

Serafin Moreno

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After watching and analyzing the video the walking pilgrimage I was left with a lingering question, what is the purpose of the film? Throughout the video this question was at the forefront of my mind; it seemed to be the prevalent theme of the video. After sitting down and analyzing the film in its entirety I came to the conclusion that many of the individuals had similar but different reasons for undertaking the pilgrimage. I say they had similar reasons because they all seemed to do it with Kobo Daishi in mind.

Kobo Daishi's spirit is thought throughout Japan to accompany pilgrims as they commence the forty five day, fourteen hundred kilometer walk through Japan. The people whom go on the pilgrimage believe that the eighty-eight temple expedition has spiritual powers. In the film the majority of the voyagers are either young or old. The video seems to infer that many of which embark on the voyage are seeking guidance and hope that by traveling in the footsteps of Kobo Daishi they will have a different perspective of the world that surrounds them, similar to the realization of an epiphany. I noticed that the path from temple to temple was marked with spiritual motifs which were distinctively recognizable to the travelers. I also noticed that the travelers often times had a walking stick in their grasps and that they were often adorned with inspirational writing. They also had a bell on their walking staff, which I believe was for protections against bad omens, and to ward off evil spirits along the path.

Another reoccurring theme throughout the film was the necessity for prayer. Individuals whom reached the milestone and entered each of the eighty-eight shrines all performed specific rituals which entitled purification, lighting of incense, the ringing of the bell and prayer. I think that the pilgrims believed that through prayer they would be able to be heard and communicate

with deities and Kobo Daishi would give them the strength to continue on their voyage. Along the way pilgrims were aided with food, water and given shelter by people who lived along the path of shrines. On one of these stops an old man sits down with the pilgrims and offers them some knowledge, he enlightens them by teaching them about the Heart of Sutra which is the preeminent source for Buddhist teachings. He also tells the pilgrims that there are always two of you walking, you and Kobo Daishi. I take this to mean that Kobo Daishi is much like a guardian angel and that if you believe in what he represented that he will always guide and accompany you throughout your life.

I couldn't tell you if there are any spiritual forces that are prevalent throughout the pilgrimage, there did not seem to be any indication by any of the participants of any supernatural forces being present in the film. With that being said I believe that there is a purpose to the voyage other than seeking a change in their lives. In my observations the man in the film as well as other pilgrims enjoyed the cleansing of their minds and spirit, the embankment of such an endeavor often times proves to have therapeutic powers. In my opinion overall the participants of the pilgrimage or at least in the case of the man, the pilgrims learn to be more patient in life. After watching and analyzing this film I feel like I gained a greater appreciation for the commitment and strong spiritual belief that Japanese people have when it comes to religious beliefs. I noticed that the pilgrims often times dressed in white, I do not know if there is a spiritual significance behind the clothing but I think it represents a pure mind and body, much like a painter's white canvas awaiting an inspiration upheaving or also like a clean slate waiting to be littered with knowledge and guidance. This readiness for accepting what the pilgrimage might offer says a lot about how much faith Japanese people have in their deities.

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very good