

Saints, cults and pilgrimage

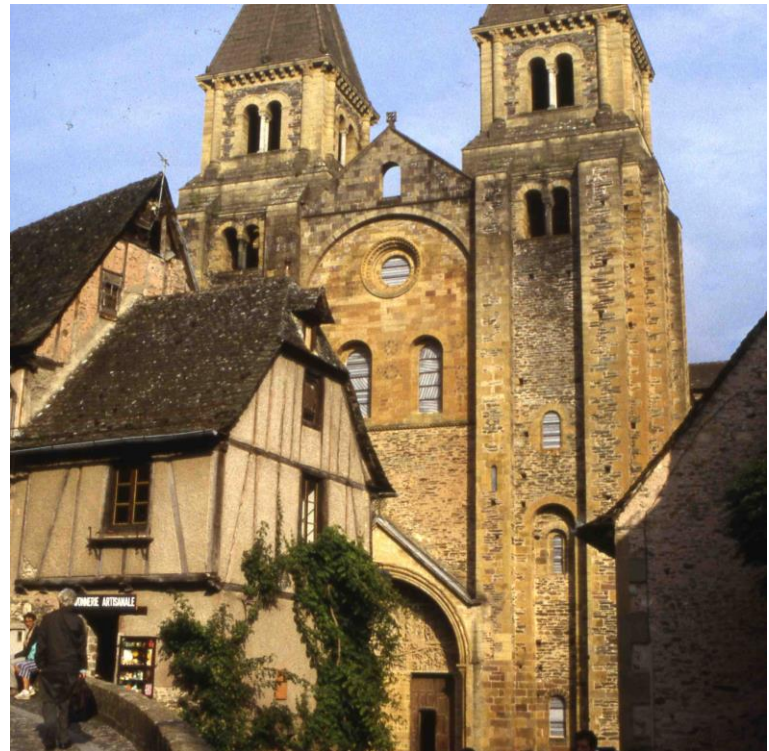
- **Piety**
- **Religious devotion**
- **Power**
- **Supernatural power**

How did cult centres emerge?

- There were places associated with a saint's life and death (e.g, traditional death of St Peter and St Paul in Rome)
- But there were other places

St Foy and Conques

- St Foy lived and died at Agen but her cult centre was at Conques – why?



The story ...

- 883 monk of Conques, Aronside, stole the relics of St Foy from Agen – he had been sent for that very purpose!
- *sanctum furtum, fidele furtum, furtum sacrum* – all phrases meaning ‘holy theft’

The main point of the story

- Was not to demonstrate the theft but to authenticate the relics
- Relics enclosed in the 'Golden Majesty'
- Cult spread by pilgrims travelling to Compostella
- And by literary compositions (esp. the book of her miracles, brought together by Bernard of Angers)

The relics of St Foy

- The reliquary



Conques: the tympanum



Another cult

- St James of Compostella (northern Spain)
- St James died in Jerusalem, but somewhere along the line a scribe made a mistake and read Hispania (Spain) for the Latin name for Jerusalem
- The medieval equivalent of a typing error!
- A ninth-century bishop, Theodomir of Padron (century) 'discovered' relics
- The Reconquista: Saint James (Sant Iago) becomes a figurehead



And finally

- The body of St James was in Compostella
- But where was his hand?
- Reading Abbey

SAINTS

RELICS

PILGRIMAGE



Some pilgrimage centres

- Holy Land (Jerusalem)
- Rome
- Compostella
- Conques
- Canterbury
- Hundreds of local pilgrimage and cult centres

Pilgrimage is a journey

- A journey 'there' (with no return):
voluntary exile
- A journey 'there and back'

Why did medieval people go on pilgrimage?

- Piety
- Penance
- Hope to see a miracle
- Hope to obtain cure
- Indulgences
- Political reasons (exile)

Why Jerusalem?

- Veneration of Christ; steps of the master
- Penance – the ultimate journey – salvation and absolution
- Not a curative (healing) pilgrimage centre – WHY?
- To die there – a ‘there’ journey

Why Rome?

- The threshold of the apostles Peter and Paul; their burial place
- The significance of Peter
- Piety
- Penance

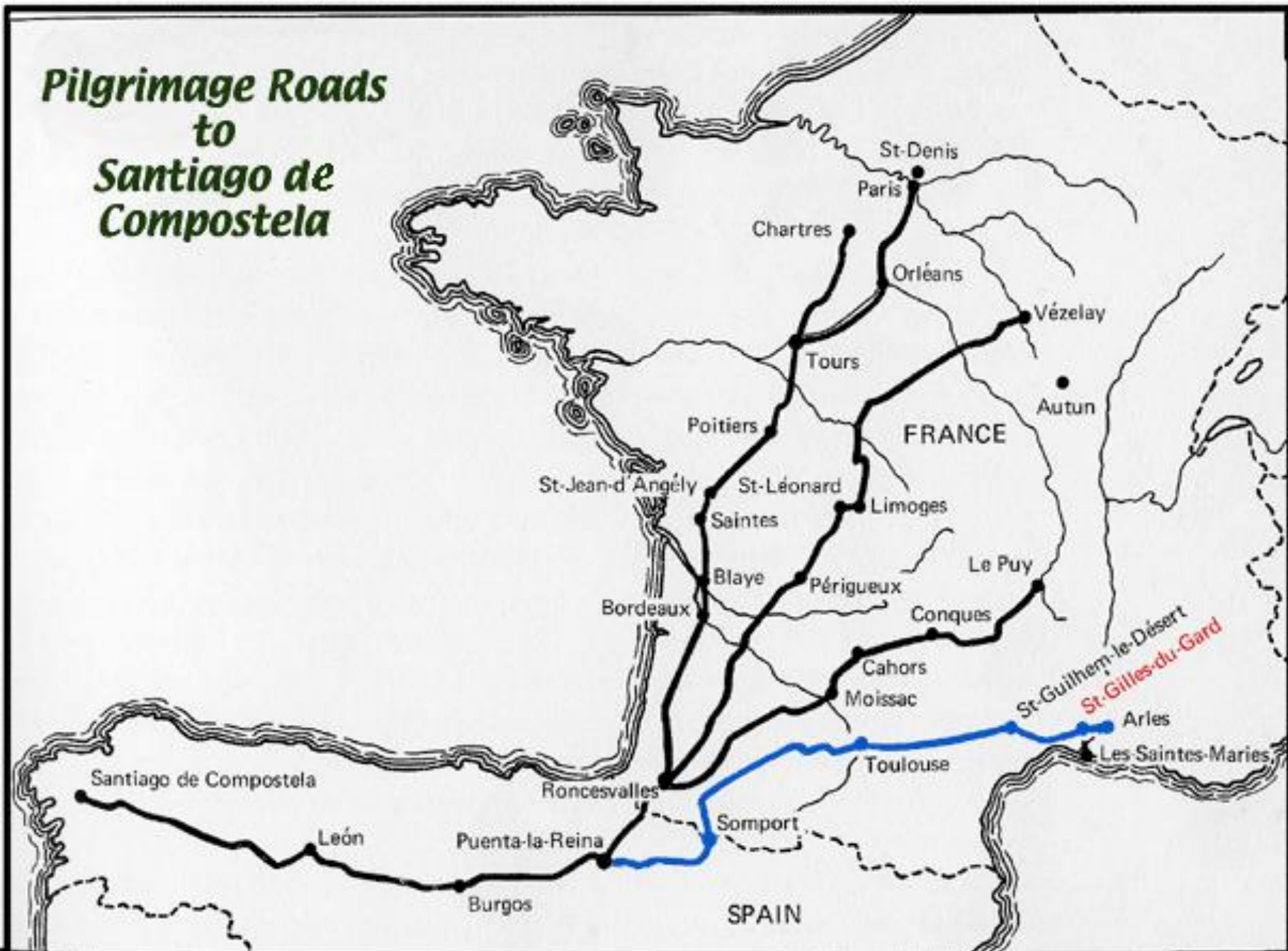
Pilgrimage is about ...

- Journey
- Ritual
- Power

Journey

- Recognised routes
- Guide Books e.g. to Compostella
 - routes
 - shrines
 - sights
 - dangers
 - health risks

Pilgrimage Roads to Santiago de Compostela



Rituals

How to do things

Ritual of departure

Ritual of arrival

Tokens to show a journey had
been completed

Pilgrim badges

- Jerusalem - palm
- Compostella – cockle shell
- Canterbury: St Thomas, Thomas in a boat, Canterbury bells etc



**Becket
badges –
the lot!**

In conclusion

- **The cult of saints is about popular piety or religiosity**
BUT
- **The church controls other worldly power through:**
 - **Control of WHO is made a saint**
 - **Promotion of cult centres**
 - **Recording of miracles and sale of relics**
 - **Control of salvation**