



K O N I N K L I J K E N E D E R L A N D S E  
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## Whiskey and Pilgrimage

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## Research Probe

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# Is Tourist a Secular Pilgrim or a Hedonist in Search of Pleasure?

## Context

The metaphor of the tourist as pilgrim and tourism as a pilgrimage has been an important idea in tourism studies, reproduced in both academic and popular accounts with varying degrees of criticality. This research probe considers a number of different ways of thinking through the degree to which tourists could be said to be either secular pilgrims or hedonists in search of pleasure. As such it considers the meanings, uses and potential extensions of metaphors of pilgrimage and how these relate to religion, to tourism and to hedonism, as well as how all of these categories interconnect. There is no unity of approach to this question among the authors here and this on the whole makes for a lively and stimulating debate. Knox and Hannam extend the metaphor of the pilgrim into the realm of hedonistic tourism through an account of popular and mass tourist practice which considers the role of religion and spirituality as objects of tourist practice. Margry makes the case that secular pilgrim is an oxymoron and that more scholarly effort ought to be expended on identifying the limited but significant commonalities between tourism and pilgrimage. Olsen situates the discussion in relation to secularization and challenges Knox and Hannam's playful extension and multiplication of metaphors. Salazar undertakes an analysis of the emergence and development of metaphors in tourism studies to demonstrate their continued utility but also the ways in which they shape representations and understandings. The range of opinions here represents a sustained reconsideration of established terminologies.

## The Secular Pilgrim: Are We Flogging a Dead Metaphor?

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### Introduction

It is possible to argue that the very act of engaging in the phenomenon of tourism is in itself an act of pilgrimage in which the 'faith' or 'doctrine' being reinforced is the notion of the holiday or trip as an escape, as a punctuation mark in a biography or as a *rite of passage*. People may disagree about which specific kinds of tourism or travel they wish to engage in, but they generally will not disagree about the more general need to engage in some form of going away whether it is motivated by a desire to engage with local cultures, climb mountains, learn to ski or lounge on a beach with a cocktail. In this probe, we seek to explore the distinction between notions of pilgrimage and hedonism as well as the intersections between these definitions. In doing so, we seek to playfully extend definitions of both as well as to encourage further debate. Contemporary tourism is now so diverse that the original terms of the opposition set up between secular pilgrims and hedonists arguably no longer apply. There is hardly any difference between pilgrims and tourists (Santos 2002) and many pilgrimages are hedonistic (Norman 2011). It is no longer simply the case, if ever it were, that the tourist can lazily be assigned to either the category of seeking distracting pseudo-events or instead the intrepid traveller seeking adventure. This of

course is not necessarily remarkable in that any time we set out to explore a dualism we go through a predictable process of arriving at a conclusion whereby we might reject the notion of the categories as mutually exclusive or discover instead an additional set of categories. Such is the stuff that tourist typologies are made of. What we want to do here is to suggest that it is not so much that the categories are no longer of relevance but that they have in some cases grown towards and overlap each other so that we can identify elements of the pilgrimage in hedonistic forms of tourism and hedonistic behaviour among supposed pilgrims.

### Hedonistic Tourism

It is not necessary to look too hard in order to find manifestations of hedonistic behaviour in tourism. Traditionally, we would look to mass tourism in order to find examples of heavy drinking, casual sex, drug use and wild behaviour. Many authors have already done this and unsurprisingly found that British youths travelling to Mediterranean mass tourism destinations for two weeks to partake of all of these activities and more (Knox 2009; Andrews 2011). Equally, we might look to slightly older representatives of the same kind of tourist pursuit in exploring mass tourism more generally, and witness the apparent

debauchery and lack of authentic cultural interest of the hordes that disport themselves on the beaches of Spain, Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria etc. each summer. Again, these groups are seen to be simply pursuing basic pleasures such as high levels of consumption of food and drink, relaxing by the pool, visiting the beach and other mild diversions. We can look elsewhere, too, and find the behaviour of extreme sports or winter sports enthusiasts, of backpackers, or of independent travellers and recognize a certain degree of risk-taking hedonism in their pursuits (Thorpe 2012). Holly Thorpe (2012: 325) for instance discusses transnational snowboarding cultures and notes that:

*committed snowboarders often migrate to mountain towns where they find accommodation and employment, and spend several months to many years practicing, playing and performing in the various physical (for example, mountains) and social (such as, bars, cafes, shops) spaces and places.*

Note, however, that these kinds of accounts tend to lack the degree of disparagement that is reserved for the package holiday customers in the all-inclusive resorts. *Après-ski* may be as drunken, unregulated and wild as any other tourist night out, but it has never been viewed with the same disdain as what happens *après la plage*. So far, then, we have established that some tourists very clearly fall into the camp of being hedonists in search of pleasure.

### **Tourists as Secular Pilgrims**

That hedonists are in pursuit of pleasure suggests that the lot of the pilgrim, whether secular or otherwise, is somewhat more ascetic as they self-flagellate themselves from museum to gallery to heritage attraction. Contained within the original distinction

between pilgrims and hedonists is a moral judgement about the relative worth of such choices which is made not from the position of religious authority but from both the privileged position of the academic and that of the well-travelled and self-styled enlightened commentator. Surely, there is significant pleasure to be derived from tourism as pilgrimage? Studies of tourist motivation attest to the pleasure that attaches to visiting heritage sites, sporting venues, wilderness landscapes, 'exotic' cultures or urban centres. It is simply that these are different kinds of pleasures, that they are imagined to be more refined or to represent a 'better' class of tourist, and that they may form part of a programme of education or self-improvement as in many forms of volunteer tourism (see Conran 2011). They are also, by and large, the pleasures that appeal to the academic or popular commentator on the tourism industry. The idea of the secular pilgrim is probably more reflective of the views of tourism academics rather than of tourists themselves. The same moral distinction noted above applies here and can be characterized as a sense of self-satisfaction.

There is a certain irony that churches and other religious sites are such a focal point of cultural and heritage tourism practice in the Christian world. Cathedrals, basilicas, abbeys, minsters, priories and so on are not entirely stripped of their original purpose or meaning but rather re-oriented towards a different kind of pilgrimage of a secular nature. The act of pilgrimage is no longer always a component part of a Christian lifestyle but rather a pilgrimage to remember Christians and Christianity of the past (see, for example, Coleman 2007). This is not to belittle the faith or pilgrimages of practising Christians visiting such sites, but simply to

point out that for the majority the practice of visiting such sites is as much about architectural wonder, historical interest or curiosity about the behaviour of adherents. The *Rough Guide to Vietnam* (2013) includes in an entry relating to Notre Dame Cathedral in Ho Chi Minh City the following account:

*The attractive redbrick bulk of the late nineteenth-century Notre Dame Cathedral straddles the northern reach of Dong Khoi. Aside from the few stained-glass windows above and behind its altar, and its marble relief Stations of the Cross, the interior boasts only scant decoration. There's plenty of scope for people-watching, however, as a steady trickle of Catholics pass through in their best silk tunics and black pants, fingering rosary beads, their whispered prayers merging with the insistent murmur of the traffic outside.*

The value of the church as a tourist attraction is based upon not only physical appearance and decoration but the apparently mystical and spectacular behaviour of the faithful. The implicit peculiarity suggested in this travel guide in relation to the behaviour of other visitors to the site is indicative of a relatively dismissive attitude towards believers in contemporary society. Or, rather, it is indicative of an attitude towards particular kinds of 'believers' in particular contemporary societies. It is not that the readers of the *Rough Guide to Vietnam* do not have orienting beliefs, but that they believe in something else. That something else, or an element of that something else, might be characterized as a belief in the power and value of travelling, of undertaking secular pilgrimages, visiting exotic places and 'people-watching'.

Extending the pilgrimage metaphor further, there are undoubtedly sets of central beliefs that act as social rules, norms and conventions within specific tourist sectors.

These beliefs differ according to the nature of the tourist encounters, motivations and practices of ecotourism, mass tourism or adventure tourism. There is a sense in which such faith is more about the act of travelling or touring than about the objects, cultures, places or peoples toured or visited. Thus, for example, we would be mistaken to overstate the devotion of the average pilgrim to sites associated with Dali, Picasso, Shakespeare, Kafka, Joyce or any other representative of esteemed cultural forms. These high cultural forms potentially encourage us to make the mistake of elevating such practices above those where the nature of the engagement is with more popular or populist forms of culture such as the world of entertainment. The beliefs are that visiting sites associated with such cultural figures is in some way self-improving, *ought* to be a part of an itinerary (the guide book says so) and indicates a degree of cultural sophistication. This, in short, is Bourdieu's (1984) cultural capital thesis.

Now, if such acts are secular pilgrimages, to what extent are they characterized by a sense of devotion to the artist, political figure or historical person represented? Visiting a Picasso museum in Malaga or in Paris does not require a lifelong devotion to the *oeuvre* of Picasso or a deep understanding of his biography, the differing natures of the periods of his outputs or the underlying philosophies and contexts of the Cubist movement. It simply tells us that the individual is a member of a social, cultural, national or international group within which Picasso is considered a worthwhile artist. Equally, few visiting Prague's Franz Kafka Museum will have dedicated much of their lives to reading his novels or short stories and will instead be working from an understanding that Kafka is a major literary

figure of international importance. Many of those visiting, indeed, probably do not want to visit at all but are simply being taken along by somebody else who does want to visit. Neither is this to say that there are not Kafka or Picasso devotees among the cultural tourism hordes: nor is it to denigrate the desire to learn as a part of the cultural experience of tourism. We make these observations simply in order to avoid the trap of elevating certain cultural forms over others and to demonstrate that cultural tourism is not necessarily any more thoughtful, reflexive or meaningful than beach tourism, sun-seeking or cruising.

So, cultural tourists are not always particularly devoted to an artist, an historical period, an architectural movement or a physical place. A greater degree of devotion and dedication can perhaps be found in the realm of practice that has been termed creative tourism (Richards 2011; Hannam and Knox 2010). At the intersection of serious leisure, tourist practice and lifestyle, participation in acts of creativity during a vacation can be seen as the culmination of a broader set of practices lived out at home. In this context, we see something of the temporal aspect of pilgrimage in the irregular departure from home to participate in acts of great significance, to partake of ritualistic behaviour and to reaffirm a connection. Creative tourists or serious leisure participants engage in pilgrimage-like behaviour in relation to a very wide-ranging set of interests – golf, pottery, landscape photography, cookery, language learning etc. The breadth of these definitions and the relationship they establish between everyday and tourism means that we can even incorporate not only secular pilgrimage within them but also traditional faith-based pilgrimage. At the opposite end of this

spectrum, it would also be possible to imagine pilgrimages based upon hedonistic behaviour and the opportunity to behave in a similarly hedonistic style as at home but for a longer period of time, with a different group of co-participants or simply in a place with a hedonistic reputation. Indeed, Jansson (2002) has argued that through mediatization, a shift has come about from realistic hedonism to imaginative hedonism, where the former relies on bodily pleasures and the latter on emotional and spiritual pleasures. But, again, such a distinction can easily be overturned when we examine hedonism in pilgrimage more closely.

### **Hedonistic Pilgrimages**

The distinction between the sacred and the profane becomes inherently less important as society becomes ever more secular in Europe, North America and elsewhere. We have argued elsewhere that cultural capital and the idea of serious leisure can apply in the setting of any kind of tourism including mass tourism, youth tourism or hedonistic tourism and we want to build on this understanding here to investigate the ways in which the polar opposites of hedonism and pilgrimage have grown together as the tourist market has diversified and become ever-deeper embedded in contemporary societies (Hannam and Knox 2010). In certain settings, the mass tourist is undertaking a pilgrimage of a sort to exactly the same extent as the cultural or any other kind of tourist might be (see Obrador et al. 2009). For example, the mediatization of tourist landscapes and particular resorts creates motivations, aspirations and desire to visit those resorts and live the lifestyle represented in popular television programmes, in magazines and newspapers, or on websites. The cultural image of

somewhere like Benidorm, for example, is refracted through word of mouth reports from associates, television drama, holiday brochures, online reviews and photographs etc. In addition, we need to note that in particular social groups the desire to visit such a resort and to partake of mainstream tourist behaviours constitutes a secular pilgrimage.

Furthermore, it has been suggested elsewhere that this kind of relationship applies to a greater extent in the context of youth tourism, particularly where it is motivated by a special-interest in musical forms or clubbing culture (Knox 2009). Thus, visiting Ibiza to experience the annual clubbing season is a pilgrimage for the individual who usually visits similar sorts of clubs and consumes the same sorts of music at home each weekend. It is a temporal punctuation mark within the general flow of serious leisure. We can also ascribe similar sorts of motivations and connections for extreme sports enthusiasts who learn to snowboard at home and visit ski resorts each year on vacation (Thorpe 2012). Who are we to say that visiting a Manumission party or snowboarding a particular run is not as significant as visiting the birthplace of Mozart, the grave of Karl Marx or wandering around the Kremlin? The quest in this kind of pilgrimage might not be for anything recognizable as sacred within conventional definitions but we can certainly point to these activities being rites that carry significance within distinct, bounded cultural communities. There is certainly a search for authenticity within these activities in the same way that there is in the activities of the culture or creative tourist.

### **Cultural and Creative Tourism as Orgies of Consumption**

Tourist typologies would tend to

represent cultural tourists as being motivated by authenticity, by cultural engagement and the opportunity to learn something new as a part of their tourist encounters (Cohen 1979). The verbal dexterity demonstrated in applying, stretching and murdering half-dead metaphors has not yet come to a conclusion and we now move to explore the similarities between cultural and mass tourism in terms of motivation, behaviour and pilgrimage. The above section has shown that we can see correspondences between the behaviour of hedonistic tourists and our understandings of pilgrimage, and we now move to look for manifestations of hedonism in other forms of tourism. We should perhaps take a moment here to reflect on the fact that cultural tourism is no longer clearly separate from mass forms of tourism in that it does not represent a very significant market that continues to grow (Obrador et al. 2009). It is probably more likely that a tourist would find himself in a crush of people when visiting the Louvre, the Vatican or other cultural attractions as in visiting Mediterranean sun destinations.

Manifestations of hedonism in the contexts of cultural and creative tourism are clearly visible even if we usually decide not to talk about them. They may not quite be 'the elephant in the room', but they certainly constitute a trunk sticking through the door. Firstly, the holiday as a period of increased activity and signification points to a rapid uptick in consumption over a relatively short period of time. While this may not be a wild or unrestrained process, there is a sense of hedonism about the content of packed itineraries and tours that provide more information, education and potential self-improvement than most individuals would reasonably be able to absorb in that time period. Secondly, there is an increase in

alcohol and food consumption as a part of holidays of all kinds and the sorts of situational dis-inhibition that this might lead to, whether or not the drunkenness that results is of the respectable middle-class kind. Even something as apparently benign as the tendency of cultural tourists visiting Amsterdam to engage in the smoking of cannabis, or visitors to Thailand to consume live sex or striptease acts point to a hedonistic pursuit of pleasure at the core of apparently pilgrim-like vacations. Thirdly, and possibly most crucially, as flagged earlier, is the sense that the cultural, creative or any other kind of tourist is to a large extent motivated by a degree of expected pleasure regardless of which activities provide them with that pleasure. All are travelling abroad to partake of pleasures they probably would not participate in at home to the same extent – whether these pleasures are based around booze, beaches or Bauhaus architecture.

### **Widening the Debate**

We do not pretend to have answered the question originally posed at the opening of this piece, but instead seek to participate in a broader debate about the utility and fit of the terms secular pilgrim and hedonist in 21<sup>st</sup> century tourist studies. Undoubtedly, many will disagree with our particular take on this debate and we welcome that as much, if not more, than simple agreement. Indeed, we look forward to reading the responses to the issues we have addressed, and to the challenging of our conceptions.

We ought to recognize within this discussion, however, that this is a highly situated, contingent and Eurocentric debate that fails to take account of tourist practices outside of the Western World or to consider societies within which shared faith in the form of organized religion remains important

or even shows signs of growth. Does this debate have the same resonance in Islamic cultures, or in China, India, Sub-Saharan Africa or indeed anywhere outside the historical heartlands of tourist studies? As tourist studies internationalizes, we would expect to see accounts of different practices and from different perspectives, or may be not. Does this debate make sense, for instance, among the masses of people on organized tours to view folk villages and ethnic cultures in China? Undoubtedly, participation in tourism in Chinese society relates to the accumulation of cultural capital but is this accrued on the same basis as it is in European societies? Do the same outlets for hedonistic tourism exist within other tourism marketplaces? Club 18-30-style booze and sex holidays simply are not an option for some consumers, although gambling, drinking and prostitution exist in all tourism markets and are consumed by some participants in those markets.

There remains much more to be unpacked in terms of the religious imagery of the metaphor of the pilgrim and questions as to the extent to which we believe that all acts of historical pilgrimage are motivated by a deep sense of devotion rather than a degree of self-interest, self-preservation or self-improvement. Pilgrimage as an earlier form of mobility is very clearly an ancestral behaviour to the diverse tourism industry of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century but this does not mean that we need to remain fixated by the explanatory power of the concept itself if we should find that has become redundant. If society changes, behaviour changes and lifestyles change, we should accept that the ways we categorize and think about cultural phenomena should also change in response. So, we have argued that while the twin concepts of pilgrim and hedonist continue to



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have some utility they are not sufficiently nuanced or all-encompassing to describe, let

alone explain, the totality of contemporary tourist practice.

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## Whiskey and Pilgrimage: Clearing Up Commonalities

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I have previously argued that the notion of 'secular pilgrimage' is an oxymoron (Margry 2008: 1-2). The two elements which comprise this concept are contradictory: pilgrimage is inherently a religious/spiritual activity. Postulating a secular pilgrimage (or pilgrim) therefore introduces a vague, unscholarly notion. By analogy, the word *pilgrimage* has become popular as a term for located practices in which people go somewhere without a religious or spiritual motivation. The notion is then usually applied in a metaphorical way. To clarify this confusing usage, we might also apply a profane metaphor: if we define whiskey as an alcoholic beverage, then secular pilgrimages can be described as alcohol-free whiskey. But can we then still speak of whiskey? Thus, for example, it is misleading to state as Knox and Hannam do in various phraseologies, that tourists who visit religious buildings and sites perform a pilgrimage of a secular nature while gazing at the architecture or peering at the devotional practices inside. Why call it pilgrimage if such behaviour cannot be accounted for as pilgrimage? Is it simply the lure of an intriguing word replete with expressive connotations, or is it an exercise in presenting superficial analogies, without demonstrating basic commonalities?

From a scholarly perspective both possibilities would imply an unsatisfactory process of analysis. This is also the case for the assignment for the research probe of this issue of *Tourism Recreation Research*: 'Is tourist a secular pilgrim or a hedonist in search of

pleasure?' This double question, including the oxymoron, is even partly redundant on its face, as modern tourism is often equated with hedonistic endeavour for pleasure and relaxation. It remains unclear why the issue of hedonism is included in this probe, unless it conveys the moral stance of the authors which surfaces in the text.

To my mind the central issue actually at stake is the question of whether modern tourists are engaged in a religiously inspired journey. In other words: is tourism a sort of religion and does pilgrimage also express forms of tourism? It is necessary then to define pilgrimage: a journey out of religious or spiritual inspiration, consciously undertaken by individuals or groups, to a place or along a track that is regarded as more sacred or salutary than the environment of everyday life, to seek a transcendental encounter with the sacred for the purpose of acquiring spiritual, emotional or physical healing or benefit.

With the rise of modern mobility and travel the notion of tourism has been connected to pilgrimage research for some decades now. It was thought that tourism, with its seemingly comparable characteristics, could generate new insights into the operation of pilgrimage, and vice versa. The French anthropologist Alphonse Dupront was the first scholar to put this theme on the research agenda. He sought to investigate how human collective psychology relates to both social mass phenomena and their capability to 'liberate' people and widen their

horizons (Dupront 1969: 119-121). His comparison was not convincing, as he neither evaluated the presence of the 'alcohol' nor realized that *in se* pilgrimage is basically an individual practice (Margry 2012: 282).

It was the American anthropologists Victor Turner and Edith Turner who in their influential book *Image and Pilgrimage* remarked that 'a tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist' (1978: 20). This frequently quoted assumption has become proverbial and hence usually cited as the 'proof' for the similar genes of tourism and pilgrimage. Along with a striking rise in mass tourism and renewed interest in the phenomenon of pilgrimage, this interesting issue was picked up by researchers all over the world. Cohen, for example, argued that secularization robbed pilgrimage from its symbolic and mystical power and therefore sees tourism as a modern metamorphosis of pilgrimage and travel (Cohen 1992: 58-59). The present day world shows that nothing is less true. Comparative research is however important and relevant, as long as the basic intrinsic differences - constitutive for both phenomena - are not overlooked or ignored, which otherwise, as a consequence, would subvert research results.

It would be short-sighted not to acknowledge that certain human behaviours can indeed commonly be identified in both tourism and pilgrimage. But it would also be inexpedient to allow derivative aspects of the phenomena to prevail over basic distinctions, as it usually happens. Throughout the centuries the repertoire of pilgrims' *collateral* behaviours has been comprehensive, and has included aspects of 'tourism' as well, notwithstanding that pilgrims always had one basic, existential, religious motif: arriving at the sacred (shrine). This quest did not

exclude that underway they performed practices related to 'tourism', whether they were going to Jerusalem, Santiago or Lourdes, as modern research confirms.

In the past decades various pilgrimages - for example to Amsterdam, Lourdes, Santiago and Wittem (NL) - have been the subject of sociological research based on multiple-choice questionnaires aimed at collecting data on motivational repertoires (Post et al. 1998: 19-48, 173-203). One reason for choosing such a non-qualitative method was that most pilgrims find it quite difficult to formulate their motives. This difficulty characterizes not only traditional Catholic pilgrims to Lourdes or Fatima, but is equally applicable to more 'elitist' present-day journeys to Santiago de Compostela and other spiritual walking routes (Margry 2014). Nevertheless, in the research performed the presence of a wide variety of 'motives' mentioned by the pilgrims is striking. The number of motives rises as high as 20 when multiple-choice questions were used by social scientists. Applying this method proved to have strong steering effects and leads to facile checking in the line up of possible motives. All sorts of secondary touristic, cultural or social aspects of a pilgrimage were included by the researchers, and were subsequently dutifully ticked by the respondents. This fed the researcher's notion that pilgrims are actually more like tourists, as they simply expressed that they indeed liked the beauty of the scenery, bought commercially produced souvenirs, gazed at cultural heritage and admitted that they could also enjoy the sociability of a collective journey (cf. Post et al. 1998: 157-242). It is obvious that all sorts of secondary motives do come in the picture when they are placed next to the main objective, and thus obscure the central religious or spiritual incentive for

going on a pilgrimage. Using the method of open questions, by which pilgrims themselves have to reflect and formulate their motivation, produces answers of a more unalloyed and reflective nature, focusing on the pilgrim's main objective (Margry 2008, 2014). These answers reflect the principal motives and objectives people have when they do a pilgrimage.

Elaborating on Turner and Turner (1978), the anthropologists Badone and Roseman tried to reconcile the conceptual dichotomy between religious travel and secular journeying or tourism. They rightly observe, 'Rigid dichotomies between pilgrimage and tourism, or pilgrims and tourists, no longer seem tenable in the shifting world of postmodern travel' (Badone and Roseman 2004: 2). This is part of what Badone and Roseman call 'intersecting journeys'. This concept does not imply that tourism and pilgrimage are interchangeable. For Badone and Roseman intersections only come to the fore when tourists allow themselves to be carried away – intentionally or unintentionally – by sacred, transformative experiences of the pilgrimage or at the shrine, and actually become pilgrims.

The presentation of Badone and Roseman's altered perspective on pilgrimage was stimulated by the fact that the new phenomenon of inspirational travelling on old pilgrimage roads had come into being. Since somewhere in the 1960s the traditional pilgrimage model has been re-enacted in a seemingly recreational manner, its re-invention of the Camino to Santiago created a new format, a genre of which it is both the precursor and example par excellence. This development created a new, non-institutionalized manner of pilgrimage, to one degree or another separate from formal

religion. The Camino is now partly a Catholic pilgrimage and partly a 'new-agey' or spirituality pilgrimage. The revival and popularity of walking the Camino to Santiago has resulted in the creation of hundreds of 'historical' and religious/spiritual roads and tracks all over the world. Did this change then result in a 'touristic pilgrimage' or, if we recall my earlier metaphorical comparison, in 'whiskey light'? What is actually the case?

Apart from the walking and sport enthusiasts, the fans of tranquility and culture and (art)history lovers, Santiago was discovered and reinvented by spiritual seekers. For many walkers the journey along the Camino has become an individual *rite of passage*, or 'a pilgrimage to one's self'. Trekking along the European Camino network can thus be described as the practice, inspired by history and tradition, of creating a religiously open ritual format for oneself for reflecting on one's life and possibly, depending on a variety of spiritual values, for experiencing transcendence in a certain manner. For such individuals, it functions as a pilgrimage. In this way, walking the pilgrim trails has become an inward-orientated activity for questioning oneself or giving meaning to one's life in relation to the world. These tracks created a possibility to move, to walk, but not so much for arriving at a destination where one would find a shrine. Modern, 'unchurched' times have created an alternative for those who do not want to participate in pilgrimages of institutionalized religions. For those who operate within an eclectic religious paradigm, an open manner of overcoming personal problems is to do a pilgrimage on such spiritual tracks.

It is not only the Camino network that is populated by groups which exhibit

different practices and discourses next to one another. Also in other seemingly 'secular' or mixed places one should always take into account that there are multiple motif structures present. The graves of Elvis Presley and Jim Morrison, for example, are both tourist attractions where mass tourism is manifestedly present. The visits to Graceland and Père Lachaise are however much more diversified than it might appear at first sight. Next to the millions of fans and tourists there exist specific groups of visitors for whom a religious (pilgrimage) factor is in fact the leading motive, employing narratives which are very distinct from those of the fans and tourists. This then makes it clear that ethnography is necessary to clarify whether people who visit specific locations have a religious motive or 'just' follow the secular or tourist circuits, and are thus not involved with the 'essence' of pilgrimage. Often things are not what they seem. For example, despite the fact that the Morrison fan-tribe which was camped out around his grave consumed many bottles of highly spiritous 86 proof Jack Daniels and were depicted as pilgrims, they proved in fact to be very distinct from a group of individuals who had a religious or spiritual motive, who invoked Morrison in a transcendental way and actually constituted a pilgrimage (Margry 2008). Graceland or Père Lachaise are thus tourist destinations, but also represent – if only for a specific group – a shrine which is not secular at all, and to which they thus make a pilgrimage.

And so let us look again at the stance of Knox and Hannam. I think it is problematic to start a scholarly debate on concepts by 'playfully extend[ing] definitions', as they write. In this way, they suggestively launch into the metaphorical mode by equaling the escapism of holiday with 'faith' (their quotation marks!), thus ignoring the aspect

of religion: 'there is little difference between pilgrims and tourists', they bluntly state. Just as easily one could argue that there is no greater difference than between a pilgrim and tourist, maybe apart from the fact that both categories have to come a certain distance to arrive at their destination. Even travelling is a relative concept in this context, as although among the public pilgrimage is best known for its renowned long-distance sanctuaries, quantitatively speaking most pilgrimages are at short or middle-long distance from the pilgrims' point of origin. Tourism too is varied, local, international and intermediate. In both cases, the exotic and far away often dominate the spotlight of the international media. Thus, when dealing with behaviour, functions and meanings the differences between the two categories become obvious. The basic mental predispositions are quite opposite. The pilgrim goes to deepening his or her faith or intensify his or her relation to god/the sacred, and/or (s)he is engaged in an existential endeavour related to physical or mental problems or support. In that regard – contrary to what both authors suggest – I would stress the importance to keep up categories as much as is useful and possible, certainly related to the domain of religion.

But, of course, it is also not that easy. A major difficulty is that hardly any expression of human activity is unambiguous. As having a job in daily life also means drinking coffee, having lunch, buying objects, experiencing the urban or rural environment, socializing, gossiping, private emailing and checking web news, similarly pilgrims experience all kinds of secular encounters under way or after arrival. They indeed can enjoy the natural and cultural beauties they see while under way, or engage in recreational and socializing activities, aspects that explain why so many boxes on secular motives were

checked on the multiple-choice forms. And if they do that, what can then be distilled from that knowledge? Various scholars call them both pilgrim and tourist. However, to keep to clear definitions it is preferable to describe them as pilgrims with additional interests. They do not have a touristic motive, but while on pilgrimage they participate in collateral experiences of a social, cultural, recreational or touristic nature.

Allowing various categories to overlap makes analysis problematic in general. Without hardly any definition of terms, in their probe Knox and Hannam produce a dysfunctional bricolage, and not only on pilgrimage. How, for example, is hedonism to be understood: in a philosophical way or as a practical container concept for people who like to drink and have sex during holidays? The latter could become quite a category if these are the two criteria. The two week holidays of British or Dutch youth to

mass tourist destinations are neither form of hedonism; they merely engage in a (yearly) holiday within the reach of their budget and social peers, in which all the experiences of a vacation must take place. The moral tone in Knox and Hannam's text is another questionable way of addressing the topics. How can one make a neutral analysis by using descriptive clichés and derogatory terminology like 'debaucheries' or 'lack of authentic cultural interest of the hordes'? Or did I miss the irony?

In conclusion, I must reiterate that without defining and delineating, research cannot be done in a proper way. Therefore Knox and Hannam's stance is a mistaken one in which basically differing categories are mixed up, resulting in an obfuscating bricolage instead of providing better insight, which should be the major endeavour of scholarly research.

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## Metaphors, Typologies, Secularization, and Pilgrim as Hedonist: A Response

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### Introduction

In recent years academics have been drawn to the multiple crossroads between tourism and pilgrimage (read: religion), which has led to a growing body of research regarding this tourism niche area from a variety of disciplinary lenses. To this rapidly growing literature base we can add the provocative research probe by Knox and Hannam which is in essence a re-visitation of discussions related to the similarities and differences between pilgrims/tourists and pilgrimage/tourism through attempting to “playfully” broaden the definition of pilgrimage and pilgrims into the realms of both hedonism and secular travel.

While the authors touch upon a number of points in their research probe that warrant comment, I wish to focus on four critical issues that arise from this paper. I first discuss the way in which religious metaphors are used in this paper, and then address the authors’ discussion of typologies in the context pilgrim/tourist and pilgrimage/tourism dichotomies. I then critique the implications of the implicit use of the secularization theory in this research probe, and finally address the contention that, in my words, ‘the hedonist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a hedonist’, before concluding.

### Metaphors

Scholars have long used metaphors, analogies and similes in tourism studies as a

part of the ‘language of tourism’ (Dann 2002, 2005). For example, terms such as ‘tourism as play’, ‘tourism as sacred journey’, and the ‘tourist as child’ are used to highlight what tourism ‘is like’ and how tourists and tourism can act as metaphors of the social world (Cohen 1985; Graburn 1989; Dann 2002, 2005; Sharpley and Sundaram 2005). As a part of this ‘language of tourism’, some scholars have borrowed religious terminology to metaphorically compare tourism to a ‘sacred quest’, sacred journey’ or a religious pilgrimage; where tourists, like religious pilgrims, travel in search of quasi-religious authenticity, truth, and self-actualization through participation in the ‘ritual’ of sightseeing and in the process of sacralizing tourist attractions and places (MacCannell 1976; Graburn 1989). This view of tourism and pilgrimage – what Cohen (1992) terms the convergence perspective – has come about in part because of the contention that as travel solely for religious reasons (i.e., medieval pilgrimage) began to give way to more multi-functional and multi-motivational trips (i.e., modern tourism) after World War II there began to be both a structural and a theoretical ‘blurring of the lines’ between pilgrimage and tourism (Kaelber 2002, 2006). The convergence of these two ‘travel styles’ (Adler 1989) has encouraged scholars to metaphorically transpose the image of the religious pilgrim onto the modern tourist and, subsequently, the act of religious pilgrimage onto the act of travel.

Throughout their research probe Knox and Hannam attempt to utilize a number of additional religious terms—such as ‘quest’, ‘ritualistic behaviour’, ‘faith’, ‘belief’, ‘rite of passage’, and ‘doctrine’—as metaphors in an attempt to convince readers of the close relationship between hedonistic tourism and pilgrimage. For example, they state that ‘...the very act of engaging in the phenomenon of tourism is in itself an act of pilgrimage in which the ‘faith’ or ‘doctrine’ being reinforced is the notion of the holiday or trip as an escape...a *rite of passage*’ (p. 236). Another example is found on page 237, where the authors state: ‘That hedonists are in pursuit of pleasure suggests that the lot of the pilgrim, whether secular or otherwise, is somewhat more ascetic as they self-flagellate themselves from museum to gallery to heritage attraction’.

Unfortunately, the authors seem to feel that the ‘playful’ use of religious terminology throughout their research probe will lend credence to their arguments regarding the close ties between pilgrimage and hedonistic forms of tourism. This, however, is not the case. For example, based on these two quotations one could rightfully ask: How is the notion of the holiday a part of someone’s ‘faith’ or ‘doctrine’? What ‘faith’ or ‘doctrine’ is being taught, who teaches this ‘doctrine’, and how is this ‘doctrine’ taught? Whose ‘faith’ is being reinforced? What is it exactly people who travel should have ‘faith’ in? In what ways is the holiday considered a ‘rite of passage’? What is the ‘rite’ that is being performed? What are the rewards for completing this ‘rite’? How do pilgrims, ‘secular or otherwise’, ‘self-flagellate themselves’, and do they really do this as they travel to museums, galleries, and heritage attractions?

The problem with the uncritical use of religious terminology as metaphors to describe tourism-related activities and experiences stems from the fact that ‘religion has its own specialized language’ to help believers ‘talk...about the world and about life as [it is] really experienced, beyond the prejudices of the modern, secular life’ (Heintzman 2011: 5-6). As such, one must consider the difficulties that can arise in merging the ‘language of tourism’ with the ‘language of religion’ and how terms translate from one ‘language’ to another. For example, can all religious terminology be equally utilized as metaphors in describing the relationships between tourism and pilgrimage? Will readers automatically see the metaphorical connection between pilgrimage and tourism when using such terminology? Will the terminology used be synonymous in the minds of readers?

To me, if religious terms are going to be used to justify a particular blurring of tourism and pilgrimage, some sort of explanation and/or definition must accompany these terms if they are to be appropriately used as metaphors. For example, is ‘faith’, as understood in a religious context, really the same as the holiday as an act of ‘faith’ or as a part of someone’s ‘faith’? Even if the metaphor is extended, as some scholars have done, to include ‘tourism as religion’ (Selwyn 1994; Burns 1999; see Sharpley 2009) or even ‘religion as tourism’ (Grimshaw 2001), this does not mean that all religious terms are inherently appropriate to use or are transferable when comparing tourism and pilgrimage travel.

### Typologies

In their research probe Knox and Hannam critique the way in which typologies differentiate the pilgrim from the hedonist.



They argue that the traditional differentiation between pilgrims and hedonists stems in part from tourism scholars who, from their privileged position within academia, have (purposefully?) succeeded in labelling certain types of tourism behaviours and activities as more 'refined' than others, and that certain classes and types of tourists are 'better' than others. As such Knox and Hannam argue that 'original distinctions between pilgrims and hedonists [tourists?]' was based on the 'moral judgment[s] about the relative worth of such choices' by academics and 'well-travelled and self-styled enlightened commentator[s]' (p. 237).

Knox and Hannam suggest that this moral interference by academics regarding the 'original distinctions between pilgrims and hedonists' is outdated in the modern world where dualisms in general do not apply. They argue this is the case because '...any time we set out to explore a dualism we go through a predictable process of arriving at a conclusion whereby we might reject the notion of the categories as mutually exclusive or discover instead an additional set of categories' (p. 236). Typologies, they argue, tend to 'grow...towards and overlap each other' (p. 236), and as such it should be no surprise that 'we can identify elements of the pilgrimage in hedonistic forms of tourism and hedonistic behaviour among supposed pilgrims' (p. 236).

Knox and Hamman are correct in their view that when it comes to pilgrim-tourist comparisons that 'the tourist [has been] lazily...assigned' to either one or the other category (p. 236). As I have more extensively outlined elsewhere (Olsen 2010), past studies comparing pilgrims and tourists have typically been done through the lens of Max Weber's 'ideal types', contrasting the 'ideal

pilgrim' (the medieval aesthetic Christian pilgrim) with the 'ideal tourist' (described by Cohen's (1979) as a diversionary tourist or a 'superficial nitwit'). In comparing the 'ideal pilgrim' with the 'ideal tourist' scholars have ignored the fact that 'individuals rarely fit into tidy categories such as "pilgrim" and "tourist"' (Olsen 2010: 849). As Maoz and Bekerman (2010) note from their study of Israeli backpackers in India, there are many aspects of travel that cannot be classified as either 'pure' travel or as typical pilgrimage or religious tourism. Therefore they question the analytical value of typologies as fixed categories. Indeed, any postmodernist or post-structuralist scholar would argue that typologies can no longer be viewed from their modernist perspective as bounded and fixed categories; rather, the boundaries between types should be seen as malleable and contingent on changing cultural and personal circumstances (Tilley 2006). As such these scholars would have difficulty accepting anachronistic and abstract universal travel typologies that place types of travel and travellers into static 'everything/nothing' categories (see Adler 1989; Bauman 1996; Uriely 2005, 2009).

Knox and Hannam, however, take their criticism of typologies a step further and suggest that the terms 'pilgrimage' and 'pilgrim' may not be suitable metaphors for describing tourists and tourism in the modern era (see p. 241), and that 'while [the] twin concepts of pilgrim and hedonist continue to have some utility they are not sufficiently nuanced or all-encompassing to describe, let alone explain, the totality of contemporary tourist practice' (p. 241). As such, Knox and Hannam argue that the terms 'pilgrimage' and 'pilgrim' as metaphors may be seemingly 'redundant'.

Their concern that 'pilgrimage' is an outdated metaphor for modern tourism is not theirs alone, however. Bauman (1996) for example, has argued that the pilgrim is more appropriately a metaphor for modernity rather than for post-modernity, in part because in the context of identity building the pilgrim represents identity-maintenance rather than identity-building. He argues that the pilgrim has already elected his/her point of arrival, their life-course is set, and present matters are sacrificed for future promises; whereas postmodern consumers refuse to have their life-course set and mortgage their present for future rewards. Therefore, Bauman argues that the term 'pilgrim' is no longer a metaphor for identity-building in modern life. Instead, he suggests four different metaphors that suggest lifestyles that the majority of people today practice: the stroller, the vagabond, the tourist and the player. As such, one might wonder which of Bauman's metaphors Knox and Hannam would consider being the most appropriate for the hedonist tourist, however they are defined. In addition, Maoz and Bekerman (2010: 424) have also suggested that 'pilgrimage' and 'religious tourism' are 'no longer suitable for examining the touristic experience, which we believe has now become complex, full of contradictions and – in other words – postmodern'.

One needs to keep in mind, however, that objections over the use of the terms 'pilgrimage' and 'pilgrim' as metaphors for tourism and tourists are intertwined with the more general tensions between modernist and postmodernist theories of tourism and market segmentation (i.e., differentiation vs. de-differentiation of tourist experiences). For example, tourist typologies can be an invaluable marketing tool for tourism

destinations, organizations, and operators due to the recognition that tourists are heterogeneous in nature and therefore tourists are segmented in terms of motivations, activities, travel experiences, socio-demographic characteristics, lifestyles and values. In fact, Knox and Hannam themselves acknowledge that the categorizing of tourists is still an important part of tourist studies! However, the use of typologies or categories to differentiate different types of tourists are seen, as viewed from a postmodern perspective, to have limited predictive ability (Uriely 2009; Moscardo et al. 2012) and can only identify regularities between homogeneous groups of tourists and describe 'different tourist practice rather than types of people' (Edensor 2001: 59-60).

As such, even though Knox and Hannam imply that the postmodern approach to typologies is the better approach, it would be interesting to have them articulate why they think modernist views of typologies still seem to be a mainstay in current tourism studies, and, in this context, whether or not the modernist use the 'pilgrimage' and 'pilgrim' metaphors might actually have some sort of utility, particularly when considering the 'post-tourist' who is able to create and participate in a wide range of touristic experiences when they travel.

### **Secularization**

As noted above, Knox and Hannam suggest that pilgrimage as a metaphor is 'redundant'. They express the view that 'Pilgrimage as an earlier form of mobility is very clearly an ancestral behaviour to the diverse tourism industry of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century but this does not mean that we need to remain fixated by the explanatory power

of the concept itself if we should find that has become redundant' (p. 241). The reason for this potential redundancy, they argue, is because 'If society changes, behaviour changes and lifestyles change, we should accept that the ways we categorize and think about cultural phenomena should also change in response' (p. 241). The question, however, is that what is causing society, behaviours, and lifestyles to change that warrants pilgrimage as a metaphor to become 'redundant'? Their answer to this question would be because 'The distinction between the sacred and the profane becomes inherently less important as society becomes ever more secular in Europe, North America and elsewhere' (p. 239). Their argument implicitly seems to be that as Europe and North America become more secular these societies become less religious, and therefore pilgrimage, as a dying form of travel, will eventually no longer have the metaphorical 'explanatory power' to describe what tourism 'is like'.

This line of reasoning is recognizable to those who are familiar with the secularization thesis or theory, which has been discussed at length by scholars in the fields of history, sociology, and religious studies. While classical secularization theory can be traced back to the nineteenth-century, it was during the 1960s that scholars began to note the waning public influence of religion. This led some academics to argue that as societies continued to industrialize, modernize, and become more rational, complex, and individualistic (read: less religious), that religion was destined to (indeed, must!) decline and eventually disappear on both a personal and a communal level (Luckmann 1963; Berger 1967; Gorski 2003). As Wallace (1966: 265) confidently declared, 'The evolutionary

future of religion is extinction'!

However, a number of scholars have pointed out the limitations of this secularization theory. For example, opponents of the secularization theory argue that secularization and modernization have been components of every society and culture historically, and that this trend in modern society is nothing new. As Stark and Bainbridge (1985: 1-2) point out, rather than secularization and modernization leading to the end of religion, societies see 'merely a shift in fortunes among religions as faiths that have become too worldly are supplanted by more vigorous and less worldly religions.' As well, there seems to be a geography to secularization (Wilford 2010), in that 'religion has declined in some sectors and levels of society, but not all' (Demerath 1995: 110). As Stark and Bainbridge (1985: 1-2) note, 'While secularization progresses in some parts of a society, a countervailing intensification of religion goes on in other parts'. Indeed, not only have both the decline and resilience of religion been illustrated in a European context (e.g., Green 2011; Kaufmann et al. 2012), but around the world there has been an intensification of religion and religiosity with the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, global Pentecostalism, and the growing strength of the American religious right.

While these and other criticisms, as well as 'religion's stubborn refusal to disappear' (Chaves 1994: 749), have led some scholars to either revise the secularization theory to make it less linear (Martin 2005, 2011; see Pickel 2011) or to suggest a middle ground argument where societies can be more secular without becoming less religious (Gorski 2000), Knox and Hannam seem to be using the secularization thesis in an uncritical manner in sweepingly suggesting that the

'distinction between the sacred and the profane' is less important in secularizing societies such as Europe and North America, which, by extension, implies a lessening of the influence of religion in those societies. Indeed, they seem implicitly follow early proponents of the secularization theory who viewed this theory more as a 'doctrine'; a 'taken-for-granted ideology' which would come to fruition even though there has been a lack of empirical evidence suggesting the demise of religion as well as the lessening importance of the sacred/profane divide (Hadden 1987: 588, in Swatos Jr. and Christiano 1999; see also Stark 1999).

As such, I would like to know from Knox and Hannam who exactly has suggested that the sacred/profane distinction is becoming less important in Europe and North America? In what ways and to whom has this distinction become less important? It is important to note that any arguments related to the secularizing tendencies of any society needs to be contextualized in terms of cultural change, political surroundings, and identity building processes (Pickel 2011), and as such the generalized use of the secularization theory, considering the criticisms noted above, is an inadequate basis upon which to claim that 'pilgrimage' is a poor and possibly 'redundant' metaphor.

### **Pilgrim as Hedonist**

I think that the arguments Knox and Hannam make regarding their questioning of typologies and who gets to place moral judgment on tourist motivations and activities are, based on my own understanding of their lead probe, made mainly to bolster their argument that 'hedonism tourism' (pp. 239, 241) is not tourism just related to fulfilling sensual pleasures and self-centered and self-indulgent lifestyles; participation in

hedonistic activities can also be seen as a pursuit after both 'emotional and spiritual pleasures' (p. 239). As such, 'hedonism tourism', like cultural tourism or religious tourism, is also about a 'search for authenticity', at least 'within [the] distinct, bounded cultural communities' of hedonistic tourists (p. 240). However, considering the conventional understandings of the hedonist tourist being 'motivated by a desire for sensual pleasure' (Swarbrooke and Horner 1999: 36) within an 'enclosed, exceptional, duty-free zone' (Diken and Laustsen 2004:102) where they are 'licensed to participate in all kinds of otherwise forbidden pleasures' (Caruana and Crane 2011: 1504), the only way in which Knox and Hannam can make this argument persuasively is to make 'hedonism tourism' co-equal with – or at least akin to – more respected and 'refined' market segments like cultural tourism and religious tourism.

In arguing for the blurring of the lines between 'serious pilgrims and frivolous tourists' (Pfaffenberger 1983), Knox and Hannam attempt to shift the position of pilgrimage and pilgrims on the pilgrim-tourist continuum (Smith 1992) so that 'the original terms of the opposition set up between secular pilgrims and hedonists arguably no longer apply' (page 1). For example, Knox and Hannam suggest that pilgrimage is 'clearly an ancestral behaviour' which 'is no longer always a component part of a Christian lifestyle' (p. 237). They argue that the majority of people who travel to religious sites are not pilgrims in a true devotional sense; rather, the majority who visit these sites are more interested in the architectural or historical aspects of the sites as well as 'to remember Christians and Christianity of the past' (p. 237). In addition, Knox and Hannam put forward the view that 'there is little difference

between pilgrims and tourists', and that 'many pilgrimages are hedonistic' in nature (p. 236). They question 'the extent to which...all acts of historical pilgrimage are motivated by a deep sense of devotion rather than a degree of self-interest, self-preservation or self-improvement' (p. 240). As such, 'we can identify elements of the pilgrimage in hedonistic forms of tourism and hedonistic behaviour among supposed pilgrims' (p. 236).

While one might agree that pilgrimage in the Christian world has waned over time in terms the importance of pilgrimage for social cohesiveness, Knox and Hannam seem to forget that Christian pilgrimage is alive and well. While overall statistics are difficult to come by with regards to the religious tourism market, the total market for religious travel in the United States alone is estimated to be approximately 16.6 million people (Saltzman 2010), and North American religious tourists supposedly account for \$10 billion of an \$18 billion worldwide faith tourism industry (Jordan 2007). While granted these numbers do not suggest that everyone travelling to a religious sites is a 'pilgrim' in a truer sense of the word, these numbers also include more 'pilgrim-like' travel including religious conferences, attendance at World Youth Day (in which over 70,000 Catholic youth participate) (Rymarz 2007; Norman and Johnson 2011), and Vatican events which attracted over 2.3 million people in 2012 (Catholic News Service 2013).

Also, while Knox and Hannam do not discuss, give evidence of, or identify hedonistic behaviour among 'supposed pilgrims' (whoever 'supposed pilgrims' are), their view mirrors Turner and Turner's (1978: 20) classic phrase 'a tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist', with 'hedonist' being substituted for 'tourist'. This argument

that both historical and modern pilgrimage contains elements of hedonism, however, is not a new idea. Anyone who has read Chaucer's classic work *Canterbury Tales* (Furnivall 1967) would note that many medieval Christian pilgrims were more akin to modern tourists in their behaviours rather than true pilgrims (Olsen 2008). In fact, logically, would not suggest that pilgrimage contains no hedonistic elements run counter to Knox and Hannam's concerns regarding the pilgrim-tourist dualism as an ahistorical and abstract attempt to universalize travel typologies (Adler 1989)? Where the pilgrim being discussed is, again, the medieval aesthetic Christian pilgrim motivated by devotional and initiatory rituals?

While Knox and Hannam's argument for 'hedonistic behaviour among supposed pilgrims' is correct, their view that there are 'elements of the pilgrimage in hedonistic forms of tourism' is a bit more problematic. Along with their view that hedonism is about a 'search for authenticity' and involves 'emotional and spiritual pleasures', Knox and Hannam suggest that 'Surely there is significant pleasure to be derived from [hedonism] as pilgrimage' (p. 236). In stating this they implicitly seem to equate hedonistic 'pleasure' with religious experiences. Such a suggestion would, of course, offend the religious sensibilities of many, as this would make pilgrimage and pilgrim activity equal with more hedonistic forms of tourism activity such as wine tourism or sex tourism (Ostrowski 2000). In fact, it is for this very reason that religious commentators have had difficulty using the pilgrim as a metaphor for the secular traveller (Vukonic 2002), as well as with the use of terms such as *pilgrimage tourism*, *spiritual tourism*, *religious tourism*, and *tourism pilgrimage* to describe modern pilgrimage travel.

As well, one could question whether the 'authenticity' and the 'emotional and spiritual pleasures' and maybe experience are akin to the same as those sought for and experienced by pilgrims or even cultural tourists. As such, while scholars have noted the structural similarities between pilgrimage and tourism (e.g., MacCannell 1976; Graburn 1989; Gupta 1999; Fleischer 2000), when it comes to motivation it is difficult to argue that pilgrims and hedonists share much in common, as they are vastly different in terms of their goals, motivations, and mindsets while traveling.

### Conclusion

Knox and Hannam cover additional topics and issues in their paper, but I have limited myself to four key matters related to religious metaphors, typologies, the secularization thesis, and the blurring of the pilgrim/hedonist dichotomy. While my comments up to this point have been critical, I wish to note that Knox and Hannam do make a couple of valuable contributions to some of the current research debates related to tourism and pilgrimage.

For example, the authors, echoing Towner (1995) and Olsen (2010), are correct in reminding readers that 'We ought to recognize within this discussion, however, that this is a highly situated, contingent and Eurocentric debate that fails to take account of tourist practices outside of the Western World or to consider societies within which shared faith in the form of organized religion remains important or even shows signs of growth. Does this debate have the same resonance in Islamic cultures, or in China, India, Sub-Saharan Africa or indeed anywhere outside the historical heartlands of tourist studies?' (p. 241). I wonder if the

themes in this research probe, as discussed below, would even be considered by scholars in a Middle Eastern or an African context. In fact, instead of asking a North American (like myself) or European scholar to respond to the probe by Knox and Hannam, it may have been much more interesting to have a scholar from one of the world regions listed above to comment on their arguments in order to engage in more inter-cultural dialogue and understanding regarding typologies, metaphors, and secularization.

In addition, I appreciated the concern raised by Knox and Hannam, as noted above, regarding who defines certain tourist motivations and performances as morally superior or inferior. As the privileged domain of academics and 'well-travelled and self-styled enlightened commentator[s]', how do these definitions relate to how certain tourism market segments are represented, and how these representations affect those who are a part of those market segments? How is it that we can avoid 'the mistake of elevating [certain tourist] practices above those where the nature of the engagement is with more popular or populist forms of culture such as the world of entertainment' (p. 238) rather than with the world of high culture, if it is indeed a mistake to do so? I expect that Knox and Hannam would agree with other scholars (e.g., Aziz 1987, Collins-Kreiner and Kilot 2000, Wickens 2002, and Moscardo et al. 2012) who have all argued that instead of imposing pre-selected unitary types on tourists, scholars should instead seek to examine the self-perceptions and experiences of the tourists who are being typologized in order to create more grounded typologies and increase their predictive abilities

However, for all their 'playful extension[s]' of the definitions of pilgrimage

and hedonism, Knox and Hannam never did define the terms they suggest have been conflated together in the modern world. For example, how exactly would Knox and Hannam define 'pilgrimage' and 'pilgrim', considering they are being compared to hedonism and the hedonist tourist? What is 'hedonism tourism', and what are the characteristics of the 'hedonistic tourist'? These are important distinctions to make, considering that Knox and Hannam in essence are comparing pilgrimage as a 'travel style' with hedonism which is more of a 'lifestyle'. As well, what is meant by 'vacation-as-doctrine'? What is meant by 'authenticity'? What is 'secular pilgrimage' as opposed to 'religious pilgrimage'?

After reading this paper, I note that there is an increasingly evident need for definitional consistency when it comes to the way scholars blur pilgrimage and tourism, particularly when it comes to the translation and interpretation of words from the 'language of religion' to the 'language of tourism'. While Knox and Hannam may be correct in stating that 'The verbal dexterity demonstrated in applying, stretching and murdering half-dead metaphors has not yet come to a conclusion...' (p. 240), without definitional consistency regarding metaphors us to describe the blurring of tourists/pilgrims and tourism/pilgrimage there may never be a conclusion. Thus, to paraphrase Voltaire, 'Define your terms, then we can talk'.

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## To Be or Not to Be a Tourist: The Role of Concept-Metaphors in Tourism Studies

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### A Conceptual Introductory Note

Tourists have been labelled, metaphorically, in multiple ways (Dann 2002). This includes descriptions of tourists *as* (secular) pilgrims in a quest of authenticity (MacCannell 1976) but also *as* travellers on a sacred journey (Graburn 1978, 1983, 2001). In contrast, the stereotypical image that tourists are hedonists is related particularly (but not exclusively) with sun, sand and sex, and is associated with, sometimes unbridled, consumerism (cf. Salazar 2010a). This research probe deals with the question whether a tourist is a 'secular pilgrim' or a 'hedonist in search of pleasure'. Both descriptors refer to a debate among tourism scholars that started back in the 1970s. It is important to put the question and possible answers to it within the historical context of this discussion.

First, I would like to state that, in my humble opinion, this probe is not about tourist typologies. Knox and Hannam suggest otherwise: 'any time we set out to explore a dualism we go through a predictable process of arriving at a conclusion whereby we might reject the notion of the categories as mutually exclusive or discover instead an additional set of categories. Such is the stuff that tourist typologies are made of'. As taxonomies do not make assertions, they cannot be judged true or false. Like tools, they may be found more or less useful for a particular purpose

(e.g., tourism marketing and management strategies). As I will discuss below, the scholars who started this debate had something very different in mind from trying to classify tourists. The descriptions of 'ideal type' tourists as (secular) pilgrims or hedonists, however, are related to broader visions of contemporary society. They are best conceived as a concept-metaphor. Henrietta Moore defines concept-metaphors as 'a kind of conceptual shorthand... They are domain terms that orient us towards areas of shared exchange, which is sometimes academically based... Their exact meanings can never be specified in advance – although they can be defined in practice and in context – and there is a part of them that remains outside or exceeds representation' (Moore 2004:73).

Concept-metaphors act as framing devices, and as such, they are perspectival. The advantage of using them is that they facilitate comparison. The problem with concept-metaphors such as 'secular pilgrim', however, is that by their nature they continue to have a shifting and unspecified tie to physical relationships in the world. As Moore (2004) argues:

*If concept-metaphors are to be relevant in a disciplinary context then they must connect to the construction of composite theories. Composite theories are those that contain ontological, epistemological and empirical claims. Concept-metaphors that merely act as*

*a descriptive gloss or posit causal forces that remain unexamined are essentially suffering – at the very least – from under-theorization (p. 80)*

In order to answer the research probe properly, we thus need to assess the composite theories underlying the concept-metaphors and the ontological, epistemological and empirical claims they make.

### The Tourist as Concept-Metaphor

*Of all the metaphors used to capture the postmodern condition, none has perhaps been employed more frequently than that of 'the tourist'. Just as modernity had its metaphor of 'the traveller', seeking the rational goal of educational improvement, the moral path of spiritual renewal, the scientific and imperialistic exploration of unknown territories, so too did post modernity seize upon the tourist as connotative of a dilettante life of fun in the sun and hedonism ad libitum in placeless destinations where the 'other' was cheerfully ignored in favour of the unbridled pursuit of individualism sans frontières. (Dann 2002: 6)*

Although Dean MacCannell (1976) did not coin the term 'secular pilgrim', he did provide the theoretical context to conceptualize the tourist as a secular pilgrim in quest of authenticity. Comparing tourism with pilgrimage, he writes:

*The motive behind a pilgrimage is similar to that behind a tour: both are quests for authentic experiences. Pilgrims attempt to visit a place where an event of religious importance actually occurred. Tourists present themselves at places of social, historical and cultural importance. (MacCannell 1973: 593)*

Importantly, MacCannell begins his seminal monograph, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, by specifying that he means two different things by tourist: (1) an 'actual person' and (2) a 'model for

modern-man-in-general' (1976:1). The notion of 'secular pilgrim' is related more closely to the second meaning. In other words, the description of tourist as (secular) pilgrim functions as a concept-metaphor. It is not so much about what a tourist does and is, as tourist, but how the figure of the tourist is emblematic for the times in which we live. This important distinction seems lost in the piece of Knox & Hannam. They argue that 'contemporary tourism is now so diverse that the original terms of the opposition set up between secular pilgrims and hedonists arguably no longer apply. There is little difference between pilgrims and tourists and many pilgrimages are hedonistic'. That was, of course, not the point of the original argument.

Inspired by Emile Durkheim's study of primitive religion and Levi-Strauss's structural anthropology, MacCannell sees tourism as an icon of the rootlessness and alienation of modern life. The search for meaning in (secularized) modern societies encourages pilgrimage to the sites of differentiation created by modernity and a search for the 'primitive' and pre-modern cultures it has displaced – a quest for 'authenticity' that is ultimately doomed as it is hindered by locals and tourism service providers that stage reality and 'real live' as mere attractions. MacCannell's work is thus an 'ethnography of modernity' (1976:2) in which tourism functions as a modern surrogate religion in connection with mass leisure.

MacCannell's theory is partially a reaction to the earlier work of Boorstin (1964), for whom tourism is essentially an aberration, a trivial, frivolous, superficial, and vicarious activity. Boorstin bemoans the disappearance of the travelling of yesteryear, which was an

individual, painstaking and educational experience. He believes that modern (mass) tourists are no more than sheer hedonists, unable to experience reality directly, thriving on and finding pleasure only in the inauthentic and, therefore, taking pleasure in contrived experiences, attractions and 'pseudo-events' created by tourism service providers and the media. Early on in the debate, Cohen (1979), points out that it is inaccurate to assume that all tourists are either dopes or secular pilgrims. According to him, most are simply out to have a good time – 'travelling for pleasure'. Only a few, of the non-institutionalized variety (also known as 'independent travellers'), look for meaning in their lives by touring the world inhabited by the 'Other'.

The use of the tourist as a metaphor for larger societal developments has also been popular outside of tourism studies. According to Appadurai, for example, tourists metaphorically represent 'the shifting world in which we live' (1996:33). Bauman (1996) takes the pilgrim as emblematic of modernity, the tourist of post-modernity: 'in the same way as the pilgrim was the most fitting metaphor for the modern life strategy preoccupied with the daunting task of identity-building, the stroller, the vagabond, the tourist and the player offer jointly the metaphor for the postmodern strategy moved by the horror of being bound and fixed' (Bauman 1996:26). For Bauman, the main difference is situated in the kind of mobility that characterizes tourism:

*The tourist moves on purpose (or so he thinks). His movements are first of all 'in order to', and only secondarily (if at all) 'because of'. The purpose is new experience; the tourist is a conscious and systematic seeker of experience, of a new and different experience, of the experience of difference and novelty –*

*as the joys of the familiar wear off and cease to allure. The tourists want to immerse themselves in a strange and bizarre element (a pleasant feeling, a tickling and rejuvenating feeling, like letting oneself be buffeted by sea waves) – on condition, though, that it will not stick to the skin and thus can be shaken off whenever they wish (Bauman 1996:29).*

### The Tourist as Pilgrim

*One needs to move beyond the Turnerian structural approach in an appreciation of the poststructuralist developments that have influenced sociology and anthropology during the 1980s. Nonessentialist accounts of tourism need to be explored, making use of recent pilgrimage studies focusing on the deconstruction of such unitary categories as pilgrim and tourist. Behind the superficial analogies between pilgrimage and tourism, there lies a more complex world of dissonance, ambiguity, and conflict that one is now beginning to explore through the analysis of official attempts to organize people's activities and beliefs and unofficial resistance to the power of those who claim to know what is both right and good (Eade 1992: 31).*

Many scholars have characterized tourism metaphorically as 'pilgrimages' (something scholars of religion have repeatedly criticized). Some seem to suggest that tourism evolved out of pilgrimage. While tourist, as a concept, only appeared at the beginning of the nineteenth century in English and French, one can identify people most of us would call tourists, as well as their actions, long before that. The term itself, derived from the Greek *tornos* (a carpenter's tool for drawing a circle), refers to an individual who makes a circuitous journey (usually for pleasure) and returns to the starting point. Pilgrim, on the other hand stems from the Latin *peregrinus*, which originally meant foreigner, wanderer, exile, and traveller, as well as newcomer and stranger. The meaning of pilgrimage historically developed to become 'a journey

claimed to be undertaken for reasons involving religious sacrifice' (Palmer et al. 2012: 71). Others use a much broader definition, making the difference with tourism become much smaller: 'a journey undertaken by a person in quest of a place or a state that he or she believes to embody a valued ideal' (Morinis 1992: 4).

The metaphorical conceptualization of tourists *as* pilgrims, like many other aspects of tourism (Salazar 2013), has largely been influenced by the work of anthropologists (Badone and Roseman 2004). Victor and Edith Turner famously wrote that 'a tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist' (1978:20). According to the Turners, pilgrimage, like tourism, is organized, bureaucratized and uses the same infrastructure mediated by travel agencies. They see evident links between tourism and pilgrimage in terms of both the journey and the experience of *communitas*, although they distinguish between the obligatory nature of many traditional rituals and the voluntary nature of tourism. Victor Turner himself notes that the simultaneous rise of the anthropology of tourism along with that of pilgrimage is no accident, since both areas of study have become metaphors for a world on the move, 'where rapid transportation and the mass media are moving millions literally or mentally out of the stasis of localization' (1992: viii).

In a Durkheimian tradition, Graburn (1978, 1983) maps tourism to Victor Turner's tripartite structure of *rites of passage*, situating the tourist's quest as a pursuit of the 'sacred' (non-ordinary), as separate from the 'profane' (ordinary). Importantly, tourists are being metaphorically compared to pilgrims as being on a 'sacred journey'. Tourism is seen as a secular and universal equivalent of

religion operating in non-ordinary time: 'even when the role[s] of tourist and pilgrim are combined, they are necessarily different but form a continuum of inseparable elements' (Graburn 1983: 16). Even history-distorting theme parks such as Disney World have been viewed as contemporary secular equivalents to traditional centres of faith, where the icons of civil religion are ritually worshipped and consumed (Moore 1980). Pfaffenberger (1983) sees present-day tourism arising out of a long tradition of religious pilgrimage. At the same time, he opposes serious (pious) pilgrims against frivolous (hedonistic) tourists. According to Colin Turnbull, too, tourists travel for 'hedonistic purposes'. Pilgrims, on the other hand gain 'a sense of belonging to a religious or spiritual heritage rather than a cultural one' (1981: 14).

In a special issue of *Annals of Tourism Research* on the relationships between pilgrimage and tourism, Valene Smith argues that 'tourist encounters can be just as compelling [as pilgrimage] and almost spiritual in personal meaning' (1992: 2). She sees social approval as the most important factor differentiating tourists from pilgrims. Her observation, similar to the Turners (Turner and Turner 1978), infers that from a tourism perspective there is (superficially) no difference between tourists and pilgrims: they share leisure time, income, and social sanctions for travel and, in most instances, the same infrastructure. Pilgrimage and tourism may be conceptualized as 'two parallel, interchangeable lanes' (Smith 1992: 15). People can 'travel either lane, or switch between them, depending on personal need or motivation, and as appropriate to time, place, and cultural circumstances' (Smith 1992: 15). Smith relies on Durkheim to link pilgrimage to the sacred and tourism to the secular and, in between these two, religious

tourism, which is related to the profane. In that same special issue, John Eade (1992) calls to reconstruct the terms tourist and pilgrim in order to capture the lack of harmony that exists between them.

Interestingly, Knox and Hannam never fully define how they understand the concepts of pilgrim and hedonist. This allows them to 'play' around with the terms (e.g., discussing the hedonistic aspects of pilgrimage). Although they recognize the 'metaphor of the pilgrim', they seem stuck in a logic of tourism typologies. That is why Knox and Hannam argue that the 'categories' of tourist and pilgrim 'have in some cases grown towards and overlap each other so that we can identify elements of the pilgrimage in hedonistic forms of tourism and hedonistic behaviour among supposed pilgrims'. Such statements suggest wrongly that there was a time in which 'pure' (and, thus, 'authentic') types of pilgrims and tourists existed. In addition, pilgrimage is imagined, in an evolutionary fashion, as 'ancestral' to tourism. On the one hand, Knox and Hannam seem to suggest that (cultural or creative) tourism has replaced pilgrimage (or, at least, the 'original' form of the practice). On the other hand, the 'mystical and spectacular behaviour of the faithful' – the pilgrims who are still around – has become part of the attraction for tourists visiting religious sites.

Knox and Hannam write that 'some tourists very clearly fall into the camp of being hedonists in search of pleasure'. This should come as no surprise. For most people, tourism involves more hedonism and conspicuous consumption than learning or understanding. However, with tourism becoming a phenomenon of the masses, the label of 'tourist' has received increasingly negative

connotations. Middle and higher social classes try to 'distinguish' (Bourdieu 1984) themselves by engaging in tourism activities that are esteemed to be of higher (moral) value (cf. Munt 1994). This strategy does not always seem to be successful. As Knox and Hannam note, 'cultural tourism is no longer clearly separate from mass forms of tourism'. Importantly, hedonists and pilgrims are not two 'types' of tourists, but concept-metaphors that reflect the societal role that scholars attribute to tourism. Again, Knox and Hannam think otherwise: 'That hedonists are in pursuit of pleasure suggests that the lot of the pilgrim, whether secular or otherwise, is somewhat more ascetic as they self-flagellate themselves from museum to gallery to heritage attraction'.

## Conclusion

Knox and Hannam end their piece by arguing that 'while the twin concepts of pilgrim and hedonist continue to have some utility they are not sufficiently nuanced or all-encompassing to describe, let alone explain, the totality of contemporary tourist practice'. Of course not, because this would imply an essentialist stance according to which tourists should be classified either as (secular) pilgrims or as hedonists. As Cohen noted long ago, 'tourism spans the range of motivations between the desire for mere pleasure characteristic of the sphere of "leisure" and the quest for meaning and authenticity, characteristic of the sphere of "religion"' (1979: 193). Tourism overlaps with pilgrimage, but also with business, migration and other phenomena (Salazar 2010b; Salazar and Zhang 2013). The two descriptors of this probe capture the complexity neither of tourists nor, by extension, the society they are supposed to represent.

As I made it clear above, this is not a discussion about tourist typologies or, worse, tourism market segments. Instead of asking whether tourists are secular pilgrims or hedonists, we should be asking what we gain, analytically, by using these concept-metaphors. For whom does this matter and how does tourism (or at least the study of it) benefit by the use of these terms? The fruitfulness of the original theoretical discussion is that it opened up an in-depth reflection on the nature of tourism in relation to the wider socio-economic context in which it develops. The role of concept-metaphors such as 'secular pilgrims' is to 'open up spaces for future thinking' (Moore 2004: 74). Their 'purpose is to maintain ambiguity and a productive tension between universal claims and specific historical contexts' (Moore 2004: 71). As the text by Knox and Hannam illustrates, however, the concepts have started to lead their own life and have almost become 'tourism imaginaries' (Salazar 2012;

Salazar and Graburn 2014) in their own right – socially transmitted representational assemblages that are used as meaning-making and world-shaping devices in tourism and beyond.

Despite my criticism and reservations, there is one point on which I wholeheartedly agree with Knox and Hannam, namely, that 'this is a highly situated, contingent and Eurocentric debate that fails to take account of tourist practices outside of the Western World'. Indeed, this conceptual discussion has been dominated since the very start by Western scholars and this research probe is a failed opportunity to open up the debate more globally. A similar argument could be made when it comes to gender. These criticisms seriously weaken the universal validity of the arguments made. Or, as Graham Dann argues, 'because the iconicity of metaphor depends on cultural codes, and cultures themselves vary, there can be no universal metaphors' (2002: 1).

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## Concluding Remarks

When first considering the question as to whether the “tourist is a secular pilgrim or a hedonist in search of pleasure” we were inclined towards offering a one word answer: No. We now recognize that this is a very complicated question that cuts to the very core of contemporary tourism studies. Margry asserts dissatisfaction with the term ‘secular pilgrimage’ with which we would concur but which fails to engage with the popular currency of the metaphor. Salazar’s account of both the tourist and tourism as pilgrimage as concept-metaphors illustrates that ‘secular pilgrims’ have become ‘tourism imaginaries’. This is an important point since the intentions of the original scholarly arguments have generally been lost in the later adoption and application of those ideas by others whether in the scholarly community or the travel and tourism industry.

For Salazar, however, the debate is not about typologies or market segmentation. Tourism as pilgrimage and the tourist as pilgrim have taken on the status of ready-made ideas in tourist studies as well as in popular accounts of tourism. Our strategy here was to extend the metaphor of the pilgrim far beyond its usefulness in understanding contemporary tourism. Olsen questions whether or not pilgrims (tourists) really self-flagellate when visiting museums, galleries and heritage attractions. The answer to this question depends on whether or not you wish to remain wedded to the pilgrimage metaphor, extend it (playfully or otherwise) or wholly abandon it. If one practice is equated with another metaphorically then surely all component parts of that practice are potentially semantically available for play? This is the problem of metaphors in general in that they are based upon a limited number of points of comparison but that such connections or similarities may not bear further analysis.

A post-secular age is one in which attitudes to religion are characterised by indifference which is only possible following a period of secularisation (Kyrlezhev 2008). Within secular thinking, religion becomes simply another identity choice open to the individual and was not given prominence over civil institutions. Ironically, this has created a circumstance within which the belief systems relating to post-Enlightenment culture and art have taken on some of the characteristics of religion in the sense of requiring belief, commitment and adherence to a moral code. Durkheim ([1915] 2008) identified the sacred / profane distinction as a central characteristic of religion and the decline in the importance in this distinction is not so much concerning the dichotomy itself but in relation to the dichotomy in the terms of dominant organized

religious structures (i.e. Christianity). In societies such as those of Europe and North America the formal influence of organized religions has tended to wane and more individualistic pursuits of a spiritual nature have come to prominence. In these circumstances, sacred / profane distinctions are evident within cultural fields and artistic movements in the sense of inside / outside distinctions.

It was never our intention to suggest that Christian pilgrimage was anything other than “alive and well”, nor to denigrate the important spiritual implications it retains for pilgrims. However, we feel that for Olsen to argue that equating hedonistic forms of tourism with religious experiences is potentially offensive and further to question whether “authenticity” and the “emotional and spiritual pleasures” of such tourism are “the same as those sought for and experienced by pilgrims or even cultural tourists” is to continue to make the same mistakes in terms of elevating some cultural practices above others. Similarly, Margry’s statement concerning youth tourism that “they merely engage in a (yearly) holiday within the reach of their budget and social peers, in which all the experiences of a vacation must take place” adds little in the way of critical insight.

To specifically respond to Margry’s concerns about our own moral tone, while we make no claim for having conducted a neutral analysis, it is possible that a certain degree of irony has been overlooked. The concern over who defines certain tourist motivations and performances as morally superior or inferior was central to our opening article and remains a key concern (see also Mostafanezhad and Hannam 2014 for further analysis of moral encounters in tourism). The answer to this problem in the short-term is not to develop further typologies but to develop research agendas that ask different questions. Finally, we should note that all of the contributing authors were disappointed that that the participants in this research probe are Western scholars when other voices might usefully have been incorporated.

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