

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9911109346503321
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Titolo	Pilgrim stories : on and off the road to Santiago / / Nancy Louise Frey
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Berkeley, : University of California Press, c1998
ISBN	9786613520326 9781280088803 128008880X 9780520922464 0520922468 9780585253008 0585253005
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (331 p.)
Classificazione	BO 1935
Disciplina	263/.0424611
Soggetti	Christian pilgrims and pilgrimages - Spain - Santiago de Compostela Santiago de Compostela (Spain) Church history 20th century
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Illustrations -- Acknowledgments -- Introduction: Arriving At The End -- Chapter 1. Pilgrims To Santiago -- Chapter 2. Journey Shaping -- Chapter 3. Learning New Rhythms -- Chapter 4. Landscapes Of Discovery -- Chapter 5. Arrivals And Endings -- Chapter 6. Santiago -- Chapter 7. To The End Of The Earth -- Chapter 8. Going Home -- Conclusions: Arriving At The Beginning -- Appendix A. Fieldwork On The Road -- Appendix B. The Twentieth- Century Reanimation -- Notes -- References -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	Each year thousands of men and women from more than sixty countries journey by foot and bicycle across northern Spain, following the medieval pilgrimage road known as the Camino de Santiago. Their destination is Santiago de Compostela, where the remains of the apostle James are said to be buried. These modern-day pilgrims and the role of the pilgrimage in their lives are the subject of Nancy Louise Frey's fascinating book. Unlike the religiously-oriented pilgrims who visit Marian shrines such as Lourdes, the modern Road of St. James

attracts an ecumenical mix of largely well-educated, urban middle-class participants. Eschewing comfortable methods of travel, they choose physically demanding journeys, some as long as four months, in order to experience nature, enjoy cultural and historical patrimony, renew faith, or cope with personal trauma. Frey's anthropological study focuses on the remarkable reanimation of the Road that has gained momentum since the 1980's. Her intensive fieldwork (including making the pilgrimage several times herself) provides a colorful portrayal of the pilgrimage while revealing a spectrum of hopes, discontents, and desires among its participants, many of whom feel estranged from society. The Camino's physical and mental journey offers them closer community, greater personal knowledge, and links to the past and to nature. But what happens when pilgrims return home? Exploring this crucial question Frey finds that pilgrims often reflect deeply on their lives and some make significant changes: an artistic voice is discovered, a marriage is ended, meaningful work is found. Other pilgrims repeat the pilgrimage or join a pilgrims' association to keep their connection to the Camino alive. And some only remain pilgrims while on the road. In all, *Pilgrim Stories* is an exceptional prism through which to understand the desires and dissatisfactions of contemporary Western life at the end of the millennium. "Feet are touched, discussed, massaged, [and] become signs of a journey well traveled: 'I did it all on foot!' . . . Pilgrims give feet a power and importance not recognized in daily life, as a causeway and direct channel to the road, the past, meaningful relations, nature, and the self."
