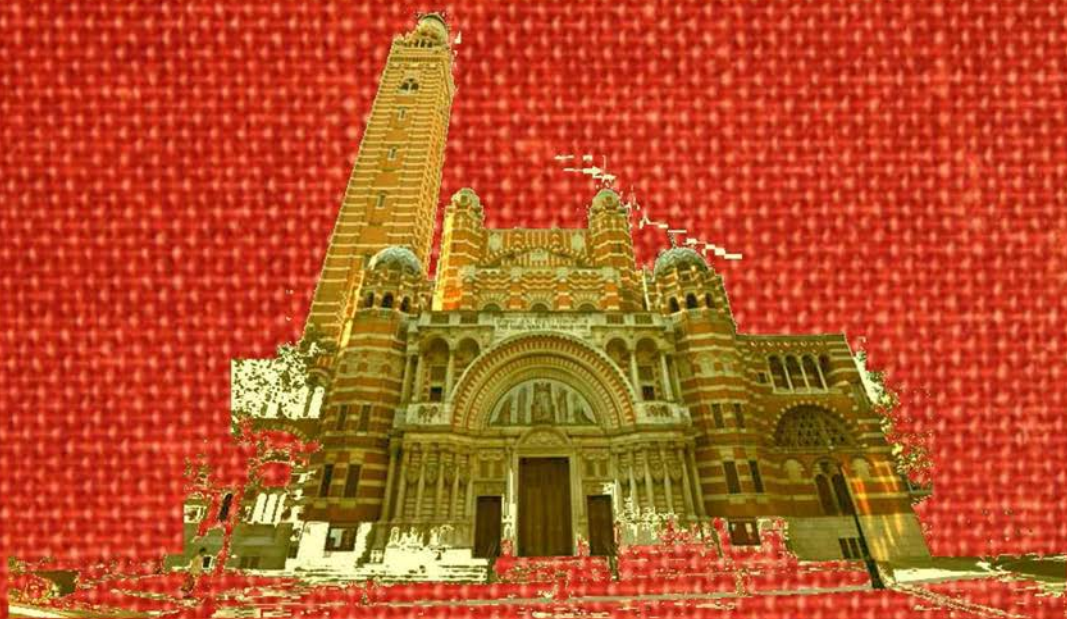


# A Westminster Pilgrim



**PILGRIM**, a wanderer, traveller, particularly to a holy place (see Pilgrimage). The earliest English forms are *pilegrim* or *pelegrim*, through Fr. *pèlerin* (the original O. Fr. *pelegrin* is not found), from Lat. *peregrinus*, a stranger, foreigner, particularly a resident alien in Rome (see Praetor, and Roman Law). The Lat. *pereger*, from which *peregrinus* is formed, meant “from abroad,” “travelled through many lands” (*per*, through, and *ager*, country).

*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edn, 29 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911) xxi, 603





I travel past it on my daily journey, cross the plain in its mountainous shadow twice a day: Church of the homeless, cathedral for the foreigners, the travellers far from home. Just a few steps away from Victoria station in the middle of London, its Byzantine domes, shadows of Constantinople and Jerusalem. The Dome of the Rock protruding amid black cabs and red busses, steadfast against the thunder of the tube.

Strangers kneeling to pray on the site where Jesus died. Watching from here, the city around us. Listening to its bustle, the mixture of unfamiliar sounds and different languages, wheely suitcases and flashlights across the square. The faint promise of something greater that remains hidden. We are searching for something. There is a reason why we left behind our homeland. I am one of them. One of the foreigners, the pilgrims.

Is this my Jerusalem?

My journey:

8:45, 18:07, North East to South West, 2010, 2013, Middle to West.

I am one of the homeless. I lack place, lack destination, travelling in words on pages. A book led me astray.

This is my pilgrimage:

Westminster to Vale of Tempe, red-brick to shady river bank.



Light intrudes into the cool green marble. Reflection on a deeper level. The chemical components in its structure create this glow. In dim candlelight I reflect just like the faithful around me, in this retreat for the far-away. A chapel for the Scots, the Irish, the Welsh, a plaque for the Polish. We are pilgrims, wanderers in a leafless forest of green stone.

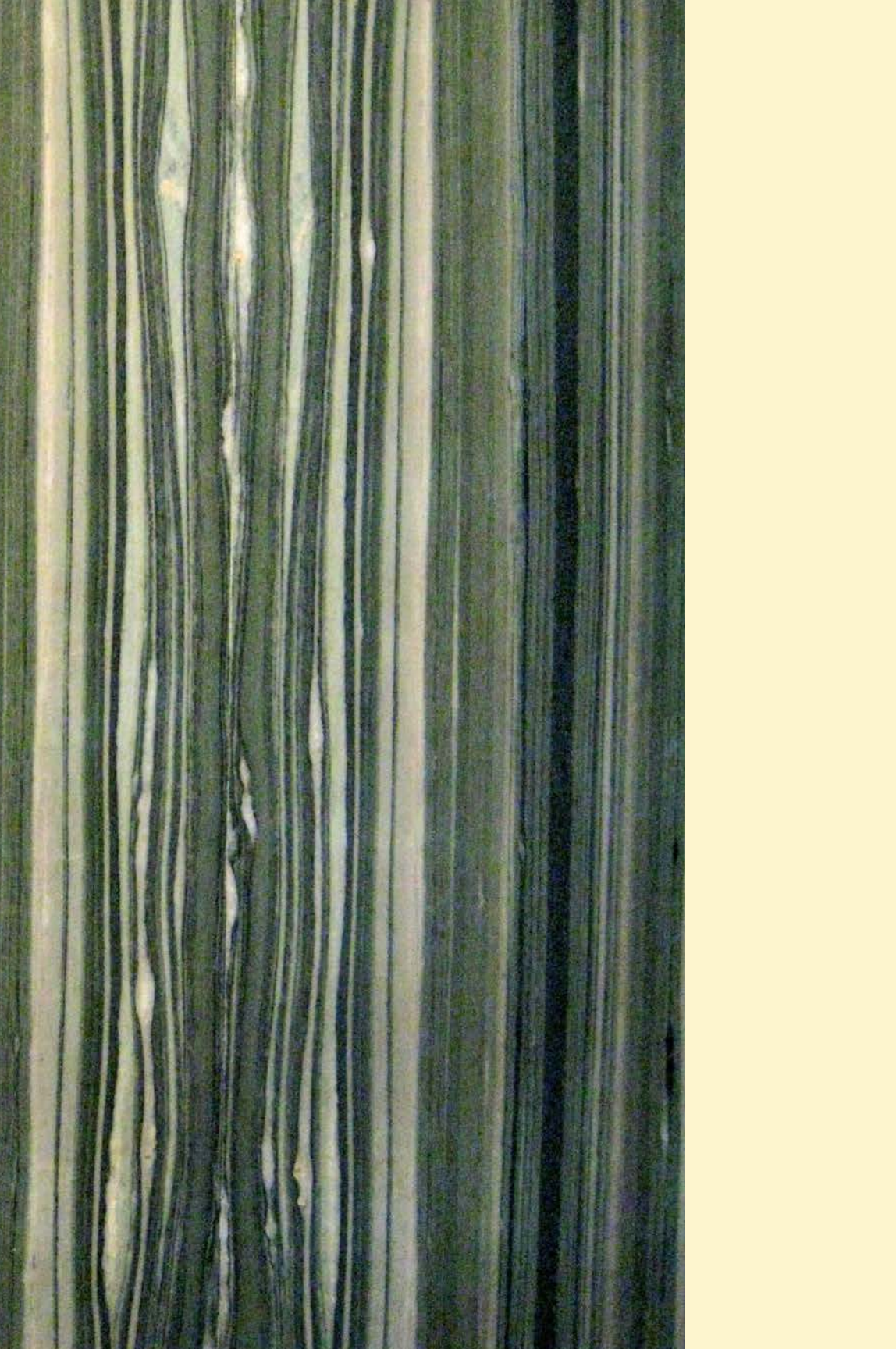
The source of this marble, greatly prized by the builders of classic times, was lost for centuries. Its re-discovery was due to the learning and enterprise of an Englishman, William Brindley. His attention was drawn to some lines of Paul the Silentiary, a high official Greek poet who more than fourteen centuries earlier, in the Ekphrasis of the Church of Holy Wisdom, celebrated the opening of Justinian's great church in Constantinople on 24 December 563.

Paul wrote of the "fresh green stone of Thessaly", employed so abundantly by the architect, as "the marble that the land of Atrax yields".

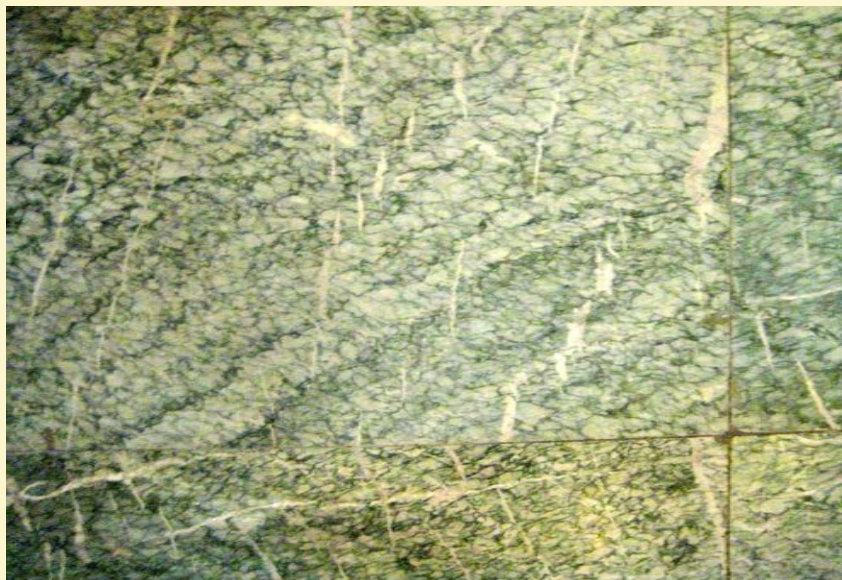
There, at Casamblasa, about seven miles north-east of Larissa, close to the road leading to the vale of Tempe, Mr Brindley located the only quarry in the world containing this green stone, this *marmor molossium*.

John Browne and Timothy Dean, *Westminster Cathedral; Building of Faith* (London: Booth-Clibborn Editions, 1995), p.51/2









*Fresh green stone of  
Thessaly in the Vale of  
Tempe*

Green as the sea or the emerald stone; or like blue cornflowers in the grass of the northern hills – with a drift of fallen snow here and there.

The Vale of Tempe: it was here that a satyr chased Eurydice, the oak nymph and the daughter of the god of light. Here, in her flight, she was bitten by a serpent and died. It was here that her husband, Orpheus sang his song and played the lyre so sweet and mournful to soften the heart of Hades, so that the god allowed him to bring her back. From here started his tragic journey – to the Underworld and back.

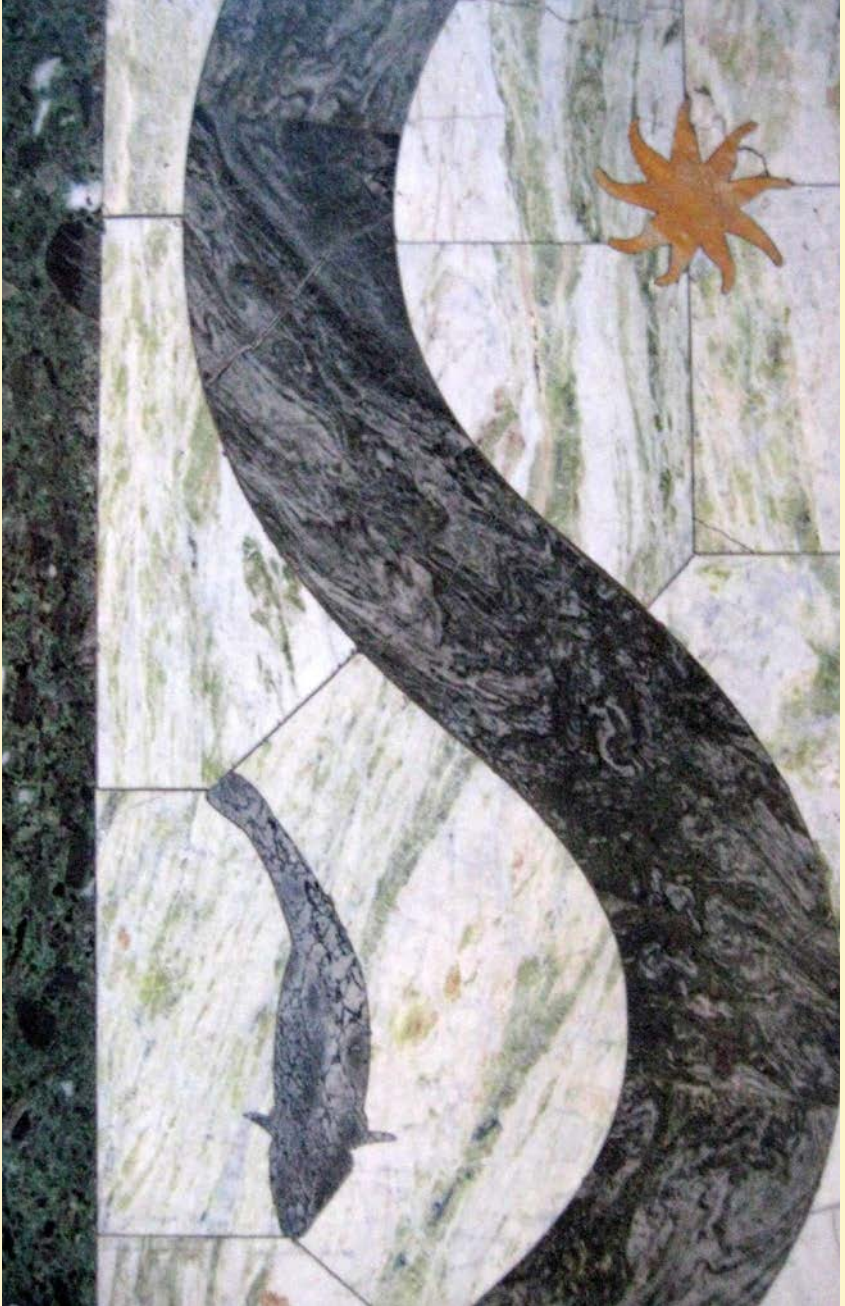
The Greek poets have described the Vale of Tempe as the most delightful spot on the earth, with continual cooling shades, and verdant walks, which the warbling of birds rendered more pleasant and romantic, and which the gods often honored with their presence.

Tempe extended about five miles in length but varied in the dimensions of its breadth so as to be in some places scarce one acre and a half wide.

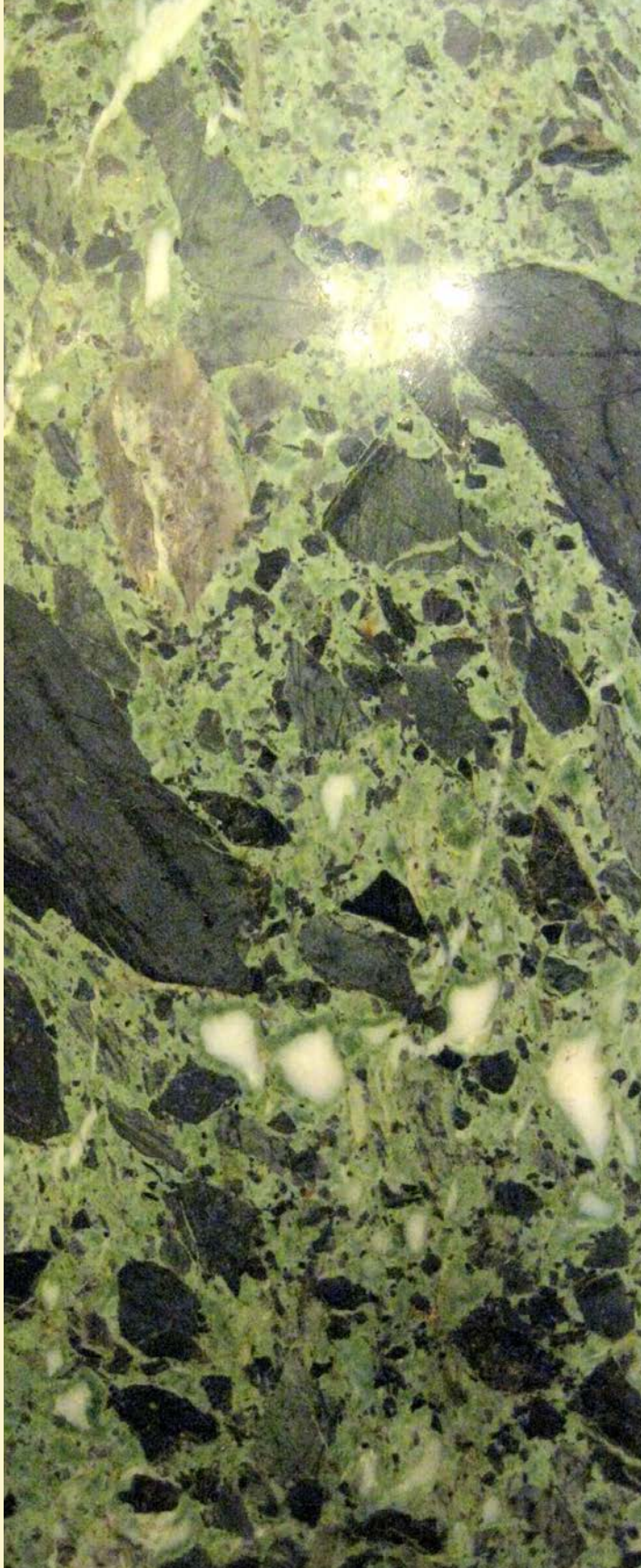
All valleys that are pleasant are called Tempe in poetry.

In Greece, 30 minutes North East of Larissa in the Vale of Tempe I hear the wind rushing through the tree tops. I follow the Pineios river to the Aegean sea.

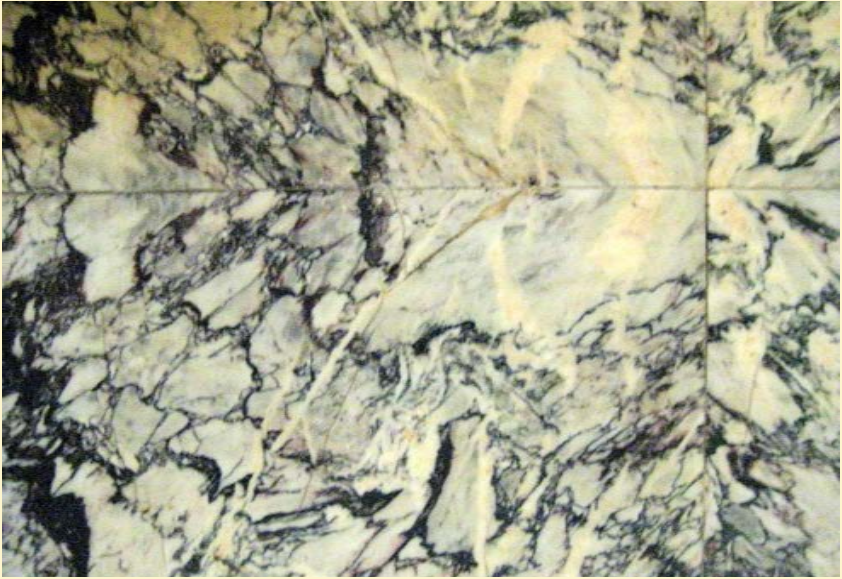




Many poets have passed here on their journeys, and astronauts. They named Terra Tempe on Mars after the beautiful valley just south of Mount Olympus. A heavily cratered highland on its northern hemisphere of the planet, 200 million kilometres away from here. Our journeys have grown longer, more intricate. You can spend millions on the search.







Among the Greeks, the habit of pilgrimage was deeply rooted. Just as the inhabitants of each town honoured their tutelary deity by solemn processions to his temple, so, at the period of the Olympic games, the temple of Zeus at Olympia formed the goal of multitudes from every Hellenic country. No less powerful was the attraction exercised by the shrines of the oracular divinities, though the influx of pilgrims was not limited to certain days, but, year in and year out, a stream of private persons, or embassies from the city-states, came flowing to the temples of Zeus in Dodona or the shrine of Apollo at Delphi.

On **Pilgrimage**:

*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edn, 29 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911) xxi, 605



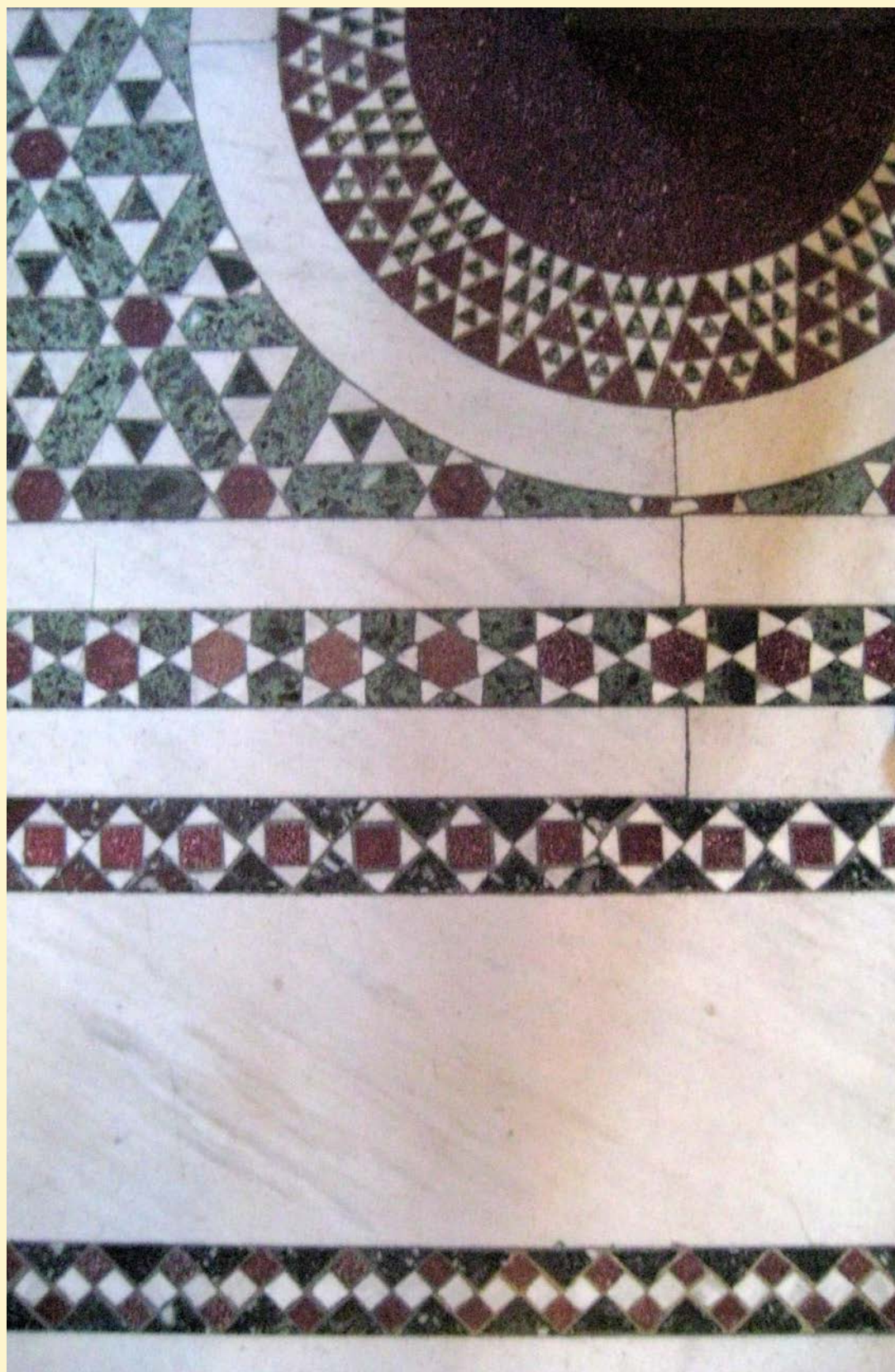


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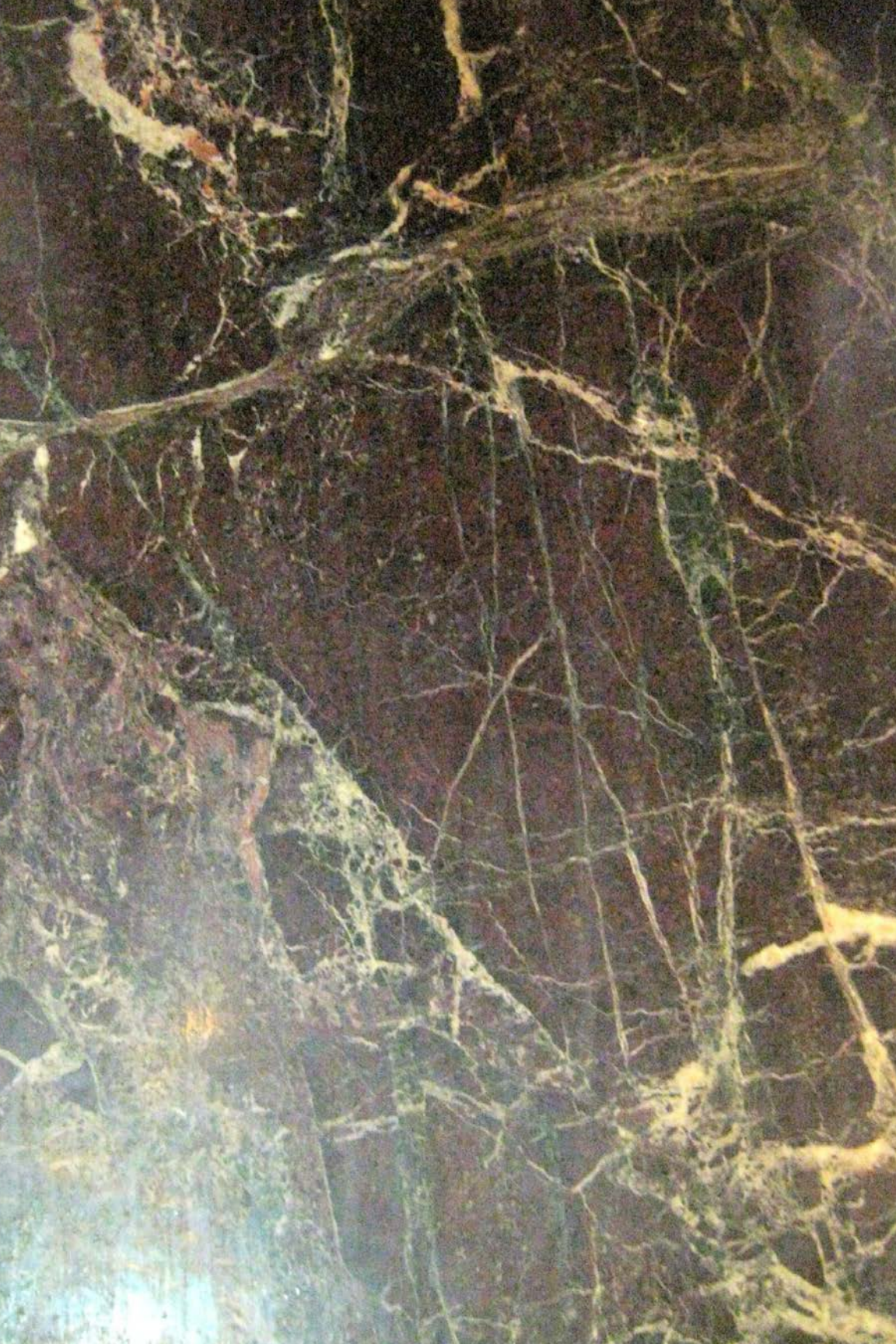
The pilgrimage was above all, an act of piety which brought a spiritual reward. The pilgrimage was yet another milestone on the road to salvation. The pilgrimage lasted. The pilgrimage led nowhere. The pilgrimage was being held at a red signal. In a tunnel, in darkness just outside Victoria station.













Pilgrims believe that a place can provide privileged access to a divine or transcendent sphere. The site on the intersection between to realms.

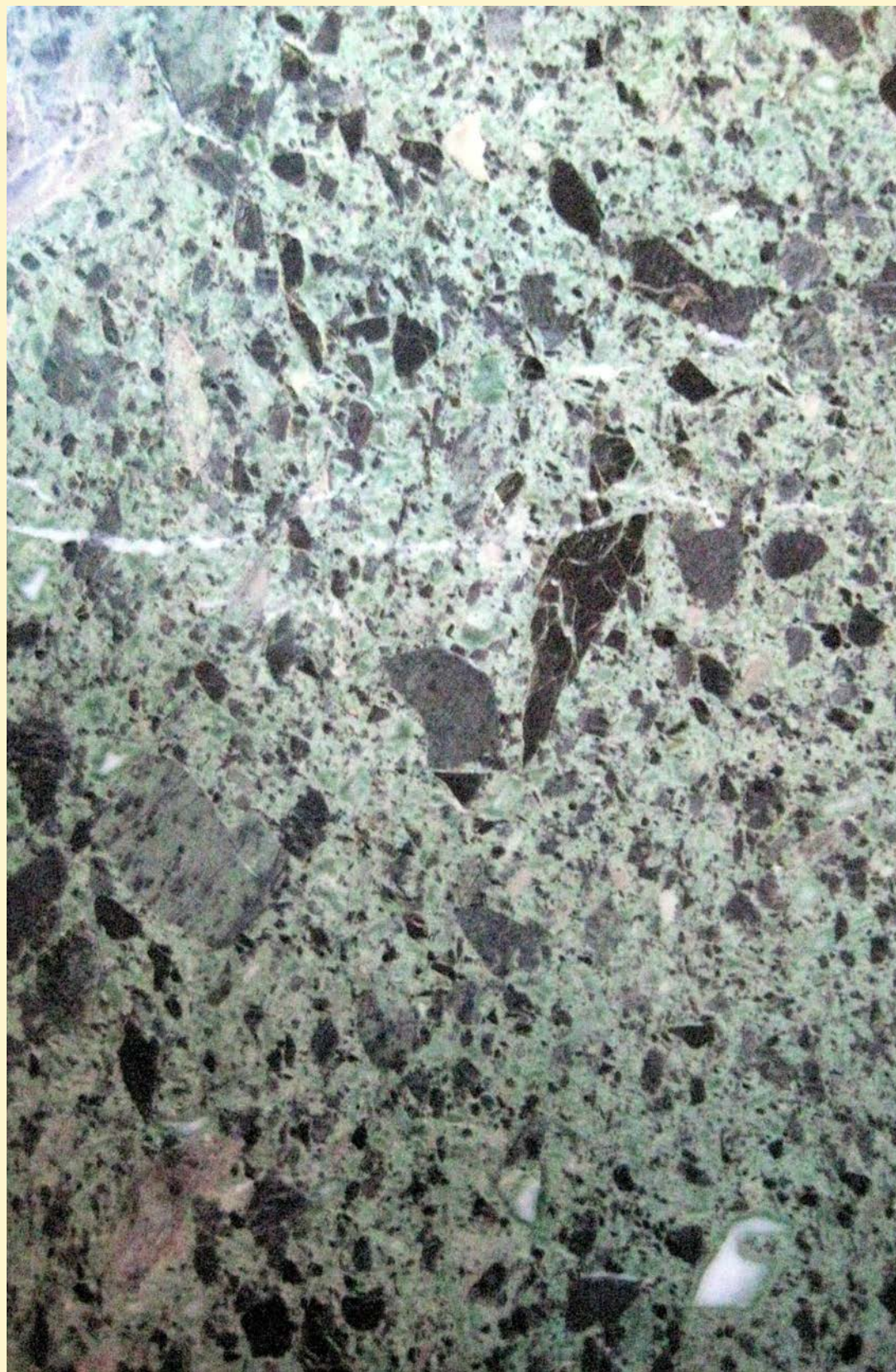
A building may speak in many different ways. There are stories, histories in its bricks and stone wall cladding. Voices and songs travel down the nave. Through the green of the forest towards the sea.





I want to rest on the banks of the Pineios river, press my skin against the pillars soothing stone, in the darkest, furthest corner of the nave watch the green world inside the marbles pattern, pass the queue to the confessional.









In small rounded grains, scales of colourless mica, dark shining flakes of graphite, of oxides, small crystals of pyrite.

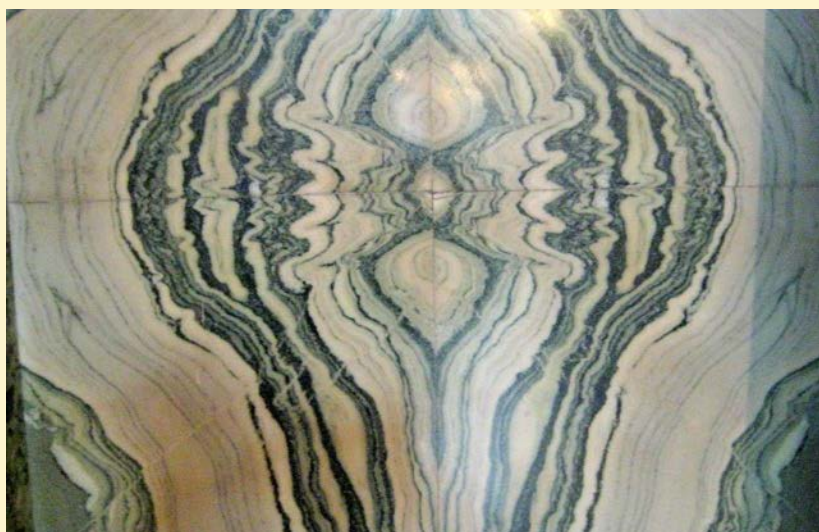
Attractive colours and variegated varieties, produced by later physical deformation and chemical decomposition of the metamorphic marble.

The metamorphic marble.

The metamorphic marble.

The metaphoric marble.

The stone's patterns are telling stories much older than the sculptures and painting, than the mosaic of saints and gods. There is a crack running through the earth. There are scars deep down. This stone comes from far away. They carved it from a place of poetry.







Name:  
Cipollino Marble

Colour: Green  
Country: Greece

Recommended Usage:  
Exterior, interior, wall  
cladding

Water Absorption:  
0.1 by weight %

Compressive Strength:  
108.2 mpa

Density:  
2721 kg/cbm

Flexural Strength:  
15.6 mpa

Mineralogical  
composition:

Calcite: 95%  
Quartz: 3%  
Muscovite mica: 0.2%  
Chlorite: 0.6%  
Others: 1%





Earth movement may shatter the rocks, producing fissures that are afterward filled with veins of calcite, in this way the beautiful brecciated, or veined marbles are produced. The broken fragments are rolled and rounded under pressure by the flow of the stone.

Stones created by movement and pressure. Movement over stone surface created by pressure. Human migrations recorded within history have transformed the entire aspect of lands and continents, and the racial, ethnic, and linguistic composition of their population.





Just outside the Chapel of Saints Andrew and the Scottish Saints, on his journey, Jesus falls for the third time.

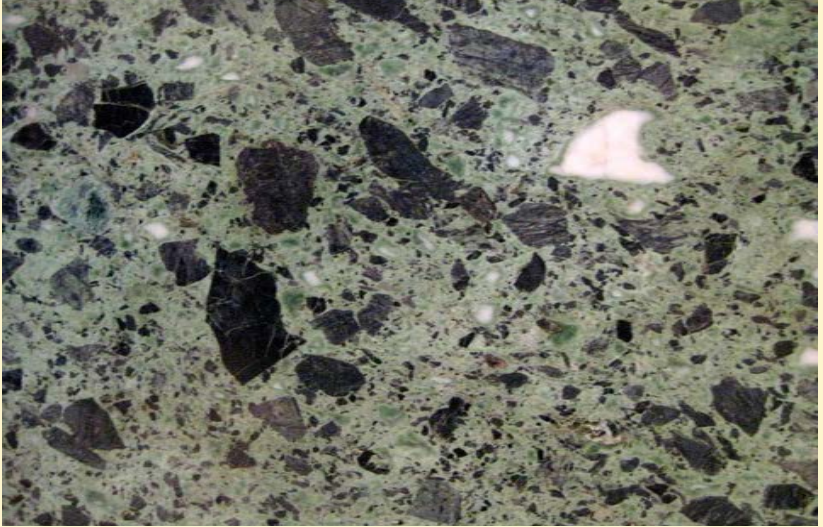


The Saints were not only available to intercede in heaven but by reason of their holiness their bodies were likely to possess a dynamic which would perform miracles. Earthly visitors sought daily for heavenly treasure. A pilgrimage acted as a spur to devotion, and brought heaven in touch with earth.

This is where heaven meets the earth, dives into the underworld.







Ladies and gentlemen, when making your way down to the Victoria line platform can you please stand on the right and walk down on the left to avoid unnecessary congestion on the top of the escalator.



I am traveller on a curious journey, with all the other pilgrims, seeking shelter in the pages of a book. On the train. On our knees. The search for meaning in the irregular pattern of the stone. The search in a book. The search on a journey. Leaving prints, on paper, in dust. Salvation in stories or in sites. Parallel journeys towards hope, in and out of cities. Towards the calm, the sheltered, the shaded, the cool.

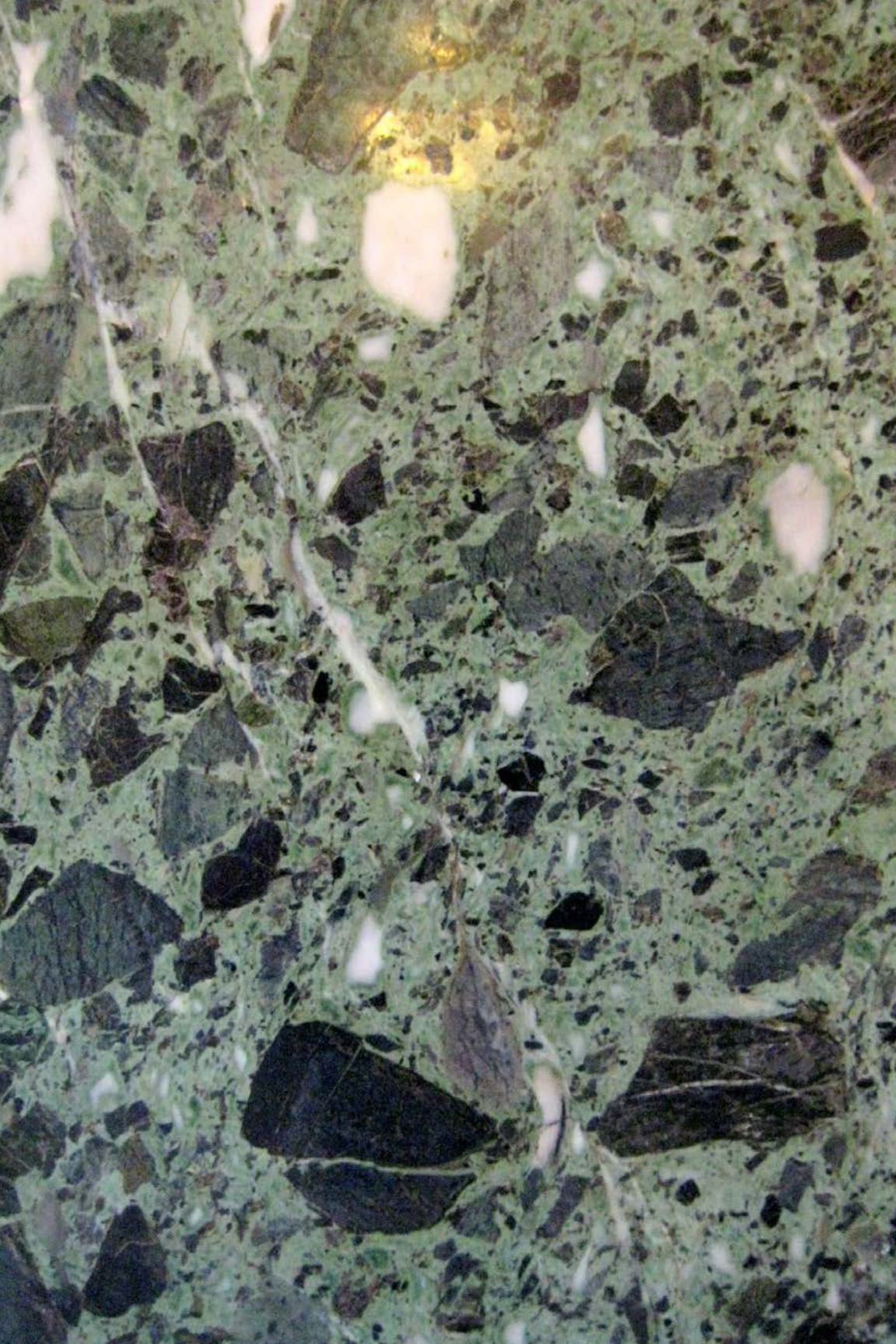
Moss is covering the walls, regaining space. Plants leaping up everywhere. Branches sticking out between pillars, ferns creating arches.

I am in a vale of green, a wanderer lost in the forest.

I found a book but it led me astray.









The passage of limestone, rich in fossils, into true marbles as they approach great crystalline intrusions of granite is a phenomenon seen in many parts of the world.

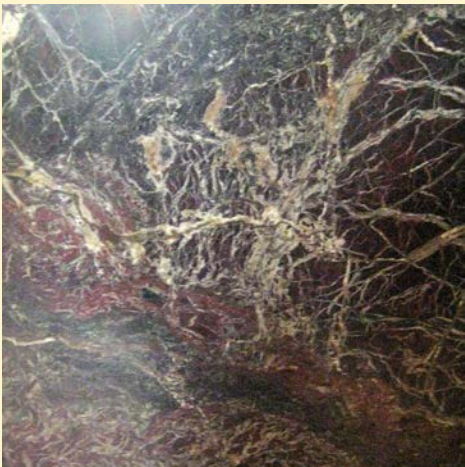
Most voluntary migration is undertaken in search of better economic opportunity or housing. Forced migration usually involves people who have been expelled by government during war or other political upheavals or who have been forcibly transported as slaves or prisoners. Intermediate between these two categories are the voluntary migration of refugees fleeing war, famine or natural disasters.



The agencies which have induced the metamorphism are heat and pressure, for these changes take place while it was still deeply buried beneath the surface.

The total number of international migrants had increased over the last 10 years from an estimated 150 million in 2000 to 214 million persons today. 3.1% of the world's population are migrants. That is one out of every 33.









Changes in religious demography are often consequence as well as goals of human mass migration to other territories.

After Austro-Hungarian journalist Theodor Herzl issued a call for Jewish settlement in the historic homeland of Israel, thousands and later millions began to migrate to the then-Ottoman-ruled territory and establish communal settlement known as kibbutzim. While the majority of early settlers who migrated were secular socialists, a large segment of later settlers from Europe after the turnover of the territory to British occupation would be driven by increasingly violent and state-supported anti-Semitism. During and after World War II Jewish migrants would flee to the territory, despite British crackdowns on illegal immigration. Following independence in 1948 the state of Israel has had a polity to encourage Jewish migration to the territory under the Law of Return.

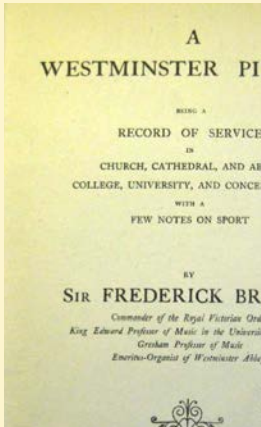




When you travel east you will see holy places piling up, lain on top of each other. Jewish, Christian, Muslim pilgrims claiming the same sites, the same piece of land. Holy rocks and stones, red brick and green marble. A trail from the West End through the Vale of Tempe to the Mediterranean sea.

The book has 1272 pages and 1189 chapters.  
The book used to be a scroll.







I sought shelter under the domes of the east and the leafy  
banks of the poet's river on my daily way from here to  
there.

I travelled East and South and North and West.

I searched for meaning.

I am homeless without destination.

I found a book but it led me astray.

