Annals of Tourism Research 83 (2020) 102924

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Annals of Tourism Research

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/annals

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Re-materialising the religious tourism experience: A post-human perspective

Matina Terzidou

Department of Marketing, Branding and Tourism, Middlesex University London, The Burroughs, London NW4 4BT, United Kingdom

ARTICLE INFO

Associate editor: Noga Collins-Kreiner

Keywords:
Pilgrimage
Veneration
Materiality
Agency
Affect

ABSTRACT

Using ethnographic research into Christian Orthodox religious tourists' performances in Tinos, Greece, this paper traces the complex pathways of human and material entanglement in creating religious experiences. While religions stage material performances by ascribing sign and use value to objects, *affect* through doing allows for different modes of understanding and performance, in which the material nature plays an essential role. This paper contributes in recognising the importance of materials' thingness in the religious experience, allowing for alternative performances and expressions of belief. Understanding the way materials can enable or even overshadow the sense of religiousness is important for the successful management of the spatial distribution of objects in religious sites.

Introduction

While a plethora of studies shows how culture and the social are tied up with and enabled by objects, technologies and materialities (Ingold, 2000; Michael, 2000; Morgan & Pritchard, 2005; Scarles, 2009; Thrift, 2004; Whatmore, 2002), materiality within the religious tourism sphere has been encountered critically throughout the centuries. Materialistic religions have been accused for their idolatrous stance, in which personal material interests are part of "parasitic rituals" (Coleman, 2014, p.281) that overshadow the spiritual world of religion (Meyer, Morgan, Paine, & Plate, 2010). Using rich ethnographic data of embodied and multi-sensuous performances of religious tourists to the sacred island of Tinos, Greece, this paper calls to 're-materialise' religion, arguing that materiality is of decisive importance to religions and sacred sites generating immanent and profound powers on people that enable (rather than overshadow) spiritual contact in a variety of ways. It is further argued that although abstract symbols and metaphors are important in communicating values, identities and ascribing meaning to events, everyday existence is not only comprehended through the world of signs, but also through people's actual engagement *with* the world of signs, which is exemplified through materials that are inextricable from religion and religious tourism (Bowman, 2016; Meyer et al., 2010; Moufahim & Lichrou, 2019; Paraskevaidis & Andriotis, 2015).

In line with post-human perspectives (Franklin, 2008; Haldrup & Larsen, 2006; Latour, 2013; Picken, 2010; Thrift, 2004) and with Hegel's (1991) emphasis on the importance of materials in human life, it is argued here that the world is not 'ready-made' but comes into being through one's encounter with its dynamic components. Similarly, religion ceases to be mainly a people phenomenon but becomes instead an 'ordering' that encompasses hybrid environments that are accomplished with the participation of both human and non-human actors. Objects within this context exercise agency intending to change the world rather than encode symbolic propositions about it (Gell, 2013). Following Latour (2013), the question is no longer only to identify relations and to follow networks in order to redefine religious experience, but to follow different expressions of encounters that provide those networks with their

E-mail address: m.terzidou@mdx.ac.uk.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2020.102924
Received 1 October 2019; Received in revised form 9 April 2020; Accepted 16 April 2020

specific tonalities and veridictions; what he calls modes of existence. Thus, this paper departs from modernist views that reject fetishism in religion and follow deterministic human-centered approaches, which focus on the commodification of souvenirs in religious places (Kaufman, 2005; Swanson & Timothy, 2012), their economic impact (Terzidou, Stylidis, & Szivas, 2008), exchange behaviour (Shtudiner, Klein, Zwilling, & Kantor, 2019) or marketing elements (Hashimoto & Telfer, 2007). Rather, this paper aims to shed light into the complex pathways of the human non-human entanglements in co-creating religious meaning and experiences in space and time. It recognises different modes of understanding and experiencing holiness (Terzidou, Scarles, & Saunders, 2017) in which reflexivity is not only a property of cognition but also of contact with the material nature.

Grounding the research on performance in and of particular places, and recognising that experiences are accomplished with the participation of creative non-humans, like objects and animals (even dead ones as in the case of leather boots, see Gibson, 2014) that possess unique qualities (Bowman, 2016; Cloke & Perkins, 2005; Paraskevaidis & Andriotis, 2015; Whatmore, 2002), a material and experiential approach has been deemed important in understanding the creation of religious moments and emotions. Acknowledging that the "social is only a tiny set of narrow, standardised connections" out of many others (Latour & Weibel, 2002, p.124), the literature review that follows, first, discusses the *systemic function of objects*, which is created through semiotic and social powers of religion that ascribe use- and sign- value to objects. Second, it highlights the *improvisational function of objects*, recognising the unexpected power of the objects' materiality on people as a result of the notion of affect that determines their religious experiences and understandings. Accordingly, it is expected that the religious experience as exemplified in the case of Tinos, as well as its maintenance off-place, are the products of co-construction of both the religious tourists and the material possession of the site.

The materiality of a travelling religion

While some religions, such as Protestantism, encourage travelling to enable religious expression and purification from material entanglements (Keane, 2007), it is argued here that travelling can bring people in contact with material possessions, which may have a profound religious effect on them. This is not only evidenced within Christianity but in other religions as well, such as Hinduism, where in some cases devotees even produce and consume their own ritual objects (kavatis) (Sinha, 2017), or in Buddhism, where material objects of various types are essential parts of Bhuddist practice disseminating essential religious aura (Brox, 2019). Contact with the aesthetic surface through sight, smell, taste and touch provides a sensual experience that transmits meaning (Alexander, 2008) through which a personal, direct communication between the deity and the believer can be achieved. In his influential work on materials, Miller (1987, 2002) developed the notion of the subject-like nature of things. In particular, he emphasises the importance of the physicality of objects, which act thereby "as a bridge between the mental and physical world as well as between the conscious and unconscious" (Miller, 1987, p.99). Such human – material interplay is experienced in two ways; institutionally, as exemplified in the *systemic function of objects*, and individually, as exemplified in the *improvisational function of objects* that exercise power on people.

Systemic function of objects; the staged performance of materials

A body's engagement with nature and its components transforms symbolic thought into emotion and feelings (Gil, 1998). Such knowledge resulted in perceiving materiality, human and animals surrounding individuals, as important ingredients of an 'experience economy' (Pine & Gilmore, 1999) that intends to construct particular experiences based on a staged choreography (Edensor, 2000; Franklin, 2004). This is particularly evident within the religious context. Especially through their pilgrimages, religions provide spaces that enable people to connect (Latour & Weibel, 2002; Thrift, 2004) with their deities. Based on religious teachings and the development of inter-subjective understandings, religions facilitate kinaesthetic experiences, bringing devotees in connection to particular objects, which are considered compelling in grasping the symbolic-cosmological meaning and building on 'common sense' activities (Durkheim, 1964; Schutz, 1962). Acquiring sign-, and use-value (Haldrup & Larsen, 2006), material articulations of religions contribute to and enhance the essential spiritual dimension of the religious experience economy (Olsen, 2017), connecting religious adherents together in time and space and enabling them to sense realities and to do things.

Enwrapped with symbolic meanings, or what Keane (2003) calls 'qualisigns', religious objects are religiously constructed signposts that direct believers' gazes and embodied performances, and construct their identities (Bourdieu, 1991); they function as vehicles of meanings and as 'the Bibles' of the poor and illiterate (Turner & Turner, 1978). The most important of such symbol-vehicles are the icons, which according to the Christian Orthodox tradition, are 'houses of a holy spirit' and 'doors opening the mind to the ultimate sanctity' (Theodore the Studite, cited in Barnard, 1977, p.12), being simultaneously containers and refractions of the divine essence. The icon of the Virgin Mary, for example, is of particular significance because 'she was the instrument by which God had made the Word flesh' (Turner & Turner, 1978, p.49).

An important aspect within particular religious contexts is the appreciation that most of the religious objects have a single, definite use-value or in other words a 'canonical' (Costall, 1997) or 'preferred' function (Loveland, 1991) that draws adherents into common actions. Religious adherents are educated so as to establish religious understandings, habits and performative techniques that ensure reproduction of what should be done in the shared context of sacred spaces. Cummins (1975), therefore, introduced the concept of 'system function', which is applied in this paper, according to which a function is to be understood solely in terms of the

capacity or disposition to perform a specific role in the context of a specific system. Religion provides the 'proper function' of objects, which is based on the notion that it is reproduced or copied from ancestors, who did engage in that performance. Within this context, religious objects are usually not handled as common objects, but call for special treatment (Appadurai, 1986). Miraculous icons or relics are, for instance, worshiped with a bow (Eliade, 1959), whereas sacred buildings, such as churches, become embodied spaces of performance that construct peoples' appearance and acting (e.g. prescribed dress codes), which are meant to optimize their experience (Belhassen, Caton, & Steward, 2008), creating particular feelings such as awe and repentance, or even states such as being modest.

For Bourdieu (1990), the invariance of religious performances intends to develop the religious 'habitus'; the automatisation and routinisation of religious actions that assist in safeguarding the continuation of religion. By producing unreflexive embodied know-how that entails the usage of religious objects, such as religious souvenirs, self-identity is affirmed that differentiates its owner from others and protects him/her from unforeseen events. Accordingly, while religion can resist consumption and commercialisation, sacred souvenirs have emerged as a prosperous industry (Kaufman, 2005). The power and meaningfulness of religious objects to their owners is highlighted in Shtudiner et al. (2019) study on religious souvenirs and the endowment effect. Specifically, regardless of their physical quality and appearance, their spiritual elements (Paraskevaidis & Andriotis, 2015) elevate them to such an extent that most people want to avoid losses more that they want to benefit from them. As Collins-Kreiner and Zins (2013) also identified, the spiritual and miraculous qualities of religious souvenirs make it particularly difficult for believers to dispose them even after many years.

Nevertheless, such perspective that highlights objects' embedment in religious narratives that transform them from pieces of matter into social objects, neglects the independent character of human beings that allow for different interpretations. For example, knowing that objects mediate human relationships, religions or *sacred economies* as they are called by Morgan (2016), are criticised to organise the exchange of goods, in which one thing is given for another, generating the value for both. In his enormously influential essay on Protestantism and capitalism, Max Weber (2001) also pinpoints the relationship of religion and economy, arguing how craved religious materials are for adherents in exchange of something else. Indeed, while the possession of religious materials does enable, in some religions, a better connection with one's deity, it is argued here that the objects' staged positioning in the religious site affects people differently, who may ascribe additional meanings to them or decide to follow different performative paths.

Improvisational function of objects; the individual performance of materials

Humans are part and parcel of the world, structuring their lives based on their numerous encounters and interactions with the things around them (Cloke & Perkins, 2005; Gil, 1998; Thrift, 2004). People do not only look *through* objects while consuming spirituality but can also be influenced by the very thingness of the objects. Symbols *are* things (Voloshinov, 1986) and not merely reflections of things (Saussure, 1966). They exercise agency acquiring several features, such as the textures of touch, the sensuousness of sight, their smell and taste, that allow people to understand things (Bowman, 2016) and to organise themselves around them (Walsh & Tucker, 2009). Through doing and being people develop a different kind of intelligence about the world that is influenced by the notion of affect: "a set of embodied practices that produce visible conduct as an outer lining" (Thrift, 2004, p.60).

Similarly, in the religious context, it is the materiality of the symbolic meanings, embodied in a variety of objects that attracts religious tourists to various sacred destinations. Religious tourists seek the bodily connection with the holy, and religious objects are a presentation of otherness. They exercise power on them through their association with wondrous events and miracles, such as healing, their very agency invoking special admiration and awe (Nolan & Nolan, 1989). Such contacts often assist in developing unique, memorable and life changing experiences, the so called epiphanic experiences (Wearing, McDonald, & Ankor, 2016), which demonstrate a closer relationship to one's deity. Some material objects even possess transcendence, which is not only achieved by humans intentionally but is part and parcel of the materials themselves (Appadurai, 1986), a fact that corresponds to the newer materialist turn that instructs people to regard things as being alive and vibrant in their own unique ways (Gibson, 2014; Latour, 2013; Muecke & Wergin, 2014). For example, relics, equal to Appadurai's (1986) fetishes, are special because they do not represent, but *are* the saints. This is especially the case in relics that are the body or fragments of the body of a saint, which attract, for instance, religious tourists to sites such as Santiago de Compostela Cathedral where the relic of St James is housed (Houlihan, 2000) or to Sri Lanka where devotees can see the tooth of the Buddha in the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy. However, other equally powerful relics exist as well such as objects that belonged to a saint like a hat, a belt or a book (or fragments of those items) or items that a saint touched.

A lively interplay between human and non-human in co-constructing religious experience is observed in the Orthodox Christian religion, as secular objects are believed to be transformed into blessed, and thus, into sacred objects when placed on saints' icons or bones (Andriotis, 2011; Paraskevaidis & Andriotis, 2015). Similar phenomena have been observed in the catholic context, as in the case of pilgrimages to Aachen and Trier (Doney, 2014). Blessed souvenirs can keep the ephemeral on-site religious experience alive and spread blessing to their owners or their friends and relatives, even years after their purchase and touch with the sacred object (Hume, 2014) prolonging, thus, religious tourism experiences beyond religious sites. Sacred places are seen as travelling themselves (Baerenholdt, Haldrup, Larsen, & Urry, 2004; Sheller & Urry, 2004), within networks of human and non-human agents. Equal to

Fig. 1. The location of Tinos.

Haldrup and Larsen's (2006) objects, souvenirs carry ideological messages about the site (Shenhav-Keller, 1993; Swanson & Timothy, 2012), spread memory (Dubisch, 1995) and infuse everyday life with hope as some believers anticipate healing and miraculous encounters through their various usages. For other believers, such religious souvenirs embody a more personal relationship to their God similar to the objects that they leave behind in the sacred places that remind the deity of their visit and particular quest.

Such qualities question Saussure's (1966) distinction between signifier and signified that dominates the literature today, as some objects are too powerful to be mere re-presentation of something else. Objects, similar to technology, can fascinate people because they are barely comprehensible acquiring magical elements, which can change the views of their owners (Gell, 2013). So, while Christian Orthodox doctrine defends itself against iconoclastic arguments, holding that religious objects do not receive worship for themselves but stand metonymically for the deities to whom respect is to be paid (Barnard, 1977), through incarnation or contact with the sacred, matter itself becomes 'deified'. Indeed, the power of some objects is so intense that, when relocated, places lose their original significance (Nolan & Nolan, 1989), whereas the new places become new points of interest. Thus, opposing views, which support that spirit is *in* matter, the worship of the fetish, which has the quality to make people suffer sensuously, usually implies revering the material object's presence itself; the spirit *of* matter.

Methods

Aiming to trace the complex pathways of human and non-human entanglement in the creation of religious experiences this paper follows a social constructivist philosophy. It is built on the thesis of ontological relativity allowing the emergence of multiple understandings and experiences of the divine. Specifically, acknowledging Appadurai's (1986) 'methodological fetishism', it is argued here that in addition to the theoretical point of view that accepts that humans encode things with significance (with matters having the form of empty signifiers), the things-in-motion, which is the tendency to attribute agency and intention to inanimate objects illuminating their human and social context, is of decisive importance to this study. Appadurai (1986), similar to Elkin (1997) and Latour (2000), introduces the concept of 'things talk back' and argues that things acquire their meanings from their uses and movements and that one can only understand how human action 'enlivens' them by analysing these movements.

In particular, stressing the polysemic nature of things, material practices offer an important insight into multiple and conflicting voices, differing and interacting interpretations of religious expression and understanding. Within this context, and acknowledging that what people say is sometimes different from what they do, ethnographic techniques, such as observation and in-depth interviews, were applied to emphasize the qualitative elements that underpin religious tourists' experiences. Research participants comprised volunteer samples from Christian Greek Orthodox religious tourists undertaking two organized four-day religious coach

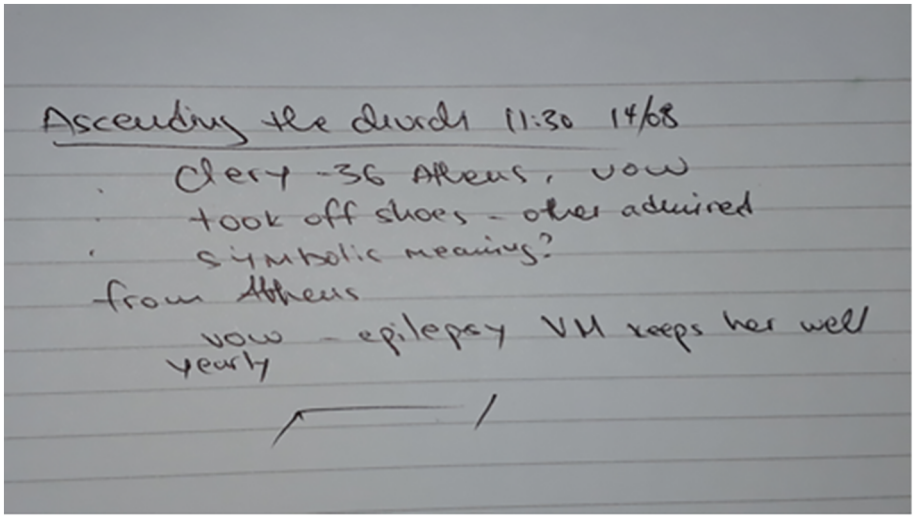

Fig. 2. Scratch notes.

trips from Kavala to the sacred island of Tinos, located in North Cyclades, Greece (Fig. 1).

To ensure homogeneity of the sample (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019), both trips took place around religious holidays; the Dormition of the Virgin Mary on the 15th August and the Holy Cross on the 14th September. The majority of the participants were female, as women in Greece are considered the guardians of their family's spiritual health (Haland, 2012). The vast majority of them were aged over 50, supporting Pargament, Smith, Koenig, and Perez's (1998) view of religion as a psychological aid in coping with death and misfortune. After obtaining their consent, 41 participants were observed across the spectrum of the trips and field notes were taken. Following ethnographic observations, all spaces and moments are considered part of the research field, which amounted to approximately 48 h of contact on the bus, the ferry and on the island of Tinos. Specifically, the field notes included information about what participants carry with them, what they buy, what they do with the objects and what their feelings and perception of the objects surrounding them are. To avoid reactivity, scratch notes were made in a hidden pocket notebook or whatever convenient item could be found, such as receipts or postcards (Fig. 2). At the end of each day, observations were recorded in detail as soon as the researcher returned to the hotel room.

In the second stage, in-depth interviews with 38 of the two trip participants were conducted once they had returned home. Participants were invited to interpret and explain particular behaviours previously observed in the trip. The semi-structured interviews lasted between 1 and 3 h and allowed for an in-depth exploration of material performances and individual experiences. While the sessions started following the themes to be covered there was flexibility and openness to changes in the sequence and type of questions. Additionally, follow up questions were used to unfold the meaning of peoples' experiences and to allow them to narrate their own stories. All interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed verbatim, and translated into English retroactively (O'Reilly, 2005) to ensure consistency in meaning. Thematic analysis was used based on the identification of patterns. More precisely, to identify patterns colour highlighting pens were used, with each colour representing a different concept and then comparisons were made. At the end of this procedure different units (quotes and observations) were cut and pasted together and sorted into categories under a common heading. Data was processed with confidentiality and anonymity was ensured by using pseudonyms.

The sacredness of Tinos

The Virgin Mary of Tinos is one of the biggest pilgrimage centres in Greece, declared sacred by the Greek government in 1971 (Haland, 2012). It is a symbol of cultural identity and a national emblem, being related to the Greeks' independence and a striking expression of the traditional Orthodox belief and practice. Despite its small size (8600 inhabitants), Tinos attracts thousands of visitors annually, who flock to see the icon of the Virgin Mary, in the Church of the Annunciation, that was found in 1823 after repeated visions of an islander, the nun Pelagia. Based on writings distributed by the church of the Annunciation in Tinos, the finding of the holy icon come to represent the resurrection of Greece, which was at that time under the oppression of the Ottomans. Even today people are educated on, and reproduce, the history of the shrine, and Virgin Mary is venerated as a protector of the army and the state (Pentcheva, 2006).

Fig. 3. Crawling religious tourist with her child on her back (Author's own photograph).

The Virgin Mary of Tinos, the *Theotokos* ('God-bearer'), who was chosen by God to be Jesus Christ's Mother, is also linked to many miracles that have been reported throughout history, usually including healing from disease (Haland, 2012; Ware, 1993). She is believed by people to be an intercessor, and the content of prayer addressed to her is a request for her intercession. Therefore, people come to Tinos every year to make offerings to the Virgin Mary, to request something or to thank for something that has been realized. They ascend to the church often accompanied by ill relatives or friends. One can see them crawling to the church, sometimes loaded with a child on their back that has been cured or is hoped to be cured by the miraculous icon (Fig. 3). The Orthodox Church acknowledges saints' relics and objects as temples of the Holy Spirit and the living God. The miracles connected to them indicate that their devout veneration by believers is pleasing to God (Kariotoglou, Kesopoulous, Papaeuagelou, & Tsananas, 1997; Ware, 1993).

Objects, like the miraculous icon of the Virgin Mary of Tinos, are made known and inseparable from religion through myths that circulate in religious communities, either through believers' verbal interactions and visual media (Terzidou, Stylidis, & Terzidis, 2018) or in textual form distributed by the church's channels. In particular, leaflets that can be collected for free from the church present the story of particular objects, thereby directing people's gazes and meanings as well as encouraging inter-subjective understandings and discourses. One of the most famous objects recalled by religious adherents, is the metallic orange tree in the church entrance, which is the offering made by a former blind man who was healed by the miraculous icon of the Virgin Mary in Tinos, creating a spatial, and mental point of interest for thousands of people (Fig. 4).

Fig. 4. Orange tree (Source: www.travelgreecetraveleurope.com/2014).

The religious atmosphere is even more intense on the eve of the 15th of August – the Dormition of the Virgin Mary. Large numbers of Gypsies contribute with their colorful presence and dramatic performances to the crowds. All night long, the Church of the Annunciation and the streets are filled with singing religious tourists, carrying candles in their hands and ascending to the beautifully lit church, which adds to the place's ambience. The church bells ring in a sweet rhythmic melody, inviting believers that have come from several different parts of the world. Fig. 5 illustrates a religious group from Ethiopia singing and making its way to the Church of the Annunciation at night.

Fig. 5. Religious groups in Tinos and the Church of Annunciation (Author's own photographs).

Findings and discussion

The rich data collected allowed for two categories of material articulation of religiousness; one following the systemic, and thus, staged, expected performances, and the other following intuition and improvisation, as a result of affect and agency.

Systemic material performances

Resembling Bourdieu (1990), the Church of the Annunciation is a place that seems to be self-evident, a symbolic capital, in which religious participants perform known and recognized religious practices enwrapped in the rules, symbolisms and practices of how the religious culture approaches the sacred. The ritual of worshipping the miraculous icon is the most common one, pursued habitually by almost all visitors, generating long queues and waiting hours. As Fotis, said: "*You see, it is also a habit.. others are doing it, everybody is doing it*". The typical ritual of worshipping the icon of Tinos presents a 'kinetic ritual' (Coleman & Eade, 2004) that includes serialized performative manifestations such as the kissing of the icon, the crossing of oneself three times in front of it and the lighting and placing of one or more candles in the stand next to the icon. Some (usually older women) even perform '*metanoia*', that is, a dramatic performance redeemed by the protagonist's 'turning' or 'repentance' (Martin, 2006), in which they bend three times in front of the icon, each time touching the floor with their right hand, crossing themselves afterwards and kissing the icon, a fixed and structured procedure bestowing elements of art and dancing (Sallnow, 1987) to the phenomenon. The kinetic worshipping ritual ends with religious tourists collecting consecrated oil distributed by the church and holy water from the basement of the church to use on-site and to take back home.

This constitutes a flow of performances that takes place among religious people based on social common-sense constructs (Schutz, 1962); each one enunciating institutionalised roles (Edensor, 1998) by playing out a role of the script based on performative know-how, which also bestows religious identity. As Mari emphasised: "*Of course I know what to do when I am coming here, because I am a religious being, a Greek Orthodox*!" Mobilized in a social space of common understanding, such known performativities bestow feelings such as confidence and security to their performers and transmit mental and social states that are religiously essential. Adherents are instructed by their religious teachings to look *through* objects in order to grasp the sign values that make them meaningful, minimising their aesthetic qualities. Commenting on the smallness of the icon, Vicky, for example, acknowledges its sign value over its aesthetic value, saying "*I used to believe that the bigger the icon the more powerful it is. But size doesn't matter.. the grace it transmits matters*". This is further manifested in Janna's words:

"*We are unworthy and so small… Our eyes have to be so clean to dare to look at the Virgin Mary. Because our Virgin Mary is the purest temple.. And we human beings have no pure look. And this is also why each time the monks and the nuns pass by the icon they incline their heads and bow… they consider themselves sinful*".

Nevertheless, while the veneration of religious objects based on authoritative semiotic readings and structured practices can facilitate believers' religious conduct, it can also lead to unpredictable, negative feelings. Georgia, for example, experienced shock when she realized that she venerated a Catholic church, during the day off, without her will. She kept stressfully saying:

"*But I kissed the icons in there and I crossed myself even with the holy water that I found there!!! What is going to happen now?… I really didn't know that it was a Catholic Church!!!*"

As Latour (2013) pinpointed, habitual practices entail the forgetting involved in proceeding with ordinary functioning that make people unaware of their current background, and thus often unreflexive and 'blind'. Indeed, while the church had the same architectural style as all the Greek churches on the island, its interior looked different, as noticed by the researcher while entering the church: "*As soon as we entered the church I felt differently in there… I turned towards my counterparts to comment on the unusual iconostasis and the benches, which were beautifully decorated with flowers, only to see them engaging in the usual act of worshipping the icons in the anteroom…Only minutes later we were informed by a local that the festival that took place in the village was an annual celebration of the Catholic Church in the village, which we had previously visited and no one had noticed!*" [Fieldnotes: 14 September, 6 pm, Village Ktikados, Tinos]. Only when issues arise individuals become aware of the background (Latour, 2013). Georgia's reaction symbolises the sudden sign-nakedness of the religious objects in the Catholic Church, standing there with their powerful, aesthetic value and

causing discomfort with their thingness. Indeed, people as reflexive beings do not only look *through* objects while consuming spirituality but can get also influenced by the very thingness of the objects. Objects seemed to be more enduring than words and symbols.

Improvisational material performances

People organise themselves around the materiality that surrounds them and exercises power on them. This is especially evident in Tinos, where the place's sacredness is experienced both imaginatively and bodily. For example, many people commence their worship performance directly after they embark from the ferry. Being driven by the power of the place and by a sudden sense of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975), they can be seen crawling from the port of Tinos until the Church of the Annunciation, a distance of about 1 km, to reach the icon that acts as a magnet pole. Georgia, for instance, neglecting the guide's instruction to wait for the other group-members to disembark in order to be counted, left her luggage to one of her co-travellers and with tears in her eyes ran away to the church. As Keenan and Arweck (2006, p.15) argue, in commenting on Appadurai's (1986) religious life of material things, "these silent, serene and scarred monuments to historic faiths cry Holy, Holy, Holy". As will be further discussed next, influenced by the notion of affect through doing, various ways of religious encounter have been identified resulting in different understandings of religious experience, in which objects play a crucial role.

Materials as vessels of sacredness

Religious tourists' closeness to the Virgin Mary through their very being in Tinos, and thus, through their embodied practices allow them "to experience not only the landscape but perhaps also [themselves] in an unusual and vivid way" (Porteous, 1996, p.23). Tasoula, for example, a female in her forties who suffered badly from pain and exhaustion after several chemotherapies, embodied the Virgin Mary's miraculous power, as she said that her pain dissolved by the very act of setting foot on Tinos, equal to Reader's (2006) religious tourists in Shikoku, who attributed every event on pilgrimage to the deity's will. As Tasoula said of her experience: *I walked to the church, I ascended the hill on foot… and keep in mind that I had just undergone chemotherapy… and in spite of my body being exhausted, I didn't feel tired at all*". Similarly, Janna shared: "*I suddenly had tears in my eyes… without my will…*!"

The body acts as a medium through which people can expand their knowledge of the world and experience states of becoming through doing (Barsalou, Barbey, Simmons, & Santos, 2005). The icon of the Virgin Mary is something more than a representation of otherness, as it transmits superiority, equal to Appadurai's (1986) fetishes that acquire human-like attributes and exercise power on people. The corporeal contact with the icon is, especially for some people, very important, and accordingly, the practice of touching it with their hands or with other parts of the human body is a common observation. Giorgos, who has undergone many brain surgeries, explained the effect his bodily interplay with the icon had on him: *When you reach the icon you remain with your head bowed, you try to pray… you cross yourself… I don't know why, but I feel such a tremendous help when I lean my head, my forehead on the pane that covers the icon*".

The power of objects on people is further revealed in viewing how the miraculous icon mobilizes and materialises religious tourists' behaviour, and ascribes sacredness even to secular encounters. Embodying the Virgin Mary as opposed to merely depicting her, the icon differentiates itself from other objects. As Sofia said: "*Here* [in Tinos] *is the home of the Virgin Mary and the icon… the icon IS the Virgin Mary and this is why we want to touch it, to kiss it or even place items on it*!" [emphasis is in its original]. Working from within the sacred environment of Tinos, religious tourists were observed inventing strategies for saving some of the icon's sacredness. Like mediators between the sacred and the secular, they buy objects from the commercial street of Tinos and bring them into contact with the miraculous icon to mediate sacredness. Elsa, for example, bought several gifts for her family, which she then took to the church:

"*… as soon as I bought the slippers we went to the church again, we lit the candles… I thanked her… I crossed my children's slippers three times on the icon and said: 'My Virgin Mary, let his steps be clean and honest', this was my prayer to the Virgin Mary. Oh! I forgot to tell you that I also bought a shirt for my brother and another one for my husband.. that I crossed too… to get blessed as well…*".

The physical contact with the very materiality of the icon is of decisive importance in transforming everyday items into containers and refractions of a divine essence. Soula, for example, said: "*I crossed it* [the rosary] *on the icon … it is like touching the Virgin Mary. I have illuminated it*". Through material performances everyday objects not only become 'traps' of a particular deity's grace, but also portable vessels of sacredness. As seen next, places, and as such a deity's grace, which is entrenched in places, are seen as travelling themselves (Baerenholdt et al., 2004; Sheller & Urry, 2004), within networks of human and non-human agents.

Materials as prolonging sacredness - the sacred out of there

Sacred places are newly created in secular spaces being the result of a co-construction of humans and materials and their relational agency, the interplays between religious tourists and material aspects making up and defining religious spaces and the performances in them. For instance, religious tourists' experience and activity in sacred places can affect changes in familiar spaces of home (Hui, 2009). Danay, for example, uses the holy water she brought from the island to free people from '*the evil's eye*' (Danay) - the forces surrounding the bodies that are believed to be responsible for their misfortunes, as well as releasing positive energy and improving a place's aura. As she stated, for example:

"*When I don't feel well in my home, when I am distressed, when I quarrel with my husband* [she laughs], *then I make holy water rites, I mean, I sprinkle the holy water in the house, on our bed, on the walls, everywhere. I air the place as I say..*"

Such holy water rites increase feelings of relief and inner peace contributing to one's daily survival. Similarly, Katia, explained how the holy water she collected in Tinos helps her in her everyday life:

"*When you suffer from something, you drink it and it does you good. It is blessed water. So if there is something wrong… or you feel pain, you anoint yourself with it. Making the sign of the cross, you cross yourself with the water wherever you feel pain… and you think 'it helps me'. And many times it really helps…*".

Holy water constitutes a tangible, visible form of sacredness that can be saved and consumed whenever needed, being part of the mechanisms of getting along in life. Homes can, therefore, become sites for religious experience, as sacredness penetrates people's everyday lives, in that, the ordinary, the everyday, joins with the sacred icon to become what Harrison (2001, p.170) terms "the extraordinary, the special". As vessels of sacredness, items obtained from the island transmit sacred energy to the humanly imperfect world outside, making the religious material possessions an expected part of believers' lives, which may explain their endowment effect (Shtudiner et al., 2019). As Nicky, for example, commented: "*The most valuable thing we got was the holy water and the oil from the Virgin Mary! And imagine that I thought I forgot it in my hotel room, because I couldn't find it anywhere* [she laughs loudly]. *Fortunately, oh my Virgin Mary* [she crosses herself], *I found it in my handbag*!!".

Materials as communication tools

Objects speak in their own unique way. Witnessing the sacred through the material, Elsa, for example, recounted:

"*After the liturgy we went to the shops, and I bought this plaster shrine* [she points to a big imitation of the Church of the Annunciation of Tinos, which stood on a table in the corner of her living-room]… *then I returned to the church and because it was so crowded I asked a church official to cross it for me on the icon. And then he gave it back to me and while I was putting it in my bag it suddenly started flashing on and off…! 'Thank you Virgin Mary', I said, 'for showing me your sign, thank you'…*"

Such communication is not only exemplified through individual objects, but also through a synergy of pairs of objects that jointly cause agency. For instance, functioning as hybrids, believers' offerings (the so called *tamata*) and the icon, are observed to work together in elevating the place's religious significance and triggering peoples' actions. In particular, since *tamata* are usually offered as a thanksgiving, their presence represents proof of miracles accomplished by the icon of the Virgin Mary of Tinos that is indirectly anointed as being the solution to human suffering. Commemorating Virgin Mary's graces, such *tamata* 'speak' and denote things to people. Lia stated, for example, "*looking at the many offerings* [tamata], *I thought 'oh my God, how many people have been cured by the miraculous icon! It is amazing… it gives you hope…*'. The powerful and supportive relationship between the offerings and the miraculous icon, therefore, entices many people to engage in practices of wish-making and offer-making in anticipation of a better future. As Sofia said: "*When I saw all these offerings… I was so overwhelmed. Yes, I was so overwhelmed and happy that I made a wish too*!"

Such actions are especially noticed among people with health issues. Indeed, the interior of the church is heavily decorated with embossed metallic plaques, depicting different representations based on each one's problem, such as legs for the handicapped or eyes for the blind. Other *tamata* include hanging ships said to be offerings made by fishermen who survived storms. Equal to the effect of postcards (Waitt & Head, 2002) and of photographs (Scarles, 2009), so do *tamata* transfer religious people back to the past and to sacred realms, inscribing Tinos with memories of happy endings and victorious stories (Selwyn, 1996; Tilley, 2006; Waitt & Head, 2002), as they constitute tangible proofs of the icon's religious grace so far. Therefore, some of the offerings purposively left in the church are made from pure gold. Big donations and testaments to the church are not rare cases, especially when huge vows were fulfilled.

An on-going flow of offerings is observed in the case of consumable objects, such as olive oil, wax or self-made consecrated bread (*prosforo*), that are brought by the believers and left in the basement of the church. As Janna explained: "*To the Saints you promise to bring olive oil and wax; the oil for the oil-candles, which are lighted in the churches with olive oil and the wax is used by the church to make the candles we believers light…*' It is believed by some that offerings left behind by believers have the power to communicate and remind the deity of particular quests. Ioanna stated, for example, that "*When she* [the Virgin Mary] *sees your oil-candle she thinks of you…she never forgets you!*". Through such embodied material encounters religious tourists ensure connectedness to the Virgin Mary and feelings of security by pinning their hopes on her.

Resembling Bourdieu's (1991) institutionally structured performance of gift exchange, such material demonstrations add economic value to the Church of the Annunciation, maintaining and supplying its existence. Accordingly, while the display of *tamata* is admired by some people, by others it is viewed with criticism acquiring a different than planned sign-value, which is rather linked to Weber's (2001) understanding of religion as 'emotional propaganda'. Janna, for example, recounted how she moved away from the sight of offerings hanging on the miraculous icon, and chose another non-distractive place in the church:

"*I walked away from the icon of the Virgin Mary and went to the iconostasis. There is the Virgin Mary too but without offerings around her. I felt much more devoutness there, than in front of the miraculous icon of the Virgin Mary, because you cannot see her there, so covered with offerings it is. To be honest – God forgive me- but aren't so many offerings really a planned enticement for the pilgrims?*"

Accordingly, the aesthetic value of religious items matters and influences religious tourists. Specifically, for some religious tourists, the spatial distribution of offerings and the provocative effect of their display, are staged rather than arbitrary, and diminish the real meanings of the icon. Indeed, the icon's aesthetic details are hardly discernible due to the numerous offerings that are placed around it (Fig. 6), creating multiple feelings, even uneasiness, as people's expectations of the icon's appearance, as created by the religious tradition, do not always match with the actual view. Lia, for example, said:

"*I can't honestly tell you if I liked it. You search for the Virgin Mary's face but you cannot find it* [it is covered with offerings]… *Sometimes you see I am contemplating about such… because usually only something that I like can bring me… you know... In fact, while I was praying I also asked for apology from the Virgin Mary for my thoughts because I didn't want her to believe that I just went there out of curiosity to see if the icon is nice or not* [she laughs]."

Fig. 6. Icon of the Virgin Mary: the original and then covered with offerings.
(Source: Christian Orthodox, www.xristianos.net, 2012)

Conclusions

This paper aimed to re-materialise religious tourism acknowledging the importance of objects in the creation of religious experiences. Following post-human perspectives (Haldrup & Larsen, 2006; Latour, 2013; Miller, 1987; Picken, 2010; Walsh & Tucker, 2009), it shed light into the complex pathways of the human non-human entanglements acknowledging not only sign and use value, as directed by religions and social understandings, but also the notions of affect and agency that allow for different modes of understanding and performance, in which the material nature plays an essential role.

Specifically, the *systemic function of objects* has been introduced, according to which symbols and metaphors are important in communicating values and creating religious experiences. Yet, the main theoretical contribution of this research lies in underlining the affective dimension of doing religious tourism. It is argued that people's actual engagement *with* the world of signs, which is exemplified through materials, can enable alternative ways of religious encounter, what is named here *improvisational function of objects*, resulting in multiple intensive feelings and different understandings of religious experience. Accordingly, while Bourdieu's theory of habitus is evidenced in sacred places, according to which religions instruct material performances directing people to look *through* the objects, so as to achieve conformity and obedience, the spirit *of* matter is also supported here, transforming the matter itself (its thingness) into something sacred that enables multiple feelings (both positive and negative) and alternative usages.

Religious oriented tourism epitomises an emotional laden travelling, encouraging material action that intends to activate the five senses in an attempt to move into new realms that entail the spiritual, non-human, and therefore unknown. Through bodily contact with powerful religious objects, such as the touching of the miraculous icon of the Virgin Mary of Tinos, it has been found that the sacredness can be experienced and collected through feelings such as awe, mental relaxation and cure. This is not only evidenced in the case of individual objects but also in pairs of objects that can jointly generate agency directing human actions and thoughts, as exemplified in the relationship between the offerings and the icon. The power of objects' materiality and their subject-like nature was further manifested in their ability to communicate sacredness through their thingness. The sudden blinking of the plaster shrine right after crossing it on the icon exemplified such a case to its owner embodying a sign of the Virgin Mary. Materials become portable vessels of sacredness after being brought in contact with the icon and allow the sacredness to be experienced on and off-site. Religious tourists' homes and everyday lives become sites for religious experience, as sacredness penetrates in their daily lives through the materials brought from the island, such as holy water or other enlightened objects. Such objects assist in people's daily survival transmitting essential religious feelings, such as purification from the evil, connectedness to the Virgin Mary and finding inner peace.

Accordingly, while Greek Orthodox pilgrimage is goal-centred as it is place/church-entrenched (e.g. veneration of icon), it is argued here that religious oriented tourism does not constitute a series of static moments through which believers move. The Greek Orthodox religious tourist enjoys the multiple and fluid tourist experiences that post-modern theories suggest, in that she/he is observed participating interchangeably in a variety of different performances, both institutional and individual, being driven by the materials surrounding them. Nevertheless, as this study is limited to one Greek Orthodox religious site, future research could benefit

from examining material performances in other places too in order to identify and interpret additional practices that are affected by different belief systems and geographies.

To conclude, while previous studies emphasize the importance of managing the coexistence of tourists and believers in religious places (Henderson, 2003; Shackley, 2001), it is of equal importance to focus and manage the religious ambience of the place for the believers themselves. The vitality of an orthologic spatial distribution of objects on-site in avoiding misunderstandings and in pertaining the religious ambience is a key managerial implication highlighted here. Spaces overloaded with offerings have, for example, been criticised by some participants as being provocative and creating uneasiness, thus obtaining different than institutionally anticipated values and meanings to its adherents. The carefully planned distribution of things in religious spaces as well as the appearance of religious objects in sacred places are important in enhancing religious experiences. Balancing sacred and secular realms, the display of objects, and especially of offerings, needs to be planned in a way signifying pure thought and innocence. Accordingly, future research may consider a more in-depth exploration of the positioning and display of objects in sacred places and their effect on religious tourists in eliminating their negative associations. Acknowledging the importance of objects in religious life, church authorities and private companies could benefit from a shared spatial plan of objects that takes into consideration believers' feelings, maximising objects' usages and enabling a powerful religious experience.

References

Alexander, J. C. (2008). Iconic consciousness: The material feeling of meaning. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 26*, 782–794.
Andriotis, K. (2011). Genres of heritage authenticity: Denotations from a pilgrimage landscape. *Annals of Tourism Research, 38*(4), 1613–1633.
Appadurai, A. (1986). *The social life of things: Commodities in cultural perspective.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Baerenholdt, J., Haldrup, M., Larsen, J., & Urry, J. (2004). *Performing tourist places.* Aldershot: Ashgate.
Barnard, L. (1977). The theology of images. In A. Bryer, & J. Herrin (Eds.). *Iconoclasm*. Birmingham: University of Birmingham, Centre for Byzantine Studies.
Barsalou, L. W., Barbey, A. K., Simmons, W. K., & Santos, A. (2005). Embodiment in religious knowledge. *Journal of Cognition and Culture, 5*(1–2), 14–57.
Belhassen, Y., Caton, K., & Steward, W. (2008). The search for authenticity in the pilgrim experience. *Annals of Tourism Research, 35*(3), 668–689.
Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The logic of practice.* Cambridge: Polity Press.
Bourdieu, P. (1991). Genesis and structure of the religious field. *Comparative Social Research, 13*, 1–44.
Bowman, M. (2016). The contented collector: Materiality, relationality and the power of things. *Material Religion, 12*(3), 384–386.
Brox, T. (2019). The aura of Buddhist material objects in the age of mass-production. *Journal of Global Buddhism, 20*, 105–125.
Cloke, P., & Perkins, H. C. (2005). Cetacean performance and tourism in Kaikoura, New Zealand. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 23*, 903–924.
Coleman, S. (2014). Pilgrimage as trope for an anthropology of Christianity. *Current Anthropology, 55*(10), 281–291.
Coleman, S., & Eade, J. (2004). *Reframing pilgrimage: Cultures in motion.* London: Routledge.
Collins-Kreiner, N., & Zins, Y. (2013). With the passing of time: The changing meaning of souvenirs. In I. Cave, L. Jolliffe, & T. Baum (Eds.). *Tourism and souvenirs: Glocal perspectives from the margins*. Bristol: Channel View Publications.
Costall, A. P. (1997). The meaning of things. *Social Analysis, 41*(1), 76–86.
Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1975). Play and intrinsic rewards. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 15*(3), 41–63.
Cummins, R. (1975). Functional explanation. *The Journal of Philosophy, 72*, 741–764.
Doney, S. (2014). The sacred economy: Devotional objects as sacred presence for German Catholics in Aachen and Trier, 1832-1937. *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage, 1*(1), 62–71.
Dubisch, J. (1995). *In a different place: Pilgrimage, gender, and politics at a Greek Island shrine.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Durkheim, E., 1964 [1915], The elementary forms of the religious life, trans. J.W. Swain, London: George Allen and Unwin.
Edensor, T. (1998). *Tourists at the Taj: Performance and meaning at a symbolic site.* London: Routledge.
Edensor, T. (2000). Staging tourism; tourists as performers. *Annals of Tourism Research, 27*(2), 322–344.
Eliade, M. (1959). *The sacred and the profane: The nature of religion.* New York: Harvest.
Elkin, J. (1997). *The object stares back; on the nature of seeing.* London: Harvest.
Franklin, A. (2004). Tourism as an ordering: Towards a new ontology of tourism. *Tourist Studies, 4*(3), 277–301.
Franklin, A. (2008). A choreography of fire: A Posthumanist account. In A. Pickering, & K. Guzik (Eds.). *The mangle in practice: Science, society and becoming* (pp. 17–45). London: Duke.
Gell, A. (2013). *Art and agency; an anthropological theory.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Gibson, C. (2014). Souvenirs, materialities and animal encounters: Following Texas cowboy boots. *Tourist Studies, 14*(3), 286–301.
Gil, J. (1998). *Metamorphoses of the Body, transl. By S. Muecke.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
Haland, E. J. (2012). The Dormition of the Virgin Mary on the Island of Tinos: A performance of gendered values in Greece. *Journal of Religious History, 36*(1), 89–117.
Haldrup, M., & Larsen, J. (2006). Material cultures of tourism. *Leisure Studies, 25*(3), 275–289.
Harrison, J. (2001). Thinking about tourists. *International Sociology, 16*(2), 159–172.
Hashimoto, A., & Telfer, D. J. (2007). Geographical representations embedded within souvenirs in Niagara: The case of geographically displaced authenticity. *Tourism Geographies, 9*(2), 191–217.
Hegel, G. W. (1991). In A. W. Wood, & t. H. B. Nisbet (Eds.). *Elements of the philosophy of right.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Henderson, J. C. (2003). Managing tourism and Islam in Peninsular Malaysia. *Tourism Management, 24*(4), 447–456.
Houlihan, M. (2000). Souvenirs with soul: 800 years of pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. 2000 In M. Hitchcock, & K. Teague (Eds.). *Souvenirs: The material culture of tourism.* London: Ashgate.
Hui, A. (2009). Many homes for tourism: Re-considering spatializations of home and away in tourism mobilities. *Tourist Studies, 8*(3), 291–311.
Hume, D. L. (2014). *Tourism art and souvenirs: The material culture of tourism.* London: Routledge.
Ingold, T. (2000). Making culture and weaving the world. In P. M. Graves-Brown (Ed.). *Matter, materiality and modern culture* (pp. 50–71). London: Routledge.
Kariotoglou, A., Kesopoulous, A., Papaeuagelou, P., & Tsananas, G. (1997). *Christianity and religions.* Athens: Organisation for publishing teaching books.
Kaufman, S. (2005). *Consuming visions: Mass culture and the Lourdes shrine.* New York: Cornell University Press.
Keane, W. (2003). Semiotics and the social analysis of material things. *Language and Communication, 23*, 409–425.
Keane, W. (2007). *Christian moderns: Freedom and fetish in the mission encounter.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
Keenan, W., & Arweck, E. (2006). Introduction: Material varieties of religious expression. In E. Arweck, & W. Keenan (Eds.). *2006, Materializing Religion; Expression, Performance and Ritual* (pp. 1–20). Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing.
Latour, B. (2000). When things strike back: A possible contribution of `science studies' to the social sciences. *British Journal of Sociology, 51*(1), 107–123.
Latour, B. (2013). *An inquiry into modes of existence: An anthropology of the moderns.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Latour, B., & Weibel (2002). Iconoclash. *Beyond the image wars.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
Loveland, K. A. (1991). Social affordances and interaction II: Autism and the affordances of the human environment. *Ecological Psychology, 3*, 99–119.
Martin, B. (2006). The aesthetics of Latin American Pentecostalism: The sociology of religion and the problem of taste. In E. Arweck, & W. Keenan (Vol. Eds.), *Materializing religion: Expression, performance and ritual. Vol. 2006*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing.
Meyer, B., Morgan, D., Paine, C., & Plate, S. B. (2010). The origin and mission of material religion. *Religion,* 1–5.
Michael, M. (2000). *Reconnecting culture: Technology and nature – From society to heterogeneity.* London: Routledge.
Miller, D. (1987). *Material culture and mass consumption.* Oxford: Berg.

Miller, D. (2002). *Should objects be called agents?* Working paperDepartment of Anthropology, University College London.
Morgan, D. (2016). The materiality of sacred economies. *Material Religion in Conversation, 11*(3), 387–391.
Morgan, N., & Pritchard, A. (2005). On souvenirs and metonymy: Narratives of memory, metaphor and materiality. *Tourist Studies, 5*(1), 29–53.
Moufahim, M., & Lichrou, M. (2019). Pilgrimage, consumption and rituals: Spiritual authenticity in a Shia Muslim pilgrimage. *Tourism Management, 70*(2019), 322–332.
Muecke, S., & Wergin, C. (2014). Materialities of tourism in the twenty-first century: A very brief introduction. *Tourist Studies, 14*(3), 227–230.
Nolan, M., & Nolan, S. (1989). *Christian Pilgrimage in Modern Western Europe.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
Olsen, D. (2017). Other journeys of creation: Non-representational theory, co-creation, failure, and the soul. *Tourism Recreation Research, 42*(1), 120–124.
O'Reilly, K. (2005). *Ethnographic methods.* London: Routledge.
Paraskevaidis, P., & Andriotis, K. (2015). Values of souvenirs as commodities. *Tourism Management, 48*, 1–10.
Pargament, K., Smith, B., Koenig, H., & Perez, L. (1998). Patterns of positive and negative religious coping with major life stressors. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 37*(4), 710–724.
Pentcheva, B. V. (2006). *Icon and power: The mother of god in Byzantium.* Pennsylvania State University Press.
Picken, F. (2010). Tourism, design and controversy: Calling on non-humans to explain ourselves. *Tourist Studies, 10*(3), 245–263.
Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. (1999). *The experience economy: Work is theater and every business a stage.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press.
Porteous, D. (1996). *Environmental aesthetics: Ideas, politics and planning.* London: Routledge.
Reader, I. (2006). *Making pilgrimages; meaning and practice in Shikoku.* USA: Hawai'i Press.
Sallnow, M. (1987). *Pilgrims of the Andes: Regional cults in Cusco.* Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.
Saunders, M. K., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research methods for business students* (8th ed.). Harlow: Pearson.
Saussure, (1959 [1966]). *Course in General Linguistics*. New York: McGraw Hill.
Scarles, C. (2009). Becoming tourist: Renegotiating the visual in the tourist experience. *Environment & Planning D: Society and Space, 27*(3), 465–488.
Schutz, A., 1962, Collected papers, Vol. 1. In: M. Natason (Ed. and trans.), The problems of social reality. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.
Selwyn, T. (1996). *The tourist image.* London: Wiley.
Shackley, M. (2001). *Managing sacred sites: Service provision and visitor experience.* London: Continuum.
Sheller, M., & Urry, J. (2004). *Tourism Mobilities: Places to play, places in play*. London: Routledge.
Shenhav-Keller, S. (1993). The Israeli souvenir: Its text and context. *Annals of Tourism Research, 20*, 182–196.
Shtudiner, Z., Klein, G., Zwilling, M., & Kantor, J. (2019). The value of souvenirs: Endowment effect and religion. *Annals of Tourism Research, 74*, 17–32.
Sinha, V. (2017). Made in Singapore: Conceiving, making and using ritual objects in Hindu domains. In J. Konig, & G. Njoto-Feillard (Eds.). *New religiosities, modern capitalism and moral complexities in Southeast Asia* (pp. 247–263). Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.
Swanson, K., & Timothy, D. J. (2012). Souvenirs: Icons of meaning, commercialization and commoditization. *Tourism Management, 33*(3), 489–499.
Terzidou, M., Stylidis, D., & Szivas, E. (2008). Residents' perceptions of religious tourism and its socio-economic impacts on the island of Tinos. *Tourism and Hospitality Planning and Development, 5*(2), 113–129.
Terzidou, M., Scarles, C., & Saunders, M. N. K. (2017). Religiousness as tourist performances: A case study of Greek Orthodox pilgrimage. *Annals of Tourism Research, 66*, 116–129.
Terzidou, M., Stylidis, D., & Terzidis, K. (2018). The role of visual media in religious tourists' destination image, choice, and on-site experience: the case of Tinos, Greece. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 35*(3), 306–319.
Thrift, N. (2004). Intensities of feeling: Towards a spatial politics of affect. *Geografiska Annaler, 86B*(1), 57–78.
Tilley, C. (2006). Introduction: Identity, place, landscape and heritage. *Journal of Material Culture, 11*(1/2), 7–32.
Turner, V., & Turner, E. (1978). *Image and pilgrimage in Christian culture: Anthropological perspectives.* New York: Columbia University Press.
Voloshinov, V. (1986). *Marxism and the philosophy of language.* USA: Harvard University Press.
Waitt, G., & Head, L. (2002). Postcards and frontier mythologies: Sustaining views of the Kimberley as timeless. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 20*(3), 319–344.
Walsh, N., & Tucker, H. (2009). Tourism 'things': The travelling performance of the backpack. *Tourist Studies, 9*(3), 223–239.
Ware, T. (1993). Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia*The orthodox church* (3rd ed.). New York: Penguin Books.
Wearing, S. L., McDonald, M., & Ankor, J. (2016). Journeys of creation: Experiencing the unknown, the other and authenticity as an epiphany of the self. *Tourism Recreation Research, 41*(2), 157–167.
Weber, M. ([1930] 2001). The protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, trans. Talcott parsons. Routledge. London and New York: Routledge.
Whatmore, S. (2002). *Hybrid geographies.* London: Sage.

Matina Terzidou is a Lecturer in Tourism at Middlesex University London. Her research focuses on religious and heritage tourism, tourism impacts and development.