The University of Sydney

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MODERN PILGRIMS: SPIRITUAL WARRIORS
OR MERELY MASS TOURISTS

Justine Digance

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements
of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

May 2000

The University of Sydney
ABSTRACT

This study discusses whether or not modern secular pilgrimage is the same as traditional religious pilgrimage; and further, if it is also flourishing as traditional religious pilgrimage is. Quantitative and qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage were noted from the literature from a wide disciplinary base, and then these were measured in five case studies based on fieldwork in the Republic of Ireland, England and Australia. The over-riding motivation underpinning both pilgrimage phenomena is that the journey is undertaken as part of a spiritual quest, and at two events, the writer was able to link this with an equally important secondary motive of the journey being made as 'an act of faith'. The three events and two sites offered many similarities and linkages, and reflected current social and demographic trends, particularly the role of the 'New Age movement' and millenarianism. Many of the events offered pilgrims the opportunity for 'spiritual smorgasbording' as part of their quest, and the two tourist attraction sites provided exemplars of a comparatively new management and visitor issue: contested sites. Based on this research, the writer concluded that at both sites and some events, modern secular pilgrims were undertaking spiritual journeys reminiscent of pilgrimages that have existed from the beginning of time.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In preparing a dissertation, particularly of this length, there are four groups of people whose assistance has been invaluable in many different ways: my supervisors at the University of Sydney, colleagues at Griffith University (Gold Coast campus), individuals at each of the five fieldwork sites/events, and friends outside academia.

If I had attempted to undertake this research some ten or even five years ago it would have been impossible. The growth of the Internet both as a communication tool and research source has enabled me to conduct my research some one thousand kilometers away from my host institution. Fortunately, my supervisor, Dr. Carole Cusack, is not a technophobe and much the interactive dialogue has been conducted by e-mail. Carole provided quick, excellent feedback on my research and because of this I was able to complete the research in minimum time. Some three and half years ago, Professor Garry Trompf fielded my initial inquiries about undertaking this research at The University of Sydney, and his comments, both in his role as a senior member within the School of Studies in Religion and his role as second supervisor, helped in refining the problem into more manageable units.

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Newgrange: Clare Tuffy
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Justine Digance
Griffith University (Gold Coast campus)
May 2000

Addendum:
It should be noted that this dissertation was submitted for examination in May 1999, revision being made herein pursuant to subsequent advice from the Faculty of Arts. No changes have thus been made to reflect the passing of calendar events, particularly the turn of the millenium.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

‘a tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist’
(Turner and Turner 1978, 20)

‘Pilgrim: One who journeys (usually a long distance) to some sacred
place, as an act of religious devotion; one who makes a pilgrimage

Latin ‘peregrin-um’: one that comes from foreign parts, a stranger.
(The Oxford English Dictionary, second edition)

The above oft-quoted truism from Edith and Victor Turner’s important work on
Christian pilgrimage highlights the interconnectedness between tourism and
pilgrimage. Pilgrimage, or travel for religious pursuits, in all its many guises and
forms, is but one category of what is now referred to as ‘special interest’ tourism.
Pilgrimage not only involves the individual in the outwardly visible journey, but also
in the inner quest for the sacred and communion with the divine.

Having said this, it makes good sense to study pilgrimage within the discipline base of
tourism, which has historically been a multidisciplinary area of research. The
academic study of tourism is a comparatively new discipline, with one of the major
English language international journals, Annals of Tourism Research, first appearing
note that social scientists keen to maintain their serious scholarly image have tended
to ignore tourism as a legitimate area of study because of its sometimes frivolous
nature. Crick (1989, 310) reports that the first anthropological study of tourism
comes from 1963, most tourism research in the social sciences being incidental to
other interests even at the end of the 1970s. The academic study of pilgrimage in the
social sciences has thus been the domain of other disciplines – historians (including
prehistorians, classicists and medievalists), literary scholars, theologians and, in the
twentieth century, in the comparatively ‘new’ areas of anthropology and ethnography.
As well as being a topic of interest to academics, there is a considerable body of primary material on pilgrimage dating back thousands of years. These recount personal experiences and/or observations along the way, Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* being one such well known example.

The aim of this study is to examine whether or not modern secular pilgrimage functions in the same way as traditional religious pilgrimage. To achieve this, indicators or ‘Hallmarks of Pilgrimage’ from traditional religious pilgrimage are identified, as well as from the literature review in other areas, and then the results of the case studies are measured against these hallmarks. Whilst there are several possible Hallmarks of Pilgrimage that are noted in Chapters 2 and 3, it is important to note at the outset that only those Hallmarks of Pilgrimage which can be empirically and objectively measured, either qualitatively or quantitatively, or both, were selected for discussion in the case studies. The hypothesis is that modern secular pilgrimage and traditional religious pilgrimage share the common primary motive, namely, that the journey is undertaken as part of a spiritual quest searching for a mystical experience. Linked with this is the equally strong motive that the journey is made as ‘an act of faith’. These two motives set ‘true’ pilgrimage, as discussed in this dissertation, apart from popular usage of the word ‘pilgrimage’.

This opening Chapter focuses on two aspects: discussion of the scope and aims of this dissertation, and the methodologies used to test those ideas.

### 1.1 SCOPE AND AIMS OF THE STUDY

To date, most if not all of the work written on pilgrimage has firmly grounded the phenomenon in traditional religion, namely the four major traditions of Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. As well, pilgrimage has a strong presence in the traditions of Judaism, Sufism, Taoism and Jainism. Anthropologists describe indigenous tribes travelling to tribal feasts and ceremonies, but until the work of Van Gennep and Turner these were generally not considered to be pilgrimages. Today, in
many of the popularist books, magazine articles and journals one is aware of pilgrimage occurring outside traditional religion, but there appears to be little or no scholarly research on these journeys. Linked with this is the commonly accepted view coming from current social science literature that we live in a world that has become desacralised. Yet, some authors indicate that today this trend is being reversed: contemporary pilgrimage and social change provide evidence of an increasingly resacralised world.

One of the leading commentators on secularization of modern society notes that the process itself does not speak of the disappearance of religiosity, but rather ‘indicates the decline in the significance of religion in the operation of the social system’ (Wilson 1985, 14). In this study, the term ‘modern secular pilgrimage’ has been used to differentiate it from traditional religious pilgrimage (see below) which reflects the view that this comparatively new pilgrimage tradition is a child of the secular social system where empirical knowledge, rationality and logic are to the fore. Wilson (1985, 70) notes this very secularization may in effect be driving this new pilgrimage tradition where, in the concluding comments of his chapter, he says:

‘... the very rationalization of society’s operation and its desiccating effect on everyday life may provide their own inducement for individuals privately to take up the vestiges of ancient myths and arcane lore and ceremonies, in the search for authentic fantasy, power, possibilities of manipulation, and alternative sources of private gratification’.

Some of his thoughts could easily be applied to the many modalities found within both the ‘New Age’ movement and New Religious Movements (see 3.3 for further discussion).

In pursuing the aims of this study, it is necessary to ask whether the journeys of modern secular pilgrims are truly pilgrimages and not just typical modern mass tourist journeys. In order to establish this, indicators or Hallmarks of Pilgrimage have been drawn from the literature. They are then used as benchmarks to measure examples of
modern secular pilgrimage as illustrated in each of the five case studies. Only Hallmarks of Pilgrimage that can be measured, either by quantitative data or qualitative participant observation, are extracted. There also other factors which may have acted as a motivating force for a pilgrimage journey, or explained why a particular site had become consecrated and recognized as a sacred site worthy of pilgrimage devotion. These qualitative aspects are noted in the case studies where relevant. As well, there are some underlying aspects of social change as discussed at 3.3 of the literature review which are also considered important in explaining the resurgence of modern pilgrimage. In this dissertation ‘modern pilgrimage’ refers to all contemporary pilgrimage, be it secular pilgrimage or traditional religious pilgrimage. However, in this dissertation the term ‘modern secular pilgrimage’ is used to differentiate it from pilgrimage which has evolved from a traditional religious base, ancient or modern (‘traditional religious pilgrimage’). But there is a common link between modern secular pilgrimage in quasi-religious mode, and traditional religious pilgrimage in a secular society, in that both have a spiritual quest as the over-riding motive for the journey. As a corollary, this is linked with a strong secondary motive: an expectation that the journey is connected with an individual’s belief system or cosmology and results in one’s motivation for travelling being ‘an act of faith’. Christians travelling to the Holy Land, particularly at Easter or Christmas, is one such example of traditional religious pilgrimage.

The focus of this dissertation falls outside traditional religion and looks at sites and events that have a secular focus. One event, the Kalachakra Initiation (Chapter 4), was a Tibetan Buddhist event but the writer’s attention was largely focused on the estimated 50% non-Buddhist attendees. Some of the events could be loosely described as ‘New Age’ in character and thus able to be categorized as ‘New Age pilgrimage’. This label, however, is eschewed in favour of ‘modern secular pilgrimage’. There are three reasons for this deliberate choice. Firstly, much of which has been labelled ‘New Age’ or alternative is now considered by many to be mainstream. Secondly, to use the term ‘New Age’ could automatically prejudice the study in the minds of potential readers of this document: pejorative labels are often used to deride anything that is called ‘New Age’ or appears to be somewhat different
from existing societal norms. The third and most compelling reason is that many of the people surveyed would, it is strongly suspected, refer to themselves as followers of traditional religions. They could therefore be deeply upset that their purpose for travelling indicated that they were members of the ‘New Age’ movement. Conversely, those who consider themselves to be ‘New Agers’ would generally not be concerned about being labelled as such, but perhaps might prefer to be put into more discrete categories such as ‘pagan’ and so on.

Five case studies of both sites and events were selected to offer a representative group of places that attract modern secular pilgrims. The location of each of the case study sites and date(s) visited are listed under the relevant Chapter, and found in Figure 1.1 (Australian sites) and Figure 1.2 (England and the Republic of Ireland). Two of the case studies are European and came from England and the Republic of Ireland; fieldwork was undertaken in June/July 1997. The remaining three are from Australia, with fieldwork carried out between September 1996 and November 1998. A somewhat flexible approach was adopted in selecting the events or sites as case studies based upon conversations with friends and colleagues, and reading widely in the popular press. The writer feels that this approach has resulted in an interesting amalgam of research findings obtained from fieldwork carried out in a diversity of settings, with respondents being drawn from a wide-cross section of the community. It could well be suggested that five case studies are perhaps too many to adequately cover in a study of this size, yet it is argued by the writer that researching any fewer in number would not have been sufficient to test the hypothesis that non-traditional religious pilgrimage was flourishing in a variety of settings.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

As noted earlier, much has been written on pilgrimage and almost without exception, it is based on qualitative research using participant observation as the sole methodology. Turner and Turner’s 1978 work is typical of this approach: visiting the sites, observing the behaviour of pilgrims, and collecting local and national archival
Chapter 6
Rainbow Beach & Uluru: Stargate Alignments
18 September 1997 (Rainbow Beach)
21 September 1997 (Uluru)

Chapter 8
Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park: Uluru monolith
1-5 November 1998

Figure 1.1: Australian case study sites

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Sydney: Kalachakra Initiation
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Chapter 7
Slane: Newgrange megalith
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Chapter 5
Uffington White Horse: Druid Gorsedd
21 June 1997

Figure 1.2: England and the Republic of Ireland case study sites
documentation. The writer was unable to find any quantitative research on either traditional religious or secular pilgrimage, which represents a gap in the research on pilgrimage that needs to be filled. Thus, the writer’s research focuses on two areas of pilgrimage that have been largely ignored: modern secular pilgrimage, and using surveys to obtain quantitative data about the pilgrims at selected sites and events.

The reason for this gap in quantitative data on pilgrimage is no doubt due to the nature of pilgrimage in its traditional sense, namely, that it is a spiritual journey. To ask total strangers in an unfamiliar atmosphere questions that offend one of the three fundamental ‘no-go’ areas of personal inquiry - religion, politics and sex - is a difficult task for any researcher. Freedom of religious worship and observance is enshrined in the Constitutions of most nations, particularly as the 1948 United Nation’s Declaration of Human Rights\(^1\) espouses such a freedom. In Australia, section 116 of the Australian Constitution (Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900) prescribes such a freedom into law. Thus to ask someone questions about their belief systems and religious faith could, quite understandably, be considered an invasion of their privacy. Permission to attend and/or then to survey at events and sites had to be obtained well in advance: however, the request to survey was denied for the Kalachakra Initiation (Chapter 4). Secondly, the survey instruments had to be approved by those in charge of the site or event, with some additional questions being added by request. Finally, it had to be accepted that people could refuse to participate in the survey, and even if agreeing to participate, they could refuse to answer the key motivational question of being there as part of a spiritual quest.

This study’s research into modern pilgrimage contains two strands: a comprehensive literature review, and five case studies based on fieldwork conducted by the writer in Australia and Europe between 1996 and 1998. The methodology relating to the literature review is discussed firstly because it provides the basis for the fieldwork methodology used to validate the study.

\(^1\) Article 18 states that ‘Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; the right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance’.
Chapter One: Introduction

Literature review

The theoretical underpinnings of this dissertation are based on secondary data obtained from a wide range of sources, and only those works cited in the text are included in the Selected Bibliography at the end of this dissertation. Besides the two literature review chapters (Chapters 2 and 3), each of the case studies has its own separate body of literature which, in some instances, is considerable. For this reason, it was decided to have a Selected Bibliography for each Chapter, rather than have one lengthy bibliography. Some authors are referred to in more than one Chapter, and for completeness and ease of use, the complete citation is repeated in each instance in the various chapter bibliographies.

The literature review is divided into two chapters. This is done so as to clearly distinguish and identify the importance of the underpinning theories of the authors discussed in Chapter 2 from the extremely diverse material covered in Chapter 3. Chapter 2 discusses the work done in the early part of this century by French anthropologist Arnold Van Gennep, and subsequently applied by two anthropologists, Edith and Victor Turner (particularly in relation to pilgrimage) and Erik Cohen, a tourism anthropologist. Chapter 3 covers a wide cross-section of material divided into four sections: the sacred realm, the phenomenon of pilgrimage, social change and tourism. Throughout both literature review chapters, Hallmarks of Pilgrimage are identified and then highlighted in bold. As noted earlier, only those Hallmarks of Pilgrimage that could be measured in some way by the writer are highlighted. Quantitative hallmarks are able to be measured by data obtained from surveys, and qualitative hallmarks are based on observations made during the fieldwork.

At the end of Chapter 2, these are summarized in tabular form and then added to those extracted from Chapter 3. Table 3.3 at the end of Chapter 3 provides a list of qualitative and quantitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage that will be measured during the course of this study. In each of the case studies, these Hallmarks of Pilgrimage will be measured, either by survey, participant observation, or both, in an attempt to determine whether or not the case study represents a truly modern secular pilgrimage site or event.
Fieldwork has often been used as the primary research tool in the social sciences, geography and anthropology being but two such disciplines. Whyte (1979, 60) stresses the importance of fulfilling promises of providing feedback after the study has been completed. Providing feedback is a way of returning to the wider community the results of one’s research, as well as being a way of repaying organizers/managers for their co-operation with the writer’s research. At only one site was there a mandatory requirement to provide research results, namely Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park (Chapter 8). This requirement was part of the permit system that is usually required before research is permitted in national parks, and will be met once this dissertation has been examined. Chapter 4 involved no such requirement as no survey was administered. The survey results in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 have already been forwarded to the relevant parties.

One key aspect of this study is that in four of the five studies there is a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methodology, but it should be stressed at the outset that this study was not empirically driven. Rather, the aim is to use quantitative data to corroborate qualitative data obtained through participant observation. In all of the four case studies, the numbers of valid survey responses obtained would not be considered statistically valid. The focus has been on the qualitative approach, however, the quantitative data provides more information and brings to each of the case studies deeper insight and understanding.

**Qualitative methodology**

Participant observation is widely used in the social sciences either by itself, or to corroborate the results of quantitative research. Participant observation ‘enables the research worker to secure his data within the mediums, symbols and experiential worlds which have meaning to his respondents’ (Vidich 1955, 354). The essence of this research is that one enters the space of others in a familiar or new setting, and observes. This enables the researcher to perceive a different reality through their own direct experience, that direct experience being a prerequisite to discerning that reality.
Chapter One: Introduction

One obstacle to be overcome in employing participant observation is that the researcher is usually an outsider and thus lack of knowledge, understanding and cultural assumptions they bring to the study may instantaneously place them at a disadvantage. As Jackson (1983, 41) points out, the inherent perils of pursuing such a methodology is that the researcher can have their observational acuity reduced if they become more of a participant then merely acting as an observer. Striving to keep the balance between the two poles of participant versus observer is acknowledged by many writers to be a difficult and challenging role. On one hand, the reality needs experiencing but on the other, a clear head and a reserved detachment is required so that emotions and personal bias do not cloud the results needed to validate one’s hypothesis. As Webb et. al (1966, 114) note, the ‘observer is more likely to report on phenomena which are different from those of his own society or subculture than he is to report on phenomena common to both’. Also, to successfully undertake this type of research, the researcher needs to be display empathy with those they are surveying and/or observing. Again, this is something that must be exercised with a degree of balance so that the subjects feel non-threatened and that their contribution to the research is highly valued.

Quantitative methodology

Survey instruments needed to obtain empirical or primary research data were designed and approved by the relevant organizers/managers of the various events/sites before they were administered on-site as self-complete surveys. Surveys were administered in the case studies discussed in Chapters 5 to 8 inclusive, with participant observation being used in all case studies. As noted earlier, surveys were used to obtain data on whether or not certain indicia of pilgrimage – Hallmarks of Pilgrimage – were present at four of the five case studies. There are four quantitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage (see Table 3.3) which all relate to the individual motive for attending an event or visiting a site. The only way to obtain first-hand information on the motives behind their journey was to ask people why they were there, and the most commonly used way of gaining this information is to survey the researcher’s target group. Other ways of obtaining this information could have been obtained via a focus
group, however this was not possible because of the individual nature of each case study. In some instances, anecdotal evidence also related to individual motivations, and these are cited where relevant as qualitative data. Each of the survey instruments is attached as a separate Appendix at the back of this dissertation. Where possible, the survey instrument was standardized for both events and sites, but there are some differences in the motivational questions. Where group or site specific questions were required, there was some deviation from the standard list of questions, and in the case of Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park (Chapter 8), several additional questions were required by Park Management as a precondition for permit approval. In designing the survey instrument, it was decided to use closed-ended questions as this was not an exploratory study, and quick response time was needed because of time constraints at each of the sites. For example, at Newgrange (Chapter 7) people were surveyed on the short five minute shuttle bus ride returning from the site to the Visitor Centre; using a longer, more detailed questionnaire would have meant that there would have been many incomplete responses. The questionnaire also included an ‘Other comments’ section, a feature often ignored by some researchers. These are a form of de facto personal interview and provide the respondent with the opportunity to offer information they may well have given if open-ended questions were used, or a face-to-face interview was conducted. The data obtained from the ‘Other comments’ section is included as relevant in discussion of the site/event.

The design of the questions linking tourist activities and other sites or activities were based on literature reviews and other survey instruments. The motivational questions were based on the tourism literature review. The styles of questions asked were discrete; namely, asking respondents to give only one response to each question. Classification of occupation was done in accordance with the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations issued by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, using the broadest or first level of groups as the occupational unit. For the motivational questions, a standard five-point Likert scale using the ‘Strongly Agree - Strongly Disagree’ continuum was used. The questions providing socio-demographic information about the respondents were taken from other survey instruments. Slight differences in wording in the ‘Level of Education’ questions were necessary to reflect
differences between Australian and English/Irish educational systems. Draft instruments were checked by the writer’s supervisor and colleagues at Griffith University before they were administered in the field. Because the two events were one-off, never-to-be-repeated events, there was no opportunity to conduct pilot surveys to validate the surveys before using them in the field. This was particularly the case with the two European sites as the final survey instruments had to be approved and printed prior to departure from Australia.

The completed questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) Version 8.0, and the writer was the only person administering the surveys. The numbers at the two case studies in Chapters 5 and 6 were between twelve and twenty-five, yet approximately 95% of those who attended responded to the survey. Chapter 7 (Newgrange) and Chapter 8 (Uluru) totaled 162 and 101 responses respectively, and although not an ideal number of responses, nevertheless gives some indication as to why people visited Newgrange and Uluru. The small numbers of responses in these four case studies meant that reporting frequencies or percentages was the only type of data analysis possible, thus the results should be regarded with a degree of caution and not seen as definitive. However the high response rates in Chapters 5 and 6 suggest that the results could be applied to larger populations. For example, the results from Chapter 5 could be applicable to other European Druid or pagan groups, and possibly to like groups in Australia because of similar socio-cultural links. With Chapter 6, again the results could be applied to other Lightworker gatherings around the world, but the writer would be cautious in applying the results to other ‘New Age’ groups. Sampling at each site and event was different, and is discussed in the methodology section of each case study.
1.3 STUDY APPROACH

The order in which the case studies are presented was not prescribed, but the writer felt that it was perhaps fitting to start with the Kalachakra Initiation as it was the first case study the writer researched, and also because it may have represented the start of a spiritual journey for many who attended the event. The other two event case studies follow thereafter so that there is a certain continuity in looking at all the event-based case studies together rather than switching between site and event.

The format within each case study is generally standardized, giving the history of the locale and/or site, and the event itself. The relevant methodology is reviewed, followed by the results of the fieldwork and the qualitative and/or quantitative data. The results are then measured against the different Hallmarks of Pilgrimage as summarized at Table 3.3. Selected comments from the survey forms are inserted in the discussion as relevant, as well as any other personal feedback given to the writer during and/or after completing the fieldwork. Figures (photographs or diagrams) and tables are used to illustrate points made in the text. A conclusion closes each case study and returns to the central theme: was the site or event one where secular pilgrims could be found on a spiritual quest, hoping to connect with the Other. Chapter 9 concludes the study, and is followed by the Appendices and Selected Bibliography.

Finally, before proceeding to review the literature in the following two chapters, it should be stressed that during the course of the entire dissertation, all judgment is suspended on the philosophies and cosmologies under discussion. It is sufficient that individuals have solace in their faith: this study does not attempt to justify the individual belief systems discussed, or otherwise.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: VAN GENNEP, TURNER AND COHEN

Chapters 2 and 3 examine the literature used as the theoretical underpinnings for this dissertation. This Chapter focuses on the work of the above three authors who, to a large extent, underpin this research into modern secular pilgrimage. The key points as relevant to the discussion are highlighted, particularly if they are considered to be Hallmarks of Pilgrimage. As noted earlier, only those Hallmarks of Pilgrimage that could be measured are identified and then highlighted in bold. Quantitative hallmarks are able to be measured by data obtained from surveys, and qualitative hallmarks are based on observations made during the fieldwork.

2.1 ARNOLD VAN GENNEP

Arnold van Gennep was Professor of Ethnography at the University of Neuchâtel in France. His work in French was first published in 1909 but it was not until 1960 that it was translated into English. In drawing analogies from many tribal cultures around the world, as well as occasionally commenting on the society of his day, his work commences by looking at social divisions in society, stating the only remaining clearly marked division in modern society is that between the sacred and the profane (the religious and secular) worlds. Because of the perceived incompatibility between these two worlds, one needs to pass through an intermediate or transitional stage between the two. He called this a liminal or threshold stage (Latin limen - threshold). The transition was a ‘passage from one situation to another, or from one cosmic or social world to another’ (p.10), and formed ceremonial patterns which were important
enough to be singled out as a special category - his ‘rites de passage’. These he subdivided into three categories:

- Rites of Separation from the usual environment [preliminal rites]
- Rites of Transition which involve crossing a threshold [liminal rites]
- Rites of Incorporation into the ‘new’ world [postliminal rites]

The liminal phase is about initiation, various rituals being used to signify to the individual that they are undergoing a rite of passage, and that the moment of transformation, when hopefully all will be revealed, is at hand. Van Gennep uses the term ‘magico-religious’ (as does Eliade 1959, 28) to describe the ‘pivoting of the sacred’ by the use of ceremonies and rituals to distinguish the special moment that sets the time and place apart from the mundane, profane world. By the use of ritualization and individual interpretation, almost any place can become sacred by ‘the pivoting of the sacred’ (Chidester and Linenthal 1995, 14).

To enter the liminal phase, one has to pass through what Van Gennep described as ‘territorial passage’. Territories invoke a notion of sanctity, be it country frontiers or ritual portals, such as arches of triumph or the main entry doors of houses. The spatial passing through such portals also becomes a rite of spiritual passage (p.22) as does the physical journey involved with any form of pilgrimage - a movement through a territory (familiar or not) represents part of that sacred journey. Passing through some form of portal or entry point could be identified in each of the case studies, but it is suggested that the commencement of the liminal stage would vary from individual to individual. Such a transition does not of itself make their visit to the site or event a rite of passage unless they meet the two key criteria highlighted earlier: a sacred journey, and that it is made as ‘an act of faith’. Although interesting, this aspect is not considered important in the overall discussion of modern secular pilgrimage but nevertheless it is raised if appropriate in the case studies.
In discussing indigenous Congolese puberty rites, Van Gennep (p.82) saw a double series of rites of passage, these five steps being:

- Rites of Separation from the usual environment [leaving home]
- Rites of Incorporation into the sacred environment [arriving at the site]
- Rites of Transition which involve crossing a threshold
- Rites of Separation from the local sacred environment
- Rites of Incorporation into the usual environment [arrival back home]

The application of both his single and double rites of passage are discussed in the Process Model of Pilgrimage at 3.2.1.

The liminal rite of passage for the modern pilgrim outside the established religious tradition could also necessitate a period of initiation. The pilgrim has already been initiated into their socio-cultural environment via the plethora of rituals that are familiar to all - birth, baptism, marriage and so on - but in pilgrimage mode they are largely in uncharted territory. As an unknowing outsider at an event for the first time, however, the initiatory process may be informal; a ‘hands-on’ learning experience, with the participant watching and asking so ‘as not to get it wrong and say the wrong thing’. Nevertheless, they are still left to grapple with the unfamiliar in their quest for the sacred despite the fact that the experiences offered may have been mediated. Victor Turner added to Van Gennep’s liminal stage, particularly in relation to research on traditional religious pilgrimage, and this is discussed in the following section. The concept of liminality is today more widely used than originally intended in defining times of personal transition. Harte (1994, 6) says it has been extended to both places and personal values, which can be seen in Rogerson’s (1986) work ‘as the common status of ghosts, fairies, monsters and UFOs’.

Ceremonies or rituals enable the participant ‘to pass from one defined position to another which is equally well defined’ (p.3). The order of these ceremonies, with a
classification of rites, forms the basis of Van Gennep's work on rites of passage. Van Gennep saw pilgrimage (with its accompanying vow) as one such ceremonial pattern (p.183). For the Catholic pilgrim, rules (rituals) must be followed before departure so that he could be 'removed from the profane world and incorporated into the sacred world' (p.184). In both Islamic and Buddhist pilgrimage, the pilgrim was 'invested with sacredness ... as soon as he left his home, so that every pilgrim, from the time of his departure until his return, was outside ordinary life and in a transitional state' (p.184).

Finally, in his conclusion Van Gennep (p.187) envisages the concept of rites of passage having wide application, not only when transiting stages of life or social positions, but also 'at the base of several autonomous systems which are employed for the benefit of whole societies, restricted groups or individuals'. Today, the term 'rites of passage' has easily slipped into modern parlance, being used to describe a wide variety of initiatory and testing life experiences as part of the travails of human existence and survival on this planet. In much of the recent work on pilgrimage, it would be unusual not to find some reference to Van Gennep's rites of passage, and the transitional or liminal phase. As noted earlier, ritual signifies that one may be about to undergo their individual rite of passage, but the emphasis is the possibility or opportunity so to do. The writer suggests that the journey may not be such an extraordinary one so that it is considered 'special' and stands out as a milestone or significant event over the course of an individual's lifetime experiences. For example, twenty-first or fortieth birthdays are seen by some as being of no consequence and merely just another day in the calendar.

In this study, the criteria established at the outset was that a Hallmark of Pilgrimage must be able to be measured either qualitatively or quantitatively. A question relating to the motivation for visiting the site or event (for example, 'was the visit a rite of passage') was not included in the survey as it was considered to be inappropriate and certainly would have biased the survey process. If anecdotal evidence suggested that
an individual considered their experience to be a rite of passage via informal comments made to the writer as part of the participant observation process, or in the written responses obtained from the Kalachakra Initiation, then this will be noted where appropriate. Whilst there were many first timers at either the event and/or site and thus the experience was novel and somewhat initiatory, it was not necessarily a rite of passage for each participant. For this and other reasons, regrettably the empirical emphasis of this dissertation necessitates that a rite of passage cannot be included as a Hallmark of Pilgrimage.

2.2 VICTOR TURNER

Victor Turner was an anthropologist and at the time of his death in 1983, Professor of Anthropology and Religions at the University of Virginia. He undertook fieldwork in many parts of the world, and the co-authored work with Edith Turner, *Image and pilgrimage in Christian culture: anthropological perspectives*, is perhaps the most important contemporary work on religious pilgrimage. At the interdisciplinary conference on pilgrimage at the Roehampton Institute of Higher Education (U.K.) in July 1988, this work was acknowledged, if not followed, in almost all of the papers presented (Coleman and Elsner 1995, 20). Van Gennep's liminal rite of passage phase was subsequently developed by Turner, particularly in relation to pilgrimage. Before looking at five specific themes in Turner's work on pilgrimage, some of his general comments are noted below.

For Turner, pilgrimage is a *rite de passage* which is characteristic of initiatory ritual, wherein one moves from the profane or secular world, to the sacred or religious world. But whilst it may be characteristic, pilgrimage *per se* is strictly not an initiation rite but bears more resemblance to a voluntary devotional act (Turner and Turner 1978, 31). The writer suggests that many modern pilgrims have no initiatory period prior to experiencing their event/site as it is perhaps very different from their
socio-cultural milieu. Their first encounter with a different culture thus may be at the event/site, and for many this may constitute a rite of initiation, albeit a ‘low key’ and voluntary rite of passage. The transformative nature of this liminal period can also be somewhat disorienting and could constitute a life-consciousness changing event.

Pilgrimage involves the notion of going from a familiar, profane environment to a far, sacred place, and, theoretically, returning back to the familiar, renewed and healed (Turner 1974a, 20). As noted in the opening paragraph in Chapter 1, pilgrimage involves both an inner and outer journey, the dichotomy between the two being discussed in more detail at 3.1. Rather than the pilgrim’s home environment and the pilgrimage site providing the contrast between the profane and the sacred as discussed by Van Gennep (and later Graburn at 3.4.1), Turner’s pilgrim in the liminal journey phase increasingly encounters more religious and secular elements as they advance towards their final goal (Turner 1972, 204). This particularly occurred in European medieval pilgrimage, with its established route of shrines and objects strategically placed on the pilgrimage circuit. But there were also secular challenges along the way, such as bandits, the need to physically and financially survive, transportation problems, and the temptations of markets and fairs. However, as the pilgrim neared the pilgrimage site, ‘the route itself becomes a sacred, sometimes mythical journey’, the Centre holding out a promise of inner transformation of spirit and personality (Turner 1972, 212-214). In traversing these often novel and unexpected realms, the pilgrim is offered the chance of increased communitas, both as secular fellowship and comradeship, and ultimately, sacred communion. Aziz (1987, 253) disagrees with this view, suggesting that pilgrims tend to disassociate themselves from others around them as they near their goal: they become less sociable, less talkative and less concerned about their fellow pilgrims.

The writer is of the view that both explanations contain merit but is reluctant to prefer one interpretation over another because one cannot generalize about inner journeys of individual pilgrims. Pilgrims may vacillate between the two points on the continuum.
as they near their final goal. Unfortunately, the writer did not knowingly participate in the journey phase with those who took part in the events/visited the tourist attractions in any of the five case studies, thus is unable to add any qualitative data in support of either view. It should also be noted that these views come from Turner’s and Aziz’ research into traditional religious pilgrimage and whether or not they would also hold true for modern secular pilgrimage is open to conjecture. The Turnerian view is endorsed from the writer’s own travel experiences observing visitors finally about to experience a long awaited visit to a tourist icon, a view which is reinforced by Smith’s example given at 3.4.1.

In their discussion of pilgrimage to Mericao in Mexico, Turner and Turner (1978) highlight the concurrent motivations for pilgrimage where people came not only for the sacred, but also for festivity and trade. They also note that in Mexico, as with Lourdes and Mecca, that mass communication media and modern transportation systems have been incorporated into the pilgrimage system. Nevertheless, many Mexican pilgrims choose to follow tradition and travel on foot or by donkey and thereby acquire ‘more merit or grace by ignoring modern means of transportation’ (Turner and Turner 1978, 227). Accounts of pilgrimage often refer to hardships, such as going by foot, as being necessary to loosen ‘the bonds of matter [so as] to liberate the spirit’ (Turner 1974b, 323). Hardship is often presented as a necessary element of pilgrimage but is not considered to be a Hallmark of Pilgrimage for today’s modern pilgrim.

Today, pilgrimage trails by foot to Santiago de Compostela in Spain, Croagh Patrick in Northern Ireland or the Shingon Buddhist route on Shikouko, Japan, offer similar parallels to the Mexican pilgrims of eschewing modern modes of transportation. However, whilst technological advances in transportation make it possible for most people to be one or two days away from their chosen pilgrimage site or event, few pilgrims have the necessary resources of time and/or money to have the luxury of making lengthy pilgrimage trails by foot. The Shingon Buddhist route on Shikouko
takes one to two months to complete by foot, and the Spanish section of the Camino de Santiago is 850km, although Murray and Graham (1997, 59) found in their study that 40% of pilgrims started their journey by foot some 300kms from Santiago. If engaged in full-time employment, few people would be able to fit such a lengthy journey by foot into their annual vacation period, perhaps having to postpone such journeys when time is not at a premium (for example, after retirement or on long service leave).

The pilgrim owns part of the process because of the mental and physical interface with the sacred centre or site. Pilgrimage is part of the structure of a society’s culture, social mores and organization, and in order to fully understand pilgrimage, one must take into account these factors (both at a macro and micro level). New pilgrimage structures and processes may be grafted onto an older surviving structure, and as part of this process the new ‘becomes sacralized and infused with liminal communitas’ (Turner 1974a, 228). Two of the sites in this study (Newgrange at Chapter 7 and Uluru at Chapter 8) provide examples of where an ancient site has experienced a renewal of interest, though not exhibiting the reputation for miracles as religious pilgrimage centres have traditionally done. Both were, and Uluru still is, focal sacred areas for their communities. Today, however, they have re-emerged as modern pilgrimage sites for people outside those traditions: they are both tourist attractions in the usual sense of the word as well as possessing a drawing power for pilgrims common to sacred sites around the world.

One final point on the seeming inconsistency found between Turner’s earlier and later works is noted, but the writer suggests that the semantics really are of no consequence to the conclusions drawn in this dissertation. Writing in 1972, pilgrimage for Turner constituted a ‘liminal phenomenon’ (symptomatic of preindustrial tribes where pilgrimage was embedded within the structure of the society of the time), but in his later 1977 and 1988 works, pilgrimage became a ‘liminoid phenomenon’ (a modern and more secular phenomenon which is ‘not cyclical but continuously generated,
though in times and places sequestered from work settings in the leisure sphere': Turner 1977, 44). Theatre, sports, concerts and festivals, with their basic event sequence, provide a ritualized context and are examples of liminoid events in the postmodern world. This notion is however prescribed with the caveat that these events ‘usually do not achieve the totalizing integrative force that has been seen as central to many kinds of ritual practice’ (Lowell-Lewis and Dowsey-Magog 1993, 198). Again, like a rite of passage, it is difficult to generalize about the individual pilgrimage experience and the importance of ritual in a secular setting. For example, standing for the ‘Hallelujah Chorus’ in Handel’s Oratorio, the Messiah, may be an important ritual for some concert goers: omission of this ritual could result in negative feelings. Conversely, some might view this ritual an inconvenience and although an interesting historical marker, completely uncalled for in today’s concert programme.

**Liminality**

Turner (1969, 95) describes individuals in the liminal phase as *liminal personae*: they are ‘neither here nor there: they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arranged by law, custom and convention and ceremonial’. To be in this state is to be a neophyte with its attendant passive, submissive and lowly status. However, during the period of liminality there is a blend of ‘lowness and sacredness, of homogeneity and comradeship’ (Turner 1969, 96). To this Turner ascribes a notion of community, preferring however the Latin term *communitas* so as to distinguish from other usage of the word. The liminal phase represents an unstructured phase, an individual being ‘a tabula rasa, a blank slate on which is inscribed the knowledge and wisdom of the group’ (Turner 1969, 103). In discussing liminality as it relates to pilgrimage, Smart (1996, 117) says that strictly speaking, the liminal phase is not when the individual becomes a pilgrim but rather when the individual moves in and out of pilgrimage mode. This would equate with Van Gennep’s ‘territorial passage’ stage noted earlier at 2.1. Some of what Turner considers to be the properties of the liminal phase are listed below but, apart from *communitas*, these are not measured in this dissertation.
equality
anonymity
absence of status
absence of rank
humility
sacredness
transition
communitas
sacred instruction
continual reference to mystical powers
simplicity
foolishness (Turner 1969, 106-107)

Liminality is particularly conducive to play, a time when experimental behaviour is permitted, 'new ways of acting, new combinations of symbols, are tried out, to be discarded or accepted. Ritual, and particularly liminality, should not be regarded as monolithic' (Turner 1977, 40). Turner laments the delimitation of Christian liturgical ritual wherein the solemn has been stressed at the expense of the festive, playful element. Modern leisure, for Turner, allows man to regain this lost sense of ludic liminality with freedom to indulge in the ludic. 'A sense of the ludic' was apparent in some of the event case studies, and is a qualitative hallmark of Pilgrimage but only if accompanied by a journey made as 'an act of faith' as part of a spiritual quest.

Communitas

Communitas, according to Turner (1969, 153), is immediate, binding and bonding people only momentarily; unpredictable in its timing, temporarily suspending the play of social distinctions, spontaneous; and, most importantly, when looking at notions of pilgrimage as a sacred journey, is:
... almost everywhere held to be sacred or 'holy', possibly because it transgresses or dissolves the norms that govern structure and institutionalized relationships and is accompanied by experiences of unprecedented potency (Turner 1969, 128).

Turner’s liminal phase rings with egalitarian tones: a phase where the ‘high must experience what it is like to be low, for there could be no high unless the low existed ... to be in this liminal state denotes an individual is on the path to a higher status, passing through a limbo of statuslessness’ (Turner 1969, 97). Communitas also promotes a fellowship and comradeship between fellow pilgrims based on an individual choice of friends rather than on kinship and neighbourhood (Turner 1972, 215). There are thus two elements of the ‘communitas’ phase described by Turner: an observable egalitarianism which sees pilgrims mingling freely, regardless of status (a qualitative Hallmark of Pilgrimage), and a desire to be with like-minded people, sharing interests and experiences (a quantitative Hallmark of Pilgrimage).

‘Hippies’ exemplify an example of communitas, being a group ‘which do not have the advantages of national rites de passage’ (Turner 1969, 112). Hippies were often involved in sit-ins, love-ins or be-ins as at the ‘Woodstock or Isle of Wight nations’ (Turner 1974a, 243). Importantly, universal communitas embodied in pilgrimage ‘is still ultimately bounded by the structure of the religious systems within which they are generated and persist’ (Turner 1972, 219). An unusual situation therefore exists in that the formalized structure of the religious tradition supports pilgrimage as a phenomenon, but as a consequence, an unstructured social process, communitas, occurs. In discussing the case studies in this dissertation, there is generally no formalized pilgrimage structure or tradition (except in Chapter 4 in relation to Tibetan Buddhism), apart from ritual used to consecrate the site and/or event. This unstructuredness, it is suggested, explains why elements of observable communitas were present in many of the case studies, in contrast to the comment made by Eade and Sallnow (1991, 4-5) who cite nine studies that indicate that communitas, as espoused by Turner, does not occur. From the titles listed in their bibliography, it is suggested that eight of these studies were based on traditional religious pilgrimage in
Islam, Hinduism and Catholicism. The ninth work is from an introduction to an edited book, and it is unclear from the title as to the actual content of the work. Two of the nine studies that the writer examined - Sallnow (1981) and Pffafenberger (1983) - were definitely bounded within the traditions of religious orthodoxy. Moore (1980, 216) found indications of communitas in the liminoid space of Walt Disney’s Magic Kingdom at Walt Disney World, pilgrimage per se being ‘susceptible to appropriation by commercial, secular interests.’

In broad terms, communitas (measured as a qualitative Hallmark of Pilgrimage) and a sense of the ludic could occur when any individual engages in an initiatory experience with other people, be they friends or total strangers. For example, a tourist joining a fourteen-day group coach tour of Europe could equally experience communitas and likewise indulge in the ludic. In this study, what makes these two aspects worthy of note when identifying Hallmarks of Pilgrimage is that they occur in tandem with the two key criteria highlighted at the beginning of this dissertation. Finding one and/or both with a spiritual quest that constituted a journey or visit made as ‘an act of faith’ denotes a pilgrimage experience rather than a mere casual touristic episode (see 3.4.1 for further discussion).

Commensality

Liminal communitas is further strengthened by commensality, namely pilgrims dining together either formally as part of an organized party or informally as people relax at the site or event. In contrast, Van Gennep (1965, 29) saw commensality as a Rite of Incorporation, forming a bond between tribal members. Both interpretations may well apply, but it depends where one anchors the physical setting of the Rite of Incorporation. For example, in one case study involving an event, most of the participants went to eat lunch together at a nearby café directly after the event. Experiences were exchanged as well as maintaining group camaraderie before individuals went their own separate ways later that afternoon. This was an
impromptu arrangement and, because of the close spatial and temporal proximity of the just concluded event, the members of the group who went to lunch were still in the liminal phase; alternatively, for those who experienced the event as a rite of passage, joining the other participants for lunch meant they were incorporated into the wider group of those who had previously undergone similar experiences under the auspices of the particular organizer (see Chapter 6 for further discussion). Schwimmer (1978, 230-231) says that there are other situations where communitas can occur in association with commensality, such as when performers and hosts come together for a feast giving, or when a feast is held for the sake of planning to fight an absent enemy. As an observable phenomenon, ‘commensality’ is one of the qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage.

As with communitas, commensality occurs in settings often completely devoid of what would be considered normal pilgrimage experiences (for example, engaging in conversation over a cup of coffee at a fast-order breakfast bar in a busy metropolitan downtown area). Again, the test is whether or not commensality was found in the presence of a spiritual quest being made as ‘an act of faith’. By itself, it may only be symptomatic of degrees of conviviality.

**Ritual**

According to Turner (1988, 25), ritual is a tool, concept or process that is used to separate people from their everyday life and place them in limbo (liminality) before returning them, transformed, to their mundane world. ‘Ritual’ is one of the qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage. So as to separate it from ritualised acts common in the profane world, the writer only comments on observed ritual that could be described as ‘magico-religious’ rather than basic event sequences noted earlier by Lowell-Lewis and Dowsey-Magog. MacCannell (1992, 256) pieces together the key phrases found in every academic definition of ritual, defining it as ‘regularly repeated, culturally transmitted symbolic code’. He goes on to analyse this definition,
noting that it does not always apply in every situation. As will be noted again at 3.2.1, ritual manifests and consecrates sacred space by ‘ritual acts of worship, sacrifice, prayer, meditation, pilgrimage and ceremonial’ (Chidester and Linenthal 1995, 10).

The Centre
Following Eliadean notions, Turner (1972, 210) saw pilgrimages as a ‘connected network of processes, each involving a journey to and from a particular site ... [where] some manifestation of a divine or supernatural power had occurred ... a hierophany’. In Central Mexico (though excluding the Yucatan), it was observed that pilgrimage shrines tended to be located at the peripheries of towns and cities (or even at some distance) rather at the centre. He contrasts this with many traditional European pilgrimage cathedral cities such as Canterbury and Chartres, but at the same time says that many popular contemporary European Catholic pilgrimage centres are at the periphery, such as Lourdes and Fatima (Turner 1972, 212). Therefore, the Centre out there may not necessarily be a geographical Centre, but rather is one that is central to the individual’s belief system at any particular point in time. Discussion of the concept of ‘the Centre’ is taken up by Erik Cohen in the next section, and is also discussed at 3.1 in the context of the sacred realm. The importance of ‘place’, particularly the work of Jonathan Smith and Simon Schama, is discussed further at 3.1.2.

2.3 ERIK COHEN

The third layer to the development of ideas by the above two authors comes from Erik Cohen, Professor of Sociology and Social Anthropology at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. He has written extensively in the area of tourism anthropology, and his perhaps best known paper is that of 1972 wherein he formulated a typology of four tourist roles. There are two aspects that should be
noted from his work: the continuance of the Turnerian tradition, and the existential tourist experience and the Centre out There.

The Turnerian tradition

Turner 'did not make any direct contribution to the study of tourism' but rather his work on pilgrimage 'provided an important point of departure for some of the more recent work in the sociology of tourism' (Cohen 1988, 37). Cohen notes (1988, 40) the propensity for those writing on pilgrimage to cite Turner's concepts of liminality and the ludic, and makes the telling point that, as far as tourists in general are concerned, not all tourists go in search of the ludic, and that there is a continuum of tourist behaviour between that of serious tourist and frivolous vacationer. Cohen's 1988 paper also looks at the work of Boorstin (1964) and MacCannell (1973), and states that Turner was implicitly responsible for the change from an etic (as evinced by Boorstin and MacCannell) to an emic perspective in tourism. The etic approach means interpreting one's observations from a stranger's or outsider's viewpoint, whereas an emic approach involves interpreting these from an insider's perspective (Kellehear 1993, 71). The change to the emic approach involves trying to understand tourists from within rather than 'looking at the tourist from the outside and evaluating the nature of his experiences' (Cohen 1988, 41).

Four years later, Cohen (1992b) revisits much of that earlier work, looking at the relationship between tourism and pilgrimage. Here there are two theoretical positions: convergence [noting the similarities between the two phenomenon which promotes a view that 'tourism is essentially the pilgrimage of modern times', based on MacCannell (1973) and Graburn (1977)], and divergence [noting the differences, seeing modern tourism as lacking any 'deeper spiritual or cultural significance', based on Boorstin (1964) and Turner and Ash (1975)]: Cohen 1992b, 48-49. Cohen then analyzes this relationship on three levels — structured, phenomenological and institutional — noting that tourism is in all respects more 'open' than pilgrimage. In
the institutional analysis, four essential differences between pilgrimage and tourism are made:

- **obligatoriness**: pilgrimage is semi-obligatory, combining voluntariness with obligatoriness and in itself a meritorious activity, whereas tourism is non-obligatory, yet nonetheless prestige may attach depending on the choice of destination/attraction;

- **itineraries and seasons**: for pilgrims, the geographical route is often customarily set and the time of visiting is often seen as being more meritorious at certain times of the year rather than others, with the presence of other pilgrims often complementing the pilgrimage experience. However modern tourism, despite routinized seasonality, is largely unset and the presence of other tourists ‘is seen as detrimental to the experience of its authenticity’;

- **patterns of demeanour**: both groups tend to ‘abandon accustomed social structures and daily routines’, however pilgrims are generally more organized and disciplined whereas tourists are free to ‘do their own thing’. Here, Cohen makes the rather crucial point that pilgrimage, as a liminal experience, is considered to be an act of major significance to an individual’s life plan whereas in tourism the journey is seen as but one recreational experience, and

- **relations with co-travellers**: while both tend to travel in groups, for pilgrims ‘the group is part and parcel of the experience ... [whereas for tourists, other tourists are] ... not necessary for the specifically touristic experience’ (Cohen 1992b, 56-58).

The above differences are generalized and would vary from individual to individual, and not all pilgrimages (religious or secular) involve travelling in groups. Rather than seek exceptions to these, the writer does however agree with his view that pilgrimage, irrespective of its origins, is a voluntary act of major significance in an individual’s life and in many instances is a one-off, never-to-be-repeated event that offers an opportunity for spiritual renewal and/or rebirth.
Five modes of touristic experience: the existential tourist and The Centre out There

At the heart of Cohen’s discussion of the five modes of tourist experience is the quest for the Centre, and the nature of that Centre. The Centre is out There, excentric to population centres, but Cohen (1992a) notes this generalization by Turner is based on Christian examples and is not necessarily the case in non-Christian religions. Vukonic (1996, 130) extends Cohen’s thesis to cover excentric and peripheral shrines, such as Medjugorje, which ultimately has become a concentric place of pilgrimage in relation to its regional setting. The five modes of tourist experience span a continuum ranging from the pleasure traveller (recreational mode) to the modern pilgrim in search of meaning (existential mode). A tourist can experience one or all modes on a single trip. Before looking at these modes, Cohen (1979, 182) makes the important, often neglected point that a person will not travel for pleasure (as opposed to necessity) if their needs are met within their own life space/home environment. The unanswered question is thus do pilgrims travel for pleasure and/or necessity: is the quest for the spiritual one of hedonistic indulgence, or a deep seated spiritual yearning, a need that must be sated and thus far outweighs all other needs?

The fifth mode - existential mode - is one that is worthy of particular interest to this study on modern secular pilgrimage as it denotes the most profound tourist experience, one which is motivated by the quest for meaning (Cohen 1979, 192). This mode is one that is closest to the modern pilgrim who, because of society’s increased mobility, technological change and decreased working hours, is able to live in two worlds. They move from their secular, mundane workaday existence and travel to their ‘elective Centre apart from their native society and culture, the source of their spiritual sustenance’ (Cohen 1979, 190). Life away from the Centre is almost one in exile, only becoming meaningful when at the Centre, and in extreme cases, the attachment may eventually become permanent. This distinction may be applicable to the mass tourist versus the traditional religious pilgrim, but modern pilgrims may have no elective Centre but rather entertain a seemingly endless list of elective
Centres that change over time as different events, leaders and fashion tastes come and go. The Stargate Alignments discussed at Chapter 6 indicate the ephemeral nature of elective Centres.

Cohen sees the main problem with the existential tourist experience is that there may be a discrepancy between the ‘expected’ and the ‘real’ once the tourist reaches their journey’s goal. No doubt this can indeed be true of any tourist experience - the hotels always seem more attractive and spacious in the glossy brochures. However here, because the journey is a significant end in itself, where much is at stake for the individual to achieve spiritual actualization (a Nirvana-like quest), the gap between the perceived and real can be dramatic. Cohen suggests that there are three ways the individual may come to terms with the fact that the promised spiritual centre does not match the geographical one:

- ‘realistic idealists’ who accept the discrepancies, despite the shortcomings;
- ‘starry-eyed idealists’ who will see perfection, irrespective of any shortcomings, and
- ‘critical idealists’ who are attached to the ideal from afar but reject the reality when they arrive (Cohen 1979, 196).

The providers of the tourist product/experience may resolve this inherent dilemma by falsifying the authenticity of the tourist experience. Selling existential experiences is a commercially viable business, the end note at page 199 of Cohen’s 1979 paper providing testimony to this:

An excellent example is the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh Ashram in Poona, visited primarily by Westerners. Rajneesh, who ‘... speeds up the usually slow Hindu attainment of meditation and bliss with a sort of pop-Hinduism ...’ [because] ‘Westerners want things quickly, so we give it to them right away’ (Bangkok Post 1978, 7).
It is suggested that expectations of instant enlightenment and the quintessential mystical experience was on the 'wish list' of many modern secular pilgrims the writer encountered. Payment to attend or visit the event/site, coupled with limited time at the site and an expectation of encountering the Other as a culmination of the journey, all go to reinforce the need to experience something a little out of the ordinary.

The existential tourist is described as the seeker who has arrived. Conversion is perhaps not so much to a particular religion or modality, but rather to an almost endless quest for meaning, and locating an elective, ephemeral centre which can serve as the focus for their touristic interludes. In discussing the increasing trend towards religious conversion, Cohen, Ben-Yehuda and Aviad (1987, 325) suggest that the 'rejection of the differentiation and disenchantment inherent in modern secular society' is an underlying reason for religious renewal and, as a natural extension thereto, a resurgence of pilgrimage in the traditional sense. Interestingly, with the possible exception of religious conversion, they found most people attached to modernity as a Centre in its own right, temporarily escaping to their chosen elective Centre from time to time to experience the Other. Dabbling in many different Centres, rather than embracing one elective Centre permanently, seems to be the norm: see 3.3.1 for discussion of spiritual promiscuity allied to the 'New Age' movement.

Three reasons are given for the disproportionate representation of the younger generation (18-35) amongst those who are Questing for the Centre:

- as a group, they experience strong feelings of alienation from modern society thus a strong desire to obtain certainty and direction;
- the diminishing opportunities for economic and occupational life changes than enjoyed by their parents, resulting in feelings of 'aimlessness, uselessness, a lack of life chances and a growing despair', and
the above two have lead to increased individual self concern generating the new narcissism which manifests itself in having many following cultic and occult teachings. This need is often coupled with a strong longing for community, hence their tendency to seek out an elective centre, or to join any kind of movement, regardless of its specific message (Cohen et. al. 1987, 336-337).

The traditional pilgrim places the Centre ‘within his world but beyond the boundaries of the immediate life space ... a movement from the profane periphery towards the sacred centre of the religious cosmos’ (Cohen 1979, 181). This is to be contrasted with the modern mass tourist which sees the reverse, going from the centre of their world to the periphery where they can experience ‘what is different, strange or novel in comparison with what the traveller is acquainted with in his cultural world’ (Cohen 1979, 182). The election and rejection of Centres is more to do with personal communications with friends and acquaintances, rather than meeting personal needs or desires (Cohen et. al. 1987, 340), and this highlights the importance of Stage 3 of the Process Model of Pilgrimage at 3.2.1 and the opportunity for outside influence on the individual’s decision process.

To test his challenge to Turner’s theory on pilgrimage centres, Cohen (1992a, 36) uses observations made of pilgrims at four types of Thai Buddhist shrines. Here pilgrim centres are separated into two categories - the formal and the popular. The formal tend to be less peripheral (or concentric) where rituals are highly formalized and orthodox: the over-riding motivation for pilgrims ‘is to perform a fundamental religious obligation - to gain religious merit or to improve their changes of salvation’. The ludic and ‘folksy’ Festival elements are secondary at such centres, but not at popular centres where they ‘may even take precedence over the more serious and sublime activities’. Here the main motivation is a ‘personal request or a fulfillment of a vow’. The motivations of the pilgrims at these four centres were not based on direct inquiry, but rather on observation and inference. At the more formal centres, the quest for religious merit was more prevalent, whereas at the more popular centres the
quest for assistance was favoured. Cohen also notes the trend of secular festivals and fairs developing at religious centres.

2.4 CONCLUSION

Van Gennep's *rites de passage*, derived mainly from his anthropological study into tribal societies, provides the starting point in the writer's discussion of pilgrimage. Translation of his work into English in 1960 prompted academic inquiry from another anthropologist, Victor Turner. Turner expanded on the liminal phase in Van Gennep's model, and fortunately for this study, this expansion involved studying traditional pilgrimage. Cohen then focused on Turner's work from a tourism perspective, as well as also referring to pilgrimage in that context, particularly looking at the centredness of the pilgrims' and tourists' world. Both Turner and Cohen make passing comments on societal change, and the emergence of alternative modalities and new religious movements.

These three authors provide the foundation for this dissertation on modern secular pilgrimage and the following Chapter, which is also a literature review, discusses important areas that must be traversed before the case studies can be discussed. Table 2.1 below provides a summary of the qualitative and quantitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage extracted from the above discussions. These are added to Table 3.3 at the conclusion of the following Chapter.
Table 2.1: **Hallmarks of Pilgrimage**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>...a sense of the ludic*</td>
<td>...communitas</td>
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<td>...communitas*</td>
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<td>...commensality*</td>
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<td>...ritual</td>
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* these are only noted as Hallmarks of Pilgrimage when found in the presence of the two key criteria of the journey being made as ‘an act of faith’ as part of a spiritual quest.
CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW:
THE PILGRIM’S QUEST

This chapter looks at the literature relevant to the discussion of modern pilgrimage. It is divided into four sections. The first section explores the realm of the sacred and how the individual encounters the divine or the Other. This includes sacred geometry and earth energies, as well as some of the ritual and symbolism necessary to connect with the Other. In this section, the concept of ‘contested sites’ is also raised. The material reviewed here may explain why pilgrims go to a site, or why a site is considered sacred. A site may be inherently sacred because of its environment but the use of ritual over time may increase its sacred worth as perceived by pilgrims: a ‘must visit site’ that promises the quintessential ‘mystical experience’.

The second section leads into a discussion of the historical aspects of pilgrimage, an outward phenomenon of observance of religious or cosmological beliefs. At the commencement of this section, there is a discussion of the writer’s Process Model of Pilgrimage which has been created in an attempt to understand the dynamics of the phenomenon of pilgrimage. Medieval pilgrimage is given particular emphasis here because of its legacy and links with modern secular pilgrimage. Finally, modern pilgrimage is discussed.

The third area addressed is a discussion of why pilgrimage is experiencing a resurgence as a social phenomenon. Two social dynamics driving the individual’s quest for the Other are examined, namely the ‘New Age’ movement which emerged from the counterculture movement of the 1960s and 1970s, and millenarianism. Finally, the demographic segment of the Baby Boomers is briefly examined.
Chapter Three – Literature Review: the Pilgrim’s Quest

The final area of the literature review is devoted to tourism, which is a necessary part of this study because, almost without exception, pilgrims are tourists of some form or another. Discussion here focuses on the tourist-pilgrim dichotomy, travel motivations, tourist attractions and authenticity, and the relatively new area of event management.

As noted earlier, only those Hallmarks of Pilgrimage that could be measured are identified and then highlighted in bold. Quantitative hallmarks are able to be measured by data obtained from surveys, and qualitative hallmarks are based on observations made during the fieldwork. The Hallmarks of Pilgrimage from Chapter 2 are added to those derived from this Chapter and are summarized in Table 3.3.

3.1 THE SACRED REALM

The sacred-profane continuum has been already noted in the previous chapter, a liminal or threshold area where one passes from one world to another. Communication between these worlds is sometimes termed numinous1, a hierophany2 or theophany3, often expressed through the image of the cosmic or universal pillar, an axis mundi (Eliade 1959, 36). The axis mundi is ‘a sacred place deemed to be the highest point of the universe and perhaps identified with the Centre of the world and the place where creation first began’ (Sullivan 1987, 20). In his criticism of Eliade’s discussion of the Australian Aboriginal Aranda traditions, Smith (1987, 16-17) says that the idea of the ‘Centre is not a secure pattern to which data may be brought to as illustrative’. He bases this on Eliade’s confusing Aranda Tjilpa myth (or the Dreaming) with history, and further on Eliade’s use of the Dur-an-ku from ancient Near East materials. Images of this symbolic meaning abound wherein heaven, earth

1 Numen from Latin, signifying the ‘manifestation, will or power of a divinity’ (Schilling 1987, 21).
2 From Greek hiero-, ‘sacred’ and phainein, ‘to show’ …’Every hierophany transforms the place in which it appears, so that a profane place becomes a sacred precinct’ (Eliade and Sullivan 1987, 313/315).
3 ‘A hierophany which reveals the appearance or presence of a god’ (Eliade and Sullivan 1987, 315).
and underworld are joined as ‘places of active passage and transition’ (Sullivan 1987, 21). This is where the individual finds access to God, or their creator-figure(s). This study deliberately avoids the use of the word God or other words which are value-laden, and linked to traditional religion. Rather, the term ‘the Other’ is used to signify the sacred figure(s) that are central to the individual’s belief system or cosmology. These transitional or liminal places include sites, palaces or temples, vines or ropes, sacred ladders and mountains (see discussion on the latter at 3.1.3). According to Eliade (1959, 43), homo religiosus (or religious man) ‘sought to live as near as possible to the Centre of the world’, with the tendency to replicate the image of the axis mundi so that one could ‘acquire orientation in the chaos of homogeneity’ [sic] (Eliade 1959, 23). Sacred sites, visible manifestations of religious beliefs, act as ‘adjustments to an otherwise bewildering chaotic cosmos … they are venerated not for their own sake but for their perceived facilitation of access to supernatural powers’ (Jackson and Henrie 1983, 96). Sullivan (1987, 21) gives the example of the cross as the cosmic tree of Christianity, its cruciform shape being replicated in the form of ‘village sites, house plans, ritual furnishings, personal ornaments, and even kitchen items tend[ing] to identify the universe as a whole with the fullness of being characteristic of action at that sacred place.’ Whilst it may be ideal to live at the axis mundi, in reality perhaps at best all that can be hoped for is to live in some reasonable proximity, or have both discretionary time and/or funds available so as to enable periodic pilgrimages to the Centre.

Eade and Sallnow (1991, 6-7) note that Turner’s work was heavily influenced by Eliade’s writing which is predicated on place-centred sacredness. They argue that this generalization ignores sites and shrines where the sacredness vests in a holy person, be it a ‘living local personality, saintly mortal or god incarnate’. Also ignored is the concept of text in relation to sacred centres which they describe as ‘textual pilgrimage’. An example is given of a Roman Catholic pilgrimage to Jerusalem which constitutes a journey through the text, ‘holy places threaded into an itinerary which fleshes out and gives tactility to the biography of Christ as reported in
the gospels' (Eade and Sallnow 1991, 8-9). A triad of person, place and text is thus suggested by them as perhaps more appropriate when discussing Christian pilgrimage, rather than Eliade's and Turner's place-centredness. For the purpose of this study, there could be some merit in this approach. By venerating textual traditions, specific pilgrimages became more important than others and although it is suggested that the two tourist attraction sites researched in this study have a longstanding pilgrimage tradition, the Earthlink Mission Internet forum is arguably in the process of currently creating a textual history with each e-mail posted sent and/or site selected for a Stargate Alignment (see Chapter 6).

Chidester and Linenthal (1995, 16-17) also call for a rethinking of the notion of sacred space as described by Eliade. Eliade's approach, it is suggested, ignores the affect of human activities that are involved in creating sacred space, such as the social, economic and political labours required, rather than merely ascribing it to the work of the gods and spirits. Eliadean notions also ignore the fact that in reality sacred places form part of a complex power structure that results in different interpretations of their social reality - a contested site.

3.1.1 Homo religiosis ~ homo spiritualis
Many of the authors reviewed frequently refer to homo religiosis in connection with the sacred realm. As with the discussion on pilgrimage to follow, almost exclusively all of the material accessed is based on either traditional religious experience from the four main religions, or indigenous/prehistoric cultures. This study looks at the contemporary individual who may be functioning outside the base of traditional religion, yet it is argued their ordered world has strong similarities. Ritual and symbolism play a pivotal role in making connection with the Other, the individual seeking an experience that transcends the profane. The location of the axis mundi may be in a constant state of flux as the pilgrim goes from event to event, or site to site, in search of their primordial experience, and as well, it may be an inwardly
turning gaze on the Self that provides the centredness for their belief systems rather than a formal, written cosmology. That is not to say that those individuals surveyed who ranked a spiritual quest highly were not, by definition, religious people and/or ascribed to a traditional religious belief system. Ferrarotti (1979, 680) discusses the eclipse of church-based religions, noting that ‘the sacred [is] a personal experience which thus escapes control by ecclesiastical teaching and which affirms the charismatic gift beyond, and ultimately against the bureaucratic control of church religion’. The sacred is ambiguous: ‘we can say nothing about it, but find it in everything, everywhere – present as an absence … [religion] … is the guardian of the sacred as an intermediate term to the divine, but a non-religious conception of the sacred is possible’ (emphasis supplied) (Ferrarotti 1979, 668-669). To avoid any risk of ambiguity with traditional religions and as well as to imbue our pilgrims with spiritual motives for making their journey, another term is used: homo spiritualis.

In entering the realm of the sacred, homo spiritualis or the pilgrim will be searching for a mystical or magico-religious experience that could be described in any number of ways: transformation, transcendent, life-consciousness changing event, hierophany, enlightenment, and so on. Whatever touches the individual, it will be such that they will be able, usually instantaneously, to distinguish between a ‘mere experience’ and ‘an experience’. Turner (1986, 35, citing Dilthey 1976, 210) distinguishes between the two, noting that ‘mere experience is simply the passive endurance and acceptance of events [whereas] an experience, like a rock in a Zen sand garden, stands out from the evenness of passing hours and years’. For Brown (1998a, 203) a ‘mystical experience, like faith itself, is not amenable to reason’. ‘An experience’ involves a spiritual awakening which, according to Brainhard (1996, 362), has two characteristics: non-ordinariness and profundity. It should be noted here that Brainhard (1996, 365) states that ‘many writers imply that the final authority for determining whether or not an experience is mystical lies strictly with the person having the experience’. This is at odds with Habel’s comment below relating to authentication, but the varying views could be explained in that Habel appears to be
writing more from a religious standpoint, whereas Brainhard offers a more broad, humanistic interpretation. For the writer, Brainhard's view is preferred because the individuality of 'an experience' is up to the pilgrim to interpret as they see fit. It is open to them to incorporate this into their own personal cosmology, to grapple with its many nuances and enable a deeper connection with what they hold to be the Other. In 'New Age' terms, the Other, according to Heelas (1996, 119) comes in guises: God, the Goddess, the Source, Christ Consciousness, the inner child, the way of the heart, inner spirituality and the Higher Self. For consistency, the term 'mystical experience' is used when describing the individual's altered state of reality or consciousness that often accompanies a spiritual journey. The inherent problems in having to meet external criteria in recounting one's experience is that:

... modern technological life has created a situation in which experience has become so utterly mediated, or packaged for consumption, or overriden by theory, or surrendered to the cult of experts, that a person stands little chance of eluding the intermediations between him or her and the thing encountered ... the inclination of the modern self, having in effect 'waived' the capacity for integral encounter, would be to doubt the authenticity of his or her experience until or unless it could be 'certified' by some expert (Sherrill 1995, 329).

Habel (1993a 107-108) looks at the various elements that constitute the totality of a religious experience: a believer who pursues a divine or sacred reality founded on their cosmology, and a religious tradition on which it is based. The experience can either be through mediation (via 'sacred rituals, special persons, religious groups, totemic objects of the natural world'), or immediate, giving direct access to the Other. In the cases studied here, mediated experience would certainly be true of events, but it could be a blend of both at the two sites. For example, a pilgrim visits the site, learning about its history and culture, either before and/or at the site, including the use of interpretative signage. Whilst their entré into the world of that culture may have been mediated, their contact with the spiritual energy of the site is immediate. Important, too, are the effects on the believer, and authentication of that experience: 'is it consistent with the beliefs of that tradition?' (Habel 1993a, 108). But when the pilgrim's experience is not prescribed by a tradition, they are free to interpret it for
themselves and not worry about whether or not it was an authentic experience. A cautionary note is however sounded by Ferguson (1987, 362) who, while stating that mystical experiences can be a validation for those on a spiritual quest, notes that it 'can be deeply distressing to one unprepared for it, who must then try to fit it into an inadequate belief system' (see Chapter 6 for further discussion of this aspect as observed at the Rainbow Beach Stargate Alignment). One's belief system could also accommodate a knowledge base of the ritual process used.

Finally, when discussing personal experiences in the context of secular or traditional religious pilgrimage, the writer is of the view that all pilgrims (whether consciously or not) expect to undergo a higher order experience as part of the pilgrimage process. Whether it is at the site, or at some point on their journey is immaterial. Recognizing the profundity of the occasion is all important, and for many such an experience serves as a conduit for transformation of the Self [see Heelas (1996) later at pp.80-81].

3.1.2 Sacred space ~ sacred place

Habel (1993b, 33-34) says that a sacred space is a one that has been transformed from the profane to the sacred. This transformation may have occurred due to a hierophany, or its association with a myth, sacred object or event. It is set apart, boundaries indicating where profane time and space make way for the sacred realm. The use of ritual, symbolism or works of art give order and form to the sacred space, and can, as cathedrals do, provide a 'microcosmic representation of the macrocosm' (Habel 1993b, 34). Finally, sacred space is accompanied with an expectation that it is a place where transformation and hierophanies may occur. Sacred spaces also entail entering what Eliade (1959, 91) calls sacred time, a primordial time when rebirth/regeneration/renewal can occur, a time 'when the gods and the mythical ancestors were present'. The concept of the 'Dreaming' in Australian Aboriginal

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4 The word 'Dreamtime' is popularly used by many authors today, but the word 'Dreaming' is more accurately correct.
cosmology is but one example showing this nexus between time and space. The concept of sacred space is often inextricably connected with an individual’s way of understanding and dealing with the world, namely, their cosmology or belief system.

Beliefs are a central phenomenon of religion, and by acting in accordance with these truths, individuals ‘live their faith’. Pilgrimage is one outwardly visible sign of this as individuals sojourn to sites set apart in both time and place. The site may be specified within the pilgrim’s belief system (such as the Ka’aba at Mecca), or can become sacralised by the individual over time as a place where devotions and connection with the Other is possible. According to Barber (1991, 5) some pilgrimage sites could be described as ‘numinous, having an ancient aura of divinity which has persisted through one of several changes of religions’. Jerusalem, Mecca, Rome and Bodhgayā are some sites which have a specific personality cult attached.

Sacralisation of a site usually involves some form of consecration by religious officials or an individual, or can occur automatically through hierophanies or theophanies (Smart 1996, 121). Ritual, either heavily formalised and ordained over time, or individualistic and/or universal by nature, is used to confer sacrality. This is usually done just prior to, or at the commencement of, use of the site. This connects the individual with the sanctity of the site and/or the event being conducted. Ritual is one of the seven dimensions of religion posited by Smart (1996), and central to his discussion of ritual is his adoption of the Chinese notion of li or the practice of right behaviour in both daily and public life. He sees ritual as having two elements: praise or homage to a God or creator-figure, and contemplative practices leading to a change in consciousness.

Ritual transforms the ordinary into sacra ‘solely because they are used in a sacred place, there is no inherent difference between a sacred vessel and an ordinary one’ (Smith 1987, 107). Place and ritual are inextricably connected so that things become sacred or profane solely due to their placement: Smith (1987, 104) uses the example
of Akiva's 'Song of Songs' which are profane when sung in a tavern but become sacred when performed in a temple or similar consecrated sacred site. According to Smith (1987, 110), the use of ritual is an agent of change in the 'pivoting of the sacred' described by Van Gennep earlier at 2.1.

If an event is being held at a site after it has been consecrated, then both site and event are sacralised, but it is suggested that holding an event at a consecrated site automatically vests the event and its participants with sacredness. Once consecrated, the site usually is advertised as being a sacred site, with rules and procedures being prescribed so that the possibility of visitors defiling and desecrating the site is avoided. This may need to be enforced by excluding visitors from certain parts of the site (such as the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem), and employing security staff to enforce the exclusion. If the individual personally consecrates the site by use of symbolic ritual, this is usually not reflected visibly, but rather can represent a consecration by the mind, using visual imagery and/or meditation. It should also be noted that it is possible to produce and reproduce sacred space by human activity through the use of ritual, making it ritual space which sets it apart from other space by the enactment of repeated symbolic performances (Chidester and Linenthal, 1995). 

Consecration of the site is one of the qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage, though it should be noted that the observations extended only to the site and/or event organized, and not to the individual attendees.

Inimical to any discussion of sacred places is consideration of the term 'a sense of place'. Gussow (1971, cited in Sherrill 1995, 316) defines this as 'a piece of the environment that has been claimed by feelings', Sherrill adding that it is 'a place in which life achieves fuller coherence and significance, in which place the religious person can identify the sacred and from which sacred place a "sense of the whole" can be developed'. Schama's theme in Landscape and Memory (1995) raises the notion that humankind's landscape tradition and our sense of place is founded on cultural memory which attaches to places over time: 'the sum of our pasts, generation
laid over generation, like the slow mould of the seasons, forms the compost of our future. We live off it.’ (at p.574). In the tourism literature, Gunn (1994, 227-231), discusses ‘place’ as providing the greatest imperative for tourism. Travellers need a place to go to and he looks at the various dimensions implicit in understanding this basic but, according to him, not well understood concept: temporality, age, spatial distribution, name, people-place qualities, and technical and scientific facts. All the case studies exhibit these dimensions in varying degrees, and although in some cases the destination is secondary to the actual event/site, a sense of place is still important in explaining pilgrimage motivations.

It should be noted that sites considered sacred are not always founded on religiosity. Sherrill (1995, 318) in his discussion of American civic faith and the sacralisation of sites, notes three other formative forces in the creation of sacred space: geography, aesthetics and sociopolitics. Eliade frequently mentions homo religiosus as the sole arbiter of the sacred-profane divide and Sherrill (1995, 324) makes the interesting point that ‘a condition for the recognition or designation of sacrality is being religious [qua spiritual] to begin with’. For some, visiting sites such as the American battlefields of Little Bighorn and the Alamo, which are all connected with perpetuating a national sense of identity, are considered to constitute a pilgrimage. However, in the context of this study, there is expected to be some linkage between visiting a site/attending an event and an individual’s cosmology so that their motive could be seen as ‘an act of faith’. At two of the events surveyed (the Stargate Alignments and the Druid Gorsedd) it was appropriate to ask this question, and thus at these two events, ‘an act of faith’ is one of the Hallmarks of Pilgrimage.

Finally, in discussing sacred places and connection with a higher deity, it should be noted that it is not necessary that this experience occurs in a place considered by the wider community as sacred per se. Mystical experiences can occur at any time and place, and it suggested by many writers that all one needs is clarity of thought to recognize these for what they are. The sacred is always around us but we are usually
Chapter Three – Literature Review: the Pilgrim's Quest

ignorant of its presence. Thoreau's aversion to running after the esoteric also posits a similar view, namely 'that the whole world can be revealed in our backyard if only we give it our proper attention' (Schama 1995, 577). Again, the search for the sacred does not necessarily have to involve a physical journey but instead can be an inner journey, looking for the Other within. Meditation, it is suggested, is no more than pilgrimage of the mind. It is not necessary to travel the world to celebrated sacred sites but rather these special places can be located anywhere we choose to place them. They can be set apart from the profane environment, decorated with symbols important to us, with the space being consecrated by repeated ritualistic performances. One person described their bedroom as fitting into this category, and as noted earlier with Chidester and Linenthal's comment, sacred space is capable of being replicated anywhere one chooses. Armstrong (1996, xvi) argues that a sense of the sacred, like any aesthetic experience, needs to be cultivated. Contrary to the majority prevailing view, the writer argues (as does, for example, Ferrarotti, 1979, 661) that a resacralisation of society is afoot, a resurgence in pilgrimage being an indicator of this trend reversal. Another indicator of the way the world views the importance of the sacred is in public forums held to discuss issues affecting these culturally sensitive sites. The UNESCO international symposium, *Natural Sacred Sites*, provides evidence of the importance of this. The symposium was held in Paris from 22-25 September 1998, but unfortunately only abstracts are available from this conference.

3.1.3 Power and energy

The discussion in the preceding two sub-sections has come from religious and/or anthropological disciplines, however in this sub-section, the literature reviewed is generally regarded as being more popularist but less scholarly. Bernyce Barlow's work (1996, 3-4) contrasts with Eliade. She says that a sacred site is special due to:
The unique combination of energies that collect there. Often these energies are present due to geo-anomalies within the earth’s vast telluric system that have found their way to the surface. Other times the energy is created from imprint residue left from generations of history or struggle (Barlow 1996, 3-4).

Although her book almost exclusively focuses on American sites, she does make passing reference to other sites such as Stonehenge, the Egyptian pyramids and Uluru. For Barlow, there are four categories of sacred sites: those based on earth energies or physics; sacred mountains/trees; goddess or female creation energies, and warrior or male survivalist energies. The first two categories are discussed in more detail as they are considered more pertinent to the case studies at hand. The third category, generally called the goddess religion, has experienced a rebirth as part of the ‘New Age’ movement. Kathy Jones’ (1991) The Ancient British Goddess is but one of the many books on this topic that have proliferated in the last twenty years or so.

Before looking at Barlow’s two categories, the aspect of power and energy should be raised briefly from a religious perspective. Many shrines and temples exude a subtle form of energy. It may manifest itself as a strong motivating force to visit the site which is connected with the individual’s belief system. This makes the journey ‘an act of faith’ whereby the individual can live their truths: for example, a Christian visiting Jerusalem. Attending the site/event may even be prescribed (such as the Hajj) or has merit attaching (Buddhists visiting Bodhgaya or the Kalachakra Initiation). The writer has visited many centuries-old cathedrals and natural temples where the energy is almost palpable, a patina of energy having been built up over centuries by devotees coming there for religious worship. Perhaps this sense is also heightened by the mystique of the site, a place that has become hallowed and sacred to all, not just the faithful, over successive centuries. Not only do many of these sites, which are often associated with the final resting place of saints and heroes, possess very strong energy and/or have the ability to heal pilgrims, but also connected with that energy is power. Cathedrals that have played a formative role in the religious and secular history of a nation, and/or are the seats of archbishops, cardinals
or other senior clergy, have a latent sense of power. This could certainly be said of Westminster Abbey, Notre Dame de Paris or St. Peters. Religion is generally seen ‘as the privileged guardian, the administrator and guarantor of the sacred … the power of the sacred is inversely proportional to that of officially constituted religions’ (Ferrarotti 1979, 675).

Burns (1995) and Barlow (1996) both refer to the work of pioneer biologist Rupert Sheldrake and his theory of morphic resonance to explain the popularity and power of certain pilgrimage sites. Sheldrake’s theory has proved to be popular amongst the non-scientific and ‘New Age’ communities. Barlow (1996, 5) particularly looks to morphogenetic fields which are able to be tapped into by humans, and ‘develop and organise energy into matter through some sort of ethereal genetic code’. Tapping into this life-force dynamism is one way of transcending the profane, of connecting with the Other; outcomes can be healing and/or a mystical experience. In an October 1995 interview with Ken Weathersby (1998), editor of Hootenanny magazine, Rupert Sheldrake defines morphic resonance as ‘a theory of collective memory through nature, [with] morphic fields [being] fields of habit, and they’ve been set up through habits of thought, through habits of activity and through habits of speech’. If one subscribes to Sheldrake’s theory, then the habit of pilgrimage at certain sites with its use of ritual symbolism creates an energy field, particularly noting that for Sheldrake ‘patterns of ritual embody morphic fields’ (Weathersby, 1998).

The second aspect connected with earth energies could be broadly be described as a form of magnetic geography. Barlow (1996, 17) describes these as a ‘network of channels that send and receive energies that encompass the globe’. Merz (1987, 17) categorizes these as ‘telluric energy’ and notes the importance of Ernst Hartmann in pioneering this ‘new’ study of geobiology. Central to understanding the concept of earth energies is viewing the earth as a living place where mankind and nature are in a harmonious relationship (the Gaia concept). These energies or telluric currents are invisible to most people, but are subtle forces that often make ‘places that feel good
to be in, that expand our awareness, that help us to realise our link to the sacred’ (Wright and Wright 1994, 86). Most frequently these energies are referred to as energy ley lines, and are sometimes variously referred to as ‘power lines, earth rays, overgrounds, earth currents and geodetic lines’ (Wright and Wright 1994, 87). An English merchant, Alfred Watkins, brought the term ley into popular use through his research in England in the 1920s. He observed that there appeared to be a linkage between ancient sacred sites and straight tracks, mapping ley lines which ran between holy shrines. According to Wright and Wright (1994):

A rule of thumb has become that if there are five significant sites on a ten-mile line, the alignments may be called a ley. Significant points can be such things as megalithic sites, springs, sacred groves, wells, stone circles, moats, mounds, crosses, and medieval churches. Features presently on the sites may be from different historical periods, because later monuments were often built on sites that earlier were marked as significant (Wright and Wright 1994, 87-88).

According to the 1998 summer edition of The Ley Hunter (‘Lines on the landscape: spirit ways and death roads’, 1998, 12), current opinion describes leys as the way routes taken by spirits and ghosts are delineated or marked. Energy leys are used to describe alignments with dowsable energy, and the places where energy leys and underground water meet are called power points (Wright and Wright 1994, 88). Khalsa (1981, 14) notes that there are many power points around the world, including ‘Glastonbury and Stonehenge in Britain, Tiahuanaco in Bolivia, Easter Island in the Pacific, Mt. Shasta in California and Chartres Cathedral in France’. Some of the case studies were located on energy leys and this is noted where appropriate.

Energy fields have been said to affect human physiology, and its effect is most noticeable in the placement and design of buildings. Two systems based on energy fields which are receiving increased attention in the West are feng shui and vastu shastra. The former is an ancient Chinese system (kanyu), first seen in the West Han dynasty in the third century B.C.E. which sees the earth as a living thing containing qi (Lip 1995, 61). It is now being used by some Western architects in domestic and
commercial building design: the newly opened Heathrow headquarters of British Airways was designed by architects in consultation with a feng shui expert (Brown 1998b, 57). The latter ‘developed two to three thousand years ago in India and started in China as feng shui. The idea is that the form, shape, materials and orientation of a building have a direct and measurable impact on health and prosperity’ (Eccleston, 1996). These systems both reflect a holistic approach, one that is consistent with the philosophies espoused by the ‘New Age’ movement. Linked with these two systems is the concept of sacred geometry which interweaves religious symbolism and numerical relationships. Man-made structures constructed in accordance with these principles are redolent with psychological and symbolic meaning (Pennick, 1980), and Newgrange (Chapter 7) provides tangible evidence of a megalithic society designing their buildings in this way. Access and use of sacred places is also carefully prescribed via the design of different types of paths. Of interest here is the circumambulating or circular path which has been used by most cultures and traditions for thousands of years; for example, Muslims at Mecca, Hindus at Benares and Buddhists at Bodhgayā (Coleman and Elsner 1995, 196). Barrie (1996, 125) suggests that it represents a respectful and gradual approach to the divine. At Uluru, a 9.4km path encircles the Rock, evoking a sacred centre: ‘close but not too close and in some cases the Centre is never reached’ (Barrie 1996, 125). Newgrange, with its encircling standing stones and axial path leading up to the entrance stone, was also probably revered in a similar way: today’s restored site has a path running off at 45° angle from the entrance stone to the tour guide centre. Since tourists were banned from walking amongst the stones, Stonehenge now has a circular path but here no approach to the centre is countenanced by authorities.

Merz (1987, 4) raises the obvious question when considering telluric energies and ritual usage of sacred sites: were the sites selected with respect to a known telluric network or does this sacred energy develop ‘after the fact as an emission of the shape deliberately calculated by constructor-initiates’. Theories about leys or ‘earth mysteries’ as they are sometimes called, are often ascribed to ‘alternative
archaeologists’. Hutton (1992, 130) discusses these claims and the fact that orthodox scholars reject most of these notions on the basis that ‘Not a single idea from the earth mystics have succeeded in toppling an orthodoxy, not because the ideas of academic prehistorians are so powerful or well defended, but because those of the earth mystics are so weak’.

Natural features, such as mountains, trees, rivers, groves and springs, have long provided inspiration for mankind as being special places where an encounter with the Other is possible. The comparatively recent concept of ‘geopiety’ is often used in connection with natural sacred space, and is defined by Tuan (1976) as covering ‘a broad range of emotional bonds between man and his terrestrial home’ (Knowles 1992, 9). Ancient temples and shrines were often strategically located in such spots, and the worship of nature has continued since then, although today this has often lead to conflict when commercial interests wish to develop these sensitive areas. Trees, for example, symbolise not only the cosmos (such as Yggdrasil) but also wisdom, youth, life and immortality (Eliade 1959, 149). According to Schama (1995, 417), ‘the high mountain slopes were imagined [in late medieval imagination] as a cloud wreathed borderland between the physical and the spiritual universe’. John Muir, the father of the American national park movement and founder of The Sierra Club in 1892, thought that ‘wilderness was a sacred environment where epiphanies could occur’ (Taylor 1995, 101). According to Muir, the sacred voices of the earth were to be heard most clearly in the mountains, traditionally revered as places of sacred power and spiritual attainment and embodiments of mankind’s highest aspirations and ideas (Bernbaum 1992, xxiii). The Mariposa stand of sequoias in Yosemite National Park ['the Big Trees'] were considered sacred, constituting ‘America’s own natural temple ... unprofaned except by fire’ (Schama 1995, 189).

Experiencing the sacred in mountains can be done in many ways from passive gazing at distant peaks, to trekking to the summit; both offer a glimpse of the sacred, transcendental world. Bernbaum (1992, xxiii) who has written extensively on the
sacredness of mountains, aptly summarises the universality and appeal of mountains: ‘They are regarded traditionally as places of revelation, centres of the universe, sources of life, pathways to heaven, abodes of the dead, temples of the gods, expression of ultimate reality in its myriad manifestations’. In recounting his twenty-five day pilgrimage to Mt. Kailash (Kailāsa) in the Himalayas, Pannikar (1996, 7) says that ‘the pilgrim experiences that we are one with earth, and that our destinies are tied together ... [the experience of his pilgrimage] ... unspeakable because its experience transcends the logos. The ultimate pilgrimage belongs to the spirit, to the other shore of reason.’ In the Taoist tradition, the five sacred mountains of ancient China were places where one went, not to gaze out on the plains below but to dwell upon ‘the mysterious immaterial essence of [the mountain’s] spirit’ (Schama 1995, 407). Uluru (Chapter 8) is the sacred mountain in this study, however elevation is also featured in the natural landscape at the Uffington White Horse (Chapter 5).

3.1.4 Contested sites
In Retreat: time apart for silence and solitude (1995), Housden says that increasingly people are taking retreats, seeking to know themselves better by cultivating silence and awareness. For many, this can be akin to modern pilgrimage, but their intentions and motivations for going to a particular site may ultimately place them in conflict with others who also want to use that site. In discussing the concept of sacred sites, Chidester and Linenthal (1995) state that this involves vested interests negotiating over space and who, if any, has the legitimate ownership of the site and its symbolism. Ancient sites all too frequently have ended up becoming ‘modern sites of struggle over nationality, economic empowerment, and basic civil and human rights to freedom of religion and self-determination’ (Chidester and Linenthal 1995, 3). There are two reasons why sacred space is contested. Firstly, purely because its spatial quality means that there will always be issues about how it is organized and controlled. Secondly, its very sacredness leaves it open to many claims about its significance. Four strategies can be employed in the battle for supremacy in deciding
who has access to the site: appropriation, exclusion, inversion and hybridization (Chidester and Linenthal 1995, 18-19). The first two are most commonly used and in the case of Uluru, the Anangu have successfully utilized these to legitimize their control over access to sites in Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park.

Stonehenge is a well known example of a contested site where even the mass tourist who pays for the privilege of visiting the site has, it is suggested, also lost out. The henge is now roped off so now all the visitor can do is to circumambulate a set of stones, separated from engaging with the site in any meaningful way. A special permit can be obtained from English Heritage to enter the henge but one must complete their visit before tourists enter the site (Fagan 1998, 161). Fagan describes his journey to the centre of the henge, a journey now denied to all but a special few. He felt ‘a powerful sense of enclosure, as if I were entering a room delineated by vast stone uprights ... the interior, even in a ruined state, was mesmerizing in its isolation from the outside world’ (Fagan 1998, 161). Druids, ‘Free Festivalers’ and locals have also been denied access to the henge. Banning the Free Festival and imposing a four mile exclusion zone during summer solstice are but two ways the guardians of the site - English Heritage and the National Trust - have protected their economic interests (Bender and Edmonds 1992, 356). Nolan and Nolan (1989, 44) in their work on Western European Christian shrines discuss the complex issues involved: traditional pilgrims, members of packaged religious tours and mass tourists ticking off sites on their vacation itinerary. These visitors are not drawn solely from Christian traditions but are from different parts of the globe, the incongruity of busloads of Japanese tourists, Muslims and American Protestants at the Catholic shrines at Chartres and Cologne being noted by these two authors. As Griffin (1994, 31) says, how does ‘one distinguish a visitor in genuine need of prayer and spiritual peace, from one admiring the work of eleventh or twentieth century builders, or contemplating the tomb of some famous person’. Gesler (1996, 102) sees as misplaced the idea that Lourdes is ‘visited by a mass of people with a single-minded devotion to Mary, full of communitas and religious fervour’. Conflict is inherent in
the system because of the involvement of different actors: pilgrim versus tourist, cleric versus secular commercialism, organizers versus helpers.

In this dissertation, a contested site is considered in each case study and represents a qualitative Hallmark of Pilgrimage.

In the first section of the literature review, two qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage have been adduced: consecration of the site and the notion of a contested site. These will be measured in each of the case studies. As well, the concept of earth energies or ley lines are discussed as perhaps explaining why some sites possess strong spiritual energy. In encountering the sacred realm, the pilgrim hopes for an experience that transcends all others: a mystical experience which perhaps the events and sites studied in this dissertation can provide.

3.2 THE PHENOMENON OF PILGRIMAGE

Edith Turner (1987) defines pilgrimage as:

... a process, a fluid and changing phenomenon, spontaneous, initially unstructured and outside the bound of religious orthodoxy. It is primarily a popular rite of passage, a venture into religious experience rather than into a transition to higher status. A particular pilgrimage has considerable resilience over time and the power of revival. Pilgrims all over the world attest to the profundity of their experience, which often surpasses the power of words (Turner 1987, 330).

This is but one definition offered in the many works, academic and popularist, on pilgrimage but at the outset it should be noted again that the pursuit of a spiritual quest over-rides all other motivations\(^5\). The corollary to this spiritual quest is that the journey is undertaken as ‘an act of faith’ in that the individual is seeking an experience that reinforces and enhances their belief system.

\(^5\) Penitential pilgrimage is an exception to this and is noted later at 3.2.3.
This section is approached by considering pilgrimage as a process model. Pre-
medieval pilgrimage, medieval pilgrimage and modern pilgrimage are then discussed.
Discussion largely centres on *homo religiosus*, however at 3.2.4, the shift is made to
*homo spiritualis* as discussed earlier at 3.1.1.

Coleman and Elsner (1995, 8-9) refer to Glenn Bowman’s comment (1988) on ‘the
academic fault lines in the study of pilgrimage’. On one side, there are the historians
whose accounts are largely descriptive, and on the other, anthropologists who seek to
analyze pilgrimage as reflections of broader social processes. Sub-sections 3.2.2,
3.2.3 and 3.2.4 provide a series of vignettes from the history of pilgrimage,
demonstrating the universality of the phenomenon. This dissertation tries to bridge
the divide, adding more recent work from the tourism arena.

3.2.1 Process Model of Pilgrimage
Van Gennep’s classification of pilgrimage as a three stage *rite de passage* was
discussed at 2.1: separation (the start of the journey), the liminal stage (the journey
itself, the sojourn at the shrine, and the encounter with the sacred) and reaggregation
(the homecoming). His five-stage model was also noted. Clawson and Knetsch,
(1969, 33-35) have developed a five-stage model of the outdoor recreation
experience: anticipation, travel to the site, on-site experience, travel back home and
recollecion. Drawing on these models, and from tourism motivational literature, the
writer has developed a nine-stage Process Model of Pilgrimage shown at Figure 3.1
which segments the complexity of the pilgrimage experience.

The first stage is to **Identify a need** and Maslow’s oft-cited hierachy of needs always
begins with this stage. Here the individual identifies a need, something missing in
their life that needs to be met. It appears from the literature that this is seldom
expressed as a strong, well defined desire, but more often presents as a vague disquiet
that something is lacking. This is not of the material and physical world, but rather
tends to relate to the individual’s psyche or soul. In McColl’s (1989, 10-11)
Have the needs been Met?  
Yes = OK. No = back on the path!

Homecoming and reflection

Journey home

Identify a Need

Undertake research

Decision made

Travel reservations

Reflection at the site

Site interaction

Travel to the site

Figure 3.1: Process Model of Pilgrimage
archetypal journey this is termed ‘The Call’. It expresses dissatisfaction with a materialistic way of life and necessitates a search for deeper answers to questions of meaning and value, about life’s origins and one’s personal crisis.

It is suggested that within the parameters of the four traditional religions it is easier to offer a solution so as to meet the need identified. One time-honoured way is to undertake a traditional journey to a particular site at a particular time (for example, a Christian going to Jerusalem at Easter). The modern pilgrim, who may be outside the traditional religious sphere, may find the solution harder as they canvass many options and thus undertake some independent research, the second stage of the Process Model. Some guidance may be forthcoming if they belong to a group who regularly conduct events, such as the Druids (see Chapter 5). The research stage is where the individual turns within in order to discern the answer to their needs. Besides looking at questions relating to one’s spiritual dimensions, practicalities such as time and cost are also considerations. The research stage could range over any timeframe from days to months, and they may also turn to external sources for assistance. These may include other people who visited these sites or events previously, books and magazines, travel agents, and other media such as television and movies. A question on external sources was included in the questionnaires.

Once the research has been completed, a decision is made in the third stage of the Process Model. A site or event is selected that is anticipated to satisfy the pilgrim’s spiritual needs. The fourth stage, making travel reservations, is allied to Clawson and Knetsch’s (1969, 34) Anticipation phase. Making travel reservations and obtaining tickets for an event provide tangible evidence of a decision having been made, and that a journey, integral to meeting that need, is about to commence. This sense of anticipation is heightened once tickets start to arrive.

The journey begins in the fifth stage, travel to the site. This represents Van Gennep’s entry into the liminal phase which he described as ‘territorial passage’ (see
earlier at 2.1). It is also part of both Turner’s second liminal stage, and Clawson and Knetsch’s second stage. The journey is a constituent part of the total experience of pilgrimage, with newness and dynamism the key elements. Culture in its many guises - different people, places, food, dress and so on - confront the pilgrim on their journey. Very often, pilgrims also see themselves acting out the role of a hero or heroine, the pilgrimage seen as an adventure with infinite possibilities (Aziz 1987, 259). The journey may have been traversed before, thus there can be reconnection with the familiar, a sense of homecoming and experiences relived. In medieval pilgrimage, the route was usually highly prescribed and rich in symbolism, each shrine along the route increasing the sense of expectation of reaching the final goal. This is also a time when, depending on circumstances, that the pilgrim may experience a sense of communitas.

The sixth stage sees the pilgrim arriving at the site where there is interaction with the site. Here, at their final destination and the climax of their spiritual quest, the pilgrim hopes to have their needs and expectations met, and undergo a mystical experience that enables them to connect with the sacred Other, the fountainhead of their cosmology. This is part of Van Gennep’s second liminal stage, and second and third stages (Rites of Incorporation into the sacred environment, and Rites of Transition which involve crossing a threshold) in his five-stage model. It is Clawson and Knetsch’s third stage. Reflection at the site, the seventh stage, has been separated from site interaction to stress the importance of the reflective, inner gaze whilst at the site. Analysis of one’s experiences occurs here, as well as during the eight and ninth stages, however at the site it is immediate and spontaneous and ‘of the now’. Diary keeping is one way that these experiences are recorded for posterity, many records on pilgrimage down through time coming from such sources. Other ways have been recording the journey visually such as via sketches or paintings, photography or video recordings. As well, there are many individual Internet sites that tell of the site owners’ journeys to sacred places around the globe, usually illustrated with snapshots of their travelling companions and the site itself.
Travelling home is the eighth stage and represents Clawson and Knetsch’s fourth stage, and Van Gennep’s ‘territorial passage’ phase. Turner and Turner (1978, 22) note that this is usually when the pilgrim is transformed more into a tourist once the quest has been met. The pilgrim may not only engage in more touristic activities in and around the site, but on the return journey as well, stopping perhaps to revisit a site that was rushed past in the fifth stage of the Process Model in their haste to reach their goal. The reflective process still occurs on the journey home, the pilgrim perhaps trying to make sense of what had occurred only moments or days before. Finally, homecoming and reflection is the concluding stage of the Process Model. It represents the reaggregation and recollection, and is the final stage for Van Gennep, and Clawson and Knetsch. Here the pilgrim slips back into the profane world with all its constraints and cares, reliving experiences with friends and family. Here they ponder the ultimate question: was the trip worthwhile in meeting their need? Reflection on this central question may occur for days, months and perhaps even years. They may come to the realization that unexpressed needs may have been met instead of prior expressed needs, and revelations about oneself may become clear only upon their return home (Meintel 1973, 4). If their need has not been met, then the process starts again, however undergoing the nine-stage process may have helped them articulate and come to terms with their spiritual needs. Needs met can signify many things: a consolidation of their cosmology, a desire to go to different sites for a difference experience, or perhaps a desire to return to the same site at a later date to relive the experience.

By segmenting the pilgrimage process into these nine stages, two salient points come to hand. The first is that the model highlights the fact that the journey is both a physical and mental one, a contest wherein the mind must maintain its outward focus on the journey but turn inwardly to pose questions, proffer answers and reflect on these as well as on the reality of the physical world they are transiting. It can be a rewarding and fulfilling journey but, depending on the individual, it can also be a time when the emotions are particularly strained and the pilgrim vulnerable and
exposed. Wilhelm’s (1989) description of the group dynamics in her Roman Catholic study tour to Ireland readily demonstrates the ebb and flow of emotions, friendships and reflective discourse. The second aspect is that it is possible through the model, by metacognition, to draw out the motivational complexity underlying pilgrimage as a social process, and also the affect of outside agents on the decision-making process.

3.2.2 Pre-medieval pilgrimage

Pilgrimage processes are part of all the major historical religions. Archaic societies such as ancient Egypt, Babylonia, Meso-America and pre-Christian Europe all had pilgrimage rituals embedded in their culture (Turner 1972, 191). Holmberg (1993, 21) lists four motivations for prehistoric pilgrimage which he says are still valid today: the visiting of spiritual places, collecting plants and other material to aid healing, acquiring knowledge and ‘the celebration of aliveness, togetherness and the dead’. The nomadic movement of Australian Aborigines is a form of pilgrimage: for example, the Anangu, use the traditional songlines around Uluru as their navigational path. A strong sense of survival in early societies meant that there was little scope for leisure, and pilgrimage thus provided scope for people to engage in enforced, ritualised leisure activities and the opportunity to escape their everyday ordered roles. It was while stepping outside these structures that, according to Turner (1990, 242), they engaged in liminal periods of major rites de passage.

The Temple of Karnak on the Upper Nile in Egypt was the most important temple in ancient Egypt, and in religious festivals held regularly throughout the year prayers affirmed the pharaoh as god and were also offered for the regeneration of the land (Barrie 1996, 149). The Egyptians thought their world was indeed Utopia, ‘a reflection of the primordial divine order, embodied by the Nile and the passage of the sun across the heavens’ (Fagan 1998, 274). The Egyptian temples provide an excellent example of processional architecture carefully designed so that internal space and wall carvings all heighten the sense of the sacred as well as the pharaoh’s power. The annual Feast of Opet, enacted by the pharaoh and the priesthood of
Karnak, drew pilgrims and local Thebans for the journey down the Nile from Karnak to Luxor, with six stops along the way for celebrations at shrines (Barrie 1996, 159-161).

Travel to oracles and festivals in the Hellenic world was important, with the great religious centers of Eleusis, Delphi, Olympia and Epidauros featuring prominently in the sacred calendar. The Romans are considered to be the world’s first true mass tourists because of their distinct concept of leisure and amusement, unlike the Greeks who imbued their celebrations with sacred aspects (Feifer 1985, 9). In these earlier times, pilgrimage was usually undertaken in large groups or, if the individual was of sufficient importance, with a retinue of servants and/or companions. From the literature, it appears that solitary pilgrimage was the exception rather than rule, but in the days of early Christian pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the virtues of a solitary pilgrimage began to be extolled. Solitary pilgrimage seems to have waned in the Middle Ages when pilgrimage as a social process was at its zenith. It was then that the journeys across Europe became more dangerous with brigands, thieves and confidence tricksters adding to the hazards of the journey.

Legend has made Helena’s pilgrimage in 327 C.E. the most renown pre-medieval pilgrimage to the Holy Land, her pilgrimage an expression ‘of piety, not only of a family, but also of the Christian empire’. The hazards and discomforts of the Holy Land pilgrimage from Western Europe meant that the pilgrim would be away from home for about a year. They spent much of their time on the byways to and from their goal, and as such their journey was ‘no cosy devotional passage around the sacred sites, but a mammoth effort of travel along the major routes of the Empire’ (Hunt 1982, 56).

Some three centuries later, the newly emerging Islamic religion was also to reconstitute a pilgrimage route - the Hajj to Mecca. In March 632 C.E., Mohammed

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6 Helena was the mother of the Roman Emperor, Constantine (Hunt 1982, 35).
went on his first and only Hajj as a Muslim to Mecca, and from this time the Hajj (comprising the Umra and Arafat festivals) was infused into the Islamic religion. For centuries previously there had been a pilgrimage or Hajj to Mecca in pre-Islamic times, with its longstanding use of rituals and customs; the Umra, a Meccan feast, is such an example, which involved circumambulation of the Ka’ba and the seven-fold running between Safa and Marwa (Peters 1994, 54-58). It is incumbent on every Muslim to perform the Hajj at least once in their lifetime, and today a Website 7 offers information on this often once-in-a-lifetime journey. Wolfe’s recent description of the Hajj echoes the sentiments common to all pilgrimage: the power of the experience eludes description (Wolfe 1998, 47).

3.2.3 Medieval pilgrimage

The term ‘Medieval’ generally refers to anything between the years 500 and 1500 C.E., although it is divided into two five hundred year periods: 500 – 1000 Early Medieval and 1000 – 1500 High Medieval. Here the focus is on pilgrimage as a social movement and much of the tourism literature cites it as an example of mass tourism. ‘Medieval society had a strong sense of estate’, according to Labarge (1982, xii), with ‘a belief that each person had a special place in society’. Usually one’s place and status in society was due to birth and lineage, but sometimes also by function or occupation. Living in an agrarian-based economy, society was delineated on class lines and dominated by the Church. Because of the monopoly of the Church over an individual’s spiritual life under the aegis of the parish priest, there was little opportunity for individuality, a chance to improve one’s lot and to escape what was for most a harsh existence. For many, pilgrimage offered a temporary opportunity to do just that. The three main centres for pilgrimage in the Middle Ages were Rome, Jerusalem and Santiago de Compostela. Each European country also had its own pilgrim circuit of major and minor shrines. The popularity of pilgrimage is evinced by the large number of churches built between 1050 and 1350 – ‘80 cathedrals, 500

7 http://Islam.org/islamicity/hajj
large churches and thousands of parish churches’ (Robinson 1997, 26). Places of pilgrimage were then, as they are often today, considered to be sacred because they were believed to be the final resting place of saints and heroes (Walter 1994, 4).

The discussion which follows is largely from Sumption’s (1975) comprehensive coverage of medieval pilgrimage, interspersed with comments from other authors as relevant. Aspects highlighted earlier in Chapter 2 have not been duplicated in this section. Because the focus in this dissertation is to establish Hallmarks of Pilgrimage that can be measured either quantitatively or qualitatively in the case studies herein, some aspects relating to pilgrimage have been omitted, not due to oversight but rather in the interests of brevity and narrowness of foci. The writer considers that for the purposes of this study, there are thirteen elements of medieval pilgrimage that need to be addressed.

The first element is that ‘God was the direct and immediate cause of everything’, and because those living in the Middle Ages lacked control over the irresistible forces that beset their life on earth, ‘the only remedies available were supplication and the performance of pious acts considered likely to propitiate them’ (Sumption 1975, 14). Not only was their life ruled by a fear of incurring the wrath of God, but despite the Church’s attempt to prove otherwise, there was an almost equally popular body of superstitions. By their very nature, these superstitions were capricious and liable to strike at the smallest error, omission or transgression. Based on ‘Christian belief, man is a fallen, sinful creature in need of salvation, [thus] the finest pilgrimage therefore is that made freely by man for the salvation of his soul’ (Kendall 1972, 15). The twin requirements for medieval pilgrimage were that the journey was made of the pilgrim’s own free will and with piety. For today’s modern pilgrim, it is assumed the former is a given. Piety, however, denotes devotional worship and prayer within a religious environment, together with a desire to encounter the Other within a sacred realm. There is therefore reluctance to describe our modern secular pilgrims, with the
exception of Buddhists attending the Kalachakra Initiation, as pious; perhaps they could be best described as those on a spiritual quest, or spiritual warriors.

Secondly, the motivation for pilgrimage changed from the spiritual to one of curiosity towards the end of the fifteenth century, the desire to see new places and experience new things reflecting broader changes that were occurring in European society around this time (Sumption 1975, 13). Zacher (1976, 4-5) puts this motivational change even earlier at the fourteenth century ‘when pilgrimages were being criticised as undertakings prompted by curiosity’. The Church generally regarded curiositas as a vice related to sloth and pride, a phase of original sin which in the late Middle Ages was seen as a threat to pilgrimage. Zacher’s pragmatic description of late medieval pilgrimage is in accord with Sumption’s (1975, 264) view of pilgrimage in the fifteenth century: ‘Worldly motives were certainly prominent and some pilgrimages were accomplished with a degree of ostentation which would have surprised churchmen of an earlier age’. Constable (1976, 145) discusses opposition to pilgrimage from the Church in the Middle Ages, with the Church reminding pilgrims that ‘in itself a pilgrimage cannot secure remission from the penalty of sin and that real forgiveness depends on interior attitudes rather than exterior actions’. ‘Curiosity’ is included as one of the quantitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage, but as it forms one of the motivations derived from the tourism literature (see Table 3.1) it is not highlighted here.

In the Middle Ages there ‘was a powerful conviction that physical diseases had spiritual causes’ (Sumption 1975, 78) and thus is was not surprising that the principle motivation for many pilgrims was to experience and/or witness a miracle. This is the third element in the discussion of medieval pilgrimage. It was through the intercession of saints, their spiritual heroes, that the pilgrim hoped that such miracles would occur. Reliquary and the tombs that surround the supposed resting places of saints were where such intercession was thought possible. Monasteries and cathedrals were the greatest repositories of relics, and the desire to enhance the reputation of
one’s cathedral, monastery or village church ‘plunged many clerics into compulsive relic-gathering’ (Finnucane 1977, 28). The quest for the authentic not only was important in relation to reliquary and miracles, but also to the written material used in validation thereof: for example, Ademar of Chabannes’ almost perfect fabrication of the apostolic cult of St. Martial at Limoges in the early eleventh century. Ademar created false manuscripts in the quest for authenticity and is an example of an ‘ambitious man, desirous of promotion and resentful at his failure to advance in the ecclesiastical hierarchy’ (Landes 1995, 21). Landes also notes (at pp.16-19) that the apocalyptic concerns in Ademar’s final work which was completed at the turn of the millennium, may have also accounted for his ideas receiving popular acceptance.

Disputes often erupted about the authenticity of which cathedral rightfully owned the sacred remains of saints; for example, the dispute in the sixteenth century between Glastonbury and Canterbury for St. Dunstan’s remains (Finnucane 1977, 29). Major healing shrines had registrars who ‘were interested in collecting reports of miracles as evidence of the powers of their saints’ (Finnucane 1977, 59), namely curing human illnesses and afflictions. The possibility of fraud on the part of some pilgrims is also raised by Finnucane (1977, 70), with some feigning ‘illness to gain more sympathy and alms than they would as plain and simple paupers [with others faking] miraculous cures for the momentary attention they would enjoy and for whatever advantages they could gain from their notoriety’. Further discussion of this aspect, as well as the Church’s ambivalence, and authentication and canonisation of saints, is well outside the scope of this study. However the expectation of miracles, those things whose occurrence cannot be explained within nature, is one that could certainly be applicable to the modern pilgrim. Rather than looking to physical cures, perhaps for the modern pilgrim to undergo an transformative experience, and to experience the Other in our mundane, materialistic world could be considered to constitute a miracle. Perhaps undergoing a ‘mystical experience’ translated into a life-consciousness changing event, one that totally transformed and brought new meaning to their life with the resultant perception that ‘life could never be the same again’, is also in the
realm of the miraculous. Authenticity is both a quantitative (posed as a motivational question in the surveys) and a qualitative (was ritual used at the event denoted as authentic and/or did the site market itself as an authentic one) Hallmark of Pilgrimage (see also further discussion at 3.4.2).

Whilst this search for the miraculous is not included as a Hallmark of Pilgrimage (either quantitative or qualitative), the writer felt that for some of the people she spoke with at the events or sites, that there was an expectation of something akin to the miraculous. Roszak (1981, 57) certainly thought this from the people he spoke with as being representative of ‘a post-Christian, post-industrial society in search of the miraculous’.

Terminally ill with cancer and shortly before her death, pilgrimage as a journey of healing in the 1990s motivated Jini Fiennes’ journey, subsequently described in her book On Pilgrimage – a time to seek (1993). She embarked on a pilgrimage through France and Spain, not only visiting Christian convents and shrines but also a Tibetan Buddhist retreat in the Dordogne. Brown (1998a, 289) recognizes the insight and wisdom contained within Fiennes’ book which is not full of self-pity, but goes ‘beyond the architecture of religious belief, dogma and ritual, to find a unity and faith in the simple fact of love’. Speaking of her battle with cancer and pilgrimage, Fiennes says in her Preface, drawing an analogy between cancer and a constellation:

A star may be sharp and full of pain, but it may also be a guide, a useful companion on a dark night. There is a hidden current within every individual. It seeks and stirs, hides and yearns. Sometimes it is bewildered, a mixture of anger and pain and certainty. It may recede, but it never escapes. In moments of crisis, it is often full of voice. Make a Pilgrimage. Go to ancient places. Go wherever there are contemporary seekers. Go in what way it works out. Just go! (Fiennes 1993, xi).

In medieval times, pilgrimage was divided into two categories: ‘voluntary pilgrimages undertaken as an act of personal piety, and compulsory ones imposed by confessors or courts of law’ (Sumption 1975, 98). In this fourth element, it is noted
the latter (penitential pilgrimage) started in the sixth century and was used from the mid-thirteenth century particularly as a sanction for serious crimes, such as murder and sexual offences by the clergy. Common to both forms of pilgrimage was the need to expiate one's sins, but the penitential pilgrim had no choice, the choice of shrine usually (from the eleventh century onwards) being prescribed as well. Penitential pilgrimage served as a form of temporary banishment, but in practice the 'sinner could usually be released from his penance by paying a fee to the state or damages to the injured party' (Sumption 1975, 107). Not only did law courts and arbitrators impose penitential pilgrimage, but also universities and guilds (Sumption 1975, 108). By the end of the Middle Ages, the sale of papal indulgences had, for many, replaced the pilgrimage journey itself (Sumption 1975, 291).

The eleventh century is generally regarded as the Great Age of Pilgrimage, 'a time of extraordinary spiritual intensity ... the climax of monastic history, the Crusades in Spain and the Middle East, and the transformation of Christianity by a world of emotion and sentiment' (Sumption 1975, 114). This fifth element also looks at millenarianism, the turn of the millennium which also gave impetus to pilgrimage and gave 'a particular urgency to the quest for remission of sins' (Sumption 1975, 132): see further discussion on millenarianism at 3.3.3. One shrine that rose to prominence at the turn of millennium was Santiago de Compostela in Spain, the supposed resting place of the bones of St. James. The Crusades completely changed the nature of pilgrimage, turning 'the intensely personal and spiritual quality of the pilgrimages of the eleventh century' into a ritualised holy war (Sumption 1975, 137). Pope Urban's Clermont pronouncement in 1095 required the crusaders to swear a solemn oath to fulfil their pilgrimage. According to canon law, the vow taken by pilgrim and crusader alike was one that could not be broken if salvation was sought: excommunication, enforced by secular and ecclesiastical courts, was the penalty (Sumption 1975, 138).
The sixth element looks at selection of the shrine. In choosing which shrine to visit, pilgrims were, as are today’s modern pilgrims, enticed by claims made by the organiser of the shrine, the clergy. In the Middle Ages, the Church marketed events such as the finding of new relics, canonisations or translations of biblical texts, along with miracles that were alleged to have occurred, in an attempt to lure pilgrims to their particular shrine. Cults of saints would come and go within weeks, thus the ebb and flow of fashion, along with promotional activities, had much to do with the popularity of certain saints and/or shrines. While this is an interesting aspect within the context of pilgrimage, it is not considered to be a Hallmark of Pilgrimage. Nevertheless, where relevant, promotional activities are noted in connection with attracting visitors to a site or event. The social fashionableness of sites and events is also noted in passing where appropriate.

Many of the commentators speak of the prescribed pilgrimage routes, the seventh element, each shrine encountered along the way heightening the sense of expectation in reaching their final goal. Unlike the wandering pilgrim mentioned in the preceding sub-section, for the medieval pilgrim it ‘was essentially a matter of staying on the straight road ... [and not] ... wandering by the way’ (Howard 1980, 7). The routes of modern pilgrims are largely prescribed by the dictates of today’s mass transportation system, but there is still certainly more flexibility today in choosing the routes and/or sites for a pilgrimage journey: a veritable ‘pilgrimage for all seasons’. Today there may be visible signs that arrival at their goal is imminent but these are likely to be roadside markers or landscape features that are familiar, either through a previous visit or learnt through books, television or other media.

The eighth element notes the fact that many authors mention that pilgrimage is a mediated process through the introduction and development of what are considered the norm for today’s tourists: tour guides and guide books. For example, professional tour guides were operating in Jerusalem as early as the fourth century (Sumption 1975, 260). Priests and other clergy were also at the shrines to assist the
pilgrim in their devotions, and to authenticate their experiences and/or miracles that occurred. This aspect of mediation is applicable to the modern pilgrim, namely, how did they learn about the site/event, and were there things observed that evinced mediation or assistance being offered to the pilgrim by officials and/or other pilgrims. However, whilst these will be noted in the case studies where relevant, mediation is not considered to be a Hallmark of Pilgrimage.

In medieval times, souvenirs were sold at the major shrines, the ninth element under discussion. Souvenirs included badges (which the returning pilgrim often wore around his village so as to acquire additional prestige), relics of doubtful worth, the famous scallop shell associated with the Camino de Santiago, holy water, and items of a more secular nature, such as jewellery and fabric. One would expect the modern pilgrim, given the opportunity, to act as his medieval counterpart did. However, the writer suggests that the collection of souvenirs is not only indicative of pilgrimage but is common for all tourists alike. George (1994, 39) says that the sacredness of the place and moment are carried back home not necessarily in the form of photographs and/or souvenirs, 'but in the continuing autographs of the inner person'. Where appropriate, the sale of souvenirs at a site or event as part of the spiritual experience is noted.

Once the site has been reached, their devotions made and their vow fulfilled, pilgrims across the major traditions have left evidence of their journey in the form of ex voto or votive offerings: the tenth element. In medieval times these could include wax models of parts of the body cured by prayers and at St. Léonard de Noblat near Périgueux in France, pilgrims released from prison would leave their chains and instruments of torture at the altar (Barber 1991, 148). Nolan and Nolan (1989) discuss the many different types of offerings found in modern Christian pilgrimage in Western Europe, the most common being candles and fresh flowers. An unusual shrine that the writer visited was a 'rag well' outside Inverness in the Scottish Highlands where the tying of rags on a tree adjacent to the well symbolizes a request
for healing the pilgrim’s bodily ills (see Figure 3.2). Flowers laid on the ground at Avebury in England on summer solstice are also votive offerings, a reminder of ceremonies (possibly pagan in origin) carried out earlier that day (see Figure 3.3). Offerings were either observed, or learnt about through anecdotal evidence, in some of the case studies. Votive offerings are one of the qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage.

The attire of pilgrims advertising their spiritual mission has historically set their wearer apart from the rest of society. This, the eleventh element, has been true of almost all of the major religious traditions, and with medieval Christian pilgrims this included a staff, sclavein (a coarse tunic which was sewn with crosses) and scrip (soft leather pouch). By the end of the eleventh century, the Church had started to bless the pilgrim’s clothes, investing them with a rich and elaborate symbolism (Sumption 1975, 171-173). In some of the event case studies, there were participants who wore what could almost be described as a uniform, namely attire befitting the event and/or their role in that event. The wearing of uniforms is not considered by the writer to be a Hallmark of Pilgrimage but rather a desire to signify the pilgrim’s allegiance to, and ownership of, the event attended. In his discussion of modern Marian pilgrimage to La Virgen del Rocio at Almonte, Spain, Murphy (1994, 56) notes that wearing a khaki shirt by the locals not only signified a change in mood from the ludic to the sacred, but also identified them as being one of a select few: it reinforced ‘community solidarity at just that social moment when it was most decisively put to the test’. These elements of dress are noted where appropriate.

The twelfth element concerns fairs which were commonly held outside churches and shrines on the feast days of saints, often timed to coincide with the display of relics. A sense of the ludic was highlighted in the previous chapter in discussion of Victor Turner’s work at 2.2. Finally, on feast days, crowds at some of the shrines necessitated the use of today’s equivalent of security personnel. By some accounts, there was little or no crowd control and sometimes there were frequent accidents,
Figure 3.2:  Votive offerings at the 'rag' Cloutie Well, Scotland
(taken by the writer on 8 July 1997)

Figure 3.3:  Flowers as summer solstice votive offerings, Avebury
(taken by the writer on 21 June 1997)
with monks often having to escape with the relics through the windows (Sumption 1975, 213-214). At large events and festivals today, as well as some tourist attractions, the presence of security personnel is the accepted norm, but it is interesting to note in passing that medieval pilgrimage as a mass tourist phenomena was plagued with similar problems.

3.2.4 Modern pilgrimage

A recent article by Michael Kress (1998) in Publisher’s Weekly notes the increase in book titles that reflect the resurgence in interest by homo spiritualis in combining their spiritual search with a physical journey. It is suggested that Western appetites, with their better living standards and greater life security, have undergone changes that require different titillation and different sustenance (Wilson 1990, 211). Not only do these books cover popular pilgrimage routes or sites in the traditional religions, but also cater to seekers interested in a pilgrimage less steeped in sectarian tradition. The Celestine Prophecy by James Redfield, visionary fiction’s most celebrated title, has been reprinted fifty-two times, sold more than 8.5 million copies worldwide and spent more than three years on The New York Times bestseller list (Bowland 1999, 4). Academic interest in modern pilgrimage experienced a revival with the work of Victor and Edith Turner in 1978. Morinis’ edited work (1992) came from ideas which originated at the University of Pittsburgh conference on pilgrimage in 1981. The 1992 [Vol.1(1)] edition of Annals of Tourism Research focused solely on pilgrimage, and reflects tourism’s interest in this area: see papers by Smith, Eade and Vukonic cited in this Chapter. Besides articles appearing in a broad range of academic journals, the July 1998 issue of Attaché, an inflight magazine of US Airways, was entirely devoted to pilgrimage. It featured articles on Mecca, the Camino de Santiago and the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial in Washington DC.

Changes in technology that allow pilgrims to travel large distances in a comparatively short space of time, as well as the information explosion that have occurred in the
second part of the twentieth century, has also contributed to this demand. Campo (1998) notes these aspects, together with the fact that:

... the modern nation-state, the world capitalist system ... and making it possible for greater numbers of people in more cultures to learn about, travel to, and see more sacred places faster than at any other time in human history. A significant result of this has been that the number and variety of sacred places have also increased dramatically.

Campo not only meant organized religion, but also civil and cultural religion when he spoke of the increase in the number and variety of sacred places. Mass communication modes such as television and radio permit vicarious participation in pilgrimage for armchair pilgrims, Coleman and Elsner (1995, 213) giving examples of recent pilgrimages in Spain and India being filmed for television. The reasons advanced for the rise in popularity of pilgrimage are discussed in the following section, however some examples of the popularity of pilgrimage today are highlighted below.

In 1858, a young peasant girl, Bernadette Soubirous, experienced a vision of the Virgin at Lourdes, and with claims of miraculous healings associated with the site, Lourdes today has become one of the most popular Marian shrines in the world. The Marian cult began in the twelfth century and accepts a plurality of Virgins in their own separate place. The most recent Marian pilgrimages see Mary as an intercessor (Gesler 1996, 97). In 1987, approximately 4.6 million people visited the shrine at Lourdes in the short pilgrimage season from April to October (Eade 1992, 21). Murray and Graham (1997) examine the Camino de Santiago as a example of route-based tourism. The Camino was restored in the 1960s and during the Holy Year of 1993, 4.5 to 5 million people visited the shrine at Santiago de Compostela: in the thirteenth century, the number visiting the shrine annually was approximately half a million (Murray and Graham 1997, 519). The increasing popularity of the contemporary route is derived from its medieval legacy of not only the shrine itself, but other towns and attractions along the way. The multiple motivation of tourists in
going to the shrine, and travelling the *Camino*, is noted by the authors. Acquisition of the ‘Compostela certificate’ to authenticate one’s pilgrimage, which is given to pilgrims who provide evidence of completing 150km by foot or 200km by bicycle, ‘may assume the significance of a certificate of athletic achievement rather than denoting any religious significance’ (Murray and Graham 1997, 521). In a television documentary on pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, one pilgrim from the Netherlands complained about the number of tourists along the *Camino* detracting from his appreciation of the sacredness of the journey. He thought that there were far too many tourists (he did not call them pilgrims), finding their very presence intrusive and unwanted (‘The Way of St James’, 1993).

This echoes the work done by Brown (1999) on the Climb at Uluru (Chapter 8), namely, the importance of accomplishing the pure physical challenge so that visitors can be rewarded with a certificate to signify that they had climbed Uluru. Dunn and Davidson (1996, xvi) in their Preface note that travelling the *Camino* is a rite of passage, and a renewal of national spirit and pride.

The writer has found one comparatively recent doctorate on pilgrimage as a modern recreational travel experience (Wilhelm, 1989) The disciplinary background of Wilhelm’s dissertation is based in leisure studies, however the author turned to Van Gennep and two of Turner’s works for some of her theoretical bases. The study involved a two-week Catholic study tour visit to Ireland by a group of twenty-five American tourists, eight of whom volunteered to take part in the project. Volunteer pre-, during and post trip interviews, and diaries were used as the research methodology. Wilhelm’s main finding was that her eight tourists ‘were searching for change in their lives through the experience of pilgrimage’ (Wilhelm 1989, 215).

This group also exhibited traits to be noted later in this Chapter, namely the importance of learning and education as part of the pilgrimage experience. She gives as an example of this being the group gravitating towards bookshops whenever there was time to shop. Wilhelm briefly refers to *communitas* but does not highlight this in
her conclusion. However, it is apparent from her general discussion that, at least for some on the tour, this phenomenon was present during the two-week tour.

Medjugorje in Western Herzegovina in the former Yugoslavia has become a pilgrimage centre in very recent times after the Virgin Mary first appeared to a group of children in 1981 (Vukonic 1992, 21). The parish office estimates that between three to five thousand people visit Medjugorje each day because of regular reported apparitions of the Virgin. As well, there are instances of many miraculous healings and verified reports of many pilgrims experiencing magico-religious, ecstatic experiences (Vukonic 1992, 82). Immediately after apparitions began, hundreds of stands sprang up around the church in the centre of Medjugorje: a ‘true village fair typical of the Yugoslav interior, but here it lasts all the year round’ (Vukonic 1992, 88). The approach of the millennium will see unprecedented interest in visiting the Holy Land, with an estimated four million tourists expected in 2000. This is more than double the usual figure and by early 2000, foreign visitors ‘will have brought in an estimated $7.8 million’ (Marshall 1999, 24). The renewed interest in Jerusalem is prompted by Pope John Paul II’s Incarnationis Mysterium, Bull of Indiction of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 given on 29 November 1998. His Holiness Pope John Paul II said in this document that ‘a pilgrimage evokes the believer’s personal journey ... it is an exercise of practical asceticism, of repentance for human weakness, of constant vigilance over one’s own frailty, of interior preparation for a change of heart’. The focus of the Great Jubilee is on the two centres of Rome and the Holy Land, with the jubilee beginning on Christmas Eve 1999 (Pope John Paul II, 1998a). Speaking of a pilgrimage made some five years earlier to Jerusalem, Murray (1996) highlights the heterogeneous nature of pilgrimage:

For the pilgrims, even these unseemly experiences do not diminish the sense of arrival. If their luxurious hotels and these rundown shrines seem incongruous, the eyes of faith see beyond the enticement of a comfortable holiday to a landscape of faith that makes even the most unlikely sacred sites holy. For it is not whether a site is authentic that makes the pilgrim happy, but the fact of having been there (Murray 1996, 36).
Chapter Three – Literature Review: the Pilgrim’s Quest

Marshall (1999, 26) speaks of the ‘Jerusalem syndrome’ to illustrate the impact of Jerusalem on pilgrims. Every year about forty tourists suffer this fate which he describes as ‘a bizarre condition characterized by the victim’s delusion that he or she is a biblical figure’. However, not all pilgrimage sites are experiencing boom times, the numbers attending the six-week long pilgrimage season at Croagh Patrick in Ireland having inexplicably dropped from 28,000 in 1988 to just 13,000 in 1997 (Campus Review, 1997).

Not only has religious pilgrimage experienced a resurgence at sites such as those in Europe as noted above, but the phenomenon of pilgrimage is still as popular as ever in the other three major religions, although sometimes with human cost. The Hajj at Mecca attracts approximately two million pilgrims each year, though in the last two decades it has been dogged by tragedy. Most recently, 118 pilgrims died in a stampede during the ‘Stoning of Satan’ ritual in Mina some 10km from Mecca (‘One hundred and eighteen die in Mecca stoning ritual’, 1998). The annual Hindu pilgrimage in 1996 to Kashmir’s holy Amarnath Cave, which sees about 112,000 pilgrims annually climb to 3880m high in the Himalayas, saw 160 pilgrims die after unusually heavy rains had brought below freezing temperatures (Mushtaq, 1996). The Kumbha-mela is the largest of India’s Hindu religious gatherings and its location is rotated every three years between four sanctified sites: Allahabad, Hardwar, Ujjain and Nasik. These festivals have long been notorious for kidnapping, murder, rioting, rape and spreading epidemics of cholera and plague. In 1970, eighteen thousand people were killed in Hardwar during sectarian battles (Walker 1983, 573). A Kumbha-Mela pilgrimage is regarded as very auspicious, particularly those which occur every twelve years when the planet Jupiter enters Aquarius and the Sun enters Aries: the four-month festival at Hardwar in 1998 attracted eight million pilgrims (Zubrzychi, 1998).
Ma Tsu pilgrimages to Pei-Kang in Taiwan attract between four to five million Taiwanese annually, with a recent increase in spectacular carnivalesque parades as rival communities attempt to outdo each other in attracting pilgrims (Sangren, 1993). The eighty-eight temple Shingon Buddhist pilgrimage route on the Japanese island of Shikoku still remains popular some 1150 years after the death of the sect’s leader Kōbō Daishi. Whilst the majority of pilgrims now arrive by the busload, their traditional white pilgrimage coats spotless and uncrushed, a few still maintain the tradition of walking the 900 mile circuit by foot. The start and finish of the circuit is at Mt. Koya (Kōyasan), 3000 feet above sea level and a two-hour train journey south of Osaka. The writer spent five days there in July 1997 at the small town which contains over two thousand temples, shrines, towers, stupas and religious buildings. The hundreds of pilgrims observed seemed to be in a constant hurry to complete their devotions, scrambling on and off buses to the brusque commands of well organised tour guides. Ritual, both observances and attire, played a strong part in the journey for these people. The white shirt, bamboo hat and staff as once worn by Kōbō Daishi, were doffed by many of the pilgrims, symbolizing both the inner and outer journey that constitutes pilgrimage. It was only at the tomb of Kōbō Daishi, the most important place of pilgrimage and fountainhead of the esoteric Shingon faith, that people tended to linger, sitting on the seats against the temple wall or in meditation on the ground.

In North America, annual pilgrimage to the shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe in Mexico City in 1996 attracted up to six million pilgrims, eight people dying and fifteen injured in the human crush over the two-day pilgrimage (‘Faithful die as millions make Virgin pilgrimage’, 1996). In August 1998, some eight thousand pilgrims flocked to a university stadium in Massachusetts to see fourteen year old Audrey Santo, who has been in coma-like state since almost drowning in a backyard pool eleven years ago. This event is repeated annually on the anniversary of her accident, with pilgrims coming in search of miracles after claiming to have seen ‘oil dripping from religious figures and blood oozing from Communion waters’
(Larrabee, 1998). The reports of miracles being performed by Santo are currently under investigation by a team of two psychologists and a theologian (‘Church puzzled by girl’s miracles’, 1999).

From all appearances, traditional religious pilgrimages are alive and well but what about secular spiritual pilgrimages, the focus of this dissertation? The opening paragraph on media signifies that this is indeed happening, the emphasis in this area being on sites or events of cultural rather religious significance. Campo (1998) speaks of the American Baby Boomer quest for an individual spiritual experience and insight: Stonehenge, the Egyptian pyramids and ashrams in India are all part of that quest. The Egyptian pyramids have become a pilgrimage centre for thousands of ‘New Age’ pilgrims who come to bathe in the mystical energy of the pharaohs (Chabert, 1995). Locals call these spiritual tourists ‘the meditators’ who flock to Egypt not only to ponder its ancient past but to explore the mystic future (O’Connor, 1997). There are special travel operators that deal in spiritual trips to Egypt, and one of these Egyptian companies, Sphinx, has about two thousand visitors a year making spiritual pilgrimages (‘Pyramid power’, 1995). The forward to Khalsa’s Pilgrim’s Guide (1981) states that the Guide’s purpose is to ‘raise our consciousness towards Planet Earth … to present access to the sacred places of Earth – natural, ancient and modern’. Its focus is unashamedly on the alternative ‘New Age’ pilgrim yet it does have brief statements on each of the world’s religions, including shamanism, with a section on pilgrim protocol at major religious shrines. Writing in the New Age Journal, one of America’s foremost alternative bi-monthly magazines, Monique Burns (1995) looks at the transformative nature of pilgrimage and how travel can be used as a way to reconnect with the sacred. Jennifer Westwood’s recent book (1997) on sacred journeys recounts a plethora of religious and secular sacred journeys, which reflects an ‘upsurge of interest in sacred places, places of power and the ancient wisdom of older cultures’ (notation on the front cover’s inner fold).
The emphasis in secular spiritual pilgrimage is not on passive enjoyment but rather on an interactive engagement with the site. It is suggested that for these modern secular pilgrims a mystical experience is a paramount motivation, rather than merely crossing the site off their tour itinerary. Kurosawa (1997) calls this willingness to escape from the shackles of cocooned sightseeing ‘experiential tourism’. The search for the quintessential experience is consistent with the views generally espoused by the ‘New Age’ movement.

Pilgrimage to Waitangi by the Maramatanga (a New Zealand Maori religious movement) is discussed by Sinclair (1992). Waitangi, a town on the northern end of the North Island of New Zealand, is where a treaty was signed between the Maoris and the British in 1840 which ceded New Zealand to the British Crown. Today, the Treaty has become a symbol of Maori activism, particularly in relation to traditional Maori land rights. The Treaty of Waitangi has similar political importance to the High Court of Australia’s Mabo and Wik decisions in relation to Aboriginal land right claims. The Maori pilgrimages are known as ra, gatherings that take place at prescribed times to commemorate events in the spiritual history of the movement (Sinclair 1992, 241). The ra encompasses elements of both Maori religion and Catholicism, and through the tradition of Maori prophecy, the participants are able to connect ‘with the more distant but nevertheless potent time of the ancestors’ (Sinclair 1992, 242). In the same work, Morinis (1992) discusses the Plains Indians of Canada’s annual ‘Sun Dances’ being substituted with a Catholic pilgrimage to a mission shrine in the 1880s. This is not an isolated instance, as in both Latin America and India indigenous shrines were converted to Catholic shrines, and still endure as pilgrimage sites. Sallnow’s 1981 work on Andean pilgrimage cited in Chapter 2 provides such an example. Morinis notes the similarities between the current Catholic and former supplanted Indian pilgrimage, and at different times the two traditions diverge, merge and converge. Both of these works examine modern indigenous pilgrimage which is based on a strong spiritual tradition. It operates today in a fused tradition with Catholicism which was brought by colonial imperialists.
The multiplicity and motives of tourists visiting sacred sites on a secular, cultural pilgrimage were noted earlier at 3.1.4. It is therefore impossible to quote with any certainty numbers of pilgrim-tourists visiting sacred sites as offering some form of proof that modern secular pilgrimage is flourishing. The case studies included have gone some small way to highlighting this trend, as do increased sales of numbers of book titles, conferences held and periodicals published.

One other way to observe the increase in popularity of modern secular pilgrimage is to look at the number of group tours to sites and events that offer the opportunity of a mediated sacred journey and/or connection with the Other. Group pilgrimage tours have usually been the preserve of those travelling in traditional religious pilgrimage mode, and indeed these are still popular ways of going to certain sites and events. Today, however, there are many tour operators which specialize in secular pilgrimage themes. Many of the itineraries offered by American tour operators still include sites sacred to the major religious traditions, but many of the ones advertised also emphasized natural settings as a way to enter the sacred realm as part of the inner journey. There are also some small Australian tour operators who are offering similar tours, such as to the megaliths of the United Kingdom, native American shamans and sweat lodges. These secular pilgrimages are not only advertised in the traditional travel outlets, but many also have their own Website. For example, the Specialty Travel Index, lists over six hundred tour operators and provides details on several tour companies specializing in spiritual and self-discovery tours. The Yahoo site has twenty or more tour operators listed under the similar themes. The writer also visited another Internet site which listed several individual tour companies offering similar secular, spiritually-oriented pilgrimages.

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8 [www.specialtytravel.com](http://www.specialtytravel.com)
9 [www.yahoo.com/Business_and_Economy...r_Operators/Spiritual_and_Self_Discovery](http://www.yahoo.com/Business_and_Economy...r_Operators/Spiritual_and_Self_Discovery)
The nine-stage Process Model of Pilgrimage provides an insight into the inner and outer aspects of the pilgrimage journey, and the fact that it could be a cyclical process repeated until the individual's spiritual needs are sated. The literature reveals the long historical tradition of pilgrimage as a phenomenon, with two Hallmarks of Pilgrimage being noted: the quantitative and qualitative hallmark of authenticity, and the qualitative hallmark of votive offerings. Finally, it appears that pilgrimage, both as a religious and secular process, is flourishing as the world enters the third millennium. The reasons behind this are discussed in the next sub-section.

3.3 SOCIAL CHANGE

The literature on modern pilgrimage and indeed society in general is replete with references to some of the matters raised in 3.2.4. Turner (1972) based the revival of pilgrimage on the fact that:

... in the age of Aquarius, pilgrimage, like many other liminal or 'underground' (as opposed to 'mainline') manifestations of the religious, not to mention and esoteric and the occult, are surfacing once again as significant, visible, social phenomena, just as they surfaced in the past in periods of destructuration and rapid social change (e.g. in the waning of the Roman Empire, and in the waning of the Middle Ages) (Turner 1972, 196).

Heelas (1996, 10) in his discussion on the academic response to the 'New Age', comments that Victor Turner's 1974 work reflected the influence of the spiritual assumptions and experiences associated with the 'New Age' movement. It is far outside the scope of this study to enlarge on the dynamics of rapid social change as currently occurring, but there are three aspects that the writer considers important in explaining the resacralisation of society and the revival of pilgrimage as a spiritual journey: the 'New Age' movement, millenarianism, and the rise of the 'Baby Boomer' generation.
In a renewed search for the sacred and spiritual elements which seem to be missing in people's lives today, both millenarianism and the Baby Boomer phenomenon act as agents of change which result in people turning to religion, either in its traditional forms or in new religious movements. They may also seek solace in the amorphous 'New Age' movement. The traffic in search of the Other is not only one way, thus those who have searched in vain under the 'New Age' umbrella may turn to religion, traditional or new, in their quest.

3.3.1 The 'New Age' movement

David Spangler, called by some the shaman of the 'New Age' movement, differentiates between the 'New Age' and the 'New Age movement'. He says the 'New Age' is a timeless idea, 'an Age of the Soul, not as something distant and separate from the body and personality but as a unifying, synergetic principle, an activity of connection, imagination and co-creativity between ourselves, the cosmos and the sacred' (Spangler 1996, 18). The key to the 'New Age' is the evolution of a new, holistic culture wherein the individual and their environment are integrated into a single unit (Spangler 1984/1996). Spangler described the 'New Age' movement as a 'modern confluence of ideas, events, groups and activities which align themselves in some fashion' to the notions of the 'New Age' per se (Spangler 1996, 16). It appears from the literature that this phenomenon, which evolved out of the counterculture movement of the 1960s and 1970s, is not new but has been around throughout history.

William Frost (1992) spends the first chapter of his book also trying to define exactly what constitutes the 'New Age', referring to other authors who have likewise grappled with this dilemma. By the second chapter, he starts to shed light on what many consider to be the essence of the 'New Age' phenomenon, the individual quest for the Self from within:
The ‘New Age’ is not a religion and has no doctrines. It is characterized as a concentration on the inner powers of life itself. As such it will intentionally resist traditions which dictate to people how to live ... [the appeal of the bicameral mind theory for the ‘New Age’ movement may be that it] ... argues that religious authority and the divine voices do not come from an outside deity but from the innerself. Thus the bicameral mind theory\textsuperscript{10} encourages the ‘New Age’ movement to recognize this untapped resource of intuition and inspiration (Frost 1992, 54).

The emphasis is on transformation of the Self which Heelas (1996, 18) calls ‘Self-spirituality’, with an emphasis on the experiential and looking within (albeit with the help of the various props offered under the ‘New Age’ banner) for an inner spirituality.

Popularist ‘self help’ and ‘New Age’ literature continually refers to the importance of contacting our Higher Selves so as to enhance our personal growth whereby the transformative experience may be realized. Traditional religious pilgrimage was noted earlier as being a process whereby one also sought a transformative experience by connecting with one’s creator figure. Thus, this is common trait shared by the pilgrimage traditions under discussion, and certainly a worthy Hallmark of Pilgrimage. But the strict requirement in this study is that the writer must be able to empirically and objectively measure this, and this was not possible in the methodology chosen. If anecdotal evidence indicates that this had occurred, it is duly noted and highlighted in the case studies. Measuring this aspect of the inner journey is fraught with many problems. Any response would necessarily vary from individual to individual, culture to culture, religious tradition to religious tradition and modality to modality, and therefore it would be difficult to generalize what exactly constituted a standard ‘transformative experience’. The problem also arises as to when this ‘experience’ exactly occurred: was it days or even years after the event? (namely, outside the study timeframe). The experience may also mark a shift in the

\textsuperscript{10} The bicameral mind theory comes from Julian Jaynes (The Origins of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind, 1976/1990) which speculates that primitive people were guided by voices or auditory hallucinations coming from the gods.

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individual’s perception of the world, so subtle that even the individual themselves is completely unaware of this change. The other aspect that may also flow from this is that there may also be resultant behavioral change in the pilgrim, causing friends or relatives to comment that ‘you seem different since you visited X’. To undertake this complex area of research, usually the field of applied psychologists, is inappropriate and well outside the scope of this study. For the reasons discussed above, ‘transformation of the self/a transformative experience’ is not included in this study as a Hallmark of Pilgrimage.

Whilst theoretically ‘New Agers’ are adverse to traditions on the grounds that their inflexible, iconoclast dogmas act against the freedom of the individual ‘to be themselves’, as a movement it has been very adroit in drawing on traditions from variety of sources such as shamanism and Buddhism. Burrows (1987), cited by Chandler (1988, 49), puts this another way: ‘the “New Age” movement has been fed by many tributaries but cannot be reduced to any single one’. Heelas (1996) discusses this seeming paradox and says that the ‘New Ager’s’ position can be seen as the perennialised viewpoint:

... it involves going beyond traditions as normally conceived, going beyond differences to find – by way of experience – the inner esoteric core ... This means that ‘New Agers’ can draw on traditions whilst bypassing their explicit authoritative doctrines, dogmas and moral codes (Heelas 1996, 28).

Such a stance explains how and why this group can seemingly enjoy the best of both worlds in what has been described by Ahrstrom (1972) as ‘harmonial religion’ (Heelas 1996, 30). This enables them to be able to go to a site that is sacred from a traditional religious perspective, or to one that belonged to ancient peoples and/or indigenous groups. Here they tap into this spirituality, sacredness and tradition but without the confines placed on those traditions. In so doing, they purloin what ritual, ideas and practices they consider to be consistent with their inner search and their quest to connect with the Other. This can be likened to a ‘supermarket approach’ used to choose one’s self-help ‘fix’ and was effectively portrayed in a recent
television documentary *Romancing the Chakra* (Froxoff Films, 1998). Selection of various ‘New Age’ modalities occurred in a empty supermarket aisle, a woman taking large boxes off the shelf and placing them into a rapidly filling supermarket trolley. A different modality, such as tarot, auras, sacred theatre and so on, was printed on each box. Once in the trolley, there was a short exposition on the each category, featuring one or more of the four individual case studies sampling different modalities. McColl (1989, 41-42) uses a similar term - ‘spiritual smorgasbording’ - to describe this phenomenon. Solomon (1999) prefers to use the term ‘spiritually promiscuous’, saying that she would:

… meditate with any teacher or guru with wisdom to impart. If the teachers appear to be enlightened, I’ll go all the way: bow to them, bring them flowers, follow their instructions, even kiss their feet. I seek the compassionate presence of loving guides – whatever their religious background – but don’t ask me to commit to a lifetime relationship with just one (Solomon 1999, 66).

The ‘New Age’ movement’s search for alternative spirituality has evoked two recent responses from the Holy See. Firstly, His Holiness Pope John Paul II in his weekly *Angelus* prayers in September 1998, stated that neither horoscopes or magic forecasts would help in planning one’s life (Owen 1998) Secondly, his encyclical *Fides et Ratio* of 15 October 1998 deplored modern society’s ‘gradual and fateful separation of faith and reason’ (Pope John Paul II, 1998b). Technology has proved to be a valuable tool in spreading the ‘New Age’ movement’s message, particularly via the Internet. In cyberspace there are a plethora of Websites that cater to every taste, however use of the Internet has not been confined to the ‘New Age’ movement alone as traditional religions, including the Holy See, have also been quick to jump on the global technological bandwagon (Ramo, 1996). Crook (1978, 32) notes that rapid technological change ‘hastens the breakaway from traditional beliefs and practices’.

As noted in Chapter 1, the writer deliberately chose to use the term ‘modern secular pilgrimage’ rather than ‘New Age’ pilgrimage. However it is fair to say that in all of the case studies a strong ‘New Age’, or alternative, element provides a common
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thread. Whether or not the people who attended the events or sites selected, and/or who were surveyed, would consider themselves ‘New Agers’ is another matter altogether. Again, this aspect was previously canvassed in the introductory Chapter. As noted frequently, the driving motivation for pilgrimage has been cited as an overriding spiritual quest. In framing this as a motivational question in the surveys, the writer had to make the question non-threatening, non-intrusive and non-aligned to any religious tradition, yet not so vague so as to get respondents asking ‘what do you mean by …’ (incidentally, this did not occur in any of the fieldwork surveys). The inner quest, an awareness of that the answers lay within, helped in this daunting task. The phrase ‘for spiritual awareness’ thus became a quantitative Hallmark of Pilgrimage. Allied with this primary motivation is the corollary that the pilgrims made their journey as ‘an act of faith’. A question on ‘an act of faith’ is included in the two cases studies at Chapters 5 and 6 as a quantitative and qualitative Hallmark of Pilgrimage.

The ‘New Age’ movement has been variously embraced by individuals ranging from the use of natural therapies to joining cults. Common to most if not all of the literature on the ‘New Age’ is that now people are involved in a search for meaning, a yearning for something spiritual in their lives. Smith (1992) says that the emergence of the ‘New Age’ in the 1960s and 1970s was reflected in little-studied travel movements from the West to the East, ‘motivated by a search for meaning, for values hidden outside the college textbook, in Native American ways, or from the Eastern gurus’ (Smith 1992, 11). As with earth energies noted earlier, supramundane experiences are generally seen as being caught up with ‘New Age’ modalities, and thus have seldom been taken seriously by the academic world. But, according to Hume (1997, 197), researchers are now starting to reverse this trend, particularly those working in the field of anthropology. In accessing some of these ancient sites, the modern secular pilgrim has often been unable to enter the sacred realm as they would have wished: this aspect was discussed earlier in contested sites at 3.2.4. There are no qualitative or quantitative indicators attached to the role of the ‘New
Age' movement as a motivational force behind modern secular pilgrimage. The key to the ‘New Ager’s’ involvement with the events and sites studied is that the experience, the journey and its goal, are all important.

3.3.2 Millenarianism

Millenarianism, also known as millenarism and millennialism, comes from the root word millennium (Lat. *mille*, ‘thousand’), and is a way of measuring earthly time in one thousand year spans. Were it only such a device then human history would be different, but the one thousand year span refers to the rule of Christians on earth measured in time spans of one thousand years. Millenarianism has evolved into a belief system that supposes ‘the end of this world is at hand and that in its wake will appear a New World, inexhaustibly fertile, harmonious, sanctified and just’ (Schwartz 1987, 521). The Book of Revelation in the New Testament is a rich primary source for such scenarios, which ‘clearly suggests that the End-time sequence has already begun, and subtly invites its readers to interpret its images in the light of their own times’ (Thompson 1998, 21). Similar instances of Armageddon-like scenarios also feature in many ‘New Age’ works channeled from so-called Ascendant Masters or Prophets (see Chapter 6). Thompson (1998, 36) describes the turn of the last millennium - commonly referred to as The Terrors of the Year 1000 - as a period when the whole of Christendom lived in a state of mortal fear during the year 999. But the apocalypse did not occur as foretold and the turn of the first millennium ushered in a time of prosperity and growth. The apocalyptic views contained in the millennium message has been subsumed into many groups or cults, appropriately labelled millenarian movements. These are not just a feature of the twentieth century, but have been around since the turn of the first millennium, particularly during the Middle Ages and Reformation, a time of religious and social upheaval. As Pottinger (1999, 18) in his discussion on the commonalties between 999 and 1999 says somewhat pragmatically, society nevertheless remains ‘every bit as prone to superstition and fallacy’.
Thompson (1998) and Poulsen (1998) note the link between millenarianism, and
times of rapid social and economic change which leave the general populace
somewhat disoriented. Poulsen (1998, 22) adds that the Internet has spread millenial
fears rapidly around the globe, and Fortean Times notes 1998 as being a time of
increased interest in the paranormal world as the year 2000 approaches (Peacock,
1999). The crystallization of national identity may also be occurring simultaneously
which can have profound consequences for national and international stability. As
proof of this, Thompson (1998, 101) cites the fundamentalist and apocalyptic views
of some Far Eastern countries as verging on millenarianism. The emergence of the
global village, along with all the other dynamics of the post-war world, make the turn
of this millenium a time ripe for such apocalyptic fears to surface. The increase in
New Religious Movements (NRM)s is perhaps one indicator of this fear. The Aum
Supreme Truth subway gas attack in 1995 in Tokyo, Japan (a country which is
estimated to have three thousand new religious groups) is one example of the public
face of cults (Garran, 1996). Bryan Wilson (1990) offers a comprehensive discussion
on the rise of NRM,s and though not specifically noting the role of millenarianism in
such, says the fact that they offer more proximate salvation makes them attractive to
people who think that the apocalypse is right on their doorstep. Trompf (1990, 2)
notes that there has been enough academic work on such movements in the last thirty
years to indicate that the ‘projection of future Transformation is positively central’ in
NRM,s. Hanegraaff (1995, 301) lists amongst the five basic tenets of the ‘New Age’
movement as a religion, the ‘expectations of a coming age’ which comes close to
linking the ‘New Age’ with millenarianist thought. Thompson (1998, 195) has no
such doubts, stating that the ‘New Age’ is apocalyptic: it believes in an End-time ... 
it is nothing less then the salvation of the entire planet’. The shift from the Age of
Pisces to the Age of Aquarius, the dawn of a new era and a ‘New Age’, is also
indicative of millenarianism, though there is considerable debate in the ‘New Age’
literature on the degree of change and when it will occur.
Fuelling the apocalyptic fears rampant in the closing years of the twentieth century is the Y2K or millennium bug. The possibility of system failures of anything that is reliant on computer technology, including the twenty five million embedded silicon micro chips around the globe, has lead to “technophobes issuing fatalistic warnings to stock up, prepare to press the ‘escape’ button and head for the hills amid mainframe Armageddon” (Riley, 1998).

The popular media is full of daily references to the close of millennium. Lord (1998) notes that a new word has entered the lexicon – *millenniumitis*. She says this is ‘a disease that afflicts governments around the globe, who then start planning grand projects that do not relate to a human scale’. Besides the Y2K scenarios, a lighthearted article by Tulloch (1998, 40) advises its readers that a revivalism in spiritualism and occultism is one way to survive and dress with style in the approach to the millennium: ‘in beauty, the preferred look is celestial, as if you’ve just been beamed down from a cloud, or finished a healthy round of chanting at the ashram’. A recent one-hour television special on millenarianism shown nationally on the Channel 9 network (Film Montagne, 1998) foretold a time of great earth changes. These changes were described as The Quickening and referred not only to the Year 2000 as the important End-time date, but also to the Mayan Calendar which ends in 2012. Several articles have recently been published telling people how, and, more importantly, where to party on 31 December 1999. This is despite the fact that, theoretically at least, the New Millennium does not officially begin until 1 January 2001. London’s new Millennium Dome and the Eiffel Tower’s golden egg-laying are just two of the more novel attempts to entice tourists to certain locations. Southgate (1999) reports that an unprecedented number of religious festivals and millenium events in 2000 will mean increased airfares and hotel rates. Jerusalem has had its share of millenarian views: an increase in pilgrim numbers in the year 1000, the impact of the Crusades, the coming of Islam in the eighth century and even earlier under its Hellenic conquerors in 300 B.C.E. when an ‘apocalyptic piety entered Judaism which looked forward to a final victory of the righteous at the End of
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History’ (Armstrong 1996, 114). All three Semitic religions in the Jewish, Christian and Islamic traditions have an eschatological base which involves Jerusalem or Palestine in various End-time scenarios, the irony being that biblical prophecies are being construed in favour of political nationalism (Danner 1991, 68). Some of these millenarian aspects have already resurfaced, with authorities being concerned ‘that suicides and other violence by Christian fundamentalists at Jerusalem holy sites could lead to large scale clashes between Muslims and Jews’ (Rabinovich 1999). According to cult watchers, the appearance of similar doomsday cults in Australia as the turn of the millennium approaches is to be expected after Israeli police arrested fourteen members of a US-based doomsday cult in Jerusalem in early January 1999 (Griffith 1999, 1). A belief, either conscious or unconscious, in millenarianism is therefore promoting pilgrimage and the growth in the number of pilgrimage sites and events. The fact that many religious people are of the view that there is a world-wide spiritual crisis is being used to explain this resurgence in pilgrimage (Gesler 1996, 99, citing Zimbars-Swartz, 1991).

To end this section on a more positive note, the turn of the millennium has probably already occurred. Due to miscalculations in using the Julian calendar, and by linking events such as the Bethlehem massacre in 4 B.C.E. and Halleys comet in 6-7 B.C.E., it is suggested by most commentators, including Murray (1999), that the turn of the millenium was around 1996 or perhaps even earlier.

3.3.3 Baby Boomers

Born between 1946 and 1964, the ‘Baby Boomer’ generation grew up in dynamic times, according to Roof (1993, 1). He describes this period as covering the counterculture of the 1960s, the evangelical and charismatic revivalism of the 1970s, and the emergence of the ‘New Age’ and self-help smorgasbords of the 1980s (Roof 1993, 1). In America, Baby Boomers make up one-third of the population, and are the trend-setting cohort in society today not only in America but also in other

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Western countries that experienced rapid population growth after the end of World War II. The figure in Australia is 29% which is the same as Generation X (those born between 1965 and 1985), but Baby Boomers account for 40% of income (Abernethy 1999, 12). In Australia, as in North America, the baby boom after World War II was due to three factors: a population relatively unscathed by the War, a repressed desire to start families and mass post-war immigration (Loverseed 1997, 46). In Australia’s situation, not only was the time after World War II one of economic prosperity, it was also when thousands of migrants, mainly from war-torn Europe, came to Australia in search of a better life. Roof suggests that this generation, many who are now approaching middle age and ‘midlife crisis’, are re-examining the role of religion and spirituality in their lives. Midlife is usually experienced as a rite of passage in most people’s lives. Coupled with the changes in the work culture and environment, corporate restructuring and downsizing, and the ability to work from home thanks to advancement in computer technology, Baby Boomers have become a ‘generation of seekers … they have to discover for themselves what gives their lives meaning, what values to live by’ (Roof 1993, 8). One way this search for spiritual identity has surfaced is in the workplace, namely through the pursuit of ‘right livelihood’ (Chabrier 1998, 95). The concept revolves around doing the work with purpose and passion, and obtaining deep satisfaction and rewards that are more to do with the essence of one’s work, rather than any material rewards that might accompany it.

Digance and Muller (1998) note four behavioural patterns amongst ageing Baby Boomers: spirituality, voluntarism, nostalgia and commitment to grandchildren. The search for spirituality may come through many avenues, traditional or alternative. Pilgrimage is part of this search, particularly as the Baby Boomer cohort are more likely to have both discretionary time and money available required to undertake longer journeys often associated with a spiritual quest.

In the surveys used in the case studies, the standard survey age group brackets of ten year intervals from age twenty were used, therefore a percentage reporting as being in
the 30-39 age group would be Baby Boomers. To validate the propensity of this cohort being foremost as spiritual seekers, one would have expected them to dominate in the surveys, however this was not always the case. Whilst the Baby Boomer cohort is not a Hallmark of Pilgrimage, the estimated percentage of Baby Boomers surveyed is noted in each of the four case studies where surveys were administered. For the reason given above, the number of Baby Boomers is listed as being a percentage between the 30-39 age group, and over 40 age group.

The philosophies generally associated with the ‘New Age’ movement underlie these case studies and probably explain why the two events occurred, and the fact that two ancient historical sites are playing host to a new type of tourist: a secular pilgrim on a spiritual quest. As this century draws to a close, millenarianism is particularly turning people to religion and alternative cosmologies in an attempt to calm their fears about a possible End of Time. The Baby Boomer cohort who grew up in the counterculture revolution of the 1960s and 1970s are also spiritual seekers, and are well represented in some of the case studies. The most important Hallmark of Pilgrimage - a spiritual quest – was noted earlier in this sub-section.

3.4 TOURISM

Tourism is frequently touted as the most rapidly growing industry in the world, the World Travel and Tourism Council estimating for 1996 the total economic value of tourist goods and services being between $3-6 trillion (10.6% of gross national product), providing one in ten jobs around the world (Roberts 1998, 3). The dichotomy between tourism and pilgrimage echoed by Turner and Turner in the Chapter 1 is discussed by many writers across the disciplines. Turner (1988, 124) notes that, based upon his earlier research, that many tourists were closet pilgrims. Whether or not tourists have come ‘out of the closet’ some 12 years on is open to
conjecture, yet the number of tourists who responded positively to the ‘spiritual quest’ question in the surveys indicates that this may well be the case.

The aim of this section is to discuss some of the processes behind the individual’s decision to travel and is divided into two sub-sections. The first sub-section looks briefly at two models on the tourist-pilgrim dichotomy, followed by tourist motivation, tourist attractions and, finally, authenticity. The second sub-section deals with event management which is covered in reasonable detail as three of the case studies were events.

3.4.1 The tourism context

Models on tourist-pilgrim dichotomy
Nolan and Nolan (1989) and Smith (1992) view this from different perspectives. Nolan and Nolan’s focus is on Christian pilgrimage shrines in Western Europe and as their model illustrates (see Figure 3.4), the relationship between pilgrimage shrines, religious tourist attractions and festival sites is a complicated but nevertheless interesting one. They make the obvious point (at p.15) that public religious festivals are not automatically considered pilgrimages unless the specific site is regarded as particularly holy, and further, that those attending must describe themselves as pilgrims. The example of the Oberammergau passion play illustrates this by providing two contrasting meanings: religious pageant or pilgrimage event. Religious tourist attractions/pilgrimage shrines fall squarely into the realm of contested sites, with tourists tending to outnumber those consider themselves to be true, spiritual pilgrims. The two sites of Uluru and Newgrange echo similar themes: a small number of visitors having different reasons for visiting the site, as well as using different and sometimes unorthodox ways to interact with the site and the local indigenous culture setting them apart from the mass tourist.

Smith’s model (see Figure 3.5) synthesizes the polarities of the sacred-profane in the pilgrimage-tourist debate.
Chapter Three – Literature Review: the Pilgrim’s Quest

I. Pilgrimage shrines. Places that serve as the goal for pilgrim journeys.
   a. Shrines of relatively low value as tourist attractions not characterized by
      festivals involving pageantry or folkloric display. The majority of visitors are
      either members of religious tour groups or consider themselves to be pilgrims.
      Most on-site activities are religious in nature.
   b. Shrines of high value as tourist attractions. Tourists tend to outnumber pil-
      grims at these places which are famous for art, architecture, features of site, or
      historical associations. Although there may be special days of pilgrimage, these
      shrines are not especially noted for great religious festivals.
   c. Shrines primarily noted for colorful pilgrimage events. The pilgrimage as
      an event is most important at these shrines. In some cases several years pass
      between each event, but pilgrimages are usually held on an annual or biannual
      basis.
   d. Shrines combining touristic importance, pilgrimage festivals, and cultic
      significance. The classic example of this type of shrine is Santiago de Compostela,
      Spain, visited throughout the year by large numbers of tourists and pilgrims, but
      especially toward the end of July when the day of Saint James (July 25) is cele-
      brated in a blaze of processions, High Masses, and folkloric displays.

II. Religious tourist attractions. These places, usually ecclesiastical structures of
    some kind, are visited by secularly oriented tourists and recreationists, religious
    tour groups, and pilgrims en route to shrines, but they are not considered to be
    places of pilgrimage in their own right. Many of Europe’s most famous cathedrals
    and monastic establishments fall into this category.

III. Sites of religious festivals. Innumerable religious festivals and processions in
     Europe are not thought of as pilgrimages per se. These include most Holy Week
     and Corpus Christi processions, as well as the majority of public Christmas cele-
     brations. Most of these events are associated with churches, some of which are im-
     portant as tourist attractions and historical monuments. Thus, categories II and
     III overlap. For example, the famous Cathedral of Granada, which contains the
     tombs of the Catholic monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, is the scene of an impor-
     tant civic-religious celebration each January 2 but is not generally regarded as a
     place of pilgrimage.

Figure 3.4: Relationship between shrines, religious tourist attractions and
          festival sites: explanations and examples.

Source: Nolan and Nolan 1989, 16.
Table 3.1: The Pilgrim-Tourist Path

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pilgrimage</th>
<th>Religious Tourism</th>
<th>Tourism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. pious pilgrim</td>
<td>b. pilgrim&gt;tourist</td>
<td>c. pilgrim=tourist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. pilgrim&lt;tourist</td>
<td>e. secular tourist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.5: The Pilgrim-Tourist Path


The true pilgrim’s focus is on the sacred quest whereas the secular tourist’s visit to the site is more in alignment with Turner and Ash’s perception of tourists as operating in the ‘I came – I saw – I conquered’ mode. The pious pilgrim, or perhaps even the ‘pilgrim>tourist’ in Smith’s model, is seen as the authentic pilgrim, the model to which all pilgrims should aspire in terms of devotion to the inner and outer journey. Continuing along the continuum, the ‘pilgrim~tourist’, ‘pilgrim<tourist’ and most obviously the secular tourist, could be described as frivolous pilgrims in that the sacred quest motivation does not over-ride all other motivations for making the journey. The demean of this pilgrim is also not consistent with the serious, authentic nature of the true pilgrim. This could be observed, for example, by not staying long at the site or putting off visits to the site in favour of engaging in mass tourist pastimes such as shopping or visiting high profile, non-sacred tourist attractions. Discerning the ebb and flow of individual motivations in a temporal and spatial context is also noted by Smith. She makes the point that access to the sacred is not necessarily limited to those on a traditional religious pilgrimage, arguing that a tourist journey redolent with personal meaning is also a pilgrimage. The example of a long-time friend is given, her wish fulfillment to see the Great Wall of China before she dies. The widespread use of the word pilgrimage in connection with secular tourist
journeys does not fit, the writer suggests, with the over-riding motivation behind pilgrimage: a spiritual quest which is usually connected with one’s belief system. These and similar journeys erroneously are called pilgrimage but fail to meet the definitive criteria proposed herein. This is despite the fact that they may be of strong personal significance to the traveller and may also be once-in-a-lifetime treasured touristic trips. To use the word ‘pilgrimage’, the writer suggests, is to imbue them with a misleading sense of spiritual purpose,

The value of both models (it is understood by the writer that these models have as yet to be empirically tested), as well as Cohen’s typology as tourist experiences noted earlier at 2.3, is that they attempt to draw fine lines in the sand relating to the various definitive meanings possible in this domain. It is a difficult task to characterize a ‘true pilgrim’ versus a ‘pilgrim-tourist’ as the individual’s perceptions and interpretations of their experiences can change perceptibly during the nine-stage Process Model proffered at Figure 3.1.

**Travel motivations**
Since World War II travel, particularly international travel, has become no longer the sole province of the leisured and/or monied classes. Comparatively cheap tours, based on charter flights and competitive hotel rates, has translated into tourism for the masses. In the 1970s, the rise of tourism as a discrete area of study has also been important in understanding this post-war phenomenon, particularly when looking at the question of tourism motivation.

The key in discussing motivation theory, which is derived from applied psychology, is to note that it represents a combination of various dynamic processes operating internally within the individual. In applying the theory as a way of explaining tourism behavior, there is seldom one dominant over-riding motive that explains solely why the individual chose to travel at that particular point in their life. However, in identifying the Hallmarks of Pilgrimage, a spiritual quest is expected to be the dominant motive because this, above all else, delineates a pilgrim from a
tourist. To reiterate, the spiritual quest ideally should be allied to one’s belief system or cosmology so that frivolous pilgrimage is differentiated from authentic pilgrimage. If the individual were surveyed during each of the nine stages of the Process Model of Pilgrimage discussed at 3.2.1, it would not be surprising to find their motive changing over time which goes back to the problem highlighted in the methodological underpinnings of this study as discussed at 1.2. Mansfield (1992, 403-404) highlights two general problems in applying any travel motivation theory. Firstly, the more motives there are which influence travel behaviour, the harder it is to distinguish each separate motivator. Secondly, the study of travel motivations per se is a complex one and thus open to many interpretations and nuances, switching from the over simplified on the one hand, to the extremely complicated on the other. The push-pull model espoused by Crompton (1979), it is suggested, offers a compromise. The push motives are socio-psychological factors which come from within the traveller and are generally seen to explain why the person chose to travel. The quantitative motives based on Crompton’s push factors are marked with a single asterisk in Table 3.1. The two pull motivations are usually seen as explaining the choice of destination and are motives aroused by the destination itself: novelty and education. These are also marked with a single asterisk in Table 3.1. The expectation of a learning outcome as part of choosing the tourism product was noted by Poon (1993, 90) in her discussion on the evolution of ‘new tourism’. Both Crompton’s pull motives are summed-up in her statement that ‘new tourists’ will ‘go out to see something different, something that would expand their experience’. For the new tourists, ‘quality and value for money are a premium, and expressing their individuality at the destination, their ultimate pleasure’ (Poon 1993, 90). Adler (1989, 1382-1383) confirms this view, stating that ‘travel has been explicitly pursued for the sake of knowledge ... framing, distancing, isolating and emphasizing some sense at the expense of others’. Bruner (1991, 242) in his discussion on the consequences of tourism on indigenous cultures, posits that tourists change very little whilst on tour, whereas more profound change is noticeable in their hosts instead. The caveat is that this hypothesis is more applicable to mass tourists rather than for individual travellers.
Table 3.1: Elements of tourist attraction visitor motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social stimulation</th>
<th>Curiosity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- so I could be with my friends*</td>
<td>- to satisfy my curiosity *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to meet people with similar interests</td>
<td>- to do something completely different *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tourist icon</strong></td>
<td><strong>Spiritual Quest</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to visit a tourist attraction</td>
<td>- for spiritual awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to experience an authentic site</td>
<td>- self-discovery*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Kinship</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to learn new things *</td>
<td>- so the family could do something together *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Miscellaneous</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- no particular reason – just passing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Note</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Crompton’s 1979 push-pull motivational model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Turner and Ash (1976) in their oft cited work on the vagaries of mass tourism, liken today’s mass tourist to the barbarian of old, going from the urbanized wealthy First World to the uncivilized, primitive Third World in search of the exotic and simple. Whilst today’s modern pilgrim will use many of the trappings of mass tourism in their journey – scheduled airlines, hotel chains, tour operators, bus companies, and so on – they would often be at pains to state that they are not tourists but rather pilgrims. In other words, they reclassify their journey into a more venerable noble form, making it a journey with a higher purpose that is not sullied with the trappings of tourism. However, in reality, this pious purity is hard to maintain today. Rojek (1993, 175) distinguishes between the tourist and the traveller based on similar ideas: ‘tourists are presented as lacking initiative and discrimination … [the] travel experience is akin to grazing – they mechanically consume whatever the tour operator feeds them’. Travellers are the opposite, being ‘associated with refined values of discernment, respect and taste … posited as an exclusive confrontation between self and Nature, and self and Culture’. He adds a third category at pp. 177-178, the post-tourist, and suggests that in choosing the tourist destination and travel mode, the
experience becomes an end in itself. Contrasting with the pragmatism of Turner and Ash, and Rojek, is Graburn (1989) who likens tourism to a sacred journey. In the sacred-profane continuum, the profane represents the home/work environment whereas tourist journeys represent the non-ordinary and sacred interludes which make life worth living. The reason behind this is the fact that ‘the tourist journey lies in the non-ordinary sphere of existence, the goal is symbolically sacred and morally on a higher plane than the regards of the ordinary workaday world’ (Graburn 1989, 28). Berger (1967, 35) also sees the ‘routines of everyday life as profane unless ... they are conceived as being infused in one or another with sacred power’. As noted earlier in this Chapter, one can seemingly find the sacred anywhere, at any time.

Tourist attractions and authenticity
Tourist attractions form the nucleus of the tourism industry and, according to Lew (1994, 29), are ‘usually in the landscape to observe, activities to participate in, and experiences to remember’. The literature often speaks of attractions as exuding some form of ‘magnetic force’ that compels the visitor to seek them out. This is often termed as the ‘drawing power’ of attractions. Poon (1993) and Martin and Mason (1993), note that changes in social values and lifestyles ultimately translate into changes in what potential visitors want in the way of tourist attractions. Attractions may need to refocus on what experiences and facilities they offer the visitor, such as the educative element, and some may even cease to exist altogether as tastes change. Other sites may become more popular and unable to cope with existing visitor use pressures, with all the attendant problems. Uluru and Newgrange are two such attractions where increased visitor numbers are creating operational problems and dilemmas for management. As Martin and Mason (1993, 38) conclude, the test is whether visitor satisfaction remains high at such sites, particularly after the visitor reflects on their visit (see Stage 9 in the Process Model of Pilgrimage at 3.2.1). Maintenance of visitor satisfaction predicates the site’s long term survival in the very competitive world of tourist attractions. Destinations ‘collect’ these attractions, providing an inventory of ‘must see’ sights at a particular place that are considered essential prerequisites if the visitor can truthfully claim that they have ‘done’ a
particular city, region or country. The writer describes these 'high profile' attractions as having achieved 'icon status', catering to large numbers of mass tourists. Once attractions appear on tourist itineraries, MacCannell (1989, 45) notes that they have a moral claim on the tourist. For example, visiting Paris without incorporating the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame de Paris and the Louvre would leave the tourist open to the suggestion that they really had not experienced Parisian life if these three core attractions were omitted from their itinerary. This is consistent with views espoused by Turner and Ash (1976) and Rojek (1993) in that tourists 'consume' attractions: as little as half an hour visit on a 'whistle stop' package tour is all that is required. The important thing here is to put a tick against the attraction, the tourist self-assured they have seen and experienced the authentic culture on offer.

Donald Horne in The Intelligent Tourist (1992, 45) states that authenticity 'unites the different objects from which tourists seek regeneration'. The fact that it is classified, conserved, formerly named and exhibited makes it worthy of being saved for generations of tourists to gaze at and photograph. These actions transform it into an object to be elevated and sanctified to levels of extraordinary purity, detached from reality and the mundane (MacCannell, 1989). The requirement for authenticated reliquary as a requisite for the maintenance of a successful medieval pilgrimage shrine was noted earlier in the discussion on pilgrimage at sub-section 3.2.2. Sightseeing is the cornerstone of this search for the authentic, striving for a new experience amongst the relics of bygone eras dislodged from their former natural, historical and cultural constructs to sit incongruously with modernity: 'modern society institutionalises these authentic attractions and modern life takes on qualities of reality thereby' (MacCannell 1989, 14). The distinction here is between false fronts and intimate reality, staged authenticity put on display for mass consumption and reality, 'getting off the beaten path' to see life lived as it really was by the locals or natives. The authentic experience is consumed in a space set aside for outsiders only, initiates who are permitted to view or participate in the inner liminal world. Redfoot (1984, 301-302) suggests there are four orders of tourist experience when
looking at the dimensions of authenticity. His fourth-order tourist bears strong analogy to our self-styled modern secular pilgrim who rejects modern culture in order to seek their spiritual reality in the experiences of other traditions. Achieving an authentic, spiritual experience and lifting the veil of illusion enables the fourth-order tourist to avoid the derision of being labeled a tourist. However, this type of tourist who tends to ‘turn East’ as part of their quest, is criticized by some authors cited in Redfoot’s article as being mere pawns in the marketing game: ‘the modern day pilgrim seems to be the dupe of a complex con, game playing in a desperate search for authenticity’ (Redfoot 1984, 302).

If the search for the authentic is an end in itself for the modern pilgrim, then apparently, according to Redfoot, it is doomed to end in failure. However, if it is part of a larger picture, namely, a search for a mystical experience and connection with the Other, then maybe ultimately it does not really matter if the authenticity is a bit jaded and rough around the edges. Even if the experience could not be deemed ‘authentic’ by a properly constituted panel of experts, surely it is immaterial as long as the spiritual element of the pilgrimage has been met. As noted earlier, authenticity is a both qualitative and quantitative Hallmark of Pilgrimage, and in the surveys, the word ‘authenticity’ was used to qualify the event or site.

An interesting twist in the search for the authentic tourist attraction lead the town of Glen Innes in northern New South Wales to ‘construct’ a circle of standing stones and to establish the Australian Celtic Festival at the site. The town won the right to erect a national monument to honour all Celtic people in Australia as part of Australia’s 1988 Bicentennial year. Only three of the twenty-four stones used were found in their natural state (the stones are 5.5m high which gives them an above ground height of 3.7m) and the other stones were split from larger rock bodies nearby. Outside the circle, there are four cardinal stones, with three stones in the centre (Coleman, 1998). Some may suggest that this circle is not ‘authentic’ and will have to wait perhaps another three thousand years before it is so deemed.
There are two sites that are tourist attractions: Newgrange (Chapter 7) and Uluru (Chapter 8). The elements in Table 3.1 were derived from the literature review and each was a separate question in the motivational section of the survey. The extent to which the visitor agreed or disagreed with their reason for visiting the site was measured on a five-point Likert scale. The elements are summarized into seven sub-groups or dimensions, and in both these sites the results of the surveys indicate, where appropriate, the dominant sub-group.

3.4.2 Event context

Over the past twenty years, events have become part of the resurgence in the short-break tourist trip phenomenon. They cover a spectrum, ranging from small, invitation-only gatherings (such as the studies in Chapters 5 and 6) to mega-events such as world fairs and the Olympic Games. Their continued growth is such that one commentator asks ‘is there an upper limit to the number of events?’ (Getz 1997, 22). Getz (1997, 22) goes on to look at the underlying reasons behind the popularity of events, some of which are listed below:

- increased availability of discretionary time for leisure pursuits
- economic growth and expansion of the 1970s and 1980s
- increasing professionalism in event management
- increased involvement of the private sector in event creation
- increasingly varied but specialised leisure interests
- changing socio-demographic forces
- settled urbanised life styles
- advancement in telecommunication and technology resulting in the ‘global village’
- politicization of events resulting in ‘civic and/or national boosterism’ (at p.35)
- change in societal values, and
- multiculturalism, including resurgence of interest in indigenous cultures.
These aspects will be highlighted in the various case studies where appropriate.

The fact that three of the five case studies are events provides testimony to the popularity of events for today's modern pilgrims, remembering all the while that many of the pilgrimages of old (and of many of them still continuing today) coincided with events at the particular site or shrine. For example, Stonehenge at summer solstice, Bethlehem or Rome at Christmas, and in Hardwar in India for the Kumbha-mela Festival. Events can also act as tourist attractions in their own right, attracting overnight and non-local visitors. Whilst events can often be held in the off-season to stimulate tourism demand, Getz (1997, 56) notes that festival and sporting events tend to adhere to the tourism peak season, generally summer.

Some factors which, according to Getz (1997, 4-5) create the specialness of events are set out as below.

A multiplicity of goals: many events can, with careful foresight, planning and marketing, appeal to a broad range of tastes across traditional socio-demographic boundaries.

Festival spirit: this means creating an 'ambience [which can] encourage joyfulness (even revelry), freedom from routine constraints, and inversion of normal roles and functions' (Getz 1997, 4). This is the ludic, and for some perhaps the magico-religious element mentioned by Turner and Eliade. This is one of the qualitative elements of pilgrimage (with the caveat noted earlier in Chapter 2).

Uniqueness: familiar marketing hyperbole of 'must see', 'once in a life time' and 'this is the event for you!' are used as ways of attracting visitors. Annual events endeavour to meet this by not only including time-proven favourites, but also by adding new products in an attempt to provide newness so that visitors will return to
see new attractions. It is one of the quantitative elements of pilgrimage, and was used as a qualifier in the surveys.

**Tradition:** many events have become traditions, grounded in the community and/or of the host organisation. Each Stargate (see Chapter 6) ceremony performed, for example, follows certain traditional rituals (use of crystals, group forming a circle and so on) even though the site and the overall composition of participants vary each time.

**Symbolism:** for Getz (1997, 5), ‘the use of rituals and symbols together adds to the festive atmosphere and can also give an event special significance above and beyond its immediate purpose and theme’. Today, ‘the revitalisation and recreation of rituals is now being seen as a more or less constant process in all cultural worlds’ (Lowell Lewis and Dowsey-Magog 1993, 199). There are two aspects of this: rituals and/or symbolism that are used by a group attending the event, and rituals and/or symbolism that develop within the event itself, usually over long periods of cyclical repetition. Of course, the two may fuse into one, providing participants with a strong sense of meaning and commitment. Ritual is one of the qualitative elements of pilgrimage noted earlier at 2.2.

**Authenticity:** this is related to uniqueness and was discussed in the previous sub-section on tourism. Participation at an event that is both unique and authentic links to the totality of the experience. The importance of authenticity was highlighted by His Holiness, the Dalai Lama (see Chapter 4) when he assured the audience that what they were about to experience was authentic, namely a ritual traditionally transmitted only by the Dalai Lama. This is one of the Hallmarks of Pilgrimage noted previously in this Chapter.

Before proceeding to conclude this Chapter, the writer notes the passing importance to authenticity that has been made in Chapters 2 and 3. Cohen (1979) referred (at
2.3) to the falsification of the authenticity of the tourist experience by commercial providers if there was perceived to be a discrepancy between the ‘expected’ and the ‘real’. Implicit in the discussion of ritual at 3.1.2 is the idea that the ritual used is authentic, well-worn with time, binding the participant with their cosmology and Creator being(s). Using authentic ritual at authentic sacred places was also important as noted at 3.2.3, Ademar of Chabannes’ quest for authentication of St. Martial in the eleventh century resulting in his ultimate fall from grace within the Church. In this sub-section, authenticity has been noted as an important draw card for both tourist attractions and events alike as they compete for the tourist dollar. Whether or not authenticity contributes to the overall pilgrimage process becoming a higher order experience, rather than Brainhard’s ‘mere’ experience discussed earlier at 3.3.1, is open to debate, however the writer is of the view that certainly it is one of the things that makes an individual mindful of the many diverse units that go together to constitute the totality of their pilgrimage journey as described in the Process Model of Pilgrimage at 3.2.1.

Examining why people come to events has received attention only in the last few years, thus the definitive list of motivations and domains is still in the early stages of development. These studies are largely grounded in the work of Iso-Ahola’s escape-rewards model (1982) and Crompton’s push-pull factors (1979). Table 3.2 was prepared in mid-1997 before the June/July overseas fieldwork was conducted and reflects the trend in event motivation studies at that time. It summarizes the event participant motivation into seven sub-groups or dimensions. The elements were derived from the literature review and usually formed a separate question in the motivational section of the survey. The extent to which the visitor agreed or disagreed with their reason for visiting the site was measured on a five-point Likert scale. Each motivation, as with the motivations discussed in the previous sub-section on tourism, is put into domains or categories of event participant motivation, and every attempt was made to keep the motivations standard for the two events surveyed. Finally, to the list of event motivations taken from the literature, was added the
overarching pilgrimage motivation: ‘for spiritual awareness’. As well, a question investigating if visitors were motivated to attend the event based on an ‘act of faith’ was also posed in two case studies (Chapters 5 and 6).

Table 3.2: Elements of event participant motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social stimulation</th>
<th>Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- because it is stimulating and exciting</td>
<td>- so I could learn new things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- because I enjoy special events</td>
<td>- to learn more about myself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- because this event is unique</td>
<td>- to learn about issues important to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to get involved and participate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to meet people with similar interests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- experience an authentic ceremony</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- because I enjoy Druid ceremonies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curiosity and entertainment</th>
<th>Kinship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- because it sounded like fun</td>
<td>- be with my partner or family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- for the variety of things to see and do</td>
<td>- for the whole family to enjoy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to experience new and different things</td>
<td>- so the family could do something together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to be entertained</td>
<td>- so I could be with my friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to do something completely different</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to satisfy my curiosity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- rest and relaxation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Escape</th>
<th>Miscellaneous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- to have a change from my daily routine</td>
<td>- no particular reason – just passing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to get away from normal demands of life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- for a change of pace</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spiritual quest</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- for spiritual awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- be with people who enjoy the same things I do</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- central to my beliefs as a practicing Druid (Chap. 5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- central to my beliefs as a Lightworker (Chap. 6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- contribute to universal group consciousness (Chap. 6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, the questions were standardized for the Druid Gorsedd (Chapter 5) and Stargate (Chapter 6). For these two Chapters, the Hallmarks of Pilgrimage are evaluated on both qualitative and quantitative measures, however the sample
populations are not statistically large. The writer was not given permission to survey at the Kalachakra Initiation (Chapter 4).

The newly emerging discipline areas of tourism and events have been reviewed so as to provide much of the quantitative material required to prepare the survey instruments. Two tables have been prepared, putting the motivational questions into domains or sub-groups which are then used in the case studies to determine the main reasons why people visited the site or event.

3.5 CONCLUSION

Table 3.3 below provides a summary of the qualitative and quantitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage extracted from the above discussions, as well as including those from Table 2.1.

Table 3.3: **Hallmarks of Pilgrimage**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualitative Hallmarks</th>
<th>Quantitative Hallmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>... authenticity</td>
<td>... authenticity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... a sense of the ludic*</td>
<td>... a spiritual quest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... <em>communitas</em></td>
<td>... <em>communitas</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... commensality*</td>
<td>... an act of faith (events only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... ritual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... consecration of the site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... an act of faith (events only)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... a contested site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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*these are only noted as Hallmarks of Pilgrimage when found in the presence of the two key criteria of the journey being made as ‘an act of faith’ as part of a spiritual quest*. 

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Chapter Three – Literature Review: the Pilgrim's Quest

In the introductory Chapter, the aim of this study was stated: to see if modern secular pilgrimage is essentially the same as traditional religious pilgrimage in that both have a spiritual quest as their primary motive, the journey linked with their belief system. The extent of modern secular pilgrimage is then examined in five case studies, as well as looking at what is prompting the resurgence in modern pilgrimage. The literature review in Chapter 2 and this Chapter has developed three elements which can be used to measure the similarity between modern secular pilgrimage and traditional religious pilgrimage: Hallmarks of Pilgrimage (see above), elements of tourist attraction visitor motivation and event participant motivation. These are measured in the following five case studies by using survey data, participant observation and/or both. As well, there many secondary aspects that tell us more about the phenomenon of pilgrimage. Earth energies, sacred mountains, mystical experiences, the purchase of souvenirs and so on, are mentioned in this Chapter, and will be thus noted where relevant in discussing each of the five case studies. Chapter 9 concludes this study, looking at the resurgence of modern secular pilgrimage.
CHAPTER 4

KALACHAKRA INITIATION
SYDNEY

In mid-June 1998, Martin Scorsese’s film ‘Kundun’ opened in Australia. The film is on the life of His Holiness, the fourteenth Dalai Lama (HHDL) and was made by the Walt Disney Company. Scorsese, when answering a reporter’s question on why he became first interested in making ‘Kundun’, said:

A lot had changed in my life and I was seeking, I think, this serenity, this spiritual well-being, that it appears to me that practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism can acquire. I was drawn to it (Barber, 1998).

Disney was warned by Beijing that its business plans in China, including a proposed theme park near Shanghai, could be at risk if the film were to be released in the United States (Wehrfritz and Watson, 1997). Turner (1996) suggests that Disney had no choice but to distribute the film as it was already shooting on location in Morocco. Michael Ovitz, who was responsible for Disney picking-up the film, became a political casualty and resigned as president of the company in early December 1996 (‘Disney boss quits over Dalai Lama movie’, 1996). Sony’s ‘Seven Years in Tibet’, also on the life of HHDL, was released in Australia in September 1997, and one month earlier on the night of the film’s release in the United States, a candlelight vigil was held outside the Chinese Embassy in Washington (Wehrfritz and Watson, 1997). Singer (1997) notes that the ‘Dalai Lama is becoming Hollywood’s most celebrated new guru’, with many writers saying that the Hollywood establishments’ support for the Tibetan cause has made ‘Tibet chic’ (Wehrfritz and Watson, 1997). The reason for Tibet’s sudden surge in the West’s popularity stakes is because many see a cause such as Tibet being the case of an underdog, Tibet (a virtuous, spiritual country) being over-run by China (a large, bullying and godless neighbour). However Sampey
(1997) suggests that Hollywood’s love affair with the Tibetan freedom cause has occurred mainly because it is being waged on distant shores, and not in their own backyard.

The West has long had a fascination with Tibet: James Hilton’s 1933 novel *Lost Horizon* introducing “the word ‘Shangri-La’ into the lexicon as a synonym for ‘a peaceful, idealized utopia’” (Brown 1998, 114). The Chinese annexation of Tibet in 1959 and subsequent creation of the Tibetan Autonomous Region has, according to Brown, been the catalyst responsible for Tibetan teachings coming to the West: ‘it was the *karma* of the Tibetans to experience the suffering of displacement and to learn from it; the *karma* of the West to be exposed to the teachings and to learn from them’ (Brown 1998, 115). This case study is on the Kalachakra Ceremony and Teachings (‘the Kalachakra’) given by HHDL in Australia in 1996. From 15-30 September 1996, HHDL visited Australia, with the main focus of his visit being the nine-day Kalachakra event in Sydney from 21-29 September 1996. The primary spiritual focus within the nine-day event was the transmission of the three-day Kalachakra Initiation (‘the Initiation’) from 25-27 September 1996 (see Appendix A for the programme), and the event commenced with three days of Teachings from 21-23 September 1996.

Despite its deceptively simple message, most authors readily acknowledge that Tibetan Buddhist cosmology is a complex and detailed area of study. The three-day Initiation is likewise a complex area of *tantric* ritual, a point which was made by HHDL on the first day of the Teachings. Thus, only a broad background to Tibetan Buddhism, and not a detailed excursus into its cosmological underpinnings, is provided in this Chapter. Because the emphasis is on pilgrimage and the qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage as developed earlier in Chapters 2 and 3, these elements will be emphasized as they relate to the Tibetan Buddhist cosmology. Initially, there is a brief overview of Tibetan Buddhism and discussion of the spread of Buddhism to the West. Before discussing the nine-day event, a brief history of the Kalachakra and
importance of HHDL’s role in the transmission of the Kalachakra is noted. As noted earlier at 1.1, this case study is the only one involving traditional religious pilgrimage, but was included in this study because it was estimated that approximately half of those attending were not Buddhists. It is suggested for the non-Buddhists that the event perhaps represented secular pilgrimage, but nevertheless offered all the trappings of religious pilgrimage to both believer and spiritual tourist alike. Because surveying was not permitted at the event, this case study is based on qualitative data only. The ludic nature that Victor Turner said was missing from many traditional religious occasions was clearly apparent at this event, and the inherent, ritualistic tradition of both Tibetan Buddhism and the Initiation gave a deep feeling of authenticity, despite the event’s somewhat incongruous location.

4.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1.1 Buddhism

Buddhism dates back to the sixth century B.C.E. and the birth of its founder, Siddhārtha Gautama who was born a prince into the Sākya tribe in the small kingdom of Kapilavastu, Nepal (Atkinson 1987, 71). In his late twenties, he was to renounce ‘his royal heritage, his wealth, friends and family and began a new life as a wandering ascetic’, achieving enlightenment and becoming a Buddha under the bodhi tree at Bodhgayā (Powers 1995, 38-42). The Buddhist cosmology relies on the awakening experience or enlightenment that occurred within the Buddha as he sat in meditation under the bodhi tree. The oral tradition of Buddha’s teaching and lack of written scriptures (the doctrines were not reduced to writing until the first century B.C.E) and variety of interpretations placed upon the teachings, ultimately lead to the polarization of thought and subsequent establishment of two schools: Therāvada and Mahāyāna (Atkinson 1987, 74-76). Today, the former is mainly found in Sri Lanka and South-East Asia, whilst the latter is found in China, Tibet, Korea, Japan and Vietnam. Both schools of Buddhism have also spread to the West and been embraced by many
different nationalities. Buddhism, more so than the other two missionary religions of Christianity and Islam, has been extremely proficient at adapting its message to fit local cultural norms. Central to the Buddhist cosmology is the concept of the Three Jewels or Three Treasures (triratna) which are translated doctrinally and ritually in the ‘Three Refuges’: the believer must rely on the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha¹. The earliest doctrinal formulations, which are still today the central tenets of the Buddhist religion, were the Eightfold Path (with its triple division into wisdom, moral practice and mental concentration) and the Four Noble Truths which contains its theoretical or metaphysical underpinnings. Two of the key teachings which have received popular recognition in the West today are the doctrines of karma, and rebirth or reincarnation. The two are inseparably intertwined as part of the cyclical nature of the lives of all sentient beings.

4.1.2 Tibetan Buddhism

Buddhism was introduced into Tibet at the end of the third century C.E. under Totori Nyentsen, but Powers (1995, 126) says that the first successful transmission of Buddhism occurred under royal patronage during the reign of Songtsen Gampo between 618-650 C.E. The Buddhism that developed in Tibet was from the Mahayana School which was dependent on large monastic institutions and tantric rites and ideas, and whilst the Chinese form of Buddhism was important initially, ‘Tibet turned to India for its sacred texts, philosophical ideas and rituals’ (Kvaerne 1987, 500). Four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism (Nyingma, Kagyu, Sakya and Gelukpa) developed over time, with much commonality found in their philosophical and liturgical texts, rules of monastic discipline and the path to enlightenment via the practices contained in the sutra and tantra system: ‘all four Tibetan schools [also] agree on the basic outline of the path one should follow to escape from cyclic existence and the sorts of practices that one should adopt’ (Powers 1995, 313-314). Tibetan Buddhism also has a Vajrayana ethos, namely that by using tantric practices

¹ Dharma is the doctrinal teaching and practice of Buddhism as well as being a phenomenon, and Sangha are the community of Buddhist monks and nuns (Powers 1995, 451-453).
the individual may attainment enlightenment more quickly, perhaps even in this lifetime (Reynolds and Hallisey 1987, 346). Many and varied practices have been incorporated into the Tibetan Buddhist cosmology to sate a believer’s desire for merit, some of which are important in the context of this case study. These include pilgrimage and chanting mantras, in particular the mantra of Avalokitesvara who is the Bodhisattva² of compassion and the patron deity of Tibet (Bernbaum 1987, 351).

Buddhism within Tibet rose and waned along with Tibet’s political fortunes in Central Asia, and it was not until the fifteenth century that the Gelukpa School was founded by Tsong Khapa (1357-1419) on which the lineage of the Dalai Lama is predicated (Powers 1995, 142-144). Until the Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1959, the monasteries wielded considerable political power which was brought about by the fusion of two distinct features of Tibetan Buddhism. The first was that monastic rule, in the Gelukpa tradition at least, relied upon succession by incarnation, namely that the head of an order or monastery was seen as a reincarnation of his predecessor. Secondly, a religious figure could be considered to be a Bodhisattva. These two aspects were combined by the fifth Dalai Lama (1617-1682) when he established himself as the head of State, and as the emanation or manifestation of the great Bodhisattva Akolokitesvara (or Chenrezig). The fourteenth Dalai Lama (b. 1935) is the current embodiment of this tradition.

Within both Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism there are long historical traditions of pilgrimage. India spawned both Hinduism and Buddhism, and both religions highly value pilgrimage as a form of religious observance with traditional pilgrims displaying one and/or all of the ‘standard repertoire of vows, devotional fervour, fasting, celibacy and recitation of the divine name’ (Knipe 1991, 150). Within the Buddhist tradition, the ultimate pilgrimage journey is to retrace Buddha’s life and

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² A Bodhisattva is an enlightened being who is ‘motivated by universal compassion and they seek the ultimate goal of Buddhahood in order to be of service to others’ (Powers 1995, 197). Kalachakra is a Bodhisattva linked with the kingdom of Shambhala, and the Initiation is the tantric ritual practice associated with Kalachakra’s teachings.

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visit four sacred sites: Bodhgaya, Rajagha, Lumbini and Sarnath. For Tibetan Buddhists, Mount Kailasa in Western Tibet is an important site that pilgrims circumambulate for weeks or months at a time. Lhasa was, and still is for Tibetan Buddhists living in the China’s Tibetan Autonomous Region, an important pilgrimage site. The Potala Palace is circumambulated and there are ‘many monasteries, shrines and caves in which the relics of holy men and women may be seen, honoured and worshiped’ (Kvaerne 1987, 501). Taktser, or Roaring Tiger village, is the birthplace of the current HHDL. The family home was torn down in 1959 but rebuilt during negotiations for his return in 1986. Now despite the failure of those talks, China still allows the caretaker, the Dalai Lama’s cousin Gunbao Tashe, to entertain Buddhist pilgrims. Four thousand of them visit each year’ (Wehrfritz and Watson 1997, 48).

Dharamsala, the site of the current Dalai Lama’s government in exile in northern India, serves both as a refuge for those escaping from Tibet and a pilgrimage site, with pilgrims circumambulating HHDL’s residence. Traditionally, Tibetan Buddhist pilgrimage is made via a series of ground-level prostrations and offers the promise of earning great merit in this lifetime. This can be to HHDL’s former or current residence, and to other Buddhist sites. Dharamsala and Sera, one of the Tibetan Buddhist monasteries established in southern India near Mysore, have become mandatory pilgrimage sites on the Western spiritual tourist trail (Brown 1998, 116/140). At page 140, Brown recalls his disquiet over dinner in the small restaurant in Sera which ‘was now filled with back-packers, clutching maps and books of Buddhist philosophy’. Sera had now become a contested site which is apparent from this quotation from Brown:

... I was suddenly aware of the stillness of the night, and the clamour of the outside world, rushing in to fracture the silence ... each had his own, private reasons to do with his religious practice for not wishing to mix too closely with the outside world. I simply resented the presence of the newcomers in the café, with their loud voices and garish clothes. I had been in the monastery only a few days, but I was already possessive of its serene magic, already holier-than-thou (Brown 1998, 141).
4.1.3 Buddhism in Australia

Stephen Batchelor’s (1994, xiii) book well describes the spread of Buddhism to the West, which he notes has historically been an encounter with European culture. In Australia there are two aspects of Buddhism: ‘ethnic Buddhism’ which has come largely as a result of immigration as far back as the Chinese miners in the second half of the nineteenth century, and Australians of Anglo-Saxon origin who have been converted to Buddhism (Bucknell 1992, 214-215). A small number of Tibetan refugees arrived in Australia in the 1970s, establishing several institutes for the study and practice of Tibetan Buddhism. Bucknell notes the particular fascination that Tibetan Buddhism has for Westerners in general, which he thinks is due to ‘its colourful symbolism, perhaps also to the charismatic figure of the Dalai Lama who visited Australia in 1982’ (Bucknell 1992, 216). Buddhism also attracts Anglo-Australians because it is perceived ‘as open and undogmatic, as encouraging critical enquiry rather than unquestioning faith’ (Bucknell 1992, 221). Venerable Pannyavaro (who runs the electronic Buddhist information network, Buddhanean, receiving over eight thousand Internet inquiries a day) gives another reason for Buddhism’s popularity:

It has really just exploded in the last fifteen years. It’s so big now it’s impossible to know everyone like before … [He] believes one of the reasons for Buddhism’s popularity is that it is not a faith or belief system like other major religions and so it attracts those who may feel alienated by mainstream churches, such as women and homosexuals … We don’t have gods or heaven and hell and we don’t discriminate, so many people see Buddhism as a way to put meaning in their ordinary day-to-day life (Pitt, 1997).

In the 1991 Census there were 140,000 Buddhists in Australia, and Buddhism is regarded as Australia’s fastest growing religion (Lovell, 1997). However the writer was unable to access any information on the number of Tibetan Buddhists in Australia.
4.2 THE FOURTEENTH DALAI LAMA AND THE KALACHAKRA

4.2.1 The Kalachakra

Religious festivals and holy days play a very important part in Tibetan Buddhism, with some important events traditionally drawing pilgrims from great distances to visit sacred precincts ‘during which [time] great lamas performed powerful ceremonies for the well-being of sentient beings everywhere’ (Powers 1995, 190). The Kalachakra is one such important religious festival and was first given by Buddha at Dhanyakataka (thought to be present day Amaravati) in Southern India in the fifth century B.C.E. (Gyatso and Hopkins 1985, 59). It appears to have been intermittently transmitted in India up until the eleventh century when it first openly appeared, Newman (1985, 65) noting that its exact historical use over those sixteen or so centuries is somewhat unclear. It was introduced into Tibet in 1026 ‘where it quickly gave rise to a flourishing tradition’ (Gyatso and Hopkins 1985, 61). The tantra received considerable attention from scholars in the Gelukpa school in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Although the Kalachakra is not the Gelukpa’s central tantra (which is the Guhyasamaja Tantra), it ‘presents a somewhat parallel but interestingly different system for transforming mind and body into purity’ (Gyatso and Hopkins 1985, 63). The large number of Tibetan scholarly works on the Kalachakra indicate its importance not only in the religious life of Tibet but its adjoining cultural region encompassing the Himalayan regions of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan as well as some parts of Mongolia and Siberia (Gyatso and Hopkins 1985, 64).

There are four classes of tantras, and ‘the yogic techniques for engaging the powerful, subtle levels of consciousness focused in meditation born from the inseparability of method and wisdom are found only in the texts of the [fourth] Anuttara or highest Yoga Tantra’ (HHDL 1985, xv). The Kalachakra is a Anuttara Yoga tantra, that is given almost exclusively by the Dalai Lama to the public in large gatherings. It is
also distinguished from the three lower *tantras* in that by undertaking the Initiation, ‘one actually traverses the mundane and trans-mundane *bodhisattva* paths and attains complete Buddhahood’ (Jackson 1985, 30). Jackson (1985, 40) discusses the Kalachakra’s ambiguous role in Tibetan Buddhism’s cosmology. On one hand, it is seen to represent the very pinnacle of the Buddha’s teachings and “its eschatology – with its discussion of the role of Shambhala in a future Armageddon and revival of the *Dharma* - is widely accepted, and considered to make it especially important to the present ‘degenerate’ era”. Conversely, the ‘Kalachakra is universally conceded to be the most complex and recondite of all Buddhist teachings and it is studied in detail by few,’ with few masters who are expert in its transmission (traditionally given by the Panchen and Dalai Lamas). Jackson (1985, 40-41) concludes his discussion on the Kalachakra’s role in Tibetan Buddhism by saying:

However arcane the Kalachakra and other *tantric* systems may be, they nonetheless are an integral part of the organism that is Tibetan Buddhism, where the higher practices invariably are based on the lower, the lower invariably point toward the higher, and the beginning and end of the part are mutually influential. All Tibetan practices are supposed to arise out of the Mahayāna spirit …

The three-day Initiation has two stages: the Generation Stage which contains seven initiations, and the Completion Stage of four initiations. Preparation for the first stage involved consecrating the site and the construction of the Kalachakra mandala of coloured sand or powder. The mandala was constructed on the stage by four monks on the first and second days of the Teachings, and was completed by the end of the second day. The preparatory rites for the first stage also involved the bestowal of the *bodhisattva* and *tantric* vows on the first day of the Initiation; these vows were also re-sworn on the second day before the seven initiations empowering the initiate to practise the Generation Stage were transmitted. The official programme for the event defined an initiation as:
... a ritual during which a qualified master [here HHDL] empowers a qualified student to perform a particular practice of deity yoga within the four classes of *tantra*. The ritual of initiation involves symbolic entry into the celestial mansion (or mandala) of the deity, where one is empowered by the main deity and other deities to practise meditations. And these deities implant upon the mindstream the seeds of extraordinary attainments. ('The Dalai Lama in Australia 1996: The Kalachakra *Tantra*, 16).

Each initiation in the Generation Stage ‘involves the transformation of both external and internal substances [empowering] the disciple to attain certain spiritual goals, and each is analogous to a particular event in the development of child’ (Sopa 1985, 99). After the Completion Stage, the final ceremony is the dismantling of the sand mandala: ‘the sands from the mandala are swept to the centre of the mandala area, placed in an ornamented vase, and taken to a river or lake where the resident nagas are propitiated and the sand ceremoniously returned to its original source’ (Sopa 1985, 113). This occurred on the final day of the Kalachakra, with the sands being cast into the waters of Sydney Harbour by HHDL.

The Kalachakra was first given by HHDL in 1954; it has since been given twenty-four times (seven in the West) with the Sydney event being the first time it had been given in the Southern hemisphere (MacKenzie 1996, 7). It is not known when the Teachings became part of the overall event, but in 1981 when HHDL gave the Kalachakra in Madison, U.S.A., there was a three-day Teachings component wherein he spoke on the ‘recognition of the suffering nature of life, generation of an altruistic intention to become enlightened, and the view of the emptiness of inherent existence’ (Gyatso and Hopkins 1989, 39). The Official Programme for the 1996 event gives the reasons that it is now a public event, and why people should attend:
... because of past and future events, and in order to establish a strong karmic relationship with Kalachakra in people's minds, there is now a tradition of giving the initiation to large public gatherings. People may attend the initiation for two reasons: some wish to receive the Kalachakra transmission in order to practise it and others want to attend the ceremony in order to receive the blessing and to establish a karmic link with the Kalachakra lineage (‘The Dalai Lama in Australia 1996: The Kalachakra Tantra’, 15-16).

To these reasons must be added, given that half of those were estimated to be non-Buddhists, the motivation of curiosity, and to be in the presence of a charismatic, spiritual leader. The writer also notes from page 18 of the Official Programme that one should be wary in criticizing the event or His Holiness: ‘Those who attend the initiation merely as a blessing receive no specific commitment. They should however, be aware of the negative karma involved in criticizing the teacher or the practice’. For Tibetan Buddhists, attendance is seen as an act of devotion, with merit attaching to those who attend the event as well as to their family and associates. Sopa (1985, 91) says that ‘presence at a Kalachakra initiation, whose blessings may help one to be reborn in Shambhala in the future, is considered highly auspicious’. There were also many Buddhists from other countries and traditions (such as Vietnam, Japan, Taiwan and Korea) as well as an equally large number of non-Buddhists.

4.2.2 The Fourteen Dalai Lama
The first Dalai Lama was Sönam Gyatso who was conferred with the title by Altan Khan, chief of the Tumed Mongols. The title means an ‘Ocean of Wisdom’. Since that time, Dalai Lamas have been generally highly regarded for their wisdom and compassion, and the current HHDL is particularly seen as embodying these traits, his 1989 Nobel Peace Prize being awarded in testimony to his efforts in trying to achieve a reconciliation between his people and China. His Holiness the Dalai Lama is both head of State of the Government of Tibet in exile in India, and the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhists around the world. Whilst his visit to Australia was purely for spiritual reasons, the political motives and the Tibetan cause were never far from the surface. His meetings with prominent Australians during his visit incurred the wrath
of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, a spokesman commenting that ‘surely this will affect relations with China. It will inevitably have a harmful influence on bilateral economic and trade relations between the two countries’ (Creadon, 1996). While Australian government officials stressed that the somewhat controversial meeting between HHDL and the Australian Prime Minster on 26 September 1996 was ‘conducted purely in relation to the Dalai Lama’s capacity as a Buddhist spiritual leader’ (Skehan and Hutcheon, 1996), the exercise drew worldwide media attention to HHDL’s visit and the political oppression in his homeland. The writer suggests that the role of the media during HHDL’s Australian visit should not in any way be underestimated in explaining the large numbers of people who attended his official Australian events, estimated to be around fifty thousand in all (Martin 1996, 9). The unanswered question is whether or not people came to see HHDL mainly because of the media attention focused on his visit and/or to merely sate their curiosity, or did they come to meet their spiritual needs. Murray (1996) castigates many westerners for their romanticized views of Tibetan Buddhism, stating that HHDL ‘hardly has the privilege of claiming that Tibetan Buddhism is a form of enlightenment when its actual fruits were social oppression, fear and sorcery’. The Dalai Lama’s ecumenism is noted by Compson (1996), a view which is often ascribed to his ‘subordinating philosophy and doctrine to what he regards as the aims of these doctrines – the promotion of human well-being through the practice of love and compassion’. His Holiness is able to do this, not because he is a pluralist, but rather ‘by a strict adherence to the teachings of one particular religious tradition’ (Compson, 1996). In the course of the Kalachakra, HHDL’s ecumenism was clearly apparent.

4.3 KALACHAKRA INITIATION: SYDNEY 1996

4.3.1 Background to the event
In 1982 and 1992, HHDL visited Australia, and his program of events, as was the case with his 1996 visit, put together by a part-time committee of volunteers, The
Dalai Lama in Australia 1996 National Executive (‘the Organizing Committee’). His Australian visit was coordinated with his office in Dharamsala, and the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT). There were approximately two hundred administrative volunteers involved with the Australian events, with an estimated four hundred and fifty on-site volunteers at the various events, performing a variety of tasks, including ticket sales, ushers, security, cleaners and so on. The Kalachakra was clearly well organized, and more particularly, orchestrated and marketed, with HHDL’s visit being advertised well in advance in both Buddhist and non-Buddhist media outlets. A call-in telephone line was also available with mailouts, and once a mailing list was established, those on the list received three pre-visit Newsletters. These newsletters were very effective marketing tools, containing a plethora of information ranging from a simple exhortation to attend the Kalachakra ('This event is for you' - Newsletter No. 1) to an order form offering official visit merchandise. The mailing list was also used after the event in November 1996 to promote the Images ‘coffee table’ book, and later to solicit donations for Tibetan charities in Australia and overseas.

The visit by HHDL and twenty-five assistants from India, including fifteen monks from his Namgyal Monastery at Dharamsala, cost in the vicinity of $750,000. It was funded by a variety of ways, including the sale of seats at the Kalachakra, event merchandise and corporate sponsorship. On the second day of the Kalachakra, the Organising Committee announced, almost perhaps to its embarrassment, that it had achieved its financial target, with some $1.5 million being raised. The $750,000 surplus was dispersed at HHDL’s discretion in promoting Buddhist teachings around the world and working towards a free Tibet. The financial success of HHDL’s Australian visit was largely, it is suggested, due to the extremely effective marketing campaign and use of the media, along with accompanying commercial activities and corporate sponsorship.
4.3.2 The 1996 event

The site of the Kalachakra was the Hordern Pavilion at the former Sydney Showground site, one which was more commonly home to rock concerts, boxing tournaments and exhibitions. For the nine-day event it was transformed into a brightly coloured Tibetan *gompa* or temple, with a raised stage for HHDL, monks, other dignitaries and the Kalachakra sand mandala. Tickets for the entire Kalachakra were available through the Organizing Committee, costing $300.00 for the nine-day event. However, just prior to, and during the event, day tickets could be purchased through a commercial ticketing agency: ordained people from all religious traditions were offered a free place. People who paid to attend either the entire event or just the three-day Initiation were given a pale calico bag with a crimson Kalachakra emblem and wording ‘Kalachakra: The Wheel of Time. Sydney, Australia, 1996’ printed on the bag. The bag also contained other material, including an Official Programme and a book on the Kalachakra, *The Wheel of Time*. Each day approximately four thousand people attended the event (Martin 1996, 9), although on the two weekends at either end of the event it was clear by the numbers of people sitting and/or standing on the floor at the sides of the pavilion, that the numbers had swelled to around five thousand. The writer estimates (confirmed by discussions with the organizers and with other attendees) that the mix was almost 50/50 Buddhist:non-Buddhist, the distinction being made by noting those attendees who observed various Tibetan Buddhist religious rituals throughout the course of the event. The two particular rituals which made this distinction possible were recitation of parts of the Guru Paja, the long life prayer for HHDL, and the making of ritual gestures addressed to the Triple Jewel.

Over the first three days of the Kalachakra, a festival (*Festival of Tibet*) was organized into the event. This comprised various stalls, eateries (which stayed open for the nine days), information on Tibet and live performances in the forecourt outside the pavilion: these were held prior to, and at the conclusion of, the day’s main activities inside the pavilion. The event advertising literature promoted the festival as
‘Touch the heart of Tibet, Experience this unique Himalayan culture, TAKE WITH YOU a lasting memory’.

The three-day Teachings were given by HHDL in English, with occasional recourse to a translator, whereas the three-day Initiation was given by HHDL in Tibetan and translated into English. Over the three consecutive days of the Initiation (between three to four hours daily), there were many small ceremonies which, for example, required the initiate to wear and then remove a blindfold, sip water, choose two stems of Kushi grass, and tie a red protective ‘blessing cord’ around their left wrist. On day eight and after the Lifelong Initiation, the mandala was able to be viewed. People were able to walk on the stage, being given water and an offering of chocolate and biscuits as they left the pavilion.

**Methodology**

The Organizing Committee refused the writer’s request to survey attendees on the grounds that it was felt that such a survey would unnecessarily intrude across an individual’s private rights at such a religious event. It should be noted that Australia does not have a Bill of Rights or similar charter guaranteeing individual rights. The only such guarantee of individual freedom is contained in Section 116 of the Australian Constitution (*Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900*) which safeguards freedom of religious worship. Perhaps the organizers felt that to allow surveys at such an event would have infringed that individual freedom. However, on the writer’s behalf the Organizing Committee placed a complimentary advertisement in the special issue of *Mandala* magazine commemorating HHDL’s visit to Australia: seventy five thousand were published and distributed free to attendees who went to HHDL’s events in Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne. The advertisement sought responses as to why people had come to the event, however there were only three responses to the advertisement. Since the event, the writer has also spoken to a handful of people who also had attended the event. Their reasons for attending are incorporated as anecdotal comments. Therefore, as stated in the opening to this
Chapter, the research methodology is based on very limited qualitative data: the writer’s participant observation over the course of the nine-day event, three written responses to the advertisement in *Mandala* and anecdotal comments made to the writer post-event.

Based upon the three responses to the advertisement in the *Mandala* magazine, the writer has at least been able to confirm that for these people, at least, the motivation was primarily spiritual. These comments were made in the final reflective or ninth stage of the Pilgrimage Process Model as discussed earlier at 3.2.1. They included one who wrote of unusual events occurring during and/or after the event to themselves and friends that they connected to the higher spiritual energies directly attributable to attending the Kalachakra. Another wrote of returning home the next day to experience a state of bliss while going in and out of sleep, with an accompanying feeling of inner peace. Finally, one spoke of being in the presence of such great compassion quite motivating. There was nothing in the three responses to indicate that they saw their participation and attendance as a rite of passage. It appears that from very limited anecdotal evidence that some non-Tibetan Buddhists also had strong spiritual motives for attending the Kalachakra. Two non-Tibetan Buddhists said that they had come because they wanted to be in presence of someone who was highly spiritual. Another went not because of the ceremonial ritual involved, but solely to see the Dalai Lama and to hear his wisdom because they saw him as an inspirational leader who belonged to the world, not just as spiritual leader to Tibetan Buddhists.

**Results – qualitative elements**

Before discussing the qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage, some other aspects often associated with traditional pilgrimage should be noted. Firstly, there was the opportunity to acquire souvenirs. The distinctive calico bag with the Kalachakra mandala and visit merchandise also provided people with visual reminders of the event, as well as an opportunity for ego enhancement on the return home, particularly
to fellow Buddhists who were unable to attend. Since the event, the writer has seen people at other events carrying the bag and wearing the T-shirt. At the Kalachakra, one or two people were seen wearing the 1992 visit T-shirt, which gave the wearers instant credibility and status. Each of the three pre-event Newsletters published by the Organizing Committee had at the back an order form for official visit merchandise, which included visit T-shirts (no sponsor logos), audio tapes, books, ‘Mantra Mix’ album, posters and prayer flags.

Many writers, including Wehrfritz and Watson noted earlier, have commented on the fact that it is perceived to be socially fashionable to support the Tibetan cause, and for many this also extends to HHDL and Tibetan Buddhism. Were the fashion-conscious also prompted to attend the event, based on a comment made in the Australian Broadcasting Commission’s ‘Review’ television program (aired on 7 October 1996)? The programme previewed the making of the ‘Mantra Mix’ album (including interviews with HHDL and some of the artists), and at the end the segment’s presenter, Nell Schofield, concluded by saying that it was fashionable to support Tibetan Buddhism and the Tibetan cause because ‘people love fashion’. ‘Mantra Mix’ was a CD produced by the Organizing Committee to raise money for HHDL’s visit, which included performances by some of Australia’s leading musicians: by the time of the Kalachakra, almost all of the 10,000 copies produced had been sold.

The qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage are discussed below:

- On the first day of the event, HHDL spoke about the importance of the Kalachakra Initiation which echo earlier features of ancient and medieval pilgrimage: ‘the Kalachakra teaching was an authentic teaching based on all four schools of Tibetan Buddhism’. Despite the venue not being one that would be readily considered as a ‘sacred site’, pilgrims were assured that what they were to experience was authentic, namely a ritual traditionally transmitted only by the
Dalai Lama. By drawing specific attention to the authentic nature of the ritual event, it is possible that HHDL was making the point that the venue, although consecrated, was not important: what mattered was the coming together of people with strong spiritual motivation and positive purpose.

- A sense of the ludic - The three-day Festival of Tibet outside the Pavilion comprised outdoor seating and a small performance stage, flanked on two sides by a market stall tent and several take-away food stalls featuring a wide variety of food (mainly vegetarian). The performances and the colourful bunting provided an almost carnivalesque air. It served as a hub for sangha and laity to informally gather, meet and network, again consolidating the communitas element of the event (see below). Figure 4.1 shows people browsing in the market stall tent at the Festival of Tibet, and Figure 4.2 shows a group of attendees at one of the performances held over the weekend.

- As noted above, the Festival of Tibet provided an opportunity for the sangha to informally mix with the public as well as occasional informal ‘pan-Buddhist’ meetings observed between, for example, Vietnamese and Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns. People tended to be at ease, chatting with complete strangers while they sat outside in the sunshine eating their lunch and enjoying the performances. Communitas occurred because of the nature of the event and/or perhaps also because of the event’s location: Australia’s strongly egalitarian and multicultural society and Sydney, an international city noted for its liberal and relaxed lifestyle. Away from the Hordern pavilion, it was easy to recognize those who were possibly on a similar spiritual journey via either the calico bag (with its distinctive Kalachakra emblem) and/or those wearing official visit T-shirts. On several occasions, the writer struck up conversations with people that week because one or both were carrying the calico bag. The writer recalls images of people leaving the Hordern Pavilion at 4.30 p.m. on Wednesday, the first day of the Initiation, carrying long stems of kushi grass with red cords of thread tied around their left arm/wrist (visual reminders of vows taken that day), many of them making their way to the nearby bus stop to return to the city centre. On the
Figure 4.1: **Shoppers browsing at the Festival of Tibet, Kalachakra Initiation**
(taken by the writer on 22 September 1996)

Figure 4.2: **People listening to a performance outside the Kalachakra Initiation**
(taken by the writer on 22 September 1996)
bus, impervious to curious looks from city commuters, event attendees (easily recognizing each other by the items noted above) exchanged their experiences, together with other general chat including their touristic activities in and around Sydney.

The Festival of Tibet provided an opportunity for those at the event to engage in *commensality*. The food stalls and umbrella cafe-style tables provided an informal opportunity people from all walks of life to meet, Buddhist and non-Buddhist, laity and *sangha*, child and adult. Figure 4.3 shows the seating around the eateries area.

![Image of the Festival of Tibet scene](image_url)

**Figure 4.3:** *Commensality at the Kalachakra Initiation*

(taken by the writer on 22 September 1996)
As noted in Table 3.3, the Hallmarks of Pilgrimage of commensality, a sense of the ludic and qualitative *communitas*, needed to be found in tandem with the two key criteria: a spiritual quest made as ‘an act of faith’. The difficulty here is that approximately half who attended were estimated to be non-Buddhist, and thus it is impossible to clearly identify the other fifty per cent who met the two key criteria, and then link them to the aforementioned three hallmarks. If, under identical circumstances, one hundred per cent of the attendees had been Buddhist or Tibetan Buddhist, then it is extremely likely that these three hallmarks may have met the test. Based on very limited qualitative data, the writer cannot definitively comment on the degree of significance or otherwise of these Hallmarks of Pilgrimage, merely commenting on what was personally observed over the course of the event.

- Tibetan Buddhism incorporates a strong tradition of ritual. Early on the teachings, HHDL noted the importance of this ritual in making the event authentic, ritual that had been handed down over the centuries.
- The Hordern Pavilion was consecrated by HHDL and his monks prior to 21 September, thus creating an instantaneous sacred site as a focus for a spiritual event.
- As noted earlier, for Tibetan Buddhists attending the Kalachakra was a particularly meritorious event, and thus the motivation for their attendance could clearly be seen as ‘an act of faith’.
- It is not known whether or not the *sangha* at the Hordern pavilion also experienced Brown’s angst at the intrusion of spiritual tourists into the serenity of the Kalachakra, but in the absence of material to the contrary, it is assumed that this was not a contested site.
- At the back of the stage and beneath the large wall hanging of Kalachakra there were many different *votive offerings*, including biscuits, fruit and chocolate.
4.4 CONCLUSION

The visit of the Fourteen Dalai Lama to Australia in September 1996, and his transmission of the Kalachakra at Sydney from 21-29 September, was of significant importance to Buddhists, particularly Tibetan Buddhists, in Australia and nearby countries. However many who attended the event were not Buddhists and their reasons for attending, their reflections upon the event and impact, if any, on their day-to-day lives will largely go undocumented. For Tibetan Buddhists, the reason for their pilgrimage was clearly one of attracting merit, ‘an act of faith’ and most importantly, being able to see and hear their spiritual leader at close hand. For non-Tibetan Buddhists, their reasons may have been many and varied, ranging from sheer curiosity, adherence to fashion and strong spiritual motivations as limited anecdotal evidence suggests.

Based solely on very limited qualitative research, the Kalachakra, particularly the three-day Initiation, six of the qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage were evident. The Festival of Tibet provided a ludic setting for the event, and made communitas and commensality possible, but with the caveat noted earlier. A simple calico bag facilitated the sharing of pilgrimage and touristic experiences away from the site, as did the carrying away of ritual objects such as kushi grass and red cord. The Kalachakra was a religious pilgrimage event that was open to Buddhists and non-Buddhist alike, and even though the latter were not there as ‘an act of faith’, they were able to share in what was perhaps to them a modern secular pilgrimage event but resplendent with all the trappings expected of traditional religious pilgrimage.
CHAPTER 5

DRUID GORSEDD
UFFINGTON WHITE HORSE, ENGLAND.

In the pre-dawn light of Saturday, June 21 1997, pagans gathered outside the four mile exclusion zone ready for their assault on Stonehenge in south-western England. By the time the sun had risen that summer solstice morning, six men had been arrested as they tried to break through the police cordon around the monument (‘Solstice arrests’, 1997). When the writer visited the site some three hours later while enroute to Uffington White Horse, there was still a police presence and tourists were already starting to trickle into the site. A handful of protestors were using the wire security fence as a trampoline to demonstrate their annoyance about being denied access to what they claimed was rightfully theirs. On summer solstice dawn, the role of Stonehenge as both an astronomical observatory and religious Temple to the Sun is graphically demonstrated (Hoyle 1977, 19). According to Green (1997, 172) Stonehenge was used from the late nineteenth century by contemporary Druids for ceremonial occasions, notably at summer and winter solstices. Both Green and Hoyle note that Stonehenge, as with many other similar sites in Britain, has been erroneously linked with historical Druids and claimed as Druid sites. The Druidic-Stonehenge connection was promoted by John Aubrey in the late seventeenth century, who argued that ‘since Stonehenge and Avebury were not Roman, they must be pre-Roman, and because they were clearly temples, they must therefore be Druidic’ (Green 1997, 141). Aubrey’s ideas were later perpetuated in the eighteenth century as will be noted further in this discussion.

It was against these events on the morning of the 21st of June that the writer journeyed to the Druid Gorsedd at Uffington White Horse in Oxfordshire (see location map at...
Figure 1.2). This Chapter opens with a discussion of the history of Druidism, followed by looking at the history of Uffington White Horse. The ceremony is then briefly described, and the results of the quantitative and qualitative data discussed, and further, whether all and/or some of the Hallmarks of Pilgrimage highlighted in Table 3.3 were present at this event. This case study, as do the Stargate Alignments in Chapter 6, is important in demonstrating elements supposedly lacking in traditional religious pilgrimage: Turnerian *communitas* and a sense of the ludic. Magico-religious ritual, as perhaps to be expected, played an important role in establishing the authenticity of the ceremony.

5.1 HISTORY OF DRUIDISM

Contemporary Druidry is part of the Neo-Pagan or New Pagan movement, a term which is used to denote the awakening interest in paganism that occurred in America and Europe in the nineteenth century. Harvey (1997, viii) describes paganism as a religion, its adherents being ‘people who consider the world to be alive; they are listening to a speaking earth’. According to Miranda Green, modern paganism espouses three central principles:

- ‘love for and kinship with Nature
- the pagan ethic: do what thou wilt but harm none, and
- acceptance of the polarity of deity (that is, the equality and balance between male and female divinity)” (Green 1997, 160).

Besides Druidry, other movements also considered to be part of the Neo-Pagan movement are Wicca, Shamanism and Odinism (Green 1997, 160). Both Green (1997) and Hume (1998), as well as Harvey (1997, all consider paganism a religion, qualifiers for the first two writers being ‘contemporary’ (Green 1997, 159) and ‘new religious movement’ (Hume 1998, 311). Today it is impossible to estimate those who...
would, if pressed, call themselves Neo-pagan. Based upon her London fieldwork in the early 1980s, Luhrmann (1993, 221) says that there were several thousand actively engaged in Neo-paganist groups, however she estimates that outside those groups ‘there are probably at least three times as many people who think of themselves at Neo-pagan’. In 1993, Lynne Hume estimated that there were five thousand practicing pagans in Australia (Cribb, 1993). A recent article by Whiting (1998, 8) suggests that today these figures are much higher because, in Queensland alone, it is estimated that there are five thousand Wiccans.

There is debate on the derivation of the word *druid* (Green 1997, 9). The popularist meaning is derived from the Greek word ‘*dru*’ (oak tree) which was sacred to both the Celts and Druids, whereas many linguistic scholars have suggested that it means ‘wisdom’. Druidism can be traced back to early references to the Celts in the sixth century B.C.E., with the ‘presence of Celtic tribes on the North Sea, in France and in south west Spain’ (Tierney 1960, 193). Literary references to the Druids date from the Graeco-Roman world of the first century B.C.E., much of it based on the writings of the Greek philosopher-historian, Posidonius, who lived in Syria. The three later Greek authors, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo and Athenaeus, as well as Julius Caesar, all draw and/or expand upon the earlier work by Posidonius. The Druids as a group are variously referred to as a ‘Celtic priestly caste, political leaders entrusted with memorizing lengthy genealogies’ (Harvey 1997, 17); acting as the ‘prescribed intermediary between God and man’ (Rolleston 1995, 42), or as ‘cruel religious Celtic fanatics, striking down hapless victims of human sacrifice by stabbing and burning ... [or as being] somehow mixed up with the secret forest grove, mistletoe, magic and spells’ (Green 1997, 7).

The idea of the Druid as philosopher is challenged by Tierney (1960) who sees any religious or philosophical doctrinal knowledge attributed to the Druids as derived from the Greeks, namely the Stoics and Pythagorus. Chadwick (1966, 55), while making the point that the Druids have no ownership claims over any coherent system
of thought, is cognizant of the fact that their role as philosophers is reinforced by the Alexandrian tradition of scholars who were writing from the first century C.E. onwards. Rather than describing the Druids rather unfavourably as the Posidonian tradition had done, the Alexandrians were rather more sympathetic in their description of the Druids based upon their travels to Gaul. They were focused on ‘the lofty ideals and investigation of the Druids’ rather than the Posidonian tradition who were ‘more concerned with discreditable practices, such as human sacrifice’ (Chadwick 1966, 59). It is outside the scope of this study to enter further into this debate, nevertheless it is generally accepted that they formed the learned class within Celtic society, being divided into three sub-classes having different but sometimes inter-related functions and responsibilities: Druids (priestly politicians), Seers or Ovates, and Bards (poets).

Persecuted under the Roman Empire, literary references to Druids in Gaul and Britain ceased by the fifth century C.E. and were replaced by a new written tradition from Ireland which remained in vogue from the seventh to the seventeenth century. During the Renaissance, however, there was a renewal of interest in the Druids by sixteenth century antiquarians (Green 1997, 140). The period of antiquarian interest in the Druids between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries portrayed the Druids in terms of romantic idealism: ‘simple but noble mystics’ (Green 1997, 146). The modern resurrection of Druidry in Britain dates from a meeting held at Appletree Tavern, Covent Garden (London) in 1717. The meeting was convened by John Toland and ‘attended by delegates from Druidic and Bardic circles from all over Britain, Ireland and Brittany’. It was also at this meeting that the ‘Mother Grove’ was founded, and later that year at the autumn equinox ceremony at Primrose Hill (London), Toland was elected as Chief Druid (Green 1997, 147). In 1781, Henry Hurle established a secret society in London linked to the 1717 group which was founded on tenets very similar to Freemasonry: the Ancient Order of Druids (AOD). To this day, the AOD ‘continues as a charitable peaceable fraternity which does not involve itself - as a group - in religion or politics’ (Harvey 1997, 18). At the
beginning of the nineteenth century, AOD was ‘arcane, exclusive and masculine’ (Green 1997, 147), yet some AOD lodges had started to admit the lower classes in the early decades of that century, a move which did not sit well with many of its conservative brothers. In 1833, some of the poorer members broke away from AOD and formed a Benefit Society called ‘The United Ancient Order of Druids’. ‘The Church of the Universal Bond’ (a remnant of Hurle’s AOD) survived until 1964 when it split into two upon the death of the old Chief, MacGregor-Reid: AOD and OBOD (Order of Bards Ovates and Druids). AOD (usually referred to as The Druid Order) continued on under the leadership of Thomas Maughan (OBOD, 1997). Hutton (1992, 142) notes that ‘the attraction of a home-grown system of very old wisdom ... still holds a considerable attraction for many people in the British Isles today’; the keyword in promoting this view since the nineteenth century has been the word ‘Celtic’.

The Order of Bards Ovates and Druids was led by Ross Nicholls who reintroduced the four older Celtic seasonal ritual events to the four solar ritual events to reinstate The Wheel of the Year, one of the central tenets of contemporary paganism. This ritual calendar is based on ‘the solar cycle, the annual seasonal and agricultural cycles’ (Hume 1997, 121). In 1979, Philip Shallcrass established The British Druid Order (BDO) which emphasizes native (endemic to the British Isles) spirituality as a way of connecting to the divine in nature. Drawing on universal Druid practices and ritual, the focus here is on working with the spiritual energy known as Awen, which is:

... the exquisite flow of divine energy that pours into us when we touch our source of inspiration, be that a deity, a spirit of place, a lower, or something more abstract like the wonder at the beauty of nature (pers. comm., Emma Restall Orr).

It is the inspiration that is most closely linked to the Bardic grade within Druidry. It finds expression through the poems, songs and stories, flowing ‘not only into the Bard but through the Bard around the circle and outwards, changing the world which
witnesses the story or the song’ (Harvey 1997, 21-22). As an over-riding goal, BDO seeks to ‘practice Druidry as a living faith’ (BDO 1997, 16). BDO is currently guided by two joint Chiefs, Philip Shallcrass and Emma Restall Orr, who were both present at the Uffington White Horse summer solstice ceremony. BDO, OBOD and AOD all belong to The Druid Forum, an informal organization of Druids established at Avebury in 1996. In 1998 the collective membership of these three Orders was around eight thousand people (pers. comm., Emma Restall Orr).

At the Autumn Equinox festival in 1993, the BDO inaugurated an open Gorsedd at Avebury, appropriately called The Gorsedd of Bards of Caer Abiri1. Since that Gorsedd, forty people grew to number over three hundred (BDO 1997). The summer solstice gathering at Uffington White Horse on 21 June 1997 was to inaugurate a new Gorsedd, The Gorsedd of Bards of Caer Rhiannon2. Today, summer solstice celebrations have tended to replace Midsummer’s Day (24 June or St. John’s Day) as a ceremony that is ‘open, celebratory, warm, outgoing ... celebrating the life-giving sun’ (Harvey 1997, 11). Midsummer’s Day has been celebrated in Europe for almost two millennia by the lighting of festive fires (Hutton 1996, 312.).

5.2 UFFINGTON WHITE HORSE

The Uffington White Horse overlooks the Vale of Pewsey near Wantage, Oxfordshire (see Figure 5.1 for entrance to the site, the white chalk outlines of the White Horse being visible in the distance). The site was donated to the National Trust in 1979 who upgraded it, removing rusting barbed wire fencing, with ‘the surrounding ploughland put to pasture, scars in the chalk [being] infilled and a new car park established in a

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1 ‘Gorsedd’ is a Welsh word for assembly place, traditionally associated with enthronement and usually symbolizes a Druid assembly (Green 1997, 17). ‘Caer’ means ‘circular earthwork’ and ‘Abiri’ is an old form of ‘Avebury’.
2 ‘Rhiannon’ is the ancient Mare Goddess who rides between the worlds, the British Goddess of Love and a Queen of Faerie. Her festival is Beltane which is usually celebrated at the end of April (Jones 1991, 41-49).
Figure 5.1: **Entrance to Wayland’s Smithy and the Uffington White Horse**
(taken by the writer on 21 June 1997)
disused quarry’ (Newman 1997, 10). He says that approximately two hundred thousand people visit the site each year, and at the time of the writer’s visit, there was no admission fee into the site. The horse resembles images of horses found on pre-Roman British coins (Molyneaux 1995, 109), and is described by Newman below:

The eerie shape of the creature, blending dragon, bird and rodent, has suggested to some a dream horse, or spirit horse, for it embodies principles of form and line without making concessions to any living creature—say, a stallion or cart-horse. It is as much about elusive reverie and fleeting impression as it is about a horse. The effect is unlikely to have been achieved by happy accident or collective effort. The man or women who drew it was a genuine artist (Newman 1998, 27).

The horse is 110 metres long and 40 metres tall, and is carved on the side of a chalk hillside near the Ridgeway, ‘the oldest trackway in Britain dating to the Mesolithic period’ (BDO 1997, 14). Jones (1991, 44) says that the White Horse, like the Nazca landscapes in Peru, can only be seen in its entirety from above, namely ‘by beings from the sky’. Sykes (1993, 13) suggests that this was perhaps the tribal symbol of the Atrebates. Authors writing before 1996 have attributed the carving to the Celts, noting that horses for the Celts played a powerful, protective role in their cosmology. As well, there are many legends surrounding the White Horse, including that the horse is the dragon that was slain by St. George.

Optical Stimulated Luminescence or silt dating was carried out in 1996, furnishing dates between 1400 - 600 B.C.E. which makes the site of Early Iron Age or Late Bronze Age origin (Newman 1997, 32). Historians generally place the site in the Late Bronze Age, a time when there was large scale resettlement and when the ‘emergent sense of the individual value may have created new networks and undermined the authority of the warrior-priest hierarchy’ (Newman 1998, 26). He suggests that:
It is possible to view hill-figures as emblematic of a more positive approach following the breakdown of the old order. Unenclosed, open to the light, they aspire to high places and possess a fertility function. Like any large monument, they draw attention to their prominence. They demand to be regularly weeded and cleansed, unlike an ancestral tomb which will persist long after those who built it have passed on (Newman 1998, 27).

The Ridgeway runs from Avebury to the Thames Valley and links hillforts, burial grounds and temple sites. Some say that it follows a ley line while others suggest that it is on a dragon line. The distinction between the two is that ley lines are straight whereas the latter winds and curves (pers. comm., Emma Restall Orr). Earth energies and ley lines were noted earlier at 3.1.3, and Emma Restall Orr describes ‘the energy [as being] extraordinarily potent, seething beneath the feet as you walk, writhing up the legs and the spine.’ A few kilometres along the Ridgeway from the White Horse is Wayland’s Smithy, a long barrow dating from 2850 B.C.E. which was dedicated to the Goddess of Regeneration (Jones 1991, 26). Named after the legendary Norse Smith Volund, the barrow might be, as Jones (1991, 26) suggests, more appropriately dedicated to Brigid, Goddess of the Hearth-fire and Smiths.

To consolidate the legend of St. George and the dragon, lying directly below the carving is a small flat topped hill called Dragon Hill, where the blood of the dragon was allegedly said to have spilled and where no grass grows on the patch of exposed chalk on the top of the hillock (see Figure 5.2 for a view of Dragon Hill, the Gorsedd being held to the right of the figures in the mid-ground of the photograph).
Figure 5.2:  **Dragon Hill at the Uffington White Horse**
(taken by the writer on 21 June 1997)

The Gorsedd was held on Dragon Hill, not on the summit as originally planned but slightly downslope on the leeward side because that location offered some respite from the strong, cold winds. The selection of the Uffington White Horse for a summer solstice ceremony has links with annual events held some two centuries ago when it appears that the ritual of scouring or cleaning the horse was followed by various manly games and celebrations on the hill around Midsummers Day (Newman 1997, 28).
5.3 DRUID GORSEDD: 1997

The Gorsedd of Bards of Caer Rhiannon was held over a two hour period from noon on summer solstice, Saturday 21 June 1997; prior to that date, the event was described to the writer by Emma Restall Orr:

The ceremony is a series of rites of passage, starting with honouring of the spirits of place, followed by handfastings, blessings for children, initiation into the Gorsedd, honouring of the dead and offerings to the gods according to the season of the year ... It ends with an eisteddfod ...

A copy of the program is enclosed as Appendix B which describes the sequence of events in the ceremony itself. The two Spirit of Place Groups met (see page two of the program) and formed a circle for the Gorsedd Rite. Hume (1997, 114) describes this as ‘casting the circle’ and here, as with Stargate at Chapter 6, ritual was used to create sacred space within the circle. Ritual served ‘to connect the members of the circle to the universal consciousness via the subconscious mind, and if a ritual is performed correctly the circle contains magical power’ (Hume 1997, 115). Hume here is discussing the use of the circle within Wiccan ceremonies, but the creation of a circle as sacred space as a delimitation of the sacred-profane continuum is common to many pagan and ‘New Age’ groups. ‘Opening and Circle’ and ‘Calling the quarters’ ritual employed at the Gorsedd are similar to those used in Wiccan ceremonies in ‘casting the circle’. The Gorsedd also included a handfasting ceremony or pagan wedding, the couple already having been previously legally married (see Figure 5.3). Harvey (1997) describes this as a rite of passage, as did Van Gennep when referring to marriage. He says that because the summer solstice is a time of vitality and fertility, it is an appropriate time for such occasions, with the couple often acting out the role of the Sun God and Earth Goddess. The ceremony is so-called because the central symbol of the ceremony is the joining of the couple’s hands (Harvey 1997, 201-202). Towards the end of the Gorsedd (see page 12 of the program) there were votive offerings in the form of bread and mead (see Figure 5.4). The bread was blessed in the name of Rhiannon, and the mead blessed to ‘Pwyll,
Figure 5.3: **Handfasting at the Druid Gorsedd**
(taken by the writer on 21 June 1997)
Figure 5.4: Votive offerings at the Druid Gorsedd
(taken by the writer on 21 June 1997)
Head of Annwn, Lord of the Underworld and ruler of this sacred Earth by virtue of his love for Rhiannon, the Great Goddess’. The similarity of this rite to a Christian communion was not lost on the writer: both seek to transmute the mundane into the sacred by the use of blessings and symbolic imagery, and enable the believer to publicly reaffirm and experience their cosmology.

Methodology
Permission to survey using a self-complete survey was obtained before departure from Australia (see survey attached as Appendix C). As well, the writer has corresponded by e-mail with Emma Restall Orr on several occasions, both pre and post visit, to clarify various matters. The group met in the car park around noon on a cold, windy and inclement day, and the Gorsedd was concluded by mid-afternoon. A Channel Four television crew filmed the ceremony as part of a documentary on paganism which was shown in the United Kingdom in September 1998. Including the writer, thirty people attended the ceremony: two declined to take part in the survey. There were three facilitators who the writer declined to survey on the basis that their participation could skew the results because of the small sample size. Nevertheless, it is suggested that the survey data based on twenty-four responses could be said to be representative of Druid events and thus while not referable to the population as a whole, could be applied as representational of other Druid events in England. Whether or not these survey results would be applicable to Druid events held in other countries is open to question.
Results – quantifiable elements

Table 5.1:  Demographic profile of participants

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>45.8</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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The gender mix was almost equal according to the survey data. If one takes into account the fact that four of the five people not surveyed were female, this gives a ratio of 14 male:15 female. The Baby Boomer group was strongly represented in the survey data, with between 21-55% being Baby Boomers. This result offers some support for the view that this cohort is turning to the quest for spirituality as suggested earlier at 3.3.3 by Digance and Muller (1998). Sixty-two percent had received some form of post-secondary education, almost half of that number having been to university. As will be noted in the subsequent case studies, this is not in itself unusual given that OECD (of which the United Kingdom and Australia are member countries) populations have increasingly become better educated.
Table 5.2:  Trip characteristics and previous attendance

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<td>29.2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>With friends only</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With family only</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed family/friends</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging in tourist activities (n=24)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited site only</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited historic sites as well</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating out as well as site</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi tourist activities</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended other Druid ceremonies (n=24)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-timers</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended other Druid ceremonies</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were they a practicing Druid? (n=24)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>70.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

'Word of mouth' (45%) was the most common source of information about the Gorsedd ceremony, with 'Other' (29%) including a variety of sources including e-mail, attending an earlier Gorsedd and an inquiry made to the BDO. The ceremony was one to be enjoyed in the company of friends and/or family, with three people coming to the ceremony alone. Interestingly, 29% visited the site only before going home after the event, although it is possible that the 33% who responded in the 'visited historic sites as well' category failed to distinguish the 'as well' in the question. This group correctly saw Uffington White Horse as a historic site, but may have failed to make the necessary distinction. If that is the case, then perhaps up to 62% of those who went to the Gorsedd engaged in no other touristic activities. There
appears to be no linkage between engaging in tourist activities and the distance the participants lived from the event site. Those who had made a two to three hour drive were just as likely to engage in touristic activities as return home directly after the event. One-third of those attending the Gorsedd were attending their first Druid ceremony and within this group of eight, five had attended to satisfy their curiosity; two ranked ‘Curiosity’ low and one was unsure.

Table 5.3: **Main reasons for attending the Gorsedd**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>StdDev</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>..for spiritual awareness</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>..to get involved and participate</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>..because I enjoy Druid ceremonies</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>..because it is stimulating &amp; exciting</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>..be with people who enjoy the same things</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>..experience an authentic Druid ceremony</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>..to meet people with similar interests</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>..to learn new things</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>..to learn more about myself</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>..to experience new things</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>..to learn about issues important to me</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>..because I enjoy special events</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>..because this event is unique</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>..because it sounded like fun</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>..central to my beliefs as a practicing Druid</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>..so I could be with my friends</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>..for the variety of things to see and do</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>..to be with my partner or family</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>..get away from the normal demands of life</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>..for a change of pace</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>..so I could develop my skills</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>..to have a change from my daily routine</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>..for the whole family to enjoy</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>..so the family could do something together</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>..to be entertained</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>..to satisfy my curiosity</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>..to do something completely different</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>..no particular reason - just passing</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above questions are largely identical to those used in the following Chapter, the reasons for any discrepancies discussed earlier in sub-section 3.4.2. Referring back to Table 3.2 (Event Participant Motivation), the results of Table 5.3 can be put into seven categories as below in Table 5.4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-group</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social stimulation</td>
<td>2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 12, 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>8, 9, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity and entertainment</td>
<td>10, 14, 17, 25, 26, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escape</td>
<td>19, 20, 21, 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinship</td>
<td>16, 18, 23, 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual quest</td>
<td>1, 5, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst the ‘Spiritual Quest’ motivation question was ranked first in the survey results, in examining the category clustering, Social Stimulation was the main reason that people had attended the Gorsedd. To two of the motivational questions the writer had added the word ‘Druid’ so as to personalize the event questionnaire: the third ranked question relating to their enjoyment of ‘Druid ceremonies’ and the sixth ranked question, ‘an authentic Druid ceremony’. It is conjecture whether or not inclusion of the word ‘Druid’ prompted people to rank the reason they came higher than they would have had the word ‘Druid’ not been used. Nevertheless, it is important to note that people came because they wanted ‘to get involved and participate’, a behavioural trait that is often identified with the ‘New Age’ movement (see 3.3.1) The fact that most enjoyed the ceremonies and found them to be stimulating and exciting, is perhaps a reason that the Gorsedd of Bards of Caer Abiri experienced a rapid growth in numbers as noted earlier. The fact that the ceremony was authentic was also important, being ranked sixth, but ‘uniqueness’ only ranked thirteenth. Because there are another seven ceremonies celebrated in The Wheel of the Year, perhaps uniqueness is not that important. It is understood that the content and form of the...
eight ceremonies is fairly uniform, varying slightly depending on the site specific god and goddess, the time of the year and whether or not special ceremonies, such as handfastings, are included.

The primary motivation for those coming to the Gorsedd was ‘spiritual awareness’, part of the Spiritual Quest category which was ranked second overall. When combined with the second ranked motivation ‘to get involved and participate’, this indicated that nearly all of those surveyed displayed a sense of ownership about their spiritual quest. They did not merely want to sit back and passively have their ‘spiritual placebo’ spooned out, but rather chose to actively engage their cosmology in their search for the ultimate mystical experience. Communitas, or being with like-minded people, ranked fifth, and perhaps this is also not surprising given that whilst paganism is growing in popularity, their activities fall outside the parameters of mainstream society. The opportunity of being able to interact with other pagans at important ritual ceremonies in a non-threatening atmosphere, such as this Gorsedd, could prompt many to attend. The fact that those surveyed generally did not see attending as ‘an act of faith’ important (ranked fifteenth) is interesting, and perhaps may be explained in that these people chose to practice their cosmology in line with BDO’s over-riding goal noted earlier, namely ‘practicing Druidry as a living faith’. To ‘live’ their cosmology on a day-to-day basis is perhaps the most important element within their belief system, and attending events such as this Gorsedd, while considered important, are no more than opportunities for social networking and catching up with old friends and acquaintances.

It should be noted here the possible confounding effect on the data obtained due to the inclusion of a handfasting (or pagan wedding) ceremony in the program. Some of the attendees may have been non-Druid friends of the couple and attended the event as they would have as any other wedding or similar social occasion. In favour of this view is the fact that being there as a practicing Druid ranked only fifteenth, and also there were many first-timers. However, the spiritual quest motivation was ranked
first which perhaps does not support this proposition. Further research at similar events where there is no handfasting ceremony may be one way to test any possible confounding effect.

There was also a question on the survey asking if people were practicing Druid’s. Seven people, or 30%, responded affirmatively to this question. Two-thirds (or sixteen participants) had been to other Druid events and they responded varyingly to the motivational question ‘an act of faith’. Six of the sixteen responses were placed into the ‘Disagree’ category, while nine were in the ‘Agree’ category, there being one missing value: seven of the nine ‘Strongly Agreeing’ with the proposition that they were there because attendance was central to their belief system as a practicing Druid. Six of the seven people surveyed who had indicated that they were a practicing Druid said that they strongly agreed that they had come to the ceremony as ‘an act of faith’.

The third ranked motivational grouping was Learning, which had rankings of eighth (‘to learn new things’), ninth (‘to learn more about myself’) and eleventh (‘to learn about issues important to me’). Such a result is consistent with similar trends noted earlier. Both the ‘New Age’ movement (see 3.3.1) and Poon’s ‘New Tourist’ (see 3.4.1) emphasized the importance of learning as a motivation. The tenth ranked motivation ‘to experience new things’, although grouped in the following category of Curiosity and Entertainment, has a learning component as well as one of curiosity. Based on this data, the average attendee came because they were on a spiritual quest, but looked to certain aspects within the Social Stimulation and Learning categories to help them in that quest. Some were novices but others not, yet the learning element still ranked significantly high so as to indicate that their spiritual path necessitated continuous or lifelong learning. Curiosity and Entertainment was ranked fourth as a sub-group in Table 5.4. The first motivation was ‘to experience new things’ (tenth). Noting that this was the inaugural Caer Rhiannon Gorsedd perhaps it could be expected that it would have ranked higher, but again only one-third were first-timers.
To be there ‘because it sounded like fun’ ranked fourteenth, one ahead of ‘an act of faith’ and coming for ‘variety’ ranked seventeenth.

**Kinship** ranked fifth, an interesting result because 77.5% came with either family/friends and/or partner. However, considering the importance of the spiritual quest, social stimulation and learning as the main reasons for attending the Gorsedd, perhaps this result is not that unusual. Those surveyed had merely placed a stronger emphasis on these aspects, and as noted earlier, this is reinforced by the fact that up to two-thirds of those surveyed had come just for the ceremony itself without engaging in any other touristic activities. Engaging in other touristic activities either before or after the event would be consistent with those who saw the ceremony as an outing, with the opportunity for other kinship enhancement activities. **Escape** as a category did not rank highly with those surveyed, the four motivational questions in this category clustered from 19 to 22 in the results. The final category of **Miscellaneous**, which comprised only one question, was ranked last: those attending knew about the ceremony well in advance and came with a distinct purpose in mind.

Two other questions that were included on the survey instrument were occupation and residential status. Approximately 42% fell within the professional/managerial category, with trades people the next largest category. All those attending were from England, the writer dividing the groups into counties as well as London. Ten people or 41% of those surveyed came from London, Essex or Kent, a two to three hour drive from the site. Perhaps this reflects areas where Druidry is strongest, namely concentrated urban settlement rather than in comparatively rural environments. The survey forms also contained a section at the end asking people for any thoughts or comments they might wish to share. Two responses were given, and only one is noted, namely ‘This is my first Druid ceremony. Enjoyed it today’.

In summarizing the quantitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage, the primary motive for most at the Gorsedd was that they were there on a spiritual quest as befitting modern
secular pilgrims. As discussed earlier, at first glance those surveyed may not have appeared to have been there as ‘an act of faith’ but on closer analysis, it appears that this was indeed the case. This was particularly so if they had disclosed the fact that they were a practising Druid. To be with like-minded people, or *communitas*, was also important in making this, based solely on quantitative data alone, a modern secular pilgrimage event.

**Results – qualitative elements**

The qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage as summarized in Table 3.3 are discussed below in point form:

- The sharing of mead and bread, and the eisteddfod at the conclusion of the ceremony, provided a sense of the ludic at the Gorsedd. This was despite the unfavourable weather conditions and the ubiquitous presence of the television crew demanding ‘a performance’.

- There were elements of *communitas* or an egalitarianism to the ceremony, but again all things were not equal in terms of knowledge or attire. Two-thirds had been to previous Druid events and one-quarter were practicing Druids, thus the knowledge base or involvement in paganism was not shared equally amongst the group. Four of those attending, including three of the facilitators whom the writer declined to survey, had creatively dressed for the occasion (see some of the different attire worn by the participants in Figures 5.3 and 5.4) which certainly added ambience and an element of authenticity.

- There were two elements of *commensality*. The first was in the communal sharing of mead and bread as described earlier which was part of the ceremonial ritual. The second occurred informally in the car park after the ceremony when two groups of people where observed sitting down to a late lunch and no doubt sharing their experiences. Perhaps others too did this away from the site on the return homeward journey.
Based on the caveat noted with respect to these three Hallmarks of Pilgrimage at Table 3.3, the quantitative data indicates that it was a spiritual quest for most of those who attended the Gorsedd. A lesser number saw their involvement as ‘an act of faith’, but the majority of those who were practicing Druids came as ‘an act of faith’. Overall, it would appear that at this Druid Gorsedd at least, the above three indicators would, in all probability, represent Hallmarks of Pilgrimage for modern secular pilgrims.

- The ceremony was, as to be expected, redolent with ritual. The program enclosed at Appendix B provides an indication of the content and form of ritual involved, and this was extremely important in a ceremony such as this in assuring participants that what they were experiencing was authentic.

- The site was consecrated very early in the course of the Gorsedd with the ‘Calling the Quarters’ (see pages 4–6 of the program). As well, in ‘Casting the Circle’, sacred space was created until the circle was formally closed at the conclusion of the eisteddfod (see page 13 of the program). The location of the site adjacent to the Dragon Line running beneath the Ridgeway may have also served a similar function.

- Because the group had chosen to meet near the base of Dragon Hill and away from the main paths in and around the White Horse, the potentiality for issues relating to contested sites appears to have been averted. No-one came near the group whilst the ceremony was in progress, despite the presence of a television crew which often automatically tends to draw curious onlookers. However, had the ceremony been held in a different location, perhaps the result would have been different. Again, the weather also may have been a factor. Only a few people were seen walking around the cutting of the White Horse above the site, and there were very few cars in the car park.

- Votive offerings were present in the form of the bread and mead as noted earlier, and as well some people brought flowers which were placed in the middle of the
circle as gifts to the Guardians just prior to the Handfasting ceremony (see page 3 of the program).

- Whilst the writer had never previously attended any Druid ceremonies, the inclusion of evergreen pagan ritual gave the Gorsedd an air of authenticity. Authenticity was also ranked sixth in Table 5.3.

5.4 CONCLUSION

Based on the high response to the survey, and the qualitative and quantitative data obtained, The Gorsedd of Bards of Caer Rhiannon held at the Uffington White Horse could be seen as being representational of other Druid gatherings held in England. Whether or not the results could be applied to similar gatherings elsewhere, including Australia, is open to debate and is an area of possible future research. With the exception of being a contested site, all of the qualitative and quantitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage were found at the ceremony, and thus the writer would conclude that this case study indicated that the Gorsedd was indeed a site of modern secular pilgrimage. The spiritual quest was the primary motivation, but social stimulation and learning were important. Six of the seven participants who had described themselves as practicing Druids, having been to previous Druid events, saw their attendance as being ‘an act of faith’. For those who did not register the fact that they were a practicing Druid, the event was nevertheless important in fulfilling their spiritual quest, but they generally did not see it as linking to their cosmology.

Macigo-religious ritual played a pivotal and guiding role in the celebratory ceremony. It also helped reinforce the feeling that by participating, individuals were part of an authentic tradition perhaps going back hundreds, if not thousands, of years. Because it marked the inauguration of a new Druid Grove, one would expect to see the converted and faithful followers: one-third of participants who were experiencing their first Druid event, although the inclusion of a handfasting ceremony could have
also explained this result. The presence of a television crew filming a documentary evinces the current, popular interest in paganism and alternative modalities.

As prefaced in the introduction, this event displayed two elements often lacking in traditional religious pilgrimage: Turnerian *communitas*, both as an observable egalitarian *communitas* and the desire to be with like-minded people. The Gorsedd also had a somewhat ludic air in keeping with its summer solstice date, which is generally a time of celebration in the pagan Wheel of the Year. Different ‘historical’ attire worn by some of the participants, votive offerings, authentic magico-religious ritual, a handfasting and a concluding eisteddfod, all added a festive air in an outdoor setting at a site whose history reaches back to prehistoric times.
CHAPTER 6

STARGATE ALIGNMENTS:
RAINBOW BEACH AND ULURU

John Randolph Price held the first global peace meditation on 31 December 1986, an event that has continued annually since that time (Solara 1998, 30). The Earth Link Mission (ELM) Calendar for 1999 notes that on 31 December 1999, there will be a New Millennia Meditation for Planetary Peace (February/March 1999 Newsletter). On 16 and 17 August 1987, the Harmonic Convergence occurred with 144,000 people gathering in groups around the globe 'to create in cosmic consciousness a field of trust by providing attunement to the planet, and to the space brothers and sisters that make up the higher galactic intelligences which surround the planet earth' (Alahoy Publications, 1987). Many of these people experienced transformations in consciousness as a result of their participation in ceremonies at sacred sites around the world, including Uluru (Solara 1998, 30). On 11 January 1992, the Activation of the Opening of the Doorway of the 11:11 occurred at two sites: the Egyptian Pyramids and Queenstown, New Zealand. The 11:11 Activations, as do the Stargate Alignments, work with telluric or earth energies (see 3.1.1). These are called ley lines which form grid systems encircling earth, and where these energies intersect a vortex is formed and according to Solara (1998, 158), Uluru is such a vortex site. Prior to the 1992 Harmonic Convergence, Solara, who 'not only gave birth to the vision for the Doorway of the 11:11 but served as its centre point', made several preparatory journeys to sites around the globe (Solara 1998, 375). She visited Australia in 1991, giving thirteen talks and six workshops, and spent five-days at Uluru over Easter with a group of twenty-two people. Since then, Harmonic Convergence 2 was held from 25 to 27 July 1997, and there have been activations of the Second and Third Gate by Solara in 1995 and 1997 respectively, including one at
the Glasshouse Mountains on Queensland’s Sunshine Coast. The fourth gate is scheduled to be activated in 1999. Solara (1998, 20) states these events are occurring because ‘This is a time of great changes. The survival of planet earth and all its inhabitants is on the line.’ The ELM January 1998 Newsletter agrees with this fact, stating that this is an epoch marked by the official beginning of the Aquarian Age on 23 January 1997.

It against this background of the Harmonic Convergence, World Peace Meditations and the Activation of the 11:11 gates that the current case study of the Stargate Alignments is set. Like the 11:11 Activations, the Stargate Alignments are led by one female. Chandara is based in Prides Crossing, Maryland U.S.A. and established ELM as a volunteer organization in 1994. In September 1997, Chandara facilitated the Triple Australian Stargates: Rainbow Beach, Uluru and Hamelin Pool (near Denham): see Figure 1.1. This case study examines two of these events, namely Rainbow Beach and Uluru. There are ‘New Age’ overtones and motivations in each of the other case studies to varying degrees, but this group is characteristic of a modern cosmology founded on a very short-lived tradition, unlike the Druids. But in common with the Druid Gorsedd, this event was one that attracted modern secular pilgrims on a spiritual quest.

Before proceeding to look at ELM and the Stargate Alignments in general, two points should be noted. The first is that much of the material about ELM and its cosmology is taken from their Website at http://www.earthlinkmission.org. (ELM’s home page, containing its Mission Statement, is included at Figure 6.1). This site contains an interview with Chandara, monthly Newsletters and other information such as forthcoming Stargates. At the end of each Newsletter, Chandara Enterprises and ELM has claimed copyright and states that ‘no portion of this document may be reproduced by any means without express written permission of Chandara Enterprises and ELM’. In March and April 1999, the writer contacted both ELM’s Australian
Earth Link Mission

To globally link Earthworkers to a common cause which will enable coordinated efforts of group consciousness to unilaterally and simultaneously perform energetic realignments of the Etheric Earth on the physical earth, thereby accelerating the Ascension Plan in its perfection.

Each Red dot on this global map represents a person or group of people dedicated to supporting the Earth Link Mission.

GLOBAL MEDITATIONS FOR PEACE:
April 1 - April 7

Translations -
German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish

Earth Link Mission Europe
Earth Link Mission Australia

Earth Link Mission's Links Page

Stargate Dates and Locations 1998-1999

Figure 6.1: ELM’s home page
Source: http://www.earthlinkmission.org (23 April 1999)
office and Chandara by e-mail on more than one occasion seeking permission to use
this material. At the time of submission of this dissertation, no response has been
received. On 11 April 1999, Chandara said on the ELM Chat List\(^1\) that articles or
data should not be taken from their site, and/or forwarded or used by others as their
own. It is understood that this particularly applies to channeled material which is a
common source of information found in ELM’s Chat List and Newsletters. As the
writer is not citing channeled material verbatim but only wishes to briefly discuss
ELM’s cosmology, material from the Website and/or Chat List is used and cited
appropriately where relevant. The Website address is not cited on each occasion but
rather the title of the main document obtained from the Website. The second point is
that while the writer was personally present at the Rainbow Beach Alignment, she
was not at the Uluru event. The questionnaires were handed out by ELM’s Australian
coordinator and returned to the writer after the event.

6.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND ELM COSMOLOGY

At the beginning of her research into ELM and its cosmology, the writer asked
ELM’s Australian coordinator if she could supply any reference material that would
assist. The writer was subsequently advised to look at work by Greg Bradden, Norma
Milanovitch and Alice K. Bailey, in addition to Solara Antara’s book \textit{11:11,} and J. J.
Hurtak’s \textit{The Keys of Enoch.} Solara’s book has been referred to in this Chapter, but
the latter has not been used as this work consists solely of channeled material, and to
discuss its content is outside the scope of this dissertation. In an interview with Brian

\(^{1}\) The writer joined the ELM Chat List on 14 April, 1998 as part of her research. The Chat list ‘is for
those who desire a more informal setting to express themselves and build relations with other list
members. Here members can share personal stories, creative writing and poetry, requests for healing,
dreams and other information in the spirit of friendship and camaraderie … It is for channeled
information or critical planetary circulation of global meditations and events only. No advertising
permitted whatsoever’. The number of subscribers on the Chat List in August 1998 was
approximately one hundred and fifty.
John in August 1996, Chandara outlined many of the key tenets of the Stargate philosophy and cosmology. This information was obtained from ELM’s Website home page, entitled ‘The Stargate Interview with Chandara.’ Chandara says in the interview that for her the Stargate Alignments began in March 1994. They occur at equinoxes and solstices (it is understood that the Stargates ‘open’ around these times) and will continue ‘as long as there are new interstellar energies which need to be brought to the earth and integrated into the etheric grid systems and the crystalline core’ (1996 interview with Brian John). The choice of event sites provides a good example of the ephemeral nature of Cohen’s elective centres discussed earlier at 2.3. According to the February/March 1999 Newsletter, the last Stargate Alignment will be held on the small South Pacific Island of Tonga on 20 December, 1999. Chandara’s 1996 interview indicates that the e-mail links and Website started around the end of 1995 immediately after the 1995 September Stargate held at Gloucester, Mass., U.S.A.

Chandara described a Stargate alignment in her 1996 Brian John interview as:

... an etheric interdimensional energy alignment between two points in interstellar space which allows high vibrational energies to pass through long distances of space along the space-time continuum. These alignments are particularly crucial at this time with the vibration of the Earth is speeding up as we integrate Photon energies within the third dimensional plane ... The Stargate is the work of the collective consciousness of the earth surface who are drawn to do so. In this combination of intention we are directly linked to the Ascension Plan, and the Source of All. It is a great gift for all to participate. Group energies accelerate the process and add a cohesive balance to these events.

From reading Solara’s book, the ELM Website and participating at the Rainbow Beach Stargate Alignment, the writer’s understands that the Alignments ‘use’ humans as a form of conduit between earth energies and energy fields that are found in space. Yasmin Boland (1997, 35) sees the Alignments as ‘energy connections which reconnect the earth to the cosmos and which, once open, allow us humans to become more closely linked to the universe’. The interstellar space refers to energies
connected with previous times and civilizations such as Atlantis and Lemuria. The Ascended Masters concept, variously referred to as the White Brotherhood, Hidden Brotherhood or Hierarchy of Spiritual Masters, was first mentioned in the West by Blavatsky, the co-founder of the Theosophical Society (Brown 1998, 207). Their role is usually seen as beneficent guardians watching over humankind’s progress on earth. Their comments on man’s progress and teachings are accessed on earth via channeling\(^2\), and this information forms the basis for not only ELM’s philosophical and cosmological base but also for many other ‘New Age’ groups. Channeling is not a new phenomenon, and according to Peters (1991, 28) there are Biblical references (1 Sam.16:28) to King Saul using ‘a medium at Endor to raise the spirit of the dead prophet Samuel to ask his advice’. Ackroyd (1995) describes them as being able to ‘lead us to a golden age where the *karma* is distinctly lighter and people observe proper parking etiquette’. Chandara is the main medium within the ELM group, and she communicates with a group of Ascended Masters, cited in ELM Newsletters as the ‘Twelfth High Council, Ancient of Days’. Part of the linking of terrestrial and extra terrestrial energies relates to, as it is understood, allowing humanity to ultimately move from its present third dimension to higher dimensional states when great cataclysmic events occur. Those whose thinking is aligned with these ideas thus hold millenarian views, as well as believing in reincarnation. Solara discusses the latter in her book, noting that:

> The Star-Borne [or Starseeds – writer’s comment] are all of us presently incarnate who know that we originate from somewhere beyond this planet. We remember that we chose to undergo incarnations on earth in order to serve in the transmutation of matter. And that once this was achieved we would be able to move both the planet and the portions of humanity who choose themselves onto an entirely new evolutionary template (Solara 1998, 28).

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\(^2\) Peters (1991, 28) defines channeling as “alleged phenomena in which a nonphysical entity communicates through a human medium, through a channel who links the spiritual and physical worlds ... In the ‘New Age’, however, it refers more often to the process whereby a disembodied teacher communicates occult doctrines to a discipleship”.

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*Justine Digance – Modern pilgrims: spiritual warriors or merely mass tourists* 162
The reason why people participate in events such as Stargate Alignments is purely altruistic: namely, by using group consciousness they are working towards betterment of earth’s physical and social environment. Global meditations using group consciousness reflect this, the most recent Chat List meditations relating to Middle East and Kosovo conflicts. This altruism is reflected in ELM’s Mission Statement (see Figure 6.1). Judging by the content of material on ELM’s Chat List, this group could also be categorized as ‘pagan environmentalists’ who ‘tend to view the world as metaphysically interconnected and sacred’ (Taylor 1995, 99). This group also ascribes to a notion somewhat analogous to the Buddhist concept of earning merit by engaging in the Alignments in that it allows devotees to progress more quickly along their individual spiritual paths (ELM’s March 1997 Newsletter). That progression is part of the Ascension Plan noted above. The three stages of the Ascension Plan is discussed in a channeling by Sananda from the Amethyst Group (1994). It commenced on earth with the Harmonic Convergence in 1987, and the second and third stages are when great cataclysmic changes will occur, and individuals will have the opportunity to evacuate the earth. They may choose to return to earth at a later stage or stay in their new environment: ‘your bodily form will be changed, your spiritual form will undoubtedly be changed ... You are on the brink of a new dawn for all mankind. Some call it the New Age ...’ The term ‘Earthworker’ is often used interchangeably with the term ‘Lightworker’, and the latter term was also used on the survey instrument. It is a spiritual life-style and Andrew Lutts (1998) defines a Lightworker as a person whose:

... mission is to share light and love with others on this planet, empowering them toward their own paradigm shift and spiritual awakening. The Lightworker’s goal is to help show others that they have a unique spiritual energy, and they are free to explore and connect with the unlimited universal life force energy available to us all.
6.2 TRIPLE AUSTRALIAN STARGATES: 1997

Methodology
ELM's Australian coordinator was contacted prior to Chandara's visit, but permission to survey was not given until Chandara arrived in Australia. At the suggestion of ELM's Australian coordinator, a motivational question was added to reflect the group's altruistic aims: did people come 'to contribute to universal group consciousness' (see Appendices D and E for the respective Rainbow Beach and Uluru survey instruments). This is consistent with a 'New Ager's' sense of responsibility for others and the earth, a universal compassion (Heelas 1996, 25).

6.2.1 Rainbow Beach, Queensland
Chandara held a public talk in Brisbane on 17 September 1997 which the writer attended. There were sixteen people at the talk. Chandara spoke about earth energy concepts and why the Stargate Alignments were being held. In the second half of the meeting, Chandara conducted a Stargate Meditation, then channeled information from the Ascended Masters relating to the three Australian Stargates. At the beginning of the talk, Chandara placed a very large quartz crystal (approximately 30cm x 4cm x 4cm) on a gold cloth on a table at the front of the room. This crystal was surrounded by many other crystals, and was used in the Alignment at Rainbow Beach two days later. During the course of the talk, Chandara said that the Stargate openings were realignments to allow universal energies to come into the crystalline core of the earth so that the two energy grids of earth can be aligned. She also noted the rapid growth of the ELM community, which two or three years ago had only thirty to forty people involved. However, now when ELM calls for a global group meditation, she estimated that there was a group consciousness of twenty seven thousand individuals.
Location and description of event

The first Australian Stargate Alignment was held at Rainbow Beach on 19 September 1997, a small coastal village on Queensland’s Sunshine coast (see Figure 1.1). The Sunshine Coast region extends more than 100 kms north along the coast from Bribie Island (at the northern end of Moreton Bay on which Brisbane, Queensland’s capital city, is located) to the southern tip of Fraser Island. The mountain ranges, and the Glasshouse Mountains (sighted and named by Captain James Cook from HMS Endeavour in 1770) provide a backdrop to an agriculturally rich and diverse coastal plain whose popular bathing beaches flank the Pacific Ocean (Holthouse 1982, 5). Easy driving distance from Brisbane’s 1.3 million population base makes the Sunshine Coast, along with its southern rival region of the Gold Coast, a popular weekend tourist destination for Brisbanians and those living in south-east Queensland.

The village is located half way between Double Island Point (named by Captain Cook on 18 May 1770), and Inskip Point (a car ferry departure point to nearby Fraser Island). Between the village and Double Island Point to the south, is a long sweeping beach also called Rainbow Beach which is backed by high cliffs of coloured sands. It was here that the Stargate Alignment was held. Rainbow Beach lies just outside Cooloola National Park, a 23,000 hectare park which was declared on 20 December 1997 after many years of public debate about extraction of mineral sands in the area (QLD National Parks and Wildlife Service 1979, 2). In order to reach Rainbow Beach it is necessary to drive through Cooloola National Park, the word Cooloola being a derivation of the Kabi words ‘Kululu/Coolooli’ given to the sand cypress (Miller and Coster 1979, 11). The writer did not find any literature that indicated that Rainbow Beach was a site of special significance for the Kabi peoples. The Kabi people’s ‘Legend of the Rainbow Serpent’ is however used to explain how the coloured sands formed. At the small picnic spot above Rainbow Beach, there is a plaque recounting this legend:
Chapter 6 – Stargate Alignments: Rainbow Beach and Uluru

LEGEND OF THE COLOURED SANDS
RAINBOW BEACH, QLD.

Way back in the dreamtime there lived on the banks of the Noosa River a beautiful black maiden named Murrawar who fell in love with the Rainbow who came to visit her every evening in the sky. She would clap her hands and sing to this lovely Rainbow.

One day Burwillia, a very bad man from a distant tribe, stole Murrawar for his slave wife, often beating her cruelly and making her do all his work while he sat in the shade admiring his terrible killing boomerang. This boomerang was bigger than the biggest tree and full of evil spirits. One day Murrawar ran away and as she hurried along near the beach, which was then all flat, she looked back and saw Burwillia’s boomerang coming to kill her. Calling out for help, she fell to the ground too frightened to run. Suddenly she heard a loud noise in the sky and saw her faithful Rainbow racing towards her across the sea.

The wicked Burwillia attacked the brave Rainbow and they met with a roar like thunder, killing Burwillia instantly and shattering the Rainbow who smashed into small pieces. Alas, the poor sick and shattered Rainbow lay on the beach to die and is still there, with all its colours forming the hills along the beach.

On the evening of 18 September 1997, Chandara had a meeting with the twelve people who would be participating in the Alignment the following day. The total number in the group, including the writer and Chandara, was thirteen, and as one person did not participate in the survey, there were ten respondents in the sample. Participation in the Alignment was not free, costing $110.00 per person ‘so as to cover the costs of Chandara’s visit to Australia’. The meeting included a group alignment and channeling. The following day at 10.00 a.m. there was another group meeting before going down to Rainbow Beach for the Stargate Alignment at noon. The group formed a circle on the beach but not before Chandara had laid a large cloth on the sand, and placed her huge quartz crystal in the centre. Group members were asked to place crystals or other items on the cloth which they wanted to be ‘blessed’ or charged with energy when the grids opened, and the extra-terrestrial energy passed through the gate or centre of the circle (hence the term Stargate) to connect with
earth’s core energy. In her article on the Stargate Alignment at Glastonbury in 1996, Boland (1997) describes a similar activity:

On the gold fabric she [Chandara] placed a massive clear quartz crystal, a bottle of water from the Chalice (which was to be invested with the high vibrations of the Stargate energies) as well as other bits and pieces of metaphysical significance. Participants were invited to place their jewellery around the edge of the cloth so as to have it impregnated with the Stargate’s energy. No-one could resist (Boland 1997, 37).

Figure 6.2 shows Chandara and the group placing items on the cloth around the crystal, and Figure 6.3 shows the group formed into a circle just prior to the commencement of the ceremony. Chandara lead the event which involved a meditation and channeling: in the channeling, the Ascended Masters thanked the group for clearing Aboriginal harmonic energy. In all, the Stargate Alignment lasted twenty-two minutes and afterwards the group stayed chatting and sharing experiences before returning back along the beach to the village for lunch.

Before examining the results of the surveys, which were administered before the group returned to the village, the writer wishes to highlight four observations from the event. The first is that high tide occurred at approximately 9.00 a.m. and thus to get to the event site (half way between the village and Double Island Point) the group had to scramble down the cliff path in order to gain access to the beach. High tide made the site inaccessible except for those using the cliff path, and thus the beach was deserted until 12.30 p.m. when the first four-wheel drive vehicle drove along the beach. For the short period the group was there, there was no contest relating to usage of the beach, but if the tidal conditions had been different, it is very likely that the event would have been conducted at a contested site. The second observation is that, from all appearances, the people who made up the group were ordinary people from all walks of life (albeit one who listed her occupation as a ‘gypsy’). They all had come on a spiritual adventure and, for the most part, were engaging in out-of-the-ordinary activities. Even Chandara falls into this category, Boland (197, 36) stating
Figure 6.2:  **Stargate participants placing items in the centre of the circle**
(taken by the writer on 19 September 1997)
Figure 6.3:  **Stargate circle prior to the commencement of the ceremony**
(taken by the writer on 19 September 1997)
that she ‘doesn’t sound crazy. She certainly doesn’t look or act crazy: she’s quite matter-of-fact about it all’. The third observation was that over the course of the three days of channeling and meditations, all of the group spoke of experiencing or feeling unusual energy shifts. At 3.1.3, the writer spoke of the palpable energy often found at ancient sites of worship, and at this event, similar powerful energies were evident. However, here these energy shifts were not confined to a site but were rather manifested at different strength levels in each individual. The final point is an observation by the writer immediately after the event and concerned one member of the group. At 3.1.1 the writer noted Brainhard’s (1996) notion of a ‘mystical experience’ which contains two essential elements: profundity and non-ordinariness. Based on observations only, one young woman clearly underwent such an experience, but respecting her privacy, the writer did not speak to her after the event nor did she participate in the survey. Watching this, the writer was reminded of the role of medieval clerics in authenticating and recording miracles. Chandara and another member of the group counselled the young woman, and spent some time with her before the whole group walked back along the beach. This raises the importance of these encounters with the Other being mediated in some way so that an individual, unprepared for the profundity of such an experience, can come to terms with their experiences which can often be quite emotional. This incident confirmed the strong participative and experiential aspect of the ‘New Age’ movement, but also perhaps echoed a warning of possible psychological dangers in engaging in meta-physical practices that are often central to many ‘New Age’ cosmologies.

After the group returned to the village, the group went to lunch together before people went their own separate ways.
Results – quantifiable elements

Table 6.1: Demographic profile of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender (n=10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (n=9)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (n=10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School year 10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School year 12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech. apprenticeship</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech. Diploma</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate degree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was only one male at the event which is not obviously consistent with Australia’s demographic profile, but is somewhat consistent with the demographic profile for ‘New Age’ events. Data from the ‘New Age’ MindBodySpirit Festival held bi-annually in Sydney shows that the typical ‘New Age’ attendee is female (60% of attendees) and aged between 25-54 (pers. comm., Tony Drew, MBS Festival). This is reinforced from the writer’s experiences and research of popularist ‘New Age’ literature. At least 78% of those surveyed were Baby Boomers which gives support at least, even though based on a very small sample, for the theories advanced by Digance and Miller at 3.3.3. Six of those surveyed had undertaken some form of tertiary education.
### Table 6.2: Trip characteristics and previous attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information re site (n=10)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel group (n=10)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With family</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed friends/family</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engaging in tourist activities (n=10)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating out</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi tourist</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attended other ceremonies (n=10)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-timers</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ceremonies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ELM Website was the main source of information about the event. This was the only event or site where the majority had come alone (70%), and the majority engaged in multi-tourist activities. Only two of those at the event had been to other Stargate ceremonies, but ‘Curiosity’ as a motivation, which would have perhaps been expected with such a high percentage of first-timers, was only ranked twenty-first. The writer suggests that this could be because both the ELM Website and ELM Chat List provide quite a lot of information on what had occurred at previous Stargate events, thus some of those attending knew what to expect.
Table 6.3:  **Main reasons for attending the event**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>StdDev</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>..for spiritual awareness</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>..to learn about issues important to me</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>..contribute to universal group consciousness</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>..to learn more about myself</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>..central to my beliefs as a Lightworker</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>..be with people who enjoy the same things</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>..to get involved and participate</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>..because this event is unique</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>..to learn new things</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>..to experience new and different things</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>..so I could develop my skills</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>..because it is stimulating and exciting</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>..to meet people with similar interests</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>..experience an authentic ceremony</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>..because I enjoy special events</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>..to do something completely different</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>..because it sounded like fun</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>..for the variety of things to see and do</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>..for a change of pace</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>..so I could be with my friends</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>..to satisfy my curiosity</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>..to have a change from my daily routine</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>..to be entertained</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>..to be with my partner or family</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>..for the whole family to enjoy</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>..to get away from the normal demands of life</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>..no particular reason - just passing</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>..so the family could do something together</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Referring back to Table 3.2 (Event Participant Motivation), the results of Table 6.3 can be put into seven categories as below in Table 6.4.
Table 6.4: Sub-grouping of event participant motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-group</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➤ Social stimulation</td>
<td>7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Learning</td>
<td>2, 4, 9, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Curiosity and entertainment</td>
<td>10, 16, 17, 18, 21, 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Escape</td>
<td>19, 22, 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Kinship</td>
<td>20, 24, 25, 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Spiritual quest</td>
<td>1, 3, 5, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Miscellaneous</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The main reason why people came to the event was because they were there on a Spiritual Quest, ‘for spiritual awareness’ being the prime motivation. Altruism (‘contribute to universal group consciousness’) ranked third and ‘an act of faith’ ranked fifth. ‘Being with like-minded people’ ranked sixth, and as with the Druid Gorsedd, is not that surprising given that both groups are different from mainstream society and have a small support base. Learning was the second ranked sub-group, ‘learning about issues important to me’ (second) and ‘learning more about myself’ (fourth). The latter motivation represents the inner journey, as does ‘for spiritual awareness’, foremost in all pilgrimage journeys. The third ranked sub-group was Social Stimulation, with the highest ranked in this group being ‘to get involved and participate’ (seventh). ‘Uniqueness’ ranked eighth confirming that this was a once-in-a-lifetime event as each of the Stargate Alignments have been held at different locations. Whilst those surveyed may have perceived the event as unique, it was ranked eighth. Perhaps this ranking was due to the fact that 80% were first-timers and had no yardstick against which to measure whether or not the Stargate Alignment was authentic: ‘authenticity’ was ranked fourteenth. But, like the Kalachakra Initiation (Chapter 4), the event was facilitated by the groups’ spiritual leader and could therefore lay claims to authenticity. Curiosity and Entertainment ranked fourth overall with the need to ‘experience new and different things’ being the first ranked motivation. The high percentage of first-timers no doubt was responsible for this being ranked tenth, but the fact that ‘satisfying my curiosity’ ranked twenty-first seems somewhat inconsistent. The writer suggests that despite the fact that 80% were
first-timers, the need to sate their spiritual needs far out weighed other superficial needs, such as ‘curiosity’ and ‘to be entertained’ which all ranked quite low. Escapism was ranked fifth, the first ranked being nineteenth – ‘a change of pace’. Kinship was ranked sixth, but this was not a surprising result because only three of those surveyed came with friends and/or family. What mattered to the group overall was the spiritual element of the journey rather than bonding amongst kinship groups. The final sub-grouping was Miscellaneous, ranked twenty-eighth. The motivational rankings were deduced from a very small cohort comprising ten people, and the writer remembers speaking with one lady who, on several occasions, apologized for the fact that she did not know why she was there but only knew that for some inexplicable reason, she had to be there. A similar comment also came from the ‘Other Comments’ section on the Uluru survey: ‘I came because I knew I had to.’

Sixty percent of the group had undertaken some form of tertiary education, with 30% having postgraduate qualifications. The survey form had a question asking for occupation, and nine of the ten surveyed responded. Apart from one indicating ‘gypsy’ on the form, five people (half the group) had given their occupation as ‘Lightworker’. This response could possibly indicate that these people felt that they had a responsibility to ‘live their faith’ and that following their cosmology was almost a vocation in itself. All but one of those surveyed were Australian residents.

In summarizing, the two most important quantitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage were met, namely, that people had attended the event as part of a spiritual quest connected with their being at the event as ‘an act of faith’. Communitas or being with like-minded people was ranked sixth, the significance of this being noted earlier.

There were very few comments offered in the ‘Comments’ section of the Rainbow Beach survey instrument except one which reinforces earlier discussion on the ‘New Age’ movement and the work of Poon: ‘I feel this is an active participation and contribution, not a passive experience’.
Results – qualitative elements

The qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage as summarized in Table 3.3 are discussed below in point form:

- Whilst not as pronounced as at the Druid Gorsedd, there was definitely a subtle sense of the ludic at this event. Perhaps also the presence of Cosmo, the dog, gave the ceremony a somewhat bizarre air as well (see Figure 6.2).
- Communitas was certainly evident at the event, both pre- and post event, and at the Alignment itself on Rainbow Beach. The small size of the group also contributed to engendering this feeling.
- The group met over an impromptu lunch to share experiences immediately after the event. This provides one example of commensality, and it is understood that several members of the group also dined together prior to the event as well.

Based on the caveat noted with respect to these three Hallmarks of Pilgrimage at Table 3.3, the quantitative data indicates that it was a spiritual quest for most of those who attended the Alignment. Being there also represented as ‘an act of faith’ for many. Overall, it would appear that at the Rainbow Beach Stargate Alignment, the above three indicators would, in all probability, represent Hallmarks of Pilgrimage for modern secular pilgrims.

- There was magico-religious ‘New Age’ ritual used in the meditations and channeling prior to, and during the event, as well as other ritual in forming the circle and even selecting the site.
- The site was consecrated by both ‘casting the circle’ and by placing the large quartz crystal in the centre of the circle over the Stargate that was to open at noon.
- For a person who ascribed to the ELM cosmology, attendance would have constituted ‘an act of faith’. The quantitative data also supported this view.
- It was not a contested site, although see earlier comments.
Placing the items on the cloth around the crystal over the Stargate could be seen as a form of votive offering. Just before the event, one of the group collected up thirteen sea eagle feathers that were lying around the beach and placed these in the centre of the circle so that they could be charged with the energy during the Alignment. These were then distributed to each group member after the event and thus were also a form of votive offering.

Whilst the writer had never previously attended any ELM events or Stargate Alignments, the ritual used embued the Alignment with an air of authenticity, although authenticity was only ranked fourteenth in the surveys.

6.2.2 **Uluru, Central Australia**

For discussion of the historical background at Uluru, see Chapter 8. As noted earlier, the writer was not at this event and the surveys were distributed by ELM's Australian coordinator: only quantitative data is therefore only available for this site. From the November 1997 ELM Newsletter, it appears that there were approximately forty people at the event which was took place on a small hill midway between Kata Tjuta and Uluru; twenty-five completed surveys were returned to the writer. Unfortunately, it is not known when and where the surveys were administered, and how proximate to the event they were. The writer is also unclear whether or not the group approached Park Management to hold the event at Uluru itself.
Table 6.5: Demographic profile of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender (n=25)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (n=25)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60&gt;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (n=25)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School year 10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School year 12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech. Diploma</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate degree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate degree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approximately two-thirds of those surveyed (64%) were female and similar comments as made earlier are thus applicable. Baby Boomers were also strongly represented in the cohort, comprising between 68 - 82 % of those surveyed. Over half of those who responded had tertiary qualifications.
Table 6.6: **Trip characteristics and previous attendance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information re site (n=25)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel group (n=25)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With friends</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With family</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed friends/family</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engaging in tourist activities (n=23)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No tourist activities</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting historic sites</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting friends and relatives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting national parks</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi tourist</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attended other ceremonies (n=25)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-timers</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ceremonies</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First visit to Uluru (n=25)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-timers</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited previously</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visited other Aboriginal sites (n=25)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had not visited other sites</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had visited other sites</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unlike the group at Rainbow Beach, only two people had obtained information about the event through the ELM Website. Word of mouth and books were the main source of information. In the ‘Other’ section, an alternative magazine, *Eagles Wings*, was cited as the source of information about both events: one person in the Rainbow Beach survey and four at Uluru gave this magazine as a source of information about the event. This magazine featured an article on the Australian Triple Stargates,
including channeled information on the importance of the events and Chandara’s schedule (‘Eagles Wings’ 1997, 42-45). Unlike the Rainbow Beach event, approximately three-quarters came with friends and/or family: 24% came alone. Like Rainbow Beach, most engaged in multi tourist activities. The reason for these results at both events no doubt reflects the fact that both sites were remote locations, particularly Uluru. It is therefore not surprising that at both sites people chose to engage in tourist activities before and after the event. Approximately three quarters of those surveyed were at their first Stargate Alignment. Of the six people who indicated they had attended other Stargate ceremonies, three gave 11:11 and one ‘Solara Starborn’ as examples of other ceremonies. For 60%, it was their first visit to Uluru, but 68% had visited other Aboriginal sacred sites which could perhaps indicate that some of this cohort were consciously going to those sites in order to connect with indigenous sacred energies.
Table 6.7: Main reasons for attending the event

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>StdDev</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>..for spiritual awareness</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>..central to my beliefs as a Lightworker</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>..to learn more about myself</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>..contribute to universal group consciousness</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>..because this event is unique</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>..to get involved and participate</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>..be with people who enjoy the same things</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>..because I enjoy special events</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>..to experience new and different things</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>..experience an authentic ceremony</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>..to meet people with similar interests</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>..to learn about issues important to me</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>..because it is stimulating and exciting</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>..to learn new things</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>..because it sounded like fun</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>..so I could be with my friends</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>..so I could develop my skills</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>..to do something completely different</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>..to be with my partner or family</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>..for the variety of things to see and do</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>..for a change of pace</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>..so the family could do something together</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>..to satisfy my curiosity</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>..to get away from the normal demands of life</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>..to have a change from my daily routine</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>..for the whole family to enjoy</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>..to be entertained</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>..no particular reason - just passing</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Referring back to Table 3.2 (Event Participant Motivation), the results of Table 6.7 can be put into seven categories as below in Table 6.8.
Table 6.8: Sub-grouping of event participant motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-group</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social stimulation</td>
<td>5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>3, 9, 12, 14, 16, 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity and entertainment</td>
<td>15, 18, 20, 23, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escape</td>
<td>21, 24, 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinship</td>
<td>19, 22, 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual quest</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Like Rainbow Beach, a Spiritual Quest, was ranked first: one comment extracted from the Uluru surveys was that ‘it was simply part of my own mythic journey’. An ‘act of faith’ was ranked second here (fifth at Rainbow Beach) and ‘altruism’ was ranked fourth (third at Rainbow Beach). Communitas ranked seventh, whereas at Rainbow Beach it was sixth. The writer suggests that perhaps the location of the event at Uluru, an Aboriginal sacred site and one that has strong links with ‘New Age’ cosmologies (particularly those noted in the introduction which have a similar theoretical underpinning to ELM), was the reason for it being ranked higher. For the committed Lightworker, Uluru would have perhaps been the first choice of location, as well as the strong association of Uluru within the Australian psyche. The number of first-timers at this event (76%) was approximately the same as Rainbow Beach. The second ranked sub-group was Learning, the ‘need to learn more about myself’ ranked third overall (fourth at Rainbow Beach). The next ranked motivation in this sub-group was ‘to experience new and different things’ (tenth) which is again unusual, this point having already been discussed earlier at 6.2.1. Like Rainbow Beach, Social Stimulation was ranked third with ‘uniqueness’ ranked fifth and ‘involvement and participation’ being ranked sixth (eighth and seventh respectively at Rainbow Beach). One person added in the ‘Other Comments’ section of the survey that they ‘felt compelled to attend and participate.’ ‘Authenticity’ was ranked tenth, which was higher than at Rainbow Beach where it ranked fourteenth. Ranked fourth overall was Curiosity and Entertainment, ‘to have fun’ being the first ranked in this
group. ‘Curiosity’ ranked twenty-third which is consistent with Rainbow Beach where it ranked twenty-first. **Kinship** was ranked fifth (sixth at Rainbow Beach) but here three-quarters of those surveyed had come with friends and/or family (compared with Rainbow Beach which was only 30%). **Escapism** was ranked sixth, ‘a change of pace’ being ranked first in this sub-group as it was at Rainbow Beach. **Miscellaneous** was ranked last overall.

Approximately 60% of those surveyed were in the professional/para-professional occupational bracket, and three people again indicated ‘Lightworker’ as their occupation. Of those surveyed, three were international visitors.

In summary, the Stargate Alignment at Uluru satisfied all the quantitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage thus indicating that those surveyed had participated at this event as befitting modern secular pilgrimage. The results were generally consistent with those obtained at the Rainbow Beach Alignment.

The Australian coordinator of the Australian Triple Stargates recorded her reflections of the Uluru Stargate in ELM’s November 1997 Newsletter. Her comments indicate that for her, and possibly others in the group, that they had undergone a mystical experience which, remembering points made earlier at 3.1.1, was impossible to adequately reduce to words.

### 6.3 CONCLUSION

This event, like the Druid Gorsedd at Uffington White Horse, was a small event characteristic of the ‘New Age’ movement. However, unlike the Druids who lay claim to links with earlier pagan traditions going back hundreds of years, ELM is a new phenomenon. Their cosmology is based on channeled messages from Ascended Masters, etheric beings who are not of this world but located somewhere Out There.
The role of technology via the use of the Internet in spreading the word of ELM has been central in gathering support and/or attendance at the Stargate Alignments. Those who ascribe to the beliefs associated with the Stargate Alignments and ELM call themselves Lightworkers who are on this planet for altruistic purposes. At first glance this group may appear to be somewhat fringe and bizarre, and thus one would expect all of its followers to exhibit the same traits. But as the writer discovered, and also as confirmed by Boland earlier, they appear to be ordinary, average citizens and not outwardly showing their adherence to somewhat alternative beliefs. One suspects that most of the people who attended the Druid Gorsedd would also be similarly described as ‘ordinary people’, fraternizing with their ‘planetary kin’. Like the Druids, this group also tries to live their faith and this is particularly reflected from the content of ELM’s Chat List.

Both Stargate Alignments at Rainbow Beach and Uluru represented a spiritual quest for those surveyed. Based on the qualitative data obtained from Rainbow Beach, the qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage were also met. From the comments in the Uluru survey, ELM Chat List and Newsletter, it appears that there were some at the Uluru event who had a mystical experience. One person at Rainbow Beach clearly underwent a mystical experience and this was the only time during the course of the five case studies where the writer witnessed this first hand. From the writer’s research, there was nothing to indicate that the Rainbow Beach site was on a ley line, but approximately over a twenty-four hour period before and during the event, all participants inexplicably experienced energy shifts which reinforced their belief that what they were going to experience at the Alignment was a portend that an encounter with the Other was imminent. This also, the writer suspects, reinforced to some the view that they were correct to follow their intuition and turn up at the Alignment because ‘they just knew they had to be there’. In concluding, the two Stargate Alignments represented modern secular pilgrimage events that promised and for some, delivered an encounter with the Other, albeit without a longstanding body of substantive traditional cosmology to assist the participants in their spiritual quest.
CHAPTER 7

NEWGRANGE\textsuperscript{1} MEGALITH
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

For six months from 1 July to 31 December 1996, the Republic of Ireland took over the running of the residency of the European Union (Carroll, 1996). This was not in itself an unusual event as it was the fifth time since joining the European Union in 1973 that Ireland had assumed this role, but what is of interest is the fact that the logo for its presidency was largely derived from the spiral motifs found on the entrance kerbstone (K1) to Newgrange (see Figure 7.1). The historical antiquity of the site is discussed in the following section, and it is interesting to ponder on Ireland’s use of the motifs, perhaps to signal to the other European Union members its historical heritage and European links.

![K1 decorated kerbstone, Newgrange](image)

\textbf{Figure 7.1:  The K1 decorated kerbstone, Newgrange}

Source: Meehan 1993, 27.

\textsuperscript{1} There is a discrepancy in the literature on the correct usage - New Grange or Newgrange. The latter is accorded more popular usage and thus is used throughout this dissertation.
The Republic of Ireland has a land area of just over 70,000 km², with a population of 3.6 million (McNiff 1996, 45). Kennedy (1998, 120) lists the attraction base of Irish tourism and two of these are important to this study: a vibrant folk tradition and a distinctive archaeological and cultural heritage. There has been a resurgence in tourism to the Republic of Ireland in the last decade. In 1995 there were 4.3 million overseas tourist arrivals, with tourism being Ireland’s third largest industry contributing 6.4% of GNP. This contribution was particularly noticeable with respect to foreign exchange earnings and as a generator of both direct and indirect employment growth (Kennedy 1998, 119). The Republic of Ireland also benefited from European Community tourism grants, receiving almost IR£ 150 million for tourism development under the Operational Programme for Tourism 1989-93 (Hurley, Archer and Fletcher 1994, 204).

Relatively recent improvements in radiocarbon dating and calibration of radio carbon time today indicate that Newgrange, one of Europe’s best preserved passage-graves, is thought to have been built around 3200 B.C.E. thus making it older than Stonehenge, Avebury and the Egyptian pyramids (O’Kelly 1994, 7). Passage-graves are noted for two features: their role as a burial chamber and as some of the best Neolithic art galleries in the world. It is also apparent from the literature reviewed that as dating techniques evolved over the last twenty or so years, historical and archaeological interpretations of what happened at Newgrange in prehistory have also shifted ground. It is well beyond the scope of this case study to fully discuss these changes, and thus what the writer understands to be the current line of thought is only raised. The site’s antiquity is reiterated in The Office of Public Works guide to Newgrange (n.d.) which implies that this site, long neglected by tourism and the general public, is now worthy of tourism ‘icon’ status as discussed earlier at 3.4.1. In 1998, there were a total of 221,886 visitors to the site, with 130,026 tourists visiting the new Visitor Centre and Newgrange (pers. comm., C. Tuffy). At Newgrange archaeological evidence and romantic myth are combined; the factual and academic
archaeological background to the site is preferred although other aspects are covered so as to perhaps explain the touristic appeal of the site.

The Chapter looks at the site prior to its excavation and rebirth as a modern tourist site some two decades ago, and the results of visitor surveys conducted there in July 1997. The site has a rich archaeological history and today, after its reconstruction, is experiencing rebirth as a modern tourist attraction. Newgrange may have served as a pilgrimage centre in centuries past, but today it is virtually the sole preserve of the mass tourist rather than the solitary pilgrim coming on a spiritual quest.

7.1 HISTORY OF NEWGRANGE

For convenience, this section is divided into three areas: the history of the site prior to 1962, its modern excavation from 1962-1975, and the period from 1975 when a restored Newgrange became open to the public.

7.1.1 Newgrange prior to 1962
The site of Newgrange is located 8km to the east of Slane in County Meath in rich, undulating picture-postcard rural surrounds, typified in Irish tourist brochures (see Figure 1.2 for location of the site). Slane is a small village on the N2, some 45km north-west of Dublin.

O’Riordain and Daniel (1964, 16) suggest that the name Newgrange could be an English corruption of An uamb grein: ‘the cave of Grainne, a mythological Irish figure who made a tour of Ireland in a year and a day, and carried large stones in her apron that were sometimes thrown down to make her bed’. Another, less academic suggestion is that Newgrange is derived from Grain Uaigh or Cave of the Sun (OBOD, 1997). Early Irish literature referred to Newgrange as ‘An Brug, the abode
or mansion, and it belonged to the Chief of all the Gods, An Dagda, the 'good god' or 'great father', and his son Oengus" (O'Kelly 1994, 123). The Dagda has two insignia: his club for protection and his cauldron for sustenance (Hutton 1992, 150). Newgrange is constructed on one of three mounds found within an area of approximately 4km by 3km by a bend on the River Boyne (see Figure 7.2). The Boyne flows past many sites famous in Irish history, such as Clonard, Trim and Hill of Tara. The Battle of the Boyne was fought on its banks in 1690 (O'Riordain and Daniel 1964, 15). Knowth and Dowth are likewise constructed on mounds and are also megalithic passage-graves. Extensive excavations and restoration commenced at Knowth under Professor George Eogan in 1962 and at the time of the writer's fieldwork in 1997, reconstruction of the site was well underway. Located on private land, Dowth is the least well preserved of the three sites, and it is understood that it will never be open to tourists as visitor attention is directed towards its two better known neighbours. The citing of the three sites along the River Boyne gives them their collective title of Brú na Bóinne, often mentioned in historical records dating back to the latter half of the first millenium C.E. (Eogan 1986, 20).

![Map of the Brú na Bóinne](image)

*Figure 7.2: Map of the Brú na Bóinne*


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2 Oengus is the Gold of Love and was the son of Dagda and Boanne: 'he was of beautiful appearance and four birds, representing his kisses, always hovered around his head' (Ellis 1992, 27).
Land cultivation occurred in Ireland from about 4000 B.C.E., and by 3000 B.C.E., there were sufficient resources to ‘look beyond the questions of day-to-day survival and to adopt the spreading cult [The Cult of the Dead] of the new religion’ (O’Kelly 1994, 122). O’Kelly (1995, 50) says that the Newgrange site was occupied prior to its construction, people living not around the tumulus itself but on the lowlands below. Around each of the three Brú na Bóinne mounds, clusters of smaller tombs were added after the initial settlement; for example, Knowth has seventeen smaller tombs built close by (Herity and Eogan 1996, 58). This period is part of the Neolithic era, commonly referred to as the Stone Age because of the use of stone in fashioning equipment necessary for those basic agrarian communities to survive. Archaeological evidence suggests that the Neolithic people kept domestic animals, hunted wild animals such as bear, ate shellfish and grew cereals such as wheat (Herity and Eogan 1996, 72-73).

The builders of Newgrange crossed the Irish Sea from Brittany and used the Boyne Valley as their base, moving inland through Loughcrew and Carrowkeel to the Atlantic coast near Sligo. Passage-grave tombs are found in other parts of Europe, namely Iberia, Brittany and Scandinavia and ‘in contrast with other megalithic people, their builders show a high regard for the adornment of the person and for ornamentation of the walls or furniture of the tomb’ (O’Kelly 1995, 77). Herity and Eogan (1996, 57) describe their culture as embodying a ‘nuclear cemetery and mountain top setting [being] realised in conjunction with pronounced insular traits: a peculiar art idiom, a preference for cruciform tombs and a sophisticated series of grave goods’. The dead (along with their personal ornaments) were generally cremated, their remains being placed in recesses of the tomb (O’Kelly 1995, 67). O’Kelly (1995, 67) suggests that only the ‘special people’ were housed in the large tombs, with other community members being buried in the peripheral graves and mounds noted earlier. Newgrange is a ‘pear-shaped heap, mainly of water-rolled

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3 In the 1962-75 excavation, remains of two unburnt persons were found (O’Kelly 1994, 126).
pebbles, has a diameter of roughly 80m and was built to a height ranging between one to three metres' (Herity and Eogan 1996, 58).

The term *megalith* is usually applied to large prehistoric stone monuments, Newgrange being a chamber tomb variously referred to as a tumulus, barrow or cairn. Such large tombs did not emerge by chance but reflected the development of society, intellectually and ideologically, ‘document[ing] the existence of an elite or at least people with distinctive values as displayed by their tombs and their possessions too, some of which were of special excellence’ (Eogan 1986, 29). The edge is defined by a kerb or revetment wall of orthostats⁴, or dry walling up to 3m high (O’Riordain and Daniel 1964, 21). It may well have taken over thirty years to pile the two hundred thousand tons of stone required to construct the tumulus (O’Kelly 1994, 117-118).

Newgrange is a passage-grave built to a cruciform plan, the roof constructed of a ‘corbelled vault made of successive layers of oversailing stones’ (O’Riordain and Daniel 1964, 21). There are one hundred and fifty passage-graves still surviving in Ireland today (O’Kelly 1994, 122). O’Kelly (1995, 106) notes that passage tombs very often feature engraved ornamentation on internal and external structural stones. At Newgrange, the large entrance kerbstone (K1) features five spirals which were the basis of Ireland’s 1996 European Union presidency logo noted in the opening comments to this Chapter. It is suggested that spirals symbolise ‘the concept of growth, expansion and cosmic energy ... to the ancient inhabitants of Ireland, the spiral was used to represent their sun’ (Celtic Motifs, 1998). Only four spirals were found on the walls at Gavrinis in Brittany, but they became the central motif in Ireland, replacing ‘the paired *oculi* of Iberia in representations of the human face.’ (Herity and Eogan 1996, 76). O’Kelly (1995, 111) states that ‘the devices on the stones are geometrical in concept and non-representational [and were probably] ... symbolic, religious or magical in content’. These neolithic people had the Earth

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⁴ An upright stone or slab, either forming part of a building, or set in the ground as a monument: *English Oxford Dictionary, 2nd ed.*, s.v. *orthostat*. These are also known as dolmens or standing stones.
Mother or Funerary Goddess as their main figure of worship (Herity and Eoghan 1964, 134).

Generally, prehistoric people were 'frequently more concerned with the need to perpetuate the remains of the dead than to provide impressive earthly dwellings' (O'Kelly 1995, 50). Sites such as the Brú na Bóinne provide a visual reminder that this society believed in the hereafter by providing what O'Kelly (1995, 124) calls a House for the Dead 'so that some spirits at least would live on to perpetuate the memory of the builders and of the community as a entity'. He also says that it was a quite sophisticated community in that they were able, for example, to source labour to build such large monuments.

After the passage-grave builders moved inland, it is unclear what occurred at the site before its occupation by the Late Neolithic/Beaker peoples who moved from Britain to Ireland around 2000 B.C.E. (Herity and Eoghan 1996, 131). They are often described as single-grave societies who were nomadic traders and warriors, but evidence suggests that they were also settled pastoralists (Herity and Eoghan 1996, 117). Archaeological evidence indicates that the southern part of the mound collapsed around this time, and the site entered into disuse and decay. However, in occupying the site, the Beaker peoples made 'no attempt to interfere with it by digging into it or in any way altering it', this domestic activity having no connection with the tumulus itself (O'Kelly 1995, 73). They built a freestanding 104m diameter stone circle ('The Great Circle') around Newgrange, today only twelve remaining of the supposed original thirty-five orthostats (Herity and Eoghan 1996, 125). They also suggest (at p.129) that the enclosure may have contained wooden 20m long rectangular houses.

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1 The Beaker people are named after a form of high quality and extremely decorated European pottery.

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Justine Digance – Modern pilgrims: spiritual warriors or merely mass tourists

191
The next society to occupy the site were from the Early Bronze Age when ‘there was an influx of new ideas, if not actually peoples’ around the middle of the first millennium B.C.E. (O’Kelly 1995, 249). This period was one of formative change in Irish history as it saw the arrival of the La Tène culture with the Celts (Herity and Eogan 1996, 224). Their common site of occupation was a single protected farmstead in the form of ring or hill forts (Herity and Eogan 1996, 224). One site selected for such a hill fort was the passage-grave within Ráth na Riògh at the Hill of Tara, this society selecting ‘hilltops that already had an aura of sanctity attached to them’ (Herity and Eogan 1996, 228). The Hill of Tara is generally described in literature as a royal site where kings lived, and offers, according to Herity and Eogan (1996, 247), ‘good proof for a tribal society and kingship’. Newgrange is supposedly the burial place of the Kings of Tara before the arrival Christianity in the fifth Century (O’Kelly 1994, 46), but this is discounted in The Office of Public Work’s site guide (n.d., 23) on the basis that Newgrange ‘was nearly 3,000 years old by the time Tara reached the pinnacle of its glory between the second and fourth centuries ... Newgrange would have been in a collapsed state and its brilliant appearance dulled and tarnished by the ravages of thousands of years.’

The arrival of the Celts and their priestly class, the Druids, is important in explaining some of the lure of Newgrange as a tourist attraction: see discussion later in this Chapter, and also Chapter 5 for a discussion on Druidism. As noted earlier in Chapter 5 ceremonies and religious practices were important community events, and it appears that Newgrange was a site where ritual was practised, even long before the arrival of the Celts. It is presumed that much of the pre-Celtic rituals would have related to the funerary aspects of burying ‘special people’, as well as pagan worship of the Sun and the Earth Goddess.

After the Celts, the next infusion of visitors to Ireland came from Britain in the first century C.E. through trading or raiding (Herity and Eogan 1996, 246). Whilst there was no Roman invasion of Ireland, various Roman artefacts appeared through trade
or plunder, with ‘twenty five Roman coins of gold, silver and bronze dating from the fourth century being discovered at Newgrange’ (O’Kelly 1995, 336). The fifth century C.E. is generally seen as denoting the end of the prehistoric period and a time accompanied by changes in the known civilized world. This was when Christianity and the Roman alphabet arrived with St. Patrick in 432 C.E. followed by the spread of literacy with the Ogham script (Herity and Eogan 1996, 248).

Before leaving the four millennia of prehistory to move onto discovery of the site in 1699, the concluding remarks of Herity and Eogan (1996) should be noted:

In Ireland during the fifth century amalgamation was going on. Iron Age traditions, late Roman influences from Britain (spiritual, literary and technological), Anglo-Saxon borrowing, and possibly direct continental contact in the south and west were laying the foundations for the blossoming forth of the first stage of Early Christian Ireland. Monastic centres were becoming as important as political sites (Herity and Eogan 1996, 249).

The earliest records of vernacular Irish literature date to around the seventh century, containing ‘mythological tales, heroic stories, stories of kings, stories of the Fianna and romantic stories … [much of this] was not conceived as written literature but was the setting down of material already preserved in oral form’ (O’Kelly 1995, 252). In preliterate times, the learned class in the Irish society were responsible for preserving this material in oral form. The law tracts, for example, indicate the strength and longevity of this oral tradition which reaches back to the first century, or perhaps even earlier for the Irish heroic tales or sagas. The Irish learned class (aeson dána) were similar to the druides of Gaul, and in early references ‘the name druid was more or less interchangeable with fili, meaning wise man or seer’ (O’Kelly 1995, 253). From an archaeological perspective, O’Kelly (1995, 254) speculates on the actuality of society portrayed in the sagas, there being ‘very little material found that is consonant with the rich aristocratic warlike people occupying the tribal or kingly capitals’ (O’Kelly 1995, 254).
The three *Brú na Bóinne* sites were part of the outlying farmland of the Cistercian Abbey of Mellifont by 1142, and “by 1378 the mound had been completely stripped of its former identity and was called merely ‘the new grange’” (Brennan 1983, 18). Charles Campbell acquired the land in 1688 and needing some stones for use on his property, instructed his labourers in 1699 to move some stones from a prominent mound in his property. In so doing, they unearthed the entrance to Newgrange; this was the first time that the tomb has been open since the revetment walls had collapsed during the Beaker period occupation some 3700 years earlier. At the time of the discovery, Edward Lhwyd, a Welsh scholar and Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford was in Ireland and he visited the site, making notes of his observations (Eogan 1986, 17). The exhilaration and excitement shared by Eogan and his team when they became the first to enter Knowth for some five thousand years was perhaps evident at Newgrange three hundred years ago when Lhwyd visited the site. After Lhwyd came a series of visitors over the centuries, with the three *Brú na Bóinne* passage tombs coming into State care under the *Ancient Monuments Protection Act* in 1882. The Board of Public Works became responsible for their protection and maintenance, and this has continued till the present day. Shortly thereafter some repairs and ‘tidying-up’ occurred, with explorations occurring under a succession of antiquarians and archaeologists. Extensive excavations, and accompanying restoration, occurred between 1962 and 1975. The first full account of Newgrange and Dowth was published in 1892 by George Coffey, Keeper of Irish Antiquities in the National Museum of Ireland: ‘The main significance of his paper lay not only in providing a description of the sites, but also in isolating and discussing a hitherto neglected aspect of them - the art’ (Eogan 1986, 19). Unlike Knowth and Dowth (some stones from Dowth being used as road base), Newgrange was not tampered with for thousands of years, although it is impossible to know what may have been ‘removed as souvenirs or in various cleanings-out of the interior’ (O’Kelly 1995, 105). Vandalism was occurring at the site during the latter part of the nineteenth Century, which prompted Public Works to install a metal gate at the site. A Mr.
Balfour of Townley Hall was moved to write that ‘the greatest danger in these matters seems to me to be behaviour of the tourists’ (O’Kelly 1994, 39).

7.1.2 Excavation and restoration 1962-1975
Between 1962 and 1975, the site was excavated under the supervision of the late Professor Michael O’Kelly, University College Dublin. This occurred over four-monthly successive summer seasons, the first priority being to look at the collapsed side that had occurred in the Late Neolithic/Beaker period. By conclusion of the excavations in 1975, the entire site had been cleared, including the whole ridge on which Newgrange and its three satellite passage-graves stood. ‘The tomb, its design and structure, were surveyed and examined and the floors of the passage excavated’ (O’Kelly 1994, 67). In the course of the excavations, considerable conservation, repair and restoration work was carried out by The Office of Public Works. This involved many aspects too numerous to recount here, but, for example included restoring kerbstones to upright positions in their former positions, and rebuilding the revetment wall using reinforced mass concrete. White quartz was used on the revetment façade and is generally ‘known for its energy-dispersing properties and it may, therefore, have been used to absorb and change its life giving energy, or it may simply have provided further visibility to those wishing to reach the site’ (King, 1998). Piped drains were also added so as to move rain water away from the tomb to stone-filled sink holes, and passage stones were replaced, including the roof and passage orthostats. ‘The whole of the passage and its roof was enclosed within a concrete tunnel which would resist the horizontal thrusts and weights of the restored cairn’ (O’Kelly 1994, 112) and no doubt also to meet safety requirements needed to operate as a major tourist attraction. The entrance to the tomb was modified and widened from its original design so as to provide ease of access for tourists (O’Kelly 1996, 110). It is understood that The Office of Public Works started charging admission fees to the site around 1969 when guided tours to the site commenced. The tours only ran in the summer months and the guides were all archaeological students
involved in the excavations. Although tourists were taken into the tomb during the excavation period, there were no doubt occasions when access was impossible. Most of the major structural works noted above were done at other times of the year (pers. comm., C. Tuffy). It was during this period that the roof box, open at the front and positioned over the entrance, was discovered in 1963. The south-east entrance orientation of the tomb was deliberate so as to allow the sun’s rays to enter the passage at winter solstice on 21 December. This is illustrated in Figure 7.3 which shows the entrance passage and cross-section of Newgrange, and how the sunlight travels to the end of the recess at winter solstice.

Figure 7.3: Path of sunlight through the entrance to Newgrange at winter solstice
This theory was first tested in 1969 and subsequently verified by later observations (O’Kelly 1994, 124). Its purpose is only speculative but general consensus is that ritual is the most likely reason why this feature was incorporated into the building. O’Kelly (1994, 123) suggests that the roof box is an offering place where gifts were placed on special days to be taken in by the spirits of the dead whose mortal remains were within. He suspects that precious artefacts, such as gold ornaments, coins, brooches and glass, found at site both by himself and earlier researchers, were offerings to the gods or the remains of the dead (O’Kelly 1994, 127). The lighting of the tomb in this way has added to the tourist attractiveness of the site, described in one guide as the world’s oldest solar observatory (Gerard-Sharp and Perry 1997, 48). When the writer visited the site, there was a ten year waiting list to visit the tomb two/three days either side of the winter solstice. It is understood that the Visitor Centre no longer takes names of people wishing to visit the site over the winter solstice (pers. comm., C. Tuffy).

7.1.3 Newgrange post 1975

Newgrange’s appeal as a tourist attraction seems to be a blend of coming to view a megalithic passage-grave linked with a rich Irish folklore tradition. O’Riordain and Daniel (1964, 19) state it is not unusual that Newgrange (as well as Stonehenge) would have ‘attracted a folklore based on imagination, half-forgotten history, unappreciated archaeology and the sort of nonsense that luxuriates in the lunatic fringes of serious archaeology’. They also make mention of a connection with the ‘little people’ and the Druids, which O’Kelly and other writers mention in varying degrees. Newgrange, as noted earlier, was the home to the Dagda who belonged to the Tuatha Dé (race of the goddess Danu) who lived in Ireland before the arrival of the Celts. When the Celts arrived, they retreated into the Irish fairy mounds or Sidhe, which are the special dwelling places of ‘Otherworld’ people. The Tuatha Dé were regarded as:
... supernatural beings who could and did perform deeds beyond the power of mortals. They were unequivocally pagan and were mainly portrayed as belonging to a remote past; nevertheless, in some unexplained way, they were able to live on from age to age so that they seemed always present and could intervene at will in the affairs of men (O’Kelly 1994, 45).

There are various myths and legends associated with their occupation of Newgrange, but it is outside the scope of this dissertation to cover these in detail. It should be noted that these myths receive popular currency in much of the information obtained from various sources looking at the Brú na Bóinne passage-graves.

Because of the mathematical precision involved with the design of the roof box and passage, O’Kelly (1995, 142) notes that there has been much interest in recent years with The Great Circle. The pioneering work done in the 1960s by Alexander Thom in the British Isles and France linked the construction of Neolithic structures and astronomy. Thom asserted ‘that virtually every site had functioned as a solar observatory, with stones aligned against natural or human features of the landscape to synchronize with movements of the sun, the moon or individual stars’ (Hutton 1992, 111). Thom’s discovery of a standard prehistoric unit of measurement, the ‘megalithic yard’, was fundamental to his theories. Since Thom’s work, his ideas have been tested at many sites but generally have as yet to be scientifically validated. Hutton (at p.114) says that Thom’s views are ‘only shared by his family, by Euan MacKie and by a handful of admirers outside academe, most of whom do not seem to be aware of the case against it’. Martin Brennan (1993) however disputes this archaeological perspective based upon his subsequent studies at Newgrange, stating that the three mounds and standing stones in the Boyne Valley were purposely positioned in alignment on terrestrial ley lines He suggests that:
... close matching of the mounds to the movements of the sun and moon at this latitude ... the mounds are not riddles or follies; they are living testimony to the indomitable spirit of the Stone Age people, who built not only for themselves, but for future generations ... megalithic [society was] clearly concerned with measuring time. Megalithic art, with its sundials and calendars, is a reflection of that pre-occupation' (Brennan 1983, 37/65/179).

He says that one of Dowth’s two passages is clearly aligned to Newgrange (the Newgrange-Dowth ley) and that two of the twelve orthostats in The Great Circle are aligned to Knowth. The two leys cross at R21, an ornamented orthostat at the junction of Newgrange’s passage and tomb, and ‘from this stone all of the twelve large standing stones surrounding Newgrange fall into terrestrial or astronomical alignments’ (Brennan 1998). Brennan’s suggested alignment of the sun and moon with the three Brú na Bóinne mounds and selected orthostats is shown at Figure 7.4.

Hutton (1992, 59) calls for caution in ascribing many theories and ideas to Newgrange based on its alignments and art on the basis that ‘we [do not] understand the social and political basis for the religion practiced at these tombs’. He asks:

But are all the details accurate? What, for example, of the quartz crystals and banded stones found on the ground outside the entrance? Professor O’Kelly decided that they had once decorated the walls above and around the opening, and there they are now. But at Knowth, George Eogan found the same rocks and wondered whether they had not been strewn upon the ground outside the entrance in order to provide a spiritual barrier. There is a possibility that at times the statements made by the tomb-builders (to spirits as well as to posterity) may be getting scrambled by their most careful interpreters (Hutton 1992, 59).

There are obviously still many unanswered questions about Newgrange’s past and the best one can say is that it is open to our spiritual pilgrims to draw on whatever Newgrange intuitively means to them in their quest to connect with the Other.
Figure 7.4: Suggested astronomical alignments with the three Brú na Bóinne passage-graves.

Source: Brennan 1983, 70.
Before looking at recent infrastructure changes at the site, it is opportune to ponder why spiritual pilgrims would want to visit Newgrange. For those on a spiritual quest, Newgrange offers different opportunities. Its pagan past, background in Irish folklore and somewhat tenuous Celtic links can be a magnet for many. One visitor commented in the survey that they came ‘To connect with pre-Christian Neolithic artefacts. To see if there was any Druidic influences. None explained!’ Smith (1994), speaking of her fascination with the neoliths in the Western Isles of Scotland, recounts her reasons for being drawn to them, sentiments perhaps equally relevant for Newgrange:

My connection to the great Neolithic sites up here seems to be that they are the Teachers, the Old Ones, the ancient Grandmothers, the Ancestors, who call me to them and demand that I listen in stillness and silence. If some find this personification of the stones hard to accept, perhaps I mean that they also embody the spirit of ancient wise ones and perhaps a wisdom of the Earth herself at the time of creation (Smith 1994, 17).

Similar comments have been made about Carnac in Brittany (France), one of the group of passage-grave tombs generally assumed to be the forerunner of the Brú na Bóinne passage-graves which the immigrating Neolithic people built after their arrival in Ireland. The menhirs or standings stones at Carnac were partially fenced off in 1991 because they were being damaged by pressure of tourist numbers (Périer-D’Ieteren 1998, 6). One of the local shop owners near the Carnac site describes the affect of these stones:

The standing stones have always been a place of life, a gathering place. Scientific people who use radiation detectors and diviners who use dowsers can tell you about that energy current exists in the alignments. Everyone can regenerate themselves there, in their own way. Local healers and therapists and people from many countries come here to join their energy to that of the stones. The summer solstice is the time of highest energy, although autumn isn’t too bad (Aviva and White, 1998).

The combined location of Newgrange over a ley line, and energies produced at the site over five millennia through ceremonial ritual, offers an opportunity for ‘New
Age’s spiritual pilgrims to tap into that energy. Anecdotal evidence suggests that these tourists would like peace and solitude so that they could, for example, meditate within the tomb itself. The writer came across one visitor doing just that at the Hill of Tara. Unfortunately, high demand for the site by mass tourists means that there is no opportunity for this to occur under present site operations as will be noted shortly. For some tourists who are there on a secular but spiritual pilgrimage, Newgrange is a contested site. Entry around winter solstice to watch the sun’s rays creep slowly down the access chamber is perhaps the only opportunity these pilgrims have to ‘bond’ with the site as Smith did above. However, for the time being, this opportunity is no longer possible.

The new Visitor Centre was opened on 4 June 1997 at a cost of IR£ 7 million, and changed the previous pattern of visitor visitation to both Knowth and Newgrange. The two-storey Centre is a well planned and designed facility, containing a information/ticket desk, exhibit area, shop, restaurant, viewing area and toilets. Prior to the Centre’s opening, visitors had gone directly to a small ticket box, parking in a small car park or on roadside verges alongside the narrow, windy country roads. Over time, houses on the access routes established cottage industries to cater to the tourist trade, such as selling Irish lace and woollen handicrafts.

With the opening of the new Centre, direct access to both sites ceased. Visitors wishing to visit one or both of the sites now have to go to the new Centre and purchase their tickets. They have to walk about 200m to the shuttle bus dispatch bay via a bridge over the River Boyne. Here visitors have undercover seating whilst waiting to board the 25-seater shuttle buses for the one-way 2km trip to the site. From anecdotal evidence it is understood that local residents near the site who operate these cottage industries, and also those from the nearby village of Slane who operate tea rooms and tourist information services, have expressed their concern about the loss of revenue due to the impact of the new Visitor Centre.
The capacity of the shuttle bus and the tour of the tomb itself are the same, namely twenty-five people. Based on the writer’s observations during her visit to the tomb on 2 July 1997, it is felt that it would be difficult to in any way increase the number of people to more than twenty-five because of the confined space in the tomb itself. During the three days on site, there was a continual progression of tour parties throughout the day in three stagings: introduction to the site outside the ticket box, visit to the tomb, and finally outside looking at the various ornamented stones and orthostats. Some people in the writer’s tour party were reluctant to leave and asked if they could stay inside longer. However, because of the back-to-back nature of the operation of the tours at the site, this request was denied. The writer suggests that by queuing to enter the chamber and then by necessity having to share one’s experiences at very close quarters with twenty or so strangers, is resulting in some negative visitor feedback. This was observed whilst on site and was also noted from the Geocities Website (1998). Similar sentiments were expressed by one person during the writer’s interview and talkback segment on the ‘Deep and Meaningful’ segment of Sarah McDonald’s morning show on ABC Radio’s Triple J (25 November 1998). Finally, in closing this section, it should be noted that the Paddynet Website (1998) stated that ‘the proposed Boyne Valley Interpretative Centre has caused considerable controversy in the area as to the wisdom of constructing such a large scale tourist facility in this precious environment’.

7.2 FIELDWORK: JULY 1997

The site was visited on 2 July 1997 to meet the Manager, Visitor Services, Ms. Clare Tuffy, and also to enable the writer to familiarize herself with the site and visit both Newgrange and Knowth before surveying commenced. This involved entering the tomb and evaluating the best way to effectively survey visitors without intruding on

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*On the writer’s visit on 2 July 1997, the guide repeatedly asked any who were disposed to claustrophobia to think very carefully about even entering the tomb, and if they did decide to enter, to stay towards the rear of the group so that they could exit quickly if the need arose.*
the visitors’ experience of the site. Self-complete surveys were administered on 3 and 4 July 1997 (two midweek days). It should be noted that surveying was conducted in peak summer tourist season when it is not uncommon for the guided tours of Newgrange to be fully booked before noon. This is because of the physical carrying capacity of the site and the time allowed for each tour party to move through the one hour, three-stage visit to Newgrange, excluding time spent in the Visitor Centre. The time in the interior of the tomb averages between fifteen to twenty minutes. It is understood from Ms. C. Tuffy that, on average, 1,000 visitors come to the Visitor’s Centre on weekdays and 1,500 on weekends. The busiest times are June-September and over Christmas. On 3 July 1997, there were 1,500 visitors to Newgrange.

Methodology

Permission to survey using a self-complete survey was obtained before departure from Australia (see Appendix F for copy of survey instrument). As well, the writer has corresponded with Ms. Tuffy by facsimile on several occasions, pre and post visit, to clarify several matters. The methodology used involved surveying tourists on the shuttle buses on their return journey to the shuttle bus dispatch bay, thus the experience of visiting the site was still very fresh in their minds. The bus ride took approximately five minutes, providing just enough time for people to complete the survey; the only problem with this sampling method was that the handwriting was sometimes not clearly legible due to the motion of the bus.

Results - quantifiable elements
Table 7.1: Demographic profile of participants

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<td>Tech. apprenticeship</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech. Diploma</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate degree</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate degree</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The gender mix was almost 2:1 male–female which is interesting but of no real significance. Baby Boomers represented over half of those surveyed (between 52-74%). Approximately 58% of those surveyed had undertaken some form of university education which is consistent with educational profiles found in the other case studies. Nearly three-quarters of those surveyed were from a professional/managerial and white collar background, which is consistent with Hurley, Archer and Fletcher’s (1994, 204) findings that foreign tourists comprised about 75% of these occupational groups: 85% of the cohort were international visitors. As Table 7.3 indicates, the educative motivation was ranked no. 1, and this is interesting because there were twenty-six teachers, five professors and three retired academics who responded to the survey. But it was school vacation time in both the northern and southern hemispheres which perhaps could have explained why 21% of those surveyed were educators.
Table 7.2: Trip characteristics and previous attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information re site (n=161)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio/television</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books/travel guides</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>51.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi media</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel group (n=160)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With friends/relatives</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>78.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a tour group</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed friends/tour group</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engaging in tourist activities(n=159)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited site only</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited historic sites as well</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting friends &amp; relatives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit museums &amp; galleries</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping as well</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi tourist activities</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>87.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visited other sites (n=158)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited none of listed sites</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>35.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill of Tara</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dromberg Stone Circle</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clonmacnoise</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stonehenge</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avebury</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi site visits</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>43.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Books and travel guides were the primary sources of information on Newgrange. In a way this is surprising given the site’s antiquity, but perhaps this is because, unlike the Egyptian pyramids and Stonehenge, Newgrange has yet to achieve tourism ‘icon status’ because it has only had a short life as a restored, mass tourist attraction. As noted earlier, organized public tours of the site only commenced in 1969. Newgrange could also be less likely to attract the attention of television and radio program producers; only two visitors from Dublin sourced information on Newgrange from
radio or television which indicates the limited range of this popular media as a way of motivating people to visit the site. This is particularly so given that 85% of visitors were international visitors. Almost 80% attended the site with friends and relatives. This high percentage could perhaps be explained by the fact that many of the visitors were from North America and Australia, countries with a strong Irish migrant heritage, and were likely to be visitors revisiting their cultural roots and/or staying with friends/relatives. One person reinforced this by stating in the survey that they had ‘come here to learn about my heritage’. Six percent visited the site only, with the remainder engaging in some other form of touristic activity before or after their visit to Newgrange. Stonehenge, as perhaps would be expected of such a high profile megalithic tourist attraction, was a popular tourist site. The Hill of Tara likewise was of equal popularity, but this perhaps can be explained due to its close proximity to Newgrange. In this section on the survey instrument, two visitors (one from the U.S.A. and one from Denmark) added that they had visited Carnac in Brittany, and a third, a Belgian visitor, added ‘in Britain (France)’, presumably also meaning Brittany. In the ‘Other Comments’ section in the survey, a visitor had added: ‘I have been coming to Ireland for the past eight years and take every opportunity to visit Neolithic and megalithic sites. I make connection with the similar sites in France. Perhaps in search of personal Neolithic roots’.

Table 7.3: Rank ordered means of motivational items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>StdDev</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>...to learn new things</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>...experience an authentic Neolithic site</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>...to satisfy my curiosity</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>...to visit a tourist attraction</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>...to do something completely different</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>...for spiritual awareness</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>...self discovery</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>...so the family could do something together</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>...to meet people with similar interests</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>...so I could be with my friends</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>...no particular reason - just passing</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Referring back to Table 3.2, the results of Table 7.3 can be put into seven categories in Table 7.4 below.

**Table 7.4: Sub-grouping of tourist attraction visitor motivation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-group</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social stimulation</td>
<td>9, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity</td>
<td>3, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist icon</td>
<td>2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinship</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual quest</td>
<td>6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sub-group Learning was the main motive in coming to Newgrange. As noted earlier, thirty four of the respondents were educators/retired educators and of this group, 79% agreed that they were at Newgrange as part of a learning experience. For example, a comment made in the survey:

'Visited to learn about Newgrange. As a result was awe inspired and moved to a better understanding of New Stone Age, Archaeology - spirituality. A moving experience aided by a well informed and inspired tour guide who was a pleasure to listen to'.

Tourist icon as a sub-group ranked second overall, with the site’s inherent nature - ‘an authentic Neolithic site’ - ranking second in importance. Newgrange is not a contrived, man-made tourist attraction, great care and attention being taken during its excavation and subsequent restoration; for example, detailed pre-excavation plans, numbering stones sequentially and so on. However, one must wonder, as did Hutton earlier, how authentic is the site after 1975, particularly with construction of a 3m high mass-concrete wall around most of its girth. Concerns held by some regarding the accuracy of O’Kelly’s restoration are quietly put aside in The Office of Public Work’s site guide. One Website visited states that ‘when the mound was discovered, the rock face had collapsed and there was no indication of how the stones ... had been arranged. The rocks were arranged randomly, and two of the best examples of cave
drawings were placed in front of the entrance' (Hylton and Gilligan, 1998). One visitor even commented in the survey: 'Undo some of the bad reconstruction done by O'Kelly.' Widening the entrance from the original design to allow ease of passage for tourist groups, along with strengthening of the passage roof, were practical aspects necessary to enable the site to safely handle large numbers of tourists. However, perhaps it is possible that alterations could affect the intrinsic energy and/or sacred nature of the site. The shop owner at Carnac cited earlier said that this has already occurred at Carnac since fences were erected in 1991 (Aviva and White, 1998). Perhaps too it is possible that the impact of such an extensive, modern interference irrevocably alters the site so that it becomes like any other modern concrete structure: it ends up being just one more modern, albeit somewhat rustic, rural museum. From earlier pre-1962 views of the site the writer has seen, there has been a substantial change in the visual amenity of Newgrange post 1975. Figure 7.5 shows the site as it is today and Figure 7.6 was taken at Knowth during the writer's visit and provides an idea of the size of reconstruction involved with that site. This would no doubt have been similar to what occurred at Newgrange during its reconstruction between 1962 and 1975. Newgrange's age, due particularly to modern advances in carbon dating technology, brooks no argument with the fact that its authenticity as a Neolithic site of a certain age is today beyond doubt. Newgrange as a pure tourist attraction ranked fourth in this sub-group. One speculates that if a similar survey had been done at Stonehenge, the 'Tourist Attraction' sub-group would rank much higher because of Stonehenge's high tourist appeal and profile as a tourist icon. Ranking fourth suggests that Newgrange has not been accorded mass tourist 'icon status' as highlighted earlier, and the high number of tertiary-educated visitors and educators may have explained its inclusion as a tourist attraction somewhat further down the scale.
Figure 7.5:  Newgrange as it is today
(taken by the writer on 4 July 1997)
Figure 7.6: Construction work at Knowth
(taken by the writer on 4 July 1997)
The third sub-group, Curiosity, contains two elements, namely ‘curiosity’ and ‘doing something different’: 91% of those surveyed had not visited Newgrange before. Again, given the high percentage of international visitors surveyed (85%) this is not unusual, but in 1994 over one-third of non-Irish visitors were repeat visitors (McNiff, 1996, 53). It is not known why this large cohort of visitors had not visited the site before, but perhaps this is completely unrelated to the fact that they were international visitors. Of the remaining fourteen tourists who had previously visited Newgrange, nine had visited the site once before, two people previously visiting the site twice and one person having visited the site at least twenty times. One visitor had obviously visited the site previously, and added in the survey: ‘The centre etc. were not here when I came before and the experience is still magical in a slightly different way. I am pleased the site is treated with respect not just as a commercial enterprise’.

Although 80% of those visiting the site came with family and/or relatives, the subgroup Kinship was ranked very low as a motivator for visiting Newgrange. Again, there is only speculation why this ranked so low. Perhaps it is the sheer age and imposing nature of Newgrange itself that seemed to demand more than just a family outing, namely being educated through visiting an important, prehistoric megalithic site. Perhaps this aspect explains why the Spiritual Quest sub-group ranked mid-range, namely sixth and seventh. By coming to learn about both the archeological and romantic history of the site, the visitor also hoped to achieve some connection with the sacredness of the site. From the thirty-eight responses who rated ‘spiritual awareness’ as a motive for visiting Newgrange, between 62-76% of those were in the Baby Boomer category. This result must be viewed with caution as over half of those surveyed were Baby Boomers and as noted earlier, the survey cohort was highly educated. In the course of administering the surveys, the writer talked to about half a dozen visitors who spoke of coming to Newgrange as part of a ‘spiritual quest’. These people, once noting the word ‘pilgrimage’ on the survey, generally asked more about the research and mentioned some of their own feelings from the visit to the tomb. One couple also commented on one of the other sites listed on the survey.
(Dromberg Stone Circle in Ireland), particularly its strong and pure spiritual energy. The sixth ranked sub-group was Social Stimulation, and as noted with the two previous sub-groups, it is felt that the nature of the site demanded more than just furtherance of social bonding to explain why people were motivated to visit Newgrange.

Thus, in summarising the quantitative data, based on the small sample population, albeit obtained in the peak summer visitation period in 1997, the average visitor to Newgrange appeared to be there because they wanted an educative experience in a authentic prehistoric site. ‘Curiosity’ was also an important motivator, as was visiting the site merely just because it was a tourist attraction *per se*. The spiritual quest was ranked low, ranked slightly higher than *communitas*. The ‘act of faith’ motivational question was not posed in this case study.

**Results - qualitative elements**

The qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage as summarized in Table 3.3 are discussed below in point form:

- There was no observable sense of the ludic at Newgrange.
- *Communitas* was not observed at Newgrange, apart from the customary salutary tourist exchanges that generally occur at large tourist attractions.
- The café in the new Centre provided an opportunity for commensality, particularly as the site is remote from other eateries, but because of the low ranking of the spiritual quest in the quantitative data, this would have only represented a shared conviviality.
- As noted earlier, Newgrange is a site that has experienced ceremonial ritual over five millennia, but the writer did not observe any tourists engaging in devotional ritual.
- As above, the site would no doubt have been consecrated over time, but no tourists were observed consecrating the site.
Those wishing to spend more time inside the tomb, and perhaps even meditate there, would no doubt agree that Newgrange is a contested site. It is a popular mass tourist attraction, and despite the best intentions of the site managers to allow access to individuals at winter solstice, spiritual pilgrims will experience difficulty if they are seeking a personalized interaction with the powerful energies at Newgrange.

Votive offerings have been left at Newgrange over millennia by successive societies, but the writer did not observe any tourists leaving votive offerings at the site.

Newgrange is an authentic neolithic site, despite its most recent reconstruction and renovation. The authentic nature of the site was also reinforced from the quantitative data where it ranked second.

7.3 CONCLUSION

Newgrange is a 5200 year old site which, since its restoration in 1975, seems to be well on the way to being awarded tourist 'icon status' if increasing numbers and modern tourist infrastructure are used as a yardstick. Its archaeological antiquity and pedigree as an authentic Neolithic and megalithic site are beyond doubt, however its attractiveness as a tourist attraction is also derived both from its rural setting, and myth and legend from Irish folklore that surround the site. Magico-religious pagan ritual has long been associated with the site both in its funerary aspect, and one suspects, also with its construction and as a general place of awe and reverence. Much of the tourist information on the site tends to romanticize its history, particularly its links with Irish and Celtic legends. Those surveyed tended to come for an educative experience, as well as because of the authenticity of the site. The latter aspect is open to debate given the amount of reconstruction required to make the site amenable to demands of mass tourist visitation. Whether or not visitors are able to make connection with those sacred realms highlighted at the beginning of this
Chapter in a twenty minute, fully narrated, non-stop visit to the tomb’s interior, is another matter. It may well be that pressure of visitor numbers on Newgrange, together with economic rationalism, mean that future tourists will have even less time to reflect on the passage-grave’s 5200 year old history.

Newgrange does not appear, based on the survey results, to fulfil many of the Hallmarks of Pilgrimage. The spiritual quest was ranked in the middle of the motivational questions, and there were few observable qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage. Nevertheless, from the comments on the surveys, from one comment made in the visitor’s book at Uluru (see next Chapter), and from anecdotal evidence, it appears that some are coming to Newgrange on modern secular pilgrimage. The closure of bookings for the winter solstice, with its ten year waiting list, is evidence of this. Some authors have suggested that the site is on a ley line and has been constructed in accordance with principles of sacred geometry, making it one of the oldest solar observatories in the world. As noted earlier, those in search of a mystical experience may be disappointed because the site’s operation as a busy tourist attraction affords little opportunity to experience the stillness and energy contained within Ireland’s most celebrated passage-grave. If nothing else, tourist and pilgrim alike can purchase a souvenir from the new Visitor Centre to remind them of reaching their journey’s end.
CHAPTER 8

ULURU MONOLITH
CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

Uluru\(^2\) (see locational map at Figure 1.1, and Figure 8.1 below) is the quintessential tourist icon that echoes the unspoken call for many Australians to escape to the Outback\(^3\), seen by many to be ‘Australia’s geographic and spiritual or emotional centre’ (McGrath 1991, 115).

\[\text{Figure 8.1: Uluru from the air} \]
(taken by the writer on 1 November 1998)

\(^1\) After transfer of title for Uluru National Park from the Commonwealth government to the traditional owners in October 1985 (‘Handback’), European site names were replaced with Aboriginal names. Uluru was formerly Ayers Rock, Kata Tjuta the Olgas or Mt. Olga.

\(^2\) Uluru is located in Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, some 335 kms south-west of Alice Springs.

\(^3\) ‘First recorded in print in 1869, the term ‘Outback’ referred to the country west of Wagga Wagga … its location has since receded to remoter districts’ (McGrath 1991, 117).

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Uluru is also a totem for white Australians, along with the Australian flag, kangaroos and kookaburras (Whitakker 1994, 319). Hugh Mackay (1993) discusses Australia’s obsession with all things rural, even though Australia is one of the most urbanised societies in the world: to him, Australia’s position as the largest market, per capita, of four-wheel drive vehicles illustrates this obsession. The fact that many four-wheel drive owners may never switch to four-wheel drive mode is irrelevant: the vehicles carry the promise that one day Australians will ‘set off for Kakadu to do our duty as real Australians’ (Mackay 1993, 213). The real Australian, replete with authentic Australian values and skills, dwells in the Outback, with ‘the most authentic manifestations of bush values and actions’ being located at ‘the Centre’, or Central Australia (Marcus 1988, 257). In 1992, the Austrian-Swiss composer and conductor Robert Bachmann composed the Uluru symphony which reflects the changing colour and aspects of Uluru. Bachmann says that with the aid of modern technology, his symphony can be like Uluru, always in a state of flux: ‘It’s different on each visit, even seen from the same standpoint. So like a river, its always the same and always different’ (Orbitex, 1998). It is also ‘an icon of many conflicting themes in Australian history, symbolising Aboriginal culture, European colonisation and a recent fragile but productive model of both groups working together’ (Lumby, 1998). Such is the complexity and diversity of the many meanings of Uluru.

Looking at Uluru as a pilgrimage site involves discussion of the physical setting, considering the history of the site (both pre- and post-European settlement), and development of tourism. Uluru, like Stonehenge and Newgrange, for example, can claim to be all things to all people in terms of touristic appeal, and its appeal as a sacred, contested site is finally canvassed before discussing the results of fieldwork in November 1998. With this site, history features strongly in the discussion, with Aboriginal mythology being discussed only briefly as relating to tourism and the sacredness of the site.
8.1 HISTORY OF ULURU

8.1.1 Geological history of Uluru
Between 1960 and 1964, the Commonwealth Bureau of Mineral Resources, Geology and Geophysics completed the first systematic geological mapping of the area around Uluru and Kata Tjuta. Subsequent studies, using the latest technology such as radiometric and magnetic surveys, have further added to understanding the area’s geological history.

The Amadeus Basin covers much of Central Australia and was formed between 900 million to 600 million years ago when it was below sea level. In the Cambrian period some 550 million years ago, the south-west margin of the basin was raised above sea level to form the Petermann Ranges, and over time, these were rapidly eroded. The sedimentary rocks that are products of this erosion formed very thick alluvial fans, forming the basis for Uluru and Kata Tjuta as they are known today. The alluvial fans became subsequently buried beneath sand, mud and lime sediments, and around 400 million years ago, the area was strongly faulted so that the original ‘horizontal layers at Uluru were rotated into a nearly vertical position’ (Sweet and Crick 1996, 11). Kata Tjuta did not suffer the same degree of uplift. It was in this period of uplift that much of Central Australia was raised above sea level, and from then on both Uluru and Kata Tjuta have been subject to continuing weathering and erosion. The remnants of these geomorphic processes provide the natural setting that provides today’s touristic appeal of both Uluru and Kata Tjuta, whether it be valleys, caves or topographic joints (curved fractures). The presence of fault lines, as is the case with the Amadeus Basin, may predispose any area to earthquakes and the area around both sites has several fault lines. On 28 May 1989, a Richter ML 5.6 earthquake occurred some 31 km beneath the southern margin of the Amadeus Basin: ‘it was felt over a radius of 220 km and caused minor damage at Yulara’ (Michael-Leiba, Love and McCue, 1994).
8.1.2 Indigenous history of Uluru

Sweet and Crick (1996, 3) state in their Introduction that ‘archaeological research suggests that there has been human settlement in this region from at least 22,000 years ago, although the initial settlement was evidently much earlier’. According to Terrill (1989, 50) who cites the work of Josephine Flood (1983), human settlement in the area could well go back 53,000 years when people would have come from Asia during the period of low sea levels. Layton (1989, 17, citing Gould 1971) says this early culture could best be characterised as ‘a stable hunting and foraging way of life which can be regarded as the Australian desert culture’. Ceremonial items were traded, otherwise the Aborigines lived a purely subsistence way of life, surviving in the semi-arid conditions over many centuries through their knowledge based on observations of climate, water systems, flora, fauna and landforms. Hill (1994, 183) refers to Finlayson who, after first coming to the Centre in the early 1930s, stressed the importance of the ‘dynamic and interactive relationship Aborigines had with their habitat.’ Fire or the use of ‘firestick farming’, a term first used by Rhys Jones in the 1960s, was systematically used to the Aborigine’s advantage. Hill (1994, 184) notes Major Mitchell, one of Australia’s pioneering explorers, as stating that ‘Fire, grass and kangaroos and human inhabitants, seem all dependent on each other for existence in Australia.’

This connectedness with the land is central to the Tjukurpa, often referred to as the Dreaming. According to Hume (1996, 361) ‘Dreaming ancestors rose up from beneath the earth … as they paused at certain locations, they left traces of the essence of themselves, transforming the country and endowing it with immanent significance.’ Oldmeadow (1991, 179) likens the multi-layered meanings within the Dreaming to the Buddhist notion of dharma and Swain (1989, 346) sees the term as being synonymous with the English term ‘Law. The latter author sees one use of the term

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4 Tjukurpa: the religious interpretations of the profound bonding of people to one-another, to their country, and to the species of animals and plants inhabiting it. It is continually renewed by its expression in song, dance, verba: narratives of creation stories, and symbolic depiction and re-enacted continually in ceremonial journeys (HALT 1993, iii)
'Dreaming' to 'indicate the abiding quality of specific places ... locations [where] timeless ancestral beings whose activities are recounted and relived in myth' (Swain 1989, 347). The Dreaming has also been used as a marketing tool by the Australian Tourist Commission, amongst others, 'to depict Australia as a land of ancient magic and enchantment' (Rojek 1993, 180). In its purest form, it is a cosmology of various language groups in the area around Uluru and Kata Tjuta, but one question that today however remains unanswered is how much remains of the pre-European contact myths? It is understood that there are certain aspects of the Tjukurpa that are so secret that they will always remain thus, protected by tribal initiation vows and ceremonies. The unanswered question is whether some of the stories retold to the tourists today been made more palatable for the mass tourism market. The possibility must also be countenanced that over the course of the past one hundred and twenty years of interaction with Europeans, that some aspects of the Tjukurpa have merged with the dominant culture or other external indigenous cultures, such as from Africa and North America. To raise these questions is not being disrespectful to the Anangu, but similar things have occurred in many other parts of the world where colonial imperialism, often masquerading as mass tourism, has occurred.

Uluru is at the cross roads of several ancestral groups or 'dreaming tracks', 'a node in a great web of Tjukurpa paths' (Breeden 1994, 19). These tracks or 'songlines' were pilgrimage tracks across the Central Australian desert landscape. Kata Tjuta and Atila (Mt. Conner) are also crossroads on these 'dreaming tracks' and together they unite the people into one desert culture. The Aboriginal peoples around Uluru are divided into several distinct language groups. Pitjantjatjara and Yankuntjatjara, and to a large extent, Ngaanyatjarra, peoples refer to themselves as Anangu (Pitjantjatjara for 'we people'). This is done so as 'to distinguish themselves from non-Aboriginal people as well as from Aboriginal people who come from other parts of Australia' (ANWPS 1986, 72).

The Tjukurpa is a network that binds the Anangu and is reinforced in their culture by ceremony (inma) using 'storytelling, singing and dancing - constantly distilling and dramatising their knowledge' (Breeden 1994, 15). The Tjukurpa has been handed
down in an oral tradition from generation to generation, reinforced by cave and rock art, and since the coming of Europeans in the 1870s, the myth and ritual which is central to the *Tjukurpa* has been condensed to writing. It is outside the scope of this dissertation to look at the various *Tjukurpa* legends, but suffice it to say that there are three main creator (besides lesser) beings at Uluru: *mala* (rufous hare-wallaby), *kuniya* (rock python) and *liru* (poisonous snakes). Some of these beings are traditionally, though it appears not exclusively, linked to male and female stories and/or *inma*. Likewise, certain sites (some of which are termed sacred in their *Tjukurpa* context) in and around Uluru are linked to these creation stories, such as *kuniya* and *liru* at Mutijulu (Maggie Springs). For Anangu, geological features such as caves and rock formations relate to the *Tjukurpa*, representing visible imprints of ancestral beings and a visible reminder that the stories passed down over the centuries actually occurred. Ancestral disappearance for the Australian Aborigine is not one of 'celestial withdrawal but of terrestrial transformation and continued presence. After their period of creative activity, the ancestors are depicted as sleeping beneath the ground at a sacred place …' (Smith 1985, 5). Many such sites may also contain the spiritual power of ancestral beings, thus they should be kept clear of grass and other plants unless the ancestral being is malevolent. Release of the spiritual power of the ancestral beings can be achieved through ritual, as well as by rubbing the rock (Layton 1989, 16).

For the Aborigines, art is an expression of present day life and as David Mowaljarlai of the Ngarinyin community in the Kimberleys explained:

> Our paintings are our title to the land. If we lose our title, the paintings are empty. It's as simple as that. Besides we are not revealing all the secrets. Not the most essential ones (Fox, 1998).

A recent study of the rainbow serpent in Arnhem Land rock art by the Australian Museum, Sydney, suggests that the Australian Aborigines have the world’s oldest religion. The rainbow serpent, which has quickly come to 'symbolise the spiritual dimensions of change, chaos and creativity', is a sacred symbol of a religious tradition which began some six thousand years ago (Dayton, 1996). The theft of an
Aboriginal engraving from bedrock at a sacred site in the north-western Arthur Pieman Protected Area in Tasmania, highlights the need for tighter protection of sacred sites and rock art in general (Walker, 1998). Australia’s cultural heritage laws were tightened in the mid-1980s so that although interest in Aboriginal art and artefacts has increased, it is not common for thefts still to occur (McCulloch, 1998).

8.1.3 European discovery of Uluru

The first citings of Uluru and Kata Tjuta occurred in the 1870s with the European explorers Ernest Giles and William Gosse. Giles was the first European to see Kata Tjuta, his sighting occurring on 13 October 1872, naming Lake Amadeus and Mt. Olga after the then King and Queen of Spain (Sweet and Crick 1996, 4). Some eight months later on 18 July 1873, Gosse became the first European to see, then climb, Uluru. His journal for that day recalls his first impressions of ‘the hill’ which he named Ayers Rock after Sir Henry Ayers, the then Premier of South Australia.

When I was only two miles distant and the hill for the first time coming into view, what was my astonishment to find it was an immense pebble rising abruptly from the plain ... This rock is certainly the most wonderful natural feature I have ever seen (Harney 1974, 50).

Gosse went onto Kata Tjuta on 8 August 1873, climbed up some of the steep slopes and ‘could have reached the top, but I was not so sure about being able to get down again’ (Sweet and Crick 1996, 4). Giles was not to reach Uluru until June 1874, his journal notes in comparing the two sites characteristic of the Romantic ideas of his era: ‘Mt. Olga is the more wonderful and grotesque, Mt. Ayers the more sublime’ (Hill 1994, 68). However, the competitive exploration in the area was short lived and petered out by the turn of the century with the realisation that the difficult arid conditions were not conducive for the establishment of a pastoral industry.

Hill (1994, 77) notes that the first photographs taken at Uluru (by Tietkins in 1889) was not of the Rock as an entity, but of Maggie Springs (now Mutijulu), the waterhole named by Gosse in 1873. Baldwin Spencer, Professor of Biology at the
University of Melbourne and a member of the Horn expedition which was the first scientific trek into the Centre, took the first full panoramic photograph of Uluru in 1894. It was also at this time that early pioneering research into Aboriginal Australia, linked with overseas anthropological thought, was carried out in Central Australia. Berndt and Berndt (1992, 535) call this the Constructive phase of anthropological studies into the Australian Aborigines, mentioning the importance of Baldwin Spencer, C. Strehlow and Radcliffe-Browne. The foundation of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Sydney in 1925-1926 signified, according to Berndt and Berndt (1992, 537), the commencement of the phase of systematic, professional research into the history of the Australian Aborigines. T.G.H. Strehlow and C.P. Mountford, based on their work in the area from the 1930s, feature prominently in pre-Handback history.

Also around this time, large reserves were declared by the Commonwealth (now Northern Territory), South Australian and Western Australian governments as sanctuaries for the Aborigines living in the border country where these land units meet (ANWPS 1986, 13). Between the First and Second World Wars, non-indigenous visitors to the area came in many guises: missionaries, welfare officials, adventurers such as Lasseter in his elusive search for gold, and the ‘doggers’ who traded dingo scalps with the Aborigines.

Assimilation of Aborigines was the official Commonwealth government policy after World War II, with the expansion of government settlements and missions, and the establishment of ration depots in an attempt to stop Anangu from moving into settled areas. Behind this was the belief that the Anangu culture was collapsing, but only recently this observation has been recognised as being mistaken. The effects of change, such as experimenting with food, clothes and non-indigenous transport modes, were taken as signs of ruin and decay. Despite attempts to keep the Anangu on reserves and settlements, nevertheless they still travelled away from their reserves to gather ‘bush foods, arranging and attending ceremonies and marriages, and teaching their young people the skills and beliefs that had always been essential for their survival’. Tourists also started to trickle through to Uluru after World War II,
and ‘the pressure on welfare workers to move the Anangu from Uluru, however, increased as tourism increased’ (ANWPS 1986, 14).

As part of the government’s assimilation policy, Ayers Rock National Park was made part of the Petermann reserve in 1920. Subsequently,

In 1958 the Ayers Rock-Mount Olga area was excised from the South West Aboriginal Reserve and declared as reserve number 1012, [becoming] Ayers Rock-Mount Olga National Park ... [it was] gazetted on 24 May 1977 (with a total area of 1,325km²) as Uluru (Ayers Rock-Mount Olga) National Park under sub-section 7(2) of the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1975 (Cth). The proclamation was further amended in 1993 to change the name of the park to Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, reflecting the Aboriginal heritage of the site and specifically identify its cultural landscape values (World Conservation Monitoring Centre, 1998).

Swain (1991, 17) states that World War II also provides a reference point for studies of indigenous peoples and ‘since that time Aboriginal people have received social services, voting rights, award wages, and the freehold title to large tracts of their traditional lands’. From the 1960s there was a shift in the status quo between the Anangu and the non-indigenous (or piranpa) communities, culminating in the transfer of inalienable freehold land to the Uluru-Kata Tjuta Land Trust from the Commonwealth Government on 26 October, 1985. Again, the details relating to these events are outside the scope of this work, and are covered in much of the material reviewed, including the Australian Broadcasting Commission’s comprehensive two-part ‘Tenth Anniversary of Handback’ radio programme (Raymond, 1995a and b). The land, now to be known at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park (the Park), was then leased back via a ninety-nine year lease to the then Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service (which subsequently became the Australian Nature Conservation Agency, now known as Parks Australia North). A Board of Management for the Park, which has an Anangu majority, was gazetted on 21 April 1986, and held its first meeting on 22-23 April 1986 (ANWPS 1986, 17). Consistent with the purposes and objectives of the Park as stated in the Plan of Management (ANWPS, 1986), a high priority has been given to the interpretation of the Aboriginal significance of the Park. One way this has occurred has been to
substitute Anangu place names for European place names formerly used around the Park. ‘Renaming is one of the most direct and effective means of asserting to the general public that a site is of interest to ... the legal custodianship of the Aboriginal people’ (Jacobs and Gale, 1994, 17). According to Gatjil Djerrkura (‘The Aboriginal patterns that haunt Australia’, 1997), native title is only one means to Aboriginal empowerment, another being economic self reliance through commercial enterprise. One way this occurs at Uluru is through gate fees into the park, as well as other permits for commercial activities such as commercial filming, photography and operating tours. Twenty-five percent of income coming into the Park (approximately $4.4 million annually: 1997/98) goes to the traditional owners (Uluru-Kata Tjuta Land Trust), and from that 20% (or 5% of the total) goes towards the running of the Mutijulu Community. The remainder is distributed amongst the traditional owners on a family unit basis (pers. comm., Paul Josif, Community Liaison Officer).

8.1.4 Development of tourism at Uluru

Bill Harney, who was the first ranger at Uluru from 1957-1962, dates the beginning of organised tourism at Uluru to around 1947. Harney’s reporting of the Tjukurpa is today held in low esteem by Anangu and Park Management, a comment in Hill’s work (1994, 103) (quoting Tony Tjamiwa) stating that ‘Bill Harney ... had it all wrong’. Hill (1994, 105), unlike many of the other works read, is more conciliatory in his consideration of Harney’s work which he saw as a ‘yarning, anecdotal account’ by a kindly, venerable bushman. From the interviews on Raymond’s programme (1995a), one unidentified speaker says that those early tourists really had to ‘rough it’, giving three reasons why tourists came to Uluru in those early days of tourism:

- roughing it and seeing outback Australia,
- the Rock itself (the Olgas would have been harder to get to in those days), and
- in the early days of the tourist industry, being able to meet and interact with the Aborigines (Raymond, 1995a).
It could be argued that those motives still hold true today, however the strong educative element now seems to becoming more important as well as the desire to experience a destination’s cultural authenticity (see 3.4.1).

In 1959 an airstrip was built close to the northern side of Uluru and the first motel leases were granted. Aborigines became increasingly involved in the tourism industry, chopping firewood and cooking food for the early tourists who camped in tents close to the Rock, and from the 1960s, selling their artefacts, men helping in motel construction and women working as housemaids. It was also through an increase in popularity of tourism at Uluru that problems started to arise with tourists trespassing onto sacred sites, with one area, Warayaki, being fenced in 1974. It took another ten years for additional sites to be similarly protected. Even the visitor’s book kept in the cairn at the top of Uluru was not spared the negative impacts of mass tourism; frustrated by the lack of space to enter their names in the book, tourists ‘chose to cover the existing records with abusive remarks’ (Jacobs and Gale 1994, 26). The sacred sites around Uluru are clearly signposted by new 2m by 50cm signs which employ international symbols to indicate that photographing and entering the site are forbidden ($5000 maximum penalty). One or two older signs still remain as Figure 8.2 indicates⁴. Each sign records the name of the site and its importance as a site for the Anangu in English, then Pitjantjatjara. This is followed by brief statements in Japanese, French, Italian and German mentioning the $5000 penalty for disobeying the wishes of the traditional owners by entering and taking photographs of the enclosed area. Several writers state that the Anangu view with disdain the superficiality of tourists merely taking photographs to record their visit, leaving without fully understanding Anangu culture and the significance of Uluru. The writer observed just that at Mutijulu on Anangu Tours Sunset Tour (see Figure 8.3).

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⁴ By the placement of the new sign some 150m around the corner from the old sign shown (which was not visible from the spot the photograph was taken from), the writer trusts that she has not been disrespectful to the traditional owners and also infringed Park regulations.
Figure 8.2: **An old sign designating an Anangu sacred site**
(taken by the writer on 1 November 1988)
Figure 8.3: Tourists taking photographs at Mutijulu
(taken by the writer on 2 November 1998)

In 1982, the Northern Territory Government bought 100km² of freehold title land just outside the Park (Ayers Rock Resort Co. Ltd.), and by 1984 all accommodation and commercial leases had been transferred to this area - Yulara - some 14km from Uluru. The resort has a revenue base of more than $70 million, and recently completed a $31 million upgrade and expansion. The airport runway was also recently extended at a cost of $13 million. The airport, which handles up to seventy flights per week, is also on resort land and has a sign ‘Welcome to Ayers Rock Resort’ greeting new arrivals (Hooper, 1996). Whilst the name Yulara is used to denote the township settlement, the resort is called Ayers Rock Resort. Raymond (1995a) notes that despite the adoption of Anangu names in the Park, the Northern Territory Government still retains the names Ayers Rock and the Olgas, arguing that these names have recognition within the tourism industry. She notes that the Uluru-Kata Tjuta Board of Management is not happy with this decision, and as noted earlier at 3.1.2 discussing the importance of ‘place’ within the tourism context, this can send mixed messages to the various stakeholders. The new Cultural Centre was opened in October 1995 and
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is shaped like two serpents from the *Tjukurpa: kuniya* (python) and *liru* (poisonous snakes). It is constructed from local red sand mud-brick and timber. The aim of the Cultural Centre is educative, as well as offering commercial opportunities to showcase and sell local Aboriginal art and artefacts. ‘The [Cultural] Centre was first sketched by the Anangu people as lines in the red sand’ and subsequently designed by Melbourne architect Greg Burgess (Hooper 1997, 68). In 1996, the Northern Territory chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects awarded the Tracy Memorial Award to Gregory Burgess Pty. Ltd.

Approximately half of Uluru’s visitors are of international origin, a fact which was corroborated by the large number of international visitors who responded to the survey. Zeppel (1998, 103), (reporting on comments made by Joc Schiechmen from the Northern Territory Tourism Commission at the 1997 Fulbright Symposium held in Darwin), notes that surveys indicate that ‘58% of international visitors want to experience Aboriginal art and culture’, but the surveys ‘do not indicate what the Aboriginal experience is about and what visitors want to do’. Along with the Sydney Opera House, Uluru is one of Australia’s best known tourist icons, and its international status is further enhanced by its dual World Heritage listing (1987 for natural values and 1994 for cultural values), as well as being recognised in 1977 as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve (McIntyre and Boag 1995, 38). Visitor numbers have trebled between 1986 and 1996, and it is forecast by the year 2000 that visitor numbers will reach 400,000 annually (Hooper, 1996). In an undated leaflet entitled ‘Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, Visitor Numbers’ obtained from the Cultural Centre, 337,735 tourists visited the Park in 1997. Hooper (1996) notes the tensions evident at the time of her article between Anangu and service providers, and raises the general issue of physical and social carrying capacity. Based on studies conducted in 1992, McIntyre and Boag (1995, 41) found that tourists visiting sites at times of high use (such as early morning and late afternoon) reported that visitor numbers were generally too high and that, with one exception, numbers should be limited. At some sites, such as Kantju Gorge and the Sunrise Viewing area, visitor satisfaction was reduced by both the number and behaviour of fellow tourists. By contrast, however, at the Climb and on the Valley of Winds Walk at Kata Tjuta, they
found that visitor numbers and ‘their supportive behaviours actually added to the experience’ (McIntyre and Boag 1995, 41). The reasons behind this trend were varied, including a need for security. Park Management and Anangu will, at some point in the not too distant future, be forced to decide whether or not visitor numbers are contained within a quota system. A quota system would act to reduce pressure on the fragile ecosystem and fauna, particularly as half of the species previously known in the area have disappeared since European settlement. The reality is that the Northern Territory has become heavily reliant on tourism as an economic base, with $130 million estimated revenue coming into the Park in 1996 from tourism alone (Hooper, 1996).

Hooper (1996) raises one aspect that in the last few years has became a contentious one, namely, should people be allowed to climb Uluru (‘the Climb’). Fost (1996) says that the Climb is the one key vestige of white Australian rule remaining at Uluru. Both the traditional owners and Park authorities actively discourage the Climb, instead promoting the 9.4km Basewalk. This is a circular path around the Rock which maintains a respectful distance except where there is a point of interest such as Kantju Gorge or Mutijulu. Here the tourist temporarily pauses in their circumambulation. The issue, put briefly, focuses on whether or not tourists should be allowed to climb what for Anangu is a sacred site. The notion of Aboriginal sacred sites was introduced by anthropologists in their descriptions over the last one hundred years, and in the 1970s it was codified into law. Today this concept has metamorphised to encompass broader notions of sacredness that come from non-indigenous culture. Maddock (1991, 230) notes that these changes do not necessarily imply that ‘because the idea of sacred is being used, it does not imply religion’, and the concept can be ‘applied to things and activities that are not places’. According to Breeden (1994, 189), to climb the Rock contravenes the Tjukurpa and is sanctioned only on very special occasions when initiated men can make the Climb. Could the mere contact of feet on the Rock, albeit uninitiated minga (the Anangu word for ‘ants’, a desultory term used frequently in tourist literature to describe those tourists making the Climb), release some of the power of ancestral beings as noted earlier by Layton at 8.1.2? Whitakker (1994, 318) sees the Climb as a form of initiation.
ceremony for tourists, notably white Australians, for ‘whom the spiritual quest, even
dying for it, is tantamount to being a true Australian’. Early in 1999, the politics of
the Climb became very clear when the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia and the
Victorian Premier clashed over whether or not the Climb should be closed (Ceresa,
1999).

Bernbaum (1992), lists Uluru as one of the sacred mountains of the world, stating
that:

The Pitjantjata and Yankuntjatjara read the features of Uluru as Jews and
Christians do the pages of the Bible. They see written in its cliffs and gullies
a record of Dreamtime stories that express the beliefs and practices of their
ancient religion ... Although tourists are coming in ever greater numbers,
swarming over the rock with cameras clicking and babies crying, at least
Uluru has a chance of remaining a sacred place, a natural monument
expressing the primordial power and traditions and traditions of the
Dreamtime (Bernbaum 1992, 191/194).

Much of the literature mentions the intrinsic sacredness of Uluru within the Tjukurpa,
and therefore as a sacred mountain, Uluru should be accorded respect and not climbed
(one could, by logical extension, argue that the caves and waterholes are also sacred
and should be off limits as well). However, in many other cultures sacred mountains
are sites of veneration and worship, and have been climbed for centuries as a way of
connecting with the Other. Such examples include Mt. Shasta (North American
Indian), Mt. Fuji in Japan (Shinto/Animistic) and several Andean mountains (both as
indigenous and/or Catholic pilgrimage sites). This prompts the obvious question:
what makes Anangu culture and Uluru so different from these and other cultures?
Harney (1979, 15) notes the sacredness of Uluru, stating that Uluru ‘was, or is, sacred
because of its importance as a living symbol to the tribal people and a place of water
and food, but it was never secret or taboo’ (emphasis added).

The writer raised the issue of the Climb with a number of people in the course of her
research, and received conflicting responses about whether or not the Climb would
ultimately be closed. On one hand, Uluru is a sacred site and repository of the
Tjukurpa for the Anangu people. However, on the other hand, it is an integral part of

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the touristic appeal of Uluru and banning of the Climb would no doubt result in potential tourists deciding not to visit the site and/or other aspects of their itinerary linked with Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. It should be noted that climbing Uluru is not without risk, some twenty seven deaths occurring at Uluru since 1965 (Raymond, 1995a). Several rescue operations off the Climb path are also carried out each year in connection with tourists climbing the Rock. There are restrictions, based on safety and comfort considerations, in place for the Climb, namely when the weather gets too hot (36°C, which is common between November-March), when it is windy and also when it rains making the surface slippery. There are clearly worded signs at the base of the Climb: firstly, asking visitors not to Climb, and then if they must climb, to take certain safety aspects into consideration. As well, there is a notice stating that the Climb will be closed in the event of certain weather conditions, and on the days the Climb was closed, a A4 paper notice was attached to the sign, with the area cordoned off with ropes (see Figure 8.4).

Not content with photographs and/or making the Climb, many tourists in years gone past have taken home a piece of Uluru as a souvenir. Realising that this was happening, Park Management mounted a successful marketing campaign, saying that to take rocks from a sacred site like Uluru would bring bad luck. Suddenly, rocks of all shapes and sizes began to arrive at Parks Australia North Uluru headquarters, some with notes apologising for taking the rocks and telling their bad luck stories. Interestingly, some of the rocks were different geologically from either Uluru and Kata Tjuta, and would have come from other parts of Australia. A decision on what do to with the two overflowing boxes of rocks has as yet to be made (see Figure 8.5).

The importance of tourists being able to experience the Climb or take the Valley of the Winds walk at Kata Tjuta was graphically illustrated when, in November 1997, Park Management advised tourist operators that temperature restrictions similar to those already in operation at the Climb, would come into effect on 1 January 1998 for the Valley of the Winds walk. These restrictions were precipitated by the death earlier that month in Adelaide of a Singaporean tourist who had suffered heat stress whilst on the Valley of the Winds walk. The Northern Territory Government and
tourist operators opposed the Park’s decision to close the walk during hot weather because it could ‘result in long-term damage to Australia’s tourism industry’ (Collins, 1997).

Figure 8.4: The Climb roped-off to tourists
(taken by the writer on 4 November 1998)
Figure 8.5:  **Rocks returned to Uluru by repentant tourists**
(taken by the writer on 4 November 1998)
8.1.5 Uluru as a contested site

Throughout his book, Barry Hill (1994) keeps on returning to the notion of visiting Uluru as part of a pilgrimage journey. He sees it as a quest for general knowledge, knowledge of Aboriginal culture and its relationship with Nature. He notes too that the understanding of another culture takes time, somewhat laconically adding that this takes more time than most tourist-pilgrims have at their disposal. Hawthorne (1998) describes Uluru as a contested site, one “where the traditional owners, local and international tourists and ‘New Age’ mystics are in conflict as to the use and the meaning of the Rock”. Referring to Chidester and Linenthal’s comment made earlier at 3.1.4, the Anangu have used European law to formalize the sacredness of the land, using the processes of appropriation and exclusion to legitimize their control over their land. Whitakker (1994, 317) sees Uluru as embodying a sacredness for white Australians in general, noting that the discourse on this aspect has carefully separated the ‘white Australian’ from the ‘tourist’. The latter is seen akin to Turner and Ash’s (1975) typical mass tourist described earlier at 3.4.1, redolent with all the negative cliches, ‘unable to appreciate mystery, mysticism or spirituality’ (Whitakker 1994, 317). In contrast, white Australians are portrayed as having a birth right ‘to make a pilgrimage to the Mecca of all Australia … as befits the notion of pilgrimage, the route is depicted as difficult, the climb dangerous and true test of spiritual endurance’ (Whitakker 1994, 318). Whitakker’s discourse on the spiritual aspect of the Climb was noted earlier in sub-section 8.1.4.

The significance of Uluru to the Anangu within the Tjukurpa has already been canvassed. For tourists, both local and international alike, the motives for visiting the site may be many and varied, forming a complex set of inter-related factors which can vary in degree depending on the time frame of the individual tourist spectrum. The lure of the Outback for white Australians has already been highlighted, but it is suggested that this also applies to international tourists who see the Australian Outback as a frontier land. From fieldwork observations, the international visitors seemed to have adopted the pioneer garb of safari clothes (khaki shorts and shirts, and Akubra hats complete with green fly veils and/or bobbing corks) more readily than domestic tourists. Dressing in safari-mode also has overtones of penitential
pilgrimage dress of medieval times, the cloak/passport/cross replaced with the pioneer accoutrements noted above.

This leaves Hawthorne’s ‘New Age’ mystics, and/or those coming to connect with Uluru as a sacred site in its own right. As Lattas (1991, 313) says, ‘Aborigines and the land they inhabit have been made into pilgrimage sites for a Western self’. It is here that Julie Marcus’ (1988) work on cultural appropriation is both instructive and valuable. She defines (at p.271) cultural appropriation as ‘processes by which meanings are transformed within a specific hierarchical structure of power’. Because of the longevity of pagan devotions at the site, one could argue most persuasively that, like temples the world over, a patina of reverential energy has built up over time at Uluru (see 3.1.3). Similar arguments can also be presented for other natural sites connected with magico-religious worship and/or experiences involving mountains, standing stones, rivers and the like. The performance of ritual as a consequence of this worship further enhances the inherent power of the site, and is self-perpetuating. To put oneself in the presence of this powerful energy, in an attempt to harness the spiritual energy within, is part of the connection with the Other sought by all spiritual pilgrims. Uluru’s place as a powerful energy source is further enhanced by the fact that it is apparently on St. Michael’s ley line, linking it with St. Michael’s Mount in Cornwall (Adelaide Fountain News, 1986), as well as Glastonbury, a ‘New Age’ mecca in south-west England.

The Visitor Books (dating between 15 November 1997 to 4 November 1998) at the Cultural Centre Information Desk were accessed by the writer, particularly looking for comments relating to visitors connecting with the spiritual energy of Uluru, perhaps even on a pilgrimage. Some of these are set out as below. Again, the question still remains: does the strong sense of powerful spiritual energy at Uluru occur because it is a sacred Aboriginal site, or is there something intrinsically special and spiritual about Uluru that transcends the Tjukurpa?

- ‘Thank you for sharing your land and stories with us - this is a beautiful and powerful place’
- ‘Reminds me of Newgrange and Navan Fort in Ireland - good feeling’
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- ‘Very interesting. I never realized Uluru had such religious experience’
- ‘I made a pilgrimage from Yulara - my life begins anew with 1998’
- ‘I could sense the sacredness of this place and I thank you for being willing to share it with me’
- ‘There is a real sense of magic - I am extremely moved’
- ‘I did climb the Rock and I’m glad I did because only then did I fully appreciate the magic of the Rock and how much it means to your people’
- ‘The Rock has a real strong power that you can feel when you see it or be near it. It’s a great experience to be here …’
- ‘The spirit of Uluru is a tangible power that must surely touch all people who visit as it has done for me’
- ‘I have had a most wonderful morning enjoying your land. The walk around was very spiritual for me …’
- ‘Very informative. Supports my belief in the spiritual world’
- ‘Fantastic aura of Uluru - magic’
- ‘A very beautiful place - soft gentle energy, very sacred …’

Marcus (1988) notes that recently Uluru and Aboriginal Australians have joined the international mystical tour circuit: she calls those on the circuit ‘Aquarian pilgrims’. These are sites and cultures which are ‘New Age’ in character (see 3.3.1), and draw on a variety of belief systems which have been homogenized to reflect ‘the timelessness and essential universal truths that such beliefs offer’ (Marcus 1988, 265). St. John (1997, 174) likens these belief systems to a form of indigenous religion, a syncretism of Celtic paganism, American Indian and Australian Aboriginal religions. Added to this may be a plethora of belief systems including Buddhism or Druidism. Jacobs (1994, 307) notes that eco-spiritualists such as Mathew Fox have turned to the Aboriginal Dreaming for inspiration and guidance. According to Marcus (1988), one example (although not identified) of this syncretism and cultural appropriation is:

… being used to provide an explanation of the spiritual power of an Aboriginal sacred site. This explanation supersedes those offered by Aboriginal cosmology and is used to explain the sacredness of the site to Aboriginals themselves. In addition to replacing the origin and cause of the power of the place, mystical explanations also point to links with other equally powerful places. Such explanations have the effect of negating local knowledge and reducing Aboriginal religion to a variation of a universal, often shamanistic, religion which is being defined and explored by settlers and which originates in western mysticism. Bits and pieces are taken from a variety of religions and traditions, and are welded into something quite foreign (Marcus 1988, 267).

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The attempts by ‘New Agers’ to incorporate Uluru into their own cosmology has often lead to conflict with Park Management and/or the Anangu community, some also gaining media attention in the process. Since Handback, growing demands by the alternative community for access to Anangu sacred areas has transformed Uluru into a contested site (see 3.1.4). In 1987, an American group calling themselves the Harmonic Convergence had conditional permission to hold their meeting, their main aim being to encircle the Rock with a human chain of people holding hands. However, some claimed that they had camped overnight in the Park, flouting park regulations, others of the groups entering the Park at dawn (Marcus 1988, 264). It is unclear from the literature whether or not the human chain eventuated, but it is understood from conversations with Park Management that this group is hoping to hold a similar event in mid-2000, the human chain formation being a key element.

In February 1988 Earthlink conducted events at Uluru whereby:

> A shaft of electric blue Light was brought down and anchored into the crystal beds under the Earth. This further activated our cellular memory banks and brought forth new levels of remembrance (Solara 1998, 30).

In 1990, Earthlink made an application for a access to part of the Rock in connection with Solara’s visit the following year. Their request was refused, based on:

- Strong beliefs of Anangu about origins of the Park, and a wish that ‘these beliefs are] not pushed aside by people presenting their sacred places as part of Harmonic Convergence, or Earthlink or other religions’, and
- Bad behaviour on the part of the Harmonic Convergence Group in 1987, including entering restricted sacred sites without permission, and ignoring Park Management signs and entering environmentally sensitive areas (Hill 1994, 270-271).

However, twenty-two people still visited Uluru with Solara over five days at Easter in 1992 ‘to fulfill the prophecy of activating Uluru into the Template of Oneness’ (Solara 1998, 49): see Chapter 6 for further discussion of Solara and 11:11.

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6 Camping, or staying overnight, in the Park is prohibited, and each evening Rangers patrol car parks and other areas to ensure that these regulations are not infringed.
In 1994, Desert Tracks (a cultural tour company owned by the Anangu) reneged on an agreement with Deva Daricha (a white Australian and self-styled shaman) to run a ten-day tour which would have included individual shamanic training and the new Wanampi Water (Rainbow) Serpent Dreaming (Richards 1995, 64). The Anangu Pitjantjatjara disassociated both themselves and Desert Tracks with Daricha, claiming spiritual copyright under the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act. They stated in an advertisement that ‘the Pitjantjatjara elders are the only people authorised to perform initiation ceremonies into any aspect of Pitjantjatjara culture’ (Richards 1995, 64). For Hiatt (1997, 38) these events signify a ‘developing mood in Aboriginal politics on the definition and control of cultural property’ whilst supporting the fact that Aborigines ‘should receive every encouragement to present and interpret their culture to outsiders, there are serious dangers in fostering the notion that this should be an exclusive prerogative.’

These instances highlight the problems there have been in the past with ‘New Age’ groups, but the writer suspects that these few highly publicised examples are perhaps used to dissuade others. Individual travellers, either alone or in twos or threes, are also coming to visit the Park with similar intent. However it is not known whether or not these visitors enter sacred sites without permission. From both anecdotal evidence and observations made whilst at Uluru, the writer suspects that many are merely content to engage the sacredness in a discrete, non-confrontational manner, using their own universalistic rituals as a way of connecting with the Other. The writer spoke to many of the Park Rangers who mentioned unusual activities (such as coming across visitors meditating at sunrise at the Sunrise carpark and/or at various places around the Rock), but also of finding unusual objects on, in and around the Rock. These included an urn containing ashes, rice, flowers, boar tusks and crystals, and were no doubt deliberately placed there as votive offerings to spirits and ancestral beings dwelling in the Rock. Another Ranger also mentioned often seeing little crucifixes in the rock fissures on the upward Climb path. Were they offerings or prayers from climbers to ensure their safety on the Climb, and/or were they a Christian form of votive offering to the same spiritual energies? At the time of the writer’s visit, there were also three small bouquets of wildflowers left at the plaques.
on the right hand side of the Climb path in memory of climbers who had died at the Rock (see Figure 8.6).

There are, it is suggested, three reasons why the Anangu are unhappy with the interest of 'New Agers' in Uluru and Kata Tjuta. The sensitivity of their sacred sites has already been discussed earlier. The second reason is linked with the first: by allowing non-Anangu to tap into the Tjurkurpa, as occurred with Daricha, they are giving away their power and control over their cosmology. One of the intrinsic appeals of Uluru is the Anangu’s connection with the Tjurkurpa, and the often explicit message is that non-Anangu cannot access this merely because the outsider is not Anangu. Finally, the adverse publicity associated with use of the Park by ‘New Age’ groups and individuals could dissuade mass tourists from visiting the Park. The Daricha incident occurred at the same time as the deaths of fifty three members of the Order of the Solar Temple in Switzerland and Canada in October 1994. The leader, Luc Jouret and co-leader, Joseph de Mambro had visited Australia several times in the mid 1980s. Jouret apparently 'told acquaintances that the rock’s mystic appeal had drawn him to Australia and that he had applied to hold a religious service there. The Aborigines, who control access to Ayers Rock, turned him down' ('Remains of the day', 1994).
Figure 8.6:   **Wildflowers left as votive offerings at the base of Uluru**
(taken by the writer on 4 November 1998)

8.2 **FIELDWORK: NOVEMBER 1998**

The site was visited between 1 to 5 November 1998, and research was carried in the Park in accordance with Permit No. RU980901 issued by Parks Australia North on 11 September 1998 (see Appendix G for copy of survey instrument). Self-complete surveys were administered on 2, 3 and 5 November, 1998.
Chapter 8 – Uluru monolith, Central Australia

Methodology
Permission to survey using a self-complete survey was obtained as noted above. In order to obtain a reasonable cross-section of visitors, and within the constraints of the site (for example, avoiding surveying people out in the open during the hottest time of the day), four surveying venues were chosen as below:

- Anangu Tours Sunset tour on 2 November
- Anangu Tours Breakfast Tour/Liru walk on 3 November
- Cultural Centre on 3 and 5 November
- Sunset carpark on 3 November

As well, the writer met with various Parks Australia North staff at their Uluru Headquarters, and the Community Liaison Officer, besides speaking with several tourists during the course of her stay.

Results - quantifiable elements

Table 8.1: Demographic profile of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender (n=99)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>52.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (n=100)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-50</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 60</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (n=94)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech. apprenticeship</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech. diploma</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate degree</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate degree</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The gender mix was roughly equal, and if inverted, would have been consistent with the general Australian population. Between 26 - 60% of those surveyed were Baby Boomers, but over one-third were in the 20-29 age bracket. Whilst not as high as Newgrange, which had 85% of its visitors from overseas, 73% of those surveyed at Uluru were international visitors. These results are roughly consistent with the fact that the visitor mix at Yulara Resort is 60% international:40% domestic (Oliver, 1999). Almost identical with Newgrange were the results of the survey at Uluru, indicating that 55% had undertaken some form of university education. Here, too, the educative motivation ranked No. 1 in Table 8.4. November is outside school vacation time for both hemispheres, and perhaps this is why there were only five teachers in the cohort. One-third of those surveyed came within the occupational category of ‘Professional’. Approximately 10% listed ‘Student’ as occupation, with 5% being retirees.

**Table 8.2: Trip characteristics and previous attendance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information re site (n=100)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio/television</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books/tour guides</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-media</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel group (n=100)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With friends/relatives</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a tour group</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engaging in tourist activities (n=100)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited Uluru only</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited historic sites as well</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting friends and relatives</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting other national parks</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating out</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi tourist</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>83.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of stay (n=101)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>63.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 3 days</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited Kata Tjuta as well (n=101)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>87.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited other Aboriginal sites (n=101)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>51.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Multi-media was the highest ranked source of information about Uluru, followed by books/tour guides (33%). These two results are perhaps not unusual given the high profile and symbolism of the Rock as previously discussed, thus it would not be unusual to find reference to Uluru in a wide range of media, including books and television. Half those surveyed were with friends and relatives, with 40% visiting Uluru as part of a tour group. This high proportion of people coming to the Park in tour groups is consistent with reported trends (Brown 1993, 26).

To have results indicating that multi-touristic activities ranked highly is not to be unexpected with tourists visiting a remote site such as Uluru. The most common length of stay was two days (63%) and is generally consistent with other information accessed (the average stay is 1.4 days: ANWPS 1986, 41). Only three people stayed for more than three days. One of the three was a doctor (no country of origin), and the other two visitors were a couple to whom the writer spoke. They were moteliers from Northern New South Wales and were spending a week with their daughter who worked at Ayers Rock Resort. The literature noted the trend of many just to visit Uluru only, with Kata Tjuta as an afterthought (ANWPS 1986, 43, which indicates that 25% of Park visitors go to Kata Tjuta). However from those surveyed, 87% also went to Kata Tjuta. The reason for this trend reversal could have been due to the fact that for most of the time the writer was at Uluru, the Climb was closed (see discussion following Table 8.3) thus people could have substituted Kata Tjuta for the

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Climb. Approximately half of those surveyed had visited other Aboriginal sites, Kakadu (including the Nourlangie and Ubirr art sites) receiving the most responses in the ‘Which other sites’ question. Perhaps this response is merely representative of the fact that 40% of those surveyed were in tour groups, and possibly that of these, a large number were extended tour groups undertaking the ‘typical Territorian tour’ which usually includes both Uluru and Kakadu as ‘must see’ tourist attractions.

Table 8.3: Climb of Uluru

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Climbed Uluru (n=101)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>88.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason climbed Uluru (n=12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To experience a tourist attraction</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For spiritual connection with the site</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saw the climb as a physical challenge</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi motives</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason did not climb Uluru (n=89)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because it’s a sacred Anangu site</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical/health limitations</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could appreciate/experience culture without climbing</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi motives</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climb closed</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The contentious issue regarding the Climb has already been noted earlier, and the above Table refers to those choosing to climb or not climb. However, figures relating to motivational reasons should only be used, and not referring to the percentages of people who climbed/did not climb. From 3 to 5 November, the Rock was closed to climbing due to a range of weather conditions, including the likelihood of storms which occurred late on the afternoon of 4 November. Firstly, in looking at the twelve visitors who had indicated that they had climbed the Rock, eight of these said they intended (emphasis supplied) to climb but had not done this yet because the Climb was closed. Four had previously visited Uluru and climbed, and were going to climb again, one giving their reason as ‘enjoyed the climb previously’. From these it is
interesting to note that one-third were motivated to obtain a spiritual connection with the site, but again, only a very small sample number. Of the eighty-nine visitors who did not climb, approximately 15% of those surveyed said that they had not climbed because the Climb was closed: whether or not these thirteen tourists would have eventually climbed is unknown. One-third of those who did not climb did so because Uluru was a sacred Anangu site. Again, because of the small number of tourists involved and the fact that the Climb was only an issue for those surveyed on 2 November 1998 when the climb was open (eight visitors), this data should be treated with extreme caution. Also there is the possibility of bias in the results relating to the Climb as it was suggested that visitors to the Cultural Centre (60% of the cohort were surveyed at the Cultural Centre) tend not to be climbers of Uluru (pers. comm, G. Balding, Chief Ranger). One visitor added in the survey:

'People fit enough to climb Uluru will almost certainly do so in order to say 'I climbed Ayers Rock'. It is not sufficient to request people to respect this sacred site - even if they agree that they should they are likely to go ahead - achievement bagging is more important than respect for others - sadly'

One other aspect that should be noted briefly is the inability of the Cultural Centre to handle large numbers of visitors when the Climb is closed. There were long queues in the ladies' toilets and at the café. If ultimately the Climb is permanently placed off limits to tourists, Park Management will need to develop other activities to take its place so as to alleviate overcrowding in the Cultural Centre.

**Table 8.4: Rank ordered means of motivational items**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>StdDev</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>...to learn new things</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>...to visit a tourist attraction</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>...experience an authentic Aboriginal sacred site</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>...to satisfy my curiosity</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>...to do something completely different</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>...for spiritual awareness</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>...self-discovery</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>...to climb Uluru</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>...so I could be with my friends</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>...to meet people with similar interests</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>...so the family could do something together</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>...no particular reason - in the area</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 8 – Uluru monolith, Central Australia

Referring back to Table 3.2, the results of Table 8.4 can be put into seven categories as below in Table 8.5.

Table 8.5: Sub-grouping of tourist attraction visitor motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-group</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social stimulation</td>
<td>9, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity</td>
<td>4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist icon</td>
<td>2, 3, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinship</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual quest</td>
<td>6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As with Newgrange, the sub-group Learning was the main motive in coming to Uluru, although unlike Newgrange, there were only five teachers in the cohort. There were several comments in the surveys indicating the desire to meet with Aboriginal people. This was also one of the three reasons for tourists coming to Uluru in the early days of tourism at the Rock, and judging by these comments, it is still as relevant today. Consistent with the Plan of Management, is Parks Australia North’s policy of employing suitable Anangu staff in the Park, and whilst the writer met some Aboriginal rangers, there obviously do not appear to be enough to meet visitor expectations of ‘meeting the locals’. It is acknowledged that this issue is problematical, and becomes a matter of drawing a fine balance between meeting tourist demand on one hand, and on the other, not putting indigenes ‘as tourist objects on permanent display for tourists’ (Whitakker 1997, 25).

Tourist icon as a sub-group, like Newgrange, ranked second overall, although here tourist attraction per se ranked second (fourth at Newgrange). Perhaps something of the strong symbolism of Uluru is linked with this response: is this evidence of the international tourist’s desire to experience frontier lands, and for Australians, doing their duty as ‘real Australians’? This view was reinforced by one visitor in the ‘Other Comments’ section of the survey: ‘Uluru is Australia. How could you come to
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Australia and not see it. Drove here from Cairns in a junker car with only $200 just to see it’. The site’s authenticity as a sacred Aboriginal site was third in importance in explaining why people came to Uluru. ‘To Climb Uluru’ was also included in this category, which ranked eighth overall, and may be indicative of many things far too numerous to speculate on, but one obvious reason could be the success of the ‘No Climbing, Please’ message. A question was also asked how tourists learnt about Anangu culture. Tours and tour guides, and the information provided by the Cultural Centre featured strongly as separate items, though 42% turned to multi-media as a way to learn and experience Uluru as a site.

The third sub-group, Curiosity, contains two elements – ‘curiosity’ and ‘doing something different’. For 93% of those surveyed, this was their first visit to Uluru, which may explain why these ranked fourth and fifth respectively. The Spiritual Quest sub-group ranked fourth, with spiritual awareness ranking ahead of ‘self-discovery’. One person added the comment on the survey that ‘Seeing Uluru for me was a religious experience i.e. I can now appreciate why it is a sacred site to the Aboriginal people’. It is unknown what were the belief systems of those tourists who came to connect with the spiritual energy of Uluru: were they from traditional religions or Marcus’ ‘Aquarian pilgrims’? Social stimulation, the fifth ranked group, was also ranked low as occurred at Newgrange, and again, the same question remains to be raised as to whether sites such as Uluru and Newgrange demand more than just furtherance of social bonding. Kinship was ranked sixth, with 51% of the cohort visiting the site with friends and relatives: again, the same comments raised in connection with Newgrange in the previous chapter apply.

Thus, in summarising the quantitative data, based on the small sample population, the average visitor to Uluru appears to visit the site because they sought an educative experience at an authentic tourist attraction. The spiritual quest was ranked midway, and communitas was ranked very lowly.

One of the visitors who participated in the survey, a researcher from Victoria, later contacted the writer by e-mail about her experiences at Uluru, and gave permission
for the following to be quoted. These comments are particularly valuable as they are
given in the final reflective (or ninth stage) of the Process Model of Pilgrimage.

... Seeing so many people come, look, eat (supposedly while watching the sunrise
on the Rock), sleep and go was disheartening. I felt like I was using this sacred
place for my own personal gains, just like the hoards of tourists were. Even trying
to gain some sort of interaction with the local Aboriginal workers (mainly at the
Cultural Centre) was impossible. I felt sad. I felt I was adding to their misery ...
(pers. comm., S. Frantz).

Results - qualitative elements

The qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage as summarized in Table 3.3 are discussed
below in point form:

- There was no sense of the ludic involved at this site.
- Outside the café at the Cultural Centre, and at the Sunrise and Sunset viewing
  sites, there was a sense of communitas as people exchanged their travelling
  experiences. This was particularly true of the car Sunset viewing site where
  people were gathered around, sitting on deck chairs and having light snacks, all
  expectantly waiting for sunset.
- Commensality was noted as above, again the Cultural Centre and the group
  coach tours that included snacks/drinks or full meals on their Sunrise and Sunset
  tours offering this opportunity.

However, in the absence of the finding the two key Hallmarks of Pilgrimage
required in Table 3.3, the latter are not considered to be Hallmarks of Pilgrimage
at Uluru.
The only individual ritual that was observed was the placing of flowers as votive offerings as noted earlier at 8.1.5. Anecdotal evidence from Park Rangers relating to votive offerings found around the Rock, and activities of groups involved with the Harmonic Convergence and Earthlink, indicate that ritual is being used to connect with the inherent sacred energies at Uluru.

The obvious consecration of the site by the Anangu over millennia is accepted without question, and it is suggested that by the use of ritual and votive offerings at Uluru, that many tourists in more recent times have likewise consecrated the site.

Uluru as a contested site was discussed in detail earlier at 8.1.5.

Votive offerings were seen at the Rock by the writer, as well as anecdotal evidence noted earlier at 8.1.5.

Unlike the preponderance of replica tourist icons (such as building a scale Eiffel Tower at the front of the Paris Hotel in Las Vegas) or Australia’s predilection for placing ‘Big Things (such as the Big Banana or the Big Merino) on major highways, there is only one Uluru. Authenticity was also ranked third in Table 8.4, however if the Climb is ultimately placed off limits to the minga, one wonders how authenticity would then be ranked by visiting tourists.

8.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter has noted the diversity of meanings that Uluru offers both the tourist and its traditional owners. It has become a contested site because of the demands made upon it by various user groups, and there exists an uneasy truce, with Park Management playing the role of gatekeeper. Why has Uluru become such a popular tourist site of late, so much so that Park Management and Anangu are looking at introducing some controls on visitor numbers?

One recently espoused theory is that such popularity is being driven by the resurgence of nationalism. According to Smith (1996, 583) three components underlie all nationalism, one of these being ‘the differential nature and location of the homeland
or ancestral territory’. These territories ultimately become part of the shared memories and mythology of that community or society, and it is suggested that Uluru has become the embodiment of nationalism as a new religion for white Australians (McGrath 1991, 123). To non-indigenous Australians, it provides a connection with real ‘Australianness’, whereas it is suggested that for Aboriginal Australians it represents a step forward in throwing off the yolk of European subjugation and a symbol of the struggle for native title. Ideally, these two strands of nationalism should fuse together in the ongoing reconciliation process, but the spectre of closing the Climb to all non-Anangu would seem to work against the harmonious joint use of the Uluru, a totem and symbol for all Australians.

The quantitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage indicate that Uluru could not be considered a pilgrimage site, but based on qualitative data, Uluru is proving to be a spiritual magnet for some modern secular pilgrims, either individually or in groups. This is reinforced by comments included in the survey where one described seeing Uluru as a religious experience. Comments from the Visitor Books echoed this, many of those who felt moved to write therein commenting on the power, aura and mystique of the site. Does the St. Michael ley line give the Rock any special energy, and do the Anangu ‘songlines’ follow the ley line as the Ridgeway follows a dragon line at Uffington White Horse (Chapter 5)? Rangers finding votive offerings in and around the Rock confirm that pilgrims are coming to connect with the Other, be it Anangu spirituality or creator-beings from the individual’s cosmology. Finally, the desire of groups such as Harmonic Convergence, 11:11 and Stargate to hold their own ritual ceremonies at Uluru, confirm that Uluru is a modern secular pilgrimage site both for its indigenous custodians and secular pilgrims coming there on a spiritual quest. The site, unlike Newgrange, is large enough to allow individuals to conduct their own magico-religious rituals as an anticipatory prelude to undergoing a mystical experience.
CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

On a few occasions during the course of the writer’s fieldwork, one was sometimes asked if there was a link or connection between the case studies. Linkages are not always apparent at the beginning of a study such as this, but only with hindsight and reflection.

Over the last twelve months, the writer has come across intermittent references to the Grail Quest, a pilgrimage with both literal and symbolic contexts. They most recently surfaced in a television documentary on the Grail Quest (BBC 1998), and in a way provides an answer to this question. The programme refers to a linkage between Glastonbury (a site often linked with King Arthur, as well as being a ‘New Age’ mecca) and Newgrange, one that was not apparent to the writer when she visited the two sites whilst in the United Kingdom in 1997. The Grail was pre-Christian and originated with the Celtic cauldron of the plenty, the cauldron of the Dagda whose home was at Newgrange or the Brú na Bóinne. Hutton (1992, 319) rejects this theory on the basis that the Grail was generally characterized as a goblet, whereas the cauldron was filled with an inexhaustible supply of food: both are symbolic of plenty and renewal. Perhaps the widely accepted idea of the Grail Quest is that it is a journey of self discovery, an idea ‘that represents the presence of a numinous, mystical link between the sacred and the secular [profane] … a focus for those who seek and a provider of wonder amid the colourless outer world in which we live’ (Matthews 1997, 7). These comments by John Matthews are reminiscent of Van Gennep’s rite de passage and Turnerian liminality which are central to this discussion. Perhaps all pilgrims are on a Grail Quest of some sort until they encounter the Other.

This dissertation has set out to examine whether or not modern secular pilgrimage is the same as traditional religious pilgrimage. This study fills a gap in research on
pilgrimage generally in that (in four of the five case studies) the writer has been able to combine quantitative and qualitative data, rather than just relying solely on qualitative data to describe the pilgrimage phenomenon. This study also examines an area that has been largely ignored by academic researchers, namely, modern secular pilgrimage which has a spiritual quest as its primary motive. The writer developed a Process Model of Pilgrimage (Figure 3.1) as a way of more fully understanding the complex interactions and decisions that take part during this cyclical process. By examining the historical background to pilgrimage, various Hallmarks of Pilgrimage were identified from traditional religious pilgrimage, and then measured in a diversity of case study settings. This was done by obtaining qualitative and/or quantitative data during the course of fieldwork carried out in the Republic of Ireland, England and Australia. The hypothesis is that modern secular pilgrimage and traditional religious pilgrimage share two common primary motives: that the journey was undertaken as part of a spiritual quest or journey searching for a mystical experience, and that the journey was undertaken as ‘an act of faith’. These twin motives set ‘true pilgrimage’ apart from popular usage of the term ‘pilgrimage’. Besides the quantitative and qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage, there was also other aspects, or second-order factors, which may have either acted as a motivating force for a pilgrimage journey, or explained why a particular site had become consecrated and recognized as a sacred site worthy of pilgrimage devotions.

The case studies can be broadly placed into three categories: sites, ‘New Age’ movements, and a traditional religious pilgrimage event where half of those who attended may have been spiritually ‘smorgasbording’. However, so as not to bias any findings, comparisons between case studies were kept to a minimum when each case study was discussed.

The first group were the two tourist attraction sites: Newgrange, a reconstructed and restored megalith (Chapter 7), and Uluṟu, a large natural neolith (Chapter 8). They were both sites of devotional worship by prehistoric peoples, and thus would have acquired some form of reverential energy often associated with places that have experienced this over the centuries, such as ancient temples, cathedrals and mosques.
For the Anangu, Uluru is still a sacred site, but mass tourists have tended to over-run this site. Newgrange is said to be a solar observatory and constructed in accordance with principles of sacred geometry (Brennan, 1998), and Uluru serves as a navigational beacon for the nomadic Anangu because of its location on their traditional song-line routes (Breden 1994, 19). According to popular earth-mysticism, both sites are supposedly on ley lines, invisible lines which imbue sites with telluric energy. Newgrange was excavated and subsequently restored and modified so as to facilitate visitor use. Uluru and its immediate surrounds have also been enhanced as a tourist attraction by the construction of access paths, signage, fencing, and placing a rope along the steeper parts of the Climb. Today, both are also seeing increasing numbers of tourists which are placing stresses on each site’s physical and socio-cultural carrying capacity, and in turn this is posing problems for those charged with the management of each site.

The quantitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage for both sites are identical in their ranking of four of the six sub-groups: Learning, Tourist Icon, Curiosity and Spiritual Quest. Kinship and Social Stimulation were ranked fifth and sixth at Newgrange but reversed in their ranking at Uluru. The quest for knowledge confirms Poon’s (1993) notion of the ‘new tourist’, but people are still coming to both sites because of their high profile as a ‘must-see’ tourist attraction. ‘Spiritual Awareness’ ranked sixth at both sites as well, and from comments in both surveys, it appears that for some ‘experiencing’ the site is a primary motivation: ‘the experience is still magical’ (Newgrange) and ‘seeing Uluru was a religious experience’. The need to ‘experience the site’ and not just being there as a passive visitor is consistent with philosophies generally espoused by the ‘New Age’ movement (Heelas 1996, 18). The Visitor’s Books at Uluru repeatedly mentioned the sacredness and spiritual energy of the site. Thus it appears that some tourists are coming to both sites on a modern secular pilgrimage, but this quest is made difficult by the ‘mass-tourist’ operation of Newgrange and the conservative management practices at Uluru which do not permit ‘New Age’ groups to hold events in and around the Rock. The qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage revealed both sites were contested sites, but due to the absence of finding a spiritual journey made as ‘an act of faith’, any evidence of finding
communitas (qualitative) or commensality was inconclusive as validating these as hallmarks of modern secular pilgrimage. Votive offerings left in and around the Rock indicate that secular pilgrims are consecrating Uluru, presumably using some form of individual ritual. Uluru is not only a magnet for mass tourists but since the Handback in 1985, appears to be attracting many ‘New Age’ tourists travelling individually or in groups.

The second group were the two ‘New Age’ groups: the Druid Gorsedd (Chapter 5) and the Stargate Alignments (Chapter 6). Both events were held at sites which had had prior indigenous usage, but were not considered sacred sites in their own right. The Uffington White Horse was supposedly a place of mid-summer celebration hundreds of years ago (Newman 1997, 28), and is adjacent to the Ridgeway which follows a ley or dragon line. Uluru is sacred to the Anangu, and Rainbow Beach has had indigenous usage, such that the origin of its coloured sands are explained by way of a local Aboriginal Dreaming legend. But the cosmological underpinnings of both groups are vastly different. The Druids claim strong historical lineage going back hundreds, if not thousands, of years whereas ELM is a comparatively new group, going back a decade at most. The former relies on traditions handed down over time on which to base its cosmology whereas the latter look to channeled information from ethereal beings as the source of their cosmology. However the results of the fieldwork at both sites offered many similarities.

Rankings of four of the seven quantitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage sub-groups were identical for the two Stargate Alignments: Spiritual Quest, Learning, Social Stimulation, and Curiosity and Entertainment. ‘Spiritual Awareness’ was the first ranked motivation at both Alignments. For the Druids, Social Stimulation was ranked first above the Spiritual Quest, followed by Learning, Curiosity and Entertainment, Kinship and Escape. Here too, ‘Spiritual Awareness’ was also ranked first as a primary motive for attending this summer solstice event. These were the only case studies where ‘an act of faith’ question was surveyed. With the Druids, this was ranked fifteenth, but for the Stargate Alignments this was ranked considerably higher: fifth at Rainbow Beach and second at Uluru. The discrepancy is an
interesting one because, as highlighted earlier, both groups choose to ‘live their cosmology’. However the Druids have a more public, pagan profile than ELM and perhaps they saw the Gorsedd as providing more opportunities for social bonding. On the other hand, ELM is a comparatively new, low profile ‘New Age’ group and rare public occasions such as the Alignments gave followers an opportunity to publicly observe their beliefs. The Druid Gorsedd and the Rainbow Beach Stargate Alignment displayed all of the qualitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage: the writer was not present at the Uluru Stargate Alignment therefore no qualitative hallmarks were noted. Coupled with the results of the quantitative Hallmarks of Pilgrimage, these ‘New Age’ events can clearly be said to be representative of modern secular pilgrimage.

The final group was the Kalachakra Initiation, a one-off event unlikely to be repeated in Australia in the near future. It was a traditional, religious pilgrimage event attended by Buddhists from Australia and the Pacific Rim, but also represented an opportunity for approximately half of the non-Buddhist attendees to undertake their own spiritual journey. This cohort may have attended the event for a plethora of reasons, ranging from sheer curiosity, adherence to fashion or because of individual strong spiritual motivations (giving them the opportunity for spiritual ‘smorgasbording’ noted earlier at 3.3.3 in discussion of the ‘New Age’ movement). Unfortunately, there was no quantitative data for this event, and the writer’s research is based on very limited qualitative data. The writer suspects that the presence of the high profile Tibetan Buddhist religious leader, His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, provided a strong motivation for people to attend if for no other reason than to sate their curiosity.

Besides the Hallmarks of Pilgrimage, there were four main trends that emerged from the case studies, and provided some interesting linkages. The first was that, according to popularist ‘New Age’ literature, three of the sites are on ley lines: Newgrange, Uluru and Uffington White Horse. The concept of ley lines is open to question and debate (Hutton 1992, 130), but to find modern secular pilgrimage occurring at these sites is perhaps not just mere co-incidence. Whether or not
pilgrims come to these sites just because of their location on a ley line, or the site has become a sacred one because of special telluric energies, are difficult questions that await further research. Indigenous usage (past and/or present) of the site was the second noted link. This past connection was deliberately highlighted at Uluru and Newgrange. The resurgence of interest in native spirituality (particularly drawing on Celtic, Australian Aboriginal and native American Indian traditions) is commonly found in many ‘New Age’ modalities, and is another area of possible future research. Technology played an important role in disseminating information about most of the sites and events studied, and this is the third linkage. The Stargate Alignments discussed in Chapter 6 graphically illustrate this point. ELM’s Website and Chat List not only provides members with an opportunity to interact and learn about forthcoming events, but more importantly, allows ELM to disseminate and market its cosmology based on information channeled from the Ascended Masters. Some of the other events and sites also had Websites which provided potential visitors with current information. Finally, the three events were held at or just following solstices or equinoxes. The Druid Gorsedd and Stargate Alignments were deliberately held at this time. Like earlier comments made relating to ley lines, perhaps this too may be nothing more than just mere coincidence.

Underlying the phenomenon of pilgrimage are the elements of social change as noted at 3.3. Traditional religious pilgrimage, by all accounts, is flourishing and, from some of the case studies in this study, it is also clear that modern secular pilgrimage is also occurring at some sites and events. It is impossible to gauge its extent because of the diffuse nature of this phenomenon. The ‘New Age’ movement that grew out of the counterculture of the 1960s and 1970s has, it is suggested, spawned the growth of pilgrimage per se. The rapid rate of social and technological change, coupled with millenarianism and fears of Y2K scenarios, have also had a strong role in promoting pilgrimage and prompting people to search for any reassuring spiritual message and guidance as the world moves into predicted cataclysmic times. The demographic cohort of the Baby Boomers are supposedly spiritual seekers as they approach retirement (Digance and Muller, 1998): this is supported by the quantitative data from the two events.
From a practical perspective, there are messages for those managing and/or operating sites and events that should not be ignored. This is particularly true of the two sites which were seen as being contested sites because the diversity of visitor motivations for visiting the site can not be successfully managed without one group suffering at the expense of another. Based on the writer’s research, it is suggested that modern secular pilgrims seem to have lost out to mass tourists in endeavoring to connect with the sacred energies and experiences found at both sites. Suspension of the waiting-list for winter solstice at Newgrange is but one example of the popularity of a site for modern secular pilgrims. These issues are ones that will hopefully be investigated in the writer’s further research into contested sites, looking at ways whereby all visitors may have equal access and enjoyment of the site.

In concluding, one must return to the primary aim of any pilgrimage: an encounter with the Other that enables the pilgrim to undergo a transformative and highly individual ‘mystical experience’. Achieving this must surely be the highpoint of any journey, one that perhaps can never again be repeated but remains a memory to be treasured down through the years. These are things that cannot be reduced to a mere question on a survey form, and are, as many writers on pilgrimage have commented, not amenable to being reduced to writing. To witness one of the participants at the Stargate Alignment at Rainbow Beach make this highly personal connection with the Other was quite a profound experience in itself, and illustrates the timeless appeal and power of the phenomenon of pilgrimage.
APPENDICES
FESTIVAL of TIBET

Hordern Forecourt - 21, 22, 23 September
11 am - 1.30 pm and 5 pm - 6 pm.

* Festival of Tibet open to Kalachakra ticket holders only. *

MARKET STALLS

Buddhism
• Sydney/Interstate centres
• Buddhist Books
• Buddhism on the Internet - Buddhanet
• Buddhist Library - Literature
• Religious Art - Demonstration - Nepalese Thangka Painter

Tibet
• Tibet Support Groups
• Photographic Exhibition - sale of prints to aid Tibetan refugees in India
• Tibetan Healing Practices

Merchandising
• Tibet Gallery - Gangchen rugs, Tamo Lijin clothes
• Sun Tzu Oriental Antiques
• Mandala Traders - Himalayan arts & crafts
• Religious Artefacts - khatas, malas
• Tibet Arts - USA
• Tibet Shop - jewellery
• Kalachakra mementos - T-shirts, prayer flags, posters, CDs.

LIVE PERFORMANCES

Saturday 21 and Monday 23
12.30 Tibetan Choir - Honey Words - composed by HH Dalai Lama
12.40 Tenzing Tsawang - Flute composition
12.50 Tashi Jechar (scarf offering dance)
1.00 Tibetan Folk Dance
1.10 Yarchen Lhamo - to be confirmed

Sunday 22
12.00 Naron Aboriginal Dancers

FOOD COURT

Asian and Western food stalls selling vegetarian and non-vegetarian international cuisine.
• Momos and noodles by Tibetan Yak & Yeti
• Curries by Mongolian Kitchen
• Indian curries and samosas by Maja Sweets
• Malaysian chicken satays by The Satay Griller
• Organic vegan and vegetarian food by The Frogs
• Gourmet burgers by Green Ignana
• Also Nepalese curries, Chinese, Thai and Lebanese food.
• Kalachakra Snack Bar selling a range of sweets, macrobiotic cakes and biscuits, hot and cold drinks.

NB: Snack bar will remain in the forecourt after the closure of Festival of Tibet on September 23. Snack food will be available before and after sessions each day.

Relax
Socialise
Celebrate

THE VISIT OFFICE
P.O. Box 2000, Kensington NSW 2033
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THE DALAI LAMA IN AUSTRALIA 1996

THE KALACHAKRA
Reference guide to the Event

TIMETABLE

September 21 (Sat)
Festival of Tibet 11.00 am - 1.30 pm
Buddhist Teachings 2.00 pm - 4.45 pm
Festival of Tibet 5.00 pm - 6.00 pm
Commentary / Questions 6.00 pm - 7.00 pm

September 22 (Sun)
Festival of Tibet 11.00 am - 1.30 pm
Buddhist Teachings 2.00 pm - 4.45 pm
Festival of Tibet 5.00 pm - 6.00 pm
Commentary / Questions 6.00 pm - 7.00 pm

September 23 (Mon)
Festival of Tibet 11.00 am - 1.30 pm
Buddhist Teachings 2.00 pm - 4.45 pm
Festival of Tibet 5.00 pm - 6.00 pm
Commentary / Questions 6.00 pm - 7.00 pm

September 24 (Tues)
Ceremonial Dancing 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm
Commentary / Questions 4.30 pm - 5.30 pm

September 25/26/27 (Wed/Thur/Fri)
Purification ceremonies 1.00 pm
Kalachakra Initiation 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm
Commentary / Questions 5.30 pm - 6.30 pm

September 28 (Sat)
Long Life Initiation/Puja 9.00 am - 11.30 am
Viewing Sand Mandala 11.30 am - Finish

September 29 (Sun)
Dissolution of Sand Mandala 8.00 am - 11.00 am

NB: The finishing times for the teachings and the initiation may vary slightly from day to day. The commentary at the end of each session will review the day and preview the next.

DOORS WILL BE CLOSED 10 MINUTES PRIOR TO THE START OF EACH SESSION.
The Gorsedd of Bards of Caer Rhiannon

A Gorsedd is a gathering of Bards. In the Druid tradition the role of the Bard is to mediate spirit through the word, whether spoken, chanted, sung or written on the printed page; through music and through other creative arts, such as painting, dance or sculpture. Originally, the term Gorsedd (literally 'high seat') referred to prehistoric sacred mounds, often with single trees growing on them, which were places of tribal assembly, festival celebration, law-giving, and the inauguration of kings. In pagan times, the sacred king was ritually wedded at such sites to a representative of the female spirit of the land. In later times, the assemblies themselves came to be known as Gorsedduau after the mounds on which they were held.

At the Autumn Equinox of 1993, the British Druid Order (BDO) inaugurated an open Gorsedd among the ancient stone circles of Avebury in Wiltshire. It was called the Gorsedd of Bards of Caer Abiri. Caer means 'circular earthwork' and Abiri is an old form of Avebury. The original gathering of forty people quickly grew to over three hundred.

The ceremony was essentially Druidic in structure, but the Gorsedd celebrations were, from the beginning, open to followers of all faiths. As the Gorsedd grew, its multi-faith nature was strengthened by having followers of different traditions give calls to the four quarters in their own manner, so we might have a Christian minister call to God as manifest in the light of the sun in the East, and a Wiccan priest call to the Lords of Death and of Initiation in the West. Thus we come together to celebrate our diversity, pledged to peace within the circle while we honour the spirits of our traditions, of the place, of the season, and of all those, both seen and unseen, who come to join us.

Within the Gorsedd circle we celebrate the turning of the year through the cycle of eight festivals recognised by many modern pagan traditions. We also celebrate rites of passage, offering Druid weddings or handfastings, blessings for children, and remembrance of the dead.
Gorsedd of Bards of Caer Rhiannon

For those who practice their tradition alone or in small, enclosed groups, Gorsedd gatherings offer an opportunity to celebrate these rites in the light of day and in a public place, witnessed by the community. The Gorsedd has been important for those taking the first steps on the path of their tradition, removing any sense of isolation or alienation, giving freedom to express their spirituality openly.

Each ceremony includes initiations into the Gorsedd for those wishing to make a personal dedication to walk the path of the Bard, which is to learn to express their own spiritual inspiration through the creative arts.


On May 3rd 1997, in the season of Calan Mai, we gathered at the Long Man of Wilmington in East Sussex to welcome in the summer and celebrate the inauguration of the Gorsedd of Bards of Caer Garanhir (‘Longshanks’).

Now, on June 21st 1997, we gather at Dragon Hill in the Vale of the White Horse to inaugurate this new Gorsedd of Bards of Caer Rhiannon.

Hail and Welcome!

Before the ceremony begins, the priest and priestess invite people who would wish to participate in particular parts of the ceremony as follows:

- a woman who would represent the Guardian Spirit of the Place; three Bards or musicians to assist in weaving the circle; four people, preferably of different spiritual traditions, to make the calls to the four directions; a priest and a priestess to help with the sharing of bread and mead. Everyone present will be encouraged to contribute to the open eisteddfod sessions that form a central part of the rite.

It is made known that there will be the opportunity for handfastings, blessings for children, Bardic initiations into the Gorsedd, prayers for the sick and the departed.

The Gorsedd Rite

Once everyone has assembled, the gathering forms two groups; one, the ‘Goddess’ party, led by the representative of the Spirit of the Place, takes one course, while the other group, the ‘God’ party, take another, processing to the point where the two meet again for the beginning of the rite.

Priest: Once again the Solar Wheel returns to Alban Hefin, and we come together in this most sacred place and ask the Guardian Spirit of Caer Rhiannon to accept the gifts we bring and bless us as we begin this celebration of the growing light and of the sanctity and beauty of our Mother Earth.

He presents a gift to the Guardian.

Priest: That which comes from the Earth, returns to the Earth.

Guardian: In the name of the Mother of All Living, of the Guardian Spirit of Caer Rhiannon,
and of the Ancestors of our people, I accept the gifts you offer. All who come here are welcome: but thrice blessed are those who come with reverence and love.
The blessing of the Goddess be with you,
The blessing of the Guardian be with you,
The blessing of the Ancestors be with you,
And with our children,
With you and with our children.
Enter now and welcome.

Others may, if they wish, also present gifts to the Guardian and receive an individual blessing from her in return. The priest and priestess then lead the procession to the place chosen for the celebration of any Druid weddings or handfastings that are to be performed.

Handfasting

Handfasting is a traditional form of marriage once common in parts of Britain. It was treated as binding by the couples themselves, by their families and communities, but not in the same contractual sense as legally recognised weddings. The couple handfasted had the option of returning to the place where they made their vows at the end of a year and a day and parting simply by walking away from each other in opposite directions. Any children born in the time the couple were together were treated as legitimate heirs, and provided for, by both parties.

Priestess: At sacred places such as this our ancestors clasped hands when they would wed, and such Handfastings were lawful, true and binding, for as long as love should last. Would any couple who would wish to make such vows, or to reaffirm existing vows, witnessed by this gathering, now come forward.

The couple requiring handfasting join hands.

Priestess: As the sun and moon bring light to the Earth, do you [ ] and [ ] vow to bring the light of love and joy to your union?

Both: We do.

Priestess: And do you vow to honour each other as you honour that which you hold most sacred?

Both: We do.

Priestess: And do you vow to maintain these vows in freedom, for as long as love shall last?

Both: We do.

Priest: Then let the Earth bear witness that [ ] and [ ] are joined in love and joy and freedom. So let it be!

All: So let it be!

The couple are then encouraged to exchange any personal vows of their own, privately or so that all may hear, after which the assembly may say again: So let it be! to signify that they have witnessed these vows. They may also
exchange rings and/or blessings, love tokens, &c., sealing their bond with a kiss.

Priest: Let all bear witness that [ ] and [ ] are joined in love. May their love partake of the beauty, majesty and power of the sacred land, and may they grow together in wisdom, joy and harmony. My own blessing, and the blessings of all those assembled here be with you,

Priestess: The blessings of the Gods be with you,

Priest: The blessing of the Ancestors be with you

Priestess: And with all that grows from your union,

Priest: So let it be!

All: So let it be!

The priest and priestess then lead the procession to the main area where the Gorsedd circle is formed.

Opening the Circle

Priest: We begin this celebration by calling for peace, that in peace the voice of spirit may be heard and those within and without may know healing. 
May there be peace in the east.
May there be peace in the south.
May there be peace in the west.
May there be peace in the north.
May there be peace throughout all the world.

So let it be!

All: So let it be!

Priestess: We gather here in peace to celebrate the inauguration of this, the Gorsedd of Bards of Caer Rhiannon, and midsummer, and the sanctity of our Mother Earth.

Priest: Let us now weave our circle, that the spirits of those who are gathered here may be blended in one purpose, one voice and one sacred space.

The circle is woven by the priest with three bards assisting.

Priestess: Let us call now to the quarters, that our ancestors may know the old ways are not forgotten.

Calling the

Quarters

Calling the quarters is a part of many traditions, invoking different energies from each of the cardinal points. The Gorsedd is open to followers of all spiritual paths and so representatives of different faiths are invited to call the quarters, each in their own way. The following are suggestions, firstly in the Druid tradition:

East: I call to the spirits of air, breath of life; to the spirit of the eagle, who brings the gift of vision far and clear, the spirits of the wild east wind, of sunrise and of spring, of new life and new growth. May all within this sacred circle know the
power of your blessings. So I bid you hail and welcome!

All: Hail and welcome!

South: I call to the spirits of fire, energy of passion; the spirit of the wild cat, who kindles within us the strength and beauty of the untamed places; spirit of the noonday sun, the heat of summer, vitality and abundance. May all within this sacred circle know the power of your blessings. So I bid you hail and welcome!

All: Hail and welcome!

West: I call to the spirits of water, of the ebb and flow of emotion; to the spirit of the salmon, who fills us with the wisdom welling up from deep within the earth, of open seas and running streams, of cleansing rain; spirit of the evening sun, of twilight and of autumn. May all within this sacred circle know the power of your blessings. So I bid you hail and welcome!

All: Hail and welcome!

North: I call to the spirits of earth, of the womb of creation; to the spirit of the bear, who draws us into the nourishing darkness of the cave; spirits of the night and the snows of winter, deep roots and ancient stones. May all within this sacred circle know the power of your blessings. So I bid you hail and welcome!

All: Hail and welcome!

And here are some suggestions from other traditions:

East [Christian]: The eye of the great God,
The eye of the God of glory,
The eye of the King of hosts,
The eye of the King of the living,
Pouring upon us
At each time and season,
Pouring upon us gently and generously.
Glory to thee
Thou glorious sun,
Glory to thee, thou sun,
Face of the God of life.

South [Shamanic]: You, O Fire,
Our mother with thirty teeth.
You ride a red mare of three springs,
Your red cloak flying in the wind.
Through your garments run chains of mountains.
In your veins the rivers flow.
Provide for us by day
And protect us by night.
Light the way for those who depart
And lead the others homeward.
O Fire, Great Mother, be with us.

West [Wiccan]: Ye Lords of the Watchtowers of the West, ye Lords of Water, ye Lords of Death and of Initiation; I do summon, stir and call you up, to witness our rites and to guard the Circle.
North [Norse]: Hail to Woden, wisest of Gods,
Howls of wolves and ravens’ cries,
Be sig-runes writ on this bright day.
Hail to Freya, fiery love-queen,
Witch-wife, healer, warrior of trance.
Hail to the Gods and Goddesses all,
Hail the ancient ones,
Spirits most wise.

Priest: The circle is unbroken,
The ancestors awoken.
May the songs of the Earth
and of her people ring true.
Hail to the spirits of this place;
of root and branch, tooth and claw,
fur and feather, of earth and sea and sky.
Hail and welcome!

All: Hail and welcome!

Blessings for Children

Priest: Our circle is a symbol of the eternal, and yet it is made anew each time we meet. And so it is with ourselves; we each hold within us a spirit that is eternal, and yet we are reborn many times as we journey towards the centre. And at each moment of rebirth we are touched by the eternal spirit that guides us on our journey.

Priestess: Let the children who would be blessed come forward, creating a circle within the circle of our community.

Babies and young children may now come forward, with or without parents. Each child is given a blessing by the priestess, the form of which is as follows. This is a blessing given to the British Druid Order by a Druid named Septimus Bron, who was blessed with these words at Stonehenge in the 1930s.

If there are many children to be blessed, it may be good to open the first eisteddfod session while this is being done. This is coordinated by the priest who invites members of the assembly to come forward with appropriate stories, poems and songs.

I baptise thee with Mother Earth,
From whose loins we come
And to whose arms we fly
When our journey here is over.

I baptise thee with the winds
That come from the four corners
Of the Earth, the winds that
Scatter the seeds of the harvest
And blow away the snows of winter.

I baptise thee with fire
So that thy spirit may be
Purified and thy days
Be long and fruitful.

I baptise thee with the waters
Of life, the waters that
No living thing can do without.

Give thanks to our Lady
For thy bounteous harvest,
And may she bless you and keep you
All the days of your life.

Priest: Within the Gorsedd circle is the circle of our children, blessed by
the Gods, blessed by our Mother Earth and by the elements of earth, water, fire and air. Let us welcome them into our community of spirit and of song. Children of our Mother Earth, I bid you hail and welcome!

All: Hail and welcome!

**Bardic Initiation**

**Priestess:** As we are born into the life of the body, so we may be born into the life of the spirit. Initiation into the Gorseddau seeded by the British Druid Order offers an opportunity to dedicate to the spirit of place, the community of Bards and kindred of the spirit. It is free and open to all who wish to receive it, welcoming followers of all spiritual traditions within one circle. In offering this initiation, we ask that you make a personal commitment to walk the path of the Bard in beauty and in peace, using what inspiration you may gain to find your own spirit's true path of creative expression, and using your creativity for the benefit of your community and of the Earth.

**Priest:** Let those who wish to be initiated into the Gorsedd of Bards of Caer Rhiannon and to receive the spirit of inspiration that we call Awen, the 'flowing spirit,' step forward now to the centre of the circle.

Candidates for initiation gather at the centre of the circle, linking hands to form an outward facing circle of their own. All then repeat the following after the priest and priestess:

We assemble here at Alban Hefin of the year 1997.
We assemble in the face of the sun; the Eye of Enlightenment.
We assemble on the Gorsedd mound of Mother Earth.
We assemble here to constitute ourselves a Gorsedd of Bards of the Islands of Britain.

**Priest:** In the name of the ancient Order of Bards, and by the authority of those here present, I hereby proclaim this sacred Gorsedd of Caer Rhiannon; may it be a meeting place of Love, and Truth, and Light. So let it be!

All: So let it be!

**Priestess:** Let us now invoke the Awen, the holy flowing spirit of the Bardic tradition, and direct its shining stream of inspiration towards those gathered in the midst of the circle, that they may receive its glowing gifts of clear sight, wisdom and strength of spirit. And let those in the centre join the chant, visualising the stream of inspiration flowing into you, and through you, to energise and inspire not only yourselves, but the land of Caer Rhiannon and all the worlds beyond.

Those remaining in the outer circle link hands. Those who have already
received the Awen visualise its stream of inspiration flowing into the circle, directed through them to those gathered in the centre.

All: Awen, Awen, Awen.

The initiates in the outer circle then give the following blessing:

Wisdom of serpent be thine,
Wisdom of raven be thine,
Wisdom of valiant eagle.

Voice of swan be thine,
Voice of honey be thine,
Voice of the son of stars.

Bounty of sea be thine,
Bounty of land be thine,
Bounty of the boundless heavens.

Priest: Step forward now, Bards of the Gorsedd of Caer Rhiannon, and take your place within the circle of initiates.

All now return to their places in the circle.

Priest: Let us now proclaim the Gorsedd Prayer.

All: Grant, O God/dess, thy protection,
And in protection, strength,
And in strength, understanding.
And in understanding, knowledge,
And in knowledge, the knowledge of justice,
And in the knowledge of justice, the love of it,
And in that love, the love of all existences,
And in the love of all existences, the love of the God/dess and all goodness.

Priestess: Everything the Power of the World does is done in a circle. The sky is round, and I have heard that the Earth is round like a ball, and so are all the stars. The wind in its greatest power whirls, and birds make their nests in circles, for theirs is the same religion as ours. The junction of heaven and earth, the horizon, is its circle of enclosing stones, for it is beyond the air that heaven and earth meet, and that junction is the circle of enclosing stones. Let us then complete our circle by joining hands to swear the oath of Peace.

All: We swear by peace and love to stand,
Heart to heart and hand to hand,
Mark, O Spirit, and hear us now,
Confirming this our sacred vow.

Honouring the Departed

Priestess: The otherworld is known by many names. Some call it the Islands of the Earthly Paradise, others the Isles of the Blest. These islands lie beyond the western ocean, where the souls of the departed are
carried on the rays of the setting sun
to place of peace and healing.
Priest: Our ancestors sang songs by
the side of those departing this life;
songs that would guide them on their
journey to the otherworld. Those
among us who have friends or loved
ones who have taken or are about to
take that journey are invited to speak
their names, either aloud or in your
hearts, that we may honour them.

Those who wish now step forward
and say the name or names aloud.
Others may make their dedications in
silence.

Priest: This song tells of the soul’s
journey to the otherworld and of
what will be found there. I offer it in
honour of our loved ones who
journey on before us.

I bring a branch of Evin’s apple-tree,
alike in form to those you know;
twigs of white silver upon it grow,
and buds of crystal blossom fair to see.

There is an island far beyond this land,
around which glisten white sea-horses;
against its shores, they flow in their white
courses;
upon four pillars strong, that island
stands.

Delight of eye, that glorious plain,
whereon hosts hold games that know no
end;
coracle and chariot there do contend,
southward o’er that white and silver
plain.

On columns of white bronze, the isle
stands tall;
their beauty through the aeons is
unfurled.
The fairest land though all the world,
where myriadr flowers fall.
An ancient tree there is in flower,
whereon bright birds each hour call.
In sweetest harmony they all
combine to sing each passing hour.

No sorrow known, nor grieving there;
no sickness, death or suffering.
Such is the life of fair Evin;
a life that in this world is all too rare.

And if you see that Silver Land,
where dragon-stones and crystals rain;
the sea-borne waves along the foaming
main,
sweep crystal tresses across your hand.

And at the rising of the sun,
comes one who lights the level lands.
He rides upon the sea-washed sands
and paints the ocean red now day’s
begun.

A host then comes across the shining sea,
and row their craft most skilfully to land,
where shining stones in circles stand
from which arise a music sweet and free.
Through ages long unto the gathered
throng
they sing a song that sorrow never
stained;
a hundred voices all in chorus reigned,
in praise of life, and life’s eternal song.

Eva of many shapes beside the sea,
whether it be far or it be near,
women in colours bright-clad wander here,
surrounded by the clear and shining sea.
And if you hear the sweet voice of the stones
and the songbirds of the Peaceful Land,
those women will walk close at hand;
no one who comes need walk alone.
Good health and happiness those women share,
in the land where peals of laughter sound;
the Land of Peace, where purity is found;
immortal life and lifelong joy are there.
So sink not on your bed of rest,
nor let the mind’s confusion overwhelm;
across the clear sea, set fast you helm,
and sail unto the Islands of the Blest.

Priestess: We give thanks, in the name of our Gods, for all those who have shared with us their lives, their wisdom and their love. Hail, O ancestors, those newly departed and those of old.

All: Hail, O ancestors!

Celebration

Now is enacted the tale of Pwyll,
Head of Annwn and Rhiannon,
Goddess of the White Mare.

Priest: We gather here today to celebrate Alban Hefin, the summer solstice, when the sun of summer is at its height. It was at this time, a thousand years ago and more, that Pwyll, Head of Annwn, was feasting at Narberth when he decided to climb to the top of Gorsedd Arberth. The Chief Bard of the Court told him:
"It is said of that sacred mound that one who sits upon it will receive either wounds or blows or else a vision."
"Well," said Pwyll, "I have no fear of wounds or blows, but I would welcome a vision."
So he went to the top of the Gorsedd mound with his companions and there they sat in the noonday sun. They had not sat long when Pwyll saw in the distance a woman on a white horse coming towards the mound. He asked his companions:
"Who is that woman?"
But none knew her. Then Pwyll sent one of the company down the hill to ask her name and errand. The youth went down to the road, but although the white horse walked slowly, the youth could not catch it even at a run and so returned to the prince. The next day, Pwyll and his fellows set out again for the Gorsedd mound and again the woman on the white horse approached. This time Pwyll sent his best rider on his swiftest horse to catch her. But although her horse seemed still to walk at a steady pace, the rider could not keep up and soon returned, exhausted. On the third day, Pwyll had his own horse saddled and sat mounted on the Gorsedd mound waiting for the woman to appear. As soon as he saw
the white horse, Pwyll spurred his own mount down the hill and galloped towards her. But again, the white horse easily outpaced him, although still seeming to walk. At last Pwyll shouted:
"In the name of all thou lovest best in the world, I bid you stay!"
At this, the woman stopped, turned to Pwyll and said:
"Twere better for your horse had you said that some time ago."
"Lady," asked Pwyll, "I beg you tell me your name and errand."
"Easily done," said she, "My name is Rhiannon and my errand is to seek you out and offer you my hand in marriage if you will accept it."
Pwyll looked at the woman, whom he thought fairer than any maid he had ever seen, and said:
"Lady, that I will and gladly."
And so a wedding feast was set for them and in the midst of the feast a young man entered the hall and said:
"I ask a favour of the lord of this feast."
"Ask your favour, and whatever it is I shall grant it," said Pwyll.
"That was the most foolish thing you shall ever say," said Rhiannon.
"I ask that the woman you would make your wife should be mine instead," said the young man.
Pwyll was stunned, but he had made his pledge before the whole hall and could not go back on his word. Then Rhiannon said to the young man:
"I will come to you after a year and a day if you then prepare a wedding feast in your own hall."
And so it was arranged. Now, when the year had passed, Rhiannon gave Pwyll a little bag and said:
"Take one hundred men with you. Disguise yourself as a beggar and go to the feasting hall, leaving your men outside. I the hall, ask for as much food as will fill this bag. The bag has a spell upon it so that, however much is put inside it will never be filled. Then say that the bag will only be filled if the rightful lord of the feast jumps into the bag and presses down the contents with his feet."
And this is what Pwyll did. He arrived at the feast and asked for as much food as would fill the little bag, but though every servant in the place brought bowls and boxes and barrels and buckets full of food, the bag would not be filled. Then Pwyll said:
"If only the rightful lord of this feast would press down the contents of the bag with his feet, then the bag would be filled."
So Pwyll’s rival jumped up from his seat and into the bag. Pwyll closed the bag over the young man’s head and drew tight the string. Then he called in each of his hundred men in turn and each one asked:
"What is in the bag?"
And Pwyll replied: "A badger."
And each one of the hundred nights
gave the bag a kick. Thus was the
name called Badger-in-the-Bag
played for the first time. At last
Pwyll's rival begged to be let out of
the bag and promised that Pwyll
should have his bride and that he
should not try for revenge in spite of
the bruises he had received in the
bag. And so it was that Pwyll and
Rhiannon were handfasted upon the
Gorsedd mound and she granted him
the sovereignty of the land, and he
ruled it well in her name for many
years.

Priestess: Let us now give thanks to
our Mother Earth, from whom we all
were born, and to whom we shall
return at the end of our days.

The bread and mead are brought
into the centre of the circle to be
blessed by the priest and priestess.

Priestess: Mother Earth, in the name
of our Gods and the Gods of our
ancestors, we give you thanks. You
nourish us body and soul with your
gifts of beauty and of abundance. As
you honour us with such precious
life, may we honour you.

Priest: I bless this bread in the name
of Rhiannon of the White Mare, she
who bears the sacred child within
her womb, who gives the gift of
sovereignty to the rightful king and
the gift of inspiration to Bards who
call upon her.

Priestess: This bread is blessed. To
our Mother we give the first. I leave
corn and milk in your land, and mast
in your woods, and increase in your
soil.

She breaks the bread and scatters
some over the earth.

Priest: Father Sky, in the name of
our Gods and the Gods of our
ancestors, we give you thanks. Light
of the sun and blessings of rain fall
upon the body of our Mother,
bringing forth her gifts. To you, O
Father, we give thanks.

Priestess: I bless this mead in the
name of Pwyll, Head of Annwn, Lord
of the Underworld and ruler of this
sacred Earth by virtue of his love for
Rhiannon, the Great Goddess.

Priest: This mead is blessed. To you,
our Mother, we give the first. I leave
corn and milk in your land, and mast
in your woods, and increase in your
soil.

He pours a little mead on the earth.

Priestess: Let us share this blessed
bread, let us eat, that none may
know hunger.

Priest: Let us share this blessed
mead (juice), let us drink, that none
may know thirst.

Priest and priestess give to each
other. With the help of the assisting
priest and priestess, the bread and mead
is shared with the gathering, passing
sunwise around the circle. While the
feast is shared, the eisteddfod begins.
Priestess: As we give thanks for the
water, we give thanks for the gifts of
food and drink that sustain deep wisdom and free flowing that
our bodies, so let us give thanks in you have brought to our circle. May
poetry and song for the gift of these gifts remain with us as you
inspiration that uplifts our spirits.
depart for your fair and lovely
Priest: I proclaim the opening of this realms, and as we bid you hail and
eisteddfod with the words of the farewell!
Dagda, the Good God of Irish
All: Hail and farewell!
tradition, who called thus to his harp
South: Spirits of the South; spirits when he descended to the
of fire, we give thanks for the gifts of Underworld to retrieve it from the passion and energy that you have Fomor who had stolen it away:
Bards of the Gorsedd are now, come two cries!
invited to give offerings of poetry, story Come, hand of fourfold music!
or song in honour of the season, of the Come summer, come winter!
Earth and of the community.
Come, voice of harps, bagpipes and
When the eisteddfod ends, the flutes!
circle is closed as follows:

Priestess: I call upon the guardians
North: Spirits of the North; spirits of quarters to close this Gorsedd of earth, we give thanks for the gifts circle.
of strength and endurance that you have brought to our circle. May these gifts remain with us as you depart for your fair and lovely realms, and as we bid you hail and farewell!

All: Hail and farewell!

All: Hail and farewell!

Guardian: In the name of Rhiannon,
North: Spirits of the North; spirits the Great Goddess of the White of earth, we give thanks for the gifts Mare, and of Pwyll, the Head of of strength and endurance that you Annwn, I give thanks to all those, have brought to our circle. May these both seen and unseen, who have gifts remain with us as you depart gathered here today. May all be for your fair and lovely realms, and as blessed.
we bid you hail and farewell!

All: Hail and farewell!

Priestess: O Spirit of this Place, we give you thanks for your blessings. Hail, O ancestors, O great Gods of old, we give you thanks for your
presence, your guidance and your inspiration. May these gifts remain with us as we bid you hail and farewell!

All: Hail and farewell!

Priestess: Let the circle be opened that these blessings be shared throughout the world.

The Priest and three Bards unweave the circle.

Priest: This Gorsedd ends in peace as in peace it began. May the spirit of Caer Rhiannon, the light of the Sun, and the love of the Goddess go with us all as we depart this place, to nourish, strengthen and sustain us until we meet again. So let it be!

All: So let it be!

Here ends this Gorsedd rite. Blessed be!

The White Horse

Many origins for the Uffington White Horse have been suggested over the years. Was it a Romano-British symbol? Was it a Saxon monument to a military victory over the British? The controversy over the age of the Horse was resolved last year by radio-carbon dating which established that the figure was cut long before either Romans or Saxons came to these shores. It dates from the late Bronze Age, circa 1500 BCE. This was the time when stone circle building in Britain came to an end, a thousand years before Celtic culture arrived from the Continent.

But what was the purpose of the Horse? Perhaps it is the animal totem of a horse Goddess similar to the Romano-British Epona, portrayed as a woman riding a horse. She was popular with cavalry units in Roman Britain. She is also one of the select band of Celtic deities who were widespread throughout the Celtic realms. Certainly, the Horse seems a powerful symbol of the land now known as the Vale of the White Horse. The figure strides the hillside close by the Ridgeway, the oldest trackway in Britain, dating back to the Mesolithic period. From a magical standpoint, the Horse offers a source of energy for weary walkers on the Ridgeway path.

Others have speculated that the Horse is in fact a dragon. The Gorsedd mound of Dragon Hill lies just below the White Horse and is said to be the scene of St. George's conquest of the dragon. The patch of exposed chalk on the hilltop is said to be the spot where the dragon's blood was spilt. The Ridgeway is a dragon track, a flow path for the life force of the Earth. There is a 'run-off' from it which flows through the body of the White Horse and down to Dragon Hill where the energy accumulates in a spiral within the Hill, reflected in a matching spiral which emerges from the bare patch of chalk and rises into the sky. The top of the mound is an interface between the powers of earth and air, a meeting place of heaven and earth, a perfect setting — for celebrating the marriage of Land and Sky, the physical and spiritual.
The Story of Pwyll and Rhiannon

For the Bardic tradition of Britain, a primary source is the medieval Welsh collection known as the Mabinogion. Lady Charlotte Guest published the first full English translation of the eleven tales in 1849. Mabinogi means 'Youthful Tales.' The first four tales, referred to as the Four Branches, are Pwyll Lord of Dyfed, Branwen Daughter of Lyr, Manawydan Son of Lyr, and Math Son of Mathonwy. The characters of Pwyll and Rhiannon provide a link between all four tales. In the first Branch, Pwyll, mortal ruler of the kingdom of Dyfed in South Wales, changes places with Arawn, Lord of the Underworld of Annwn, and fights a battle in his stead. Pwyll marries Rhiannon, a euphemised Celtic horse Goddess who seems to represent sovereignty over the land. They have a child, Pryderi, born on May Eve.

The second Branch tells how Branwen, daughter of the sea God, Lyr, is taken to wife by Matholwch, king of Ireland. Her brother, Bran the Blessed, gives Matholwch a cauldron which can restore the dead to life. Matholwch and Branwen return to Ireland, where she is mistreated. Bran wades across the sea, towing a fleet of ships behind him. They rescue Branwen, but all except seven of the Welshmen are killed, and Bran himself is mortally wounded. The seven who escape include Pryderi, the sea God Manawydan, and the Bard Taliesin. They return to Wales and Bran asks that his head be cut off, and buried in the White Mount, where the Tower of London now stands. Bran means 'raven,' and ravens are still kept in the 'Tower of London.

In the third Branch, Manawydan marries Rhiannon, thereby gaining sovereignty over the seven Cantrefs of Dyfed. The land of Dyfed falls under a spell which causes all its inhabitants and their dwellings to vanish, except the main characters in the tale. Rhiannon and her son, Pryderi, enter a magical caer, or 'fortification,' perhaps an ancient earthwork, where they lay hands upon a golden bowl which stands beside a fountain. Both they and the caer disappear. Manawydan restores Rhiannon, Pryderi, and the land of Dyfed, by capturing the wife of the enchanter who has caused their disappearance, and threatening to hang her if he does not remove the spell.

The fourth Branch tells how the enchanter, Gwydion, and his brother, Gilfaethwy, use their magical arts to obtain from Pryderi the Otherworld pigs that the Lord of Annwn had sent to him. Pryderi pursues them across Wales until he is slain by Gwydion. Gilfaethwy rapes Goewin, the foot-holder of Math, the lord of Gwynedd in North Wales. Math's foot-holder must be a virgin, so Goewin tells Math what has been done to her and that he should look for another to take her place. Math chooses Arianrhod, and so begins the tale of Lleu Llaw Gyffes and his May bride, Blodeuwedd, 'Flower Face.' Lleu, whose Irish equivalent is Lugh Lámhfada, 'Light of the Long Arm,' is a euphemised sun God. The tale follows Lleu from birth, through death,
transformation into an eagle and return to human form. This can be read as a mythic cycle following the course of the sun through the ritual year.

What Now?

If you enjoyed this Gorsedd, please feel free to carry it on, either using the ceremony presented here, or amending it, or substituting one of your own. Each Gorsedd we seed may consider itself affiliated to the BDO if members wish, but remains independent, answering to the needs and wishes of its Bards. To be a Bard of the Gorsedd means as much or as little as each member wishes it to mean. The BDO offers inspiration, help and encouragement and can also provide information about the Bardic path and other aspects of Druid tradition.

If you would like to receive news of future gatherings of the Gorsedd of Bards of Caer Rhiannon, and of other Gorseddau seeded by the British Druid Order, please give your name and address before you depart or send it on to us. The BDO or a local volunteer (hint hint) will maintain a mailing list (which can be made available to Gorsedd members who may wish to get in touch with each other) and produce a newsletter. It would help greatly if you could offer a donation towards printing and mailing costs. Cheques or POs may be made payable to the British Druid Order at: BDO, P.O. Box 29, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex TN37 7YP
telephone: 01424 716687
e-mail:
greywolf@druidorder.demon.co.uk
bobcat@nemeton.demon.co.uk
By sending £9 to the same address, you can get the BDO introductory book, Druidry: Native Spirituality in Britain, containing chapters by Ronald Hutton, Philip Shallcross, Emma Restall Orr and Andy Leitch, plus a four-issue subscription to the BDO journal, Tooth & Claw.

You might also like to subscribe to The Druids’ Voice: the Magazine of Contemporary Druidry, containing articles by many leading practitioners of modern Druidry. Send £12, made payable to The Druids’ Voice, for the next four issues to the BDO address.

The British Druid Order is rekindling the sacred fire of Druidry. The Druidry we practice is a native European spiritual tradition encompassing the Bardic arts of inspired creativity, storytelling, music, poetry and song, the Ovate skills of Otherworld vision, herb, tree and animal lore, philosophy and healing, and the ‘shamanic’, educative and priestly roles of the Druid. We practice Druidry as a living faith, imbued with life by the mud of our land and the blood of our ancestors.

For details of BDO membership, training sessions, workshops, talks, gigs, tours, other events, publications and so on, please write to the address above, preferably enclosing a large SAE and a couple of extra stamps.

We look forward to hearing from you.

And remember:

Celebrate diversity!
APPENDIX C:

SURVEY INSTRUMENT: DRUID GORSEDD
GORSEDD CEREMONY, UFFINGTON 1997

This survey is being conducted (results are confidential) as part of my research on modern pilgrimage, highlighting the motivations and experiences of people visiting sacred sites and/or events.

1. Have you attended other Druid ceremonies?
   No □1
   Yes □2
   If so, examples of other ceremonies

2. Are you a practising Druid?
   No □1
   Yes □2

3. How did you get information about the Gorsedd ceremony?
   Radio/TV □1
   Books □2
   Word of mouth □3
   Other ________________________________

4. Are you attending the ceremony:
   By yourself □1
   With friends □2
   With family □3

5. Will you be engaging in any tourist activities before/after the event?
   Yes No
   Visiting historic sites □ □
   Visiting friends/relatives □ □
   Shopping □ □
   Visiting national parks □ □
   Eating out □ □
   Visiting museums/galleries □ □
   Other ________________________________

6. What is your gender?
   Female □1
   Male □2

7. Which age group do you fall into?
   15-19 □1
   20-29 □2
   30-39 □3
   40-49 □4
   50-59 □5
   60+ □6

8. What is the highest level of education that you have completed to date?
   High School-CCSE □1
   High School-A levels □2
   Technical apprenticeship □3
   Technical College diploma □4
   Undergraduate Degree □5
   Postgraduate Degree □6

9. What is your occupation?

10. Town and country of residence:

   ________________________________
11. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your reason(s) for attending the Gorsedd ceremony:

**I came to the Gorsedd ceremony at Uffington:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...for spiritual awareness</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...to get away from the normal demands of life</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...to experience new and different things</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>...because this event is unique</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...so I could be with my friends</td>
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<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...because I thought the whole family would enjoy it</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...so that I could learn about issues that are important to me</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...to have a change from my daily routine</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...experience an authentic ceremony at a ancient Druid site</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...because it is stimulating and exciting</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...for the variety of things to see and do</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...to meet people with similar interests</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...so the family could do something together</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...so I could develop my skills</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...for a change of pace</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>☐ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...no particular reason – just passing</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other comments/thoughts you might like to share:

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

This questionnaire will be collected from you. Thank you for your help. Enjoy!
STARGATE, RAINBOW BEACH

This survey is being conducted (results are confidential) as part of my research on modern pilgrimage, highlighting the motivations and experiences of people visiting sacred sites and/or events.

1. Have you attended other Stargate ceremonies?
   No □1
   Yes □2
   If so, examples of other ceremonies

2. How did you get information on the Stargate ceremony?
   Radio/TV □1
   Books □2
   Word of mouth □3
   Website □4
   Other ________________________________

3. Are you attending the ceremony:
   By yourself □1
   With friends □2
   With family □3

4. Will you be engaging in any tourist activities before/after the event?
   Yes □   No □
   Visiting historic sites □   □
   Visiting friends/relatives □   □
   Shopping □   □
   Visiting national parks □   □
   Eating out □   □
   Visiting museums/galleries □   □
   Other ________________________________

5. What is your gender?
   Female □1
   Male □2

6. Which age group do you fall into?
   15-19 □1
   20-29 □2
   30-39 □3
   40-49 □4
   50-59 □5
   60+ □6

7. What is the highest level of education that you have completed to date?
   High School-Year 10 □1
   High School-Year 12 □2
   Technical apprenticeship □3
   Technical College diploma □4
   Undergraduate Degree □5
   Postgraduate Degree □6

8. What is your occupation?

________________________________________________________________________

9. Town and country of residence:

________________________________________________________________________
10. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your reason(s) for attending the Stargate ceremony:

I came to the Stargate ceremony at Rainbow Beach, Qld:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...for spiritual awareness</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
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<td>☐ 3</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>☐ 1</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other comments/thoughts you might like to share:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

This questionnaire will be collected from you.
Thank you for your help. Enjoy!
STARGATE, AYERS ROCK

This survey is being conducted (results are confidential) as part of my research on modern pilgrimage, highlighting the motivations and experiences of people visiting sacred sites and/or events.

1. Have you attended other Stargate ceremonies?
   - No □1
   - Yes □2
   If so, examples of other ceremonies

2. How did you get information on the Stargate ceremony?
   - Radio/TV □1
   - Books □2
   - Word of mouth □3
   - Website □4
   - Other

3. Are you attending the ceremony:
   - By yourself □1
   - With friends □2
   - With family □3

4. Is this your first visit to Ayers Rock
   - Yes 1
   - No 2

5. Have you visited other sacred Aboriginal sites?
   - No 1
   - Yes 2
   If, so which site(s)

4. Will you be engaging in any tourist activities before/after the event?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Visiting historic sites □
   - Visiting friends/relatives □
   - Shopping □
   - Visiting national parks □
   - Eating out □
   - Visiting museums/galleries □
   - Other

5. What is your gender?
   - Female □1
   - Male □2

6. Which age group do you fall into?
   - 15-19 □1
   - 20-29 □2
   - 30-39 □3
   - 40-49 □4
   - 50-59 □5
   - 60+ □6

7. What is the highest level of education that you have completed to date?
   - High School-Year 10 □1
   - High School-Year 12 □2
   - Technical apprenticeship □3
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8. What is your occupation?

9. Town and country of residence:

10. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your reason(s) for attending the Stargate ceremony:

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</table>

Other comments/thoughts you might like to share:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

This questionnaire will be collected from you.
Thank you for your help. Enjoy!
NEWGRANGE, IRELAND 1997

This survey is being conducted (results are confidential) as part of my research on modern pilgrimage, highlighting the motivations and experiences of people visiting sacred sites and/or events.

1. Have you visited Newgrange before?
   - No □ 1
   - Yes □ 2
   - If so, number of times previously __________________________

2. How did you get information about Newgrange?
   - Radio/TV □ 1
   - Books □ 2
   - Word of mouth □ 3
   - Other __________________________

3. Are you visiting Newgrange:
   - By yourself □ 1
   - With friends or relatives □ 2
   - With a tour group □ 3

4. Have you visited other sites such as:
   - Yes □ No □
   - Hill of Tara □
   - Drombeg Stone Circle □
   - Connemina □
   - Stonehenge □
   - Avebury □
   - Glastonbury □

5. Will you be engaging in any tourist activities before/after visiting Newgrange?
   - Yes □ No □
   - Visiting historic sites □
   - Visiting friends/relatives □
   - Shopping □
   - Visiting national parks □
   - Eating out □
   - Visiting museums/galleries □
   - Other __________________________

6. What is your gender?
   - Female □ 1
   - Male □ 2

7. Which age group do you fall into?
   - 15-19 □ 1
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   - 30-39 □ 3
   - 40-49 □ 4
   - 50-59 □ 5
   - 60+ □ 6

8. What is the highest level of education that you have completed to date?
   - High School-CCSE □ 1
   - High School-A levels □ 2
   - Technical apprenticeship □ 3
   - Technical College diploma □ 4
   - Undergraduate Degree □ 5
   - Postgraduate Degree □ 6

9. What is your occupation?


10. Town and country of residence:


11. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your reason(s) for attending Newgrange:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>I came to Newgrange:</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...to visit a tourist attraction</td>
<td>☐ 1</td>
<td>☐ 2</td>
<td>☐ 3</td>
<td>☐ 4</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>...experience an authentic Neolithic site</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>...self-discovery</td>
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Other comments/thoughts you might like to share:

_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

This questionnaire will be collected from you. Thank you for your help. Enjoy your stay!
APPENDIX G:

SURVEY INSTRUMENT: ULURU
ULURU-KATA TJUTA NATIONAL PARK: 1998

1. Have you visited Uluru before?

<p>| | |</p>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>□1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>□2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If so, number of times previously _______

2. Are you visiting Kata Tjuta as well?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>□1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>□2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Are you:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A day visitor to the area</td>
<td>□1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying at Yulara</td>
<td>□2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. How long will you stay at Uluru?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>□1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>□2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>□3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 3 days</td>
<td>□4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Have you visited other Australian
   Aboriginal sacred sites?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>□1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>□2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If so, which site(s) in particular?

____________________________________

6. How did you get information about Uluru?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio/TV</td>
<td>□1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>□2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td>□3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Are you visiting Uluru:

- By yourself □ 1
- With friends or relatives □ 2
- With a tour group □ 3

8. Will you be engaging in any tourist activities before/after visiting Uluru?

- Visiting historic sites □ Yes □ No
- Visiting friends/relatives □ Yes □ No
- Shopping □ Yes □ No
- Visiting other national parks □ Yes □ No
- Eating out □ Yes □ No
- Visiting museums/galleries □ Yes □ No
- Other ____________________________

9. Did you climb Uluru?

- Yes □ 1
- No □ 2

10. If you answered **YES** to Question 9, why did you climb Uluru (**please tick your **ONE MAIN MOTIVE**):

- part of experiencing a tourist attraction □ 1
- spiritual connection with the site □ 2
- get a good view over the area □ 3
- saw the climb as a physical challenge □ 4
- other ____________________________

11. If you answered **NO** to Question 9, why did you not climb Uluru (**please tick your **ONE MAIN REASON**):

- afraid of heights □ 1
- because it's a sacred Anangu site □ 2
- physical/health limitations □ 3
- could appreciate and experience the culture without making the climb □ 4
- other ____________________________
12. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your reason(s) for visiting Uluru:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to visit a tourist attraction</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for spiritual awareness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experience an authentic Aboriginal sacred site</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-discovery</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to meet people with similar interests</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to do something completely different</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to satisfy my curiosity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to climb Uluru</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>so I could be with my friends</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>so the family could do something together</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>so I could learn new things</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no particular reason – in the area</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. How did you learn about & experience the local Aboriginal culture, & the sacred nature of Uluru?

__________________________________________________________

14. Were there things at Uluru, such as the Cultural Centre and interpretative signs, that helped you in this learning experience? (please tick ONE ONLY)

Yes  □ 1  
What helped you? _______________________________________

No   □ 2  
What hindered you? _____________________________________

15. Comments/thoughts you might like to share:

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
16. What is your gender?

Female □1  Male □2

17. Which age group do you fall into?

15-19 □1  40-49 □4
20-29 □2  50-59 □5
30-39 □3  60+ □6

18. What is the highest level of education that you have completed to date?

High School- Year 10 □1
High School- Year 12 □2
Technical apprenticeship □3
Technical College diploma □4
Undergraduate Degree □5
Postgraduate Degree □6

19. What is your occupation?

________________________________________________________________________

20. Australian postcode OR Country of residence:

________________________________________________________________________

This questionnaire will be collected from you. Thank you for your help. Enjoy your visit!
16. What is your gender?

Female ☐ 1  Male ☐ 2

17. Which age group do you fall into?

15-19 ☐ 1  40-49 ☐ 4
20-29 ☐ 2  50-59 ☐ 5
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Postgraduate Degree ☐ 6

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CHAPTER 1


CHAPTER 2


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CHAPTER 3


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*Justine Digance – Modern pilgrims: spiritual warriors or merely mass tourists* 269
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**CHAPTER 4**


*Justine Digance – Modern pilgrims: spiritual warriors or merely mass tourists* 272


*The Dalai Lama in Australia 1996: The Kalachakra Tantra*. Official programme given to those attending the event (no publisher or date given).


**CHAPTER 5**


CHAPTER 6


CHAPTER 7


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CHAPTER 8


*Justine Digance – Modern pilgrims: spiritual warriors or merely mass tourists* 279


**CHAPTER 9**


Selected Bibliography


