Attica in 480 BCE from an Athenian exile called Dikaios, who tells of the sight and sound of participants in the procession to Eleusis. Dikaios talks of dust being raised by the equivalent of thirty-thousand people who sang along the entire journey to Eleusis.¹²⁰ Herodotus interpreted this action as being part of an event which signalled divine approval and support in their conflict with the Persians.¹²¹

¹²⁰ Dikaios claimed, ‘It is kept each year by the Athenians in honour of the mother [Demeter] and daughter [Kore], and whatever Greek wishes, whether Athenian or not, is there initiated; and the cry which you hear is the “Iacchus” which is uttered at this festival.’ S. Price, *Religions of the Ancient Greeks* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 103.

¹²¹ Herodotos 8.75.

2. c. *Travel*

At this point, the difficult and fundamental questions about pilgrimage need to be raised. What is the nature of the travel involved? How far does the recreation of tourism play its part in the process of pilgrimage? What are the boundaries which exist within this framework of enquiry?¹²² Such secular considerations of the nature of travel to sacred sites require the vital addition of ‘religious imagination.’¹²³

The Greeks travelled to many places. They consulted oracles; they visited temples, shrines, caves and tombs of the heroes. Travel to religious sites, deemed to be sacred in the sense of being set apart,¹²⁴ involved journeys of significantly different lengths. The Greeks would travel locally or to some distant destination. Robin Lane Fox, who has explored these activities in detail, relates how not just local travels but long journeys to ‘holy places’ could be enacted by people in ancient Greece, either relatively locally from town to country or to a destination some distance away.¹²⁵ For example, magistrates processed a distance of ten miles at Thibilis, North Africa, to visit the cave of the god Bacax. Those who wished to visit the shrines of Hera on Samos, Asclepius on Cos, or caves near Nysa would have travelled for several hours.¹²⁶

¹²² Elsner and Rutherford, *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity*, 5.

¹²³ Elsner and Rutherford, *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity*, 6.

¹²⁴ The concept of ‘asylia’ was understood and practised by the ancient Greeks and Romans as a means of claiming or providing asylum for people who were in danger of the lives or who required sanctuary. See Matthew Dillon *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 57-58, in which he discusses the issue of asylia and its usefulness in the Greek world. Also see K. Rigsby, *Asylia: Territorial Inviolability in the Hellenistic World* (Berkeley, CA/Oxford: University of California Press, 1996). Rigsby claims that by the third century BCE sites in Greece had become inviolable, therefore could be used as sites for refuge. (page 32). Rigsby discussed the term ‘holy’ in connection with places and people, and sees it being used in metaphorical sense. Chasing down evidence on coins, for example, is a fruitless exercise. (pages 33-36).

¹²⁵ Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, 41.

¹²⁶ Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, 41.

They also travelled even longer distances to major sites such as Delphi, where the oracle of Apollo was situated. This raised issues in terms of logistics. When pilgrims wished to travel to Delphi, or to the other oracular centres, they required assurances of personal safety, as we see in agreements. In 421, the treaty of the ‘Peace of Nikias’ was created to ensure the safety that enabled these many pilgrims to visit their shrines by land and sea. Thucydides makes two references to the treaty, which safeguarded the travellers.¹²⁷ Also, they were beneficiaries under the jurisdiction of the Amphictyonic League, which meant that in peacetime, they could travel without payment of a toll.¹²⁸ Such agreements indicate the importance of this inter-state travel.

Wars continued between the Greek states, but when the state officials arranged truces, the safety of those travelling to sacred shrines was guaranteed in that they were to be respected and have the privilege of protection. The truces were operative in both the Archaic and Classical periods.¹²⁹ It is interesting to note that the travellers could move safely because these truces were upheld for the most part, and that, as they guaranteed the safety of ‘pilgrims’ (at least in principle). Such a procedure was judged to be worth enacting, as the popularity of ‘pilgrimages’ was so high in ancient Greek society.¹³⁰ This was especially the case for travel to the major festivals of Eleusis, Olympia, Isthmia and Nemea and also for the Pythian mysteries.¹³¹ Truces were understood as being sacred, and therefore would have an effect of enhancing the well-being

¹²⁷ Thucydides 4.118.1: ‘As to the temple and oracle of the Pythian Apollo, we are agreed that whosoever will shall have access to it, without fraud or fear, according to the usages of his forefathers.’; Thucydides 5.18.1-3: ‘The Athenians and Lacedaemonians and their allies made a treaty, and swear to it, city by city, as follows:

1. Touching the national temples, there shall be a free passage by land and by sea to all who wish it, to sacrifice, travel, consult, and attend the oracle or games, according to the customs of their countries.

2. The temple and shrine of Apollo at Delphi and the Delphians shall be governed by their own laws, taxed by their own state, and judged by their own judges, the land and the people, according to the custom of their country.

3. The treaty shall be binding for fifty years upon the Athenians and the allies of the Athenians, and upon the Lacedaemonians and the allies of the Lacedaemonians, without fraud or hurt by land or by sea.’

¹²⁸ M. Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 51.

¹²⁹ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 1-26; for evidence in the Classical period see Thucydides 4.119.3 ‘ἡ μὲν δὴ ἐκεχειρία αὕτη ἐγένετο, καὶ ξυνηῆσαν ἐν αὐτῇ περὶ τῶν μειζόνων σπονδῶν διὰ παντὸς ἐς λόγους.’

¹³⁰ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, xvii, 1-2, 58-59.

¹³¹ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 2.

of the participants.¹³² This safety was actually a special, temporary cessation of hostilities connected directly with the presence of those performing religious duties rather than the positive, deliberate action of a truce.¹³³ Such agreements thus indicate not only that people travelled to sacred sites, but also that this travel was dangerous.

In addition to travel, pilgrims faced dangers from conflict at some of the festival sites themselves; for example, during the Sacred War at Delphi and conflicts at Olympia and Isthmia.¹³⁴ However, the very popularity of the festivals and their longevity would suggest that, for the most part, pilgrims enjoyed such activities in relative safety.¹³⁵ Yet, at the time of Spartan control of the route between Athens and Eleusis, during the Peloponnesian War in 415 BCE, the procession was omitted, which involved necessarily missing the usual sacrifices, dances and rituals one would expect on the way.¹³⁶ Protection was restored in 407 BCE, three years before in end of hostilities, when Alcibiades led the procession himself.¹³⁷

As we have seen above, the claim that the concept of ‘sacred travel’ can be equated with ‘pilgrimage’, as argued by Dillon, is not advocated by all scholars.¹³⁸ Yet it can be demonstrated that while the term ‘pilgrimage’ is not found to refer to such travel, conceptually there was travel to holy sites where devotions would occur. This was a vital and important part of religion in

¹³² Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 58.

¹³³ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 2; A. W. Gomme, *A Historical Commentary of Thucydides: The Ten Years' War*, Volume III, Books IV-V 24 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 629.

¹³⁴ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 28.

¹³⁵ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 27.

¹³⁶ Price, *Religions of the Ancient Greeks*, 54.

¹³⁷ Plutarch relates, ‘He posted sentries on the heights, sent out an advance guard at daybreak, and then, marshalling the priests, novices and initiates, and placing them in the centre of his column, he led them along the road to Eleusis in solemn and complete silence.’ Plutarch, *Alcibiades* 34.3-6.

¹³⁸ As discussed briefly above, Scott Scullion took issue with Simon Coleman and Jaś Elsner in their view of Greek travel.

ancient Greece and the Hellenistic world. Such activity was built into the social memory of Greek society, and was therefore a source of information for following generations and societies.

2. d. *The Phenomenon of Greek Processions*

Nevertheless, despite the existence of long-distance travel, most travel to sacred sites was very local, and involved no arduous journeys from far away; this was the kind of ‘going’ found in Greek processions. The ancient Greeks took great store in the processions to sacred places and tombs.¹³⁹ A defining attribute of Greek ritual was the procession, the πομπή.¹⁴⁰ These were not always entirely sacred. When the actual processions are experienced by the promoters of lavish and ostentatious displays and their recipients, the sacred nature of the whole proceedings may be changed to merely the profane.¹⁴¹

Although the processions showed the wealth of the participants, there may have been a deeper religious content being expressed. The Greeks appear to have been in search of something greater than the routine and ordinariness of everyday life. In this respect they shared the same

¹³⁹ Walter Burkert and Julia Kindt examine the origins of Greek processions. Burkert promotes the large and ostentatious ritual displays of πομπή, while Kindt highlights a more authentic foundation of the processions in that of religious ritual alone. These two opposing views signal a progression from ‘sacred’ to ‘valued ideal’ proposed by Alan Morinis. See A. Morinis (ed.), *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage* (Westport, CT/London: Greenwood Press, 1992), 4; W. Burkert, *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical*, trans. by John Raffan (Malden, MA/Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1985), 99-102; J. Kindt, *Rethinking Greek Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 67.

¹⁴⁰ The word πομπή is understood to mean ‘escort’, and, as Walter Burkert observes in his excellent discussion on the subject, ‘... how far the procession is an end in itself can be seen from the expression meaning to celebrate a festival, *pompas*, *pempein*, literally, to accompany the escorts’. Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 99-102.

¹⁴¹ Julia Kindt quotes Michael Jameson, ‘The procession had become an end in itself’. M.H. Jameson, “The spectacular and the obscure in Athenian religion” in S. Goldhill and R. Osborne, (eds.), *Performance Culture and Athenian Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 325, cited in Kindt, *Rethinking Greek Religion*, 67.

characteristics as the early Christian pilgrims. This ‘search for the Other’, and how it came about, is the central question in this study.

2. e. *From Procession to Panhellenic Pilgrimage*

If the actions of the ancient Greeks of visiting sacred places and participating in key festivals can be construed as a kind of proto-pilgrimage, then various classifications emerge on the basis of practice and evidence. Processions were undertaken by groups of people in an official capacity and by individuals. Both these were experienced within a local context, across the various Greek states and colonies. Additionally, participation in athletic competitions was a feature of some of the processions (famously at Olympia and Isthmia).¹⁴² Processions to special events at sacred sites were sometimes enacted by state officials. Indeed, the major movements of Greeks across their states were identified in the main by participation in religious festivals.¹⁴³ The procession from Athens to Eleusis, which was about a day’s journey, prepared the participants for activities at Eleusis lasting several days. This feature of the ‘journey’ is common to several key sites of Greek festivals. In addition to Eleusis, as Olympia, Isthmia, Nemea and Delphi were all panhellenic in character. The festivals in these places attracted participants from city states all over Greece.

¹⁴² Elsner and Rutherford, *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity*, 12-14.

¹⁴³ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, xviii.

An example of the panhellenic nature of these processions is provided by Eleusis.¹⁴⁴ The Eleusinian festival was held in honour of the goddess Demeter and her daughter Kore (also known as Persephone, the daughter of Zeus). The Eleusinian Mysteries are understood to have a long history. There is a progression of participation, which begins with the presence of women alone.¹⁴⁵ As the Mysteries increased in popularity, they became open to men, so that all Greek-speaking adults could attend and partake. The sanctuary and Anaktoron¹⁴⁶ were expanded to meet this enlarged membership.¹⁴⁷ Details of the ceremonies at Eleusis were secret, with any breaking of the secrecy being punishable by death, in contrast, the processions leading to such events were entirely and totally public.¹⁴⁸

This is not the only perspective, or perhaps the only lens, through which we can have an understanding of Greek processions.¹⁴⁹ A remarkable and memorable unique representation of the sacredness of processions, together with their secular nature, is recorded in the friezes surrounding the Parthenon. An idealised form of these processions is shown on the south frieze

¹⁴⁴ Elsner and Rutherford describe such an initiation ceremony and the necessary travel: ‘At Eleusis the ritual was extremely complex, requiring a preliminary initiation in the so-called ‘Lesser Mysteries’ near Athens, and participation in a mass-procession (itself a mini-pilgrimage) along the Sacred Way from Athens to Eleusis, and offering a second level of initiation ... for pilgrims who were willing to make a second trip.’ Elsner and Rutherford, *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity*, 16-17.

¹⁴⁵ Kevin Clinton describes the Eleusinian Mysteries as being ‘a transformation of the much older Thesmophoria and similar cults open only to women.’ Elements of Thesmophoria such as ‘sorrow, fasting, a sacred well, ritual mockery, deposition of piglets in *megara*, agrarian prosperity’ continue to be present in the Eleusinian Mysteries, but are set in the context of cultic drama which focuses on a pathway to death and life beyond the grave.’ K. Clinton, “The sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis” in N. Marinos and R. Hägg (eds.), *Greek Sanctuaries: New Approaches* (London/New York, NY: Routledge, 1993), 120.

¹⁴⁶ The enclosed area in the centre of the Telesterion (Initiation Hall) at Eleusis in which sacred objects could be seen by initiates.

¹⁴⁷ G. E. Mylonas, *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press/London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Limited, 1961), 55-137.

¹⁴⁸ Margaret Miles asserts that a typical procession was ‘carefully choreographed and followed a prescribed sequence along a fixed trajectory, with memorable topographical landmarks and bridges that were maintained over centuries’. M. M. Miles, “Entering Demeter’s Gateway: The Roman Propylon in the City of Eleusinion” in B. D. Wescoat and R. G. Ousterhout (eds), *Architecture of the Sacred: Space, Ritual, and Experience from Classical Greece to Byzantium* (Cambridge/New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 115-116.

¹⁴⁹ For example, Walter Burkert claims that processions *were* sacred. He says, ‘The centre to which the sacred action is drawn is naturally a sanctuary where sacrifices take place; but the pathway is also important and sacred.’ Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 99.

of the Parthenon, together with representations of horsemen with their chariots, sacrificial animals and various paraphernalia relating to religious activities shown on the east and west sides. The greatest of the processions was the *πομπή* that took place at the Parthenon each year.¹⁵⁰ Depictions of this *πομπή*, featuring the various people taking part, include such participants as basket bearers, bowl bearers and water bearers, musicians and men of all ages from the old and venerable to the young warriors, portrayed on foot and also on horseback. In particular, the south frieze displays details of three youths in the process of leading a sacrificial cow, which denotes the religious aspect of the procession.¹⁵¹ The focus was the giving of the *peplos*¹⁵² (a new robe) to the goddess Athena and the offering of victims to Athena (four oxen and sheep are shown on the frieze, with a possible hecatomb).¹⁵³ Therefore, in addition to the religious focus of such processions, there also appear to be political attributes. The presence of civic figures and the enormous importance of the event would signal such a conclusion.

It is interesting to note that such religious processions have other dimensions. They have been known to function in the purification of statues, which are then returned to their relevant sanctuaries. For example, a statue of Athena, the Palladian, was carried to the sea for purification and then returned to the site of a law court.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, the route between Athens and Eleusis

¹⁵⁰ Walter Burkert describes the annual Panathenaic procession and comments, 'Naturally the civic officials are also represented, as well as the virgins and women who have made the *peplos*. The entire citizenry present themselves in their essential groupings in this, the greatest *πομπή* of the year.' Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 100.

¹⁵¹ Price, *Religions of the Ancient Greeks*, 32-33.

¹⁵² A new robe for the goddess Athena, having been the focus of a parade through Athens, was presented by a priest standing between the twelve Olympian gods. Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 100.

¹⁵³ A hecatomb (ἑκατόμβη), was the sacrifice to the gods of 100 cattle; Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 100.

¹⁵⁴ W. Burkert, *Zeitschrift für Religions – und Geistesgeschichte* (1970), 356-368 cited in Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 99.

was ‘The Sacred Way’, denoting a sacredness of intention among those who processed along it.¹⁵⁵

Clearly, there was a breadth of diversity in Greek culture relating to the use and style of processions. Individuals and groups took part in processions, of both formal and informal natures, for a variety of reasons. Such variety was extended when one considers the locations of the processions being from local activities to those which were enacted across Greece. It is interesting that the religious aspect of the journeys is seen as an especially appropriate description in those which were panhellenic. I will therefore explore these in further detail, in terms of the precedents that would lead to social memory.¹⁵⁶

2. f. Panhellenic Pilgrimages

Religious activity, although being expressed and experienced within the individual city states, had a wider significance. This was possible in part by the influence of Homeric epic poetry.¹⁵⁷ Whereas hero cults had a local focus within the immediate community, by contrast epic poetry was of national significance and had a much wider audience. This variety of communal expression and interest had occurred already at the rise of the *polis* in Greek society.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Elsner and Rutherford, *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity*, 16-17; Miles, “Entering Demeter’s Gateway” in Wescoat and Ousterhout, *Architecture of the Sacred*, 117-121.

¹⁵⁶ However, the rich variety in which Greek society has been interpreted, in both secular and religious contexts, has resulted in widely different interpretations of the same events. The disagreement among scholars, as evidenced by the views of Coleman, Elsner, Scullion, Burkert, Rutherford and Miles, shows that the interpretation of such processions is capable of being expressed in more than one way.

¹⁵⁷ C. Antonaccio. “Contesting the Past: Hero Cult, Tomb Cult, and Epic.” *Early: American Journal of Archaeology* ((98) (3) 390. 1994).

¹⁵⁸ Antonaccio, “Contesting the Past”, 397. Gregory Nagy argues for the distinction between local and panhellenic recognition of heroes as follows: ‘In order to understand the Homeric perspective on **heroes**, the emergence of

Some sanctuaries gained such fame and importance that the identity of those who undertook pilgrimage to such places saw themselves as Greek, without any further qualification of local status. However, there were strong local affiliations for both athletes and spectators in, for example, the Olympic Games, held every four years (Olympiads) in honour of Zeus at Elis.¹⁵⁹ Olympia hosted games so famous that the Greek calendar was calculated from the first games in 776 BCE. Such a grand panhellenic tradition began in more humble surroundings, with Olympia being a local centre for athletic contestants.¹⁶⁰ To the modern mind, the word ‘Olympics’ does not conjure up images of a pilgrimage; but in ancient Greece, the contests at the centres of athletic activity were understood to be in honour of the gods. The activities themselves were sacred and thus the journeys to the centres were pilgrimages, if we consider the definition of ‘sacred travel’ to be accurate.¹⁶¹

Homeric Epos must be seen in its social context, dated to the eighth century B.C. The same era is marked by the emergence of (1) The **polis** and (2) intensive intercommunication among the elite of the various **poleis**, a phenomenon which we have defined as Panhellenism. I will leave the details and documentation to Anthony Snodgrass and others, confining myself here to the problem of contrasting the cult of heroes, which is restricted to the local level of the **polis**, with the Homeric **kleos** of heroes, which is Panhellenic and thus free from such restrictions. The point is, essentially, that the eighth century B.C. is the setting not only for the emergence of Homeric Epos but also for the upsurge of hero cults, an institution that reflects not the beginnings but rather the strong revival of a continuous heritage.’ G. Nagy, (1979), *The Best of the Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry* (Baltimore, MD/London: The John Hopkins University Press, revised edition 1999), 115. Nagy also examines the relationship between τιμη (honour) which is due to heroes in cultic settings and κλέος (glory or reknown) which is identified with heroes within the sphere of epic poetry. Nagy refers to the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*, where Demophon receives ‘ἀφθιτον ... τιμήν’ (unfailing honour, as discussed by Richardson below. By contrast Achilles requests κλέος in recognition of his impending death as opposed to τιμή, and yet which is also ἀφθιτον (unfailing). It should be noted that τιμή has only the local connotation of connection with cult, whereas the supreme κλέος has the panhellenic attribute of epic poetry. Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans*, 118-119.

¹⁵⁹ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 15.

¹⁶⁰ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 106; Pausanias, *Guide to Ancient Greece 1: Central Greece*, trans. by Peter Levi, 1971 (London: Penguin Books Limited, revised 1979), (2. 24. 8) 188; (10. 2. 1) 408; Pausanias, *Guide to Ancient Greece 2: Southern Greece*, trans. by Peter Levi, 1971 (London: Penguin Books Limited, revised 1979), (4. 15. 1) 136.

¹⁶¹ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 103-104, 122. Not all scholars are in agreement on this point. For example, Matthew Dillon concedes that ‘It is more difficult to ascertain the religious motives of the participants.’ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 122. This question can be linked to the discussion above on the role of the *theoroi*. Pausanias exclaims, ‘There are a lot of truly wonderful things you can see and hear about in Greece, but there is a unique divinity of disposition about the mysteries at Eleusis and the games at Olympia.’ Pausanias, *Guide to Ancient Greece 2* (5. 10. 1) 221-222.

Other centres for athletic activity included Isthmia and Nemea, established in the sixth century,¹⁶² where the victors received wreaths instead of financial reward; hence the competitions were called ‘crown games’.¹⁶³ Although there is scant archaeological evidence, it is thought that there were local events which added to the festive experience.¹⁶⁴ This was Panhellenism on a grand scale. Yet it is important to recognize that, although the Greek competitors met as members of a wider Greek society against foreigners from neighbouring countries, any victory gained was understood in much narrower terms, both for the athlete himself and for his city.¹⁶⁵

Although important, competition at games was not the sole feature of panhellenic pilgrimage. Other long-distance travel was, as we have seen, connected with mysteries, oracles and healing.¹⁶⁶ Eleusis, the prime centre of the mysteries, has been discussed above. Concerning the character of the mysteries themselves, it is not a case of their being a conduit through which humans may have access to the divine life. However, the participants and supplicants can gain favour with the goddesses, who will act on their behalf.¹⁶⁷

When one considers the nature of panhellenic pilgrimage, it is not that there were particular circuits which pilgrims travelled, but rather that they visited each site on its own merits as having favourable characteristics for their needs. There is a distinct contrast between the all-embracing

¹⁶² Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 107.

¹⁶³ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, xiii, 99; Pausanias, *Guide to Ancient Greece* 2 (8. 48. 2) 488.

¹⁶⁴ C. Morgan, “The origins of pan-Hellenism” in Marinos and Hägg, *Greek Sanctuaries*, 35.

¹⁶⁵ Coleman and Elsner have commented, ‘... as the odes of Pindar make plain, victors in the Games were invariably celebrated as citizens of their own particular city or state.’ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 16.

¹⁶⁶ Coleman and Elsner comment, ‘... equally important [as the games] was pilgrimage to sacred centres famous throughout the Greek world for divination, prophecy and healing.’ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 16.

¹⁶⁷ N. J. Richardson describes this aspect of the Eleusinian Mysteries in *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter*. He comments: ‘The Mysteries do not break down the barrier between gods and men: at least, in the classical period there does not seem to be any suggestion of this. Demophon does not gain immortality, but he does become the $\theta\rho\epsilon\pi\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ of the divine nurse, and men will receive the favour of the goddesses, if they will only perform the necessary sacrifices and pay them the gifts which are due.’ N. J. Richardson (ed.), *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), 29.

concept of a unified national practice of visiting sites within Greece for acknowledged religious requirements, and the specific interests of each individual Greek ‘pilgrim’.¹⁶⁸

Panhellenic pilgrimages were, by their very settings, ‘fleeting and illusive’, according to Scott Scullion.¹⁶⁹ This is an important point, as it identifies the actions and experiences of panhellenic gatherings as being in a different category to the established and ‘well-trodden’ paths used by Christian pilgrims, for example. Furthermore, the authority under which the cultic rites were enacted rested with *proxenoi* or local sponsors, not some overarching national source of authority and power.¹⁷⁰

Even though participants operated through different systems of worship at local and panhellenic sanctuaries, there seems to have been no difficulties of continuing cultic allegiance; worshipping Asklepios at Epidauros did not diminish the effectiveness of the healing god’s work in their own locality.¹⁷¹ Where hero cults have panhellenic attributes, detailed evidence from post-Mycenaean finds from Bronze Age tombs have been located in the cemetery at Prosymna.¹⁷² These tombs,

¹⁶⁸ Walter Burkert asks the question, ‘Would it not be more correct to speak in the plural of Greek religions?’ yet he claims that the Greeks understood their religious life as being ‘essentially compatible, as a diversity of practice in devotion to the same gods, within the framework of a single world.’ Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 8. Matthew Dillon posits that the Greeks’ activities were influenced by the requirements of ‘initiation, oracular advice, or physical well-being.’ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, xviii.

¹⁶⁹ Scott Scullion claims that although panhellenic centres of pilgrimage were visited by people from a wide area, the governance and the political management of the sites and the acts of worship were controlled by the local community or *polis*. Scullion, “‘Pilgrimage’ and Greek Religion”, 128.

¹⁷⁰C. Sourvinou-Inwood, “What is *Polis* Religion?” in O. Murray and S. Price (eds.), *The Greek City from Homer to Alexander* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 295-322, 1990). (Repr. in Buxton 2000, 13-37).

¹⁷¹ Scullion, “‘Pilgrimage’ and Greek Religion”, 129. Matthew Dillon attempted to argue the opposite view, that gods were more effective in panhellenic centres than in local settings (Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 76.) However, Scullion claims that Dillon’s evidence was based on only one source, an *iama* from Epidauros, which Dillon interpreted incorrectly. Scullion continued by referring to the same inscription, claiming that Asklepios is content to be in Trozen, where a cure takes place. The god just happened to be away and was called back to heal.

¹⁷² These were described first by C. W. Blegen, who suggested that such ‘explanations ignore important local differences in the archaeological and material manifestations of hero cults. C. W. Blegen, “Post Mycenaean deposits in chamber tombs”, *Arch. Eph.* 1937 377-390 cited in J. Whitley. “Early States and Hero Cults: A Re-Appraisal.” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* ((108) 1988), 173.

dating from the eighth century, held important evidence of a possible link between the increasing experience of Epic poetry and its heroes and the ordinary Greek citizen: offerings were placed in the Mycenaean tombs without any trace of human remains.¹⁷³

Perhaps the heroes were the necessary link between human mortals and the immortal gods, but something was required beyond the individual, isolated experience of addressing each god separately. Panhellenism gave the Greeks this overarching panoply of religious expression and experience; as a nationwide group the gods was always available for supplication and worship, and thus the solitary Greek need never feel alone. In terms of social memory then, there was the sense of belonging, mapped onto specific sites where religious activities took place.

2. g *Healing Travels*

Travel to certain sites connected with healing involved more personal travel,¹⁷⁴ it could be local. A shrine to Asklepios¹⁷⁵ was found in many towns and cities. However, there were also panhellenic centres, namely Epidauros,¹⁷⁶ Pergamon and Kos.¹⁷⁷ At Epidauros, pilgrims would make an offering to Asklepios (or even Apollo, his father).¹⁷⁸ They would sleep inside the building of the shrine and be visited by the god during sleep, and perhaps be cured. Pilgrims'

¹⁷³ Whitley, "Early States and Hero Cults", 173.

¹⁷⁴ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 16.

¹⁷⁵ The history of Asklepios is rich and varied. It seems that his birthplace was originally in Thessaly and that he has not always enjoyed divine status. Strabo claims two interesting facts about Asklepios and Tricce in Thessaly: '... Tricce, where is the earliest and most famous temple of Asclepius, ...' Strabo 9.5.17; and '... near Tricce, where Asclepius is said to have been born, ...' Strabo 14.1.39.

¹⁷⁶ The influence of the Delphic oracle supported the claim that Asklepios was born at Epidauros, and that 'the son of Apollo' was born in the temple there. The *Hymns of Isyllos*, which are recorded at Epidauros, relate this account. See Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 75.

¹⁷⁷ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, xiii-xiv, 73-74.

¹⁷⁸ E. J. and L. Edelstein, (1945), *Asclepius: Collection and Interpretation of the Testimonies*, John Hopkins Paperbacks Edition, Volume II (Baltimore, MD/London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1998), 1-76.

cures, regarded as miraculous, were recorded on tablets and left in the vicinity,¹⁷⁹ which the authorities displayed.¹⁸⁰ Strabo records how such tablets were dedicated at Epidaurus, Kos and Triikka.¹⁸¹ Aristophanes notes how the healing process at Epidaurus involved patients becoming incubants who lay on the temple floor overnight, in the inner part of the temple (*abaton*), where they were visited by the healing god.¹⁸² Thus travel to a healing sanctuary resulted in an action that was both healing and devotional.

2. h. *The Oracle at Delphi*

Of all the oracular sites, it is Delphi which was most important.¹⁸³ The Pythia (the Oracle of Delphi) drew in many people from all over Greece. The relative isolation of Delphi enabled it to become a focus for a whole nation, devoid of other connecting attributes. This characteristic is an example whereby a distanced position, in terms of location and operation, can be applied to other foci of attention in the human mind. Delphi acquired this special status among the oracular

¹⁷⁹ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 20.

¹⁸⁰ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 74. Matthew Dillon posits that the temple authorities' inscriptions were copied from the pilgrims' own records. He says, 'Some of the iamata were clearly copied from personal records [tablets called pinakes] left by grateful pilgrims'.

¹⁸¹ Strabo claimed, 'Epidaurus was a distinguished city, remarkable particularly on account of the fame of æsculapius, who was supposed to cure every kind of disease, and whose temple is crowded constantly with sick persons, and its walls covered with votive tablets, which are hung upon the walls, and contain accounts of the cures, in the same manner as is practised at Cos, and at Tricca.' Strabo 8.6.15.

¹⁸² Aristophanes includes the following in his play *Plutus* (Wealth): 'Chremylus: But I have thought the matter well over, and the best thing is to make Plutus lie in the Temple of Asclepius. Blepsidemus: Unquestionably that's the very best thing. Hurry and lead him away to the temple.' Aristophanes, *Plutus* 667-711. Also see A. Walton, *The Cult of Asklepios* (New York, NY, 1894), 44-46, 63-67. In addition, see also night cures at the temple of Sarapis: Strabo.17.1.17.

¹⁸³ It is understood by some Greek historians to be created in later literary constructs from an imaginary past. In the case of Delphi, W.G. Forrest considers that '... any Delphic activity before the eighth century is extremely improbable'. W.G. Forrest, "Colonisation and the Rise of Delphi." *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* ((6) (2) 160-175. 1957), 160. Forrest comes to this conclusion by assessing the work of Jean Defradas, who posited the view that stories relating to Delphi were later literary constructions of an imaginary past, which explained the fame and importance of Delphi back in the seventh and eighth centuries. M. J. Defradas, *Thèmes de la Propagande Delphique* (Paris, 1954).

centres perhaps mostly due to its central geographical location within Greece and the dramatic setting on the mountainside that it dominates. The site on which Delphi was developed was a small piece of land half-way up a mountain. It was easily accessible from all over Central Greece, which gave it an advantage over two other rival sites at Dodona and Ammon.¹⁸⁴ This central location, together with breath-taking mountainous scenery, would have added to the mystique of such a place. The Temple of Apollo would have been impressive enough to promote heightened anticipation in the minds of the Pythia's enquirers, but this would have been focused even further by the location of the grotto in which the Pythia gave her pronouncements and advice.¹⁸⁵

Scott Scullion claims, in addition, that 'Delphi's pre-eminence was surely based not on specifically religious grounds but on its antiquity and high repute, its powerfully impressive setting, ... and above all on the political capital it had amassed.'¹⁸⁶ The perceived residency of the god Apollo galvanised pilgrims into making Delphi the focus of their enquiries from the gods. Adding to the drama of the temple and its location is the person of the Pythia, who uttered what were to be understood to be the very words of Apollo himself. The questions included matters of state, including political decisions on the planning of warfare and political connections between those who were allies or foes. The importance of Delphi was recognised throughout

¹⁸⁴ H. W. Parke and D. E. W. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle, Volume I, The History* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1956), 1.

¹⁸⁵ Strabo 9.3.5: 'The place where the oracle is delivered, is said to be a deep hollow cavern, the entrance to which is not very wide. From it rises up an exhalation which inspires a divine frenzy: over the mouth is placed a lofty tripod on which the Pythian priestess ascends to receive the exhalation, after which she gives the prophetic response in verse or prose. The prose is adapted to measure by poets who are in the service of the temple. Phemonoë is said to have been the first Pythian prophetess, and both the prophetess and the city obtained their appellation from the word Pythesthai, to inquire, (*πυθέσθαι*). The first syllable was lengthened, as in the words *ἀθάνατος ἀκάματος διάκονος*.'

¹⁸⁶ Scullion, "'Pilgrimage' and Greek Religion", 129.

Greece and pilgrims came, not only from the immediate area, but also from places beyond the locale, in the whole Greek-speaking world.¹⁸⁷

The Delphic oracle did not only serve individual enquirers. Spartan officials called ‘Pythioi’ needed to consult the oracle and were aware of the Pythia’s pronouncements, together with others who were kings.¹⁸⁸ Indeed, as far as records show, the major function of the Delphic oracle was to give advice and pronounce judgement on matters of state. For example, Xenophon relates how Agesipolis consulted the oracles of Zeus at Olympia and Delphi before invading Argos in 388/7 BCE.¹⁸⁹ Therefore, travellers came from far and wide to gain divine guidance. This type of travel is purposive, and results were expected from making the journey.

Consultations with the oracle at Delphi were often from official sources, in addition to the many individual personal requests for information and advice.¹⁹⁰ There is an interesting correlation between the work of the oracle and the health of the city states. When the Greek city states were in decline, the pronouncements of the oracle also waned.¹⁹¹ Yet, when times were peaceful and less stressed, the oracle spoke in a simpler way: by prose rather than poetry.¹⁹² Therefore, such activity would denote a symbiotic relationship between the oracle and her official enquirers.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁷ Strabo 9.3.4-8. Especially 9.3.7: ‘At first twelve cities are said to have assembled, each of which sent a Pylagoras. The convention was held twice a year, in spring and autumn. But latterly a greater number of cities assembled.’; Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 81.

¹⁸⁸ Herodotus 6.57.4: ‘[The kings] keep all oracles that are given, though the Pythians also know them.’

¹⁸⁹ Xenophon *Hellenica* 4.7.2-3: ‘... Agesipolis proceeded straight from there to Delphi and asked Apollo in his turn whether he also held the same opinion as his father Zeus in regard to the truce. And Apollo answered that he did hold quite the same opinion. Under these circumstances Agesipolis led forth his army from Phlius—for it had been assembling for him there while he was away visiting the holy places—and entered the territory of Argos by way of Nemea. And when the Argives realized that they would not be able to hinder the invasion, they sent, as they were wont to do, two heralds, garlanded, pleading a holy truce. But Agesipolis in reply said that the gods did not think they were making this plea justly, and so he refused to acknowledge the truce, but advanced into their territory and caused great distress and terror both in the country and in the city.’

¹⁹⁰ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 87.

¹⁹¹ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 87; Plutarch, *Moralia*, 386c, 407d, 408c.

¹⁹² Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 87; Plutarch, *Moralia*, 408c.

¹⁹³ See below for an example of the political nature of the Pythia’s work commented on by Plutarch in his *Moralia* 408.

Greek society required knowledge of the will of the gods in many of life's undertakings. A common misunderstanding of oracular statements is that they foretold the future, that the Pythia was some kind of fortune teller. This view would miss the important fact that the oracle's function was 'to tell the divine purpose in relation to coming events'.¹⁹⁴ All the requests for knowledge and advice addressed to the Pythia can be summarised in two forms. The usual question was based around the following thought: 'Is it better and more good that such and such a course be adopted?' The Pythia might respond 'λῶρον καὶ ἀμείνον ἔσται' (it will be better and more good).

Alternatively, the enquirers may have made up their mind what action to take before approaching the Pythia and therefore wished merely to learn what offering and ritual should be enacted for the god or gods to give their approval and authority.¹⁹⁵ In addition, the Pythia would be required to avoid confrontation with rich and influential enquirers, as Plutarch comments with a detached judgement, which highlights the political sphere in which Delphi operated.¹⁹⁶

The notion of journeying to an oracular site was clearly then part of Greek memory of 'sacred travel', but so also was the model of a site high on a hill, at an arresting location.

¹⁹⁴ Parke and Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle, Volume I, The History*, 2.

¹⁹⁵ Parke and Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle, Volume I, The History*, 2.

¹⁹⁶ See this discussion in Plutarch, *Moralia*, 408: 'I should not ... be surprised if there were times when there was need of *double entendre*, indirect statement, and vagueness for the people of ancient days. As a matter of fact, this or that man assuredly did not go down to consult the oracle about the purchase of a slave or about business. No, powerful States and kings and despots, who cherished no moderate designs, used to appeal to the god regarding their course of action; and it was not to the advantage of those concerned with the oracle to vex and provoke these men by unfriendliness through their hearing many of the things that they did not wish to hear.'

2. i. *Visits to the Tombs of the Greek Heroes*

Knowledge of the great heroes of ancient Greece has come down to us principally through the legacy of the poetry of Homer.¹⁹⁷ Names such as Achilles, Ajax, Odysseus, or Helen are some of the ‘major heroes’ who have featured in the ‘narrative traditions’ of Homer.¹⁹⁸ In addition, as Ellen Aitken observes, the second-century CE historian, Pausanias, relates ‘dozens of ... local heroes. ...Pausanias’s Greece is a landscape saturated with heroes.’¹⁹⁹

Perspectives, through which Greek heroes were considered and described, changed and developed over the years. Where uncertainty and lack of confidence threatened the development or very existence of a Greek city, images of past heroism were brought forth to enhance or enable the continuation and flourishing of that city.²⁰⁰ Paul Veyne has referred to this process which ‘spoke from a need for political identity’ in which communities could have familial connections with others. Veyne used the term "the thread of time" as a description of the distance between heroes and the present time.²⁰¹

In the same way that Alexander the Great anointed Achilles’ memorial stone and performed various activities emulating the visit of Xerxes before him, showing his subjects that he was

¹⁹⁷ Antonaccio, “Contesting the Past”, 390.

¹⁹⁸ E.B. Aitken, “To Encounter a Hero: Localization and Travel in Hellenistic Hero Cults.” *Center for Hellenic Studies*. Harvard University, 4.

¹⁹⁹ Aitken remarks, ‘In general, we can say that the full range of Greek religious practice appears to have performed in the worship of heroes. Recent work has begun to explore the merging of “mysteries” and initiatory practice with hero cult. From the point of view of cult, heroes share in divine powers, are “porous” to divinity, and receive divine honors. Indeed cult makes these divine attributes and capacities accessible to worshipers in specific places.’ Aitken, “To Encounter a Hero”, 5.

²⁰⁰ S.E. Alcock, “The Heroic Past in a Hellenistic Present” in P. Cartledge, P. Garnsey and E. Gruen (eds.), *Hellenistic Constructs: Essays in Culture, History, and Historiography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA/London: University of California Press, 1997), 22.

²⁰¹ P. Veyne, “Did the Greeks Believe in Their Myths?: An Essay on the Constitutive Imagination”, trans. by Paula Wissing, Chicago (1988), 76-78 cited in Alcock, “The Heroic Past in a Hellenistic Present”, 33-34.

descended from the epic heroes;²⁰² so influential ‘aristocratic’ families, purporting to have connections with an heroic past, could attempt to give their own identities credence and honour.²⁰³ Alternatively, as Susan Alcock argues, such links with a glorious past could be used as a device for social cohesion and ‘civic prestige’.²⁰⁴ Alcock claims, ‘... the influence of Homer, and his evocation of the heroic age ... emerge as a pervasive element in Hellenistic society.’²⁰⁵

The burial place of the heroes became very important in Greek society, especially where cultic status was achieved.²⁰⁶ J.N. Coldstream has commented ‘... it was in his tomb that a hero's strength was supposed to be concentrated; ...’²⁰⁷ Gregory Nagy amplifies this view by referring to the occupant of a tomb as one who becomes a revenant, whose spirit returns. According to this view, the tomb, far from being a place of death and decomposition where the stench of the grave clothes lingers,²⁰⁸ becomes a centre of new life, generated by the presence of the revenant, who attracts new life and vigour from those who flock to the site. Nagy claims that the tombs of

²⁰² Alcock, “The Heroic Past in a Hellenistic Present”, 26; E. Minchin. “Commemoration and Pilgrimage in the Ancient World: Troy and the Stratigraphy of Cultural Memory.” *Greece and Rome* ((59) (1) 83, 85. 2012); Plutarch, *The Parallel Lives*, Alexander, 2.1: ‘As for the lineage of Alexander, on his father's side he was a descendant of Heracles through Caranus, and on his mother's side a descendant of Aeacus through Neoptolemus; this is accepted without any question.’

²⁰³ Alcock, “The Heroic Past in a Hellenistic Present”, 31.

²⁰⁴ Alcock, “The Heroic Past in a Hellenistic Present”, 31.

²⁰⁵ Alcock, “The Heroic Past in a Hellenistic Present”, 32.

²⁰⁶ Carla Antonaccio has remarked on the importance of the place where heroes were buried. She says, ‘A hero's power rested in his bones and their burial spot, and worship was maintained after the Mycenaean period ‘perhaps for a long time only by a few, in those places where there remained a cult attached to a grave.’ With the rise of the *polis*, the ancestral worship of noble families broadened into hero worship.’ Antonaccio, “Contesting the Past”, 390-391; Pindar, *Odes*, T. E. Page and W. H. D. Rouse, (eds.), *The Odes of Pindar*, The Loeb Classical Library, trans. by Sir John Sandys (London: William Heineman, 1915), *Olympian Odes* I, 93: ‘And now hath he a share in the splendid funeral-sacrifices, while he resteth beside the ford of the Alpheus, having his oft-frequented tomb hard by the altar that is thronged by many a visitor; ...’; Pausanias 1,43, 2-3; 2.12.5.

²⁰⁶ J. N. Coldstream. “Hero-Cults in the Age of Homer.” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 96 14. 8-9. 1976).

²⁰⁷ Coldstream. “Hero-Cults in the Age of Homer.”, 96 14. 8-9.

²⁰⁸ I am indebted to D.H. Lawrence, who describes the tomb of Christ in very negative terms in his novel *The Rainbow*: ‘But why the memory of the wounds and the death? Surely Christ rose with healed hands and feet, sound and strong and glad? Surely the passage of the cross and the tomb was forgotten? But no - always the memory of the wounds, always the smell of grave-clothes? A small thing was Resurrection, compared with the Cross and the death, in this cycle D.H. Lawrence, *The Rainbow*, Chapter XI, Random House, Copyright 1915).

heroes are extremely important as vehicles through which the heroes may relate to the world in the capacity (among other functions) as oracles, 'possessing power from the gods'. Nagy attaches to heroes' tombs a 'sēma or sign of the revenant, the spirit that returns from the dead.'²⁰⁹ However, Carla Antonaccio has claimed that hero worship did not originate with Homer, but that it was part of a continuing process.²¹⁰

The heroes were seen in some quarters to be active after death. This raises the prospect of a dual perspective of the honouring of heroes. On the one hand there are the heroes enshrined in poetry;

²⁰⁹ G. Nagy, "The Sign of the Hero: A Prologue" in J. Berenson Maclean and E. Aitken, *Flavius Philostratus: Heroikos, with glossary, notes, and introduction*, WGRW 1. (Atlanta, 2001), xviii-xxi. Nagy claims that 'The mystical sense of sēma 'sign, signal; tomb [of a hero]' is a tradition in its own right, well attested already in Homeric poetry.' Nagy, "The Sign of the Hero", xviii-xxi. Ellen Aitken comments, 'Nagy demonstrates that the tomb of the hero is an essential feature of cult not only as a site for veneration and cult practice but also as nucleus for the activity of the hero after his or her death. That is, through the medium of the tomb, σῆμα, the hero gives a sign, σημαίνει, to the living, a sign that includes the hero's ongoing capacity as a *revenant*, savior, oracle, healer, or founder, to name a few of a hero's ways of possessing power from the gods.' Aitken, "To Encounter a Hero", 3. See also, Nagy, "Sēma and Noēsis : Some Illustrations," *Arethusa* 16 (1983) 35-55, rewritten as Ch.8 of Nagy, *Greek Mythology and Poetics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 202-222 ("Sēma and Noēsis : The Hero's Tomb and the 'Reading' of Symbols in Homer and Hesiod").

²¹⁰ Antonaccio, "Contesting the Past", 390-391. R.K Hack produced this theory, based on the work of Nilsson concerning Minoan and Mycenaean worship of the dead which had links with later Greek developments. This view has been challenged by Walter Burkert, who claimed, '... the hero cult was a direct continuation of the Mycenaean cult of the dead cannot be upheld on the basis of the archeological findings: there is no evidence for a continuous grave cult in the Mycenaean age, let alone for continuity through the dark age. The worship of heroes from the eighth century onwards must therefore be derived directly from the influence of the then flourishing epic poetry.' Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 204; Thucydides 5.11; Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 7.3.12; Pausanias 1.42.4; 1.43.2 f. Antonaccio quoted Cook who claimed that hero cults were formed 'by people who preserved no continuity of memory - and little enough of blood - some centuries after the occupants had passed into oblivion. Antonaccio, "Contesting the Past", 393-394. She has posited that other scholars, namely Snodgrass and Morris, have followed the thoughts of Nagy, who claimed that the hero cult was not a product of a response of epic poetry, but is 'a highly evolved transformation of the worship of ancestors within the social context of the city-state'. Antonaccio makes the crucial statement, 'while hero cults are local, epic ... is Panhellenic.' Equally important here is another point made by her, emphasizing the view of Nagy, based on Snodgrass, that epic poetry emerged 'in the eighth century along with the polis and Panhellenism.' Antonaccio, "Contesting the Past", 397; Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans*, 115; Hesiod fr. 25.26-33. James Whitley raises questions about the claims of Coldstream and Cook. Whitley, "Early States and Hero Cults", 174. They had emphasised that offerings had been placed in Mycenaean tombs in the late eighth and early seventh centuries, previously unheard of, and that such a discovery was connected to the phenomenon of epic poetry. The two subjects were linked. Whitley, "Early States and Hero Cults", 173. Yet Whitley critiqued this hypothesis by pointing out that the Mycenaean offerings were mostly anonymous. Whitley remarked, 'The Iliad and the Odyssey are full of the names of heroes, but there are no dedicatory inscriptions from the Archaic deposits in Mycenaean tombs. Whitley states, 'The closest we come to such an inscription is the Archaic potsherd found above Grave Circle A at Mycenae, which simply refers to 'the hero.' Whitley, "Early States and Hero Cults", 174. If the practice of placing the offerings in tombs was generally widespread in Greece as a means of honouring the heroes, why were the tombs in Crete or Thessaly not included in this practice, as epic poetry was revered there also? Such a question is raised by Whitley in his criticism of Coldstream and Cook. Whitley, "Early States and Hero Cults", 174.

but on the other hand there are people who were honoured after death, who were believed to be relevant and interactive with the living from their graves, and were therefore honoured.²¹¹

Evidence for this claim is based on a view that, far from being a device for the development of ancestral prominence, the hero cult was championed by the people, so that ‘the cult of the common heroes of the land becomes the expression of group solidarity’.²¹²

Burkert refers to the hero cult as being very local, as opposed to the panhellenic cult of the gods. He claims, ‘The bond with a hero is dissolved by distance ... It is better not to pay too much attention to one's neighbours but to hold to one's own tradition: the hero cult is a centre of local group identity.’²¹³ This means that travel was largely local rather than panhellenic.

Heroes were an essential part of ancient Greek religious life. Without them there would not have been any meaningful relationship with the gods. The heroes provided the necessary link in the ‘semipermeable membrane’ that existed in Greek minds between the realm of the gods and human life on earth. In such a world, where to use a later term ‘thin places’ existed where heroes had lived and were still remembered. Processions to the tombs of the heroes and other sacred spaces enabled the Greeks to mark these places.

²¹¹ Burkert marks the distinction between the two types of hero. Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 203. Burkert also claims, ‘The rise of the hero cult under the influence of epic poetry has its significance and its function in the evolution of the Greek polis; the prominence given to specific individual graves goes hand in hand with the suppression of the customary cult of the dead.’ Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 204.

²¹² Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 204. Burkert emphasises, ‘The hero cult, like the cult of the dead, is conceived as the chthonic counterpart to the worship of the gods, and is attended by blood sacrifices, food offerings, and libations; the preparation of a bath is often found, and weeping and lamentation are frequently attested. The main event, however, is the cultic feast of the living in the company of, and in honour of, the hero.’ Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 205.

²¹³ Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 206.

2. j. *Jewish Pilgrimage*

The patterns established in ancient Greece continued on into the Hellenistic world, in the wake of the conquests of Alexander the Great, with syncretistic cults established wherever Greek culture was established. One of the most important sites for sacred travel in the Hellenistic world was in fact Jerusalem: the Temple of the Jewish cult.

Unlike Greek processions and sacred travels, the requirement for journeying to Jerusalem for festivals was written down in religious law.

Deuteronomy 16.16 states,

Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God at the place that he will choose: at the festival of unleavened bread, at the festival of weeks, and at the festival of booths. They shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed.

Jews from all over the ancient world obeyed the Deuteronomic command listed above, and went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem to attend the festivals of Passover (Pesach), Feast of Weeks (Shavuot) and Tabernacles (Sukkot).²¹⁴ Up until the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE by Titus, and the razing of much of the city, entry to Jerusalem was open to all Jews. Between 70 and 135 CE, some Jews would have continued to return to their holy city. But after 135 CE,²¹⁵ Jews were forbidden to enter it. Hadrian built the Roman pagan city of Aelia Capitolina, and erected a temple to Jupiter on what was the site of the Second Temple.

²¹⁴ I. Rutherford, "Concord and *Communitas*: Themes in Philo's Account of Jewish Pilgrimage" in M.R. Niehoff, (ed.), *Journeys in the Roman East: Imagined and Real* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 258.

²¹⁵ Some scholars have challenged this view, and feel that the Bar Kokhba Revolt may have been a reaction to Hadrian's building of the pagan city. For example, see P. Schäfer, *The History of the Jews in the Greco-Roman World: The Jews of Palestine from Alexander the Great to the Arab Conquest* (London/New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 146.

Ian Rutherford discusses the issue of the Temple Tax in relation to Jewish pilgrimage.²¹⁶ This money needed to be sent to Jerusalem for payment, either personally or through another person. Martin Goodman proposes that a driving force behind the encouragement of Jewish pilgrimage to Jerusalem was the financial benefits resulting from such activities. He argues that Herod the Great, having a reputation for being a shrewd and speculative businessman, almost certainly supported such an enterprise.²¹⁷ Such financial activity was not reserved for Jerusalem. All temples in the ancient Graeco-Roman world were depositories of money: they were essentially the banks. For example, in Delphi, dedicatory funds were deposited in the Siphnian Treasury.

The Second Temple and the holy city of Jerusalem were the focal points of Jewish pilgrimage and visits to holy places *par excellence*. Therefore, not only the Temple complex, but the whole city could not be ignored by Jewish people; the Temple and its environs were the places where holiness dwelt, and commanded allegiance from them.²¹⁸

In addition to the travel to Jerusalem for the festivals, the martyrdom of the Maccabees had a profound effect on Jewish consciousness. In 19-54 CE, the martyr Eleazar looked back a century and more to the lives lost in the battles of the Maccabees, and he offered his life as a ransom for

²¹⁶ Rutherford, “Concord and *Communitas*”, 258.

²¹⁷ M. Goodman, “The Pilgrimage Economy of Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period” in L.I. Levine, (ed.), *Jerusalem: Its sanctity and centrality to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (New York, NY: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1999), 69-76.

²¹⁸ Philo, *In Flaccum*, 46: ‘... looking indeed upon the holy city as their metropolis in which is erected the sacred temple of the most high God, but accounting those regions which have been occupied by their fathers, and grandfathers, and great grandfathers, and still more remote ancestors, in which they have been born and brought up...’; see also Philo, *Special Laws* 1.67-70 where he expresses with deep feelings and emotion that the practice of pilgrimage is borne out of an ‘attraction of piety’, which then separates the pilgrim from their family and friends. The ensuing dangers and difficulties of travel then forge a mutual bond of friendship between pilgrims, so new friendships are made.

their lives.²¹⁹ Such a view was new in Jewish circles at that time, and it gave rise to the marking of the deaths of prophets, sometimes as martyrs. Such an elevation of martyrdom, and its connections with contemporary living, produced a need in Judaism for martyrs' tombs to be visited, for prayers to be offered for the deceased martyrs and for requests to be made that those martyrs pray for the visitors.

There were four biblical martyrs: Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Micah and Amos. Inevitably, competition arose between different communities, and duplications occurred.²²⁰

2. k. Roman pilgrimage

After the Romans conquered the Hellenistic world, through the second and first centuries BCE, they largely allowed the maintenance of local cultic rites and festivals, including the aforementioned processions and travels. In terms of the Romans themselves, they put a particular emphasis and importance on the existence and location of place.²²¹ Therefore, there was an appreciation of a physical dimension to a religious experience. However, whereas the Greeks had their processions and athletic games overseen by the *theoroi* and individual participants, Romans had no set patterns of secular activity and liturgical practice.

²¹⁹ “You know, O God, that though I might have saved myself, I am dying in burning torments for the sake of the law. Be merciful to your people, and let our punishment suffice for them. Make my blood their purification, and take my life in exchange for theirs.” 4 Maccabees 6.27-30 NRSV.

²²⁰ J. Wilkinson, “Jewish Holy Places and the Origins of Christian Pilgrimage” in Ousterhout, *The Blessings of Pilgrimage*, 46.

²²¹ A. Petsalis-Diomidis, “The Body in Space: Visual Dynamics in Graeco-Roman Healing Pilgrimage” in Elsner and Rutherford, *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity*, 186.

The Romans maintained healing sites, where remedy for illness and disease was sought.²²² The gods were believed to be sources of healing and nurture, but also of brutality, vengeance, violence and anger. As Robin Lane Fox has remarked, ‘Like an electric current, the power of the gods had great potential for helping and harming ...’ and they needed to be placated.²²³ Such real-life and immediate effects of divine activity would have been engraved deep in the society’s social memory.

In the Roman period, however, certain alternative sites developed; for example the oracular centre of Apollo at Claros. Having a long history, dating back to the sixth century BCE, Claros developed to become a rival to Didyma during the time of the Roman Empire, and from the second century CE it became a site of religious expression for the imperial cult.²²⁴ Delegations came from far and wide, both from Greece itself and further afield in the Roman Empire. In terms of the significance of *paideia*, and its characteristic of cultural learning, Claros was a place where cohorts of choir children came to sing in groups of perhaps six to fourteen in each.²²⁵ Such an enterprise is interesting from several perspectives, not least because the children would often return on numerous occasions, leading from childhood to their becoming adults. Such visits would be remembered and form part of the children’s personal histories. The experiences of *paideia* in this context might well have prepared the children to be part of the educated elite, as products of such a system of teaching and shared experience.²²⁶

²²² R. MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (New Haven, CT/London: Yale University Press, 1981), 1-2, 18-48; M. Beard, J. North, and S. Price, *Religions of Rome Volume 1: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 12-13.

²²³ Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, 38.

²²⁴ I. Rutherford, “The experience of pilgrimage in the Roman Empire: *communitas*, *paideia*, and piety-signaling.” in V. Gasparini, M. Patzelt, R. Raja, A.-K. Rieger, J. Rupke and E.R. Urciuoli (eds.), *Lived Religion in the Ancient Mediterranean World: Approaching Religious Transformations from Archaeology, History and Classics* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), 144.

²²⁵ Rutherford, “The experience of pilgrimage in the Roman Empire”, 145.

²²⁶ Rutherford, “The experience of pilgrimage in the Roman Empire”, 153.

The imperial cult is distinctively Roman. Built on the pattern of Hellenistic ruler cults, the imperial cult united the Empire. However, there is no indication that this cult elicited long-distance travel; rather, imperial cult temples were established at sites already long attracting pilgrims from afar, such as at Pergamum or Delphi. Healing sanctuaries of Asclepius continued to attract many far-flung travellers, as we learn from Aelius Aristides.²²⁷ Aristides was a prime example of someone schooled in Greek *paideia*, who left to the world a vast amount of information relating his religious experiences in his *Sacred Tales*.²²⁸ He was a member of the cult of Asclepius of Pergamum, and he was influenced heavily by the oracles in the form of dreams, which was an experience shared by many who drew to Asclepius for devotion and wisdom. Aristides wrote of his experiences at Smyrna, having been sent first to Chios for bodily healing and then to warm springs in the atrocious winter conditions of 149 CE.²²⁹ Aristides thus shows us some aspects of pilgrimage. Although the intended outcome was of a positive nature, often healing of both the body and mind, the path towards it could be arduous. The pilgrims' actions and journeys were instigated and controlled by the god to whom the pilgrimage is directed. The resulting experience was intense.²³⁰

But local Italian cults could also take on a new significance. Pliny describes the shrine dedicated to the god Clitumnus in central Italy. The statue of Clitumnus acts as an oracle, giving predictions about the future of subjects offered by his worshippers and enquirers. Those who

²²⁷ Walton, *The Cult of Asklepios*, 40-46; Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 22.

²²⁸ Rutherford, "The experience of pilgrimage in the Roman Empire", 147; Petsalis-Diomidis, "The Body in Space", 183-186.

²²⁹ Petsalis-Diomidis, "The Body in Space", 183-184; Aristides, *Sacred Tale* 2.18: 'When we arrived in Smyrna, he appeared to me in some such form. He was at the same time Asklepios, and Apollo, both the Klarian and he who is called Kallitekno in Pergamon and whose is the first of the three temples. Standing before my bed in this form ... he said that 'this was not a dream, but a waking state', and that I would also know it. And at the same time he commanded that I go down to the river, which flows before the city, and bathe.'

²³⁰ In addition to the detail in Aristides, *Sacred Tale* 2.18 where the god Asclepius was 'standing before my bed', there is a reference in *Sacred Tale* 2.32-33: '... it seemed as if I touched him.'

were gratified to hear good news, or who felt encouraged and comforted by the experience, left graffiti or even formal plaques to show to the world the efficacy of the whole enterprise.²³¹ This shifted the search for oracles westwards, close to Rome.

One factor to note here is that we get in the Roman world records by elite and educated writers of visits to cultic sites, whether in the work of Pliny, as here, or Aelius Aristides. Such writings indicate that there were visits to sites that were deemed 'holy' in the Greek world. There were processions to special places where acts of healing took place, and there were acts that could be described as being devotional, as discussed above. The writers themselves can suggest attitudes and practices that we might associate with those of a pilgrim. We see this in the case of Pausanias.

Pausanias (c.110-c.180 CE) catalogued his journeys through Greece, viewing his world through a lens tinted with nostalgic reminiscence. Already, here, the social and collective memory espoused by people of the Second Sophistic (60-230 CE), of which Pausanias is an unusual example, may demonstrate that his perspective of a 'past-in-present' dimension is nothing other than a 'fragment of collective memory'.²³² Marco Galli examines usefully the role of *paideia* as a demonstration in collective memory within the Second Sophistic. Educated elites could use their shared knowledge, expertise and wisdom to affect a communal understanding of the world, especially in religious activities and their traditions, including a sense of pilgrimage.²³³

²³¹ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 22-23. Such practices of enthusiastic endorsement are reminiscent of similar activities at Epidauros, as noted above.

²³² M. Galli, "Pilgrimage as Elite *Habitus*: Educated Pilgrims in Sacred Landscape During the Second Sophistic" in J. Elsner and I. Rutherford (eds.), *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity: Seeing the Gods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 261.

²³³ M. Galli, "Pilgrimage as Elite *Habitus*", 255, 264-267, 281.

Pausanias is our main source of information on what we might call ‘pilgrimage’ in the Roman world.²³⁴ Motivated by devotional goals and a kind of nostalgia, he looked back to a time when Greece was free of Roman domination and when it worshipped its heroes with the full force of its spiritual energy, for example Agamemnon and Odysseus, perhaps through ‘rose-tinted spectacles.’²³⁵

There was a side to Greek religion that was of intense interest to Pausanias. He was a devout follower of the Eleusinian Mysteries, so much so that he could not bring himself to report his experiences, which would have been against the rules of the authorities at Eleusis; such a ban included architecture and religious images in addition to ritual worship.²³⁶ The portrayal of religious sites with their accompanying rituals was, for Pausanias, an essential part of his understanding and reception of a narrative from which the identity and sense of cultural belonging may be identified and experienced.²³⁷

Therefore, this double-sided treatment by Pausanias, of descriptions that he recorded of sites, underlines the dual nature of human experience in pilgrimage. On the one hand pilgrims visited sites, which may have seen normal and unexceptional to the unspiritual person;²³⁸ but, on the other hand, to those who were looking to overlay the same places with spiritual qualities, their

²³⁴ J. Elsner, “Pausanias: A Greek Pilgrim in the Roman World.” *Past and Present*, (135) 20. 1992).

²³⁵ S. Alcock, “The Heroic Past in a Hellenistic Present” in Cartledge, Garnsey and E. Gruen (eds) *Hellenistic Constructs: Essays in Culture, History, and Historiography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA/London: University of California Press, 1997), 23-25. Susan Alcock raises the question as to whether Pausanias, and other writers of the Second Sophistic, deliberately avoided the reality of Roman occupation at their time of writing to look back to a glorious past now no longer attainable or experienced. In other words, the whole project of recording and discussing Greek hero worship was to look at Greek history through ‘rose-tinted spectacles’. Alcock, “The Heroic Past in a Hellenistic Present”, 34.

²³⁶ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 27; Elsner, “Pausanias”, 22.

²³⁷ W. Hutton, “The Construction of Religious Space in Pausanias” in Elsner and Rutherford, *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity*, 298.

²³⁸ 1 Corinthians 2.14-15 (NRSV): ‘Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God’s Spirit, for they are foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are discerned spiritually. Those who are spiritual discern all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else’s scrutiny.’

perceptions and experiences would have been very different. For those looking for the ‘holy’, those pilgrimage sites would be seen as being infused with ‘holiness’. In part of the multivalent nature of his enquiry, Pausanias had a particular focus on the ritual worship which took place at the sites that he visited. He was fastidious in his accuracy and clarity of relating correct details about religious sites, both in terms of physical attributes and liturgical practice. Pausanias had an interest in religious sites which goes beyond cataloguing a mere sequence of topography; he listed places according to the various liturgies performed within them. Sacrifices in the Olympian festivals were performed in a particular order and Pausanias listed them to reflect the devotees’ experience. Furthermore, Pausanias’ treatment of the activities at Olympia presents us with another location and unique way in which he wrote.²³⁹

2.1. Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined the practice of what has become known as ‘pilgrimage’ in the societies of ancient Greece and Rome. I have done so using the tool of social memory, in which the characteristics of both societies have been examined and understood in relation to each other.

Travel within Greek experience has been examined, with particular emphasis being placed on recognition of the sacred, and communication with divine beings or their representatives on earth. Although the practice of sacrifice was not encountered in Christian pilgrimage, nevertheless, the experience of extensive travel was a Christian experience, which had roots within ancient Greek society, which would have been a source of social memory. As the Greeks

²³⁹ Pausanias 5.14.4; Hutton, “The Construction of Religious Space in Pausanias”, 299; Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 26.

consulted oracles, visiting tombs of the heroes and other places such as temples and shrines, so the concept of visiting sacred sites was set in the mind of ancient Greek society.

I have examined the practice of *πομπή*, whereby the enactment of processions was an essential part of ancient Greek spirituality in a practical sense of including the general population in a religious act, which became enshrined in their social memory. A particular source of such memory has been demonstrated in the frieze on the Parthenon, which illustrates processions that occurred in ancient Greece. Such was the obvious public display of Greek processions to the populous that the image became enshrined within social memory.

Driving forces within Christian pilgrimage, which included the all-important connection between pilgrims and saints, was prefigured in the Greek honour and relevance of the tombs of the heroes. Both Greek and Christian heroes' tombs were 'thin places', and the social memory of Greek society had a profound effect on Christian practice and culture. Social memory was the avenue through which such a connection could be established and thrive. The foundation of such experience was not a local phenomenon, but was experienced throughout Greece.

I have also examined the roots of Christian pilgrimage within the social memory of ancient Roman society, in which divine interactions with human life have been studied. As the Roman gods' potential to heal or harm human beings was acknowledged in Roman society, so pilgrimage of sites of healing were experienced and encouraged.

Pausanias has been a source of much information concerning Roman pilgrimage influenced by Greek history, even though he saw his world through 'rose tinted spectacles' as he longed for a

return to such eloquent experiences that he believed Greek society could achieve. Yet, even though Pausanias was limited in our own understanding of cold unrelated commentary on historical record, he nonetheless has given us a passionate view of the relationship between Greek and Roman society, which inevitably was based on social memory.

In summary, we have seen how those who engaged in Graeco-Roman cultural practices inhabited a world where they were bound closely with another world in which many and various gods impinged on their daily lives and experiences. As part of this, they engaged in local and long-distance travel, sacred travel that we can define as pilgrimage.

The story of pilgrimage in the worlds of ancient Greece and Rome is multivalent. On the one hand there is the traditional perception of Greek hero worship having been the inheritance of a noble and revered history of epic saga-poetry, especially originating from the work of Homer. These great men and women were associated with the gods in a unique way, and they could help and assist worshippers in their contemporary world in which fear of disease, earthquake and famine was ever present, by being intercessors for the gods. The Romans, in their day, also had their many gods of healing and support in daily life. Countless shrines beckoned a multitude of pilgrims and worshippers intent on communicating with, and having an experience of, the divine.

On the other hand, there is the less romantic experience of life being at the mercy of the gods. A more realistic interpretation of the origin of the hero cult and its rituals has been supported by scholars who see the creation of myths and stories of heroes coming from human sources, such as the growth of the *polis* in Greek culture, or the posturing of families wishing to display a favourable ancestral line in their bid for power.

The practices and experiences of the ancient Greeks and Romans are of profound interest and importance to us in the twenty-first century as we endeavour to make sense of the similar activities undertaken by the liberated Christians of the fourth century. Freedom of travel and the imprimatur of the state prevailed in both religious milieux, enabling the processing, visiting and worshipping by Greeks and Romans so that they became the forerunners of Christian pilgrims. This study will examine the correlation between these two phenomena.

In such a distant world, separated from our contemporary experience by centuries, and the subsequent lack of information, the ancient Greeks and Romans pose for us an enigma, which is very hard to fathom. However, the heroes were a source of inspiration and awe, but also comfort for many generations of Greeks, both in ancient times and in the Western world of today. The adherents in Roman pilgrimage also have provided us with a rich history of inspiration and commitment. It is exciting to acknowledge that study of such foreign worlds has flourished in the last century, and that it offers much to students of ancient Greece and Rome in the future; long may it continue.

CHAPTER THREE

Cultural Memory as a driving force in Fourth-Century Christian Pilgrimage

3. a. Introduction

In this chapter there is an analysis and critique of cultural memory and tradition, which have such a strong bearing on the early Christians' decisions to embark on pilgrimages in the newly experienced freedom offered by the fourth-century Constantinian Roman Empire. I will begin by examining and assessing the nature of human memory from the perspective of cultural memory. I will also examine the concept of 'leavings' which may be deposited by cultural memory. The contribution of Maurice Halbwachs is fundamental to any study of cultural memory, but it will also be important to study and critique the work of other scholars in the field, especially Jan Assmann and Paul Connerton, who have continued and developed Halbwachs' pioneering work.

This chapter explores various interpretations of human memory and its relationship to cultural and collective memory; for example, living memory and tradition, the place of tradition in society, the relationship between individuals and society, and the gathering of memories of the past through communities rather than individuals.

The time span of cultural and collective memory is assessed. Memory span can be many thousands of years when cultural memory becomes a feature of a society's process of remembering, with writing being a key process.²⁴⁰ Homeric poetry and literature can be seen as

²⁴⁰ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 1.

significant tools in the process of cultural memory.²⁴¹ Yet there are limits on effectiveness and relevance of cultural memory; there is an horizon beyond which memory cannot be associated.²⁴² This time span includes both the past and the present when collective memory is the conduit. Lewis Coser comments on Halbwachs' view that 'collective memory is essentially a reconstruction of the past in the light of the present.'²⁴³

The chapter focuses on the term 'commemorative leavings', which denotes the sources from which history can reconstruct the past, but not experience the mental perspective of those who were alive in the time of investigation. As individual memories pass from view, it is collective memory which can give a record of human thought and belief.²⁴⁴

Stephen Davis gives an illuminating alternative view to cultural memory in his book *Christ Child: Cultural Memories of a Young Jesus*. Davis uses information recorded in the *Paidika*, in which he explores 'the difficulties faced in reconstructing the early history and form of the text and in assessing how late ancient and early medieval audiences would have encountered such stories.' Davis uses the concept of cultural memory as a tool in his book to trace 'the idiosyncratic pathways that these stories travelled in their history of interpretation.'²⁴⁵ Davis asks, 'what cultural resources did Graeco-Roman and medieval readers have at hand to help them make sense of Jesus' childhood, and what role did perceptions of the past play in this process?' He answers these questions by stating, 'I utilize methods grounded in the sociology of cultural memory, a field that provides descriptive language well suited for the analysis of the

²⁴¹ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 29.

²⁴² Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 3.

²⁴³ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 34

²⁴⁴ See Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, 76.

²⁴⁵ Davis, *Christ Child*, 6.

Paidika and its history of interpretation.²⁴⁶ This method of using and interpreting data through the lens of cultural memory is precisely what is being attempted in this thesis in relation to fourth-century Christian pilgrimage.

The chapter will use fourth-century Christian pilgrimage as the milieu in which these attributes of cultural memory are investigated and assessed.

As stated above, one of the most important scholars on collective memory, writing in the twentieth century, was the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs. His work on cultural memory will be a key focus in the thesis. The concept of collective memory was first attributed to him; one could call him ‘the father of collective memory’. Halbwachs wrote an account of pilgrimage in the Holy Land, using his skills as someone who interpreted the pilgrims’ actions and the use of sacred sites in the context of collective memory.

Although this thesis has Egeria (Etheria or St Silvie) as the main example of a fourth-century pilgrim, our focus must now be on the anonymous Pilgrim from Bordeaux as they became the subject of the Halbwachs’ first chapter in his seminal book, *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre sainte*. This book will be translated into English by the present writer for a detailed discussion of his observations and claims.²⁴⁷

It is clear from the outset of the chapter that Halbwachs sees the Bordeaux Pilgrim’s early account as taking precedence over later work (including Egeria and her *Itinerarium*), as he says,

²⁴⁶ Davis, *Christ Child*, 14.

²⁴⁷ At present only the Conclusion of *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre sainte* is available in English, printed in *On Collective Memory*, ed. + trans. by Lewis A. Coser (Chicago, IL/London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 193-235.

How could we not study this text? It is a unique vestige that brings us closer to the period when the events reported in the Gospels are located, below which we find only a few texts in the writings of the Fathers of the Church, but no relation followed by anyone who saw the place.²⁴⁸

Although Halbwachs spent most of his life making a distinction between individual and group memory, he did expand his view to encompass both perspectives in his last book *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre sainte*. In his excellent perceptive account of pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the fourth century, he demonstrated that individual memories and the wider aspect of symbolism can be brought together and merged.²⁴⁹

Jan Assmann makes a link in cultural memory between the practice of Mesopotamian society, which began archaeological excavations in search of its past and the *topographie légendaire* championed by Maurice Halbwachs in his history of the Church in late antiquity and later.²⁵⁰

On the subject of memory and pilgrimage, Halbwachs claims,

We are in the land of the oldest Jewish patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph. These are Jewish memories, but Christians have taken to commemorate them by churches, as they did the saints of David and Moses. Read the *Peregrinatio* of *St. Silvia* (Etheria), who has climbed the slopes of Sinai, Horeb, Mount Nebo; on each of these hills, there were convents, churches, and Christians came to pray there, reading the first books of the Old Testament. That is, for Christianity, the period of expansion and conquest. But it is still deeply committed to Judaism. Christian memory seems to have taken root in Jewish memory.²⁵¹

Halbwachs summarizes his views on the Bordeaux Pilgrims' account by saying,

This testimony stands at a decisive moment, while Constantine has to convert to Christianity, and that certainly in line with what he wanted the unity of dogma and the

²⁴⁸ M. Halbwachs, (1941), *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre sainte*, ed. Marie Jaisson, 2nd edition (1971) trans. by Hugh Bonsey using Google Translate (2017), 1st edition Quadrige, Paris: Quadrige/Presses Universitaires de France, 2008), 9.

²⁴⁹ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 9.

²⁵⁰ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 28-29.

²⁵¹ Halbwachs, *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre sainte*, 47.

Church has been made at the Council of Nicea (325). Then occurs, as Renan said, “the change of policy which, [under Constantine], reversed the position, and made of the most free and spontaneous religious movement an official worship, subject to the State, and persecutor in its turn.”

For us who are trying to follow a collective memory of experience, no document could be more valuable. It takes us back closest to the origins, so that these traditions are still developing, indeed, a spontaneous movement. Thanks to him, in contrast, we can see that, in later traditions, carries the mark of artifice and systematic religious spirit.²⁵²

In the introduction to *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre sainte*, Maurice Halbwachs presents us with his reflections of the relevance of such an activity for fourth-century Christians. Halbwachs claims that pilgrims wish to witness the places of events recorded in the Gospels - by tradition. He emphasizes that some memories have been ‘transfigured’, particularly as the subject matter is not just ‘ordinary’ history, but that it has a ‘supernatural’ quality and identity. Pilgrims ‘enter another world’ as they overlay the appearance of the mundane physical settings with supernatural connotations. They require the certainty of the ‘authentic vestiges of the passage of Christ’. They want to be certain of the places where Christ spoke and acted in his life, so that their faith can become ‘vivified’ and take on a new ‘intensity’. Therefore, the accuracy of the traditions has a special importance so as to be resistant to criticism or denial. By linking the cultural memory of biblical tradition to the pilgrimage experience, events in history can become part of present experienced reality – there is a ‘direct contact’ with Christ. The places where Christ lived and worked can be ‘touched’ by the pilgrims. Halbwachs describes this process as resulting in approaching the tradition of the Gospels in ‘a whole new perspective’.²⁵³

Halbwachs raises critical questions over the link of the Gospel material to the claimed pilgrimage sites: ‘We reach the locations of evangelical facts at a fairly late stage in the early fourth century. These traditions of the so-called holy places, how have they formed? What is its origin?’ He

²⁵² Halbwachs, *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre sainte*, 48-49.

²⁵³ Halbwachs, *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre sainte*, trans. by Hugh Bonsey, 1.

takes the position that the traditional beliefs exist, regardless of the evidence to support them. He says, ‘The key is that these traditions exist, when we reach them. We do not seek what is behind them, and if they are genuine. But we look at themselves as collective beliefs.’ For Halbwachs it is the collective memory, which is the driving force behind pilgrimage activity: ‘What matters to us is, ... to see some of the laws that governed the collective memory.’²⁵⁴

Reflecting on the testimony of pilgrims, Halbwachs claims,

You can follow the spontaneous evolution and traditions, and in some cases their natural persistence through time, for no reason other than religious instinct, certain needs of the religious imagination, freed in groups of any rational or scientific discipline.²⁵⁵

Halbwachs considers that the ‘first traditions’ are beyond our powers of investigation. They are ‘shrouded in darkness’. He relates the condition of Jerusalem after 66 CE, when the Christian community left the city. It was ‘a heap of piled stones’. When Hadrian rebuilt Jerusalem as a pagan city, any hint of Christian architecture was obliterated. Yet some Christians did remain: ‘a few old men, some women’. He imagines undercover visits by Christians to the holy sites at the period between 66CE and 132CE. He says,

Christians in particular were guarding the memory and the cult of certain places. Since no-one was rebuilding in the city, and around the huge stones of great buildings remained intact in their place, ... all the monuments were still perfectly recognizable.²⁵⁶

Halbwachs is very wary of memory being a means whereby accurate details of the past can be relayed to the present. As mentioned above, he considers that, ‘... the collective memory is essentially a reconstruction of the past.’²⁵⁷

²⁵⁴ Halbwachs, *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre sainte*, trans. by Hugh Bonsey, 2.

²⁵⁵ Halbwachs, *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre sainte*, trans. by Hugh Bonsey, 3.

²⁵⁶ Halbwachs, *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre sainte*, trans. by Hugh Bonsey, 6.

²⁵⁷ Halbwachs, *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre sainte*, trans. by Hugh Bonsey, 6.

In his more general work on collective memory, Halbwachs laments the lack of evidence of pilgrimage before the fourth century. As a source of material from which we can learn of the early Christian experience, we have the Gospels and the oral traditions which lie behind them. He claims, 'In short, the Gospels already represent a memory or a collection of memories held in common by a group.'²⁵⁸

Halbwachs considers it 'probable' that Jesus' original disciples would have shown enquirers places of which we have no knowledge, because there was an absence of tradition within their activities. The opposite was happened. The sites now venerated in Jerusalem relate to supernatural events. After all the destruction and devastation of Jerusalem in 70AD and then in 132AD, the person whom the Christian visitors commemorated with 'the supernatural Christ.'²⁵⁹

The memories of the original Christ would need to become 'part of a doctrine' if they were to endure. Halbwachs claims,

In order for recollections of the life and death of Christ and of the places through which he passed to endure, they had to be made part of a doctrine: that is, of an idea that was alive for an enduring and extended group. In order for the abstract idea of expiation to become something other than an aspiration, so that one would believe in it as one would believe in a historical truth or a fact of experience, it was necessary that it claim to belong to a living tradition and to human testimony.²⁶⁰

Halbwachs considered the necessity of salient, serious articles of Christian belief being disengaged with the immediate environment in order to survive long-term elsewhere. For this to happen, the events purported to have happened in the life and times of Jesus would need to be relocated to become 'part of earlier events reported in the Old Testament, where they had been

²⁵⁸ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 193.

²⁵⁹ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 198-199.

²⁶⁰ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 200-201.

announced by the prophets.’ Also, as time passed and the events surrounding the earthly Jesus became more distant, ‘dogma profoundly modified the story of Jesus.’²⁶¹ An example of this fluidity is the location of the Cenacle, which up until the fourth century was in three distinct places: Mount of Olives, Gethsemane and the Grotto of Jesus’ teaching.²⁶²

Halbwachs makes an important point about the nature of collective memory:

Collective memory must be distinguished from history. Historical preoccupations such as we think of them, and which each author of a work of history must be concerned with, were alien to Christians of those periods.

Halbwachs highlights the view of those who promoted sites to be holy for pilgrims: ‘Their memories were closely tied to rites of commemoration and adoration, to ceremonies, feasts, and processions.’²⁶³

Halbwachs stresses that in each epoch, the requirements of the believing Christian community dictates the provision of holy sites:

... in each period the collective Christian memory adapts its recollections of the details of Christ's life and of the places where they occurred to the contemporary exigencies of Christianity, to its needs and aspirations.²⁶⁴

In order to use a reliable source of information which can give details about beliefs and practices in the past, a society needs to have more than immediate human memory at its disposal.

Jan Assmann’s works are of particular importance in this enterprise as they survey cultural memory in many situations. For example, Assmann claims that cultural or religious symbols and

²⁶¹ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 200-201.

²⁶² Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 221.

²⁶³ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 222.

²⁶⁴ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 234.

rituals provide an important safety mechanism for memory, which may involve individual people or whole societies who follow cultural customs and religious feast days.²⁶⁵ He features the Homeric epics in his work as examples of depositories of Greek knowledge.²⁶⁶ Jacques Le Goff highlights the view that memories entrusted to communities are more secure and reliable than individual memories.²⁶⁷

Halbwachs claims that collective memory is something which is constructed by society. Therefore, such memory does not come to fruition naturally in the minds of the general population, but is manipulated deliberately by those in power or in specific groups to express their view of the world, and to create their own history.²⁶⁸

For our purposes of enquiry into the formation of Christian pilgrims, the question can be asked in the light of Halbwachs' findings, 'Are pilgrims' memories and recollections of past events, and are the events related by cultural memory, those from genuine original sources or are they constructs of an ecclesiastical elite?' (Much the same question could be raised against biblical and doctrinal accounts and claims within the Christian Church and other religions.)

²⁶⁵ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 8-9.

²⁶⁶ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 29.

²⁶⁷ Le Goff claims, 'Up until our own time, "history and memory" had practically fused, and history seems to have developed "on the model of remembering, of anamnesis and of memorization." Historians proposed the expression "great collective mythologies," "we were passing from history to collective memory." But the whole evolution of the contemporary world, under the impact of an *immediate history* for the most part fabricated on the spot by the media, is headed toward the production of an increased number of collective memories, and history is written, much more than in earlier days, under the influence of these collective memories.' J. Le Goff, *History and Memory*, 95.

²⁶⁸ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 22.

Since Halbwachs' seminal works, in addition to Jan Assmann, there have been four other scholars²⁶⁹ who have contributed greatly to the subject of cultural memory. Pierre Nora has the phrase *lieux de memoire* (sites of memory) in which he claims the existence of specific points of cultural identity and presence. These *lieux de memoire* are places where memories are born and through which collective memory and identity can be re-established.²⁷⁰ Stephen Davis comments most usefully when he highlights the fact that Nora's concept of *lieux* 'sites' can apply to memory relating to both physical geography and 'a physical landscape or to a mythic motif replicated in literature and art.'²⁷¹ Nora comments most usefully when he says,

Our interest in *lieux de memoire* where memory crystallizes and secretes itself has occurred at a particular historical moment, a turning point where consciousness of a break with the past is bound up with the sense that memory has been torn—but torn in such a way as to pose the problem of the embodiment of memory in certain sites where a sense of historical continuity persists. There are *lieux de memoire*, sites of memory, because there are no longer *milieux de memoire*, real environments of memory.²⁷²

In the previous chapter we saw how Greek epic poetry, with the establishment and practice of processions, contributed to popular awareness and worship of the gods. The use of memory was integral in all these experiences and ways of life. In this chapter I will examine and assess the nature of human memory from two perspectives. The first section will be short resumé of some scholars' work in the memory of individuals. The second section will deal with the more open and diverse subject of cultural and collective memory.

It must be said from the outset that to examine memory without including its relationship to place is very difficult. In some ways one could postulate that unless both are examined and

²⁶⁹ Pierre Nora, Paul Connerton, Aleida Assmann and Astrid Erll. I am indebted to Stephen Child for his discussion on these scholars' contributions to the subject of the childhood of Jesus. See Davis, *Christ Child*, 16-18.

²⁷⁰ To use Davis' words, 'reoriented and recentred'. Davis, *Christ Child*, 16.

²⁷¹ Davis, *Christ Child*, 16-17.

²⁷² P. Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire." *Representations* ((26) 7-24. 1989), 7.

critiqued together, the task is made so much more arduous. The present argument will progress in stages, so that a clear understanding of memory can be achieved before progressing to the challenges and experiences of fourth-century pilgrims to the Holy Land. It is my intention to show how human memories are unreliable, even though the ‘witnesses’ may feel themselves to be honest and capable of accurate retrieval of their own memories.

There is a temptation to examine and assess the life and witness of the Church in a period beyond the fourth century, but that would not be relevant (and faithful) to the task in hand. One can only attempt to transcribe the current understanding of memory back to the earliest days of the Church in an effort to ascertain what actually happened in the lives and beliefs of those Christians living in the first four hundred years of the Church’s life.

The paucity of original texts, and the manipulation of surviving data by the all-powerful post-Constantinian Church, gives little hope for twenty-first century enquirers and scholars to ascertain the truth of what happened in the fourth century. This is the challenge and task of this thesis. Chapter Three will use the knowledge we have of memory, to work towards a solution to the problem that we have concerning our connection with those earliest times.

3. b. The nature of human memory

In this section there is examination of the attributes of individual memory. Collective memory is assessed in the next section. Jan Assmann claims, ‘It is a projection on the part of the collective

that wishes to remember and of the individual who remembers in order to belong.’²⁷³

If we are to make sense of the world, we have to understand how we can achieve an accurate sense of history. We can do this by looking at the relationship between hermeneutics and memory. Both Assmann and Hans-Georg Gadamer consider that before knowledge can be acquired, there must be memory in the first place. Memory is seen as being a primary source.²⁷⁴

Indeed Assmann follows the thinking of Gadamer when he claims that ‘There is no understanding without memory.’²⁷⁵ Therefore, from Assman’s and Gadamer’s perspective, the presence and function of memory are essential for human cognizance of the world. This perceived foundation of human knowledge is fundamental to the claims being made in this thesis: that memory is a potent and effective driving force behind knowledge and belief, which results in people reacting in spectacular and often dangerous ways.

Yet the process of remembering and recalling the past is not the only means whereby we can build a clear picture of the world in our minds. As stated above, the process of forgetting is also important as a means of filtering out what is insignificant, so that we can concentrate on important information that can be retained and secured in memory. This process enables a person to conduct critical analysis of the world around them. Gadamer argues persuasively, that sifting, keeping and sometimes rejecting information gives us the opportunity of using memory in a very positive way. He claims, ‘It is time to rescue the phenomenon of memory from being regarded merely as a psychological faculty and to see it as an essential element of the finite historical

²⁷³ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 7.

²⁷⁴ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, ix-x; Gadamer, “Wahrheit und Methode”, 478.

²⁷⁵ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 27.

being of man.’²⁷⁶ So, by using our faculties of remembering, but also forgetting, we can build up an understanding of the world around us.

Furthermore, one could extend this view to include critical analysis of texts and the received words from an oral tradition. Assmann says forcefully, ‘That is why it (memory) is not ‘photographic’.’²⁷⁷ In the same way that data, which can be aurally or visually received, is not uncritically compiled as in a recording or photograph, human emotion can have a part to play in the function of memory. Assmann refers to the ‘emotional force’ of pictorial images, which can become imprinted in memory. In contrast he claims that data based on narrative occupies a position in which the emotional content needs to be informed by additional data of an interpretative nature.²⁷⁸ Could it be that data, originally stored in memory, could be lost and forgotten without additional stimuli such as images, or perhaps, physical activity? Therefore, one could argue with some force, that memory needs to be acquired through our senses, as a biological necessity, and yet such data may well be in different categories.

Most of what we know is acquired by receiving the memories of others. Robert Audi indicates how memories of World War II can be experienced by those who lived after the event, even though the data is indirect.²⁷⁹ We, and the historians, may well request authentication of memories that have been passed down to us, some of which may not be true. As information is transmitted from many different sources, the scholar or historian is constantly trying to verify whether a particular statement or image is a true reflection of what actually happened. All this anxiety relates to information received second-hand. When direct personal memory is involved,

²⁷⁶ Gadamer, H-G. (1975), *Truth and Method*, 15.

²⁷⁷ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 3.

²⁷⁸ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 3.

²⁷⁹ Audi, *Epistemology*, 62-63.

the relationship between the received memory and what it portrays may be accurate and true. Audi discusses this question in his seminal work *Epistemology*, and claims that such a position is open to question when one considers the problems related to reliability of memory.²⁸⁰ In his useful analysis of memory, Robert Audi categorizes three theories: namely ‘direct realism ... representative realism, and phenomenalism.’²⁸¹ He makes important and useful distinctions between the three categories, or modes. Audi talks about memory, remembering, and recalling. Remembering events is distinct from recalling the same activities, and the concept of memory is the arena in which remembering and recalling take place.²⁸²

Furthermore, Audi discusses the way in which past events can be imagined. The memory of these events can either be accurate or not; they can have force without resorting to pictures or images. He claims that the person remembering, for example, an object, can hallucinate without having any experience or evidence of that object’s shape or form. Remembering in this category can be understood and have a very wide sense, as the representation of things or objects remembered do not have images related to them.²⁸³ Likewise, Audi remarks that language memory can be distorted. He quotes an example of talking to someone in a city surrounded by skyscrapers. He can remember the discussion, but the skyscrapers may not belong to the city that he remembers as being the place of the discussion. For example, he may be convinced that the talk took place on Wall Street, New York, but in fact he might have been mistaken.²⁸⁴

²⁸⁰ Audi, *Epistemology*, 64.

²⁸¹ Audi, *Epistemology*, 66.

²⁸² Audi, *Epistemology*, 66.

²⁸³ Audi, *Epistemology*, 70.

²⁸⁴ Audi, *Epistemology*, 70.

Audi makes a crucial point that the process of remembering must be governed by what he describes as ‘memorial capacities which are granted in the past.’²⁸⁵ This characteristic of memory outweighs and supersedes any ability on our part to create images which have been recalled from other sources, which then construct beliefs that are the basis for cohesive accounts of the past. What is being said here may seem to be a contradiction of a popular view. We can imagine a whole range of images which may create a past for us, but unless we ground ourselves in the past, such constructions would be suspect.²⁸⁶

Robert Audi’s work gives us a remarkable and sobering insight into the fragility of human memory and, alarmingly, that such memory may well turn out to be one the ephemera related to human existence. If this is so, human memory would need to be studied with greater care than may seem to be the case; its reliability and relevance to the process of recording history may well need to be analysed and critiqued in new and more secure ways.

3. c. Cultural and collective memory

Audi’s warnings and sobering reflections on human memory relate principally to the memory of individuals. Therefore, we need to analyse and assess other mnemonic systems in which data held in memory can be more secure and reliable.

It can be demonstrated that people always create systems of assistance to help them remember important things and events. It may range from the well-known and used ‘knotted handkerchief’

²⁸⁵ Audi, *Epistemology*, 74.

²⁸⁶ Audi, *Epistemology*, 74.

to elaborate cultural or religious symbols and rituals. Such an important safety mechanism for memory may involve individual people, or whole societies who follow cultural customs and religious feast days.²⁸⁷ As the subject of human memory has been examined and scrutinised by scientific enquirers, some scholars are concerned that memory has been understood in too narrow a form, involving biological neural pathways of knowledge and consciousness, and that a wider aspect including cultural memory would be more useful to us.²⁸⁸

By looking back over such a span of time, we can see Homeric epics as being significant tools in the process of cultural memory. They inhabit a time before the Greek ‘dark age’ of four or five centuries, to the Late Bronze Age bringing the Trojan War to what has been described as a ‘normative past’²⁸⁹ Yet in the fifth and sixth centuries they achieve the character of ‘connective memory’.²⁹⁰ Such a cultural depository of memory has been claimed to be experienced throughout Greece as a ‘Panhellenic’ phenomenon in the face of war with the Eastern enemy.²⁹¹

Nevertheless, Assmann puts limits on effectiveness and relevance of cultural memory. He claims that there is an horizon beyond which memory cannot be associated. Knowledge can go so far, but no further in its relationship with memory.²⁹² Investigations to retrieve data from cultural memory must be detached from their subject. Culture must be examined ‘from the outside’.²⁹³ Such an astute and focused analysis of the relationship of cultural memory to its mnemonic structure with the world to which it relates, is, in my view, a process which must be undertaken from a detached vantage point. The observer and analyst of cultural memory must be able to

²⁸⁷ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 8-9.

²⁸⁸ For example, see Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 8.

²⁸⁹ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 29.

²⁹⁰ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 29.

²⁹¹ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 29.

²⁹² Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 29.

²⁹³ Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 30.

view the subject from an objective viewpoint; otherwise the cultural aspect of the investigation would be compromised or lost.

The subject of repetition has been discussed by Patrick Hutton as having major importance in the functioning of memory and the relevance of its outcome on the continuation of membered acts and articles of belief in groups and societies.²⁹⁴ In his careful and useful analysis of ‘the art of memory’, Patrick Hutton focuses on two important activities, which can be identified within the process of memory: repetition and recollection. Hutton champions the relevance of the past, against the more critical stance of contemporary scholars. He says,

... common sense suggests that we need the past and must maintain our living connections with it. What had shown through all of the reflections on the nature of memory by poets and philosophers across the ages was the interplay between repetition and recollection. The tension between the two was as old as the Greek myth of Mnemosyne, at once the goddess of imagination and of memory, and it was one that bestowed on memory its particular ambiguity. It draws the past into the present but colors it with its particular hues and reflections.²⁹⁵

Hutton comments on the work of Maurice Halbwachs in a useful way. Hutton discusses how Halbwachs’ suspicions on the reliability of individual memories of the past engendered an ‘interpenetration of memory and history’.²⁹⁶ But such a relationship must always have a foundation of ‘documented historical evidence.’²⁹⁷ Yet others who engage in repetition, often connected with religious (or other) traditions, are concerned with the past, which negate reflection. Hutton claims that, ‘it is the opening between these two moments that makes historical thinking possible.’²⁹⁸ Recollection can be used to study the political use of memory,

²⁹⁴ Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, xvi, 7,18 50, 164-165.

²⁹⁵ Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, xvi.

²⁹⁶ Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, 76-77.

²⁹⁷ Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, 76-77.

²⁹⁸ Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, xx-xxi.

but repetition can be used to research how people in the past experienced their world.²⁹⁹ The concept of repetition and recollection is of central importance in the development of this thesis, as the links between narrative and memory are explored, analysed and assessed.

3. d. Orality to Literacy and its Impact on the Use of Memory

Walter J. Ong argues that the progression from orality to literacy in the Western world only really began in the seventeenth century, and then established itself in the following century when the power of the printed word had the potential of becoming dominant in society.³⁰⁰ Ong understood the spoken word to be both the original but also the formative way in which data is transferred by humans. Hutton remarks,

Oral expression tends to be copious; it relies heavily on preset formulaic phrasing. Literate expression, by contrast, tends to be spare; its facile use of words lends itself more easily to abstract thought.³⁰¹

The different qualities of oral and written ways of relating to the past have a profound effect on the way that each can be used in the context of memory. Yet there has always been a relationship between orality and literacy. Ong remarks,

Hearing rather than sight had dominated the older noetic world in significant ways, even long after writing was deeply interiorized. Manuscript culture in the West always remains always marginally oral. Ambrose of Milan caught the earlier mood in his *Commentary on Luke* (iv. 5): ‘Sight is often deceived, hearing serves as guarantee.’³⁰²

²⁹⁹ Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, xxiv-xxv.

³⁰⁰ It is tempting to follow Ong and Carruthers in their arguments through the manuscript tradition to that of later periods beyond the fourth century. But that would be to superimpose later developments and experiences of memory back to earlier times, when no such experience, or widespread shared thought, existed. One cannot reach back before the advent of the printing press to seek a world of mass communication, which did not (and could not) exist.

³⁰¹ Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, 14.

³⁰² W.J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, Selected content by John Hartley (Abingdon/New York, NY: Routledge, 30th Anniversary Edition 2012), 117.

Yet, as systems of data retrieval developed from oral to literary forms, the presence of literature did not reduce the importance of memory. The use of rhetoric can be referenced in both formats separately or together.³⁰³ Mary Carruthers claims, ‘Because oral cultures must obviously depend on memory, and hence value memory highly, such valorisation has come to be seen as a hallmark of orality, as opposed to literacy’.³⁰⁴ When we examine the relationship between orality and memory, we may, with Walter Ong, pause to consider the utterly alien world in which no words exist.³⁰⁵ Ong reminds us that in that world, there is nothing to ‘look up’, there are no visible sites of reference, to be studied and copied. Ong makes the intriguing point that whereas visual images, such as a series of frames in a film or words on a page can be paused and viewed, sounds cease to exist the moment that *they* are paused. This observation highlights the need for accurate and efficient systems of memory to be present and practiced in oral societies. The subject of trained memory is discussed in the section below.

3. e. Memoria: *The art of trained memory*

Before the advent of the printing press in the fifteenth century, scholars could not have recourse to reading original material very often. Therefore, a trained memory was essential for scholars in order that they could retain information on first reading of their source material.³⁰⁶

³⁰³ See Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 12-13.

³⁰⁴ Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 12.

³⁰⁵ See Ong’s discussion on the difficulties that literate people experience by considering only sounds as means of communication, in Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 31-36.

³⁰⁶ Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 9.

In her seminal book *The Book of Memory*, Mary Carruthers, as featured above, discusses Albert Einstein and Thomas Aquinas. She recognizes the similarity in the attributes of both geniuses. Both men had ‘creative imagination’, but they used it in very different ways, having very different ways of thinking. Whereas Einstein based the information he used his imagination³⁰⁷ and facts derived from a deep study of physics, Aquinas used his memory in an outstanding way. It is claimed that Thomas Aquinas never forgot anything he read.³⁰⁸ Carruthers maintained that Aquinas could not have achieved his enormous output without having a trained memory. She emphasised that such feats performed by Aquinas could not have been possible through an innate ability alone.³⁰⁹ Her term *memoria* is used to refer to such a trained memory. In the ancient world, without wide use of books, authors and thinkers were required to use their memory in a very specific way. She refers to trained memory being ‘educated and disciplined according to a well-developed pedagogy that was part of the elementary language arts– grammar, logic, and rhetoric.’³¹⁰ Carruthers claims, ‘It is my contention that medieval culture was fundamentally memorial, to the same profound degree that modern culture in the West is documentary.’³¹¹ Carruthers posits that *Memoria* was a strong feature of recording facts in the ancient world. Indeed, even in the periods when books became more prevalent and valued highly, they were, nevertheless, seen only as one of several means of remembering and retrieving a text.³¹² Furthermore, Carruthers claims,

³⁰⁷ See Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, page 2 and Einstein’s work colleague Leopold Infeld who remarked, ‘The greatness of Einstein lies in his tremendous imagination, in the unbelievable obstinacy with which he pursues his problems.’

³⁰⁸ Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 4.

³⁰⁹ Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 8.

³¹⁰ Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 8. The method employed to access accurate memory recall was to break down data into small accessible chunks of information, which could then be reconstructed into a larger whole. Such a system of data retrieval enabled random access to be achieved.

³¹¹ Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 9.

³¹² Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 9.

A thing is said metaphorically to be written on the mind of anyone when it is firmly held in the memory ... For things are written down in material books to help the memory.³¹³

Carruthers claims that there is the sense in which *memoria* encapsulates the meaning of the words expressed. The use of language and recording of words only acts as a medium through which truth can be comprehended and contained within the human mind. The importance for the reception of truth rested with *memoria*. The printed word and its textual meaning could be open to various interpretations through which the divine truth could be received and understood.³¹⁴

At a period when memory was the chief means of retaining information, its formation and use was of extreme importance. Certainly, the written text was valuable, even though it was rare and therefore little used. The point of enormous interest here is Carruthers' claim that the use of metaphor was paramount in the process of retaining information in memory. The subject of metaphor becomes a key element in the understanding of religious texts and the Early Church's reading of the New Testament. The question can be asked, 'If the early Christians understood information in the New Testament to be largely in metaphor, why did they try to make such specific links between such information and the location in the Holy Land where they were purported to take place?' Such an investigation will be a major part of this thesis on the question of memory and place.

³¹³ Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 10.

³¹⁴ Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 11.

**3. f. *How memory influenced the building of Early Christian Doctrine
and its Implications for Christian Pilgrimage***

Maurice Halbwachs promotes the view that the Christian church focuses on the earliest times of its history. This characteristic, which Halbwachs describes as ‘dangerous’, makes the Church ever more distanced from the society in which it lives.³¹⁵ Memories, which refer back to the first two centuries, become enshrined in dogma and are not flexible to be influenced by the thoughts and mores of following generations.³¹⁶

Furthermore, Halbwachs understands the ossification of early Christian teaching and experience in the process of creating dogma, as being the work of clerics, who distance themselves from the laity and thus create two distinct groups within the life of the Church. This separation not only confirms the requirement to maintain a rigid dogmatic agenda, but also to arouse suspicion (and even subjugation) of other sources of religious thought, expression and belief shown in other forms, for example, Christian mysticism.³¹⁷

Halbwachs considers that the interior spiritual life of the mystic is based on the contemporary, experienced presence of Christ related directly to the mystic and a way that is very different from the conventional member of the Church, who is guided by tradition, and the collective memories that drive it. In other words, the Church is driven by the past and its testament to the life, death and resurrection of Christ, especially in the first two centuries.

³¹⁵ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 93.

³¹⁶ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 91.

³¹⁷ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 98, 100.

Halbwachs comments on the work of St Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) who emphasised the humanity of Jesus and other New Testaments figures, especially the Blessed Virgin Mary and St Joseph. Bernard, more than any other writer in the twelfth century, nurtured the cult of the Virgin, using the Gospel of St Luke as his main focus of attention in the New Testament.³¹⁸

Lewis Coser summarizes his view of the use of memory for people who are religious as follows:

... the Church completes and illuminates its earlier remembrances through representations which, even though they have only recently attracted its attention, are themselves also remembrances. In this way, although religious memory attempts to isolate itself from temporal society, it obeys the same laws as every collective memory: it does not preserve the past but reconstructs it with the aid of the material traces, rites, texts, and traditions left behind by that past, and with the aid moreover of recent psychological and social data, that is to say, with the present.³¹⁹

3. g. Conclusion

We talk of direct memories having considerable weight, but unfortunately this is not the case, as my studies have shown. Therefore, any hope of retrieving accurate recollection of the past must reside in cultural and collective memories. Alas, here to, there are multitudinous problems and concerns. As will be shown, in the same way that ‘history is always written by the winners’, so memories are passed down from one generation to the next by those in power, for their own ends. In terms of the Christian Faith and pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the power that controlled and still controls the memories of the Early Church is the Church itself. Can it be trusted?

³¹⁸ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 106-107.

³¹⁹ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 119.

Furthermore, this problem is compounded by the distance in time between the first written accounts of the earliest days of the Church and those earliest days themselves. We are reliant entirely on the cultural and collective memory of the early Christians. Therefore, any recollection of the driving force behind Christianity, i.e. the person of Jesus of Nazareth, his life and death, and the belief that he became a revenant, could not be accessed by the earliest Christian pilgrims in the fourth century. To quote a modern phrase, there was a 'missing link' in the chain of memory.

As will be shown in Chapter Four of this thesis, the longing of the early Christian pilgrims in the fourth century to locate their treasured memories in the physical world will become irresistible, even to the extent of risking their lives travelling thousands of miles over many months in a potentially hostile world. Yet their memories will not be of the founder of Christianity, but the depository of early memories, which coalesced in the cultural and religious milieu of the first three centuries.

CHAPTER FOUR

Two Fourth-Century pilgrims' account of Western pilgrims to Jerusalem and its environs:

The Bordeaux Pilgrim - *Itinerarium Burdigalense*

Egeria - *Itinerarium Egeriae*

4. a. The Bordeaux Pilgrim

The first pilgrim to have written a detailed account of their experiences in Palestine in the fourth century is the anonymous pilgrim from Gaul, known as the Pilgrim from Bordeaux. The pilgrim's gender is unknown, and some scholars, e.g. Joan Taylor, consider that the pilgrim may well have been a woman.³²⁰ Perhaps this is because the account contains details of two springs where women who wash in them become pregnant.³²¹ As most scholars consider that the Bordeaux Pilgrim was male, and for the sake of parity, given that Egeria was a woman, all references to this pilgrim will be male, but this does not preclude the possibility that the person was female.

The Bordeaux Pilgrim was the first pilgrim to give an account of an 'actual journey'.³²² He was a key witness to fourth-century Palestine, and, as his visit was so early, in 333, he shows us what the Roman pagan city of Aelia looked like, in a period less than ten years after the time of Helena,³²³ and within seven years of the beginning of Constantine's building project. It must be

³²⁰ Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places*, 313.

³²¹ Bordeaux Pilgrim, *Itinerarium Burdigalense* (eds. P. Geyer and O. Cuntz, in *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina* 175, Turnhout, 1965), 585.7 and 596.

³²² Wilken, *The Land Called Holy*, 109.

³²³ *Itin. Burd.*, 589-594; Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 83.

said though, that for the Bordeaux Pilgrim, the Holy City was always the biblical Jerusalem, not the pagan Aelia.³²⁴ The Bordeaux Pilgrim's interest was always the connections between what was written in the biblical accounts and the 'holy sites' themselves.³²⁵

When he arrived in Palestine, the Bordeaux Pilgrim found himself where biblical stories and events could be commemorated at every turn. His account is filled with these events, which were connected with each site that he visited. For the Bordeaux Pilgrim, history and tradition were one and the same, and so where a tradition was cultivated at a precise spot, so was the historical event.³²⁶ The Bordeaux Pilgrim accepted many details at the holy sites to be genuine. He wanted to bring the Bible to life. Three specific examples, shown here in the pilgrim's account, emphasize his complete acceptance of these sites and details, such as a fourth-century tree connected with the story of Zacchaeus, and Jerusalem buildings featured in the Gospels and the Psalms:

Eighteen miles from Jerusalem is Jericho. Coming down the mountain range you reach a tomb on the right, and behind it is the sycamore tree which Zacchaeus climbed in order that he could see Christ.³²⁷

and the corner of a very lofty tower, which was where the Lord climbed and said to the Tempter, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, but him only shalt thou serve.' (Luke 4.9-12). And there also is the great corner-stone of which it was said, 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner.' (Ps. 118.22; Matt. 21.42)³²⁸

Pilgrims, such as the Bordeaux Pilgrim could be manipulated by the indigenous clergy and monks and be told all kinds of stories relating to biblical events. The example of Jerome is extreme; he relates that the Bordeaux Pilgrim 'was (as always) convinced, namely that the blood-

³²⁴ Walker, *Holy City, Holy Places?*, 395; see *Itin. Burd.*, 589-596 where there are numerous references to 'Jerusalem'. There are no references to 'Aelia'.

³²⁵ Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West*, 42.

³²⁶ Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, 83-84.

³²⁷ *Itin. Burd.*, 596.

³²⁸ *Itin. Burd.*, 590.

stains of Zechariah could still be seen on the Temple site'.³²⁹ Therefore the credulity of the Bordeaux Pilgrim becomes established (as in Egeria's case discussed below).

For the Bordeaux Pilgrim, all sites and points of interest are of uniform importance. Robert Wilken comments on the way in which the Bordeaux Pilgrim handles information without sifting and categorizing it.³³⁰ The pilgrim describes matters of great theological import alongside statements of mundane interest. For example, he does not differentiate between the detailed site of the crucifixion and Pilate's house:

As you leave there and pass through the wall of Sion towards the Gate of Neapolis, down in the valley on your right you have some walls where Pontius Pilate had his house, the Praetorium where the Lord's case was heard before he suffered. On your left is the hillock Golgotha where the Lord was crucified [...]³³¹

Again, in the next section, the pilgrim records two different details, the second of which is, as above, a reference to a fourth-century tree seen by him as authentic:

Arriving at the gate of Jerusalem which faces the east, on your way to go up the Mount of Olives, you come to what is called the Valley of Jehoshaphat. On the left is a vineyard where is also the rock where Judas Iscariot betrayed Christ; and on the right is the palm-tree from which the children took branches and strewed them in Christ's path.³³²

Wilken comments on this uniformity as follows:

Like a contemporary biblicist for whom every word of the Bible is of equal moment, the pilgrim of Bordeaux has no hierarchy of place. If a site is mentioned in the Bible and it can be located, it is worthy of a visit.³³³

The Bordeaux Pilgrim realizes that his account was very early in the history of pilgrimage. He has to explain to his readers various aspects of Palestine that were not known by his fellow

³²⁹ Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, 85.

³³⁰ Wilken, *The Land Called Holy*, 110.

³³¹ *Itin. Burd.*, 593.

³³² *Itin. Burd.*, 593-595.

³³³ Wilken, *The Land Called Holy*, 110.

countrymen before his visit.³³⁴ When he describes the buildings on Golgotha, he feels it necessary to explain the identity of a ‘basilica’.³³⁵ Indeed, the Bordeaux Pilgrim walks as if in the past visiting sites in their biblical context, but being aware of those who would follow him in future years.³³⁶

The Bordeaux Pilgrim presents us with a list of the main buildings that he saw on Golgotha, which existed in 333.³³⁷ He is well aware of the ‘little hill’ of Golgotha, and he writes a delightful short account of it. He is struck with the beauty of the architecture³³⁸ and he shows his readers how close major points of the interest are to each other. For example, Golgotha is ‘a stone’s throw’ from the Tomb:

On your left is the hillock Golgotha where the Lord was crucified, and about a stone’s throw from it the vault where they laid his body, and he rose again on the third day. By order of the Emperor Constantine there has now been built there a ‘basilica’—I mean ‘place for the Lord’—which has beside it cisterns of remarkable beauty, and beside them a bath where children are baptized.³³⁹

The Bordeaux Pilgrim was impressed with the setting in which Constantine’s buildings were built. Edward Yarnold describes the pilgrim’s account; he says, ‘The Pilgrim’s impression is thus of the mound of Calvary and the cave-tomb, both presumably set in the open, with the basilica next to them, with a separate baptistry.’³⁴⁰ Conversely, F. E. Peters sees the ‘crypt’ as referring to an edicule rather than an over-arching structure which contained the tomb.

³³⁴ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 83.

³³⁵ F.E. Peters, *Jerusalem: The Holy City in the Eyes of Chroniclers, Visitors, Pilgrims, and Prophets from the Days of Abraham to the Beginnings of Modern Times* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 145.

³³⁶ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 83; Peters, *Jerusalem*, 143.

³³⁷ Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West*, 31; Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, 294.

³³⁸ Y. Tsafirir, “Byzantine Jerusalem: The Configuration of a Christian City” in Levine,, *Jerusalem*, 135; G. Bowman, ““Mapping History’s Redemption” Eschatology and Topography in the *Itinerarium Burdigalense*” in Levine, *Jerusalem*, 181.

³³⁹ *Itin. Burd.*, 593-594.

³⁴⁰ E. Yarnold, *Cyril of Jerusalem* (London/New York NY: Routledge, 2000), 15.

Although being indiscriminate in the reports that he has written, the Bordeaux Pilgrim is selective in his recorded observations. He has not recorded all the main points of interest or history in the holy places, and therefore could be accused, or criticised, for being misleading. For example, Helena is attributed with the building of the Church in Bethlehem, and on the Mount of Olives (Eleona basilica), and yet the Bordeaux Pilgrim sees no distinction between the sources of the Churches at Golgotha, Bethlehem and the Mount of Olives as being Constantine.³⁴¹ Neither he nor Eusebius³⁴² make any mention of a cross on Golgotha,³⁴³ the *lignum crucis*³⁴⁴ or the True Cross.³⁴⁵

Joan Taylor questions a common assumption that the Bordeaux Pilgrim's 'little hill' refers to the 'Rock of Calvary'. She says, 'it is hard to imagine that anyone would have called such a strange rocky protruberance [sic] a hill'.³⁴⁶ Taylor argues that there is another, quite separate, 'mound of earth' nearby on which Constantine built his basilica: 'By order of the emperor Constantine there has now been built there a basilica'.³⁴⁷ Taylor gives further detail by saying that this other hill is fractionally higher than the neighbouring Mount Moriah and that Eusebius viewed it in terms of being the "New Jerusalem" built over against the one celebrated of old'.³⁴⁸ Furthermore, the Bordeaux Pilgrim himself marks the distinction between the ruins of the old Temple and the new structure of Constantine's basilica.³⁴⁹ The important theme of transition is taken up by Taylor

³⁴¹ Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, 37.

³⁴² The Bordeaux Pilgrim did not report seeing the *lignum crucis* in 333, but Egeria knew of a fragment of the Cross in c.382 (Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West*, 84). Therefore, it is most likely that the legend came into existence during those fifty years. Hunt (*Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, 38), argues that Eusebius would have eulogised over the Cross, as a divine sign supporting the Constantinian empire, had he known about it.

³⁴³ Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West*, 84.

³⁴⁴ Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, 38.

³⁴⁵ Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, 296.

³⁴⁶ Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places*, 121.

³⁴⁷ *Itin. Burd.*, 594, cited in Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places*, 121.

³⁴⁸ Eusebius, *Vita Const.* iii. 33, cited in Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places*, 121.

³⁴⁹ Bowman, 'Mapping History's Redemption', 179-181.

when she says that there was a change of emphasis in considering the identity of Palestine, and especially of Jerusalem: from a place of devastation to a place of ‘glory’, where it is now seen in the hopeful, positive light of the resurrection, having been viewed formerly as a place where the presence of God had departed at the destruction of the Temple and been replaced with the pagan Aelia.³⁵⁰

Up until the fourth century, the Church did not fix its attention on the earthly city of Jerusalem, seeing it as a place where God’s interest had ceased to be attached. Furthermore, it was a place that had incurred God’s wrath, his punishment on a murderous and unbelieving people who had killed his son. Despite the fact that Jesus had been in Jerusalem and died there, and that the Christian belief in his resurrection had been linked to that city, there was no sense of holiness. On the contrary, the Church preached a ‘heavenly Jerusalem’; this is where God’s love and attention could be sought and experienced (cf. John 4.21-24). Before the writings of Eusebius there is no evidence to show that people considered the city to be holy. Writing in 333, the Bordeaux Pilgrim also has no demonstrable evidence of having promoted a sense of holiness. Yet, after the building programme of Constantine, suddenly places, and indeed artifacts, became understood by Christians as being holy. Eusebius is a good example of this change of view, having begun his life having no acknowledgement of holy places, but after Constantine’s interest in Jerusalem and Bethlehem he promoted the holiness of special locations.³⁵¹

The Bordeaux Pilgrim creates a short factual account of the places that he visits.³⁵² Wilken claims that the Bordeaux Pilgrim writes in a ‘terse style’, referring to various sites much as a

³⁵⁰ Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places*, 313.

³⁵¹ Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places*, 314.

³⁵² Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West*, 57.

modern guide book would offer a bland colourless account.³⁵³ He sees difficulties with the Bordeaux Pilgrim's account as follows:

One scholar claimed even that he had never visited Palestine. His route is puzzling; he sometimes turns back to visit places he could have seen when he was in the vicinity, and he makes few observations on the things he has seen.³⁵⁴

David Hunt also writes negatively by describing the Bordeaux Pilgrim as having written a 'stark narrative', and yet Egeria, by contrast, is described as offering 'a more penetrating glimpse into the devotion of the Christian traveller'.³⁵⁵ These views have been criticised and challenged by Glenn Bowman, who argues that the Bordeaux Pilgrim has a different focus than most writers on the subject of pilgrimage: the end point is in another world, the Kingdom, not the mere bricks and mortar of this one.³⁵⁶ Indeed, Bowman sees the Bordeaux Pilgrim's pilgrimage being enacted in two worlds,³⁵⁷ with the focus of his mind being on the other rather than this world.³⁵⁸

4. b. Egeria

Egeria was an indefatigable nun from either Galicia or Gaul, who gives us a unique, passionate account of Christian pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the fourth century. In her letter *Itinerarium Egeriae*, we have intimate descriptions of meetings of indigenous Christians, worship and her relationship of sacred places which link us to her extraordinary world. She is known by other names such as Aetheria or Etheria, and is featured in the account of pilgrimage to Jerusalem

³⁵³ Wilken, *The Land Called Holy*, 109.

³⁵⁴ Wilken, *The Land Called Holy*, 110.

³⁵⁵ Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, 86.

³⁵⁶ Bowman, 'Mapping History's Redemption', 167-168.

³⁵⁷ Bowman, 'Mapping History's Redemption', 170.

³⁵⁸ Bowman, 'Mapping History's Redemption', 171.

attributed to the twelfth century monk, Peter the Deacon³⁵⁹.

This chapter will examine critically Egeria's contribution to our understanding of early Christian pilgrimage, especially using the cultural memory approach as a methodological discipline, which will result in a new understanding of her legacy to Christians in the twenty-first century.

Christian pilgrimage began to flourish in the fourth century. Constantine's promotion of Christianity in that period transformed not only the Church in its new public sphere of experience and influence, but also those Christian men and women who had the vision, drive and financial means to undertake their highest goal: pilgrimage to the Holy Land, during which they could see and touch the very things that they had learned about in reading and learning, including especially the tangible, real places and artifacts which they revered with such affection.

The fourth century was a period of enormous, far-reaching and rapid change in the way that some members of Roman society could choose to live. This new flexibility of lifestyle also included the practice of Christian pilgrimage.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁹ Peter the Deacon's work is seen as being based on Egeria's 'lost manuscript'. See Wilkinson 3rd Edition, 2006, 86-106. However, this view, shared by many scholars, is challenged by Philip Mayerson in his research paper, "Egeria and Peter the Deacon on the Site of Clysma (Suez)." *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* ((33) 61-64. 1996). Mayerson argues that Peter's description of Clysma (dated 1137) does not correspond with Egeria's account, and is not true to historical documents. Therefore Peter the Deacon's other work is suspect.

³⁶⁰ J. Wilkinson, *Egeria's Travels* (London: SPCK, 1971), 19.

There, at last, these pilgrims could access the part of the world, which contained the sites of martyrdom and revered Christian relics *par excellence*. No other sites in the world could offer similar attractions for pilgrims in such profusion.³⁶¹

Women in the Roman world, who had received a high standard of education, and who possessed both wealth and maturity necessary to long distance travel, became role models upon which future pilgrims could benefit. Constantine's mother, Helena, and Jerome's companions, Paula and Eustochium, were particularly influential examples.³⁶²

Egeria stands out from others in this period in a remarkable way. This is because of her extraordinary character and boundless energy, and her often credulous enthusiasm.³⁶³ We have a large part of her travel account preserved and passed down to us, which gives the Church the main source of its liturgy formed in the fourth century. Although not all of Egeria's diary has been preserved, we have such a volume of information that it stands out against other accounts, both in terms of length and also detail. We have here an account by a true pilgrim, not just a person on a fact-finding mission.

To put Egeria's specific characteristics of her work into perspective, we need to be aware of other accounts of visits to Jerusalem before her own. For example, Melito, Bishop of Sardis (died

³⁶¹ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 93.

³⁶² Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places*, 313.

³⁶³ Egeria's credulity exposes itself in numerous places within the text. Here are two examples, featuring subjects from the Old Testament. Egeria considers 'the burning bush' to be genuine: '[on Mount Sinai] there is also a church there at the place of the Bush' (which is still alive and sprouting).' Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 4.6. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson (London: SPCK, 1971). Egeria acknowledges the tomb of Moses: 'On reaching the mountain-top we came to a church, not a very big one, right on the summit of Mount Nebo, and inside, in the position of the pulpit, I saw a slightly raised place about the size of a normal tomb. I asked about it, and the holy men replied, "Holy Moses was buried here—by angels, since the Bible tells us 'No human being knoweth his burial'." And there is no doubt that it was angels who buried him, since the actual tomb where he was buried can be seen today.' Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 12.1-2. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

before 190),³⁶⁴ who visited Jerusalem *circa* 160. This could never be construed as a pilgrimage, *per se*, as every word written constitutes a ‘visitor’s guide’, cataloguing places, which are then related to biblical texts. Melito wished to focus on the books of the Old Testament and compose a list.³⁶⁵ There is no sense of holiness or sacred space in Melito’s account. Moving forward to 333, there is the larger and more detailed account of the Holy Land by the Bordeaux Pilgrim as discussed above.

Egeria visited the Holy Land for a period of three years, in approximately 382CE, after the influential and very large building programme undertaken by Constantine and his successors. Egeria’s legacy not only contains information on fourth-century Christian liturgy, but also many detailed accounts of her many visits to holy places and holy people. Her accounts had a profound influence on other Western pilgrims who were considering following in her footsteps and embarking on the dangerous and exhausting journey to the Holy Land.³⁶⁶ Egeria’s account of Jerusalem, during her extended three-year stay, is especially important for us as it describes the city in a state of change: from the pagan city of Aelia Capitolina created by Hadrian in response to the second Jewish revolt of 132-136 CE and the newly-created city, designed and built by Constantine, and most of his successors, as a Christian centre in a newly enlarged empire of East and West.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁴ G. Vermes, *Christian Beginnings: From Nazareth to Nicaea (AD 30-325)* (London: Penguin Books Limited, 2012), 189.

³⁶⁵ Although Eusebius lists Melito’s works, Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 4.26, featured in *The Church History*, trans. by P.L. Maier (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2007), the only surviving accounts are Melito’s Easter homily, brought to light in the mid twentieth century by C. Bonner, *The Homily of the Passion* 1940 and edited fragments by M. Testuz from papyrus XIII of the Bodmer collection (Maier, *The Church History*, 189).

³⁶⁶ C. Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West*, 151-152.

³⁶⁷ K. Armstrong, *A History of Jerusalem: One City, Three Faiths* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1996), 199.

In this chapter, I will examine the account of the travels undertaken by this curious and extraordinarily energetic nun, and view it through the lens of a cultural approach. What was it that drove Egeria to travel to Jerusalem and many other places in the Middle East? How did she become aware that the area was of particular importance to the Christian tradition? Why travel to the Holy Land as opposed to many other places in the Roman world of the fourth century, where Christian worship and Churches had been used in public for over fifty years? If such questions can be attempted to be answered, concentrating on one person, then any answers will pertain not only to her, but also to many other pilgrims who have followed the same journey.

The identity of Egeria is open to dispute in that some scholars consider her to be a member of the Spanish court, the wife of a Spanish nobleman, and others believe that she was a nun, or both.³⁶⁸ Whatever her social status was, Egeria originated from the West Coast of either Spain or Southern Gaul.³⁶⁹ Egeria reported that the Bishop of Edessa had commented that her faith had brought her ‘right from the other end of the earth.’³⁷⁰ Valerius wrote of Egeria being ‘a native of Ocean’s western shore’³⁷¹ quoting Peter the Deacon’s account where he describes the Red Sea as being similar to the Ocean, which could be part of the Atlantic.³⁷² Egeria constantly talked of her ‘sisters’ back home. For example, when Egeria received the *Letter of Abgar* from the Bishop of Edessa, she commented,

One thing specially pleased me. I received from this holy man the copies of Abgar's letter to the Lord, and the Lord's letter to Abgar, which he had read to us. I have copies of them at home, but even so it is much better to have been given them there by him. And it may

³⁶⁸ ‘Valerius refers to her as “the blessed nun Egeria”’ (Egeria, *Diary of a Pilgrimage* (trans.) G.E. Gingras (New York, NY/Mahwah, NJ: The Newman Press, 1970), page 146, note 39). Although expressing alternative identities for Egeria, Gingras concludes, ‘The internal evidence tends to support the affirmation of Valerius that our author was a nun, and strongly suggests that she was writing to fellow religious’, (page 8). Egeria was also a Roman citizen (Wilkinson, *Egeria’s Travels*, 4) and possibly a person of high rank enabling her to travel under military escort with the service of helpful officials (Egeria, *Diary of a Pilgrimage*, Gingras, 8-9).

³⁶⁹ Yarnold, *Cyril of Jerusalem*, 33; *Egeria’s Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson, 1.

³⁷⁰ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 19.5. *Egeria’s Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

³⁷¹ Egeria, *Egeria’s Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson, 177.

³⁷² “Peter the Deacon’s Book on the Holy Places” Y10, in Egeria, *Egeria’s Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

be that what we have at home is not so complete, because what I was given here is certainly longer. So, dearest ladies, you yourselves must read them when I come home, if such is the will of Jesus our God.³⁷³

The dating of her diary has been discussed by scholars who have offered a range of dates, but it seems most likely that Egeria wrote her diary between 381 and 384.³⁷⁴ John Wilkinson has a calculation that as Egeria reported her arrival at Carrae to be on 23rd April,³⁷⁵ she will have departed Jerusalem most likely on the day after Easter Day (24th March) to have made the long journey.³⁷⁶ Easter Day was on 24th March in 384. Egeria seems to lay great stress on being in Jerusalem on Easter Day. Her arrival was timed to be present at the festival, and the suggested timings seem to be sensible.

Egeria is a useful source of information for us, especially as she remained in Jerusalem and its environs for a full three years.³⁷⁷ With such a lengthy stay in the area, Egeria would have been able to visit and experience the majority, or perhaps the entirety, of locations visited by most pilgrims.³⁷⁸ In addition to the length of time spent by Egeria in the Holy Land are the intense and sustained enquiries that she undertook.³⁷⁹ Egeria had a particular interest in individual Christians,

³⁷³ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 19.19. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

³⁷⁴ P. Walker, "Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the 4th Century" in A. O'Mahony, G. Gunner and K. Hintlian (eds.), *The Christian Heritage in the Holy Land* (London: Scorpion Cavendish Limited, 1995), 28-29; *Paula and Eustochium to Marcella* (trans.) W.H. Fremantle, G. Lewis and W.G. Martley. From *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Volume 6*, P. Schaff and H. Wace (eds.), (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1893). Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight. www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001046.htm Accessed 25 May 2012; G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (2nd edition, Westminster: Dacre Press, 1945), 349-350.

³⁷⁵ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 20.5. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

³⁷⁶ Egeria, *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson, 1971, 3rd edition, 1999 (Oxford: Aris and Phillips, 2006), 170.

³⁷⁷ Egeria, *Diary of a Pilgrimage*, Gingras, 17.

³⁷⁸ *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson, 19.

³⁷⁹ For example, Egeria writes the following: "In this valley [Jordan] was the cell of a brother, a monk. You know how inquisitive I am, and I asked what there was about this valley to make this holy monk build his cell there. I knew there must be some special reason, and this is what I was told by the holy men with us who knew the district: 'This is the valley of Cherith. The holy prophet Elijah the Tishbite stayed here in the reign of King Ahab; and at the time of the famine, when God sent a raven to bring him food, he drank water from this brook. For the watercourse you can see running down the valley to the Jordan is Cherith.'" Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 16.3. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

as well as worshipping communities in general. She was drawn especially to those who lived the monastic life.³⁸⁰

However, it is important that we understand the focus of Egeria's writing. Her diary was no 'Baedeker's Guide' to the Holy Land. Egeria's interest was entirely religious, specifically a Christian focus, which was enhanced by a deep knowledge of both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. Egeria shunned anything or anyone who may have been profane.³⁸¹ There is no evidence, in her writing, that Egeria was attracted to the secular world. Of course, she moved through the world on her Christian pilgrimage, but her focus always seemed to be of a religious nature. Egeria's thought was framed in a religious context and her focus on the pilgrimage was single-minded and narrow.³⁸² Egeria's understanding of holy places was always for them to be 'witnesses to accounts of Jesus' life'.³⁸³

Egeria's precise focus brings into relief the connection between the holy places and the accounts in Jesus' life to which they relate. Egeria states,

I know I should never cease to give thanks to God, but I thank him specially for this wonderful experience he has given me, beyond anything I could expect or deserve. I am far from worthy to have visited all these holy places. And I cannot do enough to express my gratitude to all the holy men who so kindly and willingly welcomed so unimportant a person as me to their cells and, what is more, took me round all the biblical sites I kept asking to see.³⁸⁴

³⁸⁰ Robert Wilken encapsulates well the process whereby Egeria was investigating this particular subject. He remarks, 'She wanted to know from the monk who lived there why he had built his cell in that place'. Wilken, *The Land Called Holy*, 111.

³⁸¹ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 89; *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson, 4.

³⁸² Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, 69.

³⁸³ M.R. Miles, *The Word Made Flesh: A History of Christian Thought* (Oxford/Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 85. Margaret Miles describes the earthiness of Egeria's experience, where the concept of place in the physical claims so much importance on her perception of the spiritual: 'Her spirituality was based, not on mental concentration or meditation; rather, placing her body at the holy places produced a strong empathy with the events believed to have occurred there.' Miles, *The Word Made Flesh*, 85.

³⁸⁴ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 5.12. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

For Egeria, the connection of scriptures and liturgy with what she could see and touch was an essential ingredient in the pilgrimage experience, and it was symbiotic in nature. Biblical stories ceased to be not only beloved written accounts, but became direct lived experience.³⁸⁵ The physical nature of pilgrimage of being in perceived holy places and with holy people was only given credence when accompanied by scripture and liturgy, and vice versa. For example, when visiting Mount Nebo, Egeria commented on her practice,

... it was always our practice when we managed to reach one of the places we wanted to see to have first a prayer, then a reading from the book, then to say an appropriate psalm and another prayer. By God's grace we always followed this practice whenever we were able to reach a place we wanted to see.³⁸⁶

Egeria has given us an account of a pilgrim's life over three years in the Holy Land when it was just beginning to have a life of its own, having come of age under Constantine. This witness is of great value to us as a window into the beginnings of Christian pilgrimage. However, as discussed below, Egeria's interest was a narrow one, which focused entirely on Christian worship and life. Furthermore, as mentioned above, Egeria has demonstrated on numerous occasions in her text that she is credulous and is a person who will believe almost everything that the guides and the clergy tell her.³⁸⁷ Therefore this naïveté will have compromised the accuracy and judgement of an aspect of her writing. These difficulties of narrowness of focus and credulity are perhaps more than balanced by the nature of Egeria herself. The sheer energy, enthusiasm and commitment of the nun from Western Europe have been captured in the pages of her diary. Two principal

³⁸⁵ Armstrong, *A History of Jerusalem*, 200.

³⁸⁶ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 10.7. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

³⁸⁷ However, some scholars do not see Egeria as being credulous. John Wilkinson uses 8.3-4 in Egeria's diary as being an example where she distances herself from the guides' pronouncements. He claims, 'The sycamore at Rameses "does good" to those who pluck its shoots, but Egeria is just as interested in the fact that it is very ancient. Nor is she credulous. She treats her guides with unvarying courtesy, and never expresses doubts about what she is shown. But in writing down what she has seen she often qualifies the story she has been told: the sycamore is "said to have been" planted by the patriarchs.' Wilkinson, *Egeria's Travels*, 4. Yet Egeria *does* seem to be credulous as she writes as follows: 'Though it is now extremely old, and thus small, it still bears fruit, and people who have something wrong with them pick its twigs, which do them good.' Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 8.3. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

features appear in Egeria's work: first, that her account stands out from other accounts of the fourth century, which are more circumspect,³⁸⁸ without the measure of detail that Egeria recorded; and second, her account of Jerusalem has become a 'model for the West'³⁸⁹, a source of liturgical patterns and details which have been received by the Western Church to its enormous spiritual benefit.

The relationship that Egeria had with her sisters at home has a bearing on the content of her diary. Egeria wishes to give her sisters specific information about the Jerusalem liturgy. An example of her concern and care for her 'sisters' is expressed as follows: 'Loving sisters, I am sure it will interest you to know about the daily services they have in the holy places, and I must tell you about them.'³⁹⁰ We, of course, are beneficiaries of Egeria's labours. Yet there are omissions in Egeria's account which presumably would correlate to knowledge already known

³⁸⁸ The *Itinerarium Burdigalense* of the Bordeaux Pilgrim, as discussed above, is a prime example of a catalogue of places related to scripture, which does not equate with the notion and experience of Christian pilgrimage. Eusebius relates that a bishop named Alexander visited Jerusalem [before 213], but there is no feeling of pilgrimage in his account. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 6.11.2 featured in *The Church History*, trans. by P.L. Maier (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2007). As discussed above, Eusebius lists Melito's works, and Melito claims in a letter to his brother Onesimus, '... when I visited the East and reached the place where all these things were proclaimed and done, I gained accurate information about the Old Testament books that I send you herewith: ..' (Melito then lists 25 books from the OT, extracts from which he condenses into six books.) Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 4.26, featured in *The Church History*, trans. by P.L. Maier). Again, there is no notion of pilgrimage to sacred places or of personal spiritual fulfilment. By contrast, Egeria immerses herself in varied and deeply spiritual experiences as she relates the scriptures to holy people (the monks and bishops) and holy places. Egeria exclaims, 'I know I should never cease to give thanks to God, but I thank him specially for this wonderful experience he has given me, beyond anything I could expect or deserve. I am far from worthy to have visited all these holy places. And I cannot do enough to express my gratitude to all the holy men who so kindly and willingly welcomed so unimportant a person as me to their cells and, what is more, took me round all the biblical sites I kept asking to see.' Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 5.12. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

³⁸⁹ Baumstark A., *On the Historical Development of the Liturgy* (trans.) F. West (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011), 106. Stational liturgies, enacted in Jerusalem for the spiritual edification of pilgrims, were captured in Egeria's diary. The range of liturgical expression was vast, catering for daily needs at the pilgrim sites to lengthy services extending over many hours, especially in Holy Week and the Easter Season. See Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 24.1 to 49.3. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson. See also P.F. Bradshaw, "The Influence of Jerusalem on Christian Liturgy" in Levine, *Jerusalem*, 251-259. Egeria's diary became a conduit through which knowledge of the Jerusalem liturgy reached the West.

³⁹⁰ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 24.1. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

by her sisters; details that we would be very pleased to receive, not least so that we could have a comprehensive cover of knowledge for historians.³⁹¹

Nevertheless, Egeria's witness to Jerusalem liturgy is of paramount importance for us. The concept of the Western Sunday being a permanent repetitive 'Easter Day' comes from Jerusalem.³⁹² A detailed commentary of early morning Sunday worship, given us by Egeria is set out later in the thesis.

The Great Week was of enormous importance to Egeria, perhaps not only as the pinnacle of the Christian Year, but is also the point at which Egeria entered Jerusalem after her long and arduous journey from the West Coast of Europe, as mentioned above.³⁹³ The extraordinary commitment and sheer energy that the Jerusalem Christians displayed during the Great Week had a profound effect on Egeria. As this profound expression of Christian discipleship and worship was the first experience of Egeria when she first came to the city, all other experiences in that place will have been affected by her primary observations and participation. It is no wonder that Egeria's account for her sisters 'back home' began its Jerusalem section with details of the daily routine of a typical week, which its direct correlation with the Great Week.³⁹⁴

³⁹¹ Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, 110-111.

³⁹² Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, 122-123.

³⁹³ Anton Baumstark remarks on the centrally important inclusion of the Great Week in the diary:

Concerning the procession on Palm Sunday and the veneration of the cross on Good Friday, their influence upon the West is crystal clear to anyone who – at one time or another – has read this pilgrim woman's vivid descriptions of the Holy Week services as celebrated in Jerusalem. Baumstark, *On the Historical Development of the Liturgy*, 106.

³⁹⁴ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 30.1-3. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

Jerusalem came to be seen as the inspiration for much of Christian liturgy elsewhere. For example, Firmilian, the Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, saw the liturgy enacted in Rome to be a deviation from the norm, which, for him was the Jerusalem liturgy.³⁹⁵ Firmilian wrote:

But that they who are at Rome do not observe those things in all cases which are handed down from the beginning, and vainly pretend the authority of the apostles; any one may know also from the fact, that concerning the celebration of Easter, and concerning many other sacraments of divine matters, he may see that there are some diversities among them, and that all things are not observed among them alike, which are observed at Jerusalem, just as in very many other provinces also many things are varied because of the difference of the places and names.³⁹⁶

In placing herself in the location of the pilgrims' holy places, Egeria felt that the stories in the scriptures 'came to life', and, as the places that she visited were claimed to be the same location as described in the biblical text, the text itself became true.³⁹⁷ In other words, for Egeria, the biblical stories were self-authenticated by the claims that the dramas were enacted at the very places described. Egeria was impressed by the immediacy of religious experience in the holy places. Egeria often used the word 'spot' with much affection.³⁹⁸ There was a connection through time between the events themselves having taken place years, or even centuries before, and the experience of recalling them in the contemporary setting of precise locations in the topography of the Holy Land. These holy places were a 'living witness to historical events'.³⁹⁹ The interconnection between past and present events, especially in religious thought and experience, was discussed above under the subject of 'Memory'.

³⁹⁵ Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, 125.

³⁹⁶ Firmilian, *Epistle LXXIV to Cyprian, Against the Letter of Stephen*, 6. (Christian Classics Ethereal Library). In his letter to Cyprian, Firmilian, who was Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, longed for the unity of the Catholic Church, therefore despising those whom he identified as heretics. Firmilian seems to use Jerusalem as a reference point for unity and stability in matters of liturgy and worship, which were not followed well by the Christians in Rome.

³⁹⁷ Egeria, *Diary of a Pilgrimage*, Gingras, 19.

³⁹⁸ A place where actions were purported to have taken place were at 'the authentic spot'. Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 84-85.

³⁹⁹ Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, 89.

Egeria wrote of her thankfulness for having been able to participate in this mysterious undertaking, especially of listening to the scriptural text within the setting of the sacred topography:

I know I should never cease to give thanks to God, but I thank him specially for this wonderful experience he has given me, beyond anything I could expect or deserve. I am far from worthy to have visited all these holy places.⁴⁰⁰

For Egeria, the Church's liturgy is the prime avenue through which the process of sanctification can take place. The relationship of spoken word, liturgical action and the site on which these take place are interwoven in Egeria's mind and experience to form the core of her pilgrimage. Egeria experienced the telling of scriptural accounts demonstrated in the physical world around her as she visited the sacred sites. For example, Egeria exclaims on Mount Sinai,

All there is on the actual summit of the central mountain is the church and the cave of holy Moses. No one lives there. So when the whole passage had been read to us from the Book of Moses (on the very spot!) we made the Offering [took part in the Eucharist] in the usual way and received Communion.⁴⁰¹

As Egeria continued her pilgrimage to Mount Horeb, she stated, 'Indeed, whenever we arrived, I always wanted the Bible passage to be read to us.'⁴⁰²

This interplay of text and site, although highly personal in Egeria's mind, was never an individualised personal experience *per se*. On each and every occasion that Egeria visited a holy site, the reading of scripture, which accompanied the visit, was always a public occasion, usually involving one of the local clergy.⁴⁰³ The choice of each site that Egeria visited was studied in

⁴⁰⁰ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 5.12. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

⁴⁰¹ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 3.5-6. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

⁴⁰² Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 4.3. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

⁴⁰³ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 4.3, *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson; Wilkinson, *Egeria's Travels*, 59.

scripture beforehand and in the context of prayer. Egeria's description of her pilgrimage to Mount Sinai gives an example of this pattern:

When we arrived there our guides, the holy men who were with us, said, 'It is usual for the people who come here to say a prayer when first they catch sight of the Mount of God', and we did as they suggested.⁴⁰⁴

The marking of seasons in the Church's Year had an importance for Egeria, and the readings, which she valued so highly, played their part in the process. For example, the Armenian Lectionary has focused details on liturgical events, confirming Egeria's claimed account.⁴⁰⁵

Almost all of the preserved diary of Egeria contains her accounts of liturgies and worship in and around Jerusalem. Everything that Egeria relates is connected with the Church's festivals and its calendar.⁴⁰⁶ The long passages which describe to liturgy in precise detail are prefaced with these words: 'Loving sister, I am sure it will interest you to know about the daily services they have in the holy places, and I must tell you about them.'⁴⁰⁷

The legacy of Egeria's diary is the uniqueness and character of its contents. The events which she describes with such enthusiasm and vigour are placed in the actual, precise surroundings in which the events themselves once occurred.⁴⁰⁸ Perhaps the prime example of this phenomenon is liturgy enacted in the Anastasis. Bishop Cyril of Jerusalem used his unique position of being bishop and teacher in the Anastasis, whereby he could galvanize his teaching and impress upon his students his liturgical and theological statements as he pointed to specific places, where the events were believed to have actually taken place. Students, at times of catechetical instruction, together with members of the congregation throughout the year, could hear the stories from the

⁴⁰⁴ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 1.2. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

⁴⁰⁵ Yarnold, *Cyril of Jerusalem*, 49.

⁴⁰⁶ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 24.1 - 49.3. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

⁴⁰⁷ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 24.1. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

⁴⁰⁸ Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, 124.

Gospels; and where they related to the Passion narrative, the worshippers could superimpose the words that they had received on the *exact* location where the action was believed to have taken place.⁴⁰⁹

Furthermore, the passing of time since the events took place seemed to be irrelevant. Egeria describes the reaction of the assembled worshippers to the reading of the Passion narrative whereby everyone was affected emotionally. This, perhaps, seems to be understandable given that the people believed that they were hearing an accurate account of the Lord's suffering in the exact place, and at the same time. The prime example of this experience would have been during Friday of the Great Week (Good Friday) as shown below:

They place the bishop's chair Before the Cross, and the whole time between midday and three o'clock is taken up with readings. They are all about the things Jesus suffered: first the psalms on this subject, then the Apostles (the Epistles or Acts) which concern it, then passages from the Gospels. Thus they read the prophecies about what the Lord would suffer, and the Gospels about what he did suffer. And in this way they continue the readings and hymns from midday till three o'clock, demonstrating to all the people by the testimony of the Gospels and the writings of the Apostles that the Lord actually suffered everything the prophets had foretold.⁴¹⁰

Reports of such gatherings must have had an impact on the decisions of future pilgrims to travel to the Holy Land, to Jerusalem in particular, to have the same experience. In her diary, Egeria gives an extended account of the Church's liturgy for Holy Week (Great Week). There was much emotion displayed in the assembled congregation as they entered into the Passion story. Egeria comments:

Thus they read the prophecies about what the Lord would suffer, and the Gospels about what he did suffer [...] It is impressive to see the way all the people are moved by these readings, and how they mourn. You could hardly believe how every single one of them

⁴⁰⁹ Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, 123.

⁴¹⁰ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 37.5 6. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

weeps during the three hours, old and young alike, because of the manner in which the Lord suffered for us.⁴¹¹

As Egeria was keen to catalogue the various hitherto unknown liturgical details of the Jerusalem Liturgy for her sisters back in Western Europe, since, understandably, this massive and all-pervasive emotion may have been new to her.

Considering that Egeria spent so much time and energy in Jerusalem, following its exhausting, and at times seemingly never-ending liturgy,⁴¹² it is very surprising that there is no evidence to suggest that Egeria ever met Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem c.350-c.387.⁴¹³ This is especially so, as Egeria would generally write at great lengths about her interest and determination to meet the clergy on her journeys.

The background against which pilgrims experience the link between scripture and their action of pilgrimage in the Holy Land, and in Jerusalem in particular, can be interpreted in a radically different perspective. The local topography of Jerusalem had a profound effect on its Christian liturgy.⁴¹⁴ Jerusalem, and the accompanying Christian liturgy, were shown by Egeria to have

⁴¹¹ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 37.5-7. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

⁴¹² Perhaps the most tiring day of the Church's Year in Jerusalem was Pentecost. Egeria relates at the end of her account of the day, 'Thus this is a very hard day for them, for they have never stopped all day since they kept the vigil in the Anastasis, and the services have taken so long that it is midnight by the time they are dismissed on Sion, and all go home.' Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 43.9. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

⁴¹³ Cyril's episcopacy (c.350 – c.387) was intermittent, caused by various controversies. Cyril was forced to leave Jerusalem on three occasions, two of which were caused by Arians, firstly by Acacius, Metropolitan Bishop of Caesarea, in 357 for selling Church valuables to feed the starving poor, and secondly by the Emperor Valens in 367. The third occasion was between the two Arians, when in 360 the Emperor Constantius removed him from office for a year at which time the Emperor Julian the Apostate reinstated him (probably for political reasons). Yarnold, *Cyril of Jerusalem*, 4-7. Cyril was Bishop of Jerusalem between 381 and 384, having been reinstated by the Emperor Gratian in 378. Egeria was able to observe Cyril during her three years in Jerusalem, within two years of his death. Strangely, Egeria never names Cyril as Bishop and she does not record ever having met him personally. Nevertheless the Bishop is mentioned frequently in the text, leading the Christians in their extraordinarily busy and tiring worship schedules. See especially 24.1 – 49.3 of Egeria's *Itinerarium*.

⁴¹⁴ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 88. Anton Baumstark, has added a refreshingly new perspective to the pilgrims' practice of commemorations. In his seminal book *Comparative Liturgy*, Baumstark puts forward the view that the Christian festivals were focused on 'theological truths' in the first instance. It was later that these 'truths'

prime importance, as her description takes up almost half of her account, as stated above. It was the buildings that encapsulated for Egeria the arenas and atmospheres necessary for Christian worship, and which provided a space and atmosphere conducive to worship.⁴¹⁵ Egeria's interest in these places of worship encompassed many buildings in different locations.⁴¹⁶

However, the centre of attention for Egeria, which commands her focus and energy is just one building complex, that of the Anastasis and Martyrium in Jerusalem.⁴¹⁷ At the beginning of her Jerusalem account, Egeria focuses on the Anastasis as she relates the details of daily worship. From before the cock crows right through to dusk, the Christians in Jerusalem worship at the Anastasis, being overseen by the bishop, presbyters and deacons.⁴¹⁸

By Egeria's time, the practice of the bishop entering the sepulchre and then reappearing at its entrance to read passages from the Gospels relating to the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus was enacted every Sunday. Such a profound action brought many of the assembled worshippers to tears.⁴¹⁹

became historicised in their purported connection with physical locations. Baumstark remarks: "...the great Feasts of primitive Christianity were by nature not historical commemorations of such and such an episode in the sacred history, but were instituted rather to give expression to great religious ideas." A. Baumstark, *Comparative Liturgy* (rev.) B. Botte (trans.) F.L. Cross (London: A.R. Mowbray and Co. Limited, 1958), 157. Conversely, Joseph Jungmann claims that events re-enacted in Christian liturgy in Jerusalem *did* have a connection with historical events. He writes: "...not until the 4th century in Jerusalem do we meet the manner of celebration which picks out and reproduces details, a method which made sense in the places where those events once actually happened. J.A. Jungmann, *Pastoral Liturgy*, (London: Challoner Publications (Liturgy) Limited., 1962), 396. Both Baumstark and Jungmann link the fourth-century experience of Jerusalem pilgrims with past events, whereby the events were either the originators of the liturgy or a byproduct of it. Part of the task of this thesis is to determine how far Baumstark's instituted 'commemorations ... give expression to great religious ideas.' What is the contribution of cultural memory to the grounding of perceived religious truths, in addition to the drive and imagination of the pilgrims, who wished to witness and also participate in them?

⁴¹⁵ Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, 23.

⁴¹⁶ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, 87.

⁴¹⁷ Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West*, 86. Egeria focuses her attention on these buildings throughout her account of worship in Jerusalem and its environs. See Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 24.1 – 49-3. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

⁴¹⁸ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 24.1-7. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

⁴¹⁹ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 24.9-10. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

The text in Egeria's diary reads as follows:

Soon the first cock crows, and at that the bishop enters, and goes into the cave in the Anastasis. The doors are all opened, and all the people come into the Anastasis, which is already ablaze with lamps. When they are inside, a psalm is said by one of the presbyters, with everyone responding, and it is followed by a prayer; then a psalm is said by one the deacons, and another prayer; then a third psalm is said by one of the clergy, a third prayer, and the Commemoration of All. After these three psalms and prayers they take censers into the cave of the Anastasis, so that the whole Anastasis basilica is filled with the smell. Then the bishop, standing inside the screen, takes the Gospel book and goes to the door, where he himself reads the account of the Lord's resurrection. At the beginning of the reading the whole assembly groans and laments at all that the Lord underwent for us, and the way they weep would move even the hardest heart to tears. When the Gospel is finished, the bishop comes out, and is taken with singing to the Cross, and they all go with him. They have one psalm there and a prayer, then he blesses the people, and that is the dismissal. As the bishop goes out, everyone comes to kiss his hand.⁴²⁰

I now examine the text above in some detail with background detail and commentary on each statement related by Egeria, with a view to setting the account in context with the contemporary experiences of fourth-century Christians.

The scene is set at the period before dawn as the first cock begins to crow. The bishop, who would have been Cyril of Jerusalem (as noted above), entered the Anastasis (place of Resurrection) which was a cave. The Metropolitan Bishop of Caesarea, Eusebius, was a strong supporter of Constantine, and he readily put forward the idea that the place of Resurrection was a cave. In Book III of his *Life of Constantine*, Eusebius describes how the 'Saviour's cave' became uncovered by Constantine's builders, as they cleared the site of a pagan Roman temple to Aphrodite, to be visible and accessible to those who visited the holy place. Eusebius claimed:

Thus after its descent into darkness it came forth again to the light, and it enabled those who came as visitors to see plainly the story of the wonders wrought there, testifying by facts louder than any voice to the resurrection of the Saviour.⁴²¹

⁴²⁰ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 24.9-11. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

⁴²¹ Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* III, 28.

Already, there is the possibility of emotion being felt by the Christian worshippers as they become aware of the cave being a place where a sense of the divine can be experienced. Caves were believed to be places where humanity and the divine met. Then, as the doors to the Anastasis were opened, the worshippers were exposed to candles ablaze with light, shining in the early morning darkness. Next come the recitation of psalms and the offering of prayers. Egeria reports that the choice of psalms and reading at all services in Jerusalem reflect the theme of the season. Egeria is most impressed by this:

And what I admire and value most is that all the hymns and antiphons and readings they have, and all the prayers the bishop says, are always relevant to the day which is being observed and to the place in which they are used. They never fail to be appropriate.⁴²²

In addition to the sense of light in the darkness, is the sense of smell, produced by the incense. All the preparations come to a climax, when the bishop reads the Gospel account of the Lord's Passion and Resurrection. The effect on the congregation is enhanced by the reading being given at the exact place where the Lord is believed to have been raised from the dead.

Members of the congregation are well used to hearing the resurrection account as they groan and lament at the *beginning* of the reading, rather than in response to it at the end. Nevertheless, Egeria seems to consider that the emotion portrayed here is genuine, and is of a deeply spiritual nature. The congregation goes only a few yards to the place believed to have been where the crucifixion of Jesus took place. The liturgy concludes with an appropriate psalm and prayer, followed by the blessing and dismissal. The tactile experience of being at the actual places of resurrection and crucifixion, is followed by the enactment of kissing the bishop's hand.

⁴²² Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 47.5. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

To summarise: this detail of Egeria's description of regular early Sunday morning worship at the Anastasis demonstrates to us the framework in which the liturgy is set, together with the effect that it had on the worshippers themselves. The setting has sacred overtones of being a cave, which then shows forth light and emits the smell of incense. The Gospel, preceded by appropriate psalms and prayers, was read, proclaiming the resurrection from the very place it is believed to have happened. Then, the congregation moves to the site of the crucifixion where a further psalm is read and prayer offered. Members of the congregation are blessed by the bishop, whose hand they kiss on departing. It is no small wonder that these Christians wept and lamented the mighty acts of their Saviour. It is, perhaps, most extraordinary that each week in Jerusalem began in such a fashion. This liturgy could not have been replicated in full anywhere else in the world, as the liturgical setting was unique.

In a related perspective, Egeria gives much credence to the various processions which worshippers undertook between the Anastasis, Mount Zion and the Mount of Olives. Sometimes whole liturgies encompassed these locations in a single framework, which resulted in a commitment from participants far greater than that required in conventional religious settings elsewhere in the world.⁴²³ Egeria is aware of the challenges and limitations that such extraordinary liturgical action creates, in a fourth-century Jerusalem setting. Egeria is acutely aware of the sheer physical exhaustion, which resulted from a strict adherence to the demanding liturgical itinerary. There are several places in the text of the diary where Egeria expresses a

⁴²³ Tsafir, 'Byzantine Jerusalem', 140. See also Karen Armstrong who relates how Egeria participated in the Christian liturgy of Jerusalem: 'Egeria speaks of immense crowds filling the courtyards of Golgotha and flowing out into the streets. On September 14 the city was filled to bursting point with monks and nuns from Mesopotamia, Syria, and Egypt who had come to celebrate the eight days of Enkainia, the festival which celebrated the dedication of Constantine's New Jerusalem and Helena's discovery of the True Cross.' (Armstrong, *A History of Jerusalem*, 200).

concern for the well-being of worshippers. One example is her comments at the end of the section relating to Pentecost:

After the dismissal everyone goes to kiss the bishop's hand, and at about midnight everybody goes home. Thus this is a very hard day for them, for they have never stopped all day since they kept the vigil in the Anastasis, and the services have taken so long that it is midnight by the time they are dismissed on Sion, and all go home.⁴²⁴

In addition to Pentecost, the first day of the Great Week, Palm Sunday, was extraordinarily long, with many demands made upon the participants.⁴²⁵

It seems that the Great Week (Holy Week)⁴²⁶ was central to Egeria's interest in that she arrived in Jerusalem at the start of these most sacred and focused days in the Christian Year. Her diary relates the Palm Sunday liturgy,⁴²⁷ and on the Friday, the veneration of the cross.⁴²⁸ As the Christian festivals are related by Egeria, it is important for us to know that the only feast marked by the Church prior to the fourth century was the pasch.⁴²⁹

⁴²⁴ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 43.9. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

⁴²⁵ Karen Armstrong describes the events: 'On the afternoon of Palm Sunday, crowds gathered at the Eleona Basilica on the Mount of Olives for a service, followed by a march down the mountainside, through the Kidron Valley, and back into the city. Bishop Cyril rode behind the procession on a donkey, just as Jesus had done when he arrived in Jerusalem, the children waved palm and olive branches and the congregation sang hymns, chanting periodically: "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord."' (Armstrong, *A History of Jerusalem*, 200). Egeria comments on the procession: 'The babies and the ones too young to walk are carried on their parents' shoulders. Everyone is carrying branches, either palm or olive, and they accompany the bishop in the very way the people did when once they went down with the Lord. They go on foot all down the Mount to the city, and all through the city to the Anastasis, but they have to go pretty gently on account of the older women and men among them who might get tired. So it is already late when they reach the Anastasis;' (Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 31.3-4. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

⁴²⁶ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 30.1 – 38.2. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

⁴²⁷ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 30.1. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

⁴²⁸ Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 37.4-7. *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson.

⁴²⁹ Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West*, 7.

4. c. Movement and Processions

Egeria's account of liturgy in her diary is full of movement. Jerusalem Christians and pilgrims were constantly moving, either within a complex of buildings or between the various sites of worship in Jerusalem and its environs. Closer analysis of each in Egeria's text shows that there is reference to movement on virtually every page.

Egeria's account and the Jerusalem liturgy can be directly linked to the cultural memory of similar events in Greek culture and religious expression in terms of processions. I attempt to answer the following questions: Do the processions, described by Egeria, bear a resemblance to processions in ancient Greece? If so, what were the function and purpose of the Greek processions and who participated in them?

In order to address these questions, the subject of processions, both in Jerusalem and in ancient Greece need to be studied in detail, looking through the lens of cultural memory. What is there in cultural memory of ancient Greece that would inspire the early Christians to process in Jerusalem, and its surrounding area, in the way that they did? What was the driving force?

Stational worship was not limited to Jerusalem, Rome and Constantinople. In the fourth century, Antioch experienced such worship. Indeed, it was a feature of Christian life in late antiquity, that in every context there was mobile worship, which centred inevitably around the bishop of the

city. Intriguingly, Baldovin suggests that even large villages, which were able to have more than one place of worship, might have stational services involving processions.⁴³⁰

4. d. Processions in Ancient Greece and Fourth-Century Jerusalem

I begin by examining processions in ancient Greece, looking especially at their form and function. Such a perspective will involve an appreciation of the context in which the processions were performed: who witnessed them, who participated in them and who initiated them. Who benefited from this phenomenon? What was the motivation to promote such activity: was it religious, civil, commercial or political?

I will then progress to the processions in fourth-century Jerusalem as described by Egeria, broadly asking and answering the same questions.

There may or may not be connections between the two phenomena. John Baldovin, in his magisterial account of Jerusalem stational liturgy claimed that there was no link between the systems of processions. Was he correct in his conclusion? I will argue that there are sufficient grounds for there to be a connection between ancient Greek and fourth-century Christian processions, and furthermore, that such a connection can be demonstrated to be a source of memory that enabled the former to drive the latter.

⁴³⁰ J.F. Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship: The Origins, Development, and Meaning of Stational Liturgy* (Rome: Pont. Institutum Studiorum Orientalium, 1987), 248.

Processions in ancient Greece have been claimed to possess political attributes. For example, not all processions had participants who worked collaboratively. Some events were used as a deliberate showcase for single displays of power. Ps. Andocides reported the events at the Olympics in 416 BCE when Alcibiades ‘upstaged the “common procession” of the Athenians by obtaining the Athenian processional vessels from the *arkhithedroi* and using them for his own procession the night before.’⁴³¹

However, it is also the case that whole communities participated in ancient Greek processions, which had a profoundly political character. In 104 CE in the city of Ephesos, the local council accepted a bequest from the provincial Roman C. Vibius Salutaris,⁴³² which funded a spectacular procession involving nine statues of the god Artemis and 22 busts. These were paraded at the start of the political year, which happily coincided with a sacrifice timed at the first Full Moon of the year. This activity was repeated at numerous times during the year. The route was approximately one mile long, from the sanctuary of Artemis to the centre of the city. The statues and images were carried in procession by the victors of contests and priests, together with stewards, along the Sacred Way.⁴³³ Such processions were probably viewed by many citizens as they lined the route.⁴³⁴

Pilgrimages and processions in ancient Greece can be seen from another perspective in that they had different functions and contexts. Pilgrimages belonged to the political sphere where there

⁴³¹ I. Rutherford, *State Pilgrims and Sacred Observers in Ancient Greece: A Study of Theōriā and Theōroi* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 207-208.

⁴³² See J. Elsner, *Roman Eyes: Visuality and Subjectivity in Art and Text* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 232-233.

⁴³³ F. Graf, *Roman Festivals in the Greek East: From the Early Empire to the Middle Byzantine Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 31.

⁴³⁴ J. Kubatzki, “Processions and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece: Some Iconographical Considerations” in U. Luig (ed.), *Approaching the Sacred. Pilgrimage in Historical and Intercultural Perspective* (Berlin: Online Edition Topoi, www.edition-topoi.org, 2018), 315.

was a drawing together of Greek cities, which was seen to be advantageous to the elites.⁴³⁵ In contrast, the processions had a much wider context in that they enabled a strengthening between human beings and the gods.⁴³⁶

4. e. Processions as religious practice

In Chapter Two, I examined the character of Greek processions within the general context of Greek society. Here, I observe the practice of the processions in ancient Greece in the context of their utilitarian value. The questions are posed: What is the purpose of these processions? How do they relate to the requirements of pagan worship? It is in this way that comparisons can be drawn between processional activity in ancient Greece and fourth-century Jerusalem, enabling conclusions to be made as to whether there is a link of cultural memory between the two experiences.

Processions in Greece had the primary purpose of accompanying animals selected for sacrifice, from their original location to the sanctuary in which the sacrifice would take place.⁴³⁷ There were two types of procession: one was the official type, organised by those in power politically, and the other was organised privately by individual families.⁴³⁸

⁴³⁵ K. Hammerschmied (née Jürgens), “The Panhellenic Festival of Artemis Leukophryene in Magnesia-On-The-Meander. A Spatial Analysis of a Hellenistic Procession” in U. Luig (ed.), *Approaching the Sacred. Pilgrimage in Historical and Intercultural Perspective* (Berlin: Online Edition Topoi, www.edition-topoi.org, 2018), 118.

⁴³⁶ Kubatzki, “Processions and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece”, 131.

⁴³⁷ Graf, *Roman Festivals in the Greek East*, 17-18; Kubatzki, “Processions and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece” 133-134.

⁴³⁸ Kubatzki, “Processions and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece”, 134.

But this is not the only purpose of the processions. Symbols associated with lofty aesthetic values would also be present in the processions. Fritz Graf claims that such values became ‘the main expression of festivity, beauty, order, and plenty.’ These activities had three distinct parts to them: firstly, the procession itself, which was followed by the sacrifice, and then the banquet. The procession and banquet were public occasions, able to be viewed by the populace. The actual sacrifice, with its gory and bloody execution, was less visible to the crowds, and therefore would have occupied a smaller place in the collective memory of ancient Greek society.⁴³⁹

From another standpoint, processions at festivals could be viewed as a means for transporting people to a place, where usually sacrifices were to be offered to the gods. The starting place would be fairly nearby, for example, a neighbouring city which had connections with the sacrificial act. Alternatively, the route might be even closer, at the entrance to the *temenos*. Whichever route was chosen, the way would be described as ‘sacred’. The presence of *theoroi* would be a feature of these processions, where they would either participate or be observers.⁴⁴⁰

4. f. Pompe

The name used to describe processions was *pompe*. The name was eschewed by early Christians, who even ascribed such behaviour as belonging to a demonic power.⁴⁴¹ It seems that the Early Church was in a double bind on the subject of processions. On the one hand, ‘pompa’ was a term used and recognised as a characteristic of demonic display. Three examples from late antiquity demonstrate this viewpoint. Tertullian, in his work “De spectaculis”, identifies the focus of

⁴³⁹ Graf, *Roman Festivals in the Greek East*, 17-18.

⁴⁴⁰ Rutherford, *State Pilgrims and Sacred Observers in Ancient Greece*, 206.

⁴⁴¹ Baldwin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 235.

attention in pagan processions as being ‘gods’ who must be seen as the devil and his demons.

These spectacular processions, or ‘pomps’ must be renounced at baptism. In fifth-century Hippo and Carthage, the bishops Augustine and Quodvultdeus preached against similar pagan spectacles. Daniel Van Slyke comments on the bishops’ attacks in the light of Tertullian’s examination:

... spectacles are incompatible with Christian discipline and are intricately bound with demonic forces. They held that the moral life the Christians swore to live at their baptism is undermined by attending such entertainments.⁴⁴²

As Christians, at their baptism, rejected ‘the Devil and all his works, ‘pomp’ or ‘pompa’ was connected directly with such a focus and resulting action. On the other hand, processions were necessary in the stational worship of fourth-century Jerusalem to connect several places of worship, and transport people, especially the bishop, from one location to another. Also, the public nature of Christian worship, made effective by the enactment of processions, enabled the newly authorised Church to show the surrounding hostile pagan and Jewish world, that they were now the new and rising religious force in the Roman world.⁴⁴³ Therefore, even though the Church endeavoured to distance itself from such an association, it eventually coalesced and perpetuated the custom, albeit shaped and energised to match the elements of fourth-century Jerusalem’s requirement for stational worship.⁴⁴⁴

The processions, which took place in fourth-century Jerusalem, reflect pre-Christian times in Rome. Baldovin links specifically the republican *pompa triumphalis* and *pompa circensis* processions, which had the military function of enhancing the reputations of consuls and

⁴⁴² D.G. Van Slyke. “The Devil and His Pomps in Fifth-Century Carthage: Renouncing Spectacula with Spectacular Imagery.” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* ((59) 53-72. 2005), 60.

⁴⁴³ Graf, *Roman Festivals in the Greek East*, 233; J.W. Drijvers, “Transformation of a City: The Christianization of Jerusalem in the Fourth Century” in R. Alston, O.M. van Nijf, and C.G. Williamson (eds), *Cults, Creeds and Identities in the Greek City after the Classical Age*, (Leuven/Paris/Walpole MA: Peeters, 2013), 320.

⁴⁴⁴ Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 235.

generals. Their routes were located principally within the historically important central parts of Rome: the former proceeded from Capitoline Hill to the Circus Maximus via the Forum; the latter proceeded in the opposite direction.⁴⁴⁵

Baldovin discusses the claims of J.P. Kirsch that the origins of processions in Roman Liturgy lay not in Christian experience but in pagan practice of the *pompae*. Here, Baldovin argues that the passage from pagan origins to Christian practice may not be so straightforward. He claims that pagan origin of processions in the rite of Robigalia were so late in development, that any direct connection with Christian practices must be removed. Baldovin admits that there must have been a connection between pagan and Christian practices, as the observances occurred on exactly the same calendar date.

Yet, Baldovin surprisingly still keeps to his view that an argument supporting the claim that the ‘imitation of pagan practices was the original motive in adopting processions’ cannot be maintained.⁴⁴⁶

On the negative conclusion of the study of Greek processions, Jonathan Hall comments,

Ultimately the evidence is so fragmentary that in order to construct anything approaching a coherent narrative on any particular aspect (be it ... processions, or religious prohibitions) one is compelled to construct a possibly phantomatic synchronic assemblage out of precious but scattered notices belonging to different chronological, geographical, social, and even epistemological contexts.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁵ Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 234-235.

⁴⁴⁶ Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 164.

⁴⁴⁷ J.M. Hall. “Reviewed Work: The Role of Religion in the Early Greek Polis by Robin Hägg.” *Classical Philology* ((93, 3) 271-276.1998), 274.

The new features of Christian worship in fourth-century Jerusalem owe their existence to the newly built Churches, authorised and paid for by Constantine, as he cemented his victory of being Emperor of East and West through the execution of large building programmes.

Multiple centres of worship, created by these Churches, enabled the character of Christian worship to change from one local centre of worship, e.g. Sion, to several sites in and around Jerusalem. Therefore, the stational attribute of worship came about. This in turn created a mobile liturgy, which demanded the existence of processions so that the worshippers could travel from one location to another, yet could still be within the orbit of one grand act of worship.

Fourth-century Christians could now claim the Roman ‘colonia’ to be part of their own heritage as they linked the historical sites to important elements of the Christian story portrayed in the Gospels. Baldovin describes the process as ‘a sacred topography hallowed by tradition’.⁴⁴⁸

On the other hand, anyone who was either participating in or observing the Palm Sunday procession would have had no difficulty in comparing it to the processions of Greece. Fritz Graf mentions the work of Charlotte Roueché, who alluded to the Salutaris inscription’s reference to the use of public space. He comments on how, ‘the Jerusalem processions appear as just one link in a very long chain of continuity’ marking the passage of time between Salutaris and the work of Constantine Porphyrogenetos.⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁸ Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 104.

⁴⁴⁹ Graf, *Roman Festivals in the Greek East*, 236; C.M. Roueché, (1999). Looking for Late Antique Ceremonial: Ephesos and Aphrodisias. in H. Friesinger, and F. Krinzinger (eds.), *100 Jahre Österreichische Forschungen in Ephesos: Akten des Symposiums Wien 1995* (pages 161-170). Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 163-164.

A particular feature of Jerusalem processions was for them to be participatory in nature. It is in this function that comparisons with similar processions in Greece and Rome can be evaluated. The religious festivals of Greece were of a varied nature encompassing games and numerous assemblies, as shown above, which were enhanced, perhaps, by the serious business of cultic sacrifices. Above all, as we have seen, were the processions, which were very popular among all strata of Greek society: they were an important part of its cultural life.

Processions had varying functions within the Jerusalem liturgy of the fourth century. Once such function was the practical issue of transporting someone of importance from one location to another. This activity was prevalent in Egeria's account, where she described, on many occasions, processions in which the bishop moved from one sacred site to another, accompanied by his retinue and fellow worshippers. Although there may have been such worshippers in the processions, where the bishop was present, the focus was on him.⁴⁵⁰

Egeria's attention to detail, in her diary, about the worship that she experienced in Jerusalem, brings into relief the mobile nature of the stationary liturgy practised there. Such mobility is not limited to grand occasions of stationary liturgy. The ordinary services that took place on each day contained elements of movement. Processions of this nature always involved the bishop.⁴⁵¹

Jonathan Smith comments as follows:

This is worship as pilgrimage. It reflects the movement of a secure Christianity from an essentially private mode of worship to an overwhelmingly public and civic one of parade and procession.⁴⁵²

⁴⁵⁰ Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 234.

⁴⁵¹ Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 57-58;

⁴⁵² J.Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual* (Chicago, IL/London: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 92.

Indeed, on those occasions when the bishop was absent, there were no processions or any liturgical movement.⁴⁵³

Egeria relates numerous examples, including the following:

[Each day]

24.7 Then, singing hymns, they take the bishop from the Anastasis to the Cross,ⁿ and everyone goes with him. ... Then again the bishop and all the people go Behind the Cross, and do there what they did Before the Cross;

[Lent]

27. 7 Thursday is exactly like Monday and Tuesday, and Friday like Wednesday since they again go to Sion at three o'clock and from there conduct the bishop with singing to the Anastasis.

[Palm Sunday]

31. 2 At this the bishop and all the people rise from their places, and start off on foot down from the summit of the Mount of Olives. All the people go before him with psalms and antiphons,² all the time repeating, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the

3 Lord." The babies and the ones too young to walk are carried on their parents' shoulders. Everyone is carrying branches, either palm or olive, and they accompany the bishop in the very way the

4 people did when once they went down with the Lord.

40.1 On the eighth day of Easter, the Sunday, all the people go up with the bishop immediately after midday to the Eleona.

[Pentecost]

8 ... every single member of the Christian

9 community conducts the bishop with singing to Sion, ...

Processions had their purpose in liturgy. For example, the architecture of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre contained both the Anastasis and Golgotha in close proximity. The service of *Lucernare*, at the tenth hour, did not end with the dismissal at the Anastasis but in front of Golgotha. The large congregation moved with the Bishop from the Anastasis to a space between the rotunda and Golgotha in a forecourt. Here prayers and blessings took place before another

⁴⁵³ Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 58.

procession moved from the forecourt into the basilica for a short service which then was completed by a dismissal. This movement of people and clergy was utilitarian in nature as it allowed the transfer of the congregation from one area of the complex to another.⁴⁵⁴

It was the necessity of moving from place to place that created the phenomena of processions. Key elements of these emulated the pagan processions of the ancient world; namely, the ubiquitous presence of the bishop and the singing of psalms or hymns.⁴⁵⁵ Official processions, organised by the state included singing and dancing⁴⁵⁶ For example, at Delphi the Ainiianian *theoria* took part in a procession and sang as they went. Musical accompaniment was present as the *thedriai* processed to Delos and Delphi in the fifth century. Such public displays will have been enhanced with the presence of observers, especially those from elsewhere.⁴⁵⁷

Egeria provides numerous examples of this practice including the following:

24.7: Then, singing hymns, they take the bishop from the Anastasis to the Cross,ⁿ and everyone goes with him. ... Then again the bishop and all the people go Behind the Cross, and do there what they did Before the Cross;

24.11: the bishop comes out, and is taken with singing to the Cross, and they all go with him.

25.2: ... monazontes lead the bishop with singing to the Anastasis. While they are singing and the bishop approaches, all the doors of the Anastasis basilica are opened, and the people (not the catechumens, only the faithful) all go in.

27.3 Sunday at the Anastasis and the Cross. In the morning they assemble (as they do every Sunday) in the Great Church called the Martyrium on Golgotha Behind the Cross, and do what it is usual to do on a Sunday. After the dismissal in this church they go singing, as they do every Sunday, to the Anastasis, ...

⁴⁵⁴ Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 58.

⁴⁵⁵ A. McGowan and P.F. Bradshaw, *The Pilgrimage of Egeria: A New Translation of the Itinerarium Egeriae with Introduction and Commentary* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press Academic, 2018), 70; Graf, *Roman Festivals in the Greek East*, 233; Egeria, *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson, (31.2) 133.

⁴⁵⁶ Kubatzki, "Processions and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece", 134.

⁴⁵⁷ Rutherford, *State Pilgrims and Sacred Observers in Ancient Greece*, 208.

36.2 From there all of them, including the smallest children, now go down with singing and conduct the bishop to Gethsemane.

3 ... Next they go with singing to the city, and walking they reach the gate at the time when people can first recognize each other.

In summary, the key points shown above illustrate the nature of the processions requiring the presence of the bishop, and the practice of singing.

Processions were not limited to the immediate environment of the city. For example, on the Saturday before Holy Week there was an act of worship at the place where Mary met Jesus.

Egeria writes:

29.3 Just on one o'clock everyone arrives at the Lazarium, which is

4 Bethany, at about two miles from the city. About half a mile before you get to the Lazarium from Jerusalem there is a church by the road. It is the spot where Lazarus' sister Mary met the Lord.² All the monks meet the bishop when he arrives there, and the people go into the church. They have one hymn and an antiphon, and a reading from the Gospel about Lazarus' sister meeting the Lord. Then, after a prayer, everyone is blessed, and they go on with singing to the Lazarium.

5. By the time they arrive there so many people have collected that they fill not only the Lazarium itself, but all the fields around. They have hymns and antiphons which—like all the readings—are suitable to the day and the place. Then at the dismissal a presbyter announces Easter. He mounts a platform, and reads the Gospel passage which begins "When Jesus came to Bethany six days before the Passover". After this reading, with its announce-

6 ment of Easter, comes the dismissal. They do it on this day because the Gospel describes what took place in Bethany "six days before the Passover", and it is six days from this Saturday to the Thursday night on which the Lord was arrested after the Supper. Thus they all return to the Anastasis and have Lucernare in the usual way.

The Jerusalem Christians were emulating the meeting Mary of Bethany with Jesus as described in John 11:29-30. Such a story, coming as it does on the Saturday before Holy Week, does not lose its poignancy for us in our own day as we reflect of the Raising of Lazarus being a preface to the Resurrection of Jesus on Easter Day. As in the Golgotha buildings and the Anastasis, the

actual location of the worship is a critical characteristic of its function and efficacy. The procession from the believed location of Mary and Jesus to Jerusalem was an essential part of the liturgy, preparing the adherents for the coming events of Palm Sunday and Holy Week. This example of stational worship, as recorded by Egeria, was unusual and was something that was already standard practice in the fourth century, and not a liturgy requested or created by Egeria during her three years there.⁴⁵⁸

The fourth-century Christians in Jerusalem, newly emboldened by the freedoms gifted to the Church by Constantine, were able to express their faith and convictions in the public sphere by the building of churches and the enactment of public worship. Such activity was set against a background of paganism and Judaism, both of which the Church fought against.

However, the processions, which were such a vital part of the Jerusalem liturgy, had a history to them within the very realm that the Christians were trying to eradicate: paganism and Judaism.⁴⁵⁹

The genre of Christian processions which were participatory in nature had two further divisions. One focus was to be an action of supplication: to beg for God's mercy. The other focus was to enable a re-enactment to occur, which displayed an important event in the Gospels concerning the activity of Jesus in Jerusalem and its environs.⁴⁶⁰

The fourth-century Jerusalem Christians remembered the actions of Jesus in the Passion Narratives, following his movement by processing from the Mount of Olives to the city. Good

⁴⁵⁸ McGowan and Bradshaw, *The Pilgrimage of Egeria*, 54-55.

⁴⁵⁹ Graf, *Roman Festivals in the Greek East*, 232-233.

⁴⁶⁰ Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 238.

Friday began with services held at particular locations believed to have been where Jesus prayed, and where he was arrested. Such acts of worship contained prayer, the reading of a psalm and a Gospel reading.⁴⁶¹

Kenneth Stevenson examines this phenomenon, which he calls ‘rememorative’.⁴⁶² He claims that such a perspective has influenced the notion of ‘historicism’, which became noticeable in and after the time of Egeria.⁴⁶³ Such acts of remembering did not extend to a literal rehearsal of past events, rather they utilised the characteristic and presence of symbolism. For example, when fourth-century Christians venerated the ‘true Cross’ on Good Friday, there was no detail of the events leading to the death of Jesus as related in the Gospels. Stevenson reflects,

There are various "rememorative" services in the preceding days of the "Great Week," but no one acts parts in the play. The liturgy is allowed to find its own ambience through context of scripture reading, geographical association, and continuity. Finally, on Palm Sunday, the faithful walk down the Mount of Olives, but there is no donkey.⁴⁶⁴

Prominent examples of the remembering, the anamnesis, of the acts of Jesus are the Palm Sunday and Good Friday processions and readings in Jerusalem, as described by Egeria:

31.1 [On Palm Sunday] At one o'clock all the people go up to the Eleona Church on the Mount of Olives. The bishop takes his seat, and they have hymns and antiphons suitable to the place and the day, and readings too. When three o'clock comes, they go up with hymns and sit down at the Imbomon, the place from which the Lord ascended into heaven. (For when the bishop is present everyone is told to sit down, except for the deacons, who remain standing the whole time.)

2 At this the bishop and all the people rise from their places, and start off on foot down from the summit of the Mount of Olives. All the people go before him with psalms and antiphons,² all the time repeating, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the

⁴⁶¹ Egeria, *Egeria's Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson, (36.1, 3) 135-136.

⁴⁶² K.W. Stevenson, *Jerusalem Revisited: The Liturgical Meaning of Holy Week* (Washington DC: Pastoral Press, 1988), 9.

⁴⁶³ See R.F. Taft, "Historicism Revisited." *Studia Liturgica* ((14) 97-109. 1982), 105.

⁴⁶⁴ Stevenson, *Jerusalem Revisited*, 9.

3 Lord." The babies and the ones too young to walk are carried on their parents' shoulders. Everyone is carrying branches, either palm or olive, and they accompany the bishop in the very way the

4 people did when once they went down with the Lord. They go on foot all down the Mount to the city, and all through the city to the Anastasis, but they have to go pretty gently on account of the older women and men among them who might get tired.

[Good Friday]

37, 4 At midday they go Before the Cross—whether it is rain or fine, for the place is out of doors—into the very spacious and beautiful courtyard between the Cross and the Anastasis, and there is not even room to open a door, the place is so crammed with people.

5 They place the bishop's chair Before the Cross, and the whole time between midday and three o'clock is taken up with readings, They are all about the things Jesus suffered: first the psalms on this subject, then the Apostles (the Epistles or Acts) which concern it, then passages from the Gospels. Thus they read the prophecies about what the Lord would suffer, and the Gospels about what he

6 did suffer. And in this way they continue the readings and hymns from midday till three o'clock, demonstrating to all the people by the testimony of the Gospels and the writings of the Apostles that the Lord actually suffered everything the prophets had foretold. For those three hours, then, they are teaching the people that nothing which took place had not been foretold, and all that was foretold was completely fulfilled; and between all the readings are prayers, all of them appropriate to the day.

7 It is impressive to see the way all the people are moved by these readings, and how they mourn. You could hardly believe how every single one of them weeps during the three hours, old and young alike, because of the manner in which the Lord suffered for us. Then, when three o'clock comes, they have the reading from St John's Gospel about Jesus giving up the ghost, and, when that has been read, there is a prayer, and the dismissal.

In this unique record of Egeria, we have details of how fourth-century Christians were able to re-enact the Passion of Jesus in the very places where they were claimed, in the Gospels, to have taken place. Such a fusion of movement and location enabled those Christians to remember such events with clarity and enthusiasm.

Baldovin makes an important link between religious and political activity in his analysis of popular processions. On the one hand the processions, with their characteristic of being public, were expressions of individual piety writ large. On the other hand, the processions' very

existence as public expressions of faith were instruments that could be used to show the widely-held religious views of the population, and, as Baldovin highlights, they were also ‘a means of both prayer and propaganda.’⁴⁶⁵

Perceptions of fourth-century Christian worship are very different from our own. Whereas today we understand religious faith and practice to be separated in people’s lives from other activities such as political, financial or even leisure time pursuits, in the fourth century all these parts of human life are seen to be part of a whole. Baldovin claims, ‘In other words, in the world of Christendom, religion was not a private or voluntary activity.’ There seems to have been no distinct separation between religious and secular activity.⁴⁶⁶ To have attended a Christian service worship would have demonstrated being a member of the general society. So, for example, when a city was under attack, there would be processions along the ramparts in which relics and icons were displayed. Baldovin claimed, ‘To distinguish too sharply between the civil and the religious in such a situation would be a mistake.’

When we look at the processions described by Egeria in this light, we can perceive that the large numbers of Jerusalem Christians in attendance at say, the procession to Eleona on Pentecost Sunday, may not necessarily mean that everyone was a believing and faithful Christian.

Following this line of reasoning, Baldovin concludes, ‘One must admit, then, that the Christianization of the cultural world did not necessarily make for large attendance at important services of worship.’⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁵ Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 238.

⁴⁶⁶ Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 259-260.

⁴⁶⁷ Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 260.

Jerusalem was especially suited to this stationary liturgy, as many sites were relatively close together. The processions gave the Christian community the opportunity to demonstrate their newly acquired ability and status to worship freely in public as examined below. Not only could they draw attention to themselves, but they could also show the public that the sites were under their control. Here, liturgy and politics went hand in hand.⁴⁶⁸

It was indeed at Pentecost that the fourth-century Christians of Jerusalem inhabited the whole area of the city, quite literally. The procession to Zion in the morning and evening was complemented by the procession from the Mount of Olives to the Anastasis complex.⁴⁶⁹

This movement was in a very public space, not just within the confines and jurisdiction of the Church, but in the very heart of the city. The presence of lights at the city gate, anticipated the approaching procession and the use of the main gates of Jerusalem were used in order to enter the Church became opportunities of showcasing the presence of the newly authorised Christian community to the whole city.⁴⁷⁰ No one could have avoided the spectacle of the Palm Sunday processions and the sheer volume of participants, together with the presence of the bishop and his entourage.⁴⁷¹ Therefore, in order to secure large numbers of the populace to participate in the stationary liturgy of Jerusalem, the religious authorities may have introduced processions to attract them. We know from evidence given by our own secular world that parades and similar processions can be very popular to encourage participation by all kinds of people.⁴⁷²

⁴⁶⁸ McGowan, and Bradshaw, *The Pilgrimage of Egeria*, 70; Drijvers, “Transformation of a City”, 320.

⁴⁶⁹ Egeria, *Egeria’s Travels*, trans. by John Wilkinson, (43.1-3) 141.

⁴⁷⁰ Graf, *Roman Festivals in the Greek East*, 237; Drijvers, “Transformation of a City”, 320.

⁴⁷¹ Graf, *Roman Festivals in the Greek East*, 238.

⁴⁷² Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 261.

The events in Jerusalem described and catalogued by Egeria have profound influences on how stories of Christianity's foundation in scripture have been used by the Church.

As stated above, there is a connection between the present and the past whereby collective memory provides a pathway of reconstruction.⁴⁷³ The processions that took place in fourth-century Jerusalem would have been influenced by similar processions in ancient Greece, as argued above.

4. g. Conclusion

In this section I have demonstrated that processions within fourth-century liturgy at Jerusalem, experienced and reported by Egeria, have links based on cultural memory from ancient Greece.

I have concentrated on ancient Greece, although being aware that such processions were also evident in Rome, Constantinople, Antioch and even possibly experienced in large villages of the ancient Near East.

It has been shown that processions relating to Christian liturgy were not always of a religious nature. Many popular processions in ancient Greece were expressions of political life. As such political processions are viewed and analysed, it is important to engage in a broad view of the human experience shared by many in ancient Greece, whose activity influenced Christian expressions of movement in fourth-century Jerusalem and other cities.

⁴⁷³ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 34

As ancient Greeks lined the processions, as described above, we can envisage similar onlookers lining the streets of Jerusalem, not as active participants, but as observers. As in Greece, the Christians of Jerusalem could see themselves as part of a cohesive society, much to the pleasure and the confidence of the controlling elites.

This positive cohesion between the ancient Greeks was seen to present in the relationship between not only the people, but also between the people and the gods. Then, in fourth-century Jerusalem, this same cohesion was experienced within the Christian milieu. Again, such experience was present within both the religious sphere and the political life of Jerusalem. The churches built by Constantine served as a reminder of the new Christian Roman Empire, consolidated in both West and East. The location of such buildings necessitated the practice of stational worship, which in turn required processions to be enacted between them.

Whereas the main purpose for processions in ancient Greece was to transport animals for sacrifice, with the additional benefit of moving people from one place to another, the Christian processions focussed on the needs of the people. This was especially so when the focus of attention was on the bishop, who needed to lead his people in a public and dignified way.

It has been shown that such a public action drew the ire and criticism of Early Christians whereby they described such ostentatious behaviour as being related to demonic power. However, the practical necessities of moving people eventually calmed such histrionic episodes, and processions became an essential part of Christian liturgy in the stational worship of fourth-century Jerusalem.

Beyond the utilitarian actions of processions being vehicles of movement, there is the usefulness of processions being places where important Biblical stories and memories could be re-enacted. Important events and actions in the life of Jesus could be remembered and consolidated into cultural memory. A prime example of this activity are the Palm Sunday and Good Friday processions and readings, which Egeria relates in her diary.

In a wider perspective, the usefulness of processions had a two-fold outcome. On the one hand, pious involvement in processions at a personal level could enhance and develop an individual's or community's experience of faith. On the other hand, such a public display of religious faith and belief could be witnessed by many people, both those who were distinctly religious and those for whom participation or observation of processions were part of secular life. In this latter experience, religious processions could be used as vehicles through which propaganda and 'window dressing' could be used by the Church: by the bishop and his followers.

The civic attributes of communal processions undertaken in ancient Greece became important avenues of religious expression in Jerusalem in the fourth century. Pilgrims then and over the centuries have received similar experiences, which have taken their place in the witness of the Christian Church.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study of Christian pilgrimage, examined from the perspective of cultural memory, has produced the following insights.

We have seen how experiences in Greek and Roman culture in the centuries before the beginnings of Christian pilgrimage were sources of cultural memory for the first Christian pilgrims. The practices and cultural patterns of the Graeco-Roman world involved long established ways of functioning around sacred places.

Communication with the divine, either by sacrifice, thanksgiving or supplication were driving forces over the centuries in different milieux. The early Christians could acknowledge that the Greeks had a sense of the divine, that they travelled nearby or over long distances to communicate with the gods. The Greeks had an experience of the sacred and wished to enhance their lives by offering sacrifice or thanksgiving to the gods for that end. The desired enhancement of the Greeks may have been similar to that of the Christians. Communication with the divine may have been the result of a wish to be healed or to receive divine blessing either as individuals or as a community.

The crucial fact that relates directly to this study is nearness of time between the types of religious expression. Cultural memory of the long-standing practices of the world of ancient Greece and Rome formed part of their cognisance of the world in which they then experienced now Christian holy sites.

A major factor within the received memory of the early Christians was that of travel, which was the most defining attribute of Greek religious experience of holy places. It took many forms: travelling groups of ancient Greeks were composed of many different people for different reasons. There were individuals and representatives of whole communities, both official and unofficial. Their requirements varied widely from being local journeys to those that spanned hundreds of miles. Safety and security of the travellers were essential and were guaranteed by the state. Such travelling conditions were mirrored in the pilgrimages of the early Christians, as they were protected by the Roman military with their carefully protected stations in the overall political stability of the *Pax Romana*.

This experience of movement, from one place to another, became the vehicle in which a wider concept of human imagination could be realised. The search for ‘the other’ became not only desirable but possible in the safe, secure world of travel. Christian pilgrims in the fourth century, safe in the security of the Roman military, could look back to the Greek state and see how Greek travellers could move unhindered and in safety due to the peace agreements made at that time.

As Christian pilgrims retained the cultural memory of the practices of Greece, they took over ways of honouring the Greek heroes by honouring Christian saints in a similar fashion. Stories and poetry that were written to promote them, could create ways of teaching the people and imprint such information to memory. Therefore, as Greek travellers visited the tombs of the heroes, Christian pilgrims could likewise visit the tombs of the saints. The connection between visitors and the visited was on two planes: not only could human beings connect with others on the ground, it also enabled people to connect ‘vertically’ with the divine in what were to become ‘thin places’.

I have examined here the nature of human memory as individual memory. It is recognised that human beings can have no understanding without the resource of memory. For us to have an awareness of the world, we must have a foundation of memory for our thought processes to function. In its limited way, personal memories can be shared by those who experienced them directly.

However, direct memory cannot be accessed beyond living memory. For a memory to be long-lasting, it needs to be shared. For this to be achieved, the memory must be translated to tradition either as a collective or cultural memory. Such a change in the storage and protection of memory can enable it to survive for thousands of years. For example, the Homeric epics of Greece enabled experiences of the Greeks to be shared for many generations, as those extraordinary stories became embedded in cultural memory.

We have seen that cultural memory is constructed by society rather than displayed by individuals of it. Such a method of preserving memory opens up the possibility of cherished memories being manipulated by those in power for their own ends. Any natural creation of remembering an important event, where the general population holds experiences in common, become distorted and changed by elites, so that the shared narrative ends up as a different account of what actually happened. If the final edition has been influenced by genuine individual experiences having been incorporated in the narrative, then such manipulated narrative will be accepted by everyone, even though it may be far from the truth.

This way of thinking will have a profound effect on interpretations of the New Testament, and the reliability or relevance of the Gospel narratives for Christians. Remembered experiences of

Christian pilgrimages may well stand in contrast to the statements and doctrine displayed in Biblical writings. We have seen that collective memory of such texts is far more reliable than that of individuals, so a perspective which encapsulates historical awareness of Biblical sites will be most effective when such memory is separated from individual attempts at reconstructing the past.

We have also seen and acknowledged that the use of text is an essential medium through which elements of memory can be transferred from a far distant past to the current time. The depository of written text can be a valuable source of information, as it is accessed by many people and can be stored and then retrieved. Oral recollection, on the other hand, is always transitory. It cannot be paused, to enable critical reflection, and it is always experienced in the current time. We have seen that in societies where there is an oral tradition, trained memory is essential for any meaningful reception of such data.

I have examined the emergence of Christian pilgrimage in the fourth century and concluded this study with an examination of the pilgrimage to the Holy Land made by Egeria. The focus here has been on the phenomenon of ritual processions that took place in Jerusalem during her long stay in the city. This study has demonstrated that there are links between the processions that Egeria experienced and catalogued, and those of ancient Greece, indicating a cultural memory of the precedents.

It has been recognised that comparisons between the two environments and the participants of the processions are often difficult to quantify. Many Greek processions were political in nature with secular participants pursuing an entirely earthbound agenda. Yet, even though the

processions in ancient Greece and fourth-century Jerusalem had differing agendas and environments, people's activity experienced as onlookers lining the streets would have been very similar. Observers were enthralled by the processions to which they were engaged, in equal measure, whether in Greece or Jerusalem.

In this conclusion, we can see that the memory of the practices of the ancient pagan world had a direct connection to the activity in fourth-century Jerusalem. When the perspective of enquiry is broadened from activity between human beings to that of activity between people and the divine, then the action of cultural memory becomes truly astonishing.

As it becomes clear that all understanding of current events and perceptions are based on memory, the status of events in history are dependent entirely on the influence of memory in their particular situation. Therefore, the experience of Christian pilgrimage in the fourth century must have a background of other experiences which have been transmitted through memory. This thesis has argued that the long-standing ways of behaving in regard to sacred places had a profound influence on the Christian milieu of the fourth century in Palestine, which can be demonstrated in the diary of Egeria and the report offered by the Pilgrim from Bordeaux.

The original question posed in this thesis is 'Why Pilgrimage?'. It is a heading under which the subject relates to the enquiry as to why the first pilgrims undertook such perilous journeys across Europe to the Middle East in search of places and experiences that would enhance their Christian faith. What was the motivating force that drove them to such extremes? This thesis proposes that such a project was governed by cultural memory. It was a memory embedded in their culture.

There was simply no other alternative but to travel now to the places where the deeds of biblical

heroes took place, and where the divine was manifested, to process and to remember. This created a land that was sacred and scriptural, in that there were countless stories in the Gospels relating information about Jesus and his ministry, death and resurrection, and the activities of the early Church, in Palestine. The first pilgrims continued to influence the activity of other people in the world in which they lived, who also travelled long distances in search of 'the other'.

Such an investigation is never locked in time, but is part of an ongoing process of enquiry and analysis. It is hoped that this enquiry will contribute to the current academic focus on memory and encourage further study in this fascinating subject.

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