Journeys and Destinations

Journeys and Destinations:
Studies in Travel, Identity, and Meaning

Edited by

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CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS

P U B L I S H I N G

For Finn and Teddy
One on his journey, one at his destination

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PREFACE

BOTH JOURNEYS AND DESTINATIONS

ALEX NORMAN

The experience of travel intrigues us humans. To journey, to seek out a destination, to look back from afar upon our homelands, upon our people, and upon ourselves, these things have captivated the human imagination, it seems, for as long as we have been able to record our thoughts materially. Probably it is a phenomenon older still. The quickening of the pulse and the catch of the breath as one sees for the first time some magnificent, new vista does not seem a recent addition to the catalogue of human experience. Wonder at something new is, at least for the moment, something innately human. So too our seemingly insatiable quest for knowledge; a quest that is intimately bound with the act of travel. The long course of evolution has arranged that our survival is linked to understanding and knowledge. Often we go places not just to see them, but to know them in some sense, and to know more of the world in which we find ourselves. In the annals of human history our moments of discovery, enlightenment, and innovation have often occurred as a result of, or in order to foster a travel act of one kind or another. Travel is thus one of the key props and devices in the great drama that is humanity.

The journeys human beings undertake leave tracks, and the destinations they seek out are inscribed by the cultures travellers bring with them. These are traceable through the methods of the social sciences and history. Travel, however, is a relative newcomer as a focus of study in these fields. Indeed, traditionally, editors of volumes on the various phenomena encompassed by the term 'travel' (tourism, pilgrimage, backpacking, migration, movement, mobility, and many others) have introduced their work with statements opining the lack of scholarly research into the field. Thankfully this is no longer as necessary as it once was. We have sufficient now to move forward with our analysis of the minutiae of travel phenomena. The various fields of the academy have, in recent decades, contributed a wealth of scholarship on all matters

pertaining to travel. Food, for example, can now provide an insight to the importance of looking at both journeys and destinations. Recent research into the interaction of foodways with travel habits illustrates the extent to which food, religious identity, and travel function as markers of meaning.[1] Travellers moving in such a mode seek out certain foods with which to mark themselves – by way of consuming them – with the signifiers of their social identity. Likewise, food itself can become a part of the identity of a destination, and thereby used in marketing and promotion.[2] For the traveller, a particular food *becomes* the destination, where to arrive is to consume the specific meal. There are many other such examples of components of human lifeways that we might better understand through studying travel habits.

The study of travel has therefore grown to be recognised as a field that not only combines the interests of many areas of research, but has significant implications for our understanding of the world around us. Among those implications are finer understandings of the impacts travel can have; on the host, on the traveller, on those left at home. Victor Turner and Erik Cohen both have been influential in this regard. Turner, along with his wife Edith, argued that the ritual dimension to the pilgrimage/tourist experience could not be overlooked.[3] While the notion of tourism as a formal and ritualised practice in modern, secular Western societies is certainly questionable, Turner's emphasis on the structural unfamiliarity of travel, generally speaking, for most people. continues to have value as a scholarly lens. Similarly, Cohen's phenomenological approach to analysing the mindset of tourists reminds us that humans are prone to remarkable change amid a quest for relative stasis.[4] That so many of the early writers on tourism employed language that orbited the religious – authenticity, sacrality, meaning, identity – points to the importance of travel for the traveller and for the host. In the modern

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[1] Amos S. Ron and Dallen J. Timothy, "The Land of Milk and Honey: Biblical Foods, Heritage and Holy Land Tourism," *Journal of Heritage Tourism* (2013): 1–14.

[2] Yi-Chin Lin, Thomas E. Pearson, and Liping A. Cai, "Food as a Form of Destination Identity: A Tourism Destination Brand Perspective," *Tourism and Hospitality Research* 11, no. 1 (January 2011): 30–48.

[3] Victor Turner, "The Center Out There: Pilgrim's Goal," *History of Religions* 12, no. 3 (1973): 191–230.

[4] Erik Cohen, "A Phenomenology of Tourist Experiences," *Sociology* 13, no. 2 (1979): 179–201.

secular world, it seemed obvious, the religious needed to be replaced.[5] This, however, also points most decidedly to the importance of travel to scholars of humanity. In casting about for words that could communicate the importance of this new field, the early researchers, like so many great explorers, landed upon those with weight and *gravitas* as the only ones suitable to describe the astounding view before them.

As an example, the scholarly use of the term pilgrimage is now close to shedding its stigma as the veiled outlet of the great debate concerning secularisation. Scholars are increasingly recognising that 'pilgrimage' is an emic term employed to convey certain meanings and their journey's location "within a complex of socio-spatial processes that are historically, culturally, and locally dependant."[6] Once scholars sought to prove the religious could be conceptually separated,[7] and thus annexed from the rest of humanity's social processes, by arguing for a sacred-profane dichotomisation of, for example, all travel phenomena. We now understand that the religious and the non-religious intermingle, overlap, and coincide,[8] especially on the road.

As but one example of the increased sophistication of scholarly understanding of travel phenomena, the question of pilgrimage and tourism is useful. However, scholars have also developed a much better understanding of the arguments about the good of tourism, often made by governments,[9] but also sadly by organisations like the World Tourism Organisation, that are in fact part of the rhetoric of vested interest and hierarchy. Marxist theory and postcolonial studies, among others, have helped to shed light on the injustices that tourism may bring to a place or a

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[5] Possibly the greatest of the early studies, in this respect, is Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

[6] Noga Collins-Kreiner, "Researching Pilgrimage: Continuity and Transformations," *Annals of Tourism Research* 37, no. 2 (April 2010): 444.

[7] Steve Bruce, *God Is Dead: Secularization in the West* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 118–139.

[8] See, for example, N. J. Demerath, "The Varieties of Sacred Experience: Finding the Sacred in a Secular Grove," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 39, no. 1 (March 2000): 1–11; or Yves Lambert, "Religion in Modernity as a New Axial Age: Secularization or New Religious Forms?," *Sociology of Religion* 60, no. 3 (1999): 303–333.

[9] For example, Bojan Pancevski, "Get Packing: Brussels Decrees Holidays Are a Human Right," *The Times (UK)*, 18 April 2010, accessed February 20, 2012, http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/europe/article7100943.ece.

people.[10] Very importantly, the environmental impacts and outcomes of the tourism industry have now been made clear through committed research and scholarship.[11] There can be little doubt that from the local to the global, all forms of mechanised travel have what now appear to be disproportionately negative impacts on environments compared to any putative positive social, economic, and political ones. Hopefully further research will help to stimulate investigation into sustainable travel technologies and practices such that they may be promoted in the future.

These developments, and many more, highlight the importance of understanding both destinations and the journeys that take people to them. The project of editing this book was stimulated by the idea that understanding the thinking behind travel acts and habits could enhance our understanding of social facts and processes. It emerged out of a conference co-hosted by the Sydney Society of Literature and Aesthetics and the Department of Studies in Religion at the University of Sydney in October, 2011, titled 'The Philosophies of Travel', convened to bring together scholars working on the paradigms of travel and the various ways travellers think about those same paradigms. These 'philosophies of travel' make vital revelations about the cultures from which travellers emerge. Travel might be initiated for change or as Samuel Johnson argued, to "regulate imagination by reality, and instead of thinking how things may be, to see them as they are." Equally, a journey may take place so as to 'turn back' on things reflectively, or, as Pliny wrote, "to see what we disregard when it is under our own eyes." As it seems many societies have recognised through the millennia of human history, travel may function as education, forging, exploration (both of the worlds of others and of the self), as well as frivolity, hedonism, and colonialism. As such, this book looks at the habits, traditions, and writings of travellers from the past and the present in order to build a picture of what travel is and has been understood to be, for the traveller.

This book uses a variety of methodological lenses. The scholarly contributions herein take travel practices seriously as expressions of culture and society, and of relevance as avenues for understanding the lives of human beings. The examples in this volume also take the idea of travel, and the thinking that surrounds the journeys and destinations examined, as expressions of the meaning of travel. As such it forms a

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[10] For example, Brian King, Abraham Pizam, and Ady Milman, "Social Impacts of Tourism: Host Perceptions," *Annals of Tourism Research* 20, no. 4 (1993): 650–665.

[11] Graham Miller et al., "Public Understanding of Sustainable Tourism," *Annals of Tourism Research* 37, no. 3 (July 2010): 627–645.

unique contribution to the scholarship on tourism through its concentration on the *idea* of journeying and of particular destinations, as opposed analysis of specific types of movement, however they may be conceived.

Such methodological diversity is thanks largely to the authors who volunteered their time to contribute to this book. The chapters included herein cast light on topics as diverse as Emergent Church labyrinths, the travel of Chinese *literati*, and medieval revivals, along with meditation retreats and the notion of art works as travel portals. For this fascinating range of topics I am deeply thankful to all the authors, and especially so for their patience and perseverance in getting the volume ready for publication. In addition to acknowledging the work of the authors, thanks are also due to those who played their parts in the book's creation. The first and greatest of those thanks should go to Annabel Carr who, as co-convenor for the 'Philosophies of Travel' conference, was largely responsible for its success. She has also been a constant source of encouragement for this project and would also have been a co-editor of this volume were it not for the tragic death of her newborn son, Theodore, in 2012. I, like many friends and colleagues, am honoured to remember Theodore and to bear witness to Annabel's remarkable capacity for love, selflessness, and resilience.

Thanks are also due for the 'conference elves' (as they are known in these parts) who helped over the course of the conference event: George Ioannides, Sarah Balstrup, Alexandra Dockrill, Wilna Fourie, Dominique Bromfield (née Wilson), Yvette Debergue and Simon Theobald. A number of my colleagues have also been invaluable for their help; Benjamin E. Zeller, George Chryssides, Douglas Ezzy, Julian Droogan, Adam Possamai, Mabel Lee, Paul Morris, Ulrike Gretzel, Mike Robinson, C. Michael Hall, and Kiran Shinde. Carole M. Cusack and Christopher Hartney have been sources of constant encouragement, and I am also indebted to Carol Koulikourdi at Cambridge Scholars Press for her patience and her invitation to publish this book. As ever, my partner in life, Abi Monaghan, has helped with moral support and critical reading, and with much needed encouragements to spend time on the couch watching *The Office*, and my son Finn deserves thanks for his tactical cuteness.

As for the contents of the book itself; I leave that to you the reader to discover for yourself. Suffice it to say that for those of us engaged in the project of understanding the human condition, travel fascinates. As a collection of human behaviours it demands investigation for the complex of social processes, power relationships, and motivations that surround its examples. Despite its increasing presence as part of the normal, everyday life for millions of people around the world, travel retains the capacity to

delight, to inspire, and to transform. In this volume, I and the other authors are proud to present our contributions, however small, to the understanding of this voice in the human fugue.

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CHAPTER ONE

HISTORY, AUTHENTICITY, AND TOURISM:
ENCOUNTERING THE MEDIEVAL WHILE
WALKING SAINT CUTHBERT'S WAY

CAROLE M. CUSACK

Introduction[1]

This chapter investigates three interlocking discourses that inform the marketing of, and the experience of walking, St Cuthbert's Way: history (particularly the discourses of medievalism), tourism (evoking the religious pilgrimage), and identity (focused on the transformative notion of authenticity). Inaugurated in 1996, St Cuthbert's Way is a sixty-two-mile (one hundred kilometre) heritage trail that connects the picturesque town of Melrose in the Scottish Borders to the 'Holy Island' of Lindisfarne (a tidal island on the Northumbrian coast).[2] The walk is named for Cuthbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne (ca. 634-687CE), who in life and death was peculiarly engaged with religious travel. He became a monk at Melrose in 651CE and throughout his life journeyed extensively in Scotland and the north of England, allegedly founding churches in St Andrews and Edinburgh, among other sites.[3] He was buried on Lindisfarne, and after his death a significant pilgrimage cult grew up around him and his relics. In 875 his body was exhumed by the monks who departed Holy Island due to persistent Vikings raids, and carried to locations as far apart as Melrose,

[2] Roger Noyce, *The Complete Guide to St Cuthbert's Way: Melrose to Holy Island and Holy Island to Melrose* (Wilmslow: Sigma Leisure, 1999), iii-iv.
[3] Roger Smith and Ron Shaw, *St Cuthbert's Way: Official Trail Guide* (Edinburgh: The Stationery Office, 1997), xii-xv.

Whithorn, Ripon, and Chester-le-Street, before he was interred in a splendid tomb in Durham's Norman cathedral in 1104CE.[4] His tomb was a popular place of pilgrimage and devotion until the Reformation, when Catholic shrines and sacred places in the landscape were disestablished or destroyed by Protestants who viewed such phenomena as 'pagan'.[5]

The discourse of medievalism (like other positions focused on an 'other' to Western modernity such as orientalism) posits that the appeal of the medieval is linked to the notion that contemporary life is inauthentic and unsatisfying when compared to the 'authenticity' of the past.[6] This is linked to the contemporary Western desire to be 'spiritual' while remaining outside of formal religion, which has resulted in religious practices such as pilgrimage being disembedded from traditional faith institutions, and becoming intimately imbricated with secular practices like travel, creating 'fusion' phenomena including spiritual tourism.[7] Such practices are part of the quest for an authentic self that is core to contemporary Western spirituality, and which involves material consumption and *bricolage*.[8] This 'spirituality' shares with medievalism the suspicion of Western modernity and secular culture and a yearning for an authentic personal identity. St Cuthbert, a historically significant figure, has been invoked in discussions of the development of English/British 'identity' in the early Middle Ages, and it has also been speculated that through the experience of landscape, modern people can encounter the past and encounter figures such as Cuthbert, and experience them 'authentically'.[9]

This chapter emerged from the experience of walking St Cuthbert's Way with my partner Don Barrett in the early October of 2006. The walking season finished on 30 September, which necessitated that we carry

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[4] John Crook, *The Architectural Setting of the Cult of the Saints in the Early Christian West, c. 300-1200* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 167-168.

[5] Alexandra Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), *passim*.

[6] Hyounggon Kim and Tazim Jamal, "Touristic Quest for Existential Authenticity," *Annals of Tourism Research* 34, no. 1 (2007): 181-201.

[7] Alex Norman, *Spiritual Tourism: Travel and Religious Practice in Western Society* (London and New York: Continuum, 2011).

[8] David Lyon, *Jesus in Disneyland: Religion in Postmodern Times* (Oxford: Polity, 2002), 118.

[9] Clare A. Lees and Gillian R. Overing, "Anglo-Saxon Horizons: Places of the Mind in the Northumbrian Landscape," in *A Place to Believe In: Locating Medieval Landscapes*, eds Clare A. Lees and Gillian R. Overing (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 1-26.

Image 1: The Square in Melrose (image courtesy of Don Barrett)

carry our luggage, rather than use a baggage transfer service. Victor and Edith Turner claimed that "a tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist."[10] St Cuthbert's Way is marketed through strategies of history and heritage, making it more than simply a hike in the countryside or a mode of exercise. Walkers encounter the haunting Anglo-Saxon landscape (in a region of Britain that is sparsely populated and scarcely industrialized, and thus a convincingly medieval topography in the modern world); the trail is bookended by major monastic sites of medieval Christianity, and many smaller, less important churches are visited *en route*. Further, as Sean Slavin has argued, the simple activity of walking along a pilgrimage trail offers the possibility of self-transformation, albeit of a secular kind. He observed that "[t]he practice of walking allowed us to understand and explore a nexus between the body, self and the world."[11] While the lure of the authentically medieval may prove a *chimaera*, in that the route offers a

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[10] Victor and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978).

[11] Sean Slavin, "Walking as Spiritual Practice: The Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela," *Body and Society* 9 (2003): 16.

sequence of carefully constructed sites and spectacles that are more akin to what David Brown terms "genuine fakes,"[12] the process of embodied movement through the landscape may nevertheless provide an authentic mode of self-transformation.

Cuthbert, Medieval Sanctity and Religious Travel

When Cuthbert became a monk at Old Melrose in 651, the Papally-sponsored mission to the Anglo-Saxons led by Bishop Augustine who arrived in 597CE was just passing from living memory. Paganism was in decline and a struggle had developed between the Rome-oriented Anglo-Saxon Church and the Irish Church, which looked to its parent monastery of Iona in the Hebrides and ultimately to Ireland for leadership. The differences between the two Churches involved such matters as the calculation of the date of Easter and the type of tonsure worn by monks. At the 664CE Synod of Whitby, King Oswiu of Northumbria settled the Easter dispute in favour of the Roman party. Cuthbert was educated in the Irish tradition, but after the Synod of Whitby he served as Prior of Lindisfarne under Abbot Eata, during which time Lindisfarne (founded by the Irish Aidan in 635CE) adopted the Roman usage.[13] Cuthbert's sanctity impressed his fellow Christians and around 700CE an anonymous monk of Lindisfarne wrote a *Life of Cuthbert* after the saint had been disinterred in 698CE and found to be physically incorrupt. The Venerable Bede (ca. 672-735), a monk of Jarrow and historian of the Anglo-Saxon church, composed a verse *Life of Cuthbert* in 716, wrote a prose *Life* about five years later, and also wrote about Cuthbert in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*, completed around 731.[14] It is from Bede that Cuthbert's travels during his life are known. His postmortem journeys, as his corpse was carried around the north of England and the south of Scotland by the monks of Lindisfarne after Viking raids caused them to evacuate the monastery, are chronicled in Symeon of Durham's *Libellus de Exordio atque Procursu istius, hoc est Dunelmensis, Ecclesie* ('The Little Book on the Origins and Progress of this Church, That Is Of Durham'), which was written between 1104 and 1107CE. Ælfric of Eynsham (ca. 955-1010) also wrote a life of

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[12] David Brown, "Genuine Fakes," in *The Tourist Image: Myths and Myth-Making in Tourism*, ed. Tom Selwyn (Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, 1996), 33-47.

[13] Frank M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 2nd edition (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1967[1947]), 124-126.

[14] D. H. Farmer, "Introduction," in *The Age of Bede*, ed. D. H. Farmer, trans. J.F. Webb, revised edition (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988), 16.

Cuthbert, testifying to his emergence as a national, rather than a 'regional', saint.[15]

Bede portrays Cuthbert as a pious child, though as a young man he appears to have done military service before entering the monastery. Prior to being tonsured he received a vision of St Aidan being taken into heaven, and was miraculously given food for himself and his horse by God, when journeying at the start of winter. He became a monk of Old Melrose, and a few years later accompanied Abbot Eata to Ripon in North Yorkshire, where a new monastery was founded.[16] Bede's *vita* paints a portrait of Cuthbert as a man in harmony with nature who had a close bond with birds and animals (the common eider ducks found in the Farne Islands are still called 'Cuddy ducks' after Cuthbert). Bede also records an anecdote concerning Cuthbert praying throughout the night, standing up to his neck in the sea.

> At daybreak he came out, knelt down on the sand, and prayed. Then two otters bounded out of the water, stretched themselves out before him, warmed his feet with their breath, and tried to dry him on their fur. They finished, received his blessing, and slipped back to their watery home.[17]

Preaching, pastoral care, and evangelism took Cuthbert considerable distances: he travelled to Coldingham and Lindisfarne on the east coast, to Carlisle in the west, and is believed to have founded churches in Scotland at Dull, St Andrews, and Edinburgh. In his last years as Bishop of Lindisfarne he lived as a hermit on isolated Inner Farne. He died in 687CE and was buried on Lindisfarne. Almost immediately, his tomb became the site of miracle cures and other manifestations of his sanctity.[18]

Eleven years after Cuthbert's death his tomb was opened and his body discovered to be incorrupt. He was re-interred in an above ground sarcophagus in the church on the island, which was tantamount to being unofficially canonized. The see of Lindisfarne prospered through pilgrimage

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[15] Mechthild Gretsch, *Ælfric and the Cult of the Saints in Late Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 65-66.

[16] Bede, "Life of Cuthbert," in Farmer and Webb, *The Age of Bede*, 50-51.

[17] Bede, "Life of Cuthbert," 56.

[18] Rex Gardner notes that "[i]f we exclude the miraculous from his story [Bede's prose *Life of Cuthbert*], of the 46 chapters in his biography we are left with only six (chapters 9, 16, 26, 37, 39, 40)." In R. Gardner, "Miracles of Healing in Anglo-Celtic Northumbria as Recorded by the Venerable Bede and His Contemporaries: A Reappraisal in the Light of Twentieth Century Experience," *British Medical Journal* 287, no. 6409 (1983): 1927.

to the saint's tomb, but on 7 June 793CE the invading Vikings sacked Lindisfarne. Symeon of Durham states:

> They came like stinging hornets, like ravening wolves, they made raids on all sides, slaying not only cattle but priests and monks. They came to the church at Lindisfarne, and laid all waste, trampled the holy places with polluted feet, dug down the altars and bore away the treasure of the church. Some of the brethren they slew, some they carried away captive, some they drove out naked after mocking and vexing them. Some they drowned in the sea.[19]

After this traumatic experience, the first recorded attack by Scandinavian pirates on a Christian site, Viking raids become increasingly frequent and the coastal monasteries of Christendom, including Iona, Wearmouth, Jarrow and Noirmoutier, were the sites of further attacks. At Lindisfarne the monks were relieved to discover that the tomb of their saint had not been violated by the invaders. The damaged buildings were repaired and the community continued, precariously, to occupy the island.[20]

In 875, desperate and vulnerable as Viking dominance of the sea and coastal regions grew, the monks of Lindisfarne exhumed Cuthbert's body and departed the island, beginning a pilgrimage that lasted more than a century. This ended in the re-burial of the saint behind the high altar of Durham Cathedral, approximately seventy miles to the north of Holy Island, in 1070CE. During this period of exile, the monks carried with them major cult items, including the *Lindisfarne Gospels* manuscript.[21] Sites at which the saint's body rested included Whithorn in Dumfriesshire, Chester-le-Street in County Durham, Crayke in North Yorkshire, and Ripon, Cuthbert's residence during his early years as a monk.[22] The importance of Durham as his final resting place emerged in 995CE, after the coffin became bogged and it was intuited that Cuthbert wished to be interred at nearby 'Dunholm'. In 1070 a wattle church was erected and the saint's body ceased its perambulations. Three years later a stone building, the White Church, replaced the temporary church, and in 1104 Cuthbert's

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[19] Symeon of Durham, quoted in M. Scott Weightman, *Holy Island* (Seahouses: Weightman, 1987), 6.
[20] D. J. Hall, *English Medieval Pilgrimage* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), 84.
[21] Rupert Bruce-Mitford, "The Lindisfarne Gospels in the Middle Ages and After," *The British Museum Quarterly* 29, nos 3-4 (1965): 98-100.
[22] Hall, *English Medieval Pilgrimage*, 88.

body was translated to the new, but as yet uncompleted, cathedral of Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary, to lie behind the high altar.[23]

Medievalism and Heritage in the Cult of St Cuthbert

The cult of Cuthbert was, from the beginning, peculiarly rich in material objects connected to the saint. Alan Thacker notes that he was buried in a precious cloth 'given to him by Abbess Verca … [and] interred in a stone sarcophagus given by another high ecclesiastic, Abbot Cudda … A golden fillet adorned the brow of the saint and at his breast hung the famous gold and garnet cross'.[24] Cuthbert's corpse was gorgeously clad in luxurious ecclesiastical attire, and the exhumation and translation of the saint's relics in 698CE was accompanied by the manufacture of a multitude of further cult objects, the most celebrated being the magnificent insular illuminated manuscript, the *Lindisfarne Gospels*. Michelle Brown comments that the colophon added by Aldred, the provost of Chester-le-Street, in 970CE which names "himself, Eadfrith and Aethelwold (both bishops of Lindisfarne) and Billfrith the anchorite as those responsible for constructing the Gospels 'for God and for St Cuthbert' … embodies a well-preserved piece of community folklore" linking the text directly to the saint.[25] Other cult objects, like the small *Stonyhurst Gospel of St John* that was placed in Cuthbert's coffin in 698, were probably gifts to the community on the important occasion of the translation of the relics. Bede states that the monks placed Cuthbert's incorrupt body in a "light chest" (*levis theca*) in 698. John Higgett argues that the oak casket, decorated with incised half-length apostles, which was one of up to four coffins from which fragments were identified in 1827 when the tomb of St Cuthbert in Durham Cathedral was opened, is certainly the original coffin, the "light chest."[26]

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[23] Hall, *English Medieval Pilgrimage*, 89-91.

[24] Alan Thacker, "Lindisfarne and the Origins of the Cult of St Cuthbert," in *St Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to AD 1200*, eds Gerald Bonner, David Rollason and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1989), 105.

[25] Michelle P. Brown, "The Lindisfarne Scriptorium from the Late Seventh to the Early Ninth Centuries," in *St Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to AD 1200*, eds Gerald Bonner, David Rollason and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1989), 152.

[26] John Higgett, "The Iconography of St Peter in Anglo-Saxon England and St Cuthbert's Coffin," in *St Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to AD 1200*, eds Gerald Bonner, David Rollason and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1989), 268-270.

In 934 King Athelstan "presented rich gifts to St Cuthbert, among which a stole and maniple are expressly inventoried."[27] These beautiful and rare medieval embroideries have survived to the twenty-first century, as have Cuthbert's pectoral cross, portable altar, the *Stonyhurst Gospels*, the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, and finally the carved coffin, which John Crook interpreted as a British adaptation of "fashions in Merovingian Francia" regarding the veneration of saints.[28] Until Henry VIII instigated the English Reformation in the 1530s the shrine of St Cuthbert attracted a constant stream of pilgrims. Between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries the medieval Catholic pilgrimage to Durham was interrupted. However, in the early nineteenth century a combination of factors, including the Romantic movement's interest in both picturesque medieval ruins (whether genuine or reconstructed) and the exotic Catholicism they evoked, and the Enlightenment values of freedom that facilitated the removal of religious discrimination in the form of legislation such as the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, resulted in a revival of Catholic devotional practices in both the high Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church.[29]

The second half of the nineteenth century in England was a time of accelerated change, which was characterised by the retreat of institutional Christianity, the development of new religious options (such as Spiritualism, founded by the Fox sisters in America in the 1850s and the Theosophical Society, founded in New York in 1875 by Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott), and the growth of individualism and consumer capitalism as factors in the formation of the modern lifestyle. Increased affluence also manifested a Romantic dimension, considered in the light of consumer culture. Colin Campbell has argued that the origins of modern consumerism lie in Romanticism, in that the imagination fuels a cycle of desire and acquisition that "never actually closes."[30] This cycle of desire and acquisition applies equally to experiences (of the past, of nature, of exotic cultures, of culinary or sensual treats) as it does to objects pure and simple. The emergent secularity of the nineteenth century West also facilitated the complex ways in which travel could be used to construct personal meaning and identity. In the Victorian era, historical

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[27] G. Baldwin Brown and Mrs Archibald Christie, "S. Cuthbert's Stole and Maniple in Durham," *The Burlington Magazine* 23, no. 121 (1913): 3.

[28] Crook, *The Architectural Setting of the Cult of the Saints*, 169.

[29] Mary Heimann, *Catholic Devotion in Victorian England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 1-37.

[30] Colin Campbell, *The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Modern Consumerism* (York: Alcuin Academic, 2005), 38.

pilgrimage routes in the United Kingdom in addition to landscapes of great beauty, were enthusiastically appreciated by both those sharing a Romantic sensibility such as that evidenced by the poet William Wordsworth and his circle in the Lake District, and by prominent Christians like the clergyman, social reformer and novelist Charles Kingsley, who coined the term 'Muscular Christianity'. Kingsley was a prodigious hiker, horseman and rower, and advocated a manly and physically robust image of Jesus. He argued that physical activity contributed "not merely to physical, but to moral health."[31]

Mass tourism emerged around the same time, with Thomas Cook's invention of the package tour in the 1840s, which was dependent on what Sharma terms the "growth of leisure time but also on the structure of free time and the economics of the tourism industry."[32] Traditional views of travel posited tourists as 'secular' and pilgrims as 'religious'; this position depended upon research by scholars like Victor Turner and Edith Turner, who viewed pilgrim behaviour within a highly structured social sphere, and whose theories posited a basic dichotomy between 'sacred' pilgrimage and 'profane' tourism.[33] Religious pilgrimage thus was a journey from the profane to the sacred, which necessitated a collectively recognised location of the sacred. However, the nineteenth century innovated new modes for people to interact with history, the landscape, and their own identity-formation, and these ways included travel and the touristic appreciation of heritage sites. Within the secular context, meaning for individual traveller took on dynamic forms, which were not fixed with reference to traditional institutional markers. This phenomenon was intensified in the twentieth century to incorporate what David Lyon's terms the *melange* of free-floating symbols and 'brands' from which contemporary individuals choose to construct identity.[34] Lyon notes that both pilgrimage and tourism can be informed by similar conditions. Pilgrims and tourists are not easily separable; indeed, it is possible that tourists might utilise religious traditions and sites for multiple religious and secular purposes.[35] This enables touristic phenomena to be read through a religious studies lens and

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[31] Charles Kingsley, quoted in William J. Baker, *Playing With God: Religion and Modern Sport* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 32.

[32] K. K. Sharma, *Tourism and Socio-Cultural Development* (New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 1994), 181.

[33] Turner and Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture*, 1-39.

[34] Lyon, *Jesus in Disneyland*, 74-76.

[35] Gisbert Rinschede, "Forms of Religious Tourism," *Annals of Tourism Research* 19, no. 1 (1992): 51-67.

vice versa. Justine Digance's redefinition of 'pilgrimages' as "journeys redolent with meaning" is of particular significance for this chapter.[36]

Heritage and Pilgrimage in Walking St Cuthbert's Way

The cult of St Cuthbert encountered the modern world in 1827 when "Dr James Raine, librarian of Durham Cathedral and rector of Meldon, opened St Cuthbert's tomb in the feretory on 17 May," an event reported in local print media as having "occasioned a great sensation in the town."[37] This exhumation took place against a backdrop of sectarian tensions between Catholics and members of the Church of England, which constituted a prologue to the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act two years later. The Catholic tradition of pilgrimage had been interrupted by the Reformation and was revived at selected sites throughout the United Kingdom after the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act. The Marian shrine at Walsingham, originally founded in 1061CE by Richeldis de Faverches as a site of devotion to the Holy House of Nazareth, is a useful comparative example because, apart from its being almost contemporary with the foundation of Durham Cathedral, as Simon Coleman writes, "Walsingham's picturesque, folly-like ruins proved appealing to a romanticising form of late Victorian spirituality."[38] Charlotte Boyd, a convert to Catholicism, purchased the fourteenth century Slipper Chapel in the late nineteenth century, and in the first half of the twentieth century both Roman Catholic and High Anglican pilgrimages were instituted. Protestant Christians were deeply suspicious, and in 1926 the Bishop of Durham, Herbert Hensley Henson, published an opinion piece, 'Pilgrimage', in the *Evening Standard* of 1 September, arguing that the Walsingham pilgrimage (in its High Anglican form led by the charismatic Father Hope Patten) had revived "mere 'pageants' rather than truly 'religious acts'."[39]

Coleman's fascinating ethnography of Walsingham at the turn of the third Christian millennium exemplifies the changes in both religious

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[36] Justine Digance, "Religious and Secular Pilgrimage: Journeys Redolent with Meaning," in *Tourism, Religion and Spiritual Journeys*, eds Dallen J. Timothy and Daniel H. Olsen (London: Routledge, 2006), 36-48.

[37] Richard N. Bailey, "St Cuthbert's Relics: Some Neglected Evidence," in *St Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to AD 1200*, eds Gerald Bonner, David Rollason and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1989), 231.

[38] Simon Coleman, "Meanings of Movement, Place and Home at Walsingham," *Culture and Religion* 1, no. 2 (2000): 157.

[39] Coleman, "Meanings of Movement," 158.

adherence and the functions of religion since the 1950s. He remarks of Walsingham that the town has moved:

> towards an almost exclusive focus on its key selling points for external consumption. Local shops selling food and agricultural equipment have been replaced by souvenir boutiques as well as a number of cafés and restaurants. Many of the houses in the middle of the village are also now owned or hired by pious incomers who are attracted to Walsingham for its sacred associations. The centre caters to the expectations of pilgrims who expect to find an 'authentic' mediaeval village … In contrast, the backstage of the village is made up of the distinctly non-mediaeval residential estates, located behind the Anglican shrine, which might never be seen by the visitor.[40]

In the early twenty-first century, sectarian concerns have largely ceased to matter, and many who are not Christian at all may journey to Walsingham, to sightsee and relish the historical setting, or even to participate in religious ceremonies, whether as part of a spiritual quest or merely as recreation or diversionary entertainment.[41]

The opening of the St Cuthbert's Way trail exemplifies the modern approach to both the medieval past and the Christian religion. Roger Smith and Ron Shaw, who both worked in the tourism industry in the Scottish Borders region, mapped the route of the Way in 1995 and were directly engaged in building the physical infrastructure of the walk.[42] They wrote of the opening ceremonies:

> the Way was inaugurated at two equally pleasant but distinctively different ceremonies in late July 1996. At the magnificent ruin of Melrose Abbey, St Cuthbert himself made a reappearance after 1,300 years to give the new walk his blessing, hoping it would become a modern pilgrimage in his memory. Three days later in Wooler, a large group of people walked part of the route to 'first foot' it in style.[43]

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[40] Coleman, "Meanings of Movement," 159.

[41] Erik Cohen's influential five-stage typology of tourists posits motivations along a continuum, in which Recreational is the most secular mode, with Diversionary, Experiential, Experimental and Existential gradually progressing to more spiritual modes. See Erik Cohen, "A Phenomenology of Tourist Experiences," *Sociology* 13 (1979): 179-201.

[42] St Cuthbert's Way has an official website, accessed November 20, 2012, http://www.stcuthbertsway.net/index.html. This site has a 'Walkers' Comments' page that was added in November 2011. In November 2012 there were still no comments posted.

[43] Smith and Shaw, *St Cuthbert's Way: Official Trail Guide*, vii.

These two events focus on the twin components of medieval Christian pilgrimage, a saint whose residence in life, burial in death, or miraculous relic hallows the site to which the route leads, and the group of pious pilgrims who journey along it. Yet there is more than a touch of Bishop Henson's 'mere pageants' with an actor portraying St Cuthbert (a humble hermit who would certainly not have desired a pilgrimage in his honour), and David Brown's 'genuine fakes' are a crucial part of the mix, in that the monastery which Cuthbert entered was Old Melrose, not Melrose where the beautiful ruined abbey is a twelfth century Cistercian foundation.[44]

The St Cuthbert's Way trail provides the walker with both real and manufactured encounters with the saint. As with all major trails in Britain it is clearly waymarked, and the symbol chosen was the saint's famous gold and garnet pectoral cross.[45] The official guide to the walk acknowledges sights and attractions, some more and some less connected to the historical Cuthbert. After a steep climb from Melrose up into the Eildon Hills (stronghold of the Celtic Votadini, which now afford excellent views of Dere Street, the Roman road), walkers then reach the town of St Boswells, named for the Prior of Old Melrose, Cuthbert's mentor Boisil. Further along the trail the village of Maxton "claims to be the birthplace of the medieval scholar John Duns Scotus, more often associated with the Berwickshire town of Duns which has become part of his name."[46] Yet, as Mary Low notes, genuine traces of the saint are often ignored; the medieval church of Maxton, a village near Newtown St Boswells, was first recorded as "St Cuthbert's Church of Mackistun," a fact that the guidebooks fail to mention.[47] Given equal billing with the landscape and genuinely medieval sites are a multitude of other attractions. Upon reaching the Dryburgh footbridge across the River Tweed, Smith and Shaw offer the following suggestions:

> a short diversion from here across the river would enable you to visit Dryburgh Abbey … which dates back to 1150 … The abbey holds the grave of Sir Walter Scott and other members of his family, and also of Field Marshal Earl Haig, the army commander from World War I … through the village from the abbey [is] the large sandstone statue of William Wallace … 8 metres (25 feet) high with shield and huge sword

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[44] Brown, "Genuine Fakes," 33-47.

[45] Noyce, *The Complete Guide to St Cuthbert's Way*, 8.

[46] Smith and Shaw, *St Cuthbert's Way: Official Trail Guide*, 17.

[47] Mary Low, *St Cuthbert's Way: A Pilgrims' Companion* (Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 2000), 86.

[which] was carved in 1814 by John Smith … Since the release of the film *Braveheart* about Wallace's life, the statue has become much better-known and more popular with visitors.[48]

It is important to note the authors' acknowledgement that sites with connections to contemporary popular culture will be more popular with tourists. Another site worthy of attention is the nearby folly known as the Temple of the Muses, a circular structure of Classical design that originally housed a statue of Apollo, but now contains a statue of three nude females, representing the Muses. This structure was erected in honour of the Border poet James Thompson (1700-1748) in 1817. The now little-read Thompson wrote *The Seasons* (1730), which is regarded as one of the finest nature poems in English, and also the patriotic lyrics of 'Rule Britannia'.[49] As with Christianity, the age of passionate interest in poetry is past, but modern people can still engage with poets – as with saints – through the touristic lens.

St Cuthbert's Way usually takes four days, and the landscape becomes significantly more medieval and charged with the presence of the saint after leaving Kirk Yetholm, the mid-point of the walk. The two days from Kirk Yetholm to Holy Island involve walking through remote and largely uninhabited country, dotted with prehistoric monuments. The border crossing from Scotland into England is a short distance from Kirk Yetholm, and the walker now encounters major sites of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria. Clare Lees and Gillian Overing, two scholars who work on the medieval landscape, have mused that, "positing a Northumbrian horizon or a sense of Northumbria as a region, we … ask questions about place and time, about places in time."[50] Following Edward Casey, they distinguish between 'empty' space and 'full' place by positing that places 'gather' through human interactions with sites. They argue that, "the 'gathering' that constitutes place in this view also engages spatial and temporal dimensions, and clears, in one sense, a continuous space where we can think within and across centuries via the concept of place."[51]

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[48] Smith and Shaw, *St Cuthbert's Way: Official Trail Guide*, 11-12.

[49] David Orkin, "The Tweed: Take a Trip on a River Flowing With History," *The Independent*, April 21 2007, accessed June 16, 2012, http://www.independent.co.uk/travel/uk/the-tweed-take-a-trip-on-a-river-flowing-with-history-445500.html.

[50] Lees and Overing, "Anglo-Saxon Horizons: Places of the Mind in the Northumbrian Landscape," 4.

[51] Lees and Overing, "Anglo-Saxon Horizons: Places of the Mind in the Northumbrian Landscape," 5.

Walking past the vast Iron Age hillfort of Yeavering Bell, in the shadow of which stood the expansive Northumbrian royal settlement of Yeavering (Ad Gefrin), the site of the baptism of King Edwin of Northumbria by the missionary Paulinus in 627CE, I was momentarily nonplussed to realise that nothing of the Anglo-Saxon occupation of the site was visible to the walker. Where was the great hall in which the oft-quoted 'anonymous *thegn*' compared the human life to a sparrow flitting through the king's guest hall, briefly in the warmth and comfort, but returning to the cold and storm from whence it flew? Where was the temple, so shockingly profaned by the pagan high priest Coifi, when he declared for Christianity, saying to King Edwin:

> None of your followers has devoted himself more earnestly than I have to the worship of our gods, but nevertheless there are many who receive greater benefits and greater honour from you than I do and are more successful in all their undertakings. If the gods had any power they would have helped me more readily, seeing that I have always served them with greater zeal. So it follows that if, on examination, these new doctrines which have now been explained to us are found to be better and more effectual, let us accept them at once without any delay.[52]

As these topics formed part of my doctoral thesis, perhaps significantly awarded in 1996, the year St Cuthbert's Way opened for walkers, I knew that archaeologists habitually backfill sites, and that the palace was still there, although hidden.[53] With Lees and Overing, I was sure that although Yeavering lay buried, I had nevertheless "developed a pervasive awareness of the presence" of that particular place.[54]

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[52] Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, eds and trans. Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Blackwell, 1969), 183.

[53] Brian Hope-Taylor, *Yeavering An Anglo-British Centre of Early Northumbria* (London: Department of the Environment Archaeological Reports No. 7, 1977).

[54] Lees and Overing, "Anglo-Saxon Horizons: Places of the Mind in the Northumbrian Landscape," 12.

Image 2: The Pilgrim's Path (image courtesy of Don Barrett)

Spiritual Tourism, Secular Pilgrimage?
Heritage Walks and Personal Identity

Throughout the second half of the Way I was drawn further into an emotional reverie concerning the landscape and the trail. During that time it seemed we were almost entirely removed from modern life. On the third and fourth days there are no villages on the trail, the only substantial settlement being Wooler, the overnight stop on the third day. This sense of isolation from contemporary society plunged me deeper into my remembered doctoral studies, which focused on the conversion to Christianity of the Pagan Germanic peoples of the early Middle Ages.[55] On the final day of walking, from Wooler to Holy Island, the most evocative site was St Cuthbert's Cave, a large natural cave located in a dense wood, at which the monks of Lindisfarne stopped on their journey bearing the exhumed body of Cuthbert in 875CE. Smith and Shaw describe it as "a wonderfully evocative place … you can imagine the

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[55] Carole M. Cusack, *Conversion Among the Germanic Peoples* (London: Cassell, 1998).

monks laying down their precious burden to shelter there after the traumatic events of the previous days."[56] Imagination is key to the experience of many of the sites along St Cuthbert's Way; Yeavering has already been mentioned, but neighbouring Tom Tallon's Grave, a huge Bronze Age cairn that was destroyed by farmers in 1859 (so that they could use the stone to build drystone walls) is another place where presence is more profoundly signalled by absence. Lees and Overing view such sites as filled with opportunity; offering "new possibilities for storytelling, of continuing the story of the past into the present."[57]

In his groundbreaking analysis, Dean MacCannell posited that what tourists sought, above all else, was to experience *authenticity*. He argued that the post-industrial West resulted in alienation for individuals from everyday life. The leisure activity of travel allows alienated individuals "to … quest for authentic experiences, perceptions and insights" that are unavailable in his or her profane life.[58] Travel and the 'otherness' experienced as a tourist are coded as sacred, as ritual and practice that may afford self-transformation. Lees and Overing argue that Lindisfarne is a "visual paradox. It remains both center and margin … [It] is regularly packed with tourists ... Many of these modern visitors make the journey to Lindisfarne, as we did, in order to understand its isolation, to experience what it's like to be there."[59] Arriving at Lindisfarne both sharpens and dulls the sense of engagement with Anglo-Saxon England. The walk has been lonely and silent, and the island monastery, connected to the mainland by a tidal causeway, should strike the walker as the holy destination of the pilgrimage, as it is a site of sanctity specifically connected with Saint Cuthbert. Thus, Bede tells how a young boy who was possessed by demons was healed by the application of "soil that was mixed with water once used to bathe Cuthbert's body."[60] Yet walkers pass by World War II concrete defences (pillboxes and tank traps) and have to cross a major railway line in order to reach the causeway, and the majority of people walk across on the roadway alongside the cars, because the sands of the old Pilgrims' Path "are covered by water for a much longer

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[56] Smith and Shaw, *St Cuthbert's Way: Official Trail Guide*, 48.

[57] Lees and Overing, "Anglo-Saxon Horizons: Places of the Mind in the Northumbrian Landscape," 2.

[58] Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1999), 105.

[59] Lees and Overing, "Anglo-Saxon Horizons: Places of the Mind in the Northumbrian Landscape," 17-18.

[60] Nicholas Howe, *Writing the Map of Anglo-Saxon England: Essays in Cultural Geography* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 181.