

CONFERENCE CFP

WHAT MAKES A PILGRIM A PILGRIM? CONCEPTUALISING PILGRIMS AND PILGRIMAGE, C.300-1600

Manchester Metropolitan University, 13-14 July 2022



The appellation of ‘pilgrim’ is routinely applied to a wide range of medieval people undertaking a broad range of (normally) spiritual activities. A penitential pilgrim to the Holy Land, an armed crusader, a traveller seeking a cure at a local shrine, or the symbolic life-pilgrim which all Christians were metaphorically understood to be. And yet, there is often a gulf between what motivated each of these individuals, the actions they performed, and what these individuals were trying to achieve on their “pilgrimage”. Trying to understand what makes a ‘pilgrim’ a ‘pilgrim’ in the Middle Ages is further complicated by the application of the same term to describe Muslims undertaking the *hajj* or practicing *ziyara*, Medieval Jewish travellers, Christian travellers not within the Latin Christian tradition, or Buddhist or Hindu pilgrims travelling throughout Asia in this period.

In light of ever-increasing interest in pilgrimage in the contemporary world, this conference seeks to discuss the usefulness of hypernyms such as ‘pilgrim’ and ‘pilgrimage’ for describing various Medieval spiritual practices, as well as the extent to which these concepts changed over time, in space, and between religions during the years c.300-1600. We welcome papers on any of the following topics or similar topics relating to the conference’s theme:

- Varieties and definitions of Medieval Pilgrimage
- All ‘pilgrimage’ traditions including Buddhist, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, and Pagan
- Terminologies (past and present) used to describe Medieval Pilgrims
- Comparative approaches to Medieval pilgrimage
- Anthropological and interdisciplinary approaches to Medieval pilgrimage

Proposals for 20-min papers should be sent to Philip Booth (philip.booth@mmu.ac.uk). Proposals should include a title, a 250-word abstract, and brief biographical details about the speaker. The deadline for proposals is 17th December 2021.

It is the intention at this stage that the conference will be held in person in Manchester, but the option for a hybrid or fully online event will remain open with a decision made early 2022 as to the final format.