



VIRGIN OF GUADALUPE, MEXICO.

IMAGE AND PILGRIMAGE IN CHRISTIAN CULTURE

Anthropological Perspectives



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If I did not somewhat fear the reproach of exaggeration, I would say that in the twentieth century ethnography will be the foundation on which a new philosophical conception of humanity will be built.

—Arnold van Gennep

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: Pilgrimage as a Liminoid Phenomenon



PILGRIMAGES are probably of ancient origin and can, indeed, be found among peoples classed by some anthropologists as "tribal," peoples such as the Huichol, the Lunda, and the Shona. But pilgrimage as an institutional form does not attain real prominence until the emergence of the major historical religions—Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In view of its importance in the actual functioning of these religions, both quantitatively and qualitatively, pilgrimage has been surprisingly neglected by historians and social scientists. But perhaps it has merely shared in the general disregard of the liminal¹ and marginal phenomena of social process and cultural dynamics by those intent either upon the description and classification of orderly institutionalized "facts" or upon the establishment of the "historicity" of prestigious, unrepeated events.

¹We refer here and throughout this work to a number of concepts formulated in earlier books and articles on ritual and its symbolism. Readers not familiar with the earlier work are referred to Appendix A for a summary.

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It was Arnold van Gennep (1908; 1960), the French folklorist and ethnographer neglected by the pundits, savants, and mandarins of the French school of sociology in his own time, who gave us the first clues about how ancient and tribal societies conceptualized and symbolized the transitions men have to make between well-defined states and statuses, if they are to grow up to accommodate themselves to unprecedented, even antithetical conditions. He showed us that all *rites de passage* (rites of transition) are marked by three phases: separation, limen or margin, and aggregation. The first phase comprises symbolic behavior signifying the detachment of the individual or group, either from an earlier fixed point in the social structure or from a relatively stable set of cultural conditions (a cultural "state"); during the intervening liminal phase, the state of the ritual subject (the "passenger" or "liminar") becomes ambiguous, he passes through a realm or dimension that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state, he is betwixt and between all familiar lines of classification; in the third phase the passage is consummated, and the subject returns to classified secular or mundane social life. The ritual subject, individual or corporate (groups, age-sets, and social categories can also undergo transition), is again in a stable state, has rights and obligations of a clearly defined structural type, and is expected to behave in accordance with the customary norms and ethical standards appropriate to his new settled state.

By identifying liminality Van Gennep discovered a major innovative, transformative dimension of the social. He paved the way for future studies of all processes of spatiotemporal social or individual change. For liminality cannot be confined to the processual form of the traditional rites of passage in which he first identified it. Nor can it be dismissed as an undesirable (and certainly uncomfortable) movement of variable duration between successive conservatively secure states of being, cognition, or status-role incumbency. Liminality is now seen to apply to all phases of decisive cultural change, in which previous orderings of thought and behavior are subject to revision and criticism, when hitherto unprecedented modes of ordering relations between ideas and people become possible and desirable. Van Gennep made his discovery in relatively conserva-

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tive societies, but its implications are truly revolutionary. In the liminality of tribal societies, traditional authority nips radical deviation in the bud. We find there symbolic inversion of social roles, the mirror-imaging of normative secular paradigms; we do not find open-endedness, the possibility that the freedom of thought inherent in the very principle of liminality could lead to major reformulation of the social structure and the paradigms which program it. But in the limina throughout actual history, when sharp divisions begin to appear between the root paradigms which have guided social action over long tracts of time and the antiparadigmatic behavior of multitudes responding to totally new pressures and incentives, we tend to find the prolific generation of new experimental models—utopias, new philosophical systems, scientific hypotheses, political programs, art forms, and the like—among which reality-testing will result in the cultural "natural selection" of those best fitted to make intelligible, and give form to, the new contents of social relations.

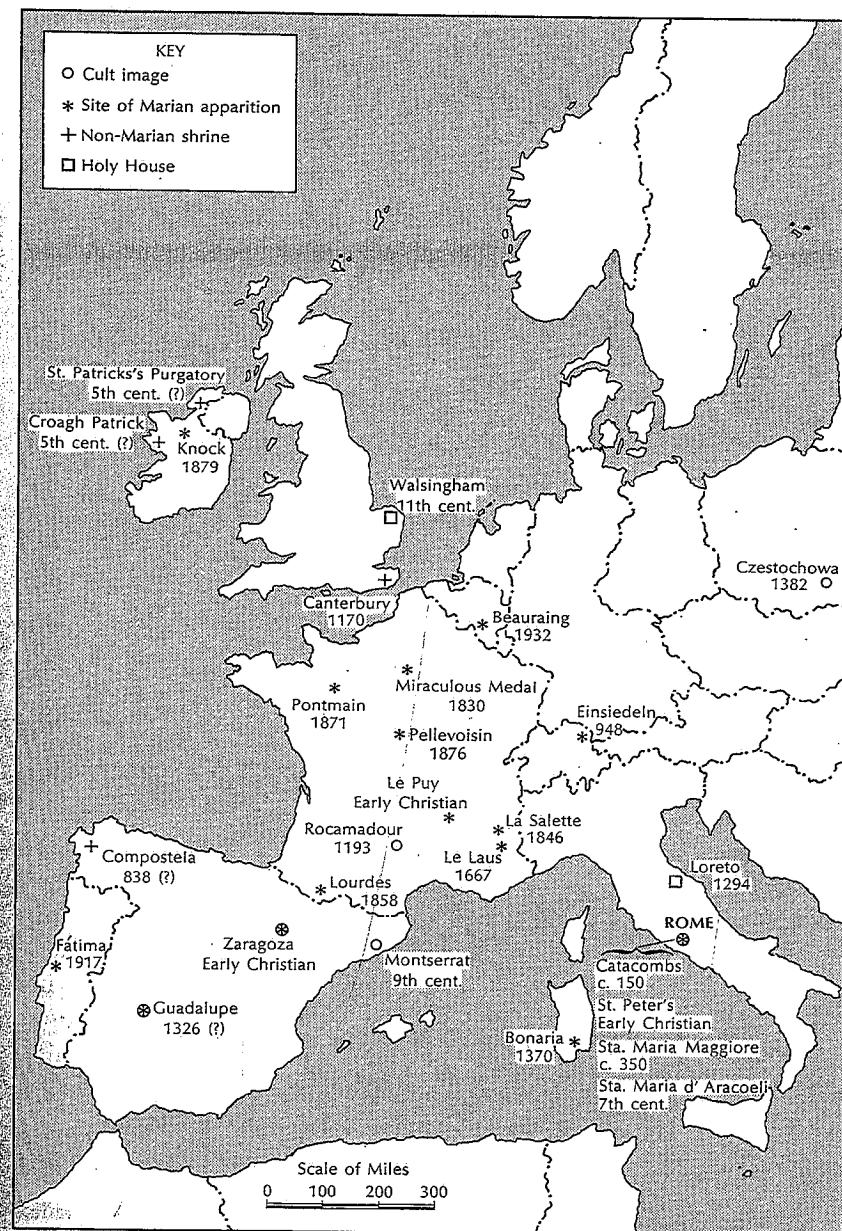
It has become clear to us that liminality is not only *transition* but also *potentiality*, not only "going to be" but also "what may be," a formulable domain in which all that is not manifest in the normal day-to-day operation of social structures (whether on account of social repression or because it is rendered cognitively "invisible" by prestigious paradigmatic denial) can be studied objectively, despite the often bizarre and metaphorical character of its contents. In *The Ritual Process* (V. Turner 1969), certain modes of liminality in preindustrial society were examined, and further studies in more developed cultures were suggested. The present book is an attempt to examine in some detail what we consider to be one characteristic type of liminality in cultures ideologically dominated by the "historical," or "salvation," religions.

When we first began to look for ritual analogues between "archaic," or "tribal," and "historical" religious liminality, beginning with the Catholic Christian tradition which we know best, we turned, naturally enough, to the ceremonies of the Roman rite. But in the liturgical ceremonies of the Mass, baptism, female purification, confirmation, nuptials, ordination, extreme unction, and funerary rituals, though it was possible to discern somewhat truncated

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liminal phases, we found nothing that replicated the scale and complexity of liminality in the major initiation rituals of the tribal societies with which we were familiar. One obvious difference was seen in the spatial location of liminality. In many tribal societies, initiands are secluded in a sacralized enclosure, or *temenos*, clearly set apart from the villages, markets, pastures, and gardens of everyday usage and trafficking (see Junod 1962: vol. 1, pp. 74-94; Wilson 1957:86-129; Richards 1957; Turner 1968:210-39; Barth 1975:47-102). But in the "historical" religions, comparable seclusion has been exemplified only in the total life-style of the specialized religious orders. In other words, the progressive division of labor made of the liminal phase a specialized state, complex and intense enough to involve the entire lives of the deeply devoted. Of course, as the history of monasticism has shown, the orders become decreasingly liminal as they enter into manifold relations with the environing economic and political milieus. That, however, is matter for a different book. But the religious, though relatively numerous in the heyday of the historical religions, were easily outnumbered by the ordinary worshipers, the peasants and the citizens. Where was their liminality? Or was there indeed any liminality for them at all?

In European societies with a rurally based economy and feudal political structures, life for the masses tended to be intimately localized. Indeed, for Christian serfs and villeins the law itself ordained their attachment to particular manors or demesnes. Their religious life was also locally fixated; the parish was their spiritual manor. Yet during its development, Christianity generated its own mode of liminality for the laity. This mode was best represented by the pilgrimage to a sacred site or holy shrine located at some distance away from the pilgrim's place of residence and daily labor. Beginning with the pilgrimage to remote Jerusalem (*Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society*, 1887; 1889; 1891a,b,c; 1893)—made by a few choice, pious, and relatively well-to-do persons—to which was swiftly joined the pilgrimage to the shrines of Peter and Paul in Rome (Jusserand 1891:374-78; Sigal 1974:99-110), the map of Europe, particularly after the Saracenic occupation of the Holy Land and domination of the Mediterranean sea routes thither, came to be crisscrossed with pilgrim ways and trails to the shrines of European



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saints and advocations of the Holy Virgin (varieties of mode of address, such as Our Lady of Walsingham) and to churches containing important relics of Christ's ministry and passion (Turner 1974a:224-26). Such pilgrim centers and ways, frequented increasingly by the poor, can be regarded as a complex surrogate for the journey to the source and heartland of the faith.

The pilgrim trails cut across the boundaries of provinces, realms, and even empires (Jusserand 1891:362-71, 393-95). In each nascent nation certain shrines became preeminent centers of legitimate devotion. But since the church laid claim to universality, pilgrims were encouraged to take up staff and scrip to travel to the great shrines in other Christian lands. In time this international religious tourist traffic became organized. (Venice became the model for later secular tourism, as well as for modern agencies of pilgrim travel.)² Many Englishmen made the pilgrimage to St. James the Apostle's shrine in Spain, while French and Dutch pilgrims swarmed across the Channel to visit St. Thomas's tomb at Canterbury. Within each country one can detect a loose hierarchy, or at least a rough scale of priorities, among its shrines. In plural societies, each linguistic or ethnic group has its favored pilgrimage places. Provinces, districts, even the shrines themselves, have their focal devotions. All sites of pilgrimage have this in common: they are believed to be places where miracles once happened, still happen, and may happen again. Even where the time of miraculous healings is reluctantly conceded to be past, believers firmly hold that faith is strengthened and salvation better secured by personal exposure to the beneficent unseen presence of the Blessed Virgin or the local saint, mediated through a cherished image or painting. Miracles or the revivification of faith are everywhere regarded as rewards for undertaking long, not infrequently perilous, journeys and for having temporarily given up not only the cares but also the rewards of ordinary life. Behind such journeys in Christendom lies the paradigm of the *via crucis*, with the added purgatorial element appropriate to fallen men. While monastic contemplatives and mystics could daily make

²For a first-rate account of the late fifteenth-century Venetian pilgrimage "trade," readers should consult M. Margaret Newett's Introduction to her book *Canon Pietro Casola's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem; in the Year 1494* (1907:1-113).

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interior salvific journeys, those in the world had to exteriorize theirs in the infrequent adventure of pilgrimage. For the majority, pilgrimage was the great liminal experience of the religious life. If mysticism is an interior pilgrimage, pilgrimage is exteriorized mysticism.

The point of it all is to get out, go forth, to a far holy place approved by all. In societies with few economic opportunities for movement away from limited circles of friends, neighbors, and local authorities, all rooted alike in the soil, the only journey possible for those not merchants, peddlers, minstrels, jugglers, tumblers, wandering friars, or outlaws, or their modern equivalents, is a holy journey, a pilgrimage or a crusade. On such a journey one gets away from the reiterated "occasions of sin" which make up so much of the human experience of social structure. If one is tied by blood or edict to a given set of people in daily intercourse over the whole gamut of human activities—domestic, economic, jural, ritual, recreational, affinal, neighborly—small grievances over trivial issues tend to accumulate through the years, until they become major disputes over property, office, or prestige which factionalize the group. One piles up a store of nagging guilts, not all of which can be relieved in the parish confessional, especially when the priest himself may be party to some of the conflicts. When such a load can no longer be borne, it is time to take the road as a pilgrim.

For many pilgrims the journey itself is something of a penance. Not only may the way be long, it is also hazardous, beset by robbers, thieves, and confidence men aplenty (as many pilgrim records attest), as well as by natural dangers and epidemics. But these fresh and unpredictable troubles represent, at the same time, a release from the ingrown ills of home. They are not one's own fault, though they may be sent by the Almighty to try one's moral mettle. (There are, of course, legends that very bad sinners will have extra trouble on their pilgrimage. One cycle of stories, for example, recounts the mishaps on the penitential pilgrimage to Jerusalem by the four knights who martyred St. Thomas Becket. Finally, so the tale runs, persistent offshore gales prevented them from setting foot on the Holy Land, and they had to return, as it were, unforgiven.)

Although the pilgrim may take the path because he has made a

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promise to a saint whose intercession he once sought on his own or a beloved's behalf, nevertheless it is he who decides on the day and hour of his going. This freedom of choice in itself negates the obligatoriness of a life embedded in social structure. In many tribal societies, on the other hand, rituals such as initiation, which contain extended liminal phases, tend to be obligatory. Nearly everyone has to pass through certain main-stem rites. There is some room for choice, certainly, but it is usually confined to such questions as the precise timing and placement of corporate performance rather than to whether an individual is willing to undergo the ritual at all. Often, too, it is left to complex divinatory procedures to determine when and where rites should take place; thus the scope of individual choice is further narrowed. Of course, some religious pilgrimages, like the hajj in Islam, are defined as a duty incumbent on all believers. But in such cases there are so many qualifying clauses and extenuating circumstances that the individual is placed once more in a situation of virtual choice.

Yet there is undoubtedly an initiatory quality in pilgrimage. A pilgrim is an initiand, entering into a new, deeper level of existence than he has known in his accustomed milieu. Homologous with the ordeals of tribal initiation are the trials, tribulations, and even temptations of the pilgrim's way. And at the end the pilgrim, like the novice, is exposed to powerful religious sacra (shrines, images, liturgies, curative waters, ritual circumambulations of holy objects, and so on), the beneficial effect of which depends upon the zeal and pertinacity of his quest. Tribal sacra are secret; Christian sacra are exposed to the view of pilgrims and ordinary believers alike. Again, the mystery of choice resides in the individual, not in the group. What is secret in the Christian pilgrimage, then, is the inward movement of the heart. In tribal rituals, on the other hand, what is concealed from the profane—the sacred objects and teachings—is the possession of an elite group within the community, whether this be, for example, an inner core of initiated men or a nuclear group of mothers and potential mothers. In the pilgrimages of the historical religions the moral unit is the individual, and his goal is salvation or release from the sins and evils of the structural world, in preparation for participation in an afterlife of pure bliss. In tribal

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initiation the moral unit is the social group or category, and the goal is the attainment of a new sociocultural status and state. While the pilgrim seeks temporary release from the structures that normally bind him, the tribal initiand seeks a deeper commitment to the structural life of his local community, ultimately, in many cases, to the state of being a venerated, legitimate ancestor after death, rather than a homeless ghost. Of course, historically the distinction has not always been so clearcut. Pilgrims sometimes enhance their mundane status through having made the journey. And in tribal religions certain kinds of initiation, notably the shamanic and the priestly, frequently offer a measure of release from the duties and necessities of the structural order, and a measure of participation in the invisible milieu of the gods or ancestors. Robert F. Gray (1963:14) has described how the Khambageu cult among the Sonjo of Tanzania promises salvation for believers who have undergone a specific initiation rite. Jacques Maquet (1954:183-84) mentions a similar cult in Ruanda. We must also face the fact of an opposite tendency in the historical religions, where the community of believers has often acquired something of a tribal character, on a world scale, and where religious wars are, as it were, magnified tribal feuds. While politics and economics become increasingly international and noncorporate as markets, merchants, and cities multiply, salvation religions, though universal in principle, raise corporate walls against outsiders in practice. This exclusiveness is reflected in the pilgrimage systems. With rare and interesting exceptions, the pilgrims of the different historical religions do not visit one another's shrines, and certainly do not find salvation extra ecclesia. Pilgrimage, then, offers liberation from profane social structures that are symbiotic with a specific religious system, but they do this only in order to intensify the pilgrim's attachment to his own religion, often in fanatical opposition to other religions. That is why some pilgrimages have become crusades and jihads. Nevertheless, within the institution of pilgrimages, human freedom made a historic advance. Inside the Christian religious frame, pilgrimage may be said to represent the quintessence of voluntary liminality. In this, again, they follow the paradigm of the *via crucis*, in which Jesus Christ voluntarily submitted his will to the will of

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God and chose martyrdom rather than mastery over man, death for the other, not death of the other.

Toward the end of a pilgrimage, the pilgrim's new-found freedom from mundane or profane structures is increasingly circumscribed by symbolic structures: religious buildings, pictorial images, statuary, and sacralized features of the topography, often described and defined in sacred tales and legend. Underlying the sensorily perceptible symbol-vehicles are structures of thought and feeling—ideological forms—which may be truly described as "root paradigms" (see Appendix A for a discussion of this term). These derive from the seminal words and works of the religion's founder, his disciples or companions, and their immediate followers, and constitute the "deposit of faith." Quite often they owe their systematic formulation to the collective deliberations of later dogmatists and theologians, who aimed at giving an institutional shape to the spontaneous insights and inspired actions of the founder. The root paradigms draw upon crises in the founder's life—especially those of his birth, coming of age, and death—to clothe abstract patterns of relationships in vivid forms accessible, through the sympathy of common experience, to all believers. Thus we see images, icons, and paintings of Jesus as infant, child, young preacher, scourged victim, crucified scapegoat, and resurrected God-man. Each of these representations is set, however sketchily in some cases, in the context of images derived from the sacred narrative of the founder's life. In this way, something is shown of his relations with his parents and kinsfolk, with his disciples, with strangers, with his accusers and enemies, with the anonymous people he healed or instructed, and even with supernatural beings, such as the other Persons of the Trinity, angels, and devils. Between founder and setting (those features of the natural and cultural landscape regarded as pertinent to the paradigm being expressed), there exist sets of relationships which together compose a message about the central values of the religious system. The pilgrim, as he is increasingly hemmed in by such sacred symbols, may not consciously grasp more than a fraction of the message, but through the reiteration of its symbolic expressions, and sometimes through their very vividness, he becomes increasingly capable of entering in imagination

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and with sympathy into the culturally defined experiences of the founder and of those persons depicted as standing in some close relationship to him, whether it be of love or hate, loyalty or awe. The trials of the long route will normally have made the pilgrim quite vulnerable to such impressions. Religious images strike him, in these novel circumstances, as perhaps they have never done before, even though he may have seen very similar objects in his parish church almost every day of his life. The innocence of the eye is the whole point here, the "cleansing of the doors of perception." Pilgrims have often written of the "transformative" effect on them of approaching the final altar or the holy grotto at the end of the way. Purified from structural sins, they receive the pure imprint of a paradigmatic structure. This paradigm will give a measure of coherence, direction, and meaning to their action, in proportion to their identification with the symbolic representation of the founder's experiences. For them the founder becomes a savior, one who saves them from themselves, "themselves" both as socially defined and as personally experienced. The pilgrim "puts on Christ Jesus" as a paradigmatic mask, or persona, and thus for a while becomes the redemptive tradition, no longer a biopsychical unit with a specific history—as in tribal initiations, where the individual who dons the ceremonial mask becomes for a while the god or power signified by the mask and the costume linked to it. But since Christ signifies "the individual" (he represents uniqueness for everyone), a fundamental difference between corporate and singular initiatory traditions is still discernible.

But pilgrimages are not merely optional equivalents of obligatory tribal initiations. They also have affinities with what have been called "rituals of affliction" (see V. Turner 1957:292; 1968:15-16, 22). In many tribal societies the world over, rituals are performed to propitiate or exorcize supernatural beings or forces believed to be the cause of illness, ill luck, or death. Not infrequently, the curative process is conducted by an association of religious specialists or "doctors." These doctors are often recruited from former patients, for it is believed that to personal experience with illness or misfortune, a state liminal both to life and to death, they owe their contact with, and knowledge of, the invisible entities that shape human

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life. Those afflicted are thought to be afflicted for definite reasons. Sometimes, as in many African societies, the agents of affliction are ancestral shades, who punish their living kin either for moral misdemeanors or for breach of ritual prescriptions or prohibitions. But, consonant with the corporate character of morality, it may not be the actual culprit who is afflicted, but another member of his family, lineage, or clan, someone with whom the culprit shares bodily substance or "blood." Since breach of morality is almost identical with breach of social norms, and since the patient is bound by such norms in a complex web of social relationships, the target of ancestral affliction is as much the patient's kin group or residential unit as the patient himself. He may even be said to furnish the pretext or occasion for a revaluation of all its current relationships. In another sense, though, the therapeutic ritual is a rite of passage which transforms the patient into an adept ready to learn the mysteries of the healing cult.

Pilgrimage is both like and unlike affliction ritual. It is similar in that in the feudal and semifederal societies in which it seems most to flourish there is widespread belief that illness and mischance are punishments for moral transgressions in thought, word, or deed. The agents of punishment are not thought to be ancestral spirits or lesser deities or demons, however, but God himself—though he may be thought to act indirectly, as in the classic affliction of Job, by giving the devil permission to test out a person's spiritual mettle with affliction. Again, since the historical religions stress individual salvation rather than corporate harmony as their supreme goal, the treatment of affliction does not generally proceed within the localized corporate structure of a cult group and a kin group who play important roles in the ritual. The individual person is now the ethical unit, though the misfortune of others may still be thought to be caused by one's own moral failings. For example, we have seen in Mexico, and have read about in the English literature, parents who take the penitential journey to a saint's shrine on the occasion of their child's illness. But it is generally the victim's innocence, rather than the group's turpitude, that is emphasized here. Essentially the individual is regarded as responsible for his acts and thoughts. His will is at the heart of the matter. Thus in many re-

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spects a pilgrimage is the converse of a ritual of affliction. An individual pilgrimage often originates in a vow by a supplicant to God or the saints to undertake the arduous pilgrim's way if he or his dear ones are freed from present affliction. Or the afflicted person may choose to travel or be conveyed to a pilgrimage center, there to hope for a miraculous cure, or the equal miracle of the gift of resignation to his painful lot. It may well be that he travels in fellowship with others, either in an organized party or in a Chaucerian company met with by happenstance. Pilgrims have found that there is some safety in numbers, that it decreases their vulnerability to human predators. But the groupings so formed are "associational" rather than "primary" (though nuclear family groups often do travel together); that is, they are based on contract, friendship, voluntary association, and even casual acquaintance, rather than on ties of ascribed status. Again, pilgrims go out to be cured, while tribal patients draw kin and curers to themselves: pilgrims abandon the tight structures of kinship and locality, and voyage far to their font of healing; tribal sufferers remain within the arenas that are believed to provide the conditions of their affliction, while unrelated doctors come in from outside the village to cure them. At the pilgrimage's end—at Guadalupe, Lourdes, and Knock, for example—the pilgrim may find himself a member of a vast throng. But this is a throng of similars, not of structurally interdependent persons. It is only through the power ascribed by all to ritual, particularly to the Eucharistic ritual (which in part commemorates the pilgrim saint), that likeness of lot and intention is converted into commonness of feeling, into "communitas." All religious rituals have a strong affectual aspect, whether this be muted or displaced or given full liturgical expression. Symbols, which originate in elevated feeling as well as cognitive insight, become recharged in ritual contexts with emotions elicited from the assembled congregants. At major pilgrim centers, the quality and degree of the emotional impact of the devotions (which are often continuously performed, night and day), derive from the union of the separate but similar emotional dispositions of the pilgrims converging from all parts of a huge sociogeographical catchment area (see V. Turner 1974a:178-79, 209). It is not merely the troubles of an individual village or villager that induce

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this affectual atmosphere. It is the confluence of innumerable individual woes and hopes: manifold woes engendered by the most various of circumstances; incalculable hopes that the religion's paradigms and symbols will restore order and meaning to a sad and senseless state of personal and interpersonal affairs—and from these hopes derives the pilgrim's proverbial happiness. ♥

There is yet another profound difference between pilgrimage and tribal affliction ritual. The therapeutic action in a ritual of affliction has a systematic and quasi-pragmatic character: the action is normally expected to render the patient whole and healthy, unless he is the victim of the invincible malice of a living person, that is, of witchcraft. A pilgrim, on the other hand, is not supposed to *expect* any corporeal remedy. If a miraculous healing does occur, it is attributed to the grace of God, often through the seemingly capricious mediation of the pilgrimage saint. If magic is, as Sir James Frazer held, "a primitive kind of science," then tribal therapeutic rituals, despite their involvement with "spiritual beings" in the Tylorian sense, must clearly be regarded as "magical," on account of their systematic and causative character, given the cultural context-dependent principles governing therapeutic practice; while pilgrimages must be seen as essentially antimagical, since they are thought to depend upon the exercise of free will on both the human and the superhuman side of the encounter. Of course, in most pilgrimages, magical beliefs do in fact abound: beliefs in the supernatural efficacy of the water from sacred springs, in the contagious beneficent power of relics and images, and in the nonempirical curative virtue of certain formulae—"white magic," as it were. But even in these cases much weight is attached to the moral, as well as the ritual, condition of the subject. The water will not work a cure, nor the litany a benefit, unless the subject's "heart" is penitent, absolved, and therefore cured—all the result of a virtuous inclination of his will.

Thus the curative, charismatic aspect of pilgrimage is not thought of as an end in itself. In the paradigmatic Christian pilgrimage, the initiatory quality of the process is given priority, though it is initiation to, not through, a threshold. Initiation is conceived of as leading not to status elevation (though in practice it may often have that

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effect) but to a deeper level of religious participation. A pilgrim is one who divests himself of the mundane concomitants of religion—which become entangled with its practice in the local situation—to confront, in a special "far" milieu, the basic elements and structures of his faith in their unshielded, virgin radiance. It is true that the pilgrim returns to his former mundane existence, but it is commonly believed that he has made a spiritual step forward. Again in antithesis with the status climbing implicit in both tribal initiation and affliction ritual, the Christian pilgrim experiences no rise in status. His moral standing in the community may be increased, but often at the expense of his economic standing—no great loss in a culture which defines material gain as spiritual retrogression. To become more the Christian, one must be less the successful citizen. (This was at least the formula until the onset of the Protestant ethic, which holds that worldly success may result from the practice of such virtues as thrift, industry, punctuality, temperance, and just dealing—virtues manifesting to the world and to the actor himself that he has been elected by God for salvation.) The fact that the pilgrim's initiation was hidden and symbolic, further safeguarded the role of pilgrimage as something that did not merely subserve the functional requirements of mundane society but was its metaphorical opposite. This was the case in Christendom, at any rate. (In Islam, the pilgrimage to Mecca became, in many instances, a functional component of localized sociopolitical systems. The haji sometimes attained superior status, or at least standing, after his return.) In medieval Christian countries, the returned pilgrim, though perhaps outwardly acclaimed for his deepened piety, may have actually set back his chances of preferment to positions of higher office or trust, through his long absence. If some form of initiation is involved here, it is a secret, invisible one, not an enhancement of status. Yet there has undoubtedly accrued to the pilgrim a heightened respect and moral standing among the pious in the local community, as well as a raising of his own morale. These rewards tend to fall within the orbit of *communitas* rather than social structure, and make the pilgrim a *primus inter pares*, not a person of higher rank.

The branch of Christianity which has traditionally been most

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committed to the pilgrimage process—that is, the Roman Catholic Church—has also conceived of the struggle for salvation as a life-long drama played out essentially in the individual soul but involving a huge cast of actors, some visible, some invisible, some natural, some supernatural: God; Mary, Mother of God; the angels; the saints; and the three divisions of the living Church, the Church Triumphant of the invisible souls in heaven; the Church Suffering of the invisible souls in purgatory; and the Church Militant of living mortals beleaguered in the world by flesh and the devil, and by human adversaries. The individual soul is seen as dramatically involved, until the moment of death, with all these persons, personages, and corporate groups. It has free will to turn to God or away from him. God in turn plies the soul with graces (either directly or through sacramental ritual), which are thought of as gifts aiding in salvation or in resistance to temptation. These may be freely accepted or rejected. The doctrine of the communion of saints presupposes that souls may help one another, by praying to God on each other's behalf. Members of the Church Triumphant, being themselves saints in heaven, are the most effective intercessors; but anyone may pray for anyone. One motive for going on pilgrimage is the feeling that a saint's shrine has a sort of "hot line" to the Almighty. One purifies oneself by penance and travel, then has one's prayer amplified by asking a saint at his own chief shrine to forward it directly to God. This theory is characteristic of the peculiar union of individualism and corporateness that made up the medieval Christian Church; ordinary mortals can augment the efficacy of their prayer by passing their request, preferably on behalf of someone else, upward through a mediator or chain of mediators of increasing sanctity, to the source of all creative power. The converse of this is that God became incarnate, moving down from the invisible spiritual realm to visible mortality as Jesus Christ. The paradigms of the imitation of Christ, and mystical union with Christ, are available for making saints out of "middling good" Christians; that is, they serve as extensions of the salvific, incarnative process, in the continuing life of the Church, the mystical body of Christ.

Pilgrimage is very much involved in this perennial, universal drama, cutting across cultures, societies, politics, language groups,

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and ethnicities. In the uncertainty regarding that drama's climax, pilgrimage itself is regarded as a "good work," in the theological sense of observance of the Church's precepts and counsels (especially the counsels to pray, to fast, and to give alms, all prominent features of pilgrimage). No one good work will ensure ultimate salvation; but in the popular view it ensures many occasions of grace as rewards for a good work done freely out of a desire for salvation and for the benefit of others.

In most tribal societies, save for those which are in the hinterlands of literate Great Traditions and have absorbed ideas from them (see Redfield 1956:69-72), initiatory and affliction rituals cannot be traced to any demonstrable historical foundation. Instead, there may be myths recounting the origin of a given ritual *in illo tempore*, the timeless, undatable time of cultural beginnings, when gods, demigods, and semidivine heroes walked the earth and initiated the central cultural institutions (Eliade 1971:4,21). In contrast, most pilgrimage systems have beginnings traceable in historical time. One must qualify this statement, of course, by underlining the fact that many of the pilgrimages of the historical world religions—like the hajj of Islam and the Guadalupe pilgrimage in Catholic Mexico—were established on the sites of pilgrimages belonging to earlier religions which, though more than tribal in theological scope and territorial range, did not yet possess the strain toward universality of their historical supplanters. At any rate, in the world religions with which we are now concerned, the beginnings of most pilgrimages can fairly confidently be ascribed to a particular historical period, and even, in many instances, to a precise date. Our contention is that the epoch of genesis is of crucial significance in determining the lines along which a specific pilgrimage has developed—that is, the nature of its processual structure.

CLASSIFICATION OF PILGRIMAGES

In a broad system of classification, we have identified four main types of pilgrimages, the first two of which occur in all the historical religions: (1) Those pilgrimages which, on the authority of documentary or widespread traditional evidence, were established by

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the founder of a historical religion, by his first disciples, or by important national evangelists of his faith, may be termed prototypical pilgrimages. Such pilgrimages, though sometimes founded on ancient pilgrimage sites, dramatically manifest—in their symbolism, charter narratives, ecclesiastical structure, and general form of international repute—the orthodoxy of the faith from which they have sprung, and remain consistent with its root paradigms. Prototypical pilgrimages (such as those to Jerusalem and Rome for Christianity, Mecca for Islam, Benares and Mount Kailas for Hinduism, and Kandy for Buddhism) must be distinguished from (2) pilgrimages which bear quite evident traces of syncretism with older religious beliefs and symbols. Among such pilgrimages we would place Glastonbury in England's Somerset, with its continuing Celtic pagan overtones; Croagh Patrick in the west of Ireland; Chalma in Mexico, with its evident Ocuiltacan and Aztec embellishments; and Pandharpur in the Deccan of India, whose equivocal deity Vithoba Bhava may well have Dravidian, pre-Indoeuropean associations. We call these ambiguous and syncretic pilgrimages archaic pilgrimages.

Within the Christian tradition, it is possible to distinguish two further types: (3) Many of the pilgrimages best known in the popular and literary traditions of the Christian world originated in the European Middle Ages and take their tone from the theological and philosophical emphases of that epoch; we need only instance here Canterbury and Walsingham in England, Compostela in Spain, Chartres in France, Loreto and Assisi in Italy, Einsiedeln in Switzerland, Cologne and Altötting in Germany, and Częstochowa in Poland. Pilgrimages originating, roughly, in the period A.D. 500-1400 we call medieval pilgrimages. (4) Finally, attention must be paid to a genus of pilgrimage which has grown steadily in the post-Tridentine period of European Catholicism, particularly in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Such pilgrimages are characterized by a highly devotional tone and the fervent personal piety of their adherents, and they form an important part of the system of apologetics deployed against the advancing secularization of the post-Darwinian world. All surviving pilgrimage systems are heavily in debt to modern modes of communication and transportation, but

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the late post-Tridentine pilgrimages have, almost from the beginning, been deeply involved with mass technological and scientific culture, both positively, in drawing upon it as a source of instrumental aids, and negatively, in seeing it as a challenge to the Christian, and indeed to the entire religious world view. This category we term *modern* pilgrimage. But we must emphasize that by "modern" we here denote postmedieval. In tone, these pilgrimages are actually antimodern, since they usually begin with an apparition, or vision, and they assert that miracles do happen.

A pilgrimage's historical origin, then, determines its design and modulates its later development. Nevertheless, whatever their origin, pilgrimages have never been immune from the influences exerted by subsequent periods, with their modes of thought and politics, patterns of trade, military developments, and the ecological changes brought about by these and other forces. Thus, we must consider, in identifying types, the relationships between a given historically derived pilgrimage paradigm and the influences to which history has subjected it. At this point the sociologist of religion must also have his say! There are certain crucial moments, key points, when the data themselves insist that we arrest our time machine, to examine the synchronic connections between economic, political, legal, religious, social, and ecological factors, and analyze them in terms of sociological theories. Inevitably, we do not have all the data required by modern standards of sociological research, but we can at least produce plausible approximations which may incite thought and encourage deeper research. We propose, therefore, to select examples from these four broad categories of pilgrimages, to regard them as roughly paradigmatic of their genre, and to treat them both historically and anthropologically.

We have chosen for intensive consideration pilgrimages in Mexico, England, Ireland, and France which either achieved historical preeminence or enjoy contemporary esteem—or, better still, satisfy both criteria. These pilgrimages exemplify the latter three of the four types discussed above. St. Patrick's Purgatory in Lough Derg, and Croagh Patrick, both in Ireland, are pilgrimages of the archaic sort; Walsingham in England is a medieval pilgrimage; and the pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in the south of

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France, visited by millions annually, is a fine instance of a modern, "apparitional" pilgrimage system. We will also refer on occasion to the immensely popular Irish pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Knock, in County Mayo, another modern, "apparitional" system. We have visited these places, observed the behavior of pilgrims there, and collected local and national archival documentation on them. Canterbury, which we also visited, has ceased since Henry VIII's time to be a pilgrimage center in the formal sense, but the streams of English visitors and foreign tourists (and many of them are "closet" pilgrims) who visit Canterbury Cathedral mainly to gaze on the reputed spot of St. Thomas à Becket's martyrdom, attest to the hardihood of the pilgrim spirit. As we hinted earlier, a tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist. Even when people bury themselves in anonymous crowds on beaches, they are seeking an almost sacred, often symbolic, mode of communitas, generally unavailable to them in the structured life of the office, the shop floor, or the mine. Even when intellectuals, Thoreau-like, seek the wilderness in personal solitude, they are seeking the material multiplicity of nature, a life source. Perhaps, like Walsingham and Glastonbury, the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury, center of the Anglican ecclesiastical structure, will experience a revival of its traditional pilgrimage, with processions, candles, and religious services devoted to the martyred cleric. No doubt there would have to be major changes in the relations between church and state, and between the Anglican and Roman confessions, before tourists could shed their current guise and present themselves as pilgrims; but the fact that both Roman Catholics and Anglo-Catholics have reinstated Walsingham and Glastonbury as pilgrim centers (and even timidly participate in joint processions on occasions at Walsingham) may be a straw in the ecumenical wind.

In addition to the British examples cited here, mention will be made of medieval pilgrimages on the continent of Europe, preceding or coeval with our British examples. Similarities and differences of history and structure can thus be the better revealed.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF PILGRIMAGE

Our field research on pilgrimages in Mexico has produced useful comparative material. In Latin America we have the spectacle of a Christianity introduced by missionaries from a Church already under attack, in its European base, by Luther and his Protestant successors. Such missionaries often seem to have regarded the New World as a *tabula rasa* on which to inscribe the pure forms of the faith. Yet their own local traditions, from the provinces of Spain and Portugal, combined with indigenous Amerindian customs and beliefs to generate a fascinating set of new syncretic variations on metropolitan Catholicism. Among the variations were the pilgrimage systems. These exhibited both continuity with the pre-Columbian past (notably in the *communitas* of the assembled pilgrims) and discontinuity (in their theological and cosmological paradigms). The potent indigenous tincture of many Latin-American pilgrimages relates them to European archaic pilgrimages, though examples of both medieval and modern pilgrimages may also be found in the Iberian New World. Here we should mention that when pilgrimages of all types coexist in the same religious field (in this case Catholic Christendom), each type influences all the others, so that a single pilgrimage system comes to absorb "prototypical," "archaic," "medieval," and "modern" features, with variable dominance at different points in time. Examples of this process will be given in subsequent chapters. Nevertheless, throughout its development, each pilgrimage continues to maintain a subsystem of beliefs and symbols derived from its historical origin; this subsystem within the wider system of all subsequent paradigmatic accretions can be described as the "nuclear paradigm" and exerts selective pressure on all subsequent borrowings. Glastonbury offers a case in point. From its early medieval beginnings, this pilgrimage has always had a broad penumbra of Celtic pagan and other pre-Christian associations, some of them figuring as important parts of the Arthurian and Grail legends. Even today, these associations continue to resonate—for example, in the countercultural pilgrimages which link the ruins of Glastonbury with adjacent prehistoric sites

and regard the whole complex as a cosmological schema laid out either by the lost Atlanteans or by extraterrestrial "Saucerians," to whom are also attributed the megalithic structures of Stonehenge and Avebury. Some will doubt the propriety of extending the notion of a pilgrimage system to embrace the entire complex of behavior focused on the sacred shrine. But we insist, as anthropologists, that we must regard the pilgrimage system, whenever the data permit us so to do, as comprising all the interactions and transactions, formal or informal, institutionalized or improvised, sacred or profane, orthodox or eccentric, which owe their existence to the pilgrimage itself. We are dealing with something analogous to an organism-environment field: here the "organism" comprises all the sacred aspects of the pilgrimage, its religious goals, personnel, relationships, rituals, values and value-orientations, rules and customs; while the "environment" is the network of mundane "servicing mechanisms"—markets, hospices, hospitals, military supports, legal devices (such as passports), 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.

A fully mature pilgrimage system, or "field," is comparable to a series of overlapping, interpenetrating ellipses whose common area of overlap has the shrine at its center. Each of these ellipses constitutes a pilgrimage route, or "way," with its own sociogeographical surrounds. Indeed, even when pilgrims return by the way they came, the total journey may still be represented, not unfittingly, by an ellipse, if psychological factors are taken into account. For the return road is, psychologically, different from the approach road. When the pilgrim advances toward his ultimate sacred goal, he tends to stop at every major way station, there to do penance, pay his devotion, and prepare for the holy climax at the central shrine. When he returns, so travelers' accounts repeatedly inform us, his aim is to reach home as swiftly as he can, and his attitude is now that of a tourist rather than a devotee. He has sloughed off his structural sins; now he can relax and enjoy himself, while looking

forward to a warm and admiring welcome at home. The road is thus two roads; the apt metaphor is an ellipse, not a straight line.

Near the central shrine the ingoing routes become evermore beset with way stations (lesser shrines, chapels, holy wells, and the like), and the pilgrims' progress becomes correspondingly slower as they advance. These sacred valves and resistances are designed to build up a considerable load of reverent feeling, so that the final ingress to the holiest shrine of all will be for each pilgrim a momentous matter. In the older centers the inmost shrine is immediately surrounded by a complex of sacred places and objects, which must often be visited in a fixed order, in some cases after the climactic visit to the central shrine. It is the task of the anthropologist to discriminate the structure of this sacred complex, and to relate its labyrinthine ways to the progress of the pilgrim toward his devotional goal.

Pilgrimages, as we have noted, have several time dimensions, too. It is therefore necessary to delineate the diachronic profile of each pilgrimage, and to relate its consecutive phases to the larger histories by which it is encompassed. Every pilgrimage has a local and a regional history; responds more or less sensitively to a national history; and, especially in the case of the most important pilgrimages, is shaped and colored by international, even world history. We shall find echoes of world events in several of our British pilgrimages, for example.

Like all sustained mass movements, pilgrimages tend to accrete rich superstructures of legend, myth, folklore, and literature. Legend may be defined as the corpus of written accounts of the marvels and miracles connected with the genesis and development of a pilgrimage system; myth, as the systematic oral tradition concerning these events; and folklore, as the assemblage of unsystematized (and often locally idiosyncratic) tales and yarns about happenings of an unusual sort along the pilgrimage way and about its saints. Finally, most of the greater pilgrimages have become seedbeds of the literature of "high culture." Everyone knows of the writings of Chaucer, Tennyson, T.S. Eliot, and Jean Anouilh, to cite but a few, having direct relevance to the origin and institu-

tionalization of the Canterbury pilgrimage. Similarly, the development of the Arthurian legend has seldom wandered far from its legendary homeland of Avalon, the cradle of the Glastonbury pilgrimage. Shane Leslie (1932) has listed a long line of literary references to St. Patrick's Purgatory—a line which includes Marie de France, Roger of Wendover, and Matthew Paris—and has further claimed (perhaps not altogether convincingly) that both Dante and Shakespeare, among the very great, were aware of St. Patrick's Purgatory. To these authors must be added the Spanish dramatist Calderón de la Barca, who wrote a play entitled *Purgatorio de San Patricio*; and the poet Ariosto in Italy. The French chronicler Froissart mentioned the grim island cave, while even the English printer Caxton noted it, however skeptically. Walsingham is less well endowed with literary tributes; yet its legend is enshrined in a fifteenth-century ballad printed by Richard Pynson; frequent mention is made of the pilgrimage in the Paston Letters (see below, chapter 5); and the brutal destruction of the shrine in the reign of Henry VIII is lamented in an elegy by Philip Howard, earl of Arundel. Few books have been written on Knock; however, a popular literature of tracts, plays, and verse—pioneered by four volumes on the shrine's history and personalities, by William J. Coyne (1935, 1948, 1953, 1957), founder of the influential Knock Shrine Society, and once a militant Irish rebel against England—has flowed in a steady stream for several decades. Since 1938, the *Knock Shrine Annual*, a record of important events at the shrine, sermons preached there, and articles by leading Catholic writers on the meaning of the pilgrimage, has appeared regularly. Our experience has shown that most major pilgrimage centers have become foci and sources of popular devotional literature, a copious source of data for the cultural anthropologist interested in myth and ritual. Often we have good historical records as well of events relating to the shrines. Light may be shed on the mythopoetic process by our comparing these records with the legends, myths, and literary compositions—products of both "folk" and "high" cultures, often transformations of one another—which have evolved in successive historical epochs. Legends and myths to account for a pilgrimage sometimes arise quite late in its history. Discrepancies among these accounts sometimes reveal the social

tensions and cultural anomalies in changing pilgrimage fields. For most pilgrimages, tales of miracles abound, comparative analysis of which illuminates regional and national differences in culture, as well as changes in the temper of the times. Legends cluster round a pilgrimage's ending, too, as in the cases of Canterbury and Walsingham, which terminated in a burst of political and theological polemics. One advantage of studying a long-term sociocultural process such as pilgrimage is that one's attention is directed toward the dynamics of ideological change and persistence, rather than committed to analysis of static ideological patterns and cognitive structures.

While it may be useful to apply to pilgrimage systems the concept of organism-environment fields in space-time, it must not be forgotten that each pilgrimage has its own entelechy, its own immanent force controlling and directing development. A phased process can usually be traced, where the data is adequate. A pilgrimage's foundation is typically marked by visions, miracles, or martyrdoms. The first pilgrims tend to arrive haphazardly, individually, and intermittently, though in great numbers, "voting with their feet"; their devotion is fresh and spontaneous. Later, there is progressive routinization and institutionalization of the sacred journey. Pilgrims now tend to come in organized groups, in sodalities, confraternities, and parish associations, on specified feast days, or in accordance with a carefully planned calendar. Marketing facilities spring up close to the shrine and along the way. Secularized fiestas and fairs thrive near these. A whole elaborate system of licenses, permits, and ordinances, governing mercantile transactions, pilgrims' lodgings, and the conduct of fairs, develops as the number of pilgrims grows and their needs and wants proliferate. In the sacred domain, special prayers, novenas, litanies, rosaries, and other modes of devotion to the pilgrimage saint, Jesus, or Mary, multiply. The pilgrims' Mass itself is often the climax of an escalating series of devotions held at ancillary way stations and subordinate intrabasilican shrines. To cater for the fired-up pilgrim's spiritual needs, the merchants of holy wares set up booths in the market, where they sell devotional statuettes and pictures, rosaries, missals, sacred tracts, and a variety of other sacramental objects and edify-

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ing literature. In major population centers today some travel agencies have as their sole function the organization of pilgrimage itineraries and the chartering of aircraft, boats, omnibuses, and trains to convey pilgrims to distant destinations. Even in the medieval period, as the narratives of Fra Felix Fabri and Canon Pietro Casola bear witness, it was customary for pilgrims to travel in organized parties on shipboard and in caravans. The Church absorbed pilgrimages into its system of salvation, and absolved grave sinners if only they would visit a distant holy shrine. Kings and great lords developed the taste for pilgrimage, and rode the pilgrims' way with great entourages. The arterial pilgrim routes became conduits of cultural transmission. Some scholars have held that the great roads extending from Germany and the Low Countries through France to Santiago de Compostela in Northern Spain did more to spread knowledge and appreciation of the Romanesque style of architecture than any other mode of communication.

It is our intent to trace these developments from vision to routinization, from antistructure through counterstructure to structure, in their several discernible dimensions (compare V. Turner 1974a:275-94). It is clear, for example, that the style of social interconnectedness changes as pilgrimage systems become more elaborate. Numbers bring diversification of functions, and the coordination of diverse functions brings bureaucracy and centralized control. Faith is often manipulated for political and economic ends. Nevertheless, it can also be shown that even amidst the materialism of declining pilgrimage systems—of the kind that Erasmus condemned at Canterbury and Walsingham (it is worth noting that he thereby helped prepare the way for Henry VIII's suppression of these and many other centers)—something of the original ardor and *communitas* persists, a thin trickle of popular devotion. Moreover, pilgrimages have been known to revive after a period of decline. It is rare indeed for a long-established pilgrimage to die out completely, unless it has fallen victim to sustained and merciless deracination. The histories of many pilgrimage systems provide evidence for this. The shrine of St. Anne de Beaupré in Canada (Leclerc 1907:539-40), for example, was the focus of a pilgrimage that made slow progress from its origins in the late seventeenth

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century until 1875, when it developed astonishingly in keeping with the late post-Tridentine trend mentioned above. Another case is the pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Bonaria, in Cagliari, the capital and chief seaport of the island of Sardinia. This pilgrimage, which thrived in the High Middle Ages, declined during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but has recently revived quite significantly (Gillett 1952:205-11). Even extinguished pilgrimages may revive; there are evident signs that Walsingham and Canterbury, for instance, are about to flourish once more (Stephenson 1970:247; Henderson 1967).

Another dimension of change is in the nature and style of the symbolic forms prevailing in each period: ecclesiastical architecture, sculpture, paintings, abstract ornamentation, stained glass, and music, as well as the folk symbolism of dress, gesture, object, site, song, and dance, often associated with pre-Christian beliefs and practices. Pilgrimages are like cultural magnets, attracting symbols of many kinds, both verbal and nonverbal, multivocal and univocal. One of our aims here is to explore the changing symbolic systems associated with pilgrimage systems, and to examine their influence upon pilgrims individually and collectively. Here the study of personal documents such as the journals, diaries, and published narratives of pilgrims can be illuminating, if they are read in connection with the theological, pastoral, and liturgical literature of the period. Because the British data are very uneven, we have drawn on the rich resources of Irish, Continental European, and New World Catholic pilgrimage data to illustrate our argument. At some points we have utilized data from the pilgrimage systems of other historical religions, for there are striking similarities in pilgrimage processes and structures in all the world religions. As pilgrimages attract greater numbers and fall increasingly under ecclesiastical sway, ceremonial symbols multiply and are elaborated. The stream of social *communitas*, choked by the symbols arrayed in the ceremonial structures of the church, becomes, in some cases, a mere trickle of mobile "antistructure." Pilgrimages that develop to this point experience their major crisis, since critics are not slow to point out the disparity between their original and latter-day conditions. If such critics become iconoclastic, for whatever reason, and

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manage to enlist adequate political support, the result will be destruction of the symbolic complex and of the pilgrimage in its present shape. If the critics aim at reform rather than destruction, however, there may ensue both a social reorganization of the wardenship of the shrine and a purification of its system of worship, veneration, and devotion. Muhammad's reform of the pre-Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca is a non-Christian case in point. We shall discuss Christian instances in some detail later. Any religious system which commits itself to the large-scale employment of nonverbal symbolic vehicles for conveying its message to the masses runs the risk that these vehicles will become endowed by believers with magical efficacy. And if these signifiers represent persons, they may become objects of idolatry, rather than of veneration. Indeed, much catechizing and homiletic is directed against the popular tendency to take symbols literally rather than metaphorically. Taken literally, symbols cease to mediate between the orders of being they are intended to conjoin. Symbol-vehicles which are viewed materialistically, in terms of self-serving interests, become increasingly opaque. Where they should be lenses bringing into focus the doctrines of the faith, they become blinders hindering the understanding. They themselves are felt to possess the powers to which they only point, and which are not man's to bestow. For their worshipers they become instruments by which to obtain material goals: they cease to be aids to salvation *from* the material order. Paradoxically, iconoclasm seems themselves to share a belief in the literal efficacy of symbol-vehicles, for why else would they rage so violently to destroy these visible objects? It is the reformers within a church who wish to retain iconicity while condemning iconolatry, though they are not averse to using the pruning hook whenever the growth of symbols has become overluxuriant. But, being intellectuals, their use of the pruning hook sometimes lays low symbol-vehicles which have become important objects of popular devotion, even of thoroughly orthodox devotion. In the eyes of the simple faithful, such intellectual reformers may seem no better than iconoclasts. Some thinkers have argued that the process of selection should be left to the popular judgment, to the collective taste, which bestows its favor now on one symbol-vehicle, now on another. This

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would be a cultural selection akin to natural selection. Many a pilgrimage center is littered with the images and icons of abandoned saints, while in a favored side-chapel or niche of the shrine candles blaze before the statue of some newly popular beatus. It is hard, however, to decide *a priori* in individual cases whether the multiplication of symbol-vehicles is by arbitrary ecclesiastical fiat or in response to popular demand. Patently both processes make their contribution: permission from a superior in the hierarchy must be granted before a popular new symbol-vehicle may be installed; while an enthusiastic bishop or priest may insist on establishing a devotion which exemplifies the latest theological ideas. This is why it is necessary to undertake, on a comparative basis, a series of intensive studies of various pilgrimage systems in order to determine, in each case, which process is paramount at a given phase of development. The answers may well prove to be important. One mark of a pilgrimage's decline may be an increase in externally imposed ceremonial symbols, while a major symptom of normal growth may be the proliferation of devotional symbols donated by ordinary pilgrims. Our observations of pilgrimage centers in Mexico and Britain suggest that this is indeed the case. Here those who are concerned with church renewal should proceed carefully, for their pruning may hack away the very roots of religious devotion, rather than the dead wood they are intending to destroy.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS

Finally, we shall consider the relationship between the entelechy of a specific pilgrimage and the major sociocultural changes in the environment. For the development of a pilgrimage may be accelerated or retarded by the intellectual and political climate. Just on the point of flourishing, for example, a pilgrimage may be denounced and destroyed by representatives of church or state, or even by revolutionary groups who see it as an organ of church or state. Pilgrimage systems are peculiarly vulnerable in that they do not have their own means to defend themselves by force. But they have one immense advantage: unless a pilgrimage center is systematically discredited and destroyed, the believing masses will continue to make

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their way to the shrine. Mexico provides many examples of the pervasiveness of pilgrims in the teeth of antireligious governmental pressures. Some call this inertia, others faith, but the fact remains that on the great feast days pilgrimage centers have never been so crowded as today. Thus, a popular pilgrimage, supported by a range of homeostatic institutions, both formal and customary, may long resist the countervailing tendencies of an unpropitious environment. Something in the human condition, particularly as it is exemplified in the poor, responds to the root paradigms which nest within one another in any great pilgrimage. Regardless of the progress of the division of labor, the nature and degree of social stratification, the division between urban and rural milieus, and the distribution of wealth and property, human beings are subject to disease and death, and experience guilt as a result of their dealings with one another. From all these ills and sins, pilgrimage systems furnish relief—as well as the increased prospect of ultimate salvation, since the performance of pilgrimage is considered by Catholics to be a supereminently good work. Pilgrimage provides a carefully structured, highly valued route to a liminal world where the ideal is felt to be real, where the tainted social persona may be cleansed and renewed.

It is significant that Calvin, who declared that pilgrimages "aided no man's salvation," believed in predestination and shared the general Protestant emphasis on faith rather than good works as the key to salvation. The orthodox Catholic view, of course, has always been that no one can be sure of salvation until the very last gasp: on the one hand, the believer is plied with graces by God; on the other, he continually exerts his free will by accepting or rejecting them. Faith without good works is regarded as useless. Good works are performed in response to graces—the initiatives of God, who desires the salvation of all. Good works are defined as the "observance of the precepts and counsels." "Precepts" are rules of life and conduct necessary for all who wish to obtain salvation. The Ten Commandments are examples of such rules. "Counsels" are rules of life and conduct for those who, not satisfied with the bare minimum, aim at greater moral perfection by means of good works not commanded but commended—for example, abstinence from lawful

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pleasures. Observance of the counsels is held to be meritorious only if done out of a desire for salvation, rather than out of a wish to be highly regarded by one's fellow men. Protestantism, which professes justification by faith alone, naturally ignores the distinction between precepts and counsels. For Catholics, going on pilgrimage is a good work in response to a counsel. We mention this peculiarly Christian instance of theological infighting merely to emphasize that pilgrimage, though having initiatory features, is not, strictly speaking, an initiation rite (that is, "an irreversible, singular ritual instrument for effecting a permanent, visible cultural transformation of the subject"). Pilgrimages resemble private devotions—like those to the Sacred Heart of Jesus or the Immaculate Heart of Mary—in their voluntary character, but differ from them in their public effect. The decision to go on pilgrimage takes place within the individual but brings him into fellowship with like-minded souls, both on the way and at the shrine. The social dimension is generated by the individual's choice, multiplied many times. On pilgrimage, social interaction is not governed by the old rules of social structure. When a pilgrimage system becomes established, however, it operates like other social institutions. The social takes precedence over the individual at all levels. Organized parties make the journey; devotions at the shrine are collective and according to the schedule. But pilgrimage is an individual good work, not a social enterprise. Pilgrimage, ideally, is charismatic, in the sense that pilgrim's decision to make it is a response to a charism, a grace, while at the same time he receives grace as he makes his devotions.

For this reason, orthodoxy in many religions tends to be ambivalent toward pilgrimage. The apparent capriciousness with which people make up their minds to visit a shrine, the rich symbolism and communitas quality of pilgrimage systems, the peripheral character of pilgrimage vis-à-vis the ritual or liturgical system as a whole, all make it suspect. Pilgrimage is too democratic, not sufficiently hierarchical. In Catholic Christianity the sacramental system does have something of the irreversible character of tribal rites of passage, giving direction to social and personal life, and coordinating sacred and secular processes. Baptism, confirmation,

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ordination to the priesthood, all are irreversible, once-only rites of passage, which are declared dogmatically to "imprint an indelible character on the soul." It is significant that the sacraments most closely associated with pilgrimage are the Eucharist and penance. Neither of these is a rite of passage, and both are indefinitely repeatable. These sacraments in one aspect form an admirable system of instruments of social control. This is not true of pilgrimages, at least in their early stages. As we shall see when considering historical cases, there is something inveterately populist, anarchical, even anticlerical, about pilgrimages in their very essence. They have at times been linked with popular nationalism, with peasant and anticolonial revolt, and with popular millenarianism. They tend to arise spontaneously, on the report that some miracle or apparition has occurred at a particular place, not always a place previously consecrated. Pilgrimages are an expression of the *communitas* dimension of any society, the spontaneity of interrelatedness, the spirit which bloweth where it listeth. From the point of view of those who control and maintain the social structure, all manifestations of *communitas*, sacred or profane, are potentially subversive. We shall see, in this connection, how religious specialists have attempted to domesticate the primitive, spontaneous modes of peregrination, with their freedom of *communitas*, into orderly pilgrimage, more susceptible to ecclesiastical control. Their model is the structured ritual system. Individual Catholic pilgrimages have in the course of time been transformed into extended and protracted forms of such sacraments as penance and the Eucharist. Their voluntaristic, even miraculous, essence has been subjugated to doctrinal and organizational edict. Their charism has been routinized; their *communitas*, structured. Nevertheless, like Etna, old pilgrimages are apt to revive unexpectedly; and new ones erupt like so many Parícutíns—indeed, miracles attributed to the crucifix rescued from Parícutín village in Mexico have made of its present refuge, the church in San Juan near Uruápan in Michoacán state, a new pilgrimage center!

There is no simple answer to the question of how pilgrimages begin. Some pilgrimages indeed have no traceable ultimate origin, but are known to antedate the historical religions with which they

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are currently associated. Other pilgrimage centers exist today which have been superimposed on known older centers, like scions on a stock. This is true not only for the Mexican Catholic shrines of Guadalupe, Ocotlán, Chalma, and Ízamal, pilgrimage sites, but also for such world-renowned centers as Mecca, Islam's "navel of the world" (which was a pilgrim shrine long before Muhammad), and Jerusalem, frequented by Jewish pilgrims long before the birth of Christ. Wherever *communitas* has manifested itself often and on a large scale the possibility of its revival exists, even when linked to a different religious system. Recognition of this fact perhaps underlies Gregory the Great's injunction, via the monk Mellitus, to St. Augustine of Canterbury, missionary to the Anglo-Saxons—to tolerate those pagan practices which were not directly repugnant to Christian notions of morality, and to attach them to some feature of Christian belief or practice. To this letter may be owed the preservation of many wells held sacred to pre-Christian deities, wells which were later incorporated into the shrine-complex of local Christian saints. Such a practice of incorporation is referred to colloquially as "baptizing the customs" (this practice will be discussed more fully in chapter 2, in connection with Mexican pilgrimage).

However, the oldest pilgrim centers of the historical religions are generally places mentioned in sacred narratives as connected with the birth, mission, and death of the founder and his closest kin and disciples. In Hinduism, pilgrim shrines are associated with the cults of deities. The sacred narratives are paradigms of the salvific process. They concern the relationship between the timeless message of the founder, whose words and works show how to obtain release from time's suffering or how to use it to one's eternal advantage, and the concrete circumstances of time and place. Believers in the message seek to imitate or to unite with the founder by replicating his actions, either literally or in spirit. Pilgrimage is one way, perhaps the most literal, of imitating the religious founder. By visiting the sites believed to be the scenes of his life and teaching mission, the pilgrim in imagination relives those events. As we have noted above, pilgrimage may be thought of as extroverted mysticism, just as mysticism is introverted pilgrimage. The pilgrim physically traverses a mystical way; the mystic sets forth on an inte-

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rior spiritual pilgrimage. For the former, concreteness and historicity dominate; for the latter, a phased interior process leads to a goal beyond conceptualization. Both pilgrimage and mysticism escape the nets of social structure, and both have at various times been under attack by religious authorities. Pilgrimage has its inwardness, as anyone who has observed pilgrims before a shrine can attest; while mysticism has its outwardness, as evidenced by the energetic, practical lives of famous mystics such as St. Theresa of Ávila, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, St. Catherine of Siena, William Law, al-Ghazali, and Mahatma Gandhi.

In the early stages of a religion's development, the prototypical shrines tend to predominate. Later, the places where saints and martyrs lived and died may become pilgrim shrines. Later still, places where visions, or apparitions, of the founder and those close to him—or of some manifestation of God or divine power—presented themselves to a believer, may become pilgrim shrines. All these types of shrines provide evidence for the faithful that their religion is still instinct with supernatural power and grace; that it has objective efficacy derived from the founder's god or gods and transmitted by means of miracles, wonders, and signs through saints, martyrs, and holy men, often through the medium of their relics.

SUMMARY

Pilgrimage, then, has some of the attributes of liminality in passage rites: release from mundane structure; homogenization of status; simplicity of dress and behavior; communitas; ordeal; reflection on the meaning of basic religious and cultural values; ritualized enactment of correspondences between religious paradigms and shared human experiences; emergence of the integral person from multiple personae; movement from a mundane center to a sacred periphery which suddenly, transiently, becomes central for the individual, an *axis mundi* of his faith; movement itself, a symbol of communitas, which changes with time, as against stasis, which represents structure; individuality posed against the institutionalized milieu; and so forth. But since it is voluntary, not an

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obligatory social mechanism to mark the transition of an individual or group from one state or status to another within the mundane sphere, pilgrimage is perhaps best thought of as "liminoid" or "quasi-liminal," rather than "liminal" in Van Gennep's full sense.

Tribal rites know nothing of modern distinctions between "work" and "play" or "work" and "leisure"; episodes of joking, trickery, fantasy, and festivity mark the rituals of tribal societies. Yet within tribal societies ritual activities are themselves clearly considered to be a form of "work" and are thus described by any modern preliterate societies, as in the Tikopia's "work of the gods," quite as necessary to the group's welfare as subsistence activities and the judicial process. The ludic (as in Huizinga's term, 1950), or play, aspects, as well as the most solemn aspects of ritual, are most vividly represented in liminality—for example, in the masked dancing, with clowns of various kinds, in the riddles, joking speech, rites of reversal, and practical joking, found in puberty initiations, side by side with the telling of myths about the sometimes obscene and often tricky behavior of deities and founding ancestors. Now, in postindustrial societies, the spheres of work and leisure are sharply divided by the clock but, at least in the cities, have little to do directly with the seasonal cycle—being determined instead by the rational organization of industrial production, mainly mass production, in factories (V. Turner 1974b:67-70). Religion generally has been moved into the leisure sphere, more and more subject to individual option ("a person's free time is his to do as he likes with"). Even weekly attendance at religious services is becoming increasingly voluntary; failure to attend is no longer a sin. Games, sports, pastimes, hobbies, tourism, entertainment, the mass media, compete to fill the leisure sphere. On the other hand, work, perhaps originally under the influence of the Protestant ethic, has itself become rationalized, highly serious, almost ascetic in its regulation of productive time, like canonical hours in a monastery, and has been totally segregated from religion. But leisure activities have been so influenced by the prestige of work that many of them are pursued with the same solemnity as work and demand at least an equal outlay of attention. Even leisure has become professionalized, and some pastimes require more technical skill and know-how than

many jobs. Thus, under the influence of the division between work-time and leisure-time, religion has become less serious but more solemn: less serious because it belongs to the leisure sphere in a culture dominated by the high value set on material productivity, and more solemn because within that sphere it has become specialized to establish ethical standards and behavior in a social milieu characterized by multiple options, continuous change, and large-scale secularization.

The history of pilgrimage illustrates this progress from the "ludic" liminal to the "ergic" liminoid (V. Turner 1974b:83). The great medieval pilgrimages, in Islam as in Christianity, were usually associated with great fairs and fiestas as indeed they are in Shinto Japan. For example, in his article "Ḥadjj" (hajj) in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, A. J. Wensinck (1966:32) writes: "Great fairs were from early times associated with the ḥadjj, which was celebrated on the conclusion of the date-harvest. These fairs were probably the main thing to Muḥammad's contemporaries, as they still are to many Muslims."

The Christian medieval fairs at such pilgrim centers as Chartres, Zaragoza, and Cologne on important feast days of Jesus, Mary, or major saints have their present-day successors in Latin America. We have seen almost at the portal of the church of Naucalpan (on the outskirts of Mexico City), where the venerable image of Our Lady of the Remedies is kept, troupes of brightly feathered Conchero dancers mime fights between Aztec warriors and French troops, while a skull-headed Death clown wildly for the amusement of pilgrims. Fifty yards farther on, a full-blown fair was taking place, with ferris wheels, shooting galleries, and bumper cars, beside peddlers selling a wide range of goods. In describing the northern Brazilian pilgrimage to the shrine of Bom Jesus da Lapa in Bahia, Daniel E. Gross (1971:132-34) has given us a vivid picture of the juxtaposition of worship and commerce:

[Lapa is a] raw river town whose chief *raison d'être* is the annual flow of thousands of pilgrims to its religious shrine. . . . As the major festival of August 6 (which is, incidentally, the Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ) draws near, more and more vendors from outside Lapa arrive and set up stands selling a

great variety of wares. Some of these depend on the local trinket distributors, but others bring a large part of their merchandise, including a few items of artisanry such as saddles, leather hats and vests, hammocks, horse-blankets, spurs, and innumerable items fashioned from tin cans. . . . I used to count the numbers of stands on my way down a single street about one-half km. in length. On June 20, 1966, there were only five temporary stands set up on this particular street. By July 11, there were 43; a week later 78 had appeared, and by the end of July, 187. On August 5, the day before the procession, 346 vending stands could be counted along the same street, which became choked with pilgrims admiring the wares.

Gross also mentions that cabarets and bars thrive in the pilgrimage season.

Pilgrimage devotion, the market, and the fair are all connected with voluntary, contractual activities (the religious promise, the striking of a bargain, the penny ride on the merry-go-round), and with a measure of joyful, "ludic" communitas (see V. Turner 1974a:221-23). This extends even to the religious activities proper, for comradeship is a feature of pilgrimage travel. Chaucer noticed this aspect six centuries ago, and we have experienced it personally as members of pilgrim groups in Yucatán, Ireland, Rome, and Lourdes. Those who journey to play together also play together in the secular interludes between religious activities; sightseeing to places of secular interest is one common form of "play" associated with pilgrimage. Anthropologists have learned that it is necessary to study the total field of a great ceremony, the nonritualized factors surrounding it, as well as the liturgical or symbolic action. If one applies this method to the study of pilgrimage, one finds that play and solemnity are equally present. Indeed, it is the ludic component which excited the wrath of many Christian critics of pilgrimage and perhaps prepared the way for the virtual abolition of pilgrimage in Protestant lands. One has only to name William Langland, John Wycliffe, Erasmus, Hugh Latimer (bishop of Worcester in Henry VIII's time), and John Calvin, among the host of detractors (see below, chapter 4).

Today, pilgrimages, like so many other leisure-time activities, have been organized, bureaucratized, and subjected to the influ-

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ence of the modern forms of mass transportation and communication, mediated by full-time travel agencies. On the whole, they have become more solemn in tone, especially in the Western European lands, where once they combined devotion with pastime and mirth. However, recent changes in the Christian outlook have aimed to transform pilgrimage by encouraging more informal dress, sermons with contemporary themes, and a relaxed atmosphere outside the precincts of the shrine.

One fact is certain and striking. The numbers of pilgrims at the world's major shrines are still increasing. That this phenomenon is not due merely to tourism can easily be seen in the voluminous literature published in connection with pilgrimage centers (Lourdes, Guadalupe, and Knock come immediately to mind as Christian examples).³ The papers, journals, and annuals of these centers abound with devout articles, fervent religious poetry, and news about visits to the shrine by organized pilgrimages and celebrities of church and state. Sermons delivered on feast days at the shrine by famous preachers and bishops are printed verbatim. There are lively correspondence columns on questions of doctrine and on the social role of the Church. Despite obvious resemblances and historical connections between archaic, medieval, and modern pilgrimages, we would argue that there is a significant difference between pilgrimages taken after the industrial Revolution and all previous types. In the scientific and technological age, pilgrimage is becoming what Geertz (1972:26) has described as a "metasocial commentary" on the troubles of this epoch of wars and revolutions with its increasing signs of industrial damage to the natural environment. Like certain other liminoid genres of symbolic action elaborated in the leisure time of modern society, pilgrimage has become an implicit critique of the life-style characteristic of the encompassing social structure.

Its emphasis on transcendental, rather than mundane, ends and means; its generation of communitas; its search for the roots of ancient, almost vanishing virtues as the underpinning of social life, even in its structured expressions—all have contributed to the dramatic resurgence of pilgrimage. It is true that bureaucracy has been

³ According to René Laurentin (1973a:145), there are "about a thousand [Christian] sanctuaries which [each] receive a hundred thousand pilgrims a year."

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pressed into the service of pilgrimage, and that comfortable travel has replaced penitential travel. Here, too, the stress has been on the communitas of the pilgrimage center, rather than on the individual's penance on the journey thither. In the earlier periods, pilgrimage still had liminal, even initiatory, aspects. Though it was one of the first forms of symbolic religious action to assign an important role to voluntary action, it was still, especially in its penitential aspect, deeply tinged with obligatoriness. This was because the earlier pilgrimage systems, in all the major religions, were highly consonant with both the social and the religious systems, which in some measure they served to maintain. But in the present age of plural values, increasing specialization of function and role, and potent mass communication (the publication explosion, in particular, has brought the whole of man's past within the range of all literate people, in cheap paperbacks), pilgrimage—with its deep nonrational fellowship before symbols of transmundane beings and powers, with its posing of unity and homogeneity (even among the most diverse cultural groups) against the disunity and heterogeneity of ethnicities, cultures, classes, and professions in the mundane sphere—serves not so much to maintain society's status quo as to recollect, and even to presage, an alternative mode of social being, a world where communitas, rather than a bureaucratic social structure, is preeminent. Thus, out of the mixing and mingling of ideas from many traditions, a respect may grow for the pilgrimages of others. These may be seen as providing live metaphors for human and transhuman truths and salvific ways which all men share and always have shared, had they but known it. Pilgrimages may become ecumenical; and more devotees than the Swami from Madras, whom once we met in Chicago, will become palmiers to the pilgrim shrines of all the great religions.