



Miracle Cures: Saints, Pilgrimage, and the Healing Powers of Belief

Robert A. Scott

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Iconic images of medieval pilgrims, such as Chaucer's making their laborious way to Canterbury, conjure a distant time when faith was the only refuge of the ill and infirm, and thousands traveled great distances to pray for healing. Why, then, in an age of advanced biotechnology and medicine, do millions still go on pilgrimages? Why do journeys to important religious shrines—such as Lourdes, Compostela, Fátima, and Medjugorje—constitute a major industry? In *Miracle Cures*, Robert A. Scott explores these provocative questions and finds that pilgrimage continues to offer answers for many. Its benefits can range from a demonstrable improvement in health to complete recovery. Using research in biomedical and behavioral science, Scott examines accounts of miracle cures at medieval, early modern, and contemporary shrines. He inquires into the power of relics, apparitions, and the transformative nature of sacred journeying and shines new light on the roles belief, hope, and emotion can play in healing.

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