The Psychology of Religion and Place

Emerging Perspectives

Edited by
Victor Counted · Fraser Watts

The Psychology of Religion and Place

"It is fitting that one of the first books to take up a serious psychological consideration of religion, spaces, and places should push against multiple intellectual boundaries. Particularly useful is the fact that the expert chapter authors do not all press in identical directions; instead, they explore multiple theoretical frontiers. Likewise, as opposed to advocating for a theoretically or practically narrow field of vision, the contributions highlighting potential applications open up a wide, interdisciplinary landscape of possibilities. This is precisely the type of book I value the most. Rather than telling readers how they ought to think, it provides theoretical tools for navigation and invites them to chart their own courses into these fresh territories."

—Kevin L. Ladd, *Former President of the Society for the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality (APA, Division 36); Board of Directors, International Association for the Psychology of Religion; Editor-in-Chief, Archive for the Psychology of Religion; Professor of Psychology, Indiana University South Bend, USA*

"This book successfully examines a fascinating area of growing interest and relevance yet hardly addressed from geographical and psychological perspectives: spirituality and place. The reader will find compelling ideas, clear arguments, state-of-the art scholarship, and a wide number of entries that explore and advance the embodied dimensions of religion."

—Julio Bermudez, *Director, Sacred Space and Cultural Studies Program, School of Architecture and Planning, The Catholic University of America, USA, and President, The Architecture, Culture, and Spirituality Forum*

"This is a pioneering and deeply interesting study of the psychological aspects of religion and place - for example exploring the fascination of the idea of holy places. I have long felt that attachment theory provides a powerful lens for the study of religion, and this book is a great demonstration of how attachment theory helps to illuminate the psychology of religion and place, while also offering other perspectives."

—Kate Miriam Loewenthal, *Professor Emeritus, Royal Holloway, University of London, UK; Professor of Abnormal Psychology, New York University in London, UK; Visiting Professor, Glyndwr University, Wales; Editor*, Mental Health, Religion & Culture

"Diverse and even controversial points of view are intelligently brought to bear in this volume on the important but long-neglected phenomenon of place as it figures into religious experience and practice."

—David Wulff, *Professor of Psychology, Emeritus, Wheaton College Norton, USA*

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Thomas Albers is a Ph.D. candidate at the Sapienza University of Rome in social and environmental psychology. He studies the emotion of Pride of Place and its consequences on an individual and societal level. Thomas also works for the Anatta Foundation in The Netherlands where he is the coordinator of an EU funded project on the promotion of Pride of Place in secondary education. He is passionate about environmental and positive psychology and seeks to combine both research fields in his studies and work. For the Anatta Foundation he delivers trainings for young people to increase people–nature connections.

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Jamie D. Aten, Ph.D. is the Founder and Executive Director of the Humanitarian Disaster Institute and holds the Blanchard Chair of Humanitarian and Disaster Leadership at Wheaton College. His research focuses on the psychology of religion/spirituality and disasters.

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Laura E. Captari, M.A., M.S. is a doctoral candidate in counseling psychology at the University of North Texas. Her research and clinical interests include the developmental impacts of trauma, disaster, and loss, and the role of relational spirituality in facilitating resilience and post-traumatic growth. Her work also explores the efficacy of psychodynamic psychotherapy with diverse populations.

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Victor Counted, Ph.D. is a Research Associate of the Cambridge Institute of Applied Psychology and Religion and teaches at the School of Social Sciences and Psychology, Western Sydney University, Australia. His scholarly work examines health inequality, adult attachment experiences, place attitudes, religious behaviours and global migration epigenetics. His works have been featured in several international journals including *Archive for the Psychology of Religion*, *Journal of Community Psychology*, and *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes*.

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Joel Gruneau Brulin is a licensed psychologist, and Ph.D. candidate at Department of Psychology, Stockholm University, Sweden. Interests include attachment theory, psychology of religion and political psychology. His dissertation projects concern psychology of the welfare state, and specifically focus on how people seek security from the welfare state, in contrast with security received through religion. Aside from his Ph.D. project he works as a clinical psychologist with focus on ISTDP (Intensive Short Term Dynamic Psychotherapy).

Joshua N. Hook, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of North Texas. His research interests include humility, religion/ spirituality and multicultural counselling.

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Tanya Meade, Ph.D. is a Professor of Clinical Psychology and Head of Psychology Discipline at Western Sydney University. She also holds the role of Director of the Clinical and Health Psychology Research Initiative (CaHPRI). Professor Meade is an experienced researcher who received a Ph.D. in 2001 from the University of Sydney in the area of clinical health psychology (biopsychological aspects of rheumatoid arthritis) and is an Adjunct Professor at the Sydney Medical School, University of Sydney. A clinical and health psychologist, Professor Meade's research

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Rupert Sheldrake, Ph.D. is a biologist and author of ninety technical papers and nine books, including Science Set Free. He was a fellow of Clare College, Cambridge, and was also a research fellow of the Royal Society. He worked in Hyderabad, India, as Principal Plant Physiologist at the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT). From 2005 to 2010, he was Director of the Perrott-Warrick Project for the study of unexplained human and animal abilities, funded from Trinity College, Cambridge. He is currently a Fellow of the Institute of Noetic Sciences in Petaluma, California.

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Fraser Watts, Ph.D. was reader in Theology and Science in the University of Cambridge, Director of the Psychology and Religion Research Group and a Fellow of Queens' College. He is a former President of the British Psychological Society and of the International Society for Science and Religion, and a former Chair of the British Association of Christians in Psychology. He is now Visiting Professor of Psychology of Religion at the University of Lincoln, Executive Secretary of the International Society of Science and Religion, and Director of the Cambridge Institute for Applied Psychology and Religion. In the first half of his career his research was mainly in clinical psychology, especially on cognitive approaches to emotional disorders. Over the last 20 years he has worked mainly on psychology and religion. That has been

mainly on the interface of theology and psychology, arguing that there is more of a two-way relationship than obtains in most areas of theology and science. He has also contributed to the psychological study of religion, especially exploring the implications for the evolution of religion of dual-process models of human cognition, and exploring the implications of the scientific study of religion for theology. His wider interests in theology and science have focused mainly on evolutionary and systemic biology, and on general methodological issues in theology and science.

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An Introduction to the Psychology of Religion and Place

Victor Counted and Fraser Watts

This book is about the role of religious and spiritual experiences in people's understanding of their environment, and how their place experiences are transformed in the process. We will examine how understandings and experiences of religious and place connections are motivated by the need to seek and maintain contact with perceptual objects, so as to form meaningful relationship experiences. The purpose is not to engage in comparative religion or analyse different religious traditions in relation to place, but rather to understand how people's perceptions of physical, imaginary and transpersonal objects shape their religious and place experiences.

In order to understand this phenomenon, religion and place are conceptualized as 'transitional' objects with anthropomorphic attributes, having

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psychologically significant characteristics, especially in challenging situations. We also discuss religion and place as 'transactional' objects of transference which become the substitute for the use of human interaction, playing a relational function as objects for emotionally attuned communication. We have summarized these two processes elsewhere, as shown below:

> The function [of] a transitional space goes beyond the periphery of security-seeking, and includes the need for identity formation within the context of an imagined relationship with objects of attachment. This is reflected in the place identity and/or religious identity the individual embodies as a subject of a transitional space. As a transactional phenomenon, the focus is not on the end of the interaction, but rather on the process of communication within a transitional space. Transactional process emphasises the content of interactions between the individual and their objects. (Counted & Watts, 2019, p. 50)

An individual's understanding of a perceptual object is likely to be contingent on the nature of the object and how it provides either transitional comfort or transactional interaction. How the individual perceives and reacts to the object is central to understanding the presumed events that shape religious and place experiences. Our main concern in this book is with the interplay of religion and place as a psychological phenomenon that occurs in everyday life at both conscious and unconscious levels.

In 1920, Austrian psychologist Fritz Heider wrote a whole thesis on 'Thing and Medium' using the philosophical framework of Alexius Meinong, arguing that people's environmental conditions make the perception of distant objects possible. Heider starts his argument by exploring how individuals perceive objects and ends with the nature of the proximal stimuli that is been communicated. His view of relational processes in perception of physical objects led to the conclusion that such relations may influence people's perception of themselves and those around them. This basic perceptual process shows how people can make causal inferences about the causes and effects of events in relation to an object. In the context of this book, such processes involve relations between two, or more, entities. This also involves people's perception of imaginary and physical objects during religious and place experiences. How one feels and thinks about an object, how they perceive it and what they expect of the object are significant events to be discussed.

Why Study Religion and Place?

The dynamic interplay of religion and place has been important throughout human history and has shaped traditions and cultural identities. People's sense of connection to sacred places and objects is recorded in myths, poems, folk tales and historical writings. Such symbolic experiences signal man's need for meaningful relationships and curiosity about experiences that define their identity and mastery of their environment and the world around. To understand religious experiences, one needs to understand the geographical setting of such phenomena, since religion is often practiced in the context of a particular place. The same can be said about how place experiences shape devotion to the sacred, and how people experientially relate to a Divine entity based on what is happening in their community. These links are important for understanding religious experiences, and the experience of particular geographical places, which are often inseparable. However, it requires considerable attention to detail to discern exactly how they are connected with each other.

One key reason for studying the interplay of religion and place is that it has something to teach us about geographical places. The role played by the environment in everyday life is linked to basic personality development and human experience. In other words, the experience of the environment is important for understanding human development. Studying place-related events and how they influence personality can complement the picture of the human nature. Every behaviour, feeling or thought occurs in the context of a particular environment, and what is experienced is often determined based on the particular place in which the experience occurs. Place-related behaviour and perceptions may share the same neural code which helps us understand social and developmental psychology. Geographical places are a significant part of the everyday life, and human behaviour is influenced by how the individual perceives and interprets what is happening in their environment, which then triggers planned behaviour. This is well-documented in the theory of planned behaviour (Boldero, 1995; Taylor & Todd, 1995).

Another reason for studying religion and place is that it offers an opportunity to learn more about religion. Scholars of religion who are concerned with interpreting mystical experiences have provided explanations for various religious phenomena. However, what is often not accounted for is how experiences of place shape religious experiences. We maintain that the genesis of religious experience is usually in a particular place. Perceptual

processes are undertaken in the context of a person's environment and the objects to be found within that environment. In addition, the steps used to organize and interpret religious experiences involve experiences of place, whether those experiences are felt to come from within, or beyond, or the border between the two. Place offers a broader understanding of religion; just as religious experiences help us to better interpret place meanings and experiences. Taking account of how place influences experience is analogous to recognizing how embodied practices influence a wide range of experiences, in what is now generally known as 'embodied cognition' (Watts, 2013). It is increasingly evident that embodied cognition can make a significant contribution to the psychology of religion; we are arguing here that the psychology of place experience can make a similar contribution.

At present, there are no recorded books that have covered this important area of research. Most of the available literature on religion and place is written from the perspective of sociology, anthropology, geography and theology. There seem to be no perspectives on the interplay of religion and place from psychology, except for the recent work done by Victor Counted and colleagues on the *Circle of Place Spirituality* (e.g. Counted, 2018, 2019; Counted, Possamai, McAuliffe, & Meade, 2018; Counted & Watts, 2017, 2019; Counted & Zock, 2019). This psychological theory of place spirituality has been well-received, leading to conversations and commentaries on the topic in relation to how place spirituality can transform traumatic experiences (Sternberg, Engineer, & Oberman, 2019) and how it is defined in world religions (*Budhhism*: Basu, 2019; *Christianity*: Counted & Watts, 2017; *Islam*: Latifa, Hidayat, & Sodiq, 2019). This psychological perspective on religion and place has also been critiqued by Brulin and Granqvist (2018) who argue against the preposition of 'place' as a perceptual object of attachment in everyday life.

Despite recent literature unifying the psychology of religion and place, there is still a lack of empirical investigation of the topic, and of valid measurement tools for assessing this phenomenon in psychology. We hope that this book will spark interest in the topic and create a new wave of discussion about the psychology of religion and place. We believe that religion and place should be approached from an integrative psychological perspective, though such an approach should not ignore perspectives from other areas such as sociology, geography, theology and anthropology. Instead, our understanding of religion and place should be enriched from these other perspectives, to avoid a narrowly defined psychology. In line with the title of the book, our main focus is to expand on how psychological theories and

methodologies can help us understand religion and place, shaping emerging perspectives on a broadly conceived psychology that acknowledges and builds on existing perspectives.

Interdisciplinary Engagement

The study of the psychology of religion and place creates an interdisciplinary space for both religion and place scholars. We believe that such collaboration is necessary for the different disciplines involved to understand each other better. A religious phenomenon cannot be adequately captured without the application of place theory, because place experiences are often integral to meaningful spiritual encounters that religion scholars study. Equally, the psychology of religion should not be left out of the psychological study of place experiences, as religion is integral to some of the most powerful place experiences.

There are enormous benefits in this kind of interdisciplinary engagement, and far-reaching implications; it can be regarded as an aspect of *consilience*—the unity of knowledge (Wilson, 1998). This approach to interdisciplinary research has the potential to advance theoretical harmony and disciplinary synergies—and provides a key to advancement of knowledge and scholarship. One practical implications of this kind of approach is the availability of measurement tools for assessing how place is related to religion and how religious experiences shape pro-environmental behaviours. These understandings can help in measuring and containing, for example, religious-related conflicts that are triggered purely by place experiences. The security and stability of any society is based on the proper application and understanding of concepts shaping the dynamic interplay of religion and place.

A key reason why we advocate for this field is the lack of intra-disciplinary engagement in the field of psychology. Such engagement would unify perspectives, practices and methods that deserve integration in fields of environmental psychology and the psychology of religion. During a recent talk on 'Place attachment and Spirituality' at the 2018 *International Association for People-Environment Studies Conference* in Rome, it was a shock to the first author to find that most of the participants had never heard of the psychology of religion as a field of enquiry, nor had any familiarity with its concepts. It was like speaking to an English-speaking audience in another language. Participants struggled to understand that people develop attachment relationships with Divine entities. The idea of a religious attachment

was inconceivable to them, since they were only familiar with the place attachment theory in environmental psychology, even though there have been over four decades of empirical research that provides evidence for such religious phenomenon.

We have had similar experience with scholars in the psychology of religion field who were not aware that place attachment was a key environmental psychology concept. A reviewer in one of the leading psychology of religion journals (name withheld) to which we submitted a manuscript said that the idea of place attachment was inconceivable, and warned us not to extend attachment theory 'beyond its valid limits'. However, both the attachment to God framework, and place attachment theory, fall under the umbrella family of adult attachment theory, and we are merely trying to integrate both concepts.

We acknowledge that attachment theory began as a way of understanding the relations of infants to caregivers. Both place attachment and religious attachment are extensions of that original attachment concept. We maintain that each has significant similarities to the attachment of infants to caregivers, though we acknowledge that in each case there are also significant differences from the attachment relationships of infants. Most authors in this book have *either* worked mainly on place attachment as environmental psychologists and geographers and are here beginning to consider the relevance of their work to religious attachment, *or* they are psychologists of religion interested in religious attachment who are here broadening out to consider religious attachment to place. Our task in this book is to seek a cross-fertilization between religious attachment and place attachment.

Religion and Place as Conceptual Windows

Religion and place are important conceptual windows in that they provide lenses through which to understand human behaviour. People define themselves, and others, based on their religious and place experiences. The concepts of religion and place that are used in this book focus our thinking on the role of perceptual and relational objects in everyday life. As we will see, in most parts of the book, an object relations perspective was used in our definition of religion and place. Such relationality shapes human behaviour, thus embodying much of what we have come to know as the common-sense psychology that guides our behaviour and response towards others (Heider, 1958/2005). Religious and place experiences are central to human development. They contain several concepts that symbolize our

unique everyday experiences. These experiences have become the spring-board from which our personality emerge.

We have drawn on various psychological perspectives in this book to shed light on how religion and place can serve as conceptual windows in everyday life. Such insights have roots in theories such as psychoanalysis, object relations theory, attachment theory, self-ecological theory, parapsy-chology, theory of memory and nature, therapeutic landscape theory, social cognitive theory, among others. The interactive processes associated with the psychological links between religion and place are conceptualized in subsequent chapters. This is done while also highlighting various method-ological, theoretical, empirical and policy-related perspectives that emerge as a result of the dynamic interplay of religion and place.

In defining 'religion', we explore both the institutionalized and non-institutionalized aspects of religious experiences. Religion and spirituality are sometimes used interchangeably to refer to aspects of religious expe-riences that shape human behaviour and relational tendencies. This does not mean that religion and spirituality mean the same thing; they have been broadly defined as having distinct features (Schlehofer, Omoto, & Adelman, 2008). However, our concern is not to distinguish the unique ways in which place is related to religion on the one hand, and spirituality on the other hand, but to evaluate how these concepts are broadly related to place experiences. We make efforts at unifying the conceptualization of religion in the book, while acknowledging that different authors use the concept of religion in different ways. Each chapter has its own concep-tualization of religion, although the common focus is to understand how people relate to the sacred. For the features of religion themselves have no definite systematic order because every single religious experience has its own unique meaning.

The book also examines 'place' as a conceptual lens. Place is a multidi-mensional concept involving the affective function of a place (attachment to one's community or a geographical object), people's behavioural com-mitment to spatial settings (dependence on activities, resources and events in a particular geographic place), and the cognitive-developmental aspects involving the character and identity of a place. The book explores these areas of meaning and the roles of religious experiences, or people-place experiences, in understanding the cross-cultural differences in personal-ity and developmental processes related to the psychology of religion and place. Psychology can learn a great deal from an analysis of these concepts and conceptual schemes. Our particular focus here is to understand how

the dynamics of people-place experiences and relationships are discussed in relation to religious experiences.

Conclusions and Structure of the Book

This book is one of the first scholarly attempts to discuss the psychological links between place and religious experiences. The chapters provide insights for understanding how people's experiences with geographical places and the sacred serve as agencies for meaning-making, pro-social behaviour and psychological adjustment in everyday life. Apparently, this is an under-researched field with endlessly changing patterns of psychological and biological processes.

The book is divided into two sections. Part I explores the 'Theoretical and Methodological Perspectives' of different epistemological trajectories advancing our knowledge of the psychology of religion and place. It starts with the chapter from renowned psychobiologist Rupert Sheldrake who conceptualizes 'sacred places' using his morphic resonance theory, arguing that memories linked to geographical places are inherited by individuals in those places and thus transmitted culturally and religiously through pilgrimage, tourism and traditions. Sheldrake argues that sacred places are simply a re-emergence of traditional patterns of movement and reconnection with past experiences of those who have been in the same geographical places, thus linking similar self-organizing systems across time and space to contemporary life. This is done through the transmission of stories that shape contemporary religious devotion and tourism in specific geographical places. If this hypothesis is accepted, it shows how the dynamic interplay of religion and place, through the process of morphic resonance can link present sacred experiences with past traditions and rituals.

In Chapter 3, Victor Counted introduces a discussion on attachment-related place and religious experiences. He explores the intersection of religion and place as an attachment experience using three conceptual frameworks (correspondence vs compensation models, motivational systems theory and self-ecological model) that shed light on the psychology of religion and place. Next, Laura Captari and Jamie Aten and colleagues (Joshua Hook, Edward Davis and Theresa Tisdale) argue that religion and spirituality 'unfolds in the ever-changing milieu of culture, institution, social environment, and physical place'. This understanding shapes the rest of the discussion in their richly referenced chapter, highlighting how religious experiences develop in the context of place, with supporting

literature from disaster psychology and the psychology of religion. This leads to the introduction of the concept of 'embodied spirituality' which the authors conceptualized as a multidimensional framework involving the restoration and experience of the sacred through the dynamic interplay of cognitive, affective and social processes.

In Chapter 5, leading clinical psychologist and theologian Fraser Watts presents a dialogue on the psychology and theology of place as an important locus for understanding people's faith experience and experience with sacred buildings, particularly with reference to the Judeo-Christian tradition. In so doing, Watts offers a definition of the psychology of religion and place as the psychological processes involved in distinctly religious relationships to place, including locations and natural features, and built environments. What is unique about the chapter is its interdisciplinary approach to conceptualizing the significance of the natural environment and how it is understood and experienced by people of faith using psychological and theological frameworks. In Chapter 6, environmental psychologist Morino Boaunito and colleagues (Thomas Albers, Silvia Ariccio and Silvia Cataldi) from Sapienza Università di Roma introduce a new concept to the study of place: 'pride of place'. They start their chapter by providing a detailed definition of their use of the term, 'pride of place', as an 'emotion that people have for the place they identify or associate themselves with'. The authors conceptualized pride of place as a negative or positive emotion and a multidimensional construct linked to place identity and attachment. They further discussed how pride of place can play out within a religious context through affective, behavioural and cognitive processes. Avril Maddrell uses frameworks of embodiment and mobilities to explore the role of 'embodied and emotional-affective experience in shaping relationship to place' in Chapter 7. She conceptualizes the links between the relational character of place and sacred mobilities as dynamic spatial relations.

Drawing on ethnographic sources, folklore and mythology, Nell Aubrey begins her chapter by exploring the myth of 'wild places' as a setting for supernatural encounters. Experiences in such 'wild places', also known as 'wilderness experience', were discussed as being transitional realities with both transformative and threatening consequences. The next chapter by Victor Counted examines the interplay of religious and place attachment using the theory of parallel processing. The author conceptualized objects of attachment involving religious figures and geographical places as processing units having a flow-on effect on each other, although depending on what is happening in the individual context. Attachment theory researcher

Joel Gruneau Brulin provides a critical appraisal of the characterization of 'God' and 'place' as objects of attachment—a sequel to his previous commentary on the theory of place spirituality with leading attachment theory scholar, Pehr Granqvist (Brulin & Granqvist, 2018). According to Brulin, places can provide *general* security but not *attachment* security, as opposed to the psychology of religion perspective where God is seen as a symbolic attachment figure by religious believers. Brulin used the essentialist, functionalist and prototype approaches to stress the variability of attachment processes in relation to God and place as objects of attachment.

Part II covers the 'Empirical Applications and Practical Implications' of the book. First, we used case study examples which shed light on the psychology of religion and place. This section starts with the work of Boadi Agyekum with Ghanaian and Somali migrants in Canada. The author explores the role of religious places in promoting a sense of place and emotional well-being, thus conceptualizing such spaces and communities as 'therapeutic landscapes'. In the next chapter, Miriam Billig of Ariel University Israel makes a very important contribution to the book in her examination of the relationship between attachment to God, the 'Promised' Land of Israel, and the Jewish people as a means of meaning-making and coping with hostility in Gaza Strip. Billig describes how 'security-related and political tensions in a place increase religious tensions and strengthen the bond between the residents and God'. She argues that 'God becomes the origin to which we turn when faced with negative experiences in [a] place, and the place becomes a source of kinship when man experiences internal spiritual struggles'. The author seems to suggest that Jewish place attachment undergoes three processes of religious attachment: to the Rabbis, then to God and through sacred texts. Hence, place attachment in this context is formed through attachment to human religious figures (e.g. Rabbis) who reinforces people's attachment to the sacred.

Leading environment-behaviour researcher David Seamon provides a theatrical view on the modes of place engagement and relationship as a spiritual exercise. Drawing on existential theories of authenticity and inauthenticity, Seamon explores how people are integrally a part of geographical places spiritually through the way they respond to the complex world of uncertainties. Seamon uses the movie *Limbo* as a case study to show how people need to make connections with others and place by accepting life's uncertainties and potential transitions in order to be their most authentic selves and experience true self-transcendence. In Chapter 14, Ken Estey introduces solidarity psychology as a tool for understanding the link

between place-making and religion. Estey uses the Mosque building controversy and the protests in Brooklyn New York as his case study for understanding the relationship between religion and place, particularly focusing on how social actors shape places where people practice religion through building what the author refers to as 'the commons'. Estey ends his chapter by proposing a place-based pedagogy in order to promote religious understanding across different opposing groups in a given geographical place by creating a solidarity psychology that unites people through negotiating their place and religious differences.

Finally, in the second section of Part II, the authors go beyond the theoretical and empirical applications to focus on the practical implications of the psychology of religion and place. In addition, a series of recommendations are provided with the hope that the issues described the book will lead to more discussion on how religion and place inherently influence each other. This section starts with the chapter by Victor Counted who describes 'why' and 'how' religious and place attachment are important predictors of quality of life. This section ends with a concept analysis of the psychology of religion and place by Victor Counted and Fraser Watts. Their chapter provides an operational definition of the psychology of religion and place by analysing contributions from all the chapters in the book. The chapters in Part II coalesce around the broader context of empirical applications, implications, recommendations, conceptual clarity and further studies. These were discussed with practical consequences for research and education in the psychology of religion and place, a way of reasoning which we develop further in this book.

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Theoretical and Methodological Perspectives

Sacred Places: The Presence of the Past

Rupert Sheldrake

Introduction

The association of sacred places with stories and memories is part of a more general phenomenon. Memories are linked to particular places in countless animals, not only in humans. Animals of many species need to remember where their home is, how to find their way home, where there are safe hiding places, where to find food and where dangers may be lurking. As well as personal memories, members of many species inherit memories of places that are culturally transmitted, like the roosting places for flocks of birds, and traditional feeding grounds and watering holes. In addition, memories of places can be inherited, even without the need for cultural transmission, as shown most clearly in migratory species in which there is no direct contact between one generation and another. Young British cuckoos, for example, do not meet their parents because they are raised by birds of other species. The older generation of cuckoos have no need to stay in Britain to look after their young, and leave for southern Africa in July, flying down through Italy, and feed well in southern Italy before crossing the Mediterranean and the Sahara. Their offspring gather together about a month later and follow the same route to the same African destinations

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with no guidance from their elders, yet somehow, they know which way to go, what route to follow, where to feed and recognize when they have arrived at their ancestral destination.

In this essay, I consider first the biological basis of memory. I then discuss the culturally transmitted associations with particular places in migratory hunter-gatherer cultures. I then suggest how pilgrimages to holy places may have evolved, and discuss how visiting these places can connect people in the present with the experiences of those who have been there before. Part of this presence of the past is explicable in terms of the cultural transmission of stories, but it may also depend on a direct influence across time by a process called morphic resonance. This same process may play an important part in the effectiveness of rituals, which connect present participants in these holy places with those who have taken part in these rituals before.

The Anatomical Basis of Memory

Place and memory are closely linked not only in animal behaviour but also within brains. The part of the mammalian brain that is most closely associated with the laying down of memories, the hippocampus, is also concerned with the orientation in space (Bird & Burgess, 2008). When mice learn their way around a maze, and remember how to navigate it, groups of nerve cells in the hippocampus are activated, and these link up with activity in other parts of the brain. Such memories enable animals to find their way around.

Old-school London taxi drivers have to spend several years travelling around London on mopeds memorizing 25,000 streets and thousands of tourist attractions and hot spots. As they acquire 'The Knowledge', the anatomy of their brain changes. Scans made by magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) show that the posterior part of their hippocampus enlarges. People of similar age and intelligence who are not acquiring The Knowledge show no such changes (Jabr, 2011).

This fundamental connection between place and memory was the basis for well-known mnemonic systems in the ancient world called 'the art of memory'. In oral cultures, and in literate cultures before the inventions of printing, the cultivation of memory was an important skill. A place-based system was said to have been invented by the Greek poet Simonides. As summarized by Cicero, 'Persons desiring to train this faculty (of memory) must select places and form mental images of the things they wish to remember and store those images in the places, so that the order of the

places will preserve the order of the things, and the images of the things will denote the things themselves, and we shall employ the places and the images respectively as a wax writing-tablet and the letters written upon it' (Cicero, 1942, p. lxxxvi). The ancient techniques were revived during that Renaissance (Yates, 2014), and modern mnemonic systems use the same principles. You can try it for yourself. If you want to remember a series of objects, imagine walking along a path and finding one object at a particular point, the next object at another point and so on. Then to remember them all you need do is imagine yourself walking along that path again, and through their association with these particular points, you should find it easier to remember them than if you have just tried remembering them without any spatial aid.

Thus places and memories are closely connected for individuals, and they are also connected socially and culturally, in memories shared by social groups. This is clearest in migratory species, where memories of places hundreds or even thousands of miles apart enable them to navigate to remote destinations, and also to follow customary routes.

Migrations and the Evolution of Pilgrimage

Thousands of animal species are migratory. They usually have two homes, moving from one to the other in an annual cycle. Swallows arrive in England in the spring, often returning to the very same place they nested the year before. In the autumn, they fly to Southern Africa. They make the reverse journey the next spring. Their homes are like two poles between which they move. The arctic tern, a small seabird, literally moves between two poles in its annual migration from the Arctic, where it breeds, to the Antarctic and back again.

These migrations are purposeful. The animals migrate to places with favourable conditions for breeding, and then move to places where they can find food and warmth while it is winter in their breeding grounds.

However, some animals make migratory journeys without any obvious biological purpose. The kingfish of the Mbuntu River in West Africa make yearly journeys to the head of the river, where they swim in clockwise circles for a week before returning. They neither breed nor hunt at their destination, and their annual migration has been compared to a pilgrimage (Societyx, 2013, February 12). Some groups of chimpanzees carry rocks to particular trees in their territories where they throw them down. The

stones accumulate in heaps, rather like human-made cairns (Kühl et al., 2016).

For most of human history, the vast majority of humanity was migratory. Our ancestors were hunter-gatherers. They moved around the landscape in seasonal migrations. Hunting and gathering mean moving to find game and edible plants; they involve purposive cycles of movement. Traditional peoples follow customary migratory paths, as the reindeer herders of Siberia still do today (Vitebsky, 2011). Australian Aborigines navigated these paths, or Song Lines, by singing the story of the places as they travelled, with the songs highlighting the locations of waterholes and landmarks (Chatwin, 1998).

In North America, too, hunter-gatherer societies made circuits of their territories to sources of natural resources, and also to places featured in creation songs and stories. Their rituals were linked to specific sacred sites. For example, Paiute-Shoshone people of California believed that a particular hot spring was the site of their creation, and that it was a healing place. The Chumash Indians helped the deceased on their journey by burying medicine bundles on the top of Santa Lucia peak. One of the Sioux legends told how a woman refused to break camp and follow the tribe's migration trail owing to jealousy about her husband's new wife. So she stayed behind, and turned into a standing stone, at a place now called *Standing Rock* (Boyles, 1991).

About 12,000 years ago, some groups of people started cultivating crops. The Neolithic Revolution began. Since then, an increasing proportion of humanity has led settled lives in villages, and later in town and cities. For all these people, and for all of us today who live in villages, towns and cities, this immemorial pattern of continual movement has come to an end.

When agriculture and settled life began, the herders of goats, sheep, cattle, yaks and camels continued a migratory existence, moving their herds and flocks in search of water and fresh pastures, going to higher ground in the summer, and to lower ground in the winter. In the biblical account, when Adam and Eve were driven out of the Garden of Eden, one of their sons, Cain, became a farmer, and the other, Abel, a shepherd. Like Abel, the Old Testament patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, were herders, who moved amidst settled people. Humanity at this stage was depicted as half settled and half on a journey.

For settled people, the ancient habit of making journeys to sacred places persisted, and people congregated at the places for seasonal festivals. In

some cases, the migratory movement of the group was replaced by ritualized sacred journeys in the form of religious processions (Michell, 1975, p. 10).

With the growth of cities, journeys to sacred places, or pilgrimages, focused increasingly on man-made temples. The cities of the ancient world were sacralized—and justified—by the presence of temples, as in ancient Egypt and Sumeria. In Sumer, all the great city states had a temple at their centre. Less urban cultures, as in England, built great ceremonial centres, such as the stone circles of Avebury and Stonehenge, which were constructed more than 4000 years ago, around the same time as the pyramids in Egypt. These great structures must have been places at which populations converged for seasonal festivals, making journeys that were prototypical pilgrimages.

In his *Republic*, Plato advised settlers in a new country first to discover the shrines and sacred places of the local deities, and then reconsecrate them to the corresponding principles in the settlers' religion, with festivals on the appropriate days (Michell, 1975). By Plato's time, many religions had already adopted this principle, and many did so subsequently, including the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches.

The Jewish people originally did the same. Moses and Joshua led the Jewish people out of slavery in Egypt to the Promised Land—namely Canaan or Palestine. When they settled there, they worshipped at a range of holy places that had been venerated long before their arrival, like Shiloh, a Bronze Age shrine sacred to the Canaanites, where Joshua set up the holy tent. The Jewish people also worshipped in sacred groves on hilltops, and venerated the sacred stone at Bethel where Jacob had his vision of angels descending from and ascending into heaven. Many other megaliths in Palestine were sacred to the pre-Jewish inhabitants of the land. Bethel may well have been one of these ancient sacred stones when Jacob had his vision there (Frazer, 1918, p. 76). When he awoke from his dream, he said, 'Surely the Lord is in this place – and I did not know it! How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven' (Genesis 28, pp. 16–17). Jacob anointed this stone with oil and established an altar there. Later, his descendants became slaves in Egypt. When they returned to Canaan after many generations, they made Bethel a major place of pilgrimage.

After the construction of the temple in Jerusalem by King Solomon, around 950 BC (Coleman & Elsner, 1995), Jerusalem became a central place of pilgrimage, especially at the time of the great festivals. More than

200 years later, King Hezekiah, who reigned from 715–687 BC, destroyed the hilltop shrines and other sacred places, and tried to channel all pilgrimage to the temple at Jerusalem. But he failed to suppress worship at Bethel, which continued to rival Jerusalem as a religious centre until the reign of King Josiah (640–609 BC), who completed the centralization of Jewish worship by destroying the sanctuary at Bethel and cutting down the remaining sacred groves. The focus of Jewish pilgrimage was henceforth urban, at the temple in the city, rather than spread out over many groves, shrines and other sacred places. But the principle of pilgrimage remained.

In classical Greece, each city state had its central temple to which far-flung citizens returned for regular festivals. In Athens, the Great Panathenaea festival, celebrated every four years, culminated in a procession on the Acropolis, which is represented on the friezes of the Parthenon, the temple of Athena, the patron goddess of Athens (Coleman & Elsner, 1995). And as well as these local gatherings, there were all-Greek centres of pilgrimage, like the shrine of Delphi, where pilgrims consulted the oracle, and Olympia, where the Olympic games took place every four years at the festival of Zeus. Here the people would see their champions perform feats of strength, speed and endurance, embodying heroic myths in flesh and spectacle.

The classical Greek traditions also included another core purpose of pilgrimage: personal healing. Many pilgrims went to the great healing shrine at Epidaurus, hoping for miraculous healings by the gods Apollo and Asclepius. Pilgrims made offerings and slept inside the shrine, where many claimed to have been cured in visions (Coleman & Elsner, 1995, p. 20).

Within the Roman Empire there were many places of pilgrimage. Some were by springs, rivers and sacred groves that only local people would visit; others were more widely famous, and involved many days' journey on foot. Some pilgrims' practices were similar to those of present-day Buddhist monks. For example, a treatise from the second century AD called *On The Syrian Goddess* describes how pilgrims prepared themselves for their journey to the holy city of Hierapolis, in modern-day Turkey, by shaving their heads and eyebrows before setting off. On their way, they always slept on the ground, never on a bed, and used only cold water for bathing (Coleman & Elsner, 1995, p. 25).

For early Christians, the primary place of pilgrimage was Jerusalem because of its central importance in Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Jesus

himself travelled around the Holy Land on foot, and went to Jerusalem for the major festivals.

Jerusalem is still a primary place of pilgrimage for Christians and for Jews, and for Muslims. In his visionary 'night journey', Mohammed flew to the temple mount in Jerusalem on a steed called Lightning, where, according to Muslim tradition, he encountered Abraham, Moses, Jesus and other prophets. He led them in prayers. Gabriel then escorted Mohammad to the pinnacle of the rock where a ladder of golden light appeared. On this glittering shaft, Mohammed ascended through the seven heavens into the presence of Allah, from whom he received instructions for himself and his followers. Over this place stands the Dome of the Rock, one of the holiest places in Islam.

In the Christian world, many additional places for pilgrimage grew up around the tombs of martyrs and other saints, whose relics were believed to connect the pilgrim to the heavenly realm to which the saints had ascended. Their tombs were seen as places where heaven and earth joined. Through their earthly relics, the saints in heaven could be present at their tomb on earth. These tombs were already places of pilgrimage by the third century AD, and by the sixth century the graves of the saints had become centres of ecclesiastical life. In the Western church the power and authority of bishops was closely linked to the shrines of saints, which were often housed in cathedrals (Brown, 2015).

The hometown of the prophet Mohammed, Mecca, was already an important face of pilgrimage at the time of his birth, with the pilgrimage centred on a black rock, which tradition held had fallen from heaven. This black stone is now embedded in one corner of the Kaaba, the cubic building at the centre of Mecca, the focus of Islamic pilgrimage, around which pilgrims walk seven times anti-clockwise This is one of the few places in the world where circumambulation does not go clockwise.

India is still criss-crossed with numerous pilgrim routes leading to holy caves, like Amarnath high in the mountains of Kashmir, to the sources of sacred rivers such as the Ganges, to holy mountains, like Mount Kailash in Tibet, and to many temples, sacred trees, rivers, rocks and hilltop shrines. Buddhists go on pilgrimages to Buddhist sacred places, including those linked to the Buddha's life in India, like Bodh Gaya, the place where the Buddha is said to have attained Enlightenment, under a *bodhi* or *pipal* tree (Coleman & Elsner, 1995).

Forms of pilgrimage are found all over the world. Pilgrimage seems to be a deeply ingrained part of human nature, with its roots in the seasonal

migrations of hunter-gatherers, and, more remotely, in many millions of years of animal migrations.

The Suppression and Revival of Pilgrimage

Precisely because of its ancient roots, pilgrimage was attacked and supressed in Europe in the Protestant Reformation. The reformers based their faith on the authority of the Bible, rather than on the pre-Christian traditions that had over the centuries been syncretized and absorbed within the Catholic Church, together with newer customs and traditions related to Christian saints. In England, for example, there were great pilgrimages to the shrine of St Thomas Becket in Canterbury Cathedral, commemorating his martyrdom, and all it symbolized of spiritual resistance to earthly and especially royal power. Thomas was also known as the Great Doctor, a healer without compare in days without affordable doctors or medical science. The healing power was supposed to reside in water tinged with his blood, 'the blood of St Thomas', which pilgrims bought in lead ampullae from vendors near his shrine. The journey to Canterbury was immortalized in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, written in the 1380s and 1390s, consisting of stories told by pilgrims to each other on their journey.

Another great English centre of pilgrimage was Walsingham, Norfolk, with its shrine of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the form of a Black Madonna, and her Holy House, a recreation of the building in which the Annunciation of the Angel Gabriel happened. Another was the great Abbey of Glastonbury, where King Arthur was reputedly buried and where Joseph of Arimathea (who arranged the burial of Jesus after his crucifixion), is said to have planted his staff in a nearby hill, where it took root and grew into the Holy Thorn Tree. A hawthorn tree still grows on that spot.

But there was nothing about Canterbury, Walsingham or Glastonbury in the Bible, and therefore for the Protestant Reformers these pilgrimages had no scriptural authority. In 1538, all English pilgrimages were suppressed under King Henry VIII by his henchman Thomas Cromwell. The shrines were destroyed, the abbeys and monasteries dissolved, and their riches confiscated by the king. The dissolution of the monasteries destroyed the pilgrimage landscape not only by removing key pilgrim destinations, but also by taking away the infrastructure that supported pilgrims as they travelled, providing them with food and accommodation.

Pilgrimages were also suppressed in other Protestant countries. In 1520, Martin Luther declared, 'All pilgrimages should be stopped. There is no

good in them: no commandment enjoins them, no obedience attaches to them. Rather do these pilgrimages give countless occasions to commit sin and to despise God's commandments' (Dyas, 2019, February 8).

No such suppression occurred in the Roman Catholic countries of Europe, or in the Orthodox East. In many Catholic and Orthodox countries ancient pilgrimages continue to this day. For example in Ireland, despite attempts to suppress them by the Protestant English, pilgrimages persisted, and many pilgrims still go to the island Sanctuary of St Patrick in Lough Derg, in County Donegal, and climb the holy mountain, Croagh Patrick, in County Mayo.

In Latin America, the European conquerors followed the traditional Roman Catholic policy of assimilating and Christianizing pre-Christian holy places. Near Mexico City, for example, the temple of the Aztec mother goddess was demolished in 1519. In 1531, a native Mexican had a series of visions of the Blessed Virgin on the same spot, where a shrine was built, which is now the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, a Black Madonna standing on a crescent moon. This is the most visited Roman Catholic place of pilgrimage in the world.

By contrast, the Protestant settlers of North America were not interested in the holy places of the native peoples. English common law was taken to redefine the native people's homeland as *vacuum domicilium*, an unpopulated expanse of wilderness over which no one held dominion, which cried out for farming and civilization (Nabokov, 2006). The old sacred places became real estate.

In some traditionally Roman Catholic and Orthodox countries, pilgrimages were suppressed not by Christian reformers, but by anti-Christian revolutionaries. They wanted to stamp out pilgrimage precisely because it was religious. The French Revolution, starting in 1789, aimed to overthrow the power of the Roman Catholic Church as well as the power of the King. In 1793, the revolutionary government proclaimed the Cult of Reason as the state religion. The Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris was converted into a Temple of Reason; other churches and cathedrals were secularized. Pilgrimage was banned.

Under the atheist government of the Soviet Union, churches were closed, priests executed, monasteries destroyed and religious activity persecuted. Shrines were deliberately desecrated, most recently in the campaign against 'so-called holy places' launched in 1958, with the aim of the final elimination of pilgrimage (Albera & Eade, 2015).

Tourism as Frustrated Pilgrimage

Although pilgrimage was suppressed in Protestant countries and by revolutionary governments, the urge to visit holy places was not extinguished. Within 200 years of the banning of pilgrimage in England, the English had invented tourism, now a vast global industry, with a global economic value of 2.2 trillion dollars in 2013 (Statista, 2019, January 27).

Tourism is often a form of frustrated pilgrimage. Many tourists still go to the ancient sacred places: pyramids and temples in Egypt, Stonehenge, the great cathedrals of Europe, and so on. But they are not going to sacred sites to give thanks, make offerings, or pray. Many feel they have to behave as secular, modern people who are primarily interested in cultural history. But they are still making purposive journeys and the ancient holy places still pull them; indeed, these places are often called tourist 'attractions'.

Although we live in an unprecedented era of mass tourism, in recent decades there has been a remarkable revival of pilgrimage. Santiago de Compostela, where the cathedral housed the supposed relics of St James, the patron saint of Spain, was one of the most popular sites of pilgrimage in mediaeval Europe. But by the mid-twentieth century, the number of pilgrims was reduced to a trickle. In the 1980s, a few enthusiasts made sure that the way, or Camino, was well marked with signs, and established a series of facilities for pilgrims along the route. In 1987, about 1000 pilgrims walked to Santiago. By 1993, 100,000 pilgrims walked there, and in 2017, 300,000 did so.

Elsewhere in Europe, old pilgrimage routes are being reopened. In England, the British Pilgrimage Trust is helping to re-open the ancient pilgrimage footpaths, first and foremost the pilgrim's way from Southampton to Canterbury over the South Downs, a 220-miles (350 km) walk, taking 17 days, connecting 65 churches, three cathedrals, 75 prehistoric sites, five holy wells, 15 ruined priories, monasteries or abbeys, eight rivers, ten holy hills, five castles, 50 villages, 40 pubs, eight towns and four cities (The British Pilgrimage Trust, 2019, January 27).

In Russia too, after the end of communist rule in 1991, many Russian Orthodox churches and monasteries reopened, and ever-increasing numbers of pilgrims make their way to the holy places.

Stories told about sacred places influence people who visit them and help to shape their experience. Much of this memory can be transmitted culturally, through stories about the place and other people's beliefs about its special powers. But some sacred places have a power that is felt by

people who do not know the stories of the place but directly experience a presence of holiness in that place, as Jacob did when he had his dream at Bethel. I have felt it myself in a wide range of sacred places including mountains, groves, seashores, Hindu temples, Buddhist stupas, Sufi shrines and Christian churches and cathedrals. Some of this feeling may arise from properties of the place itself, its natural features. Others may come from a cumulative memory of what previous people have experienced there, including feelings of transcendence, holiness and divine presence.

Is this more than a vague and inexplicable feeling? I believe it is. The hypothesis of morphic resonance is a scientific principle that may shed new light on these experiences.

Morphic Resonance and the Presence of the Past

According to the hypothesis of morphic resonance, first proposed in 1981, all nature has an inherent memory. The so-called laws of nature are more like habits. All biological species draw upon a collective memory from their ancestors and in turn can contribute to the accumulative collective memory of the species. This idea is rather like Jung's 'collective unconscious' but instead of being confined to human minds and cultures, this is part of the nature of nature (Sheldrake, 1981/2009).

According to this hypothesis, the formation of habits depends on a process called morphic resonance (Sheldrake, 1981/2009). Similar patterns of activity resonate across time and space with subsequent patterns. This hypothesis applies to all self-organizing systems, including atoms, molecules, crystals, cells plants, animals and animal societies. All draw upon a collective memory and in turn contribute to it.

A growing crystal of sucrose, for example, is in resonance with countless previous crystals of sucrose, and follows the same habits of crystal organization, the same lattice structure. A growing oak seedling follows the habits of growth and development of previous oaks. When an orb-web spider starts spinning its web, it follows the habits of countless ancestors, resonating with them directly across space and time. The more people that learn a new skill such as snowboarding, the easier will it be for other people to learn it because of morphic resonance from previous snowboarders (Sheldrake, 1988/2011). In summary, this hypothesis proposes that:

1. Self-organizing systems including molecules, cells, tissues, organs, organisms, societies and minds are made up of nested hierarchies or

Fig. 2.1 Nested hierarchies or holarchies of morphic units. The smallest circles could be subatomic particles, in atoms, in molecules, in crystals; or cells, in tissues, in organs, in organisms
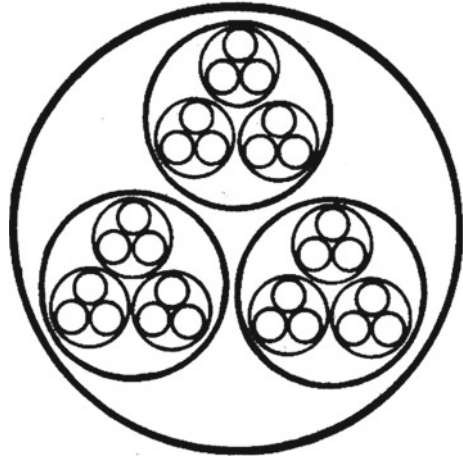
holarchies of holons or morphic units (Fig. 2.1). At each level the whole is more than the sum of the parts, and these parts themselves are wholes made up of parts.

2. The wholeness of each level depends on an organizing field, called a morphic field. This field is within and around the system it organizes, and is a vibratory pattern of activity that interacts with electromagnetic and quantum fields of the system. The generic name morphic field includes:

   a. Morphogenetic fields that shape the development of plants and animals.
   b. Behavioural and perceptual fields that organize the movements, fixed action patterns and instincts of animals.
   c. Social fields that link together and coordinate the behaviour of social groups.
   c. Mental fields that underlie mental activities and shape the habits of minds.

3. Morphic fields contain attractors—goals—and chreodes—habitual pathways towards those goals—that guide a system towards its end state, and maintain its integrity, stabilizing it against disruptions.
4. Morphic fields are shaped by morphic resonance from all similar past systems, and thus contain a cumulative, collective memory. Morphic

resonance depends on similarity, and is not attenuated by distance in space or time. Morphic fields are local, within and around the systems they organize, but morphic *resonance* is non-local.

5. Morphic resonance involves a transfer of form or in-form-ation rather than a transfer of energy.

6. Morphic fields are fields of probability, like quantum fields, and they work by imposing patterns on otherwise random events in the systems under their influence.

7. All self-organizing systems are influenced by self-resonance from their own past, which plays an essential role in maintaining a holon's identity and continuity. Since organisms are more similar to themselves in the past than to other members of their species, self-resonance is highly specific. Individual memory and collective memory both depend on morphic resonance; they differ from each other in degree, not in kind.

This hypothesis leaves open the question of how morphic resonance is transmitted. There are several suggestions. One is that the transfer of information occurs through the 'implicate order', as proposed by the quantum physicist David Bohm (Sheldrake, 1981/2009). The implicate or enfolded order gives rise to the world we can observe, the explicate order, in which things are located in space and time, In the implicate order, according to Bohm, 'everything is enfolded into everything' (Bohm, 1980, p. 177). Another possibility is that morphic resonance may pass through the quantum vacuum field, also known as the zero-point energy field, which mediates all quantum and electromagnetic processes (Laszlo, 2007). Another possibility is that similar systems might be connected through hidden extra dimensions, of which there are five in string theory and six in M-theory (Carr, 2008). Or maybe it depends on new kinds of physics as yet unthought of.

From the point of view of morphic resonance, when people enter a holy place in which many people have prayed, worshipped, participated in rituals, celebrated festivals and entered altered states of consciousness, with mystical or visionary experiences, the similarity of the experience of that place will bring people in the present into resonance with those who have been there before. There will be a presence of the past through morphic resonance. Participation in rituals at that place will enhance this effect.

The key to morphic resonance is similarity. Its usual effect is to reinforce similarities, leading to the buildup of habits. By contrast, rituals involve the

reverse of this process. In rituals, patterns of activity are deliberately and consciously performed the way they were done before. In habits, previous patterns are repeated unconsciously; in rituals, they are repeated consciously. In habits, the presence of the past is unconscious; in rituals it is conscious.

Through morphic resonance, rituals bring the past into the present. The greater the similarity between the present ritual and the past, the stronger the resonant connection (Sheldrake & Fox, 1996). Thus morphic resonance provides a natural explanation for the repetitive quality of rituals found in traditions all over the world, and illuminates the way in which rituals connect present participants with all those who have done the ritual before, right back to the first time it was performed.

This is just what participants in rituals implicitly or explicitly believe. They are connected not only to members of the group with whom they are performing the ritual now, but with all those who have done it before. Jews taking part in a Passover dinner connect back over the generations to those who took part in the first Passover dinner in Egypt; Christians taking Holy Communion connect with all those who have done it before, right back to the Last Supper of Jesus with his disciples; Americans sharing in a Thanksgiving dinner connect with previous generations of Americans, right back to the first Thanksgiving dinner of the pioneering Christian settlers in New England.

Both rituals and visiting holy places bring about the presence of the past, and link those who take part in them now with those who have done them before. But rituals and pilgrimages are not only about connecting across time; they are about opening to the spiritual realm in the present, just as people opened to this realm in the past.

The Nature of Memory Itself

It might at first sight seem that the hypothesis of morphic resonance provides an optional extra to normal theories about memory in places that are based on cultural associations and transmissions, communicated through myths and stories. But this conventional point of view takes for granted that normal memory and cultural transmission can be fully understood in straightforward, conventional terms. The standard materialist theory is that people's memories are stored as physical traces inside their brains, and cultural memories are stored in printed books, inscriptions, architecture and other material artefacts, or remembered by people and transmitted orally.

But we have to keep in mind that consciousness itself appears unexplained in materialist terms. The very existence of human consciousness provides the hardest problem for a materialist philosophy which regards all reality as made up of non-conscious matter or physical processes. Why should consciousness exist at all? And is there any evidence that memories are stored inside brains as physical traces or is this just an assumption?

It turns out that the storage of memories in brains is an assumption. Attempts to find memory traces have failed over and over again for more than a century. Certainly, some parts of a brain become active while memories are being laid down and retrieved, for example regions in and around the hippocampus. But in between they seem to disappear. They are assumed to be stored in indeterminate areas of the brain, somehow spread out holographically.

But they may not be stored in brains at all. According to the hypothesis of morphic resonance, all organisms resonate with similar organisms in the past, on the basis of similarity. Any given organism is more similar to itself in the past than to any other organism, and is therefore subject to strong and specific self-resonance. In the realm of form, this helps to maintain the shape and organization of the organism even though the chemicals and cells within it are continually changing. Our own bodies are in a constant state of flux and our skin, hair, intestinal lining and blood cells are continually dying and being replaced. In the realms of behaviour and learning, organisms resonate with their own behaviour in the past under similar circumstances, which is how habits build up. And specific conscious memories depend on resonance with a previous experience under similar conditions, for example at the same place, or with the same characteristic smell. So the conventional theory of memory turns out to be very questionable. Both normal memory and the experience of the presence of the past in holy places may be aspects of the same underlying processes, connections across time on the basis of similarity (Sheldrake, 2012).

This still leaves the mystery of the numinous, the sense of the divine present, or deep connection, or love, or more-than-human consciousness that gives rise the experience of the holy in the first place. This is not a presence of the past, but a presence. But the fact that others have experience this presence in the same place in the past can make it easier to experience that presence again. We are helped by those who have gone before us.

Conclusions: The Presence of the Past in Sacred Places

We are drawn to sacred places because of the stories that are told about them, the events that have happened there in the past, and the experiences that other people have had there before us. They attract us, and even in the secularized context of tourism, they are still called 'attractions'. Our experience in them is shaped not only by the place itself, and by the stories about what happened there in the past, but also by an influence from those who have been there in the past, and their experiences in that place. According to the hypothesis of morphic resonance, we come into direct connection with those who have been there before us. There is a presence of the past that influences our own experience in the present, the presence of the present. There can be a sense of a presence far greater than our own.

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Religion, Place and Attachment: An Evaluation of Conceptual Frameworks

Victor Counted

Introduction

Adult attachment theory provides an evolutionary perspective from which to explore the attachment behavioural system and its broader psychological implications across a lifespan (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Cicirelli, 2004). This framework of social relationships examines how repeated attachment experiences with important people in one's life form internal working models that serve as cognitive frameworks which are generalized to anticipate the nature of future relationship expectations (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1969, 1973). The attachment working model is key to human development (Ainsworth et al., 1978), in that it forms the mental representations for evaluating future surrogates to which/whom the individual is drawn to as targets for seeking and maintaining proximity, safe havens in times of distress, and the secure base for exploring the broader environment. Proximity to an attachment surrogate

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is likely to occur when the emotionally attuned communication with a previous attachment figure may have been lost either due to the death of a loved one, geographical and emotional separation, or the perceived insensitivity of an attachment figure (Cicirelli, 2004). Adult attachment theorists (e.g. Cicirelli, 2004; Counted, 2018; Counted & Watts, 2017; Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016; Sroufe, 2005) and neuropsychologists (e.g. Fuster 1997a, 1997b; Luna, Garver, Urban, Lazar, & Sweeney, 2004) are in harmony that attachment can be formed with imaginary objects that are not physically present due to the maturation of cognitive processes in adults, compared to infants, which enable them to maintain closeness with invisible objects of attachment just by the mere knowledge of their whereabouts.

Such relationships can be formed due to the lack of confidence in the availability of an attachment figure, thus leading to developing an attachment with another figure/object with the potential of assuring a sense of felt security. This chapter argues that in the event where the individual lacks confidence in the availability of an attachment figure, a new relationship can be formed with a religious or spatial object of attachment. I further contend that there is a fluid relationship between objects of attachment (Divine entity: God, Allah, Jesus, Mary, Budha, Krisna, etc.; geographical place: one's country, residential neighbourhood, nature, the resources of a setting), such that individuals drawn to a religious figure as an attachment surrogate are likely to be in a dual relationship with place as an object of attachment. This is such that the sense of spiritual attachment might be functionally tied to the individual's attachment to a place and vice versa. This understanding can be enriched through further theoretical exploration, as will be made clearer in this chapter.

Relationship Experiences with God

In the last two decades, spiritual attachment has been conceptualized as largely part of the biological function of the attachment system in which seeking and maintaining proximity with a protective attachment (religious) figure is prioritized (Counted, 2016a, 2016b; Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016; Hall, Fujikawa, Halcrow, & Hill, 2009; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990; Rowatt & Kirkpatrick, 2002; Sim & Loh, 2003). As an important subject central to most monotheistic religions (e.g. Christianity), spiritual attachment is prioritized by religious believers when maintaining a personal relationship with God as they represent God as an attachment figure, having

the characteristics of a safe haven and secure base. The attachment component in having a relationship with God also connotes an idea that reiterates 'the centrality of the emotion of love in people's perceived relationships with God and in religious belief systems' (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016, p. 918). Religious attachment reflects the normative ways in which people evaluate and experience their spirituality in terms of developing proximity to a Divine entity, turning to the Divine as a response to loss, and perceiving God as a target for security (Counted, 2016a, 2016b; Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016; Sim & Loh, 2003). This can also apply during spiritual struggles when the attached individual experience emotional insecurity through expressing divine avoidance and having anxiety about God (Ano & Pargament, 2014; Rowatt & Kirkpatrick, 2002).

As a growing area in the psychology of religion literature, research in religious attachment has become one of the most researched topics in the field. Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1990) first reported a correlation between global attachment patterns and religious attachment. Hart, Limke, and Budd (2010) examined the links between attachment with romantic partners and faith development. Joung's (2006) treatment of women's faith experiences suggested the same trend of faith development, indicating an association between women's interpersonal relationships and their religious experiences. These studies show that relationship problems with human attachment figures are related to faith development in one form or another through a sense of spiritual connection (also see Beck & McDonald, 2004; Rowatt & Kirkpatrick, 2002; Sim & Loh, 2003). This kind of spiritual attachment has been described as a 'care-giving faith' development in which the attached individual emphasizes the importance of needing care and emotional support in their faith experience (Counted, 2016a). This religious perspective examines how God fulfils the role of a Divine attachment figure in relation to believer–God proximity and struggles (Ano & Pargament, 2014; Counted & Miller, 2018).

People–Place Relationship Experiences

Having proposed that adults develop attachment with protective and imaginary figures due to their increased cognitive abilities (Cicirelli, 2004; Counted, 2018; Counted & Zock, 2019; Luna et al., 2004), I also argue that people–place relationships can take similar forms of affective development. This is because topical objects like geographic places fulfil the attachment relationship role in addition to, or instead of, God (Counted,

2018; Counted & Watts, 2017; Counted & Zock, 2019; Scannell & Gifford, 2014). This is largely attributed to the function of the maturational aspects of cognitive development in adults, which infants do not have, thus allowing adult individuals to carry out mentally stimulating tasks such as processing speed, voluntary response suppression and working memory (Hale, 1990; Diamond & Goldman-Rakic, 1989; Fischer, Biscaldi, & Gezeck, 1997; Luna et al., 2004).

The affective development in people's experiences of place in environmental psychology circles has been used to position places as more than just geographic locations with concrete features. Places are distal dynamic contexts of social interaction that contribute to spiritual well-being and interconnectedness (e.g. Counted & Watts, 2017; Rollero & De Piccoli, 2010; Stokowski, 2002). Most importantly, the concept of place has been discussed as a multidimensional construct that can be synthesized into three functions: emotional attachment, cognitive development and behavioural dependence (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001). As an attachment setting, place is discussed in terms of its material and geographic pull, emphasizing how people may form a positive bond with the spatial features of a place (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001; Low & Altman, 1992; Seamon, 2012). Secondly, place can also be discussed in terms of how it influences the individual's identity and cognitive development, or produces what Seamon (2012) refers to as *genius loci*. This aspect of place involves how the individual mirrors the character and lifestyle of a place at a personal level (Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983). Thirdly, as a multidimensional construct, place involves some sort of conative, behavioural commitment on the lifeworlds, routines and natural attitudes of place, or people-in-place, showing how individuals depend on the resources of a place (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001; Seamon, 2012; Stokols & Shumaker, 1981). These three dimensions of place have been conceptualized as sense of place (SOP) attitudes, which express the social psychology of place-specific attitudes in terms of 'beliefs, emotions, and behavioural commitments' (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2006, p. 317).

Convergent or Divergent Parallels

While juxtaposing 'place' and 'God' as important objects of attachment in day-to-day life, I want to further propose that relationships with these objects overlap with the tenets of interpersonal attachment (Ainsworth et al., 1978). For example, in interpersonal attachment, infants develop an

attachment to a primary caregiver whereas adults are drawn to geographical places in environmental psychology literature (Low & Altman, 1992) and to Divine entities in the psychology of religion literature (Cicirelli, 2004; Counted, 2016a, 2016b; Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016). This section will explore how adult attachment relationships mirror the criteria of interpersonal attachment: proximity-seeking, safe haven, secure base and separation anxiety.

Proximity. While infants develop proximity to a caregiver through clinging and crawling towards them in interpersonal attachment (Bowlby, 1969), proximity to place may be achieved through purchasing a home in a particular city, displaying photographs of an important place of vacation (Ryan & Ogilvie, 2001), travelling to a place on a regular basis (Kelly & Hosking, 2008), visualizing a place (Newell & Canessa, 2018), or even refusing to evacuate a place (Billig, 2006; Donovan, Suryanto, & Utami, 2012). Proximity to God is also achieved through religious behaviours that draw the individual closer to God, such as fasting, prayer, devotionals, meditation, reading sacred texts and religious participation (Counted, 2016b; Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016).

Felt Security. In addition to the above, objects of attachment such as place and God offer a sense of felt security and safety just as caregivers in interpersonal attachment (Counted, 2018, 2019; Counted & Zock, 2019; Scannell & Gifford, 2014). For instance, one's place of residence can be perceived as a safe haven and less-dangerous for its residents (e.g. Brown, Perkins, & Brown, 2003; Lewicka, 2010), in the same way trust in God can be a great secure base and a source of hope and comfort for religious believers (Krumrei, Pirutinsky, & Rosmarin, 2013). Most people would likely want to return to their homes after an exposure to danger in the workplace or schools because of their perceived function of their home as a safe haven while some might turn to God in prayer for protection after such exposure. These relationships help the attached individual to cope with the reality of life stressors and frightening events as they turn to their surrogates as safe havens. When such relationship has been established, it offers a secure base from which to model one's identity as the individual master their object of attachment.

Separation Anxiety. Loss of attachment in an interpersonal context can lead to separation distress and psychopathology in infants. This is also the

case in people–place and believer–God relationships where separation distress may occur following the loss of important people in a place or the loss of one's SOP through natural disaster, migration and displacement (Cox & Perry, 2011), thus resulting in feelings of grief, alienation and disorientation. This can also be seen in the fear of losing one's relationship with God or feeling abandoned by God in a religious attachment context (Counted, 2016a, 2016b), often leading to spiritual struggles and discontentment (Ano & Pargament, 2014). The positive effects developed with specific Divine entities and certain geographical places embody similar attributes seen in interpersonal attachment that assure a sense of safety, security and emotional meaning for the individuals involved (Bowlby, 1977; Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016; Morgan, 2010).

Intersections of Religious and Place Attachment: Three Conceptual Models

Attachment Pathways. To further explain the intersection between religion and place from an attachment theoretical perspective, the individual differences in terms of the correspondence and compensation models of the attachment-religion framework are discussed (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016; Kirkpatrick, 2005; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990). These models are based on the emotional regulation theory which is used to understand the interaction between attached individuals and their attachment surrogates based on their internal working models (representation of the self in relation to others). This framework shows how relationships are undertaken to effect changes in one's emotional states through seeking and maintaining proximity with an object of attachment. The correspondence model of attachment, for example, shows how individuals transfer their existing or previous attachment working model onto a new relationship with a surrogate (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016; Kirkpatrick, 2005). In other words, if the individual is insecure in their existing or previous relationship they are likely to experience similar insecurity in a new relationship (Counted, 2016a). However, with a history of secure attachment the individual is likely to model similar positive representations with a surrogate attachment. In terms of the compensation model, the individual seeks a new relationship because of the loss of attachment or negative experience in a previous or existing relationship (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016; Kirkpatrick, 2005). In other words, the individual seeks a new relationship with God, or to

place, to compensate for an unhealthy relationship with a human partner, for example (Counted 2016a, 2016b).

Motivational Systems Model. Another conceptual framework that could be helpful for understanding the relationship between religion and place is the motivational systems approach which has been proposed in a recent work as the circle of place spirituality (CoPS) model (Counted, 2018; Counted & Zock, 2019). This approach, drawing on the work of Lichtenberg, Lachman, Fosshage (2009), conceptualizes the interplay of religion and place by exploring the interaction between the attachment-affiliation and exploration-assertion motivational systems. As a premise, the CoPS model (see Fig. 3.1) demonstrates how the relationship between religious and place attachment is shaped in a circular movement pattern where the religious believer turns to and from two attachment objects. For example, maintaining proximity to God while at the same time shifting attention towards exploring place as another object of attachment, or the opposite: maintaining a relationship with place while seeking attachment to God. The argument here is that individuals are likely to form attachment and at the same time explore a relationship with another object of attachment (e.g. a place, a Divine entity, etc.) based on certain motivational factors
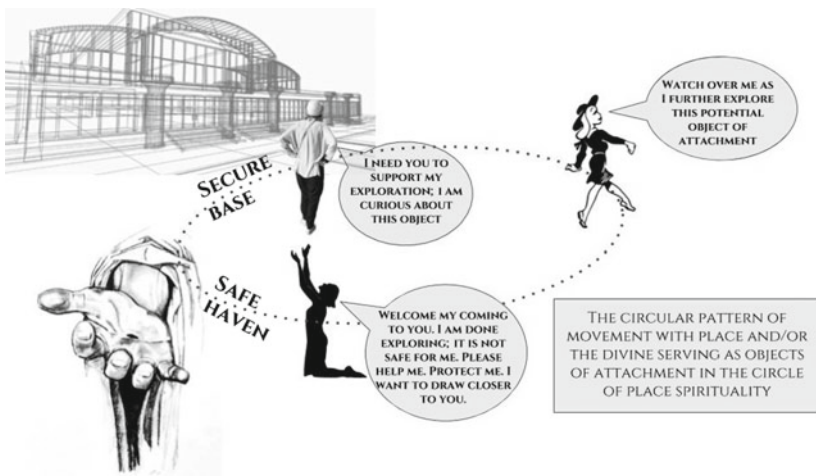

Fig. 3.1 The circle of place spirituality (© Victor Counted)

such as their personal feelings, tastes, intentions, drives, emotions, needs and opinions.

In the event that the CoPS exploration-assertion motivational system is activated, the individual explores a relationship with a place, either out of curiosity, or to better understand the place of their attention, even though they may already be in a secure relationship with God. However, while attachment breakthroughs begin with curiosity, the aim of the attachment-affiliation motivational system is to maintain proximity with the object of attachment in the event that the attachment system is activated due to a perceived threat to the environment. The CoPS model is well-documented in some recent works (e.g. Counted, 2018, 2019; Counted, Possamai, McAuliffe, & Meade, 2018; Counted & Zock, 2019) and have been criticized by Brulin and Granqvist (2018).

Self-Ecological Model. Another theoretical perspective is the ecopsychology theory used by Kamitsis and Francis (2013) in positioning spirituality as a correlate of nature connectedness and a mediator of the relationship between attachment to place and psychological well-being. Kamitsis and Francis argue that the individual ecological self is activated in response to experiencing the natural environment during the search for spiritual interconnectedness. This experience emboldens the individual's perception of the self from an individualistic perspective to a broad spectrum of images of the self that includes all life forms, spiritual transcendence, ecosystems and place itself (Bragg, 1996; Kamitsis & Francis, 2013). Place experiences may, therefore, affect the individual's sense of spiritual interconnectedness or attachment to the sacred. In other words, the individual is drawn to both a place and the sacred simultaneously as objects of attachment or relate to one object based on the relationship experience with the other. Trigwell, Francis, and Bagot (2014) summarize the link between religious and place connectedness as an ecopsychological process in which 'the well-being of humans and the well-being of nature are interwoven into a biocentric sense of self, whereby well-being is experienced through a spiritual interconnectedness with all things' (p. 243). Counted and Watts (2017) envision this ecological view of attachment in their treatment of place attachment in the Bible, examining the role of sacred places in religious life and arguing that attachment to place can be an embodied form of spirituality that transcends attachment to a specific place.

Religion and Place in Attachment Perspective

What makes the interaction between religion and place an attachment experience? To answer this question, the CoPS diagram (see Fig. 3.1) is used to illustrate how religious attachment experiences may be related to place attachment experiences, showing how attached individual may seek refuge and security in-between two objects of attachment. I argue that the intersection of religion and place, based on the three conceptual frameworks discussed in the previous section, provide a triad vision for understanding the link between religious and place attachment in terms of the criteria of attachment processes such as: (a) proximity to an object of attachment, (b) felt security (perceiving the object as a secure base and safe haven) and (c) turning to the object during moments of separation anxiety for answers (in the case of a religious figure) and clarity (through exploring a new place). These criteria are discussed in this section in relation to the three identified models above.

Seeking and Maintaining Proximity. First is the proximity factor in attachment experiences. Attached individuals are drawn to their objects of attachment and this lived experience is also feasible with geographical places and religious figures. In terms of the correspondence vs. compensation models of attachment, proximity-seeking behaviour is the functional attribute of attachment experiences where individuals are either drawn to an object because of a negative experience in another relationship or model previous attachment attributes in a new relationship (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016).

This might be different in the motivational systems approach to attachment and exploration. For example, proximity to an object may be experienced through motivational cues in the forms of intentions, emotions, needs, motives, drives, beliefs and so on (Counted, 2018). There is no specificity to motivation (Branscum & Senkowski, 2019); thus this is to say that the motivational drive that one feels towards an object when performing a specific behaviour (e.g. attachment-affiliation or exploration curiosity) may also be contingent on the individual's contextual needs at the time of such search. It may also be the case that objects of attachment do not have equal attachment advantage in one's life since one may feel more compelled to turn to God, compared to going for vacation for their emotional regulation. Therefore, in order to understand the motivational systems approach

to attachment experiences, it is recommended to consider one's motivation to form an attachment with any affective object.

The self-ecological perspective provides a broader incentive for proximity with objects of attachment and is considered to be part of the self process of finding itself in the world. Essentially, the argument here is that meaning-making implied by a sense of proximity to the sacred can impact significantly on psychological aspects of wellbeing through proximity to nature as an aspect of place. This self-ecological perspective is shared by Kamitsis and Francis (2013) who argue that the individual's inner experience and spiritual depth are attained through their sense of proximity to the sacred via engagement with and exposure to place. This gives meaning to existence as a source from which the positive effects of attachment experience with place are derived, thus allowing the attached individual to transcend beyond the present context.

A Sense of Felt Security. Second is the feeling of felt safety experienced with an object of attachment perceived as a safe haven when exposed to danger or as a secure base from which/whom the individual models their own identity and mastery of life conditions. Objects of attachment are perceived as refuges of safety when exposed to danger or threat when the compensation model is activated, thus serving as a safe haven for protection and security. The correspondence model of attachment on the other hand is the pathway for exploring how a relationship with an object of attachment can be perceived as a secure base from which attached individuals explore or master their broader environment and stretch their individual growth. Both the correspondence and compensation attachment pathways are trajectories for experiencing a sense of felt security with one's object of attachment.

The set goals of attachment affiliation in the motivational systems model is often determined by one's drives. This is where the CoPS model comes in, arguing for the role of motivation in achieving a sense of felt security through attachment experiences (Counted, 2018). In other words, the first step to experiencing felt security is identifying the motivation that is propelling the need for attachment with a particular object since it determines how the attached individual use their environment and what intersubjective contexts (e.g. personal feelings, intentions, conditions, tastes, opinions, beliefs, drives, etc.) inform their exploration curiosity and attachment

needs. Intersubjectivity has the potential to draw the individual's involvement with an object of attachment, thus experiencing a sense of felt security in the process of such experience. One's intersubjectivity in relation to social, cultural, political and religious contexts can be the primary motivation that triggers seeking and maintaining attachment to religious figures and geographical places, with the end goal of achieving a shared sense of security.

On the other hand, the self-ecological perspective shares the same view on the role of social connectedness with place, thus aiming at experiencing spiritual security through one's union with the sacred, with oneself and with all things through exposure to and engagement with nature. This perspective is well-documented, with research showing that people with greater sense of attachment to place also reported a stronger spiritual connection (Counted, 2019; Shiota, Keltner, & Mossman, 2007; Williams & Harvey, 2001). Hence, exposure to and engagement with nature, an aspect of place, can be conceptualized as a source and context for individuals seeking to experience a sense of spiritual connection with the sacred.

Responses to Separation Anxiety. Lastly is the separation void in relationship experiences which objects of attachment fill. Seeking and maintaining proximity to religious figures and geographical places can become a source of comfort and security for attached individuals and separation from such objects can often lead to distress, anxiety and grief. According to Ainsworth (1985), responses to separation anxiety from an object of attachment is one of the defining components of attachment, where individuals drawn to an object share concern over losing their attachment bond. Determining whether geographical places and religious figures met this attachment attribute is difficult. However, the potential of a true separation from God by most religious believers is an eschatological question—at which point the believer spends their afterlife either with God or separated from God based on their deeds on earth. In terms of place, separation from a geographical place is quite unlikely; place does not die, it is not mobile, change its address or file for separation. Separation from place is usually seen when dwellers evacuate a place because of a natural disaster or relocate to pursue an opportunity elsewhere.

Attached individuals may compensate for a previous relationship experience or transfer their model of attachment onto a new relationship in order to explore a new relationship with an object that will fill the void of

their separation experience. Divine entities and geographical places can be responses to separation anxiety experienced with human partners. However, this relationship is formed based on one's motivational drives and attachment needs. On the other hand, the self-ecological model helps us to understand how the attached individual experience union with the self and one's environment, which are likely to yield to spiritual connection and fulfilment. This sense of interconnectedness with the self and the sacred, through attachment to place/nature, enhances human flourishing (Trigwell et al., 2014) and meaningfulness (Cervinka, Roderer, & Hefler, 2012), and disruption of such connectedness can lead to disharmony with the self. Thus, making those who are in union with place to find a sense of purpose and meaning through such inseparable connections.

Conclusion

This chapter explored how the place context and attachment to geographical elements are significant factors when studying psychological functions of religion. Although religious figures and geographical places can both serve as alternate security systems, individuals seeking and maintaining attachment with these objects do so based on their attachment needs and history, motivational drives and intersubjective contexts, and exposure to or engagement with the natural environment. Three main conceptual frameworks have been discussed in relation to the role of religion and place as objects of attachment in everyday life.

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Embodied Spirituality Following Disaster: Exploring Intersections of Religious and Place Attachment in Resilience and Meaning-Making

Laura E. Captari, Joshua N. Hook, Jamie D. Aten, Edward B. Davis and Theresa Clement Tisdale

Religious and spiritual experience unfolds in the ever-changing milieu of culture, institution, social environment and physical place. In daily life, sacred spaces, structures, symbols, ceremonies, gatherings and practices 'function to synthesize a people's ethos—the tone, character, and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood, and their worldview, the picture they have of the way things in sheer actuality are' (Geertz, 1993,

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p. 89). But what happens when mass tragedy strikes? How might congregants be uniquely impacted when a shooting desecrates their synagogue, mosque, temple or church? Or when a hurricane obliterates their home, which is imbued with sacred significance for them? What role might local faith communities play in facilitating healing and resilience? This chapter explores the embodied experience of faith in the context of mass trauma and disaster, drawing on attachment, object relations, affective neuroscience and ecological systems theories. Specifically, we propose the multidimensional framework of embodied spirituality to capture the dynamic interplay of cognitive, affective and social processes in experiencing and restoring a sense of the sacred in the aftermath of mass tragedy and loss.

The Ripple Effect of Trauma on Religious Experience

Both natural (e.g. hurricanes, floods, tornados) and human-caused (e.g. terrorist attacks, mass shootings, oil spills) disasters are becoming increasingly prevalent and destructive (Centre of Research on the Epidemiology of Disaster [CRED], 2016; National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism [START], 2016). Such catastrophic events frequently result in a ripple effect of devastation, including (a) individual resource loss and physical displacement from home, (b) compromised community infrastructure, including communication, emergency and medical services and (c) destruction of sacred spaces, including places of worship and natural landscapes. Evidence suggests that the actual or perceived loss of personal, social and material resources is a 'principal ingredient in the stress process' (Hobfoll, 2001, p. 337). Destruction of tangible resources, such as bodily injury or loss of possessions, frequently depletes survivors' psychological and emotional resources, and the 'safety net' of kinship, community and spiritual supports are often more difficult to access. Recognizing the systemic impacts of disaster, O'Grady, Orton, White, and Snyder (2016) call for ongoing research to map the 'multilevel complexities of large-scale trauma' (p. 166) and identify key risk and protective factors for survivors' resilience and recovery, including the potential role of religion and spirituality.

Disasters can precipitate a downward spiral of secondary losses and psychological distress, as has been found among survivors of Hurricane Katrina (Zwiebach, Rhodes, & Roemer, 2010), the Virginia Tech shooting (Littleton, Axom, & Grills-Taquechel, 2009), and the Deepwater

Horizon oil spill (Grattan et al., 2011), to name a few. Moreover, according to the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, these loss spirals make it difficult to facilitate recovery because more resources are needed in order to regain one's previous level of functioning. In addition to large-scale catastrophic events, personal tragedies such as the death of a loved one (Aldrich & Kallivayalil, 2016), severe or chronic illness (Dirik & Karanci, 2010), abandonment by a partner (Slanbekova et al., 2017), and job layoff (De Cuyper, Mäkikangas, Kinnunen, Mauno, & Witte, 2012) may also lead to significant resource loss and psychological distress. Survivors experiencing systemic oppression, including racial/ethnic minorities and economically disadvantaged individuals, may be particularly vulnerable to negative outcomes due to resource barriers that predated the disaster.

In coping with tragedy, disaster survivors may draw on a variety of personal resources, including spirituality and faith (Aten et al., 2019). In the United States, an estimated 89% of individuals believe in 'God or a universal spirit', 75% describe religion as either 'somewhat' or 'very' important to them, 80% pray regularly, and 50% belong to a local house of worship (Pew Research, 2016). Religion and spirituality are multidimensional, and can potentially serve as either risk or protective factors in post-disaster adjustment. Variance in outcomes is largely accounted for by the unique ways survivors engage with their faith, including how they come to understand the role of their Higher Power in the events that occurred (Pargament, Smith, Koenig, & Perez, 1998). Following Hurricane Katrina, Pecchioni, Edwards, and Grey (2011) found that while survivors' religiosity was not associated with posttraumatic stress symptoms, it did influence disaster-related meaning-making. Although a majority of survivors framed Katrina as a random natural event or blamed government mismanagement, a significant number of participants framed the disaster as part of God's plan, moral karma, or payback for wrongdoing.

Evidence suggests that survivors frequently turn not only to spirituality and faith, but also specific places of worship to which they are attached (Aten et al., 2015, 2019). Mazumdar and Mazumdar (1993, 2004) describe believers' emotional identification with sacred structures (e.g. temples, cathedrals, shrines), places in nature (e.g. rivers, mountain peaks, forests) and cities (e.g. Jerusalem, Mecca, Rome) as an important aspect of spiritual life. Many survivors display increased engagement with religious practices (e.g. prayer, altruistic acts) and religious participation (e.g. church attendance and involvement) following disaster. It stands to reason that one of the reasons people seek out places of worship and

other sacred sites (e.g. locations of miracles and visions) may be that they physically and symbolically represent divine presence for survivors who are searching for meaning and hope in the aftermath of mass trauma. Moreover, a common need among disaster survivors is the restoration of safety and security. When tragedies strike, survivors are left feeling vulnerable, and sacred places may help cultivate a much-needed sense of refuge.

An extensive body of research has documented a positive relation between religion, spirituality and physical and mental health (Koenig, King, & Carson, 2012). While destruction of property and death of loved ones can 'lead to a breakdown in coherence and… a sense of a chaotic and meaningless universe' (Sutton, 2017, p. 256), religion and spirituality have been found to facilitate resilience and protect against the psychological distress associated with resource loss (Aten, O'Grady, Milstein, Boan, & Schruba, 2014). One explanation for this has been through the provision of a commonly held framework (Park, 2016) that helps individuals and communities 'make sense of their lives and experiences, sustain a sense of higher purpose and direction, and maintain a sense of sacred significance and value' (Davis et al., 2018a, p. 1).

Particularly among predominantly religious communities, spiritual kinship networks both within specific congregations and across faith traditions can provide a sense of community cohesion and facilitate meaning-making on a systemic level. Through sermons, homilies and public discourse, religious leaders shape narratives of theodicy, attempting to reconcile 'a merciful, just, and omnipotent God with the existence of evil and unjust human suffering' (Merli, 2010, p. 4). Among flood survivors, Davis et al. (2018a) found that benevolent God representations and theodicies were a key component in helping congregants make positive meaning from their disaster experiences. Hence, it is possible that religious leaders and communities can become an embodied resource for promoting adaptive religious/spiritual and psychological growth following disaster, especially when they help foster benevolent God representations, theodicies and appraisals of the disaster. Beyond these psychological functions, religious communities and faith-based organizations are integrally involved in disaster relief through swift mobilization of resources, volunteers and funds (Schruba, Aten, Davis, & Shannonhouse, 2018).

However, religion and spirituality can also be a source of struggle and inner turmoil. For example, though spiritual support has been found helpful for many disaster survivors, it is not helpful for everyone. Following extensive floods, survivors that perceived the spiritual support received as

negative (e.g. felt judged by their spiritual community) reported greater spiritual struggle (Davis et al., 2016). In a recent review of the literature on psychology of religion/spirituality and disasters, it was also found that religious minorities may struggle more after a disaster because they see members of the religious majority in their community providing greater assistance to other majority believers (Aten et al., 2019). This may result in a heightened sense of difference, including rifts between perceived in-group and out-group community members.

Religious and spiritual struggles are also particularly salient if survivors view the disaster as an 'act of God' and the divine as punishing, uncaring or absent. Among survivors of Hurricane Katrina, greater loss of physical resources was associated with more negative views of God (Aten, Bennett, Hill, Davis, & Hook, 2012) and following a mass shooting, resource loss was related to spiritual struggle (San Roman et al., 2019). Thus, survivors who experience substantial and widespread losses may be at greatest risk of questioning previously held belief systems about divine protection and care. However, some evidence suggests that experiencing religious support and being able to make spiritual meaning of a tragedy can buffer the negative effects of resource loss by protecting against posttraumatic stress and depression (Haynes et al., 2017; San Roman et al., 2019). Amidst the post-disaster chaos that can lead to spiritual questions and doubt, the tangible presence, emotional support and practical aid of local faith communities can promote fortitude and resilience (Aten, Topping, Denney, & Bayne, 2010).

Faith communities and religious leaders' post-disaster responses can also exacerbate community members' distress and feelings of blame, shame and abandonment. For example, in eighteenth-century England, Reverend Stukeley of Saint George's Church declared from the pulpit that earthquakes are 'singled out, above all natural phenomena, by their majesty and dreadful horror to mark an immediate operation of God's hand exercised in his divine anger' (Kendrick, 1955, p. 18). In 2001, following the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centers in New York City, some prominent religious leaders claimed the event was evidence of God's wrath on sexual minorities. After Hurricane Katrina, it was not uncommon to hear religious leaders voice narratives such as, 'They don't call New Orleans "Sin City" for no reason' or 'This sort of thing never happened to Mississippi until they built those sinful casinos along the coast'. Similarly, when the Haiti earthquake struck, some religious leaders suggested the tragedy was punishment for Haitians' participation in Voodoo. Pecchioni et al. (2011)

found that religious survivors trying to make sense of mass tragedy frequently recalled the biblical stories of Noah and the great flood, Sodom and Gomorrah and the Apocalypse and End Times. While narratives of divine blame or retribution for sin provide a cognitive explanation for the disaster, they have been associated with greater depression, anxiety and posttraumatic symptoms following earthquakes (Feder et al., 2013) and mass shootings (Captari et al., 2017). Therefore, making meaning of a tragedy within one's spiritual worldview can provide either a sense of comfort and peace or fear and self-blame.

These findings raise important questions for ongoing investigation. Research has documented cognitive aspects of religion in post-disaster settings, including the differential outcomes associated with positive (e.g. 'God is with me') and negative (e.g. 'God is punishing me') divine theodicies. However, less attention has been given to visceral, aesthetic and relational aspects that shape survivors' intersubjective spiritual realities. What are the mechanisms and processes by which religious attributions and spiritual meaning come about, and how might this differ by culture? Little is known about the relative or interactional influence on meaning-making of theological beliefs (e.g. divine attributions), individual spiritual experience (e.g. felt closeness to God), spiritual support within one's religious community (e.g. emotional care and practical help), and participation with that community in regular gatherings (e.g. worship services, prayer meetings) as well as specific rituals of lament (e.g. vigils, sitting *shiva*). To fully understand and reflect the complexity of survivors' engagement with faith, each of these aspects must be considered.

ATTACHMENT TO GOD AND AFFECTIVE NEUROSCIENCE

Attending to the multidimensional aspects of religious experience, Rizzuto (1979) proposed that monotheistic believers' subjective representations of God are distinct from their theological beliefs about God. Based on in-depth longitudinal qualitative research, Rizzuto described 'internal psychical processes that contribute to the formation and maintenance of a relationship with an internally conceived and socially sanctioned divine being' (McDargh, 2017, p. 2). From this perspective, religion and spirituality can be understood as a dynamic, affect-laden experience that evolves across the lifespan and is shaped by both formal religious institutions and broader culture (Davis, Granqvist, & Sharp, 2018). Thus, mapping believers' perceived relationship with God is vital to understanding the diverse

ways survivors experience and interact with the sacred following disaster (Davis et al., 2018a, 2018b).

Bowlby (1982) identified five psychological processes characterizing attachment bonds. In monotheistic religious traditions, connection with the divine has been conceptualized through this lens (Davis et al., 2018), serving as (a) a safe haven in times of anxiety, threat and emotional distress. Believers are motivated to (b) seek proximity to God as a source of safety and comfort, and frequently experience (c) separation distress, protest and despair when God seems distant. God is understood as (d) a stronger, wiser figure and the divine relationship serves as (e) a secure base, facilitating believers' exploration, growth and development. Within Christianity, for example, the divine is regarded as a spiritual shelter in the midst of difficulty (e.g., 'God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear...', Psalm 46:1); believers are encouraged to seek proximity ('The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous run to it and are safe', Proverbs 18:10); and God's felt absence is experienced as painful ('How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?', Psalm 13:1). Furthermore, God is perceived as stronger and wiser ('As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts', Isaiah 55:9), and serves as a secure base from which to take on new challenges confidently ('I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me', Philippians 4:13).

Stroebe, Schut, and Stroebe (2005) proposed that survivors' internal working models (IWMs) of attachment relationships shape 'the course, intensity, and way of grieving' and adaptation (p. 58). Believers with a secure IWM of the divine carry the relational expectation of God as loving, emotionally present and responsive to their anguish. Amidst tragedy or disaster, though they may be angry or confused, such individuals are motivated to seek out experiential closeness to God as a means of comfort and soothing (Davis et al., 2018a, 2018b). Massengale et al. (2017) found that secure attachment to God following Hurricane Katrina weakened the link between loss of tangible resources (e.g. food, water) and psychological distress. In a longitudinal study of flood survivors, Davis et al. (2018a) similarly reported that divine attachment security facilitated emotional processing and spiritual meaning-making, including appraising the disaster in light of God's providence and benevolence.

Secure attachment has distinct neurobiological correlates, involving shifts in perception that buffer the effects of stress and down-regulate autonomic reactivity (Coan, 2016; Seybold, 2016). Scientists in the field of neurotheology have begun to investigate cognitive, emotional, auditory and visual processing centres in the brain involved in the subjective experience of the sacred. For example, the ventromedial prefrontal cortex (vmPFC) acts as 'a gating system that sets a threshold for what is and is not considered a threat of harm' (Flannelly, 2017, p. 136). Perceived closeness to God may operate at a brain level by increasing the vmPFC's threshold, thus down-regulating amygdala activity and facilitating a sense of inner peace and calm even in the midst of adversity (Hodge, Captari, Mosher, & Hook, 2018). Evidence suggests that spiritual contemplation may alter brain activity such that connection with the sacred is experienced as a 'solid, tangible reality' (Newberg, 2018, para. 3).

In contrast, individuals with an insecure IWM of divine attachment, characterized by relational avoidance and/or anxiety, may be at greater risk of negative psychological impacts following tragedy (Captari & Riggs, in press). Believers with an avoidant attachment style may be less visibly upset following a disaster, take active steps to avoid emotional reminders and memories, and exhibit extreme self-reliance and an outward show of strength (Stroebe et al., 2005). At first glance, such a response may appear resilient; however, persistent minimization of sadness, anger and guilt hampers survivors' motivation to seek out comfort and support from God and/or spiritual community and thus may shut down the painful—albeit necessary process—of grieving and rebuilding (Bowlby, 1982).

On the opposite extreme, believers with an anxious attachment strategy may incessantly seek out spiritual support and reassurance, yet ongoing expectations of rejection, abandonment and harm likely hamper their ability to experience God as a safe haven. In an empirical study following Hurricane Katrina, avoidant attachment to God was found to exacerbate the negative psychological impacts of physical resource loss, while anxious attachment predicted psychological distress independent of loss of resources (Massengale et al., 2017). While ongoing research is needed to document the post-disaster spiritual experiences of individuals with fearful/disorganized divine attachment (e.g. heightened anxiety and avoidance), because these individuals lack an organized strategy for managing emotion and relating, they may be at greatest risk for persistent psychological distress.

Attachment to Sacred Places and Spiritual Community

Although proximity-seeking is a hallmark of attachment relationships, the divine is not physically available in the same sense as a parent or romantic partner. However, monotheistic religions understand God as omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent, and within the Christian theology of the trinity, Jesus Christ is described as God in human flesh (John 1:14). Winnicott's (1971) concepts of transitional objects and spaces can be applied to understand religious phenomena as existing in the 'intermediate area of experiencing, to which inner reality and external life both contribute… the intermediate area between the subjective and what is objectively perceived' (pp. 2–3). In a caregiver's physical absence, a young child may imbue a toy, blanket or picture with relational meaning. This object is sensory, constant and unchanging, supporting the child's ability to hold their parent in mind and elicit feelings of calm, comfort and safety without being physically held. We propose that believers' felt experience of the sacred is integrated and inseparable from specific places and objects that serve similar symbolic psychological functions.

Within attachment theory, Bowlby (1982) understood human environments as life-sustaining systems, while Relph (1976) noted that 'to be human is to live in a world that is filled with significant places' (p. 1). A growing literature has documented the affective bonds people form with specific physical environments, geographic spaces and objects that cultivate both a sense of groundedness and connection as well as identity and meaning, frequently referred to as place attachment (Counted, 2016, 2018; Manzo & Devine-Wright, 2013). Throughout childhood, home and school ideally serve as a safe haven, providing emotional support and protection from threat, while community spaces (e.g. back yards, parks, sports fields) act as a secure base scaffolding key developmental processes, including problem-solving, emotion regulation and mastery. In adulthood, an individual's home, place of worship, and other frequented locations can facilitate emotional safety, play and restoration. Spiritual place attachment may include emotional identification with religious structures and architecture, natural and human-made landscapes and sacred sites and regions (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 1993, 2004).

What happens when these places are damaged or destroyed? For example, the 2019 fire at Notre Dame Cathedral evoked visceral reactions of shock, grief and sadness across the world. People of faith recalled previous

visits to this religious site and mourned the loss of something sacred. As one parishioner reflected, 'The overwhelming outpouring of grief over the burning of Notre Dame testifies that buildings are not "just" buildings, but hold in themselves our most sacred longings, for God, for beauty, for spaces of quiet and hope…' (K. Beaty, personal communication, April 16, 2019). A holistic understanding of disaster survivors' spiritual experience must consider the relational interplay between person and place (Scannell & Gifford, 2010). Even in the absence of a loved one's death, grief reactions are common due to felt loss of place and destruction of what was deemed sacred (Scannell, Cox, Fletcher, & Heykoop, 2016). Destruction of personal possessions and displacement from home and community can be incredibly disorienting, and demolition and reconstruction efforts, while restoring daily functioning, often compromise and reinvent familiar landscapes, architecture and spatial routines. Severed person–place bonds as a result of disasters have been repeatedly associated with psychological distress (Cox & Perry, 2011; Silver & Grek-Martin, 2015).

Interpersonal neurobiologists describe embodied self-awareness as co-constructed at the intersection of person and place, including 'the ability to pay attention to ourselves, to feel our sensations, emotions, and movements on-line, in the present moment, without the mediating influence of judgmental thoughts', as well as 'sensing our location relative to objects and other people' (Fogel, 2013, p. 311). Applying affective neuroscience to the field of religion, Davis et al. (2018) theorize about aspects of embodiment inherent within spiritual practices and experiences. Building on this, we propose the psychological construct of *embodied spirituality* (ES) to capture the intersection of believers' relationship to the sacred rooted within the physical world and a religious community. Embodied spirituality includes aspects of both self-awareness and God-awareness, and can be concisely understood as believers' psychophysiological experience of the sacred in the present moment. In contrast with cognitive models of religion, embodied spirituality is concerned with how people experience the sacred at a physical level (e.g. sensation, movement, space) and psychological level (e.g. emotional, subjective, relational). This construct holds notable potential for holistically understanding survivors' reactions to the human suffering and widespread physical damage inherent in disasters and mass traumas.

What makes something sacred? Pargament and Mahoney (2002) describe how people of faith often imbue various roles and routines, physical possessions and spatial surroundings with particular spiritual meaning and value. Through this process, 'Aspects of life can be linked directly to

God (theistic sanctification) or imbued with divine qualities (nontheistic sanctification), including timelessness, ultimate value, and transcendence' (Pargament, Magyar, Benore, & Mahoney, 2005, p. 60). Across the history of faith, specific places, spaces and objects have become spiritually significant, and thus have particular affective resonance (Counted & Watts, 2017; Jones, 2018). Symbol and metaphor are interwoven with religious experience, evolving 'from the amalgamation of what is real, material, and objective as it is experienced, penetrated, and creatively reshaped by the subjective belief and patterns of meaning attributed to the object by the believer' (Meissner, 1984, p. 181). Just as a child's attachment to their primary caregiver is embedded within a particular home, specific belongings and daily rituals of connection, so the embodied experience of attachment to God is inseparable from physical architecture (e.g. churches, synagogues, mosques, temples), natural landscapes (e.g. rivers, mountain peaks, forests), human-made environments (e.g. spiritual labyrinths, prayer walls), practices (e.g. lament, Eucharist, pilgrimage) and a larger social milieu (e.g. felt sense of connection with believers around the world and across history). These embodied aspects of spirituality engage the senses and join the worshipper with a larger group identity, providing a felt sense of belonging, coherence and transcendence (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 1993, 2004). Experiencing the sacred is interwoven with place, time and space, yet these tangible realities are often thrown into chaos by disaster events.

Perceived closeness to the divine is further aided through physical elements that facilitate believers' subjective experience of God's presence, activating internal representations that modulate stress and elicit inner peace (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016). Depending on religious tradition, a variety of physical objects (e.g. the Star of David, icons, sacred scriptures), bodily movements (e.g. bowing, raising one's hands, making the sign of the cross), seasons of the year or feasts (e.g. Passover, Ramadan, Lent) and sensory experiences (e.g. burning incense, having ashes placed on one's forehead, speaking the liturgy) are used to engage believers' minds, bodies and emotions. Religious rituals frequently integrate image, sound, smell, touch and even taste in order to orient the worshipper to both the present moment and a spiritual reality beyond it: 'The cross is made from wood and the Torah from ink, but in a religious context they become vehicles for meanings that go beyond botany and calligraphy' (Jones, 1991, p. 40). Thus, paradoxically, it is often by attuning one's senses to a specific place, space and moment in time that believers experience transcendent connection with God. Winnicott (1953) conceptualized transitional space and

phenomena as the realm of art and religion that was ripe with creative potential and transformational experience.

How might loss of spiritual transitional objects and sacred spaces impact people of faith? While rarely considered in the literature, traumatic experiences frequently include sacred losses or violations. Pargament et al. (2005) note that survivors 'may suffer more severe consequences when sanctified aspects of their lives are lost (i.e., sacred loss) or violated (i.e., desecration)' (p. 60). Thus, when houses of worship suffer tangible damage or beloved ritual objects are ruined, believers may experience God as distant and struggle to achieve symbolic proximity to the divine. Aten and Boan (2016) explored congregational struggles within a large protestant Christian denomination following Hurricane Katrina. Through qualitative interviews, they found that disputes arose within several congregations about whether or not to rebuild in the same location (where the buildings had been badly damaged or destroyed) or relocate further inland with the hope of reducing future risk. Underpinning these arguments, which in some cases led to church splits, was how connected many parishioners felt to the physical place and location where their congregation had originally been established. Many congregants were concerned that if their church relocated, something sacred would be lost or diminished.

Research has established the role of religion in promoting resilience following disaster through facilitating meaning-making (Davis et al., 2018a, 2018b; Park, 2016). We propose that sacred objects and spaces play important roles in restoring a sense of coherence, purpose and connection. After a disaster, survivors might experience certain damaged places (e.g. homes, schools, houses of worship) as being desecrated. Conversely, they could also experience certain places as being sanctified (literal or subjective 'sanctuaries'). This could occur in the form of specific physical buildings (e.g. churches, synagogues, mosques, temples) or through psychologically or spiritually meaningful places (e.g. an aesthetically beautiful natural space in their community). An important aspect of community recovery includes place making—restoring a sense of beauty, order, comfort and familiarity to the physical environment and landscape. From this perspective, physical aspects of restoration and rebuilding the community may be considered decidedly spiritual endeavours.

Furthermore, embodied practices such as prayer, meditation, worship, communion, fasting, confession and anointing of the sick may create a transitional space or expansion of consciousness by which theological truths are viscerally known and experienced. In the Christian tradition, these acts are

described as *sacraments*, through which grace is received and the divine is encountered with certainty and mystery in the midst of daily life. Moreover, much of the nuance and complexity of individual religious experience unfolds in gatherings with fellow believers. For many people of faith, their church, synagogue, mosque or temple functions as a spiritual home, and parishioners have a closeness and commitment to each other described as spiritual family. Attachment to a faith community involves not only identification with a particular physical building, but a sense of deep connection to 'a living and growing social organism' (McDargh, 2017, p. 9), including relationships within the congregation as well as symbolic joining with believers globally. This spiritual community can play a primary role in facilitating perceived closeness to God and associated feelings of comfort and peace amidst suffering.

Disaster Spiritual and Emotional Care

A growing literature emphasizes the importance of incorporating religion and spirituality in order to holistically address the needs of disaster survivors (Aten & Boan, 2016; Aten et al., 2014, 2015, 2019; Roberts & Ashley, 2008). Both governmental and nongovernmental organizations have begun to integrate clergy and chaplains in disaster response, such as the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster Emotional and Spiritual Care Committee (Schruba et al., 2018). Furthermore, collaborations between local faith communities have a vital role in promoting disaster preparedness and resilience through planning for potential disaster, drawing on social, political and financial capital to mobilize immediate relief efforts, and supporting the community in longer-term processes of recovery after government-deployed aid workers are gone (Ager, Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, & Ager, 2015). Extending evidence for religious meaning-making as inherent in post-disaster adjustment, the framework of embodied spirituality explores the tangible realities of *how*, *when*, *where* and *under what circumstances* believers may find spiritual meaning, jointly considering affective, behavioral and relational mediators of this process.

When considering religious and spiritual experience following disaster, it is critical to recognize survivors' states of mind and body. Displacement from home, disrupted daily routines, uncertainty about loved ones' whereabouts, and exposure to danger activate the sympathetic nervous system,

flooding the body with epinephrine, norepinephrine and cortisol in order to support self-protection and survival (Van der Kolk, 2004). This acute stress response can result in hyperarousal to one's surroundings and/or feelings of numbness and shock. In the initial days and weeks following a tragedy, survivors frequently find it difficult to concentrate or rest, and may be preoccupied with intrusive and distressing thoughts (North & Pfeffer-baum, 2013). In a study of Hurricane Katrina survivors, Stephens, Fryberg, Markus, and Hamedani (2013) found 'the degree to which people experience unpredictable, disruptive, and uncontrollable disaster-related events (e.g. watching people die) predicted religious meaning-making' (p. 612). Existential questions and spiritual doubts are common among survivors with a religious identity, yet cognitively addressing discrepancies between theological belief and lived experience may be counterproductive or even psychologically harmful when survivors are experiencing significant emotional distress (Entwistle, Moroney, & Aten, 2018). Well-meaning religious reassurances, such as telling survivors that 'God works all things together for good' (Romans 8:28), fail to acknowledge the validity of survivors' suffering and may exacerbate hypervigilance, numbness and shock reactions. Understanding the physiological impacts of disaster is vital in order to support survivors' effective engagement with faith.

Spiritual meaning-making is an inherently relational process rooted in particular places. Parishioners impacted by tragedy frequently turn to embodied communal practices that engage the body and the senses, providing containing, grounding and affect regulating functions. Catastrophic events often shift and expand the milieu of a local congregation, bringing parishioners 'out of the church building and into the street', in the words of one survivor. In some cases, floods, fires or extreme weather may destroy or significantly damage a church, mosque, synagogue or temple. When a physical space deemed sacred is invaded by violence, as in a mass shooting, survivors may face spiritual confusion and distress as their spiritual gathering place that was presumably safe becomes the context for tragedy and death. Thus, disasters may disrupt parishioners' ability to gather together, induce fear, or trigger avoidance of meeting.

Following a mass tragedy, vigils, prayer services and religious gatherings may function as a *spiritual safe haven* in which survivors can find solidarity, comfort and hope through joining together in a familiar physical space, engaging with cultural practices of lament, and expressing care and support for each other. Ager et al. (2015) point out that 'shared allegiance to institutions, beliefs, or history are often central to local processes of identity

and connection that comprise the social fabric of communities disrupted by disaster or conflict' (p. 203). Religious and spiritual communities also frequently function as a *spiritual secure base* from which survivors mobilize efforts for practical relief, such as delivering food and water, cleaning up debris, repairing damaged homes and ultimately beginning to rebuild the community. Recovery from disaster is a process that unfolds over time, including acts of heroism, a honeymoon period of community cohesion, and inevitable disillusionments in the process of coming to terms with the loss (Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA], 2012). Drawing on an attachment perspective, Schruba et al. (2018) describe religious leaders' and fellow parishioners' practical presence within a disaster zone as a primary resource that facilitates restored coherence, meaning, and connection with God.

A Holistic Framework for Spiritual Resilience

Resilience following tragedy is a multifaceted and dynamic process involving individual, family and community aspects (Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000; Bonanno, Brewin, Kaniasty, & La Greca, 2010). The aftermath of disaster includes not only physical devastation, but also chaos, fear, disillusionment, helplessness and isolation. Embodied spirituality promotes resilience by holistically attending to survivors' religious concerns and conflicts in the context of their physical, psychological and social needs. When believers engage with familiar spiritual practices, join together with fellow parishioners, and use objects of personal religious significance as a source of grounding and comfort, acute stress reactions can be countered with a restored sense of safety, control and predictability. Evidence suggests that the vast majority of survivors who are people of faith display some level of spiritual resilience. According to Davis et al. (2018a), 'Spiritual resilience may be the most typical religious/spiritual response to disasters, even as psychological resilience is the most typical psychological response to disasters' (p. 10).

While specific spiritual practices vary greatly based on religious tradition and cultural context, connection with the sacred through experiential means enables survivors to persevere in the midst of difficulty and develop a transcendent perspective about their suffering and loss through theodiciefs of God's goodness, providence, love and ultimate control (McElroy-Heltzel et al., 2018; Newton & McIntosh, 2009). Thus, amidst destruction of physical resources, believers can buffer potential distress by drawing on

spiritual resources within their faith. Below, we outline key processes inherent within embodied spirituality that promote resilience, capacity building and community reconstruction and resanctification. Although considered separately here, these areas are inextricably linked and bidirectionally related.

Social Capital and Relational Support

Large-scale disasters frequently disrupt communication and available relational support from family members, neighbours, coworkers and friends. This may be due to loss of proximity (e.g. forced evacuations), compromised technology (e.g. loss of power, cell service), community biases (e.g. privileging aid to some groups over others) and/or intrinsic barriers (e.g. survivor guilt, mistrust). Longitudinal studies of survivors have revealed that social isolation predicts psychological distress following earthquakes (Sone et al., 2016), nuclear disasters (Oe et al., 2016) and terrorist attacks (Welch et al., 2016), to name a few. Children may be particularly vulnerable to negative outcomes when disaster events compromise their social development (Pfefferbaum, Jacobs, Houston, & Griffin, 2015).

Local congregations hold significant potential to mitigate post-disaster social isolation because they are embedded within impacted communities and thus can serve as 'social bridges [which] may in turn engender other sources of cohesion, such as trust, and further establishment of support networks and norms' (Vinson, 2004, p. 33). Shared values and identity, regular participation in joint activities, and engagement in volunteerism—all common traits of religious communities—have been identified as key antecedents of social cohesion (Rolfe, 2006; Vinson, 2004). Social capital and instrumental support are vital in the immediate days and weeks following a tragedy to gain access to food, shelter and practical assistance (Aldrich & Meyer, 2015), and churches can be influential in coordinating relief efforts and bolstering morale. Felt solidarity with fellow survivors can lead to the development of a new social identity and distinct bond because of common lived experiences (Drury, Brown, González, & Miranda, 2016).

Following an initial honeymoon phase of cohesion, communities often begin to experience strife, disillusionment, conflicts and burnout (FEMA, 2012), as pre-existent social 'fault lines' are exacerbated by stress. For example, differences in beliefs, values and lifestyles could lead to preferential treatment of some groups and marginalization of others. Furthermore, anniversary reactions and secondary tragedies may contribute to feelings

of exclusion and loneliness. During this phase, religious leaders can be instrumental in helping to increase collaboration through promoting unity across differences, identifying superordinate goals, drawing on religious narratives that promote purpose and meaning amidst suffering, and countering hopelessness by facilitating opportunities to mourn, memorialize and remember the tragedy and those impacted by it. Thus, community reintegration facilitated by local congregations may offset the social splintering effects of disaster and precipitate an upward spiral of relational and emotional resource gain.

In a longitudinal study of resilience across four communities impacted by disaster, Townsend et al. (2015) found evidence for this social cohesion-resilience feedback loop, but noted distinct variations in the strength of this association, which could be due to differences in culture, attachment style, or available resources. A secure attachment to God and/or faith community that predates the disaster might be expected to enhance the buffering effect of spiritual social support, while insecure attachment could induce relational stress or make it difficult to access supports. Ongoing empirical investigation is needed regarding the interplay of believers' perceived relationship with God in the context of their experiences within a local place of worship. Practical help and interpersonal presence provided by religious communities may facilitate and reinforce connection with the sacred and the development of benevolent theodicies, as God's care, love and protection are tangibly embodied in human relationships (Schruba et al., 2018).

Emotional Regulation and Processing

Catastrophic events, particularly those involving life threat, can elicit strong emotional reactions (e.g. terror, anger, guilt, anguish) that are difficult to tolerate and regulate (Norris, Friedman, & Watson, 2002). Individual and collective trauma memories can result in preoccupation with and rumination about specific elements of the disaster, such as witnessing human suffering or death and the associated horrific sights, sounds and smells. In this state of mind, survivors may feel out of control and desperate for sources of relief, resulting in heightened risk for maladaptive coping, including substance abuse, behavioural disengagement, self-harm and other emotional avoidance strategies (Crane & Clements, 2016). Trauma survivors frequently report feeling disoriented, numb and disconnected from themselves and others (Herman, 2015). An extension of this physiological state

may be experiencing disconnection from God. Amidst tragedy, embodied spiritual practices can help ground survivors in the present moment and elicit feelings of peace and calm by facilitating felt proximity to God. Mindfully engaging the senses could include meditating on a sacred image, lighting a candle, burning incense, listening to religious music, practicing yoga, being in nature or joining in prayer with other congregants. Regulating affective distress through sensory means can take many forms, based on culture and faith tradition.

Local faith communities can serve as spiritual holding environments that provide solace and emotional shelter from the horrors of disaster. Torr (2018) argues for the importance of the spiritual practice of lament in helping believers counteract the human tendency to avoid, suppress or deny pain. Lament provides an intentional means through which anguish, rage and despair can be openly and honestly expressed, honoured and worked through in community. Applying Winnicottian theory within the Christian tradition, Torr elaborates:

> [I]n the seeming absence of a particular kind of presence of God and resolution of the suffering for the sufferer, it is the job of the church to maintain healthy holding and handling… The same can be said when the cry in question is one of anger. To shut down the anger is to prevent a healthy, justified, and honest cry that gives expression to and acknowledges pain as well as hope… [T]he one who is experiencing a seeming absence of God can have hope maintained, and the fuel and anchorage of lament provided, by the community who paradoxically holds together both the presence and memory of who God is and what God has done. (pp. 62–63)

Regular religious gatherings facilitate emotional processing by providing boundaried communal contexts (e.g. lasting a specific amount of time) that titrate exposure to trauma memories, while visual and sensory components keep survivors grounded in the present moment. Religious rituals and orders of worship (e.g. wearing certain clothing, reciting familiar liturgy, assuming various postures), although varying significantly across faith traditions, function to contain survivors' overwhelming affective states by providing structure and predictability, a comforting contrast to the widespread chaos inherent within disaster.

Both formal religious services and informal gatherings with fellow believers can serve as sacred transitional spaces within which the emotional horror of tragedy can be empathically witnessed and borne together rather

than minimized or hidden. In this creative and dynamic space, transformation of trauma may occur. The biblical narrative of Job exemplifies the power of entering into others' mourning: '[Job's friends] sat on the ground with him for seven days and nights. No one said a word to Job, for they saw that his suffering was too great for words' (Job 2:13). As one example, consider the community's response after the 2019 New Zealand terrorist attack on two mosques that took the lives of 50 worshipers. A week after the attack, numerous members of the community gathered around believers who came to pray at the mosques where the attacks took place and formed a physical barrier around them in order to show support and offer protection. In this instance, community members *and* the specific physical space of the mosque jointly embodied the sacred's attachment-related qualities, serving as a spiritual safe haven and secure base as well as a context in which survivors could individually and communally seek proximity to a stronger and wiser attachment figure (e.g. God). Specific places/spaces are often experienced psychologically as having a unique spiritual power to connect survivors with the sacred and with broader humanity (e.g. their affected community members). In the wake of disaster, embodied spirituality helps survivors co-regulate overwhelming emotion, metabolize grief reactions, and transform lived experiences of chaos, suffering and loss into narratives of hope and restoration (Moulton, 2015).

Cognitive Processing and Integration

Disasters challenge the continuity of core schemas about oneself, others, the divine, and the world, frequently precipitating assimilation and accommodation processes. Davis et al. (2018) propose that theistic spirituality includes two distinct aspects of lived experience: *head knowledge* and *heart knowledge*. Head knowledge consists of doctrinal representations about God that 'guide and integrate how a believer thinks and talks about God at an abstract, theological, conceptual, declarative, and often explicit level' (p. 3). In contrast, heart knowledge includes 'the affective and behavioral representations that underlie believers' embodied, emotional experience in perceived relationship with God', frequently referred to in the attachment literature as IWMs of the divine (Davis et al., 2018, p. 4); these affect-laden representations often operate outside of conscious awareness. To the extent that believers experience dissonance between previously held theological beliefs about God's goodness, love, mercy and protection in the face of the jarring reality of human suffering, loss and death, they are faced

with a crisis of meaning (Park, 2016). Felt incongruence between doctrinal and experiential representations of God may underlie believers' spiritual struggle, angst and questions (Ano & Pargament, 2013).

Among earthquake and hurricane survivors, Stephens et al. (2013) found that religion and spirituality are frequently employed to cope with 'stressful, uncertain, unpredictable, and uncontrollable experiences', particularly situations of extreme hardship, and that 'religion offers more personally meaningful answers to existential questions than other potential frameworks' (p. 616). However, there is significant variance in how believers approach and manage conflicts between doctrinal and experiential schemas both across and within religious traditions (Abu-Raiya, 2013; Cohen, Gorvine, & Gorvine, 2013). Some congregants may reduce dissonance primarily by altering or expanding theodicies of suffering. This can include distress-perpetuating negative appraisals, such as blaming themselves or society at large (e.g. viewing the disaster as punishment for sin) or accusing God (e.g. viewing the divine as wrathful, cruel and/or untrustworthy). Alternatively, believers may reaffirm a divine purpose and plan (e.g. seeing God at work amidst the disaster), making positive attributions of the divine as using the tragedy to bring unity, sanctification and/or spiritual growth. In a longitudinal qualitative study of flood survivors, Davis et al. (2018a) identified resilience-promoting religious appraisals about *cause* ('God did not cause the disaster but did allow it to happen'), *purpose* ('God has used the disaster to accomplish higher benevolent purposes') and *presence* ('God has been a source of love, comfort, strength, and hope for survivors') (p. 6). Overall, the two most common spiritual meanings made were '(a) survivors' renewed beliefs about and experiences of God's benevolence and providence and (b) survivors' subjective sense that their perceived relationship with God has grown closer and stronger' (p. 9). Considering these findings, local faith communities must attend to the diverse ways survivors engage with their personal belief systems following disasters.

At the level of experiential knowledge, parishioners may acknowledge the limitations of doctrine to make sense of tragedy and instead draw on practices such as spiritual surrender and contemplation of divine mystery in order to accept and ultimately transcend suffering (Frederick & White, 2015). Religious rituals, embodied spiritual practices and commemorative gatherings aid developing shared memory and identity as disaster survivors, as well as facilitating the re-sanctification of spaces that were desecrated (e.g. a church in which a mass shooting occurred or a home in which a family

member was killed by a natural disaster). The term *memoryscape* has been used to represent the diverse ways that communities inscribe, memorialize and transform the impact of disasters within places of worship and the local landscape through art, music, poetry and dance (Butler, 2007; McAllister, 2011). Whether cognitive processing is facilitated through verbal or experiential means, a central tenant of trauma-focused intervention is tangibly expressing unspeakable horrors in order to construct a coherent narrative of one's experiences.

Local faith communities have tremendous potential as social contexts within which cognitive processing and integration may occur. Moulton (2015) described how individual attributions are 'influenced by social conventions of expected narrative patterns and importance placed on specific themes by those with whom disaster survivors communicate' (p. 321). Churches, mosques, synagogues and temples play influential roles in helping congregants co-construct a narrative of the tragedy through (a) explicitly addressing theodicies of suffering in sermons, homilies, memorial gatherings and regular programming, (b) facilitating communal spiritual practices such as worship, communion and prayer that enable transcendence of suffering and (c) providing a relational context in which there are ongoing opportunities (e.g. small groups, sharing meals) to discuss and reflect together about the impact of the tragedy in light of shared spiritual beliefs. For instance, after the 2017 mass shooting at a church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, efforts were undertaken to not only clean the building, but also symbolically paint the sanctuary white inside in order to resanctify the space. People then gathered in small groups within the sanctuary around religious symbols and memorials to mourn together, support one another and lament.

Conclusion

This chapter has proposed that religious experience cannot be fully understood apart from examining how the human mind and body react to threat, chaos, trauma and loss. Specifically, we have explored the visceral, aesthetic and relational aspects of both faith and loss that shape survivors' intersubjective realities. Embodied spirituality considers the experience of the sacred in the present moment, including both physical (e.g., sensation, movement, space) and psychological (e.g. emotional, subjective, relational) domains. By considering object relations and affective neuroscience, we posit that

the interplay of religious and place attachment creates an in-between, liminal space within which trauma and suffering can be contained, metabolized and transformed.

In the aftermath of both widespread disaster and personal tragedy, neurobiological evidence suggests that survivors' experience of the divine may be significantly impacted and that religious communities can play a formative role in restoring a sense of spiritual meaning, community belonging, affect regulation and connection with God. Amidst extreme emotional distress, interventions that emphasize abstract doctrine or systematic theology may not only miss the mark, but also exacerbate perceptions of God as distant, disengaged or uncaring. However, embodied practices that holistically weave together social, emotional and cognitive aspects of religious experience are most likely to meet survivors' felt spiritual needs.

Philosophers and religious scholars across history have explored the role of disillusionment and angst amidst suffering as central to believers' spiritual formation and growth through expanding doctrinal and experiential schemas of the divine as well as facilitating psychological and emotional growth. Saint John of the Cross, a Roman Catholic priest in the sixteenth century, described these 'dark nights of the soul' not as pathological phenomena, but rather as common religious experiences embedded within the journey of mourning and recovery (Durà-Vilà & Dein, 2009). Empirical evidence suggests that posttraumatic growth is indeed a frequent occurrence following disasters, such that some survivors not only regain normative functioning, but also report psychological, relational and spiritual growth (Spialek, Houston, & Worley, 2019; Xu & Liao 2011).

While previous research has examined disaster survivors' religiosity on an individual level, we have proposed the framework of embodied spirituality to capture the intersection of believers' relationship to the sacred rooted within the physical world and their religious community. Ongoing scholarly and empirical work is needed to examine the mutual and reciprocal influences of congregants' post-disaster theodicies and subjective experience of God unfolding in the context of places and spaces that may have suffered significant physical damage. Coping with the death of friends and loved ones who may have been spiritual confidants, as well as the loss of physical possessions, particularly those of religious significance, pose unique challenges for survivors. Local churches, mosques, synagogues, temples and other religious contexts have significant potential to facilitate community-wide resilience.

We propose that attachment to God, attachment to sacred places, and attachment to spiritual community are distinct yet interdependent constructs. Following mass trauma and disaster, faith communities (both the building itself and the congregants comprising the group) can become an embodiment of survivors' experience of God as a safe haven, secure base, and stronger and wiser figure. In so doing, faith communities can (a) help offer comfort, protection and nurturance (safe haven); (b) help promote restored confidence and resolve (secure base); and (c) help provide emotional, practical and informational resources that assist survivors in rebuilding their lives (stronger and wiser).

Local religious leaders and helping professionals are uniquely attuned to the cultural and spiritual practices of survivors in their community, and therefore are well-positioned to facilitate regulatory, meaning-making and capacity-building experiences and processes both within regular religious gatherings and informal social interactions that promote psychological and spiritual recovery. Furthermore, a shared spiritual worldview provides a common foundation that may unite people across ethnic, socioeconomic and gender differences in order to rebuild the community. Humans often attempt to make meaning of traumatic experiences through their *senses*. Thus, embodied spirituality holds significant potential for helping congregants experience God as present, caring and engaged throughout the disaster recovery process.

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The Psychology and Theology of Place: A Perspective from the Judeo-Christian Tradition

Fraser Watts

Introduction

In this chapter, I will bring into dialogue two disciplines that have explored the significance of place in religion: psychology and theology. The primary focus of this volume is psychology, but it can enrich psychology to engage with neighbouring disciplines. When it comes to religion, the dialogue with theology is especially fruitful.

I focus here just on Judeo-Christian thought, as that is where my own expertise lies; it is also a faith tradition that has a particularly rich engagement with the significance of place (e.g., Bartholomew, 2011; Inge, 2003; Wynn, 2009). However, I am not here advocating or assuming any of the truth claims of Christian theology. I am also not claiming any special place for Christianity; other chapters explore place in other faith traditions. This is one chapter among several on different religious traditions.

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For the purposes of this chapter, I am 'participant-observer'. I will try to combine my insider's perspective as someone who stands within the Christian tradition with the external perspective of a psychologist of religion. The study of religion often needs to combine insider's and outsider's perspectives. There has been much work bringing psychology into dialogue with and Christian theology and tradition (e.g. Watts, 2002, 2010). However, there has so far been little exploration of the Christian understanding of place from a psychological perspective, except for a paper by Victor Counted and myself offering a psychological approach to how place is handled in the Bible (Counted & Watts, 2017).

In this chapter, I refer to various stories that occur in the Jewish and Christian scriptures, such as the story of Naaman being healed of leprosy by washing in the Jordan. However, I do not necessarily assume that the events referred to in these stories actually occurred. For present purposes I do not need to take a position on that, one way or the other, though some are probably more veridical than others. I simply take these stories as reflecting the sense of place in the religious communities from which the stories emerged.

The Judeo-Christian place attachment phenomena described in this chapter are to some extent parallel to what would be found in any area of human life, though religious literature provides a rich description of them. However, the religious frame of reference can give place attachment a particular significance. This accords with the two-factor approach to religious experience that I have suggested elsewhere (Watts, 2017), the two factors being raw phenomenological experience and the interpretive framework that is employed. A religious frame of reference at least affects how place attachment is described, but it may also impact to some extent how place is actually experienced.

There seems to have been a gradual development in human evolution from experiencing the transcendent as a given, to people feeling more actively engaged creating experiences of the transcendent (Barfield, 1957). Over the nearly 3000 years of Judeo-Christian literature one can discern this kind of evolution in how people have experienced places of special religious significance. Sometimes the process of creating place attachments is now quite individualistic; in an earlier period, special places were created more collectively, and that can still occur. There is usually an interplay between the individual and the collective.

There is also an interesting variation in the religious literature between place attachments that are constant and secure, and those that are more

ambivalent or conflicted. In the latter, a person can go to a place of religious significance but experience that as an absence rather than a presence, rather as one might in visiting a grave. It is sometimes unpredictable whether a place will have powerful significance on a particular occasion; the person goes to a particular place in search of the presence, but may not always find it. Because a spiritual presence is unseen, it is particularly likely to be experienced in this way. As I discuss in the last section of the chapter, this can give rise to a sense of ambivalence about the whole idea of place attachment, in which people partly feel the pull of attachment to particular places, but also see merit in detachment from them, and want to cultivate to a sense of experiencing the transcendent everywhere equally.

In considering the religious significance of place, the distinction between natural and constructed places is very important. Natural places, such as mountains or rivers, can be endowed with significance; they are a kind of blank screen onto which almost anything can be projected. In contrast, constructed places come with a history; there is a narrative about when, how and why they were constructed, and how they have been used. When considering the religious significance of places, religious buildings obviously play a particularly important role.

The Natural Environment

The Hebrew Bible is an ancient document that describes the transition of the Israelites from being a nomadic to a settled people, and it is the key historical document that I will explore in this section. Also, because it is a religious document, it provides insights into the religious significance of features of the natural environment from a Judeo-Christian perspective, including how that significance was attributed, and how it influenced human life.

There are at least two different aspects of the sense of connection with the natural environment. One is the significance attached to particular natural features such as mountains or rivers. The other is an identification with a particular territory, a tract of land; that kind of identification probably predates permanent settlements. Both feature in the Hebrew Bible, in which there is a strong attachment to particular features such as Mount Sinai and the River Jordan. There is also great significance attached to the territory that they came to refer to as the 'promised land'.

It is important to remember that human consciousness was very different in the period before the development of buildings and stable settlements.

The religion of this earlier period has been variously called 'shaministic' or 'imagistic'. More generally, human consciousness seems to have been animistic, as described for example by Steward Guthrie in *Faces in the Clouds* (Guthrie, 1993).

I think there is general agreement about the existence of animistic consciousness, but I don't agree with what I take to be the standard interpretation of it in the 'Cognitive Science of Religion' (CSR) of how it came about. CSR seems to assume that the distinction between the animate and inanimate world is obvious and must have been obvious to emerging humans. Animism seems to involve thinking about the inanimate, natural world as though it was part of the animate world of intentional beings. I agree that emerging humans thought about the inanimate world in that way, but I am not convinced that the distinction between animate and animate was intuitively obvious to them. I think that is implausible to suggest, as I think CSR does, that humans had that distinction, but then somehow violated it. It is hard to see how such an obvious distinction would have been lost. It seems much more likely that they were not yet making a clear distinction between the animate and inanimate worlds, and were treating everything in the same way.

I have argued this in more detail elsewhere (Watts, 2014) and drawn an analogy with a similar debate about the origins of metaphor. It is often assumed that words started by being applied to something tangible in the animate world, and were then extended, by metaphor, to also apply to something metaphorical or experiential. However, as Owen Barfield (1928/1973) and others have pointed out, there is no etymological evidence for this proposal. It seems that words began as figurative, double-aspect terms, being applied both to something in the sensory world and in the world of experience. 'Literal' uses of words were a later development, not how things started.

There are passages in the Hebrew Bible that interpret the natural world in a very animistic way, such as 'The Lord also thundered in the heavens and the Most High uttered his voice. And he sent his arrows and scattered them; he flashed forth lightnings and routed them' (Psalm 18:13–14). However, it is fixed features in the natural world that are especially relevant to the religious relationship with place. Mountains play a significant role in many religions (Eliade, 1959), and the importance of Mount Sinai for the Israelites is an example.

The Book of Exodus contains a story about how Moses went up the mountain, encountered God there, and received instructions to bring back

to the Israelites. 'Moses went up to God; the Lord called to him from the mountain' (Exodus 19:3). Later, according to the story, God orders Moses, 'Be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai and present yourself there to me, on the top of the mountain' (Exodus 34:2). There, it is said, God writes the ten commandments on the two tablets of stone that Moses has been ordered to bring with him.

There is a close identification between God and the mountain, which is the 'mountain of God' (Exodus 3:1). The mountain is thought of as the visible, identifiable seat of God, and is revered as an extension of God himself, and is therefore approached with reverence and awe. The mountain is seen as the place where God reveals himself; indeed, the conceptual distinction between God and the mountain sometimes seems quite thin. In staying close to the mountain, the Israelites were staying close to God. Counted and Watts (2017) have suggested that the relationship to the mountain is in some ways like an attachment relationship.

However, the Israelites are told to leave the mountain, and the concept of a 'promised land', the land of Canaan, is introduced (Exodus 33:1). The place where God is to be found shifts from Mount Sinai to the Land of Canaan, from a mountain to a territory. The promised land functions in a different way from the mountain. The mountain is the seat of God, whereas the land is what God has promised. The mountain is treated with huge reverence; indeed, it is so holy that the Israelites are not allowed even to touch it. The land is a place given them by God, but one that they can inhabit and identify with, more than they could identify with the mountain. The land is a gift of God, but it is also a place they can make their own. The land thus brings God and the Israelites together in a way that did not happen with Mount Sinai.

The way to the promised land, as the Bible tells it, was not straightforward, and the Israelites spent 'forty years' in the wilderness before they eventually found it; indeed, Moses died before he saw it. The wilderness is also associated with God, but in a different way again. God is with the Israelites in their years in the wilderness, but apparently sporadically. God provides them with mana to eat when they are starving, but often God seems to be absent and to have abandoned them. If we think of the Israelites attachment to God as in some ways like an attachment relationship, then the attachment in the desert is a conflicted attachment, in which God is both present and absent.

Once arrived in the land of Canaan there are other natural features that become closely associated with God, especially the River Jordan. A sense

develops that the power of God is to be found in that particular river in a special way. That emerges most clearly in the story of Naaman coming to Elisha to be healed of his leprosy. He is told to wash in the Jordan but that makes him angry. He serves the King of Aram and he protests, 'Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be cleansed?' (2 Kings 5:12). But he is persuaded to wash in the Jordan, as Elisha has ordered and, according to the story, is healed of his leprosy. Clearly, there is felt to be a close association between God and the Jordan. Later, the Jordan is the river in which Jesus is baptized by John.

Though the sense of God being associated with natural places is well illustrated in the Hebrew Bible, it has also been an important part of the Christian tradition. A strong sense of the presence of God in nature is found in the Celtic Christian tradition. The Irish prayer for a hermitage, attributed to St. Kevin, captures this beautifully, and evokes a spirituality that is close to nature. It reflects a longing for a special God-given place a strong as the Israelites had for their promised land. St. Kevin longs for a 'hidden hut in the wilderness', with 'a narrow blue stream' and 'a clear pool for washing away my sins'; also 'a beautiful wood all around' in which 'birds of every kind of voice can grow up and find shelter' (de Waal, 1991).

The Hebrew claim that 'The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork' (Psalm 19:1) was echoed in much religious poetry of the Enlightenment period, such as Joseph Addison's *The Spacious Firmament*. John Clare's *Nature's Hymn to the Deity* starts: 'All nature owns with one accord/The great and universal Lord'. Hills and mountains continue to have special spiritual significance for many people. That is well captured in a modern poem, *The Hills*, by James Kirkup, in which hills are seen as 'both god and temple/And their stones are holy, the earth's enduring thrones'. There seems currently to be a widespread nature mysticism, that is independent of religious belief. It is likely that if people were asked where they experience the spiritual dimension most strongly, many might say that it was in nature.

The ancient Israelites had a particularly strong sense of identification with their promised land. Such identifications with land are probably not so common now. However, there can often be a strong religious sense of identification with the place where people grew up and acquired their religious faith. It is not a matter of claiming that the place has universal religious significance, but it can still have a special significance for the person concerned. Victor Counted has studied the sense that people from Africa

often have of being separated from their land of faith (e.g. Counted, 2019). Their experience echoes the experience of the ancient Israelites in exile in Babylon, and lamenting, 'How could we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?' (Psalm 137:4).

There have been interesting historical changes in how people connect nature and the spiritual. The animism of Psalm 18 that saw God's anger in thunderstorms has long faded, but a new kind of nature mysticism developed with Romantic poets such as Wordsworth and Coleridge. Owen Barfield (1957) has offered a systematization of these changes. He calls the way of looking at nature that connects it with the spiritual as being 'participation'. However, he distinguishes the 'original participation' of animism from the 'final participation' that begins with the Romantic movement but which, in his view, is still not yet fully developed.

He makes the interesting suggestion that there has been a change in the direction in which nature and the spiritual are connected. The ancient Israelites had a powerful sense of God speaking to them from Mount Sinai; it was a rather passive experience. In contrast the nature mysticism of the Romantic poets seems much more active. Not everyone has such a strong sense of a spirit-imbued natural world, and those who sense it sometimes do not always do so. There seems to be a matter of *choosing* to see places in this way; it requires effort and skill. The spirit is felt to be within but there is an opportunity to look at nature with spirit-filled eyes.

Religious Buildings

Constructions play a very important role in religion. Stone circles, such as Stonehenge in the UK, are among the earliest constructions, but I will focus here mainly on religious buildings. One issue for religious people is whether to have religious buildings at all. The Hebrew Bible provides a fascinating insight into that debate. The Hebrews were originally a nomadic people, and there seems to have been a marked reluctance to construct a temple. At least there was ambivalence about it, both a sense that it would be a betrayal of something important in their identity as a chosen people to construct a temple, but also a strong sense of being called to do it. You don't have to accept the historical accuracy of every detail of this struggle in order to recognize that some such development must have taken place.

Religion is older than buildings, indeed older than permanent settlements; there were religious attachments to places before attachment to religious buildings. Village settlements began in the Levant about 12,000 years

ago. One of the earliest towns to be built was Jericho, referred to in the Hebrew Bible, where the first permanent settlement goes back to 9000–9500 BC. It is thought to have been the first walled city in the world and to have had a population of c. 5000. It was an early centre of worship, though initially for the Lunar deity, Yarikh.

Jerusalem is probably not as old as Jericho, but is perhaps the most important city in the world, from a religious point of view, being a holy place for all three Abrahamic faiths, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Probably no city has been quite so significant for any faith as Jerusalem is for the Jewish people. When the Ark of Covenant was placed in the temple built by Solomon it is said to have been filled with the glory of the Lord. It replaced Mount Sinai as the seat of the Lord; a city replaced a mountain, as the Jewish people made the transition from a nomadic people to one living in towns and villages.

The construction of stable settlements was a very important development for people everywhere, and it had a marked effect on the nature of religious life. There is consensus among evolutionary anthropologists of the importance of this transition (e.g. Dunbar, 2014; Whitehouse, 2004). Rituals became more frequent but less intense; religious understanding becomes less immediate and experiential, and became more systematic and doctrinal; there was a more marked development of religious specialists; and social regulation was achieved less by methods such as trance dancing and more by fear of supernatural punishment. Taken together, there were massive changes in religion associated with stable settlements which included religious buildings.

The rituals by which a religious building is 'consecrated' for religious use can play an important role in religious life, though there is an ambivalence about this, rather like the ambivalence the Hebrew people showed about the transition from nomadic religion to temple religion. Some have a strong preference for a formally consecrated building with a consecrated altar for the sacrament of Communion. Others prefer to use everyday buildings and believe that God is present wherever people seek him. However, much pomp and ceremony is invested in the consecration of a building, there is usually a belief that the consecration of a building should be linked to the dedication of the people who use it. A consecrated building is felt to call for a consecrated people.

Buildings sometimes play an important role in religious conversion, and a particularly vivid account of that is offered by the novelist Susan Howatch

about the role that Salisbury Cathedral played in her conversion to Christianity (Howatch, 1994). She had moved to live in The Close, the circle of houses that surround the cathedral; that was presumably not a random choice, a first step in her engagement with that building. She took to walking around the Cathedral, often at night when no one was there, first at some distance but gradually getting closer to it. Eventually she started to touch the walls of the building as she walked around it, using touch to develop her connection with the building. Eventually she went inside, though it was a long time before she did so. She tells of the process of spiritual development that accompanied her developing relationship with the building.

John Hull, a blind theologian and religious educationalist, gives a somewhat similar account of his visit to the Abbey on the Island of Iona in Scotland, a historically important site in the Celtic tradition of Christianity (Hull, 1990). His efforts to get to know the Abbey church were frustrated by well-meaning attempts to help him, a blind man, find his way around. Eventually he was able to arrange to be left alone in the building at night, and to find his way round by touch. At last he came to the stone altar, and rubbing his hands over that was the spiritual peak of his journey of physical exploration. It gave the title, *Touching the Rock*, to the book in which he describes this experience.

Howatch and Hull both describe a journey that involved the physical exploration of a building as well as a felt spiritual journey; for both of them the two were closely intertwined. Their religious journey took place through a process of what might be called 'embodied cognition' (Watts, 2013). The journeys of spiritual and physical exploration are so closely intertwined that they become two aspects of one journey. The physical exploration is a metaphor for the spiritual exploration, but more than a metaphor. Physical exploration facilitates and expresses the spiritual exploration that is also taking place and is intertwined with it.

It is also helpful to understand this in terms of the formation of an attachment to a religious building. It seems that Howatch formed a religious attachment to Salisbury Cathedral, and Hull formed an attachment to Iona Abbey. They ended up almost hugging and caressing these buildings, as they might do if they were bonding with a human attachment object. The buildings stood for the spiritual centre, or God, that they felt they were coming to know. The physical process of bonding with these buildings enabled them to enact and physicalize their religious bonding process.

It is probably significant that the sensory experience of the buildings was tactile, not just visual.

Many experiences of church buildings are much more tentative and ambivalent. Attendance at church services is in decline in the developed world. However, it seems that people continue to visit church buildings as much as ever, but often not when services are being held. Some of this is surely just out of historical or architectural interest. However, in many cases, there is probably an element of spiritual search in the mix of motivations.

The Welsh priest-poet, R. S. Thomas, has written a number of poems which capture brilliantly the wistful, uncertain longing with which people sometimes enter lonely village churches, experiencing both the presence and absence of God. One of the most poignant, *In Church*, begins '*Often I try/To analyse the quality/Of its silences*', and asks '*Is this where God hides/From my searching?*' He waits and listens until people depart and everything returns to silence, leaving only '*the sound of a man/Breathing, testing his faith/On emptiness*' and '*nailing his questions/One by one to an untenanted cross*'.

This is a very ambivalent attachment to a religious building. There may be a nostalgic memory of a significant spiritual experience in such a building, or a vague hope that such an experience might occur at some time in the future. But, for now, the most powerful sense seems to be the lack of such an experience. The primary experience is of absence rather than presence, but the absence does not seem to be absolute; there is still a sense of faith, and of a cross on which questions can be pinned. In this ambivalent religious attachment, it is hard to distinguish between absence and presence (Shepherd, 1996).

In considering the religious significance of buildings it will be helpful to make use of a three-fold distinction developed by David Seamon (2012) about the significance of place. At the basic level there is just the 'environmental ensemble', which includes a locality, and its various natural and constructed features. Second, there is what people do in the place, the range of events and activities that happen there, what Seamon calls 'people in place'. Thirdly, there is the special and distinctive identity of a place, what Seamon calls the 'genius loci'.

In the examples discussed above, the building functions mainly just as building, albeit one with history and significance. However, I will turn now to an example of what Seamon would call 'people in place', in which the

focus is more clearly on what people do in the building than on the physical structure.

The best example I know is the new Cathedral in Coventry, opened in 1962 after the mediaeval one had been destroyed in a bombing raid in 1940. Stephen Verney wrote a moving account of the spiritual preparations that were connected with the consecration of the new Cathedral in Coventry (Verney, 2010) showing how the building of the physical structure was intertwined with a developing sense of its significance. Coventry Cathedral is known as much for its commitment to peace, forgiveness and reconciliation, as for the impressive building, designed by Basil Spence. The Cathedral's commitment to reconciliation has shaped the identity of Coventry as a whole, which even the road signs announce is a 'city of peace and reconciliation'. This has given the community associated with Coventry Cathedral a strong sense of narrative identity. Most members of the Cathedral community there would say, without hesitation, that they are the people whose Cathedral was bombed and rebuilt, and who are committed to international reconciliation.

It is an identity that arises from the distinctive history of the building but has developed into a commitment to how the building is used, as much as to the building itself. The building itself is impressive, with many excellent features including Graham Sutherland's tapestry of Christ in Glory and John Piper's Baptistry window. However, the sense of attachment to the Cathedral for those who use it regularly is not just to the building, but to how the Cathedral has been used. A consistent commitment to peace and reconciliation since 1940 has shaped the identity of the building.

Significant physical features have been developed that have become a focus for attachment to the Cathedral as a centre for international reconciliation, such as the cross of nails, first made from nails found in the rubble the day after the Cathedral was bombed, a large cross made from charred timbers that stands on the stone altar in the ruined Cathedral, and the words 'Father Forgive' carved prominently in the wall behind it. These features, which embody the focus and significance of the Cathedral; they probably provide a more powerful focus for attachment than other impressive artistic features. The same is also true of Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*, written for the Cathedral and first performed there, and widely regarded as his masterpiece. The way it brings together the traditional words of the Requiem Mass with Wilfred Owen's war poems encapsulates the mission and identity of the Cathedral in a remarkable way.

The religious attachments described by Susan Howatch, John Hull and R. S. Thomas are all of individual, rather isolated people; Hull needed to be alone in Iona Abbey to explore it and bond with it in the way he did. However, the different kind of 'people in place' attachment that many have felt to Coventry Cathedral is much more a collective affair. The identity of the Cathedral has been sustained by a community that has continued over several generations, in which individuals have come and gone. Becoming attached to the Cathedral is as much an identification with community that has shaped it as it is the building itself. The two have become inseparable.

Seamon also talks about another kind of place attachment, which is the 'genius loci' of the place. Several of the religious buildings already mentioned have that 'genius loci'. Salisbury is an ancient building that has acquired it over many centuries; whereas the new Cathedral in Coventry has acquired it more recently. Iona Abbey is both an ancient building with links with an ancient tradition of Celtic Christianity, dating its foundation by Columba in the 563, but one that has been renewed by the modern Iona Community, founded in 1938.

There is a very interesting and important question about just exactly *how* a building acquires a 'genius loci'. This may happen in somewhat different ways with different kinds of building, but our focus here is on how a religious building does that. It seems likely that several different features come together for that to happen. There is often a combination of a significant location, a significant history, an impressive building, and a distinctive and intensive pattern of usage. It may not be essential to have all four of those features but there are usually at least two or three.

A significant religious building that has been celebrated in poetry is the chapel at Little Gidding, the focus of one of T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*. Little Gidding was the home of a small Anglican religious community established in 1626 by Nicholas Ferrar. The church is a small but attractive building, with an interesting history, set in a beautiful but secluded location. It thus has several of the features that I suggest contributing to its genius loci. Eliot, when he visited in 1936, was evidently moved by that, but also by the pattern of prayer that he sensed had taken place there. In a memorable phrase, Eliot speaks of Little Gidding as a place 'where prayer has been valid'.

How can sustained prayer in a building give rise to that sense? One theory is that advanced by Rupert Sheldrake in this volume in terms of 'morphic resonance', a resonance that becomes attached to a building through what has been done there (see his chapter in this volume). It is a theory

that makes path-breaking assumptions that some have found controversial (Watts, 2011), as it allows for buildings to acquire something akin to memories. However, it seems to me that some such theory is needed to give a scientific account of how buildings acquire atmosphere, what in the 1960s used to be called 'vibes'.

Religious buildings that acquire 'genius loci' sometimes become places of pilgrimage. One of the most notable pilgrimage destinations is Santiago de Compostela in North-Western Spain. It was an important pilgrimage destination in the Middle Ages but was revived as a pilgrimage destination following the publication of Walter Starkey's *The Road to Santiago*. Over 300,000 people now make the pilgrimage to Santiago every year. Pilgrimage is one of the religious activities that is showing a revival, while other aspects of religion are in decline, and it is the religious activity that more than any other is focused on place. How a religious building is experienced will obviously be affected by having made a long and physically arduous journey to get there; but pilgrimage seems to be a transformative experience in itself, quite apart from the destination.

There is a growing body of psychological research studying pilgrimage. The physical demands of pilgrimage make it a form of extreme spirituality, capable of bringing about significant personal change. The long physically demanding journey often seems to be intertwined with another more intangible journey of personal transformation. One intriguing feature of the pilgrimage to Santiago is that it is undertaken by atheists as well as religious people; it thus seems to be a religious practice that is fairly independent of religious belief. Farias et al. (2019) suggest that both atheist and religious pilgrims are exploring 'forms of horizontal and vertical transcendence,' and have a common desire to connect to nature and their deeper selves.

When people arrive at notable religious buildings, however they travel, there is a further question about how to explore them. As many probably visit such buildings out of some kind of spiritual motivation, whether or not they are religious believers, they may be looking for more than historical and architectural information. The psychiatrist-theologian, Chris Cook, has attempted to provide a guide to the spiritual significance of Durham Cathedral, *Finding God in a Holy Place* (Cook, 2009). Durham is one of the most visited religious buildings in Britain. It would be an interesting piece of psychological research to provide different groups of visitors to such buildings with different kinds of guidebook material, some with a spiritual focus and some without, and to see if that led to differences in their experience of the building, and in the personal impact of the visit.

Religious Ambivalence About Place

In conclusion I want to draw together some scattered comments indicating that religion is ambivalent about focusing on particular sites or buildings. The idea of a place that is holy in a special way is attractive to the religious mind. But the downside is the implication that other places are *not* holy, or at least not to the same degree. It is a tension between particularity and universalism. Both are important in religious traditions and the tension between them is never easy to resolve.

In the Hebrew Bible there is an ambivalence about building a temple. It was felt that God's permission was needed to build a temple and, when David asked permission to build a temple, it was refused (2 Samuel 7), though it was later granted to Solomon. The exile into Babylon and the destruction of the temple were evidently a traumatic event for the Israelites; being deprived of Jerusalem perhaps made them long for it all the more fervently. In the New Testament, Jerusalem is the focus of significant events, but at the end of the Gospels Jesus tells his disciples to go back to Galilee, where they came from and where they will find him, not to stay on in Jerusalem. As Christianity develops, the concept of Heavenly Jerusalem serves to weaken the attachment to the tangible earthly Jerusalem.

The New Testament portrays Jesus as also being ambivalent about too exclusive a focus on the temple at Jerusalem. He overturns the money-lenders' stalls in the temple courtyard, and weeps over Jerusalem as he looks down on from outside. In the story about the Samaritan woman whom he meets at the well, she raises the problem that the Jews say that God should be worshipped on one mountain, but her Samaritan people say God should be worshipped on another. When she asks Jesus which is right, Jesus is said to have replied that 'the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth' (John 4:23–24).

There is probably a range of views among religious people about holy places. For some they are very important; for others the importance of holy places can be exaggerated and can distract from the potential for any place to become holy. In practice, most faith traditions have allowed these two emphases to co-exist, and have left people a degree of freedom about which to emphasize. Places can play a very important role in religion but that there is also a sense that it is not good to get too attached to them.

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Pride of Place in a Religious Context: An Environmental Psychology and Sociology Perspective

Marino Bonaiuto, Thomas Albers, Silvia Ariccio and Silvia Cataldi

Introduction to Pride of Place in a Religious Context

On 15 April 2019, worldwide televisions show the images of the Cathedral of Notre Dame in flames. Notre Dame is one of the world's most recognizable landmarks. The headlines of the main newspapers in the world report the news indicating this place of worship as 'an international symbol', 'the pride of Paris', 'the holiest address in France', 'the undisputed pride of Paris', 'a sign of national pride', 'a symbol

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Although the chapter is the result of the joint work of the authors, for formal attribution reasons the paragraph "The cognitive component of PoP and religion" can be attributed to Silvia Cataldi.

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of Christianity', the 'place of identification for the entire French nation', but also 'part of heritage of mankind for all the world'. The same evening, while the French President Macron declared 'With pride I tell you tonight that we will rebuild this cathedral, all together', the newscasts showed the Parisians, who 'with pride gather outside the burning cathedral to pray and sing hymns' (CNN). The word pride was pronounced and evoked many times that evening and the following days. The Notre Dame burning is the window that introduces us to deepen the theme of the pride of a place, for either local inhabitants or external visitors, and how this can be closely connected to religion.

Pride of Place (PoP) is the positive emotion that people can have for the place they identify or associate themselves with. It is linked to one's own place attachment and one's own place identity, both referring to one's own place or local area, although its geographical scale can vary quite a lot (e.g. from a home's room to a nation or even supra-nationally). Positive pride of where one comes from can elicit a series of behaviours that are of prosocial and caring character, however a pride that is too extreme can result in nationalism and antisocial behaviours (at least towards what is outside one's own place).

Place can be defined as any environmental locus in and through which individuals or group actions, experiences, intentions and meanings are drawn together spatially (Manzo & Devine-Wright, 2014; Relph, 2008). Place can also refer to a variety of geographical levels such as a bedroom, a house, a workplace, a neighbourhood, a city, a village, a landscape, an area or a region, up to a nation, a continent or even larger geographical entities. Whatever the geographical level, a place does not solely consist of its physical features but just as much of the social and cultural dynamics that happen in it (Hidalgo & Hernández, 2001) and that inform both a person's perceptions and evaluations of such a space, and her/his activities in it (coherently with a psychological theory of place, e.g. Bonnes and Secchiaroli, 1992/1995; Canter, 1977). Where the physical characteristics consists of factors such as natural or built environment, the social aspects of place are of course social relationships but also cultural heritage of the place with its symbolic values.

PoP in Environmental Psychology

In their seminal book about place attachment, Altman and Low (1992) report how Afro-American women struggled to keep their PoP providing

an air of 'homelikeness' to their apartments, even in less-than-ideal conditions (i.e. small, crowded apartments that were also used for their labour activities, e.g. laundry; Low & Altman, 1992). Dealing with the situation of these women, the authors explicitly mention the role of Pride of Place as a motivator for 'homelikeness' efforts. In the same book, they also highlight how typical childhood activities that modify the physical environment (e.g. a treehouse in the garden, or an area of flattened grass) would aim at experiencing a sense of pride in the act of creating a place that is an expression of one's emerging identity.

Since then, Pride of Place (PoP) has not often been studied as an independent construct, yet its relevance emerges in various studies, mainly dealing with place identity and sometimes place attachment (but also other related constructs, e.g. sense of place, Williams et al., 2010; and topophilia, Tuan, 1974). Moreover, even if a direct link is not explicitly drawn in the literature, PoP is often associated to place-based activities thus implying an association with the conative aspect of the person–environment relationship. Thus, even if PoP particularly deals with the emotion of pride people have towards their given places, its antecedents and consequences are affective, but also cognitive and conative.

Beside its specific placement in the wide and complex galaxy of people–environment constructs, what consistently emerges from the literature is the link PoP has with feelings of self-esteem, ownership, place-making and social significance of places. Considering how religion can be locally situated, and how important it can be for people's identity and self-esteem, it is unsurprising to find out that PoP has a relevant role in the religious context. Despite this, a paradox is clear in PoP being at the core of some of the fundamental conceptualizations regarding place attachment and identity, on the one side, and PoP almost completely forgetting and lack of direct and explicit addressing in the relevant contemporary literature, on the other side.

Situating PoP Among Its Related Constructs

Many constructs in environmental psychology deal with the relationship people have with their environment (e.g. Pretty, Chipuer, & Bramston, 2003 for a review). Place identity is considered the cognitive facet of the person–place relationship, contributing, together with personal and social identity, to the definition of the individual's identity (Proshansky, 1978; Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983). Place attachment mainly refers to

the affective bond people have with specific places (Altman & Low, 1992). Place dependence attests of a behavioural link people have with some places that allow them to perform specific local actions and resistance to move out (Stokols & Schumaker, 1981). Sense of place is a more general construct referring to the relationship people have with places, being composed by different dimensions. Different organizations of all these constructs have been proposed in the literature, with some of these constructs being proposed as components of, or composed by, other constructs, thus resulting in a complex, not always consistent, hierarchical structure of different place-related constructs (Bonnes, Lee, & Bonaiuto, 2003).

Without entering the debate of the place-related constructs' hierarchy and structure, Pride of Place can surely be considered as an emotional component of the person–environment relationship that has been mentioned or emerges in many of these different constructs: this implies that Place attachment—given its affective status, in comparison to other relevant constructs which deal more with PoP cognitive or conative components—certainly assumes a pivotal role in PoP.

Such an affective core, supposedly played by Place attachment with respect to PoP, is acknowledged by Altman and Low (1992) when, in their work about place attachment, they explicitly suggest that 'place attachment plays a role in fostering individual, group, and cultural self-esteem, self-worth, and self-pride' (Low & Altman, 1992, p. 10). The association between pride and place attachment has often been suggested, including pride-related items into place attachment measurements (Brown & Perkins, 1992; Brown, Perkins, & Brown, 2003; Lewicka, 2010, 2011; Mesch & Manor, 1998; Scannell & Gifford, 2010a). In a study about place attachment and pro-environmental behaviour, for instance, Scannell and Gifford (2010a), considered city pride as an item of the civic place attachment. However, in a paper about place attachment operationalization, Hidalgo (2013) decides not to include pride among the items of the place attachment scale, stating that, even though pride is sometimes mentioned among the different emotions associated to place attachment, it is not strictly intrinsic to the concept, but simply often associated.

Indeed, from the operational point of view, PoP has often been associated to place identity, rather than to place attachment. For instance, in their qualitative study about place-related identity processes among people living in the London Docklands, Twigger-Ross and Uzzell (1996) directly investigated the role of pride of place for place identity asking Docklands dwellers 'Would you say a bit more about what makes you feel proud/not

feel proud about living here?' (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996, p. 210). Similarly, the operational link between place identity and pride is particularly evident in several studies in which pride of living in a place is considered as a measure of place identity (e.g. Bonaiuto, Breakwell, & Cano, 1996; Bonaiuto, Carrus, Martorella, & Bonnes, 2002; Bonaiuto et al., 2016). In a study about place identity and beach pollution perception, for instance, Bonaiuto et al. (1996) measured local identity through the item 'Do you feel proud of living in this town?' Subsequently, studying Regional Identity in the context of support for protected areas in Italy, Carrus, Bonaiuto, and Bonnes (2005), found that Regional Pride is one of the two components of Regional Identity (the other one being Regional Empowerment). Dealing with urban vs. countryside identity, and place attachment, Knez (2005) found that the persons being highly attached to Gothenburg, and who defined themselves as urban-persons, were those who also were more proud to live in Gothenburg (vs. low attached persons and country-persons): this shows an association between PoP, place attachment and place identity.

As for what concerns the conative relationship with one's own place, even if an explicit link between PoP and place dependence has not been made so far, PoP is often found to be associated to places where people perform specific activities. Twigger-Ross and Uzzell (1996) found that people are proud of a place when they associate this place with specific activities positive for their self-esteem (e.g. having participated to place renewal). Similarly, Scannell and Gifford (2017) suggest that people could be attached to places where they perform specific activities they are proud of (e.g. gym, but also gardening, Clatworthy, Hinds, & Camic, 2017).

Overall, several studies suggest that PoP could be linked to place making and appropriation. In their book Low and Altman (1992) highlight how place modification and appropriation seem to be linked to pride both in childhood and among Afro-American women taking care of their apartment. This is consistent with home being considered as an expression of self and pride (Cooper, 1974). From a theoretical point of view, the Eudaimonistic Identity Theory (e.g. Waterman, 1984) explicitly posits a link among a person's activities and her/his development of an identity. One contribution explicitly addresses how this is the case for place identity too: people feel more place identity in places where they can perform flow-related activities (Bonaiuto et al., 2016).

Considering the identitary importance of religion, it is not surprising to notice how several authors have found links between place making and PoP in the context of religion among immigrants. When traditional religious

places are unavailable, people strive to reconstruct meaningful sacred places. For instance, studying Hindu immigrants in Southern California (but also immigrant Muslims' homes, Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004a), Mazumdar and Mazumdar (2009) find how religion is inscribed into home spaces through specific elements in the décor and in the gardens: they suggest that home can be a religious space and that religion can affect homes in tangible physical ways. Consistently, Gale and Naylor (2002) highlight how the incorporation of specific architectural elements (e.g. a marble frontage) in a Hindu temple in the UK would be a source of pride for the local Hindu community.

What can be highlighted is that even though person–environment studies often mainly focus on residential places, literature about PoP reports a significant number of non-residential places people are proud of, mostly linking them to their social (rather than personal) significance, suggesting that PoP is eminently social. For instance, Hawke (2011), in a study about cultural heritage and sense of place in the England's North Pennines, finds that the relevance of these places (e.g. a battlefield) was mediated by the collective meaning associated with the places, that remind of a proud collective history rather than direct experiences. In a study on the consequences on mental health as a result of the degradation of the Great Barrier Reef, it was found the extent to which people experiencing ecological grief was based on the intrinsic value and meaning of these places, and this was moderated by the experienced pride of place (Marshall et al., 2019). On the same line, in a study about place attachment to sport facilities, Madgin, Bradley, and Hastings (2016) found that the pride people associate to these places of attachment (in the context of their destruction and upgrading), is mainly due to their history, in this case a history of traditional sporting reputational success. Similarly, pride has been found to be associated to famous museums (Capper & Scully, 2016) and to festivals (Ryan, 2015). Notably, pride can also be associated to negative events, because of the media and scientific resonance the place acquires (e.g. volcanic activity in Canary Islands, Spain; Ruiz & Hernández, 2014). In terms of the Eudaimonistic Identity Theory stated above, it can be here noticed that a Self-defining activity—namely an activity capable to psychologically strengthen an individual's identity whether at personal, social or place level—could be offered not only by a direct self-defining experience but also by a mediated inherited self-defining activity realized by a somehow significant individual or group historically embedded in that place and previously acting in it.

In line with the idea that PoP is affected by the media's attention and the reputation of a place, different studies found that international branding initiatives (such as the European Capital City label and funding) increase PoP of the local communities (Liu, 2015; Žilič Fišer, 2018). Overall, this suggests that PoP has to do with the self-esteem associated to belonging to a place with a positive social reputation (Bonaiuto, Alves, De Dominicis, & Petruccelli, 2016; see also Bonaiuto et al., 2018). Moreover, research shows that people will be happy with a place that has a physical symbol that makes them proud (Ginting, Rahman, Subhilhar, & Wahid, 2018). On the contrary, they will avoid a place that makes them feel not proud (Ginting & Rahman, 2016).

Consistently, the only scale of measure for PoP proposed so far is a Civic Pride scale (Wood, 2006) to measure the pride effects of events and festivals organized by the local government. The aim of this scale is to provide a measurement of a positive social benefit of these events, i.e. civic pride, which is otherwise hardly measured and thus often under-considered when evaluating the outcomes of these events. More often, PoP is not directly measured, but items related to it are included in sub-scales or dimensions of place attachment and place identity, most often within dimensions of place-related self-esteem and place-related distinctiveness (e.g. Knez, 2005). These two constructs are strongly related. Place-related self-esteem directly refers to how a given place contributes to people's self-esteem; place-related distinctiveness, instead, describes how unique features of a place (e.g. architectural, natural) promote a sense of pride that can contribute to self-esteem (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). In both cases, the focus is on how a given place affects people's self-esteem, possibly through the elicitation of pride.

Overall, PoP seems like an extremely pervasive but highly understudied aspect of the person–environment relationship, most often considered as a facet of a number of other related constructs (place attachment, place identity and the like), failing in recognizing and enucleating it. In order to better clarify the concept of PoP and its bond with religion, in the next pages three components are focused on: the affective component, the cognitive component and the conative component. Disentangling these three dimensions of PoP can help to answer the following key questions at a psychological level: What role does religion play in the dynamics of PoP? How does religion affect people's PoP in terms of emotions, beliefs and behaviours?

The Affective Component of PoP and Religion

Pride can be defined as a positive emotion that results from self-governed events which are congruent and relevant to the initial objectives of the event, where such objectives need to be important and meaningful to the person (Hart & Matsuba, 2007). Like other self-conscious emotions (e.g. guilt and shame), pride is traditionally labelled as a self-focussed (intrapersonal) emotion instead of other-focussed (Tracy, Cheng, Robins, & Trzesniewski, 2009; Tracy & Robins, 2004, 2007a, 2007b). When a person experiences a non-self-conscious emotion (interpersonal) like gratitude, the emotion is directed towards something or someone else and it does not particularly reflect on one's own role in the process, but when pride is being experienced the person becomes aware that s/he has lived up to some ideal self-representation. Pride does, thus, require self-awareness and self-evaluation (Tracy & Robins, 2004). Pride is indeed generally encouraged when individuals direct attention towards themselves, activate self-representations and estimate an object as relevant to those representations. For pride to be elicited, the object must be congruent with positive self-representations. In this sense, PoP can be activated in a positive way when the place is consistent with the spiritual and ideological representation deriving from a religion.

Several researchers have stated that pride is probably a multifaceted emotion and propose to make a distinction in at least two different sides of the same emotion, such as the 'authentic' and 'hubristic' pride (Carver, Sinclair, & Johnson, 2010; Cheng, Tracy, & Henrich, 2010; McGregor, Nail, Marigold, & Kang, 2005; Tracy et al., 2009; Tracy & Prehn, 2012; Tracy & Robins, 2004, 2007a). In particular, authentic pride is a specific emotion characterized by a proportionate sense of self-esteem (Tracy et al., 2009) and social acceptance (Cheng et al., 2010); 'authentic' pride derives from achievements and goal accomplishments (Williams & DeSteno, 2008), motivating us to fill our lives with meaning (Nakamura, 2013) through unstable and controllable attribution processes. Instead, hubristic pride is more related to self-views, abilities and character strengths (Tracy et al., 2009), through stable and uncontrollable attribution processes.

Religion can foster both authentic and hubristic pride. For example, in a study on the identity of residents living in Lazio region in Italy (Censis, 2015), an interviewee stated he was 'proud to live in the city of the Holy See and heart of Christianity'. However, we can say that it is authentic pride if

this feeling is motivated by the opportunity to always find a church or a mass and to participate in the functions of the Pope, sometimes; on the contrary, it is hubristic pride if it is motivated, such as because the Catholic Church in Rome shows itself as the most important and magnificent religion in the world (Census, 2015).

Places may convey symbolic values for religious worship and/or for their spiritual qualities. Through their special physical and symbolic properties, places can help bring a person closer to religious ideals, spirituality, community and place. Precisely these special features can make people feel at home (Billig, 2006) and perceive these places as a safe haven and secure base (Scannell & Gifford, 2014), serving as locations for 'survival and security' (Chatterjee, 2005; Counted & Watts, 2017; Giuliani, 2003). Moreover, being a source of protection and satisfaction, religion can generate a series of emotions that modulate distance from and hence maintain contact with a place as an object of pride and attachment. Several studies investigate how the link between places and religion can activate a sense of protection, even in an extreme and ideological way. Examples are searches on the protective effect of religiosity under terrorism (Levav, Kohn & Billig, 2008). Other research focuses on Jewish settlements in the Gaza region where, despite the terroristic risk, places become refuges for safety in times of instability (Billig, 2006). The mechanism is well explained by a Jewish inhabitant who responds to the telephone interview in this way: 'Only when you live here do you notice how every minute, every second, God is protecting us. To my mind, this is the safest place on earth; therefore, I am not afraid of any danger' (Billig, 2006, p. 263).

Overall, it is likely that people might feel pride for places that fulfil their psychological needs (Ryan & Deci, 2000). According to Self-Determination Theory, people have intrinsic needs for autonomy, relatedness and competence as a basis for their personality integration. The relatedness need can refer to building coherent relationships (and secure attachment) with others, but as well to places (Clayton & Myers, 2015) or religious entities. Building meaningful relations leads to increased care and concern for others, for the environment and for the divinities. Autonomy can relate to the need for self-efficacy and to people's need to feel a sense of agency. The need for competence relates to the desire to feel competent in mastering situations (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Religious places are likely to fulfil these needs, providing a sense of security, freedom and social support that make people feel better, instilling the positive circle of pride and positive emotions.

How positive emotions such as pride related to one's own place can have a direct or indirect impact on an individual's well-being is of particular interest especially since the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 1998; Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002, 2018) suggests that positive emotions trigger an upward spiral towards well-being. The immediate effect of pride in general and also of PoP is self-esteem (Tracy & Robins, 2004, 2007a, 2007b; Tracy et al., 2009). Self-esteem has often been found to be positively related to subjective well-being (e.g. Diener & Diener, 1995) just as PoP has been found to be associated to well-being at different scales. Reeskens and Wright (2011), in a cross-national survey project, found that national pride is positively associated to subjective well-being. Potentially there is thus an effect which moves from religious places to PoP as a positive emotion to self-esteem, up to well-being.

On the contrary, however, religion can also provoke a sense of alienation towards places and therefore affect PoP in negative terms. This may occur when people are disrupted by displacement, or when there are diaspora or migration processes. In these cases, people can lose their sense of belonging and their inner link with native place, so that nostalgia, disorientation and alienation might ensue (Fullilove, 1996). All these processes may have an emotional distress in the final common path of subjective expression (Billig, Kohn, & Levav, 2006, p. 195). In effect, these same negative feelings can emerge even in the case of permanence in a place. Classical references are the Marx and Feuerbach's theories according to which religion can be considered a by-product or after-effect of alienated consciousness (Feuerbach, 1941; Marx, 1944). Other contemporary research show that religion is not always a driving force for attachment to places, but it could be a source of uprootedness and disconnection with people and places around (e.g. Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004a). So, we can assume the same could happen to PoP.

More broadly, the affective link between PoP and religion can be rooted in attachment (Bowlby, 1969). Indeed, both place and religion can be exalted attachment surrogates (Counted & Zock, 2019; Low & Altman, 1992). In particular, place attachment is defined most of all by the affective level, regarding the emotional bonds people have with their environment (e.g. Giuliani, 2003; Hidalgo & Hernández, 2001). Place attachment is recognized as the emotional component and quality that make up the understanding of place to which people are drawn. Taking up the different cultural and developmental theories related to place attachment, the literature defines it as a positive emotional bond to a geographical setting

and the meaning attributed to that bond (Giuliani & Feldman, 1993). Therefore, PoP can be considered as one of the emotions linked to place attachment (Brown et al., 2003; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). Other emotions derived from place attachment can be gratitude and love, or other negative emotions such as fear (Brown et al., 2003) or boredom (Russell, 1992). However, depending on the psychological needs that are stimulated by their environment, a place could have a spiritual significance for religious believers (Thomas, 2001). This spiritual significance enables them to make sense of life events, relationships and the self, as they interact with the objects of place attachment. Therefore, place and spiritual attachment can be described as two aspects of the same journey (Counted & Watts, 2019).

A relevant question is how pride of place, in terms of its affective function (place attachment), could trigger attachment or detachment to a religious object or figure. According to some scholars (Counted, 2018; 2019; Counted & Zock, 2019), this can be discussed under the umbrella theme 'place spirituality'. Place spirituality has indeed been defined as the psychological mechanism involving the intersection of place and spiritual attachment (Counted & Zock, 2019). According to these authors, the link between attachment to places and religion can be established through two different processes: transitional process and transactional process (Counted & Watts, 2019; see also Counted & Watts, 2017; Counted & Zock, 2019; Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004a). The transitional process consists in establishing a link with entities that are able to fulfil the end goal of the attachment relationship, e.g. comfort, security, protection (Basu, 2019; Counted & Watts, 2019, p. 7). Religion and places are drawn to objects of attachment simultaneously, thus serving as a safe haven and secure base for their set goals (Counted & Watts, 2019). Within the transitional process, correspondence and compensation phenomena can happen between place attachment and religious attachments. For instance, when a place is perceived to be unsafe or unreliable, a compensatory attachment, such as the religious one, may be formed (Counted & Watts, 2019; Counted & Zock, 2019, 8). Alternatively, religious believers are likely to turn to environmental qualities of a place when they lose their inner reality (Counted & Zock, 2019, 10). This process may have effects in emotional terms too. Indeed, the affective drivers can be comfort, security, protection, but also pride. For example, several researches show that war, conflict, natural disaster and terrorist attacks can lead people to insecurity towards the place where they live, but insecurity does not correspond to an abandonment

of places (Bar-Tal, Jacobson, & Freund 1995; Billig, 2006; Lerner, Gonzalez, Small, & Fischhoff, 2003). In a compensatory manner, however, this mechanism can generate greater attachment to religion. Examples are the effects of the Twin Towers attack on 9 September 2001 in New York City or the coordinated terrorist attacks on 13 November 2015 in Paris (Counted & Zock, 2019). As in the case of the Notre Dame fire anticipated in this chapter's opening, in all these events people were seen singing spiritual songs in public and turned to religion and began to pray (Counted & Zock, 2019, p. 10). Moreover, after those events, the sacralization of violated places raised as well as their corresponding PoP, so that people declared to feel respectively proud to be New Yorkers or Parisians.

Another psychological mechanism that links place with religion is a transactional process. In this process, the focus is not on the end of the interaction, but rather on the process of communication within a transitional space between the individuals and their objects of attachment (Berne, 1961; Counted & Watts, 2019). In terms of PoP, this means the emotionally attuned communication between two antithetical poles: receiver (the attached individual or community) and sender (objects of attachment) of information (Counted & Zock, 2019). Therefore, PoP can be the fruit of an imagined communication and a social intercourse between subjects and objects within a circular movement to and from the objects of attachment (Counted & Watts, 2019).

The Cognitive Component of PoP and Religion

The emotion of Pride (both authentic and hubristic pride) has often been found to be associated to identity. An identity linked to place can serve as a source of pride (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996) and can have strong influences on people's perceptions and behaviour regarding that place (Bonaiuto et al., 1996). Pride has also been used in studies as a single research item for place identity and therefore pride seems to be closely linked to one's own self-construct related to place (Bonaiuto et al., 1996, 2016). Also, it can be remembered here that one of the functions of identity, in many theories such as for example social identity theories (e.g. Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), is to provide individual self-esteem, which can be considered a function closely related to pride.

The term place identity was first coined by Proshansky (1978) and it has been defined as 'memories, conceptions, interpretations, ideas, and related feelings towards specific physical environments as well as types of

settings' (Proshansky et al., 1983). Where Proshansky defines place identity more as a state, Seamon (2014, p. 17) defines place identity as a process 'whereby people living in or otherwise associated with a place take up that place as a significant part of their world'. Place identity is a sub-concept of self-identity and refers to 'the component of identity that is associated with feelings about a particular locale' (Clayton & Myers, 2015, p. 172). The process of how the sense of identity is being established starts in early childhood and becomes a lifetime process.

Religious socialization has an important role in shaping place identity and indirectly in fostering PoP. As Mazumdar and Mazumdar (2004a) pointed out, in fact, religion is taught and learned through mechanisms such as ritual, story, text, drama, experience and pilgrimage that are strictly connected to specific places. Place stories, hymns and myths are important components of socialization in some religions (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 1993). Whether transmitted orally through singing and storytelling or textually through written literature, they help to teach, explain and clarify place meaning (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004a, p. 394). For example, repeated stories help establish for the believer the centrality and significance of specific sacred sites; sacred history focuses on important events such as revelations, visions, miracles, prophets, building, other stories located in specific places, praised for its unique physical, spiritual, supernatural and cosmic qualities (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004a, p. 394). All these elements contribute to the formation of individual identity, which starts in childhood and continues to be defined in a sort of continuous lifelong learning within the religious community and the individual spiritual path.

Furthermore, both religious identity and place identity can exist next to social, professional or personal identity. All are subsets of the same self-concept whose salience may change throughout a lifetime and across situations. Since the place where the identity process is emerging from is made up of physical and social elements (Scannell & Gifford, 2010b), place identity is also partly made up of a social/group identity (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). The place element (physical and social) usually refers to place of residence but it can be used in regard to the place where one grew up but does not live currently. Place can manifest itself in a variety of geographical scales such as, for example, a specific neighbourhood, city or broader area (including rural and natural ones).

But what may be the link between religious identity and place identity? And how do these affect PoP? There is actually a variety of configurations. One of these is when an individual's identity of place and religious identity

are well-defined. For example, this configuration can be individuated when a resident identifies him/herself with the territory where s/he lives, and s/he is a fervent believer in the main religion of that place. In this combination, PoP is a very common manifestation. As an illustration, living in Rome, next to the Vatican City and having a sense of pride for the city may influence one's religious identity, such that individuals, there, are most likely going to be drawn to the Roman Catholic faith which is the pride and symbol of the City. In this combination, therefore, there is a positive circularity between place identity and religious identity: they do not only reinforce each other, but they also activate PoP.

Another configuration is when an individual has a well-defined religious identity, but s/he does not have an equally defined place identity. In this case PoP may not be activated. For example, this could be the case of first-generation migrants in Europe who, for the most part, maintain a very close connection with their religion, e.g. with Islam. However, this could also be the case of a permanent resident, because, through processes of spiritualization, abstraction and ascesis, religion may not activate the need for a precise place identity. Research demonstrated that in some cases religious belief systems may transcend attachment to any particular place (Counted & Watts, 2017), and position place as the by-product of an emotional attachment to God (Counted, 2018). For example, in a study with African migrants in a secular Dutch society, religious identity is found to negatively moderate the negative relationship between place insecurity and place identity. While for people with low religious attachment, a stronger feeling of insecurity lead to smaller place identity, the relationship was no longer significant for people with high religious attachment. Religious attachment would thus function as a protection allowing to keep place identity even in a discriminating context (Counted, 2019).

With secularization, however, another configuration is very common: one in which the identity of a place is well-defined, but religious identity is not so defined. The case of the Notre Dame fire presented at the opening of this chapter is unique from this point of view. In fact, France is a secular country and historically from the Enlightenment and the Positivism has a very strong secularist orientation. Notre Dame can therefore be recognized as a symbol of national and Parisian pride simply as an artistic and historical monument and not as the heart of Christianity. However, it is also true that all people believe in 'something/someone sacred and sacrosanct to theirselves' (Counted & Watts, 2019, p. 6) and the sense of spirituality belongs to the human being from the birth. Therefore, the cognitive

mechanisms that link place and spirituality can be not very distant between believers and non-believers, even if religion is not explicitly recognized as an identity pillar. Lastly, there could be the configuration in which neither identity of place, nor religious identity are defined. This anomic and depersonalization configuration goes beyond the interests of this chapter, but it could potentially refer to an increasing relevant portion of the global population in a contemporary era where high mobility could increase place detachment and where religious education has a decreasing trend.

When analysing the four above-mentioned configurations more deeply, both in the religious sphere and in the process of developing place identity, four principles can be identified: *distinctiveness, continuity, self-esteem and self-efficacy* (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). *Distinctiveness* is a bond to a particular place (Lalli, 1992) and to a particular religion that contributes to one's differentiation from residents in other areas and from believers of other religions or adherents belonging to other churches. The process of detachment and differentiation is necessary for identification and identity formation. However, differentiation can also have negative effects, such as identity closure, identitarianism, clash of cultures and competition between groups. These phenomena are strictly connected with religiosity, activating pride.

According to the *continuity principle*, people have the desire to maintain continuity to their self-construct. On a collective level, according to the idea of *perceived collective continuity,* also groups like to perceive themselves as collective entities moving across time (Sani et al., 2007). There are two subtypes of the continuity principle: *self-referent continuity*, which refers to the places and/or religion as referents to past selves and actions (e.g. Lalli, 1992), and *congruent continuity*, which means that people are motivated in their behaviour to maintain continuity based on places and religion that have emotional significance to the person. Self-referent continuity corresponds for example to landscapes that can be used as memorials to a person´s past (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996), when people for instance choose to maintain a connection in a certain place as a means to stay connected to their ancestors. This is also true for holy landmarks, such as a church or a cemetery, which means maintaining the connection with their religious roots. Moreover, in non-religious context, it could apply to memorial monument communities or institutions built in places where significant events, such as battles, or war events happened, strengthening local PoP. Regarding the place-congruent continuity, the principle can also act as a motivator for people to move out of, or to disinvest on, a certain place

if they think that their identity no longer meets the spiritual significance of a place. Such a feeling has been named by the environmental philosopher Albrechts (2005) as 'Solastalgia'—namely the chronic distress a person feels when his/her own place changes so much that it is no longer recognizable by him/her (Albrecht et al., 2007). Moreover, congruency helps to explain phenomena, such as the search for the promised land and the connection between religious orthodoxy and pride of places, e.g. activated by groups of Jewish settlers in the occupied territories (e.g. Bar-Tal et al., 1995; Billig, 2006; Billig et al, 2006).

The third principle of place identity process is self-esteem where the authors describe that self-esteem can be a result of a positive association of one's identity with a place. Pride of place can be a result of this association (Lalli, 1992; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996), and self-esteem is known to be a possible positive result of feelings of (authentic) pride (Tracy et al., 2009; Tracy & Robins, 2007a). This could also possibly apply to people living in the holy land or city (e.g. Jerusalem) who feel more self-esteem, only because they live in such a significant religious place.

The fourth principle is the need for self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), which in context of place identity refers to the manageability of and sense of agency over one's environment. In case of lack of sense of agency related to one's place of residence, for instance due to high levels of crime, or of environmental crisis, emergency and disaster, people could lose their motivation to keep their residency and decide to move out.

The positive association between religious identity and place identity is also consistent with the broad framework of Terror Management Theory (TMT) (Pyszczynski, Sullivan, & Greenberg, 2014; Rosenblatt, Greenberg, Solomon, Pyszczynski, & Lyon, 1989; Solomon, Greenberg, & Pyszczinsky, 1991, 2004). This theory explains how humans defend themselves against anxiety and existential terror that the awareness of our mortality brings about. The theory suggests that, over millennia, civilizations all over the planet have developed cultures to minimize the psychological distress that is associated to this existential terror. The worldviews of these cultures offer a potential psychological buffer against the terror and a source for the self-esteem of individuals. TMT argues that people will experience a higher self-esteem when they value themselves as living a good and meaningful life and as a valuable participant to their culture; i.e. living up to the expectations of its society (Greenberg, Vail, & Pyszczynski, 2014). One of the main hypothesis of the TMT is that when mortality salience (i.e. bringing mortality into awareness) is induced, then people will tend

to increase their adherence to, and defence of the culture they are part of. In line with this assumption, many studies have demonstrated that an augmented mortality salience in participants is connected to a variety of outcomes related to the defence of cultural worldviews and self-esteem, such as enhanced prejudice and stereotyping towards others who hold different cultural worldviews (Schimel et al., 1999), motivating violent behaviour towards out-group members (McGregor et al., 1998), discrimination of out-group members (Leippe, Bergold, & Eisenstadt, 2017) and a nationalistic bias (Nelson, Moore, Olivetti, & Scott, 1997). Studies for example showed that in countries such as Italy or the USA where nationalistic pride is widely valued, feelings of nationalism were increased when mortality salience was induced (Castano, Yzerbyt, & Paladino, 2004; Nelson et al., 1997). In Germany however, a country where expression of national pride is negatively viewed, high amounts of emotional self-regulatory abilities are needed to show any signs of national pride (Kazen, Baumann, & Kuhl, 2005).

In a negative application of TMT to Hawaiian history, Salzman (2001) discussed how the arrival of Western settlers on the island brought about mortal diseases that could not be explained by their traditional religion and belief systems. The Western (Calvinist) missionaries following the invasion assisted the native population in letting them believe that they were being punished for their sins. Death from Western diseases made it easy for the missionaries to convert the natives to Christianity for the promise of an afterlife in heaven (Kame'eleihiwa, 1992). Because of the abandonment of traditional values, the native population on the island remained with low self-esteem and consequently with maladaptive behaviour and low pride of their place.

The literature presented so far mainly provides evidence of the positive outcomes of PoP, however, a too high PoP could be a double-edged sword, leading to positive individual outcomes, but negative societal effects. PoP emphasis on the individual's self-esteem could indeed lead to antisocial and egoistic attitudes of the individuals who would favour their source of PoP, denigrating or, even, aggressing other individuals, groups and places.

Indeed, religion and places are linked to group-identities; in an intergroup context this can lead to property issues and potential conflicts. A small-scale example of this kind of conflicts can be found when groups of immigrants ask to be able to create a temple for their religion. Bugg (2013) reports that when a Hindu community wanted to construct a Hindu Temple in Australia, a dispute over the project raised, with locals considering the

religious site as inconsistent with the traditional rural heritage of the area they are proud of, while immigrants would be proud to have a place to pray in (Bugg, 2013). The inter-group frame leads to connecting place identity and PoP to parochialism. Parochialism can be defined as the tendency of people to favour a group that includes them while under-weighing or ignoring harm to outsiders (Schwartz-Shea & Simmons, 1991). More broadly, it is a social-psychological construct according to which people tend to support the in-group and harm the out-group (Reeve, 2017). For instance, Quin (2011) studied the relationship between East Asia regionalism and Chinese national pride among young Chinese university students: results show that East Asia regionalism and Chinese national pride are positively correlated, probably in an anti-West sentiment. Consistently, Reeskens and Wright (2011), in a European study involving more than 40,000 participants from 31 European Countries, found that national pride appears to increase subjective well-being trough the mediation of nationalism. The same authors note that ethnic nationalism may be stoked by religious conflicts (Reeskens & Wright, 2011).

In its most extreme negative form, PoP can turn into collective narcissism where there is a belief in an in-group greatness with a need for external recognition (Cislak, Wojcik, & Cichocka, 2018). For example, studies link collective narcissism with anti-Semitism (e.g. Golec de Zavala, & Cichocka, 2012; Golec de Zavala, Cichocka, Eidelson, & Jayawickreme, 2009). This led to the segregation of Jews and in many European cities to the multiplication of Jewish ghettos.

The Conative Component of PoP and Religion

Another aspect to investigate concerns the link between PoP and religion in terms of behaviour and agency. One might wonder how religious activities can strengthen PoP. Furthermore, we can explore under what conditions PoP can generate a commitment to the place and how it in turn can affect the spiritual experience of individuals and a community.

The first aspect to explore concerns the role of routines. It is known, in fact, that place involves some sort of conative, behavioural dependence on the life-worlds (Counted, 2019, p. 1). Some scholars talk about attitudes of place, or people-in-place (Seamon, 2014; Stokols & Shumaker, 1981), or place dependence (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001). Due to religion, the observant actively adheres to a set of rituals that are strictly connected with a place (Levav et al., 2008, p. 47). For example, praying is often practiced in

groups in a temple, mosque, church or synagogue. Even the individual pray at home is strictly connected with physical cues (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004b), such as the carpet or the direction oriented towards a place (e.g. Mecca). In other words, Mazumdar and Mazumdar (2004a) would say that religion encourages place attachment having a role in people's daily life and influencing their relation with places and between places.

The concept of place rituals is able to explain well the link between the conative component of PoP and religion. Place rituals are 'a series of acts through which places in religion are invoked, their sacredness reaffirmed and a person's identification with place solidified' (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004a, p. 390). They have the task not only of activating repetitive behaviours, but also of introjecting the meaning attributed to a place, so that they can play a significant role in the 'internalization' process. According to Geertz (1968, p. 100): 'For the overwhelming majority of the religious in any population engagement in some form of ritualized traffic with sacred symbols is the major mechanism by which they come not only to encounter a world view but actually to adopt it, to internalize it as part of their personality'. In this capacity, place rituals act as 'reminders' (Berger, 1967), having the goal of making central and maintaining active a place (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004a, p. 390). The link between place rituals and PoP is barely investigated, but it can be assumed that a place continually remembered through daily prayers and/or special occasion invocations can also activate pride. As an illustration, we can assume the pride of Jerusalem, as it is invoked by the Jews and the role it played during the diaspora (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004a).

Another aspect to be explored is the agency. It can be wondered how religion can activate, through PoP, engagement and involvement in a specific place. In this context, the link between PoP and actions or behaviours can be located in the field of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) where positive emotions play an essential role for human thriving. In contrast to negative emotions, positive emotions do not evoke specific adaptive responses to the experienced emotion, they are very broad, and there is no direct link with survival (Fredrickson & Levenson, 1998). Barbara Fredrickson, one of the pioneers of positive psychology, has written extensively about the 'broaden-and-build model' of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 1998, 2001; Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002, 2018). Every positive emotion has its unique contribution to this 'broadening effect'. For example, experiencing (authentic) pride can stimulate caring, sharing (Nakamura, 2013; Tangney & Fischer, 1995), altruism (Michie, 2009)

motivation (Williams & DeSteno, 2008), engagement and a sense of connection with others (Gable, Reis, Impett, & Asher, 2004). In general, positive emotions promote social engagement. Where negative emotions are of value for short term responses to (life) threatening situations, positive emotions build up long term resources. Through the broadening of attention, cognition and behaviour, people build up resources that sustain the presence of positive emotions (the 'build effect'). When people for example experience (authentic) pride, they build up, among others, perseverance (Williams & DeSteno, 2008), stronger social ties (Gable et al., 2004) and higher self-esteem (Tracy et al., 2009; Tracy & Robins, 2007a). These resources can prove useful in order to deal with difficult or challenging situations. Because of the broadening and building up of resources, positive emotions initiate an upward spiral towards physical and mental well-being (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002, 2018). In sum, PoP will enlarge the person's contextual attention and resources investment, and all this finally improves a range of actions and behaviours with a positive effect on individual and societal well-being. For example being proud of your community church can strengthen social ties, increase self-esteem and could motivate you to contribute to its renovation; reinforcing the feelings of pride and leading to positive outcomes on the well-being of the individual and (religious) community.

Beyond positive psychology, at a societal level, PoP can also have positive societal effects. People with a stronger place identity and place attachment are known to be more active in the neighbourhood and in protecting identity-relevant natural places (Carrus et al., 2005; Comstock et al., 2010; Hinds & Sparks, 2008). A study conducted on a sample of 1328 subjects, coming from three regions of Poland, considered religious engagement strictly connected with place attachment and neighbourhood ties and it includes the participation of local religious associations, and religious activism, as indicators of civic activity (Lewicka, 2005).

PoP has also positive effects for the collective because it leads to pro-community initiatives. Like other cultural events (Liu, 2015), religious events can be effective catalyst for city regeneration processes through boosting PoP. In Italy, for instance, several studies have been conducted during the Catholic 2000 Jubilee and the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy (Cipriani, 2012; Cipriani & Cipolla, 2002; Memoli & Sannella, 2017). These events have led the population living in Rome to feel proud of living in the eternal city and thousands of people have volunteered and

welcomed pilgrims. Also, interviewed people who participated in the pilgrimage showed attitudes of attention to the hosting city (e.g. not littering) as a sign of gratitude for the reception and for the intensity of the spiritual experience with the place. In general people along pilgrim routes/sites could be proud to experience the place and its religious significance and feel a strong connection to the land they crossed to arrive at the destination.

This topic is strictly connected with pilgrimage that can be considered one of the most intense learning experiences because it is part of religious socialization through a place visit (Boissevain, 2017; Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004b; Rowan, 2004). In pilgrimage, learning—through ritual, texts and storytelling—is synergistically combined so that the experiential sense is heightened (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004a, p. 393). It enables the pilgrim to witness first-hand the place qualities, through the engagement of all the senses (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004a, p. 393). For example, in a research on Hindu worship, Eck (1981) analyses the experience of pilgrimage using a model which underlines the engagement of all the senses. Indeed he states that during the pilgrimage the believer 'sees' sacred sites, such as temples, churches, relics, icons and monuments, 'hears' sacred sounds such as bells, drum beats, chanting, singing, the call to prayer, 'touches' sacred artefacts, such as icons, 'eats' special food, such as consecrated food and 'smells' specific aromas, such as incense or flowers smell.

This brings us to mention one last aspect opening a stimulating scenario: the role of mobility today. According to Gustafson (2001) in this age of postmodernism and globalization, a different relationship has developed between place attachment and mobility (Billig, 2006, p. 250). Nowadays mobility may signify freedom, opportunity and new experiences, but also flexibility, liquidity and loss of roots (McAlister, 2005). Not even the religious experience is excluded by this new context. Current society is characterized by high levels of migration, mobility and this makes one wonder how this alteration influences behaviours and human place interaction (Relph, 2008). If we add to this picture the processes of digitization and the possibility of having virtual experiences, it is even more challenging to imagine and maintain PoP future characteristics.

Conclusion

In the event of the Notre Dame burning of April 2019 the word 'pride' was evoked and pronounced many times. That event introduced us to deepen the theme of the pride of a place and how it is closely connected to religion.

In particular, in this chapter, a first overview has been offered regarding relevant literature behind the construct of Pride of Place (PoP) across a range of related constructs for a place–person relation promotion—also in terms of positive emotions and identity features. Pride of Place has been mentioned often in literature, however a systematic study has not been done yet.

In this chapter, PoP has been related to other important concepts in environmental psychology such as primarily place attachment and place identity. In particular, the chapter explores the relationship between PoP and other constructs trying to understand what role religion plays in the dynamics of PoP.

PoP develops, often during infancy and through particular place-related activities, with places that have a relevant social and religious significance and that fulfil individual's psychological needs. Indeed, it is likely that people might feel pride for religious places that provide them with autonomy, competence and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). By fulfilling these basic psychological needs, the virtuous circle of pride-related positive emotions initiates.

The literature review shows that, at the individual level, PoP has mainly positive consequences because it is associated to an individual's self-esteem. On the societal point of view, consequences of PoP are both positive and negative: On the one hand, PoP leads to prosocial and pro-environmental behaviours, on the other hand it is associated to group identity and thus phenomena such as parochialism, identitarianism and inter-group conflicts. On the religious point of view, it could be linked to religious fundamentalism and intolerance.

Following the subdivision between affective component, cognitive component and conative component, the chapter's framework tries to investigate how religion affects people's PoP especially in terms of emotions, beliefs and behaviours.

A first exploration here has been outlined in order to justify how PoP can be used for improving both the study and the management of people–place–religion bonds and relations, with relevant implications for both personal and collective well-being and prosperity.

concept is studied and a curriculum for secondary education in rural areas is developed to foster positive people–place bonds and enhance twenty-first century skills. The project results will be published on www.prideofplace.eu. The EC Erasmus + grant 'Pride of place' runs from 01-09-2018 until 31-10-2020 (reference number: 2018-1-NL01-KA201-039020).

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Mapping the Visible and Invisible Topographies of Place and Landscape Through Sacred Mobilities

Avril Maddrell

Introduction

Over the last decade I have explored relationship between bodies, emotions, religion, place and landscape in a number of themes and contexts—bereavement; gender and religion; the Marian shrine of Madonna Ta Pinu in Gozo, Malta; gender and religion; pilgrimage walks; pilgrimage and landscape; and wider sacred mobilities, including death. Geographies of gender, and of religion, embodied and emotional geographies are central to these endeavours. Scholarship grounded in feminist theories and methods has played an important role in bringing analytical attention to questions of gender, embodiment and performance within religion (Maddrell, 2009, 2011, 2016); as can be seen in significant bodies of work on feminist theology and gender and religion (e.g. Gemzöe, Keinänen, & Maddrell, 2016; Jansen & Notermans, 2012; Morin & Guelke, 2007); sacred places and landscapes (e.g. Hopkins, Kong, & Olson 2013; Kong, 1993, 2001;

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Maddrell, della Dora, Scafi, & Walton, 2015; Maddrell, Terry, & Gale, 2015; Park, 1994; Saunders, 2013); spirituality in various contexts (Cloke & Beaumont, 2013; Holloway & Valins, 2002; Shah, Dwyer, & Gilbert, 2012). This chapter builds on that body of work.

Here I draw on those studies to provide an overview of the intertwined and relational character of place, scared mobilities and body-mind-belief. Morin and Guelke's (2007) volume, *Women, Religion and Space*, highlighted three recurring themes: (i) embodiment (e.g. Gokariksel [2007] on veiling), (ii) lived tactical religion (which is often highly gendered); and (iii) the need to 'best understand religion not as a discrete category of social life but as a way of being in the world, one that is always articulated within particular…..[situated social-cultural-historical]] contexts' (Secor, 2007, p. 158). The next section reflects on the spatial nature of such situated contexts.

The Spatialities of Place and Landscape

Space is often perceived in static Euclidian form (a field, a room, a container); but recent geographical scholarship and the 'spatial turn' in the wider social sciences have recognized and reconceptualized space *as* organic, fluid, alive, and dynamic. Lefebvre's (1991) *The Production of Space* encapsulates something of those processual and dynamic qualities. This has prompted those inspired by his and other work to attempt to 'capture in thought the actual process of [the] production of space', including making the qualities of space, both perceptible and imperceptible, visible and cognizant (Merrifield, 2000, p. 173). It is through understanding space and spatial relations that we can understand the complexities of places and wider landscape—and how these are inflected by and experienced as sites of belief, spirituality and/or religion.

Doreen Massey (2005) neatly captured the nature of space as the product of interrelations, constituted through interactions and pluralities when she wrote: 'space is always under construction … a simultaneity of stories-so-far' (Massey, 2005, p. 9). The same can be said of *places*, those sites shaped by meaning, experience, association, and attachment, described by Yi-Fu Tuan (1974) as *Topophilia* (love of land/place). A range of approaches explore people's relationship to place. 'Sense of place' has been developed to account for phenomenological experience of, and response to, place, whereby place is understood as a loci for lived experience and meaning-making, which in turn engenders discursive, dialogical and hermeneutic understanding, by individuals and collectives (Relph, 1976; Seamon, 2014). Crucially, this includes negative relation to place,

as seen in Tuan's (1979) *Landscapes of Fear*. Work on place attachment has identified particular geographical locations as objects of psychological attachment (e.g. through childhood memories and day-to-day relational experiences), whereby place becomes the object of attachment and site of relational interaction and emotional bonds, prompting particular forms of behaviour. Place thereby acts as a loci for transactional processes which provide the individual with a sense of security (Counted & Zock, 2019). While both sense of place and place attachment are characterized as 'slow' processes, in contrast, Raymond, Kytta, and Stedman (2017) make a case for complementing 'slow' understanding of and attachment to place with approaches which accommodate immediate 'fast' sensory experience and perceptions of place by dint of affordances, which are the product of a relationship between the perception of particular situated properties of the world and the possibility for action in response to those affordances within that locale (Raymond et al., 2017, p. 1675). Ultimately, Raymond et al. (2017) call for an approach to understanding sense of place which encompasses (i) immediate sensory experience and perceived meanings as well as those developed over time; (ii) attention to the attributes of individuals and their interface with environmental features; and (iii) a move away from simplistic linear notions of place attachment in order to recognize the dynamic interface of mind, culture and environment. This approach affords an understanding of sense of place which is perceived and socially constructed, and which may vary over time—notably over the life course, and allows for an understanding both the socially constructed and apparently transcendent meanings of place, as well as the role of tangible and intangible characteristics of places which can evoke emotional, symbolic and spiritual meaning. Such understanding involves the interrelation of the material and emotional-affective, cognitive and the sensory, individual and shared values, norms and experiences, each set within wider socio-economic, cultural and political contexts (Maddrell, 2016).

The encounter between human subject and place constitutes a key arena for meaning-making (Crouch, 2000), it is an encounter shaped by dynamic interaction: 'places … are always "on the move"' (Sheller & Urry, 2006, p. 1); 'places are always becoming' (Edensor, 2010, p. 7); moreover, all *relationships* are dynamic, their character evolving, so too people's relationship to and with places. The next section explores the role of embodied and emotional-affective experience in shaping relationship to place before an outline of a conceptual framework 'maps' those dynamic spatial relations.

Embodiment and Emotion

The body has been recognized as an important site of enquiry for those concerned with identity, gendered relations and the 'everyday'. The body is deeply inter-connected emotional, psychological and biochemical system with associated processes, as well as a site of *embodiment*, of identity, experience, performance (Moss & Dyck, 2003/1998). It is a space where things happen, such as illness, ageing, pregnancy, a site of sentience and sensual experience, but also a space of expression, marked by culture and life history. Its complexity is simultaneously 'material, discursive and psychical' (Longhurst, 2005, p. 91), a space where intertwined corporeal and psychological processes occur—and this includes religious beliefs and spiritual practices. We experience the world through the senses—touch, smell, taste, sight, sound—and the kinetics and rhythms of movement. Inevitably, visual, haptic and embodied experience of places and landscapes can evoke emotional-affective-embodied-spiritual responses (Maddrell, 2011, 2016; Maddrell & della Dora, 2013).

In parallel to, and often in conversation with work on the body, scholarship over the last two decades has increasingly acknowledged and addressed questions of emotion and affect. These subjects had previously been relatively neglected within the social sciences, despite their centrality to human experience and meaning-making, and their import to understanding economic, political and policy matters (Anderson & Smith, 2001). A consequence of a gendered politics of research which favoured detachment, objectivity and rationality, Anderson and Smith highlight how 'this neglect leaves a gaping void in how we both know, and intervene in, the world' (ibid., p. 7). Instead, they make the case for understanding the human world as constructed and experienced *through emotions*, arguing that 'to neglect the emotions is to exclude a key set of relations through which lives are lived and societies made' (op. cit., p. 7).

Being attentive to emotions prompts an understanding that '… places are never merely backdrops for action or containers for the past. They are fluid mosaics and moments of memory, matter, metaphor, scene, and experience which create and mediate social spaces and temporalities' (Till, 2005, p. 8). Thus, particular spaces become emotion-laden *places:* 'embodied emotions are intricately connected to specific sites and contexts' (Bondi, Davidson, & Smith, 2005, p. 5). This is true of both those spaces we consciously—actively—designate as significant and those affectively charged

spaces which unexpectedly interpellate us, unawares. Thus, places and landscapes are experiential, relational, polysemic.

Relational approaches have informed understanding within various sub-disciplines, including health geographies (Curtis, 2010), therapeutic geographies (Bell, Foley, Houghton, Maddrell, & Williams, 2018), geographies of religion (Kong, 2001, 2010), and processual approaches to cartography (Kitchin, Gleeson, & Dodge, 2013). Both emotions and spaces can be seen as dynamic shifting assemblages, and, combined, represent a complex interrelation of lived place-temporalities, shot through with socio-economic, cultural and political norms. Building on previous work on the spatialities of grief, the same conceptual framework applies to other situated experiences and relations, including the complex assemblage of arenas, beliefs and experiences which constitute the relationality of place and religion (see Fig. 7.1).
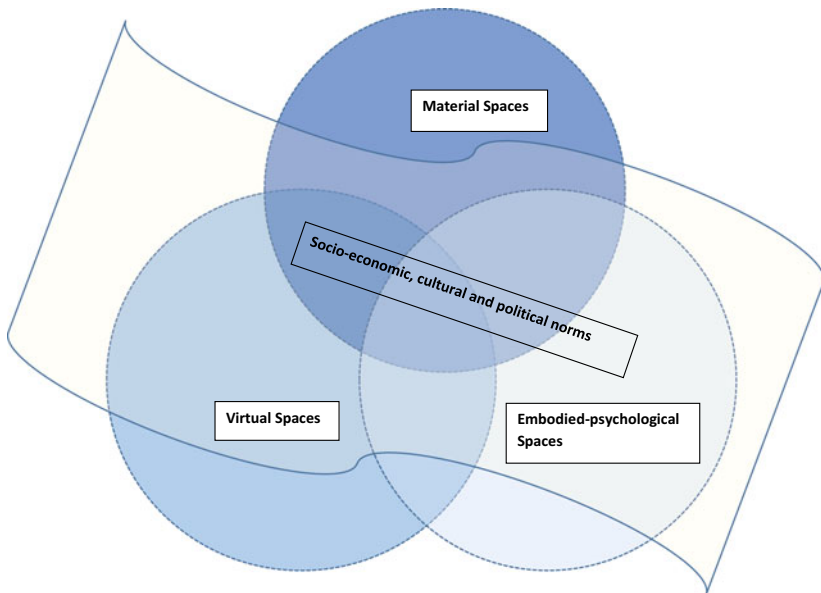

Fig. 7.1 Material, embodied psychological and virtual spatialities: a conceptual framework for understanding dynamic spatial relations (After Maddrell [2016, p. 181])

Mapping the Topographies of the Visible and Invisible

This experiential framework identifies the overlapping and co-producing characteristics of familiar physical-material spaces, the body-mind complex as an intrinsic space in its own right, and as a medium of experience; as well as the virtual spaces of online arena, virtual communities, and the non-material arenas of belief, including those associated with religious belief, such as heaven. This framework is a schematic representation of a form of 'deep mapping' (Harris, 2015), used initially to explore the spatialities of grief, loss and consolation, but can be applied to all manner of place-based, experiences, producing a situated experiential 'map' for individuals which, in turn, provides insight to place attachment and sense of place. The dynamic contingent and 'messy' reality of this approach is represented by the uneven, overlapping and permeable areas, and by the porous outline of any individual or collective map, as seen in Fig. 7.1.

Embodiment is central to the framework presented here, the body being a space of 'experience, practice, performance and trace' (Maddrell, 2016, p. 176). Being attentive to the body contributes to understanding the contextualized co-constitution of people, experience and places. Embodied spaces represent an overlap between the material space of the body and emotional-psychological space, as experienced through place and landscape (e.g. home, workplace, sports arena or riverside). Sense of wellbeing being reflects conscious and sub-conscious processes and associated biochemistry (Damasio, 2000) which are shaped by physical, psychical, emotional-affective and spiritual engagements, including those anchored in, or triggered by, site-specific experiences of place and landscape (see Foley, 2011, Maddrell, 2011, 2013). Meaning and attachment can coalesce around sites of personal experience and significance, as well as shared symbolic spaces and sites of meaning-making, such as a place of worship, shrine, or site associated with revelation. Religious beliefs and spiritual practices mesh material and embodied experience with the virtual realm of the, imbricating the embodied and material to the topographies beyond the body-mind and physical environment into the non-material and more-than-human arena, such as prayer networks, global communities of believers and spatial imaginaries of the afterlife. Combined, the resulting dynamic maps of personal and communal meaning and experience lay bare the topographies of the inner and virtual worlds of belief in relation to the material world.

Thus, if, following Secor (cited in the introduction to this chapter), we view lived religion as a spiritual *embodied* faith practice rather than one focused institutionalized creeds, structures and buildings (although the two frequently intersect), then it is necessary to recognize that a person's religious beliefs and spiritual practices travel with and within them, with varying degrees of visibility, influencing perceptions of, and responses to, particular places. To rephrase an argument made in relation to mapping the dynamic, overlapping and relational spatialities of grief and remembrance: 'if we recognise the primary space of [spirituality] as embodied by the believer, they (we) carry belief *within* and can potentially be interpellated by it at any juncture of time-space. If we recognise the mobility of embodied and relational belief, greater understanding of the complex dynamic spatial patterns of belief, spiritual experience and religion will follow' (rewording of Maddrell, 2016, p. 170, underlined sections replace 'grief' with 'belief'). The following section applies these principles to understanding the practice of pilgrimage as a form of embodied sacred mobility.

Embodied-Emotional-Affective Sacred Mobilities

The hermenutics of place progressively reveals new meanings in a kind of conversation between topography, memory and the presence of a particular people at any given moment. (Sheldrake, 2001, p. 17)

In the quote above, Philip Sheldrake usefully identifies the topography, memory and people in a specific time-space; however, this co-production of hermeneutics also speaks to and from body-minds with sensory, sensual, kinaesthetic, emotional and spiritual dimensions, which in turn enrich our understanding of religion and place. In this section, sense of place, place attachment, and place perception are explored through the medium of landscape. 'Landscape' is simultaneously material territory, socio-economic, cultural and political text, historical palimpsest, place of dwelling and practice, and situated aesthetic, reflecting local topography, geology, architecture, land tenure and industry, and a blend of stasis, continuities and dynamic flows. Tilley (2016, p. 27) privileges 'places and their properties and paths or routes of movement between these places and their properties' in defining landscapes, but any combination of these characteristics may be perceived at a particular point in time by particular individuals

or groups. Tilley helpfully emphasizes the role of sensory embodied experience in understanding place and landscape, but it is necessary to include the non-material arena when examining religious and spiritual beliefs, practices and experiences, such as those associated with sacred sites, pilgrimage and other forms of sacred mobilities (Maddrell, Terry et al., 2015).

A focus on place- and landscape-situated experience has proved fruitful to the understanding of the embodied experience and meaning-making of scared mobilities (Maddrell, 2013; Maddrell & della Dora, 2013; Maddrell, della Dora et al., 2015; Maddrell, Terry et al., 2015. A landscape approach '…. holds in tension and blurs the boundaries between the static and the dynamic, between imagination and lived experience, between subjectivity and objectivity, between the self and the transcendent. It combines nature and culture, process and form, land and life. It accommodates exploration of the "bigger picture" of spiritual cultures and how these relate to the tangible material world ….' (Maddrell, della Dora et al., 2015, p. 7).

The Mobilities framework facilitates analysis of the meaning and experience of movements and journeys (Sheller & Urry, 2004). Just as place accrues significance through meaning-making (Tuan, 1974, 1977/2001), when movement is freighted with meaning it is described as *mobility* (Cresswell, 2006). Mobilities are experienced through bodies and senses, inflected by place, practice, belief, emotion and affect, but also by the constraints and affordances of wealth, culture and physical capacities. Attention to situated practices and performances, including their embodied and emotional-affective dimensions, which when combined with feminist non-dualistic concepts, such as sacred-secular and body-mind, can offer insight to experience of lived religion and the everyday spiritual practices. A Sacred Mobilities approach seeks to creatively explore the experiential intersections of those seeking and practising the 'sacred' (however defined) with travel and other forms of movement (Maddrell, Terry et al., 2015). Just as 'Place is characterized by the mobilities that course through it … Patterns of mobile flow thus contribute to the spatio-temporal character of a place' (Edensor, 2010, p. 5), so too people's experience of place and wider landscapes are inflected not only by their bodies and sensory experience (Tilley, 2016), but also by the emotional-psychological-spiritual nexus they inhabit. The following section draws on insights from accounts by participants in a series of guided pilgrimage and prayer walks to early Christian sites on the Isle of Man (see Maddrell, 2011, 2013; Maddrell, della Dora et al., 2015),

which are analysed in order to identify and reflect on aspects of embodied-emotional-spiritual encounters of place and how these relate to the tripartite spatial framework, as represented schematically in Fig. 7.1.

Pilgrimages often centre on site-specific place-based spiritual experience relating to sites denoted as intrinsically 'sacred', by dint of sacred materiality (e.g. a saint's shrine), 'theoplacity' (Belhassen, Caton, & Stewart, 2008), or a looser 'spiritual magnetism' (Preston, 1992) relating to broader qualities including the aesthetics, 'mood' or atmosphere of the place. The place-specific material-spiritual interface is illustrated by reflections from a male respondent during a prayer walk to the remains of a medieval keeill (chapel) and a collection of carved Celtic-Norse stones and crosses from the same period, both at Maughold: 'Touching the stones [of the keeill] and sitting on the walls gives me a great sense of connectedness to Christianity, to our ancestors and to this beautiful Island … the Celtic crosses here are reminders again from whence we have come. I love to come and just be in their presence … [St Maughold's well is] another of the special places, it conveys a great sense of peace' (Male, 66–75 years, Methodist). Here the physical tangibility of both the situated ruins of the keeill and the beautiful carved stones generates an aesthetic-spiritual experience in this particular place, with its assemblage of historical sacred artefacts which engender a spiritual atmosphere in the present, as well as creating a virtual bond, across time, to the forebears of faith in this place. Imagination plays a critical role in the social construction of place (Adams, Hoelscher, & Till, 2001, p. xxi) and beliefs (Holloway, 2003), and here the physical attributes of place, including the representational 'texts' of the stone carvings, create a prized and revisited place characterized by spiritual liminality and temporal mobility, an experience of place often attributed in popular Celtic theology in terms of 'thin places': both pilgrimage as an experience and particular landscapes have liminal qualities (Maddrell, della Dora et al., 2015).

As another participant reported, both the practice of worship and being in nature can act as spiritual thresholds: 'Apart from worship, I find it easiest to be in the Lord's presence when I am in His beautiful Creation' (Female, 66–75 years, Evangelical Christian); needless to say when worship takes place in an inspiring natural environment, it can create heightened experience, as evidenced in the following description of what might be described as spiritual enchantment: 'Sitting in a place of prayer surrounded by beautiful woodland and carpets of spring flowers was sheer delight. An awe-filled mystic experience each day being a new landscape, vista, and different type of weather. [….] From hilltop and Viking burial grounds and grassy fields

to the woodlands and waterfalls to the beaches, all enveloped in the glorious May splendour of new green and wildflowers. Magic' (Female, 66–75 years, Roman Catholic). However, even adverse physical conditions can engender heightened spiritual experience in charged places: 'On this wild, wet day, the elements … it just inspires … it was driving rain, but we were together inside [the chapel ruin], and we shared the Elements together, passed the chalice round to each other and gave the bread to each other. We were soaked through, it was pelting with rain when we were there, and we had come some distance walking down, but I [was moved by] the simplicity of it' (Female, 60+ years, Methodist). While a secular analysis might characterize this wind and rainswept service in the coastal keeill ruins as sensual and Romantic experiential aesthetics, for those who, like this woman, were spiritually moved by the prayer walk culminating in the Eucharist, this characterization would not do justice to their experience of spiritual transport. Rather, it might be described as a place-based convergence of physical movement and spiritual mobility, in Inge's terms, an example of 'sacramental encounters in which the material becomes a vehicle for God's self-communication. In such events the role of place is essential' (Inge, 2003, p. 91).

Physical and spiritual journeys are intertwined in sacred mobilities, embodied and metaphorical journeys experienced in and mediated through body-mind, embodiment being central to the experience of landscape through the medium of a sensing carnal body (Tilley, 2016). The kinaesthetic, aesthetic, sensory and sensual are all evident in various participants' embodied-emotional-spiritual experiential accounts: 'peace – physical exhaustion, understanding we are such small specks on this earth' (Female, 35–44 years, Anglican); '…began a lovely trek along the coastal path, very like that at St.David's. Gorgeous wild flowers added so much to our pleasure, archids, thrift, blue scabiou, field sorrel which we tasted. A brief stop at Port Mooar Bay – how I would have loved to swim …. quite uncomfortable walking on stones after heather' (Adele, Female, 60+ years, Quaker). At another point, this participant deployed an extended period of silent walking to faciltiate focus and heightened experience—to allow her the spiritual mobility of simultaneously occupying her place on the path and 'another place' (see Maddrell, 2013).

The physical and mental benefits of walking are well-rehearsed (ibid.; Slavin, 2003), and, not surprisingly, these appear in Adele's account: 'I love the buzz I get form climbing mountains, both the physical and the spiritual. The views were wonderful, South to the Calf of Man, Ireland was

hidden behind mist or cloud. Lots of ups and downs today, which made me think about the ups and downs of life on the hills and valleys. You can't have one without the other' (Adele, Female, 60+ years, Quaker). Clearly, this exemplifies the agency and hermeutics of experiential landscape, learning experienced through the soles of boots, ragged and easy breath; it epitomizes what geographers have referred to as 'textures of place' or sense of place (see Adams et al., 2001).

'The physicality of landscapes act as a ground for all thought and social interpretation, it profoundly affects the way we think, feel, move and act' (Tilley, 2016, p. 26). Furthermore, 'Motion and emotion … are kinaesthetically intertwined' (Sheller, 2004, p. 227), but that motion and emotion are situated, rooted in place at a particular point in time, as illustrated further in Adele's account of the day which was her late mother's birthday. 'Day 6 Thursday June 24th. Feast of St John the Baptist. Birthday of Eileen [….] born in 1908. This is always an important day for me, as it was my Darling Mum's birthday ….'. This day's walking, contextualized by the anniversary, was overtly emotionally heightened for Adele, and she had to stop and take some time out when unexpectedly interpellated by an unexpected affective encounter with a cluster of family graves, including a mother and daughter located at the top of the hill: 'A very emotional moment looking at a grave of several members of a family …' (Adele, 60+ years, Quaker).

Conclusion

Different forms of mobility produce specific situated experiences, and consequently orient the subject differently in relation to that place, at that time. Sacredly charged mobilities intersect with body-minds, place, wider landscapes and perceived spiritual realms in rich predictable and unpredictable ways. Sacred mobilities—journeys and practices—are a 'complex and interactive social, emotional, embodied spiritual experience shaped to varying degrees by individual and collective journeys, beliefs, performances and aesthetic responses' (Maddrell, della Dora et al., 2015, p. 172). Place can be characterised by the mobilities that flow through it, patterns of flows being a significant ingredient in the character of a place (Edensor, 2010). In turn, places and landscapes are agential, evoking and provoking emotional-affective and, in some cases spiritual, engagement. In common with spirituality, emotional ties reach across time and place, ultimately, they are both carried within and catalysed by meaningful places and embodied experience of landscape.

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'A Dwelling Place for Dragons': Wild Places in Mythology and Folklore

Nell Aubrey

Introduction

Places have spirits, they also have stories, and a cursory glance through any Folklore has local legends connected to features of the natural landscape. Forests, Mountains, Lakes, Seas, Marshes, Desert-wastes and Caves embody a sense of the numinous and have been transfigured into cultural traditions and narratives as the foci of non-human powers. Unusual features of the landscape such as lone trees, glacial erratic boulders, eroded or anthropomorphic rocks also accrue a mystical quality. Even abandoned man-made structures and ancient ruins close to human habitations signal an intrusion of the 'Otherworld' beyond the normal Wilderness boundaries. Folklore, Folk belief, Fairy Tales and Mythology form a wide compendium of supernatural entities, which occupy the realm beyond the familiar and the domestic. The Wilderness is where the wild things are, and by implication a place where humans should not be. An unhuman quality is the essence of its wildness, from the blank expanses of the desert to the intense, claustrophobic otherness of the forest, and the creepy stillness of absence lies

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over derelict houses and the ruins of cities. Wilderness functions as a 'space of encounter - between the human self and the supernatural Other and between humans and a natural alterity' (Feldt & Benavides, 2012, p. 2). This Alterity, natural or otherwise, encompasses a myriad of dangers to body and soul in places where supernatural others manifest as immanent forms of 'super' Nature. I will explore how these are concretized in the portrayal of the Wilderness as the domain of powerful and ambiguous otherworldly forces, and examine how perilous supernatural landscapes add a layer of complexity to psychological theories of attachment and emotional relationships with place (Manzo, 2005). I will examine a diverse range of sources including Medieval European folklore, the mythology of the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean and contemporary Ethnographic accounts of oral traditions.

DEFINITIONS OF WILDERNESS

Wilderness can be defined as any area beyond the 'cultural sphere': outside direct, intensive, purposive human control a barren, uncultivated, uninhabited and hostile space or one of neglect or abandonment (Cronan, 1996; Worman, 2010). None of these definitions are entirely satisfactory and some are contradictory. Lack of cultivation does not equate with a lack of fertility, or hostility with absence of habitation. Furthermore, pristine notions of Wilderness as 'untouched by human hand' discount the myriad ecosystems in which all humans lived for 95% of our existence, and some still do (Watson et al., 2018). Modern notions are largely concerned with the effects of human modification of planetary ecosystems (Bauckham, 2006). In reality, human exceptionalism in this regard is largely a matter of scale; all living organisms manipulate their environment (Smith, 2007). Rather than an arena of harmonious cooperation and balance, Nature, red in tooth, claw and chemical compounds, is the battleground for an arms race. All species seek to optimize their chances of survival at the expense of competitors, within a complex shifting of alliances between predator, prey, parasite and host. In the Forest 'the law of the jungle rules': Trees have evolved to release chemicals to deter browsing deer and giraffe and to attract the predators of invasive insects (Wohlleben, 2016). Retaliation against axes and chainsaws is currently confined to fairy tales and Folklore, but Trees play a long game so hopefully it's only a matter of time (Lucas, 1963). The scale of human exploitation has certainly placed remaining areas of Wilderness at incalculable risk. As of 2018 more than 77% of land

(excluding Antarctica) and 87% of the ocean has been modified by the direct effects of human activities (Watson et al., 2018). In modern discourse we are accustomed to thinking of the Wilderness as fragile ecosystems at risk from human action, whereas writings from Antiquity until the Romantic era largely envisage human civilization perched precariously on the edge of an expansive Wilderness, at the mercy of a feral aggressor (Oelschlaeger, 1991).

These concepts of 'Wilderness' are heavily laden, but the latter, which has the longest documented historical currency within the wider narrative of the human dominion over Nature. This is reflected in the Indo-European etymology. Wilderness 'a place of Wild Deer or game', derives from the Proto-Germanic '*Wildia*'; a natural state, uncultivated, untamed, undomesticated and uncontrolled. The association between Civilization and Cultivation is not simply a linguistic residue, but an ingrained orthodoxy (Scott, 2017). Urbanized 'grain-states' are a comparatively recent phenomenon, wobbling unsteadily into permanence in the four or five millennia following the first evidence of settled agriculture (Wilkinson et al., 2014). Legal, philosophical and geographical texts of the Ancient World typified civilization in terms of walls, tax, government, organized religion and Law, or the absence thereof. On his ill-fated trip beyond the bounds of the known world Odysseus repeatedly wonders if he will encounter; 'brutal and lawless savages, or hospitable and god-fearing people?.' In reality Cities were heavily dependent on the exploitation of wild hinterlands for raw materials, including slaves, and while granaries and moveable goods made Cities easy pickings for mobile raiders, the proliferation of walls may have served to keep populations in as much as to keep hostiles out (Scott, 2017). The intensification of cultivation and the harnessing of technologies such as deforestation, irrigation and mining altered the relationship of burgeoning agricultural settlements to those beyond their boundaries. The Wilderness became an ambiguous place of fertility and disturbing otherness, charged with cultural significance as gauge of a society's response to alterity (Feldt & Benavides, 2012; Uebal, 2016). In 1900, 13% of the planet's population lived in urbanized areas, by 2016 this had grown to 55%. For most of their existence, Cities, and indeed States, have been tiny nodes in a larger morass of 'uncontrolled' lands and peoples; it is estimated that until the seventeenth century up to one-third of the world population lived outside formal state structures. Permanent settlement and agrarian economies formed a radical break from a life of hunting, gathering and nomadic pastoralism, underpinned by an intimidating knowledge of the

natural world and ecological niche construction. (Scott, 2017). The othering of people and landscape goes hand in hand in the human history of conquest and colonization, and these populations have been most often disregarded or demonized in the distinctions between human and nature, civilization and Wilderness. In the sixteenth century the area known as Finnmark, the home of the Sami, was considered a territory utterly inhospitable to man and the particular home of wizards and sorcerers, whose magical abilities accounted for their survival in the icy wastes (Johannsen, 2010). For the states of the Ancient and Classical Worlds 'Barbarian' was as much a political category as 'primitive' was to later Colonial regimes, and assertions of innate superiority from Cities, Kingdoms or Empires should be taken with a large pinch of salt, especially as the absence of written sources from the 'Barbarians' puts them at a distinct disadvantage (Heather, 2005; Scott, 2017).

Wilderness and Place Attachment

The Wilderness, as a space receptive to imaginative projections of desires and fears, is 'sacred in the wrong way' (Uebel, 2016, p. 63), complicating the traditional theories of 'place attachment' and the sacred. The relationship of individuals to their meaningful environments has been examined mainly in terms of positive attachment, in which a sense of place is an affective tie, fulfilling human needs, and contributing to a stable sense of self and belonging (Scannell & Gifford, 2010; Tuan, 1974). Alternatively, Lynne Manzo has argued for the necessity of incorporating the full magnitude and diverse richness of emotional relationships to place, as meaning develops from an array of emotions and experiences, both positive and negative (Manzo, 2005). The cognitive elements of place attachment—memories, beliefs, meaning and knowledge, are exactly the sort of threads from which Folklore is spun. The continuity formed by storytelling can be as powerful as that of other meaningful rituals and cultural events that convey the significance of a place, furthermore stories often contribute or responds to interpretations and understandings of an actual landscape. Wilderness, like all other landscapes, is not a blank canvas, but a palimpsest, with laminae of natural, preternatural and human agencies. Michael Mayerfield Bell has suggested that our experience of landscape is a social one, and that meaning, and sense of place are largely constituted by the particular 'Ghosts' sensed there. A ubiquitous aspect of the phenomenology of place these ghosts or *genius loci* are the memories that are felt and present, occupying

and animating a landscape (Mayerfield Bell, 1997). What may appear to an outsider as a pristine environment, is marked with history, memories and meaning for an inhabitant. (Lennert, 2017). In folklore these presences may be conceptualized as ghosts of the spectral variety, or as other supernatural entities which tradition, collective memorates and experiences have localized. Narrative and naming are acts that socialize even the most inhuman and barren terrain, distinctive natural features of caves, mountains, and rock formations may be as culturally charged as an ancient mound or a stone circle (Scarre, 2009). Across Northern Europe Geology, Glaciation, Prehistoric Earthworks and Roman ruins form a landscape full of apparently artificial features, far beyond the scope of ordinary human strength or technology. Over time these have been variously interpreted as the work of Giants, Devils or Witches; the Anglo Saxons considered the decaying stone ruins of Romano-British cities to have been the work of Giants, who in later English folklore are otherwise engaged throwing rocks at one another. Many of their original stories have been lost, but place names such as Grimsdyke, Wansdyke, Devil's Dyke, Giant's Chair, Cave or Quoit, reflect the explanatory roles of supernatural agents within otherwise inexplicable landscapes (Westwood & Simpson, 2005). These folk beliefs have been derided, not least by those Antiquarians happy to wreak their own havoc in the hunt for ancient treasures (Michell, 1982). However, recent research has demonstrated the enduring role of mythology in encoding histories of natural disasters, and providing explanatory frameworks for volcanic eruptions, fossilized bones and oversized footprints (Barber & Barber, 2012; Mayor, 2001; Mayor & Sarjeant, 2001). In Maori tradition the north island of New Zealand is a petrified Whale, and the petrification of Trolls caught by the sunlight, Witches, Devils and those dancing on a Sunday, supply an anthropomorphic backstory to Monoliths, Stone Circles and Glacial Erratics across Northern Europe. However, in mythology as in folklore, the regular presence of certain themes belies the intricacies of local variants, overlooked by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century collectors interested in national identity, standardization and uniformity. Folklore is both dynamic and conservative, traditions rooted in a particular landscape alter fluidly across changing conditions of time and space (Fox, 2010; Taggart, 2017). Within the sparsely populated Northern Isles of Scotland, the meeting place of Gaelic, Scandinavian and Atlantic cultures, traditions vary between and within Islands, even from parish to parish (Bruford, 1997). Angela Bourke argues that the multiplicity of local names for the thirty

thousand or so ring-forts across Ireland reflect their emotional and imaginative importance, as places within a vast oral tradition imprinted onto a known landscape (Bourke, 2010). The variety of traditions by area and by ecology underpins the importance of landmarks and their 'biographies' to regional rather than National 'belonging' (Bourke, 2010; Gunnell, 2009). The Folklorist Ornulf Hodne writes that across the Norwegian landscape 'there is hardly a boulder, an old tree, a small rill, mound or patch of land which is or was not called by some name' (Johannsen, 2010) p. 240. Folklore is rooted within specific environments; a lived-in geographical and mental landscape, clothed in a repertoire of legends, in which hills, crossroads and ruins have specific stories, evident in the persistent and pervasive character of Wilderness archetypes drawn from the Folklore of specific areas (Gunnell, 2009; Worman, 2010). Those landscapes which retain ancient landscape features also retain stronger folklore traditions, Archaeologists have acknowledged the contribution of 'holy dread' to the long-term preservation of fairy-forts, burial mounds and sacred rocks (Giolláin, 1991). Traditions of reverent avoidance, for fear of supernatural reprisal, constitute a specific form of place attachment, by demarcating places as dangerous and set apart from normal human habitation. In considering social realms within Scandinavian Folklore, Johannsen explores the place of the 'ecotone', a transition zone between two ecological territories, reflected in the spatial distinction between social and wild. This liminal space is where respectful, reciprocal exchange with supernatural others may be conducted. Beyond lie strange uncontrollable territories, which can only be managed through a strict set of motifs, rules and patterns. The most elaborate and popular tales, '*Eventyr*', are those when the human traverses the boundary into 'alien' territory and becomes 'a protagonist for the legends' extensive background of antagonistic nature (Johannsen, 2010). Like Little Red Riding Hood, life gets more interesting, albeit endangered, when we stray from the path.

Wilderness Boundaries

In Ireland and Iceland, the otherworld is a dynamic presence within the landscape. The Irish '*Dindsenchas*' (lore of place names) portrays the physical formation of the landscape, developing from an oral tradition rooted in the Iron Age, and Mythology and Folklore peopled Bronze Age ruins, glacial Erratics, caves and mountains and forests with supernatural beings tied to the land. In Ireland the incoming Celts framed the archaeology, and

possibly the beliefs, of the previous culture within their mythological traditions, some of which were then assimilated into the narratives of Christian conversion. Supernatural powers and dangers are integrated within each new layer, frequently reinterpreting existing boundaries. Celtic mythology tells of the defeat of the magical race of the Tuatha De Danaan by the incoming humans, and their withdrawal into a separate dimension under the earth, accessed through sacred features of the landscape and Bronze Age burial mounds. The Gaelic *Si* refers to the physical structures of barrow mounds and ring-forts, of which there are some thirty thousand remaining in Ireland alone, and also the beings dwelling within (now commonly known as Fae or Fairies), a blurring that conveys the depth of the association between 'place' and inhabitant. The *Si* are probably an amalgam of chthonic and animist spirits, tied both to fertility and to the dead, able to interact with humans, for good, but mainly for ill. Lady Wilde recorded the deep-rooted belief in malevolent Fairies as late as 1985 (Bourke, 2010). Several Icelandic Sagas also describe the alien inhabitants of this largely hostile landscape, and its division according to the legal and cosmological categories of medieval Scandinavia. The Farm and its enclosures '*inngard*r' form the human world, whereas Outlaws, *Draugr*, Trolls and Wolves manifest the powers of the 'outside', '*utgardr*'. Seasonal changes form part of a narrative arc; humans are chased from pastures by the hidden-folk during the shortening days of September, and darkness, ice and snow become characters in their own right. The wilderness encroaches on the farmstead during the liminal period of the winter solstice, in the form of *Draugr, Berserkers* and Ghosts (Gunnell, 2000).

The use of the word Troll across Scandinavia often denotes, not a specific entity, but a label of 'otherness', used of witches, lakes, birds and the indigenous Sami. 'Normal' people who have come into contact with the other side, or spend too long in the north 'become' troll; withdrawn, alienated, melancholy or insane (Johannsen, 2010). Similar terms function as 'pegs on which to hang accounts of all the strange, ambiguous and unexpected' (Bruford, 1997, p. 132): Trows and Fairies in the British Isles and Ireland and Kami in Japan. The Thai 'phi' prefix signifies uncanny beings from ghosts to liver-eating goblins. All manner of otherworldly entities worldwide symbolize wild nature and the supernatural, embodied within rocks, mountains, rivers and trees, they channel the powerful natural forces of the inhospitable worlds they rule, and their chief shared characteristic is that they can all be dangerous (Ballard, 1991). In Irish folklore 'Fairy' operates as a reference point for all that is marginal, ambiguous and beyond human

control, and Fairy Fort's, outposts of 'otherness' close to human habitation, symbolize the connection of lore and landscape that together chart the no-man's land of the ambiguous and the magical. Even limited contact across these boundaries is dangerous and can be contaminating. Spatial entities influence the internal reality of their confines, hence humans in the wild internalize the non-human aspects of their environment. Outlaws exiled to the internal Wilderness in the Icelandic sagas are referred to as 'forest-men' or 'wolf-men'. Those able to endure its privations, thought to be 'troll-like' to begin with, could only be dispatched through treachery and witchcraft (Barraclough, 2010).

Greek thought defined the 'wild' *eschatia*, a place of Gods and Beasts, against the properly, fully 'human' world of the *polis* (Endsjø, 2000). These categories were also articulated through cosmology and geography, a framework in which the unknown could be imaginatively explored. *Chaos* encircled the Created world, and existed within it as Wilderness, a state of confusion, not yet ordered. Mythological and Geographical texts depict places beyond the known world, where the ordered state of the cosmos dissolves into endless darkness, mist and cloud, dark fog, or blazing heat and fiery streams. Impenetrable air filled with snow and viscous seas impassable for seaweed represent the cumulative confusion of the elements into a formless mass comprised of 'neither earth, nor sea, nor air', but 'a kind of mixture of these'. This disorder is illustrated by reports of Demons, Giants and hybrids such as Sphinxes and Griffons. Hybridity represents the transgression of the natural laws represented in the boundaries between species, and to much of the Ancient World represented the undifferentiated chaos in itself. The earliest creatures were composed of the primordial ingredients of biological life; hermaphroditic body parts, random organs, limbs, tails, fur, wings, paws and claws, before ordered into the proper categories of male, female, animal and human (Endsjø, 2000). Hybridity continues as a form of disordered biology, as does hermaphroditism, and irregularity of limbs, eyes and heads from Homer to Shakespeare (Asma, 2011). Demons constitute another outcast from the order of Creation; incorporeal, placeless pieces of pure otherness formed of the early embryonic cosmos. In Andean folklore unhappy 'Spirits' hover in a liminal existence, dimensionally distinct from human space and time, in these and many other cases across world folklore cosmic outcasts are depicted feeding 'without mercy' on a civilization they cannot be part of (Dedenbach-Salazar Sáenz, 2017; Wiggerman, 2011).

Wilderness Ecology

Specific ecologies inform the natural and supernatural threats embodied within a particular terrain and the physical attributes of their power. Physical landscapes can be dangerous intentional agents in their own right; the natural threats of an environment are personified as a form of 'super' Nature, with the purposeful control of natural phenomena. For the seafaring populations around the Ancient Mediterranean the Sea was the realm of the primordial and chaotic. Wandering rocks, lethal whirlpools, impassable cliffs and treacherous caves sheltered an assortment of aquatic terrors. Fishermen of the Red Sea still paint their boats with apotropaic eye symbols, and make food offerings to pacify the potentially murderous waters (Agius, 2017). The consuming predatory aspects of natural phenomena underlie the ubiquity of water spirits and the emotional tensions surrounding the unburied dead and the fate of the drowned are reflected throughout world mythology and folklore.

Perilous nature also stalks the desert, Wandering Ghosts, especially those of Bandits and their victims, lurk in the wastelands and the ruins of desolated cities. Demons, Gods and *djinns* embody the deadly winds that unleash the *sedru ezzu* sandstorms that can obliterate anything in their path. Mountains, such as the South American *Apu's*, are frequently cosmic entities in their own right, are home to Weather Gods and Volcanic entities such as the Guanche *Guayota*, or Hawaiian *Pele* (Dedenbach-Salazar Sáenz, 2017; LaPier, 2017; Wiggerman, 2011). Mountains are also envisaged as portals to the Underworld; the Akkadian term for Mountain '*Kur*' also refers to the 'Great Beneath', Helgafell on Iceland was designated as the recipient of the Dead by the incoming Norse, the Sami, Lapp and Tyva also venerate the Sacred Mountain abodes of their Ancestors (Hultkrantz, 1987; Purzycki, 2010; Wiggerman, 2011). Ice fields of the Arctic Tundra, Swamps, Forests and Bush can all manifest malicious intentional agency when disturbed (Borlik, 2013; Gamble, 2011; Jakobsson, 2006; Stone, 2010). In Finnish Folklore boulders, woods, wells and even cemeteries lash out with their inherent spirit, if approached improperly (Stark-Arola, 2002). The importance of the natural landscape is reflected in the physical form and powers of nature spirits and even in their later demonization: 'when our Lord expelled the fallen angels from heaven, they fell on the earth and became what the troll folk we know. Some fell on rooftops and became *nisse*; some fell in the water and became water sprites; some fell

on the hills and became hill folk, and some fell into the moors.' (Gunnell, 2007).

The power of a place and of its resident monsters is often consubstantial. In an intimate relationship between place and belonging, *genius loci* incarnate the essence of their habitats. Winged ethereal humanoids, craggy mountain-like giants, tree-people composed of bark and flesh, watery sea creatures with seaweed for hair and fiery desert *Ifrits* all embody the respective forms of their constituent elements. This continuity is reflected in the supernatural habitats of Monsters and Demons, Frost Giants would not fare well in the desert, nor D*jinn* in the arctic.

Different shapeshifters occupy different ecologies; *were-wolves* are indigenous to Europe, *were-Leopards* to Africa, *were-Tigers* to India and *were-Crocodiles* to Indonesia, whereas Mesoamerican *Nagual* transform into jaguars, pumas and wolves. Human experiences over millennia created ecologically augmented monsters and anthropological data points to the embellishments of local predators rather than the imaginative evolution of entirely new sorts of monsters (Asma, 2011; Rose, 2001). Hybrids require known ontological categories for their violations to be effective. Soul eating Demons like the Egyptian 'Devourer' *Amit* combined the hippopotamus, the crocodile and the lion, the region's most dangerous predators. Apart from Shapeshifters and Hybrids, 'normal' animals can occupy a supernatural ecological niche: snakes, crocodiles, coyotes, birds of prey, wolves, snakes, hippopotami and all manner of big cats can be Gods, Demons and Masters of Animals, or of Place. Dangerous Beasts have to share headspace with a multitude of imaginative constructs, so it makes sense that our imagined terrors began as real ones. The universal characteristics of mythical monsters include their great size and or strength, claws, fangs or some other means of facilitating predation, and a taste for human flesh and blood (Saler & Ziegler, 2005). Size and Predation of course go hand in hand; memorialized in impressive imprints in human consciousness; from the Kraken and King Kong to Godzilla, Jaws and even Nessie, Mythologies, Folklore and popular culture all resound with the motif of Big as Bad.

Our evolutionary and physical landscapes are fundamental to the explanatory frameworks we develop to interpret our experiences and relate to our environment. Recent research on survival advantage found that a supernatural predator, Demons, appear to activate a far more negative reaction on a word rating task, and may have traits akin to a superpredator (Kazanas & Altarriba, 2017). The predatory nature of the Wilderness

and its inhabitants is full of intention. Nature is understood as purposeful, even by those who claim to have no religious beliefs, which suggests the deep-seated tendency to see intentional causation in nature is rooted in evolved cognitive biases as well as cultural socialization (Järnefelt, Canfield, & Kelemen, 2015, Legare, Evans, Rosengren, & Harris, 2012). Furthermore, recent phylogenetic research has indicated Animism, defined as the belief that all 'natural' things have intentionality that can influence human lives, as the oldest trait of religion, shared by the most recent common ancestor of present-day hunter-gatherers (Peoples, Duda, & Marlowe, 2016). A 'world that watches' (Nelson, 1982, p. 14), is a domain of 'Super' Nature, the places where potency cumulates through traditions, rituals and experiences are not simply beyond Human control, but within the domain of powerful Others with the ability to both take and punish offence (Bovensiepen, 2014; Garg, 2013; Guillou, 2017). Intentional agency and anthropomorphism coalesce within our frameworks of supernatural causation with an awareness of capricious and hasty tempers (Abu-Rabia, 2005; Formoso, 1998). The prohibition against disturbing Fairy Mounds has outlasted dancing on a Sunday as a transgressive act in Ireland and Iceland, and Sacred Trees invested with an unseen dangerous power still grow on sites sacred since Biblical times (Dafni, 2011, Bourke, 2010; Gunnell, 2009). Sacred places have deep roots, especially when they are mysterious or sinister.

Reasons to Be Fearful

Viewing the Wilderness as the domain of powerful and dangerous others is ubiquitous throughout Folklore and ethnographic records worldwide. Those populations that view themselves as part of nature may often simultaneously consider specific areas either forbidden or daunting (Bovensiepen, 2014; Dedenbach-Salazar Sáenz, 2017; Wright, 1993). These places embody a strong sense of 'Otherworld' territoriality that underlies prohibitions and warnings, delineating zones of safety, danger and the importance of the boundaries between them (Bourke, 2010; Formoso, 1998; Walker, 2015). Christine Judith Nicholl's argues that among the rich inventory of monsters throughout Aboriginal Australia, 'the specific form that their wickedness takes depends to a considerable extent on their location' and reflect the potential vulnerabilities and fault lines of specific Aboriginal societies and locations. These are made manifest in creatures such

as the nocturnal predatory *Namorroddos*, the carnivorous desert *Pangkarlangu* who feasts on the bodies of children who have wandered away from camp, and the amphibious '*yawk yawk*', who like Selkies and Merpeople worldwide, lure their victims to a watery death (Comptour, Caillon, & McKey, 2016; Gunnell, 2009; Lehr, 2013; Nicholls, 2014).

Supernatural violence also occurs as revenge for behavioural infractions, or simple intrusions; tree and mountains spirits bite, and attacks by demonic diseases are often described in terms of aggressive physicality; seized by the hand of a hostile Ghost in the desert or the ruins, struck by the '*Sulak*' demon of the lavatory (Walker, 2015; Wiggerman, 2011). Supernatural vengeance places sudden and mysterious illness within a causal framework; a common denominator of powerful 'others' is their potential to harm at a distance. Elf-Shot, *elf-grippir* or fairy-struck, are among a wide range of mytho-medical tropes attributing a supernatural etiology to sudden pains and sickness, also represented as the evil airs of haunted places (Dedenbach-Salazar Sáenz, 2017; Gunnell, 2007; Wiggerman 2011).

In Finnish folklore once sacred places '*hiisi*', later reinterpreted as demonic or trickster entities '*Hiisifolk*', are among a prolific population of hidden-folk, localized within unusual or impressive aspects of the landscape. This population is held responsible for the phenomenon of '*metsanpeitto*' becoming lost and disoriented in the Wilderness. This is interpreted as being deliberately befuddled or misled by '*maahinen*' (earth-dweller), by whose magics one cannot be found, seen or heard by would-be rescuers. *Maahinen* is also a term used to refer to *nanas* or illness, linking the spirit to the states of exposure, exhaustion, dehydration and other ill-effects of disorientation (Enges, 2015). The dual motifs of disorientation and death are found in connection with 'Fairy' type beings, demons, *djinn* and innumerable other entities worldwide. Becoming lost is the easiest way to fall prey to the Wilderness, and that predation is often sexual as well as carnivorous. These abductions are also intimately tied to the physical environment; in the south of Sweden, Men alone in the forest are lured away by lascivious ladies with tree bark on their backs, in the north girls are accosted by Elves or *Huldrefolk* while in the mountain pastures or dairies (Ebrahimi, 2012; Gunnell, 2009; Purkiss, 2000; Yazdani, 2014). Germany, Iceland and Norway have Folklore and ballad traditions of women being 'taken into the Mountain' by Trolls the equivalent of 'fairy-taken' in the traditions of the British Isles (Lindow, 2014). Being deceived by illusions and led to one's doom is often the dark underbelly of seduction. Ghosts and Spirits from Malaysia to Poland share their taste for human blood with

giants, trolls and fairies (Lehr, 2013; Purkiss 2000; Sabbatani & Fiorino, 2016; Willerslev, 2004), who, before their infantilization by Arthur Rackham and Disney, were more akin to the modern-day sartorially elegant and carnally predatory Vampire than Tinkerbell.

The risks of becoming lost, or being lured away to another world by supernatural others, and lost forever, is ubiquitous in world folklore; the tropes of either sexual or carnivorous predation represent the very real risks of consumption by the Wilderness; 'during the formation of the human brain the fear of being grabbed by sharp claws, dragged into a dark hole and eaten alive, was not an abstraction' (Asma, 2011; Sugiyama, Sugiyama, Slingerland, & Collard, 2011). Thirst, hunger, lack of sleep, exposure and temperature extremes can all contribute to hallucinatory responses towards unseen dangers in unfamiliar environments, the dark or in the face of solitude; shipwrecked sailors, prisoners in solitary confinement, polar explorers and many others show how the effects of isolation can lead to perceptual hallucinations and cognitive deterioration (Lloyd, Lewis, Payne, & Wilson, 2012). Psychoneurological research has demonstrated that humans are biased in favour of detecting humanlike features, especially faces, in random images and patterns. In cases of sensory deprivation and stress it is far from uncommon for human forms and features are seen in natural phenomena as divergent clouds, trees, rocks, human voices are heard in white noise, wind, wolf howls and birdsong (Nees & Phillips, 2015, Waters, Blom, Jardri, Hugdahl, & Sommer, 2018).

Account of extreme environments, by their very nature, are a valuable resource in considering the aversive supernatural elements of Wilderness. The precarious fragile boundary between body and landscape is exacerbated by the hostile and eerie surroundings of desert or icy wastes. The risk to body and soul magnified by extremes of temperature, and the effects of the unusual movements of light and sound (Blom, 2009; Brugger, Regard, Landis, & Oelz, 1999). The Desert of Lop, 'burning hot and the home of poisonous fiends and imps', is legendary for a bewildering range of mysterious sensory experiences. There are no landmarks apart from bones that emit a faint blue light in the dark, and daytime mirages and nighttime 'desert' hallucinations are a regular feature of this terrain. Accounts of travellers including Marco Polo and Xuan Zeng report hearing voices, musical instruments, the sound of cavalcades marching, and unearthly sobbing and howling. *Djinns* are said to stalk there seeking to lure travellers to their death; 'Sometimes the spirits will call him by name; and thus, shall a traveller ofttimes be led astray so that he never finds his party. And in this way, many

have perished' (Blom, 2009; Cheng'en, 2011; Polo & Latham, 1958).[1] The hallucinatory effects of the landscape and spectral experiences are also consistently reported on Arctic and Antarctic expeditions; 'Disembodied things – the souls of those, perhaps, who had perished here – seemed frenziedly calling me in the wind' (Grabow, 2016; Mccorristine, 2018, p. 38). Should anyone harbour any doubts as to the human propensity to animate physical landscapes with intentional agents, recent research calculated that Antarctica, the least inhabited and most hostile terrain on earth, is haunted by one ghost for every 9.62 of its, albeit temporary, inhabitants. That we bring our ghosts with us is hardly in doubt. During the US Expedition of 1838–1842, Charles Wilkes described icebergs with 'lofty arches' resembling 'ruined abbeys, castles and caves'. That both poles had been imagined through the gothic tinted lenses of Coleridge and Lovecraft presumably did not help, but this should in no way detract from their overwhelming and unearthly qualities (Grabow, 2016; Mccorristine, 2018, p. 38). The actual landscapes and the psychotopographical reactions to them are more than equal to their literary counterparts. During a two-month period of total isolation on the Australasian Antarctic expedition of 1912 Morton Moyes describes his growing awareness of a nearby glacier as something alive 'some prowling enemy…a slow brained sentient being…Sprawled gigantically… immovably gripping the southern cap of the earth, deceptively solid and lifeless but actually full of movement and change', seeking to consume him like an amorphous predator (Moyes, Dovers, & Niland, 1964, pp. 20–23). Such oppression was not merely the result of isolation or ennui. Fellow AAE member Charles Laseron, while in the midst of an active sledding team, equipped with huskies and a practical joking photographer, recorded his impression of 'fighting, always fighting a terrible unseen force', and the sensation of a 'relentless, resentful and definite personality', a malevolent agent that waited 'implacably for the single false step which would hand the intruder into his power' (Laseron & Hurley, 2002, p. 31). On their respective expeditions in Taklamakan, Langdon Warner similarly reported the constant 'uneasy feeling that they were not entirely alone' among the silent and deserted ruins, and Aurel Stein encountered outbreaks of depression, violence and hysteria, attributed by his assistant to the evil spirits of the sand buried ruins (Hopkirk, 2001; Mirsky, 1998).

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[1]Xuanzang's account was the basis for the sixteenth-century Folklore compendium 'Journey to the West' by Wu Ch'êng-ên, later immortalized in the 1970s TV series 'Monkey'.

Wilderness Lore

Among all these horrors we would not have survived as a species without some monster-management strategies, and folklore function to encapsulate the real and perceived dangers of the Wilderness, and the mechanisms for dealing with them (Nelson, 1982). Phylogenetic research and ethnographic analyses reveal storytelling as both ancient and culturally universal (Tehrani, 2013). Cross-cultural research of Folktale motifs demonstrates the ubiquity of certain topics including topography, animal characteristics and social behaviour (Boyd, 2018; Scalise Sugiyama, 2017; Sugiyama, 2004). Recent research indicated social interaction and natural phenomena as the main content of stories told by a range of Hunter-Gatherer communities (Dunbar, 2014; Smith et al., 2017; Wiessner, 2014). In encoding vital ecological and survival information, including how to find food without becoming it, storytelling may well have contributed to our endurance as a species (Sugiyama, in Friedrich et al., 2006; Smith et al., 2017). Humans are heavily oriented towards space, up to half the vocabulary in conversations involve spatial references (Heeschen, 2001). Myths and Songs encapsulate place names, accounts of wanderings, territorial occupations or metaphysical guidance systems (Dal Zovo & González-García, 2018; Wright, 1993). The interweaving of landscape and stories, making 'history local and nature meaningful - by attaching social information to it' is notable mnemonic device of great antiquity (Johannsen, 2010; Stoffle et al., 2000). Local, known landscapes function as communal multidimensional maps, delineating not just routes, but histories, memories and behaviour: following the map was a safety strategy, whether you are avoiding hungry wolves or the unquiet dead (Coe, Aiken, & Palmer, 2006; Gunnell, 2009). In the Western Desert of Australia Petroglyphs considered to be created by Ancestral Beings in the Dreamtime, operate still as mnemonic devices to recall mythological narratives, which in turn link to the larger geographical terrain. 'Learning' the land remains a common constituent of the oral narratives in modern traditional societies which encode trails, paths and significant landscape features (Coe et al., 2006; James, 2015). Basso's work on the Kalapalo depicts the land as 'well used, and well known', and marked by 'ancient stories that describe how lakes, rivers, and rapids came into being' (Basso, 1996, p. 33). Vital wayfinding and topographical information within folklore became a means of acquiring and storing details of landmarks, distinguishing features, benefits or hazards in memorable socially encoded forms (Scalise Sugiyama, Under Revision). Salient

features of the landscape are often associated with the actions of human or superhuman agents reflect the deep-rooted sense of purpose and intent behind geological events and natural phenomena redolent in Mythology and Folklore (Barber & Barber, 2012; Legare et al., 2012; Mayor, 2001).

As a species that developed and survived a 'Wilderness environment' our relationship to place should be examined within the framework of our place within a natural ecology. Echoing the real-world dangers of the Wilderness, Stories are concerned with the breaching of boundaries, both physical and personal, which could provoke even well-intentioned spirits to vengeance, and in which running afoul of the malevolent reprobate could mean certain death. As a core of successive mythologies across time and space, the accommodation of Wilderness spirits into dynamic, changing structures, illustrates the flexibility and fluidity of complex meaning-making around inherently 'sacred' places.

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Religious and Place Attachment: A Cascade of Parallel Processes

Victor Counted

Introduction

Adults develop attachment bonds with visual and imaginary objects due to their mature cognitive abilities, compared to children who are yet to develop such capacities (Cicirelli, 2004). These cognitive abilities enable them to maintain proximity with objects of attachment by the mere knowledge of their whereabouts, with the aim of attaining a sense of felt security (Sroufe & Waters, 1977). Attached individuals are most likely to be drawn to more than one object of attachment simultaneously, depending on their motivational drives (Counted, 2018b). The *Circle of Place Spirituality* (CoPS) model was developed to explain the complexities of the interaction between religious and place attachment, arguing that attached individuals are likely to activate their motivational systems (exploratory assertion and attachment-affiliation) in the process of experiencing objects of attachment (Counted, 2018b). The exploratory-assertion motivational system, which is the first CoPS function, may be activated when individuals seek to master

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their broader environment and explore the potential of a particular object of attachment, thus having the function of exploration curiosity. The second motivational system in the CoPS model, attachment-affiliation, maybe activated when individuals in distress and in need of a safe haven turn to an object of attachment for emotional connection and to satisfy the need of attachment. The CoPS model is quite complex: there is no one direction for interpreting motivational drives since the attachment and exploration drives could be active simultaneously and are difficult to analyse. In other words, the CoPS model shows that humans, unlike non-human animals, are able to create artificial ways of getting safety. They create ways of activating the same neural pathways, thereby satisfying (sort of) their needs and creating a flow-on effect. That is, religion, place, drugs and porn all co-opt predetermined motivational systems. It seems right to say that God is a created source of security in the same way that places serve as settings of safety as well. In times of need, people go home, for example. Religious followers also turn to God in times of distress. Hence, geographical places and Divine entities can be viewed as objects of attachment in this regard.

The idea that there are instinctual drives might still be right but most importantly there are good reasons to expect that motivational systems and the attachment behavioural system will evolve to lead us into making choices that align with needs for safety. And some people are wired towards safety or sex more (e.g., the Dark Triad leads to a bias against safety and towards sex). Essentially, the interplay between religious and place attachment are based on the motivational drives which enhance the perception of the object of attachment as either a safe haven for attachment-affiliation or a secure base from which to engage in exploration curiosity. To further understand the intersection of religious and place attachment and how a motivational drive leads to other forms of adult attachment experiences in everyday life, the theory of parallel processes is employed to give insight on how the human brain simultaneously processes the emotionally attuned communication between religious and place attachment and how this shape the relational experiences of the attached individual.

Parallel Processes in Religious and Place Attachment

In psychology, parallel processing is the ability of the brain to process incoming stimuli of differing quality simultaneously (Broadbent, 1958; De Pisapia, Repovs, & Braver, 2008; LaBerge & Samuels, 1974; McClelland

& Rumelhart, 1986). The parallel processing model involves cognitive processes that are fundamental to determining how the brain processes multiple information such as the processing units, states of activation, patterns of connectivity, output values, rules of learning and activation and environmental characteristics. The processing unit is usually the conceptual object of attention (e.g. God, or place) and some units may be in a state of activation while others may be dormant at a given time. According to De Pisapia et al. (2008), when there is an interaction with a set of units there is usually a production of output values in the form of behaviours and emotion schemas representative of a particular object of attention. However, how a particular system is processed (activational state) varies based on the function of the rules of activation which are contingent on the interaction with the output values (behaviours, representations, etc.) and patterns of connectivity (e.g. attachment-affiliation, exploration curiosity, etc.). Hence, a model of parallel processing in relation to place spirituality, as an intersection of religious and place attachment, is a theoretical characterization of the processing stages that occur simultaneously in which two or more attachment processes occur independently in varying patterns of connectivity and at the same time when producing output values. This parallel processing activities not only determine how the human brain simultaneously responds and processes attachment stimuli of differing qualities, but also trigger a flow-on effect in which incoming stimuli affect each other in a cascade of place spirituality.

Therefore, to understand how place experiences are related to religious attachment one needs to re-examine the theory of place spirituality and how relationships have a flow-on effect that affects other relationships. As a premise, the theory of place spirituality shows how attached individuals are most likely to be drawn to more than one object of attachment or processing unit simultaneously, depending on the motivational drives (e.g. feelings, intentions, emotions, etc.) or patterns of connectivity that influence what motivational system is activated at a time (Counted, 2018b). The CoPS model, for example, simplifies the complexities of the interaction between religious and place attachment and shows how attached individuals simultaneously process incoming stimuli of differing attachment quality, though depending on the processing unit, rules of activation and patterns of connectivity.

Drawing on the theory of parallel processing, I speculate about the nature and neurobiology of religious and place attachment as a cascade

of parallel processes. As a point of departure, I first argue that relationship experiences play a central role in people's developmental processes and well-being, thus having a significant effect on their ability to function well in relation to their processing units (e.g. objects of attachment). Secondly, I propose that attachment relationships involving processing units are a focus of intervention and the means through which the attached individual finds meaning in the world because relationships matter and affect other relationships, thus forming a cascade of parallel processes. Thirdly, it is argued that processing units involving religious and place attachment share commonalities at every level and these relationships are shaped by the individual context. Essentially, a parallel processing framework helps to put the intersection of religious and place attachment into perspective, showing how they are interwoven at both micro and macro levels, thus affecting each other and sharing common processing features both historically and in contemporary life.

Relationships Matter: The Centrality of Religious and Place Attachment

While religious and place attachment have been viewed as processing units, the relational premises and centrality of these relationship experiences requires a retrospective look. The centrality of relationships is an organizing construct that refers to the integration of relationship-based concepts that express a fundamental re-examination of trends, pressures and new knowledge systems affecting human relationship processes within the environment (Weston, Ivins, Heffron, & Sweet, 1997). The discussion that follows examines the critical issues in the conceptualization of the centrality of relationships at the believer–God and people–place levels, as seen in recent literature. Attachment is central to human development, and it is not just a contemporary practice but also an ancient phenomenon. For example, biblical history shows that figures in the bible have sought for objects of attachment in times of distress and for their identity formation and collective growth (Counted & Watts, 2017). This is seen in the Judeo-Christian history among the people of Israel in the Old Testament (OT) and early Christians in the New Testament (NT) in the treatment of place attachment in the Bible. Mount Sinai, Canaan and Jerusalem played symbolic affective roles in the lives of the Israelites in the Old Testament as places of attachment to which they were drawn to for spiritual empowerment, identity development and spiritual restoration. In the New Testament, places such

as Galilee and Jerusalem had significant impact on the theology of place in biblical history among the early Christians, as seen in the epistemological shift in the meaning of place from a topological object to an embodied and trans-spatial experience of spirituality. This form of religious experience transcends attachment to any particular geographical ensemble by virtue of the contested death and restoration of the person of Jesus Christ (Counted & Watts, 2017).

Though the nature of religious place attachments is diverse and varied, the overall claim is that place experiences are related to religious attachment, and these relationships were central for religious characters (Counted & Watts, 2019). The centrality of such relationships is seen in how biblical figures experienced God in the context of place and drew close to place in their search for God. Nonetheless, reflecting on the historical analysis of the links between religious and place attachment can be problematic and complex. This is because history is addressed to the special and the singular (Nagel, 1952). In other words, history is ideographic (in the sense of place events) and aimed at understanding the unique and nonrecurrent, and thus a historical inquiry may play a less meaningful role in understanding the universal and the pervasive. While the logic of historical analysis may be limited to a specific context, I imagine that the Judeo-Christian perspective on the link between religious and place attachment only provides us with an additional lens from which to understand the phenomenon. Therefore, it is important to understand the valid limits of a particular history, especially for understanding the diverse nature of such phenomenon in another history (e.g. Islamic, Buddhist; aboriginal religions). Regardless of the proposed specific Judeo-Christian history, there is strong historical evidence showing that the intersection of religious and place attachment plays an important role in shaping cultural and religious beliefs. For example, Islamic history narrates how Prophet Muhammad received the Quranic revelation through divine mystery around 610 AD and later got the revelation for the Islamic faith in a cave called Hira at mountain Jabal an-Nour, located near Mecca. In other words, Prophet Muhammad had a divine, spiritual encounter in a place he was drawn to at that time in history. Similarly, the story of the historical Buddha also spotlights the interplay of religious and place attachment, in which he found himself connecting to the divine through his attachment to nature (which is an aspect of place). Buddha travelled across the wilderness to find answers and discover truths about the human condition, and spiritual teachings were developed during his place experiences. These different trajectories of the interplay of religious and place

attachment show how the logic of historical analysis may be singular and may not necessarily apply to universal knowledge, though there might be parallel patterns. However, what is important is that the centrality of religious and place attachment as processing units is an ancient phenomenon that is still much relevant today for conceptualizing place spirituality.

As a contemporary practice, recent empirical findings suggest the centrality of religious and place attachment among migrants (e.g. Counted, 2019; Counted, Possamai, McAuliffe, & Meade, 2018), victims of natural disaster (Davis et al. 2018) and individuals in a Western context (Brulin, Laurin, Hill, Mikulincer, & Granqvist, 2018). These studies emphasize the important role of processing units involving religious and place attachment in the lives of those drawn to them. The reason for such attachment-affiliation is not quite known, although empirical studies within the attachment theoretical framework suggest that attached individuals turn to attachment surrogates when they are in distress or to form a secure base from which/whom to shape their identity and explore the world around them (e.g. Cozolino, 2006; Richter, 2004). In other words, processing units in the form of objects of attachment become targets for proximity-seeking behaviour for attached individuals as they navigate their day-to-day lives in relation to established meaningful relationships. This shows that relationships matter. Whether it is to God, or to place, relationships matter. These attachment processes are meaningful for the individuals experiencing them, thus validating their sense of being in the world. Relationships are important for individuals both at the micro or macro levels of hierarchical structures: between processing units such as parents and infants, romantic partners, religious figures and believers, geographic places and residents, teachers and students, mentors and mentees, managers and staff, government agencies and public civil servants. Relationships matter.

Relationships Affect Other Relationships

Another proposition would be that relationships, involving processing units, affect other relationships. Siegel (2001, 2003) provides an explanation for this in showing that an individual's attachment experiences with his/her primary attachment figure is related to how they parent their own children. This is further shown in the attachment-religion framework (Counted, 2016a, 2016b, 2018a; Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016) showing that believer–God relationships stem from experiences with important

people in one's life. In the same way, people–place relationships are associated with believer–God relationships since what happens in one domain of relationship informs what happens in the other domain (Counted, 2019). The relationship in one attachment domain may be related to another relationship domain, as seen in the link between religious and place attachment both historically and empirically (Counted, 2018b, 2019; Counted & Watts, 2017, 2019). Historically, the Old Testament tells the story of an infant nation of Israel as they experienced God's presence in several biblical places through their forty years sojourn in the wilderness. From a Judeo-Christian perspective, when the Israelites found themselves in a foreign land, they craved for the God of their fathers and often turned to Jehovah as their source of hope and comfort amidst the bondage of captivity (Counted & Watts, 2017). In addition, empirical data suggest that the phenomenon of religious and place attachment among the historical Israelites who found themselves in the wilderness is analogous to that of migrants who turn to God to help them navigate the uncertainty of living in a foreign land (e.g., Counted, 2019; Counted et al., 2018). The link between religious and place attachment suggest either of these two possibilities or arguments, that (a) religious attachment promotes place attachment, or (b) faith development is the byproduct of place attachment.

The above connection between religious and place attachment is analogous to the model of parallel processes. In social work and mental health research, parallel processes refer to the way 'the relationship between a professional and a client parallels the relationship between the client and the [important people] in their lives' (Moore, 2007, p. 3). In other words, the capacity to relate with God as an attachment figure is supported by the quality of one's relationship with their environment. This signals a flow-on effect in which people–place relationships influence believer–God relationships, or believer–God experiences enhance people–place experiences, especially among dispersed populations (Counted, 2019). The model of parallel processes is an important lens from which to understand the psychological link between religious and place attachment, as it forces the reader to see that such flow-on effect goes beyond understanding that the actual relationship is important. What is important is that the nature of the relationship between religious and place attachment needs to be informed by the imaginary attachment that the individual has with a particular processing unit (object of attachment), which reflects and models the way they relate with another processing unit.

Relationships Form a Cascade of Parallel Processes and Share Common Features

One important takeaway from this chapter is that relationships, in the context of religious and place attachment, form a cascade of parallel processes and commonalities which are influenced by the individual context. The common features in believer–God and people–place relationships may indicate the presence of parallel processes across the full spectrum of attachment experiences, forming a cascade of common characteristics. For example, the way the individual relates to their place of attachment parallels the way they relate to God, which parallels the way they relate with the important people in their lives (Counted, 2018c, 2019; Scannell & Gifford, 2014). To put differently, the way that the attached individual relates to their close others mirror the way they relate to both God and place as attachment surrogates, sharing similar features of affective development and processing units. The notion of parallel processes simply suggests that attachment relationships at all levels have flow-on effects that extend beyond an immediate object of attachment to the next, and the quality of the relationship will ultimately reflect on the next relationship. However, there are exceptions to this rule since this might not be evident in all relationships. What is evident, though, is that relationships form a cascade of parallel processes, thus sharing common features at both macro and micro levels. I will proceed to discuss the three ways religious and place attachment share common features.

Normative Aspects. Firstly, the capacity of a religious believer to relate effectively with God is not solely dependent on the nature of their experiences and the social environmental qualities, nor does the individual's sense of place solely depends on their spirituality (Counted, 2019). Attached individuals may be drawn to both place and God independently of what might be happening in each domain of relationship (Counted et al., 2018), and both experiences might share common characteristics and parallel processes that are analogous to attachment patterns. The common characteristics reflect the normative functions of attachment that involve proximity to the object, perceiving the object as a safe haven and a secure base and perceiving the object as a response to separation. Other common characteristics shared in attachment relationships at all levels are attunement, communication, responsiveness, empowerment and stress moderation (Moore, 2007). Attunement is the act of engagement with an object of attachment and the starting pointing for all relationships in which the individual seeks to

establish a connection with an object of attachment at both conscious and unconscious levels (Cozolino, 2006; Johnston & Brinamen, 2005; Siegel, 2006). Responsiveness is the attuned communication between the individual and their object of attachment, in such that the object responds to the signals, communication and changing states of the individual seeker. For example, God can respond to the signals of religious believers by strengthening their faith in a toxic environment through the testimony of others, answering their prayers and words of faith by a spiritual leader. In doing so, the individual is empowered and strengthened in 'their walk with God' and 'earthly assignment' even in a foreign land, thus regulating the effects of life stressors in such a place. The difference in parallel processes might occur in relation to the nature of individual differences in attachment working model. For instance, certain individuals may be drawn to an object to compensate for an unhealthy attachment, as they seek new relationships to reconcile with the negative effects of a previous relationship or due to the demands of their motivational drives (Counted & Zock, 2019). Others may be drawn to an object just for exploratory curiosity in order to assess the extent to which such object could be reliable and beneficial to their well-being (Counted, 2018b, 2018c).

Relational Support. Secondly, another exception to the rule of parallel processes in terms of the commonality between religious and place attachment is that the most important forms of relational support often come from physical, human relationships rather than with imaginary objects of attachment. While it is possible that God and place may be perceived as objects of attachment, the extent of the perceived proximity to these objects are ultimately limited to imaginary and visual extents. Although physical contact is essential for the physiological development of all individuals, I argue that processing units in the form of 'place' and 'God', as objects of attachment, can essentially become informal sources of relational support and extensions of relationship cascades. The need for God to support the individual is significantly dependent upon the nature of support they receive in their home or place of residence, and the level of support they receive in a place is equally dependent upon the nature of support they get from important people in their lives and the broader network of community they have in those settings (Counted, 2019). This relational perspective shows how both processing units share similar relational framework of psychological adjustment.

Individual Context. Another aspect of parallel processes is that the need to turn to place or to God is not only dependent upon the nature of the support one receives, but contingent on the specific individual context. This shows that the parallel processing model of religious and place attachment is not too simplistic since it captures all the other factors that influence relationships at different levels. For example, one of such factors is the socio-demographic background of the individual (Counted, 2018c; Counted, Moustafa, & Renzaho, 2019; Counted et al., 2018). It is therefore possible that our emotional stability and ability to relate effectively with objects of attachment (e.g. place, God, human figures etc.) are partly the product of several other relationship cascades that involve our social experience and socio-demographic profiles. Although the underlying notion of parallel processes still do exist, religious and place attachment experiences still appear to be of significance within individual and cultural contexts (e.g. Brulin et al., 2018; Counted, 2018c; Counted et al., 2018, 2019). For example, cultural aspects of gender may predict the individual experience of place, and women are more likely to have less attachment to place compared to men in a migration context. Understandably, this could be linked to the limited social networks among women within a migration context. This is likely since, in most cultures, men are socialized as breadwinners of their families while women are domiciled at home in patriarchal societies. This cascade of relationship in the context of gender roles influences the nature of people–place relationship in a migration context. Furthermore, an individual's region of residence can also be another example of an influencing factor in the proposed parallel processing model of relationships, particularly in a migration context. Take for instance, migrants living in urban, metropolitan cities known as the 'melting pot' of cultures may be less likely to be drawn to God compared to those in remote, rural areas with limited social contacts and cohesion. The latter are far more likely to turn to religion as an object of attachment amid socio-cultural inequities. The individual context therefore plays a crucial role in the way the attached individual relates effectively with the object of attachment as a processing unit that affects other relationship experiences.

Towards a Parallel Processing Model of Place Spirituality

Reflecting on the intersection of religious and place attachment, as the parallel processing units, illuminates the nature of place spirituality as a flow-on effect. It forces the reader to change their thinking about the relationship between religion and place, and how both constructs are shaped by similar events. One important takeaway is the important role played by processing units in the form of objects of attachment such as 'place' and 'God' in shaping and managing the individual's behaviour, in such that they have a flow-on effect that affect and resembles each other. Drawing on previous discussions, what do parallel processes teach us about the link between religious and place attachment in psychology? To address this question, I propose that the concept of place spirituality, as a parallel processing model where religious and place attachment affect each other, can either take one of the three suggested trajectories below.

Firstly, place spirituality highlights the role of religion in promoting the individual's experience of a place, involving emotional attachment to a place, cognitive development in the identity of a place and behavioural commitment to activities and resources in the form of dependence on a place (e.g. Counted, 2018b, 2019; Counted & Zock, 2019). This multidimensional approach to place means that religiously attached individuals in a particular setting are most likely to deeply explore multiple aspects of place due to their secure base in God. This sense of security may be the basis for exploring the immediate or broader environment whether through forming attachment to and identity of the place, or being dependent on resources and activities in that place (Counted, 2016c; Scannell & Gifford, 2010). While such individuals may form religious attachment due to environmental distress and for exploration of their broader environment, such attachment empowers them as their secure base, to confidently explore the different aspects of place. Hence, it is possible for an attachment breakthrough to occur in the process of such exploration curiosity wherein the individual becomes drawn to a particular dimension of place. This process ultimately starts with depending on the activities and resources in a place, which when repeated over a longer period of time can lead to an attachment breakthrough. And as the individual becomes more deeply drawn, they begin to develop place identity and adopt the character of the place.

Secondly, place spirituality also involves understanding how the individual's experience in a geographic setting triggers their religious attachment

in the face of perceived danger and place insecurity. This perspective takes on the side of the oppressed, marginalized and afflicted. Individuals at the margins of society who are trying to hold onto their cultural identity and further pressed to the outside are most likely to turn to something or someone greater for help. When this group of people becomes targets of racism, marginalization and oppression in a society, it is expected that they may need to deal with such difficulties through a form of religious coping that involves turning to spiritual resources and God as their safe haven (Counted, 2018a, 2019; Counted, Possamai, & Meade, 2018; Counted & Zock, 2019; Pargament, 1997). A parallel processing model of place spirituality therefore examines how seeking and maintaining a relationship with God plays such a crucial role in the context of place insecurity, and how such believer–God relationship is shaped by socio-cultural inequities experienced by individuals pushed to the margins of society.

Thirdly, and most importantly, the phenomenon of place spirituality can be influenced by a range of determinants which mirror the individual's background, identity and culture (Counted et al., 2019). In other words, the link between religious and place attachment is represented in a cascade of parallel processes in the broader spectrum of relationships. This means that the individual context is key to understanding the formation of place spirituality as a processing parallel. For example, a first-generation migrant is likely to experience place differently than a second-generation migrant. The first-generation migrant is likely not to be particularly concerned with issues of racism due to their own unique context (e.g. place of origin or birth) that is indifferent to issues of racism, compared to a second-generation migrant who is probably born and raised in a saturated cycle of racism in a foreign land. The former may be concerned with issues of survival while the later perplexed by the politics of their own identity in a place where they are perceived as the *other*. The same applies to religious and non-religious individuals who may relate to the sacred differently due to their respective upbringings. The individual—religious, social and cultural—contexts shape the formation of a person's religious and place attachment since context-informed perceptions of socio-cultural issues are different. Place spirituality is therefore a two-way street and not only concerned with the experiences of a particular collective.

To further illustrate, it is possible for a country native to experience place spirituality based on their own context of fear, anxiety and uncertainty in the face of economic and political instability compared to a non-native who might experience place differently—based on their need to survive in a new

abode. Individual context is key to understanding the complex relationship between religious and place attachment, and this link is what I refer to as place spirituality. This is also the case with men and women who are likely to experience place spirituality differently. For instance, factors that influence believer–God relationships among women are expected to be different for men and this sense of spirituality flows on to the way such individuals experience a place. Several studies have shown that women are more likely to develop surrogate attachment than men due to the socialization of gender roles which positions women as more emotional than men (e.g. Barry, Seager, & Brown, 2015; Counted & Moustafa, 2017; Feingold, 1994; Geary, 1998). However, this may not always be the case and may depend on the context of the women involved. Rose, Carrasco, and Charboneau (1998) argue that women with young children in a migrant settlement context may have weak attachment to place compared to their male counterparts. This weak attachment to place among women is much likely to flow-on to the way they relate to God in those places, such that they may be deeply drawn to God in compensation for their weak attachment to place.

The above-discussed trajectories are examples of how relationships affect other relationships, forming a flow-on effect which represents a cascade of parallel processes involving religious and place attachment. The key concern is not whether or not the underlying factors trigger religious and place attachment but the direction of that effect which is likely to predict another parallel effect. I reason that the psychology of place spirituality should recognize the complex dynamics of relationships which are important for our day-to-day life, flowing onto another relationship in a cascade of parallel processes. Further research agenda should focus on investigating the effects of place spirituality as a parallel processing model and its longitudinal impact on lifespan development. The interactive processes by which place spirituality is formed are still not quite clear and requires further empirical investigation. It is hoped that the reader is now acquainted with the symbolic interactions that contribute to the parallel processes in place spirituality: a theoretical umbrella that describes the form of religious behaviour that emerges as a result of the shifting interplay between religious and place attachment.

Conclusion

This chapter makes an original contribution to the emerging literature on the psychology of religion and place as it offers a parallel processing model for understanding the intersection of religious and place attachment. This

was discussed in relation to how religious and place attachment have a flow-on effect as processing units, thus affecting each other based on the individual's unique context. As an alternative perspective to place spirituality, parallel processing theory helps us to understand how religious and place attachment are analogous to each other as central processing units shaping the way people thrive and flourish.

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CHAPTER 10

God and Place as Attachment 'Figures': A Critical Examination

Joel Gruneau Brulin

Introduction

Attachment theory was first presented by Bowlby in the 1950s and then popularized through his trilogy Attachment and Loss (1969/1982, 1972, 1980), and was further developed through the work of Ainsworth (e.g. Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1979). Inspired by psychoanalysis and Darwin's theory of evolution, Bowlby claimed that it was the actual experiences of a child's interpersonal interactions, rather than unconscious fantasies as claimed by traditional psychoanalysis, that shaped the future development of the child. He argued that an affectional bond was created between the child and the caregiver, and that the experiences of interactions within this bond shaped personality development, emotional regulation, and future interpersonal relationships. Attachment theory has had an immense impact and inspired a vast amount of research, especially within developmental psychology (see Cassidy & Shaver, 2016), but also within other fields such as psychology of religion (e.g. Kirkpatrick, 2005) and

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environmental psychology (e.g. Scannell & Gifford, 2010). I will hereby give a brief presentation of attachment theory, and then discuss what constitutes an attachment relationship, and whether God and places could be considered as attachment figures/objects.

Bowlby (1969) and Ainsworth (1985) describe the attachment relationship as an affectional bond between the child and its caregiver. A central aspect is that none of the parts is interchangeable with others, and that the child experiences the caregiver as someone who is both stronger and wiser. The relationship is characterized by that the child strives to maintain physical proximity with the caregiver, especially when feeling tired, ill or distressed. Bowlby and Ainsworth further describe that the child experiences separation anxiety and protests if separated from the caregiver involuntary, and also that the child mourns and grieves if the caregiver would be permanently lost. Moreover, the child uses the caregiver as a safe haven when experiencing a threat and as a secure base for exploration.

Typically, the parent is the caregiver for the child, but other people could also function as attachment figures, as the key elements in forming the attachment bond are familiarity and physical contact between the child and the caregiver (Cassidy, 2016). Bowlby describes the attachment system as an innate emotional and behavioural system that becomes activated when one experiences distress, a threat or fear. Like a goal-directed system, it guides attention and behaviour towards what provides security, namely the caregiver, i.e. the attachment figure (Bowlby, 1969). Bowlby and Ainsworth contrast the attachment system with the exploration system, and argue that the two systems work hydraulically—when one is active the other is switched off. This is pedagogically described in the Circle of Security model (Marvin, Cooper, Hoffman, & Powell, 2002). Hence, the child has an innate motivation for exploration, but when experiencing a threat, the attachment system activates and the child turns to the attachment figure for security. When feeling safe again, the child can continue exploration. Experiences of interactions within the attachment relationship, based on the sensitivity of the caregiver to the emotional expressions of the child, are internalized as internal working models (IWM) of oneself and others. These models are said to be stable throughout life, yet liable to change with new experiences, and function as templates, or filters, of what to expect in future relationships (Bretherton & Munholland, 2016).

Bowlby also hypothesizes that when the caregiver is not available, a child could use a 'surrogate' for the attachment relationship, such as a blanket or a cuddle. Bowlby notes that a child turns to these objects in much the same

situations as a child turns to the attachment figure, such as when feeling distressed, tired or ill (Bowlby, 1969, p. 313).

Even though Bowlby focuses mainly on the first years in a person's life, and the relationship between the child and the parent, he noted that people show attachment behaviour throughout life, from cradle to grave. During one's lifetime attachment figures shift, however, typically from parents to friends and partners. Furthermore, with maturation there is a shift in attachment behaviour. Increased cognitive abilities mean that physical proximity to the attachment figure is not necessary; it could instead be sufficient to talk to, look at pictures of, or think about the attachment figure to experience security (Bowlby, 1969). It has thus been argued that the goal of the attachment system is rather the experience of '*felt security*' than physical proximity per se (Sroufe & Waters, 1977). This shift also provided an opportunity to apply attachment theory to understand other kinds of human relationships: those between peers (Zeifman & Hazan, 2016) and romantic relationships (Hazan & Shaver, 1987); in relation to non-corporeal figures such as God (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016); with respect to inanimate objects such as physical objects (Keefer, Landau & Sullivan, 2014); engagement in a welfare state (Gruneau Brulin, Hill, Laurin, & Mikulincer, 2018), or, as is the focus of this anthology, a human's relationship to places.

Even though it is a good mark of a theory that it can be used to understand such a vast amount of different relations, this also calls for caution. As Bowlby (1969) notes '*the merits of a scientific theory are to be judged in terms of the range of phenomena it embraces, the internal consistency of its structure, the precision of the predictions it can make and the practicability of testing them*' (p. 173). In the present chapter, I will discuss specifically places in terms of attachment relationships, with attachment theory—as it has been applied within religion-attachment framework—as a basis. I especially focus on the second and third point made by Bowlby, namely regarding the internal consistency of the structure and the precision in the application of attachment theory within these areas.

Semantics

The word 'Attachment' is defined by the Oxford dictionary as 'Affection, fondness, or sympathy for someone or something' (obviously it could also refer to other things such as an extension of something, or a train connection, but we leave those definitions aside for now). This definition of

the word is much broader than the definition that Bowlby used when discussing attachment. Hence, everything that we label as attachment does not necessarily refer to the specific psychological category that Bowlby and followers discussed when using the term attachment. An example of this is within the Buddhist tradition, where attachment (or in Pali, Upādāna) is considered to be one of the root causes of suffering. In the Buddhist perspective, attachment is considered a positive affection towards someone or something, but the craving, or clinging, that is involved in this affection ultimately leads to suffering. Even though 'attachment', as discussed by Bowlby and viewed in the Buddhist tradition, refers to similar phenomena, including positive affection towards someone or something, they do differ in the psychological processes they strive to explain and understand. Where one describes how people gain security through personal relationships, the other describes the root causes of suffering (for a more thorough discussion on Buddhism and attachment theory, see Sahdra & Shaver, 2013; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2017). The same argument could be made in relation to other objects with which people cultivate a positive affection. Just because people show affection towards an object does not mean that the same psychological processes are involved. Hence, one cannot assume that the same theory can be applied to understand these processes. An over-inclusive use of terms of a theoretical framework would lead to a lack of internal consistency regarding the constructs, and through that a risk of lower precision of theory. Hence, to ensure that we discuss the same phenomena when referring to 'attachment', we need to set some boundaries, to be able to define what constitutes an attachment relationship. However, I want to make it clear that I by no means suggest that the only way to use the term attachment is in the tradition of Bowlby. However, without a clear notion of what psychological processes we are talking about there is a risk of diluting attachment theory and increasing the possibility for misconceptions within the field.

DEFINING THE ATTACHMENT RELATIONSHIP

When determining what could be considered as an attachment relationship, different approaches can be used. I will start by discussing the attachment relationship from an essentialist perspective based on a set of criteria given for an attachment relationship, and then proceed with a discussion based on a functional approach focusing on how a specific object is used. I will then finish with a prototype approach using the late Wittgenstein's idea of family resemblance.

Essentialist Approach

The probably most straightforward way to categorize and determine a psychological construct is by simply listing a set of criteria that needs to be met. Even though there is no clear agreement among attachment researchers, the most common set of criteria is the one given by Bowlby (1969) and Ainsworth (1985). Namely, as described above, an attachment relationship consists of an *affectional* bond between *two individuals*, in which *none is interchangeable* with others. The attached person selectively maintains *physical proximity* with the attachment figure. When separated involuntary from the attachment figure (or threatened with such circumstances), the attached person typically *protests* and *experiences separation anxiety*. Following permanent loss of the attachment figure, the attached person *grieves or mourns*. Further, the attached person uses the attachment figure as a *safe haven* to turn to when distressed and as a *secure base* when exploring their surroundings. Finally, in using the attachment figure in these ways, the attached person implicitly assesses the attachment figure as *stronger and wiser than the self*. From an essentialist perspective, any relationship category that meets these criteria should be considered as an attachment relationship, accordingly excluding any that do not.

With the basis of these criteria, it has previously been argued that God should be considered as an attachment figure, if not as an attachment figure per se then at least as a surrogate, symbolic or non-corporeal attachment figure (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016; Kirkpatrick, 2005). For example, it has been noted that people tend to turn to religion, or God when experiencing stress, and threats (e.g. Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2004; Sibley & Bulbulia, 2012). Moreover, God is often described with words related to the secure base concept, such as 'Love', 'Caring' (Hood, Hill, & Spilka, 2018), and quite obviously, God is perceived as someone stronger and wiser.

In the same way, it has been argued in this anthology and elsewhere that the way that people relate to geographical places share these same characteristics like the way people relate to attachment figures (e.g. Counted & Zock, 2019; Giuliani, 2003; Scannell & Gifford, 2014). For example, it has been highlighted that people mourn and grieve when separated from significant places like their homes (Fullilove, 1996), seek security from special places (Giuliani, 2003) and form inner models of places similar the concept of IWM as presented within attachment theory (Morgan, 2010). I will not here go into a detailed discussion about the specific criteria, since this

has been done elsewhere (see Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016, for religion, and, Scannell & Gifford, 2014, for places as attachment objects), but I do highlight the major restriction in considering both God and geographical places as attachment figures from an essentialist approach.

Even if both God and geographical places fulfil many of the given criteria, neither would fit into the first point of the definition: that the attachment relationship is an affectional bond between *two individuals*. God, and other spiritual entities are often given individual humanlike characteristics, for example the Gods of ancient Greek, Hindu Gods, or maybe most notably God's manifestation as Jesus Christ in the Bible. The tendency to anthropomorphize God has even been argued to be innate within the human mind (Barrett & Keil, 1996; Guthrie, 1993). It is difficult to see how a place could be considered as an individual, both in itself, or as one's mental image of a place. Possibly places can be given personal attributes and individual-like characteristics, but this should probably be considered as an exception rather than a rule. Also, even though God can be perceived as humanlike, to equate God with an individual would be a reduction. Both from a theological perspective, and that of people describing their perception, the nature of God is often described as ineffable, abstract, eternal and invisible (e.g. Silverman, Johnson, & Cohen, 2016; Streib, 2001). These are all characteristics that individuals do not have. Thus, to simply equate God with an individual would be, from a theological perspective, a mistake. Also, the attachment relationship is formed through continuous, physical and reciprocal interactions (Bowlby, 1969). Typically, through signalling from the attached part, and response behaviour from the caregiver, often with physical contact. It's debatable whether the same type of interaction takes place in relation to God. Even though people experience physical contact with God, this happens only rarely, and the expression 'being held by God' should probably be understood as a metaphor rather than physically. Place on the other hand does provide physical contact, but since places have no agency, we can't expect them to be responsive to signalling from a person. Hence, since neither God nor a place can be seen as an individual, and it's debatable whether a reciprocal behaviour takes place, neither would, from an essentialist approach, fit into the category of an attachment relationship.

From my point of view, strictly following an essentialist approach leads to an overly conservative, and in the end, misleading definition of attachment relationships and what could be considered attachment figures. First, as a

developmental theory, cognitive maturation, which transform the attachment system, must be allowed to affect our understanding of attachment relationships and figures. As Sroufe and Waters (1977) note, the set-goal of the attachment system after infancy is not necessarily physical proximity per se, but rather 'felt security'. This means that older individuals could also develop, or maintain, attachment relationships with people that are not physically present (e.g. Buote, Wood, & Pratt, 2009). Second, very few, if any, psychological constructs are as stringent and clear as an essentialist definition suggests. Psychological constructs refer to experiences, which are difficult to capture in words, and to ranges of behaviour whose perceived meaning depend on other things such as language, contexts and culture. An essentialist approach will therefore be limited and inflexible, both in its accountability of transformations, as well as when applying a theoretical framework within new contexts and understanding new phenomenon (for a more detailed discussion, see Granqvist, 2020).

Functionalist Approach

Consequently, when attachment theory has been applied within new fields, and new objects have been considered as part of the attachment category, it has not necessarily been based on a strictly essentialist approach, but rather on a functionalist approach. Instead of following a set of criteria that define attachment relationships, the focus has been on the function of a specific category, such as how physical objects (Keefer et al., 2014), places (Scannell & Gifford, 2014) or God (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016) might fill in for a person as attachment objects. To emphasize the function of an object avoids the question regarding the nature of the object, and thus the discussion about the individual-like characteristics; it is also more adaptable to cognitive maturation. It should be noted, however, that the functionalist and essentialist approaches are not mutually exclusive. For example, an essentialist approach could very well be based on a list of functional, behavioural criteria. However, the two approaches are here presented in contrast since the former emphasizes to a greater extent the essence, or content, of a psychological category, and thus draws a clearer line concerning what could be considered as a member of that category. As the functionalist approach emphasizes the behaviour, and the perceived function of an object, it thus leaves more room for flexibility to include members within a category.

   The most signifying behaviours within an attachment relationship are the use of an attachment object as a safe haven when distressed and as a

secure base for exploration. Logically, when attachment theory has been applied in new contexts, the emphasis has been on these behaviours. For example, when argued that physical objects such as cell phones could be used as attachment objects (e.g. Konok, Gigler, Bereczky, & Miklósi, 2016; Trub & Barbot, 2016), the focus has been on the use of cell phones as safe havens (Keefer, Landau, Rothschild, & Sullivan, 2012) and as a secure bases (Keefer, 2014). Since cell phones can function in this way, it has been argued that they should be considered as attachment objects (Keefer et al., 2014). Similarly, in experimental research within the attachment-religion framework, the emphasis has been on God as a safe haven (e.g. Cassibba, Granqvist, & Costantini, 2013; Granqvist, Mikulincer, Gewirtz, & Shaver, 2012, study 2) and as a secure base (e.g. Chan, Tong, & Tan, 2014; Granqvist, et al., 2012; Kupor, Laurin & Levav, 2015, study 3). It has also been argued that places function in the same way (e.g. Counted, 2018; Counted & Zock, 2019; Morgan, 2010; Scannell & Gifford, 2014). For example, based on how people turn to specific places for feeling secure (Korpela, Kyttö, & Hartig, 2002), and that places are important when exploring new areas (Fried, 2000). Hence, from a functionalist approach, since both inanimate objects, God, and physical places seem to be able to function as both safe havens and secure bases, they should, from a functionalist approach, be considered as objects of attachment.

The idea that attachment-related behaviour could be directed towards non-human objects is not something new. On the contrary, Bowlby noted in the first volume of Attachment and Loss (1969/1982) that specific attachment behaviour, such as *non-nutritive sucking* and *clinging*, could be directed towards non-human objects such as blankets or cuddles (p. 311). Moreover, he also observed that

> … whenever the 'natural' object of attachment behaviour is unavailable, the behaviour can become directed towards some substitute object. Even though it is inanimate, such an object frequently appears capable of filling the role of an important, though subsidiary, attachment-'figure'. Like the principal attachment figure, the inanimate substitute is sought especially when a child is tired, ill, or distressed. (p. 313)

It should however be noted that when Bowlby discusses inanimate objects as attachment 'figures' he emphasizes that these objects should

be seen as surrogates—not to be equated with the interpersonal attachment relationship—as is highlighted by the quotation marks around 'figure'. That is, inanimate objects are not attachment figures per se, but rather substitutes that a child directs the attachment behaviour towards when the attachment figure is not available.

Bowlby did not discuss similar patterns among adults, and when a theory is applied to understand other phenomena then it was intended to, it is important to do this with caution. If we return to Bowlby's criteria for the merits of scientific theory, '*a theory is to be judged by its internal consistency, and the precision of its hypothesis*' (1969, p. 173). If all things that manifest attachment-related behaviour are to be considered as attachment figures/objects, both the internal consistency within the theory, and the precision of it, would be hampered. If virtually anything can be considered as an object of attachment as long as it provides security, there would be little need for the term attachment. Many people find security through objects, such as cigarettes or alcohol that few researchers would be willing to consider as objects of attachment, at least not as Bowlby used the term. Hence, focusing only on the function and behaviour risks a dilution of the term attachment, and lowers both the internal consistency and the precision of the theory. Hence, we return to the need for some boundaries around the category, even though we just have found the essentialist approach to be too conservative.

Prototype Approach

A possible solution to this dilemma is given by the late Wittgenstein (1953) through his notions about *Fuzzy Boundaries* and *Family Resemblance*. Wittgenstein argued that it was impossible to find any 'essence' of a specific category. Famously, Wittgenstein took the category 'games' as an example of this. If one would list all possible games, Wittgenstein argued that it would be impossible to find any quality that all games shared; it would not be possible to find any essence of 'games'. Instead, he argued that a category of a certain phenomenon has fuzzy boundaries. Just as it is not possible to find a quality that all phenomena within a certain category share, it is not possible to find a clear boundary to what distinguishes this category from other categories. To address this, Wittgenstein proposed that categories are made up by familiarity: they have *family resemblance*. Some phenomena share more of this familiarity with other phenomena within the specific category, and could be considered as prototypes of a certain category. This

theory of Wittgenstein has gained great influence over the way that language is viewed, but it has also influenced research within cognition, where studies suggest that people in many ways categorize phenomena in the way suggested by Wittgenstein (e.g. Rosch & Mervis, 1975). Although many researchers would dream of clear and distinct categories within psychology, most psychological constructs are, as noted above, *fuzzy*. When God would previously have been argued to function as an attachment figure (e.g. Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016), it is hence is not based on a strictly essentialist approach, but rather with the notion of family resemblance in the back of the mind.

Most researchers would probably agree that the prototype relationship of attachment is the relationship between the child of about 12–20 months of age and the parent. This is the age when the attachment behaviours are typically most visible, such as the dynamic between exploration and seeking security with the attachment figure. Hence, following the logic of Wittgenstein, if a new 'family member' would be included within the attachment category it would need to share familiarity with the prototype relationship. I would argue that there is compelling evidence, both theoretical and empirical, that the relation to God does resemble the relationship between the infant and the parent. Though the apparent lack of corporeal form of God probably means that the relationship with God is instead better coined as a symbolic, or non-corporeal attachment relationship. I find it, however, more disputable whether the relation to places has the same resemblance. As noted above, it is questionable as to whether people do indeed relate, and view places, with individual characteristics, and there is also a lack of empirical research that directly tests this hypothesis. As Lewicka (2011) notes, most research on place attachment is based on exploratory research and has not experimentally tested the hypothesis whether people do indeed relate to places in a way that resembles the infant–parent relationship. Before places could be considered as attachment objects, more research directly testing this hypothesis is needed.

It is worthy to note that, inspired by the religion-attachment framework, we have previously tested whether secular people cognitively relate to the welfare state as a safe haven or as a secure base (Gruneau Brulin et al., 2018). However, we have not argued, nor do our results indicate, that people develop attachment to the welfare state. In fact, that would

be counter-intuitive, since the relation to the welfare state is not an inter-personal relationship with another individual or individual-like anthropo-morphized character, even though the welfare state does indeed provide security.

Place Spirituality and Attachment

As we have seen, there are limitations in defining both God and places as attachment figures per se. In my view there is compelling evidence, both theoretical and empirical, that God could be considered as a non-corporeal or symbolic attachment figure, but it is more questionable whether the same could be said about places as attachment figures or objects. This is partly because of the question regarding whether a place could have individual-like characteristics, and thus also of the lack of reciprocal interactions with place, and partly because of the lack of empirical research on the function of a place. However, this does not mean that places are not important, including within the religious attachment relationship, nor that places can-not provide a sense of security.

On the contrary, as has been highlighted by, for example, Counted (2018) and Mazumdar and Mazumdar (2004), the role of physical places has been overlooked to some extent within the religion-attachment frame-work. Since God, and other deities are non-corporeal, physical places are important in proving a space where it is possible to feel closer to God. Through providing a physical space, religious buildings could in this way facilitate attachment behaviours, such as using God as a safe haven or secure base. However, it is not necessary that this means that people attach to the religious places per se. Rather, another interpretation would be that the connection that a person feels towards a religious place would be due to the memories and experiences in relation to God that are connected to the place. This is in line with research regarding geographical places that show that the valence that a person attributes to a place is connected to the memories related to a particular place (Manzo, 2005). In line with this interpretation, churches, and other religious buildings, are often called 'the home of God'. And just as a child probably feels more secure at home than in other places, religious believers possibly feel more secure in a church. But just as a home is, as the famous t-shirt quote goes, 'where my mum is', it is not the building per se that provides the security, but rather that this is where one can find God. It should also be noted that churches and other religious buildings can be experienced as secure places due to other, more

objective reasons, than facilitating closeness with God. For example, religious buildings have a tradition of being a sanctuary for refugees, meaning that authorities will not arrest refugees in churches. However, since this security is related a factual security, rather than the security that is provided through an affectional bond, I would argue that this goes beyond the scope of attachment theory.

Place is also important to consider in relation to the exploration aspect. As mentioned, the attachment system and the exploration system work in tandem, where the attachment system functions as a secure base for exploration. As Bowlby (1969) and Ainsworth (1985) present it, exploration is important in its own right. Places could, quite obviously, be an area of exploration, where for example religious places, except facilitating proximity seeking to God, could also provide areas for exploration. Also, religion in itself, both through places and through activities such as meditation or rituals, provides opportunities for exploration (Counted, 2018). This exploration could be facilitated through the relationship with God providing a sense of being guided or watched over, i.e. the secure base function. In line with this, studies indicate that people do indeed feel more secure, and are thus more willing to take risks after being reminded about God (Chan et al., 2014; Kupor et al., 2015). Since religious places probably do increase the feeling of being closer to God, and do provide a place for exploration, it seems like a logical assumption that they increase willingness to explore, which is something for future studies to further enlighten. However, it's important that this exploration does not necessarily have the goal of forming an attachment relationship.

Another area where place spirituality makes a contribution to the attachment-religion framework is shedding light on the exploration aspect. As Bowlby (1969) and Ainsworth (1985) present, the attachment system and the exploration system work in tandem. Exploration here refers mainly to exploring new environments, i.e. new places. An important aspect within spiritual practices, as presented by Counted and Zock (2019), is the exploration of places not necessarily outside oneself, but from a more existential perspective: places within oneself. However, it is important to make a clear distinction here that the exploration is not necessarily directed towards new attachment objects. As Bowlby and Ainsworth present it, the exploration system is important in its own right. Hence, the goal of the exploration system is not to explore new attachment objects, but simply to explore. The relationship with God could very well facilitate this exploration, through providing a sense of security, i.e. the secure base function. Concordantly,

studies indicate that people do indeed feel more secure, and are thus more willing to take risks after being reminded about God (Chan et al., 2014; Kupor et al., 2015). Whether religious places do increase willingness to explore seems like a logical assumption, and is something for future research to further enlighten.

Finally, I want to stress that even though I argue that places, religious or non-religious, should not be considered as attachment figures/objects in the way Bowlby and Ainsworth describe the term, I am not denying that people can have a strong emotional connection with places, and religious places in particular, or that they are not an object of security. On the contrary, as many of the researchers in this anthology present, places are very important in people's emotional life, and people have strong feelings, such as pride, in relation to places (Bonaiuto, Albers, Ariccio, & Cataldi, 2019). Furthermore, places in themselves provide security (Captari, Hook, Aten, Davis, & Tisdale, 2019), and have had a significant role in relation to religion, both throughout history (Watts, 2019), and in contemporary conflicts (Billig, 2019). However, as has been highlighted, just because an object provides security, or evokes strong emotions, does not equate it with an object of attachment, as the term is used by Bowlby. Also, it is important to distinguish whether it is the object in itself that a person feels connected to, or whether the object is rather a mean for connecting with something, or someone else.

A final remark is that one of the inspirations for attachment theory in the first place was finding that separation from one's parents has a more severe impact on children than being exposed to war. During the bombings of London in the Second World War, many children were transported to the countryside, a secure place, but at the same time removed from their parent, their attachment figure. Afterwards it was found that it was the children who were separated from their parents that suffered the most trauma. Hence, one of the inspirations for attachment theory was specifically that it was the human relationship that provided a feeling of security, rather than a physical place. As Bowlby himself enthusiastically expressed it: 'Most people think of fear as running away from something. But there is another side to it. We run TO someone, usually a person…. It's screamingly obvious, but I believe it to be a new idea, and quite revolutionary'. (dated 3 May 1958, citation from Hesse & Main, 2000).

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have provided a philosophical discussion on the definition of the term attachment relationship, specifically whether the relation to a place or to God could be considered as an attachment relationship. Three different approaches to this question were suggested: an essentialist approach—based on a list of criteria; a functionalist approach—based on the specific function of an object; and finally, a prototype approach—based on Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance. In my view the relationship with God, or other deities, could be considered as a symbolic or non-corporeal attachment relationship due to a resemblance between the relationship with God and a parent. Nevertheless, from a theoretical perspective, there is too big a difference between a physical place and an individual to allow for a place to be considered an attachment figure. Moreover, there is a lack of hypothesis-driven empirical research demonstrating that places do indeed function similarly to an attachment relationship in providing a safe haven and being a secure base. However, this does not mean that places, and religious places in particular, are not important in providing security, nor does it mean that people do not develop a strong emotional connection to specific places. However, this does not necessarily mean that they should be considered as attachment objects, as presented by Bowlby and Ainsworth.

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Empirical Applications and Practical Implications

Religion, Well-Being, and Therapeutic Landscape

Boadi Agyekum

Introduction

Research and practice increasingly suggest that religious places are important sites for physical, social, emotional, spiritual and mental well-being of individuals and groups. The therapeutic landscape concept provides a useful tool for explaining the link between religion and well-being. Considering the complex ways in which religious places function as therapeutic places, this chapter re-examines the organization of religious places (both regular and online) and discusses how this is (re)shaping the experiences of individuals and groups that patronize religious places. Attention is paid to whether they contain elements of the physical, social, emotional, symbolic and spiritual sense of well-being. A better understanding of how people experience religious places is critical towards developing healthy spaces that may improve quality of life.

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Gesler (1992) was among the first contemporary humanistic/cultural geographers to allude to the potential health impacts of places on populations. Writing on the therapeutic landscape concept, he noted that various places, settings or milieu in which people associate with, are significant sites for physical, emotional, spiritual and mental well-being. Not long after his writing the research on the therapeutic landscapes concept bourgeoned in many academic institutions and disciplines across the world. The universality of the therapeutic landscape concept in the early 1990s greatly facilitated such studies (Agyekum & Newbold, 2016; Gesler & Curtis, 2007). The researchers had a major focus and a guiding premise: their focus was to gauge the extent to which the specific places or settings possess the capacity for the physical, social and symbolic and mental well-being for people (see Gesler, 1996; Williams, 2013). In its most basic form, the concept acts 'as a geographic metaphor for aiding in the understanding of how the healing process works itself out in places (or situations, locales, settings, milieus)' (Gesler, 1992, p. 743). Drawing on examples relating to the physical, social, symbolic and mental characteristics of religious places, we argue for a broader understanding of religious places as settings for peoples' well-being. Given that much of the chapter focuses on religious places and practices as 'therapeutic', we begin with a brief discussion of the therapeutic landscape concept, with an emphasis on an examination of how the therapeutic landscape concept has been broadly applied in research focusing on religion. Building on this concept, our analysis examines in four stages: the nature of the physical, social, symbolic and mental well-being of religious place making, supported with findings from a study I conducted in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada to illustrate the role religious place-making plays in maintaining and promoting health of the people. The paper concludes with a discussion of the significance of the therapeutic landscape concept in the understanding of religion, emphasizing policy implications with respect to issues of well-being in religious placemaking, and calls for an expanded view of religion that emphasizes the concept of therapeutic landscape.

The Therapeutic Landscape Concept

The therapeutic landscape concept provides an explanation of the subjective meanings and the 'development and maintenance of the health of populations' (Williams, 2002, p. 148). First introduced by Gesler (1992), the concept of therapeutic landscape describes the ways in which people

have traditionally sought healing powers in certain places. The concept acts 'as a geographic metaphor for aiding in the understanding of how healing process works itself out in places (or situations, locales, settings, milieus)' (Gesler, 1992, p. 743). Even though the concept of therapeutic landscape was initially associated with particular physical or symbolic aspects of places, including baths (Gesler, 1998) and shrines (Gesler, 1996), several scholars have extended the concept to non-traditional healing landscapes including the home and beaches (Williams, 2007), children's summer camps (Kearns & Collins, 2000) and collective gardening programmes (Milligan, Gatrell, & Bingley, 2004). The development of the therapeutic landscape concept has resulted in a deeper understanding involving moving away from see-ing space as simply a container within which disease and treatment occur but, rather, recognizing spaces as being active agent in itself, capable of transforming and contributing to health experiences (Kearns & Joseph, 1993). Elaborating this assertion, Williams (1999, p. 1) provided helpful and constructive explanation:

> Most people have certain places that they associate with peace, relaxation, rejuvenation, restoration and/or some form of physical, mental and/or spir-itual healing. Whether a family cottage, a holiday spot in the country, a spa where the hot springs have achieved international repute, or even a hospital famous for disease-specific treatment, certain places are therapeutic.

It is worth noting that the concept of therapeutic landscape emerged as a result of the cultural turn in Human Geography, which led to a move from medical geography (focused mainly on the biomedical model of health, using quantitative methods) (Kearns & Moon, 2002) to health geography (which focuses on socio-ecological model: multiple identities and indi-viduality, given attention to post-structuralism, discourse, feminism and postmodernism) (Kearns & Moon, 2002). Thus, the latter adopts a socio-ecological model to health. The socio-ecological model views health in a holistic manner, 'as a complex interaction of physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, environmental and societal factors' (Williams, 2002, p. 149). Therapeutic landscapes are therefore defined as specific places of healing, particularly where the natural environment intersects with the social envi-ronment (Gesler, 2003). Notwithstanding, Gesler and Curtis (2007) noted that landscapes can be either therapeutic or not (or both), depending on the constellation of components and people's subjective experience of the space (Gesler & Curtis, 2007; Smyth, 2005). Developing the concept of

therapeutic landscape beyond spaces traditionally perceived for healing, Gesler and Kearns (2002, p. 133) argued that 'a wide variety of influences on the healing power of place exist'. They contend that the idea of therapeutic landscapes is inherently interdisciplinary; it is 'geographic in that it deals with specific places, but it brings together layered landscapes of meaning from several sources' (Gesler & Kearns, 2002, p. 133). The versatility and accessibility of the therapeutic landscape concept has made it attractive to studies beyond the discipline of geography, including arts and music (Andrews, Kearns, Kingsbury, & Carr, 2011; Evans, Crooks, & Kingsbury, 2009); religion (Agyekum & Newbold, 2016; Williams, 2010, 2013); migration (Agyekum & Newbold, 2016; Dyck & Dossa, 2007; El-Bialy & Mulay, 2015); anthropology (Winchester & McGrath, 2017) and indigenous studies (Smith, Luginaah, & Lockridge, 2010; Wilson, 2003). Using the therapeutic landscape concept, Wilson (2003) explored the relationship between the land (Mother Earth) and health among First Nations peoples in Canada. Recent work by Williams (2013) emphasized the concept of therapeutic landscapes to explore the healing outcomes via cyberpilgrimage sites. Apparently, every society has its particular religion, resulting from its natural and socio-cultural makeup. Humans continually interact with each religious setting that influences the physical, social, symbolic and spiritual well-being. Recent works in cultural geography emphasize this broad definition of landscape and see the landscape not as static but continually dynamic. The purpose of this chapter is to explore how religious places are therapeutic in nature, in keeping with the broad core material/physical, social, symbolic and spiritual dimension of the concept. In the following sections, I discuss the methods and each of the four dimensions of therapeutic landscape concept in religious place making.

Methods

This chapter focuses on therapeutic landscapes concept that contributes to an understanding of 'religious places' as socio-cultural landscapes for promoting well-being (i.e. religion as a feature of well-being for immigrants). It is important to note that the study does not directly measure the relationship between religion and well-being. Rather, it explores how places of worship and religious activities are viewed as 'healing' and how they shape members' general quality of life, including both mental and physical health. A qualitative study involving purposive and convenient sampling was used to recruit participants from Ghanaian and Somali communities

in Hamilton. After obtaining clearance from an institutional ethics board, we advertised at three Ghanaian churches and two mosques where Somalis worship through recruitment posters and verbal announcements. Two churches are located in the central core and one in the suburban mountain. With respect to the mosques, one is located in the central core of the city while the other is in the suburban mountain. Individuals participated in open-ended, one-on-one interviews in English, Ghanaian Twi and Somali Af Maxaatiri with the help of translators when needed. The interviews were conducted between July 2015 and February 2016. In accordance with the agreed ethics protocols, and with the participants' consent, interviews were recorded. The university ethics guidelines were followed and approved by the University Research Ethics Board at the author's institution. The interviews lasted between approximately 45 and 60 minutes and were conducted at locations preferred by the participants, including churches, mosques, homes and shops. Because of the limited number of participants needed, only 24 were contacted initially to take part in the in-depth interviews. Seven of those invited did not respond and later two declined after accepting to participate because of some inconveniency. Additional nine were later invited and recruited. In total, 24 participants were recruited from the two study groups, with 12 participants recruited from each. Seven males and five females from the Ghanaian community participated, with four males and eight females from the Somali community. The ages of participants in both groups ranged from 22 to 54 years old. All participants were regularly attending church or mosque (i.e. weekly) at the time of the interviews. All interviews were anonymized, electronically recorded, and transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Common themes within and across groups were identified through the coding process, looking for recurrent words or themes, which informed the development of an initial coding scheme, in keeping with the core themes of the therapeutic landscapes concept.

The Physical/Built Therapeutic Landscape

An aspect of the religious environment that has been linked to health and well-being of individuals and groups is the physical/built environment—structures that members have created for themselves. The physical environment includes not only the temple, mosques and shrines among others, but also the embodied experience and materialities of actually visiting religious sites (e.g. spaces where the Supreme Being dwells and a venue for active participation in certain rituals such as praying, dancing and singing). Given

that believers meet regularly and spend much of their time in religious places, it is important to consider what people are exposed to while occupying these spaces. Such religious worships as praying, singing and dancing, and type of structure/facilities used may all affect well-being. The health and healing benefits of religious places have received considerable attention to-date. Studies on therapeutic landscapes have examined the influence of material settings, ranging from large-scale (countryside, coasts, and seaside) through meso-scale (urban parks and riverine spaces) to micro-scale environments (hospitals, churches, mosques, gardens and the home) (Bell, Wheeler, & Phoenix, 2017).

The physical space provides avenue for people to meet and participate in activities related to their religious practices. Individuals and groups have access to the physical space which is considered as 'sacred' or healthy space (Agyekum & Newbold, 2016). The physical landscape and other built structures of religious places offer members a sense of identity. Places are argued to shape identity or as Gesler puts it (1991, p. 8), 'places influence personal identity'. As such, religious places represent more than just a physical location of healing:

> It's a healing place for members; it's a sacred place for Allah. Sometimes people stay at home and the only opportunity they have is to go to the mosque, a lot of people from other places come and interact. This is another way of healing because you get to mingle with people, worship, have fun, chat, and all those things. (Male, Muslim)
>
> Yes, I would say so, totally, it is a healing place. Based on some of the testimonies I have heard from people at church, like most people come and say they used to have health issues or this or that but when they sign up for church group activities such as prayer groups they got people to talk to and all that and help them both physically and spiritually and mentally and all that so based on what I have heard from people I will say, yeah, it is a healing place. (Male, Christian)

Williams (1999) asserted that the concept of therapeutic landscapes includes environments that have a sense of place and promote maintenance of health and well-being. Thus, the physical interaction with materials such as the Bible, Quran and other manipulative substances during worship make members feel as they are actually present with the Supreme Being (Agyekum & Newbold, 2016; Williams, 2013). As Dyck and Dossa (2007)

observed, religious observance/prayer depicts migrant women's constitution of healthy spaces. Again, scholars have noted that visiting actual pilgrimage sites is a popular spiritual activity that promotes health and wellness (Foley, 2010; Gesler, 1996).

Similarly, scholars have noted the health benefits of online pilgrimages (see MacWilliams, 2002; Williams, 2013). New structures, such as cyberpilgrimage, provide an opportunity for the cyberpilgrim to navigate through space using online tools including maps, images and videos. Addressing the physical/built therapeutic landscape theme and using St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican, Rome, Williams (2013) asserted that online pilgrim can manipulate the mouse through each to the many areas that make up the tomb. This she argued made members feel that they are physically present in the tomb, which Vásquez and Marquardt (2000) argued as being indicative of having a personal relationship with the sacred. These religious websites constitute a new non-traditional perception of sacred place (Inoue, 2000) providing cyberpilgrimage to re-create the physical environment allowing the 'virtual pilgrim to have a total control over their movements while ensuring a detailed 360 degrees perspectives of the tomb'—a significant aspect of the physical/built therapeutic environment (Williams, 2013, p. 89). The health-related benefits that result from physical/built therapeutic spaces will require a multidisciplinary approach to identity more health potentials. Combining insights from religious leaders, architectural designers and planners is essential for understanding how the physical/built religious places influence members' health and well-being.

The Social Therapeutic Landscape

The social dimension of therapeutic landscapes was one of the core components of Gesler's (1992) initial concept of therapeutic landscapes, which has been employed to understand the social support and networks of religious believers (Agyekum & Newbold, 2016; Foley, 2013). Religious places' social context (characterized as settings of 'care') can drastically affect the health and well-being of members. The social environment in which members worship includes the presence of individuals and religious groups, their relationships, and the religious sects in which they are embedded. An excellent example of this is how social support and networks through interaction impacts health and well-being (El-Bialy & Mulay, 2015; Milligan et al., 2004). It is found that among immigrants, religious places provide not only

a place of worship in the native language but are also a source of familiar ethnic foods, community information, psychological and instrumental support for newcomers who need healthcare, housing and jobs (Stodghill & Bower, 2002). In a study exploring religiosity, social support and life satisfaction among elderly Korean immigrants in New York, Park, Roh, and Yeo (2012) observed that greater religiosity correlates with greater life satisfaction and that social support particularly explained the positive relationship between religious place making and life satisfaction. Social support exemplifies the link between religious placemaking and well-being:

> Through group meetings we get to interact, we get news and information from friends about jobs, cheap accommodations and stuffs; it helps to settle and feel part of a family especially for single newcomers. Loneliness is bad. If you're alone you always have headache. Also it helps to share problems by advice – it helps prevent excessive pressure. Interaction helps people to forget about their problems in that particular moment. It is a welcoming environment for everyone. (Male, Muslim)
>
> At church sometimes they show movies about Jesus and other Christian movies. It's really nice. In the Easter time, they showed a movie on Jesus' death and His resurrection. This helps us to come together to believe in Him and hope that He is capable of doing anything we ask. (Female, Christian)

Support via religious places has provided both expressive and instrumental resources such as economic assistance and employment information (Costen, 1993; Mensah, 2009; Zuckerman, 2002), helping to empower the individual and connecting him or her to a community that might in turn give psychological stability (Oman & Thoresen, 2003). As Malloch (1989) argues, good health and healing require that an individual live in harmony with others, their community and the spirit worlds. This social relations shape both the experiences of place and an individual's sense of community and belonging that are both central to health. Increase in sense of security when members are surrounded by people with similar identities (Popay et al., 2003) promotes social cohesion. This assertion corroborates with other studies that have documented how social cohesion influences health by enhancing the mutual exchange of resources and information (Kearns & Forrest, 2000; Wilkinson, 1997) and promoting collective efficacy, the extent to which members believe in their ability to mutually solve problems (Mensah, 2009; Sampson, Morenoff, & Earl, 1999).

The narratives surrounding religious sites have changed over the years, with many pilgrims visiting online for their religious needs (see Williams,

2013). Numerous social resources of online pilgrimage that addressed the social therapeutic landscape theme have been identified. Using the 'Stations of the Cross, Jerusalem, for example, Williams (2013, p. 85) observed that the cyberpilgrim has the option to 'stop slideshows and go pray', which gives the pilgrim an opportunity to pray at his/her own computer'. Additionally, cyberpilgrimage websites often recommend that their users undertake in 'ritual reflecting activities' to enable them to mitigate the non-material disembodiment of not actually being at the physical site, at the same time, generate real-life physical relationships to the activities (Hill-Smith, 2011, p. 241). Such activities include lighting candles and alms-giving, activities associated with virtual memorials (Maddrell, 2010).

The Symbolic Therapeutic Landscape

Space is invested with historical, social and symbolic meaning for its occupants (Carter, Donald, & Squires, 1993). Various works on therapeutic landscapes highlight the importance of symbols and symbolic landscapes in shaping health (Gesler, 1996; Kearns & Barnett, 1999). These symbols allow the observation of particular rituals in relation to them (Jordan, 2003). The symbols provide avenue for socialization into a particular material context. Places perceived as beneficial to well-being possess basic properties, 'healing places for example achieve positive or negative reputations because people perceive that they do or do not fulfil basic human needs such as providing security, a feeling of identity, material wants, or aesthetic pleasure' (Gesler, 1998, p. 17). These perceptions may vary depending on the functional and/or symbolic significance of a religious place in question:

> In the church, we have a baptistery where new members are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Prior to baptism, you have to accept Jesus as your personal savior and believe in Him. (Male, Christian)
>
> To become a Muslim, you need to recite "the Shahada" [a short oral declaration of faith]. "I bear witness that nothing deserves to be worshipped except Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah". (Female, Muslim)

The cultural landscape can be viewed as a product of symbolic action; it revels, structures or represents cultural images. Specific symbols, including the baptistery in Christian churches, are directly associated with the religion, and often have spiritual powers or roles themselves. The function

of the baptistery is, for example, multifaceted: it is used for prayer and to cleanse the believer from sins. Similarly, in the mosque there is a fountain, its water both a welcome respite and important for ablution (ritual cleansing). Another important symbol in the mosques is the 'Mihrab', a niche in the wall that indicates the direction of Mecca, towards which all Muslims pray. Symbols such as the baptistery, rosary and tasbih reflect the various ways through which members express faith in their congregation. Similarly, in the virtual pilgrimage, there are various symbols within an interface that one can click open to interact with, providing an explanation about the symbolic significance of that particular symbol located within the interface (see MacWilliams, 2002; Williams, 2013).

The Emotional/Mental Therapeutic Landscape

Gesler's therapeutic landscape acknowledges the role that places play in delivering emotional and mental health benefits (Gesler, 1992). It captures the subjective ways in which individuals interpret their religious places. It includes feeling good, not only about ourselves, but about our social relationships, within members/believers, between members, and in communities (Keyes, 2002). Other researchers have also emphasized 'the principle of the common good' and fellow feeling for members, advocates a concept of relief/happiness, which embraces positive aspects of our social being (Layard, 2005). For example, the church and/or the mosque can be interpreted as creating 'healthy spaces', which contribute to spiritual and mental well-being of members through its activities. Participants reiterated the notions of spiritual strength as necessary to health:

> Sometimes praying, keeping quiet and having your quiet time also enables you to be introspective, it goes really down into yourself and think about a whole lot of issues that you think you can talk with your God that you think you cannot talk to anybody, but talking to God is also a way of staying healthy. (Female, Christian)
>
> Singing as a group heals from emotional stress, trauma, and brings joy in your heart; if you follow the song with all your soul, heart and mind, it heals you mentally and psychologically. It gives you joy; it's a form of healing. (Male, Christian)
>
> If I have a problem, I go to the mosque, pray, recite some verses in the Quran. If you follow the verses that you read, to me it's like getting treatment from a doctor. It's healing. (Male, Muslim)

Routine and regular attendance and adherence allow individuals to connect spiritually with their God, allowing members to pursue at the same time physical and spiritual connections to religious sites that are important for emotional and mental well-being. Research has also explored how emotional attachment to religious places can become consolidated over time. Religious places are settings for developing emotional bonds. Indeed, member/believer's sense of comfort in their religious places was often to their appreciation of religious places as 'sacred places'. For example, positive perceptions of religious places can strengthen motivation to remain in the faith, which could form a basis for stronger social ties, and by extension, for the genesis of social capital, a resource generally beneficial to well-being which requires stability of the structure of social relations (Coleman, 1990).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION: TOWARDS HEALING PLACES

Religious communities and institutions have been pivotal in the growth of cities and urban communities in the world, usually as cradles around which large cities emerge. Followers of various religions have created their own sacred places, religious institutions, organizations, support services and transnational linkages (Ebaugh & Chafetz, 2000; Leonard, Stepick, Vásquez, & Holdaway, 2005; Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2005). Religious sites may constitute elements of the physical, social and symbolic environment (Gesler, 1996) that are perceived to have healing capabilities. The physical space provides a place where people can meet and/or participate in activities related to worship. Members can have access to the physical space which is considered 'sacred' and contains other symbolic elements. Places perceived as healing all possess basic features; healing places for example, achieve positive reputation because members perceive that they do possess qualities for human needs such as providing security, a feeling of identity and material wants (Gesler, 1998, p. 17). While researchers have emphasized the role of the natural environment in the maintenance of the physical well-being (see Gesler, 1992). For Saunders (1986), the built environment of familiar streets and neighbourhood, were key. For example, religious places provided a supportive environment for immigrants who were initially out of place in the Canadian society (see Agyekum & Newbold, 2016). Newcomers perceived religious places as pleasant, nurturing them gradually into the mainstream Canadian society.

Research has demonstrated diverse influences such as the role of social networks, social support, humour and leisure activities associated with participation and processes of religious empowerment (see Agyekum & Newbold, 2016; Williams, 2013). Social dimension of religious places was generally perceived as having a positive influence on peoples' lives. For most believers/members, church and mosque that brought people together and where membership and support networks were made and maintained were instrumental to a general sense of well-being. This bond provides a framework for both individual and communal aspects of identity. In Canada, such religious places tend to serve as hubs for new immigrant and newcomers, providing opportunities such as ethnic nutritional foods, recreation, language support and training, and employment. Religious places often serve as miniature society, where people feel comfortable to mingle, and speak freely without fear, where their natural languages are tolerated, and this has implications for health. Some researchers have acknowledged the potential of such inclusive and welcoming places as therapeutic (Gesler, 2003; Keyes, 2002; Mensah, 2009). As Stafford, Cummins, MacIntyre, Ellaway, and Marmot (2005) argued, living in a less tolerated area has been associated with poorer self-rated health. Others have argued that tolerance is an important pre-condition for widening networks and for a more inclusive social capital (Hallberg & Lunds, 2005).

In essence, the geographic concentration of religious places creates an environment that sustains and maintains populations' health. Religious places provide a range of benefits to diverse people who patronize these places. Some members derived restorative benefits, but for others, it is their social benefits, the security and connections which were instrumental in reducing stress and maintaining and promoting well-being. Again, religious places are more than just spiritual places, most often becoming the first point of contact for most newcomers to Canada (Agyekum & Newbold, 2016). In a broader context, Brown and Perkins (1992) illustrate how place attachment involves positively expressed bonds, sometimes occurring without awareness, that are developed over time from the behaviour, affective and cognitive ties between individuals and groups and the sociophysical environment.

Religious places remain important locale for maintaining and promoting health. Culturally, the therapeutic landscape concept has provided a useful framework for examining the major components of healing capacities of landscapes, including religious places. In this regard, the key contributions of humanistic/cultural geographers and other social scientists have been

to underscore and illuminate the importance of the therapeutic landscape concept, particularly its broad application, as a factor in understanding religion and religious activities. Clearly, then, religion is important as a factor in understanding the well-being of populations, but rather than viewing religion in narrow spiritual terms, as a call to a Supreme Being, a wider view is warranted. In fact, the chapter advocates reframing the spiritual component of religion to combine the physical, social, symbolic, emotional and other factors that characterize religious placemaking, and to consider vulnerable religious places that jeopardize populations' well-being. The focus on therapeutic landscapes is sharp. The (re)introduction of the therapeutic landscapes concept was a turning point in improving the process for individuals and researchers to re-examine the potential effects of place on health. It concentrates on entry to the socio-ecological sense of health, rather than on biomedical aspect of health and well-being. But a better understanding of therapeutic landscapes is a significant precursor to fairer attainment of well-being.

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'To Him I Commit My Spirit': Attachment to God, the Land and the People as a Means of Dealing with Crises in Gaza Strip

Miriam Billig

Introduction

The connection based on the relationship between 'creator, creation, and creatures' is depicted in the biblical tale as a universal component—as a general connection between man and creation. In Jewish Theological discourse, this relationship was translated into the eternal trinity between 'God, the land (of Israel) and the (Jewish) people'. This link is mentioned in the covenant, when God revealed himself to Abraham and promised him that his seed shall inherit the Land of Israel, as it is written: 'For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever' (Gen. 13:15). This promise was also made to Isaac and Jacob and is mentioned in the Bible several times as the 'Promised Land' (ibid., pp. 15, 28). In Latin it is called 'Terra Sancta,' (Holy Land), and its soil is also considered sacred.

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Many religious Jews attribute supreme spiritual importance to living in the Land of Israel, as they believe that only residents of the Holy Land can fulfil all of God's commandment to the letter. In that sense, Judaism may be somewhat unique in comparison to many other religions, in that its faithful aspire to spend their entire lives in a certain territory, while some even endeavour to never leave the place. This connection is described as unique by some sacred Jewish texts and as extending beyond the 'natural bond' all people have with their countries.

Judaism is, therefore, an example with which we may demonstrate the connection that research literature describes as an emotional bond that develops and grows between a people, its God and a determined territory (Counted, 2019; Counted & Zock, 2019; McAlister, 2005). This religious approach also explains why the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948 was perceived by many believers as a seminal event and as a part of the Redemption that would see the people of Israel return to their land, where they would realize the promise God had made to their Patriarchs. In the terms of Counted and Zock, for some Jewish believers, coming to Israel is a sublime spiritual experience, accompanied by a sense of 'place spirituality', and the right to live there is the 'object of attachment' (Counted & Zock, 2019). This concept contrasts, for example, the approach of Evangelical Christianity: 'a potent theology for a world of migrants and wanderers, those who define their identity in terms not of roots but of routes' (Coleman, 2000, p. 63; Jenkins, 2011, p. 116; See also Kalir, 2009, p. 150). In most religions, religious attachment runs through its holy places. Religious perceptions determine, among other things, the nature of place attachment and the situations that lead to detachment from it (McAlister, 2005).

On the other hand, the unresolved Jewish–Palestinian conflict over the rights to the land and the biblical borders of Israel, is the cause of wars and terrorism, and a source of power and violence driven by national narratives, anthologies, meanings and competing frameworks of morals and ethics. Thus, it also deflects from the discussion on place in this region in the context of 'moral geography' (McAlister, 2005). This discussion has expanded beyond the conflict of the two peoples to include the international involvement of various powers and countries, which exert pressure in an attempt to solve this conflict. It is also the most important topic in the political debate/discourse in Israel since 1967, which raises differences between Israeli political parties.

One border region that has a continuous and complex conflict is the Gaza Strip. The Gaza strip lies within the boundaries of Israel's biblical

promise (Josh. 15:47) and has been considered a part of its mandatory borders since the twentieth century. In 1949, the area was put under Egyptian rule, and has since returned to Israel twice, and twice has Israel withdrawn from it: the first time was between November 1956 and March 1957, following the Sinai Campaign; and again, following the Six-Day War, for a period of 38 years, between 1967 and 2005. This article addressed the two final decades of that period, from 1987 to August 2005, with the execution of Israel's disengagement from Gaza, a plan initiated by then Prime Minister—Ariel Sharon. The plan entailed a one-sided Disengagement from the Gaza Strip, which involved uprooting its Jewish population and the demolition of its settlements by IDF forces.

Ever since 1987, Gaza Strip residents have endured Palestinian terrorist attacks, which damaged property and claimed Jewish lives—as well as Palestinian, as a result of Israeli acts of retribution. In 2004, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon declared his intent to conduct a one-sided Disengagement of Jewish settlers from the Gaza Strip. For about a year and a half following that declaration, Gaza Strip residents lived in a state of uncertainty regarding their continued residence there and led a fight to annul the government's decision to withdraw from the region. Despite constant threats to their and their children's lives, and despite the uncertainty surrounding their place of residence, barely any settlers decided to leave the place willingly (Billig, 2006). Paradoxically, the number of Jewish residents in the Gaza Strip increased during that time, reaching about 8000 residents across 21 small villages and community settlements. The main explanation for the rise in Gaza Strip settlers has to do with the arrival of devout religious families (*Chardalim*—National Haredi Jews), whose strong faith propelled them to reside in the area. Their motive for coming to the Gaza Strip was ideologically religious, and they aimed to strengthen the local resident and prevent their departure. As mentioned, these religious settlers believed the demand to willingly relinquish parts of the land of Israel is a violation of their loyalty to God's promise. The spirit this group of believers had brought along with them, as well as their successful assimilation into the communities as strong religious rabbinical leaders, succeeded in rallying most of the Gaza Strip residents to remain faithful to the place and to refuse to leave it—within the boundaries of the law—until military forces evicted them and demolished their homes (Billig, 2013).

According to Geertz (1973), crises and extreme situations allow the researcher to unveil the foundations of social structure and the meanings behind its inherent symbols, which usually remain hidden and out of sight

in routine situations. Situations in which residents are under the stress of terrorism and threat of displacement, constitute a rare opportunity to discover the principles of expected behaviour and the normative commandments of a certain religion. With the Gaza Strip as our case study, we shall try to explain the religious significance of place attachment, and how it manifests in times of crisis. We wish to examine the behaviour of settlers in the Gaza Strip by also relying on the psychoanalytical approach which contends that people form an emotional bond with tangible objects such as geographical places, or intangible ones such as a divine being, which then provides them with a sanctuary and with security in a nonsecure world (Cicirelli, 2004; Counted, 2016; Lager, van Hoven, & Meijering, 2012). Wars and other life-threatening and frightening acts of terrorism affect the intensification of place-attachment and one's attachment with God (Counted & Watts, 2017). That is, security-related and political tensions in a certain place increase religious tensions and strengthen the bond between the residents and God. God becomes the origin to which we turn when faced with negative experiences in the place, and the place becomes a source of kinship when man experiences internal spiritual struggles. Places that saw loss and tragedy have become sacred ground, where God's presence can be felt (Counted, 2019, p. 2; Counted & Zock, 2019, p. 5). On the relationship between tragedy and sacred place see also Counted and Watts (2017).

This chapter offers a religious model of contemporary thought which includes an attachment between a people, their God and a particular region. It seeks to examine how religious perception serves political stances and national ideology that call to hold on to the land under a twofold threat: the pressure of ongoing terrorism, and the pressure of the possible displacement of residents from their homes.

It may be helpful to clarify that central to the Jewish religious faith is the belief in the oneness of God and in Him being the creator and master of the universe. According to Judaism, God gave the Torah to the People of Israel and it contains the commandments and the laws that the faithful must follow and live according to. The role of the rabbis is to teach the Torah and to interpret it and thereby draw the Jews closer to God and to strengthen their bond with Him. The redemption will come, according to the Jewish faith, when the Jewish people will keep all of the commandments and the human race will reach a sufficiently high level of moral and spiritual behaviour. Speaking about the strengthening of the Jewish religious faith, means the strengthening of the faith in God.

This article aims to analyse the faithful messages used in sermons by the rabbis of communities and settlements in the Gaza Strip during various times of crisis. These sermons were given following acts of terrorism that led to deaths and injuries, during funerals and memorials, and in celebrations of gratitude by survivors. They were also given following government decrees that evoked anxiety and uncertainty in residents regarding their future in the area, during demonstrations against evictions, and as part of the preparation towards a possible departure from the place. The article attempts to decipher the faith-based tools with which the rabbis managed to strengthen residents' spirits. The findings are based on about 200 sermons that were published as a compilation titled *Torat Katif* [the Torah of Katif], which includes rabbis' sermons from over 35 years of settlement in the Gaza Strip (Epstein, 2009). I will quote representative examples from these sermons, of messages from the following fields: attachment to God, attachment to place and attachment to the people of Israel.

Attachment to God

Providing God's ways with meaning and a rational explanation— following the traumatic events that took place in communities—especially where deaths and injuries were involved—rabbis, in their sermons, attributed the difficult events to which residents were subjected, to a broader variety of similar events interwoven throughout Jewish history. Rabbis based their arguments on the sacred Jewish texts that said that the land of Israel is acquired through suffering. According to interpretations, in this context, the suffering does not weaken the people of Israel but rather strengthens them, and will eventually bring about their redemption (Epstein, 2009, p. 304). With this evidence, rabbis sought to facilitate Gaza Strip residents' ability to face their fears and loss by providing their reality with a religious faith-based meaning and guiding them towards achieving clear goals. For example, after one settlement was attacked by missiles, its Rabbi addressed the security situation by explaining that:

> This war, with its unique nature, is a divine measure meant to incite forces and overflow minds with new depths of the divine spirit, which breathes life into the hearts of people. The divine measure is a "necessity," namely, a divine act that transforms us from activity to passivity. (ibid., p. 130)

The rabbis have emphasized that the reality of the Gaza Strip is not coincidental and that God is watching—that Divine Providence guides these events according to a predetermined purpose. The transition from 'active'—which refers to human action, to 'passive'—the highest level that refers to God's intervention in man's actions, where man becomes an object of divine action, much like Abraham in the story of the Binding of Isaac. The faithful person is, therefore, called upon to rely on the overall divine act—which humans are not privy to—despite the difficulties they may encounter. Concretely, as part of that same divine providence, rabbis claim that this unsafe place must remain inhabited because God commands it. They wish to attribute the inner strengths God gives to his believers, so they can deal with such events and manifest strengths that remain otherwise hidden. Rabbis attribute the very appearance of such positive strength—whatever the circumstances—'to a rise in the faith of Gaza Strip residents that would eventually bring redemption closer' (ibid., p. 144). This approach comes up again and again in the sermons, as rabbis claim that war can strengthen the nation, and therefore wars have always been the start of redemption and salvation.

Strengthening the emotional bond with God—in their sermons, rabbis showered Gaza Strip residents with compliments, and described them as the heroes of a generation, who give away their lives for the sanctity of God, people and country. The rabbis have complimented them for their heroism and staying power during the many trials God has brought upon them and emphasize that God only tests those who can withstand his trials. Following a terrorist attack, rabbis attempted to raise morale and lift resident spirits by displaying reality in as positive a light as possible. Alongside addressing the disaster and trauma, they gave thanks to God for the many miracles that survivors have experienced. According to the rabbis, these miracles were not coincidental, but rather a result that credits the deeds and behaviour of Gaza Strip residents. The rabbis portray these residents as a chosen elite, which gets to experience miracles when others do not. The most prominent miracle rabbis have emphasized is the sparsity of casualties—relatively to the multitude acts of terrorism against Jewish settlers. As one rabbi puts it:

> We witness miracles upon miracles, and see truly divine visions, and as time passes the number of miracles only grows, and the appearance of the miracle keeps growing and intensifying… All these prove that God loves us and performs all these miracles in order to uncover and grow sublime things

from within our complicated reality, things that we currently do not know…
It is our duty to look upon the miracles and trials God had wrought for us
and see and understand that our actions are in keeping with the divine will
and aim. (ibid., pp. 303–304)

According to these rabbis, the many miracles bestowed upon Gaza Strip
residents from the beginning of the *intifada*[1] to the evictions can be
attributed to God's special love of these inhabitants as a result of their
unique qualities and religious and faith-based righteousness. The rabbis
tried to inspire positivity and give people the feeling that they are chosen
and unique, thus imbuing them with new faith-based strengths so they
could deal with their reality:

To our brothers and sisters, the dear, beloved, and kindly residents of Gush
Katif[2] [Gaza Strip], the true heroes of our generation… The pride, heroism
and determination, valor and strength, endurance and absolute adherence to
God [master of the universe] of Gaza Strip residents – they who brought us
thus far, they are the greatest *Kiddush Hashem* [sanctification of God] of our
time. (Kaminsky, 2005)

They claim this love manifests through God's particular attention to the
settlers. Yet another level of miracles that rabbis have mentioned in their ser-
mons refers to farmers' success in promoting agriculture in the Gaza Strip:
by founding agricultural greenhouses in areas inhabited by desolate dunes,
and through the cultivation of unique crops, which they had exported
to international markets in exchange for large sums of money. The rabbis
attributed these successes to heavenly assistance, that is, to God's help. Mir-
acles that allowed Gaza Strip residents to 'extract the holy from the sand:
Torah, faith, and godliness, settlement, devotion, and so on'.[3] The agricul-
tural enterprise in Gush Katif was considered 'the land's acquiescence to its
saviors': as part of the overall perception that the land of Israel is essentially
different from other places, as it reacts to the deeds of its inhabitants by
rewarding its lovers or ejecting its sinners. Thus, beyond their livelihood,

[1] A Palestinian uprising violence against the Israeli occupation.

[2] Gush Katif is the name given to the territory that most Jewish settlements of the Gaza
Strip occupied—many rabbis used that name in addressing Jewish Gaza Strip residents.

[3] Gaza Strip settlements were founded in Dune filled areas. This is a play on words in
Hebrew, as the word *Hol* [sand] is the root of the word *Hoolin* [secular/non-holy], that is
'a secular day' as opposed to 'Shabbat – a holy day'.

farmers were awarded the added value of the divine appreciation that manifests in enjoying the fruits of the land and a chance to become closer to God.

The intent to act towards annulling the decree—by relying on the psychotherapeutic approach, rabbis attributed a great deal of importance to encouraging residents to be active, in order to prevent them from sinking into depression and grief. Therefore, in their sermons, they made sure to pose their audience with challenges and missions on two levels: the spiritual and the worldly. On the spiritual level, they reiterated the motif that God's actions are beyond comprehension, but that redemption will only come when it is deserved. For example, after the Rabbi of one community was murdered in a terrorist act, they said:

> We shall not lose our faith and spiritual strength just because redemption does not seem to be on its way. God… redeems His offspring in convoluted ways… The light that springs from within a darkness that has accumulated throughout all our years in exile shines bright according to the value of the time, and according to the virtue of our people in this generation. (Epstein, 2009, p. 187)

Additional messages have insisted that the ability to deal with such difficult trials can only be achieved by connecting with the roots of one's faith. In order to tackle fears of travelling the roads, rabbis have recommended studying the Torah beforehand, or performing charity that religion deems as 'life-saving', or speaking the verse: 'to Him I commit my spirit', meaning that the driver commits their own fate to the hands of God. Rabbis sought to take tangible actions that would improve qualities and strengthen religious faith on both a personal and communal level by increasing Torah learning, participating in Torah lessons, rigorously observing the mitzvot, performing acts of charity and so on. Through these challenges, rabbis have wished to instil hope in the hearts of the faithful, to provide them with an explanation for their current reality—'the state of darkness', and especially encourage communal gatherings that reinforce communal and personal strengths.

On the worldly level, rabbis encouraged Gaza Strip residents to take an active part in the fight against the Disengagement from the Gaza Strip. Success in the recruitment of public opinion and people towards joining demonstrations against the evacuation was also attributed to God's divine providence, and considered proof that God sees their righteous struggle

and acts in a way that would enable their staying there. In a letter to campaign headquarters activists, this Rabbi relies on these successes: 'we see the enormous heavenly aid that accompanies all our actions throughout all our years here, and especially ever since the disengagement command, and almost all that has happened has been an outright miracle' (ibid., p. 298). The threat of exile is, from the rabbis' perspective, a unique kind of trial, and they are formulating a way of dealing with it.

The rabbis have called upon the residents to believe in salvation, telling them that they deserve it, and asking them to 'continue to redeem the land, by planting and sowing, etc.' (ibid., p. 236). The rabbis were afraid that Gaza Strip farmers would put a stop to planting and cease working the fields in order to avoid any more financial losses with the assumption that they would not have time to reap their fruit before they were expected to evacuate. In practice, in order to avoid ongoing idleness, the rabbis founded a foundation called 'Believing and Planting', aimed at funding further planting in the Gaza Strip until the day of evacuation. Rabbis strengthened farmers' spirits until the very last moment, by focusing on their work and empowering their belief that there would be no Disengagement.

Similarly, rabbis encouraged continued housebuilding and the watering of gardens until the very last moment. By doing so, they delivered a message, that they are doing all they can to hold onto the land, and that their faith in God is stronger than anything. From a psychotherapeutic point of view, rabbis were directing residents towards proactive action until the very moment they were displaced, thus preventing them from falling into idleness, despair and depression.

Contrary to the sense of insecurity and uncertainty residents have endured, the rabbis' sermons direct and encourage residents to strengthen and deepen their attachment to God. In order to do so, the rabbis' practical guidance is channelled towards enhancing religious beliefs on both a personal and communal level: by imbuing reality with a comforting religious meaning, and telling them that they are a part of an overall process that would eventually bring about redemption; by framing residents as God's favourites, whom He protects through miracles, thus providing them with a sense of security; and by encouraging residents towards proactive action, such as ongoing planting and building that would prove their absolute faith and give them hope that such actions can turn the decree around.

Place Attachment

Giving a meaning to staying—this approach helped solve the cognitive dissonance created around the need to explain why Gaza Strip residents remain loyal to their place of residence even though, in doing so, they endanger their own lives and the lives of their children. From rabbinical sermons and letters of that time we can learn that rabbis did not ignore the difficulties and fears with which residents had to deal, but rather tried to moderate them by providing life in that place with faith-based content and spiritual meaning. To the observant Jewish public, the Sin of the Spies is a well-known codename for one of the more severe sins in the Torah. It refers to the biblical tale (Num. 13) of the Spies who were sent to explore the Land of Israel before its conquest, and upon return described it as 'a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof'. With these words, the Spies had expressed their disbelief in the God that guided them to this land, and thus the Israelites who believed the Spies were also punished (Num. 13:32).

According to Jewish sages, this sin belongs in the shortlist of sins which, to this day, remain unrectified. The rabbis of the Gaza Strip, in their attempt to imbue the Disengagement plan with theological meaning, often analogized the Sin of the Spies with those who do not side with the aspiration to hold on to the place and fight for it. To them, the sin represents the argument between those Israelis who supported Prime Minister Sharon's plan to uproot the settlements of the Gaza Strip, and between Gaza Strip settlers who fought against it. The rabbis presented the struggle to hold onto the Gaza Strip as part of the rectification of the Sin of the Spies, which embodied the weak attachment between the people of Israel and the Land of Israel (Num. 14). As one rabbi describes:

> Unfortunately, back then, the people of Israel considered the land of Israel as they now consider the Gaza Strip… as a demographic problem [in light of the large Palestinian population in the region, MB], security issues, a desolate area of desert and dunes, where nothing can grow, etc., etc., but… the settlers of the region also discovered a Land of Milk and Honey here. They can acknowledge the value and virtue of the land of Israel even in a place that now seems as complicated as the Gaza Strip, and become partners to the rectification of the Sin of the Spies… And "the land is an exceeding good land". (Epstein, 2009, p. 207)

This message was particularly important in a time when reality did not smile on Gaza Strip residents, especially after terrorist attacks, where residents were murdered and injured and doubts were raised regarding the justifications for staying there. Thus, this Rabbi quotes an explanation, that the lesson the Sin of the Spies teaches us is that even when reality seems hard, we must adhere to the place: '(*Sanctification of God*… [expressed] in his burial [of the victim, MB] in the sacred soil of the Gaza Strip, is the repentance with which we rectify the Sin of the Spies, and with it discover our love of the land' (ibid., p. 269). That is, the rabbis emphasize that it is not enough to merely remain in the land, but that one must also be attached and love the place. The rectification of sin depends on strengthening the love of the land, and on the readiness of Gaza Strip residents to reside there despite difficulties (ibid., p. 205). This message, of the rectification of the Sin of the Spies, has become part of the religious discourse that takes place 'between the lines,' even when it was not mentioned outright. In a farewell prayer, on the eve of the Disengagement, this settlement's Rabbi utilizes motifs from the story of the Spies: 'We did not spy, we did not speak ill, we did not forsake our faith, we have spoken only good things, of your holy land, it is the land of our lives… We came here to plant, to build our homes, to not back down…' (ibid, p. 206). The contrast with the Sin of the Spies in this case, aims to emphasize the unique emotional attachment to the place and its residents. Gush Katif rabbis stressed the operative messages derived from comparing our generation to that of the Spies: (1) We must not fear, even though the people who support the settlement of the Gaza Strip are a minority.[4] (2) We must sacrifice our lives for the Gaza Strip and believe in God even when reality is harsh and seems impossible. (3) We must learn and internalize the value of the Gaza Strip and the emotional attachment of the people of Israel to the promised land.

Place idealization—in their sermons, rabbis praised the uniqueness of the settlement and its quality of life compared with other areas of the country, as a place that sustains a spiritual value-based life, devoid of the pursuit of materialism and promiscuity common elsewhere. As shown by the following description:

> Though we settle here… Out of a supreme devotion to His people and country and Torah… Despite that, this is now a place of danger [i.e.: the Gaza

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[4]Because only two out of 12 spies (Joshua and Kaleb) brought a message of faith, that the land was good and could be conquered with God's help.

Strip, MB], [In contrast] where they speak of hollow and empty "ideals" [i.e.: in other places outside the Gaza Strip, MB] […] Is that where we shall lead our lives? This would be dangerous to our souls, and especially to the soul of the nation. (ibid., p. 79)

The rabbis weighed the tangible dangers of living in the Gaza Strip against the moral and spiritual deterioration that occurs in other places in Israel, and claimed that life in the Gaza Strip is much safer. Namely, they posed the physical danger of losing one's life against the danger of losing one's spiritual life. In this, they sought to strengthen local pride and residents' emotional bond with the area and aimed to increase the sense of pioneers among them. The rabbis believe that, by holding on to the land, Gaza Strip residents have achieved the highest level of proximity to God and of love for the land of Israel—a level more significant than settling Jerusalem. In one sermon, a Rabbi explains this argument by saying that the Gaza Strip is the only place where the three following conditions coexist at the same time: (1) Life in the land of Israel. (2) In an agricultural area, where most settlements are agricultural in nature, and attached to the land. (3) A place where people attached to God, pray to Him daily from the depths of their hearts, thank Him for their past and cry out for their future (ibid., p. 164). Thus, life in the Gaza Strip becomes a great privilege.

The intent to strengthen their hold on the place—the rabbis sought to encourage residents to increase movement within the Gaza Strip and the roads leading to it, despite the security risk travel posed. In this, they wished to strengthen residents' self-confidence and motivation to continue living there normatively, rather than shut themselves in their homes for fear of driving on the roads. This was expressed, for example, by an empowering letter distributed around Kfar Darom after the start of the *intifada*, in which the settlement's Rabbi writes:

In such times, which are not easy, it is our duty to strengthen our confidence in Him, to strengthen and grow strong in our spirit, and not to break down or back down, God forbid, from our stance, and to hold on to this sacred place… We are required a great deal of devotion, and with His help, we shall find the valor to project it outward. Though we may sometimes encounter phenomena to which we are unaccustomed… Stressful drives along the roads, with His help we shall know how to overcome, gather our courage and bravery, and not give up or run away. (ibid., p. 91)

Despite this guidance, fear of travelling the roads preoccupied Gaza Strip residents on a daily basis. It is manifested in numerous discussions on the topic in rabbis' sermons, as they often provided focused directions on how to deal with this fear. For example, in an answer to a young woman who was raised in Gaza, the settlement Rabbi replies:

> We may ask a person to educate themselves and get to where they can control their natural feelings. Especially when they know what they're fighting and giving their lives for. In this case, we must also grow strong in our belief that our fight for this country is the Holy of Holies. Any small or great contribution that strengthens our hold on the land is a blessed one. Undoubtedly, by driving down these routes we assert **our ownership of this place**, raise our confidence and improve our feeling. (ibid., p. 87)

By transforming the fight for the land into 'the Holy of Holies', rabbis strengthen the justification of taking a security risk. By emphasizing the connection between driving along the central routes in the area and asserting ownership of the place, they created a religious obligation to stay there alongside a personal obligation to travel the roads, which contributes to settlers' overall sense of security.

In the face of the dilemma of whether or not to stay and continue risking their lives, and in the face of the demand made by parts of Israeli society and the world to leave, rabbis' sermons direct and encourage residents to strengthen and deepen their attachment to the Gaza Strip, which constitutes a part of the promised land and therefore must not be abandoned. The rabbis' practical guidance towards this cause is channelled towards strengthening place-attachment: by providing a spiritual meaning to life there, and through the faith that holding on to the place will rectify the sins of their forefathers who did not get to see how good the land is; by strengthening local pride by turning it into an ideal place which provides quality of life alongside moral, value and religious standards that do not exist in other places in the country; and by emphasizing the personal responsibility to stay in order to prove their ownership.

Attachment to the People

Providing a historic meaning through the generations—one of the messages that helped cope with times of crisis, as adopted by the rabbis of the Gaza Strip, is the ability to rise above the current problem and see the crisis

as part of something greater. This outlook transforms the sense of misery and victimization of a cruel fate into a sense of purpose, and feelings of loneliness into a shared past (ibid., p. 42)—a perception which gives people the strength to deal with difficulties. This message constitutes a demand to strengthen faith in the righteousness of one's path. As this rabbi says in his lecture to youths:

> We all know that, in each generation, God challenges the people of Israel. To each generation its roles, to each generation its spiritual and national tasks. The people of Israel are one never-ending chain, and every link is vital and important. **As it seems, you, the youth, have a very important role to play. To speak the true word of the land of Israel and the Gaza Strip wherever you go!** (ibid., p. 214, original emphasis)

The rabbis presented Gaza Strip residents' struggle to maintain hold of the place as part of a long Jewish history of devotion to the Jewish people: 'we are merely another link in the chain of the Jewish love of this place… A chain of devotion to the land, which holds on to it, a living chain of the love that the Jewish people has for its country…' (ibid., p. 51). The place of Gaza Strip residents in this chain encourages and adds a dimension of stability to a world of uncertainty, while the overall picture is broad and eventful and hard to understand when in the midst of a crisis.

Residents as God's emissaries—rabbis have also made sure to compliment Gaza Strip residents for being people of faith, for their courage and determination to stay and for being chosen as God's emissaries to live there due to their unique qualities which allow them to endure these trials. For example, in a demonstration against the eviction, the board of settlement rabbis wrote:

> As devout believers, we are certain… That all these fleeting hardships have made us stronger and more resolute. We ought to know that God has sent those people who are unique to places that are unique, and if divine providence has so steered us and brought us to live here, it is a sign that this is our place, where we should live our lives and fulfill our roles and destiny in His world". (ibid., p. 217)

One act Gaza Strip residents had assumed was going through members of the ruling party (the Likud) and convince them to vote against the Disengagement plan. After their success among the ruling party, the local rabbis praised the work that Gaza Strip residents had done for the people

of Israel, their good qualities and their success in pleasing God as His emissaries:

> The residents of the Gaza Strip get to work alongside God in the process of redemption… You have done the impossible. Because of your humbleness and humility, of your love of the Torah and the honor of Torah scholars, of a wonderful unity, of your mutual respect, of your endless devotion, you have been awarded the role of the emissaries of divine providence… You have led the people of Israel into one of its most uplifting and finest hours, one that will become part of the national consciousness, one of contentment for the Almighty. (ibid., pp. 246–247)

Rabbis are trying to lift residents' spirits and encourage them to hold their heads high by turning them into emissaries whose role is to discover and evoke love of the place in the rest of Israel. Thus, rabbis reposition the status of Gaza Strip residents, no longer as victims on the outskirts of society, but as courageous leaders who can change God's ways/actions.

The role of settlers on a mission—after every event that resulted in deaths and injuries, the dilemmas regarding the justification of this path and the decision to hold on to the place arose anew. In their sermons of comfort and encouragement, rabbis addressed the divine mission of Gaza Strip settlers:

> As a strong and brave population which has, these many years, populated this place out of faith and devotion to God, our faith and our strength regarding our promised fatherland shall not weaken. As people schooled in miracles… With God's help, we overcome difficult safety issues, to flourish and thrive and gain the admiration of all those whose hearts are true. We shall not falter nor let go, but courageously and proudly continue our **divine mission** to the Gaza Strip through our mental strengths. (ibid., p. 217)

Following a terrorist attack, one boy told his rabbi that the Bible has taught him that 'The Land of Israel is acquired through suffering', and asked how much more suffering must Gaza Strip residents endure until the Land of Israel is theirs for eternity? The rabbi replied: 'We must do our duty and hold on to the land out of self-sacrificing devotion. In addition, we must also instill the love of the land, its value and importance in the hearts of the rest of our brethren across each and every region'. That is, Gaza Strip residents' mission isn't solely connected to their need to hold on to the place despite difficulties but is much broader than that. Paradoxically,

when faced with the psychological pressures to leave the Gaza Strip, the resident's rabbis extended their mission from a personal level to a national one. This mission seeks to validate their need to hold on to the place even further and gives them the role of exemplars and guides that would instil the love of the land in other places as well.

After the Prime Minister had rejected the majority vote of his party and elected to proceed with his plan, the rabbis have again raised the question of their mission as Gaza Strip residents. In their sermons, they asked what does God want of them with this manoeuvre, as people of faith? What does God want of them on a personal level, and what does he want from them in general? And to that the rabbi says:

> The Gaza Strip residents, whether willingly or unwillingly, with or without intention, are not private people, they are very public people… How important it is for all of Israel that the people of the Gaza Strip remain strong… For, should we weaken, God forbid – all of Israel will also weaken, as it will toil and struggle… Our worship… centers around faith and security, and we ascend the holy steps one by one… This is a divine process, in which we take part. (ibid., pp. 275–276)

In their sermons, rabbis have depicted the fight for the Gaza Strip as part of the culture-war within a broader context, a perception that clearly shows that the reason they struggle for the land of Israel is not merely territorial (ibid., pp. 123, 126). In doing so, they have increased the residents' responsibility for the fate of the nation. According to the rabbis, the residents' roles were predetermined by God, who chose them to be a part of His plan. The stronger their faith, the more they will affect the fate of the people and of the Land of Israel. The rabbis' words indicate that the central factor in the decision to withdraw from the Gaza Strip was the people of Israel's weak affinity to their country. Therefore, they stated that Gaza Strip residents should focus their struggle on strengthening this affinity (Roth, 2014).

In light of the lack of sympathy for their struggle to annul the Disengagement plan, as well as a sense of loneliness and distance from overall Israeli society, the rabbis, in their sermons, defined Gaza Strip residents as God's chosen emissaries to fulfil his mission for the people. To do so, rabbis' practical guidance was channelled to strengthening their attachment to the people of Israel: by giving a meaning to their role as part of a long Jewish history of devotion to God and the actions of those few who see

that the path is just and shed light upon it for the greater good; because of Gaza Strip residents' strong affinity to the land they have been chosen as emissaries whose role would be to pass this love on to the rest of Israel; and by emphasizing their role as emissaries that can strengthen the connection to the people of Israel, and the attachment of the people of Israel to the land and to the Gaza Strip and lead the struggle against giving the region back.

Summary and Conclusions

The central challenge settlement rabbis faced was strengthening Gaza Strip residents' bond with God. In their sermons, they provided a variety of rational explanations for the reality of the residents' lives as part of an overall plan guided and controlled by God. Other messages addressed the development of residents' emotional connection with God by proving that God's love for them is unique, and that he cares for and saves them by watching over them. Rabbis encouraged residents to act in ways that would please God's will and justify His providence. When the security threats increased and living in the Gaza Strip became truly life-threatening, rabbis worked to strengthen the ideology of holding on to the land. This ideology refers to the duty that a faith-based individual has to adhere to all parts of the land that was promised to Abraham and the Israelites according to the divine decree, and not surrender them to another people. This approach had a strengthening effect on residents' conscious and emotional attitudes, with the realization that they are a significant factor in strengthening their people's hold on this place. Other messages addressed the concept that Gaza Strip residents are not an individual group operating from a place of personal interest but rather a part of the people of Israel and play a central role in its spiritual and faith-based guidance.

Rabbis sought to expand the theological issues to the sociological plane as part of the practice of handling their crisis. Within the framework of this practice, they set concrete goals: strengthening the religious belief of the community—in answering the issue of the attachment to God; strengthening their place-attachment—in answering the issue of their attachment to the land of Israel and strengthening the community's sense of purpose—in answering the issue of their attachment to the people of Israel. In doing so, rabbis have successfully interpreted, for Gaza Strip residents, their given reality, and helped them cope with it psychologically, thus ensuring their continued work there as active people.

Gaza Strip rabbis presented a holistic agenda for all aspects of managing the time of crisis residents experienced during the years that preceded the Disengagement. The division was as follows: (1) Cognitive messages explaining their position regarding the overall narrative explanation of war and crisis. (2) Emotional messages that provide emotional solutions and encourage the public whilst evoking self-sacrificing devotion. (3) Operative messages and guidance which directs settlers on how they should conduct themselves, and the desired form of struggle against the Disengagement plan. In addition, we have seen how Gush Katif rabbis invested their time and energy in improving settlement residents' social cohesion.

Quantitative studies conducted around the time of the Disengagement show that holding on to one's religious beliefs and place of residence, and strengthening place-attachment, have contributed to the social cohesion and strength of Gaza Strip residents and provided their struggle with meaning (Billig, 2013; Billig, Kohn, & Levav, 2006; Levav, Kohn, & Billig, 2008). The words of the rabbis, as given in this chapter, provide these findings with explanations and show us why these messages have been proven to work and did what they were meant to do to those settlers who heard them. This prominent phenomenon was clearly demonstrated in the outcome on the eve of the Disengagement, as government ministries who tried to promote the plan were met with a lack of cooperation, in the non-violent response of residents as they were being evicted from the Gaza Strip, and in residents' favourable attitudes towards their rabbis. Although, at the end of the day, Gaza Strip residents' approach did not accomplish their struggle's main objective—to stop the Disengagement—this case allows us to examine the great positive effect that the religious attachment mechanism had had on the settlers throughout the years of crisis.

The failure to prevent the plan to withdraw from the Gaza Strip, which eventually led to the exile of all Jewish settlers from the region and the destruction of their homes by military forces, put their religious faith to the test once again. Many experienced a severe crisis, and wanted to know why their prayers were not answered? In some cases, the rabbis' authority weakened, and some wished to retire from this role. Some chose to change the theology by disassociating from 'the state' following the Disengagement. Others—mostly youths—experienced a weakening of their religious faith, and some became secular. But most of the evacuees continue to encourage rabbis to take on new national and social challenges and missions, with the belief that 'God works in mysterious ways and they must continue to follow His mitzvot'.

Although the 'attachment to God and place' lies at the heart of man's faith, the case depicted in this article enhances our understanding that this attachment may either strengthen or weaken in accordance with circumstances and time. Changes in the intensity of this bond may be affected by the believer's own inner processes, but may also be the result of an external threat, and of dealing with various crises.

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Glimpses of a Place Spirituality in American Filmmaker John Sayles' Limbo: Authenticity, Inauthenticity and Modes of Place Engagement

David Seamon

INTRODUCTION

In *A Place for You: Psychology and Religion*, Swiss psychiatrist Paul Tournier (1968, p. 14) writes that 'All the places we have lived in remain with us, like the pegs in a vast storehouse, on which our memories are hung' (Tournier, 1968, p. 14). Throughout this book, Tournier highlights how the places of our lives gather and hold experiences, actions, feelings and recollections. He emphasizes that human beings are not 'pure spirit' but integrally a part of their place. They are 'bound up with matter, with things, with the ground [they live] on' (Tournier, 1968, p. 14). Tournier contends that, typically, people are much better at recollecting places than people. As evidence, he explains that, when he asks clients for their life story, their recollections of people are often vague and unreliable, whereas place memories are less

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ambiguous and include considerable lived specificity: 'he [or she] readily gives me a precise and detailed description of the various places which form the background of his [or her] experiences' (Tournier, 1968, p. 14). Tournier argues that place is integral to human existence and that people's lives are undermined when they lose or do not have a place. He contends that this need for place is grounded in an essential, noncontingent facet of human existence: 'Life is not an abstraction. To exist is to occupy a particular living-space to which one has a right.... To exist is to have a place, a space that is recognized and respected by others' (Tournier, 1968, p. 25).

In the psychological literature, Tournier's book, originally published in French in 1966, is one of the earliest studies to consider the central importance of places in human life and wellbeing. Today, this topic is represented by a large body of research, not only by psychologists but also by scholars in a wide range of disciplines that include philosophy, sociology, anthropology, geography, theology, and religious studies.[1] In this chapter, I draw on one film by American independent filmmaker John Sayles to consider the relationship between place and spirituality. To provide a conceptual context, I begin with theologian Philip Sheldrake's *Space for the Sacred*, a book that probes the spiritual dimensions of place, place experience and place meaning (Sheldrake, 2001). Sheldrake argues for jettisoning any nostalgic, idealized understandings of place, home, rootedness and environmental belonging. Instead, he calls for a 'workable theology of place' that moves beyond environmental and place naivety to 'contend with estrangement, with what is flawed and damaged in material existence' (Sheldrake, 2001, p. 63). The need is 'a sacramental sensibility in which the particularities of places may point beyond themselves to the mystery of God' (Sheldrake, 2001, p. 63).[2]

To illustrate one place rendition towards which Sheldrake's sacramental sensibility points, I draw on Sayles' 1999 *Limbo*, a film that dramatizes shifting relationships between people and one specific place that provokes

[1] For overviews, see Casey (2009), Cresswell (2014), Donohoe (2017), Janz (2005, 2017), Lane (2001), Malpas (2018), Manzo (2005), Manzo and Divine-Wright (2014), Mugerauer (1994), Relph (1976, 1981, 1985), Seamon (2018), Smith (2018), and Stefanovic (2000).

[2] For discussions of place and spirituality, see Burton-Christie (1993, 1999), Cameron (2018), Counted (2018), Counted and Watts (2017), Holm and Bowker (1994), Kinerk (1981), Lane (1998, 2001), Noel (1990), Olsen and Cairns (1996), and Sheldrake (2001).

both existential possibilities and limitations. This place is early twenty-first-century Alaska, both the setting and antagonist for the film's three main characters who face personal and interpersonal risk impelled by place in both its natural and human forms. Other, less central characters in the film illustrate other modes of place relationship, some that are more real, necessary, and ethically engaged; others that are more self-serving, delusive and ethically irresponsible.[3]

To locate and specify *Limbo's* range of place relationships, I draw on the existential concepts of *authenticity* and *inauthenticity*.[4] On one hand, authenticity relates to a way of being in which individuals accept responsibility for their lives and seek to be honest and consistent in their dealings with the world. On the other hand, inauthenticity relates to a way of being in which individuals deal with the world unrealistically: they accept it as fated and immutable, or understand and act only via blindered, self-centred motivations out of touch with the world at hand. Obviously, no human being is totally authentic or inauthentic, and different situations provoke varying degrees of autonomy or dependence, candor or deceit, appropriate or inappropriate actions. From the perspective of existentialism, the key point is that individuals best choose for themselves how to live, basing that choice on who they are, who they wish to be, and how that choice does good (or bad) for their worlds (Golomb, 1995; Pollard, 2005). Drawing on personal

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[3]Though none of his films explicate religious themes directly, Sayles is one of America's most spiritually astute directors. Character-driven films such as *City of Hope* (1991), *Passion Fish* (1992), *Lone Star* (1996), *Sunshine State* (2002), *Amigo* (2010), and *Go for Sisters* (2013) focus on characters' self-transformation stymied or propelled by personal misfortune, social change, or the mystery of fate. Critical discussions of Sayles's work include: Arreola (2005), Barr (2003), Bould (2009), Carson (1999), Carson and Kenaga (2006), Davis and Womack (1998), Jones (2002), Magowan (2003), Mains (2004), Molyneaux (2000), Natter (2002), Nichols (2009), Ryan (2010), Sayles (1987), Sayles and Smith (1998), Seamon (2008), Shumway (2012), Walker (1999), and Whitehouse (2002). Critical discussions of *Limbo* include: Barrett (2006), Bould (2009, pp. 150–158), Molyneaux (2000, pp. 249–259), Ryan (2010, pp. 214–228), Shumway (2012, pp. 113–120), West and West (1999), and Woodford (1999). Commentaries on cinematic portrayals of place include: Aitken and Zonn (1994), Cresswell and Dixon (2002), Kennedy and Lukinbeal (1997), and Lukinbeal (2004, 2005).

[4]On authenticity and inauthenticity, see Baugh (1988), Erickson (1995), Golomb (1995), Guignon (2004), Heidegger (1962), and Pollard (2005, 2016); on the concepts as they have relevance to place and place experience, see Dovey (1985), Relph (1976, 1981), and Seamon (1979, 2008).

determination and progressive insight, individuals may find ways to over-come estrangement with place and move towards Sheldrake's sacramental sensibility.

In this chapter, I begin by overviewing *Limbo's* story line and introducing its main characters. I then draw on several contrasting definitions of 'limbo' to discuss how the film's characters illustrate a range of authentic and inauthentic relationships with Alaska as a place and as a natural and human environment. I conclude by relating this range of relationships to Sheldrake's sacramental sensibility.

A Film in Two Parts

Filmed mostly in Juneau and the city's outlying natural environs, *Limbo* is set in fictitious Fort Henry, Alaska, a small fishing community where tourism, recreational development and real-estate ventures threaten the livelihood of long-time residents who are either fisherman or unemployed workers recently terminated from their jobs at the local pulp mill and fish cannery. In the first part of the film, Sayles provides a satirical portrait of how long-time insiders and more newly arrived outsiders succumb to or cash in on corporate developers' unrelenting effort to transform Alaska into a tourist destination and one colossal wilderness theme park.

Attempting to cope with Fort Henry's shifting economic and environ-mental fortunes are the film's three major characters, the first of whom is forties-something former fisherman and seasoned outdoorsman Joe Gastineau (played by David Strathairn), haunted by his responsibility for the drowning deaths of two high-school friends in a freak fishing-boat acci-dent twenty-five years ago. The second major character is forties-something single mother and itinerant lounge singer Donna De Angelo (Mary Eliz-abeth Mastrantonio), who relishes her musical career but faces unsettled fortunes professionally, personally and romantically.

Amid his unfolding portrait of Fort Henry's unstoppable tourist devel-opment, Sayles plots the growing attachment between Joe and Donna, a romance that is upsetting for the film's third major character, Noelle (Vanessa Martinez), Donna's sensitive but resentful teenage daughter. Noelle is a precocious young story writer who harbors seething anger towards a mother who continually shifts boyfriends and seems unable to provide domestic stability. Joe and Donna's deepening relationship impel Noelle's snowballing jealousy and distress, including intentional body cut-ting under her arms where no one will notice.

If the first half of *Limbo* incorporates sarcastic travelogue and budding romance, the film's second half unexpectedly becomes a compelling survivalist story. Joe's underhanded half-brother Danny (Casey Siemaszko) returns to Fort Henry and asks Joe to crew his boat when he sails out to meet two men he calls 'business associates'. To become closer to Donna and especially Noelle, Joe invites them along. In fact, the business associates are disgruntled drug dealers to whom Danny owes money for a large hashish stash he destroyed because his boat was stopped by a coastal patrol. As he, Joe, Donna, and Noelle sail along southeastern Alaska's remote, uninhabited coast, the drug dealers secretly pursue their boat, come on board, murder Danny, and try to murder Joe, Donna and Noelle. They escape from the boat and swim to a nearby deserted island where they are stranded without provisions.

Fearing that Danny's killers will pursue them, Joe, Donna and Noelle hide out on the island. They find shelter in an old, abandoned cabin once inhabited by a fox farmer, his unstable wife and teenage daughter Annemarie, who had begun and abandoned a diary accidentally discovered by Noelle. For the two-and-a-half weeks they are stranded and hoping for rescue, the angry, frightened Noelle nightly reads aloud Annemarie's diary entries that rapidly devolve from pioneer idyll into drudgery, failure and eventual suicide of her mother. Near the end of the film, Donna and Joe accidentally discover that Noelle has fabricated most of the diary entries as a vehicle to express her anger at Donna, who Noelle blames for having placed herself and her daughter in a life-threatening situation.

The film's concluding scene is abrupt and open-ended. As the three main characters stand together on the shore waiting for a seaplane that appears on the horizon, the screen fades to white. Neither the main characters nor film viewers know whether the aircraft carries legitimate rescuers or Danny's killers. Though the uncertain ending has been harshly criticized in both popular and academic commentaries (Molyneaux, 2000, p. 255; Ryan, 2010, p. 215; Shumway, 2012, p. 120), Sayles argues that it is the only ending possible because he was intentionally asking the audience to 'take the same trip that the characters [take], and that trip entails surprise and risk' (West & West, 1999, p. 31). He points out that, for most genre films, the viewer knows beforehand that hero and heroine will prevail, 'no matter how many twists and turns you go through with them'. In contrast, *Limbo's* main characters have each taken an emotional risk, and 'now they're facing a very uncertain future, and I'm asking the audience to face that future with them' (West & West, 1999, p. 31).

Sayles' Definitions of 'Limbo'

In a six-minute trailer for his film, Sayles presents six different definitions of 'limbo'.[5] These definitions provide a valuable clue for understanding the film as it relates to place authenticity and inauthenticity: that the same place can be understood, lived in, and dealt with in vastly different ways, some involving inertia, entrapment, or obtuseness; others involving opportunity and promise, if only individuals make the effort to risk constructive change. These six definitions are as follows:

1. Limbo: A state of neglect or oblivion;
2. Limbo: A place or state of confinement;
3. Limbo: An abode of abandoned souls;
4. Limbo: An intermediate or transitional place;
5. Limbo: A state of uncertainty;
6. Limbo: A condition of unknowable outcome.

In relation to authenticity and inauthenticity, these definitions are inciteful because they point to three contrasting ways in which the film's characters engage with place. On one hand, the first definition intimates a relationship in which place is largely ignored, misunderstood and misused. On the other hand, the second and third definitions relate limbo to a state of lived inertia in which individuals become so habituated to their place that they hold little hope that, in a time of economic distress and community malaise, their place might be reinvigorated. Yet again, the last three definitions refer to hazard, change, and an uncertain future. One can argue that these contrasting understandings of limbo's lived nature identify characters' contrasting place relationships with Fort Henry and Alaska: first, the *developers*, who unrealistically plan to transform the town and state into a Disney-like, ersatz tourist attraction; second, the *unemployed locals*, inescapably mired in their place; and, third, Joe, Donna and Noelle as they bond in a strengthening relationship that includes the potential for becoming more authentically a part of their place. I discuss each of these relationships in turn.

[5]This trailer overviews the film's story line and includes commentary from Sayles and some of the actors. The trailer is available at: http://www.videodetective.com/movies/limbo/852974 (accessed August 16, 2018).

A State of Neglect or Oblivion

In studying the six definitions of limbo, one notes that 'A state of neglect or oblivion' readily describes the real-estate and tourism developers' relationship to place in the film, which, after a brief underwater image of salmon swimming randomly, opens with a tackily produced travelogue proclaiming Alaska as:

> America's last frontier… where nature's bounty unfolds in a panoply of flora and fauna, the life of which is seen nowhere else on the planet…. A land that has lifted its siren call to the bold and adventurous, to those willing to risk their lives for the promise of untold fortune be it from fur, fin, from the heaven-pointing spires of old-growth spruce, or from the buried treasures of gold or black energy-rich petroleum.

The truth-exaggerating claims of this travelogue are jarringly contradicted by the film's dated, sentimentalized visual images—for example, Eskimo dolls, fake totem poles, and a man in a polar-bear suit hugging elderly tourists in front of a cruise ship. The travelogue's message is further undermined as the scene shifts to the local fish cannery, shortly to close because no one, as one of the employees makes the point, eats canned salmon anymore when even 'people in Peoria' can buy fresh fish at the local grocery. The film then moves to an outdoor wedding reception for the daughter and son-in-law of Albright (Michael Laskin), an Alaskan tourism developer, who tells his friend and timber-industry colleague Phil Baines (Tom Bliss) that he must pay more attention to 'the big picture'. In clear-cutting Alaskan forests, Baines may gain 'hundreds of thousands of dollars of timber', but the sheared, denuded landscape is unattractive to tourists. In countering, Baines retorts that 'We all have to make a living'. Albright shrewdly replies, 'I'm not arguing that. Cut the trees in the interior. Turn it into a parking lot. Just quit with the chain saws where [tourists] can see'.

Albright contends that Alaska's real future is environmental and historical tourism organized around regional themes: 'The Whales' Causeway', 'Island of the Raven People', 'Kingdom of the Salmon' or 'Lumberland', which Albright envisions as 'a turn-of-the-century sawmill and gift shop'. In a later scene, Albright proclaims that the next important phase in Alaskan tourism is simulated hazard: 'What are you buying when you get on a roller coaster? Not risk… but the illusion of risk. Being hurled to the edge of danger but knowing that you never have to cross it'. Albright contends that Walt Disney's achievement was placing the illusory risk of carnival rides

within a story line. The next stage, Albright proclaims confidently, is 'not bigger and better facsimiles of nature but nature itself. Think of Alaska as one big theme park'.

In relation to Sayles' definition of limbo as a state of neglect or oblivion, this is the developers' understanding of Alaska as a place, which they see as a region-sized stage set containing unlimited natural resources to be transformed into a state-wide tourist attraction. In almost every scene in which Albright and his cronies appear, they are in the foreground and set off by breathtaking mountains and ocean scenery appearing as an environmental commodity that is unlimited, controllable and readily packaged for tourists who look out on nature as stunning spectacle. The ecological fragility and inscrutable power of the natural environment are neglected and only significant in the sense that the landscape looks beautiful but be absolutely safe for passing tourists.

Two developers portrayed more benignly by Sayles are a recently arrived lesbian couple from Seattle, Frankie (Kathryn Grody) and Lou (Rita Taggart), who operate a Fort Henry restaurant, tourist lodge and trekking business that employ a good number of the laid-off cannery and pulp-mill workers. These women, both lawyers, are shown to know very little about local customs or about Fort Henry's natural environment, but they do take a professional and personal interest in Noelle, who is a waitress at their restaurant; and in Joe, who is their carpenter and repairman. Joe eventually agrees to return to fishing, making use of a boat Frankie and Lou have repossessed from local fisherman and cannery employee Harmon King (Leo Burmester), who has been destroyed financially by Port Henry's shifting economy.

Mostly, however, the developers ignore the integrity and complexity of Alaska's natural environment as its geographical size, visual grandeur and practical value as illusory risk are brought to the foreground as a profit-making, objectified commodity. In a similar way, the developers have neither empathy for the long-time residents losing their traditional livelihoods, nor respect for the tourists, most of whom visit on cruise ships and tend to be older and retired. As Albright mockingly explains to Phil Baines,

> Look, our [tourists] cruise by an island. They got [sic] their binoculars out, the ones that can still see. What do we show them? We show them a little Indian fish camp, some totem poles maybe, a black bear foraging... in the early morning mist. We do not show them deforested hillsides and logging equipment, Phil. Heavy machinery they see in New Jersey.

Just as these developers denature the complex reality of the Alaskan environment into a scripted progression of safe, readily accessible tourist attractions, so they adulterate Alaska's diverse range of environmental experiences into counterfeit places and arbitrary visual clichés. Albright and his colleagues are oblivious to the reality of the place because profit is their primary aim. Though the timber and oil-extraction industries may sooner or later desecrate much of Alaska's natural environment, Albright and his cronies are unconcerned, provided the potentially offending development is kept out of tourist sight. These developers exemplify the worst sort of place inauthenticity: for the uniqueness of Alaska as a place, they would substitute a fantastical, money-making simulacrum undermining the natural environment and scuttling the long-time lifeways of Fort Henry as a human community. 'A state of neglect or oblivion' is one credible summary of their inauthentic relationship with place.

A Confining Abode of Abandoned Souls

Sayles' next two descriptions of limbo—'an abode of abandoned souls' and 'a place or state of confinement'—accurately render the characters who are long-time Fort Henry residents no longer able to find a self-sustaining place in the town's shifting economy. For the most part, Sayles presents these old-guard Fort Henry insiders as ensconced in place habitually. They seem not to have the will or courage to take the risk to shift their lives in positive directions. In one sense, these long-time locals are confined in place and abandoned by a world in which they no longer fully belong.

These characters mostly include several salmon-cannery workers who appear immediately after the opening image of aimlessly moving salmon and the disingenuous Alaskan travelogue, from which Sayles quickly cuts to cannery worker Harmon King, who knows the travelogue script by heart and mockingly replaces the original voice-over with his own sarcastic narration:

> Each river and stream welcoming home the [salmon]... which [are] smashed into cans and quick-cooked to give the colorful local folks something to do other than play cards and scratch their nuts all day. A land where that nice old lady from Fort Lauderdale, who had a stroke three cabins down, was probably parked next to the thawed-out halibut you'll eat tonight, while your floating hotel chugs through the Hecate Straight to deliver its precious load

of geriatrics to the hungry Visa-card-accepting denizens of our northernmost and most mosquito-infested state!

Unlike the travelogue's disembodied narration, however, Harmon is neither separate from the world depicted by the film's images nor is he a tourist who encounters that world as just pleasurable scenery with no real existential bearing on his life. His hometown economy can no longer provide him a viable livelihood, and Harmon cannot detach himself 'from the physical and intersubjective realities of the place and situation' (Bould, 2009, p. 152). Later in the film, we learn that he was once a successful commercial fisherman and owner of the lodging property now run by Frankie and Lou, who repossessed his fishing boat because he did not make promised repairs to their tourist lodge.

Though Harmon is the most prominently drawn of *Limbo's* place-forsaken characters, they are also represented by other cannery workers, both men and women, who illustrate a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds that include Native-American, Mexican and Filipino. Throughout the film's first half, Harmon speaks for the long-time locals whose employment is dependent on Alaska's natural resources, including fish and timber. Early on, he jokes about how the cannery, as soon as it closes, will be transformed into a museum of display cases and dioramas. Speaking to his Filipino co-worker Richy (Hermínio Ramos), Harmon says: 'They'll hang fake fish guts all over you, put a label underneath [that says] "Typical Filipino Cannery worker." Probably pay better than this!'

Importantly, Sayles includes a scene that depicts the cannery's closing as the line workers clean the equipment and processing rooms one last time. 'That's all she wrote', says Harmon, as co-worker Richy replies, 'They say the Chinese might buy it. Pack it all up, ship it over. Let them have it'. Harmon responds by asking if anyone wants a drink, and the line workers all leave for the 'Golden Nugget', a local bar that is the center of Fort Henry's social life and Donna's current singing venue. The establishment is also a brief stop on Fort Henry's history tour for the cruise-ship tourists, who walk through as the unemployed cannery workers sit at the bar. One tourist asks if the Golden Nugget has witnessed any gunfights and killings recently. The young woman tour guide says no but vividly describes how they happened there in the past.

In every Golden Nugget scene, Sayles locates the same long-time residents sitting on the same bar stools telling more or less the same Alaskan

stories involving danger and risk—for example, fishing accidents and seaplane crashes. As Joe's half-brother Bobby exclaims as he enters the establishment after several years away, 'Jesus, look at this. You're all where I left you six years ago. Same barstools and everything. Hey, Harmon, … somebody come in and dust you off once a week?' Like the randomly moving salmon in the film's opening shot, the Golden Nugget reflects an environmental inertia as its patrons seem caught in a limbo incorporating human abandonment and a confinement in place. The bar symbolizes an Old Alaska that no longer exists, and a New Alaska where long-time locals are little more than living props for 'history tours'. Even an important centre of community life like the Golden Nugget is translated into a brief tour stop that includes locals who, to the tourists, perhaps seem more like actors than human beings bound to their place.

In one sense, the inertial situation of these long-time locals is inauthentic, since they have little inkling of their potential freedom to construct a future not straightjacketed by the past or imposed by outsiders like Albright. These long-time locals are deeply place-bound and do not have the psychological or communal means to actively reshape their place in a way whereby it remains theirs. Sayles sympathizes with these long-time locals, but he also recognizes that their future is largely determined by the relentless drive of global capitalism to make money and gain power, almost always at the expense of localities and natural environments. For Sayles, the important question is '[W]hat do people do when these huge sea changes happen, when your world is never going to be the same again? Who are the people who can… go with the flow and who are the people who… are too rigid? The factory closes and the town dies, or the fishery closes and you're one of twelve generations of fishermen—what do you do then?' (Moyers, 2002, n.p.).

The film's one exception to the confining inertia of locality is Smilin' Jack Johannson (Kris Kristofferson), a seaplane pilot and occasional drug dealer who does 'whatever pays best, or what he can get away with'. Smilin' Jack first appears playing pool in the Golden Nugget, contributing stories about Alaskan dangers and risks. In an interview, Sayles explains that Smilin' Jack represents the roguish adventurers once common to the Alaskan frontier (West & West, 1999, p. 31). As Joe remarks to Donna, 'I'm not saying people don't like him, I'm saying I don't trust him'. Near the end of the film, Smilin' Jack in his seaplane spots the smoke of a fire that Joe has set as a distress signal. Smilin' Jack lands but explains that his radio has failed and he's almost out of fuel. Donna blurts out the story of Danny's murder,

and Smilin' Jack replies that, as soon as an approaching storm ends, he will return for a rescue. Out of Donna and Noelle's hearing, he tells Joe that he's been sent to locate them by two men he's never seen before: 'They laid some money on me to see if I could spot three people in the boonies'. Joe makes it clear to Smilin' Jack that these two men are Danny's murderers and, if they learn their location, they will kill Joe, Donna and Noelle.

For the film's narrative arc, Smilin' Jack is pivotal because his younger brother was one of the teenagers who drowned on Joe's fishing boat. Jack has a grudge against Joe, and Sayles provides no indication of what Smilin' Jack will do. At the film's ending, he no doubt pilots the seaplane whose occupants—rescuers or killers—will determine whether Joe, Donna, and Noelle live or die. Like the other old-time locals of Fort Henry, Jack may be 'an abandoned soul' who has largely lost his place in the new Alaska. For Joe, Donna, and Noelle, however, he plays a decisive role in their fate, even though film viewers never learn what that will be.

Uncertainty and Potential Transitions

Between place as lived inertia and place as profit-making commodity is place as a region of precarious possibility as indicated by Smilin' Jack's inscrutability as to whether he will inform Danny's killers of Joe, Donna and Noelle's island location. This region of hazard, unpredictability, and potential betterment is rendered by Sayles' last three definitions of limbo: 'an intermediate or transitional place'; 'a state of uncertainty' and 'a condition of unknowable outcome'.

Early in the film, Joe, Donna and Noelle are all, in different ways, entrenched in the inertia of place. Laid off at the pulp mill and now a jack-of-all-trades working for Frankie and Lou, Joe is adrift existentially. He still feels guilty about the drowning of his fisherman buddies and cannot return to the work where he found the most self-worth: 'It's the thing itself', he explains to Donna shortly after they first meet. 'You go out. You fish. You pull him out of the water. Everything else is secondhand'.

Once he and Donna begin to care for each other, Joe finds the will to face his past. When Frankie and Lou suggest that Joe go out fishing, using Harmon's repossessed boat, he agrees, confronts the past tragedy, and realizes he can be a fisherman again. Joe's moment of decision is movingly portrayed by Sayles as Joe stands alone on the deck of Frankie and Lou's lodge, looking out to the stretch of sea where he once fished. A cold blue dominates the scene, echoing the drowning deaths and Joe's uncertainty.

Joe's eyes are entwined with the sea, sky and mountains. As Ryan (2010, p. 222) explains, 'There is a convergence of character and setting'. One senses that, in this moment, Joe makes the irrevocable decision to return to fishing and to rejoin himself with his place. Through Donna's loving support, he finally releases the accidental deaths twenty-five years past. He is ready again to accept the natural world's uncertainty and potential hazard.

Donna's life is also stuck in place, though in a way much different from Joe's. Her adulthood has been a perpetual road trip: 'I've sung in thirty-six states and the territory of Puerto Rico', she confides to Joe shortly after they meet. At one point in the film, she talks with a cruise-ship representative about a possible gig on one of his tourist liners. Like Joe's, Donna's life has involved considerable failure, but unlike Joe, she accepts her defeats and moves on quickly. As Sayles (West & West, 1999, p. 29) explains in an interview:

> Both he [Joe] and Donna are people who have had big failures, but they respond differently…. Joe's reaction to failure… is not to take another risk again, physically or emotionally for twenty-five years. When Donna gets hammered, her reaction is to have… a two-day period of mourning and then to get up and say, 'Okay, new day', and lead with her chin again. And she's the one who pulls him out.

Partly, their mutual fondness can happen because Donna, like Joe, knows the reassuring pleasure of complete immersion in one's vocation—in her case, singing, which closely parallels his love of fishing. When Joe asks her at their first meeting in the Golden Nugget, why, as a forties-something, she continues to perform, she explains:

> Almost every night—it doesn't matter where I am or what I'm singing—all of a sudden, I'll hook into it. I'll be feeling whatever it is the song is about. And I can hear it. I can feel it in my voice. And I know that I'm putting it across. Moments of grace…. I put my kid through a lot, though. Moving all the time. But when I take a straight job… I feel so defeated. I don't even want her to look at me.

For Noelle, the attachment between Joe and Donna is emotionally unsetting because, through their both working for Frankie and Lou, Noelle meets Joe considerably before her mother and has a crush on the older man, partly because he has been willing to listen to her and offer advice about who she is. 'You look like an angel', he says early on as she serves appetizers at the wedding reception for Albright's daughter. The only means for

Noelle to express her unhappiness is creative writing, which the film viewer first learns of when, in her high-school English class, she reads aloud a short story she wrote about the birth of a friendless 'water baby' who is part human and part fish.

Later, when she, Donna, and Joe struggle to survive on the deserted island, Noelle uses her anger and creative imagination to construct the fantastical story of the fox farmer and his family. In a sense, Noelle becomes the fox-farmer's daughter Annemarie and uses her escalating distress to manufacture a story that reproaches Donna for not protecting her from the life-threatening situation they face on the island. In the last entry she reads, Noelle condemns Annemarie's mother for killing all the foxes and hanging herself. Now aware that the diary entries are Noelle's own terrified creation, Donna tearfully apologizes: '[Annemarie's] mother didn't love her enough to stick around…. I would never do that. No matter what'.

Shortly after, Noelle falls asleep, and Joe and Donna envision a hopeful future as a family. Joe says that Noelle can stay with him while Donna completes her contracted singing gigs in Alaskan towns farther north. 'You're not sick of us?' Donna asks sheepishly. Joe says, 'You're not sick of me?' In a reply that is perhaps the film's most important moment, Donna answers, 'There's nobody I'd rather be stranded with in desperate circumstances'. This declaration is poignant in that it is said in the midst of the life-threatening situation that may well lead to Donna, Joe and Noelle's deaths, whether from hunger, exposure or human hands. Because of its powerful emotional resonance, the moment is crucially important in facilitating Sayles's wish that the audience be motivated to face the three characters' future with them (West & West, 1999, p. 31).

As the film ends, Noelle has not fully accepted her mother's apology or gained hope that they will survive their island ordeal. She has, however, learned basic survival skills from Joe and assists him in gathering mollusks and seaweed to eat and wood to burn for the signal fire. When in the film's last scene, the seaplane reappears, the three watch hidden in the trees, but then Donna runs out to the shore, viscerally not caring whether she faces rescue or death. Quickly, Joe and Noelle run out to join her, and the final image is of their standing together, arms enwrapped, *as a family*. Sayles seems to be suggesting that neither human nor natural worlds offer absolute security, which instead is only found in human beings caring for one another. All three have taken the risk of mutual responsibility and involvement. Whether they live or die, they have arrived at a meaningful place together.

Natural Versus Human Worlds

One of the most prominent themes in *Limbo* is the lived relationship between natural and human worlds (Barrett, 2006). In the film's first half, nature is presented, on one hand, as a malleable, visually striking prop that, through its historical and cultural associations, can be drawn upon to facilitate simulated risk. The ultimate aim, proclaims Albright, is 'Alaska as one big theme park'. The natural world is understood as little more than a picture-postcard landscape providing a majestic backdrop for unrelated human events like the wedding reception of Albright's daughter. On the other hand, the film' first half also points out that, for many old-guard Alaskans, nature remains the source of human occupation and, as those employment opportunities disappear, long-time Alaskans lose their place in the world. The social grounding and economic viability of regional life is lost, replaced by inadequate substitutes like Frankie and Lou's trekking business or fake replicas like Albright's nineteenth-century sawmill and gift shop.

Though these two economic scenarios are vastly different in terms of the places they presuppose, both assume a natural world that is a manageable resource—either nature as a human-shaped simulacrum or nature as a requisite grounding for human occupation and sustenance. In both scenarios, the natural world is mostly passive—shapeable and maneuverable, either directly through hunting, fishing, timbering or mining; or indirectly, through secondhand manipulations and representations that meet the contrived aims of economic development and corporate tourism.

In dramatic contrast, the second half of *Limbo* illustrates a natural world that is entirely active, intimidating and uncaring in relation to people and place. After two-and-a-half weeks on the deserted island, Joe, Donna and Noelle are barely able to survive. Unprepared and with no basic survival gear other than a knife, cigarette lighter and rusted fish trap left by the fox farmer, Joe cannot provide adequate food, and the start of winter is only weeks away. In striking contrast to its malleable portrayal in the first half of the film, nature now becomes a major character determining and demolishing human survival. Sayles portrays the natural world as dark, forbidding and closing in, especially in the scenes where continuous rain drenches the exposed interior of the fox-farmer's ramshackle cabin. The one exception to this claustrophobic encroachment is a remarkable helicopter shot in which the camera begins with a close up of Joe's tending the signal fire but then moves skyward and progressively farther away to reveal a

panoramic aerial view of civilization nowhere and endless unspoiled nature everywhere.

In considering the narrative significance of this imposing aerial shot, one must point out that the eminent American cinematographer Haskell Wexler filmed *Limbo*.[6] Ryan (2010, p. 226) explains that this aerial scene is reminiscent of Wexler's famous shot in film director Joshua Logan's 1955 *The Picnic,* in which '[Wexler] tracked a freight train with his camera from the open door of a helicopter. Here, though, Sayles wants to show the vast landscape that surrounds Joe, Donna, and Noelle'. The contrast between these two aerial views is instructive in that Wexler used the *Picnic* shot as a geographical means to infer that the film's young lovers, drifter Hal Carter (William Holden) and small-town-Kansas girl Madge Owens (Kim Novak), will reunite in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the destination for the train carrying Hal and for the Trailways bus boarded by Madge immediately before the train shot. In using an aerial shot to picture the toy-like train and bus moving together through the flat, sprawling Kansas landscape, Wexler drew on distance, motion, simultaneity and scale to suggest a propitious reunion and future for the two main characters. In contrast, Wexler's panoramic wilderness shot in *Limbo* is ambivalent and uncertain: perhaps the three characters will survive their environmental ordeal *or* perhaps they will be annihilated by human violence or nature's immensity and indifference.

This uncertainty of life is perhaps *Limbo's* most overarching theme: That human being and becoming are unescapably precarious and neither the natural nor the human world offers any guarantees. The film's first half in Fort Henry portrays the situation where civilization, through the demise of traditional occupations and the rise of corporate tourism, undermines the lives of Fort Henry residents and transforms the multivalent reality of natural and human worlds into secondhand representations catering to visiting tourists and recreationists. In this world that human beings mostly control, the problem is humans manipulating and misusing other humans and nature.

In the second half of the film, however, Sayles suggests that the natural world provides no solution to life's uncertainties either. The wilderness against which Joe, Donna, and Noelle struggle offers no alternative to civilization but, instead, demonstrates its necessity in that whether the three main characters live or die depends on another person—Smilin' Jack and

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[6]Wexler also worked with Sayles on *Matewan* (1987) and *The Secret of Roan Inish* (1995).

whether he will place a bounty payment over the lives of three fellow human beings. How he decides is a product of the ethics and morality of the civilization and place of which he is a part.

Importantly, this link between morality and civilization intimates why Alaskan tourism development poses such a formidable economic and existential threat to the Fort Henry community: Honesty and good will cannot survive in situations where the daily reality of a place and its people is transmogrified into a counterfeit commodity primarily serving the needs of profit-making and only secondarily, if at all, sustaining the everyday worlds of the people who inhabit that place. Good will is grounded in the reality of place and the people who belong in that place. When that reality is undercut, so is good will and so is civilization.

Spirituality, Authenticity and Place

Theologian Sandra Schneiders (1989, p. 684) speaks of spirituality as a fundamental feature of human being that involves an experience of 'consciously striving to integrate one's life in terms not of isolation and self-absorption but of self-transcendence toward the ultimate value one perceives'. In this sense, *Limbo* is a deeply spiritual film because Sayles suggests that the best way to cope with a hazardous world is accepting and actualizing the possibilities offered by one's place, most importantly loving and caring for the people of that place who matter most. If Joe Gastineau survives his island ordeal, he will more than likely marry Donna, and they and Noelle will become a viable family who contributes to the life of Fort Henry. In an interview, Sayles admits that his personal definition of limbo is 'a state that people get trapped in', whether it be a failing marriage, an unsatisfying job, or a community where one feels out of place:

> So many people live in those limbos, where it's not quite hell, but it's sure not making them happy. For me, the… key to the film is that the only way to get out of those kinds of situations is risk, and risk involves not knowing what's going to happen next, or how it's going to work. (West & West, 1999, p. 29)

In *Limbo*, different characters face different traps, some unnoticed and others painfully in the sphere of conscious awareness. By risking the chance to reach out to each other, Joe, Donna and Noelle direct themselves towards freedom and finding a better place. Whether they live or die,

they have moved towards a situation that is more authentic in the sense that what they have done, they have done *for themselves, from themselves.* In Sheldrake's words, they have contended 'with estrangement' and with 'what is flawed and damaged in material existence' (Sheldrake, 2001, p. 63). Through a series of agonizing experiences proffered by time and place, they have moved towards an interpersonal belonging that is more trustworthy, fulfilling and whole.

In *Space for the Sacred*, Sheldrake (2001, p. 64) suggests that spirituality relates to how one is to live 'within a complex world of particularities'. In turn, he understands that world as 'an essentially sacramental universe' and a 'graced nature' (2001, p. 65). He explains that 'each and every thing, person, and environment is called to "be itself" or better, to *do* itself with utter intensity and concentration …' (2001, p. 66). In this sense, 'every particular time and every particular place is a point of access to the place of God' (2001, p. 66).

Sayles offers no indication in *Limbo* that Joe, Donna and Noelle realize some higher spiritual reality during their harrowing time on the island, but their story does speak to the dynamic power of love and personal transformation that Sheldrake points to as an integral part of a sacramental sensibility (Sheldrake, 2001, p. 153). In Sheldrake's phrasing, Joe, Donna and Noelle have found a way to *be* themselves more wholly and *do* for each other with forthright mutual regard and care. Sayles' central message is the need to make stronger connections with others and to strive for our deepest, most authentic selves. By the end of the film, Joe, Donna and Noelle have set aside inertia, accepted uncertainty, and found courage 'to take risks and act in the world, to try out new ways of existing' (Pollard, 2005, p. 179). However short or long their remaining lives, they are psychologically stronger, more hopeful and no longer alone. At least for the days they struggle on the island, Joe, Donna and Noelle have learned that the vicissitudes of fate can be sundered by forgiveness and love.

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Place-Making and Religion: A Solidarity Psychology of the Commons

Ken Estey

Introduction

A more complete account of the relationship of religion and place occurs when one focuses on the actors (believers and non-believers alike) who interact within and across religious traditions and shape the places where religions 'occur' or 'happen'. If one prioritizes, with Angotti (2008), the idea that land is not 'simply a physical object' but a set of social relations (p. 21), then it is possible to see how considerations of religion and place must account for those social relations and the oftentimes agonistic quality of those relationships. Religious practices in contested places reflect the pull of power among a variety of people inside of the inevitable disputes and debates. Any given relationship between a religion and a place is subject to evolution or movement. Part of this includes struggles over power and resources. This aspect of the reciprocal formation of religion and place need more attention. The motivation for this study is to explore one such struggle and to propose the notion and practice of 'the commons' as a

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more comprehensive framework for pondering religion and place (Bollier, 2014). By so doing, a proposal for a 'solidarity psychology of the commons' can be more fully explored.

Efforts to situate the relationship of religion and place have taken a wide number of forms. A familiar example includes introductory textbooks in religion that discuss indigenous or pre-Axial Age religious practices for which place, nature, or the natural world are primary components (Esposito, Fasching, & Lewis, 2017). While it is inconceivable to ponder the so-called 'world religions' without also considering place and nature as fundamental, far too often, the religions of the world have been reduced to doctrinal structures, beliefs and sacred scriptures. The scholarly turn back to those places from which a religion arises or is practiced has taken a variety of approaches. Vivid examples include the work of Robert Orsi in his exploration of Roman Catholic piety and practice in Harlem (2010) to Delores S. Williams and her proposal for a womanist theology that considers the twin 'places' of exile and wilderness as foundational for theological reflection (1993) to Covington's (1995) *Salvation on Sand Mountain* in which the southern Appalachia region is as much a character as any of the practitioners of the snake handling arts. Tweed (2006) grapples with the conundrum of defining religion in the field of religion and ends up prioritizing place. 'Religious women and men make meaning and negotiate power as they appeal to contested historical traditions of storytelling, object making, and ritual performance in order to make homes (*dwelling*) and cross boundaries (*crossing*). Religions, in other words, involve finding one's place and moving through space' (Tweed, 2006, p. 74). The emphasis on built form, built environment and architecture is yet another way to consider the relationship of religion and place. Sheldrake (2014) considers place in his theological urban theory. With respect to specific structures, Rae (2017) looks to architectural form and considers the doing of theology through the 'spatial arts'. Drawing upon Bergmann (2009), Rae ponders two options—a theology *of* the built environment in which that environment, as such, is a form of theological expression or 'doing theology *in* built environments' (Rae, 2017, p. 5). Rae views his work as a combination of the two approaches insofar as he argues that the practice of theological reflection is 'enriched through engagement with the built environment' (p. 5) and is thus enabled to consider new ways of undertaking theological exploration.

A solidarity psychology of the commons provides a more comprehensive context to situate the relationship of religion and place. This solidarity psychology, through its linkage with the commons, emphasizes the mutualism essential to human wholeness. 'Commoning' or the activity of 'managing a resource for everyone's benefit' is an essential activity to constitute and sustain the commons (Bollier, 2014, p. 19). The 'commons' is a resource that has 'a defined community *and* the protocols, values and norms devised by the community to manage needed resources' (Bollier, 2014, pp. 175–176). As a self-organized social system that practices stewardship to manage a collectively shared resource, it is a form of wealth that is inherited or created, and it is intended to be passed down to future generations. Usually considered to be a sector of the economy outside of either the market or the state, Bollier and others view the commons expansively to include cities, universities, infrastructure and social traditions (Bollier, 2014, pp. 175–177).

This chapter assumes that a religious tradition is an example of a social tradition. That is, social traditions form a larger category for which religious traditions are a part. A religious tradition is a commons or a resource that is managed and provided for by its adherents and its leaders. The place that a given religion inhabits is also a commons. The neighborhood in which a given religious tradition is situated, whether it is found in a rural, suburban or urban environment is an example of a commons too and may be nurtured or supported, in part, by that religious community. The infrastructure that constitutes that environment is a commons, whether this includes sidewalks, benches, or other amenities that are used, managed and stewarded by "commoners" who live there or nearby.

Solidarity, as a practice and as a virtue, has a deep history in the labor movement in the United States. At the heart of solidarity is the notion that 'an injury to one is an injury to all'. Attributed to the Knights of Labor, a labor federation in the United States that achieved national prominence in the 1880s, the Industrial Workers of the World (founded in 1905) emphasized the inalienable relationship among workers in their struggle for justice. A solidarity psychology of the commons places the emphasis on commoners who strive in cooperative activity to realize each other's good and welfare. By so doing, commoners seek to overcome alienation or separation from each other (and also from the natural order) in their ongoing efforts to manage and develop the commons, be that a natural resource or something that is less physically tangible, yet altogether real, meaningful and fulfilling.

In sum, religious or not, we are shaped by place and we shape our spaces into places that reflect who we are and who we wish to be. The study of any religion must incorporate considerations of place and space to gain a more complete sense of that religion's priorities. These include practices, rituals, sacred writings, beliefs, theology and ethics and the well-being of its adherents (Esposito, Fasching, & Lewis, 2017). Neglect of place in a religion leads to a deracinated view of that religion. Such uprooting leads to excessive reliance on accounts of doctrine, theology or sacred writings as a way to define that religion and characterize its followers. Such an abstraction of a religion is reductive and does not account for the ways that the place where a given religious community practices its faith shapes that community and offers it a distinctive perspective. A religion's place is always the result of constituting a space to serve a purpose and an end. A key element to the public understanding of religion and religions occurs when non-scholars and a curious lay public are able to experience and see how a religion's places shapes our spaces.

The following pages describe two situations featuring a linkage of religion and place. The first involves the proposed construction of a mosque on 2812 Voorhies Avenue in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn. Many neighbors and outsiders observed the linkage between religion and place in that neighborhood and were determined to break it by stopping the Yemeni community there from forming its spiritual center. The second reflects a more positive and hopeful note. Students enrolled in a place-based course at Brooklyn College were enabled to link religion and place to investigate and appreciate religious diversity within and across religions.

Place matters! In a world increasingly destabilized by the first stages of global overheating, the normalization of extreme weather events, climate-based mass migration and species extinction, the contest for space will intensify. The practices we engage in to reproduce those places will determine the possibility for human survival in the future.

The project of linking religion and place is not just the goal of scholars invested in the study of definitions of religion and philosophical and theological conceptualizations of place. People who are concerned about demographic shifts also make the connection between religion and place, though not for benign ends. According to the Pew Research Center, the total number of Muslims in the United States in 2007 was 2.35 million and in 2017 it was 3.45 million. Their projections indicate that by 2040 'Muslims will replace Jews as the nation's second-largest religious group after Christians. And by 2050, the U.S. Muslim population is projected to

reach 8.1 million, or 2.1% of the nation's total population—nearly twice the share of today' (Mohamed, 2018). In this context, some who fear (and loath) the continued demographic erosion of, particularly, a white Christian majority in the United States have taken note given projections that the white population in the U.S. will drop to 49.7% in 2045 (Frey, 2018; Jones, 2016). They have made the connection between their places (their neighborhoods) and the new arrivals and, particularly, their places of worship. For them, the fear of dis-*place*-ment by adherents of another religion is not an academic concern but a primary life-concern. But they are not only ones, however, who view this as a matter of death and life. White nationalist attacks on Muslims during Friday Prayers in Christchurch, New Zealand on March 15, 2019 resulted in the death of fifty one people and nearly that many injured. The extremist hatred was directed at Muslims in their place of worship, the place where their practice and their faith is nurtured and reproduced.

Methods

Data Collection Procedure

The first step for collecting the research data entailed a simultaneous review of news accounts and studies of national trends in mosque construction disputes and a study of local disputes in New York City. At that time, the heated controversy in Manhattan over the so-called 'Ground Zero Mosque' or Park51 (two blocks north of the World Trade Center site) contributed to opposition to the proposed mosque and community center in Sheepshead Bay, the focus of this inquiry. The second step involved outreach to various religious leaders in Brooklyn (particularly those involved in the annual Children of Abraham Peace Walk that marked the anniversary of September 11, 2001) to confirm that the Sheepshead Bay dispute was ongoing (Interfaith Center, 2017). The third step entailed four site visits to 2812 Voorhies Avenue. These visits included an observation of a demonstration in favor of the mosque construction, a site visit to visually confirm claims about the character of the construction site in relationship to the neighborhood around 2812 Voorhies Avenue, as well as interviews with opponents of the mosque. Census data research on the neighborhood complemented the site visits. The fourth step, throughout the project, involved web-based research on locally based and nationally known personalities and organizations in opposition to mosque construction. The fifth step drew upon the

experiences and reflection papers of students over several academic years from a place-based course taught by this author, Brooklyn and Its Religions. This place-based course encouraged practices that could foster the development of a solidarity psychology of the commons and thus work against the pitfalls in the 'commoning' practices found in the immediate neighborhood around the mosque construction at 2812 Voorhies.

Data Analysis Process

Multiple methods were deployed to discern the relationship of religion and place in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, New York. Likewise, the prospects for a solidarity psychology of the commons also drew upon multiple sources ranging from the literature on place-based education to place-based experiences in an undergraduate setting. The goal, overall, was to provide more than one context to examine and to verify claims about the mosque controversy in particular and the relationship of religion and place overall. Thus, the local experience in Brooklyn could be compared and contrasted with similar situations across the country. Neighborhood residents and their description of their environs could be measured relative to census data material. Site visits provided additional data to assess assertions by local and national figures about this neighborhood.

Data Sources

The possibility of parallels between disputes in other states and in Brooklyn prompted a study of the *Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion and Public Life's* 'Controversies Over Mosques and Islamic Centers Across the U.S'. The interactive map locates and discusses proposed mosques and Islamic centers that faced controversies and community resistance (Pew Forum, 2012). Connections between national political agendas and 'local' concerns could then be discovered and assessed.

In view of the national disputes, the local controversy in Sheepshead Bay over a mosque construction site suggested five additional research tasks to test the level of connection between national trends and local disputes. One question included whether the historical and cultural forces that shaped Sheepshead Bay influenced how residents viewed the proposed construction and presence of a mosque.

Bay People Inc. was a key organization that opposed the mosque construction at 2812 Voorhies Avenue. Web-based research into their purpose served as a preparatory step for the interviews with residents in that neighborhood. This research uncovered links between local concerns and national controversies. Research into census data yielded data into race and ethnicity as well as land-use patterns in the census tracts surrounding the research site.

Four field visits were made to Sheepshead Bay and 2812 Voorhies Avenue. Field visit 1 was an introduction to the controversy and involved a reviewed of attendees at the 27 June 2010 Anti-Mosque Rally. Observation of the rally afforded an opportunity to view the pro-mosque forces as well as the neighborhood opponents. Field visit 2 examined the connections between Sheepshead Bay and the mosque site. This visit established a sense, on-the-ground, of the proximity of the mosque site to the main commercial area of Sheepshead Bay. Also, claims about the size and of the mosque, its impact on the neighborhood and its compatibility with existing residential structures could be immediately assessed. Progress towards completion of the building's shell could be directly ascertained. Field visit 3 and 4 focused on interviews on-site. Five interviews were conducted over two days (November 5 and 14, 2011) with homeowners (all male) across the street and around the corner from the proposed construction site. The selection criterion for the interviews was proximity to the construction site. The first one was secured by an unscheduled visit to a house across the street from the mosque site with the request for that person's time for an interview. The other two interviews on Voorhies Avenue occurred through this initial contact (snowball or chain-referral sampling). In addition, two interviews occurred on East 28th Street around the corner from the site (with these two homes having their back against a side wall of the mosque). These two interviews occurred in the same manner as those on Voorhies Avenue with an unannounced visit followed by a request for a referral. These interviews were analyzed in light of the Bay People website and other reports that described neighborhood opposition to the construction. In short, the inquiry centered around whether those most physically affected by the construction cited reasons pertaining to the construction or whether they had a broader agenda including animus against Islam or Muslims. The goal of these interviews is to gain a perspective from key figures with an interest in the issue.

Results

Mosque Construction Disputes: A National Review

In the 2012 report, 21 states experienced 53 such controversies: North-east (15 disputes); Midwest (15 disputes); South, Southeast (15 disputes); and West, Southwest (8 disputes). A content analysis of the controversies from the interactive map from 2008, available at the time of the research, showed that objections to the various mosques fell into two major categories. The first was location-based which included six sub-categories: (1) traffic; (2) parking; (3) overdevelopment/aesthetics; (4) noise and environmental concerns; (5) zoning; and finally, (6) property values. The second category, deemed by this author as 'idea-based', encompassed three sub-categories: (1) religious and cultural objections; (2) concerns over outside funding; and (3) ties to terrorism.

Local Concerns Over Mosque Construction: 2812 Voorhies Avenue, Brooklyn

Historical and Cultural Research

Sheepshead Bay is the Brooklyn neighborhood featured in the film *Brooklyn Lobster* (2005) starring Danny Aiello. Long-timers in Brooklyn remember that to live in Sheepshead Bay is to be Irish, Italian and working class. And long before the Irish and Italian, Dutch farmers in the village of Breuckelen (established in 1636 as a colony of New Amsterdam, in present-day Manhattan) fought the resident Canarsee Native Americans and stole their land. The Dutch legacy is present in the remaining Dutch Reformed churches and the names of streets such as Voorhies Avenue, named after Steven Coerte van Voorhees who arrived in Flatlands in 1660. Flatland is now a neighborhood in Brooklyn, but it was one of the original Five Dutch Towns. In a borough of 2.6 million people, Sheepshead Bay is its own village and draws its name from the ocean inlet there with its marina, fishing boats and memories of the famous Lundy's Restaurant. For those with cars, the Belt Parkway has been whisking people in and out of the neighborhood and around the borough towards Manhattan or Queens since 1941.

Web-Based Research on Bay People Inc., a Brooklyn-Based Organization

The Bay People website listed round-the-clock disruptions, heavy traffic, loud noise, pollution, calls to prayer five times a day, blocked sidewalks,

lower property values and the claim that the Muslim American Society (MAS) has links to radical anti-American and anti-Semitic organizations. They described themselves in this way:

[It is a] New York based organization that was created by a group of Sheepshead Bay residents with a goal of protecting quality of life in our residential neighborhood. Bay People is not affiliated with any political party and our activists do not share common religion, race or heritage. Our first neighborhood project is to stop a construction of an oversized mosque/community center at 2812 Voorhies Ave that is set to replace a quiet residential home. The proposed construction encroaches on our rights to privacy, health, safety and is an intrusive, unreasonable interference with the use and enjoyment of our properties. Religion cannot and will not be an excuse for zoning violations and inappropriate development, and we will not be the 'silent majority.' Bay People is a voice for thousands of property owners and residents of Sheepshead Bay who are simply trying to preserve their quiet residential existence, protect their property values, and peace of mind. (Bay People, 2011)

The Bay People website also listed their opposition to the mosque construction in six steps that parallels the content analysis of the Pew Center report on mosque controversies.

1. Inappropriate Development that does not conform to existing zoning laws and will require a variance or changes in zoning.
2. The proposed construction grossly exceeds the programming needs of the mosque/community center.
3. Nuisance: defined as substantial and unreasonable interference with neighboring properties enjoyment and use of their land.
4. Proposed construction is detrimental to the stability and character of our residential development. Proposed construction is devastating to surrounding property values.
5. MAS [Muslim American Society] is a political organization and is utilizing religion as a cloak for inappropriate development and to further their political clout.
6. Residents' reasonable concerns about MAS organization and the funding of the construction threaten the health, safety and welfare of the Sheepshead Bay community. (Bay People, 2011)

The website of the Bay People organization, composed of a core of twenty people, portrayed the Bay People group as local and grassroots oriented. The site once featured a rolling set of six images on its homepage. The first one showed the old house that was torn down to make way for the construction. The second image depicted the construction site without the house. The third image was of hundreds of Muslim men kneeling and praying in what appeared to be a midtown Manhattan site. The fourth showed more men praying, The fifth and sixth images portrayed Muslim women and children walking in what looks to be the Sheepshead Bay neighborhood in question.

Website Research on National Organizations

A report published in August 2011 by the Center for American Progress titled 'Fear, Inc.: The Roots of the Islamophobia Network in America' discussed the 'Islamophobia megaphone' supported by foundations (e.g. Richard Mellon Scaife, Donors Capital Fund, Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, Russell Berrie Foundation) and individuals including Frank Gaffney, Daniel Pipes and Robert Spencer. Other categories include (1) the religious right, (2) the media including the likes of David Horowitz, Rush Limbaugh, Glenn Beck, (3) political players such as Rep. Peter King in Long Island and then-presidential aspirant Rep. Michele Bachmann to (4) activists/bloggers such as Pamela Geller's Stop Islamization of America and various Tea Party movements. The Bay People claimed to be local but national players also paid attention and provided support. Pamela Geller's blog Atlas Shrugs covered the Sheepshead Bay case extensively. Robert Spencer of Jihad Watch had entries about the controversy and drew from Pamela Geller's posts as well.

Census Data

While Brooklyn as a whole, according to the 2010 census, is 43% white, the sixteen census tracts that include and surround the proposed mosque and community center is 71% white. The mosque is located in Census Tract 600 which is 85.5% white alone, 1.7% black or African-American alone and 9.3% Asian alone. The land-use statistics for 2010 show that Community District 15 (of which Sheepshead Bay is a part) utilizes nearly 51% of the total lot area for 1–2 family residential lots. By way of contrast, the neighborhood

overlooking the East River to Manhattan, Brooklyn Heights, is just over 8% for 1–2 family lots.

Field Visits to Sheepshead Bay and 2812 Voorhies Avenue

Sheepshead Bay, in Community District 15, is one of the southernmost neighborhoods in Brooklyn and it has its own stop on the Q subway line. One can descend from the subway platform to a vibrant downtown retail and restaurant sector to such sights as the combo Chinese/Mexican restaurant called Yummy and the law office of Felix Shneiderovsky.

From the Q station, it is a fifteen-minute walk east to reach the neighborhood that surrounds 2812 Voorhies Avenue. At the time of the research, there were two-storey structures to the left of 2812 Voorhies, a three-storey home on the right, and three-storey houses one and a half blocks west, and a six-storey condominium structure in the back of the proposed mosque site. Claims that the mosque would upend the quiet of the neighborhood also have to account for Public School 52, the public elementary school, just a half block away with the usual traffic and parking issues on the relatively narrow two lane Voorhies Avenue where 2812 Voorhies is located. P.S. 52 was built in 1950.

At that rally opposing the mosque on June 27th (2010), signs on the row houses across from the construction site read as follows:

"MAS is not welcome here!"

"Peace = No Anti-Semitism. No MAS."

"No Anwar Al-Awlaki"

"Stop Islamization!"

"Don't build houses of worship next to our public schools! I already own an alarm clock, do not wake me up with a call to prayer."

"Sidewalks are for walking not praying."

"Marty Markowitz: [then Borough President] This mosque has radical ties – and you still approve??????"

Local homeowners claimed that the mosque/community center would change the feel of the neighborhood. A passerby emphasized 'It's going to be a bedlam, it's going to be nuts! Where did they get the three stories? All the houses around here are two stories'. At three stories, the mosque would be taller than the two-storey structures to the left of 2812 Voorhies, though not taller than the three-storey home on the right and all the three-storey houses one and a half block west, nor the six-storey condo complex in the back of the mosque.

The first interviewee referred first to the 'regular Hebrews' or Russian Jews that had been in the neighborhood for 'the last ten years'. In a nod to the change afoot, he claimed that 'They [presumably the local Yemeni community] bought up everything. They have money, they can afford to build on small lots. It used to be a bungalow'. He reported that he was 'neutral' on the construction being 50% for and 50% against the construction. He claimed it was the 'best thing that ever happened' to him as he could charge for parking! Among the interviewees, he had the best sense of humor about the imminent changes.

The second interviewee also noted his objection to the 'construction of an oversized building' given his claim that the homes in the area are designed for families consisting of two people. But when the mosque is completed, then 'three hundred people [will be] coming to prayer five to six times a day' in this 'nice and quiet' neighborhood. He claimed that not all the worshippers will be able to walk to the site and thus cars will block driveways or double-park every morning. He also referred to the issues around the construction of the mosque, the subject of numerous legal hearings that almost derailed the whole project. For this neighbor of the building project, the pipe on the concrete pump burst and sent concrete onto his roof. 'While construction is construction', he conceded, he said that contractors were engaged in many unsafe building practices or non-permitted activity. He claimed that by the time city inspectors arrived, no one was present to ticket at the construction site.

Very aware of the wrangling around the construction and the design of the structure, he referred to a local Community Board meeting in which, apparently, the leaders of the mosque guaranteed that no prayers would occur in the street (as feared by many of the opponents) but that the prayers would occur on the roof. He said he was unsure whether the roof could structurally support the 'live load occupancy' of that many people. Referring to a number of questions he had about the construction methods, he concluded that he didn't want a 'person to die in his backyard'.

This interviewee's backyard was the subject of another concern. His bedroom windows faced the site and the eight-foot fence surrounding his back yard was not high enough to block the mosque windows on the first floor. People inside could look down at him while he was playing with his kids. Yet other issues animated his opposition to the mosque. Similar to the first interviewee, he also referred to the old house that formerly stood at 2812 Voorhies. He said it was 'run down' as the owner was sick and unable to maintain it. When the property was purchased, the neighbors hoped that someone would 'build a nice house' there. But when they heard that the purchasers paid over the market value for the property and, moreover, intended to build a $2 million structure in its place, then their suspicions arose. As this interviewee pondered: 'Who can donate [such an amount]?' and where is the owner getting the money? He reported that they gained 1500 signatures against the construction even while sending letters to the FBI, IRS and then Mayor Bloomberg to figure out what was going on. After all, according to this interviewee, the 'owner is not employed' and 'he's getting money from somewhere else'. As he noted, 'It brings questions to that'. The interview ended on a contentious note. 'I'm scared. I don't know whether they are going to start throwing rocks...My family came from Russia in 1991 as a result of persecution.' He claimed that the builders of the mosque were urging their people not to buy any houses in the neighborhood until the mosque was completed. 'The idea is that people will want to sell, property values will drop and then they can move in...They are building the mosque so they can force us out.'

Just next door, the third interviewee agreed to talk based on his common interest with the second interviewee. He also discussed the point about the height of the residential property versus the planned height for the mosque. But similar to the last interviewee, the shift from points about architecture to ones about religion and politics occurred soon after the beginning of the interview. He emphasized that the mosque is tied to something bigger. 'As a neighbor, I know a lot of people are not comfortable with MAS [Muslim American Society]'. Officers of MAS, he claimed, also support Hamas and Hezbollah. In response to critics of their opposition to the mosque construction, he asserted that 'when people say it's a Muslim issue, it's not really fair, because people have grounds to be concerned of who is coming here'.

The fourth interviewee emphasized the lack of consultation with the neighborhood about the plans for the structure. The owners were 'not

taking us into account. No one came to us. They sprung it on us'. In short, 'the people feel, the fix is in'.

The fifth interviewee, also a neighbor of the mosque construction site, showed more nuance in his response to the proposed site of worship. He viewed the Bay People as more militant in character. He argued that more people would have listened to the neighborhood's complaints had they stuck with issues such as traffic because 'at least, it's a legitimate concern'. He was not a supporter of the mosque as he claimed it was 'odd to have it built here' and that it 'would affect my way of life and my neighbors'. He was in favor of a demonstration against it but ultimately he was focused on the tactics. He asked, 'Why did you [that is, the neighborhood] bring people from the outside to deal with our problems?' Of the allegations against the builders of the mosque, he said that those making the claims 'may be right, but you have to give me proof'.

In sum, these discussions with neighbors of the proposed mosque at 2812 Voorhies Avenue and the examination of the Bay People website showed considerable similarity between their logistical and ideological objections to the mosque with that of objections voiced by opponents to mosque construction in other parts of the country.

Off-Site Interviews

Daniel Meyers, Member, National Lawyers Guild, New York City Chapter (November 4, 2011)

In a phone interview, he affirmed that the Sheepshead Bay area was very unreceptive to people of color. He noted that the area was, historically, made up of working class, GI returnees from the early 1950s made up of people who were in the police and fire departments and other forms of civil service. This anecdotal account, at least with respect to the neighborhood's racial demographic, was confirmed in the census research discussed above.

John Press, Chair, Brooklyn Tea Party (November 9, 2011)

In a bid to shore up attendance at an anti-mosque rally in the spring of 2011, the Bay People invited the Brooklyn Tea Party to attend. The founder and former head of this local Tea Party, John Press, spoke at the rally. His involvement in these efforts prompted the request to interview him in early November 2011.

In this interview, he spoke about the value of the term 'culturism' as a way to give language and a vocabulary to people who want to uphold the

distinctive values of Western culture without being called racist and without marginalizing themselves. Culturism is a 'philosophy which holds that majority cultures have a right to define, protect and promote themselves' (Press, 2007, p. 1). As he emphasized repeatedly in the interview 'cultural diversity is real, and I take it seriously'. For him, Islam is not just another religion but a totalitarian theocratic system that does not believe in the separation of church and state. As such, the community center and mosque on Voorhies Avenue is culturist aggression on the part of the Saudis. 'I believe [in] the clash between civilizations – a big fan of him [Samuel Huntington]. It's not over – Islam is not giving up. History is not over. Saudis are funding mosques all over the nation'. Thus, saying 'no' and resisting the construction on Voorhies Avenue supports resistance against structures of radical Jihad throughout the nation.

As Press noted 'they strategically choose these neighborhoods… there's a reason they chose this site. They chose that property! Once you conquer, you build a site of [religion, it] fits [the] historical pattern. Not an accident'.

Discussion

The Vortex on Voorhies Avenue: Islam and State in Brooklyn, New York

The controversy on 2812 Voorhies Avenue over the construction of a mosque from 2009 until its opening in 2016 featured loud and contentious protests between proponents of the mosque and opponents who lived near the construction site. Many referred to the building as the Sheepshead Bay mosque. Supporters called it the Sheepshead Bay Community Center. Next door neighbors said it should be built elsewhere, if at all. Supporters said that the Yemeni community, 300 strong and residents in the neighborhood for up to forty years, would finally gain what they wanted.

As noted above, based on interviews with proponents and opponents of the mosque at Sheepshead Bay in 2011, the building then in construction on 2812 Voorhies matched objections identified by the Pew Research Center's report on the controversies over mosque construction (Pew Forum, 2012). The Bay People and their supporters, locally and nationally, proposed a direct connection between the mosque/community center and international terrorism. The accusations used the center's affiliation with the MAS to connect both to the Muslim Brotherhood. They also asserted

a relationship between the center and Anwar Al-Awlaki, the American-born Muslim cleric killed on 30 September 2011 in the legally questionable drone attack authorized by President Obama. As one sign posted at the June 27th rally read, 'Don't sell Anwar Al-Awlaki's books next to my house!'

Anti-Islamic populism is a useful general category to conceptualize opposition to the development of mosques and Islamic centers. But it must be coupled with a close study of the meaning of 'religious space' shaped by the concrete religious and political concerns faced by the neighborhood in question. The symbiotic relationship between local and national agendas must be taken into account. Without local concerns, national actors operate in a vacuum and are removed from the grassroots. In turn, national actors can provide resources to local activists. This relationship shaped the politics of the religious space in that neighborhood of Sheepshead Bay. The commons that some people in the neighborhood thought they had was now due for a transformation from those nearby who wanted a spiritual home of their own.

Sheepshead Bay and the Proposed Mosque/Community Center

Sheepshead Bay has a distinct way of life, and those who lived near the construction site wanted to keep it that way. For the Bay People, their mission was clear. Unless they took action to stop the mosque, the neighborhood would change forever. 2812 Voorhies Avenues became a more complex place in this conflict. Where a small unassuming bungalow once existed, now the address became a national flashpoint and a site of protest. Voorhies Avenue is but twenty paces wide at this point, so the energy of the conflict could be felt on both sides of that roadway. The protest against the mosque on 27 July 2010 also included supporters as counterprotesters including Brooklyn Congregations United (the local chapter of PICO, People Improving Communities through Organizing) the Children of Abraham PeaceWalk organizers, members of the Muslim Consultative Network, activists such as Debbie Almontaser, the founder and former principal of the Kahlil Gibran International Academy, and clergy from local churches. Such activity exemplified a solidarity psychology of the commons in action. At 2.6 million residents, Brooklyn would be the fourth largest city in the United States if it were not part of New York City. But such networks can make even Brooklyn feel manageable, similar to the ways that people identify with a neighborhood such as Sheepshead Bay. The people

and organizations in favor of the mosque were there to forge the new commons at 2812 Voorhies that would be more inclusive than the truncated commons envisioned by its opponents in the neighborhood.

The colorful and rhetorically gifted former Brooklyn Borough President, Marty Markowitz described Brooklyn as a uniquely diverse borough and unquestionably open to all newcomers. His speeches, regularly meted out with gusto whenever he could find a megaphone, were hopeful and aspirational in character. Yet with civil court cases, countless go-rounds with building inspectors from the city and repeated attempts to halt the construction, it seemed that it was business as usual in the Sheepshead neighborhood.

Place-Based Pedagogy: Brooklyn and Its Religions

The hopeful possibilities of a solidarity psychology of the commons do not magically emerge from the controversies experienced at 2812 Voorhies Avenue. Not all those who organized and rallied in support of the mosque belonged to the Yemeni community that sought to build the spiritual center there. But the supporters viewed the spiritual center through the eyes of their own communities who have also jostled for a space where their own religion community could create a place of its own. This form of solidarity or mutualism is the basis for a more comprehensive commons that is comprised of a network of smaller commons that seek the same end of human wholeness and well-being through the forging and maintaining of organizational connections. This solidarity is only possible if religious and non-religious communities are able to resist, on the basis of their limited experience, generalizations of another religion.

Possibilities for a positive linkage of religion and place occurred in this author's course at Brooklyn College called Brooklyn and Its Religions. The course provided a semester-long opportunity for students to experience places in various Brooklyn neighborhoods where different Abrahamic traditions have taken root and evolved over time. In contrast to the protests against the mosque construction on 2812 Voorhies Avenue, the students in Brooklyn and Its Religions had a different opportunity. In this course, they experienced places of religious expression while being encouraged to develop a framework for comprehending the diversity of a given religion. Students needed to ponder how a religion can have different forms, inhabit multiple spaces and create diverse places. The reflection papers asked students to comment on and interpret their field visits.

An upper-level religion course, it met weekly in an extended time slot to allow field experiences outside of the classroom. To the extent possible in a fourteen-week semester, students encountered the diversity of religions in Brooklyn. Within a given religion, emphasis was placed on variations of belief and practice. Other topics included the relationship between religion and politics in Brooklyn, diverse definitions and conceptions of power and the ways in which religious and political constituencies in Brooklyn understand the public good and its enhancement or diminishment. Opportunities to develop skills to continue this inquiry on their own was a key part of this course. These included the New York City website, United States Census data, Social Explorer and the databases on the Association of Religion Data Archives website (Estey, 2014).

Place-based educational methods, such as those employed in the Brooklyn and Its Religions course, de-center the traditional classroom. Other places of learning include undeveloped natural environments, built environments in rural, suburban, or urban communities. The main emphasis is the spatial context in which students find themselves and the consciousness and awareness they have of that context and the way it shapes them. According to Clifford Knapp (2008), a long-time practitioner of place-based methods, place-based education has a long history and its practices have been associated with other terms such as community-based learning, service learning, environment-based education, outdoor education, bioregional education, ecological education and nature studies (p. 6) (Estey, 2014).

Place-Based Pedagogy in Kensington, Brooklyn

All Souls Bethlehem Church (ASBC) and Christ Apostolic Church were well-suited for the learning goals of the course given their proximity to Brooklyn College and to each other. ASBC is a result of three congregations that merged to survive membership decline and financial challenges. These include the United Church of Christ, the Disciples of Christ, and the Unitarian Universalist Association. Located in a row house that was once the parsonage of one of the three congregations, ASBC's worship space is in the living room which can squeeze in around forty worshippers. A 'little house church' since 1998, the website warns would-be visitors not to 'be fooled by the large church on the corner' (ASBC, 2019). Instead, visitors are urged to look for the house church in the middle of the block. The large church on the corner used to be Bethlehem United Church, one

of the original three churches preceding ASBC. Christ Apostolic Church bought the building in the late 1990s and now it is a thriving Nigerian community with a Pentecostal orientation to its theology. As anyone who walks by the building well into a Sunday afternoon can attest, the worship service is lively and audible from the sidewalk. ASBC, on the other hand, tidily wraps up their service by the noon hour.

The field experience commenced with Christ Apostolic and ended at ASBC. As one student noted, 'the visit to the Christ Apostolic Church and All Souls Bethlehem church truly exemplified the multiple modes of practicing Christianity as well as the diversity between houses of worship on a single Brooklyn block'. This same student emphasized Christ Apostolic's cultivation of 'Nigerian Christian tradition in their now native Brooklyn'. The lengthy service in Yoruba, the emphasis on 'charismatic song' and the hierarchical leadership structure stood out for this observer. Other students emphasized how Christ Apostolic avoided politics in favor of spirituality. As for ASBC, one student noted that Rev. Thomas Martinez, the pastor at the time of the visit, argued that 'power isn't found in repressive structural authorities, but power is in the power of the cosmos, which includes all individuals'.

The short two-minute walk to ASBC served as a prelude to the surprise and, to some degree, the dismay upon entering ASBC. Another student, inaccurately, deemed it a 'private home-made church, created by an individual… I must confess that I was very surprised to be in a regular-size[d] apartment, which was supposed to be a church'. While correctly pinpointing ASBC's emphasis on social justice and its involvement in politics, this student walked away underwhelmed by the experience. 'For now, when it remains a House Church, it might not be taken seriously, as it was not taken by me or some of my classmates. Perhaps, it was because of my expectations, for me church is a religious institution that has all the appropriate symbolics'. The observation that 'symbolics' were missing is what a place-based field experience can offer to a student. One student took this theme further and described ASBC as a 'very atypical "church". Even the title of "church" seems to be misleading regarding this group being that it resembled an organization, a philosophy, or path of life…' Another student's reflection paper stated it aptly: 'So what really is a church? When one thinks about 'church,' one may envision a large building with beautiful stain glass windows, and pews all lined up in rows leading to a pulpit'. Certainly, Christ Apostolic Church matched that description but at ASBC, this student reported upon entering the house 'I noticed that it was a living

room set up, and seemed very communal, like a place where people had no choice but to get to know one another…' Yet a different student amplified the point about the personal connections that appear to be forged in a house church:

> Our visit to the All Souls Bethlehem Church was also quite interesting. I had never heard of, or seen, a house church before. In a way it was comforting. Churches are large and foreboding, while a house is comfortable and homey. Tom [Rev. Martinez] mentioned how many of his congregants refused his attempts to move them to an *actual church*. [italics added] They are comfortable and happy with the situation they have. He mentioned there would be many pros and cons in moving to an actual church. The intimate feeling is lost, but gives more people a chance to participate. The house church is small, but cramped, and cannot seem welcoming to new members. I would personally feel uncomfortable walking into a situation like that, where everyone is close knit and already knows one another.

The students, overall, agreed that Christ Apostolic Church felt like a church though it did not reflect their budding theological perspectives or political interests. On the other hand, ASBC did not feel like a true church but the viewpoints it embodied closely matched their own. The student, above, who expressed wariness about the prospect of walking into ASBC, still thought it would accommodate her desire to be recognized.

> Both churches presented interesting thoughts and idea. I enjoy hearing how other religions work, or in some cases, do not work. The structure of the CAC (Christ Apostolic Church) does not appeal to me, and I would feel uncomfortable with other people making all my decisions. Although I am not heavily involved in my religion, if I was, I would want to be heard. I think I would flourish in a community like All Soul's Bethlehem Church. It seems like an arena where people can discuss their feelings.

The students' encounter with Christ Apostolic Church and All Souls Bethlehem Church allowed them to experience the diversity inherent in Protestant Christianity. In other years, visits to Our Lady of Refuge on nearby Ocean Avenue further demonstrated the theological and historical extent of Christianity. This course also featured field experiences in selected Brooklyn neighborhoods that showed the diversity within Judaism and Islam. But for all the differences between Christ Apostolic Church and ASBC, they share the experience of being uprooted from their original

homes, their primary places. For many of the Nigerians of Christ Apostolic Church, their home country is over 5000 miles away. For the parishioners of ASBC, their original places are nearby but separated chronologically by decades of decline, displacement and relocation. The shift in place for both congregations has intriguing results that reflect the relationship between religion and place. In a number of reflection papers on Christ Apostolic Church, students noted the theological emphasis there on full water immersion as the truest mode of baptism. In one noteworthy reflection, a student identified such baptism as the precondition for partaking of Holy Communion. She also recalled how the 'Junior Priest' said that 'baptism always took place in the river. However, here due to circumstances of the area, an indoor pool is used instead. This results in baptisms year-round, not just at times when the water is warm enough'. Even as one's physical place changes, one recreates theological meaning with what is available even if an 'indoor pool' must suffice.

For ASBC, parishioners endured a number of closures and mergers and were literally on the move, as a congregation, for some time. Little wonder that the transition Rev. Martinez envisioned to an 'actual church' fell on deaf ears. But ASBC participated in a more uplifting type of movement through their involvement with the Children of Abraham organization. The Children of Abraham was a multifaith organization mostly consisting of congregations reflecting the Abrahamic traditions that 'celebrates community and the role of the diverse faith community in responding to crisis' (Children of Abraham, 2013). One such moment of solidarity, already mentioned earlier, included public support of the mosque construction on 2812 Voorhies Avenue. The space in the middle of Voorhies Avenue in front of 2812 was transformed through a multireligious organization into a place for acceptance and solidarity across theological and historical differences. Indeed, because of the support across the city and across religious and political differences, by the summer of 2016, the MAS Sheepshead Bay Community Center finally opened.

Conclusion

A promising way to renew the inquiry into space, place and religion is through the lens of the commons and the practice of 'commoning'. David Bollier's *Think Like a Commoner* reminds readers that the commons can be a physical space but it is also any self-organized and collectively managed resource (2). Bollier urges that we act like commoners and tend to

resources beyond and outside of state and market domination. Natural resources are usually associated with 'the commons' such as a town common, or a lake, a river system, or state and national parks. But civic institutions are also aspects of the commons. Religious bodies and organizations are social traditions and they also count among those civic institutions. Each of these religious bodies or institutions—and the communities and places that they shape—is an example of a common. In turn, these commons are also shaped by other organizations or commons even when it seems that there is 'nothing in common' among them. Given the vast diversity characteristic of Brooklyn along racial, ethnic and religious lines, the question about cooperation among the countless commons is especially paramount. As observed in the 'vortex on Voorhies', that commons turned into an especially intractable controversy. Various perspectives on the commons came into conflict even as other commoners from religious communities outside the neighborhood offered support in solidarity. But such support is more than a fortunate turn of the story. That support undergirded the larger common, or the new place of inter-religious cooperation among Muslim, Christian, and Jewish religious leaders and communities on 2812 Voorhies. Such a common is renewed or created anew whenever any group reaches beyond its own boundary (either within a given religious orientation or outside of that orientation) in solidarity with someone else. This larger common is not a permanent condition or something that can be achieved fully but is always a work yet to be accomplished. As students discovered in the case of Christ Apostolic Church and ASBC such boundary crossing might be a challenge between those two apparently similar commons. The students had to contend with the malleability of terms such as 'church' or 'Christianity'. In a time when tensions are experienced in an acute and very public way around differences in religious and political orientation, the work of commoning is a vital task that requires a renewed commitment to one's place in the service of others. By so doing, the conditions for human wholeness and wellness, the basis and outcome of a solidarity psychology, can be created.

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How and Why Environmental and Religious Attachment Matters for Quality of Life

Victor Counted and Tanya Meade

INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes some key points regarding the place of adult attachment processes in the quality of life narrative. It is proposed that understanding the role of adult attachment relationships, involving a geographical place and a Divine entity, entails grasping the organisational structure of the attachment construct and its predictive health benefits in relation to pro-environmental and religious coping strategies. Using such concepts, recent studies show that attachment relationships involving religious and place attachment are clearly related to better quality of life, development of identity, the capacity for emotional regulation and psychological adjustment, and the emergence of exploration curiosity, among other things (e.g. Counted, 2019; Counted, Possamai, McAuliffe, & Meade, 2018; Counted, Possamai, & Meade, 2018; Pittman, Keiley, Kerpelman, & Vaughn, 2011). These studies suggest that specific patterns of adult attachment processes

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have their unique health and theoretical implications. Even more important than such links, however, is that the study of the role of individual differences in attachment patterns reveals much about the developmental processes underlying both the negotiation of, and change in, quality of life. This chapter summarizes recent research on the role of adult attachment experiences in promoting health and quality of life and the broader implications for attachment theory, health promotion and future research.

PLACE, SPIRITUALITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE: AN ATTACHMENT PERSPECTIVE

Quality of life (QoL) and health outcomes are largely derived from the satisfaction of basic attachment needs (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Scannell & Gifford, 2016). QoL involves an individual's experience of life, well-being, and life satisfaction. It is a broad concept that is related to the individual's evaluation of life satisfaction with key psychological, environmental, physical and relational areas of life which enhance a general sense of well-being. Physical health-related QoL can be described as a state of well-being that is determined based on the functionality of all internal and external body parts, tissues and organs which enable the individual to be physically fit to perform their daily routines (Anokye, Trueman, Green, Pavey, & Taylor, 2012). Psychological functioning focuses on the individual's ability to attain their own goals in relation to their mental health, emotional well-being and behaviour (Limbos, Joyce, Chan, & Kesten, 2000). Environmental health relates to how aspects of the natural and built environment may affect an individual's QoL (Meyer & Owen, 2008). The social relationship domain points to the relationship connections and social ties that exist between people, in terms of quality of relationships, social integration, social networks and social isolation, as important factors influencing the individual's health and QoL (Umberson & Montez, 2011).

Place attachment is one of the most researched topics in environmental psychology and human geography, with most studies focusing on the health benefits of having a sense of community and factors contributing to residential or neighbourhood attachment (Bonaiuto, Carrus, Martorella, & Bonnes, 2002; Bonaiuto et al., 2006; Evans, 2003; Relph, 1976). Despite its importance, the way in which place is related to QoL remains unclear, even though this relationship has been investigated in a number of studies. Rollero and De Piccoli (2010) have dealt with this topic from a social support theoretical perspective, thus positioning perceptions of QoL in

places of attachment as the outcome of relational factors. In particular, their study suggests that social relationship experiences in a place, in terms of social interactions and support from attachment figures within a geographical setting, are important for maintaining a healthy balance between place and health. Tartaglia (2012) linked the quality of social relations with important relational objects in the experience of place as an important factor promoting QoL in an urban environment. Gattino, De Piccoli, Fassio, and Rollero (2013) corroborate these findings, suggesting that QoL is largely influenced by one's sense of community and not by the place itself. These findings are similar to those of other studies which highlight the association between place and QoL as the outcome of the social and environmental qualities of a place, afforded by support and proximity to one's relational others (e.g. Marcheschi, Laike, Brunt, Hansson, & Johansson, 2015; Scannell & Gifford, 2016, 2017). This theoretical perspective is well-documented in social support theory (e.g. Lakey & Cohen, 2000).

Furthermore, research evidence also suggests the health benefits of religious believers' attachment to God spirituality through engaging in proximity-seeking behaviours that promote emotionally attuned communication and spiritual coping in the form of prayer, reading sacred texts, meditation and religious involvement (e.g., Counted, 2016a, b; Hood, Spilka, & Hunsberger, 1996; Idler, McLaughlin, & Kasl, 2009; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992; Miller, McConnell, & Klinger, 2007; Reed, 1978; Saffari et al., 2013). Other studies have also found that secure attachment in a believer–God relationship is related to life satisfaction (Bradshaw, Ellison, & Marcum, 2010), better QoL and health status among patients (Saffari et al., 2013), maintaining positive emotions (Schore, 2003), adjustment to stress and less anxiety-related disorders (Ellison, Bradshaw, Flannelly, & Galek, 2014; Marganska, Gallagher, & Miranda, 2013), and lower levels of psychological distress (Bradshaw et al., 2010), among others.

In addition, secure attachment to God has been presented to moderate the effects of stressful life events and mental health outcomes in two longitudinal studies (e.g. Ellison, Bradshaw, Kuyel, & Marcum, 2012; Bradshaw et al., 2010). On the contrary, some studies have also reported no association between attachment-related spirituality and improvements in physical health QoL (e.g. Bradshaw & Kent, 2017; Miller et al., 2007; Nagpal, Heid, Zarit, & Whitlatch, 2014; Nguyen, Grzywacz, Lang, Walkup, & Arcury, 2010; Rohani, Abedi, Omranipour, & Langius-Eklöf, 2015). In a review elsewhere (i.e. Counted, et al., 2018), we argued that the lack of association between spirituality and physical health might be due to the

illness context since having a sense of spiritual connection may provide psychological comfort but not change the physical status of the individual. After a series of follow-up interviews, it was found that the nature of the relationship between religious attachment experiences and quality of life was multidimensional (Counted, 2018a). In other words, religious attachment processes can be experienced as coping strategies having both positive and negative aspects, involving multiple domains: personal, social, and environmental. At the personal positive level, this involves how the attached individual forms of personal meaning-making through their relationship with God, thus helping them to cope with life stressors. This personal dimension is also seen in the negative aspect of religious coping in that some attached individuals may find it difficult to go beyond their material limitations, thus adopting a realist human-based approach to problem-solving. At the positive-social level, individuals tap into their sense of attachment to God with the purpose of building corrective relationships, thus emphasizing the need for a more meaningful relationship. In contrast, at the negative social level, attached individuals may give contrasting views about the effectiveness of their relationship experiences and discontentment with God. The environmental domain shows how attached individuals turn to their sense of attachment, but this time, in relation to a significant place, in such a way that it enables them to embrace their environment and achieve harmony and order in it.

The directionality of attachment patterns, especially among adults, are still not quite clear. For example, both the attachment to place and religious attachment can be related with each other in a particular context and not in another context (e.g. Counted, Possamai, McAuliffe, et al., 2018; Counted, 2019). This might be due to the variation in sociocultural contexts, which might differ depending on what or who is their object of attention and attachment (Counted, 2018b). This variation might also be due to the incompatibility of the study data which only speak to the independence of a safe connection to objects of attachment as a psychological state promoting a sense of felt security (Counted, Possamai, McAuliffe, et al., 2018). Hence, it is possible that attachment to place, and attachment to God, may not be connected by the same attachment behavioural system.

Individuals expressing attachment behaviours develop affective bonds and mental representations that convince the self it is worthy of care due to the proximity and availability of an object of attachment. Such feeling of felt attachment security in adults allows the individual to maintain

and promote positive emotions that reduce emotional distress and anxiety (Marganska et al., 2013; Schore, 2003). There is a consistent link between secure attachment styles and higher scores of QoL outcomes, or lower levels of psychological distress (e.g. Bradford & Lyddon, 1993; Feeney, 1999). Alternatively, insecure attachments have also been linked to lower scores of life satisfaction, QoL, and higher psychological distress (e.g. Bethany & Lorne, 2008; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992; Sharon & Wendy, 2009). Separation distress, following the possible loss of an object of attachment or experiences that threaten the attachment process with close others (Quinn, Clare, & Woods, 2009), place (e.g., Afshar, Foroughan, Vedadhir, & Tabatabaei, 2017; Gattino et al., 2013; Rollero & De Piccoli, 2010; Scanell & Gifford, 2016, 2017; Tartaglia, 2012), or a divine entity (e.g., Canada, Murphy, Fitchett, & Stein, 2015; Currier, Drescher, Holland, Lisman, & Foy, 2015; Idler et al., 2009) may lead to declines in QoL and increase attachment-related psychopathology (e.g. Kobak, Zajac, & Madsen, 2016; Counted, 2017). However, when attachment is intact attached-individuals experience better health outcomes (Counted, 2018a; Homan, 2014).

How Adult Attachment Affects Quality of Life

Social referencing and observation. One way through which attached individuals experience quality of life and better health outcomes is through learning about their emotions and environment by observing their objects of attachment and interactions with them (Parke, 1994). This perspective is well-documented in the correspondence model of attachment development which shows how emotion contagion and social referencing behaviours provide the basis for the observational learning structure in attachment processes (e.g. Beck & McDonald, 2004; Counted, 2016c; Granqvist, 1998; Granqvist & Hagekull, 1999; Hall, Fujikawa, Halcrow, Hill, & Delaney, 2009; Kirkpatrick, 1999; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990; Rowatt & Kirkpatrick, 2002). These studies suggest that individuals who observe unhealthy emotional experiences with previous objects of attachment may expect similar negativity in their next relationship. However, healthy emotional attachment observed in a previous relationship may also be modelled in a new relationship, regardless of who/what is standing in proxy as the object of attachment. These experiences have an impact on the way the attached individual experiences their objects of attachment, thus negative attachment experiences may lead to poor quality of life while positive experiences are likely to predict better health outcomes.

This observational learning strategy in attachment processes corroborates literature on social referencing theory (Ainsworth, 1992; Saarni, Mumme, & Campos, 1998). Social referencing phenomenon is an observational process by which an attached individual determines how to respond to, process, or feel about a new relationship experience based on the information from previous experience s. In other words, it is an aspect of interaction between an individual and their objects of attachment. For example, when a religiously attached individual is put into a stressful situation, referencing to a spiritual or religious information related to that relationship may determine the effective meaning of their situation, adjust their perception of the situation, or regulate their emotions in such that it helps in negotiating their quality of life. Similar experience can happen in an environmental context where positive place memories may serve as social referencing phenomena in the form of affective communication and not as instrumental communication (Campos, 1983; Rogoff, Mistry, Radziszewska, & Germond, 1992). This social referencing phenomenon produces information about how the attached individual feels at that moment, rather than direct information about what to do, thus improving the state of their subjective well-being at that time (Ainsworth, 1992). Social referencing phenomenon in adults as affective communication implies that the attached individual receives sensory inputs from an object of attachment which either directly, or after a cognitive interpretative process, influences how the individual feels and, hence, indirectly, what to do in a given stressful situation (Feinman, 1992).

Social competence and relational practices/behaviours. Secondly, specific relational practices and behaviours related to adult attachment are most likely to affect the quality of life of attached individuals. This is because positive emotional expressivity and emotional awareness during the early years of life are associated with emotional competence since the competence in emotion at infant leads to social competence during adulthood (Denham et al., 2003). Social competence may be a predictor of adult attachment development in terms of seeking imaginary relationships with objects that assure an attachment advantage in the way they nurture and promote relational practices and behaviours. However, this competence in relational practices and behaviours are enhanced due to coaching, reactions and encouragement in relation to emotions (e.g. Eisenberg, Cumberland, & Spinrad, 1998; Gottman, Katz, & Hooven, 1997; Roberts & Strayer, 1987). This perspective is based on the theory of

meta-emotion which 'refers to an organized set of feelings and thoughts about one's own emotions and one's children's emotions' (Gottman et al., 1997, p. 243). The concept of relational behaviours and practices is used broadly in this chapter to encompass both feelings and thoughts or metacognition associated with the socialization of emotion in adults, hence focusing primarily on the socialization of attachment behaviour specifically. Therefore, the ways in which objects of attachment influence people's quality of life, in relation to their social competence, should be considered as part of how adult attachment processes affect quality of life.

While examining emotion-related practices, Gottman and colleagues (1997) propose that responsive objects of attachment display specific types of relational behaviours associated with emotions which affect quality of life. One of such behaviours is 'emotion-coaching' (Gottman et al., 1997), which involves the following: emotional awareness (being aware of the emotion of the individual); emotional intimacy (developing intimacy through the emotion of the attached individual); emotional labelling (helping the individual label their own emotions); emotional validation (empathizing with the emotion of the individual); and problem-solving coaching (being part of the meaning-making process of the individual). Apparently, these emotion-related practices may not be done physically but largely form part of the emotionally attuned communication between adults and their objects of attachment, mainly at an imaginary level. For example, an individual who is drawn to a religious figure/entity as an object of attachment can evaluate how such object is aware of, or empathize with, their emotions or builds intimacy with them through their emotions. This implicit aspects of communication can be achieved through meditation, prayer, devotional, reading the scripture, and in the context of a faith community, as shown in a literature review on relational spirituality and quality of life (Counted, et al., 2018).

The way a perceived object of attachment implicitly reacts to emotional stimulus also affects the quality of life of the attached individual. When a religiously attached individual feels abandoned by God he or she may end up with negative emotions and spiritual struggles which trigger negative religious coping (Pargament, 1999). This can also be the case when a migrant feels displaced in a new geographical setting because of their negative migration experiences, thus leading to a poor sense of social belonging and quality of life. An example of a negative reaction in relation to 'place'

can be migrants' response to the increasingly anti-migrant climate and populist movements around the world. These atmospheres and messages can build up negative emotions in such that migrants may implicitly react negatively towards themselves and close others in a self-destructive way. In contrast, relational and recreational support activities that encourage and help migrants to have control over their emotions and life stressors can help them adjust to a new life during the process of place change. The same applies in a religious context where an attachment relationship with God is strengthened through the reading of Scripture and listening to spiritual teachings. These relational practices and behaviours help the attached individual to have control over their emotions, thus improving their quality of life amidst life stressors.

Emotional climate of attachment relationship. Lastly, quality of life is affected by the emotional climate of a relationship, as reflected in the emotional quality of the attachment relationship, sensitivity of the object of attachment, and social competence of the attached individual. The emotional climate that the attached individual experience, in relation to a geographical place or a divine entity, has an impact on their overall emotional development and quality of life. The emotional climate of a geographical environment is reflected in the way people in that spatial setting relate to it (such as developing identity, forming attachment, and depending on the environmental activities and resources) and in the kind of positive or negative emotions experienced by individuals living in such environment. The same is true when assessing the emotional climate of a believer–God relationship, which also reflects in the way the believer relates with God and the outcome of such experience in the life of the believer. This perspective corroborates report from Darling and Steinberg (1993) who argue that the emotional climate of a family system impacts on the well-being and attachment patterns of family members. Alternatively, when an individual's emotional climate is negative, they are at risk of developing adaptive reactions in the forms of 'protest' (signals of separation distress), 'despair' or 'deep mourning' (interpreting the separation experience as a loss of the object of attachment) and 'detachment' (showing positive attitudes towards alternative objects as a way of surviving in the environment) due to an unexpected disrupted attachment (e.g. Bowlby, 1973; Counted, 2017; Kobak et al., 2016). This kind of disruptive environment makes the individual to be less emotionally secure and at risk of attachment-related psychopathology.

Attachment disruptions can happen in people–place and believer–God relationships, and can be symptomatic of a deeper need for attachment security and exposure to a negative emotional climate.

In the psychology of religion, attachment disruption can happen when a relationship with a divine entity is 'attacked' either through slanderous remarks by others or limiting access to religious symbols that draw the individual closer to the religious figure (Counted, 2017). For example, mocking Prophet Muhammad is likely going to have an impact on the perceived relationship between a Muslim believer and the religious figure; the same way a Christian believer would be offended when a non-believer mocks Jesus of Nazareth. Such emotional climate can predispose the religious individual to the adaptive reactions mentioned above: protest, despair and detachment (Counted, 2017; Kobak et al., 2016). When the livelihood and daily lives of people are disrupted in a particular geographical location, there sense of attachment to that place is greatly affected. This kind of emotional climate places individuals living in such a place at risk of developing emotional problems and adaptive reactions, leading to psychopathological issues and poor quality of life outcomes. In contrast, living in a stable, responsive geographical environment or religious atmosphere will foster emotional security because of the certainty of emotional stability experienced in such a context. Religious believers are likely to feel emotionally secure when they know they are safe in their spiritual relationship or connection with the divine, especially when there is no direct or indirect threat to their attachment bond. The emotional climate of an environment or relationship is a reflection of how attachment affects quality of life. This can be due to the emotional stability of the environment, expectations of the environment, the extent to which positive emotions are expressed in that environment, and the degree to which negative emotions are expressed in the environment (Morris, Silk, Steinberg, Myers, & Robinson, 2007). These factors determine the extent to which individuals experience quality of life during their attachment experiences in relation to a divine entity or to a geographic place.

WHY ADULT ATTACHMENT EXPERIENCES MATTER FOR HEALTH PROMOTION

Psychological adjustment. Empirical findings from recent studies show that adult attachment experiences have significant psychological impact,

including the effect on everyday physical, social, spiritual, and environmental functioning and relationships (e.g. Bradshaw & Kent, 2017; Counted, 2019; Counted, et al., 2018). Adult attachment processes conceptualized in terms of two dimensions—attachment to one's geographical environment and attachment to a Divine entity—can positively affect adjustment to life stressors. Attachment to a significant physical or imaginary object can be useful in balancing and controlling conflicting emotional needs, or life stressors, exacerbated by external factors within the environment. This is because of the secure base advantage which an object of attachment assures in a relational context, as the attached individual manages to control their fears and perceived threats during the exploration of their broader environment. The proximity with an object of attachment provides the secure base from which the individual makes such exploration, leading to a mastery and adjustment to their environmental conditions. Psychological adjustment is made possible due to emotion regulation as will be discussed next (Krasuska, Lavda, Thompson, & Millings, 2018; Thompson, 1990).

Greater emotion regulation. Attachment experiences are often effective at regulating emotions, in that it helps securely attached individuals to stay within their secure base and maintain a sense of tolerance in a way that helps them to manage their emotions both internally and externally. Attached individuals utilize internal processes such as attention shifting, cognitions, and physiological responses to manage their emotions and process attachment-related information, thus allowing them to make a particular object a target of their proximity-seeking behaviour. This attention shifting behaviour and physiological responses allow the attached individual to be attuned to their objects of attachment. Emotion regulation also involves external processes in relation to relational figures or objects (friends, loved ones, parents, Divine entities, geographical places, etc.) who/which help in the modulation of emotions. These attachment figures or objects play a role as targets of proximity-seeking behaviours and important emotion-regulation platforms/actors for enhancing emotional security and maintaining attachment; both of which eventually promote quality of life. Brenner and Salovey (1997) have encouraged researchers to consider the specific processes involved in modulating emotional experiences. As shown in a recent qualitative study (Counted, 2018a), emotion regulation in adult attachment experiences involve specific processes or strategies for managing quality of life and emotions. For example, in a study examining religious coping strategies (Counted, 2018a), it was found that religiously attached migrants facing sociocultural challenges associated with their ethnicity, race,

and immigration status, were developing a multidimensional coping strategy (involving personal, social, and environmental domains) which enabled them to manage their emotions through relying on religious resources. Alternatively, a different kind of emotion regulation may be seen in the relationship with place, where people develop pro-environmental coping strategies, involving affect, behaviour, and cognition, to effectively manage their emotions and deal with the challenges associated with place change (Halpenny, 2010; Ramkissoon, Weiler, & Smith, 2013). Overall, emotion regulation also connotes the capacity to respond in a socially appropriate way in relation to an object of attachment, thus developing the skills set to adapt to life stressors and negative personal experiences.

Engagement with prosocial behaviour. According to Mikulincer and Shaver (2007), attachment experiences can provide a conceptually rich framework for understanding prosocial behaviours. This is a common feature in attachment experiences, showing a trend towards attachment differences in prosocial affects, behaviours, and cognitions (Counted, Possamai, McAuliffe, et al., 2018; Shaver, Mikulincer, & Chun, 2008; Tur-Porcar, Doménech, & Mestre, 2018). In other words, the attachment behavioural system enables the individual to express themselves in relation to others either by turning their attention to a geographical object, a religious figure, or an important person in their lives. A recent qualitative study shows how migrants with religious background noted how their attachment relationship with God made them socially active within the context of their local church community and working environment, thus making them to develop prosocial behaviours in order to be a part of their faith, community and get more involved in the lives of others (Counted, 2018a). Attachment is a reasonable predictor of prosocial behaviour (Shaver et al., 2008), such that having a relationship with objects of attachment can make one to have a positive assumption about others and their immediate environments as the relationship internally shapes a corresponding effect that improves the social aspect of the individual's quality of life. This makes sense since the attached individual is likely to maintain a positive relationship with the objects—experiences that become the springboard for future relationship expectations and prosocial behaviour.

Positive sense of identity.   One overarching premise in most attachment research is that attachment-related working models offer opportunities for exploring contexts of identity formation (Junot, Paquet, & Fenouillet,

2018; Pittman et al., 2011). For example, securely attached individuals are likely to have a positive self-identity compared to those with insecure attachment styles (Counted & Moustafa, 2017; Counted, 2017). This positive sense of identity is conceived due to one's relationship experiences and perception of the self in relation to 'being' in the world. When attachment relationship is maintained for an extended period of time, this may shape one's understanding of the world and how attached individuals perceive themselves through their relationship experiences, as they experience life and model their identity from a secure base (Counted, 2018a, 2019). The secure base confidence derived from maintaining an attachment relationship can also go a long way in helping individuals develop a sense of belonging and identity (Counted, 2019; Ramkissoon et al., 2013). In other words, the drive (e.g. in the form of an exploration curiosity) to develop an attachment to a particular place, for example, may become the precursor for modelling pro-environmental behaviours that mirror the identity of the place, thus helping to colour the lens through which people see themselves in relation to a particular place. This can also be applied in a religious context where believers often model their identity based on the teachings and characteristics of a particular religious attachment figure, although the nature of this perceived identity can vary depending on the object/figure of attention.

Public health promotion.   The public health perspective on the empirical evidence linking adult attachment processes and quality of life needs to be considered. One of the commonly accepted functions of attachment relationships with regards to quality of life and public health is state-based feelings of security and comfort. The proposition that attachment-affiliation to a significant object fosters felt security has never been controversial. Emotional security is essential for public health promotion since the impact of insecure attachment trauma could last for a whole life span. Several studies have shown that emotional insecurity is related to depression, poor mental health, low self-esteem, high stress levels, and psychological dysfunctions (e.g. Counted, et al., 2018; Lee & Hankin, 2009; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Simpson, Rholes, Campbell, Tran, & Wilson, 2003). Some of the pioneers of the adult attachment framework viewed the forging of felt security as the primary function of adult attachment experience and subsequent research evidence supports this claim (e.g. Cicirelli, 2004; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Sroufe, 2005). The feelings of felt security experienced by an attached individual

is the function of attachment-related behaviours of support provided by the object of attachment, which are not only central to the quality of life of the attached, but to healthy relationship connections which impact the family, community, regional, and national life (Carnelley, Pietromonaco, & Jaffe, 1996; Collins & Feeney, 2000). The need for meaningful secure connections may be a public health issue, especially given the high rates of mental health issues and suicide rates among insecurely attached individuals with traumatic relationship experiences—most of whom have no figure/object to turn to for security and meaning-making (Falgares et al., 2017; Ozer, Yildirim, Erkoc, 2015). Thus positive health outcomes are mostly linked to psychological state-based feelings of felt security and connectedness which are experienced when one seek and maintain relationships with objects of attachment. This sense of connection is important in everyday life. Attachment is central to public health promotion and is a health determinant, especially among migrant groups who may be seeking for reliable connections in their new abode in their quest for hope, assurance and security (Counted, 2019; Counted, Possamai, McAuliffe, et al., 2018). The importance of adult attachment to public health may also be related to the growing recognition of the role of attachment relationships to the lifespan trajectory of health outcomes (Cicirelli, 1991a, 1991b, 2004; Sroufe, 2005), and association with other social determinants of public health such as the social and physical qualities of one's environment (Bryant et al., 2012; Counted, Possamai, McAuliffe, et al., 2018; Marcheschi et al., 2015; NSW Department of Health, 2010).

Concluding Remarks and Further Studies

This chapter advances our understanding of the role of adult attachment relationships, involving geographical places and Divine entities, in health promotion. Several studies show that adult attachment processes are positively associated with outcomes of quality of life, meaning that these experiences play a significant role in the lives of people. There are many advances that still need to be made in order to fully understand the complex processes involved in the intersection of place, spirituality and health. Firstly, more consensus on how to assess and conceptualize quality of life in relation to the ways in which different measures of adult attachment experiences are related to one another requires further investigation. Further studies must be clear in discussing the aspects of attachment processes (e.g. psychological state vs. trait-based forms of attachment motivational systems) that are

being assessed. Attempts to distinguish patterns of attachment to geographical places, attachment to religious figures, and to discern the affiliation to a particular object of attachment or disruption of such attachment-affiliation are all worthy goals that should be considered in further studies.

Secondly, further research exploring the relationships between adult attachment processes and health outcomes needs to be expanded to include a broader motivational system (Counted, 2018b). More research on adult attachment processes is needed in order to fully understand how affective bonds may take different forms, involving the ability to mentalize the emotionally attuned communication with an object of attachment on the basis of the individual's emotions, desires, beliefs, and intentions (Counted, 2018b, p. 149). For example, empirical evidence provided by Krause (1990) and Ekman (1992) suggests that affective processes such as fear, sadness, happiness, annoyance, contempt, rage, among others, are significant emotions that predispose the individual to explore the possibility of attachment affiliation during a particular situational context, thus negotiating quality of life in the process.

Ideally, a motivational systems approach to adult attachment processes helps researchers to see how sensation and emotion are primary motivational drivers of desires that activate attachment-affiliation with a particular object (Jimenez, 2006; Lichtenberg, 1988, 1989). Understanding the functions of such motivational drivers are important in making sense of the patterns of intersection between adult attachment processes and quality of life outcomes. Thirdly, further studies should also focus on investigating the effects of cross-cultural aspects of attachment processes on quality of life in relation to several sociocultural and migration variables which may play a significant role as mediators or moderators.

In conclusion, the impact of attachment relational processes is complex, often involving internal and external structures of coping, manoeuvre and pro-social behaviours. By continuing to examine the links between place, spirituality and quality of life, a greater understanding of adult attachment behaviours in relation to relevant prosocial coping strategies that predict better health outcomes will emerge.

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Defining the Psychology of Religion and Place: A Concept Analysis

Victor Counted and Fraser Watts

INTRODUCTION

People experience the sacred in geographical places for various reasons. Such experience of place spirituality often arises as a way of dealing with trauma and place events (Counted, 2019; Sternberg, Engineer, & Oberman, 2019), activating one's spiritual imagination (Basu, 2019), understanding world religions (Basu, 2019; Counted & Watts, 2017, 2019; Latifa, Hidayat, & Sodiq, 2019), and negotiating quality of life (Counted, Possamai, MacAuliffe, & Meade, 2018). This perceptual process, involving a significant object, can embrace with nuanced perspectives and meanings that vary across cultures, disciplines and practices. The chapters in this book have provided an idea of what the psychology of religion and place (PRP) might look like from an interdisciplinary perspective. In this chapter, we

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attempt to provide an operational definition for PRP based on the perspectives discussed in the book chapters and what this means for future research and education in the field. As data from our book chapters were analysed, it was obvious that the interplay of religion and place as a psychological phenomenon was discordant; this means that the disciplinary and research backgrounds of the authors shaped their perspectives. This is a good thing but one that can also become a challenge, especially when dealing with the incongruence among authors in relation to the definition of PRP.

As a criterion for the selection of data sources, only chapters in this book were included in our concept analysis. This 'convenient' inclusion criterion was necessary to provide a systematic analysis of the definitions of PRP in our book chapters, especially since the contributors were all leading scholars in the PRP field. Hence, while PRP conjured up schemas and perspectives from the authors' chapters, the terms and definitions used in the chapters remain vague and vary in meaning. Often used by the authors were terms such as 'attachment', 'sacred places', 'security', 'embodied spirituality', 'meaning-making', 'resilience', 'object relations', 'sacred mobilities', 'ecological systems', 'motivation' and 'religious relationships to place'. PRP has yet to be systematically defined or analysed as a concept in the field of psychology.

Employing a concept analysis method developed by Walker and Avant (2011), we investigate the meaning of PRP and analyse the defining and operational attributes of the concept. Sample cases (chapters) from our book on 'The Psychology of Religion and Place: Emerging Perspectives', published by Palgrave MacMillan, were used to further develop a conceptual definition and clarify the concept further. Thematic analysis was used to analyse our data sources and book chapters were read and summarized in Table 16.1. PRP themes were coded and classified based on their attributes, antecedents, consequences, exemplar cases and referents. We hope that the results of our PRP concept analysis are used by researchers to enhance their understanding of the concept and its practical implications for research and education in the field of psychology.

Table 16.1 Summary of the book chapters' definitions of the psychology of religion and place

Authors (chapter title)	Background	Themes	Theories and definitions	Exemplar model cases and referents
Rupert Sheldrake (Sacred Places: The presence of the past) Chapter 2	Psychobiology	Memories of places; sacred places; morphic resonance process; cultural transmission; stories; collective unconscious	*Morphic resonance theory* Definitions: The process of moving between significant places across time through cultural transmission of stories that shape the experience of sacred places "…a direct connection with the experiences of those who have been [in a place] in the past, transmitted by the process of morphic resonance, which links together similar self-organising systems across time, from the past to the present" Sacred memories of places achieved through the process of "implicate order" "Association of sacred places with stories and memories"	The rise of tourism as a kind of secularised or frustrated pilgrimage due to the abolition of pilgrimage during the Protestant Reformation "Rituals where activities are performed in a similar way to their performance before, creating conditions for morphic resonance, linking present with past participants" "the migratory movement of the group… replaced by ritualised sacred journeys in the form of religious procession" "when people enter a holy place in which many people have prayed, worshipped, participated in rituals, celebrated festivals and entered altered states of consciousness, with mystical or visionary experiences, the similarity of the experience of that place will bring people in the present into resonance with those who have been there before"

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Table 16.1 (continued)

Authors (*chapter title*)	Background	Themes	Theories and definitions	Exemplar model cases and referents
Victor Counted (Religion, Place, and Attachment: An evaluation of conceptual frameworks) Chapter 3	Psychology of Religion; Environmental Psychology	Adult attachment; place attachment; religious attachment; safe haven; secure base; attachment-affiliation; exploration curiosity; relational support; motivational systems; social relationships; emotional separation; felt security	*Adult Attachment Theory; Motivational Systems Theory; Self-Ecological Correspondence vs Compensation models. Circle of Place Spirituality* Definition: An attachment relationship established between an individual, a geographical place, and a Divine entity with the set goals of maintaining proximity, seeking security, and regulating feelings of separation anxiety	"[when] individuals seek refuge and security in-between two objects of attachment" "[when] one feel[s] more compelled to turn to God, compared to going for vacation for their emotional regulation" "[when] the individual's inner experience and spiritual depth are attained through their sense of proximity to the sacred via engagement with and exposure to place" When religion and place are "perceived as refuges of safety when exposed to danger or threat" "experiencing spiritual security through one's union with the sacred, with oneself, and with all things through exposure to and engagement with nature" "[When] seeking and maintaining proximity to religious figures and geographical places become a source of comfort and security for attached individuals and separation from [these] objects can often lead to distress, anxiety and grief"

Authors (chapter title)	Background	Themes	Theories and definitions	Exemplar model cases and referents
Laura E. Captari, Joshua N. Hook, Jamie D. Aten, Edward B. Davis, and Theresa Tisdale (Embodied Spirituality Following Disaster: Exploring the intersections of religious and place attachment in resilience and meaning making) Chapter 4	Counselling Psychology; Disaster Psychology; Psychology of Religion and Spirituality; Clinical Psychology	Embodied spirituality; spiritual resilience; object relations; emotional regulation; cognitive processing; growth following disaster; relational support; emotional care; faith communities	*Attachment, object relations, affective neuroscience, and ecological systems theories* Definitions: "The embodied experience of faith in the context of mass trauma and disaster through the dynamic interplay of cognitive, affective, and social processes" "Embodied spirituality" "[religious] believers' felt experience of the sacred [that] is integrated and inseparable from specific places and objects that serve similar symbolic psychological functions" The links between "attachment to God, attachment to sacred places, and attachment to spiritual community"	"experiencing religious support and being able to make spiritual meaning of a tragedy [or disaster]" "Faith communities and religious leaders' post-disaster response" "emotional identification with religious structures and architecture, natural and human-made landscapes, and sacred sites and regions" "religious meaning making… inherent in post-disaster adjustment" "[When] faith communities (both the building itself and the congregants comprising the group) become an embodiment of disaster survivors' experience of God as a safe haven, secure base, and stronger and wiser figure"

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Table 16.1 (continued)

Authors (*chapter title*)	Background	Themes	Theories and definitions	Exemplar model cases and referents
Fraser Watts (The Psychology and Theology of Place: A perspective from the Judeo-Christian tradition) Chapter 5	Theology; Clinical Psychology	Embodied cognition; natural environments; sense of place; religious buildings; sense of connection; animistic consciousness	*Sense of place theory; Judeao-Christian perspective* Definitions: "The psychological processes involved in distinctly religious relationships to place, including locations and natural features, and built environments" "The religious ambivalence about place"	"[When] a building takes on a religious significance for a particular individual" "[When] a body of people develop together a shared understanding of the religious importance [of a church building]" "[When] God is felt to speak powerfully to a person in a particular place" "the sense of God being associated with natural places" "Hebrew people showing the transition from nomadic religion to temple religion"
Marino Bonaiuto, Thomas Albers, Silvia Ariccio, and Silvia Cataldi (Pride of Place in a Religious Context: An environmental psychology and sociology perspective) Chapter 6	Environmental Psychology; Sociology	Pride of place; place identity; place attachment; emotion of pride; nationalism; authentic pride; hubristic pride	*Pride of place theory; place attachment theory; self-determination theory; broaden-and-build model* Definitions: "How religious contents inhabit a person's identity as defined by individual features, belonging to social groups and categories, belonging to past and present places"	"In a study on the identity of residents living in Lazio region in Italy, an interviewee stated he was proud to live in the city of the Holy See and heart of Christianity (Censis, 2015)" "[When] a faithful Catholic is] motivated to find a church or a mass in Rome and to participate in the functions of the Pope" "[When a faithful Catholic] is motivated to go to mass or find a church because the Catholic Church in Rome shows itself as the most important and magnificent religion in the world"

Authors *(chapter title)*	Background	Themes	Theories *and definitions*	Exemplar *model cases and referents*
			How religion generates a series of emotions that modulate distance from, and maintain proximity to, a place as an object of pride and attachment How pride of place as an affective function "triggers attachment or detachment to a religious object or figure" Understanding how both "religious identity and place identity can exist next to social, professional or personal identity"	"special physical and symbolic properties in places that help bring a person closer to religious ideals, spirituality, community, and place" "[When] religious believers turn to the environmental qualities of a place when they lose their inner reality" "[When] place stories, hymns and myths are important components of socialization in some religions" "when a resident identifies him/herself with the [place] where s/he lives, and s/he is a fervent believer in the main religion of that place" "[When a religious] observant actively adheres to a set of rituals that are strictly connected with a place"

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Table 16.1 (continued)

Authors (*chapter title*)	Background	Themes	Theories *and definitions*	Exemplar model cases and referents
Avril Maddrell (Mapping the visible and invisible topographies of place and landscape through sacred mobilities) Chapter 7	Geography; feminist theory	Emotional-affective sacred mobilities; embodied mobilities; dynamic spatial relations	Theory of mobilities; embodiment framework; feminist theory Definition: "Sacred mobilities [with] meaningful and meaning-making journeys and practices which have religious or spiritual intent"	"[When spiritual] imagination plays a critical role in the social construction of place [When] the place-specific material-spiritual interface is illustrated by a male respondent during a prayer walk to the remains of a medieval keeill (chapel) and a collection of carved Celtic-Norse stones and crosses from the same period. [One participant illustrated saying:] 'Touching the stones [of the keeill] and sitting on the walls gives me a great sense of connectedness to Christianity, to our ancestors and to this beautiful Island … the Celtic crosses here are reminders again from whence we have come. I love to come and just be in their presence another of the special places, it conveys a great sense of peace'. (Male, 66–75 years, Methodist)" "[When both the practice of worship and being in nature can act as spiritual thresholds. [For example, when a religious follower] find[s] it easiest to be in the Lord's presence when [he/she is] in His beautiful Creation'"

Authors (chapter title)	Background	Themes	Theories and definitions	Exemplar model cases and referents
				"when worship takes place in an inspiring natural environment [which] creates heightened experience, as evidenced in the following description of what might be described as spiritual enchantment [of a religious follower]: 'Sitting in a place of prayer surrounded by beautiful woodland and carpets of spring flowers was sheer delight. An awe-filled mystic experience each day being a new landscape, vista, and different type of weather. [….] From hilltop and Viking burial grounds and grassy fields to the woodlands and waterfalls to the beaches, all enveloped in the glorious May splendour of new green and wildflowers. Magic.' (Female, 66–75 years, Roman Catholic)"
Nell Aubrey ('A Dwelling Place for Dragons': Wild places in mythology and folklore) Chapter 8	Mythology; Folklore; phenomenology	Wilderness spirits; wild places; place attachment; the sacred; memories; beliefs; meaning; ghosts; folklore	*Place attachment theory; wilderness ecology* Definition: The character of the Wilderness as a liminal and unstable physical landscape and a spatial reality both potentially transformative and threatening	When a 'wild' place is said to have spirits that make it inherently 'sacred'. When place "memories, beliefs, and meanings, formed by storytelling, become powerful meaningful rituals and cultural events that convey the significance of a place"

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Table 16.1 (continued)

Authors (*chapter title*)	Background	Themes	Theories and definitions	Exemplar model cases and referents
Victor Counted (Religious and Place Attachment: A cascade of parallel processes) Chapter 9	Psychology of Religion; Environmental Psychology; Psychoanalysis	Parallel processing units; Objects of attachment; place attachment; religious attachment; flow-on effect; patterns of connectivity; output value; states of activation	*Parallel processing theory; place attachment theory; attachment-religion framework* Definitions: A flow on effect between the processing units of religious and place experiences The commonalities between two or more processing units involving religious and place attachment	When someone is drawn to God as an attachment figure when in a place because they are from a religious family When someone's relationship experience with God shapes their place experience—both of which affect each other based on the individual's subjective and external factors such as life's experiences, biographies, and socio-economic status "[When] the way an attached individual relates to close others mirror the way they relate to both God and place as attachment surrogates, sharing similar features of affective development and processing units"

Authors (chapter title)	Background	Themes	Theories and definitions	Exemplar model cases and referents
Joel Gruneau Brulin (God and Place as Attachment 'Figures': A critical examination) Chapter 10	Clinical Psychology; Psychology of Religion; Philosophical Psychology	Attachment; attachment figures; cognitive maturation; security; safe haven; secure base; fuzzy boundaries; family resemblance; prototype relationship	*Attachment-religion framework; essentialism; functionalism; prototype approach; Theory of Fuzzy Boundaries and Family Resemblance* Definitions: An experience involving places that provide security (but not attachment) and God as a symbolic, or non-corporeal attachment figure The emotions, cognitions and behaviours that people experience or show in relation to sacred or holy physical locations	"an affectional bond between two individuals" "the use of an attachment object as a safe haven when distressed and as a secure base for exploration" "a space where it is possible to feel closer to God" "[when] religious buildings…facilitate attachment behaviours, such as using God as a safe haven or secure base"
Boadi Agyekum (Religion, Well-being, and Therapeutic Landscape) Chapter 11	Geography; Social Science	Religious places; migration; wellbeing; therapeutic landscapes; sense of community; religious place making; subjective meanings	*The therapeutic landscape theory* Definition: The physical, social, and symbolic environments of religious worship and activities that provide social support and networks that impact a sense of wellbeing	"the physical interaction with materials such as the Bible, Quran and other…substances during worship [which] make members feel as [though] they are actually present with the Supreme Being"

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Table 16.1 (continued)

Authors (*chapter title*)	Background	Themes	Theories and definitions	Exemplar model cases and referents
				"visiting actual pilgrimage sites as a spiritual activity that promotes health and wellness" "how social support and networks through interaction [in a religious community] impacts health and well-being" "healing places"
Miriam Billig ("To Him I Commit My Spirit": Attachment to God, the Land and the People as a Means of Dealing with Crises in Gaza Strip) Chapter 12	Environmental Psychology; Sociology; Psychology of Religion; Peace & Conflict Studies	Place attachment; religious coping; meaning-making; attachment to God; attachment to the Jewish Land	*Place attachment theory; religious coping theory; attachment-religion framework* Definition: A meaning-making process in a symbolic hostile place through attachment to place and connection to the sacred via scriptural exhortations from human religious figures (e.g., Rabbis)	"[When] Rabbis showered Gaza Strip residents [in their sermons] with compliments, and described them as the heroes of a generation, who give away their lives for the sanctity of God, people, and country" "[When] Rabbis based their arguments on the sacred Jewish texts that said that the land of Israel is acquired through suffering" "[Rabbis urging the people of Israel] to hold onto the land [as a demonstration of faith], and that their faith in God is stronger than anything"

Authors (chapter title)	Background	Themes	Theories and definitions	Exemplar model cases and referents
David Seamon (Glimpses of a Place Spirituality in American Filmmaker John Sayles' Limbo: Authenticity, inauthenticity, and modes of place engagement) Chapter 13	Architecture; Environment-behaviour; Place phenomenology	Place phenomenology; place relationships; limbo; place engagement; spirituality	*Authenticity/Inauthenticity theory; sense of place phenomenology* Definitions: Who we are based on where we are. Thus using the "whereness" of our life to better understand who we are and what we might become Being in *limbo*	"strengthening relationship[s] that includes the potential for becoming more authentically a part of [a] place" "[When] the natural world is understood as little more than a picture-postcard landscape providing a majestic backdrop for unrelated human events like wedding receptions [etc., but] the source of human occupation and [spiritual engagement with life's uncertainties, even when] opportunities disappear and [people] lose their place in the world"
Ken Estey (Place-Making and Religion: A solidarity psychology of the commons) Chapter 14	Geography; Pedagogy; Religious Studies	Building the commons; solidarity psychology; place-based pedagogy; shared communing; social actors	*Theory of the commons; psychology of solidarity* Definition: "A psychology [that] prioritizes solidarity, community, mutualism, and human wellness through the commons, the stewardship of shared resources and spaces" The study of social actors who drive the interplay of religion and place	When people protest about the religious buildings in a controversial space

(continued)

Table 16.1 (continued)

Authors (*chapter title*)	Background	Themes	Theories and definitions	Exemplar model cases and referents
Victor Counted (How and Why Environmental and Religious Attachment Matters for Quality of Life) Chapter 15	Public Health; Environmental Psychology; Psychology of Religion; Clinical Psychology	Attachment relationships; environmental attachment; religious attachment; quality of life; social referencing behaviours; social competence; observational learning	*Social referencing theory; Social competence theory; the circle of place spirituality model; theory of meta-emotion* The psychological adjustment and emotion regulation achieved through social referencing and social competence behaviours involving religious and place attachment objects	"when a religiously attached individual [references] an information related to a relationship which determine [how they interpret life stressors] and regulate their emotions in such that it helps [them negotiate] their quality of life" "where positive place memories may serve as social referencing phenomenon [which] produces information about how the attached individual feels at that moment, rather than direct information about what to do, thus improving the state of their subjective wellbeing at that time" When mocking one's religious figure (e.g. Prophet Muhammad, Jesus, God, Mother Mary etc.) has a psychological impact on the perceived bond between a believer and their religious figure; the same way place displacement, through war conflicts and military invasion, is likely to predispose individuals attached to such geographical places to symptoms of psychopathology and maladaptive behaviours

The Psychology of Religion and Place: Emerging and Evolving Themes

Definitions and Uses of the Concept

Several definitions of the PRP concept have been discussed in this book so far. These discussions provide a rich understanding of the concept as we review how PRP has been defined by the authors. We must rely on these definitions, at this point, since there are no available resources on the topic as of present. The book authors propose PRP as connection to sacred places and relational experiences and processes linked to memories of places with religious significance. We asked some of the authors to provide their definitions of the concept and the following were provided (also see Table 16.1):

How religious contents inhabit a person's identity as defined by individual features, belonging to social groups and categories, belonging to past and present places. (Marino Bonaiuto, Thomas Albers, Silvia Ariccio, Silvia Cataldi)

The psychology of religion and place explores the psychological processes involved in distinctly religious relationships to place, including locations and natural features, and built environments. (Fraser Watts)

The emotions, cognitions, and behaviours that people experience or show in relation to sacred or holy physical locations. (Joel Gruneau Brulin)

The embodied experience of faith in the context of mass trauma and disaster through the dynamic interplay of cognitive, affective, and social processes. (Laura E. Captari, Joshua N. Hook, Jamie D. Aten, Edward B. Davis, Theresa Tisdale)

Using the "whereness" of our life to better understand who we are and what we might become. (David Seamon)

An attachment relationship established between an individual, a geographical place, and a Divine entity with the set goals of maintaining proximity, seeking security, and regulating feelings of separation anxiety. (Victor Counted)

A direct connection with the experiences of those who have been [in a place] in the past, transmitted by the process of morphic resonance, which links together similar self-organising systems across time, from the past to the present. (Rupert Sheldrake)

Sacred mobilities [with] meaningful and meaning-making journeys and practices which have religious or spiritual intent. (Avril Maddrell)

The character of the Wilderness as a liminal and unstable physical landscape and a spatial reality both potentially transformative and threatening. (Nell Aubrey).

The physical, social, and symbolic environments of religious worship and activities that provide social support and networks that impact a sense of wellbeing. (Boadi Agyekum)

A meaning-making process in a symbolic hostile place through attachment to place and connection to the sacred via scriptural exhortations from religious figures (e.g. Rabbis). (Miriam Billig)

A psychology that prioritizes solidarity, community, mutualism, and human wellness through the commons, the stewardship of shared resources and spaces. (Ken Estey)

These definitions provide some idea of what PRP may look like and its practical applications. However, one apparent evidence is that it is a dynamic relational process involving more than one entity. It also involves how people relate to geographical places with a sense of the sacred or experience the sacred in significance places based on frameworks of attachment, morphic resonance, parallel process, embodied cognition, self-ecology and object relations (see Table 16.1). These subjective meanings attached to places are everyday experiences that define how people see themselves in the world and experience what David Seamon describes, in his chapter, as 'authenticity'. Meanings attached to places shape the way individuals cope with their life experiences (*natural disaster:* Chapter 4; *place hostility*: Chapter 11; *migration*: Chapter 10), which provide a sense of security and meaning for those drawn to such places.

In addition to the above, PRP also involves negative experiences in 'wild places', according to Nell Aubrey (see Chapter 8). Such experience shows the liminality of PRP experience as unstable settings with ominous consequences. Similarly, Marino Bonaiuto and colleagues (Chapter 6) offer some insights into how PRP activate what they describe as 'pride of place'. This concept may emphasize 'the individual's self-esteem' about their place of pride, thus expressing 'antisocial and egoistic attitudes of the individuals who would favour their source of Pride of Place, denigrating or, even, [displaying] aggressive [behaviours toward] other individuals, groups, and

places'. Such negative effect may shape similar patterns of inauthentic religious identity in which the individual identifies with a particular religious movement due to the 'hubristic pride' that is motivated by self-interest and social hierarchy.

People react to the changing conditions of their natural environment, and such expressions are interpreted as subjective experiences with implicit and explicit spiritual meanings. PRP is a constellation of subjective and relational experiences in geographical places with religious significance, sometimes having a flow-on effect and connected to the past through the process of morphic resonance. These embodied experiences are meaning-making processes that trigger a sense of felt experience with the sacred, thus enabling one to achieve a sense of felt security, identity and belonging in the world.

Defining Attributes of PRP

Identifying the defining attributes of a concept is the most important task in concept analysis since it enables the reader to distinguish the main attributes of the concept from those of similar concepts (Rodgers, 2000; Walker & Avant, 2011). Identifying the attributes of PRP can help us to associate the concept to synonyms and themes that repeatedly appear in the chapters which provide a much richer description of PRP. Essentially, PRP is characterized by a set of psychological behaviours, processes and themes. We found five main critical attributes based on the discussions in this book. These five attributes can help us differentiate PRP from other related concepts and clarify what it means for the authors of this book:

1. The relational experience between two, or more, entities;
2. The spiritual experiences in sacred places with connections to the past;
3. Experiencing the sacred in natural environments;
4. Spaces where identity and attachment are formed;
5. Resilience and meaning-making in places of religious significance.

PRP is thus defined as the constellation of subjective relational and spiritual experiences in spatial settings that provide a sense of security, identity and connection to the past. First, PRP starts as a relational experience involving more than one entity, a relationship that flows on another relationship through what is described as the model of parallel processing and

morphic resonance. The later (morphic resonance) suggests a connection to the past while the former (parallel process) connotes an idea of how relationships affect other relationships across time and space. PRP was defined as a relational experience in all the chapters, suggesting that it is a relationship and a form of connection between two, or more, entities. This relationality involves a connection to the past (Chapters 2, 5, and 12), attachment to place (Chapters 3–9, 12, and 15), sense of community (Chapter 11), patterns of connectivity (Chapter 9), shared communing (Chapter 14), prototype relationship (Chapter 9), and a flow-on effect that is transferable (Chapter 9).

Second, PRP is a spiritual experience that often starts with a deep-rooted connection to the past where previous place events or personal experiences are linked to future experiences with the sacred through the process of morphic resonance (Chapter 2) and working models of attachment (Chapters 3, 4, and 10). This connection to the past triggers a sense of attachment a particular place, according to Rupert Sheldrake in Chapter 2. However, psychologists of religion are in agreement that connections to personal attachment experiences can also trigger attachment to God (Chapters 3, 4, and 10). As discussed by Sheldrake in his chapter, this sense of attachment is likely to influence some form of religious experience through cultural transmission and storytelling. Growth following disaster, for example, can mean having spiritual experiences in 'sacred' places where the individual was exposed to a tragic *past* life event, trauma or natural disaster.

Third, PRP experience can also happen in natural environments where the individual feels a sense of transcendence through exposure to and connectedness with nature (Chapter 5; Kamitsis & Francis, 2013). Next, PRP can also help us to understand how spaces are conceptualized as both transactional and transitional settings for forming identity and attachment (Counted & Watts, 2019). And based on the account of Bonaiuto and colleagues in Chapter 6, religious identity can be formed based on either the authentic or heuristic sense of pride one attaches to a place.

Finally, PRP can function as a meaning-making mechanism for coping with the difficulties associated with place (Counted, 2019). Boadi Agyekum discusses how religious places can help in building resilience among migrants (see Chapter 11). Miriam Billig discusses this in length in Chapter 12, showing how attachment to the Jewish land led to attachment to God which served as a religious coping model, among Jewish residents in Gaza Strip, for dealing with the hostility in that region. Similar account was discussed by Laura Captari, Jamie Aten and colleagues (see

Chapter 4) as they explored the intersections of religious and place attachment in resilience and meaning-making. They reasoned that PRP can lead to a form of embodied spirituality which they used to 'capture the intersection of believers' relationship to the sacred rooted within the physical world and a religious community'. These are all defining attributes to consider when discussing PRP.

Antecedents

In concept analysis methods, 'antecedents' are the events that must arise prior to the onset of the concept (Rodgers, 1989; Walker & Avant, 2011). Two events or phenomena were identified that generally precede PRP. The first one is the memories of events with a connection to the past, which re-emerge during cultural transmission and storytelling through the process of morphic resonance. In other words, in order for PRP to occur, there must be a connection to place through past experiences which make it possible to relate to place as a sacred object. This perspective is well described in Chapter 2 as Rupert Sheldrake describes how pilgrimage and religious rituals are simply connections to the past in such a way that links self-organizing systems across time. People are more than likely to have a sense of connection to the city of Rome because of its religious significance and the rich history and myths of the city as a sacred place. This connection to the past is reinforced through cultural transmission and stories about the city, which make it a sacred place for seekers of the Divine and for those drawn to the appeal of the Roman Catholic religion. This perspective is well-discussed by Bonaiuto and colleagues in Chapter 6.

Similarly, Fraser Watts articulates this antecedent in his skillful integration of psychological and theological frameworks to describe PRP. In one scenario, he tells the story of Naaman who was healed of his leprosy in the river Jordan centuries before the emergence of Jesus who was baptized by John the Baptist in the same river Jordan. We see two interesting significant place events, connected by morphic resonance, happening in-between hundreds of years apart in the same place. Naaman's washing in the Jordan river brought him healing while Jesus' baptizing (or washing) in the river of Jordan marked his emergence as the man of miracle who can heal the sick. Watts' account of Judeo-Christian place events (in Chapter 5) and the worldview of the nation of Israel as a people attached to the 'Promised' Land of Canaan (see Counted & Watts, 2017) may provide the basis for understanding Miriam Billig's empirical account of place attachment as a

source of religious attachment in contemporary Israel (see Chapter 12). These place events signal some sort of morphic resonance and embodied spirituality which is triggered by a connection to past memories, either through stories and other forms of cultural transmission. Capturi and colleagues (see Chapter 4) also describe this phenomenon, showing how connections to places of past trauma and natural disaster trigger a sense of resonance that makes a place sacred. Memories of events with a connection to the past can also manifest itself through attachment processes where an individual forms attachment with an object of attachment (e.g. God or place) based on their personal experiences (see Chapters 3, 4, and 10). This aspect of connection to the past can also be shaped by the framework of the internal working models of the individual involved in attachment-seeking behaviours and representations (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016).

The second PRP antecedent or event would be personal traumatic experiences that activate the attachment-affiliation system and the need to form proximity with a reliable perceptual object of attachment. Such an object can serve as a haven of safety to turn to in times of frightening place events and a secure base from which to model one's identity and explore the world of danger (Counted, 2018; Counted & Zock, 2019). Bowlby's (1988) attachment theory best describes this second PRP antecedent. Chapters 3, 4, 10, and 12 skilfully articulate this antecedent, showing how survivors of natural disaster and individuals with unavailable attachment figures are likely to turn to an object for meaningful relationship. Geographical places and Divine entities have been conceptualized as objects of attachment in these chapters, although Joel Gruneau Brulin is of a different view that even though PRP may provide a sense of security it may not necessarily be an 'attachment' relationship but might fall under the *family resemblance* of prototype relationships.

Consequences

Rodgers (1989) describes 'consequences' as what follows the occurrence of the phenomenon. Hence, the first consequence that emerges as a result of the two antecedents of the concept of PRP is the need to form attachment. Whether it is expressed through memories of past places or embodied experience of faith, the consequence of PRP is to form attachment—a meaningful connection and relationship with something greater than one's self.

All the chapters in this book demonstrate this phenomenon and how geographical places and Divine entities evoke attachment-seeking behaviours due to their relational attributes as objects with attachment advantage.

The second consequence of PRP is the identity formed based on the connection to a relational object. When people form meaningful relationships with a particular object, they are likely to model their identity based on the functions of the objects (Meeus, Oosterwegel, & Vollebergh, 2002; Pittman, Keiley, Kerpelman, & Vaughn, 2011). If the object provides a sense of security for such individuals and is always available to them, they are likely to form a secure attachment and express attributes that are similar to the object (e.g. a son wants to be like the father; a daughter wants to be like the mother; a Christian wants to be like Jesus; a Muslim wants to follow the life of Prophet Mohammed, etc.). However, if the individual has a dysfunctional relationship with the object this is likely going to predispose them to a range of personality psychopathologies.

The third consequence that follows the occurrence of PRP is the resilience built through the process of meaning-making involving attachment-seeking behaviours with, and representations of, relational objects. Miriam Billing (see Chapter 12) and Laura Captari and colleagues (see Chapter 4) discussed this consequence in their chapters, explaining how the attachment representations used for experiencing geographical places and religious figures serve as mechanisms and schemas for meaning-making and coping with life stressors. David Seamon (Chapter 13), for example, shows how place relationships can help one build resilience in the face of uncertainty while in *limbo*.

Exemplar Cases

Walker and Avant (2005) describe exemplar cases as study examples that clarify the concept of analysis. Exemplar cases are usually three types including model case (the primary example of the concept that include all the defining attributes), borderline case (an example that resembles the concept that might be mistaken for it), related case (an example that is similar to the concept) and contrary case (an illegitimate case).

We have summarized all the model cases in Table 16.1 while noting that a borderline case example is when an individual form a connection to a place without it necessarily having a religious significance. PRP involves a relationship between two or more entities. Usually, it starts with place and has a flow-on effect that influences one's religious experience or starts

as an embodied cognition where the religious mind influences the actions of the individual towards their environment. Related cases may include how people form connections to place or religious figures through their human relationship experiences. The parallel processing theory used in Chapter 8 shows how relationships affect other relationships; hence a relationship with a romantic partner or caregiver is likely to flow-on to other forms of relational experiences such as geographical places and Divine entities. An example of a contrary case would be the notion that PRP is 'sacred places'. While PRP involves a connection to sacred places, it does not necessarily mean that PRP should be defined as sacred places or religious buildings themselves. On the contrary, PRP is not the study of sacred places per se but the study of the affective, behavioural and cognitive processes associated with people's connection to sacred places.

Referents

The method of concept analysis also involves describing the references of the defining attributes being analysed (Walker & Avant, 2011). This step simply provides measurable and illustrative ways to identify the occurrence of PRP in real-life situations based on the five identified defining attributes. We illustrate and outline the referents for attributes of the PRP phenomenon that emerged from the book chapters.

The Relational Experience Between Two, or More, Entities. Below, we elaborate on the empirical referents for this attribute based on the authors' chapter contributions.

> [when] the individual's inner experience and spiritual depth are attained through their sense of proximity to the sacred via [their place experiences]. (Chapter 3)

> attachment to God, attachment to sacred places, and attachment to spiritual community. (Chapter 4)

> [When] a body of people develop together a shared understanding of the religious importance [of a church building]. (Chapter 5)

> special physical and symbolic properties in places that help bring a person closer to religious ideals, spirituality, community, and place. (Chapter 6)

It is a space where things happen, such as illness, ageing, pregnancy, a site of sentience and sensual experience, but also a space of expression, marked by culture and life-history. Its complexity is simultaneously 'material, discursive and psychical' (Longhurst, 2005, p. 91), a space where intertwined corporeal and psychological processes occur – and this includes religious beliefs and spiritual practices. (Chapter 7)

[When] the way an attached individual relates to close others mirror the way they relate to both God and place as attachment surrogates, sharing similar features of affective development and processing units. (Chapter 9)

[when] religious buildings…facilitate attachment behaviours, such as using God as a safe haven or secure base. (Chapter 10)

how social support and networks through interaction [in a religious community] impacts health and well-being. (Chapter 11)

[Rabbis urging the people of Israel] to hold onto the land [as a demonstration of faith], and that their faith in God is stronger than anything. (Chapter 12)

strengthening relationship[s] that includes the potential for becoming more authentically a part of [a] place. (Chapter 13)

when a religiously attached individual [references] an information related to a relationship which determine [how they interpret life stressors] and regulate their emotions in such that it helps [them negotiate] their quality of life. (Chapter 15)

Spiritual Experiences in Sacred Places with Connections to the Past. References to how sacred places hold a connection to the past are illustrated below:

After the beginning of agriculture and settled living, pilgrimage may have been a survival from this traditional pattern of movement. Sacred places took on their significance through the experiences that happened there and the stories that were told about them. Some were and still are natural, like mountain tops and springs; others are human-made like temples, churches and shrines. (Chapter 2)

[When] a body of people develop together a shared understanding of the religious importance [of a church building]. (Chapter 5)

In a study on the identity of residents living in Lazio region in Italy, an interviewee stated he was proud to live in the city of the Holy See and heart of Christianity (Censis, 2015). (Chapter 6)

memories, beliefs, and meanings, formed by storytelling, become powerful meaningful rituals and cultural events that convey the significance of a place. (Chapter 8)

[When] Rabbis based their arguments on the sacred Jewish texts that said that the land of Israel is acquired through suffering. (Chapter 12)

Experiencing the Sacred in Natural Environments. This experience is manifested in many ways such as the following:

[When] a building takes on a religious significance for a particular individual. (Chapter 5)

When a 'wild' place (wilderness) is said to have spirits that make it inherently 'sacred' (Chapter 8)

religious meaning making… inherent in post-disaster adjustment. (Chapter 4)

visiting actual pilgrimage sites as a spiritual activity that promotes health and wellness. (Chapter 11)

Spaces Where Identity and Attachment Are Formed. Transitional and transactional spaces are the in-between worlds where people form identity and develop attachment with their relational objects (Counted & Watts, 2019). The following referents describe how this attribute is illustrated in the book chapters:

[When a faithful Catholic is] motivated to find a church or a mass in Rome and to participate in the functions of the Pope. (Chapter 6)

[When a religious] observant actively adheres to a set of rituals that are strictly connected with a place. (Chapter 6)

Objects of attachment are perceived as refuges of safety when exposed to danger or threat…, thus serving as a safe haven for protection and security. …on the other hand…a relationship with an object of attachment can be perceived as a secure base from which attached individuals explore or master their broader environment and stretch their individual growth. (Chapter 3)

[When] exposure to and engagement with nature, an aspect of place, can be conceptualised as a source and context for individuals seeking to experience a sense of spiritual connection with the sacred. (Chapter 3)

a space where it is possible to feel closer to God. (Chapter 10)

Resilience and Meaning-Making in Places of Religious Significance.
Several psychological factors make it possible to build resilience and
meaning-making in PRP, including the function of an object of attach-
ment as a secure base and safe haven (Chapters 3, 4, and 10), relational
support in faith communities (Chapters 4 and 11), and the interactions
with objects/figures that reinforce security and facilitate social and spiritual
wellbeing (Chapters 11 and 12). These developmental processes involved
facilitating resilience. This meaning-making model has been discussed
by Laura Capturi and colleagues in Chapter 4, and Victor Counted in
Chapter 15. The referents below offer insights into how people can bounce
back following a traumatic experience in a geographical setting.

> benevolent God representations and theodicies were a key component in
> helping congregants make positive meaning from their disaster experiences.
> Hence, it is possible that religious leaders and communities can become an
> embodied resource for promoting adaptive religious/spiritual and psycho-
> logical growth following disaster, especially when they help foster benevolent
> God representations, theodicies, and appraisals of the disaster. (Chapter 4)

> the physical interaction with materials such as the Bible, Quran and
> other…substances during worship [which] make members feel as [though]
> they are actually present with the Supreme Being. (Chapter 11)

> Rabbis based their arguments on the sacred Jewish texts that said that the
> land of Israel is acquired through suffering. (Chapter 12)

CONCLUDING REMARKS: TOWARDS A PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION AND PLACE

The concept of analysis in this chapter elaborates the definition of PRP in
this book, as summarized in Table 16.1. Our analysis of the concept gen-
erated a conceptual and operational definition of PRP as a constellation of
subjective relational and spiritual experiences in spatial settings that pro-
vide a sense of security, identity and connection to the past. PRP seems
to be an ongoing phenomenon involving affective, behavioural and cogni-
tive processes that are always constantly changing, depending on people's
needs across space and time. We came up with this definition based on case

examples and defining attributes generated from the book chapters. We found a set of five defining attributes that provide insights into what PRP is all about.

First, PRP is a relational experience between two, or more, entities. That is, individuals involved in the process and their perceptual objects. This can include a person's relationship with geographical places or Divine entities or other relational objects. Second, PRP involves explicit and implicit levels of spiritual experiences in sacred places with connections to the past. Rupert Sheldrake describes this process as the process of morphic resonance in his chapter, which he argues is brought to the present through memories and stories. Fraser Watts shows how this process is applicable in religious buildings and practices of pilgrimage. Third, PRP also involves experiencing the sacred in natural environments. This perspective is also well-captured by Fraser Watts and Nell Aubrey in their respective chapters, showing how natural environments evoke feelings of the sacred. Victor Counted also discussed this in his chapter as a self-ecological model activated in response to experiencing the natural environment during one's search for spiritual interconnectedness. Most importantly, PRP prioritizes intrapersonal processes that involve transitional and transactional spaces where identity and attachment are formed and facilitate resilience and meaning-making in places of religious significance (Counted & Watts, 2019). This perspective is well-discussed in the book by Laura Capturi and colleagues (see Chapter 4), Boadi Agyekum (see Chapter 11) and Miriam Billig (see Chapter 12) respectively.

In terms of the *antecedents*, PRP often starts with two key events involving the memories of events with a connection to the past and personal traumatic experiences that trigger the need for attachment-affiliation. With regards to the PRP consequents, we found that the concept often propels the need to form attachment with one's perceptual objects. People who are drawn to such objects, after an extended period of time often model their identity based on the attributes of the object. These initial consequences and relational processes may later facilitate the meaning-making model for building resilience based on the individual's contextual interactions and cultural positioning.

One limitation of our book with regards to the concept of PRP is that there is no quantitative study on the topic in the book. Such a methodological approach could help in refining the application of cross-cultural variables and measures relevant for assessing PRP. Nonetheless, the concept of PRP provides numerous opportunities for research and education

as an important topic and interdisciplinary field relevant for contemporary societies. The first opportunity lies in PRP theory development. Clarifying the PRP concept, and its associated antecedents and consequences, is necessary for distinguishing variables and relationships that can advance research in PRP. The second opportunity is the development of a PRP research agenda. Such agenda will explore specific attributes of PRP as key areas of focus for furthering research in the field. Included in this agenda is the advancement of PRP literacy which this book clarifies.

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