The way to Santiago beyond Santiago. Fisterra and the pilgrimage’s post-secular meaning

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Abstract

There is a growing demand for pilgrimage, which in turn seems to be linked to the change in content and performance that the practice of pilgrimage is undergoing. This paper examines the emergence of Fisterra as a “new” end destination for the pilgrims. The aim of this study is to shed light on and create understanding of the destination Fisterra and the meaning of the place
and the role it plays for the pilgrims. Empirically, the study is partly based on statistics and official documents and partly on interviews with pilgrims at Fisterra. The study concludes that contemporary Fisterra as the end of the journey should be perceived as an effect of the post-secular trend in Europe as well as a response to the fact that the historical goal of Santiago de Compostela is increasingly marked by commercialised mass tourism, which is a disadvantage in the context of pilgrimage.

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