

Outline

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IB subject: World Religion

Topic: The Camino de Santiago de Compostela

Research question: Why is the Camino used for spiritual practice and how has it changed?

I. The history of the Camino

- a. Began about 1200 years ago. The remains of Saint James were believed to be buried at Santiago de Compostela, Spain.
- b. Busy during the 13th century, more convenient for pilgrims than to travel to Jerusalem or Rome.
- c. The Renaissance and Enlightenment declared it dead by the 1800s
- d. Still declining during WWI and WWII
- e. Restored and revived during the 1980s. It became a UNESCO world heritage site
- f. Albergues (hostels for pilgrims) were mostly, if not completely run by churches, and church run hospitals

II. Current approaches to the Camino

- a. Albergues have become a source of business
- b. Backpacks should be no more than 10% of a person's body weight
- c. Guidebooks and novels have brought much attention to the Camino, giving it an almost touristy air
- d. Unlike before people from all over the world travel the Camino, to the point it has become an almost social and worldly experience.

III. Why is the Camino traveled?

- a. Health
- b. Searching for meaning
 - “Sunrises to Santiago” by Gabriel Schirm, where he searched for a new career
 - “The Way of the Stars: Journeys on the Camino de Santiago” by Robert Silby where he looked for a break from journalism
 - “I’m Off Then,” by Hape Kerkeling
 - “The Camino: A Journey of the Spirit” by Shirley Maclaine

IV. How does it prove spiritually enriching?

- a. Physical struggle
- b. Natural beauty
- c. The Meseta: the mental portion
- d. Galicia: the spiritual
 - “Camino Divinia-Walking the divine path: A Book of Moving Meditations with Likely and Unlikely Saints” by Gina Marie Mammano discusses the Camino, but mostly covers just how walking can prove to be a type of meditation

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