

Call for Papers
14th Assembly of the
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MISSION STUDIES
August 11–17, 2016
Seoul, South Korea

Convention Theme: Conversions and Transformations:
 Missiological Approaches to Religious Change

Study Group: BIBLICAL STUDIES AND MISSION (BISAM)

Topic proposed:

On the road

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For “those of the way” (Acts 22,4), the prophet Elijah is an inspiring example of creative faithfulness to God (1 Kings 17 – 19). It leads him into exile and struggle, he experiments tremendous success and falls into a deadly depression. However, he discovers a different God and a new mission.

There are similarities in my actual context (Germany). In this contribution I plan to look at the phenomenon of “pilgrims” to Santiago de Compostela. There is a fair amount of films taking up this motive. Similarly, there are accounts of “pilgrims” who have taken the way, for a variety of reasons. This analysis focuses on some of their reports, particularly on “diaries” dedicated to the more restricted circle of friends and family members. The leading idea is that while there is a wide range of reasons and motivations to set out for Santiago, the way itself exerts an uncontrollable and unpredictable influence on the pilgrim.

Could it be that such a diffuse interest in setting out on the way should be considered a *praeparatio evangelica* (cf. AG 9)? What does “the way” to pilgrims? Many have found strength for carrying on in their life under a different perspective. Conversion, then, does not necessarily lead to a return to the old flock and church. But, like in Elijah’s case, there could be a new turn and even mission in the lives of the pilgrims.