

Globalization, Glocalization, and the Changing Nature of Pilgrimage in a Post-Secular World

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Abstract: Globalization is a commonly used term to describe the rapid changes and spatial transformations that have taken place on a global scale over the past forty years. The purpose of this paper is to examine how globalization has influenced pilgrimage from a geographical perspective. This paper begins with a discussion on globalization and glocalization. Attention is then turned to the changing use of the term and practice of pilgrimage in the modern, and post-secular world. The text then discusses ten ways in which modern pilgrimage travel has changed due to globalization, including: the democratization of pilgrimage; changes in the sacred laws of hospitality; the increasing medicalization of pilgrimage; pilgrims as an unwanted guest; technology and the pilgrimage experience; the over-commodification and monetization of pilgrimage; the segmenting of pilgrimage and tourism; pilgrimage as spectacle and play; transplanted pilgrimages; and pilgrimage as a sustainable practice(?), are discussed before concluding.

Keywords: Globalization, Glocalization, Pilgrimage, Post-Secularity, Technology, Commodification, Tourism.

Globalización, glocalización y la naturaleza cambiante de la peregrinación en un mundo postsecular

Resumen: Globalización es un término comúnmente utilizado para describir los rápidos cambios y transformaciones espaciales que han tenido lugar a escala global en los últimos cuarenta años. El propósito de este artículo es examinar cómo la globalización ha influido en la peregrinación desde una perspectiva geográfica. Este artículo comienza con una discusión sobre globalización y glocalización. Luego se centra la atención en el uso cambiante

del término y la práctica de peregrinación en el mundo moderno y post secular. Diez formas en las que los viajes de peregrinación modernos han cambiado debido a la globalización, incluida la democratización de la peregrinación; cambios en las leyes sagradas de la hospitalidad; la creciente medicalización de la peregrinación, los peregrinos como invitados no deseados, tecnología y experiencia de peregrinación, la sobremercantilización y monetarización de la peregrinación, la segmentación de la peregrinación y el turismo, la peregrinación como espectáculo y juego, peregrinaciones trasplantadas, y la peregrinación como práctica (?) sostenible, se comentan antes de concluir.

Palabras clave: Globalización, glocalización, peregrinación, post-secularidad, tecnología, mercantilización, turismo.

Globalización, glocalización e a natureza cambiante da peregrinación nun mundo post secular

Resumo: Globalización é un termo comunmente utilizado para describir os rápidos cambios e transformacións espaciais que tiveron lugar a escala global no últimos corenta anos. O propósito deste artigo é examinar como a globalización influíu na peregrinación desde unha perspectiva xeográfica. Este artigo comeza cunha discusión sobre globalización e glocalización. Logo céntrase a atención no uso cambiante do termo e a práctica de peregrinación no mundo moderno e post secular. Dez formas nas que as viaxes de peregrinación modernas cambiaron por mor da globalización, incluída a democratización da peregrinación, cambios nas leis sagradas da hospitalidade, a crecente medicalización da peregrinación, os peregrinos como convidados non desexados, tecnoloxía e experiencia de peregrinación, a sobremercantilización e monetarización da peregrinación, a segmentación da peregrinación e o turismo, a peregrinación como espectáculo e xogo, peregrinacións transplantadas, e a peregrinación como práctica (?) sostible, coméntanse antes de concluír.

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Introduction

Globalization is a commonly used term to describe the rapid changes and spatial transformations that have taken place on a global scale in the past forty years. The term itself is commonly attributed to Theodore Levitt, who used it in his paper entitled “The Globalization of Markets” that appeared in the *Harvard Business Review* in 1983.¹ Since that time, globalization, or “the development of an increasingly

¹ Levitt, T., “The Globalization of Markets”, *Harvard Business Review*, 61, 3 (1983), pp. 92-102.

borderless world where flows and exchanges of people, goods, money, ideas, and technologies between countries, cultures, and societies”,² has led to a more standardized, interconnected, and globally conscientious world.³ At the same time, as will be discussed below, globalizing trends in the areas of politics, economics, and migration, among others, have both positively and negatively influenced cultures and peoples at every scale.

In the context of pilgrimage in a globalizing world, much of the recent research on pilgrimage has been mostly reductionist in nature, with a heavy focus on the micro-scale. While pilgrimage as a formal and/or informal activity is a global phenomenon found in the majority of the world's faith or cultural traditions, research emphasis has often been placed either on pilgrimage to and at individual sites or on the individual pilgrim experience, with a focus on how these sites and pilgrims fit within “particular historical-geographical contexts” through “pure description [and/or] storytelling at the individual level.”⁴ For some reason, pilgrimage scholars seem to be a bit reticent to discuss the macro-scale causal mechanisms that facilitate pilgrim mobilities that would better “giv[e] credence to the underlying reasons of *why* and *how* [pilgrimage takes place]”,⁵ or to work on developing meso-level theories beyond *communitas*,⁶ *liminality*,⁷ and *rites of passage*⁸ theories that have both theoretical and practical staying power to help scholars and practitioners understand pilgrimage better across faith traditions. This reticence may be due to the “fractured and socio-culturally contingent nature of pilgrimage”⁹ that makes it difficult to develop catch-all models that explain the theological, motivational, processual, and ritual variations inherent in pilgrimage. As such, there is a need to move beyond the privileging of micro, individual experiences through *n=1* case studies towards a better understanding of the macro-scale structures that either facilitate or inhibit pilgrimage travel, such as studying the structural nature of

2 Olsen, D. H., “Religion, spirituality, and pilgrimage in a globalizing world”, in Timothy, D. J. (ed.), *The Handbook of Globalization and Tourism*, London, Edward Elgar, 2020a, pp. 270-283 (p. 270).

3 See Robertson, R. *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, London, SAGE, 1992.

4 Yeung, H. W. C., “What kind of theory for what kind of human geography?”, *Dialogues in Human Geography*, 9, 3 (2019), pp. 283-292 (p. 285).

5 *Idem*.

6 Turner, V., “The center out there: pilgrim's goal”, *History of Religions*, 12, 3 (1973), pp. 191-230; Turner, V., “Pilgrimage and *communitas*”, *Studia Missionalia*, 23 (1974), pp. 305-327; Turner, V., “Pilgrimages as social processes”, in Turner, V. (ed.), *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1974, pp. 166-229.

7 See, for example, Turner, V., (ed.), *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors...*, *op. cit.*; Thomassen, B., “The uses and meaning of liminality”, *International Political Anthropology*, 2, 1 (2009), pp. 5-28; Beech, N., “Liminality and the practices of identity reconstruction”, *Human Relations*, 64, 2 (2011), pp. 285-302.

8 Van Gennep, A., *The Rites of Passage*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1960.

9 Olsen, D. H., “Geographies of pilgrimage”, in Warfield, H. (ed.), *Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Pilgrimage: Historical, Current, and Future Directions*, New York, Peter Lang, 2023, pp. 203-234.

globalization and pilgrimage as they relate to themes such as political economy,¹⁰ macroeconomics and mass consumption,¹¹ geopolitical and supranational structures,¹² and the “structure of interconnectedness.”¹³ In other words, pilgrimage scholars need to go beyond the horizontal movement of pilgrims and links between sacred and profane spaces to investigate the vertical links that situate pilgrims and sacred places within the context of a global whole.

While I do not necessarily focus on the structural elements of globalization in this paper, I do wish to scale up the discussion on the linkages between globalization and pilgrimage and write about the changing nature of pilgrimage in a globalizing and post-secular world. In doing so, I wish to draw upon some of my own work, as well as the work of others, on various topics and ideas relating to religious mobilities in the modern world and, based on my disciplinary leanings, approach globalization and its influence on pilgrimage from a broadly geographical perspective. To begin, I will discuss in greater detail what globalization is, look briefly at two of its historical forms, and then discuss the idea of glocalization. I then examine the changing use of the term pilgrimage and its practice in the modern world within the rise of post-secularism. Then, attention is turned to examine ten ways in which modern pilgrimage travel has changed due to globalization, including the democratization of pilgrimage, changes in the sacred laws of hospitality, the increasing medicalization of pilgrimage, pilgrims as an unwanted guest, technology and the pilgrimage experience, the over-commodification and monetization of pilgrimage, the segmenting of pilgrimage and tourism, pilgrimage as spectacle and play, transplanted pilgrimages, and pilgrimage as a sustainable practice (?) before concluding.

Globalization and Glocalization

As academics we like to define things. It is kind of our default setting when writing papers or giving presentations, even if our audience already knows much about the

10 Coleman, S. and Eade, J., *Pilgrimage and Political Economy: Translating the Sacred*, New York, Berghahn Books, 2018; Bozonelos, D., “The political economy of religious and spiritual tourism”, in Olsen, D.H. and Timothy, D. J. (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Religious and Spiritual Tourism*, London and New York: Routledge, 2022, pp. 36-52.

11 Cavanaugh, W. T., “Migrant, tourist, pilgrim, monk: Mobility and identity in a global age”, *Theological Studies*, 69, 2 (2008), pp. 340-356; Santos Solla, X. M. and González, R. C. L., “The Camino de Santiago in the context of new forms of tourism”, *Estudios Turísticos*, 189 (2011), pp. 95-116.

12 Bianchi, R., *Islamic Globalization: Pilgrimage, Capitalism, Democracy and Diplomacy*, Hackensack, NJ, World Scientific Publishing, 2014; Gelbman, A., “Tourism along the geopolitical barrier: implications of the Holy Land fence”, *GeoJournal*, 81, 5 (2016), pp. 671-680.

13 Stiglitz, J. E., “Contagion, liberalization, and the optimal structure of globalization”, *Journal of Globalization and Development*, 1, 2 (2010), article 2.

topic under consideration. Maybe it is because at a subconscious level, or through indoctrination at graduate school, we adhere to the idiom that is often attributed to the French Enlightenment writer, historian, and philosopher Voltaire: “If you wish to converse with me, define your terms.”

Most readers of this paper are probably familiar with the concept of—or at least the term—“globalization.” However, globalization is what I call a “fuzzy term,” in that we know what globalization is as a concept and a defining aspect of contemporary societies but may find it difficult to define, particularly when it can be considered its own separate process as well as a part of the processes of internationalization, liberalization, universalization, and westernization.¹⁴ As such, globalization is a contested term with no one accepted definition.

As noted in the introduction, globalization refers to large scale changes in human-human and human-environment interactions over the past several decades. Our increasingly borderless or “transplanetary”¹⁵ world has been bought about in part by advances in communication and transportation technologies, as well as neo-liberal economic and political policies that are meant to reduce the friction of these flows and exchanges through removing, or at least limiting, barriers to this movement—barriers such as government politico-economic interference and international borders. This reduction of frictional movement or “cross-country smoothing”¹⁶ has led to the development of new relational geographies, “power-geometries”, and what geographers refer to as “time-space compression” or “time-space convergence,” where transportation and communication technologies have both metaphorically and literally compressed time and space,¹⁷ leading to conditions wherein nation-state economies have become subsumed by the global economy and where speed supersedes or “conquers established geopolitical representations and the material conditions they rely upon,”¹⁸ thereby reducing the significance of place as a political and cultural differentiating principle.¹⁹

While globalization as a social science concept has a very short history, being a relative newcomer to the body of theories that make up the social sciences,²⁰ the

14 Scholte, J. A., “What Is Globalization? The Definitional Issue – Again”, CSGR Working Paper No. 109/02, 2002, <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/research/csgr/papers/workingpapers/2002/wp10902.pdf> (accessed 20 September 2021).

15 *Idem*.

16 Stiglitz, J. E., “Contagion, liberalization...”, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

17 Warf, B., *Time-Space Compression: Historical Geographies*, London and New York, Routledge, 2008; see Olsen, D. H., “Religion, spirituality, and pilgrimage...”, *op. cit.*

18 Agnew, J., “The new global economy: Time-space compression, geopolitics, and global uneven development”, *Journal of World-Systems Research*, 7, 2 (2001), pp. 133-154.

19 Kivisto, P., “Time-space compression”, in Ritzer, G. (ed.), *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Globalization*, Malden, MA, Wiley-Blackwell, 2012, pp. 2145-2146.

20 Khondker, H. H., “Glocalization as globalization: Evolution of a sociological concept”, *Bangladesh e-journal of Sociology*, 1, 2 (2004), pp. 1-9.

processes inherent within globalization itself—which processes include financial deregulation, the reduction in costs related to technological change and innovation, and changes in economic organization and production forms²¹—are not modern post-World War II phenomena. Indeed, manifestations of globalization can be seen throughout most of human history. This can be observed through a comparison of what is referred to as “weak globalization” vs. “strong globalization.” In the contemporary globalization literature, the distinction between “weak globalization” and “strong globalization” tends to be based on the *degree* to which “transterritorial organizations” can “steer and control the economic, cultural, social, and political life of nation-states”²²—where “Nation-states...march lock step to the mandates of...transnational organizations over [the] most fundamental economic, political, social, and cultural matters.”²³ In other words, both weak and strong globalization leads to the rise and spread of *neoliberalism*.

However, from a historical perspective, one can also distinguish between weak and strong globalization based on its geographic reach or influence—the territorial extent to which disparate and geographically-separate cultures were brought together under these same processes. For example, the Mongolian, Roman, and Ottoman Empires, the Christian Crusades, the development of the Silk Road, and European colonization are examples of instrumental organizations, events, and infrastructural improvements that led to early forms of weak or *regional* globalization.²⁴ Since the 1970s, however, there has been the rise of strong globalization tendencies, wherein regional forms of globalization have been subsumed by a *one-world* global enterprise, wherein there are few if any places in the world that have not been influenced by the processes of globalization with varying intensities.²⁵ As Peter Beyer notes, if modernity/modernization involves the process of all places eventually becoming modern, globalization “spatializes” it.²⁶ This diffusion of modernity has intensified interactions between distant world regions. As a result, rapid change, whether technological, economic, or cultural in nature, has led to cultural acculturation, hybridization, and syncretism becoming common place, and new core-periphery relations have arisen, particularly in the cases where the spatialization of modernization has excluded various ‘others’, whether this exclusion has taken place on a regional and/

21 *Idem*.

22 Neilsen, K., “Are nation-states obsolete? The challenge of globalization”, in Seymour, M. (ed.), *The Fate of the Nation-State*, Montreal and Kingston, McGill-Queen’s University, 2004, pp. 153-172 (p. 154).

23 *Idem*.

24 Olsen, D. H., “Religion, spirituality...”, *op. cit.*

25 Friedman, J., “Global System, Globalization and the Parameters of Modernity”, in Featherstone, M.; Lash, S., and Robertson, E. (eds.), *Global Modernities*, London, SAGE, 1995, pp. 69-90.

26 Beyer, P., “Globalization and glocalization”, in Beckford, J.A. and Demerath, N.J. (eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, London, SAGE, 2007, pp. 98-117 (p. 98).

or racial basis.²⁷ This rapid change is for many a desired outcome, particularly from those in international development studies who believe that the spread of modernism leads to “all boats rising,”²⁸ thereby guaranteeing future equality between “have” and “have-not” countries.²⁹

However, the effects of this intensity of interaction and change has not necessarily led to equality. Indeed, anti- or counter-globalist movements—focused primarily on the economic inequalities that globalization exacerbates as well as the loss of state autonomy—have led to a retrenchment from globalization in many world regions along social justice and nationalistic lines. As well, anti-globalist proponents contest the globalization process in terms of its influence on the lives, livelihoods, and identities of people at regional and local scales. This scalar acknowledgement of the influence of the global on the local has led to the rise of the neologism “glocalization”—first introduced into the social science lexicon by Roland Robertson—which term describes the fact that “the global and the local are deeply intertwined... and mutually constituted.”³⁰ Rather than globalization leading to a broad, all-encompassing “cultural homogeneity,” “globalization [affects] various areas at different scales differently—with the end result being unique and diverse outcomes in different geographic areas.”³¹ While there is no denying that “the global interpenetrates the local”³² (and vice versa) and that “the imperialistic ambitions of nations, corporations, organizations, and other entities and their desire—indeed, their need—to impose themselves on various geographic areas”³³ is real, each region or locality either consciously or unconsciously reacts to these globalization efforts differently in ways that lead to “the local [becoming a] particularization of the global”³⁴—where the local retains “social forms that...[are] indigenously conceived, controlled, and comparatively rich in distinctive substantive content.”³⁵ In other words, globalization makes places similar, but *not* the same.

27 *Idem*.

28 Goodland, R. and Daly, H., “Ten reasons why northern income growth is not the solution to southern poverty”, *Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences*, 82, 1 (1992), pp. 37-51 (p. 39).

29 Khurana, C. D. G. S., “Multilateral structures in the Indian Ocean: Review and way ahead”, *Maritime Affairs: Journal of the National Maritime Foundation of India*, 14, 1 (2018), pp. 11-23.

30 Luz, N., “The glocalization of al-Haram al-Sharif: Designing memory, mystifying place”, in Weismann, I., Sedgwick, M., and Mårtensson, U. (eds.), *Islamic Myths and Memories: Mediators of Globalization*, London, Routledge, 2014, pp. 99-120 (p. 106).

31 Ritzer, G., “Rethinking globalization: Glocalization/globalization and something/nothing”, *Sociological Theory*, 21, 3 (2003), pp. 193-209 (p. 193).

32 Roudometof, V., “Theorizing glocalization: Three interpretations”, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 19, 3 (2016), pp. 391-408 (p. 392).

33 Ritzer, G., “Rethinking globalization: Glocalization...”, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

34 Beyer, P., “Globalization and glocalization”, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

35 Ritzer, G., “Rethinking globalization: Glocalization...”, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

Religion, Globalization, and Post-Secularity

So, what does all of this have to do with religious pilgrimage—or “journey[s] to a distant sacred goal”³⁶ for (historically) religious purposes? While globalization affects the local, the local also affects the global, and there is no better example of this than religion. As Luke Herrington notes, “[r]eligion [and hence pilgrimage] has long been a driving force in the process of globalization.”³⁷ To put it more forcefully, Reza Aslan argues that “no single force can be said to have had a greater impact on propelling globalization forward than religion, which has always sought to spread its message.”³⁸ This can be seen through the use of terms like “Islamic globalization”³⁹ and “Catholic globalization”⁴⁰ that describe how these faith communities have utilized the structures of globalization at various times and scales to spread their belief systems in order to create a “globalized spiritual solidarity”⁴¹ within their faith communities—which spread and solidarity was facilitated by pilgrimage and sacred site creation. Inversely, globalization has then influenced the ways in which religion spreads and how religious groups interact with each other at multiple scales.⁴² To better understand how globalization has influenced the phenomenon of pilgrimage, I wish to first examine the influence of globalization on religion and religious identity in our modern era before turning to look at its influence on pilgrimage.

With the rise of “strong globalization” in the 1970s, some scholars noted that the spread of capitalism was increasingly tied to the “extension of science, technology, market rationality, and [other] associated organizational principles.”⁴³ Seeing this trend, these scholars argued that “religion,” as a strong influencer of public policy, would eventually fall out of favour with the global population in lieu of a politics and economics of consumerism as the dominant cultural ethos. This shift in global ethos would, in turn, lead to religion becoming antiquated and eventually disappearing from the public and private sphere due to its lack of personal and communal influence.⁴⁴ However, this has not been the case. Yes, the influence of religion in the public sphere seemed to have waned in places such as Europe, but

36 Barber, R., *Pilgrimage*, Woodbridge, UK, Boydell & Brewer Ltd., 1991, p. 1.

37 Herrington, L. M., “Globalization and religion in historical perspective”, *Religions*, 4, 1 (2013), pp. 145-165 (p. 146).

38 Aslan, R., *How to Win a Cosmic War: God, Globalization, and the End of the War on Terror*, New York, Random House, 200, p. 18.

39 Bianchi, R. R., *Islamic Globalization: Pilgrimage, Capitalism, Democracy, and Diplomacy*, Singapore, World Scientific Publishing Co., 2013.

40 Stauffer, B., “The routes of intransigence: Mexico’s ‘spiritual pilgrimage’ of 1874 and the globalization of Ultramontane Catholicism”, *The Americas*, 75, 2 (2018), pp. 291-324.

41 *Ibidem*, p. 309.

42 See Sacks, J., *The Dignity of Difference*, London, Bloomsbury, 2002.

43 E.g., McDonald, K. “Religion”, in G. Ritzer, ed., *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Globalization*. Chichester, UK, Blackwell Publishing, 2012, pp. 1768-1776 (p. 1769).

44 Luckmann, T., *The Invisible Religion: The Problems of Religion in Modern Society*, New York, Macmillan, 1963; Berger, P. L., *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*, New York, Anchor Books, 1967.

the full global secularization of religion ended up being geographically limited, with some world regions actually seeing an increase in religious adherence and a resurgence in the influence of religion in the public realm.⁴⁵

The fact that religion has seen a renaissance in the public consciousness in many places has led some scholars to suggest that we now live in a “post-secular” world. The term “post-secular” is often invoked to refer to the de-secularization of societies and the “return of religion” to international affairs,⁴⁶ albeit with religion still being viewed as a “most awkward element from [the] past”⁴⁷ by “modern enlightened reason[ing].”⁴⁸ But post-secularity seems to be more than just the resurgence of religion—the death of secularism and the resurrection of the religious. Within “a re-appraisal of the role of religion in Western societies by the social sciences,”⁴⁹ John Milbank argues that the idea of the secular within post-secular modern society does not stand in stark contrast to the sacred through an “emancipation *from* theology”, but rather has always been a *part* of theology, being constituted *in relation* to theology.⁵⁰ As such, modernity, in which secularism is a dominant narrative, may best be understood as “an *experimentation* phase with the secular, rather than a clear break from the sacred.”⁵¹ In other words, post-secular modernity involves playing with interchangeable sacred/secular combinations.

I think that the key word that describes post-secular modernity, then, is “experimentation,” which also implies individualization. As François Gauthier *et al.* argue, consumer societies “further...the individualization process of modernity by redefining life and society as arenas of choice rather than the transmission of traditions and belongings.”⁵² This “cultural deregulation”⁵³ has led to “new possibilities within the religion field,”⁵⁴ as manifested in how spirituality is becoming increasingly separated from organized or institutionalized religion. This separation comes about as a growing percentage of people seek meaning and *meaning-making* through “less

45 Turner, B., “The sociology of religion”, in Calhoun, C.; Rojek, C. and Turner, B. (eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Sociology*, London, SAGE, 2005, pp. 284-301; Gauthier, F.; Martikainen, T., and Woodhead, L., “Acknowledging a global shift: A primer for thinking about religion in consumer societies”, *Implicit Religion*, 16, 3 (2013), pp. 261-276; see Olsen, D.H., “Religion, spirituality...”, *op. cit.*

46 Pabst, A., “The secularism of post-secularity: religion, realism, and the revival of grand theory in IR”, *Review of International Studies*, 38(5), 2012, pp. 995-1017.

47 Habermas, J., “An awareness of what is missing”, in Habermas, J. and Cronin, C. (eds.), *An Awareness of What is Missing: Faith and Reason in a Post-Secular Age*, Cambridge, UK and Malden, MA, Polity Press, 2010, pp. 15-23 (p. 16).

48 Dallmayr, F., “Post-secularity and (global) politics: A need for radical redefinition”, *Review of International Studies*, 38, 5 (2012), pp. 963-973 (p. 965).

49 Nilsson, M. and Tesfahuney, M., “Pilgrimage mobilities: A de Certeauian perspective”, *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*, 101, 3 (2019), pp. 219-230 (p. 221).

50 Milbank, J. *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason*, London, Wiley, 1990, pp. 3, 28.

51 Nilsson, M. and Tesfahuney, M., “Pilgrimage mobilities...”, *op. cit.*, p. 221, emphasis added; see Lillas, M. *The Stillborn God: Religion, Politics, and the Modern West*, New York, Alfred A Knopf, 2007.

52 Gauthier, F., Martikainen, T. and Woodhead, L., “Acknowledging a global shift...”, *op. cit.*, p. 270.

53 *Idem.*

54 Olsen, D. H., “Religion, spirituality...”, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

institutionally bound and more personalized manifestations of religion that also offer access to transcendental human concerns.”⁵⁵ Indeed, the spiritual marketplace has opened up new forms of pilgrimage-like travel, such as spiritual tourism and New Age tourism,⁵⁶ and is demonstrated clearly in the presence of non-Catholics and people of “no faith” walking the Camino de Santiago de Compostela for religious and/or spiritual purposes.⁵⁷ Virtual pilgrimages can also be included to this list of pilgrimage-like travel, where participants forgo the physicality inherent in traditional pilgrimage while still seeking a pilgrim experience. This experimentation has led to a shift in how “pilgrimage” is defined. If we follow Alan Morinis’ view of pilgrimage as being *any journey* “undertaken by a person in quest of a place or a state that he or she believes to embody a *valued ideal*”,⁵⁸ then secularization has in many ways “robbed pilgrimage of its symbolic, mystical, and religious qualities.”⁵⁹

At issue for me here, though, is that if modernity is an experimentation phase between the sacred and the secular, then post-secular modernity is also “liquid”, in that personal identities that were once bounded by religion and communal structures are now fluid—permeable and changeable at any moment based on objects, products, and/or philosophies that are consumed in the name of connecting to a person’s “inner self.”⁶⁰ This liquefaction of personal and communal identities due to “precarious uncertainty, short-term planning, instant gratification, the weakening of institutions, ephemeral relationships, struggles to manage risk, volatile consumerist identities [,] the collapse of viable communities,”⁶¹ and the speeding up of social life,⁶² has led Zygmunt Bauman to suggest that the “tourist” is the modern successor of the traditional “pilgrim,” as the tourist is a “systematic seeker of diversity, difference [,] and novelty.”⁶³ Tourists experiment!

55 *Idem*.

56 E.g., Cheer, J. M., Belhassen, Y. and Kujawa, J., “The search for spirituality in tourism: Toward a conceptual framework for spiritual tourism”, *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 24 (2017), pp. 252-256; Kujawa, J., “Spiritual tourism as a quest”, *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 24 (2017), pp. 193-200; Olsen, D. H., “Faith, New Age spirituality, and religious tourism”, in Novelli, M., Cheer, J. M. Dolezal, C., Jones, A. and Milano, C. (eds.), *Handbook of Niche Tourism*, London, Edward Elgar, 2022, pp. 282-299; Pernecky, T. and Johnston, C., “Voyage through numinous space: Applying the specialization concept to new age tourism”, *Tourism Recreation Research*, 31, 1 (2006), pp. 37-46.

57 E.g., Amaro, S.; Antunes, A. and Henriques, C., “A closer look at Santiago de Compostela’s pilgrims through the lens of motivations”, *Tourism Management*, 64 (2018), pp. 271-280.

58 Morinis, A., “Introduction: The territory of the anthropology of pilgrimage”, in Morinis, A. (ed.), *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage*, Westport, CT, Greenwood Press, 1992, pp. 1-28 (p. 4), emphasis added.

59 Olsen, D. H., “Religion, spirituality...”, *op. cit.*, p. 274; see also Cohen, E., “Pilgrimage and tourism: Convergence and divergence”, in Morinis, A. (ed.), *Sacred Journeys...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-61; Margry, P. J., “Whiskey and pilgrimage: Clearing up commonalities”, *Tourism Recreation Research*, 39, 2 (2014), pp. 243-247.

60 Bauman, Z., *Liquid Modernity*, Malden, MA, Polity Press, 2000.

61 Jay, M., “Liquidity crisis: Zygmunt Bauman and the incredible lightness of modernity”, *Theory, Culture & Society*, 27, 6 (2010), pp. 95-106 (p. 99).

62 Kivisto, P., “Time-space compression”, *op. cit.*

63 Feldman, J., “Key figure of mobility: The pilgrim”, *Social Anthropology*, 25, 1 (2017), pp. 69-82 (p. 70).

However, in many ways, religion acts as a counterbalance to this liquidity, in that while there are several ways in which a person can escape from daily life and find their “authentic self,”⁶⁴ many people still use religious institutions and their related tangible and intangible heritage as a template for spiritual growth. This is seen with the aforementioned Camino de Santiago, where non-Catholics and those with “no faith” utilize the religious infrastructure of the Camino as an organizational tool in their search for meaning. And even though sacred religious sites are inundated with a variety of visitors with different motivations and expectations of experience, brought about in part by transportation advances and the global tourism industry, pilgrimage destinations continue to maintain their distinctiveness due to their unique and original historico-political contexts, and as such provide to people a pluralization of religious spaces within which this experimentation can take place.

The Changing Nature of Pilgrimage in a Globalizing World

Everything I have discussed so far sets the context for the main focus of this paper—how pilgrimage in the modern era has changed due to the influences of globalization. Some of the changes discussed below are grounded in the realities of a globalizing world, while others may be speculative, projectional, and forward-looking in nature; and in many ways, these ten influences of globalization on modern pilgrimage are often interrelated. Because of space constraints, I will only briefly touch upon ten ways in which globalization has influenced modern pilgrimage travel.

The Democratization of Pilgrimage

The first way in which modern pilgrimage has been influenced by globalization is what I have referred to elsewhere as the “democratization of pilgrimage,”⁶⁵ after Hugh De Santis’ work on the “democratization of travel.”⁶⁶ While pilgrimage is one of the oldest forms of and motivations for human mobility,⁶⁷ historically, pilgrimage has not been open to people from all walks of life. For much of the world’s history, pilgrimage—and travel in general—has been a socially-exclusive activity, wherein those who participated in such travels tended to be the upper elites within a society rather than lay persons, in part because of its dangers and the costs of travel as well as

64 MacCannell, D., “Staged authenticity: Arrangements of social space in tourist settings”, *American Sociological Review*, 79 (1973), pp. 589-603; MacCannell, D., *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, New York, Schocken, 1976.

65 Olsen, D. H., “Religion, spirituality...”, *op. cit.*

66 De Santis, H., “The democratization of travel: The travel agent in American history”, *Journal of American Culture*, 1, 1 (1978), pp. 1-17.

67 Olsen, D. H. and Timothy, D.J., “Tourism and religious journeys”, in Timothy, D.J. and Olsen, D.H. (eds.), *Tourism, Religion, and Spiritual Journeys*, London and New York, Routledge, 2006, pp. 1-21.

subsistence living responsibilities that left little time for less-wealthy individuals to engage in long-distance pilgrimaging.⁶⁸

However, in modern times, cheaper and faster transportation has democratized pilgrimaging—meaning that more people have access to and can afford, and thus subsequently engage in, traditional pilgrimage travel. Indeed, pilgrimage travel has become safer, shorter, and is often not as physically demanding as in the past due to these transportation efficiencies. These efficiencies, along with an increasing middle-class, has led to an estimated 300 to 600 million people visiting religious sites each year as per the United Nations World Tourism Organization.⁶⁹ The popularization of pilgrimage can also be seen in the increasing numbers of people who perform the Hajj. Pre-1950, the number of pilgrims attending the Hajj rarely went above 100,000, but today, Hajj authorities have had to limit the number of pilgrims attending the Hajj through forcing potential pilgrims to purchase Hajj visas due to limited carrying capacities. At its 2012 peak, approximately 3.18 million pilgrims participated in the Hajj.⁷⁰ At other religious sites around the world, too many tourists and pilgrims have led to site managers limiting the number of visitors—in some cases including pilgrims—because of wear-and-tear and other types of physical damage due to over-pilgrimage (discussed below).⁷¹

Changes in the Sacred Laws of Hospitality

The second way in which modern pilgrimage has been influenced by globalization is through changes in the sacred laws of hospitality. Providing hospitality to strangers as a sacred obligation is rooted in early human history, where the dangers of pre-modern travel necessitated prescriptions and proscriptions around appropriate contact with strangers and alien cultures⁷²—particularly regarding both protection of and the reciprocity between strangers.⁷³ The view of hospitality-as-commandment or as a covenant responsibility in the pre-modern world became more pronounced when informed by

68 Jarvis, R. *Romantic Writing and Pedestrian Travel*, London, Macmillian Press, 1997.

69 UNWTO, *Religious Tourism in Asia and the Pacific*, Madrid, UNWTO, 2011.

70 McLoughlin, S. Hajj, "How globalisation transformed the market for pilgrimage to Mecca", *The Conversation* (2018). <https://theconversation.com/hajj-how-globalisation-transformed-the-market-for-pilgrimage-to-mecca-97888> (accessed October 4, 2021); "Statista.com. Annual number of Hajj pilgrims to Saudi Arabia from 1999 to 2019", <https://www.statista.com/statistics/617696/saudi-arabia-total-hajj-pilgrims/> (accessed October 4, 2021).

71 Matchan, L., "Too many tourists spoil European sites Crowds: The crush of visitors is putting historic places at risk", *The Baltimore Sun* (1997), <https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/bs-xpm-1997-11-16-1997320124-story.html> (accessed October 4, 2021); Adnan, A., "The Magic of Angkor Wat is Lost, and Never to be Found Again", *Medium* (2018), <https://medium.com/@aydinadnan/https-medium-com-aydinadnan-the-magic-of-angkor-wat-is-lost-aad3b0c7628> (accessed October 4, 2021); Bayliss, C., "Vatican considers limiting visitor numbers as 10 guests a day faint due to overcrowding", *Daily Mail* (2018), <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6346885/Vatican-considers-limiting-visitor-numbers-10-guests-day-faint-overcrowding.html> (accessed October 4, 2021); see Levi, D. and Kocher, S., "Perception of sacredness at heritage religious sites", *Environment and Behavior*, 45, 7 (2013), pp. 912-930.

72 Cohen, E., "Tourism and religion: A comparative perspective", *Pacific Tourism Review*, 2 (1998), pp. 1-10. See also Olsen, D.H., "Towards a religious view of tourism: Negotiating faith perspectives on tourism", *Journal of Tourism, Culture and Communication*, 11, 1 (2011), pp. 17-30.

73 Siddiqui, M., *Hospitality and Islam: Welcoming in God's Name*, New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 2015.

religion rooted in obligations to deity.⁷⁴ The covenants and rules regarding pre-modern hospitality can be found in the sacred scriptures of the three Abrahamic religions, in Buddhist and Shinto philosophy, and also in Roman and Greek mythology.⁷⁵ Within these covenants and rules, hospitality towards strangers was unconditional—taking a stranger into one’s home and taking legal responsibility for them was not based on monetary reward, but rather because of the command from God to take care of strangers because at some point the host might become a guest.⁷⁶

However, in the modern era, the idea of unconditional hospitality has all but disappeared.⁷⁷ With an ever growing and expanding tourism system, record breaking numbers of people pre-COVID-19 crossing international borders, and growing concerns regarding risk and safety within the travel industry, the host-guest relationship in our day has become highly commodified, politicized, and scripted. Indeed, hospitality is now often conditional, “given to strangers and guests if they are able to pay for the services provided to them.”⁷⁸ This is even the case where it is altruistically and even theologically appropriate and right to help pilgrims as they engage in their formal or informal pilgrimage endeavors, as in most cases, those who seek to help pilgrims must still pay taxes and have a livelihood. As such, while globalization has democratized pilgrimage travel, it has eroded the host-guest relationship. Consider: In the book of Genesis, Abraham had a moral and religious obligation to host the three strangers or messengers that God sent to him. I wonder how Abraham would react today if he was asked to host 10,000 people a day, even if he had the money and resources to do so. It is hard to get to know, love, protect, and care for overwhelming numbers of people regardless of the desire to be unconditionally hospitable as per God’s commands, particularly where mobile strangers or “Others” are viewed with increasing suspicion (see below).

The Increasing Medicalization of Pilgrimage

The third way in which modern pilgrimage has been influenced by globalization is through the increasing medicalization of pilgrimage.⁷⁹ While religion and medicine

74 Sorensen, P. J., “The lost commandment: The sacred rites of hospitality”, *BYU Studies*, 44, 1 (2005), pp. 5-32.

75 *Idem*; Siddiqui, M., *Hospitality and Islam...*, *op. cit.*; Hall, C. M., Razak, N. H. A., and Prayag, G. “Introduction to Halal hospitality and Islamic tourism”, in Hall, C. M. and Prayag, G. (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Halal Hospitality and Islamic Tourism*, London and New York, Routledge, 2020, pp. 1-18; Kirillova, K., Gilmetdinova, A. & Lehto, X., “Interpretation of hospitality across religions”, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 43, (2014), pp. 23-34; Lashley, C., “Religious perspectives on hospitality”, In C. Lashley, Ed. *The Routledge Handbook of Hospitality Studies*, London and New York: Routledge, 2016, pp. 111-120; Pohl, C.D., *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, Cambridge, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999; Kearney, R. and Taylor, J., eds., *Hosting the Stranger: Between Religions*, London and New York, The Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011.

76 Sorensen, P.J., “The lost commandment...”, *op. cit.*

77 Cohen, E., “Tourism and religion: A comparative...”, *op. cit.*

78 Korstanje, M. E. and Olsen, D. H. The discourse of risk in horror movies post 9/11: Hospitality and hostility in perspective”, *International Journal of Tourism Anthropology*, 1, 3-4 (2011), pp. 304-317 (p. 308).

79 See Olsen, D. H., “Disease and health risks at mass religious gatherings”, in Shinde, K.A. and Olsen, D.H. (eds.), *Religious Tourism and the Environment*, Wallingford, UK, CABI, 2020, pp. 116-132.

have a long and intertwined history,⁸⁰ today, religion (or at least religious medical practices) has been subsumed by medicine—where religion as both the explanatory and healing factor in people's lives has been overtaken by scientific medical practices. This is evidenced by the power exerted by governmental and medical authorities to shut down religious pilgrimage sites and cancel mass religious events during the COVID-19 pandemic.⁸¹ As Gary Ferngren argues, "even spirituality has come to be viewed within a therapeutic framework, one in which counselors replace pastors, [and] the language becomes one of developing a healthy physical and spiritual lifestyle and restoring one's harmony with nature"⁸² rather than one's harmony with deity.

This medicalization of pilgrimage, however, is not necessarily a by-product of the COVID-19 pandemic. For several decades, the international community has overseen the medicalization of the Hajj over concerns that the pilgrimage event was a chronic super-spreader event. A cholera pandemic in the 1860s—which originated in India and was spread by pilgrims who traveled to Mecca—resulted in not only the spread of cholera to other countries around the world, but also the death of 15,000 Hajj pilgrims during the Hajj.⁸³ As such, European countries enforced stringent European-standard sanitary and medical practices and regulations on the Hajj management, including the forced vaccination of Hajj participants, quarantining practices, and pilgrim surveillance.⁸⁴ Concerns over mass religious gatherings as super-spreader events have now extended to pilgrimage events in Europe and India.⁸⁵

With pilgrim and tourist travel numbers expected to return to pre-COVID-19 levels, many academics and social commentators have argued that travel generally should be redesigned to be more environmentally and socio-culturally sustainable, suggesting several policy changes designed and enacted to limit long-haul travel.⁸⁶ However, the continued expansion of globalized transportation networks and pent-up pilgrimage demand will probably lead to continued concerns by government officials and medical experts regarding mass religious events in the future,

80 See Amundsen, D. W. *Medicine, Society, and Faith in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds*, Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, MD, 1996; Ferngren, G. B., *Medicine & Religion: A Historical Introduction*, Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 2014.

81 Olsen, D. H. and Timothy, D. J., "COVID-19 and religious travel: Present and future directions", *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*, 8, 7 (2020), pp. 170-188.

82 Ferngren, G. B., *Medicine & Religion...*, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

83 See Boyle, S. A., "Cholera, colonialism, and pilgrimage: Exploring global/local exchange in the Central Egyptian Delta, 1848-1907", *Journal of World History*, 26, 3 (2015), pp. 581-604.

84 Mishra, S., *Pilgrimage, Politics, and Pestilence: The Haj from the Indian Subcontinent, 1860-1920*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2011; Huber, V., "International bodies: The pilgrimage to Mecca and international health regulations", in Tagliacozzo, E. and Toorawa, S. M. (eds.), *The Hajj: Pilgrimage in Islam*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2016, pp. 175-195.

85 Gautret, P. and Steffen, R., "Communicable diseases as health risks at mass gatherings other than Hajj: What is the evidence?", *International Journal of Infectious Diseases*, 47 (2016), pp. 46-52.

86 For a summary of these arguments see Olsen, D. H., "Pandemics, situational undertourism, and the search for sustainability", in Singh, R. P. B.; Niglio, O. and Rana, P.S. (eds.), *Placemaking and Cultural Landscapes*, Singapore, Springer Nature, 2016, pp. 227-238.

possibly leading to continued and expanded medical oversight and interventions at pilgrimage events.

The Pilgrim as Unwanted Guest

The fourth way in which modern pilgrimage has been influenced by globalization is the pilgrim as unwanted guest. As just discussed, the medicalization of pilgrimage will probably continue apace, not just due to the rise of COVID-19 variants but also as a preventative measure against future pandemics wherein infectious diseases spread through travel. Considering that mass religious events, like tourism more generally, were viewed as COVID-19 super-spreader events, would it be too much of a stretch to suggest that in the same way that tourists, as potential carriers of disease, may be viewed with wariness as viral threats post-COVID-19,⁸⁷ pilgrims will also be viewed as potential vectors of disease through same lenses of suspicion?⁸⁸

In fact, this has already happened in part, albeit during the COVID-19 pandemic. Every year during Rosh Hashanah or the Jewish New Year, followers of the Breslov Hasidic Jewish sect travel from Belarus to Ukraine to pray at the grave of Reb Nachman, the movement's founder, who died there in 1810. In September 2020, due to a spike in COVID-19 related cases, the Ukraine government banned foreigners from entering the country. However, hoping that this ban would not apply to religious pilgrims, two thousand Hasidic pilgrims showed up at the Belarus-Ukraine border. However, they were refused entry, in part because "[Some] pilgrims [who had] made it into Ukraine before the border closed...were found to be infected [with the COVID-19 virus],...leading to fears about the spread of the virus [by pilgrims]."⁸⁹ Unfortunately, instead of returning home, a miscommunication led many of the pilgrims to believe that they would eventually be allowed entry into Ukraine, and so they waited in the in-between zone between the Belarus and Ukraine border in make-shift tents and endured many rainy days. Because the waiting pilgrims did not have enough money, water, or kosher food with them, the Belarusian Red Cross Society was called in to provide assistance. Eventually, one of Ukraine's interior ministry officials publically stated: "Ukraine has shut its borders to foreigners, and no exclusions will be made for the Hasidic [ultra-Orthodox] pilgrims....It's getting colder and we suggest that they...go home"⁹⁰—which the Hasidic pilgrims eventually did.

87 Korstanje, M. E., "Tourism and the War Against a Virus?", 2020. <https://northernnotes.leeds.ac.uk/tourism-and-the-war-against-a-virus-also-in-spanish/> (accessed October 4, 2021).

88 Olsen, D. H. and Timothy, D. J., "COVID-19 and religious travel...", *op. cit.*

89 Varenikova, M., "On Ukraine's Border, the Coronavirus Ends a Hasidic Pilgrimage", 2020. <https://www.ny-times.com/2020/09/18/world/europe/ukraine-border-belarus-pilgrims-coronavirus.html> (accessed September 22, 2021).

90 Sherwood, H., "Jewish pilgrims blocked from entering Ukraine over Covid fears", *The Guardian*. (2020). <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/sep/18/jewish-pilgrims-blocked-entering-ukraine-covid-fears> (accessed September 22, 2021).

I cannot help but wonder if the medicalization of pilgrimage, combined with other instances of pilgrims being denied entrance into foreign countries, the cancelling of mass religious events, and the enforced closure of religious sites due to the potential of pilgrims being disease vectors will continue in an ever-globalizing world. And if pilgrims leave a country for pilgrimage purposes and an epidemic breaks out at the event, will they be allowed to return home, or do they have to quarantine in the country in which the pilgrimage took place? And will governments ban pilgrims from certain countries, particularly those with low vaccination rates, from traveling to mass religious gatherings? At the same time, it is appropriate to view pilgrims as a type of tourist, and as such all unwanted guests come under the label of “travelers”. As such, as all travelers are treated by governments, so will pilgrims be treated the same.

Technology and the Pilgrimage Experience

The fifth way in which modern pilgrimage has been influenced by globalization is through technology and its influence on the pilgrimage experience. The interconnection between pilgrimage and technology can be viewed in both a negative and a positive light. Historically, pilgrimage was dangerous—it was physically demanding and emotionally draining. However, while globalization and its associated transportation technologies has made it easier for people to travel to religious pilgrimage sites and participate in far-away religious rituals, it has also decreased the historically physical nature of the pilgrimage experience. Pilgrims are no longer required to walk or take a boat to their desired sacred destinations, as globalization and technological advancements have created thicker and compressed connections between world locations. The hardships of long-distance pilgrimaging have been minimized, such as in cases where pilgrims choose to use mobility-enhancing technologies such as cars, buses, and bicycles rather than their feet to travel along pilgrimage routes. Also, the emphasis on risk-aversion and shifting travel standards and amenity expectations within the hospitality industry has led to the conditions of being-on-pilgrimage becoming more comfortable. At the Hajj, for example, wealthier pilgrims can participate in various rituals in the comfort of air-conditioned hotel rooms while less-wealthy pilgrims endure the heat.⁹¹ Also, while in Portugal a couple of years ago, I remember speaking to a group of pilgrims in the lobby of my hotel room who were walking the Portuguese Way of the Camino. During the course of our conversation, one of them commented to me how nice it was to be able to book a van service that would take their heavy luggage to their next hotel so they walk the Camino unencumbered, thus having a more comfortable pilgrimage experience.

91 Qurashi, J., “The natural environment and waste management at the *Hajj*”, in Shinde, K. A. and Olsen, D. H. (eds.), *Religious Tourism and the Environment*, Wallingford, UK, CABI, 2020, pp. 133-143.

Websites, apps, and social media have also led to changes in how people experience pilgrimage. For example, the addictiveness that many people have to small screens can make it difficult for want-to-be-pilgrims to put their devices down to facilitate spiritual experiences that only occur through mindful engagement with pilgrimage routes, sites, and ambient settings—a phenomenon that is outlined well in Kathleen Jenkins' book *Walking the Way Together: How Families Connect on the Camino*.⁹² And with so much information regarding the dos and don'ts of pilgrimage travel along various pilgrimage paths or at religious sites, much of the mystery, the mystique of the unknown, and the spontaneity of the pilgrimage journey has dissipated.

However, these same technological and transportation advances can also enhance modern pilgrimage experiences. Information provided to pilgrims via these same websites, apps, and social media channels can reduce much of the risk and anxiety inherent in the pilgrimage process, which may possibly inspire people who are "psychocentric,"⁹³ or extremely risk-adverse or nervous travelers, to participate in pilgrimage travel, as they can now better plan and prepare for their sacred journeys through these mediums. And while virtual pilgrimage does negate the "ritual praxis of pious bodies,"⁹⁴ it does allow immobile people to engage in the pilgrimage process in ways that might otherwise not be possible. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, people could choose to participate in the Camino de Santiago Virtual Challenge. This challenge involved people exercising at home, and for every mile they ran, walked, biked, or swam, they could track how far they had traveled along the Camino.⁹⁵ Also, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints hosted live virtual tours of their religious heritage sites for church members who could not visit during the pandemic. These virtual tours were very popular, with the number of church members participating in these virtual tours outnumbering the number of in-person visitors these religious heritage sites would receive in any given year! These virtual tours allowed Church members from around the world who might not otherwise have an opportunity to visit these sites to do so, helping them learn more about their religious faith and heritage.⁹⁶

The Over-Commodification and Monetization of Pilgrimage

The sixth way in which modern pilgrimage has been influenced by globalization is through the over-commodification and monetization of pilgrimage. Commodification refers to the cultural and economic processes through which goods, ideas, people, and

92 Jenkins, K., *Walking the Way Together: How Families Connect on the Camino*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2021.

93 Hoxter, A. L. and Lester, D., "Tourist behavior and personality", *Personality and Individual Differences*, 9, 1 (1988), pp. 177-178.

94 Lorea, C. E., "Religious returns, ritual changes and divinations on COVID-19", *Social Anthropology*, 28, 2 (2020), pp. 307-308 (p. 307).

95 See <https://www.theconqueror.events/camino/>

96 Esplin, S. C. and Olsen, D. H., "'Come, See the Place': Teaching students the value of historic sites", *The Religious Educator*, 22, 2 (2021), pp. 114-135.

services are transformed into “objects of economic value”⁹⁷—objects that in many cases were “formerly non-sellable or non-market things.”⁹⁸ Indeed, some commentators suggest that there are certain things to which assigning “a monetary value to something that had not formerly been considered in monetary terms” should not occur because they are deemed to be a “higher-order good.”⁹⁹ One example is religion, because the commodification of religion corrupts and “constitute[s] threats to human autonomy and personhood.”¹⁰⁰ Religious commodification can be defined as a “set...of purposeful acts to convert religious symbols and institutions into marketable and consumable commodit[ies].”¹⁰¹ The problem with religious commodification, however, is that it “re-contextualize[es...] religious symbols, language, and ideas...from their original religious context[s]” into commodities.¹⁰² While modern concerns over the commodification of religion seems to be more of a Western concern—as material and immaterial religion has been sold in non-Western societies for centuries—the idea of over-commodification comes from questions regarding what aspects of religion should and should not be sold for profit and who should be selling religious goods for profit.

The problem, I think, is not necessarily the selling of religion by religious organizations, as they need a monetary base to survive. I also do not necessarily have a problem with enterprising entrepreneurs using religion for monetary gain. This is the case with the Camino de Santiago Virtual Challenge I just mentioned, where pilgrimage could more fully participate in the challenge for a modest fee depending on the package they preferred in order to receive, among other items, the tracking app, a t-shirt, and a medal for completing the Camino route. Rather, the problem is the over-commodification of religion, or where religious institutions and site managers become more focused on making a profit than on saving souls. For example, Kam Hung *et al.* shared a case study where tourists at a Shaolin temple in China became upset because not only were the monks overly aggressive in asking for donations, but also seemed to be more interested in hawking souvenirs than dealing with the spiritual needs of the visitors.¹⁰³ With increasing wear-and-tear on religious sites due to over-pilgrimage (see below),

97 Appadurai, A., *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, London, University of Minnesota Press, 1996, p. 3.

98 Asimakopoulou, J., *The Political Economy of the Spectacle and Postmodern Caste*, Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2020, p. 108.

99 Radin, M. J., *Contested Commodities*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1996.

100 Song, E., “Commodification and consumer society: A bibliographic review”, *Hedgehog Review*, 5, 2 (2003), pp. 109-121; Evans, D., “Commodification”, in Southerton, D. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Consumer Culture*, Thousand Oaks, SAGE, 2011, pp. 212-214.

101 Kitiarsa, P., “Towards a sociology of religious commodification”, in Turner, B. S. (ed.), *The New Blackwell Companion to the Sociology of Religion*, Chichester, UK, Blackwell, 2010, pp. 563-583 [p. 565].

102 Ornella, A. D., “Commodification of religion”, in Runehov, A. L. C. and Oviedo, L. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Sciences and Religions*, Dordrecht, The Netherlands, Springer, 2013, pp. 430-431 [p. 430].

103 Hung, K.; Yang, X.; Wassler, P.; Wang, D.; Lin, P. and Liu, Z., “Contesting the commercialization and sanctity of religious tourism in the Shaolin Monastery, China”, *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 19, 2 (2017), pp. 145-159.

and with most religious sites being self-funding, the need for money to maintain pilgrimage routes and end-points is great, and as such, there may be a greater emphasis by some religious site managers on the monetary aspects of sacred site management, even if this emphasis seems strange to visitors who struggle with this juxtaposition between spirituality, asceticism, and material accumulation.

The Segmenting of Pilgrimage and Tourism

The seventh way in which modern pilgrimage has been influenced by globalization is how pilgrimage has been utilized and segmented by the tourism industry. With religion being both a supply and demand side aspect of travel for centuries, it makes sense that the modern tourism industry would incorporate religious sites, routes, and ceremonies into their itineraries.¹⁰⁴ However, with globalization has come an economic emphasis on hyper-commodification—where “advertisers and marketers emphasize minute differences between products...so as to create larger and larger numbers of commodities”.¹⁰⁵ As such, the tourism industry has been active in identifying different niche markets upon which to capitalize.¹⁰⁶ Initially, noticing the growing numbers of people participating in pilgrimage travel, the tourism industry created the religious tourism market, which focuses on facilitating the movement of people to religious sites. From a tourism industry perspective, pilgrimage falls under this religious tourism moniker.¹⁰⁷ Sometimes also referred to as “faith tourism” or “faith-based tourism,” this market focuses on the “believer as tourist”,¹⁰⁸ with an emphasis on “developing faith-friendly offerings to address consumers’ religious sentiments.”¹⁰⁹ Since then, there has been a splintering of this market to include the spiritual tourism market and the New Age market. However, there is now also a pilgrimage tourism market, which differs from the religious tourism market in that it is demand-side focused. It will be interesting to see if and how these tourism niche markets fragment even further in the future.

Pilgrimage as Spectacle and Play

The eighth way in which pilgrimage has been influenced by globalization is what I call here pilgrimage as spectacle and play. The idea of pilgrimage as spectacle is tied

104 Olsen, D. H., “Heritage, tourism, and the commodification of religion”, *Tourism Recreation Research*, 28, 3 (2003), pp. 99-104.

105 Campbell, C., “Commodification”, in Robertson, R. and Scholte, J.A. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Globalization*, Vol 1, London and New York, Routledge, 2007, pp. 173-175 (p. 173).

106 See Olsen, D. H., “Faith, New Age spirituality...”, *op. cit.*

107 Timothy, D.J. and Olsen, D.H., “Conclusion: Whither religious tourism?”, in Timothy, D.J. and Olsen, D.H. (eds.), *Tourism, Religion and Spiritual Journeys*, London, Routledge, 2006, pp. 287-294.

108 Terzidou, M.; Styliadis, D. and Szivas, E. M., “Residents’ perceptions of religious tourism and its socio-economic impacts on the island of Tinos”, *Tourism and Hospitality Planning & Development*, 5, 2 (2008), pp. 113-129.

109 Izberk-Bilgin, E. and Nakata, C. C., “A new look at faith-based marketing: The global halal market”, *Business Horizons*, 59, 3 (2016), pp. 285-292 (p. 286).

to John Urry's notion of the "tourist gaze,"¹¹⁰ which emphasizes the visual nature of tourism—where "tourists seek out and consume visual images [as well as] the means by which the tourism industry organises and directs this [visual] consumption."¹¹¹ While many tourists travel to seek authentic experiences and meaning,¹¹² other tourists, as per Daniel Boorstin, do not, and are satisfied with staged, superficial experiences.¹¹³ With religious culture continuing to be an increasingly important tourism resource in the post-secular modern era, religious pilgrimage has been deconstructed in the eyes of many tourists to be just another event, attraction, or spectacle to be gazed at rather than experienced. With this emphasis on the visual, pilgrimages become things or objects to be commodified and marketed to an audience that wants to see pilgrimage-in-action.

For some people, pilgrimage is seen as ritual-as-vacation, where pilgrimage is just a type of leisure activity in which they can *play* or experiment in a less deep and meaningful way. As a case in point, BBC2 in the UK has sponsored three pilgrimages—one to Rome, one to Santiago, and one to Istanbul—to cater to their reality television market. *The Road to Santiago*—referred to by one pundit as "celebrity *Big Brother* with blisters"¹¹⁴—is a three-part series wherein several people with various levels of fame or star-power attempt to walk the 800km pilgrimage route over the Pyrenees towards Santiago.¹¹⁵ *Pilgrimage: The Road to Rome* is also a three-part series tracing eight celebrity pilgrims of different belief systems as they walk 1,500 miles in 15 days along the Via Francigena pilgrimage route,¹¹⁶ while the *Pilgrimage: Route to Istanbul* series follows seven celebrities as they start from Belgrade, Serbia, and walk through the Balkans before reaching the Suleymaniye Mosque in Istanbul.¹¹⁷ These shows are replete with intrigue, infighting, complaining, foot pain, and, at the end, miraculously, healing and faith-finding. People that watch this show can vicariously engage in pilgrimage by watching others do so in a somewhat playful and scripted manner, again making pilgrimage in this case something to be seen rather than something in which to participate. This can also be seen in the ways in which many tourists and even pilgrims use sacred sites as a cultural backdrop within which they

110 Urry, J., *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies*, London, SAGE, 1990/2002.

111 Smith, M.; MacLeod, N. and Robertson, M. H., *Key Concepts in Tourist Studies*, London and Thousand Oaks, CA, SAGE, 2010, pp. 174-177 [p. 174].

112 MacCannell, D., "Staged authenticity: Arrangements of social...", *op. cit.*

113 Boorstin, D. J., *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*, New York, Vintage, 1992.

114 Feay, S., "The Road to Santiago, BBC2 — Celebrity Big Brother with blisters" (2018) <https://www.ft.com/content/fea250ec-238c-11e8-add1-0e8958b189ea> (accessed September 22, 2021).

115 *Idem.*

116 Martin, L., "Pilgrimage: The Road to Rome cast: full line-up walking the epic route on BBC Two", *INews* (2019). <https://inews.co.uk/culture/television/pilgrimage-the-road-to-rome-cast-line-up-celebrities-bbc-two-route-276650> (accessed September 22, 2021).

117 Kavanagh, J., "MEET THE PILGRIMS—Who's in Pilgrimage: The Road to Istanbul line-up? Full cast on the Sultans Trail" (2021). <https://www.the-sun.com/entertainment/600477/pilgrimage-the-road-to-istanbul-line-up/> (accessed September 22, 2021).

blend sacred and secular motivations and activities. As one 20-year-old pilgrim explained to Simon Thomas *et al.* in their study of post-modern pilgrimage at Lourdes, “Why do we come to Lourdes, that is simple, to pray and to play.”¹¹⁸

Transplanted Pilgrimages

The ninth way in which modern pilgrimage has been influenced by globalization is through transplanted pilgrimages. One of the outcomes of globalization has been the intensity of migration flows through the world—generally from developing to developed countries. As people migrate from one country to another, they bring with them their religious customs, norms, and values, including pilgrimage rituals and traditions. Carolyn Porok has suggested that within a North American context, religious migrant groups engage in several strategies to maintain their religious traditions. One of these strategies is to travel back to their ancestral homelands as pilgrims to maintain a connection to their faith community.¹¹⁹ Another strategy is to either create new or co-opt existing “sacrosapes”¹²⁰ to transplant former pilgrimage traditions to sanctify the places in which migrants now live. Examples of this range from the establishment of Protestant summer Bible camps to the building of cathedrals and basilicas complete with relics of martyrs and saints,¹²¹ to the Hari Krishna Holi Festival of Colors which is performed in various destinations around the United States, to the co-opting of the San Francisco Chinese New Year Parade by Taiwanese Americans to perform religious rituals related to Mazu.¹²² While these strategies may seem to lead to the “detraditionalizing” of sacred spaces, texts, and mobilities, these strategies lead to the creation of new “spatialized ontologies”¹²³ that often involve a “renewed reverence for traditional texts, practices, places, and symbols.”¹²⁴

Pilgrimage as a Sustainable Practice?

The tenth way in which modern pilgrimage has been influenced by globalization is through questioning pilgrimage as a sustainable practice. As I have noted elsewhere, “Pilgrimage and religious tourism [are] sometimes viewed as a form of ‘soft’

118 Thomas, S.; White, G. R. and Samuel, A., “To pray and to play: Post-postmodern pilgrimage at Lourdes”, *Tourism Management*, 68 (2018), pp. 412-422 [p. 416].

119 Porok, C. V., “Transplanting pilgrimage traditions in the Americas”, *Geographical Review*, 93, 3 (2003), pp. 283-307.

120 Anttonen, V., “Landscapes as Sacrosapes: Why does topography make a difference?”, in Nordeide, S. W. and Brink, S. (eds.), *Sacred Sites and Holy Places: Exploring the Sacralization of Landscape through Time and Space*, Turnhout, Belgium, Brepols, 2013, pp. 13-32.

121 Olsen, D. H., “Ritual journeys in North America: Opening religious and ritual landscapes and spaces”, *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*, 4, 1 (2016), pp. 34-48.

122 Lee, J. H. X., “Maintaining patterns: Community ritual and pilgrimage in a diasporic Taiwanese American religious community”, *Asia Pacific Perspectives*, 10, 1 (2011), pp. 81-101.

123 Vásquez, M. A. and Garbin, D., “Globalization”, in Stausberg, M. and Engler, S. (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Study of Religion*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015, pp. 684-701 (p. 684).

124 Gauthier, F.; Martikainen, T. and Woodhead, L., “Acknowledging a global shift...”, *op. cit.*, p. 270.

tourism that involves more environmentally mindful travel.”¹²⁵ Indeed, in discussions regarding the negative environmental impacts of tourism, religion and religious travel is rarely if ever mentioned. In a book I co-edited with Kiran Shinde,¹²⁶ we discussed this issue and suggested that pilgrimage travel today is not environmentally sustainable—that pilgrims do not tread softer than tourists environmentally speaking. One of the case studies in our book was on the Hajj, and how pilgrims at the Hajj produce over 42,000 tons of waste during this pilgrimage event.¹²⁷ Both in this case study and another case study about pilgrimage in India,¹²⁸ it was found that both religious leaders and pilgrims felt that it was not their responsibility to clean up the waste that they created during the course of pilgrimage events. Because pilgrimage was a just cause in the eyes of God, either God would take care of the waste, or, ultimately, the local governments would. Doing their part to be “greener” was not part of the pilgrim worldview. This is an interesting finding, considering that most religious faiths have articulated theologies related to environmental conservation and stewardship and that the environmental actions of pilgrims and religious leaders were often in conflict with those theologies.¹²⁹

In many cases, pilgrimage routes and destinations suffer from “over-pilgrimage”, a term I have used previously in this paper. This term is related to “over-tourism,” a phenomenon in which “the impact of tourism on a destination, or parts thereof,...excessively influences the perceived quality of life of its citizens and/or the quality of visitors’ experiences in a negative way.”¹³⁰ In the same way, pilgrimage as a mass tourism event can also turn into over-pilgrimage, where resource demands, environmental modification, and waste left behind by pilgrims can hurt the quality of life of residents receiving these pilgrims.¹³¹ This is particularly the case where there is a lack of a strong institutional and governance infrastructure to handle the impacts of over-pilgrimage.¹³²

However, there have been recent attempts by pilgrimage event managers, non-government organizations, and governments at various scales to make pilgrimage

125 Olsen, D. H., “Pilgrimage, religious tourism, biodiversity, and natural sacred sites”, in Shinde, K.A. and Olsen, D. H. (eds.), *Religious Tourism and the Environment*, Wallingford, UK, CABI, 2020, pp. 23-41 (p. 29); see Lusby, C., “Hard and soft tourism”, in Lowry, L. L. (ed.), *The International Encyclopedia of Travel and Tourism*, Los Angeles, SAGE, 2017, pp. 566-568.

126 Shinde, K. A. and Olsen, D.H., *Religious Tourism and the Environment*, Wallingford, UK, CABI, 2020; See also: Shinde, K. A. & Olsen, D. H., Reframing the intersections of pilgrimage, religious tourism, and sustainability, *Sustainability*, 15, 1 (2022), p. 461.

127 Qurashi, J., “The natural environment and waste...”, *op. cit.*

128 Shinde, K. A., “Managing the environment in religious tourism destinations: A conceptual model”, in Shinde, K. A. and Olsen, D. H. (eds.), *Religious Tourism and the Environment*, Wallingford, UK, CABI, 2020, pp. 42-59.

129 See Olsen, D.H., “Disease and health risks...”, *op. cit.*

130 UNWTO, *Overtourism? Understanding and Managing Urban Tourism Growth beyond Perceptions*, Madrid, UNWTO, 2018 (p. 4). <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284420070>.

131 See Shinde, K. A., “Palkhi: A moving sacred town”, in Olsen, D. H. and Trono, A. (eds.), *Religious Pilgrimage Routes and Trails: Sustainable Development and Management*, Wallingford, UK, CABI, 2018, pp. 150-166.

132 See Shinde, K. A., “Managing the environment...”, *op. cit.*

more “green,” which efforts can lead to improved ecologies and peace-building.¹³³ For example, managers of the Hajj are presently focusing on investing resources, developing technologies, and creating strategies to improve solid waste and recycling collection efforts and food and ritual waste disposal as well as limiting pilgrimage-induced CO₂ emissions in major cities.¹³⁴ One non-government organization, the European Green Pilgrimage Network, as “a faith-led network of pilgrim places, pathways and cities in Europe,” is “committed to promoting green, or environmentally friendly, pilgrimage. Its vision is that pilgrims leave a positive footprint on the earth, and that pilgrim places become models of care for the environment.”¹³⁵ The Interreg European Regional Development Fund, which brings governments together to focus on shared policy issues, recently completed a €1.18 billion green pilgrimage project that spanned the years 2017-2022. The purpose of this project was to “bring...together six regions in the United Kingdom, Italy, Norway, Sweden and Romania to promote the integrated management and development of natural and cultural heritage”¹³⁶ with a focus on the sustainable management of pilgrimage tourism resources.

Conclusion

As a “structure of interconnectedness,”¹³⁷ globalization, along with its attendant processes and driving forces, was assumed to have the power sufficient to consign religion to the private sphere. Yet religion continues to have a variable influence within both the personal and public sphere in many parts of the world. One of the most visible ways in which this is manifested is through the practice of pilgrimage. Today, millions of people travel to religious sites around the world that they or their faith community hold to be sacred. The reasons why people visit these sites varies greatly, ranging from the religious to the spiritual to the secular,¹³⁸ with pilgrimage continuing to be an important part of religious community-building.

133 Ivakhiv, A., “Green pilgrimage: Problems and prospects for ecology and peace-building”, in Pazos, A. M. (ed.), *Pilgrims and Pilgrimages as Peacemakers in Christianity, Judaism and Islam*, Surrey, Ashgate, 2013, pp. 85-103.

134 E.g., Qurashi, J., “The natural environment and waste...”, *op. cit.*; Elgammal, I. and Alhothali, G. T., “Towards green pilgrimage: A framework for action in Makkah, Saudi Arabia”, *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*, 9, 1 (2021), pp. 39-57.

135 See <https://www.greenpilgrimageeurope.net/>

136 Interreg Europe, “Green Pilgrimage: Lessons Learned for Sustainable Economic Growth” (2017). This document can be accessed at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/343738630_Green_Pilgrimage_Lessons_Learned_for_Sustainable_Economic_Growth

137 Stiglitz, J. E., “Contagion, liberalization...”, *op. cit.*

138 Morinis, A., “Introduction: The territory of the anthropology of pilgrimage”, *op. cit.*; Olsen, D. H., “Religious tourism: A spiritual or touristic experience?”, in Sharpley, R. (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of the Tourist Experience*, London and New York, Routledge, 2022, pp. 391-407.

While pilgrimage as a religious tradition is both a community-building and economic endeavour, in recent decades both globalizing and glocalizing forces have begun to change the nature of modern pilgrimage travel. As explained in this paper, changing political economies, macroeconomics, mass consumption patterns, geopolitical and supranational structures, and transportation technologies have in many ways expanded (deregulated), as well as constrained (regulated) (e.g., COVID-19 restrictions)¹³⁹ pilgrimage growth and travel. In addition, there has been a move towards the individualization of pilgrimage, where people engage in pilgrimage-like travel in search of individual spiritual experiences outside of the interpretational framework of religious dogma. As such, the term “pilgrimage” has taken on new contextual meanings and activities. In addition, as presented in this paper, globalization has influenced modern pilgrimage in at least ten different ways, and assuredly there are more ways in which modern pilgrimage travel has been influenced by globalizing forces.

In this paper, I have argued here that pilgrimage studies would benefit from a more nuanced study of the macro-scale causal mechanisms that facilitate pilgrim mobilities. Such a study would better explain why and how pilgrimage takes place from a meso-scale. In so doing, scholars may be able to see both the similarities and differences in pilgrimage travel among different faith communities and better understand how to facilitate pilgrimage travel in the modern and post-secular world. Other research in this area might examine how pilgrimage itself is contributing to connecting the world and making it ‘smaller,’ such as examining how the revival of the Camino de Santiago has been embedded in church, state, and continental projects—each of which have their own history and trajectory—creating cultural, social, religious, and spiritual coherence and identity among faith communities, tourism entities, and political regimes in a multicultural, multinational continent. If anything, the ten ways in which pilgrimage has been affected by globalization noted in this paper opens a door to further interdisciplinary study and invites analysis of the ties between pilgrimage and globalization from and with other religious, cultural, national, and ideological perspectives.

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139 Olsen, D. H. and Timothy, D. J., “COVID-19 and religious travel...”, *op. cit.*