
HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY FORMS OF 'SURROGATE PILGRIMAGE' ON THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

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(Received 4 January 2022, revised 11 March 2022)

Abstract

A proliferation of forms of experiencing the Camino de Santiago is observed among pilgrims, who use the term 'camino' in describing not only the walking in Spain, but also activities beyond the physical presence on the Way of Saint James. A new form of pilgrimage, without coming to the Spanish part of Camino, has grown after the appearance of COVID-19. It is not something totally new, because the tradition of substituted or surrogate pilgrimage appeared already in the Middle Ages, taking two main forms: substituting for a person who could not make the journey (due to illness or death) or choosing another place when reaching Compostela (e.g. the Gate of Forgiveness in Bierzo). In this paper, once having analysed the historical practice of surrogate pilgrimage, the contemporary forms of replacement of pilgrimage, such as pilgrimage within prison, wired Camino, backyard Camino, mini-Camino and virtual pilgrimage will be discussed.

Keywords: health, pilgrimage, spirituality, theology

1. Introduction

On pilgrimage to places regarded holy in Christianity - particularly prominent in medieval practice - the possibility of someone going to the sanctuary on behalf of others, was approved. This was often the case in situations of delegated pilgrimages, where towns sent (and paid for) their representative who was obliged to make a pilgrimage to the sanctuary and make a sacrifice with the intention of freeing the town from, for instance, the plague. He received a small allocation from his association for this given purpose. This model was implemented in various configurations, for example, in the form of an expedition of guilds, representatives of professions who entrusted themselves to the intercession of the patron saint - which has remained in the practice of

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Santiago de Compostela until today. In words of D. Webb: “Some pious guilds, not specifically dedicated to pilgrimage, included among their statutes the provision that a brother or sister going on pilgrimage should receive a small subsidy from the other members, and that he or she should be escorted out of the town on departure, and if possible, greeted on his or her return. It might be explicit, in such a case, that the guild members were in fact investing in the pilgrimage and expected to share in the spiritual benefits obtained.” [1]

At other times, a family member would undertake a pilgrimage for an ill person who could not make the trip himself. This type of pilgrimage is defined as ‘vicarious’, ‘surrogate’ or ‘proxy’ pilgrimage: “Proxy pilgrimages, sometimes termed surrogate pilgrimages, are those performed by one individual for another who is unwilling or unable to go. Some religious traditions give official approval to this practice, and in others it is only tacitly accepted.” [2]

This ability of representing others before God, as reflected in the Latin *re-praesentatio*, of making them present in the given place, despite their physical nonattendance - derives from several theological truths and profoundly shapes the Christian thinking, evident, e.g. in the idea of the intercession of saints [3]. On the one hand, it is a belief in the unity of the community of the Church - the Mystical Body of Christ, which in each of its members holds the potentiality of the whole. The bond that unites believers will be the key, of which charity is the bond of perfection, while *unio*, as Saint Thomas wrote, its effect. Therefore, certain activities can be performed for someone else, when both are united by love or belong to an organic whole. On the other hand, when faced with the physical inability to appear in a given place, the essence is exposed - to remind what it is for, and what *ordo* is like.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the impossibility of walking the Camino on Spanish roads and reaching the sanctuary at Compostela, gives rise to challenges with the aim of replacing it with something else: some other spiritual or physical effort [4, 5]. On one side, this is facilitated by a long spiritual tradition in which the inability of reaching a holy place has led to the creation of mappings outside the original site, such as: the rotunda of *Anastasis* in Jerusalem and the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, the Grotto of Christ’s Nativity in Bethlehem, the Way of the Cross - Calvary [6], *Santa Scala* - the Holy Stairs, places of apparitions (Lourdes, Fatima, La Salette), the Holy House of Loreto, the Portiuncula Chapel in Assisi and the Gate of Dawn in Vilnius [7]. The idea of creating alternative sanctuaries where the faithful could participate in rituals related to those performed in the Holy Land, was developing in the countries of Western Europe since the 5th century. The best example of this is probably the religious building complex of Saint Stephen in Bologna (nowadays Basilica di Santo Stefano), known as: a ‘Jerusalem’ in Bologna [8, 9] or the oldest copy of the Holy Sepulchre - presently kept in a museum in Narbonne [10, 11].

On the other side, these new ‘mutations’ of pilgrimage prompt questions about the essence of pilgrimage, since it can be applied to such a variety of circumstances, incarnate into an often distant reality. Is the experience of

vicarious pilgrimage merely a relic of a certain mentality or piety that has passed into history?

In the case of new initiatives that arise around the phenomenon of pilgrimages to Compostela - one of the most dynamic sanctuaries of today, where pilgrims of many nationalities and faiths including the non-religious are heading [12] - the replacement strategies of place or person are worth analysing. They testify to changes in religiosity, but also of a solid core which retains the identity of the effort, and despite cultural and social changes, is referred to as the Camino.

This paper has two parts. In the first one, we will analyse the medieval forms of vicarious pilgrimage on the Way of Saint James that can be divided in replacement of place (going to another place than Santiago de Compostela) or person engage in pilgrimage. In the second part, we will study the current form of surrogate pilgrimage.

2. Camino 'substituted' - historical form of vicarious pilgrimage on the Way of Saint James

Behind the phenomenon of vicarious pilgrimage, a question arises in regard to the translationality of the Camino de Santiago into new cultural languages, due to its anthropological embeddedness. This shows that the concern not to lose the essence nor be enchanted by the 'shell' does not mean to concretize the customs, but bring out the clue of what Camino is all about, how it transforms the human, and what - in theological language - is signified by 'grace of the Way'. In this perspective, the realization of Camino will not consist in reaching the external form, but in experiencing transformation from the inside to the outside. Moreover, in the Christian tradition, faith is always incarnate and it cannot be 'distilled' in its pure form. Furthermore, it embraces cultural heritage and therefore Camino as an experience of faith is expressed through this cultural heritage and not in spite of it.

The concern to preserve the essence of Camino is, however, not just a contemporary worry in the face of a culture of diversity. It breaks through the practice dating back to the Middle Ages, when people tried distinguishing a real pilgrim from a pretended one, looking for elements in his/her clothes, behaviour, because it was associated with privileges (e.g. customs). In his letters to pilgrims on the occasion of the jubilee years (*Año Santo Compostelano*), Archbishop Julian Barrio often refers to these questions, reflecting on what a 'real' Camino is, what it means to set out on the Camino or accompany the journey from the moment of arriving at Camino - when taking the first step or the moment of making initial plans.

Nevertheless, the popularity of the Camino de Santiago has its price. It has become the reference point for many other emerging customs that, in some respects, try to resemble one of the oldest pilgrimages in Christianity. This may concern the infrastructure, the way the pilgrimage route is implemented, the identification of the pilgrim or how the pilgrim is being received by the

inhabitants. Thereby, the very term ‘camino’ becomes linked with a number of phenomena that are not related to the Camino, to such an extent that the literature even speaks of caminonization [13], which is understood as the replacement of different forms of pilgrimage with the one from Santiago [14].

Still, in terms of the historical Camino de Santiago, replacement was usually proceeded on two planes. For one thing, it concerned the substitution of people who due to separate reasons (e.g. health) were not able to go to Compostela, and for this reason, other people were asked, hired or even obliged by law to fulfil this task. For another thing, it could refer to a place - instead of traveling far, the pilgrim could make the trek to a more accessible location where he would receive the same spiritual favours as in the main sanctuary. It is worth examining all these options, to then compare them with the latest forms of vicarious pilgrimage.

2.1. First type of replacement - person

The medieval tradition of expeditions to Compostela knows many kinds of replacements - pilgrimages in place of certain people, though with their intentions. It is not about hiring someone to do the activity but the idea of being represented by another. There were many possible scenarios for this.

One of them concerned professional groups gathered around guilds that delegated representatives on their behalf. They were to offer a gift at Compostela (*ofrenda del Apostol*) for the intention entrusted to them.

Nonetheless, *post mortem* pilgrimages are also known, that is, when someone, on the strength of a will, makes a pilgrimage to Compostela on behalf of the deceased [15]. In the late Middle Ages, the practice of donating property for devotional purposes became widespread, not only for building churches or altars, but also in making pilgrimages, often several times, depending on the amount. Sometimes it was connected with the fact that the testator took a vow during his lifetime that he would go on a pilgrimage, but due to health or other circumstances he did not. At times it was done by wives for the souls of their deceased husbands, or by sons who were required to make a pilgrimage as a condition of their inheritance. The sums for this purpose were either monetized from assets or an allocated amount. The hired pilgrims were occasionally directly mentioned in the wills, they could be poor, or it was specified that they had a good reputation, but also clergymen who were to celebrate masses at the sanctuary. In addition, it was also specified whether it was to be a woman or a man. This had often much to do with pilgrimages that could not be accomplished during a lifetime, yet sometimes in remembrance of those already made. It was necessary, as in the case of the penitent pilgrim, to bring a certificate or other memento, which was sometimes placed on the grave of the deceased. The pilgrimage was ‘in memory’ of other pilgrims who had previously made their way to the sanctuary. It is also worth remembering that sometimes in wills (written during one’s lifetime and indicating the period of time they are to be

implemented), the intention was simply to give a votum to the sanctuary, and someone had to take it there.

Pistoia was a place of regional pilgrimages of Saint James, thanks to Bishop Atto of Pistoia who received the relics of Saint James in 1144. This cult, however, did not prevent people from going to Compostela - Pistoia officials assisted the people who visited their town on the way to Compostela, as evidenced by the numbers: between 1360 and 1480 alms are mentioned 3,000 pilgrims who were recorded by name as going to Compostela. Documents recall the participation of pilgrims in the liturgy on 2nd of February, the blessing of candles (which were then offered to them) and many wills in which sums were paid to pilgrims to go to Compostela on behalf of deceased benefactors as a 'substitute pilgrimage'. The information from 1380 about Giovanni di Guglielmo of Serravalle, called Pagharino, who sets out for Compostela on 16th of December for the soul of Jacopo di Mone of Melano from the parish of San Prospero, is an example of this. The inheritance left by the deceased is sold and pilgrim Giovanni is paid fifteen gold florins on condition that he completes the pilgrimage to Saint James, provided that he will not beg along the way (unless he would find himself in such need). Albeit, in the margin of the book it is written that someone else went - Jacopo Domenichi - because the said Giovanni fell ill [Archivio di San Jacopo, 757, fol. 283v; 15, p. 171].

2.2. Second type of replacement - place

The risk of death in the course of the Camino, injury to health or disability which made it impossible to continue the journey, were the reasons for which alternative sanctuaries have been created, where pilgrims received the same favours of indulgence as in the main sanctuary to which they were heading. In the case of Compostela, as Adeline Rucquoi notes, such situation occurred at the Basilica of Saint Isidore in Leon, where there was a 'gate of forgiveness' (*puerta del perdon*) which functioned until the end of the Middle Ages. During the jubilee years there was a similar 'gate' in the small town of Villafranca del Bierzo, where pilgrims too sick to continue the journey could receive the same favours as if they had reached Santiago [16]. Before receiving Communion they passed on their knees to receive indulgences - the tradition dates back to the time of Callixtus II [17].

The same applies to the Church of Saint James in Sicily [17, p. 107], which is difficult to reach and requires a river crossing to get there - for pilgrims; it was an opportunity to obtain expiation for committed sins. Similar sanctuaries, to which specific sins were assigned for atonement, were found in many countries and in a way 'replaced' pilgrimages to distant sanctuaries. The confessor in Santiago informed Paweł Bulgrin of Osiek that there was no need for him to arrive at Compostela, that going to Góra Chełmska was enough [18]. In medieval Ireland, a pilgrimage to Glendalough was equated at least twice (in some cases even seven times) with a pilgrimage to Rome, just as a visit to the seven chapels in the sanctuary of Rocamadour was equivalent to the indulgences

of a visit to Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome. Similar customs are also known in other religions, e.g. in Islam, where according to local traditions seven pilgrimages to the Great Mosque of Kairouan (Tunisia) were to equal a pilgrimage to Mecca, as were seven pilgrimages to the Great Mosque in Demak, Java, Indonesia [19, 20].

Therefore, alongside the substitution of a person (one for another), there have recently been a number of practices that imitate ancient customs (which is not surprising, in the times of taking over the discourse), but this substitution refers to the place itself. The term 'Camino' began to be applied to practices that are not bound to the appearance of a representative at the sanctuary. Such situations date back to the late medieval practice of *devotio moderna* and the shift of the essence of pilgrimage to the spiritual dimension, with disregard towards the external [21]. On the basis of this spirituality, a pilgrim does not have to physically travel or cover a distance; it is enough that they make a pilgrimage in spirit. For it is said that a pilgrimage is a journey from 'reason' to 'heart'; therefore, it does not matter whether it is performed on the way to Giewont or Łagiewniki (postmodern deconstruction makes itself known). The physical journey was never simply *bruta facta*, but it had a symbolic dimension to it, which was particularly evident in medieval sermons encouraging people to go on pilgrimages. The symbols of the pilgrim's costume were pointed out, as was the scholastics' view of the human as a microcosm. Thus, in accordance with the hylomorphic profile of medieval anthropology, the external journey depicted the internal journey of the soul. The symbiosis of physicality and spirituality (specific to Christian biblical hermeneutics, in which the literal sense is the basis for the spiritual sense) was a theological *sine qua non* condition or a philosophical framework, within which it was possible to speak of other forms of pilgrimage when the physical one was impossible because of some valid reason.

At the end of the Middle Ages, things changed. The German Dominican Felix Fabri in Ulm and Jean Geiler von Kaysersberg in Strasbourg wrote 'spiritual' pilgrimages for their auditors or readers, while 'pilgrimages with the mouth' also appeared in Ulm in 1490: 12,000 *Pater noster* and *Ave Maria* were equivalent to a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; 8,000 would replace a pilgrimage to Santiago, Rome or Mount Sinai [22].

3. Contemporary 'replacement' of the Camino

In the late Middle Ages, many warnings appeared against using pilgrimage for selfish purposes or neglecting responsibilities and thus the encouragement towards cultivating obedience instead. This was in accordance with the postulates of the *devotio moderna* spiritual current, with its emphasis on inner concern rather than external manifestations. While the Aristotelian philosophical framework with epistemology was based on sensual cognition (*sensualia*) - from which only knowledge of the spiritual (*spiritualia*) is born - the late medieval thought had a distinctly Platonic tinge to it and thus depreciates

bodily effort in favour of spiritual experience. Traveling to distant places was seen as a disruption and a spiritual threat, and in the face of such a temptation to disperse, it was rather suggested that attention be given to the essence of pilgrimage, that is, the spiritual experience rather than the means of its accomplishment. Physical inability, for example, in accessing the sacrament of the Eucharist, which gives rise to spiritual communion, is another issue.

3.1. Camino de Santiago and prison

The chaplain of 'Brians 2' prison in Spain, Father Xavier Rodriguez SJ, tried to organize a pilgrimage to Santiago at the request of a prisoner named Valentin [23]. Faced with the refusal of the prison service, they began a pilgrimage project without leaving the prison. After preparing maps and calculations, they determined that 1,300 km were needed to be covered. Consequently, they decided that they would make this pilgrimage by walking around the prison courtyard in their free time, which they were allowed devote to physical activity. Based on their calculations, they concluded that reaching Santiago de Compostela would be equivalent to 4,200 laps around the courtyard. The prisoner and the chaplain first met in the library of Brians 2 Penitentiary, where the enrolled inmates participated in a liturgy of the Word, during which they were introduced to the Christian meaning of pilgrimage. Some of them joined the chaplain on the first lap, and they were then accompanied by other prisoners. As the chaplain noted, at least three people completed the pilgrimage, while others did not complete the pilgrimage in full due to their sentence or resignation, because they only participated to a certain extent. The three of them asked for pilgrimage accreditation at the Pilgrim's Office in Compostela. In this event, it seems hard not to notice a reference to *devotio moderna*, in its modern incarnation, which focuses on inner, spiritual pilgrimage.

Similar projects involving prisoners and using the Camino as a therapeutic route [24] have also taken place in Poland, such as the 'New Route' project [25] or in Spain (the Canary Islands), where one of the judges proposed - as part of a rehabilitation project - walking sections of the Camino as a *ruta de los valores*; the prison chaplain in Mallorca, Jaume Alemany, accompanies twelve prisoners on the route to Santiago each year [26]. Both projects, however, differ from the previous one in their use of the routes of Saint James, which is located far from Santiago, and often without a visit to the Cathedral of Compostela.

This case of 'camino in prison' should be seen in a broader tradition of medieval labyrinths. This is a geometric shape that was inherited from Antiquity, appearing early in churches, such as in Castellum Tingitanum (El Asnam, Algeria) in 329. Between the end of the 12th and 14th centuries, many cathedrals were adorned with more or less elaborate labyrinths, in the shape of a circle or square, the meaning of which was not always obvious [27, 28]. The most famous of these is the one in Chartres Cathedral, which had the image of Theseus fighting the Minotaur in its centre, a symbol of Christ's victory over evil. In Guingamp of Brittany, the Virgin Mary sat in the centre of the labyrinth. In

Rheims, however, the labyrinth of the cathedral had in its four corners representations of the architects who had worked on its reconstruction and Archbishop Aubry de Humbert in the centre.

These labyrinths, a word sometimes interpreted as *labor intus* - the labour inside, the pains in the world before arriving in Paradise - were called 'paths to Jerusalem', '*dedale*', or 'the lieue'. These would be a symbolic and spiritual representation of the pilgrimage [29].

Were the pilgrims walking on their knees as a substitute for the pilgrimage to the Holy Land? Unfortunately, no text confirms this use, whether medieval or modern. These labyrinths seem to have had a liturgical role. In Chartres, only the dean of the cathedral's chapter would walk along the labyrinth during Easter celebrations, carrying a ball of yellow wool which, once he had reached the centre, he would in turn throw to the assistants gathered outside the circle - a rite which was banned in 1538. These concentric designs attracted children and adults alike, but the chapters had them removed between the 16th and 18th centuries because their comings and goings disturbed the religious services [30].

3.2. *Backyard Camino*

Phil's Camino pilgrimage route is a certain form of reference to the medieval tradition of labyrinths, which was created by Phil Volker on a 10-acre property on Vashon Island in the American Pacific Northwest [K. Barush, *As coronavirus curtails travel, backyard pilgrimages become the way to a spiritual journey*, *The Conversation*, <https://theconversation.com/as-coronavirus-curtaills-travel-backyard-pilgrimages-become-the-way-to-a-spiritual-journey-143518>, accessed on 26.09.2021]. After the experience of making the pilgrimage to Compostela, he was faced with an illness that prevented him from undertaking further pilgrimages there. Thus, he started creating Camino paths in his own field. He supplemented them with symbolic elements relating to the customs of Camino (a stone pile is a reference to Cruz de Ferro, a place for meals or tapas and breaks for prayer and meditation). The road to Santiago matches the number of kilometres - it takes 909 laps of the area he marked to go 500 miles. Thus, it was about 'creating an atmosphere' (built environment) and a community. A visible element of this, for example, was waiting for others to enter the Cathedral of Compostela together, although everyone had their own rhythm in circling Phil's field. This experience of a 'localized pilgrimage', and not just the intellectual/spiritual one is governed by the credential and the pilgrim's prayer taken from the *Codex Calixtinus*.

Kathryn Barush, who made a theological analysis and thoroughly described this form, notes that this is a reference to the 'transferred' pilgrimage, which was already known in the Middle Ages, when physical impossibility relocated the pilgrimage to an imaginary or vicarious dimension [31]. It was based on the 'transferable holiness' between the wanderer's body and their environment. Still, the transfer also applied to symbolic geography, both in the sense of a European route in an American field and a reflection of the

eschatological path [32]. However, it was not about spatial mapping, but concerned the rituals prevailing on the pilgrimage route.

In the author's intention, Backyard Camino was not a form of 'replacement' but a continuation of the experience acquired on Spanish roads. It was based on the book *Mapping* by David Greenhood [33], describing Eratosthenes of Cyrene's measurement of the planet's circumference, accomplished not by physical calculation, but by operating on a smaller scale, in accordance with the angle of the Sun's rays between two cities in Egypt and treating them as a representation of the real distance. In analogy to this, the Backyard Camino project was developed, offering deeper and deeper levels of symbolism and meaning over the years.

Then, over time, surrogate pilgrimage became an inadequate term due to the fact that it has turned into an autonomous destination for many people coming to Phil's Camino. He calls it a 'sanctuary from daily life'. However, what the project managed to replace was the creation of a real *communitas* between pilgrims [34, 35], which is one of the hallmarks of this experience.

3.3. Station churches

In 1300, in order to attract pilgrims to Rome, Pope Boniface VIII proclaimed a Holy Year, during which those who made the pilgrimage and visited a certain number of Roman churches would receive a plenary indulgence, that is, the remission of all their 'debts' to God; the indulgence was also extended to those who died on the way. The Jubilee of 1300 was to be held every 100 years, but Pope Clement VI reduced the period and convened the next one in 1350, while Paul II stipulated in 1475 that the Roman jubilee would be held every 25 years.

As an apostolic see, Compostela was quick to adopt the idea of holy years to attract new pilgrims to the tomb of the apostle James, brother of John. The periodicity that was chosen was based on the feast of Santiago, July 25, when this date fell on a Sunday, which gave the jubilee years in Compostela a rhythm of six years, five years, six years, then eleven years - that is, about thirteen times per century. The pilgrim who goes to Compostela that year and confesses, takes communion and makes an offering to the apostle 'wins the jubilee', a pardon.

The date of the first of these Compostellan holy years, announced to Christianity by the King of Castile - and not the Pope - is unknown. When the need arose, in the 16th century, the church of Compostela fabricated a false bull from Pope Alexander III, which in 1179 supposedly confirmed the establishment of the Jubilees by Calixtus II (1119-1124). However, the forgers made the mistake of pointing out that they were founded 'following the example' of those in Rome, which were only created in 1300.

Nevertheless, we know from the accounts of 15th century pilgrims that the holy years were celebrated at that time, and from the study of the attendance at the sanctuary, that the first holy year in Compostela probably took place in 1372 [36].

When the Compostelian Jubilee Year was celebrated in 2010, by virtue of the Decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary of December 18, 2009, three diocesan bishops in Poland established a total of nine ‘jubilee churches’ of the Holy Year of James 2010 in their dioceses (Brzesko, Gorzów Wielkopolski, Jakubów, Podegrodzie, Rokitno, Simoradz, Szczyrk, Tuchów and Zielona Góra) [37]. The celebration of the next 120th Compostelian Holy Year in 2021 was disturbed by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The initiative of announcing the station churches of the Holy Year of Compostela 2021 in Poland has gained even greater momentum and scope. By the decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary, on the authority of Holy Father Francis on December 14, 2020, and November 14, 2021, 56 station churches were established in Poland. Furthermore, three bishops (in Elbląg, Opole and Warsaw) set up eight more jubilee churches.

3.4. ‘Wired Camino’ and virtual pilgrimage

During the Covid-19 pandemic, many sanctuaries remained inaccessible to pilgrims, but this situation opened up a new kind of visitation experience to these places which would replace - at least temporarily - physical presence at such a site (e.g. Lourdes, France or Guadalupe, Spain) [38-40]. The *Sanctuary of Torreciudad in Spain*, among others, adopted the proposal of combining the essence of pilgrimage with the use of modern technologies and encouraged this kind of virtual pilgrimage to be organized, for example, within families, schools, and groups of friends - on one of the selected Saturdays. A special offer was created for such virtual pilgrims, who were asked to submit an application by using a special form. Their visit began at 4:00 p.m. with a 3D tour of the sanctuary, at 4:30 p.m. the testimonies of pilgrims were heard and from 5:00 p.m. rosary prayers were streamed with a concluding blessing. As indicated, this was a substitute solution with the intention of enhancing the desire of meeting Mary venerated there as soon as conditions permitted.

The benefits of using the media and new technologies in pilgrimage pave the way for new experiences, such as the online accompaniment of those walking the Camino de Santiago. In a way, acquiring daily information from the route, frequent live broadcasts, images of successive towns, and meetings - even though they do not physically take the steps - all this provides them with the opportunity to experience a virtual pilgrimage vicariously. Despite the physical distance that separates them, participation and inclusion in the spiritual fruits is feasible due to the advance of technology. Communication is possible with the pilgrims completing the Camino at different stages. However, the change is very significant due to the use of electronic cameras by pilgrims. In the 1990s, the experience of the pilgrim consisted in being ‘cut off’ from the world; today, because of technology, we are faced with a more ‘fragmented Camino’ [41], although it is becoming more ‘collaborative’ [42, 43].

Still, it is worth noting the increasingly frequent appearance of websites with advice on how to disengage from virtual space during the Camino as part of the ‘oasis of de-mediatisation’ or to negotiate - for instance, within a pilgrim

family - the rules of using virtual tools, which recent empirical research on the Camino de Santiago has revealed [44]. Disciplinary strategies, especially for young children, were aimed at preventing the pilgrimage experience from losing its spiritual coherence and the 'tech-time' of web browsing from destroying the essence of the experience of disconnection ('digital detox'). Nevertheless, the use of technology provided an opportunity for many people in what Jenkins and Yan Sun called 'mediated spiritual intimacy', that is, strengthening relationships and participating in spiritual experiences, which was expressed, for example, in mutually creating a pilgrimage diary or browsing photos or films, which became a new ritual of pilgrims. In this option, technology was not something external, but integrated into the experience of pilgrimage.

3.5. 'Mini-Camino'

The phenomenon of 'mini-pilgrimages' that are characteristic of Polish popular piety is another way of replacing the physical route to Compostela or other sanctuaries. For over 300 years, of which each year during the months of July and August organized groups of pilgrims have headed for Jasna Góra to the image of Our Lady of Częstochowa [45]. These trips last from a few to several days. While the pilgrims are heading to the sanctuary, another group performs a 'mini-pilgrimage' by walking from one parish in a given town to another (as in Toruń, for instance) or along a lake, as in Szczecinek.

In the case of the Camino de Santiago, there is a tendency to replace the entire route by completing only individual stages. Sometimes it is a fragmented Camino experience that often overlaps with the new Jacobean routes, through which the link with the Compostela sanctuary is maintained. Initiatives such as 'Saturday on the Camino', 'Family Pilgrimage Along the Way of Saint James', 'Sunday Pilgrimage on the Way of Saint. James', or 'Weekend on the Way of Saint James' do also appear, which bring local communities together in a common passage of sections of the Way of Saint James. Yet another form of such substitution may be the initiative implemented in Poland in 2021 - the 'Star Pilgrimage' - in which representatives of various Fraternities of Saint James or associations covered a stage of the Camino, in a way substituting for the whole organization.

3.6. 'Extended' Camino

Furthermore, a different form of substitution is when the term 'Camino' is used to describe many of the challenges people face in their daily lives. This reveals a certain linguistic process of caminonization and thus many activities not directly related to the physical journey to Compostela are labelled with this term. This implies that the term ceases to be a designator of one type of activity and is extended to other areas of life. The linguistic usage indicates that the original meaning of the Camino pilgrimage is replaced with a reference to the acquisition of new skills ('Camino' as language learning, in which every step is

a new word) or the journey to one's workplace. The sensitization of these activities, the effort involved, the prospect of a long road - all of this causes a semantic shift.

4. Conclusions

To some people, replacement may seem to weaken or dilute the essence of pilgrimage, but the motivation is worth drawing attention to: it is not a magical perception of the destination, but the spirit to accompany. This is a strictly Christian, anti-magical attitude that binds the sacred with the place in a non-magical way [46]. Various forms of vicarious pilgrimage lead to fundamental questions about the essence of the pilgrimage as such [47].

For medieval pilgrims the journey to a holy place, as Irena Widmann notes, was based on the decision about 'identification' rather than 'transformation' - a search that would carry out a complete change [48]. The pilgrim heading for Santiago wanted more of an affirmation of who they are - the pilgrim who chooses to follow the Camino today is probably experiencing something similar. They are fighting for this identification in the *albergue* and discovering the quality of their Christianity in the haunted sanctuaries. This is the first step. Pilgrims then come into contact with others, discover 'the others' at the same time as they discover nature [49]. To walk the Camino is to experience a certain transformation [50], but also to 'abandon' the closest environment, the neighbouring area of our daily life, for the opportunity to discover something new.

The revival of surrogate pilgrimage in contemporary religious piety leads to the discovery of many theological truths that aim to answer the question, 'How much of the Camino remains in the contemporary Camino de Santiago?'. This is a question that has always accompanied the history of expeditions to Compostela and other sanctuaries, which - to paraphrase the well-known saying - lead to the issue of *de vera peregrinatione*. It is important at a time when words are being redefined, such as the term 'sanctuary', which is sometimes used to refer not only to sacred places, but also to significant places, due to their cultural or even natural value (e.g. *Beluga Whale Sanctuary*).

As part of this article, by juxtaposing historical and contemporary forms of surrogate pilgrimage, it has been possible to reconstruct the fundamental characteristics of this type of pilgrimage. These are the conditions by which this kind of experience can be recognized and lived in the spirit of the tradition of pilgrimages to Compostela, without distorting the idea. Among these conditions, a few are worth mentioning: (1) unity with the one for whom (for whose intentions) the pilgrimage is made; (2) experience of internal building; (3) transition from the category of Thirdness into Firstness; (4) focus on the goal of the pilgrimage, which is the Cathedral of Compostela; and (5) the experience of healing and renewal.

Acknowledgment

We are grateful to Dorota Adamiec for her help in proof-reading this text.

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