The Medieval Pilgrimage Business

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Although medieval pilgrimage has been the subject of extensive historical research, the economic and financial dimension has been somewhat neglected. This paper is an attempt to provide a synthesis of published and unpublished work on pilgrimage, focusing on the business management and promotional aspects

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of pilgrimage shrines. From the literature reviewed, it is clear that many 'modern' business practices were being widely used by pilgrimage centers throughout Europe in the middle ages. Examples can be found of active brand management and promotional techniques adopted by shrines operating within a highly competitive market for pilgrimage services.

Although medieval pilgrimage has been the subject of extensive historical research, the economic dimension has received much less academic coverage than analyses based on cultural, religious, and social themes.[1] This is all the more surprising in view of the fact that the pilgrimage industry was arguably one of the most important activities in medieval Europe alongside other more well-researched businesses such as the wool trade.[2]

In this paper, we identify and elaborate on three economic aspects of pilgrimage. First, the pilgrimage journey, ending in a donation to the shrine of destination, may be viewed as one side of an implicit contract involving reciprocal rights and obligations on the part of the pilgrim and the church (below). Second, high and later medieval pilgrimage shrines were a form of franchise business, operating under the umbrella brand of the universal church: the local shrine managers marketed their patron saint and took in large-scale offerings that were recycled, in varying proportions, to the clergy, church building programmes, and the poor (below).[3] Finally, ancillary pilgrimage services, such as the provision of accommodation, food and wine, transport, banking, and pilgrimage badges constituted an important economic activity, sometimes involving complex commercial relationships between the private sector and local church authorities (below).

In the eleventh to fifteenth centuries, the three great pilgrimage centers were Jerusalem, where the objects of veneration included Christ's empty tomb; Rome, where both St. Peter and St. Paul were buried, and Santiago de Compostela, where St. James' tomb became a major shrine after its alleged discovery in the ninth century. In England, St. Thomas Becket's tomb in Canterbury was nearest to achieving the status of an international pilgrimage centre, but there

1. For a summary, see McCants, "Donations and the Economics of Shrines."

2. For a recent treatment of the sophistication of the medieval wool market, see Bell, Brooks, and Dryburgh, *English Wool Market.*

3. A franchise is "an agreement enabling a third party to sell or provide products or services owned by a manufacturer or supplier. A franchise is granted by the manufacturer, or franchisor, to a franchisee, who then retails the product," In Business: The Ultimate Resource.

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were numerous other important shrines such as Durham (St. Cuthbert), Westminster (St. Edward), Bury (St. Edmund), Worcester (St. Wulfstan) and Walsingham (Shrine of Our Lady).

In the absence of any reliable records, the true scale of European medieval pilgrimage remains a matter of conjecture. However, contemporary chronicles, registers of shrine offerings, testamentary bequests, fragmentary city records, and the extent of the pilgrimage institutions along major pilgrimage routes point to the large numbers involved—up to 500,000 per annum to Compostela alone in the thirteenth/fourteenth centuries according to some estimates.[4] Pilgrimage continued to flourish in the face of pestilence (the Black Death) and conflict (the Hundred Years War), finally declining in the context of the English Reformation and the European religious wars.

The Pilgrimage Contract

Those who embarked on a lengthy pilgrimage were making a costly commitment. First, there was the devotional journey and the associated expenses—which for long-haul pilgrims might amount to more than a year's income from employment. Second, there was the opportunity cost of foregoing profitable employment during the absence from home. Third, there were major risks in the form of shipwreck, disease, exhaustion, and robbery. Finally, there were offerings to be made, not only at the shrine of destination but also at other shrines en route, which might be in coins, jewelry, or wax. Wax was an important form of ecclesiastical currency that could be readily converted into cash at an exchange rate of 6*d* per pound in weight and some shrines accounts were even divided between money and wax revenues.[5] However, at Santiago, only cash or jewelry was accepted.[6]

In return for their commitment, pilgrims were offered two primary benefits: the possibility of miraculous intervention by the saints whose shrines were venerated and the prospect of indulgencies (remission from purgatory) according to a fixed scale sanctioned by the papal see. These benefits are described in detail below but it may be noted that there was a link between the extent of a pilgrim's commitment and the benefits that could be expected. For instance, indulgences might be calibrated according to the provenance of pilgrims. Pope Alexander III (1159-81) varied the level of indulgences for visitors to Rome according to the distance traveled, so that those from Sweden, for instance, received three

4. Courtes, *Les Chemins de Saint-Jacques de Compostelle*, 4.
5. Nilson, "Medieval Experience," in *Pilgrimage Explored*, ed. Stoppard, 108.
6. Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, 160.

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years, those from England two years, and local visitors only one year. The indulgences set out in the "Stations of Rome" similarly distinguished between pilgrims from overseas, from Continental Europe, and those of local origin. From this, it is clear that the spiritual benefits of pilgrimage were related to the length of the devotional journey.

In addition to benefits in the form of miracles and indulgences, the pilgrims could expect from the church a degree of physical and spiritual security. Physical security was provided through two monastic orders dedicated to the assistance of pilgrims. The first to be founded was the Order of St. John's Hospital known as the Hospitallers. Established in the 1080s, they had the role of providing shelter and medical care for pilgrims. They would later take on a more militaristic role, perhaps influenced by the other military order, the Templars. The Order of the Temple was founded in *c.*1119, with the original remit of providing protection for pilgrims traveling to Jerusalem.

The church offered spiritual security to those pilgrims who died during the course of their devotional journey. The first such plenary indulgence was granted in 1095 to pilgrims to the Holy Land. This was an important assurance given the large number of pilgrims who fell victim to illness.

Pilgrimage was therefore underpinned by a set of reciprocal rights and obligations. The nature of this compact between the pilgrims and church is further illuminated by those who made vows to go on pilgrimage. From the twelfth century onwards, pilgrimages were frequently made in pursuance of an earlier vow which in England was traditionally signified by bending a penny.[7] When individuals found themselves in extreme danger (e.g., at sea), they might invoke the name of a saint in order to obtain divine salvation. If the danger passed, this would be interpreted as a miraculous intervention. The beneficiary of the miracle would then be obliged to visit the saint's shrine and make an offering to fulfill the vow. The pilgrim in such a case can be viewed as having received an advance benefit on credit, which then had to be "paid for" in the customary manner. There was a powerful sanction because those who broke their vows to go on a pilgrimage were liable to penal miracles. The Miracles of the Hand of St. James from Reading Abbey, compiled in the 1190s, relates that a man with a broken arm vowed to make a pilgrimage to Reading if St James would heal him. The saint granted this plea but when the man failed to fulfill his vow intervened again to break the man's other arm,

7. There is evidence that miracles associated with vows became more common after 1200.Vauchez, *Sainthood*, 446–7.

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in an act not far removed from the behavior of modern debt collectors.[8] This approach to pilgrimage vows demonstrates that miracles were not free goods: they had to be "purchased" through a devotional journey and an appropriate offering.

Shrines as a Franchise Business

Shrines, which were at the heart of the pilgrimage experience, provided spiritual services in exchange for the offerings and supplications of the faithful. The shrine may be viewed as a profit center that generated revenue from pilgrims who then might receive benefits in the form of miraculous interventions and indulgences.

In this business model, the shrine custodians (i.e., local churches or abbeys) benefited directly as franchisees because they had discretion over the use of the offerings they received. The Papacy, on the other hand, was not, in the early medieval period, entitled to any share of the receipts of churches outside Rome itself. The value of the franchise to the Pope lay in the fact that the shrine network supported the wider church's financial needs while strengthening and extending the devotion of the Christian faithful—and in the case of Jerusalem and Compostela establishing a bulwark against the encroachment of Islam.

However, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the papacy began to exploit indulgences as a source of revenue. By the end of the fifteenth century, any of the great shrines that wished to apply for a plenary indulgence for a year could expect to pay an up-front fee of 4–500 gold florins and a percentage of the proceeds—usually one third but occasionally as high as 75 percent.[9] The Pope, however, finally priced himself out of the market when Canterbury baulked at the financial demands made on the occasion of its 1520 Jubilee and the related application for a plenary indulgence.

The various aspects of the shrine franchise operation are considered in the following subsections dealing with the two spiritual services offered by shrines (miracles and indulgences), papal control, shrine marketing, and the use of shrine revenues.

8. Kemp, "miracles of the Hand of St. James." For the history of the Hand of St. James and Reading Abbey, see Ibid., "Hand of St. James at Reading Abbey." Other examples of penal miracles—here targeting those who failed to offer sustenance to needy pilgrims—are recounted in the Pilgrims Guide to Santiago de Compostela. English Text of *The Pilgrims Guide*, in Shaver-Crandell and Gerson, *The Pilgrims Guide*, 95.

9. Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, 163.

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Saints, Relics, and Miracles

Saints worked their miracles through their bodily remains. This focus on physicality was important to the medieval mind and relics were generally displayed to allow pilgrims physical access as close as possible to the tomb or reliquary. Since Christ and the Virgin Mary ascended into heaven they left few bodily remains: Marian shrines could, nevertheless, offer phials containing her milk, her hair, her comb, and her robe; and relics associated with Christ included his blood, hair, foreskin, part of the umbilical cord, part of the manger, and, of course, parts of the True Cross.[10]

The direct association of miracles with particular saints was important from a very early stage. When St. Martin's body was moved to Auxerre from Tours in the ninth century to protect it against Viking pillage, an argument over the division of subsequent shrine offerings arose. The men of Tours claimed that as St. Martin was responsible for all miraculous cures at the shrine, they should receive the profits. However, Auxerre countered that it was their own St. Germanus who was responsible for the healing of pilgrims. This led to the miraculous powers of the two saints being tested in resolution of the dispute. William of Malmesbury reported, "To solve the problem, they sent for a leper, and set him, between the bodies of the two saints . . . Next day the man's skin on the side turned towards St Martin was quite clear, while of St Germanus' side it was as ghastly and hideous as ever." Just to be sure, the next night, they reversed the experiment and again St. Martin prevailed, fully curing the leper. This resulted in the men from Tours gaining the full advantage of the shrine offerings.[11]

Santiago demonstrated how a powerful new mythology—in this case the "discovery" of St. James' tomb in Galicia in the early ninth century—could be exploited by the local church establishment to create a pilgrimage centre rivaling Rome and Jerusalem. The presence of St. James' saintly remains in a magnificent purpose-built basilica, coupled with miracle stories and generous papal indulgences, proved to be a winning formula.[12] So much so that the prosperity of Santiago under its famous propagandizing bishop, Diego Gelmirez (1100–1140), led to demands by King Alfonso VII that the royal coffers should share in the shrine spoils.[13]

10. Bonser, "Cult of Relics".

11. William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, 185–7. For earlier examples and the development of the cult of the saints between the third and sixth centuries see, Brown, *The Cult of the Saints.*

12. Such stories could even be sung by "jongleurs" or read aloud by monks along the route, for the benefit of a largely non-literate public. For example, see *A Medieval Pilgrims Companion.*

13. Fletcher*, St James Catapult.*

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Since the miraculous power of a saint's relics was as much in the parts of the body as the whole, it became common to dismember the remains and distribute the separate limbs.[14] This practice that allowed the (theoretically limited) supply of saintly remains to meet the growing demand for relics throughout Christendom appears to have been linked to the growth of long-distance trade during and after the crusades. When Becket's remains were removed from the sepulchre at the time of his translation, it was reported that Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, retained a few small bones to distribute to great men and churches for the honor of the saint.[15] The same principle applied to the blood of saints, so that at Canterbury, for instance, the custodians of Becket's shrine were able to offer limitless ampules of the martyr's blood mixed with water—the efficacy of this holy solution being unaffected by dilution.[16]

Crucially, it was the physical presence, not the provenance, of holy relics that mattered so far as miracle working was concerned. This doctrine encouraged the theft of relics, particularly as the saint concerned was held to have acquiesced in the removal of his/her remains. A celebrated example is the case of St. Foy whose body was stolen from Agen in the ninth century and taken to Conques, which then witnessed a spate of miracles. St. Foy thereafter played a decisive role in the emergence of Conques as a major pilgrimage centre. Highly placed clerics would also resort to extreme measures to gain a particularly prized relic. Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, later to become Saint Hugh, bit off small pieces of bone from the arm of Mary Magdalen, a relic held at Fécamp in Normandy.[17]

Shrine custodians were not always content to wait for pilgrims to make offerings before their prized relics. They could also take the relics on processions into the surrounding countryside in order to raise money from donations. These so-called "quests" might be farmed out to a professional questor who would receive the revenues in exchange for a lump sum payment, a fixed salary or a profit split (typically two thirds to the Church and one third to the questor).[18] The relics of the cathedral of St. Mary in Laon (that included the "hairs of the virgin") were sent on two tours in order to raise money to rebuild the cathedral, which had burnt down in 1112. The first tour of Northern France was successful, but did not provide enough funds to complete the rebuilding work. A second fundraising tour was

14. Bonser, "Cult of Relics," 235.
15. Robertson, *Materials for the history of Thomas Becket*, 427.
16. Hall, *English Medieval Pilgrimage,* 150.
17. *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis*, 169–70. He also cut sinew from the arm of St. Oswald at Peterborough.
18. Cohen, "In the Name of God and of Profit," 69–71.

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therefore arranged, this time to England. The relics, having provided divine protection on the perilous crossing of the channel, generated offerings of 120 marks, which was enough to finish the church.[19]

Evidence of an active secondary or trading market in major relics has not been identified,[20] which is perhaps surprising in view of the disconnection between a relic's miraculous powers and its site. In one celebrated case in 1455, Venice bid 10,000 ducats for Christ's seamless coat held by Treves, but the bid failed.[21] Louis IX was also reported to have spent over £25,000 on his purchase of relics of the Passion from the Emperor of Constantinople, including the crown of thorns, which he housed in the newly constructed Sainte Chapelle.[22] As an alternative to selling relics, the Church could capitalize on the value of a shrine as a profit centre by pawning the income stream: the Abbot of Tulle, for instance, was in 1235 able to pawn the annual offering from the Virgin's altar at Rocamadour for a capital sum of 4,000 silver marcs.[23]

The main shrines were diligent in recording their saints' miracles and some shrines employed a notary or local monk to compile their miracle stories. These collections were sometimes bound together with liturgical texts, chansons, and hagiographies to provide a kind of promotional brochure to be placed near the shrine.[24] Miracles, along with indulgences, were the shrine's main "product" and they were therefore prominently displayed and proclaimed.

Indulgences

While miracles catered for pilgrims' needs on earth, indulgences offered relief in the after life. These two spiritual services were not therefore substitutes. Rather, they were complementary and the faithful sought both—although for long distance pilgrims, who would need to be healthy when they set out, the emphasis was on indulgences.

An indulgence is a remission of a temporal punishment for sin, the guilt of which has been forgiven following the sinner's confession and repentance. According to early Christian doctrine, the superabundant

19. Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind*, 134–41. Also see 137, where earlier tours are described, such as that of St. Ouen, who also visited England between 1075 and 1087 and local tours of the relics of St. Cuthbert of Durham.

20. It is interesting to note that Mavis Mate has identified that Canterbury Cathedral in 1319 was able to sell off relics that had been left in the wills of grateful pilgrims thereby generating over £1000 pounds to meet the Cathedrals debts. More research is therefore needed in this area: Canterbury Cathedral Archives, CCA-DCc-MA/2, f. 96d., as cited in Mate, "Coping with Inflation," 102, 105–6.

21. Burckhardt, *Civilisation*, 47–8.

22. Paris, *Chronica majora*, iii, 518; iv, 75, 90.

23. Cohen, "In the Name of God and of Profit," 44.

24. Ibid; 80.

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merits of Christ and the saints created a "Treasure" of superfluous merit, which, through the intermediation of the Church, could be drawn upon to expiate the sins of the faithful. The church distributed this Treasure to willing purchasers who had received absolution. In this sense, there was an active primary or new issue market in indulgences but since there could generally be no assignment to third parties of indulgences already issued, there was no secondary market.[25] Nevertheless testators would often leave bequests to pay for surrogate pilgrims to travel and make offerings on their behalf in the hope that indulgences would be granted to relieve the suffering of the dead and some indulgences were available through proxies acting on behalf of living persons who were unable to travel.[26] These practices introduced an element of assignability into the selling of indulgences.

The tariff of indulgences offered to pilgrims was calibrated according to the Church calendar, the site(s) visited, and the provenance of the supplicant. The generosity of indulgences also changed markedly over time. Pope Boniface VIII initiated the idea in 1300 of granting plenary indulgences to pilgrims visiting Rome in special jubilee years—a practice adopted by successive Popes up to the present day and also followed by other shrine centers, notably Canterbury. "Special offers" of indulgences were also available on saints' feast days and other particular occasions. William Wey, for instance, recounts that in addition to the standard indulgence available to pilgrims to the Church of St. James at Compostela (one-half of sins remitted), there was an additional 40 days indulgence for attending each administration of the sacrament—raised to 300 days on a feast day and to 600 days on St James Day.[27] Furthermore, during the whole year in which the Feast of St. James fell on a Sunday, a plenary indulgence was available to pilgrims to St. James. These special deals may be viewed as marketing techniques analogous to modern store sales and promotional discounts.

The great pilgrimage centers such as Compostela and Rome specified a tariff of indulgences for the various individual shrines. Those for Rome were set out for the convenience of pilgrims in various "libri indulgentianum," notably the "Stacions of Rome" that provided a comprehensive English language guide to Rome's holy places and their associated indulgences. The "Stacions" also sought to promote Rome as a pilgrimage centre by asserting that "if a man did but know the pardon to be had in Rome, he would not go to the

25. A primary market is "the part of the market in which securities are first offered to investors by the issuer. The money for the sale goes to the issuer, rather than to traders or investors as it does in the secondary market," In Business. The Ultimate Resource.

26. Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, 66.

27. *William Wey*, ed. Davey, 35.

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Holy Land, for in Rome is pardon without end."[28] At Glastonbury, the cumulative indulgences available for pilgrims were displayed on a tablet within a large box affixed to the wall of the church: this listed the bishops who had granted the indulgences that totaled 64 years and 197 days.[29] Clearly, the availability of indulgences was used as a promotional device in the competitive struggle between rival shrines.

Finally, the level of indulgences granted varied considerably over time. As described below, the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 tried to limit indulgences, but papal grants became more generous during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and reached their peak under Boniface IX (1389–1404) as he sought to attract support during the Great Schism. By the time the "Stacions of Rome" was compiled in the late fourteenth century, redemptive hyper-inflation had set in: pilgrims from overseas could expect to receive 12,000 years' indulgence for visiting the Veronica (the cloth on which Christ's suffering face had been imprinted) and 7,000 years at the church of St. Lawrence.

Central Control

As franchisor, the Papacy exercised an important degree of control over the operation of franchisees and the use of its umbrella brand while preventing competition from unauthorized sources. This was achieved through the papal monopoly on the creation of saints, the popes' discretionary powers relating to indulgences, and, less successfully, through the validation of miracles and relics.

Shrines were typically associated with a patron saint whose relics would be put on display in a resplendent reliquary. Crucially, canonization, a key feature of the profitability of shrines, was a monopoly of the papal see. Originally sainthood was a reward for martyrdom but the demand by local communities for their own saints led to the emergence of "confessors" whose saintly lives qualified them for canonization.[30] By broadening the criteria for sainthood, the Church was able to accommodate a wider geographical distribution of saints to meet local shrine needs—although the process of canonization now required careful scrutiny of the life of each individual nominee.

Indulgences were also under papal control. Only the Pope had the authority to issue plenary indulgences, and the powers of bishops to grant indulgences were strictly limited by the Fourth Lateran Council (1215); this set a maximum for Episcopal indulgences of 100 days on the dedication of a church and 40 days on subsequent anniversaries.

28. *Stacions of Rome*, ed. Furnivall, 10, lines 286–91. Translation from the early English by Birch, "Selling the Saints," 33–4.

29. Krochalis, "*Magna Tabula*," 114.

30. Rogers, "Marketing of the Holy Dead," 29.

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In contrast, Papal indulgences were formally unlimited and could be used both to benefit strategic shrines such as Compostela, and to attract pilgrims to Rome.

Relics and miracles were not so easily subject to control. The sack of Constantinople in 1204 led to a proliferation of looted relics throughout Europe. Finucane describes how "after the fall of Constantinople the churches of the East were ransacked and crate upon rattling crate of bones was sent to the west."[31] The increased supply, along with the insatiable appetite, for these precious items led to moves to regulate the relic market. Pope Innocent III decreed in 1215 that no-one "should presume to announce newly-found relics unless they shall have first been approved by authority of the Roman pontiff."[32]

The papal see validated the miracles of those proposed as saints as part of the canonization process. However, authentication of miracles of existing saints was left largely to the discretion of shrine custodians. There was of course, a limitless demand for miracles from those seeking physical cures and other benefits but there was also a large supply of those prepared to testify to miraculous interventions. This was partly due to the fact that a miraculous cure was seen as a mark of divine favor, a distinction that many were willing to claim.[33] However, local Churches felt obliged to provide some kind of authorization to preserve the credibility of the miracle phenomenon. Thus a monk attended Becket's tomb in Canterbury with the specific task of assessing pilgrims who claimed to be healed, so that accusations of fraud could be refuted.[34]

In protecting its monopoly over shrines the papacy was concerned to eliminate competition from unauthorized sources and, above all, to prevent damage to its own franchise network or umbrella brand. If miracles were not validated in some manner, claims to sainthood not subject to proper scrutiny, relics not authenticated, and indulgences left entirely to the discretion of competing shrine custodians, the credibility of the Church's spiritual services would be undermined and the pilgrimage industry would suffer. The papal monopoly over canonization and shrines was most fully developed during the reign of Alexander III when sainthood was established through papal commissions of enquiry and veneration was prohibited unless approved by the Church of Rome.[35]

31. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims*, 31. Indeed a list compiled in c.1191–1193 for Reading Abbey demonstrates that they had 240 relics, and in addition "many other relics whose labels are missing," Kemp, "Hand of St. James at Reading Abbey," 77–8.
32. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims*, 31.
33. Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, 64–70.
34. Hall, *English Medieval Pilgrimage*, 149.
35. Kleinberg, "Proving Sanctity," 188–9.

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Shrine Marketing

It was the task of shrine custodians as franchisees to promote pilgrim offerings and a number of techniques were employed for this purpose. Custodians might deploy several shrines and "pyxes" (strong boxes) within a church or cathedral, a notable example being Canterbury where the established pilgrimage circuit provided no fewer than five opportunities for making offerings.[36] Shrine attendants might be given incentive payments, directly linking their remuneration to the shrine takings, in a form of performance related pay.[37] In addition, payment was sometimes made to those who "called" pilgrims to a shrine during fairs and festivals. To further encourage donations, a celebrated "miraculee" might be persuaded to remain at the shrine to bear witness to his/her cure. At Conques, one such individual proclaimed his miraculous experience to visitors, for which service he received the profitable monopoly of the sales of wax to pilgrims.[38] Fairs and markets were often associated with shrines and an annual fair might be established to promote a particular shrine. Henry III ensured a huge turnout to Edward the Confessor's translation in October 1248 by introducing a fifteen-day fair at Westminster and simultaneously banning fairs elsewhere.[39]

The major shrines were typically heaped with gold and jewelry, the evident purpose of this ostentatious display being to attract further offerings. The promotional effect was noted at the time, St. Bernard of Clairvaux famously remarking:

> Money is sown with such skill that it may be multiplied. It is expended so that it may be increased, and pouring it out produces abundance. The reason is that the very sight of these costly but wonderful illusions inflames men more to give than to pray. In this way wealth is derived from wealth, in this way money attracts money, because by I know not what law, wherever the more riches are seen, there the more willingly are offerings made. Eyes are fixed on relics covered with gold and purses are opened.[40]

A church's "Treasury" that was put on display in this manner could be melted down and disposed of when the need arose, thereby providing both a profitable and a liquid investment.

The major international shrines—Rome, Jerusalem, and Santiago—were in direct competition with each other because those going

36. Nilson, "Medieval Experience," in *Pilgrimage Explored*, ed. Stoppard, 96, figure 1, The East End of Canterbury Cathedral.
37. Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, 71.
38. Cohen, "In the Name of God and of Profit," 69.
39. Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, 90.
40. Diana Webb, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage,* 240.

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on long-haul pilgrimage would typically have to choose between them (though some, like Marjery Kempe, visited all three). Within individual countries, too, there were great shrine rivalries, with Durham and Canterbury in particular competing with each other to attract visitors in England. However, other shrines, linking a single pilgrimage route, were in a complementary relationship, as was the case with Conques, Rocamadour, and Le Puy, each of which benefited from being located along the Compostela Chemin in France.[41]

Where shrines were in direct competition shrine custodians were faced with the task of protecting their particular product or sub brand and demonstrating the superior efficacy of their patron saints and holy relics. This could be done in a number of ways. First, some shrines appear to have targeted a particular subset of pilgrims. Examples of such specialism include Le Puy that became associated with the cause of the French monarchy during the Hundred Years War[42] and St. Foy of Conques who was famed for releasing prisoners and for providing protection to French crusaders going to Spain.[43] In England, the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham was favored by an aristocratic clientele[44] whereas the Holy Rood of Bromham attracted more humble pilgrims.[45] However, the major international shrines attracted pilgrims from all walks of life and had no apparent need to develop a specialized clientele.

The most effective way for a shrine to strengthen its competitive position was to proclaim the superior efficacy of its spiritual services in the form of miracles and indulgences. For example, Canterbury became associated with a stream of miracles after the martyrdom of Becket in 1170, provoking St. Cuthbert to respond by performing a sudden spate of miracles at his rival shrine at Durham. Another rival shrine, Reading Abbey, whose prime relic was the hand of St. James, reacted to the competitive threat from Canterbury in a similar manner. In one of Reading's twelfth-century miracle stories, a girl who went to Canterbury to obtain a cure for her wasting illness was confronted in a dream by St. James. The apostle told her "You will certainly not receive a cure here, but go to Reading, to my monastery, and there you will be healed"—a promise that was duly fulfilled when the girl abandoned Canterbury in favor of Reading.[46] Durham's propaganda

41. Cohen, "In the Name of God and of Profit," 91–112.
42. Ibid; 37.
43. Ibid; 186.
44. Hall, *English Medieval Pilgrimage*, 114.
45. Ibid; 205.
46. Kemp, "miracles of the Hand of St James," Miracle XX. See also Miracle XI where St. James appears in a dream to urge a sick woman not to take a candle to Salisbury as she had planned but to Reading where she would be and was indeed cured. Kemp describes the competition between shrines as "aggressive rivalry," Ibid., "Hand of St. James at Reading Abbey," 90.

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was also aimed at discouraging pilgrims from traveling south to Canterbury: it was reported by Reginald of Durham that Becket had appeared in a vision to a pilgrim to support the idea that north countrymen should apply to their local saint at Durham and not to Canterbury.[47] This "negative campaigning" was taken a stage further when, according to Durham's miracle stories, certain pilgrims were successfully cured by St. Cuthbert, having failed to find relief for their ailments at Becket's shrine.[48]

The miracle stories of the Hand of Saint James at Reading Abbey provide an instructive case study in brand promotion. The manuscript copy of the miracles justifies the dissemination of the relic's healing powers to a wider audience. The introduction to the miracle stories draws on the parable of the ten talents to support the argument that divine bounty in the form of the miracles of St. James should not be hidden, but advertised to the world.[49] The hand's powers did indeed have considerable geographical reach, with miracle stories involving invalides from Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Essex, Herefordshire, Suffolk, Surrey, Sussex, Wiltshire, and even the north of England.[50] From this, it is clear that these collections of miracle stories were used by shrine custodians as a form of advertising to promote their own brand. It may be added that in some cases miracle stories were also used to justify the "pious theft" of relics from other houses.[51]

A further insight into shrine rivalry can be gained from the competition that developed in Rome during the late twelfth century between the Lateran and the Vatican. The Lateran had acquired the heads of St Peter and St Paul as well as the "Uronica," an image of Christ allegedly painted by St Luke and the angels. These visible relics evidently provided a greater attraction to pilgrims than the body of St Peter buried on the Vatican Hill. The result was the appearance of new visible relics at St. Peter's basilica, including in particular the "Veronica"—the cloth used to mop Christ's brow on his way to Calvary. The Veronica was no doubt intended to rival the Uronica but the new emphasis on these images of Christ also helped to promote Rome as a pilgrimage centre associated not only with Peter and Paul but with Christ himself.[52]

47. Webb, *Medieval European Pilgrimage*, 123.

48. *Reginaldi Monachi Dunelmensis*, vol. 1, 38, 260.

49. Kemp, "miracles of the Hand of St. James," 6.

50. Another example of religious marketing materials has been detailed by Swanson, "Fund-Raising." The article discusses the survival of 163 duplicates of publicity material from around 1400.

51. The use of miracle stories for propaganda purposes is discussed in detail in, Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind*, 34 (advertising), 209 ("pious theft").

52. Birch, *Pilgrimage to Rome*, 110–15.

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Whether faced with a competitive threat from a new saint, or suffering a decline in their own saint's novelty interest over time, shrine custodians often had to consider ways of renewing their brand. The traditional way of doing this was to organize a "translation" of the saint's relics to a new and more grandiose tomb, an event marked by a special ceremony, public celebrations, and (in some cases) the grant of additional indulgences.

When Becket was installed in a new tomb in Canterbury's enlarged cathedral in July 1220 public attendance was encouraged with the offer of free food and fodder at all the stages on the London Road. On the day of the translation, free wine was provided in various part of the City on such a scale that chroniclers reported that the church's debt was only paid off in the time of Archbishop Boniface over twenty years later. As an added attraction, the Pope granted a 40-day indulgence to all pilgrims who attended the translation celebration and for 15 days thereafter; the papal legate and each of the three archbishops also granted 40 days, while each of the seventeen bishops granted 20 days, making a grand total of 540 days indulgence.[53] Clearly, the extravagant benefits conferred on pilgrims during the translation ensured a huge turnout and helped to strengthen the saint's hold on the public mind. The numbers that poured into Canterbury to enjoy these material and spiritual inducements were, according to one chronicler, so large that they could hardly be held by the City and the neighboring towns.[54] A poem of Henry of Avranches states that those who attended a pre-translation banquet in Canterbury numbered 33,000 but this may have been a poetic exaggeration.[55]

Translation might also result in the saint's body being separated from the head that would be encased in its own reliquary. This led to the multiplication of shrines in the form of the original (empty) tomb, which continued to be venerated, the new main shrine, and the head shrine (or "Corona" as Becket's head shrine was designated). In addition, the grandeur of the building housing the shrine, the richness of the saint's tomb, and the opulence displayed at the shrine altar could play an important role in promoting an image of spiritual power. Certainly, the building of a suitably imposing basilica seems

53. *Walteri de Conventria*, ed., II, 246 (indulgences and free hospitality); *Annales Monastici*, Luard, vol. ii, 293 (free hospitality); *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa*, ed., Bond, vol. i, 406 (debt due to hospitality); *Polychronicon,* ed., Lumby, vol. viii, 200 (debt due to hospitality).

54. *Walteri de Conventria*, 245.

55. "Beati Thome Martiris," in Russell and Heironimus, *Shorter Latin Poems,* 71–8, line 79, "triginta tria milia." The poem was probably written just a few weeks after the event.

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to have been a priority for shrine custodians seeking to entrench the brand of their patron saint, as for example in Conques.[56]

These few striking examples suggest that our medieval forebears were very much aware of what we describe today as "brand management." When comparing medieval shrine management to modern branding theory, there are a number of parallels: consumers were targeted directly, pilgrim centers promoted their advantages over competitors, and supporting evidence for miraculous claims was both collected and distributed.[57]

Proceeds of Shrine Revenues

The high and later medieval shrine may be viewed as a profit centre that funded the various activities associated with the pilgrimage centre. How, then, were the proceeds from offerings spent? Essentially, there were three main uses for these funds: maintaining the fabric of the church; supporting the local religious community; and providing accommodation and sustenance to pilgrims, particularly the poor and sick. The precise allocation of funds between these different functions varied considerably, however.

In some instances, the building fund might take priority. When Diego Gelmirez became Bishop of Compostela in 1100 he set aside half of the alms received for the support of the hospice.[58] Offerings also helped to finance the new cathedral of St. James (completed around 1124), and pilgrims were requested to carry limestone on part of *el camino de Santiago*, which would then be burnt for lime.[59] At a later date Compostela pilgrims apparently could specify whether their offering was "for St. James" (i.e., alms for the poor) or for the building fund.[60] On the other hand Picaud produces figures purportedly showing that Sunday offerings at St James went mainly to the canons and the archbishop and none to the poor.[61] A more typical allocation of funds was incorporated in a papal bull of 1212 stating that of the money left at the main altar at St. Peter (Rome), one-third was to go to the canons, one-third to the building maintenance, and one-third to the poor and destitute.

56. Cohen, "In the Name of God and of Profit," 23–4.

57. For a modern perspective see Tybout and Calkins (eds) *Kellogg on Branding*, especially chapter 1, Brand Positioning.

58. Fletcher, *St James's Catapult*, pp. 175–8; Birch, "Selling the Saints," 28–9. Of course, using the profits of pilgrimage activity to fund further building work, would in turn create further profit, by attracting and impressing future pilgrims.

59. Fletcher, *St James's Catapult*, 178.

60. Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, 160.

61. *The Pilgrims Guide*, 95.

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Certainly, the Church throughout the medieval period recognized an obligation to provide support for poorer pilgrims, to care for those who fell sick, and to bury those who died on pilgrimage. Just as the shrine, as a provider of spiritual services, may be viewed as a profit centre, the church-sponsored hospitals and monastic foundations that provided the pilgrim's material needs were loss centers. This is suggested by the surviving accounts of Canterbury's shrine takings which show that the amounts paid out by the cellarer for looking after pilgrims often exceeded total shrine offerings for the year.[62] Nevertheless, steady outlays on pilgrim welfare may be viewed as promotional in so far as they strengthened the shrine brand.

Recent research on English shrines has cast doubt on the view that a major proportion of offerings were recycled back to pilgrims through the provision of free accommodation and sustenance. On the basis of detailed scrutiny of the surviving accounts of Canterbury, Ely, Norwich, Hereford, Lincoln, and Durham, Ben Nilson concludes that English cathedrals used the bulk of shrine offerings to supplement the income of canons and monks.[63] He also questions whether more than a very small percentage of English pilgrims were given free accommodation by monastic foundations operating under the hospitality rules of St. Benedict, which he describes as an "idealistic impracticality."[64] These conclusions are, however, in conflict with the experience elsewhere in Europe where surviving documentation points to large-scale ecclesiastical charitable support for pilgrims.[65]

Certainly, standards of care varied considerably. Pilgrims to Aachen were apparently allowed to stay for several weeks at the richly endowed nearby hospital of Andernach where they were entitled to receive wine, vegetables, beer, bread, meat, and fish.[66] At the other extreme the Abbey at Conques declined to provide free lodging and poor pilgrims were obliged to spend the night either in the church or in front of the church door.[67]

Hospitality to pilgrims was an essential monastic obligation but accommodation and sustenance had to be limited if it was not to

62. Woodruff, "Financial Aspect," 13–32, table summarizing accounts, 19.

63. Nilson, *Cathedral Shrines*, 187.

64. Ibid; 185, describing the example of the Chequers of Hope Inn in Canterbury, built as an investment by the Priory.

65. For instance, Moissac Abbey in France eventually experienced a financial crisis in its efforts to fulfill the very onerous obligations in its statutes to provide sustenance to pilgrims and the poor: see Fraisse, *Moissac*, 69; the generous alms given to pilgrims departing from the Tuscan city of Pistoia are detailed in Webb, "St. James in Tuscany."

66. Plotz, "Aachen," in *Body and Soul*, 72.

67. Cohen, "In the Name of God and of Profit," 125.

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become an open-ended invitation to common vagrants. As one leading monastic handbook put it: "A visitor, be he a brother or a layman, should not be fed more than two days without working'. This was to guard against 'strangers who, because of their wretched laziness, do not settle down anywhere but visit monasteries under the pretext of religion and remain idle while devouring the bread due to workers."[68]

Benedictine hospitality was generally restricted to three days accommodation in order to limit the burden on the monasteries.[69] In some hospitals, such as St. Mary's at Le Puy, beds and sheets were provided for pilgrims, while others might have separate cubicles but no beds.[70] At Aubrac, en route for Santiago, only the old and sick were accommodated, others being given food and sent on. By the fourteenth century, hospitals were almost entirely devoted to the needs of the very poor, better off pilgrims preferring the greater privacy and comfort of inns.[71]

The Scale of Pilgrimage and Its Supporting Services

Pilgrims were in need of a wide range of products and services apart from the spiritual benefits offered by shrines. To gauge the importance of these pilgrimage-related economic activities, it is necessary to examine the volume of pilgrimage traffic that had to be served.

Scale and Composition of Pilgrimage

There are no reliable records on numbers of pilgrims and estimates of the scale of the pilgrimage business must therefore rely on other evidence. Some idea of numbers can be gained by reference to contemporary anecdotes and chronicles that sometimes refer to numbers of pilgrims. The gate keepers of the City of Aachen counted 147,000 incomers during the fifteen days period of a special indulgence granted in 1496;[72] bailiffs testified in city archives that 100,000 persons attended the fifth Canterbury Jubilee Year of 1420;[73] and John of Würtzburg reported that he saw 2,000 people

68. Bellenger, "Benedictine Tradition," in *Body and Soul*, 32.

69. Tomasi, "Medieval Pilgrimage," in ed., Swatos and Tomasi, *Medieval Pilgrimage*, 12.

70. Cohen, "In the Name of God and of Profit," 131.

71. Ibid; 137.

72. Webb, *Medieval European Pilgrimage*, 41.

73. Woodruff, "Financial Aspect," 2 citing a certificate from the city's archives, printed in Somner, *Antiquities*, Appendix, No. XLII.

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accommodated at the great hospital of St. John in Jerusalem.[74] The Hospital of St. James in Paris lodged 16,690 pilgrims in 1368, most of these being on their way to St. Michel.[75] A monk writing in 1085 says that in the last year 17,000 persons visited Cluny. Estimates of the numbers of pilgrims visiting Rome in the Jubilee year 1300 vary wildly from 200,000 to two million.[76] Although unsubstantiated, all of these estimates fortify the impression that the pilgrimage business was extremely popular.

The scale of pilgrimage accommodation may give some idea of the numbers catered for. For instance, Burgos had thirty-two pilgrimage hostels and Astorga and Leon had at least twenty each.[77] However, we do not know the capacity of the hospitals, the average period for which pilgrims stayed or what proportion of pilgrims camped or found other accommodation. The volume of annual offerings at individual shrines, where available, also provides some indication of the numbers of visitors. Nilson suggests that the numbers of 1*d* coins received at a shrine should approximate the numbers of pilgrims based on the assumption that 1*d* was the standard offering at an English shrine. On this basis, he calculates that the number of pilgrims at Lincoln was around 8,000 in 1334/1335.[78] Applied more generally shrine income of £100 per annum implies around 24,000 pilgrims per annum. If this exercise is applied to other English shrines where offering registers survive, annual pilgrim numbers in the first half of the fourteenth century can be crudely estimated at 100,000 for Canterbury, 15,000 for Ely and rather less than 15,000 for Norwich.

One of the very few sources of information on pilgrim numbers are the English ship registers. The sea route used by English pilgrims to Compostela via Corunna is increasingly well recorded from the mid-fourteenth to mid-fifteenth century because pilgrim ships were required to obtain licences. The ship registers show that around 15,000 English pilgrims were carried to Corunna in the first half of the fifteenth century, with over 3,000 carried in each of the Jubilee years 1428 and 1434.[79] However, the importance of the sea route to Compostela relative to the land route is unclear and the overall numbers of English pilgrims traveling to Spain remains uncertain.

The main difficulty faced by prospective pilgrims to distant shrines was the expense. It has been estimated that for a European pilgrim a

74. *Jerusalem pilgrimage*, ed. Wilkinson, Hill and and Ryan, 266–7.
75. Cohen, "In the Name of God and of Profit," 117n.
76. Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, 235.
77. Barton, "Patrons," in *Pilgrimage Explored*, ed. Stoppard, 74.
78. Nilson, "Medieval Experience," 116–19.
79. Childs, "The Perils," in *Pilgrimage Explored*, Stoppard, 127.

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return journey to Jerusalem might cost around 200 ducats, half of which would be travel costs.[80] For many pilgrims, this would represent more than a year's income from employment. In addition to travel, there were subsistence and lodging expenses, medication, footwear, the cost of offerings, and the purchase of pilgrimage badges. On the other hand, penurious or mendicant pilgrims taking the land route to Compostela might hope to find free lodging and sustenance at monasteries and hospitals along the route.

In addition to the above costs, there were the risks of robbery and illness. Pilgrims usually traveled in large bands to minimize the risk of robbery but serious illness and death were an ever-present feature of the pilgrimage experience. For instance, it was reported that at the Hospital of St. John in Jerusalem, which could accommodate some 2,000 pilgrims, around 50 died every day.[81] The most important cost was, however, the opportunity cost involved in long-haul pilgrimage. A return trip to Compostela from England (land route) might take six months to a year, which would represent a severe economic sacrifice to someone in regular employment.

The financial costs of pilgrimage could be met in a number of ways.[82] Some guilds were prepared to sponsor individual members who went on pilgrimage; financial help might also be sought from a local monastery; and pilgrimage might be combined with commercial activity along the route: significantly, the document that pilgrims received on completion of their journey to Compostela granted trading rights along the Camino that might be exploited on the return journey. Finally, pilgrims might help to finance the journey by obtaining money from those who wished to have prayers said for them at the shrine. Indeed, Marjery Kempe recounts how she received seven marks to pray for a woman in Santiago.[83]

The opportunity cost of pilgrimage could be addressed in other ways. Testamentary bequests reveal that pilgrims who found it difficult or impossible to go on pilgrimage during their lifetime nevertheless made provision for others to go on pilgrimage on their behalf. Such bequests would typically cover travel expenses and offerings to be made at shrines but also money "for their labors," i.e., to recompense the surrogate pilgrim for their time.[84] It was also

80. Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, 204.

81. Ibid; 199.

82. An interesting tariff of costs for visitors to Jerusalem is included in a contemporary account in 1392: "Thomas Brygg," *Western Pilgrims*, ed. Hoade.

83. *The Book of Marjery Kempe,* trans. Windeatt, 143.

84. Duffy, "dynamics of pilgrimage," in ed. Morris and Roberts, *Pilgrimage*, 174.

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possible to arrange for vicarious pilgrimage in one's own lifetime.[85] It appears that there was a pool of "stipendiary" pilgrims available for hire to meet the demand for surrogate pilgrimage.[86]

Pilgrims were drawn from every class of society, ranging from royalty at one extreme to the destitute and criminal penitents at the other. Royal pilgrims to distant shrines included Cnut (Rome), Louis VII, Philippe II and Louis IX of France (Jerusalem), Richard I (Jerusalem), and Henry II (Rocamadour), while the Pope absolved Edward III from a vow to go to Compostela. In general, however, Kings and Queens fulfilled their pilgrimage aspirations vicariously through testamentary bequests.[87] Within England, there were frequent royal visits to local shrines, particularly Walsingham, while Canterbury also attracted royalty, in part because of its convenient situation en route from the Channel ports to London. Aristocratic or prosperous pilgrims would go on long-haul journeys with an entourage. For instance a group of fifty-four pilgrims going to Jerusalem in 1413 comprised ten "gentlemen" (nobles and their companions) and forty-four servants.[88] Therefore, not all those undertaking the pilgrimage journey were true pilgrims. By the thirteenth century, a new class of bourgeois pilgrim began to appear. These individuals traveled in some comfort as if on a business or tourist trip and by the fourteenth century only the very poor stayed at hospitals.[89]

At the lower end of the social scale were the destitute, who would rely on free hospital accommodation and charity along the pilgrimage route. Evidently, it was difficult to distinguish between common beggars and mendicant pilgrims and in England, following the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, it was enacted that pilgrims who begged rather than paid their way must carry a letter attesting their bona fides and stating the date when they were expected to return home.[90]

Finally, there were penitential pilgrims who were sentenced by the ecclesiastical or civil courts to go on a specified pilgrimage, the length of the journey being broadly proportional to the gravity of the offence. The penitents were required to bring back a certificate showing that they had visited the relevant shrine(s) in person and to present this to the sentencing court to obtain their formal acquittal. These judicial pilgrimages began with the French Inquisition in the thirteenth

85. Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, 195.
86. Reported by John of Würzburg, in *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 266.
87. Webb, *Medieval European Pilgrimage*, 101.
88. Ibid; 106.
89. Cohen, "In the Name of God and of Profit," 137.
90. Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, 176.

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century that divided penitential pilgrim journeys into "overseas" (Jerusalem), "major" (Canterbury, Santiago, Cologne, and Rome), and "minor" (shrines in France). France's civil courts adopted the same sentencing practice, as did courts in the Netherlands and Italy. European universities and guilds also sent recalcitrant members of their institutions on pilgrimage as a form of expiation and punishment.[91]

While women would frequently visit local shrines (roughly one third of pilgrims to English shrines were women, according to recent data analysis)[92] they were understandably much less inclined to go on long-haul pilgrimage. Marjery Kempe recounts some of the difficulties when traveling to distant shrines: when she was unable to join a pilgrimage party for protection she felt obliged on occasion to pay a male pilgrim to accompany her.[93] There is also evidence that some of the major shrines discriminated against women when it came to access to holy relics.[94] However, it seems that women were just as likely as men to leave testamentary bequests for others to go on pilgrimage on their behalf.

Ancillary Pilgrimage Services and Products

Pilgrims as travelers, required services such as accommodation, medical care, banking, and, in some cases, security. They also bought a wide range of products ranging from bread, food, and wine, to sandals, pouches, flasks, straps, belts, medicinal herbs, and spices, all of which are listed in the *Pilgrim's Guide* as being for sale in the precincts of the Cathedral in Compostela.[95]

Long haul pilgrims trekking down from the Pyrenees on the camino toward Compostela would have bought many of these products and services en route. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that towns along the pilgrimage route in Northern Spain expanded and prospered from the eleventh century onwards, in some cases establishing special trading districts to serve the passing pilgrimage trade.[96]

Some services, such as accommodation, were provided both by the Church and the private sector; others, such as security services were provided free by the Hospitallers and Templars. However, the latter also established a network of "preceptories" between 1130 and 1300,

91. Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, 108.
92. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims*, 143.
93. *The Book of Marjery Kempe*, 166.
94. Craig, "Stronger than men."
95. *The Pilgrims Guide*, 89.
96. See generally Lozano, *A Practical Guide*.

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running from Western Europe to the Holy Land, that provided a prototype retail banking service on a commercial basis to pilgrims and crusaders. Their involvement with financial services led to the Templars becoming general lenders of large sums of money to the kings of England and France and therefore central players in European financial markets.[97]

In some areas, there were tensions between Church authorities and private service providers. This was particularly evident in medical care, an important requirement on long-haul pilgrimages where many of the faithful became sick. The Church's view was that physical illness had a spiritual cause, an approach that led to tension with the medical profession.[98] The Lateran Council of 1215 sought to formalize the Church's involvement in healing by forbidding physicians from visiting patients for a second time unless a priest had seen him/her. Healing also accounted for a high proportion of recorded miracles—as much as 90 per cent in England according to one modern analysis.[99] It is perhaps not surprising therefore, that "condemnation of doctors and surgeons was common to all the miracle collections."[100]

There was also a clash in the thirteenth century between local churches and private traders over the manufacture and sale of pilgrimage badges and souvenirs that constituted an important industry in the medieval period. Pilgrimage badges had several functions: they were proof of the completion of the arduous journey, they provided safe passage on the return trip, and they became holy objects in themselves when the custodian of a shrine touched them to the saint's statue or relics. The Church's argument was that pilgrimage badges differed from other necessities bought by pilgrims in that they had a religious significance. Accordingly in many pilgrimage centers, the Church claimed monopoly rights over the badge trade. In Rocamadour, the right to sell badges was given in 1237 to the townspeople who paid an annual tax for the privilege. This arrangement did, however, lead to disputes and in the fifteenth century a compromise was reached which allowed townspeople to sell badges depicting the Madonna on one side and St. Veronica on the other, while the right to sell badges depicting the Madonna on one side and St. Amadour on the other remained with the bishop.[101]

97. The best modern review of the Templars is provided by Barber, *The New Knighthood*. For their involvement in banking, see 266–79.

98. Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, 77–81.

99. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims*, 103.

100. Ibid; 66.

101. Cohen, "In the Name of God and of Profit," 153–5.

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In Le Puy, the monopoly of the badge trade was given by the bishop to the hospital of St. Mary. Subsequent disputes led to a legal test case in 1436 where the royal court backed the hospital's monopoly rights over all religious badges, while scrips, statues, non-religious figurines, and trinkets generally could be sold on the free market. Where a monopoly was claimed the Church enforced its rights through, inter-alia, threats of episcopal and even papal excommunication. At the shrine in Le Puy, the hospital's policy was to allow only its own badges to be touched to the virgin's statue, thereby disappointing all those who had bought unauthorized badges outside the hospital.[102] In Compostela, the guild of Concheiros (badge sellers) was strong enough after 1200 to prevent an ecclesiastical monopoly, although even here the badge shops, which stood in the courtyard behind the cathedral, paid rent to the Church.[103] Similarly in England, it seems that the Church did not have a monopoly on badges (that were often on sale in the town) but Canterbury Cathedral may have leased stalls in the cathedral precinct to merchants who sold badges there.

Conclusions

Academic research on medieval pilgrimage has tended to neglect the economic and financial dimension, focusing instead on social, cultural, and religious aspects. Yet pilgrimage itself may be viewed as a form of contract, involving on the part of the pilgrim a devotional journey, worship at a saints shrine and donation of offerings, the consideration for which is the possibility of miraculous intervention in this world, and redemption in the next. Furthermore, the network of saints' shrines, sanctioned by the Pope, can be seen as a business franchise operating under the umbrella brand of the universal Catholic Church. The shrine custodians were free to promote the miraculous powers of their patron saints and the generosity of their indulgences, while the papacy exercised a degree of central control. Finally, the provision of ancillary pilgrimage services constituted a major trans-European industry in which private sector providers were sometimes involved in turf wars with Church authorities.

102. Cohen, "*In haec signa*," 206–7.
103. Ibid; 197.

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