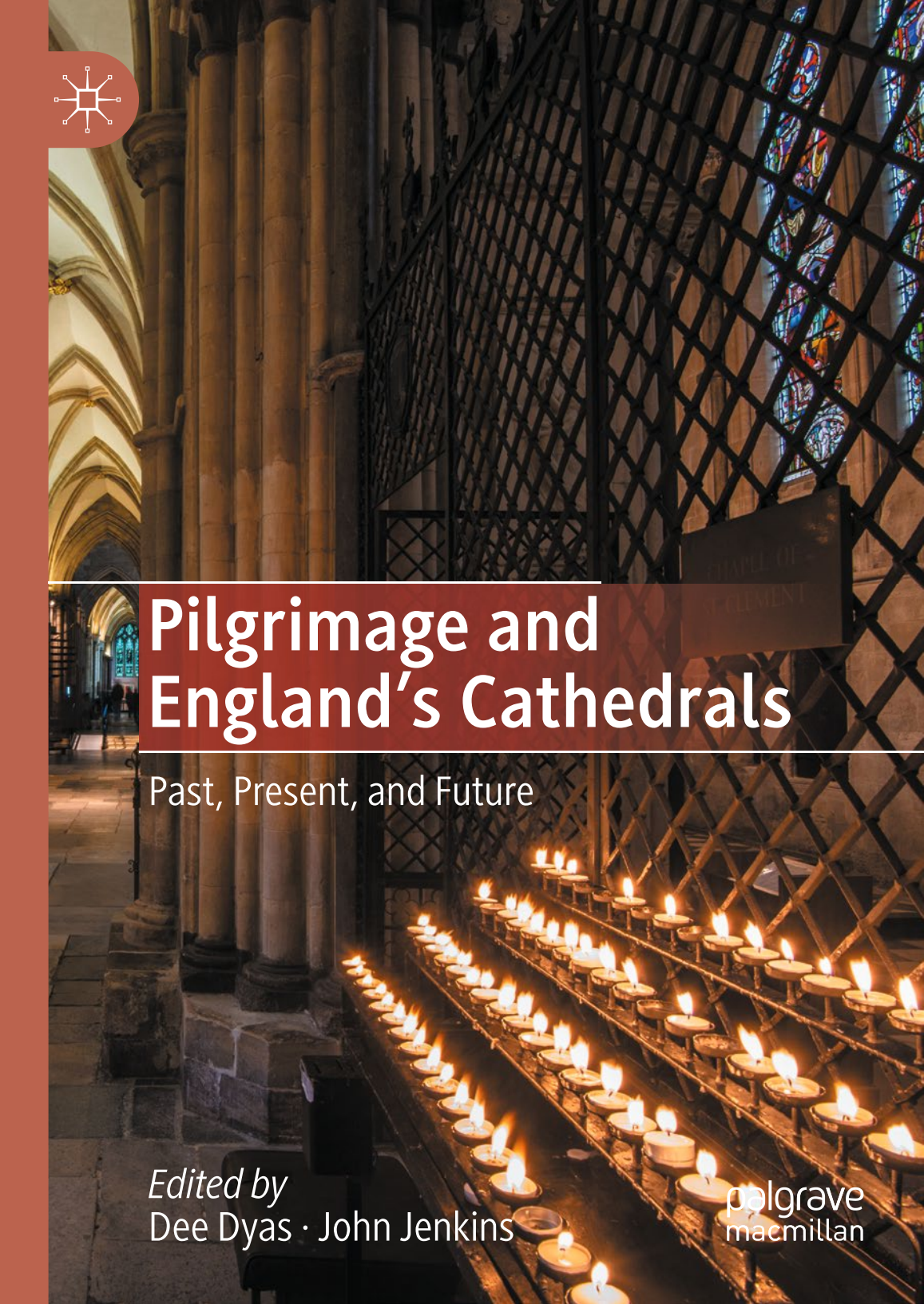

Pilgrimage and England's Cathedrals

Past, Present, and Future

Edited by
Dee Dyas · John Jenkins

palgrave
macmillan

Pilgrimage and England's Cathedrals

Dee Dyas • John Jenkins
Editors

Pilgrimage and England's Cathedrals

Past, Present, and Future

palgrave
macmillan

Editors
Dee Dyas
University of York
York, UK

John Jenkins
University of York
York, UK

ISBN 978-3-030-48031-8 ISBN 978-3-030-48032-5 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-48032-5

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG.
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

To Sarah and to Stuart

Preface

This volume grew out of a large three-year interdisciplinary research project, 'Pilgrimage and England's Cathedrals, Past and Present', which was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The project was carried out by a team based at the University of York (Dee Dyas, John Jenkins, Tiina Sepp, Louise Hampson, Patrick Gibbs, Anthony Masinton, Geoff Arnott), together with co-investigators Marion Bowman (The Open University) and Simon Coleman (University of Toronto).

In partnership with the Church of England, Historic England, the Association of English Cathedrals, and other national bodies, the project team examined historical and contemporary experience of pilgrimage in its broadest sense, through the lens of four English cathedral case studies: Canterbury, Durham, Westminster, and York. The essays which make up this volume have been produced by the research team and by leading scholars and practitioners who have generously contributed their expertise and experience to the project.

The editors are grateful to all the scholars and those responsible for managing cathedrals at national and local levels who took part in cross-disciplinary conferences and workshops and thus helped to shape and inform this volume. We would particularly like to thank the staff and volunteers of our case-study cathedrals, the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division of the Church of England, and Historic England for the enthusiasm with which they engaged with the project and continue to

implement its findings. We are greatly indebted to the project Executive Board, chaired first by Professor Mark Ormrod and then by Professor Grace Davie. We are also grateful to Joe Johnson and Emily Russell, our editors at Palgrave Macmillan. Finally we would like to thank our families, especially Stuart and Sarah, for their encouragement, support, and patience.

York, UK

Dee Dyas
John Jenkins

Contents

Notes on Contributors

Ian Atherton is Senior Lecturer in Early Modern British History at Keele University who has published a number of essays and articles on cathedrals in early modern Britain, including in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism. Volume 1, Reformation and Identity c. 1520–1662* (2017), as well as co-edited *Norwich Cathedral, 1096–1996: Church, City and Diocese* (1996). He is working on post-Reformation British cathedrals and on the commemoration of battlefields from the Middle Ages to the modern era.

Marion Bowman is Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies at The Open University, a Guest Researcher at the University of Oslo, and external scientific expert on the Baltic Research Programme project Re-storied Sites and Routes as Inclusive Spaces and Places: Shared Imaginations and Multilayered Heritage (EMP340). She has published widely on pilgrimage, vernacular religion, Glastonbury and materiality, and in 2020 co-edited 'Reframing Pilgrimage in Northern Europe', *Numen* 67 (5–6). She was co-investigator on the 'Pilgrimage and England's Cathedrals' project.

Simon Coleman is the Chancellor Jackman Professor at the Department for the Study of Religion, University of Toronto. He is an anthropologist who has done fieldwork on Pentecostalism, pilgrimage, hospital chaplaincies, cathedrals, and the contribution of religious movements to urban infrastructures. He was a co-investigator on the 'Pilgrimage and England's Cathedrals' project. Coleman is a co-editor of the journal *Religion and Society* and of the book series *Routledge Studies in Pilgrimage, Religious Travel and Tourism*. Among his recent books is *Pilgrimage and Political Economy: Translating the Sacred* (2018, co-edited with John Eade).

Grace Davie is Professor Emeritus of Sociology at the University of Exeter. She publishes widely on religion in Britain and Europe, including *Religion in Britain Since 1945: Believing Without Belonging* (1994) and *Religion in Britain: A Persistent Paradox* (2015). She is a co-editor of *The Oxford Handbook on Religion and Europe* (2020).

Eamon Duffy is Professor Emeritus of the History of Christianity in the University of Cambridge. His publications include *The Stripping of the Altars* (1992), *The Voices of Morebath: Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village* (2001), and *Royal Books and Holy Bones: Essays in Medieval Christianity* (2018).

Dee Dyas is Reader in the History of Christianity and Director of the Centre for the Study of Christianity and Culture and the Centre for Pilgrimage Studies at the University of York. She has studied the meaning and practice of pilgrimage for twenty-five years and spearheaded major research projects and initiatives in Pilgrimage Studies. She advises the Church of England on the development of cathedrals as pilgrimage and heritage sites. Dyas is a co-editor of *Routledge Studies in Pilgrimage, Religious Travel and Tourism*.

John Inge is the Bishop of Worcester. He served as the lead bishop on cathedrals and church buildings until 2019 and is the author of *A Christian Theology of Place* (2003). He was introduced to the House of Lords as a Lord Spiritual in 2012 and has a particular interest in culture and heritage.

Christopher Irvine was formerly the Canon Librarian and Director of Education at Canterbury Cathedral and is now priest-in-charge of Ewhurst Green and Bodiam and an Honorary Teaching Fellow at St Augustine's College of Theology.

John Jenkins is a research associate and teaching fellow at the University of York. He has published on medieval and modern church history and is working on an edition of the *Customary of the Shrine of St Thomas Becket* and a monograph on the cult of Becket in late medieval Canterbury. He was a post-doctoral research associate on the 'Pilgrimage and England's Cathedrals' project.

Mark Langham is a priest of Westminster Diocese. From 2001 to 2008, he was the Administrator of Westminster Cathedral. More recently, he worked in Rome at the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and is the Catholic chaplain at the University of Cambridge.

Elizabeth Macfarlane is Chaplain of St John's College, Oxford. Her doctoral work focused on saints in the nineteenth-century Anglican tradition, and she has published on commemorative culture in the Victorian period.

Tiina Sepp is a research fellow at the Institute of Cultural Research, University of Tartu, Estonia, and has published on European and English pilgrimage and cathedrals. She was a post-doctoral research associate on the 'Pilgrimage and England's Cathedrals' project.

Michael Tavinor has served at Ely Cathedral and Tewkesbury Abbey and has been Dean of Hereford since 2002. At Hereford he has focused on developing pilgrimage, especially through the refurbishment of the shrines of St Ethelbert and St Thomas Cantilupe.

Jonathan M. Wooding holds the Sir Warwick Fairfax Chair of Celtic Studies at the University of Sydney. He has wide-ranging interests in the history and culture of pilgrimage.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Dee Dyas and John Jenkins

My impression of this place was—wow. There is something … This cathedral is rooted so deep down in the earth. A feeling I have never had in this intensity, or in this deepness, this depth. And not only rooted in the earth, but it's at the same time rooted in time. As if the Cathedral was here as a … what's the word? … a witness.
—Pilgrimage and England's Cathedrals Project, interview data

This response, recorded in 2014 by a visitor to Canterbury Cathedral, confessing himself almost overwhelmed by the combined impact of architecture, setting, and a sense of history evoking eternity, is testament to the continuing power of cathedrals and other sacred sites to elicit profound responses. Initially self-identifying as 'no religion', this 32-year-old respondent struggled to define his identity and motivation for himself—and for the cathedral admission criteria. Was he a heritage visitor? In part. Had he come to pray? Not really. Was he a pilgrim? Partly, but perhaps not. In the end he refused to define himself by any one of these categories but nevertheless announced that he was adopting the idea of pilgrimage as a framing device for his life.

D. Dyas (✉) • J. Jenkins
University of York, York, UK
e-mail: dee.dyas@york.ac.uk; john.jenkins@york.ac.uk

D. Dyas, J. Jenkins (eds.), *Pilgrimage and England's Cathedrals*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-48032-5_1

Around 850 years earlier Reginald, a monk of Durham, recorded the cathedral preparing for one of its major annual feasts:

> At the time when Pentecost was approaching many people resolved to come from all around to the church of St Cuthbert … The monks had therefore decorated the walls with various beautiful ornaments, and had embellished the ceremonial of their services with suitable arrangements. Then the largest bells, which were at the church doors, were made to sound according to the custom of the great festival. So the young men, with those older and younger, rushed to that place and because the weight of the bells was too much for the combined strength of many men, gathered together a great crowd. Those who had been born in Durham had more experience and skill knowledge of bell-ringing because practice and training in the work produced experience and a thorough knowledge of this skill. So the officers of the church preferred a few of them to very many of the others and put forward the young men of Durham City for the task of ringing the bells. So when the office of prime had to be sung in the church, a large group of young men from the City of Durham came up to perform the task of ringing and to make those bells sound out. As they rang the bells they competed with one another using all their might and for some long time dedicated themselves to this burdensome task and charmed the ears of the crowd with pleasant sweetness…[1]

Here we are provided with a valuable glimpse into the relationship between the resident cathedral community and the series of communities that surrounded and interacted with it. The cathedral and St Cuthbert, its resident saint, drew crowds on major feast days from the city and the wider region of its diocese and beyond. The monks and servants of the cathedral were attentive to the need to present the church appropriately. The citizens are shown as skilled bell ringers, who took their role in creating the appropriate sensorily pleasing soundscape for the festival very seriously and enthusiastically, but were chosen and trained by the cathedral authorities. We cannot retrieve their experience, but we can note even in this short description the complexities of the lay relationship with the medieval cathedral. The story goes on to relate that one of the bell ringers was fatally struck by the bell's heavy clapper and his life only saved by the intercession of St Cuthbert, thus further modifying his relationship with the

[1] Reginald of Durham (1835, p. 202) translation by Margaret Coombe, modified by John Jenkins.

saint and the building and ensuring that all who had come to the cathedral at Pentecost were witnesses to a miracle. We can thus identify a range of modulating devotional behaviours and meanings around the cathedral on this important feast day.

These accounts affirm the enduring ability of cathedrals to surprise and engage. They are huge presences in their landscapes, they inspire feelings of belonging, and they have formed and continue to form a key part of local, regional, and even national identity. For many centuries they have offered some of the fullest sensory and devotional experiences available. However, they also problematise our understanding of, and ability to define, pilgrimage.

The Purpose of This Volume

The area of pilgrimage studies has grown and diversified considerably over the last three decades and now embraces a very wide range of disciplines, each with its own preoccupations, methodologies, and definitions. This volume seeks to contribute to cross-disciplinary conversations about pilgrims and pilgrimage, past and present, through interrogating the meanings of these terms within a particular geographical context (England) and with reference to a distinctive group of holy places (cathedrals). It draws its inspiration from a three-year Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded research project,[2] which employed a combination of methodologies drawn from history, art history, archaeology, theology, religious studies, the social sciences, and digital humanities, to identify and analyse the core dynamics of pilgrimage and cathedrals in England from the eleventh to the twenty-first centuries, to assess the renewed significance of English cathedrals as sacred/heritage sites today, and to use historical perspectives to inform future management of these iconic buildings. This book therefore brings together work by historians, social scientists, theologians, religious studies scholars, and cathedral practitioners, employing cathedrals as the lens through which to study pilgrimage, and pilgrimage as the lens through which to study the cathedral experience.

Alongside the now relatively well-established field of pilgrimage studies, this volume also looks to the more nascent area of 'cathedral studies'. To date this has largely been embodied in two main approaches. Traditional

[2] 'Pilgrimage and England's Cathedrals, Past and Present': https://www.pilgrimageandcathedrals.ac.uk accessed 1.10.19.

cathedral historiography has tended to focus on institutional or art and architectural aspects. On the other hand, recent work in social science and religious studies has sought to 'evaluate the impact of cathedrals as key points of growth' in the modern Church and build on the idea that cathedrals represent both 'sacred space' and 'common ground',[3] functioning as sites which have historically been shaped by one faith but are now seeking to offer spaces of shared exploration and significance to those of all faiths and none.[4]

In line with the approach of Simon Coleman and John Elsner that the 'landscape of pilgrimage', the setting within which pilgrimage takes place, is instrumental in shaping the pilgrim experience, this volume provides in-depth historical studies of the 'landscape' of England's cathedrals and a new framework for analysing past and present visitor experiences.[5] The central analytical chapters combine thorough historical research focusing on a discrete set of case studies to provide a solid basis for analytical interpretation, and each chapter offers a number of analytical frameworks for historians to interrogate and understand the past in new ways. By bringing these two approaches together, this volume offers a more experiential view of cathedral history than previous studies have offered. This has the potential to integrate previously fragmented evidence and perspectives and thus enrich each discipline.

English cathedrals provide a unique 'laboratory' in which to observe and analyse a wide range of pilgrim behaviours through time. Pilgrimage was highly important to the development and status of many English cathedrals in the early and later Middle Ages. Although most shrines were destroyed at the Reformation, a number of the great churches and monasteries which housed them remain as cathedrals today, literally shaped by their pilgrim past and retaining a strong pilgrimage legacy. There are marked parallels and connections between the decline and revival of pilgrimage in England and the very similar pattern evident in the history of cathedrals. Suppressed in England at the Reformation, pilgrimage began

[3] Coleman and Bowman (2019, pp. 2–4, 11–12), Francis (2015), Muskett (2016, pp. 275–276). Judith Muskett, *Shop-Window, Flagship, Common Ground: Metaphor in Congregation and Cathedral Studies* (London: SCM Press, 2019) was published after the completion of this introduction.

[4] The resonance of this concept is illustrated by the fact that 'Sacred Space: Common Ground' was the title given to the first National Cathedrals Conference for England held in Manchester in September 2018.

[5] Coleman and Elsner (1995, pp. 202–213).

to re-emerge in the nineteenth century, and place-focused activity, including visits to sacred sites and the creation of wayside shrines, is now of considerable, and still-growing, significance. The history of cathedrals follows a similar trajectory. Cathedrals lost shrines at the Reformation, experienced abolition (and threats of demolition) under the Puritans and suffered decline in the long eighteenth century, only beginning to recover purpose and identity in the nineteenth century. Today English cathedrals function as both sacred and heritage sites where national and local history and identity, material culture, and traditional and emerging religious practice can be encountered in unique combination. Anglican cathedrals, visited by over ten million people each year,[6] are increasingly refocusing on and reinstating shrines, reflecting an international multi-faith phenomenon in which an estimated 200 million people across the world engage in pilgrimage and religious tourism annually.[7]

However, it is also important to recognise that cathedrals have always been far more than the shrines they may have housed. As Simon Coleman and Marion Bowman note, by contrast with more rural pilgrimage sites cathedrals are largely urban and highly multifunctional spaces. Pilgrimage is only one of a number of parallel activities which these buildings and communities have accommodated, a fact which has frequently generated tensions, and the multivalency[8] of cathedrals, past *and* present, is a key concept which is explored in the chapters which follow.[9] Multivalency is relevant not only to those who study cathedrals but also to those who manage them: the staff and volunteers who find themselves responsible for the day-to-day running of an important heritage site which is also an active church, a focus for major civic and cultural events, and a nexus for pilgrimage. In addition to contributing to scholarly discussions, this volume brings historical perspectives and insights from the social sciences to bear on conversations about the current and future management of these sacred sites at a time when the practice of pilgrimage is more popular in England than it has been since the Reformation. This approach provides an important counterbalance to the material that is currently available. English cathedrals, both old and new, are proud of their history, and many

[6] https://www.englishcathedrals.co.uk/news/2018/10/record-numbers-visiting-cathedrals/ accessed 1.10.19.

[7] Eade (2016, p. 77).

[8] Defined as the capacity to contain many values, meanings, or appeals. See Chap. 6.

[9] Coleman and Bowman (2019, pp. 16–17).

cathedral constitutions begin with a preamble giving an overview of the history of the individual cathedral.[10] A number of both general and individual histories of cathedrals have been produced in recent years, which have tended to focus on art, architecture, institutional politics, biographies of senior clergy, and theology, reflecting the main historiographical traditions within 'cathedral studies', although increasingly the lay experience within the church and relationship to the cathedral has become a historiographical concern.[11] Another strand of 'cathedral studies' has come from a theological and devotional standpoint, many of the authors being members of cathedral chapters. Many reflect a preoccupation with the history of the cathedral in question, particularly in the case of medieval monastic foundations, but also focus firmly on the present-day experience.[12]

The 'experiential history' of cathedrals offered in this volume complements these approaches through exploring in depth the meanings these institutions and buildings have held for successive generations. It also demonstrates that the issues and opportunities faced by cathedrals today are, in many cases, as old as cathedrals themselves. The analytical sections interrogate evidence from the past and the present to identify key dynamics which not only shed light on earlier experiences but also suggest ways in which cathedrals today can offer meaningful interaction in which the 'authenticity' many visitors seek is clearly rooted in their own history.

The Multivalency of Christian Pilgrimage

Christianity has, through the centuries, exhibited a complex range of attitudes towards pilgrimage and holy places. Christian pilgrimage is not and never has been a monolithic concept. Instead it represents a mosaic of sometimes conflicting ideas, which has evolved from a wide range of sources and has also been modified through interaction with host cultures through the centuries. It is indebted not only to the writings of the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament but also to practices incorporated from Greek and Roman polytheistic religion, the development of the Cult of the Saints, the highly influential creation of a Christian 'Holy Land' in

[10] Doe (2017)

[11] Aylmer and Cant (1977), Orme (2017), Brown (2014), Lehmberg (2006), Cannon (2007), Nilson (1998), Barrett (1993).

[12] Brown (2004), Brown and Loades (1995), Inge (2003), Irvine (2015), Lewis (2005), Platten and Lewis (1998, 2006), Platten (2017).

Palestine by a newly converted pagan Roman Emperor and his mother, and the deep-rooted human instinct to frame devotion with materiality and attach meaning to place.[13]

The diverse origins of Christian pilgrimage have given rise to tensions, which have prompted ongoing debate and conflict. They have also created a multifaceted set of devotional practices which have shown a remarkable capacity for adaptation and reconfiguration across different periods and cultural contexts. The fact that within Christian thought 'pilgrimage' has been a contested concept, variously understood as a journey of daily obedience through life towards heaven, an inner journey of prayer and meditation, or a journey to a holy place has led to significant division (not least at the Reformation). However, the vulnerability engendered by a plurality of meanings (viewed by some as mutually incompatible) has also been offset by an accompanying flexibility of application. This internal complexity has endowed pilgrimage with a multivalency which has enabled sequential reinvention of its appeal and relevance across disparate contexts.

In an essay on pilgrimage in the Early Church, E.D. Hunt declared: 'There should by rights, of course, be no such thing as Christian pilgrimage [to holy places]',[14] and in strictly theological terms he was correct. The Hebrew Scriptures had offered the infant Church two models of pilgrimage: the experience of journeying *with* God, illustrated in the life of Abraham[15] and in the Exodus from Egypt, and a model of journeying *to* God manifested in a system of fixed-place pilgrimage which focused on Jerusalem—and the multi-sensory splendours of the Temple in particular—as the place where the divine was to be encountered.[16] The New Testament writers and the Early Church Fathers chose the former option. For them, sacred sites had become irrelevant,[17] for in the Gospels God was portrayed as present in the person of Jesus and, following the Day of

[13] See Dya (2020).

[14] Hunt (1999)

[15] 'Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you"' (Genesis 12:1). Unless otherwise specified, biblical quotations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

[16] 'How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! … the God of gods will be seen in Zion.' Psalm 84: Illustrated in the three great Jewish pilgrimage festivals of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles.

[17] St Paul is recorded as stating categorically: 'the God who made the world and everything in it … does not dwell in shrines made by man' (Acts 17:24).

Pentecost, as being available to anyone, anywhere, through the Holy Spirit. Pilgrimage in Christianity now meant belonging to a community of 'pilgrims' and 'exiles' journeying through life towards heaven, rather than visiting 'holy places' on earth.[18]

Christianity may have seen no need for sacred places, but the world in which it was establishing itself was full of them. The polytheistic cults which made up Greek and Roman religion had a very strongly developed sense of place; frequently a particular spot, such as a mountain, cave, or spring, was recognised as having an inherent sacred quality and a shrine established there. Pilgrims travelled to Delphi, Epidaurus, and other centres to pray for guidance, healing, and other material benefits, sleeping close to shrines to experience revelation and healing and offering ex votos in supplication or thanksgiving.

Against this background, Christianity was to undergo a seismic shift of emphasis in the early fourth century as a result of the conversion of Emperor Constantine (c. 272–337), who brought with him expectations of sacred places derived from his pagan background. He ordered an extensive building programme to be undertaken in Palestine,[19] and his mother was instrumental in the 'recovery' of a number of important Christian sites in Jerusalem and elsewhere. Palestine was reinvented as a Christian 'Holy Land', and the resulting synergy between place, biblical text, emotive liturgy, and intense sensory experience[20] became a model for Christian pilgrimage to holy places, which eventually took root in England. These developments were supported by, and in turn served to strengthen, the emerging cult of the saints, with its emphasis on direct access to the holy and the importance of the material in facilitating spiritual contact. The perceived presence of the saints in their relics drew pilgrims to a multitude of sites and helped to establish a 'new sacred geography'[21] across Christendom. Both the concept of Christian holy places and the swift growth of the cult of relics met with opposition, particularly as elements of pagan practice were being incorporated into Christian patterns of

[18] 1 Peter 2: 11: 'I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims (Vulgate, *advenas et peregrinos*) to refrain yourselves from carnal desires.' Hebrews 11; Dyas (2001). As Robert Markus has stated, 'The Christians' God was wholly present everywhere at once, allowing no site, no building or space any privileged share of access' Markus (1990, pp. 140–141).

[19] Mirroring the glories of the Temple described in the Hebrew Bible.

[20] 'Others only hear,' proclaimed Bishop Cyril of Jerusalem, 'but we see and touch'.

[21] Markus (1990, p. 273).

engagement with the holy, but the momentum of the new place-centred forms of devotion proved unstoppable.

The fourth century also witnessed another, very different, development. For decades men and women had been retreating from Rome and Alexandria to seek God in the deserts of Judea and Sinai. The conviction that their true status was that of 'pilgrims and strangers' in this world impelled many to renounce earthly ties and pleasures in order to pursue the spiritual goals they saw set out in the New Testament. This emerging monastic movement came to be seen in time as a specialised form of life pilgrimage, characterised by exile from home and family and by a growing insistence on the necessity for physical stability as a precondition of inner spiritual journeying.

By the beginning of the fifth century, therefore, the concept of pilgrimage was capable of multiple interpretations and permutations. 'Interior Pilgrimage' encompassed monasticism, anchoritism, meditation, and mysticism, and stressed 'stability of location to facilitate the pursuit of God within the soul. 'Moral Pilgrimage' also emphasised stability, together with daily obedience to God in the place of one's everyday calling while *en route* to the heavenly Jerusalem. 'Place Pilgrimage', which involved journeying to holy places to express devotion and seek forgiveness, healing, or other material benefits, was essentially about mobility and leaving one's daily responsibilities to seek special tangible, measurable, experiences of the sacred. It is the existence of these multiple strands, sometimes working in combination, sometimes conflicting, which has made Christian pilgrimage so prone to controversy and conflict—and yet so powerful and persistent in its appeal.

Who or What Is a Pilgrim?

The problems with defining 'a pilgrim' or 'pilgrimage' stem from this fundamental multivalency. In medieval historiography, 'pilgrimage' can look very different depending on whether the study is of particular pilgrims, of a pilgrimage site, or of the concept of medieval pilgrimage generally. The idealised version of the medieval pilgrim, based on contemporary Church strictures and reinforced through appearances as a stock literary character, is of the 'palmer' with a scrip, staff, and hat, travelling long distances on foot and often shoeless, having undergone a series of rituals to

transform him (usually so gendered) into a 'liminal' wandering figure.[22] This is, in effect, the combination in its fullest form of 'Interior', 'Moral', and 'Place' pilgrimage as delineated above. However, analysis of past practice suggests that it was an ideal that many did not even strive for while 'on pilgrimage'.[23] It was instead one of a number of competing discourses that comprised and informed the 'landscape of pilgrimage' and continues to do so as part of the search for 'authenticity' in the modern world.

It is also necessary to be cautious in using the term 'pilgrim' as a historiographical category. Those present in the miracle accounts of a particular shrine or saint have often been assumed by historians to be *de facto* pilgrims by their presence, largely regardless of how they are actually described. It seems obvious, for example, that a layman who had been the recipient of a miracle at the shrine of St Cuthbert at Durham in the twelfth century should be called a pilgrim. Yet in St Cuthbert's twelfth-century miracles, only 2 of around 100 miracle recipients are called 'pilgrims', and both of them were stated to have travelled Christendom as penance for their sins. All the others are individually designated by name or by status and origin: 'a boy from Berwick', 'a woman named Osanna from Foxton'.[24] Chaucer's narrator says of his journeying storytellers in the Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales* that 'pilgrimes were they alle' (l. 26),[25] citing their destination and intention to pray at the shrine of St Thomas at Canterbury. However, the narrative also subtly questions the depth of the spiritual commitment and pilgrim motivation of many of the group. There may well have been a similar ambivalence about some of their real-life counterparts. The early fifteenth-century 'Customary of the Shrine of St Thomas' gives the two categories of laity who came to pray at the shrine as 'pilgrims and travellers' (*peregrini et viatores*), although fails to clarify how the monks made that distinction.[26]

The idea, adopted into modern historiography from the work of Victor and Edith Turner in the 1970s, that the pilgrim automatically becomes a liminal figure has been significantly modified by subsequent work.[27] Yet historians continue to use 'pilgrim' as primarily a label for status rather than a form of behaviour or type of experience. This is despite the far more

[22] Sumption (1975, p. 172).
[23] Webb (2000, pp. 215–232).
[24] Reginald (1835, pp. 164, 208) for 'pilgrims'.
[25] Chaucer (1987, p. 23).
[26] British Library Add MS 59616 fo. 1v.
[27] Turner and Turner (1978), Dyas (2010).

common use in the medieval miracle stories and accounts themselves of labels of lay status, origin, age, and the like, to identify a range of individuals undergoing a particular religious experience within, or in relation to, a particular site, which may or may not have been described by them or by contemporary observers as 'pilgrimage'. Nor was that experience necessarily uniform. As this volume explores, the 'pilgrim experience' at the shrine was greatly variable even at the same site by reason of the time of year or day or of the status and need of the individual. While Chaucer's 'pilgrims' may have travelled together, the innate social distinctions and the resultant tensions within the group are still very evident. A fifteenth-century continuation of the *Tales* composed at Canterbury states that when they got to the cathedral door, their varying statuses were highlighted once again: 'courtesy began to arise', and they were treated 'right as they were of states'.[28] This ties in with modern frameworks of understanding pilgrimage as a 'realm of competing discourse [with] multiple meanings and understandings brought to the shrine by different categories of pilgrims, by residents and religious specialists, that are constitutive of the cult itself'.[29] People going on pilgrimage, past and present, do so from within an initial framework of their own social structures, and the evidence suggests that these structures for the most part endure. The pilgrimage, and particularly the 'landscape of pilgrimage' comprising the space and management of the shrine, the myths of the cult, and the route to and from the cultic centre, has inherent potential to affect as well as to accommodate those structures, and as such the 'realm of competing discourse' is not completely unmediated.[30] The very pilgrims who at Canterbury were treated 'right as they were of states' were also each of them sparged with holy water at the entrance to the cathedral: a literal rite of passage marking them out as pilgrims within the space of the church, with clear behavioural expectations.

This flags another important issue with the modern understanding of medieval pilgrimage. Inherent within the concept of 'place pilgrimage' is the journey. For the modern Christian pilgrim to Compostela and its numerous 'pilgrim trail' imitators, the journey, and more specifically the journey to the shrine, is the key part of the pilgrimage.[31] For the medieval

[28] Bowers (1992, pp. 63–65).
[29] Eade and Sallnow (1991, pp. 3–5).
[30] Coleman and Elsner (1995, pp. 202–213).
[31] Bowman and Sepp (2019).

pilgrim, the journey to and from the shrine was an intrinsic if necessary part of the pilgrim experience but normally secondary to the experience of, and journey through, the shrine. A reasonable comparison could be drawn with the modern Hajj, where for most the mode of transport to Mecca is unimportant, there is no compulsion to walk there and meditate upon the way, but the pilgrimage 'proper' starts on arrival at the holy site.[32] In medieval Christianity the subversion of journey length to experience at the holy site meant that pilgrimages could be made to sites in one's own neighbourhood.[33] We might also think of Pentecostal or Rogationtide processions, which to the modern social scientist or anthropologist would look suspiciously like pilgrimage, as movement through a landscape with a religious and potentially transformative purpose, but would rarely be considered as such by the historian of medieval pilgrimage.

'Pilgrimage' has also come to the fore in the vocabulary of cathedral management over the past century. Its popularisation, and much of what it means in application, was largely thanks to the Dean of Chester, Frank Bennett, who in 1925 wrote: 'regard [the cathedral] as a great Family House of Prayer and its chief purpose to make it easy and natural for those, who come to it, to listen and to talk to God, and every visitor becomes a potential pilgrim'. 'Visitor' was shorthand for the spiritually unengaged laity, who might pay a fee to enter; a 'pilgrim' had a religious experience and gave an offering. Or, to put it another way, 'pilgrim' was shorthand for the ideal 'satisfied customer' of the cathedral. For Bennett, charging for entry was anathema to the creation of pilgrims: 'a cathedral [cannot] begin to do its proper work until it has replaced visitors' fees by pilgrims' offerings'.[34]

Bennett's language, if not his wider recommendations, became a common currency in cathedrals in the twentieth century. Thus while the 1979 English Tourist Board Commission on Cathedrals recommended that entry charges should be reintroduced as a method of improving the quality of the visitor experience, it also echoed Bennett in stating that 'every visitor is a possible pilgrim and it is the task of the Church to draw him into the spiritual dimension of the experience of visiting a cathedral'. Yet at the same time some cathedrals recognised the potential undesirability of forcing a spiritual experience on their visitors: 'We hesitate to make a

[32] Coleman and Elsner (1995, pp. 58–61).
[33] Duffy (2002).
[34] Bennett (1925, p. 45).

distinction between pilgrims and tourists … [We] respect each visitor's right to appreciate the Cathedral in his or her own terms and at the level which he or she finds most natural.'[35] The 1961 Cathedrals Commission Report had set the groundwork for this approach, using 'tourist' and 'pilgrim' interchangeably without definition.[36] The idea that best practice was, as far as possible, to let the building do the talking was repeated in the 1994 Cathedrals Commission Report, which described the transformation of 'tourists' into 'pilgrims' as when they are 'beguiled by place, mood and size into a mode of wonder. They can acknowledge a desire to understand, to question, even to confront the God whose inspiration has made possible both the building and the moment.' Unconsciously shadowing Bennett's idea of the Family House of Prayer, the Report saw the problems of staff dealing with 'strangers' whom the cathedral wants to treat as 'guests' rather than 'intruders'.[37] However, at a meeting of cathedral deans in the 1990s, what was seen as the essential vacuity of the terminology was admitted with the joke that '*I* am a pilgrim, *you* are a visitor, *he* is a tourist'.[38] At the heart of this lies an insight that these are labels applied by visitors, staff, volunteers, and clergy to themselves and each other. Naming is in itself an act of controlling, and as such these labels act as forms of behavioural control.[39] It is an intrinsic part of the 'realm of competing discourse' of pilgrimage, and historians and social scientists, as much as cathedral staff, should be wary of the trap.

In cathedral discourse the term 'pilgrim' is not only still in use in much the same manner as Frank Bennett applied it nearly a century ago but if anything has become more widespread. Clearly the term itself is too powerful to drop. Yet, as discussed above with regard to the earlier history of pilgrimage, it contains within it problematic tensions which lurk beneath the modern 'realm of competing discourse' of cathedral visitor management. Despite the constant use of the 'pilgrim' topos, cathedrals have not arrived at a consistent understanding of the meaning of this term in practice. On the one hand, it is used broadly as a label of desirability for those considered to be particularly 'well-behaved and responsive visitors'; on the other hand, there remains a narrow conceptualisation of 'the pilgrim'

[35] English Tourist Board (1979, pp. 5, 8).
[36] Cathedrals Commission (1961, pp. 4–5).
[37] Archbishops' Commission (1994, p. 36).
[38] Lewis (1996, p. 26).
[39] Primiano (1995, p. 38).

based on a romanticised medievalism of the 'palmer-pilgrim', as witnessed by the continued use of medieval imagery to underpin modern pilgrimage-focused cathedral activity. In the case of the latter, at many charging cathedrals, the visitor self-presenting as 'a pilgrim' (often wearing walking boots) is allowed in free, while others who may also be engaging spiritually with a building or shrine are classed as 'tourists' or 'visitors', with consequences for the ways in which they are welcomed or encouraged to engage. Yet pilgrimage has always had a broad range of meanings and encompassed a wide range of transformative experiences, many of which may be unplanned and unanticipated. It is evident that these often occur *within* the setting of the cathedral itself and can be helpfully supported and facilitated by the provision of access and interpretation (used 'independently' by the individual or 'directed' by the cathedral). A certain ambiguity in the use of the term 'pilgrim' can help cathedrals to embrace multiple audiences, but this needs to be underpinned by a clear understanding of the potential meanings of pilgrimage and a flexibility of response to individuals as they engage with buildings. In both respects (the transformation and the process of creating 'pilgrims') a thorough understanding of the historical relationships between people and sacred sites has much to offer, as the issues around modern cathedral management of lay visitors have deep roots.

Returning to the saying 'I am a pilgrim, you are a visitor, he is a tourist', it is the contention of this volume that at any point during a pilgrimage or visit to a sacred or meaningful site it is entirely possible that most people will have experiences that belong to more than one of these categories. It is not helpful or necessarily accurate to assess behaviour on a theoretical pilgrimage-tourism scale (with its implicit value judgement of pilgrim = good, tourist = bad).[40] For the visitor, all these modes of relating to sacred spaces are potentially valid, and many find themselves moving from one to another while within the space. Some may come seeking a particular experience, but for others the site engenders the experience. A twelfth-century example from Durham is given by Ralph de Capella, a knight who was visiting the cathedral on business from his home 17 miles away. He was suffering from a terrible toothache, but it was only after having been in the cathedral church for some time that he decided he would seek St Cuthbert's intercession for a cure. He then pressed his face against the tomb and the pain stopped. A few days later while riding his horse, half

[40] Smith (1992), Palmer et al. (2012), Knox et al. (2014), Feldman (2017).

his tooth fell out and he quickly rode back to the tomb to present it as an offering and as evidence of the miracle.[41] Here we have an example of a visitor on business spontaneously 'turning into' a pilgrim whilst within the space of the cathedral itself, then returning as a pilgrim following further evidence of answered prayer and building an enhanced relationship with the holy site. Similar shifts of 'identity' are evident today. A 'tourist' may visit Durham Cathedral for the architecture and history yet also experience a growing awareness of a spiritual dimension to the building as they move through the space, with the result that they light a candle at the feretory of St Cuthbert and leave having felt a connection that gives rise to return visits. At what point did this individual become a 'pilgrim'?

We might say, then, that pilgrimage is broadly speaking a 'spiritual'[42] and meaningful experience, planned or spontaneous, and that it is often transformative. It is linked to concepts of belonging and relationality, as this volume explores, and is, as Dee Dyas' chapter shows, rooted in sensory engagement with space and place. While 'pilgrim' and 'pilgrimage' still have uses as broad categories of actor and behaviour, we must accept that they are too rigid for a proper understanding of the nature of the experience we are trying to study and of little more than nominative use in managing or providing that experience within contemporary sites. 'The pilgrim experience'—the transformative or meaningful moment—is and has been available to all who go to a site of historical or contemporary meaning. This volume shows how cathedrals, as highly visible sites of spiritual and historical meaning, have been actively managed (and mismanaged) to provide that experience. This is what makes cathedrals such a valuable laboratory in which to examine pilgrimage.

The Roles of Cathedrals

As English cathedrals form the basis for this volume's study of pilgrimage, it is worth asking whether there is anything particularly distinctive about them. Are English cathedrals particularly 'English'? Historically speaking, there have been a number of peculiarly English features, particularly from the general reformation and rebuilding of the eleventh and twelfth

[41] Reginald (1835, pp. 278–279).

[42] Spirituality is frequently defined as a sense of connection to something bigger than ourselves, typically involving a search for meaning in life, not necessarily limited to a particular religious framework of belief or practice.

centuries. Notably the presence of a number of 'monastic' cathedrals, where the chapter was provided by Benedictine monks or, in the case of Carlisle, Augustinian canons, was a feature almost entirely confined to the British Isles. Following the Reformation English cathedrals became part of a national church and, as such, were demarcated, subdivided, and codified in national law. From the Reformation there were 'Cathedrals of the Old Foundation' and 'Cathedrals of the New Foundation', depending on their date of creation. The nineteenth century gave rise to the further distinction between 'Dean and Chapter Cathedrals' and 'Parish Church Cathedrals' depending on functionality and governance. Legally, although not necessarily functionally, these distinctions were collapsed by the 1999 Cathedrals Measure.[43] From the Reformation we can also note the curious continued existence of these grand edifices designed for remote and solemn services in a Protestant Christian tradition, which has often emphasised the individuality, parochiality, and intimacy of the relationship with God. We can also see how the nineteenth-century campaigns of cathedral building in America and India reflected their role as repositories of English/Anglican memory and culture, as part of a colonial installation of Western ideals.[44] The Roman Catholic cathedrals of England, built from the mid-nineteenth century, are deeply rooted in an English tradition of design and function. Even the pseudo-Byzantine shell of Westminster Cathedral is packed with symbolically potent claims to a particularly 'English' religiosity and history stretching back to the medieval Church.[45] In a rapidly changing world, cathedrals represent continuity and are evidence of long-standing social and personal networks of relationship, which are perceived as disappearing. The human interest in the past starts with the self, and many people come to cathedrals to explore the achievements and experiences of their ancestors. English cathedrals have in many ways long been distinctively English in their form and function, but in their role as highly visible containers of heritage within the landscape they have in many ways come to embody a sense of 'Englishness' themselves, particularly in the past two centuries.[46]

The question that is posed by a number of recent cathedral study volumes is, 'what is a cathedral for?' It may, perhaps, be assumed that prior to

[43] Doe (2017, pp. 11–23).
[44] Coleman and Bowman (2019, pp. 5–11).
[45] Jenkins and Harris (2019).
[46] This point is discussed further in Chap. 7.

the modern age, 'there was once a time when cathedrals were untroubled by fundamental uncertainties as to their purpose',[47] but this is something of a medievalism, as cathedrals have always attracted criticism and have always sought, rather than been automatically awarded, validation. The present age is therefore not the first 'in which people have valued the monumental splendour of cathedrals without being entirely certain what they are for'.[48] This uncertainty has been shared by those who manage them as well as those who visit. The purpose for which medieval cathedrals were originally built is superficially clear: they were intended to be the seat of the bishop and the centre of the diocese. Yet while all other functions proceed from this principle, in one way or another, the place of the bishop within the cathedral has long been relegated to a largely theoretical importance, measured episodically or personally—how many services does the bishop attend, and does (s)he approve of cathedral policy?[49] Indeed, very swiftly after their foundation, the resident clergy—either monastic or secular—appointed to perform the liturgy of the church, protect its saints and treasures, and administer its holdings, were able to carve out for the cathedral institution a role largely independent from, and often in conflict with, the judicial and pastoral functions of the bishop.

For the resident cathedral 'chapter' (in whatever guise), the predominant function of the cathedral, both pre- and post-Reformation, was as a house of liturgy and prayer. The splendid building was one 'with which' and 'within which' God was worshipped. In the medieval period the efficacy and immediacy of this worship was increased by the bodily presence of the saints and was supported by lay donations of land, money, and services. However, the presence of the laity at the regular acts of corporate worship was not necessary, and at many points in their histories not particularly encouraged, and as such the cathedral had no natural congregation. Following the Reformation, this issue of engagement with the laity remained unaddressed, with the 1559 Cathedrals Commission recommending that the functions of a cathedral were to attend to its liturgical and administrative duties and to provide sound theology. This is not merely a medieval or early modern phenomenon—despite dealing fully with the issues of chapter and liturgy, neither the 1927 nor the 1961 Cathedrals Commission contained recommendations on visitor

[47] Archbishops' Commission (1994, p. 187).
[48] Archbishops' Commission (1994, p. 3).
[49] Archbishops' Commission (1994, p. 6).