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# The Camino de Santiago in Late Modernity: Examining Transformative Aftereffects of the Pilgrimage Experience

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Based on a content analysis of 32 pilgrim travelogues it was assumed that certain values resulting from the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage would tend to be persistent, and these rather meaningful and memorable experiences may result in changes to a pilgrim's personal hierarchy of values. To explore these assumed transformative aftereffects an online survey (n = 500) was carried out to examine self-reported value changes using the Short Schwartz's Value Survey. The greatest increase post pilgrimage showed the importance of values that emphasise concern for the welfare and interests of others (universalism, benevolence). The only and quite substantial decreases we measured was in the importance of values that emphasise the pursuit of self-interest and relative success together with dominance over others (power, achievement). A slight increase was evident in openness to change and interestingly, also conservation. Since spirituality shares a pro-social tendency with religiosity, while conservation is not the emphasis, openness to change is important. We suggest therefore, that value-shift reflects pro-social tendencies and is associated with both religiosity and spirituality.

**Key Words:** transformative aftereffects, pilgrimage, late modernity, values, spirituality

## Introduction

Studies show that modernisation in some countries of Europe has greatly reduced the social significance of religion or at least markedly pushed it from churches into the private sphere (Berger & Luckmann, 1988; Bruce, 2003; Kaufmann, Goujon & Skirbekk, 2012; Luckmann, 1997; Norris & Inglehart, 2004; Voas & Crocket 2005). Therefore, it seems surprising that the number of pilgrims on the Camino de Santiago, which is considered as a Christian route, has seen a significant increase in recent decades (Challenger, 2014; Chemin, 2012; Davie, 2005; Reader, 2007; Schnell & Pali, 2013; Vilaça 2010). It is thus reasonable to place this phenomenon in the broader context of studies that talk about maintaining or even strengthening certain aspects of religiosity and spirituality in modern Europe (Frisk, 2009; Geels, 2009; Heelas, 1996; Houtman & Aupers, 2008; Motak, 2009; Sheldrake, 2007; Voas & Crocket, 2005).

## The Camino De Santiago Pilgrimage

The name Camino de Santiago usually refers to the French version of the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela which is almost 800 kilometres long and requires from four to five weeks of walking. The number

of pilgrims on the Camino de Santiago, one of the world's best-known pilgrimage routes, began to rise in 1987 when the Council of Europe declared the cultural importance of routes crossing all of Europe with a destination in Santiago de Compostela. From then on, the annual number of pilgrims has increased from less than 3,000 to more than 347,000 in 2019 (Pilgrim's Reception Office, 2020). Along with that number, what also increased was interest in research of the pilgrimage, which has been reflected in a series of primarily ethnographic studies of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage.

*There is probably no better place to look at the coexistence of old and new forms of ritual expression than in the Camino to Santiago'*

point out Oviedo *et al.* (2013:433) in their study which examines the rise of pilgrims on the Camino de Santiago. They found out that the majority of pilgrims are not particularly interested in traditional religiosity, and that signs of eclectic forms of spirituality are associated with a search for new sensations. They suggest, that many pilgrims seem to be looking for an experience 'outside the margins of material interest and the simplistic pursuit of gain'(Oviedo *et al.*:441). Lois-González and Santos (2015) see the success of the route in the adaptation of classic elements of the pilgrimage to current society motivations. They argue that contemporary pilgrims

have, besides religious or spiritual motives, further motives such as the search for various landscapes or to escape from the pressures of daily life. They consequently conclude that the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage could be considered as ‘something between the New Age and the strictly religious pilgrimage to catholic shrines such as Lourdes or Fatima’ (161). Nilsson and Tesfahuney also suggest that the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage is polyvalent and can be seen as a place where,

*both the traditional, institutional (organised) religion and individualised forms of religious belief, fuse in manifold ways* (2015:28)

where the pilgrim is,

*a heterodoxic, topos-disloyal and self-reflexive figure that is on the quest for ontological security* (Nilsson and Tesfahuney, 2018:172).

Pilgrims often report transformative aftereffects due to their pilgrimage. Lucrezia Lopez (2013) argues that after the pilgrims return home, their everyday life is marked by the pilgrimage experience. She examined the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage experience based on 63 travel narratives published by Italian pilgrims on the Internet through which she argued that their experiences transformed their lives and priorities. Greenia (2014) captured a certain change that happens after a pilgrimage and called this aspect of the pilgrimage ‘open-endedness’ (ch.1/para. 27). This incompleteness of the pilgrimage experience, which surprises the pilgrim at the end of the journey, is described in the words of anthropologist Nancy Louise Frey, who states:

*I didn't go on a pilgrimage to change, nor did I want to create a break in my life, but that was one of the results* (1998:168).

The latter author conducted an anthropological study of pilgrims on the Camino (she also walked the path several times). For her, becoming a pilgrim to Santiago often signifies ‘a means of finding transformation’ (1998:27). She argued, that at times, it is possible to witness a transformation of values for which pilgrims,

*claim in the postexperience that perhaps they were not changed by the Camino but it 'reaffirmed' values or directions in which their lives were already moving* (Frey, 1998:151).

Concerning the values of pilgrims at Camino de Santiago, the findings of Miguel Farias *et al.* (2019) are also intriguing. They found that atheists and New Age individuals are, in the aspect of values, almost

indistinguishable as they both scored higher than religious respondents on hedonism, self-direction, and stimulation. They agree with the opinion of Steve Bruce and suggest that rather than atheists being New-Agers,

*these similarities may stem from the shared absence of an ultimate authority structure or dogma, which would normally suppress these motivations in an explicitly religious context* (2019:32).

Bona Kim, Seongseop Kim, and Brian King (2016) examine the pilgrimage of Camino de Santiago from the perspective of values; they explore the ones exhibited by travellers themselves along the pilgrimage route in Spain. Based on the results of their research, they concluded that even though ‘values tend to be persistent, they may still shift over the course of meaningful and memorable experiences’ (152) as pilgrimage Camino de Santiago is. Similarly, Suedfeld *et al.* (2010) found that significant personal experiences can change an individual's value system. This latter paper is the only study known to us that measures the transformative effects of human experience using Schwartz's model of values. They also argue in their work that values are generally considered stable, yet susceptible to change in response to important life events. Consequently, important personal experiences can change an individual's value system.

Suedfeld *et al.* studied how the experience of flying into space influenced change in the personal hierarchy of values. Due to their rarity, the changes were not measured using the Schwartz Value Questionnaire; researchers analysed the astronaut's records using a thematic analysis method. They found that the values at the highest levels of astronauts' hierarchy, before going to space, were the ones associated with individualism (the values of achievement, hedonism, and self-direction) while, after returning from space, those were replaced by values that focus on the collective good (the values of universalism, spirituality, and social recognition).

## Values

In the present study, we focused on the transformative aftereffects of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage through the lens of values. Currently one of the leading researchers of values, Shalom Schwartz, rightly argues that values are key to explaining the changes of individuals and societies over time. According to his theory of values (Schwartz, 2006; Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz *et al.*, 2012),

human values have a significant impact on the behaviour of individuals and, consequently, on the functioning of societies. Schwartz understands values as beliefs linked inextricably to effect which also refers to desirable goals that motivate action and are expressed in the form of emotional moods (2012:3). For example - people for whom success is an important value are motivated to pursue success and are happy when they are successful.

Schwartz defines ten broad values and their mutual dynamics. He also argues that some values contradict each other (e.g. benevolence emphasises concern for the welfare and interests of others as well as power actions aimed at enhancing one's social position and authority over others) while others are congruent (e.g. conformity and security both motivate actions of submission to external expectations.). According to Schwartz, the ten basic value categories are grouped into four higher-order values, which form two polar value dimensions (Schwartz, 2010: 225).

The first one is *Self-enhancement* versus *Self-transcendence*. This dimension encompasses the conflict between values that emphasise concern for the well-being and interests of others (universalism, benevolence) with values that emphasise the pursuit of one's interests and relative success and dominance over others (status, achievement). As some values promote pro-social behaviour (e.g. positive effects of self-transcendence values could be expressed in sharing, helping, taking care of, and feeling empathic with others) and some oppose it, they thus play a key role in pro-social behaviour (Schwartz, 2010). This suggests that increasing the importance of values that promote pro-social behaviour (self-transcendence) and decreasing the importance of values that oppose it (self-enhancement) will elicit an increase in pro-social behaviour.

The second polar value dimension is *Conservation* versus *Openness to change*. In this dimension, Schwartz encompasses the conflict between values that emphasise independence of thought, action, and feelings, also readiness for change (self-direction, stimulation), and values that emphasise order, self-restraint, past preservation, and resistance to change (security, conformity, tradition). Within this dimension, Schwartz emphasises that the relative importance of tradition and conformity versus hedonism and stimulation 'typically guides church attendance and religiosity' (Schwartz, 2010: 223).

Interrelationships of conflict and coherence between values creates a structure of values that is similar in culturally diverse groups. Although the essence of values and their structure can be universal, individuals and groups have different priorities or hierarchies of values.

It is important for our research, that we emphasise the difference between the two basic values; values of benevolence and universalism, and their correlation to religiosity and spirituality. According to Schwartz (2006), the value of benevolence is about focusing on maintaining and increasing the well-being of those with whom the individual has frequent personal contact. The values of universalism, however, go further and wider. People recognise them when they encounter others beyond the expanded primary group and until they are aware of the scarcity of natural resources. The goal of universalism is to understand, respect, tolerate, and protect the well-being of all people and nature. If we link benevolence and universalism to religiosity and spirituality, we could assume that belonging to a religious group tends to favour benevolence more than universalism, because people within a religious community are connected with the same faith. That same faith, on the one hand, connects them and on the other, distinguishes them from people of other religious communities. The described connection between benevolence and religiosity was confirmed by a meta-analysis of studies about values and religiosity using Schwartz's model (Saroglou *et al.*, 2004). Results of that study on 21 samples from 15 countries (total n=8551) led to the conclusion that religious people tend to favour values that allow for a limited self-transcendence (benevolence, but not universalism), and disfavour hedonism and values that promote self-enhancement (achievement, power); favour values that promote conservation of social and individual order (tradition, conformity, and to a lesser extent, security) and disfavour values that promote openness to change and autonomy (stimulation, self-direction). Schwartz and Huisman (1995) also note that several studies found religiosity to be negatively correlated with hedonism, self-direction, and stimulation, while positively associated with tradition, conformity, and benevolence.

Slightly different results emerge if we correlate the level of an individual's spiritual orientation with Schwartz's dimensions of values. Studies (Pepper *et al.*, 2010; Saroglou & Munoz-Garcia, 2008) showed that spirituality, in contrast to religiosity, is statistically significantly associated with greater openness to change.

Pepper *et al.* also perceived (albeit weak - significantly weaker than in the case of religiosity) a positive correlation between spirituality and conservation, whereas this correlation was statistically insignificant in the study of Saroglou and Munoz-Garcia. In summary, spirituality tends to favour universalism, self-direction and stimulation, and disfavours tradition and security. Similarly, it shares the tendency to favour benevolence and disfavour achievement and power with religion. In addition, religious people tend to favour conservation and disfavour openness to change and experience.

## The Present Study

This study aims to examine transformative aftereffects reported by pilgrims after the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage. With this goal in mind, we first determined the form of pilgrimage aftereffects in which these values are manifest. Accordingly, a content analysis of confessional travelogues about the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage, written by the pilgrims themselves was undertaken. We found that the aftereffects are primarily reflected in the changed hierarchy of personal values. To test this presumption, we developed the research further with an online survey. For measuring value changes after the pilgrimage, we used the well-known Schwartz's model. We also sought to explain self-reported value changes after the pilgrimage through association with religiosity and spirituality. We explored changes in religiosity after the pilgrimage by developing a composite variable. We expected that pilgrims with increased religiosity would score higher on benevolence, hedonism, as well as conservative values, and lower on universalism and openness to change. From all theoretical considerations and empirical findings related above, we advanced the following hypotheses:

H1: A pilgrimage experience of walking the Camino de Santiago will result in increased self-transcendence values (benevolence, universalism), and decreased self-enhancement values (power, achievement).

H2: People with a pilgrimage experience of walking the Camino de Santiago to a larger extent, report an increase in the values of self-direction that are closer to spirituality than an increase in conservation values (tradition, conformity, security) that are closer to religiosity.

H3: An increase in religiosity after the pilgrimage experience of walking the Camino de Santiago is negatively correlated with an increase in hedonism and stimulation, while simultaneously being positively correlated with an increase in benevolence, tradition, and conformity.

This research was initially divided into two stages; the first was comprised primarily of qualitative and quantitative content analysis of 32 pilgrim travelogues. Based on these findings we hypothesised the direction of value changes.

In the second stage, following the qualitative and quantitative content analysis, we conducted an online survey (n = 500) examining self-reported value changes using the standardised Short Schwartz's Value Survey (Lindeman & Verkasalo 2005). This short value scale is a shortened version of Schwartz's Value Survey which includes 57 value items that represent ten motivationally distinct values. The Short Schwartz's Value Survey gives insight into the ten broad values.

## First stage: Content Analysis

The first phase of the study is based on a qualitative and quantitative content analysis of 32 travelogue testimonies about the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage<sup>1</sup>, written by the pilgrims themselves, published in a book form in the Slovene language, and recorded in the Slovenian library information system COBISS (Co-operative Online Bibliographic System & Services). Most books (23) are works of Slovenian authors, while six were written by seven authors from other countries and translated into the Slovene language. These six authors include two Frenchmen (Potdevin, 2013; Rufin, 2016), three Americans (Gray & Skeesuck, 2017; MacLaine, 2000), one Croatian (Kapetanović, 2017), and one Irishman (McManus, 2014). The analysis was performed using computer data processing, with QDA Miner software, where we imported and encoded the books in rtf files. Text coding was the central part of data processing. We create codes based on the qualitative data itself by analysing the incidents or activities as potential indicators of the pilgrimage experiences and their transformative aftereffects. To code values, we used the set of Schwartz's value items related to basic values (Schwartz, 2012:5-7). During the coding process, we assigned those codes to the qualitative data. After we finished the process of coding,

<sup>1</sup> In Appendix is List of analysed travelogues.

we merged identified value items into seven basic values:

- benevolence,
- universalism,
- tradition,
- self-direction,
- hedonism,
- power, and
- achievement.

In the next step, we further explored the relationship between codes by computation of similarity indices and co-occurrence indices which enabled us to perform a cluster analysis and multidimensional scaling on selected codes. We displayed our results in the form of a concept map (Figure 1).

*Findings.*

To form a hypothesis about how the values of the pilgrims changed after the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage, we explored the relationship between 30 codes relating to the changed personal hierarchy of values. As Figure 1 shows the analyses yielded a three-cluster solution. Seven basic values with value items, their frequencies of occurrence

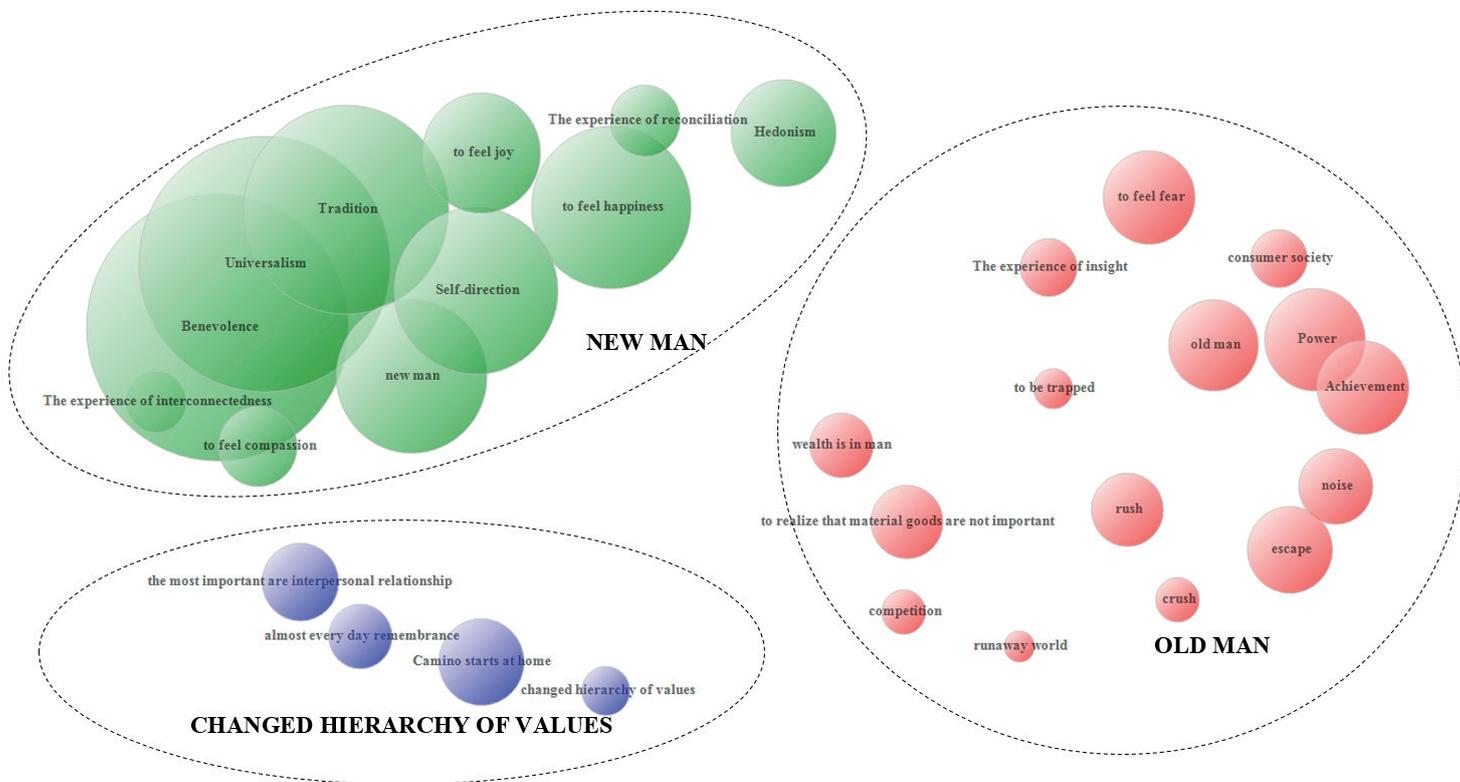
in all analysed books, and reference quotations from travelogues are presented in the implementation matrix (Table 1).

**Cluster 1: Changed Hierarchy of Values**

The first cluster forms some kind of general transformative aftereffect that we grouped under the category *Changed hierarchy of values*. It further forms four codes: *changed hierarchy of values, the Camino starts at home, almost every day remembrance* and *the most important are interpersonal relationships*. We linked the codes to each other in the next interpretation: *the Camino starts at home, pilgrims remember the experience almost every day* and that experience brings them a deep awareness that *the most important are interpersonal relationships* that lead to a *changed personal hierarchy of values*. Within the analysed text in our study, an account of this cluster can be found in a passage written by Grešak and Remškar (2017:74), describing changes after the pilgrimage experience in computer language:

*Formatting a disk has nevertheless caused some confusion and work. You will need to*

**Figure 1: Three Code Clusters Indicating Value Changes as Transformative Aftereffects of the Camino de Santiago Pilgrimage**



Note: The size of bubbles indicates how frequently a given code occurred in all the analysed texts. The proximity of the bubbles represents their average proximity/co-occurrence in the analysed texts.

*run the Values 2.0 application, download the new version of the Family Relations program, and edit the Broadband connection with the Surroundings Unit.*

### Cluster 2: New Man

Before proceeding, we need to clarify the five codes we determined and which appear in the next two clusters. During the coding process we encountered, that whenever pilgrims talked about values, it was clear from the text whether they appreciate a certain value or they reject it. To capture the aspect of rejecting, we made an addition to the coded part of the text; *old man*. An illustrative case of code *old man*, transformation after the pilgrimage and the rejecting of power and achievement, can be found in the book by Gričnik (2018:13):

*We have big fenced houses, everyone has their car, we must go to the sea on holiday and ski in winter ... All that to be normal, respectable, noticed ... My umbilical cord is cut and the shackles are torn. It is impossible to sew it, and weld the fittings, it is impossible to reassemble it. As the proverb says, when you walked the Path and arrive in Santiago, your Camino is just beginning.*

On the contrary, when the pilgrims spoke of the value with appreciation, we added code *new man*. The authors of travelogues described this transformation from an old man to a new man with different words. We have already seen Gričnik (2018) used ‘umbilical cord is cut’ (13), and Grešak and Remškar (2017) ‘formatting a disk’ (74). Škarja (2017:235) puts it like this:

*... the Camino pressed the delete button and pressed it for so long that everything was deleted.*

Frenchmen Potdevin (2013) expressed the transformation after the pilgrimage with these words:

*The world has turned on its head ... now I will have to change everything and put life on a different footing (2013:47).*

Slovenian Močnik (2009) stated,

*... I ended the journey and at the same time felt that the beginning had just happened (176).*

The next three codes that we should explain are types of exceptional experiences among pilgrims on the Camino de Santiago that we determined in the process of content analyses (Brumec *et al.*, 2022). The first one

is *the experience of interconnectedness* that is by far the most common type in our research. We define these experiences as a strong perception of an individual where one is deeply integrated into a bigger whole, usually the entire universe. The second code to explain is *an experience of deep calm and reconciliation*, which was the second most common theme in our typology. It is an experience of deep inner peace, that usually manifests itself after the process of self-exploration and self-confrontation when walking in nature and silence. The third type of exceptional experience is *the experience of insight*. We describe this as an instant and clear awareness of the essence of an important issue, which involves deeper sensing and is achieved mostly without conscious thinking. Two of these experiences are present in a second cluster - the one describing the transformation of pilgrims and becoming a *New man*.

We related all codes from the second cluster in the following explanation: through *the experience of interconnectedness* and *experience of deep calm and reconciliation* pilgrimage activates five basic values (*universalism, benevolence, self-direction, hedonism, tradition*) and fills the *new man* with feelings of *joy, happiness, and compassion*.

### Cluster 3: Old Man

The third cluster, named *old man* involves 15 codes describing the life of an *old man* in a late modern society as perceived by the pilgrim through the *experience of insight*.

The third cluster we could interpret as being *trapped* in the big *rush, crush, and noise* of a *runaway world*, in a *consumer society* marked by *competition* and *fear*. Through the *experience of insight*, the *old man* realises that *wealth is in man*, that *material goods are not important*, and one should *escape* from a world where *achievement* and *power* rule.

We could conclude, that pilgrims prefer values of universalism, benevolence, self-direction, hedonism, including tradition, and dislike achievement as well as power. In analysed travelogues, we did not detect value items that represent three of Schwartz's original ten basic values: stimulation, conformity, and security.

## Second Stage: Survey

Following the Content Analysis, we developed an internet-based questionnaire using IKA, an online survey software tool. The survey was targeted at those that walked at least 500 km of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage route - The Way of Saint James. In the

survey, we used the standardised Short Schwartz's Value Survey (Lindeman & Verkasalo 2005), which examines ten basic values only with 10 items. We asked the respondents to what extent are certain values, such as hedonism (pleasure, enjoying life), are less or more important in their personal lives after the pilgrimage Camino de Santiago. Respondents rated their responses

**Table 1: Code Occurrence for Values and Reference Quotations from Travelogues**

Values (value items)	Frequency	Percentage	Reference quotations from travelogues
<b>1. Benevolence</b> (mature love, true friendship, meaning of life, helpful, honest, forgiving, a spiritual life)	530	31%	The Camino has made this much clear to me: I want my life to demonstrate love, sacrifice for others, compassion, and the value placed in relationships (Gray & Skeesuck, 2017:217).
			How I will act at home and work. I will spread Love and light. I will be kind and loving to everyone and everything around me (Jernejčič, 2014:90).
			And now at home? I live, I feel joy, freedom, and love. I accept what life has inevitably chosen for me. I'm trying to make something good out of it. ... I found the right-center and the true meaning of everything (Steblovnik, 2010:163).
<b>2. Universalism</b> (unity with nature, broadminded, equality, a world of beauty, inner harmony, a world of peace, wisdom)	453	26%	The Camino brings an ear for the other, tolerance, recognition of diversity, and respect. Where is the place that, in addition to the above, also unites different religions? ... The Camino is strong. You only feel its power later, after the journey is over (Močnik, 2009:179).
			... the compassion we spontaneously develop at the Camino is essentially the same, regardless of skin color, eye color, size, hair length, or mother tongue (Artnik Knibbe, 2017:190).
			But deep down in myself, I feel that the Camino has brought me gratitude. Gratitude for the life I live, for the people in my life, for our mutual support and love (Božič, 2018:228).
			Unbelievable depth and beauty. Life is wonderful. We are the birds and children again, we are happy because of the Earth and its endless wonderfulness (Udovič, 2012:65).
			When you are on the ground, when nature surrounds you, when the time you have dedicated to it is the essence of your day, everything is so simple, nothing matters anymore, only the soul begins to take its shape. You realise that you are, that you are at peace (Jenko Simunič & Jenko, 2014:32).
It had awakened something in me that I long feared had been extinguished. Specifically, accompanying Sarah had restored my sense of compassion and care for others, something that suicide grieving had robbed me of (McManus, 2014:ch.12/last para.).			
<b>3. Tradition</b> (accepting my portion of life, detachment, respect for tradition, devout, humble)	319	19%	I realized that I wouldn't want to be living significantly different from what I do, that the path I walk on is the only one for me. This path taught me acceptance, it taught me to live and enjoy the here and now (Lepej Bašelj, 2009:89).
			I have cleared up with the past and now I am very much looking forward to the future. I'm not afraid of what will happen. Everything that I will experience, I will accept, I will accept (Jernejčič, 2014:31).
			Let me hint to you that this is a very special aspect of Camina when you train detachment daily (Artnik Knibbe, 2017:210).
			Weakness shows the true power of love; vulnerability makes us alive; poverty shows us the true richness of the heart; imperfection shows us true reality and ontological humility; sins open the door of grace for us (Potdevin, 2013:120).
			I'm grateful to the pain which has turned me into a humble pilgrim (Udovič, 2012:19).

**Table 1 (cont.): Code Occurrence for Values and Reference Quotations from Travelogues**

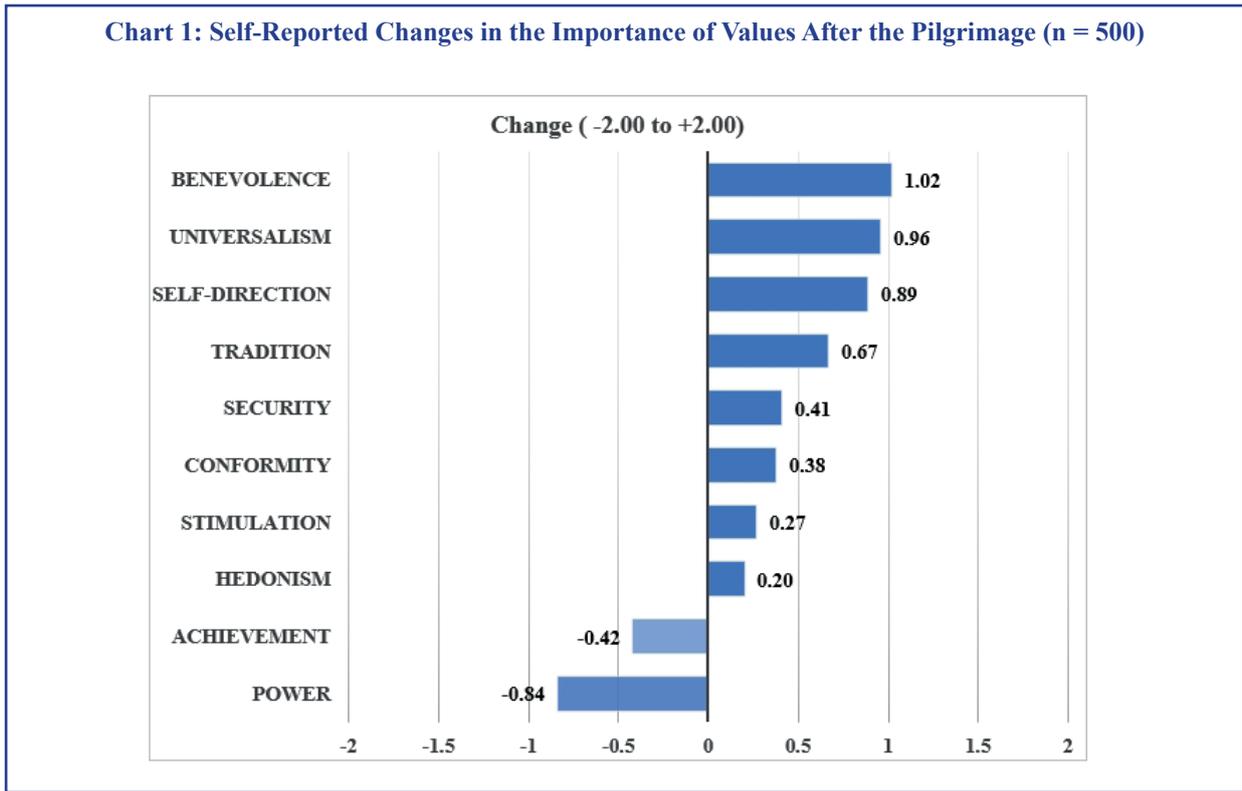
Values (value items)	Frequency	Percentage	Reference quotations from travelogues
<b>4. Self-Direction</b> (independent, choosing own goals, self-respect, creativity, freedom)	204	12%	I start by settling accounts with my personality, as even now, after the Camino, it does not end for me. I have become my creator of life, I enjoy creating and being free (Steblovnik, 2010:165).
			I could see now the invitation to get off the mad wheel of competitiveness and busyness that the world promotes. I knew the importance of walking my own Camino at my own pace. This meant not being distracted by others, keeping my own quiet and humble goals (McManus, 2014: ch.16/para. 28).
			One of the needs that arise next to me in all these changes is also that I walk through life lightly and without unnecessary clutter. So in recent years, I've been giving away everything I don't need ... The feeling of freedom grew with each box that found its place among those who still needed it ... (Artnik Knibbe, 2017:20-21).
<b>5. Hedonism</b> (pleasure, enjoying life)	81	5%	I feel free, enjoy life and feel great pleasure in every moment, (Steblovnik, 2010:94).
			I also realize that pleasure in itself is not problematic if it is conscious and we do not attach to it (Artnik Knibbe, 2017:216).
<b>6. Power</b> (wealth, social power, authority)	69	4%	Craving for material goods and a kind of quasi-survival seems completely irrelevant and superfluous to me in the crazy rhythm of everyday life in which we live (Djura Jelenko, 2010:140).
			In the outside world, where power and might reign, instant pleasure, money, and empty glory, selfish possession, and pride, Christ shows us and helps us turn the tyrannical pyramid of values that enslaves us (Potdevin, 2013:120).
			A role based on power and control creates comfort. With this, however, a golden cage from which few are freed (Artnik Knibbe, 2017:171).
<b>7. Achievement</b> (influential, successful, ambitious)	56	3%	People talk about their profession, about their titles and certificates. ... People talk about their references, certificates, diplomas. ... People talk about their houses, cars, jewellery, yachts. ... People talk about success, fame, and visibility. ... People talk about their possessions. ... Say what is invisible to the eyes, inaudible to the ears, intangible to the hands, imperceptible to the nose ... That is the most important thing. And that has real value. What you always have in you. What builds you no matter what is around you ... (Škarja, 2017:232-234).
			For several months after my return, I tried to apply my reflections on my fears to the whole of my life. I calmly examined what I carried on my back. I cast off many things, many projects, many constraints (Rufin, 2016: ch.32/ para.17).

on a 5-point scale (from 'much less' to 'much more'). In our analysis, we explore the direction of change as well as the magnitude of change, so responses reflect both direction and magnitude of change. Scores on each of the 10 values are calculated as follows: 'much less' is assigned a value of +2; 'less' is assigned a value of +1; 'the same' is assigned a value of 0; 'more' is assigned a value of -1, and; 'much more' is assigned a value of -2. The questionnaire was available in English, Spanish, and Slovene language. The data were collected from July to September of 2020. A link with the online questionnaire was placed on several Camino de Santiago groups, on Facebook.

Survey questions also consisted of measures of traditional religiosity. We used a three-item scale to check respondents' change in the level of engagement with religion after the pilgrimage. We asked them if the frequency of religious practices and the importance of God increased after the pilgrimage experience. They rated these answers on a 5-point scale (from 'definitely not' to 'definitely yes').

### Results

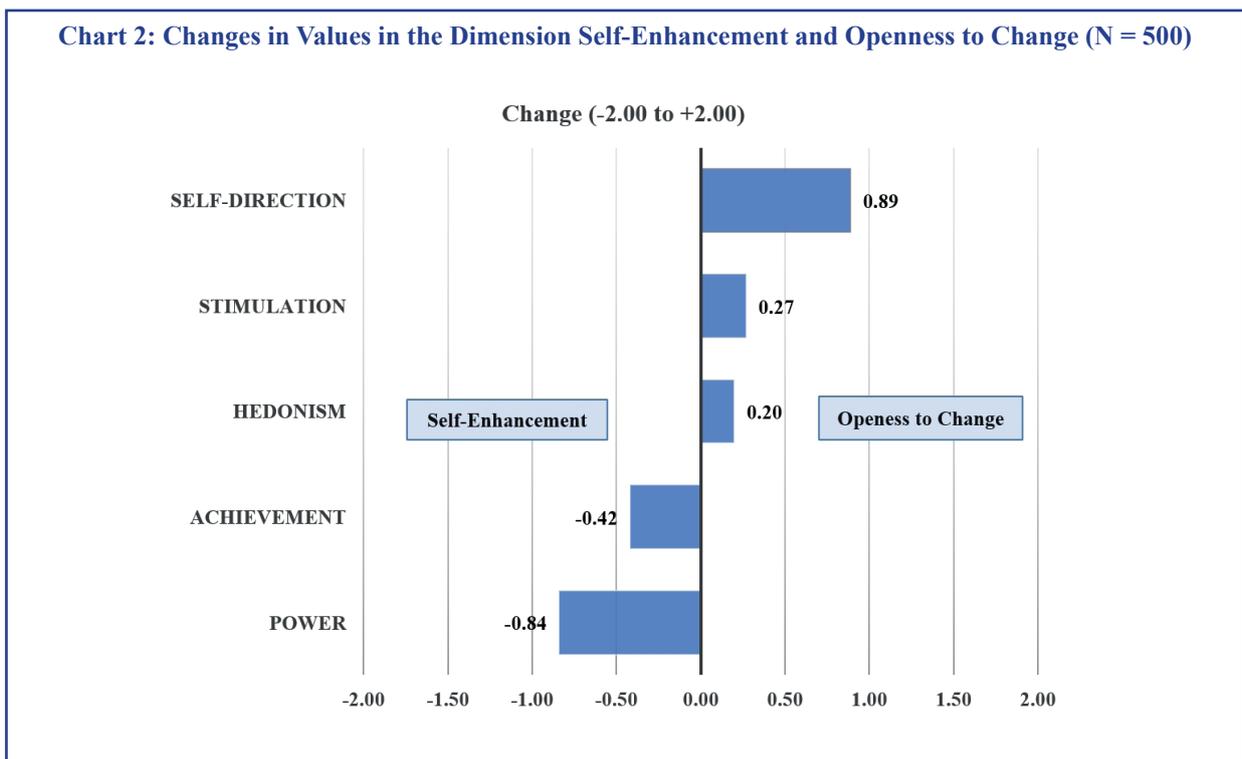
The final sample (n = 500) consisted of 53% of pilgrims that walked at least 500 km of the Camino de Santiago once, 16% twice, and 31% more than twice. 10% of them participated in the survey less than half a year after they



had returned from their last pilgrimage, 58% more than half and less than two years, and for 32% it was more than two years since they finished the Camino.

Self-reported changes in the importance of values after the pilgrimage are presented in Chart 1. In the first place is an increase in benevolence ( $\Delta = +1.02$ ;  $SD = 0.73$ ),

which is followed by universalism ( $\Delta = +0.96$ ;  $SD = 0.78$ ). Significantly less extensive changes were recorded in Schwartz's dimension of openness to change, where the effects of pilgrimage are mixed. On one hand, there is a moderate increase in the values of self-direction ( $\Delta = +0.89$ ;  $SD = 0.76$ ), and on the other, the values of stimulation and hedonism increase very slightly ( $\Delta$



**Table 2: Coefficients of Correlations Between Values and Composite Variable of Religiosity (n = 500)**

	Values									
	$\Delta$ PO	$\Delta$ AC	$\Delta$ HE	$\Delta$ ST	$\Delta$ SD	$\Delta$ UN	$\Delta$ BE	$\Delta$ TR	$\Delta$ CO	$\Delta$ SE
$\Delta$ PO	1									
$\Delta$ AC	0.62**	1								
$\Delta$ HE	0.14**	0.27**	1							
$\Delta$ ST	0.16**	0.29**	0.55**	1						
$\Delta$ SD	-0.21**	-0.04	0.22**	0.30**	1					
$\Delta$ UN	-0.22**	-0.13**	0.14**	0.09*	0.47**	1				
$\Delta$ BE	-0.23**	-0.11*	0.06	0.04	0.44**	0.59**	1			
$\Delta$ TR	-0.09*	-0.01	0.03	0.10*	0.22**	0.27**	0.38**	1		
$\Delta$ CO	-0.01	0.12**	0.14**	0.18**	0.17**	0.30**	0.28**	0.55**	1	
$\Delta$ SE	0.08	0.17*	-0.04	0.15	0.07	0.21*	0.23**	0.45**	0.60**	1
Become more religious	-0.08	-0.07	-0.18**	-0.15*	0.02	0.08	0.16**	0.20**	0.23**	-0.03

\*p < 0.05; \*\*p < 0.01, two-tailed.  
 Note:  $\Delta$  PO = decrease of power;  $\Delta$  AC = decrease of achievement;  $\Delta$  HE = increase of hedonism;  $\Delta$  ST = increase of stimulation;  $\Delta$  SD = self-direction;  $\Delta$  UN = universalism;  $\Delta$  BE = increase of benevolence;  $\Delta$  TR = increase of tradition;  $\Delta$  CO = increase of conformity and;  $\Delta$  SE = increase of security.

= +0.27; SD = 0.98). The slightest increase occurs in hedonism ( $\Delta$  = +0.20; SD = 1.09) that shares elements of both openness to change and self-enhancement. Both values of self-enhancement – power ( $\Delta$  = -0.84; SD= 0.93) and achievement ( $\Delta$  = -0.42; SD= 0.96) – are the only values that recorded a decrease.

Changes in values in the dimension of self-enhancement and openness to change are presented in Chart 2. We are pointing out that self-transcendence values - benevolence (which is close to spirituality and religiosity) and universalism (which is close to spirituality), record the highest increase. We also measured a marked and sole decrease in the importance of higher-order value self-enhancement. Latter findings are in line with the research hypotheses H1.

As was hypothesised in H2, individuals with a pilgrimage experience, to a larger extent report an increase in the values of self-direction - the ones close to spirituality and not to religiosity; however, not an increase in conservation values (tradition, conformity, and security) - the ones close to religiosity and not to spirituality.

To support our third hypothesis H3, we conducted correlational analyses between value changes and changes in religiosity (Table 2). We captured the respondents' religiosity dynamically through three questions concerning the change of their religiosity

after the pilgrimage: do they pray more (M = 2.77; SD = 1.24), is God more important to them (M = 2.97; SD = 1.27), and whether they attend Mass more often after the pilgrimage (M = 2.26; SD = 1.14). From those three variables, we also formed a composite variable with average values of responses for each respondent. The average value of this variable was 2.67 (SD = 1.22) which indicates that, on average, respondents did not report an increase in religiosity. More accurate results were obtained with the help of frequency analysis, which showed that 31.7% of respondents exceeded the average value of 3. For these respondents, we can conclude that, according to their assessment, after the pilgrimage, their religiosity increased.

The strongest negative correlations between value changes are between the decrease of power on the one hand and the increase of benevolence, universalism, and self-direction on the other. The strongest positive correlation is between the decrease of power and achievement.

Results of the survey also confirm our third research hypothesis H3. Respondents that became more religious after the pilgrimage experience of walking the Camino de Santiago are positively associated with the increase of benevolence, tradition, and conformity. Negatively, they are associated with an increase of hedonism and stimulation.

## Discussion

Based on the analysis of codes in travelogues and the self-reported value changes of survey participants, we could infer that findings from travelogue testimonies to a great extent align with the results of the questionnaire. Both, authors and respondents, mostly emphasise values of self-transcendence. To a lesser extent, they tend to select values that promote self-direction, tradition, and hedonism. Furthermore, both groups dislike achievement and power. We could, thus, conclude that an important aftereffect of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage is a changed personal hierarchy of values.

In the existing studies, spiritual people favour self-transcendence as well as openness to change and disfavour self-enhancement. For this reason, we could assume that the value shift after the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage is associated with increased spirituality. However, we must not overlook that we additionally measured an increase in conservation (tradition, conformity, and security) and consequently found that value shift is also associated with increased religiosity. This conclusion supports the assessment of 31.7% of respondents for whom religiosity has increased after the pilgrimage.

If we compare changes in higher-order values, we come to a surprising conclusion - it appears that only one (albeit strong) of Schwartz's two conflicts between the higher-order values are expressed. *Expressed conflict* is a conflict between *self-enhancement* (personal focus) and *self-transcendence* (social focus). This conflict of values emphasises the pursuit of one's interests, success, and dominance over others on one side, and values that emphasise concern for the welfare and interests of others, on the other. We suggest, that the direction of value changes and strong expression of this conflict, after the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage, reflects pro-social tendencies and implies highly internalised pro-social values.

The second expected conflict between values emphasises the independence of thought, action, feelings, and readiness for change (self-direction, stimulation) on the one side; and values that emphasise order, self-restriction, preservation of the past, and resistance to change (tradition, conformity, and security) on the other. This did not emerge in our investigation.

Pilgrims returned from Camino de Santiago with a greater average emphasis on openness to change and

conservation values. The value of self-direction, less present among traditional believers and excessively present among spiritually oriented individuals, has also increased significantly. The latter is surprising when aligned with Schwartz's theory of values viewpoint, according to which conservation is supposed to be in opposition to self-direction.

Certainly, this study is not without its limitations. One of the central assumptions regarding the first stage of this study is that pilgrims' travelogues give the researcher a credible insight into the actual experiences of the Camino de Santiago. In favour of the credibility of our results, we should emphasise that the analysed travelogues are authentic thick descriptions of the studied pilgrimage experience, which include self-reflections of pilgrims which were not limited or distorted by an interviewing process. Therefore they give the researcher a credible insight into the actual experiences of the Camino de Santiago. However, we must not neglect that travelogues are subjective narratives and not a direct insight into objective reality. Another constraint in this regard was brought about by the time component; the travelogues are based on author memories; written narratives of earlier events that may have been influenced by the state in which the story was told. All in all, for both validity of our interpretations and much-appreciated sincerity, it is important to note that one of the analysed travelogues was written by the author of this article, who had a first-hand experience as a pilgrim on Camino; this had a profound impact on our analysis.

Regarding the second stage of our study, one limitation was our assumption that we could validly determine value changes after the pilgrimage experience on a random sample of pilgrims along the Camino de Santiago by self-reported value changes after the pilgrimage experience. The survey was conducted exclusively in an online format. Consequently, we limited survey participation to individuals who had access and were able to navigate the survey online. Another hurdle is the limited reach of the sample; the survey covered only those pilgrims who are members of Camino de Santiago groups on Facebook. Hence, pilgrims with more positive impact (overly satisfied with their Camino experience) probably will be more likely to decide to take part in these Facebook groups and answer the questionnaire. In addition, it would be worthwhile to collect data from pilgrims on the Camino and compare the results with the one obtained in this study to see if there are significant differences.

Furthermore, our reliance on retrospective self-reports of experiences may limit confidence in our findings. Any retrospective report of subjective experience may be vulnerable to memory decay, distortion, or fabrication. However, this does not mean that it is not possible to suggest the direction and the extent of value changes that occurred after the pilgrimage experience at the level of the entire sample.

To conclude, despite all the mentioned limitations, the present study brings empirically grounded new knowledge about the transformative aftereffects of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage experience and it seems obvious that studies measuring values before and after the journey are needed to validate and potentially modify the findings of this study.

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## Appendix: List of Analysed Travelogues

Author	Published	Walked	Title
1. Artnik Knibbe, Tjaši	Artnik Knibbe, 2016	2014	Vulnerable: Stories from The Way (El Camino de Santiago), 850 km long path of presence, awakening, and grace
2. Božič, Saša	Božič, 2018	2018	Storyteller: 365 inspirations of the citizens of the world and a story about the path to self
3. Brumec, Snežana	Brumec, 2016	2016	The Camino
4. Djura Jelenko, Saša	Djura Jelenko & Jelenko, 2010	2009	The Camino: A 800 kilometers long experience
5. Jelenko, Vinko	Djura Jelenko & Jelenko, 2010	2009	The Camino: A 800 kilometers long experience
6. Gliha, Franc	Gliha, 2018	2017	The Camino de Santiago "In two parts" 2017-2018
7. Gray, Patrick	Gray & Skeesuck, 2017	2014	I'll Push You: A Journey of 500 Miles, Two Best Friends, and One Wheelchair
8. Skeesuck, Justin	Gray & Skeesuck, 2017	2014	I'll Push You: A Journey of 500 Miles, Two Best Friends, and One Wheelchair
9. Gričnik, Ivan	Gričnik, 2014	2014	My Camino
10. Gričnik, Ivan	Gričnik, 2018	2014	From Santiago to Assisi
11. Jenko Simunič, Nadja and Jenko, Barbara	Jenko Simunič & Jenko, 2014	2013	Our path
12. Jernejčič, Nataša	Jernejčič, 2014	2012	My path: The Camino de Santiago
13. Kapetanović, Ivan	Kapetanović, 2017	2016	Camino de Santiago: The Way of St. James, Lečevica - Santiago de Compostela.
14. Klug, Mojca	Klug, 2018	2015	Camino Francés: My attempt to escape the "nonsense" of modern society
15. Kvaternik, Stanislav	Kvaternik, 2015	2011	My pilgrimage: Along the path of St. James in Santiago de Compostela
16. Lepej Bašelj, Saša	Lepej Bašelj, 2009	2006	Camino: My lonely path or cleansing of soul and body
17. MacLaine, Shirley	MacLaine, 2000	1994	The Camino: A Journey of the Spirit
18. McManus, Brendan	McManus, 2014	2011	Redemption Road: Grieving on the Camino
19. Močnik, Uroš	Močnik, 2009	2007	In 14 days to the end of the world: a journey into inner peace, The Camino
20. Novak, Nace	Novak, 2004	2002	The Camino: From Nova Gorica to Compostela
21. Potdevin, Jean-Marc	Potdevin, 2013	2008	Reset: The mystical experience of a businessman on the footpath to Compostela
22. Remškar, Eva	Grešak & Remškar, 2017	2017	And here we go: moms and daughters at the Camino
23. Grešak, Mojca	Grešak & Remškar, 2017	2017	And here we go: moms and daughters at the Camino
24. Rigler, Marjeta and Rigler, Metodij	Rigler & Rigler, 2004	1999	You are blessed, poor man: A pilgrimage along the path of St. James to Compostela
25. Rufin, Jean-Cristophe	Rufin, 2016	no data	The Santiago Pilgrimage: Walking the Immortal Way
26. Sluga, Rado	Sluga, 2017	2011	In the embrace of the trail: El Camino
27. Steblovnik, Mirjana	Steblovnik, 2010	2008	Buen Camino, Peregrino
28. Steblovnik, Mirjana	Steblovnik, 2012	2010	All just because of one church at the end of the world: The Camino Portugal
29. Škarja, Petra	Škarja, 2017	2016	The Camino: From slavery to freedom
30. Štuhec, Jožef	Štuhec, 2011	2008	Across the Pyrenees to the Atlantic: A little different Camino
31. Udovič, Vladimir	Udovič, 2012	2010	I am alive, I walk, and I am happy: a travelogue of a pilgrimage to the Camino
32. Vranjek, Bojana	Vranjek, 2015	2014	The Camino: The mysticism of the invisible world