

Institution: University of St Andrews



Unit of Assessment: 33 – Theology and Religious Studies

Title of case study: Promoting Pilgrimage in Churches, Cultural Heritage and Tourism

1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)

Dr Ian Bradley's research on the history and practice of pilgrimage in Scotland has had an impact on public understanding of cultural heritage, on the tourist industry, and on the development of new practices by local authorities, churches and the military. Dr Bradley has been commissioned to devise and lead pilgrimages in Scotland and beyond, which have yielded quantifiable economic benefits of over £250,000. His research has contributed to the conservation of cultural heritage through a range of consultancy work, with impacts including the establishment of the Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum in 2012 and enhancements to the visitor experience at Iona Abbey. It is continuing to shape pilgrim route infrastructure development by national and local agencies, church groups and the army.

**2. Underpinning research** (indicative maximum 500 words)

Since he joined the University of St Andrews at the beginning of 1999, Dr Bradley has undertaken extensive original research on the context and centrality of pilgrimage in Celtic Christianity, engaging with primary (mostly monastic) sources and conducting fieldwork at pilgrim sites. His initial research was directed at determining the extent to which Columba, the sixth-century Irish saint, was seen as a pilgrim in early hagiography, poems and monastic literature from the seventh century to the twelfth. The results of this research were published in a revised edition of his book *Columba: Pilgrim and Penitent* (2000) commissioned by the Iona Community. Subsequent research into the pilgrim journeys made by Irish monks, their motivation and destinations, led to exploration of the extent to which the theme of pilgrimage was taken up in extant sermons from the so-called 'golden age of Celtic Christianity' in the sixth and seventh centuries. This research was published in *Colonies of Heaven* (2000), which also explored the pastoral and theological implications and contemporary resonances of this emphasis. Further research focussed on the significance of pilgrimage as a motif in early Irish literature and in the characteristic decorative intertwining knot-work found on Irish high-standing crosses and illuminated manuscripts. This was found to be related to the theme of journeying in the stories and poems of epic voyages, notably in the so-called *imra* tradition, and to the ubiquity of pilgrimage in Irish monastic life. This research was published in a substantially revised edition of *The Celtic Way* (2003).

A further concentrated period of research on pilgrimage between 2006 and 2008 explored the history and contemporary revival of Christian pilgrimage on a Europe-wide basis, drawing on biblical, historical and literary sources and on insights and methodological principles from anthropology and art history as well as the disciplines of church and cultural history and religious studies.

This project involved fieldwork through observation of twelve pilgrimages across Europe. Substantial quantities of empirical data were collected through interviews with organisers and participants in pilgrimages regarding their motivations, expectations and experiences, and the extent to which they viewed themselves as connecting with medieval pilgrims. The conclusions of this research were published in the book *Pilgrimage: A Spiritual and Cultural Journey* (2009), extensively illustrated and translated into Norwegian, Dutch, Japanese and Arabic. The research demonstrated the extent and nature of the revival of interest and engagement in pilgrimage across Europe over the past four decades and identified the primarily spiritual and cultural motives which impel modern pilgrims and allow them to connect with Celtic and medieval pilgrimage places. It also proposed a range of initiatives and practices for contemporary churches and faith communities, including labyrinths, prayer walks and the revival of ancient pilgrim routes.

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3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

I. Bradley, *Columba: Pilgrim and Penitent* (Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, new edition 2000) ISBN: 0947988815 – continuously in print since first publication, several editions, current life sales: 6600.

I. Bradley, *Colonies of Heaven: Celtic Models for Today's Church* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2000) ISBN: 0232523371 – continuously in print since publication, current life sales: 3949. Included in submission to RAE 2001, in which the University's profile for outputs at 2* or better was 95.5%.

I. Bradley, *The Celtic Way* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, new edn., 2003) ISBN: 0232524955 – continuously in print since earliest edition in 1993, numerous new editions, current life sales: 19,015.

I. Bradley, *Pilgrimage: A Spiritual and Cultural Journey* (Oxford: Lion Hudson, 2009) ISBN: 9780745952703 – first printing (2500) sold out, translated into and published in Norwegian, Dutch, Arabic and Japanese. Facilitated by a grant from the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland.

All of these books listed are available upon request.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Dr Bradley's research on pilgrimage has been used by churches, contemporary Christian communities and heritage bodies both to stimulate pilgrimages to significant historic and spiritual sites and as a basis for developing new pilgrim routes. It has had a direct impact in increasing visitor numbers to significant sites, changing interpretation and signage practices, promoting new routes and directly stimulating involvement in pilgrimage infrastructure projects on the part of the armed forces.

The most longstanding and consistent user of the research has been the Iona Community, the ecumenical Christian community based on Iona which seeks, among other objectives, to reinvigorate contemporary spirituality. Directly as a result of his research into Columba and early Celtic Christianity, the Community invited Dr Bradley to engage with it in rethinking its weekly pilgrimages around the island. Dr Bradley proposed a series of specific changes to these, which have been adopted, and was subsequently invited to lead nine study weeks for the Community on the theme of pilgrimage. These have brought over 800 participants from 12 different countries, to stay on Iona and led directly to invitations to advise Swedish, Norwegian and Danish pilgrim pastors on new ways to encourage modern pilgrimage. The Island Centres' Director/Programme Co-Ordinator writes that '*Your research on Columba, Irish monasticism and Celtic pilgrimage has had a direct and perceptible impact on the way that we present these topics to our guests staying on Iona. As well as directly feeding into our programmes, such as the one you led for 43 guests from all over the world, from 8-14 June 2013, it has also led us to change the content of our weekly pilgrimages around the island – the scripts for these pilgrimages have been changed to reflect and incorporate the results of your research – this has enhanced the experience of our guests and visitors*'. She estimates that '*the week in which you disseminated your research into pilgrimage in June 2011 directly generated a total of £34,760 for the island economy*' and that, overall, the ten pilgrim weeks devised and led by Dr Bradley have generated in excess of £250,000 for the Iona economy [S1]. Comments and feedback gathered from those attending these weeks shows that they travelled from as far afield as New Zealand specifically to hear Dr Bradley and described their experience of Iona as being hugely enriched and enhanced, and their perspectives changed, as a result of attending his presentations [S6].

More recently, Dr Bradley was invited to present his research on the development of pilgrimage on Iona to a conference organised by Historic Scotland in April 2012 [S7]. This has led to an on-going involvement with Historic Scotland, advising on the substantial re-interpretation of Iona's historical landscape. The principal researcher for Heritage Research at Historic Scotland writes that '*Dr Bradley's research on the re-evaluation of Iona Abbey in the late nineteenth century, and in particular the role of the 8th Duke of Argyll, has been incorporated into the new permanent exhibition and Audio Guide unveiled in May 2013 for the 1450th anniversary of Columba's arrival on Iona, in the rebuilding of the Abbey. We welcome more than 50,000 ticket-buying visitors to the*

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abbey each year, making a valuable contribution to the economy of the Hebrides. Their experience and understanding of Iona's spiritual history has been considerably enhanced as a result of Dr Bradley's research'. [S2]

Dr Bradley's research has had a direct impact on the promotion, planning and development of a long-distance pilgrim trail between Iona and St. Andrews. As a direct result of the book *Pilgrimage: A Spiritual and Cultural Journey* (2009), he was asked by Pax Travel, the leading pilgrimage tourism company in Britain, to devise and lead a pilgrimage across Scotland from Iona to St Andrews in August 2011. This week is estimated to have generated £30,000 for the Scottish economy; Pax's Managing Director writes '*as a result of highlighting your excellent book, which we consider to be the standard work on this intriguing subject, we have had many inquiries from groups and individuals for pilgrimages, including many from the USA. Your research has had a great impact on our whole approach to the subject of pilgrimage, specifically leading us to introduced new routes*'. [S3]

Dr Bradley's research has also had a direct impact on the development of a pilgrim route across Fife from St Andrews to Edinburgh via Dunfermline. He was invited to provide presentations in 2011 to Fife Council and to the Dunfermline-Trondheim Twinning Association. These research-based presentations have become the basis for route planning and for modelling the Fife route on the Norwegian St Olav Pilgrim Path on which Dr Bradley carried out extensive research for his 2009 book.

Over the last ten years Dr Bradley has directly applied his research into devising and leading pilgrimages around St Andrews. The minister of Holy Trinity, the Town Kirk, testifies that '*the annual St Andrew's Day pilgrimages which you have devised and led directly based on your academic research on St Andrews as a place of pilgrimage have had a direct and demonstrable impact in enhancing the experience of both visitors and residents. Through them, and the annual Stations of the Cross which you have led round Holy Trinity in Holy Week, your academic research has changed practices in the main church in the town and enhanced its outreach to the community*'. [S4] In addition to these initiatives, Dr Bradley has devised and led Good Friday pilgrimages around St Andrews over the last three years, directly based in his academic research, which have brought together every single major denomination in the town for the first time.

As a direct consequence of his books on the subject, Dr Bradley was invited to address the Scottish Parliament on promoting pilgrimage in February 2011. His presentation, attended by MSPs, church, local authority and tourism representatives, gave a major impetus to the campaign to develop pilgrim routes across Scotland and has led to invitations to work with individuals wanting to initiate local projects. An example are the meetings that he has had with the minister of Whitekirk, an ancient place of pilgrimage in East Lothian, who approached him having read his books to provide advice an input on her plans to promote and reinterpret pilgrimage from Whitekirk to Haddington. His input has stimulated new practices such as pilgrim walks and information centres. Dr Bradley is the main academic adviser for the Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum, established in February 2012 following extensive consultations involving church groups, politicians, Scottish Natural Heritage, Visit Scotland, and walkers' organizations. His input into the Forum's deliberations, based directly on his research is having a significant impact on the practical development of pilgrim routes across Scotland. [S8]

On the strength of his published work on pilgrimage, Dr Bradley was invited to give a two-day residential presentation to Scottish army chaplains on the subject in February 2012 at the Army Chaplaincy centre, Ampert House, Hampshire. The Deputy Chaplain General of the British Army writes of the direct impact this had in leading chaplains to discuss and develop with their commanding officers initiatives to involve troops relocated from Germany to Scotland in pilgrim trail infrastructure work. This significant and practical on-the-ground demonstration of involvement with the local community fits the Army's overall strategy in the current relocation of British forces from Germany and will roll out over the next ten years as a direct result of Dr Bradley's research and input. [S5]

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

S1. Letter and email from Iona Community Island Centres Director/Programme Co-ordinator, 23

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S2. Letter from Principal Researcher, Heritage Research, Historic Scotland, 25 June 2013.

S3. Letter from managing Director, Pax Travel, 10 July 2012.

S4. Email from Minister of Holy Trinity Church, St Andrews, 7 June 2013.

S5. Letter from Deputy Chaplain General, the British Army, 7 February 2012.

S6. Comments recorded and feedback gathered through evaluation forms by Iona Community Programme Worker from 43 participants during week on Iona, 8-14 June 2013. These corroborate the considerable impact made by Dr Bradley's research presentations on those attending the week from around the world and the enhancement of their experience while on the island.

S7. 'Late Nineteenth Century Views of Iona and Columba' in Iona Research Conference, April 10-12 2012, <http://www.ionahistory.org.uk/iona/ionahome/ionaabout/researchconference.htm>. This corroborates the impact made by Dr Bradley in the presentation of his research to the conference organised by Historic Scotland to advise on the re-interpretation of the Iona site.

S8. <http://www.sprf.org.uk/news.html#chapter9>. This page corroborates Dr Bradley's involvement with the Forum and illustrates this with the example of a recent address on pilgrimage to the national gathering of the Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum in Dunfermline in September 2013.