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Everyday Mobilities and the Construction of Subjective Spiritual Geographies in 'Non-places'

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ABSTRACT

Traditional geographic approaches depict sacred spaces, religion and spirituality as places of stillness and tranquillity, this paper challenges such fixity and instead uses the mobilities lens to analyse the dynamic and fluid nature of contemporary spirituality. It builds on recent work that draws on mobilities and geographies of religion by shifting focus away from the extraordinary journeys of pilgrimage to the ordinary, the mundane and everyday routines and movements; trips for economic, recreational or utilitarian purposes.

The findings illustrate the activities that people do when they are on the move that can be related to their personal sense of spirituality and the ways in which religion interweaves in the movements and routines of everyday life and mobilities – from the radio playing in the car to the use of meditation. Often, activities became associated with specific parts of the journey and are threaded together to form 'subjective spiritual geographies' and significant elements of individual spirituality challenging secular pre-conceptions of mobilities time-spaces and characterisation of 'non-places'.

KEYWORDS

Geographies of religion; sacred mobilities; religious journeys; sacred space; travel-time use.

Introduction

Everyday journeys and forms of mobilities are often considered as time-spaces of secular modernity, where the focus is centred around the necessity of the trip and the need for making travel easier, quicker and cheaper. Time-spaces of mobilities have been characterised as sites of control and power asymmetry (Bissell 2011; Jensen 2011) as well as the alienation of locality or a sense of

placelessness or 'non-place' (Urry 2007; Augé 2008; Relph 1976). This article explores the ways in which individuals transform the everyday time-spaces of mobilities into sites of religious and spiritual practice and in doing so allow their practices and beliefs to become modified by the people, places, objects and situations they encounter whilst in transit. The paper responds to the reassessment of the time-spaces and practices of mobility such as walking, cycling, driving and passengering inspired by the New Mobilities Paradigm, and to Kong's (2001, p228) call for investigation of religion 'beyond the officially sacred' sites of religion such as the church or temple. Resultantly this article will call for an understanding of mobilities as implicated in personal narratives of religion and spirituality that construct what I term 'subjective spiritual geographies'.

Movement is often, and has been, a familiar and often taken for granted part of contemporary everyday life in the last century. Advances in speed and wider affordability of transport and communications technologies have allowed for employment, education, utility and recreation opportunities to be spread over large areas of space. Faster transportation has encouraged people to travel further or more frequently rather than reducing time spent in transit (Ellegård and Vilhelmson 2004; Larsen, Urry, and Axhausen 2006; Korsu 2012; Mokhtarian and Salomon 2001). Average time spent commuting in the case-study area (south-west England) is 25 minutes, reflecting 75% of British commuters who travel up to 30 minutes each way (Office for National Statistics 2011). Daily travel time therefore occupies a significant portion of many people's daily lives but these time-spaces have previously been overlooked by researchers in favour of the origin and destination locations (Sheller and Urry 2006; Jensen 2009; Cresswell 2010). The neglect of such spaces from scholarly attention reinforced assumptions of these time-spaces as examples of 'non-place', time-spaces where relations to other people and locality are limited and time spent dwelled within is absent of social or cultural meaning.

This paper uses a mixed methods approach to add to such studies by making visible the use of travel time for non-secular pursuits, for activities drawing from religious traditions and contributing

towards the individual's sense of spirituality. The paper contributes to the understanding of the time-spaces of mobilities as not just a functional trip from A to B for reason Y, but as significant geographies within the individual's everyday routines and movements. Everyday mobility and travel not only allows the time and space but can become an active component in stimulating and shaping such practices and their corresponding beliefs. When spiritual practices such as prayer and meditation occur, they do so not in spite of mobility but because of the action and consequences of mobility and the people, places and situations that are implicated within the subjective spiritual geography of the individual constructed through mobility.

First there will be discussion of how time-spaces of mobility have been conceptualised, drawing on Augé's notion of 'non-place' before a counter movement to re-humanise these spaces by mobilities scholars through a review of contemporary studies of travel time use. Following this, recent research that combines mobilities and geographies of religion will be surveyed before an outline of the methods of the research and a discussion of findings and conclusions.

Non-places

For many years travel time and space (the car, train, bus or walking) was believed to be 'wasted' or 'dead' time with the challenge being to reduce the time spent (or lost) in transit (Jain and Lyons 2008). This pre-conception of wasted time or the time-space of mobilities lacking in local or personal significance resonates with Augé's (2008) consideration of spaces of transport and mobility as 'non-places': Highly regulated spaces that reflect the disenchantment and fragmentation of society and the *dis-placing* of the individual reaches a crescendo in space in which global capital has colonised and alienating those who dwell within. Despite criticism outlined shortly, *Non-places* (Augé 2008) identifies a potent challenge to place-making in contemporary society. Augé's exploration of 'non-places' framed modern spaces as characterised by limited, mediated and scripted human communication, continual flows and remote ownership or control that act to alienate those who dwell within. Such 'non-places' are designed to facilitate movement through

universally standardised routes and procedures, minimising interruptions of flow and thus benefiting Capital (Bissell 2011). For Augé, airports were exemplary of non-places in containing universalised, simplified signs, symbols and graphics that produce homogenised and de-territorialised localities. These signs, graphics and instructions allow the traveller to find their way around the space whether they are in London or Beijing. Furthering this concept, Jensen (2009) has critically applied non-places to spaces used on a daily basis, the motorway, and public squares where information is exchanged on billboards, screens and images and power relationships are expressed.

Augé's work is not without criticism. Several scholars contest that 'non-places' are in actuality sites of complex socio-cultural and economic interactions (Hannam, Sheller, and Urry 2006; Merriman 2004). Similarly, Edensor (2003) argues for more-than-travel reading of such non-places. In his example, the motorway can be a site of sensorial redistribution of these spaces entangled in place-specific associations of memory and emotion. More-than-travel time-spaces of mobility are discussed later in the following section. Despite criticism, Augé's work still expresses a powerful sense of dislocation and alienation as homogenous global entities insert themselves and contest the heterogeneous local. The local is often overshadowed by the global-universal. Processes of universalisation, uniformity and standardisation that are implied by globalisation as well as the inclusive effort to accommodate plural and diverse groups of different people can lead to a homogenisation and universalisation of formerly heterogeneous cultures. Such spaces are produced to accommodate everyone but can have the alienating effect of being for no-one in particular, displacing the local and removing the human, emotional and more-than-rational dimensions of place. Augé's 'non-places' can therefore undermine religion, spirituality and belief which often rely upon the local and contingent to take form. Before turning attention to this in greater detail, the next section will examine how mobilities research has resisted Augé's characterisation of time-spaces of movement as devoid of human attachment, significance and meaning.

Travel-time Use

Prompted by increased local, regional, national and international movement and communication, the New Mobilities Paradigm employs a range of scales and modes of mobility to recognise and investigate the impact of mobility on the individual and recognise that power relations and socio-economic structures are not restricted to static concepts of 'place' (Urry 2007; Sheller and Urry 2006; Cresswell 2010; Hannam, Sheller, and Urry 2006; also Cresswell and Merriman 2011).

Significantly for this research, the New Mobilities Paradigm has included a reassessment of the time-spaces of mobility to recognise the activities and practices of movement and value of this time, formerly perceived to be wasted or undesired time.

Everyday time-spaces of mobility (such as 'non-places') encourage travellers to subordinate and internalise the socio-economic practices and routines of movement as part of habit (Bissell 2011; Jensen 2011; Lefebvre 2004). Transport and urban planners depend upon habitualised social practices as they construct an idealised 'rational' traveller who always chooses the most efficient route for their journey passively guided by universalised signs and symbols. Travel time in this model is 'wasted time' and undesirable, with the aim to reduce time spent in transit (Mokhtarian and Salomon 2001). Despite negative characterisations of travel time and efforts to provide more efficient transportation, Mokhtarian and Salomon (2001) found a desire amongst commuters in their survey for journey time of around 16 minutes on average between work and home. Journeys are viewed as an important and repeated time-space and an opportunity to mentally transition from origin to destination (Mokhtarian and Salomon 2001; Jain and Lyons 2008) as well as for other activities. These findings would therefore suggest that these time-spaces of travel offer some personal (non-economic) value to the traveller.

The journey may therefore be valued for non-functional purposes such as: touring by motorcycle (Mokhtarian and Salomon 2001); using the private space of the car to engage in socially undesirable behaviour such as shouting at other drivers cyclists and pedestrians or singing loudly to the radio

(Bull 2004); cars can become an extension of the driver's (and passenger's) home, filled with materials that dissolve the boundaries between home and the external world. Personalised features can help transform a generic, mass-produced space of a car into a personalised 'dwelling-in-motion' (Sheller 2007; also Fallov, Jorgensen, and Knudsen 2013). Public transport can also provide an environment to enable work or leisure activities to be performed and personal space bounded with the use of technologies, entertainment systems and other objects (Jain and Lyons 2008; Jain 2009; Watts 2008; Clayton, Jain, and Parkhurst 2016 (online first)). Alternatively, commuters may take the opportunity to be deliberately unproductive on the train by window-gazing, a 'time out' from socio-economic responsibilities and obligations, instead indulging in window-gazing or sleeping which can be a therapeutic source of relaxation and rejuvenation to ready the individual for the resumption of work or home based activities (Lyons et al. 2011).

Different modes of transport are suited for different activities and produce different levels of enjoyment in travellers. Workload or obligations are often broken down into tasks and activities and assigned to different parts of the same trip as the most appropriate time-spaces in a Taylorist factory breakdown approach to management of work output (Holley, Jain, and Lyons 2008; Laurier 2004): the rail passenger may take advantage of the quiet coach of the regional train to London to work rather than on the connecting peak hour London Underground journey and instead use this time-space as 'time-out' to listen to music (Jain and Lyons 2008). The New Mobilities Paradigm's re-assessment of travel time is extended further in this work to explore the ways in which such time-spaces, constructed in discourse as secular and functional, can be transformed into opportunities for religious and spiritual practices.

Religion, Spirituality and Mobilities

Geographers of religion and spirituality have moved beyond conceptions of sacred space as fixed and static (for example, Eliade 1957), embracing more fluid, multi-scaler and contested notions of religion, spirituality and its relationship to space and place (Kong 2010; Olson, Hopkins, and Kong

2013; Holloway and Valins 2002; Yorgason and della Dora 2009). Despite this turn, studies of religion, spirituality and mobility have privileged the act of pilgrimage over everyday journeys that comprise a greater part of many individual's mobilities.

Whilst pilgrimage studies have often focussed on the destination or 'centre' of the pilgrimage, more recent literature has seen an engagement with pilgrimage that focuses on the role of mobility (Coleman and Eade 2004). The act of mobility is seen less as a linear progression from A to B than a performative action by the pilgrim that intends to stimulate introspection or contemplation. There is a shift away from institutional narratives of pilgrimage to subjective experience of journey that is both physical and metaphorical. Maddrell's (2011b) study of the Isle of Man series of walks demonstrates this discussion as walkers participate in a series of pilgrimages to different keeills, allowing local topography and rhythms of the walk to direct personal reflection and contemplation. The geography and mode of mobility can therefore have an influence on the affective state of the individual. Focussing on the role of movement within pilgrimage highlights the significance of locality, topography, physicality and mobility within discussions of religion, spirituality and mobility.

The edited collection *Sacred Mobilities* (Maddrell, Terry, and Gale 2015) points to a potentially new discursive phase in the intersection of mobilities and geographies of religion, spirituality and belief. Although much of the collection is framed through the lens of pilgrimage, including contemporary notions of pilgrimage to secular events such as the Isle of Man TT races (Maddrell et al. 2015), other journeys that can take on special significances for the individual are also afforded scholarly treatment. Considered throughout this work is the impact of the site or the space traversed on the individual in spiritual, emotional and physical channels. The wearing down of walking shoes, the sore legs and feet or the sense of renewal and healing can help to confirm the experience and reinforce the sacredness of the journey and the site (Maddrell 2011b; Maddrell, Terry, and Gale 2015; Eade 1991). Similarly, the site can be changed as individuals seek to leave their personal mark on the centre of the pilgrimage or journey destination. The sacredness of the site is constructed

through the interaction of humans, non-humans and the natural processes of topography, decay and erosion (Maddrell 2011b; Maddrell 2011a; Ivakhiv 2003). Sacred spaces are therefore considered to allow the pilgrim or visitor some sense of emotional or physical connection or interaction, constructing an identity and value(s) of place for the individual.

Spirituality embedded and embodied within everyday routines has been addressed to some extent in the work of Holloway and Philo, Cadman and Lea. Holloway's (2003, p1966) work argues that 'making a spiritual world through embodied practice allow us to acknowledge the corporeal generation of systems of symbolic-cosmological thought and meaning.' In this sense, the direction and regulation of the body reinforces the individual's spiritual outlook. Later in this same article, Holloway's research participant discusses the practice of meditation on a busy underground train. Despite the fast-paced surroundings, the consistency of the activity, in this case meditation, enables a moment within 'ongoing subjectification of spirituality' (2003, p1968).

Philo, Cadman and Lea (2015; 2011) have examined the ways in which meditative and yogic practices were enmeshed and folded into everyday schedules of activity for inhabitants of Brighton, UK. Like Holloway, they found that non-religious or spiritual codified and public spaces could be transformed through a network of beliefs, behaviours and materials. Participants could enact moments of stillness within the midst of busy urban environment through the use of pockets of calm spaces found in parks, pavilions and health and fitness centres. The body was the instigator of practices as mindfulness, meditation and yoga were deployed in order to counteract perceived stresses and pressures felt in the body. Participants would use the breathing and meditative exercises learnt from yoga and meditation centres to create these temporary pauses. Through place-making performances (Cresswell 2015) such as introducing materials or behavioural gestures the yoga and meditation practitioners, like Holloway's participants, are able to construct sacred spaces within otherwise secular, busy contemporary environments. In these accounts, everyday landscapes of parks, the home and spaces for exercise become sites of energy renewal and

strategies to cope with the pressures of modern socio-economic responsibilities and activities. Yet these accounts rarely engage directly with the flows of corporeal and virtual mobility, particularly within a Christian context, that characterise contemporary society.

Given this framing of religion, spirituality, everyday practices and mobilities, can the de-humanised 'non-places' that characterise time-spaces of mobilities ever be used for such experiences? Time-spaces of mobilities, the car, the pavement, the road, the bus and train amongst others are designed with re-use, permanence or resilience and to be used by wide variety of people, not to allow for the interaction of humans, non-humans and landscape that combine to make place. As these time-spaces are increasingly understood through the new mobilities paradigm to be personalised, to be significant and valued by the individual, this paper seeks to understand how such sites are employed and become part of spiritual practices and belief.

Methods

In order to investigate spiritual practices within time-spaces of mobility, the data for this paper was drawn from the questionnaire and diary-interview phases from September 2013 to June 2014 as part of wider PhD project based in Bristol, UK. Questionnaires were employed to provide a broader picture of possible practices ongoing in mobility and to recruit participants for the richer and more intensive diary-interview phase of the research.

As the focus was to investigate the subjective experience of spiritual practices in time-spaces of mobility, the sample was therefore drawn from two religions that represent the 'congregational domain' and the 'holistic milieu' as mapped by Heelas and Woodhead (2005) to explore how both a traditionally embedded congregational sample and a holistic sample adapt to time-spaces of mobility. The Baptist Christian denomination was selected as an example of the congregational domain, whilst Buddhist meditation centres were selected from the holistic milieu. Many of the participants did identify themselves as 'Baptist Christians' and 'Buddhists' respectively, however this

was not a requirement of the research. The participants were selected as people who attended these sites whether or not they affiliated with the broader religious movement.

The early part of the data generation phase incorporated a questionnaire distributed to 165 congregants attending church for a weekly Sunday service and a further 81 individuals attending Buddhist meditation centres during the week. These were mostly multiple-choice, closed questions with some options for more descriptive answers if the participant wished to elaborate. The final question of the survey asked respondents if they wished to take part in further research by keeping a diary of their activities for one week and then discussing this in the context of an interview.

Similar to Cadman, Philo and Lea (2013), the project sought out the time-spaces in which religion and spirituality 'structure, frame and bleed into everyday practices', necessitating ethnographic research be undertaken. Unlike other ethnographic methods such as participant-observation, diaries allow for the recording of phenomena which may not be accompanied by external or physical behaviour: contemplation or thoughts and opinions provoked in response to external stimuli.

Diaries enabled an intimate portrait of the participant's to be developed; the interweaving of their spiritual lives and their secular lives. There are some issues of participant conformity and the potentially intensive and time-consuming nature of keeping a diary which did impact upon the diversity of quality and quantity of the data. At the end of the week, some participants delivered a very large cache of data with the longest diary being 31 pages in length whilst other participants returned very limited diaries, being only a few pages of sparsely written notes. Overall, the majority of diaries returned were of a good standard both in data quality and quantity, often providing rich insights into the lived experience of the participants and illuminating activities or areas that even they did not expect. Even if the diary was not particularly long or detailed, the recorded log could still provide a basic insight and enough data for initial thematic analysis and to investigate further in the following semi-structured interview with the participant.

The interviews that accompanied the diaries in this research were semi-structured, usually lasting around one hour in duration. Semi-structured interviews allowed for several basic themes to be followed across all interviews but were responsive to the individual characteristics of the participant. The interview provides an opportunity to clarify activities and to increase the resolution of data from generic terms of 'walking' to 'walking to work, thinking about x, acting in this way because of y', deepening the diary data (Phipps and Vernon 2009). Along with the diaries, thorough thematic analysis was carried out on the participant's corresponding interview transcript. From a familiarisation process, notes were taken and codes generated for further analysis that could later be developed into themes (Savin-Baden and Major 2013; Braun and Clarke 2006). The data was then re-analysed to identify when and where these themes arose and the significance they accrued within each participant's dataset.

In total 16 sets of diaries and interview transcripts were collected, coded and analysed for themes emerging from their everyday journeys and spiritual practices. All participants have been assigned pseudonyms to maintain their confidentiality whilst survey respondents are left unnamed. Church and meditation centre names have also been changed for this reason. Participant's main mode of mobility, gender, age range and sample group are noted in parentheses on their first appearance in the discussion.

Findings and Discussion

Urry's (2007) framework suggests that mobilities imply an intersection of the five interdependent mobilities of corporeal travel, transport of objects, imagined travel, virtual travel and communicative travel is implicated in this research. The mobilities of this study often enrol some aspects of all of these mobilities and nearly always involve corporeal travel of the body. Often, this corporeal travel forms the skeleton of the mobility on to which other mobilities are layered, the act of physical movement prompts and allows for a stabilised and (perceived) predictable space and time for the other forms of mobility and the possibility of spiritual practices to occur. However, it is also the

possibility of disruption, of serendipity and of encounter with others that can shape the spiritual practices that take place. The findings are presented here in three interconnected themes that explore how encounters within mobilities, the use of travel time, movement and slowing down can have transformative effects or be affected by the practice of religion and spirituality.

A (Travel) Time for News and Prayer

Like millions of drivers across the UK, survey respondents and diary-interviewees reported using their driving time to listen to the radio, particularly the BBC Radio 4 *Today* programme and 'Thought for the Day' segment. What distinguished these research participants was their processing of the content through a Christian framework. For example, Fred and Sally, both regular attendees to a Baptist church, found that the news on the radio would present national and international issues and causes for concern that could later be reflected upon within the context of prayer. Fred's concern for social justice and social values caused him to draw on information from the 20 minutes of the *Today* programme. This commuting time-space was very useful to him as his access to other news sources would otherwise be limited by his heavy workload. Commuting time spent in the car afforded the opportunity for this participant to access political news and information that could then be interpreted and acted upon within his Christian frame of reference.

Sally, for example, incorporated prayers for recent news events that would be sourced from the *Today* programme within her 'shopping list' of prayers. At the time of the diary and interview, she had been praying for those affected by the extensive floods that had impacted upon southern England, particularly in the Somerset levels, near to Bristol. Prayer time for Sally required privacy from others and the private space of the car provided the necessary and important shelter for the exercise of prayer. Whilst Sally had access to other spaces that could be rendered private such as her home, these were often shared with others. The morning commute in the car provided a space that could be relied upon to be a private space. Unlike Fred, her consumption of the *Today* programme was limited to whatever time remained on her commute journey after she had

completed that day's prayer time and so was not as regulated. When situations intervened that defied the predictability of the daily journey to work she was required to return her full attention back to driving. Similarly, Eleanor reported that prayer and contemplation would most likely occur either on journeys that had become habitual or on motorways or major roads designed for predictability and producing a stabilised mobility time-space for such activity (Laurier 2004). Fred's prayer time occurred in the morning, immediately prior to his commute. During the weekend both participants were less regulated in this news-gathering role. Although Fred did maintain early-morning prayer time and read the newspapers on a Sunday, the commuting time-space could guarantee consumption of wider news whilst the weekends were often more flexible.

Prayer was cited by a number of questionnaire respondents as well as by car-drivers, a train-user and a cyclist in the diary interview. In these cases, some ambiguity remained whether there was a dynamic spectrum where increased familiarity with the journey led to a greater likelihood of that journey being used for instances of prayer. Although prayer was also reported by a small number of Meditation Centre respondents in the questionnaire phase, the practice of mindfulness and meditation during travel time were much more prolific in both questionnaire responses and the diary-interview participants and is discussed in the following section.

Another Baptist church attendee, Max, detailed his multi-modal morning commutes in the diary that were split between cycling to a local train station and then travelling for 40 minutes on the train during which time he would read his Bible notes. A time-space activity, commuting, which had to be performed due to social-economic reasons, provided an opportunity to engage in an activity such as reading and prayer (Figure 1).

[INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE]

Max's travel time use had settled after several years of different commutes using different forms of transport in which he had also explored podcasts, audio sermons and both worship and non-worship

music. Currently he was satisfied with this use of time on the train, which includes using a Kindle after previously using a small bible. He enthusiastically recounted an encounter with a train conductor who remarked 'good book!' when he saw Max was reading a bible. Max referred to this anecdote twice throughout his participation, in the initial questionnaire from which he was recruited and later in the interview. This would suggest that he found some satisfaction in being recognised as a Christian, acting as witness, by strangers. As further evidence, when I asked him if he preferred using a Kindle for the anonymity it afforded as other people cannot see what he is reading, he responded:

'No, not really. [...] when I first started I was a little bit self-conscious but then you just think "well, what the heck."'

Max's Bible reading on his commute in the morning prompts contemplation on the topic for the rest of his day and often informs his prayers.

'[...] doing the reading before, remind me who...God is...and again it drives the context for the prayer. [...] I mean there's probably a good reason to pray before you read and....so the spirit enlightens what's being read. But I don't seem to find, I never seem to find...I mean I have read in the past fairly mechanistically but I try to read to...see what God is saying and then there's notes afterwards that I usually read. So there'll be...erm...a review of what's been there, I mean sometimes that can be good, sometimes that can be amazing, sometimes it can be...fairly banal so...erm...I find that all helps really.'

As with Fred and Sally using the *Today* programme to gather news for prayer, Max and other participants in this research, including members of the Buddhist meditation centre sample with podcasts and smartphone 'apps', used mobile technologies to act as a conduit between material and

non-material manifestations of spirituality. The private space of car travel provides shelter from the external world and control over which mobilities cross the threshold within, suggesting a partial form of temporary liminality from relations and interactions. However, objects such as the kindle or the bible, can also help to construct this phase in public transport spaces. There is an interplay then, between the aspects of 'non-place' that afford liminality and the relations with others and personal space, that constructs place.

The participants and their practices explored above have evidence a variety of prayer-based that is afforded by, and influenced by, *strategic* arms of religious institution or the official, fixed sites of religion whilst presenting *tactical* manifestations of such practice. The discussion has so far focussed on the Baptist church sample and it is notable that the Meditation Centre sample did not report in either questionnaire or diary-interview phases the use of news broadcast via radio or other media in travel. Instead there was a focus in this sample on the use of teachings available on podcast or mp3 format. The next section continues this theme but with the practice of meditation as discussed by predominantly voices of those who went to Buddhist Meditation Centres but also some Baptist church attendees.

Meditation and Everyday Mobilities

Like the participants from the Baptist church, respondents and diary-interviewees from the Meditation centre sample also reported that everyday mobilities afforded an opportunity to contemplate, reflect, worship or experience their relationship with God:

'It's often where I do most of my praying/thinking about others.' (Car-driver and walker, female, Baptist, 35-44)

'I really need the space provided by travel to reflect on my relationship with God.'
(Car-driver, female, Baptist, 35-44)

‘Time for prayer - very little space in life but journey time can provide this.’

(Cyclist, female, Baptist, 35-44)

The above comments illustrate the personal and spiritual value that can be attached to travel time. Additionally, all three respondents here use the spatial language of ‘where’ and ‘space’, indicating that these journeys do not just provide the time but are framed as a space outside of secular life conditions and responsibilities. The Meditation centre sample also used the opportunities afforded by times-spaces of mobilities to become mindful or ‘present’ in what is happening around them at that moment, for relaxation or to contemplate teaching:

‘I see travelling to work mindfully as an important part of Zen practice’ (Cyclist, train-user and walker, male, Meditation centre, 35-44)

‘Sometime practicing breathing into my belly to feel relaxed.’ (Walker, male, Meditation centre, 5-54)

‘My journeys are more meaningful since I started practising Dharma because I use them to think about Dharma.’ (Cyclist, male, Meditation centre, 25-34)

‘Space’ is constructed as a static non-moving entity, a momentary place that the individual constructs through materials, gestures and practices. The body here becomes central to spiritual activity either in its physical or mental behaviours. Are the respondents here referring to the entire journey space from the origin to the destination or to a portion of this journey space? Or is the inhabited body space temporarily transformed into a sacred space? The above comments evidence there is an emphasis on journey time-space as the location of religious activity within an overall schedule that provides a ‘time out’ from everyday responsibilities to focus on the spiritual needs of the individual.

Mindfulness and meditation were also discussed by other participants within this sample. Whilst travelling for the above participants / respondents initiated activities centred around contemplation or relaxation, other forms of mobility could be more socially inclusive. The practice of *metta bhavna*, the wishing of happiness and wellness to the self and others, in the time-spaces of everyday mobilities was reported by several respondents.

I often use waiting for buses as an opportunity to let go & practice acceptance & be present (!) I enjoy the space of journeys by bus & walking in particular to let myself be present or to reflect. I feel my journeys are an important source of space in my life & very part of my spiritual life (Cyclist, female, Meditation centre, 35-44)

Try to think of Metta when I see people (Multiple transport, female, Meditation centre 35-44).

Wishing well to those around me esp waiting for a bus or train metta bhavna. Meditation at airports often in chapel or quiet room. (Walker, male, Meditation centre, 65-69)

One of the diary-interview participants, Penny, also employed *metta bhavna* using the potential frustrations of driving as an opportunity to practice.

[...] say somebody drives in a way then I might...some harsh words or swear words might come to mind but if I'm practising *metta* than it's much less likely to. And...erm...yeah so say I'm practising loving kindness towards the driver in front of me...I start to see them as a human being with their own struggles and joys...on their own journey to wherever. You know and I start to see them as a

person...that's part of life, connected with me and I start to feel warmly towards them.

Later, when asked if this practice was extended to other road users as well as drivers, Penny added that a particular part of her journey was often congested due to a zebra crossing that would cause traffic to stop but instead of getting annoyed she

[...] found I was wishing *metta* to the pedestrians [laughs] cos they were in front of me!

Through the practices of driving and these different forms of meditation, secular and spiritual dimensions become fused and mutually supportive of each other. Moreover, a subjective spiritual geography of practices is constructed with specific parts of the journey, such as the zebra crossing, enabling or encouraging spiritual activity. The survey respondents here also capitalise on time-spaces they know are likely to cause frustration, boredom or anxiety. In practising *metta* bhavna whilst waiting for or riding a bus, 'wasted' time is transformed into a significant time-space that actively contributes to something more transcendent. Knowledge of the route and its cognitive requirements is habitualised through performances repeated everyday, in the process allowing the participant to find the most appropriate segments of the journey for spiritual practices.

Several meditation practitioners from the diary-interviews and the wider questionnaire sample advised that they used driving as an opportunity for mindfulness and meditation. Paul had developed a form of 'driving meditation' (with his eyes open) that involved mindfulness techniques. Whilst this participant had developed this practice by himself, there are also several videos on the YouTube video-sharing website, demonstrating forms of 'driving meditation'. When asked if he waited for quieter stretches of the journey, Paul responded that he did not, suggesting instead he believed the two actions of driving and meditation complemented each other and traffic was

therefore not a problem with safety or concentration. However, he did also reveal that due to the location of his home being in between his workplace and the city centre, he was usually travelling in the opposite direction of travel from city-bound traffic, enabling a less congested and therefore more stable journey to work. Of course, mindfulness or meditation and driving were universally practiced across the sample and several respondents made comments that suggested that concentrating on driving was not overly compatible with spiritual practices. As with the prayers cited by Sally earlier, it would appear important to have a stable and predictable journey on which such practices can be made. Mindfulness and meditation was also practiced by several walkers and cyclists elsewhere in the meditation centre sample:

Trying to do walking meditation on my way to work [...] Since I practice zazen, I make much more of an effort to be aware and mindful during my day to day journeys. I often fail but I'm definitely paying more attention. (Walker, female, Meditation centre, 35-44)

Bring attention to the act of travelling/meditate (Cyclist, male, Meditation centre 35-44)

Like the above respondents, Michelle from the meditation centre sample, also used her commute to integrate the mundane everyday landscape with her spiritual practices. Here she talks about her journey to work:

I take myself along the cycle path from the river cos I find it really relaxing and...erm...it's just more pleasant really. And again it's a bit more natural cos you're near the river and sometimes I stop and I do a little bit of mindfulness by the river. Either before or after work. And...er...yeah. I find it...I'm quite noise sensitive so cycling in traffic I don't like cos I get, I can see my mind...gets a lot

more busy when there's more noise and so I like going on the cycle path cos
there's hardly any noise and it calms me. It's calming for when I get into work.

Michelle chooses a route to her work that separates her from the mobile choreography and noise of commuting traffic and this allows her space in order to calm the mind before work. Michelle is also drawn to the 'natural' landscape, exemplified in the flowing water which she continues to talk of the connection with the spaces she cycles through.

In these cases, prayer and reflection are assigned to travel time-space due to the occupation of other static time-spaces with different activities. Everyday journeys, by their very nature, are recurrent and expected; familiarity is generated with a route and the parts of the route that require concentration and the parts that require less concentration. Planned daily routes form interchangeable components that interlink together to form a unique and individual journey. Activities are delegated to different spaces according to which environment is most conducive to which activities (Jain and Lyons 2008; Holley, Jain, and Lyons 2008; Laurier 2004). The predictability of the route masks a degree of instability of the journey as actors and objects assemble and encounter each other, reproducing everyday life with subtle variations day after day (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012; Pred 1981; Bennett 2001). It is notable that if the journey involved encounters with other people then practices such as *metta*, which nurtures social relationships, was discussed. Conversely, participants who had more solitude in travel (eg. cycling) may talk more of relaxation and calming. A subjective reality and informal spirituality is generated. Routinization of time-spaces that is characteristic of 'non-places' and rationalised modernity enables individuals to engage activities and beliefs that are significant, emotional and more-than-rational. Religious and spiritual thoughts and practices enter into this reality that both reinforce the reality through travel time

usage and transform the reality by inserting the rupture of the otherworldly into this worldly time-space.

Time-space for Worship Music

Within the Baptist church sample, the most popular response of the survey question regarding travel time uses was listening to music and combined with singing, reported by over 50% of those who responded to this question. This section discusses the use of music as a portable phenomenon that can be either material (in the use of CDs or mp3s) or non-material (through singing) in the Christian tradition. Music did not feature prominently within the sessions at the meditation centre which explored silence and occasionally mantra as part of the practice. It maybe for this reason that the use of music was reported less within the meditation centre sample in the questionnaire and did not feature in the diary-interview. This section therefore concentrates on the Baptist sample.

Music provides a stimulation that emotionally and cognitively affects the body (Frith 2002) and has been discussed in the context the body within motorised movement (Edensor 2003; Bull 2004). Listening and singing to music increases the body's activity and can be used to excite or regulate the individual's emotions (Edensor 2003; Frith 2002; Davies 2011; Lindenbaum 2012) which can in turn be used to focus on something unifying and Otherly transcendent (Davies 2011; Lindenbaum 2012; Guthrie 2003). Music was very important to Eleanor and facilitated continuity between church worship and everyday life. During both the diary and interview Eleanor alluded to the reverberations of the images and themes of the church sermon during the week. In Figure 2 the memories of that week's church service echo into secular time-space. The lyrics, in particular, allowed for further contemplation.

[INSERT FIGURE 2 HERE]

Notably, two of the Baptist churches involved in the survey prominently featured contemporary forms of worship music in their services. One played music that was similar to late 20th and early 21st

century rock, pop and indie genres with a full band line up of guitars, drummers, bass and singers. The other was focussed around the folk-ragtime orientated interests of the minister with acoustic guitar, flutes and vocalists. Not only can music help to regulate the mood within a particular environment, but additionally to aid control of, dwelling in, as well as familiarise territory (Bull 2004; Frith 2002). Music can also lead to conflict between groups and individuals who resent being involuntarily subjected to the musical selections of other people (Frith 2002), reflected in the following comment when asked about reactions that respondents have received:

‘[S]ome people don't like the religious music I play for my children in the car.’

(Car-driver, female, Baptist, 25-34)

Worship music can be a form of Hjarvard's (2008) 'banal religion' in that it can provide a backdrop to, rather than focus of activity but also as low-intensity and continual engagement can form a significant element of the individual's religious and spiritual life. However, the description of worship music as a form of 'banal religion' was contentious with Max as he believed the words carried a weight that deserved special attention:

[...] it's not supposed to be for entertainment... I don't revert to background music or whatev[er], elevator music cos I mean the words are quite...profound. Erm...and we'll have it in the car...as background music for the kids. But then we'll encourage them to...er...trying to encourage them in their Christian faith so I think there is...that content is quite useful but I wouldn't just have it [on as background music]. (Max, Car-driver, male, Baptist, 35-44)

Whereas Max was keen to ensure listening to worship music was a conscious choice rather than merely to fill a silence, Rita was keen to use music as a method to 'smudge' the divide between religious and secular music; juxtaposing the two categories side by side on playlists that she made.

The importance of music in worship and belief is also illustrated in Eleanor explained in her interview that contemporary Christian music had come to form a key part of her life following a recent reaffirmation of faith. Music and lyrics have to resonate with the individual and if they do, then the effect can be to profoundly reinforce the Christian message of love and redemption in everyday life by being present in and, as Lindenbaum (2012) suggests, transforming everyday situations into Christian practices. Resonating with this production and transformation of place Fallov, Jorgensen and Knudsen (2013) argue that practices associated with the home are transplanted into mobile situations to aid a sense of belonging. Practices such as worship music can bring and alter a sense of belonging in the time-spaces of mobility.

Continuing from his previous statement above, Max noted how singing could also help him to grasp the meaning of British Christian singer-songwriter Matt Redman's lyrics more deeply:

If I was listening to it I'd be listening to it, kind of trying to sing along to think about what is being...sung really. And to make it penetrate.

However, Max would be discouraged from singing if the private space of the car was being shared:

[...] I'd sing along if I was on my tod [own] but I wouldn't with anyone else...in the car.

When asked why he would not feel comfortable singing with other people in the car, Max was unsure.

Max: 'Er...pride, I don't know. No, I don't, it's quite, I mean I sing in church.

Erm...but the car? I don't know, ah, I don't know why it's a mental block for me.

Cos everybody else sings [...] I don't know, it just doesn't feel right.'

Interviewer: 'But if you're on your own, you will?'

M: 'Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah. I don't know [why he doesn't sing when with other people]. Fear of looking the idiot? Making mistakes? Yeah, I don't know. Odd, that's odd.'

This converges and contrasts with the anonymity allowed within church of feeling comfortable singing due to the merging of the individual's voice with the collective voices of others present (Guthrie 2003; Wolff 1999). Anonymity and privacy is also provided within the personalised space of the car (Bull 2004). This privacy can also be extended to other modes of transport. Several respondents also reported singing whilst cycling although this like other cycling activities is often subject to the energy requirement of the negotiating topography or traffic that can remove the mental capacity (and breath) for singing (Jones 2012);

'Sing on bike under (if in breath - or in head if not)' (Cyclist, female, Baptist, 35-44)

Sally also stated in her diaries that she would sing in her head whilst swimming but played this down in her interview, suggesting this was encouraged by the lack of other stimulation as in Figure 3. Despite her hesitance in ascribing value to this moment, this episode illustrates a micro-mobility or function (exercise), a mobility without destination that worship music enters into.

[INSERT FIGURE 3 HERE]

Singing can be an embodied experience of worship in which the sensuous nature of tempo, rhythm and melody combine with words of meaning to direct the body towards a transcendent focus away from the internal self. As has been demonstrated, spaces of mobility can allow for this element of continuity with church worship to be enacted in everyday life. A movement away from traditional sacred, classical music to worship music that is closer in style to contemporary pop and rock has

eased a transfer to space outside the church boundaries. Music that relies less upon the acoustic or atmospheric environment, as is the case with hymnal or choral, but is pre-packaged to be played anywhere, anytime. Melody and song lend themselves as ideal exercises to be taken anywhere, anytime due to the lack of material resources required and appropriation to soundtrack the mobile movement.

Listening or singing to music are positive actions that the participants perform in order to make present religious and spiritual qualities within secular discourses that characterise everyday time-spaces of mobility. The songs presented by these participants from the Baptist tradition of Christianity are often contemporary in character and more easily transported and adapted to the people who listen and sing to them and the situations they find themselves in. Music helps to construct an atmosphere, particularly within the enclosed cabin of a car, and a soundtrack to everyday mobilities that enables Christian beliefs, values and ideas to become embedded within everyday life.

Conclusion

Throughout this paper I have analysed the different ways that participants import and embed place-based practices of prayer, meditation and music into the spaces of the car, the cycle ride and public transport as part of travel time use. Journeys that participants undertake, as evidenced in this paper, can enfold specific spiritual practices and beliefs at certain points or passages of these trips to work, to home and other places. Everyday mobilities can enable the privacy required by some for prayer or singing but also affords the sociality for others to develop relationships – often brief and fleeting – enabling individuals to make spaces of significance and meaning within their subjective spiritual geographies. The car, and to an extent the bicycle, becomes a protective shell that shelters the individual from public viewing whilst the travel etiquette of commuting on the bus or train affords the opportunity to privately and discreetly engage in prayer or contemplation. Both private and public spaces of transports can enable some degree of liminality where the individual is

removed from external socio-economic relations and responsibilities, afforded by the partial characterisation of 'non-place'.

These time-spaces are also intersections of mobilities in that as well as the corporeal travel involved in such journeys, there are the communicative mobilities of the car radio or the use of music and religious texts, the transport of objects such as reading material or music CDs as well as the imaginative or spiritual mobilities that the participants are travelling. The regulated familiarity of mobilities when repeated on a daily basis can provide a stable platform on which to incorporate beliefs and practices but this stability can be and is disrupted and transformed by the different encounters and situations which are implicated in the movement of the individual. The assemblage of these different mobilities and experiences help to transform these spaces from the characterisation of 'non-places' into places, meaningful and significant locations with heterogeneous identities for those implicated. Everyday mobilities also allow for specific, innovative forms of spiritual practices to emerge. There were some differences between the practices of the two sample groups but the significant differences were those that cut across both groups according to activity, mode of transport and need for connection with others encountered in mobility. These can be framed in three themes: the embodied, the contemplative and the social.

Firstly, spiritual practices may be embodied, for example mindfulness in movement (and stillness) amongst Meditation Centre attendees and listening to or singing worship songs in the Baptist Church sample involve an awareness and agency of the body. Secondly, other spiritual practices are more contemplative based, *metta*, meditation and prayer are psychological, rather than physical activities. Thirdly, there is the cross-cutting theme of the sociality that mobilities engender and how this inflects spiritual practices: *metta* requires some form of relationship with others – and as this study has shown, particularly with Penny, these relationships can be formed with others encountered whilst moving. Other respondents also reported prayers for the strangers they encounter or regarding news events they hear about on the car radio whilst travelling. Interactions between

everyday mobilities and spiritual profiles therefore enable and encourage different forms of spiritual practices to emerge. Alongside the intersection mobilities noted earlier, there is then an intersection of connection of inner spirituality with the external other (in the form of other people, information, ideas) that is mobilised through everyday movement.

Mobilities thus provide time-space for the subjective experience and embodiment of spirituality as a method of making real the otherwise abstract ideas of spirituality and producing a more concrete meaning of the spiritual in daily life. This extends Holloway's earlier noted suggestion of a subjectification of spirituality through the corporeal generation of 'systems of symbolic-cosmological thought and meaning'. Subjective spiritual geographies challenge the 'non-places' of mobilities and become entangled with the everyday movements, routines and networks that inform mobilities. Moreover subjective spiritual geographies reaffirms Urry's (2007) observation that the person, rather than the place, become the central node to networks of interaction in a society characterised by heightened mobilities. Exploring the practice of religion and spirituality through a mobilities framework has evidenced a previously neglected area – of how the movements necessitated by socio-economic responsibilities can provide new avenues for innovative forms of spiritual practices and inform personal belief in contemporary society. As movement informs much of daily life and modernity for many people in western society, understanding how rationalist mobilities and universalist 'non-places' can become caught up in, and enable, social and cultural beliefs and practices is crucial for future work in sacred mobilities. This paper has explored how individuals construct and manage these personalised geographies of religion and spirituality, often taking an active role and resisting the 'non-place' characterisation of passive, docile bodies being moved. Participants here value their everyday mobilities with the opportunities and encounters that journeys bring as part of their wider spiritual life.

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