

PILGRIMAGE AND THE PASSAGE TO SELF

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Abstract: «Pilgrimage» implies a journey made by those in movement towards a specific location or site. When defined strictly in Christian terms, the destination chosen limits itself to a sacred or holy place, many times a sanctuary or temple where the presence of the saint or «invisible friend», in the words of Peter Brown, is felt and sought after, the intercessor thus serving as the connection to the celestial realm. While the association of sacredness often rests upon a pilgrimage destination, this paper seeks to explore the «passage» or the road itself as a hierophany which erupts into the mundane, leading the pilgrim to the sacred. This concept of hierophany highlighted in Miceau Eliade's works demonstrates how the sacred breaks into the human experience, in this case, pilgrims walking along the road or «passage» which is leading them onwards and upwards, thus parallel to the joyous proclamation of «*Ultreia et Suseia*». By stepping upon this pilgrimage road, the traveler is able to connect and experience the transcendent while simultaneously discovering true self. The aim of the paper is to show the connection of the pilgrimage road as a passage and to reveal how through pilgrimage there is a return to self, as one is uncovering identity whilst making his or her way along the road. With this in mind, concepts from Zygmunt Bauman's studies will also be addressed and two texts will be reviewed, both by female travelers from the United States who, at the turn of the twentieth century, ended up on the Santiago pilgrimage road in Spain, all of which will be instrumental in order to evidence this phenomenon. These women, whose journeys led them to the passage of self, reveal how the Santiago road and shrine either was or became a focal point of their sojourns, evident in the pages of their narratives. Setting out upon the sojourn signifies that the pilgrim is away from home, experiencing the unfamiliar and embracing encounters upon a path, or a «passage» which is the liaison to the sacred, enabling the discovery and formation of self and therefore

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constructing identity. Although more than a century has passed, this same feature of the Santiago pilgrimage road continues to act upon female sojourners of the 21st century.

Keywords: Georgiana Goddard King, hierophany, identity, Katherine Lee Bates, pilgrimage.

Introduction

«I am no more than one ingredient in my life; the other is the surrounding circumstance, the world... I and circumstance both form parts of my life», states the Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset in his lesson 5 from his work *Some Lessons in Metaphysics* (Ortega y Gasset, 1969: 78). This «circumstance» or «world» in which one finds oneself can be altered when one chooses to move from a space already known and to explore and change to another. Ortega conceives an individual as an «ente» or «being», claiming that one does not have a fixed being and proposes rather that one's being is invented by oneself. He questions if a person can be considered as a type of novelist of themselves, one who forges the fantastic figure of a character with unreal activities¹. Considering this approach, a person can, in a sense, self-produce him or herself going well beyond the sheer satisfaction of biological needs. This Orteguitan concept which reveals the individual as a technician, who discovers and builds a technique in order to invent him or herself, can easily be assimilated when introducing the concept of *pilgrimage and the passage to self*.

Embarking upon a pilgrimage undoubtedly implies an altering or change in the normal vital conditions, settings and surroundings of the individual. The customary space in which one finds him or herself is left behind upon journeying to another, thus changing one's world *per se*. The desire to assume such an undertaking is the first stepping stone which lays new ground in the formation of self. Consequently, this act of making a pilgrimage to another place will not be able to be separated from the discovery and identity of self thenceforth, as the momentum of change has been initiated.

This idea will be explored through the consideration of various female authors at the turn of and at the beginning of the 20th century who found themselves on the Camino de Santiago, the pilgrimage route leading to the shrine of Saint James in northwestern Spain. Through two case studies, identity formation through pilgrimage is set at the forefront, as once undergone and included in one's life events,

¹ In volume v, page 335 of his Complete works (*Obras completas*) published in 1947, Ortega y Gasset questions if «man» can be considered his own technician with the original quote in Spanish: «¿Sería el hombre una especie de novelista de si mismo que forja la figura fantástica de un personaje con su tipo irreal de ocupaciones y que para conseguir realizarlo hace todo lo que hace, es decir, es técnico?».

it is inseparable when considering the passage to self. Through the texts of these travel narratives, evidence leads us to understand that similar transformations of self are occurring on the present-day pilgrimage road in the 21st century. The actual tracing and following of roads or pilgrimage paths is revealed as the prominent factor allowing for this passage to self and identity formation to transpire.

Pilgrimage Paths and Connection to the Sacred

Before analyzing this concept of identity and the wayfarer, it is crucial to evidence the focus on the passage or path as the preeminent factor in the process of self-discovery. This journey is not just another solitary event which comprises the experiences in the life of an individual, but rather it manifests itself as an occurrence which becomes integrated into the individual who embarks upon it. This study will examine the passage to self when considering travel or pilgrimage to sacred places, for it is these spaces that are still immensely powerful in attracting visitors, despite the passing of centuries. A pilgrimage to holy sites heightens even further the polarization of those profane spaces in which contemporary or modern-day people of non-religious societies are more accustomed to live and thrive in. In a desacralized world, the motives for undertaking a pilgrimage tend to lure away from religious experiences and the sacredness of those spaces where once this factor alone was what attracted believers of the past. This same place may nowadays only draw agnostics, atheists, enthusiasts or mystics, a far cry from those pilgrims of yesteryear.

When defined strictly in Christian terms, the sacred destination of pilgrimage limits itself to a holy sanctuary or temple where the presence of the saint is deemed to be experienced and felt. It is this «invisible friend», as Peter Brown (1981: 50) describes, whose presence is perceived as being felt, and close by, once the pilgrim finally reaches the sanctuary. This proximity is precisely what is sought after, the saintly intercession thus serving as a connection to the sacred upon reaching the destination². The growth of the cult of the saints in the High Middle Ages, continued to be on the rise as many believers would overcome obstacles traveling great distances, to reach these sacred destinations with the sole intention of being able to «address the martyr their prayers of intercession as though he were present» (Brown, 1981: 11). The destination itself, the shrine, undoubtedly proves to be worthy of examination, but in this case, I wish to explore the passage or the road which travelers of current times and those of earlier centuries, have chosen

² In his book *The Cult of the Saints*, Brown discusses how this concept of the saints and refers to how they were considered as «invisible companions» who were in the minds of the people of Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages as they made pilgrimages to their gravesites. The intermediary figure of a dead saint, whose shrine many walked to, would intervene on their behalf.

to traverse, even when religiosity was not the driving component which spurred the initiation of their journeys.

Although the shrine is not the principal motivation for wayfarers to make a pilgrimage, it can be evidenced how this passage still has the power to evoke travelers, even despite the lack of religious motives. The road beckons many pilgrims to step upon the beaten paths leading them along the way to the sacred place without actually truly perceiving the reason for, or knowing why or how they ended up there. But the time endured along these roads and paths throughout the journey is clearly essential when considering pilgrimage as a passage to self. The significance of this passage is the focal point which will be taken into consideration here.

It is the examination of this aspect of the path, road or passage which leads us to contemplate it inasmuch, as a tie or link to the sacred. The road, not merely the destination, can serve as a true «hierophany» as seen when exploring the concept insisted upon by the 20th-century Romanian historian and anthropologist Mircea Eliade. As elucidated thoroughly in the works of Eliade, the term *hierophany* is defined as «something sacred that shows itself to us» (Eliade, 1957: 11). This path or route to a pilgrimage destination can surface as a true connection to the sacred. This «breaking into the world», in this case, a simple road to follow, de-structures the homogeneity of the space, that being a common space or profane space. A normal road or path, which in itself is a profane reality, can reflect the characteristics of a hierophany to some when it suddenly reveals itself as sacred and «its immediate reality is transmuted into a supernatural reality» (Eliade, 1957: 12). Eliade's theory claims that «for those who have a religious experience all nature is capable of revealing itself as cosmic sacrality» (Eliade, 1957: 12). For example, the paths along the routes that lead to Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in north-western Spain, have revealed themselves as sacred for a countless number of pilgrims, serving as hierophanies that orientate people to the sacred. The force of the path induces some pilgrims who are walking upon it, to touch upon and directly experience the sacred, thus transforming them in a way that other spaces would not have the power to do. In this fashion, the hierophany not only transforms the profane road into a sacred road, but it also transforms a traveler into a pilgrim. In this sense, some cease being just mere tourists or travelers along the way. One's reality as a «pilgrim» is no longer merely that of one who marches through *-per-*the fields *-agros-*, but becomes that of one traveling through strange, unknown or mysterious lands, as definitions of the word «pilgrim» indicate. The manifestation of the sacred or hierophany emerges as something «of a wholly different order, a reality that does not belong to our world» (Eliade, 1957: 11) as something strange and foreign to us along our once profane path. This idea also appears in the theologian, Rudolf Otto's work, *The Idea of the Holy* as he describes the sacred, explaining that «it contains a quite specific element or 'moment', which sets it apart from 'the rational'» something «which remains inexpressible» and «ineffabile»

(Otto, 1952: 4). In this way, it is not only the final destination point in the pilgrimage which renders sacredness, such as the shrine in Santiago itself but rather the sublime path that takes on the role of a hierophany, which suddenly becomes the center for the wayfarer who is able to experience it as «something else» (Eliade, 1957: 12). The *Camino* can thus be considered a true hierophany that can alter the walkers even before they reach the doors of the cathedral which houses the relics of the saint. Upon examining literature left behind by pilgrims and travelers, such a testimony can be justified.

The hierophanic quality and sacredness of pilgrimage roads to sanctuaries has long since lost its validity in the collective conscience. As our world has become desacralized so have the roads to shrines. Nonetheless, it is not until these hierophanies emerge that many can take hold of the opportunity to relate to something in which one's own existence has felt long desacralized. Reflecting on this process of change and erosion of the sense of the divine in modern humanity along with the desacralization of human life, led Nietzsche to proclaim the «death of God». This cultural shift away from faith was further pondered upon as the philosopher described and analyzed European nihilism which was later profoundly explored and studied by German philosopher Martin Heidegger. According to Eliade, «change in spiritual attitudes and behavior in modern man has desacralized his world and assumed a profane existence» (1957: 13). Given this circumstance, this «desacralization pervades the entire experience of the non-religious man of modern societies» in such a way that one «finds it increasingly difficult to rediscover the existential dimension of religious man in the archaic societies» (Eliade, 1957: 13). This force which drove thousands to the graves of saints and to the doors of churches and sanctuaries, has long since been felt in such depth, as modern societies have chosen to live in a desacralized world. The idea of the desacralization of pilgrimage has been thrust into the world as modern trends have desacralized society in general. Nonetheless, on the roads that lead to Santiago, for many travelers the opportunity still arises for them to connect with the sacred as the link to the holy is revealed. The experience of the sacred can manifest itself to those who embark upon the journey leading them to something previously unexperienced. This walking and moving forward in pilgrimage becomes a part of their own identities. To highlight this idea of hierophany or quality of the pilgrimage road to Santiago and to further understand and interpret this notion, two texts will be reviewed, both by female travelers from the United States to Spain around the turn of the 20th Century. Through their narratives, these women reveal how their journeys along the Santiago road and to the shrine in Compostela led them to the passage of self.

North American Female Pilgrims on the Santiago Road

The first text to be discussed is that of university professor Katharine Lee Bates, who found herself on Spanish soil when she sought specifically to explore Spain and its people by embarking on one of several of her transatlantic journeys. Bates, born in 1859 in Falmouth, Massachusetts, witnessed and formed part of the transition to modernity, and was a firm pursuer of this change in women's role in American society. Her life reflected this new ideology in which women began to become their own «identity-builders», rupturing through the spheres of norms, revealing a new society that was slowly mitigating this stigma of women that it had so long endured, a time marked by change for females. Many women in the field of education, drew upon their profession in order to incite forced social changes, their very actions serving as a catalyst to spur this uprising of women's new role in the world. In 1896 Bates wrote, «The inequalities of American life are, at present, so unhappily pronounced that more or less faintly even our colleges needs must mirror them. But the colleges do not mirror only, they transform» (Bates, 1876-1899). The second half of the 19th century brimmed with happenings which changed the role of women.

In the late 19th century, American female scholars and writers were especially active in this reform as their engagement with Great Britain introduced them to a transatlantic connection. Consequently, transatlanticism created a web of this Anglo-American «Atlantic community» composed primarily of 19th-century women activists, travelers and writers, on opposite sides of the world, the latter of whom had the power of the pen, which allowed them to induce further change as they could address issues pertaining to the society of those times. Traveling across the Atlantic was slowly becoming more pursued by many American women who could afford such a costly and courageous undertaking. With these journeys, travel narratives written by females also emerged, a genre linked to modernity. These writings reveal not only the first-hand tales of adventures abroad but conversely serve to engage and critique norms of the late 19th century into which the category of gender also surfaces. Women denied accepting the relegated role which kept them confined to the domestic sphere³.

There is no doubt that Katharine Lee Bates, who was teaching English literature at Wellesley College for women, had been influenced by the Women's Rest Tour Association (WRTA) which was founded in 1891 by Boston literary women. Her

³ The role of women in this time period and the transatlantic exchanges between them is discussed through various articles published in 2012 in the book *Transatlantic Women. Nineteenth-Century American Women Writers and Great Britain*. Fifteen different writers include their essays which had grown from a conference and project which took place at the Rothermere American Institute in 2008. Of special interest is the article by Libby Bischof, «A Summer in England. The Women's Rest Tour Association of Boston and the Encouragement of Independent Transatlantic Travel for Women».

name appears on the November 15, 1898, *List of Members*. The main objective of this association was to encourage women to take charge of their own personal and intellectual development and growth by inciting them to travel abroad. The word «rest» in its title refers to how women would «rest» from their daily routines by offering the opportunity to embark on new adventures or journeys and seek out their independence. Surprisingly enough, the WRTA used the scallop shell, which had been incorporated as the Association's symbol, on publications that they produced. Each member also had a golden scallop shell pin which was to be worn by female travelers who were abroad, to show they belonged to this association. The emblem of the Camino was also seen imprinted on the association's newsletter titled *The Pilgrim's Scrip* (Bischof, 2012: 154-155).

Bates, the author of the lyrics of one of the most popular patriotic hymns of America, titled «America the Beautiful», introduced travel into her active academic life as a professor, poetess and writer, when she began to journey to other parts of the world. She traveled alone or accompanied by her close beloved friend, Katharine Coman, leaving behind her alma mater Wellesley in Massachusetts and her home, the Scarab which she shared with the above-mentioned companion from 1907 onwards. It is upon making these journeys that she could escape from the confines of this narrow space where her academic obligations pressed her in her daily life at Wellesley, thus offering her the possibility to promote her restless intellectual and cultural pursuits to understand the working of other nations.

In the pages of Bates' *Spanish Highways and Byways*, published in the year 1900, the passage to self can be uncovered. The author prefaces the book by claiming that her travel narrative is nothing but a «record of impressions», and that it should serve to «at least bear witness to the picturesque, poetic charm of the Peninsula and to the graciousness of the Spanish people». Her relation with the founders of the International Institute for Girls, Alice Gullick and her husband, a Congregational pastor, had also provided her with a prior connection to the country. Her drive to set women and young girls into schools and provide them with the necessary education had also pushed her to be active in the pursuit of the establishment of schools even beyond the borders of her own country.

Although this journey to Spain was not inspired by the sole purpose of making the pilgrimage to Santiago, the road that passes through the cities along the way to Santiago was traversed by Bates and she does make her way eventually to Saint James' shrine. She expresses how she does not desire to leave the country before visiting the «Jerusalem of the West» (Bates, 1900: 409), as she proclaims, «It did not seem to me historically respectful to take leave of Spain without *having made a pilgrimage* to Santiago» (Bates, 1900: 362). Despite the condescending tone which uncovers contrary connotations when referring to her «pilgrimage», the sacredness of the place is ignored, its mention possibly having been inspired simply by satirical intentions. Clearly, the religious motives for the inclusion of this city

in her itinerary are not present, nonetheless the mere fact of referring to the jaunt to Santiago as a «pilgrimage» is a precursor of the impact that the shrine and the roads that lead to it had left upon her, not to mention the fact that the entire book ends with her time in Santiago de Compostela.

However, along Bates' travels throughout the Peninsula, the roads that lead to the shrine end up appearing as a hierophany linking her to a different space which in turn contributes to this process of passage to self. In chapter two «A Continuous Carnival», Bates' narrative evokes the significance of this sacred space when she crosses the threshold of the cathedral in Burgos. She attests that what they thought of the cathedral was actually not important, «In a word, however we thought nothing at all; we only felt» (Bates, 1900: 15). This testimony from Bates hints at Eliade's description that, «language is incapable of manifesting the true essence of the experience of the sacred» (Eliade, 1957: 18). He argues that when humans try putting into words and expressing fully the power of the divine, there is a «nothingness to be discovered» as they do not have the capacity to express what exactly it is. William James, the psychologist-turned-philosopher, whose works flourished at the turn of the 20th century, also reveals this idea upon explaining this experience of transformation documented in a manuscript which he translated, «But the more I seek words to express this intimate intercourse, the more I feel the impossibility of describing the thing by any of our usual images» (Williams, 1985: 68). This passing through a threshold, in this case, the threshold of the Burgos cathedral, ties one inevitably back to the idea of passage to self. Turning to Eliade's discussions of thresholds we can consider how the cathedral surfaces as a sacred space to her, a different space from the other nearby buildings. The threshold of the cathedral itself separates two spaces: the profane and the other religious or sacred. This threshold «limits the boundary» and serves as the «frontier» which «distinguishes and opposes both worlds». Eliade describes the threshold as a «paradoxical place» as he reasons that it is the space «where the two worlds communicate» (Eliade, 1957: 25).

Pilgrimage allows for the crossing over of this space, as the road can manifest itself as a hierophany, tying or constituting an opening to the sacred. «Every sacred space implies a hierophany, an irruption of the sacred...» (Eliade, 1957: 26). The passing over into this space makes one more vulnerable as he or she becomes exposed to an opening leading to the sacred, it is that «paradoxical point of passage» to the sacred, «from one mode of being to another» (Eliade, 1957: 27). The church or sanctuary becomes a place of passing between heaven and earth, between the sacred and profane, and an integral part of the pilgrimage as the wayfarer passes in and out of these religious edifices, a habit and truth which also consequently comes to form a persistent element in the passage to self. The continual reminders of the sacred appear and reappear and remain with the pilgrim as he or she is journeying towards the shrine.

In this chapter which narrates the time spent in Burgos, Bates assumes this connection to the sacred along her pilgrimage and reveals its impact upon her when she states upon leaving the city of Burgos, «that the proud old city seemed to fill all the horizon of thought», which induces her to further question herself when she asks, «How had we lived so long without it?» (Bates, 1900: 16). A piece of her identity has been ascertained on this stop of her journey. The author, a faithful Congregationalist, more than once considers herself and her traveling companion from Wellesley, as «pilgrims of St. James» (Bates, 1900: 375) and the image of the vigorous saint with his sword held high in the air is summoned various times in the narrative. This evoking of the iconography of St. James served to remind them to be on their way as the saintly figure «was clearly not a person to be trifled with», thus ensuring that they «must be pressing forward on their pilgrimage» (Bates, 1900: 371). Although some cities along the route beckoned a lengthy stay, they knew that the «pilgrims of St. James must put fresh peas in their shoes and be off to Compostela» (Bates, 1900: 375). «The uplifted sword of St. James drove us on», the author clamors as they wanted to reach Compostela in time for the «annual fiesta of Santiago», and «there was no time to lose» (Bates, 1900: 382). The incessant mentioning of their state as pilgrims continues to appear intermittently until the final pages of the work, although the skepticism regarding their true pilgrim qualities is also brought to light.

Once in the holy city of the Apostle, Bates is again confronted with the sacred and she relates how upon catching the first glimpse of the Santiago cathedral, the «fatigues of the journey and discomforts» of their lodging «melted from memory like shadows of the night» (Bates, 1900: 423). They found themselves, on July 24, standing before the «rich dark mass of fretted granite», witnessing firsthand, «a majestic church standing solitary in the midst of spreading *plazas*» (Bates, 1900: 423). Once the threshold of the grandiose medieval cathedral was crossed, Bates was further compelled to narrate encounters with those pilgrims within the cathedral with whom she had interacted. She dedicates paragraphs to expand upon the descriptions of these «true» pilgrims who, although few and far between, seemed to be enraptured just by the sheer fact of being within the walls of the sanctuary of the Apostle, including the middle-aged man, a humble worshipper whose countenance held an «expression of naive ecstasy» (Bates, 1900: 427) or the old woman in pilgrim dress who was only a beggar and who had made the journey to Santiago as part of her penance dictated to her by the priest of her village (Bates, 1900: 428).

Although Bates recognized that the «contents of the silver casket, the center of Santiago faith, could arouse no thrill of worship» within her, the sacred space and the cathedral itself were impactful as she dedicates many pages of the book to narrate this part of her travels in Spain (Bates, 1900: 422). The pilgrimage itself, her journey, put her into touch with these sacred spaces so very different from the normal profane spaces of her world. When she finally set sail for home, embarking

back across the Atlantic, as the boat pulled further away from the shores, she referred to Spain as the land «toward which one of us, at least, still felt a stubborn longing» (Bates, 1900: 439). Could it be that she was leaving a piece of herself behind? Had she been led along this pilgrimage to discover more of herself through exposure to the sacred? The tremendous impact that the cathedral of Santiago had made upon her, could only incline her to discover more of herself, heightening her sensitivity, her affectivity and her stubborn longing for Spain, which in turn allows us to uphold the idea that this final stay in the city of Santiago caused her to discover and to construct more of herself. In this way the sacred road of pilgrimage constituted an integral element of the passage to self for Bates.

Perspectives of another Transatlantic Female Pilgrim

The second literary work incorporated to explore this idea of pilgrimage and the passage to self requires a second voluminous publication to be considered, this also being by another transatlantic female scholar, Georgiana Goddard King. King traveled to Spain on numerous occasions, but the first time somewhat later than Bates, although she had spent one year in Europe, mainly in Paris, between 1898 and 1899. In the case of her journey to Spain which would result in the publication of her book to be discussed here, the vital essence of her sojourn was precisely centered upon the studying of the *Camino de Santiago*, and the core of her research rested upon examining the art and architecture of the Medieval pilgrimage route. Through her writings, although the focus is quite fixated on the art history of Spain, the *pilgrimage and the passage to self* can also be explored and drawn into consideration.

Georgiana Goddard King made several journeys to Spain before writing her three-volume work, *The Way of Saint James* published in 1920 by the Hispanic Society of America. Its founder, Archer Milton Huntington, had convinced her to undertake summer journeys to Spain with the intent of exploring its art history. He offered to provide her with the money necessary to carry out the research and all that this entailed and also promised that he would publish her work if she accepted⁴. As seen in one of the articles of the Bryn Mawr Alumnae Bulletins, it is said that Huntington had «profound respect for her intelligence». This wasn't her first offer to conduct research abroad, previously in 1914, she had already

⁴ Found in the archives in the special Collection reading room at Bryn Mawr University in Pennsylvania, are letters regarding King's projects that she had conducted for the Hispanic society. The author Janice Mann tells of her investigation at the Hispanic Society and how she had found a file of correspondence between King and Huntington. She says that after going through these files she could perceive that Huntington had suggested and was responsible for many of the projects that she chose to pursue.

received another, this one from the art critic Bernard Berenson, who had been so impressed with her research, slides and cataloguing of Italy's art, that he wished for her to go to Florence in order to help him in his writings and research on Italian art, offering any salary necessary, a tempting proposal which she ended up turning down. In the case of Spain and the extensive volumes which she was writing, her aim was to record and interpret iconographical details of monuments which especially populated the pilgrimage road with the intention of showing «Spain's debt in architecture, to other countries, France in especial, during the Middle Ages» (King, 1920: I, IV). Her work also involved defining the Spanish styles which had been altered and engulfed by later architectural modifications of other centuries. This tedious task required King three years of tracing paths, visiting monuments and compiling information along the Saint James route, previous to the writing of her colossal three-volume work. In the end the entire undertaking took seven years of her life.

King was a beloved professor at Bryn Mawr College for girls where she began as a Reader of English several years after completing her Master's degree in 1898. Starting in 1906 she held this position until 1911, but her passion for art history led her to other fields. In 1912, the History of Art Department was organized at Bryn Mawr with her at the head, although she still held her position as Lecturer in Comparative Literature. Drawn to dedicate her scholarly pursuits to art history, she soon found that this niche would lead her to higher academic recognition not only in her motherland but also abroad, in Europe, and especially Spain, the country whose art and architecture she dedicated countless hours to. She was promoted one year earlier than promised to full professorship at Bryn Mawr in 1916 due to the appealing offer that Huntington had made her which included increasing her salary by \$700 as well as securing her the prestige of being named the Head Curator of the Hispanic Society of America in New York. This counteroffer by the College along with a slight salary increase, made her think twice about leaving behind her teaching career and ultimately prompted her to turn down Huntington's offer.

Fortunately for many students, her decision benefitted them as countless documents attest to the impact that she had upon students in class, praising her way of instructing and teaching the history of art. She pushed students to contemplate art and to independently think and understand it, thus developing their own thoughts and ultimately learning how to strive to a higher level and in a sense, educate themselves. Her infatuation with art was transmitted to students who said they were «taking GG (as they affectionately called her)» instead of stating that they were majoring in art, just grateful to be able to sit in one of her classes at Taylor Hall where they learned to strive for excellence and demand more of themselves. One former student testified to this powerful impact of King in the classroom when she wrote

in 1924, «No one who came within the sphere of her influence can quite imagine Bryn Mawr without it»⁵.

Apart from her teaching roles, King dedicated her life to her research. Spain and its art were evidently at the heart of this research. What most spurred this interest in Spain, aside from the varied and rich monumental display of Pre-Romanesque, Romanesque and Gothic art within the country, was the place and the epoch in which King lived during her early years of higher education. The 20th century saw a resurgence of interest in Spain shortly after the Spanish-American War of 1898 which had put the United States on the opposing side of Spain, this being a spin-off of this growing curiosity in the country during the decades shortly before the war. King was just completing her bachelor's degree in English literature in 1896, and she made her first trip to Europe in 1897. The number of transatlantic visitors to Spain had surged during this time period prior to the war, with tourists enthusiastic for anything they could touch regarding Spanish culture and art. One of the important mentions of Spain and the impact that it had on tourists, artists and scholars from abroad appeared in the book *Reminiscences* by Augustus Saint-Gauden. The American sculptor who visited Spain in the Fall of 1897, professed to have been struck by the «Spanish fever» as soon as he entered the country, the same condition that so many tourists suffered from upon visiting the country, not insinuating a medical sense of the coined expression, but rather referring to it figuratively (Kagan, 2019: 3). This thirst to experience to the hilt the art and culture of the Iberian Peninsula drew many to explore the Spanish land, visit monuments and immerse themselves fully in its art, music, architecture, culture, dance, cinema, literature and gastronomy. Spain, until then, had remained in the background to France, and was considered a place which many of the elite had thought to be a «dead and gone civilization»⁶. In the Gilded Age, commercial and international growth and foreign trade were becoming more common, triggering Americans to become more curious about foreign culture. Books and articles regarding the «romance» of Spain found their way into the hands of eager readers. This «Spanish craze» as coined by historian Richard Kagan, would change Americans' viewpoint on the Spanish land, culture and its people. Moreover, later on during the 20th century, prominent writers began to shift their focus to Spain. King had also been fortunate to come into contact and maintain friendships with some of these authors

⁵ The biographical information appears in letters, correspondence and articles published in Bryn Mawr bulletins found in the archives housed in the Bryn Mawr Special Collection Library at the Pennsylvania College. This cited quote appears in an article written by a past student, Katharine B. Nielson in 1924 and was published in the Bryn Mawr Alumnae Bulletin in 1939, vol: 19, no. 6 under the title «In Memoriam» which included various articles dedicated to King after her death on May 4th, 1939.

⁶ This quote appears on page 4 in the book titled *The Spanish Craze* by Richard Kagan and refers to the answer that financier Morris Ketchum Jesup had given to the hispanist, Archer Milton Huntington when he had spoken to him of his love of Spain's literature and art in the early year of 1891.

such as Gertrude Stein whose profuse love of Spain revealed biased feelings towards the country.

It was King's years of traveling around Spain and other countries of Europe which opened the door to her work as an academic in the field of art history alongside her role as English reader and Comparative English lector. Thanks to her impetus, Bryn Mawr could boast of offering the first graduate courses on Spanish art history in the United States. This time abroad also led her to other academic endeavors such as reediting the book *Some Accounts of Gothic Architecture in Spain* between the years 1911-1914, authored by George Street. Also, once she advanced to full professor at Bryn Mawr, she began to teach courses in Modern Art as well, cubist art being introduced to her by Gertrude and Leo Stein. This long academic pilgrimage would lead her to a prestigious career as a scholar, full professor and historian and to become recognized as one of the most versed persons in Spanish architecture.

In the opening pages of *The Way of Saint James*, she reveals how in the research and writing of her volumes on Spanish art, her «intentions, as the readers will see has grown from a mere pedantic exercise in architecture, to a very pilgrimage», as she continues «to following ardently along the ancient way where all the centuries have gone» (King, 1920: I, 22). Therefore, returning to the central focus of this present study, and delving into her texts, one can perceive how this pilgrimage and passage to self also surfaces within King's work. The pilgrimage to Santiago for King ended up revealing itself as a circumstance of extraordinary personal importance in her life, it ended up being a determining factor in forming part of her existence or of her «self», of her preferences, of her freedom. This brings to mind once again Ortega y Gasset's theory from his lessons in metaphysics, when he states that one «finds [oneself] in a circumstance, a set of surroundings, a world» (Ortega y Gasset, 1969: 77). Again, this circumstance forms the other ingredient of one's life or of one's own being, or the «I», discussed previously. The spaces and places which King had been exploring during her years along the *Camino francés*, proved to be constant hierophanies, elements which broke the homogeneity and neutrality of her life, her life in the profane space that she was immersed in as she pursued to carry out her academic endeavors on the Peninsula. Although her pursuit to study Spanish art and architecture is classified by her in her text as «pedantic», and even if her quest to compile data, descriptions and explanations is far from the rendering of the «sacred spaces» in which she frequently found herself, these «points of orientation in the chaos of homogeneity» (Eliade, 1957: 23) allowed her to experience the sacred, which led her to understand more fully her own self, her own identity.

The Identity-Building Sacred Road

In his article «From Pilgrim to Tourist», the sociologist, Zygmunt Bauman classifies the homogenous space as a «desert-like world» which is «featureless» and whose «meaning is yet to be brought into it through the wandering» (Bauman, 1996: 22). This pilgrimage through life «would transform it into the track leading to the finishing line where meaning resides» (Bauman, 1996: 22). As King reminisces, this connection to the road and meaning is showcased as she refers to the way, the pilgrimage road, the *Camino*, saying that «Along the way the winds impel, the waters guide, earth draws the feet. The very sky lures and insists» (King, 1920: I, 23). As she endures time spent on the road throughout her investigation, with every monument visited, scrutinized, studied and revisited, she is «bringing in this meaning» and is experiencing, as described by Bauman, this passage of pilgrimage called «identity building». As she travels from town to town along the way, she is also coming closer to herself: «The pilgrim and the desert-like world he walks acquire their meanings *together* and *through each other*» (Bauman, 1996: 22).

Undoubtedly, King's intention of traversing the pilgrimage road is not to connect with her religiosity, as she at no point professes herself as a believer. As Dunn (2022) points out in her article «First Class or Coach? Women as Tourists and Pilgrims, 1888-1928», King as well as Bates refer to their journeys to Compostela as «...pilgrimages, but as Protestants they have no theological mindset for their journeys and clearly set their pilgrim designation on reasons other than faith» (Dunn, 2022: 10). As Protestants, any outward expression of religiosity was muted as they move along the road of the Apostle. Nonetheless, they both ended up «walking to» something on the road or upon this projected hierophany which connects to the sacred as it paves the way to the holy shrine of Santiago de Compostela, where the perception of the transcendent is more than evident. The pilgrim «avoids being lost in this desert» for she makes this «pilgrimage out of necessity», which leads her closer to, or to progress towards this passage to self (Bauman, 1996: 21). «The way is opened before you, and closed behind» says King, remarking about how journeys to shrines are made (King, 1920: I, 24). She describes Compostela to which the «restless feet are guided» as being «not a place to live, triste, grey, quite dead» and further states «but when you are away it draws you» (King, 1920: I, 24). She is aware of the weight of the past pilgrims, many of them true believers, as she makes her way along the Camino: «There as I went, so went the Middle Ages», the road she toiled bringing her close to the discovery and building of self (King, 1920: I, 24). The pilgrimage had become part of her and who she was, her time in Spain not to be separated, nor divested from her life upon returning to America. Even when she was away from it, she claimed that it still drew her: «In the Spring, when frost is out of the ground, and ships are sailing,

week by week, you cannot get it out of your head: as you smell the brown fresh-turned clods, it works in your blood» (King, 1920: I, 24).

The academic field which she immersed herself in, the history of art, would nonetheless also be what had the power to bring her to this passage of self as she made her «pilgrimage». For her, not only the pilgrimage road appeared as a hierophany, but also many other realities that marked the Camino, such as the art, the architecture and sculpture found by the wayside and in the towns, all of which displayed features bearing symbols of religious importance that would serve as «vehicles of passage» having the capacity to transport «from one space to another» (Eliade, 1957: 25). The space of the church or temple, or even mere religious ruins, provide areas for one to symbolically ascend upward and at the same time allow for the sacred to descend. They serve as an opening through which one can attain this upward direction and ensure a connection and communication with the divine. *Ultreia et suseia*, words commonly heard along the pilgrims' road, represent this concept of moving onwards and upwards. Spanish monuments studied and visited by King on her journey provided her with the possibility to feel the sacred space more present and to witness the connection between the profane and the sacred, especially as she crossed over and into spaces which held the most spiritual of scenes⁷. In a sense, her work as an art historian did not stop only in the sheer compilation of historical data, documents or monuments, but rather it led her to deeper hermeneutic considerations, as her own interpretation of what she contemplated could seep into her studies, allowing her to truly relive and understand the reason and the purpose of these edifices, vestiges and sacred symbols and scenes carved in stone. Moreover, King understood this feature in art as she reveals in her «Introductory Notes to Art» that were amongst her teaching material used by her in her classes which is presently found in the archives at Bryn Mawr. King says «...that the secret inclination of all art is to communicate feeling not just what the artist felt but what he inherited» (Georgiana Goddard King papers).

Upon pondering the ruins of the Romanesque cloister in the Benedictine Monastery of San Juan de la Peña found on the Jaca Road, and after dedicating many lines to saintly sculpted figures, where she mentions the curving parallel lines of the hair and beard or the high cheekbones and the eyes in «Scriptural phrase» bulging out with the pupils to emphasize this feature, King makes a final closing comment. After this exhaustive description she remarks that, «In spite of all this, the scenes have not only dignity but feeling» (King, 1920: I, 186). Transmission of the sacred through the cold carved stone that has withstood the centuries also forces her to continue to «come closer» and leads her to leave her footprints on the pilgrimage road. In Burgos, she describes in detail the chapel at the foot of the cathedral which housed the crucifix of the Santo Cristo of Burgos and which

⁷ Again, this concept of the threshold introduced previously in this article comes into play. The threshold as Eliade explains as the frontier between the sacred and the profane.

she said: «every traveler and every pilgrim knew» (King, 1920: II, 66). Amongst the pages she dedicates to the miraculous crucifix, is the description of the chapel at night, full of veiled women and silent men who go and come to pray before the image and implore their petitions in hopes of being blessed and receiving the sacred intervention favoring them. She goes on to say how these little churches stay open after dark and are all over Spain. «They have a special feeling, like the scent of dried leaves, like the taste of the night air, like the hushed Friday evening of the return from Calvary in Ribalta's painting» (King, 1920: II, 66). She claims that to the Spanish women, these chapels or small churches «are very comfortable», for the «subdued glow of light, the warm smell, the rustling human figures, offer something of the attraction of the hearth, without the *ennui* of home» (King, 1920: II, 66). These depictions disclose a deep understanding of her presence in the sacred space. Before the image of the Santo Cristo of Burgos, she continues to «progress towards» something in the direction in which she is heading.

Conclusions: Timelessness and Transformation on the Santiago Road

Our two authors, King and Bates, found themselves on their «pilgrimage» along the Santiago Road, far from their homelands. The times in which they lived, along with their own personal strong independent convictions and character, compelled them to leave behind the internalized sensations and religious beliefs characterized by their homogenous worlds, causing them to become more vulnerable and exposed when coming into contact with hierophanies that connected them to the sacred. They were able to see and experience a road loaded with feelings and sensations, through the true symbolism which it had inherited over time. They themselves came to form part of the road by living and moving amongst these ruins, reminders of the past, but simultaneously they also inherited the possibility of «becoming» once they encountered other circumstances in which hierophanies surfaced. Their writings bring light to the pilgrimages they made and by their journeys, they themselves experienced the «emancipation from constraints» of their everyday lives and surroundings. By placing themselves on the pilgrimage road to Santiago, although their investigations and scholarly pursuits had been put first and foremost as the reason for its undertaking, they had also, just by being on the road, put their own «becoming» before the «being»⁸.

⁸ In *Conversations with Zygmunt Bauman* the sociologist answers the question of «What does the making people into individuals consist of?» He reasserts how a person is a creature, «whose plight is the summation, consequence or desert of a life of work». He argues to show how a person is what he or she has become and that each and every individual is the result of his or her own choices and pursuit. Pilgrimage allows individuals to create this possibility.

While Bates and King chose not to directly delve into discussing the spiritual reflections of their personal pilgrimages in their narratives, their texts reveal that they were able to «feel» the sacred as they experienced new surroundings. The pilgrimage could and did awaken them, but they withheld sharing their personal religious beliefs and perspectives, and any discourse revolving around the Protestant religion was more intellectualized, their own religious sentiments not tending to surface in any direct, profound and spiritual manner. Nonetheless, both women were able to witness and connect with the sacred as their narratives reveal: they contemplate it, admire it, consider it, experience it, respect it and come to understand it as they spend time along the Santiago road and at the holy sanctuary. This contact with hierophanies urges them to come into contact with something else as they «found the world to live in» *per se*, in «a real sense». The abandonment of the «desert», the profane amorphous neutral places where these two female scholars lived and thrived, were returned to after their time in Spain and these journeys abroad. But their «pilgrimages» had become immeshed within them, transforming them and creating part of who they then were.

Although more than a century has passed, this same feature of the Santiago pilgrimage road continues to act upon female sojourners of the 21st century. Today, more and more women from distant lands and from the Spanish Peninsula itself, appear upon this soul-searching itinerant way, a pilgrimage route which offers them the possibility to be able to connect to something which they are unable to grasp and fathom in their everyday lives and everyday surroundings. This «sacred road» provides a new space, allowing them to connect with and reevaluate their own selves and their own personal paths that they are following, although the religious motive for making the pilgrimage is eclipsed in the initial pursuit of their journeys. Nonetheless, this pilgrimage along the roads to this «sacred shrine» itself is what enables one to fully experience new spaces, spurring change and the formation of self. Not being just another ordinary trail to follow, the Santiago pilgrimage road heightens the immersion in self along with this building and reinvention of self, as there is a connection or disclosure of a hierophany, which bridges the gap between this and the other world. It is this crossing-over which illuminates and boosts identity formation, all of which emerges precisely because of what the pilgrimage road provides. As the gap between the sacred and the profane is even more pronounced nowadays, the road has the capacity more than ever in the 21st century to awaken and arouse those who step upon it. Those who are simply following the beaten path after others encounter elements along the wayside and simultaneously become more aware of what is missing from themselves and their lives, all of which incites the rebuilding of self.

Perhaps it is for this reason why so many 21st-century pilgrims are able to discover more than they initially set out to find once they step upon the Santiago road. The footprints of all these pilgrims, and in our case, women, those of yesterday and

today, are permanently engraved in the way, their pilgrimages inscribed within themselves, forming part of who they are and were. The road, being the hierophany, is always carrying them to «walk to something», in this case, themselves and their own identity.

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