

1 Introduction to Spiritual and Religious Journeys

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The aim of this book is to provide insight into the development and management of sacred journeys, and the varying motivations for undertaking such journeys. The range of topics will include traditional aspects of sacred journeys and pilgrimage, as well as introducing less orthodox applications of theory to the world of sport and beyond, exploring the roles of people, objects and place in sacred journeys. As cultural experience changes and develops, and people search for fulfilment, spiritual meaning can be found in many different activities, in a quest for authenticity, identity and meaning.

Tourism facilitates the growth in globalization through enabling encounters between individuals and groups from different cultures and traditions, and religion makes an important contribution to that expansion, through religious and spiritual tourists, as well as the destinations and artefacts they visit, and the activities in which they participate. Whether travellers adhere to a specific faith or spiritual worldview, or not, there is a manifestly significant increase in tourism by spiritual seekers of transcendent experiences, in addition to the worshipful journeyings of religious believers of many faiths. It is apparent that travelling for the purposes of religious and/or spiritual enlightenment and connection, along with higher numbers of faith adherents, will also contribute to the increase and

make a wider contribution to swell the coffers of global tourism providers in markets around the world. Such growth mirrors the burgeoning events sector, and alongside these developments comes a need for professionalization and management of destinations (e.g. the holy city of Makkah), and of associated events. This book aims to add to the body of knowledge on forms of and motivations for religious tourism.

In contrast to earlier research that focused on the management of sacred sites and their visitors (Shackley, 2000, 2001; Raj and Morpeth, 2007), this book encompasses the wider aspects of both spiritual and religious tourism, with the focus on the traveller and the tourist experience, rather than the destination. The growing popularity of spiritual and religious tourism is evidenced by the Brussels-based secular organization, Future for Religious Heritage (no date), that works collaboratively with the European Commission on matters of religious heritage (European Commission, 2014). In 2016, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) recognized religious tourism as being one of the fastest growing segments within the travel industry, with an estimated 300 million tourists visiting major religious destinations annually, with some 600 million national and international religious journeys being undertaken. The expansion into

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spiritual as well as religious tourism indicates that, as with sacred sites, increasing numbers require management and operational processes, trained staff (who are increasingly professionalized), and reducing reliance on volunteers to undertake core tasks and activities. We have learned from respected research such as that by Raj and Griffin (2015) and Shackley (2001) that strategic planning has become a necessary element in enabling this growth, as financial elements move towards commercialization, as distinguished from the traditional not-for-profit characteristics that typified the oversight and control of such sacred sites in the past.

It is still possible for small groups of pilgrims to travel together on their own planned itinerary – whether as local church groups visiting the Holy Land led by their vicar, or a posse of Christian motorcycling enthusiasts rallying their way round sacred locations in the UK. The evolving definitions of ‘religious’ and ‘spiritual’ are considered, as many people no longer identify themselves as ‘religious’. In the last UK Census of 2011, the Office of National Statistics research analysis focused on changes in the religious beliefs of Christians, Muslims and those with no religion (ONS, 2013). Some 59% of the UK population at that time (some 33.2 million people) reported that they were Christian. Meanwhile, numbers regularly attending traditional churches continued to fall, and the number of people who identified as having ‘no religion’ continued to rise, reaching a quarter of the population (some 14.1 million people), and growing across all age groups. So, while traditional Christianity appears to be declining in the UK, a trend mirrored across Western Europe and North America, elsewhere, numbers of religious adherents – both Christians and Muslims – are developing rapidly. This expansion is reflected in diverse localities and communities in the developed nations, and is largely situated in evangelistic religious communities, as they successfully gain new believers.

Despite falling numbers of people who attend places of worship on a regular basis, there is significant development of interest in spirituality, in spiritual events and practices, underpinning the proliferation of opportunities for spiritual tourism. Those who are spiritually inclined can take a path towards enlightenment by choosing from the plethora of books published

over the past 50 years, from authors such as Paul Coelho (*The Alchemist*, 1993), to Rhonda Byrne’s *The Secret* (2004) that was popularized by the 2006 film of the same name, greatly influencing this cultural context. Dismissed by some as ‘New Age’, the choices open to those of that persuasion have broadened to include spiritual journeys, not only as tourists, but even as pilgrims. Meanwhile, the passions of some sports fans, in an age that spurns ‘religious’ labels, quickly embraces the deep and spiritual experiences often found at sports events. And sacred spaces might equally be found by journeying to music festivals such as Glastonbury (Robinson, 2016), or even at an illegal rave (Dowson *et al.*, 2015).

As the editors of this book our spiritual and religious journey experiences have influenced not only the development of the book, but connected to our daily lives and bonded us together through our mutual scholarly and pedagogical perspectives of the study of events management and practitioners of our faiths. The book’s origins began in the traditional home and burial place of Rumi, the great 13th-century Sufi poet, in Konya, Turkey. This ancient city, situated in the Anatolian flatlands of central Turkey, played host in 2015 to a conference of academics from around the world, whose primary interest lay in religious tourism and pilgrimage. As we gathered together within this close-knit nurturing academic community to present papers and discuss our subject, we were immersed in a cultural environment that engaged us in new and different perspectives. Together, we visited Rumi’s shrine and the Mevlâna Museum, and wandered in the heat through the Neolithic settlement of Catal Huyuk, one of the most ancient human communities, dating from 7500 BCE. We experienced the fascinating ceremony of the whirling dervishes with enchanting music and sparkling dramatic movement, and reflected in the quiet stillness of the Greek Orthodox Church of Aya Elenia, in nearby Sille, a place of worship commissioned by the Empress Helena (St Helen) in the 4th century, which is now a museum. In all these experiences, along with the rest of our group, we became tourists and pilgrims – transformed from religious tourists to pilgrims, from secular cultural visitors to undertaking a sacred journey. And so, in this apt environment, the idea of this book was born.

The International Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Conference has met since 2003, and in 2017 we convened again in Italy, near Lake Orta, the location of our cover photograph, kindly taken by one of our hosts, Ms Daniella Sbarro. So the book's own journey of formation epitomizes its content. We have travelled together, on spiritual and religious journeys, just as we have engaged with the authors of our varied chapters contained within this volume.

The general discourse about whether a pilgrim is a tourist, and vice versa, is generally constructed as a continuum where people are not one or the other, but some combination. When the religious tourism and pilgrimage research group met in Konya, the touristic elements included watching a performance of the whirling dervishes. It was a highly immersive experience for the whole group, but a different experience for each of us. As we walked back into Konya for an evening meal, some of us shared our experiences of the event and began to reflect together. We became aware that we had found ourselves at different points on the 'tourist-worshipper' continuum, at different times, as shown in Fig. 1.1. As we observed those around us, we interpreted their responses, as well as our own, as being, at different points, worshippers and observers – whether interested and engaged, or not. The dancers started in a slow movement, like a procession, which resembled processions into church at the start of a service,

with choir followed by clergy. There was singing; and music; and dancing. Sometimes together, sometimes not. As we watched, the movements resembled the liturgical motions of priest and worshippers, as arms were crossed, uncrossed, folded and raised in the air. Did the arm movements have a symbolic meaning, a metaphor, as we searched for detail in the actions? For some, music and singing are how they connect with God, how they engage in the transcendent, they lose themselves, enfolded in God, lost in wonder and awe. As we observed others in the audience, our own usual practice in worship was influencing our interpretation of what we saw and heard. Our own meaning in a worship context became the meaning we ascribed to those around us, as we perhaps assumed they were experiencing the same feelings, both dancers and others watching from the audience.

The diagram in Fig. 1.1 indicates that as an academic, the event is experienced through an additional lens, which is that of being an academic, in addition to the tourist-pilgrim (worshipper) dynamic. The academic element of being an observer was searching for explanations for the observed response behaviours.

Our experience through the event was not static, however; the positioning varied throughout the event, as indicated in Fig. 1.2 – resembling a journey between the constructs of worshipper and tourist. This concept of journey provides a powerful metaphor for motivations; the inner

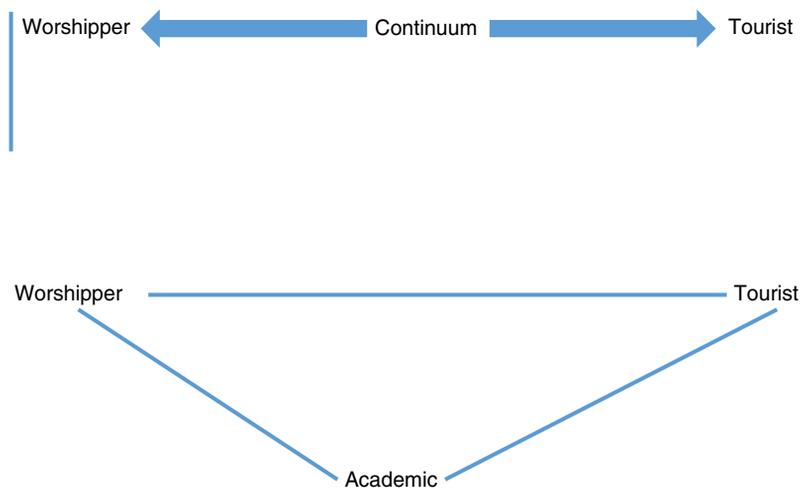


Fig. 1.1. The 'tourist-worshipper' continuum; the academic views events through an additional lens.

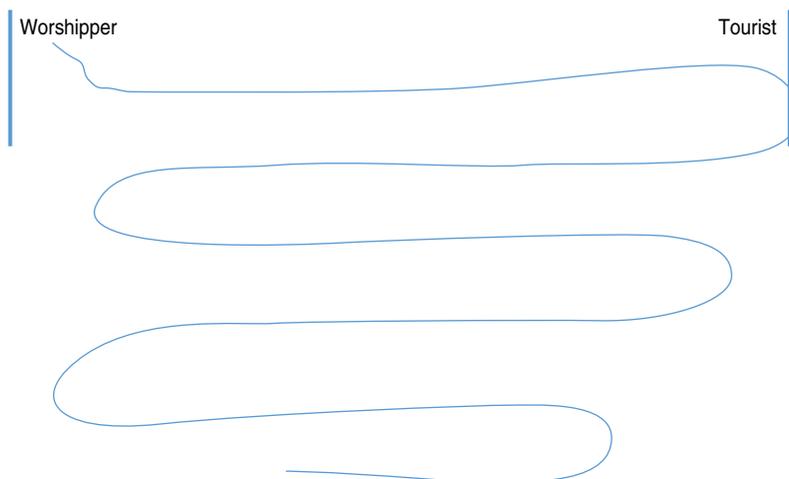


Fig. 1.2. The 'tourist-worshipper' continuum is not static, the position varying throughout an event.

journey often mirrors the physical journey as self-discovery reflects the geographical discovery of new sacred places.

Spiritual tourism might include a range of different aspects, some of which are covered in this volume, while others remain to be researched in the future, such as the spiritual aspects of well-being that might emerge in the tourism sector. Recent literature on pilgrimages and religious tourism has emphasized the importance of the management of religious events, from the perspective of a marketing strategy approach, to promote religious spectacles in different places. The book is divided into three distinct parts. Part 1 aims to contribute towards the development of theoretical perspectives in the field. Part 2 undertakes studies of the processes and impacts of managing motivational elements of spiritual journeys, and Part 3 contains international case studies. Our chapter authors range from as far afield as Aotearoa New Zealand, Japan and Brazil, along with contributions from Malta, Sweden, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey and the UK.

Overview of Chapters

The following is an overview of each of the chapters in the book.

In Chapter 2, Ruth Dowson offers a comprehensive understanding of the ritual in religious

or spiritual activities, applying the concept to the context of sacred journeys. The chapter also considers pilgrimages to be a 'typical' form of journey undertaken for religious or spiritual purposes; other contributors to this book demonstrate a much broader interpretation. Sacred journeys are interpreted by some as including the whole of life, as individuals and groups journey separately or together, from birth through to death. This chapter also discusses the definition of what is 'sacred', developing new nuances of meaning, acknowledging the depth of experience and engagement with the transcendent in acts and activities that traditionally bear no resemblance or connection to religion or the practice of faith.

In Chapter 3, M. Jabar Yaqub demonstrates and explores the motivations of individuals attending the annual pilgrimage of Hajj, which is one of the main pillars of faith in Islam and an obligation on every Muslim to complete at least once in their lifetime. Hajj originated over 4000 years ago in the valley of Makkah in Saudi Arabia which was an uninhabited land. Today, up to 2 million Muslims travel to the holy cities of Makkah and Medina in Saudi Arabia to complete the Hajj. The chapter further highlights the development of the country from a commercial aspect as well as the use of modern technology to communicate and educate the pilgrim. Further developments are planned for the holy cities and the scope of the project is to

highlight whether the motivations of the attendees are changing from pilgrim to tourist. Chapter 3 also discusses that alongside visiting Makkah, pilgrims visit the holy city of Medina Munawwara in which the shrine of the last Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him (PBUH)) of the Islamic tradition resides.

In Chapter 4, Maximiliano E. Korstanje examines the concept of the increasing growth of Islamic tourism in recent years. Some voices have interrogated the impact of the secular nature of tourism in a religious society. Middle East nations are traditional and religion-based cultures, which gradually introduced tourism and other Western lifestyles into their cultural background. This chapter proposes two significant assumptions. The first is that it is time to reconsider tourism as a recently born industry as well as its influence of rational industrialism. This is in sharp contrast to MacCannell's view, who envisaged a model to understand tourism that was opposed to tribal life. Tourism appealed to secularized societies in the same way that the figure of Totem appealed to Aboriginal tribal societies. The second viewpoint is that some scholars are claiming that the countries of the Middle East are losing their traditional values by embracing tourism as the icon of a new (more rational) perspective. The chapter discusses contributions and limitations of Islamic tourism to date, while thinking of tourism as something other than a simple Westerner's industry, which was the view of the economic-centre paradigm.

In Chapter 5, Özlem Güzel and Ayça Sariyildiz offer an analysis of spiritual tourism and its motivations. It argues that as a result of today's stressful city life, materialism and overexposure to constantly evolving technological developments, the vast majority of today's individuals have begun to drown in negative feelings such as alienation, loneliness, stress and spiritual emptiness. This has led them to be more interested in the concept of spiritualism than ever before and as a spiritual tourist, who is different from normal tourists, to search for self-fulfilment, personal healing and enlightenment. The notion of spiritual tourism is very different from the old tourism concept that leads tourists to hedonic activities or escape, and instead focuses on the exploration of the individuals themselves and the arrival of their internal transformations. The chapter explores spiritual tourism, spiritual tourists and their

motivations and considers the antecedents of tourists towards spiritual journeys in the conceptual framework.

In Chapter 6, Shin Yasuda critically examines how modern technology has changed Islamic pilgrimages, with the development of digital and mobile devices; Islamic religious practices and religious events have also been influenced by these technologies. Consequently, the harmonization of these technological transformations with the traditional and religious atmosphere of such religious events has emerged as a topic of discussion. The author further analyses how Hajj pilgrims recorded their religious experiences by taking selfies and instantly uploading them on to social media websites such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and other related SNS (social networking services). This new phenomenon has drawn the derision of religious scholars and other pilgrims and has triggered an anti-selfie movement. Religious scholars emphasized the importance of preserving the purity of the pilgrimage and its accompanying religious experiences. In these discussions, people should focus on the proper way to show their religious authenticity in the digital era in order to retain the authentic pilgrimage experience in holy places – an experience that, some claim, is undermined by the selfie.

In Chapter 7, Jaffer Idris presents his research on spiritual motivation for religious tourism destinations. He begins the chapter with a discussion of the concept of sacred sites and pilgrimages. Sacred spaces are deemed worthy of visit and reverence by their affiliation with a certain religion and practice. It is worth noting that we as humans will often have a different interpretation of how and what we class as sacred. A space may have become sacred for several reasons and contexts. There are huge numbers of different religious sites associated with different religions dotted across the globe. It is these physical spaces that often ignite or reignite the affiliation with the religion and helps to bind the devotees to their belief by strengthening their faith and connection. The author continues with a further discussion about the management and expectations of pilgrimages and religious tourism, including examination of topics such as transport infrastructure, accommodation and security, and considers why travellers make such difficult journeys to religious destinations.

In Chapter 8, Anne Lidén focuses on the motivations of tourists to visit pilgrim destinations, thereby connecting medieval heritage, art and personal narratives. The question is what pilgrim and heritage tourists find important for their journey – the places of historic and cultural heritage, the physical exertion of walking or the personal experience of the landscape? In this chapter Anne Lidén further illustrates the role of medieval pilgrim heritage, art and narrative, in modern management of pilgrim tourism in Scandinavia. In the Scandinavian countries two cities constitute the most important pilgrim destinations in medieval history as well as in modern time, namely Trondheim in Norway, the city of Saint Olav of Norway, and Vadstena in Sweden, the city of Saint Bridget of Sweden. The pilgrim and tourist routes to these sites, officially inaugurated in 1997, follow medieval historical trails and are connected to the cultural and historical heritage, art and narrative of the lives of the saints as well as their religious cults.

In Chapter 9, Jahanzeeb Qurashi examines the diminishing religious cultural heritage of holy Makkah and Medina in Saudi Arabia due to commercialization of the sacred event. The main focus of his chapter is how mosques and vital historical sites witnessed from the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) have been demolished, as have Ottoman-era manors and forts, prehistoric wells and stone bridges, including the houses of Sahba (the companions of Prophet Muhammad, PBUH). The chapter further provides an insight into Hajj and Umrah Ziyara places (religious cultural heritage sites of holy cities), as the majority of Muslim pilgrims during the journey of Hajj and Umrah go for 'Ziyara' to see the religious cultural heritage sites of Makkah and Medina, though Ziyara is not part of the Hajj rites. However, due to the emotional value of spiritual attraction and the spiritual attachment with the prophets and their companions (Sahba), pilgrims want to see the ancient and historical houses, old mosques, water wells, mountains, forts, battlefields and special places that give the pilgrims religious cultural spiritual affection.

In Chapter 10, Özlem Güzel, İlker Şahin and Seda Yetimoğlu highlight the management of the physical environment of a religious site. Religious sites have the potential to recall tourists to come back to the destination, because the

ambience of the sites makes a spiritual impression on the tourists by stimulating them emotionally. Current studies in tourism literature centre on analysing the influences of physical environmental cues in religious sites and in this context, the main goal of the chapter is to reveal cues as to the physical environmental dimensions of a religious site. The authors indicate that the physical environment cues of the Mevlâna religious site in Konya, Turkey consist of four main concepts, which are: (i) decoration; (ii) ambience; (iii) design; and (iv) layout. Of these, decoration of the museum received the highest score followed by the design dimension. However, foreign visitors have negative perceptions on issues related to cleanliness, accessibility and equipment quality in the Mevlâna Museum.

In Chapter 11, Ruth Dowson explores the application of the concept of 'eventization' to tourist journeys made to visit sacred objects. Religious objects and associated heritage sites are increasingly promoted through a process of building a framework of events through and around them, to encourage and facilitate tourism, whether such tourism is prompted by a spiritual or religious focus, or not. As a case study she provides insights into the impacts of eventization on the 3-month release of the Lindisfarne Gospels from the British Library to Durham Cathedral for an exhibition in the summer of 2013, compared to those of a promotion of the Lindisfarne Gospels in 2003 and of the Magna Carta in 2015. The chapter further examines and reflects on the experiences and motivations for visiting sacred objects of historical importance, from the perspectives of those who make such visits possible, as well as their visitors.

In Chapter 12, Jane Legget and Suzanne Histén discuss the significance of the identity issues related to managing existing missionary heritage buildings in order to serve visitors journeying with a sacred purpose. The case study looks at it from a stakeholder perspective at a critical time in relationships between the indigenous Māori and Pākehā (non-Māori), as New Zealand transitions into a 'Post-Treaty Settlement era'. A case-study approach has been used to analyse missionary sites in Northland/Bay of Islands. Church hierarchies have acknowledged historic complicity and church-owned land and

property feature in contemporary negotiations for redress. Representatives of *iwi* (Māori tribal groups) are increasingly involved in heritage management, sometimes in leadership roles, through museums, national parks and Heritage New Zealand, as well as heading their own cultural centres and tourism operations. *Tangata whenua* (literally people of the land) insist on recognition of their cultural links to their ancestral lands. The chapter further explores how New Zealand heritage tourism has the potential to offer different dimensions of Christian content or experience. Some provide opportunities for prayer, reflection and spiritual refreshment, although these aspects are not widely promoted.

In Chapter 13, Luana Moreira Marques, Vicente de Paulo da Silva and Jean Carlos Vieira Santos examine and explore the changes motivated and mediated by pilgrimage to religious festivals, having as background the festival in honour of Our Lady of the Abadia, held annually in the city of Romaria, Minas Gerais, Brazil. The authors discuss sacred is sacred only from the perspective of the 'other'. It does not become divine by itself. Indeed, becoming sacred comes from the recognition of the profane. Understood as different, the element made sacred is separated from the ordinary and starts to exercise its power on the groups that recognize it as such. A rock can be sacred to certain communities, as well as a kind of animal to another. The idea of the sacred is therefore universal, but its practical recognition is given by specifics and locations. The interrelationship while transcending also includes humans, who understand the sacred as a highly powerful element distinct and separated from themselves. However, it is to the sacred that humans direct themselves and what endows their lives with meaning, ordering it according to their needs.

In Chapter 14, Dane Munro examines a case study of holy places in Malta. The first signs of a Christian culture in Malta perhaps needs some more explanation. Christianity's advent in Malta is thought to be connected to the providential shipwreck of the later apostolic Saint Paul in the year 60 on the island of Melite, as later narrated in the Acts of the Apostles 27 and 28 of the New Testament. The missionary zeal of St Paul introduced Christianity far beyond its Judaic birthplace and boundaries. Obviously, at that time Christianity was still spread by word of

mouth, as the New Testament had not been compiled and edited yet. The shipwreck of St Paul is seen by many Maltese as the birth of their Latin European identity as Maltese, and accordingly, Malta as a sacred island. Where does this leave the Protestant who is following the footsteps of St Paul in Malta? Wherever it is known where St Paul travelled, pilgrim routes have been set up, which justifies that in Malta a national St Paul's pilgrims' route should be designed.

In Chapter 15, Tadeja Jere Jakulin analyses and examines the ancient wisdom and motivation of Shams-i Tabrezi, whose mosque and tomb is in Konya, Turkey. The case study illustrates 20th-century discoveries and that ideas of systems theory and a systems approach to life were present in ancient Shams-i Tabrezi's wisdom and were known centuries ago. This is evidence that wisdom from the past does not have time limits. Further, it repeats itself in the present and if ignored or not recognized it badly affects the future. To understand this statement, one must start to understand the difference between systems and linear or dual approaches and how they affect society. When one starts to see the world from a view of a whole, nothing becomes impossible. One sees connections, interconnections, interdependencies, synergy among elements of a system as a harmonic structure of a system, which evolves only if it goes along with its change. Sufi wisdom presents the importance of systems thinking as modern approach and wisdom in the words of Rumi's teacher Shams-i Tabrezi. It is the writings of such masters that reveal the inner beauty, the diamond of Shams.

In Chapter 16, Onur Akbulut and Yakin Ekin discuss and examine religious tourism development in Turkey. Religious tourism is the pioneer form of tourism which has begun almost with the dawn of humanity. From ancient times religious destinations were not only a part of the cultural landscape but also they became a vital factor in local marketing and primary parts of the economy of hosted destinations. Some of the religious places such as Makkah in Saudi Arabia, Fatima in Portugal and Lourdes in France attract millions of religious tourists, charity workers, missionaries and humanitarians creating a huge financial transaction in the destination. Religious tourism has become increasingly popular worldwide, including in Turkey where there are

sites and places that fall within the standards of religious tourism both in terms of quality and quantity. Throughout Turkey, 43 provinces out of 81 possess such kind of attractions. However, the issue of accommodation and some infrastructure problems have yet to be overcome which is why investment in hotels along the routes of religious tourism should be encouraged by the government and there should be some incentives for such an investment.

The final chapter (Chapter 17) by Richard Keith Wright is a case study exploring the emergence of the modern-day pilgrim, looking for spiritual guidance or gratification by making 'spiritual journeys to the cathedrals of sport'.

This is an area deemed worthy of further exploration, both within and outside the realms of pilgrimage tourism. The chapter examines the emergence of secular pilgrimages by the serious leisure-inspired English football pilgrim to follow the performance of their team and compares it to 'Rites of way: behind the pilgrimage revival'. He acknowledges an increasing desire to 'reconnect' and 'make sense' of our natural surroundings, driven by the consequences of dematerialization and the disembodiment of virtualized existence.

At the end of the book there is a list of questions (four for each chapter) to provide a focus for discussion of the topics described in each chapter.

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Start Your Spiritual Journey. Spiritual Principles for Fast Spiritual Development. Benefits of spiritual practice.Â Whichever religious path or culture you come from, the Spiritual Science Research Foundation recommends three things you can do right away to begin or complement your spiritual journey. 1. Chanting the Name of God according to your religion of birth. We are born to the religion that is most conducive to begin our spiritual journey. Accordingly, the aspect of God that we worship depending on our religion is what is most beneficial for our spiritual growth at that stage. The various Names of God according to each religion, represent the various aspects of the one Supreme God.