

Introduction

Pilgrimage and Political Economy

Introduction to a Research Agenda

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Introduction: Communitas, Contracts and Capitalism

Pilgrimage has always followed, and sometimes helped to create, trade routes and markets. Victor and Edith Turner's classic study of Christian pilgrimage – *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (1978) – talked not only of rites of passage and the extra-worldly, non-hierarchical fellowship of *communitas* but also of the existence of a 'pilgrimage ethic' in operation long before that of Weber's Protestant Ethic. Indeed, the Turners speculated that medieval European pilgrimage may have formed a landscape of religio-economic connections that would later make 'mercantile and industrial capitalism a viable national and international system' (ibid.: 234). In their view, the voluntarism and egalitarianism characteristic of historical pilgrimage provided antecedents for contractual relationships, contributing in significant ways to modern landscapes of capitalist exchange.

Yet what is striking is that neither the Turners nor other ethnographers of pilgrimage, with some important exceptions discussed below, have seriously taken up the challenge of examining these themes relating to pilgrimage and the wider organization of the economy. To be sure, much work in tourism management studies has assessed the broad economic impact of travel to sacred sites (e.g. Raj and Griffin 2015), but anglophone fieldworkers in particular have tended to focus on phenomenological perspectives that, while valuable and necessary, have rarely considered wider political and economic processes in systematic ways. Although the pioneering critique of the *communitas* model by Michael Sallnow (1981) drew on his work in the Peruvian Andes where pilgrims engage in both

religious and commercial transactions (Sallnow 1987), his untimely death prevented him from pursuing his approach further. Since the late 1980s the contested meanings and contradictory practices involved in pilgrimage have been explored, particularly in Christian contexts (Perry and Echeverria 1988; Eade and Sallnow 1991; van der Veer 1994; Dubisch 1995; Duijzings 2000; Ivakhiv 2001; Digance 2003; Kormina 2004; Maclean 2008; Hermkens, Jansen and Notermans 2009; Bowman 2012; Fedele 2013; Eade and Katić 2014). However, such work has largely focused on the pilgrimage sites themselves, where the presence of strong ideological distinctions between sacred and secular has discouraged analysis of more ramifying and multivalent connections among religious, political and economic processes. Not only informants, but also scholars of pilgrimage, have tended to reinforce Euro-American, post-Enlightenment tendencies to draw boundaries between religion and the economy, or at least to see their mixing as somehow an aberration or compromise (cf Reader 2014). This separation-of-spheres approach not only reinforces the ideal of pilgrimage as a 'set apart' realm of anti-structure, it also concentrates attention on the pilgrimage shrine as a discrete focus of analytical attention – an apparently exceptional and bounded place where versions of the sacred are displayed, preserved and/or defended from competing interests.

In this volume, we seek to go beyond such models by proposing the virtues of a 'political economy' approach to the study of pilgrimage. In using this term, we are conscious of its long history of scholarship (e.g. Vogel and Barma 2008), and its focus on the ever-evolving nexus of relationships between state governance and economic transactions. Such approaches have certainly been profitable in examining links between economic management and perceived national interest, highlighting political efforts to move control of production, consumption, markets and exchange beyond purely local spheres of activity and surveillance (e.g. Valeri 2010: 552). They have increasingly taken into account the growing complexity and unpredictability of economic transactions beyond and across national frames, ranging from the analysis of the effects of colonialism to raising questions concerning the management of international and transnational systems of production, distribution and trade in relation to both the state and corporate interests.

While these questions may seem far from discussions of religion, they raise significant issues that challenge the sociological validity of separation-of-spheres assumptions in both Western and non-Western contexts. Rachel McLeary and Robert Barro (2006) powerfully argue that interactions between religion and political economy involve two causal directions: not only how a nation's economic, political and legal structures affect its religiosity, but also how 'religiousness' may influence economic

performance. Such considerations encourage the use of analytical paradigms that transcend older secularization/post-secularism epistemes, as Gauthier et al. point out (2013: 261–62).

We can also see religious activity in many parts of the world operating within new forms of *cultural* political economy (Gauthier et al. 2013: 261), dominated by consumerism, global media and manifestations of neoliberalism. Through these new forms, market logics seem to permeate many areas of policy and practice, ranging from education or welfare to religion. As Osella and Rudnyckyj (2017: 10) point out, this new economic dispensation has ‘inspired changing forms of religious practice, just as religious moralities have been deployed in new ways in the market’. A post-Fordist era of flexibilized production and global, if uneven, dispersal of labour challenges centralized, Keynesian, state controls over the economy, while creating conditions for rendering the mobility (and immobility) of people and resources objects of considerable anxiety for both governments and individuals. These contemporary varieties of uncertainty not only present problems for stable governance; they also challenge national frames of reference and memory (Hervieu-Léger 1999) at the level of participation in established churches, shared forms of cultural identification, and popular understandings of belonging to particular territories.

We can thus see why an increasing volume of research has emerged concerning such issues as ‘detraditionalized’ forms of spirituality, troubled relations between religion and welfare provision, and – perhaps most spectacularly – the growth of prosperity-oriented forms of Pentecostalism (Comaroff and Comaroff 2000). As Coleman (2014: 283) has pointed out, in an era of labour mobility and the flourishing of neoliberal ideologies, such Christianity – well adapted to city life, often borne by labour migrants in the global South as well as those moving from global South to North, and lending spiritual reinforcement to both physical movement and career aspiration – has been a highly productive area of study for scholars interested in contemporary interweavings of capitalism and religion, as well as in the state’s attempts to regulate or exploit corporate, often explicitly transregional or transnational, expressions of faith.

Our argument in this volume is that pilgrimage is also an excellent but hitherto under-exploited means of examining these issues. Pilgrimage is an activity and a field constituted around both movement and the constant, chronic work that goes into place-making and place-maintaining. It also raises epistemological and ontological questions concerning what constitutes religion and economic activity, as well as the relationship between them. Pilgrimage is not only a source of popular religious activity but is also subject to varied forms of control on the part of national churches, denominations, social movements, commercial enterprises, and

regional and national governments, not to mention transnational organizations, such as UNESCO. Furthermore, it often accompanies or mitigates trajectories of labour migration and diaspora formation that result from economic and political demands for flexibilized workforces (cf Eade and Garbin 2007).

Pilgrimage is about so much more than the creation of a set-apart, sacred realm, therefore. Indeed, the Turners themselves recognized this point when they described the pilgrimage 'environment' as a network of mundane 'servicing mechanisms' that included

markets, hospices, hospitals, military supports, legal devices ... systems of communication and transportation, and so on – as well as antagonistic agencies, such as official or unofficial representatives of hostile faiths, bandits, thieves, confidence men, and even backsliders within the pilgrim ranks. (Turner and Turner 1978: 22)

We contend that all of these elements, and more, are not merely incidental or supplementary to the social scientific or historical study of pilgrimage; they are inherent dimensions of the phenomenon as an object of study as well as a social force. A political economy approach focuses attention on an expanded environment of operation that illustrates the significance for pilgrimage of national and transnational scales of planning, infrastructure and economic activity, even in relation to smaller shrines, since these are often linked in direct or indirect ways to wider spheres of influence.

We might, of course, ask why pilgrimage has not been approached through such a perspective before – or, at least, not enough. Our answers are suggestive rather than definitive. Aside from the 'over-sacralizing' of pilgrimage contexts, it may be that a focus on shrines as bounded containers of either *communitas* or contestation has blinded us from examining wider pilgrimage environments, and indeed from furthering the potential agenda that the Turners sketched out. In addition, as Vikash Singh suggests when asking why pilgrimage has been so marginal to the sociology of religion literature, 'Where it is scholars in religious studies and anthropologists that do detailed ethnographic work on popular religious practice, including pilgrimages in various societies, the broader discourse on religion and globalization is defined by political scientists and sociologists' (Singh 2013: 285). In practice, we need the detailed ethnography *and* the broader overview, and pilgrimage, in this sense, provides an ideal opportunity for varieties of multi-sited ethnography that look not only at a single, seemingly isolated shrine but also at a much wider landscape of connection, communication, competition, fractal-like replication, networking, mobility, infrastructure and governance.

Arguably, such a widening of perspectives has been anticipated by ethnographic perspectives that have shown the importance of looking at the experience of pilgrims not only at shrines but also before they leave and, in particular, once they reach home (e.g. Gold 1990; Delaney 1990; Frey 1998; Coleman 2014; Kaell 2014). It reinforces the implication by Eade and Sallnow (1991) that in order to understand pilgrims' attitudes and activities *at* shrines we need to understand their ideological positions *away* from shrines. In addition, a growing appreciation of global and transnational flows of people, goods, information and images has led some students of Christian pilgrimage to pay more attention to the varied and interconnected links between multiple 'homes' (see Tweed 1997; Petersen, Vasquez and Williams 2001; Vasquez and Marquardt 2003; Coleman and Eade 2004; Notermans 2012). Certainly, these perspectives expand the temporal and institutional focus of pilgrimage studies, raising questions about how to define the boundaries of the field. Such tendencies are promoted even more by a concern for how the salience of pilgrimage extends into questions and arenas of political economy.

Broadening Perspectives

The long-standing but still growing literature on the connections between pilgrimage and tourism has given added impetus to understanding the links with a supposedly 'secular', commercial activity (see, for example, Rinschede 1992; Vukonic 1992; Murray and Graham 1997; Swatos and Tomasi 2002; Badone and Roseman 2004; Kaufman 2005; Timothy and Olsen 2006; Blackwell 2007; Mu et al. 2007; Stausberg 2011; Di Giovine and Picard 2015). Yet the imbrications and mixtures outlined in the previous section have been more obvious to those working outside the anglophone study of Christian pilgrimage in Western Europe and North America. Hence, in Latin American countries, researchers writing not only in English but also in Spanish and Portuguese have uncovered complex relationships between religion, politics and commerce, as well as between Catholic teaching and everyday beliefs and practices. Since the present volume is directed primarily to an anglophone audience, reference is made here only to the English-language publications by Wolf (1958), Della Cava (1970), Slater (1986), Crumrine and Morinis (1991), Slater (2015) and Toniol and Steil (2015) (also see the chapters by Fortuny and Steil in this volume). A similar sensitivity to the entanglements of religion, politics and/or commerce is evident in studies undertaken in India and Japan (see, for instance, van der Veer 1988; Sax 1991; Thal 2005; Reader 2005, 2014; Bianchi 2004; and Singh 2013).

An important recent addition to the literature is Ian Reader's *Pilgrimage in the Marketplace* (2014), which has a broad scope but builds most extensively on work rooted in Japanese Buddhism – in other words, a cultural and religious context where the post-Reformation, Christian-inflected biases within social scientific theory are challenged. Reader's fundamental aim is to show how pilgrimage operates not merely *in* the marketplace, but *through* it, via the deployment of consumer activity, publicity and promotion. Here shrine administrators contend less with the character of the sacred as with a market share of pilgrims, who may not be as numerous as is often assumed (*ibid.*: 8). In these terms, the nature of pilgrimage is not despoiled by commercialism; it is (partially) constituted by it. Indeed, for Reader, such interweavings between what we usually call the religious and the economic, so evident in historical and contemporary Japan, have parallels with very early Christian sites (*ibid.*: 11; see also Adler 2002: 27), medieval Christian Europe (Reader 2014: 16; see also Sumption 1975 and Webb 2002) and Hindu pilgrimage sites (Reader 2014: 17). An important implication of his approach that we highlight here is that it extends the range of analysis from the shrines themselves to places such as exhibitions in shopping malls, railway lines and airports, tourist offices and so on.

Taking the multitude of such activities and places into account helps to demonstrate the considerable amount of work and, often, conscious strategizing involved in building up and maintaining what we might think of as a pilgrimage 'system', 'assemblage' or even 'multi-site' rather than a single sacred locale. It also opposes what Reader sees as the tendency of some scholars to refer to shrines as if they had some kind of inherent 'spiritual magnetism' (Preston 1992); rather, the language of the sacred is shown to be deployed in ways that are as entrepreneurial as they are pious. In fact, we might argue that Weberian charisma is, and has always been, a combination of the two. Thus, Sedona in Arizona has become a New Age pilgrimage site as local tourist agencies have transformed the area into a base for outdoor activists, while more spiritually oriented activists have identified 'power spots' in the landscape and organized tours of sacred features (*ibid.*: 33).

Reader does not point out the connection, but there are parallels between his position and that taken by Eade and Sallnow (1991). Although their contestation metaphor has attracted widespread attention (see also Coleman 2002), they also talk about how 'in a perfect illustration of the classic Marxist model of fetishization and alienation, the shrine ... appears to its devotees as if it were itself dispensing the divine power ... which they seek' (Eade and Sallnow 1991: 15–16). Reader's critique of the idea of *sui generis* magnetism parallels, therefore, their reference to the fetishization

of holy influence, with both stances implying that informants *and* scholars have tended to take the sacredness of shrines too much for granted. This scepticism towards inherent sacrality and, particularly in Reader's case, specific reference to the multiple agencies involved in the construction of pilgrimage, might be pitched against Victor Turner's (1973) famous characterization of the shrine as the 'center out there', marked by its isolation from everyday politicking and commerce, and thus also distinguishing home sharply from sacred goal (Turner 1973, 195). In fact, when a broader perspective is adopted, many 'centres' can be seen to be involved in the production and popularization of any site/multi-site. Or, as Bajc, Coleman and Eade (2007) have argued, pilgrimages can be understood as working through networks of mobilities around which objects, cultures and people circulate, with always fragile 'destinations' being made, remade and displaced at different scales of both time and space.

We therefore find resonances between our own approach and Reader's broadening out of what needs to be examined in truly comprehensive studies of pilgrimage. Our emphasis on a political economy approach – and, indeed, a market approach – should not be taken to imply that economic or political relations and strategies somehow represent *the* ultimate, underlying explanation for the emergence of pilgrimage sites and systems. Such a view would grant too much agency to the strategic master plans of administrators, politicians and entrepreneurs, or to the determining force of material relations. The dynamism and adaptability of pilgrimages emerge through multi-stranded and not always predictable plays of influence among different constituencies, including clergy, politicians, pilgrims, entrepreneurs and wider publics. While factors associated with both economy and governance must be acknowledged, we should avoid the temptation, suggested by neoliberal paradigms, of only allowing ourselves to think through economic metaphors. A fetishization of the powers of the sacred must not be replaced by a fetishization of the transcendental forces of the market. We see both our and Reader's approaches as expanding the field of pilgrimage studies, not forcing it down a narrow path.

Furthermore, we need to develop a sophisticated understanding of what actually might be meant by 'the market' in relation to pilgrimage. In their recent overview of religion and the 'morality of the market', Osella and Rudnyckij (2017: 9) note how what we call the market is

produced as an effect of the cumulative interventions of a heterogeneous assemblage, involving both human and nonhuman actors: market traders, economists, mathematicians, state apparatuses, legislations, educational institutions, economic theories, information technology, algorithms, electronic trading and more.

In other words, this is an assemblage that is always changing, is likely to look different according to one's vantage point at any given moment, and transcends any single human institution.

Different representations of the market also call forth different forms of response. For instance, the (modernist) assertion of the amoral, impassive workings of market forces is likely to call forth its equal and equivalent opposite – an impassioned call for the need for 'pure' forms of compassion and charity – even if the unadulterated existence of either stance is sociologically unlikely. Or, in the world of scholarly analysis, some writers argue that market-like relations may in themselves act as catalysing forces for the exercise of faith, as in the claims of rational-choice theorists that competition among religious actors is likely to increase participation (Stark and Bainbridge 1985; discussed in Osella and Rudnyckij 2017: 3).

While we have critiqued ethnographic approaches to pilgrimage for their rather exclusive focus on particular 'sacred' locations, we argue for the value of good ethnography in exposing the contradictions, subtleties and multi-dimensional character of whatever is instantiated as market relations in any given situation. Here, for instance, we note the work of Vikash Singh (2013) mentioned earlier, in which he refers to the operations of global capitalism but does so through a detailed focus on the Kanwar pilgrimage to Hardwar, an annual operation that involves some twelve million people in religious actions involving, among other things, the arduous movement over perhaps hundreds of miles of especially young, lower-class males. Singh explores ways in which such pilgrimage performances enact concerns over work and lack of recognition: 'This is not a flight from the world; rather, it addresses the world. It engages the world, gets a purchase on it, precisely through transcending it' (ibid.: 293). Singh is neither denying here pilgrimage's capacity for play or recombination, nor is he consigning such elements to a realm of remote anti-structure. Pilgrimage in these terms both reflects and provides the means for addressing the demands of a liberal capitalist logic, even as its possibilities are not exhausted by its engagement with such logic.

Singh shows how a deployment of phenomenology and performance theory can complement and reinforce an acute diagnosis of the links between pilgrimage and political economy. In line with our own intentions, he opens up rather than sets boundaries around his field of study:

The pilgrimage, I found, intervenes in the social order through the very figures and moments of transcendence. It provides a field for the participants to address their desires and immediate social responsibilities and perform to the unique challenges of an economically destitute yet very hierarchical society,

increasingly dominated by a liberal capitalist social logic. This is an open field, one without any gated entries or institutional constraints, and yet, a challenging and productive site to practice and prove one's resolve, gifts, and good faith. (Singh 2013: 297)

As Singh shows so well, ethnographers need more explicitly to acknowledge the ways in which pilgrimages constitute powerful social forces within but also beyond religious landscapes. This realization brings with it methodological challenges in attempting to assess the difference made by and through pilgrimage-related action. A recent instructive example of evaluating the complexities of influence associated with pilgrimage is provided by the study of a Zion Christian Church (ZCC) gathering (Saayman et al. 2014), which occurs annually at Easter weekend in the Limpopo Province of South Africa and attracts well over a million people. In one sense, the event seems to constitute a 'set apart' period of religious concentration, with ZCC leaders insisting that pilgrims stay on site in order to be focused on spiritual growth and not be distracted by tourist sites or attractions. Yet the sheer scale of the event means that it inevitably has considerable economic and logistic impact, given the necessity to provide food, transport, security and so on.

For our purposes, one of the most fascinating dimensions of the piece is precisely the difficulty, outlined by the authors, of determining not just the size but also the *location* of such impact: should one focus on the site alone, the immediate locality, the region, the country, or the places from around the world that some pilgrims have come from? Such impact, as they put it, can be seen as 'direct, indirect and induced' (Saayman et al. 2014: 410), pointing to the numerous and ramifying channels through which pilgrimage activities – and effects – flow. As with much multi-sited work, the researcher responds to the demands of the field while understanding that the delimitation of any 'multi-site' involves choices based on the research questions one is asking. But the point is to remain open to where the pilgrimage assemblage seems to lead.

There are times when the influence of pilgrimage in realms of governance can be detected, occasionally in ways that manifest quite directly in observable social institutions. Anne Feldhaus (2003: 14–15) argues that pilgrimage and what she calls 'religious-geographical conceptions' may have played a role in the founding of the State of Maharashtra in 1960. Furthermore, she notes that in contexts around the world where regional and national political movements have arisen – for instance in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Africa and Indonesia – pilgrimages may even be seen as broad expressions of a kind of 'proto-nationalism' (ibid.: 221). Writing from a very different evidence base – that of archaeology – Joy

McCorrison (2013) explores the idea that pilgrimage may have played an important role in the emergence of Arabian complex societies during the first millennium BCE, as mobile pastoralists gathered to reify communities, reshape social arenas and engage in economic exchanges. The results of such crystallizations of community, therefore, appear to have been deeply 'structural' in the long term.

One of the most developed studies of pilgrimage as an instrument of social, political and economic order is provided by Emanuel Marx's work on the Bedouin of Mount Sinai from the 1960s onwards, in which he examines the political economy of tribal groupings whose way of life is linked to regional, national and global forces (Marx 1977: 9). The immediate landscape of South Sinai contains some 130 saints' tombs (*ibid.*: 134), twenty of which serve as pilgrimage centres. Marx shows how the functioning of such centres in the lives of the Bedouin must be understood in parallel with the fact that most men work in insecure jobs and are often away from their families for much of the year. Given the lack of other resources and the general distance of state infrastructures, pilgrimage brings people together who 'help to make an alternative economy' (*ibid.*: 166), since gatherings enable meetings with friends and relatives, contacts with business associates from various tribes, and reaffirm the right to use territorial resources. As Marx puts it, in reflecting on the ritualized activities at saints' tombs, 'purely' spiritual occasions are inconceivable, as indeed are 'purely' material ones (*ibid.*: 154).

If these examples from South Africa, India, ancient Arabia and Sinai all point to the influence of pilgrimage in economic and political realms, there is also evidence for it being deployed as a tool for soft power in international relations. Mikiya Koyagi (2014) provides the striking case of the Hajj enacted by Japanese travellers during the interwar period. He notes that at this time the Japanese government hoped to develop an alliance with Islam as part of a vision of a new world order in Asia, with the Imperial State keen to expand such economic connections as a means of mitigating economic hardships generated by the Great Depression. Thus, Koyagi quotes the words of one pilgrim, who is explaining the meaning of Allah to his fellow countrymen and women:

It may sound disrespectful (to the Emperor) to say that the ideal main god for West Asians today (i.e. Allah) is the same as the ancestor of our Emperor ... Still, I came to believe that what they worship in a changed form is nothing but the ancestor of our Emperor. It is the duty of our nation and essential for the grand plan of the Imperial Nation to propagate the absolute Shinto Faith, enlighten people, and enrich them by changing them into the subjects of the Emperor. (Koyagi 2014: 854)

In this account, the intersections of religion, forms of governance, empire and conversion are genuinely difficult to disentangle; there is little evidence that the Hajj itself actually had any of the effects described. Yet the point here is to indicate the understanding of the Hajj as a conduit both for a universalized sense of faith and for an almost missionary sense of transmitting political fealty to a foreign realm.

Contributions to a Widened Field

A political economy approach implies that economic relations – not only market ones but also others associated with patronage, public works, the financing of national religious bodies and so on – are enmeshed with actions (successful or not) aimed at directing resources in ways that benefit state or other political entities. In these terms, pilgrimages are to be seen as ‘resources’ that contain or generate numerous forms of capital (monetary, cultural, social), even as they might simultaneously promote ideologies that militate against the accumulation of what are perceived as secular expressions of prestige and power. Thus, we agree with the common understanding of a pilgrimage as characteristically made up of ‘crossings’ (Tweed 1997, 2006) and intersections, but the intersections that we focus on are not merely associated with liminal relations between heaven and earth, but also with the encounters between religious, ethnic, political, economic, national and transnational frames of reference.

Contributors to this volume investigate how wider factors behind national and transnational mobility have impacted on pilgrimage activity in, and by definition across, different parts of the world. We are particularly interested in how pilgrimage relates to movements associated with migration (often prompted by economic and/or political imperatives), diaspora and political cooperation or conflict across nation-states. While tourism is often associated with voluntary action, pilgrimage may equally be practised by communities that have undergone enforced journeys away from homelands, and ones where the prospects of return may be unclear. Under such circumstances, we ask how pilgrimage might work in the creation of new landscapes of ambiguous and/or aspirational belonging, possibly overlaying or even claiming historically and religiously charged sites in host nations. How are assumptions concerning ‘sacred’ action translated into new contexts and novel temporalities, where the role of religion in the public and civic spheres might be viewed and regulated very differently from the situation at home? More generally, how can we see pilgrimage as not so much reflecting, or in competition with, secular assumptions and institutions, but *articulating* with them, so that for instance the experience

of forced migration might be translated into the domesticating routines of ritual, creating chains of mobility that shade into each other over time?

The volume is made up of chapters that have been commissioned to provide a range of geographical perspectives. They indicate how the movements of the colonial past still have effects in the postcolonial world, but also how the minutiae of religious action in a given shrine can provide a ritualized commentary on much wider articulations of identity. We cover not only various forms of Christianity but also Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and the New Age.

Our first chapter is an exploration of the networks linking Hindus in India with their co-religionists across the Indian Ocean in Mauritius. As Mathieu Claveyrolas points out, Mauritius has always been embedded in globalized contexts. A crossroads of ancient sea routes, the island has been populated by Africans, Indians and Europeans. Slave trade and indenture labour accounted for most of its population. Today, half of the island's 1,200,000 inhabitants identify themselves as Hindus and most are descended from the half a million indentured labourers brought there from India during the second part of the nineteenth century. From the early twentieth century they managed to gain access to land and property and, after national independence in 1968, members of the Hindu elite gained control of political power.

Claveyrolas shows how shrines in sugarcane plantations and temples in villages close to the plantations were part of the settlement of Hinduism in the island and its invention as 'Little India'. Encouraged by the dominant political elite, Hindu Mauritians have been (re-)developing rapidly growing links with India, among other things through local priests or devotees going there as tourists and pilgrims. Ganga Talao, a sacred lake in the Mauritian mountains, was claimed to be connected to the Indian Ganges and it developed as the island's main Hindu pilgrimage site, attracting hundreds of thousands of pilgrims not only from Mauritius but also from India. First conceived as a consolation for the loss of Hindu India, Ganga Talao both duplicates the sacred motherland of Hinduism (India) and gradually becomes seen as unique. The ways by which community leaders and institutions have managed the site and the pilgrimage illustrate, then, the role played by pilgrimage in diasporic contexts through mobilizing not only the religious but also the economic and political soft-power dimensions of transnational links.

In Chapter 2 we move to India itself and transnational networks generated by young Indians working at the famous Buddhist pilgrimage site of Bodh Gaya in the northern state of Bihar. David Geary begins at the national level and the federal government's development of political and economic collaborations with the Japanese government, which include

the development of the country's Buddhist pilgrimage circuit. Analysing Buddhist heritage as forming mechanisms of soft power, he shows how Buddhism provides a cultural and political resource for strengthening partnerships and creating formal bilateral aid arrangements across Asia. The increasing importance of pilgrimage activities at several Buddhist sites in north India has generated an array of economic, social and romantic opportunities for local Indian residents that are not available in other parts of the country. Drawing on stories of transnational encounter and cross-cultural ties between East and East, Geary examines the role played by pilgrimage and the service sector in providing jobs that can lead to marriage proposals and migration. These stories reveal some of the emotional entanglements and cultural constraints that underlie these romantic ties and emerging inter-Asian connections in the early twenty-first century.

In Chapter 3 the focus shifts to Pakistan, where Rémy Delage seeks to develop a political economy approach to the study of Sufism and South Asian devotionalism, while considering the importance of movement and religious circulation in reconfiguring the geography of Muslim pilgrimages and ritual cartographies. To substantiate this general project Delage focuses on the shrine of the Muslim saint, La`l Shahbâz Qalandar. He describes how the migration of the saint and his disciples from the West has forged imaginary links between past and present sacred geographies and how these transnational Islamic imaginaries coexist with emerging forms of local religiosity.

The intimate relationship between religion and politics has played a major role in changing the nature of the places Delage describes. Hence, the partition of British India led to the flight of Hindu families, who had long been involved in the shrine's ritual activities. Furthermore, the cult's repositioning towards Shiism reflects its transnational religious and political connections with Iran and the Central Asian republics. The emergence of a new map of ritual places also reflects the shrine's re-appropriation by Shias from within Pakistan, who constitute the main audience during the pilgrimage season. Although the state has tried to project the official version of an orthodox Sunni Islam onto this major Sufi site, it has signally failed to counter the growth of Shia influence.

In the next chapter we move further west to Central Asia and the Republic of Uzbekistan. Maria Louw explores national and transnational conceptions of Islam and Muslimness through an ethnographic study of shrines in the city of Bukhara. Most of these are grave sites – the burial places of Muslim saints – but there are also sites that have other connections with a saint: they may be places with which he or she has been in contact, rested or performed a miracle. Today, many are being used

as places where the post-Soviet ideology of national independence can be proclaimed, an ideology that promotes a particular Uzbek form of Muslimness and which tends to see transnational Islam as a threat. Yet, while the shrines are replete with traces of the links established between Bukhara and the wider Islamic world that point to the city's glorious past associated with the Silk Road and its fame as a centre for Islamic learning and mysticism, they are also sites for imaginaries that call for the re-establishment of ties with the wider Islamic *umma*. The chapter explores, then, the tensions between national and transnational conceptions of Islam and Muslimness and the ways in which they find their expression in pilgrimage practices.

Mario Katić's chapter on Bosnian Croat migrants' annual visits to their homeland and associated shrines is also rooted in transnational landscapes, while exploring a concept that juxtaposes and interweaves the themes of this volume. The term 'pilgrimage capital' draws on Bourdieusian models to refer to the capital that contributes to and participates in the promotion, development and (re-)construction of pilgrimage places. It thus operates at the intersections between producers and consumers of pilgrimage, clergy and entrepreneurs, economic gain and religious or historical imagination, displacement and the remaking of place. Katić traces the re-establishment of a number of Christian shrines in a region still marked by post-Second World War migration as well as post-communist ructions, involving tense relations among Croats and Serbs. And, as he notes pithily of one shrine, Kondžilo in Northern Bosnia, 'Wherever there is a mass of potential voters, it is normal to find politicians'. The capital analysed here is clearly a resource, tied to the location, materiality and history of various sites; it can be accumulated, but is not in itself a stable entity given that it is always reacting to the shifting economic and political imperatives of the region.

If many of the pilgrims described by Katić are suspended between different forms of agency in their travels across Europe, combining economic necessity with the regular desire to return 'home', Anna Fedele depicts a very different form of mobility: that orchestrated by 'spiritual entrepreneurs' as they translate Roman Catholic sites into New Age power places, both marketing the sacred in neoliberal fashion but also articulating new 'landscapes of belonging' for travellers seeking re-enchantment. While the dominant analytical metaphor for Katić was that of capital – itself a term touching on but going beyond purely economic forms of prestige and power – for Fedele the guiding metaphor is 'energy', a term describing how distinctions between tourism and pilgrimage, Catholicism and the New Age, become blurred in pilgrimages that complement both 'secular' and 'religious' assumptions. Energy itself is, in effect, part of

a transnational *lingua franca* for those who see themselves as 'spiritual' rather than religious *per se*.

Like Katić, Fedele makes her case by juxtaposing the development of different shrines and allowing us to see how common themes are translated across multiple sites. In so doing, she shows how, like religion itself, 'energy grammar' is both product of and antidote to the disembedding mechanisms of modernity. When Fedele's pilgrims talk of returning 'home', they do not mean the nostalgic homeland of Katić's informants, but rather a search for the possibility of feeling 'grounded' in the earth. Interestingly, national and regional Church administrators across Europe and the Americas are not only aware of such visitors, but also torn between the desire to preserve what they see as the authenticity of shrines and the imperative to attract people to what Reader might well call the pilgrimage market.

In the next two chapters we shift the focus towards Latin America, where the hegemony of the Roman Catholic Church has been challenged from a variety of directions. Patricia Fortuny Loret de Mola examines the connections between transnational labour migration and pilgrimage to the headquarters of a Pentecostal Church, *La Luz del Mundo* (The Light of the World) in the Mexican seaside town of Guadalajara. Economic, social, cultural and political activities are closely connected through the cyclical movement of migrants, who are involved in constant border crossings between the USA and Mexico. This migration differs from that of other nationalities in Latin America because transnationalism among Mexican immigrants has been in existence for a very long time. After a short outline of the Church's history and a discussion of migrants' perceptions concerning the annual pilgrimage, Fortuny Loret de Mola describes the various ritual events that are held at and around the Church's Mexican headquarters during August when the migrants return in force from the USA.

She then places these religious ceremonies in a wider structural context, explaining their role as 'active economic agents connecting different places and transforming them at local, national and global levels'. Hence, a broad range of economic and social activities are undertaken during the pilgrimage, such as reinforcing old and building new friendships, undertaking marriages and beginning romantic liaisons, trading cars and enjoying the local beach. The economic influence of these transnational migrants is also felt beyond Guadalajara, as some visitors also travel across the region and take the opportunity to add to the special items purchased in Guadalajara for use in festivities back in America.

Carlos Alberto Steil also analyses an alternative to, or at least adaptation of, Roman Catholic forms of pilgrimage in his discussion of the *Caminhos de Santiago* (Paths of Saint James) in Brazil. These routes are the new creation

of a notable assemblage of agencies – local councils, the state, the Church, tourist agencies, university and civil society organizations and so on – and they produce pilgrimage routes that translate both the European idea of the Camino to Brazil, and the hierarchical assumptions of Catholicism into the more immanent, postmodern spiritualities of New Age walkers. The ‘sacred’ is patently being constructed in this case study and it is mobile, indeterminate and often embodied within the self. This internalization is not only a matter of theology or phenomenology; it is also cultivated on pathways whose function and trajectory indicate a wider reconfiguration of religion and the cultural economy in Brazil as a whole.

Taken as a group, these chapters not only introduce us to pilgrimages from different religions and countries, but also explore a huge variety of institutional locations: shrines, plantations, UNESCO offices, regional and national government and so on. They show how a political economy approach is not a reduction of pilgrimage to a set of economic imperatives or market metaphors. It is an invitation to broaden our focus in ways that will be both ever more relevant and ever more productive: pilgrimage perceived at different and overlapping scales; linked in chains of production and promotion with religious bodies as well as commercial and governmental bodies; conjoining and blurring the boundaries between movement and the making of place.

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