CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

PART I

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

I am currently on the train from Glasgow to Manchester, where I will then catch my flight to Lourdes. I have to admit I am sort of dreading this forthcoming field visit. It's three weeks long, and I will be volunteering on site at Lourdes. I worry about the data I will collect, the people I will meet. I mean, I have read lots of books and journal articles about conducting ethnographic fieldwork but now it is actually being put into practice, and in the formal capacity as a volunteer it is quite scary. It's weird; as I am writing this entry into my journal, I am listening to the song "You Got the Love" by Candi Staton.

> *"Sometimes I feel like throwing my hands up in the air*
> *I know I can count on you*
> *Sometimes I feel like saying "Lord I just don't care!"*
> *But you've got the love I need to see me through"*

I have always associated that song with Sex in the City, because it plays at the very end of the final episode, when Carrie is walking down New York and we finally realise that Mr Big's name is in fact John. For some reason, that song always seemed to be about friendship to me –human friendship – but as I listen to it just now I realise it is about God, and how God sees you through difficult times in life. I don't know why I am writing this down, it just struck me right there, how this song is really quite inspiring, yet I know for a fact I've danced drunkenly to it in a club and never given it a moment's thought,

except that it reminds me of Sex in the City. I wonder how often I do that, go around my daily life not realising the religious connotations and inspirations around me. I mean, take songs for instance - The Beatles "Mother Mary comes to me, singing words of wisdom, let it be", Kayne West "And bring the day that I'm dreaming about, next time I'm in the club everybody screaming out Jesus Walks". Clearly, Christian themes and connotations resound in these songs, yet they are so embedded in our daily lives, do we actually think about the lyrics? I would always have placed them as secular popular culture songs, never sacred, but perhaps the inspiration behind them has been sacredly and spiritually driven? That's why I am going to Lourdes, why I want to investigate Lourdes, my assumption is that the consumers of Lourdes go either because they are sick and seeking a potential cure or help with their illness or they go because they are sacredly driven to go – they want to connect with God, the spiritual, with Our Lady, etc. But why work there, why volunteer, and why pay between £700-£1000 to work hard for a week – I just cannot get my head around that and I really hope the next few weeks help me to better grasp this logic…

(Field notes from day one of the author's June/ July 2011 fieldtrip).

1.0 Introduction

This thesis will investigate the 21st century consumption of religious pilgrimage, with a specific focus on the Catholic Sanctuary of Lourdes in France. This chapter begins by explaining the research background and rationale of the study, followed by

its aim and objectives, chosen methodology and a short overview of each of the forthcoming chapters. An overview of the pilgrimage context of Lourdes will then be offered to set the scene for this research.

1.1 Research Background and Rationale for this Study

As will be developed further in chapter two, investigations within consumer research regarding the consumption of the Sacred, spiritual and religious date back to the 1970s (Engel, 1974: 1976); however, many align the area of sacred consumption with a seminal paper by Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry (1989) entitled 'The Sacred and the Profane: Theodicy on the Odyssey'. Belk et al. (1989) offered insight into the sacralisation processes that people, experiences, times, places, and both tangible and intangible things undergo in order to make them sacred. Consequently, positing that in the growing liquid modern (Bauman, 2000) and secularly-driven (Weber, 1905/1958) society of the late 20th and early 21st century, there is a blurring of the boundaries between the Sacred and the secular, with a "gradual sacralisation of the secular and secularisation of the Sacred" (Belk et al., 1989, 8). Nonetheless, since the 1970s, a stream of research investigating both the sacralisation and secularisation processes, as well as the consumption of the Sacred, secular, ritual, transcendent, religious, spiritual and all things pertaining to the Sacred realm, has developed within consumer research (Engel, 1974:1976; Hirschman, 1982: 1983; Rook, 1985; Belk et al., 1989; O'Guinn and Belk, 1989; O'Guinn, 1991; Arnould and Price, 1993; Celsi Rose and Leigh, 1993; Schouten and McAlexander, 1995; Belk and Costa, 1998;

Iacobucci, 2001; Kozinets, 2001: 2002, Muniz and Schau, 2005; Gould, 2006; Schau and Muniz, 2007; Jafari and Goulding, 2008; Touzani and Hirschman, 2008; Hirschman, Ruvio and Touzani, 2011; Turley, 2013; Scott and Maclaren, 2013; Rinallo et al 2013a; Rinallo, Scott and Maclaren, 2013b; Rinallo, Borghini, Bamossy and Kozinets 2013c). However, this area of research still lacks conceptual clarity, despite the growing body of work surrounding it. This thesis posits that such neglect is due to the lack of conceptual work which draws together all the different strands and conversations surrounding this research stream, and equally, due to issues with terminology and positioning – for in researching the consumption of spirituality, sacredness, ritual, transcendence, and religion – what should such research be labelled, and where should it be positioned within the wider field of consumer research?

Figures from November 2013 (Ross, 2013) indicate that the world's population is over seven billion, of which approximately 2.3 billion are Christians (with approximately 1.21 billion of these being Catholic), 1.5 billion Muslims, and almost 2 billion in total are Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jews, and followers of Folk religions, demonstrating that approximately 6 of the 7 billion global population follow a defined religion. Furthermore, in light of recent globalisation and the belief that we live in a postmodern, fragmented, consumer and technologically driven society (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995) a wave of new-age spiritualism has emerged. This is a "bricolage-esque" (Ammerman, 1994) built spiritual belief, fusing both Western and Eastern ideologies and philosophies, with more and more people labelling themselves spiritual but not religious (Daniel, 2013). Thus, the spiritual and the

Sacred are currently very fashionable (Rinallo et al., 2013c) and have been for several decades (MacDannell, 1995). That said, a strong body of research has been offered to consumer research investigating spirituality and consumption specifically (Gould, 2006; Rinallo et al., 2013a), with Rinallo et al. (2013b) offering a conceptual drawing together of such research. However, as will be further discussed, this conceptual work, although shedding light on the conversations surrounding the consumption of the Sacred and the spiritual, equally demonstrates severe terminological and positional issues, generating further questions for this growing consumer research stream.

With specific reference to religion and consumption, Hirschman (1982) provided three reasons for the limited prior research within the religious consumption field: firstly, a lack of awareness of the substantial evidence linking both religion and consumption together; secondly, the sensitive and at times taboo nature of religion; and finally the ubiquitous, all-encompassing nature of religion in influencing all aspects of life. Nonetheless, Hirschman (1982) believes that the ubiquitous nature of religion should be embraced by consumer researchers, for its influence upon all aspects of life stretches to consumer behaviour and decision-making. Furthermore, despite the secularisation theories of the 1960s and 1970s (Bruce, 1992: 1996, Berger, 1999) which claimed the death of religion to be imminent, religion has persisted and remains strong, relevant and important to its followers today (Berger, 1999), with Scott and Maclaren claiming that at our core, humans remain "spiritual seekers" (2009). Consequently, this thesis supports the belief of Hirschman (1982)

that consumer research needs to investigate further the relationship between religion and consumption.

The brief introduction above has offered the background for this study alongside a clear rationale for investigating the area of sacred consumption within consumer research. The following sections will now outline the approach and structure of the thesis, the aim and objectives of the study and provide a short overview of the chosen methodology and each chapter, as a means of setting the scene for the research journey ahead.

1.2 The Approach and Structure of this Thesis

Gummesson (1991, 54) offers insight into the idea of "procrustean science" whereby researchers, following the ancient Greek god Procrustes, will have the "unpleasant habit" of stretching or shortening their research as a means of fitting it "perfectly" into theoretical constructs. This study did not align with such Procrustean logic, but rather in developing this study, very loose and flexible parameters were set, as a means of permitting holistic and emergent understanding to come to the fore. As a result, the thesis has been structured and written in a non-procrustean manner, developed in line with hermeneutic logic, whereby the emergent themes are discussed as they arose in the data collection. A clear example of this is the presentation of the findings on family. This was an emergent theme discovered throughout the three year ethnography, and given its emergence, and the researcher's

belief in conducting a non-procrustean research thesis, the decision was made not to include family into the literature review but rather to offer the reader literature within the findings chapter on kinship (family). In this way, the research remains true to the hermeneutic paradigm, with pre-understanding and emergent understanding both being incorporated, offering a truer reflection of the actual, real-life trajectory of the Lourdes ethnographic research process to the reader. Consequently, the structure of this thesis follows the hermeneutic spiral trajectory (figure 1), discussed more fully in the methodology chapter, and offered below to provide the reader with understanding at this early stage of the structure and approach adopted by this research thesis.

Future research study planned to uncover the voice of the sick consumer of Lourdes.

- Week long reflective fieldtrip in May 2013.
- Analysis and interpretation of all data following the framework offered by Spiggle (1994)

NEW STUDY

HOLISTIC ACCESS TO PHENOMENON

ACCESS TO PERSON

REFLECTION

UNDERSTANDING

ACCESS TO INFORMANT

REFLECTION

- Spring 2012 began a series of depth interviews with Scottish pilgrims.
- Summer 2012 participated pilgrimage with the Archdiocese of Glasgow.
- Late 2012- Early 2013 futrher interviews and follow-up interviews conducted.

ACCESS TO TEAM

REFLECTION

ACCESS TO ORGANIZATION

REFLECTION

INITIAL ACCESS

REFLECTION

- Three week field trip June/July 2011
- Week long field trip Eastertide 2012
- Ten-day fieldtrip June 2012.

REFLECTION

- A four-day immersive field trip in April 2011.
- Throughout 2011 access was granted and strong network developed with the Archdiocese of Glasgow.

REFLECTION ON PHENOMENA

PRE-UNDERSTANDING

- Immersion in secondary data on sacred consumption, extraordinary experiential consumption (EEC) and pilgrimage theory.

Figure 1: Ethnographic Timeline, based on Stenbacka (2001)

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

The overarching aim of this thesis is *to investigate the consumption of religious pilgrimage, with a specific focus on 21st century consumption of the Catholic Sanctuary of Lourdes in France*. In gaining a holistic understanding of what it means to consume the Lourdes pilgrimage experience today in the 21st century, two more specific objectives have been developed from this main aim.

Objective One: To gain insight into why pilgrims consume Lourdes in the 21st century

The main purpose of objective one is to understand why pilgrims continue to consume the Lourdes pilgrimage experience in the 21st century. What do they gain from the experience that makes it valuable and worth consuming (for some, over a lifetime)? Why, in the increasingly liquid modern (Bauman, 2000), fragmented and consumer culture (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995), and secular-driven (Belk et al, 1989) culture of the 21st century, do pilgrims continue to consume the religious pilgrimage experience of Lourdes?

Objective Two: To understand the role the marketplace plays in the Lourdes pilgrimage experience

The purpose of this second objective is to better understand if the presence of the marketplace at Lourdes is a sign of secularisation or a further blurring of the boundary between the Sacred and the secular (Belk et al., 1989, 8).

1.4 Research Methodology

Influenced by ethnographic consumer research (Arnould and Price, 1993; Celsi et al., 1993; Schouten and McAlexander, 1995; Peneloza, 1994, Peneloza, Thompson, Schouten, Sampath and Meamber, 1998; Diamond, Sherry, Muniz, McGrath, Kozinets and Borghini, 2009; Scott and Maclaren, 2013) and pilgrimage research studies (Turner and Turner, 1978, Morinis, 1992, Reader and Walter, 1993), this study has adopted an interpretive ethnographic methodology (Brewer, 2000). The study has also followed a historical hermeneutic philosophy (Gadamer, 1977/2008), allowing deep holistic understanding alongside a fusion between the history of Catholicism, the history of the Lourdes shrine from 1858 to the present, and the histories and present lives of the consumers of Lourdes. Over a three-year period, eight weeks of immersion at Lourdes was conducted alongside days at subsidiary

shrines and Lourdes meetings throughout the UK and Europe, utilising the methods of participant observation and interviewing as a means of "privileging" both what consumers "say" and "do" (Peneloza et al., 1998, 352).

In an attempt to fully understand the consumption of Lourdes, the fieldwork took various forms as visits were organised independently through a volunteering programme and a weeklong pilgrimage with an Archdiocese in Scotland. The pilgrimage took place at the mid-point of the data collection and enabled greater insight into the consumer scripts stemming from the in-depth interviews with informants. The data collected on site amounted to 200 pages of field-notes and approximately 3000 videos and photographs.

The fieldwork included many informal and serendipitous interviews with pilgrims on site at Lourdes. In addition, twenty-one semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 23 informants, lasting from 30 minutes to four hours in length. Some interviews were conducted individually, whilst others were undertaken in groups or with couples. As a means of tracing the pilgrimage journey more fully, some informants were interviewed multiple times. All interviews were transcribed verbatim, tallying over 1000 pages of transcription. All informants were native to fluent English speakers. The sample included males and females ranging in age from 17 to 93. Some informants were first time Lourdes consumers, whilst others were recurrent. Twenty-one of the informants were practicing Catholics; one was a Christian from the Episcopalian denomination and one did not align with any

particular creed but viewed herself as spiritual. The interview content centred on themes of consumption and pilgrimage, with extensive discussion geared towards understanding the different experiences at Lourdes, with the consequent aim of holistically understanding the consumption of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience.

1.5 Overview of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into two parts. *Part I* will begin by discussing the relevant literatures within the areas of sacred consumption, extraordinary experiential consumption (EEC) and pilgrimage. Following this, an offering into the building, development and implementation of the research methodology of this study will be provided. In *Part II* the findings from this study will be provided, the chapters in this section will discuss the main themes of kinship, communitas and liminality as well as the role the Lourdes marketplace plays in the entire pilgrimage experience. Finally, the conclusions, contributions and future research recommendations of this study are offered, which, it is hoped, might lead the reader further towards holistic understanding of the subject. Summaries of the contents of each chapter now follow.

Chapter II: Sacred Consumption traces the development of sacred consumption within consumer research since the 1970s, adopting the work of the social economist David Haddorff (2000) and his three traditions of separation, absorption and ambiguity in investigating the relationship between religion, consumption and the marketplace. The use of this work enables the offering of two predominant voices

within sacred consumption, the absorption and the ambiguous voice. Finally, this chapter calls for consumer research to further conceptually build the area of sacred consumption in order to incorporate all research conversations pertaining to consumption of the Sacred, spiritual and religious.

Chapter III: Extraordinary Experiential Consumption (EEC) and Pilgrimage discusses a further two core areas of contribution: extraordinary experiential consumption (EEC) and pilgrimage, by presenting research drawn from consumer research, anthropology and sociology.

Chapter IV: Methodology describes the interpretive ethnographic methodology of this thesis, tracing the philosophical underpinnings of the study, and building a deeper and fuller understanding of the intricacies and specifics of the Lourdes Ethnography.

Chapter V: Communitas. The following three chapters begin to answer the first objective, uncovering the core reasons why consumers continue to consume the Lourdes pilgrimage experience in the 21st century. Despite recent consumer research being critical of communitas (Tumbat and Belk, 2011), this study found communitas to remain relevant and important when consuming the Lourdes pilgrimage experience. Consequently, this chapter analyses the theme of communitas at Lourdes, alongside offering a new subtler form of communitas – 'Communitas Continuas'.

Chapter VI: Liminality examines the liminal position in which many informants feel they live each day due to their Catholic faith, revealing Lourdes to be a religious servicescape where consumers are able to temporarily find a "coherent sense of self" (Ahuvia, 2005). The chapter also begins to shed light on the important role of the marketplace at Lourdes. With the emotionally and spiritually charged experience causing consumers to desire temporal escape from intensity, the marketplace plays an important role in providing "light-hearted" escape from the sacredly intense experience.

Chapter VII: Kinship discusses the theme of kinship (blood and social family), demonstrating the unique familial benefits that Lourdes offers its consumers and the social familial structures created at Lourdes that will often span a lifetime.

Chapter VIII: The Role of the Marketplace at Lourdes discusses the important role played by the marketplace of Lourdes, addressing objective two of this study. In consuming the Lourdes experience, the consumer experiences some powerfully spiritual and emotional moments. Their desire to temporarily escape these powerful moments results in them running towards the "light-hearted" Lourdes marketplace, where they receive the fun and social aspects crucial in creating the "whole package" of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience.

Chapter IX: Conclusions draws this thesis to a close by sharing the holistic understanding built by the research of the Lourdes consumption experience, and discussing the main contributions of this study towards consumer research. Future research streams following from this study are also suggested.

Following on from this overview of the thesis, the following section will now introduce the reader to the context of Lourdes.
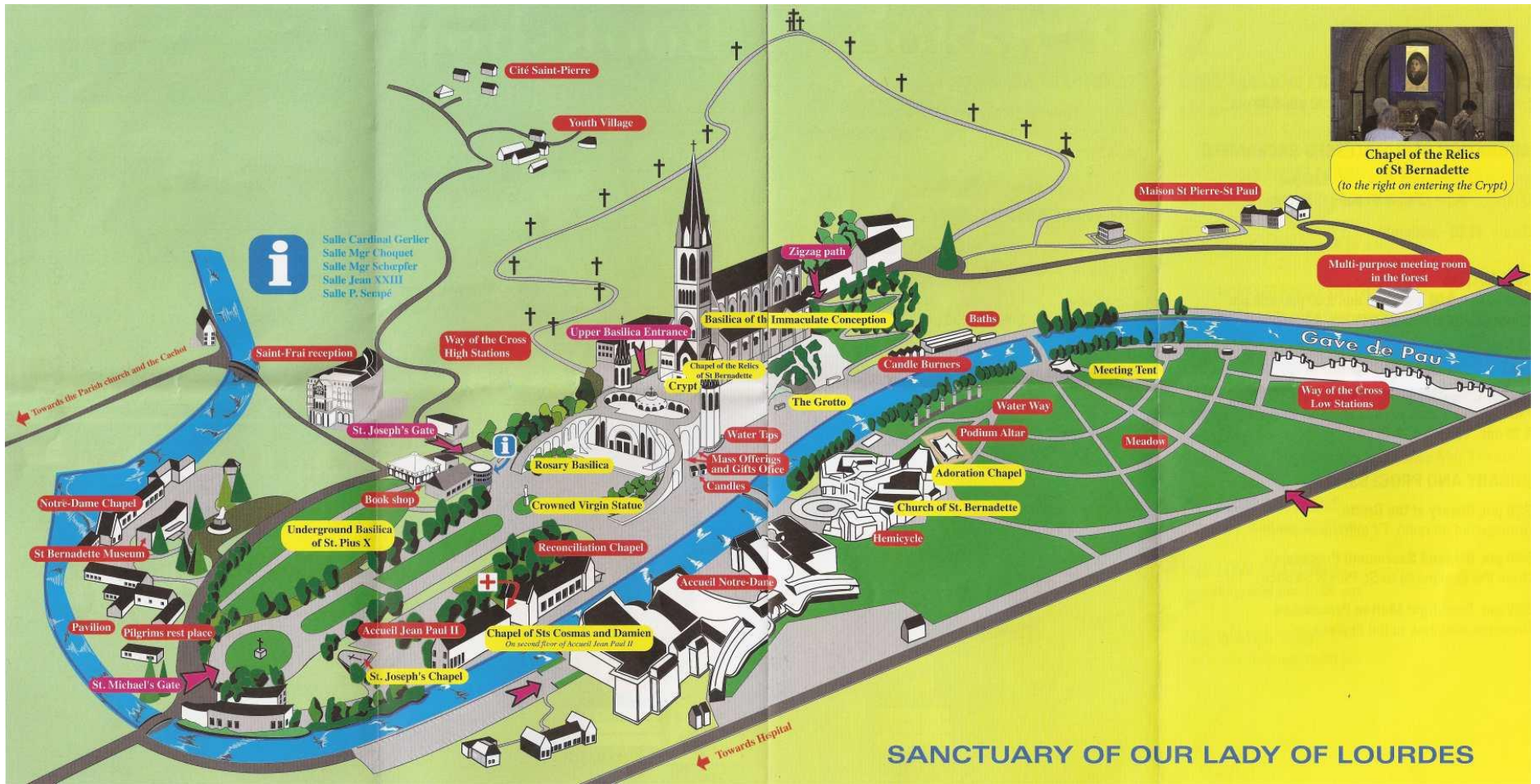
Figure 2: Map of Lourdes

1.6 Lourdes, Catholicism and Consumption

1.6.1 The Story of Lourdes

"Que soy era Immaculada Counchestsiou"

(I am the Immaculate Conception, Sixteenth Apparition, March 25th 1858)

Lourdes is now the second biggest tourist destination in France (Fargues, 2011, 7); however, prior to February 1858 the small derelict village was of no consequence to France or the wider world. On the 11th of February 1858, Bernadette Soubirous, a fourteen year old, poor, illiterate peasant girl, was collecting firewood at the grotto (rockery) of Massabielle[1] (see figure 3), when she suddenly heard what sounded like a "gust of wind" (Lauretin, 1999, 20). She turned to discover that "above the grotto, on the right-hand side, at the base of a niche-like cavity in the rock, some bushes were quietly shaking, their long brambles reaching to the ground. The dark cavity brightened and there in that light was a very young girl dressed in white. She smiled in welcome" (Lauretin, 1999, 20). The "very young girl" was to be named by Bernadette, "Aquero" meaning 'The Lady'. From the 11th of February until the 16th of July 1858, Bernadette had a series of eighteen visitations from "The Lady" who on the

---

[1] It is necessary to mention that the grotto area in 1858 was incredibly undesirable (see Figure 2) – dirty, pigs lived and ate there. It was not the place where a "spiritual triumph" (Turner and Turner, 1978) such as the Sacred place of apparitions of Our Lady would be expected. However, it fits in line with apparitional sightings of Our Lady, which generally take place in liminal, peripheral, often poor, and undesirable regions and places. Equally this fits with the traditional symbolism of Catholicism and Christianity, where the "spiritual triumph", such as Christ being born in a stable yet been Lord God, and equally His dying on the cross yet rising and thus conquering death.

sixteenth apparition revealed herself with the words "Que soy era Immaculada

Counchestsiou," meaning "I am the Immaculate Conception" (figure 4).
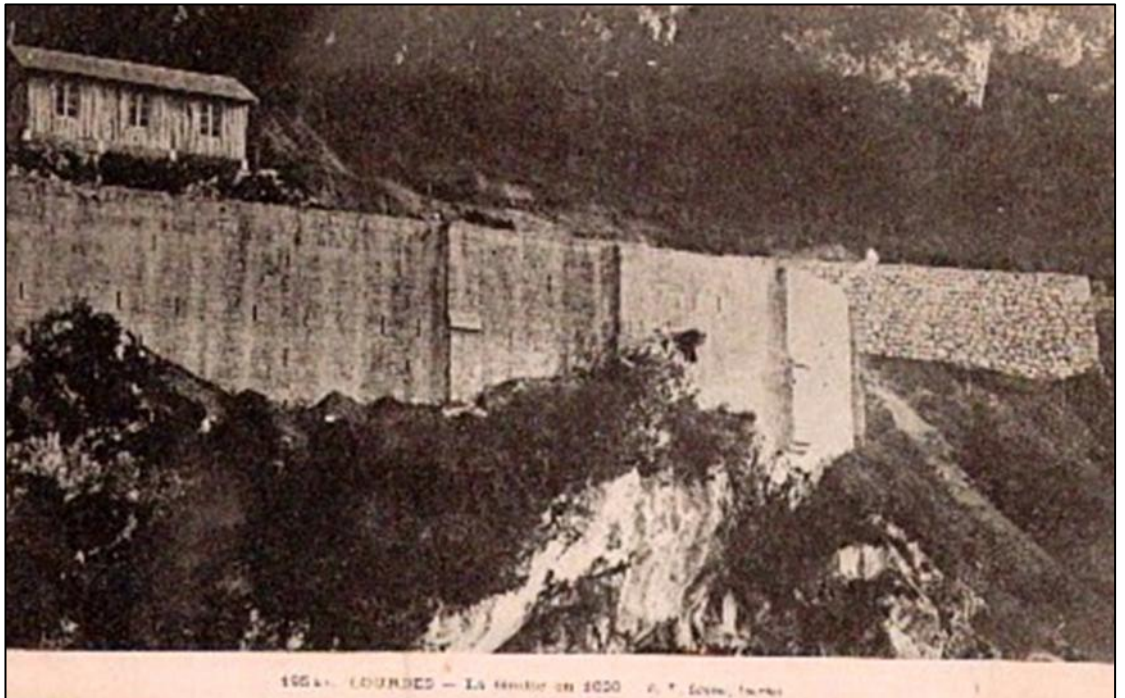
Figure 3: Postcard illustrating the grotto ahead in 1858, prior to the apparitions, demonstrating the mundane and liminal position of the grotto area.

Figure 4: Popular depiction of the apparitional scenes at Lourdes

The Immaculate Conception is a dogma of the Catholic Church outlining that Our Lady, the Mother of Jesus Christ, was from her conception in the womb of her mother Anne until her ascension into Heaven (as she is believed to have never physically died but ascended into Heaven) free from original sin[2]. This dogma was passed only in 1854. Thus, the usage of the statement "I am the Immaculate Conception" in 1858, by a young, poor, uneducated girl who spoke only the local pidgin dialect, and who was unable to speak or comprehend Latin or scriptural dogma, was the catalyst in persuading the Catholic Church to issue their official acknowledgment of the apparitions at Lourdes, leading to the apparitions' authentication by the Catholic Church in 1862.

At the time, France and hence Lourdes' socio-cultural, historical and political landscape was rather bleak. Following the Age of Napoleon, the political life of France was in "disarray" (Gesler, 1996, 97), and in light of growing modernity, Gesler, (1996, 97) argued that "many people sought salvation from what they believed was an increasingly wicked world. Pilgrimage, therefore, was a reaction to the ills of the modern age, a response to the modern lifestyle through a search for something beyond". Consequently, it was unsurprising that many believers saw the apparitions at Lourdes as the light they had been praying for. Consequently, prior to the authentication of Lourdes by the Catholic Church, the

---

[2] Original Sin is a part of the Doctrine of the Fall: that after the Fall of Man, when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden all of humankind has been born sinners. Consequently, the Christening of a person into the Catholic faith acts as a rite of passage into Catholicism, but is equally the beginning of cleansing the soul of its original sin, which is furthered through the sacrament of Confession.

Grotto of Massabielle had become a frequented site, with many journeying to the grotto with the intention of witnessing the apparitions as they occurred.

These witnesses viewed Bernadette in many different ways. A large proportion believed her a liar who was simply attempting to raise the profile and status of her poor family. Others, however, believed her truly in communication with divinity. This split perspective still surrounds Lourdes today, as Gesler (1996, 97) shared in his investigation into the medical and health significance of Lourdes: despite the widespread belief in the Sacred place having "curative properties", many sceptics believe that the pilgrimage site is nothing more than a "gigantic hoax". Nonetheless, in the late 1800s, a strong group of pilgrims regarded the apparitions between Bernadette Soubirous and Our Lady as authentic, and believed in the curative power of Our Lady of Lourdes, physically, mentally and spiritually, thereby becoming the first pilgrims to the site. Such continued belief in the power of Our Lady of Lourdes has in turn made Lourdes one of the most internationally recognized Catholic shrines in the world (Gesler, 1996).

1.6.2 The Sacred City of Lourdes: The Religious Complex

"On 2nd March 1858, during her third apparition at Massabielle, the Immaculate Conception entrusted Bernadette with a mission: "Go and tell the priests to come here in procession and that a chapel should be built here"... In the course of the years, "the priests" developed a vast religious

complex around the grotto, which today includes three basilicas and a

church" (Fargues, 2011, 117).

Since the eighteen apparitions of 1858, the grotto of Massabielle has grown to become not only a "vast religious complex" (Fargues, 2011, 117) but also the third largest Catholic pilgrimage destination (after the Vatican in Rome and Our Lady of Guadeloupe in Mexico), and the second largest tourism destination in France (second only to Paris) (Fargues, 2011, 7) (figure 5). Over six million pilgrims supplement the small Lourdes population of 16,000 inhabitants annually. Also, in light of the 68 confirmed miracles since 1858 which have been aligned with Lourdes, the site has become a favourite pilgrimage destination for ill, ailing, and disabled pilgrims (figure 6), with over 80,000 sick pilgrims journeying there annually, and a further 100,000+ pilgrims journeying to Lourdes in a voluntary capacity to care for the sick pilgrims (Fargues, 2011, 185).

A Sanctuary is believed within Catholicism to refer to "a building dedicated to the ceremonies of religion. But in Lourdes, the number and variety of these buildings have led to "sanctuaries" in the plural being used to describe them" (Fargues, 2011, 119). The Grotto of Massabielle has grown to become a "vast religious complex" (Fargues, 2011, 117) now referred to as "Sanctuaries Notre Dame de Lourdes" meaning "Our Lady of Lourdes Sanctuaries".

Figure 5: The Sanctuary of Lourdes, today

Figure 6: The sick of Lourdes are transported via these blue chariots named voitures.

This vast religious "Domain", as informants often call it, is home to three large basilicas, one of which is the 14,500 square metre Underground Basilica of Saint Pius X, with capacity for 20,000 people (figure 7). The religious Domain of Lourdes is also home to several churches[3], two sets of Stations of the Cross[4] (the high and the low stations) (figure 8), and two facilities for housing sick pilgrims – The Notre Dame Acceuil and Marie-Saint Frai Acceuil (Welcome Receptions), which can hold up to 1300 sick pilgrims at any one time, and which are viewed as "neither a hospital nor a hotel" (Fargues, 2011, 185) but, rather, provide the sick pilgrims with a pastoral, health conscious, safe, hygienic, comfortable and welcoming place of rest while they are on their pilgrimage to Lourdes (figure 9). It also includes an information centre, a shop, two museums (the Museum of the Miracles, and the Museum of Bernadette), numerous Hospitality (volunteer) accommodation and eating places, and premises for the 297 permanent

---

[3]In Catholicism there are different castes of Sacred building. A church/chapel stems from the Greek word for assembly and is used to refer to the Sacred buildings in which Catholics assemble daily or weekly for Mass.

Basilicas were originally part of the Roman Empire, and the most famous basilica in Catholicism is the Vatican. There are only four Catholic basilicas worldwide: St. John Lateran, St. Peter's, St. Paul's Outside the Walls (Vatican), and St. Mary Major. However, in modern times the Catholic Church has allowed a number of minor basilicas, which refer to sacred buildings built in a religious historically significant region, one example being the basilicas at Lourdes, which are historically significant in Catholicism because of the apparitions of 1858, and the miracles and continuous pilgrimage to the area since.

[4]The stations of the Cross (aka Via Crucis or the Way of the Cross) are a series of stages depicting the moments leading up to and the Crucifixion of Christ. They are displayed in Catholic religious buildings and pilgrimage sites, and Catholics pray and follow the stages in prayer as a memorial of Christ's death. At Lourdes there are two sets of these stations; the High Stations are positioned high in the hills of the Pyrenees, close to but adjacent to the Sanctuary. These are beautiful but incredibly difficult to undertake, as they are uphill; this way the person feels a level of penance as they follow Christ on his way to the cross. The Low Stations are positioned within the grounds of the Sanctuary, almost directly below the High Stations; these were built to enable the sick to have access to Stations of the Cross at Lourdes.

employees and 95 seasonal employees. Thus, the religious Domain of Lourdes is a "veritable city within a city" (Fargues, 2011, 123), as it is simultaneously "a religious centre, a medical centre, a recruiting and propaganda and money-raising centre, a centre for holidays and for social work, and a thriving business", making it "a very odd place indeed" (Marnham, 1982, 138).

Figure 7: The Underground Basilica San Pius X is 14,500 square metres and can hold up to 20,000 people.

Figure 8: The High Stations of the Cross; these are set over rough and hard terrain high in the Pyrenees mountains, and are therefore very arduous to undertake. The first station illustrated above shows many pilgrims praying on the Sacred stairs. Traditionally they say a prayer on each stair and ascend on their knees towards the Station.

Figure 9: The Accueil functions as a hospital and place of welcome for the sick pilgrims.

1.6.3 The Secular City of Lourdes: The Commercial Complex

Christianity and Catholicism follow the mantra that "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4), and the religious complex of Lourdes offers the opportunity to engage fully with, "the mouth of God". However, it is impossible for westerners to truly live on bread alone; we need food, shelter, and, in a society driven by consumption (Arnould, 2007), in the 21st century whilst on pilgrimage to Lourdes, it seems we also need shops. Addressing these needs, the commercial city of Lourdes does not let its consumers down, with 208 hotels of all types, including 60% of the three-star and 40% of the four-star hotels in the Pyrenees region (Fargues, 2011, 164). It also houses over 100 restaurants and 220 souvenir shops (figure 10), equalling one shop for every 30,000 pilgrims who come to Lourdes (Fargues, 2011, 65). Likewise, the city is home to

numerous tourist organisations, offering trips around the different areas of the Pyrenees, such as Galvarnie, Pic de Jour, and the Caves of Betheran, as well as "Le Petite Train" ("The Little Train"), which offers tours round the city, predominantly to the areas related to the visionary Bernadette Sobirous, such as the "Boly Mill" and "Cachot", where Bernadette lived during her lifetime, to the Parish Church where she was Christened and the convent where she made her First Holy Communion[5] (figure 11).

Figure 10: The Marketplace of Lourdes. This image was taken at St. Joseph's entrance to the Sanctuary, demonstrating the close proximity of the marketplace to the Sanctuary.

Figure 11: Le Petit Train, the tourist train which tours places of significance relating to the visionary Bernadette Soubirous' life.

Outwith the Sanctuary gates, Lourdes becomes a consumption-scape, offering all types of services, from food and accommodation to holidaymaking tours, and all types of products and goods, from religious Rosary beads to the "Jesus Junk-esque" (Park and Baker, 2009) sparkly Our Lady statues and Lourdes "Mary" Mints (figure 12).

Figure 12: Tacky marketplace offerings; the Lourdes Mary Mints which have a drop of Lourdes water within them, and the popular, sparkly Our Lady statue which changes colour depending on the weather.

Colleen McDannell (1995, 133) discussed in her research on religious material culture that a "spiritual economy" has dominated Lourdes since its inception in the late 1800s, further explaining that the international sharing of Lourdes water between the Sanctuary and the USA at this time aimed to supply fulfilment for both the body and the soul to those outwith Lourdes and Europe. However, equally, it was a means

of internationalizing the shrine, making it known and popular to Catholics across the globe. Turner and Turner (1978) describe Lourdes as having a:

"…Sense of a living communitas, whether in the great singing processions by torchlight or in the agreeable little cafes of the back streets, where tourists and pilgrims gaily sip their wine and coffee. Something of Bernadette has tinctured the entire social milieu − a cheery simplicity, a great depth of communion" (1978, 230).

However, with mass consumer culture so close to the Sanctuary gates, one wonders whether the liminoid quality of pilgrimage to Lourdes has become lost in the commercial town surrounding it? Have the Sacred properties of the pilgrimage to Lourdes become secularised? Can the Lourdes of the 21st century still be described as a "living communitas," as it was by Turner and Turner (1978)? The forthcoming chapters of this thesis will answer these questions.

1.7 Conclusion

This introductory chapter has provided the background and rationale of the study, the approach, aims and objectives of this study, an overview of the methodology, as well as introducing the forthcoming chapters. Finally, as a means of setting the contextual scene of the research pilgrimage and consequent thesis, insight into the context of

Lourdes was offered. Thus, to conclude this section, it is now time for the reader to begin their journey towards a holistic understanding of the Lourdes consumption phenomenon.

CHAPTER II: SACRED CONSUMPTION

"In Christ there is a blurring of the material and the spiritual; the Sacred voice and the profane human body" (McDannell, 1995, 5).

2.0 Introduction

This chapter traces the development of sacred consumption within consumer research since the 1970s, drawing on the work of social economist David Haddorff (2000) and his three traditions of separation, absorption and ambiguity. The chapter will be based upon two of his traditions, both of which are prevalent in consumer research −absorption and the ambiguous voice. It will offer an overview of the consumer research discussions aligned to sacred consumption: Sacred and secular blurring, religious consumption, religious affiliation and religiosity's influence upon consumer behaviour, and balancing religion with consumer culture, before finally calling for consumer research to build a more cohesive conceptual understanding of sacred consumption.

2.1 Defining the Sacred?

Daniele Hervieu-Leger described the Sacred as an "impossible concept" (1986). In defining the Sacred, many have contrasted it with its antithesis – the Profane. Durkheim (1912/2008) defined the Sacred as something, "consecrated or holy…that

which is set apart – that which society holds in its highest esteem, which is not to be challenged" (Pickering, 1984, 126). Consequently through his Sacred and Profane dichotomy, Durkheim separated the two spheres, seeing them as distinctly different. Despite this stance, however, Durkheim did acknowledge that Sacredness could arise from the mundane, and this idea has developed further, with many scholars today believing the Sacred to be experienced and uncovered within secular settings, leading many theologians such as Mahan (2007, 52), to believe that the "wall between Sacred and secular is clearly porous". Similar ideas of Sacredness have been shared within consumer research, with Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry (1989, 8) finding that the Sacred can be "operant" in Domains outside religion; in short, that "anything may become sacred" (1989, 13). Given these flexible parameters regarding the Sacred, the following section will discuss the specifics of sacred consumption.

2.2 What is Sacred Consumption?

"Sacred consumption places primary importance on virtuous objectives such as love, honour and integrity" (Hirschman, 1988, 348).

Elizabeth Hirschman (1988, 348) offered consumer research the only distinct definition of sacred consumption to date. The work in which she offers such definition ironically does not focus, like her previous work had done, on any particular religion. Instead, it investigated the consumption of the popular US television shows 'Dynasty' and 'Dallas'. Her findings from this study were that within these TV shows, there existed characters adhering to sacred consumption

practices which focused on the focal points of life, such as family, friends and community, and characters adhering to secular consumption practices, which focused on "the acquisition of man-made products, typically those resulting from technological processes and those sought after by consumers in a competitive fashion" (Hirschman, 1988, 347). Hirschman thus defined sacred consumption as relating to focal points and key aspects of life, thereby resonating with Durkheim and his separation between the Sacred and the Profane. Hirschman's work also resonated with the desire of Borgmann (2000, 422) for consumers to ensure they are not overly influenced by the paradigm of mass-consumption and to engage "with focal things and practices".

Hirschman's ideas of Sacred and secular consumption differed somewhat from Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry (1989), and their alignment with the "Sacred-secular porous" concept proposed by Mahan (2007, 52). Through their work they suggest a blurring between the boundaries of the Sacred and secular, with a "sacralisation of the secular and a secularisation of the Sacred" (1989, 8). Thus, although both research papers were published around the same time, and both remain frequently cited and referenced today, in Hirschman (1988) and Belk et al. (1989) two differing opinions on the relationship between the Sacred, secular and consumer culture can be witnessed, resonating with the relationships offered by social economist David Haddorff (2000).

Much prior consumer research has spoken about the ideology of the retail brand (Borghini, Diamond, Kozinets, McGrath, Muniz and Sherry, 2009); however, Haddorff (2000, 484) suggested that "Christian social thought should begin with a "thick" description of market/ religion interaction before moral judgements about particular economic theories are pronounced sacrosanct". Thus, prior to believing that brands and the marketplace have ideologies similar to those of religion or philosophies, Haddorff (2000) calls for further investigation into the complex relationship between religion and the marketplace, positing three questions: 1) "is religion opposed to, or interdependent with the market?"; 2) "does the market secularise religion making it ineffectual on market behaviour?"; and 3) "does religion alter market behaviour"? He continues by discussing the three main theoretical positions regarding the relationship between religion and marketplace: the oppositional, absorption and ambiguous traditions.

The first, the oppositional tradition, claims that "the hegemonic market and religion are in mutual opposition to each other, which presumes a dystopian view of society" (2000, 486). The second tradition, the absorption thesis, believes that the "economy has become "sacred" and a contemporary form of religion" (2000, 486). Finally, the ambiguous tradition believes that "the interdependence of the market and religion allows them to stand in ambiguous tension, which presumes a dialectical view of society" (2000, 486). Consequently, the first tradition – the oppositional – refers to Durkheim (1912/ 2008), who viewed the Sacred and the Profane as polar opposites from one another. The separation between sacred and secular offered by Hirschman (1988) in her early definitions of sacred and secular consumption mirror the

oppositional perspective. However, the second tradition – the absorption theory –
viewed such separation and opposition as a false dichotomy. This latter tradition sits
in line with many of the secularisation theorists such as Weber (1905/1958) who, by
Haddorff's interpretation, believed that:

> "(In the light of…) increased modernisation religion would undergo two
> distinct changes. First religious authority and influence over society
> diminishes because more powerful secular institutions, driven by techno-
> scientific reason, provide alternative explanations about the meaning and
> purpose of existence. Second the attitudes, language, and rational procedures
> of the secular "public" sphere become so pervasive that they alter the
> traditional ways of practising religion. In short, not only does religion lose its
> cultural influence in secular society, but this same society shapes, alters, and
> transforms religion into something that appears more "secular". As the
> greatest proponent of the secularisation thesis Weber, predicted that religion's
> influence in modern society would progressively become ever diminished"
> (Haddorff, 2000, 487-488).

This belief in the secularisation thesis became widely popular in the 1960s and
1970s, with many secularisation theorists such as Steve Bruce and Peter Berger
believing that the death of religion was imminent. However, the persistence of
religion twenty to thirty years later led one of these same scholars to admit that they
were "essentially mistaken" (Berger, 1999). Secularisation will be discussed more

fully as this chapter develops; firstly, sacred consumption and the aforementioned consumer research work pioneering this area must be placed in its socio-cultural setting. It has already been noted that Hirschman shared many of the attributes of the oppositional tradition in her preliminary definition of sacred consumption. However, Belk et al. (1989) were clearly influenced by discussions of secularisation and the absorption tradition prevalent at the time of their work, as they found in their research a blurring between the Sacred and the secular through the consumption of certain times, places, experiences and things (both tangible and intangible).

In recent years, the downfall of secularisation theory coupled with religious persistence has resulted in a revised perspective on sacred consumption. More recent research has found not only the persisting influence of religion over consumption behaviours (Siguaw and Simpson, 1997), but also that the consumption of religious ideologies and religious goods can help many consumers to create balance in their lives and communicate their identity (Zwick and Chelariu, 2006; Sandikci and Ger, 2010). Thus, within consumer research there has been a growing research stream aligning with the "ambiguous tradition" (Haddorff, 2000), believing that a relationship of "symbiosis" and "interdependence" between religion and the marketplace has emerged. Returning to the opening definition by Hirschman (1988), although it points to the oppositional tradition, she equally demonstrated a high degree of foresight in the same 1988 paper through offering her idea of "mediating consumption" (1988, 353), representative of the characters, places, experiences, and components of the TV shows which mediate "between the oppositions of sacred and secular consumption". Thus, she demonstrated and illuminated the idea in the late

1980s of what Haddorff (2000) was later to view as the ambiguous tradition between religion, consumption and the marketplace.

Consequently, in light of the growing interest in sacred consumption it has become apparent that Hirschman's (1988) definition and the sacralisation/secularisation blurring process described by Belk et al. (1989) are insufficient in defining sacred consumption. This thesis therefore argues instead that sacred consumption has grown to become not merely a consumer research term, but a stand-alone contributory area of its own within consumer research, incorporating components pertaining to the Sacred, secular, religious, transcendent, spiritual, and ritual. Thus, this chapter aims to build upon the ideas of sacred consumption offered initially by Hirschman (1988) and Belk et al. (1989), in developing a conceptual understanding of sacred consumption.

2.3 Conceptual Understanding of Sacred Consumption

In researching and devising this literature review, it was difficult to find a starting point, as no clear conceptual work exists which brings together all the different strands and ideas on sacred consumption within consumer research. The understanding shared here is the result of an immersion in core journals such as the Journal of Consumer Research (JCR), Advances in Consumer Research (ACR), Journal of Consumer Culture (JCC), Consumption Markets and Culture (CMC), Journal of Marketing Management (JMM) and the Journal of Consumer Behaviour

(JCB) – journals which are central to the contributory area of CCT. A search was carried out through all volumes since the respective journals' establishment (some dating back to the 1970s) to date, for research contributing towards discussions on; consumption of the Sacred, consumption and religion, consumption and spirituality, secularisation, ritual, pilgrimage, anything relating to the Sacred, and the religious investigated through a consumption lens. These journals were supplemented with copious texts and pieces from the likes of Durkheim (1912/2008), Weber (1905/1958), Victor Turner (1969: 1978: 1982) and Plato's Theory of Ideas and Forms (Fox, 1945; Cooper, 1997). This process revealed the existence of two dominant sacred consumption voices; the absorption voice, which has primarily been driven by the seminal work by Belk et al. (1989) on sacred and secular blurring, and the ambiguous voice, driven by a revisionary perspective on the ambiguous relationship between religion and consumption.

In early 2013, a pioneering conceptual book was published by Rinallo, Scott and Maclaren focusing on spirituality and consumption. This book helped to further develop and support this conceptual literature review and in turn informed the findings within the thesis. However, a limitation of the book is that it does not offer strong conceptual clarity, but rather, further terminological confusion, in the area of spirituality and consumption. In their introduction the authors strongly outline the difference between religion and spirituality, yet later proceed to interchangeably use a myriad of both religious and spiritual contexts as platforms upon which to discuss conceptual ideas, thus contradicting their belief in the distinction between religion and spirituality.

A key issue facing researchers interested in investigating the consumption of religious, spiritual, sacredness, rituals, pilgrimages, secularly-sacred contexts is what to call such research. Should it be thought of as religious consumption, spiritual consumption, or ritualistic consumption? The terminology this thesis is most drawn towards is the consumption of the Sacred, following the belief that 'sacred consumption' is a strong umbrella term under which all sacred-consumption focused studies can be positioned. Remaining in line with Durkheim's (1912/ 2008) belief in the Sacred pertaining to something "set apart", this thesis believes that the term sacred consumption allows the incorporation of religion, spirituality, transcendence, ritual, pilgrimage as well as the secular, mundane, everyday society through which the Sacred, or, as will be argued later in this chapter, communication with the Sacred (Iacobucci, 2001; Higgins and Hamilton, 2012) can be harnessed. In short, sacred consumption allows for the incorporation of anything that consumers may "set apart" (Durkheim, 1912/ 2008).

A thorough but still introductory exploration of sacred consumption as it has grown in consumer research since the 1970s until the present day follows now, beginning with an examination of the first and most influential voice within sacred consumption to date – the absorption voice, with focus upon sacred and secular blurring offered by Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry in their renowned paper from 1989, 'The Sacred and the Profane, Theodicy on the Odyssey'.

2.4 The Absorption Voice in Sacred Consumption

The first voice of sacred consumption refers to the predominant focus upon the idea of sacred and secular within consumer research, with the central idea from Belk et al (1989) on sacred and secular blurring. However, prior to investigating the relationship between the Sacred and the secular in consumer research, it is essential to further address the dichotomy between the Sacred and the Profane (Durkheim, 1912/ 2008).

2.4.1 The Origins of the Sacred and Profane Dichotomy

> *"Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's"* (Mark 12:17[6]).

As outlined by the preceding biblical reference, Jesus Christ, often through his own actions and words, demonstrated belief in the existence of a separation between the things of God and the things of man, an idea later supported and furthered by St. Augustine of Hippo (345-430 A.D.): "the thought of a sharp division in human affairs between good and evil, light and darkness, life and death is common enough and is indeed inevitable. In the Bible it is generally described under the analogy of Two Ways" (Augustine of Hippo, as cited in Wand, 1963, 14). Augustine's strong belief in this dichotomy resulted in his famous work 'The City of God', in which he wrote about two cities - the City of Man and the City of God. However, it is

---

[6] Taken from King James Version of the Holy Bible.

important to note that at no point did Augustine ever equate the two cities with the institutions of Church or State; rather, his Platonic philosophical influences meant that he equated the City of Man with the earthly, and the City of God with the Heavenly. Nonetheless, the general interpretation of his works in the Middle Ages were grounded in a Church and State distinction, and thus the origins of the Sacred and profane dichotomy were born – with the Sacred equated with the City of God – i.e. the Church, and the profane equated with the City of Man – i.e. the state. This dichotomy reigned for approximately sixteen centuries and for many religious followers and cultures, it still has great influence today.

Only in 1912 was the theory of the Sacred and the Profane dichotomy coined by Emile Durkheim (1912/2008) who, influenced by his belief in duality, believed sacredness and profanity to exist on two separate planes. Durkheim believed that man's body was profane whilst his soul was Sacred, and for Durkheim the Sacred represented the collective society whilst the profane was embodied by the individual. Although highly regarded and often referred to, the Sacred and Profane dichotomy is not without its critiques, the main criticism stemming from the lack of clarity regarding what Durkheim actually meant by 'profane' (Pickering, 1984, 133-139). The simplest interpretation of profanity is to interpret it as something mundane and everyday (Giddens and Towler, 1974 as cited by Pickering, 1984, 136-137), however, Pickering (1984, 13) highlighted that the English interpretation of the word 'profane' is stronger than the mere indifferent nature mentioned above. The former, mundane sense of profanity, is equated more with the popular term, secularisation. Profanity, in the latter sense, and what is believed to be Durkheim's analogy of

profanity, was that it equated to the complete antithesis of the Sacred – the pollution of the Sacred. Thus, the Sacred and Profane dichotomy held many difficulties and flaws, which over recent decades have caused much debate. This debate has been taken up by consumer researchers over the last thirty years.

Mircea Eliade (1958, 1) suggested that "all the definitions given up till now of the religious phenomenon have one thing in common, each has its own way of showing that the Sacred and the religious life are the opposite of the profane and the secular life. But as soon as you start to fix limits on the notion of the Sacred you come upon difficulties - both theoretical and practical". Eliade (1958, 1) thus illustrated that the main issue is the fixing of limits upon what can be said to be sacred. Thus, as discussed previously, in recent years much of consumer research has looked at the narrowing between the boundaries of what can be constituted as the Sacred and the Profane. Belk et al. (1989) aligned with Eliade through their statement that "religion is one, but not the only, context in which the concept of the Sacred is operant" (1989, 2). Additionally, Arnould and Price (1999 as cited in Arnould, 2004, 52) rejected the Sacred and Profane dichotomy entirely, stating that "the Sacred and the Profane no longer comprise (if they ever did) the dichotomy previous research poses". Thus, in consumer culture the transcendental nature of the Sacred has been located through the consumption not only of religion but also of objects and possessions (Belk, 1988; Belk et al., 1989), extraordinary experiences (Arnould and Price, 1993; Celsi et al., 1993; Belk and Costa, 1998) and even celebrity icons (O'Guinn, 1981; Schau and Muniz, 2007; Hewer and Hamilton, 2011). It follows that the concept of sacredness has been extended to incorporate many more dimensions and contexts, and in

particular, as Belk et al. (1989) suggested, the blurring between sacred and secular boundaries has brought about a stream of research looking specifically at the "sacralisation process".

2.4.2 The Sacralisation of the Secular

Belk et al. (1989, 2) proposed that "consumption can become a vehicle of transcendent experience; that is, consumer behaviour exhibits certain aspects of the Sacred". Consequently consumption can, in an increasingly secular era, act as a "vehicle" helping consumers "fulfil a need to believe in something significantly more powerful and extraordinary than the self – a need to transcend existence as a mere biological being coping with the everyday world" (1989, 2). Belk et al. continue by stating that whether these consumptive objects are regarded as religious or not, "contemporary consumers treat them as set apart, extraordinary, or sacred, just as elements of nature are sacred in naturalistic religions and certain icons are sacred to followers of contemporary, organised religions" (1989, 2).

Despite their belief that "religion has become secularised and the secular sacralised in contemporary Western society" (1989, 13), Belk et al. were not concerned about "what" can be potentially perceived as being sacred, arguing that "almost anything can be imbued with this meaning". Rather, they were interested in the "processes" which an object, place, time, etc. undergoes in order to become sacred. They believe the Sacred in "the realm of consumption to refer to that which is regarded as more

significant, powerful and extraordinary than the self", with the profane being perceived as "ordinary and [lacking] the ability to induce ecstatic, self-transcending, extraordinary experiences" (1989, 13). Thus they posited that sacred status could be, through a process of sacralisation, imbued upon anything falling within six secular domains: places, times, tangible things, intangibles, persons and experiences (1989, 9). Belk et al. (1989, 14-21) proposed seven-sacralisation processes: sacralisation through ritual, pilgrimage, quintessence, gift giving, collecting, inheritance and external sanctioning. Furthermore, their work offered findings suggesting the existence of four main processes of perpetuating and maintaining sacredness within a time, place, object, experience, etc. Consequently, Table 1 on Sacralisation Processes offers an overview of the Domains of sacredness, the main processes of sacralisation, and an explanation of the processes of perpetuating sacredness offered by Belk et al. (1989). Predominant consumer research discussing the relationship between consumption and sacredness have contributed towards examining the sacralisation process itself; the forthcoming section will therefore outline the discussions in this area with a specific focus on religious parallelisation, celebrity sacralisation and finally the metaphorical sacred versus the absolute Sacred debate.

Domain of Sacredness					
Places	*Times*	*Tangibles*	*Intangibles*	*Persons*	*Experiences*
Traditional sacred places such as the context of this study Lourdes.

Places such as Disneyland (Moore, 1980) and Graceland, the home of Elvis, (Reader and Walter, 1993) have been discussed as having sacred status for many of their visitors/consumers. | In the traditional sense, religious festivals such as Christmas and Ramadan.

Consumer research has discussed the Sacred status of national holidays such as Thanksgiving (Wallendorf and Arnould, 1991) and historical recreations such as the annual recreation of Gettysburg (Chronis and Hampton, 2008). | Traditional religious objects such as the crucifix or cross worn by a Christian (Higgins and Hamilton, 2012).

Sewing machines and wedding gowns were sacralised and maintained throughout the western movements of Mormons in the 1800s (Belk, 1992), thereby imbuing them with sacred status. | Traditional moments such as ritual praying or processing.

Modern sacred intangibles can be viewed in the singing of National anthems ahead of sporting games, or the ritual of mascot dances such as the famous Haka Dance performed by the New Zealand All Blacks ahead of a match. | Traditional religious Figures such as Jesus Christ, Our Lady the Mother of Christ and the Saints in Christianity.

Consumer research has discussed sacred status being bestowed upon celebrities such as Barry Manilow (O'Guinn, 1991), Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers (Schau and Muniz, 2007) and Kylie Minogue (Hewer and Hamilton, 2011). | Traditional religious experiences such as pilgrimages, are most often correlated with sacredness (Higgins and Hamilton, 2011; Moufahim, 2013).

Consumer research has also witnessed experiences such as white water rafting (Arnould and Price, 1993), skydiving (Celsi et al., 1993) and Mountain Men experiences (Belk and Costa, 1998) having sacred status placed upon them. |

Sacralisation Process						
Ritual	*Pilgrimage*	*Quintessence*	*Gift giving*	*Collecting*	*Inheritance*	*External Sanctioning*
The rituals of prayer, processions and religious services in traditional religious sects. Rituals of homemaking are also popular examples, as one can turn a bare house into a home, filled with sacred memories, times and experiences, as well as a sanctuary space of protection, comfort and well-being (Belk et al., 1989; McCracken, 2005).	Pilgrimages traditionally have religious connotations, such as the pilgrimage context discussed in this thesis. However, consumer research has also discovered pilgrimage to be found through the consumption of, e.g., white water rafting experiences, or a consumption trip with family to American Girl Place, which consumer researchers have paralleled with pilgrimage experience (Arnould and Price, 1993; Borghini et	Quintessence objects are sacralised due to being "just right", such as the artwork of the Head of Christ image created by Walter Sallman and mass-produced and sold during the 1940s-1960s which became popular due to quintessentially having the eyes of Christ "just right" (McDannell, 1995, 29). Whilst Belk et al. (1989, 15) discuss the quintessence of the Chevrolet for many of it loyal consumers who view themselves as	Gifts brought back from religious pilgrimages to Syria for the Islamic faith are sacralised, with a core component of the pilgrimage being the ritual gift-giving to friends and family (Moufahim, 2013). Belk et al. (1989, 17) suggested that a gift provides a "connection" between the giver and the receiver which is at times sacred,	Collections can also be sacred to their owners; for example the collection of Mountain Man products for consumers of the experience were treated with reverence and sacred status, well cared for and maintained continuously (Belk and Costa, 1998). Similarly, the shrine-like maintenance and display of Barry Manilow insignia indicates the status	The inheritance of goods from deceased relatives and friends can often be aligned with sacred status (Belk et al., 1989; Curasi, Price and Arnould, 1994) with the latter finding that at times such inherited goods can link families and family rituals together over generations.	Sometimes a good is sacred because society and structures tell us so, such as Lourdes being sacralised by Our Lady the mother of Christ via her apparitions, and consequently, authenticated as Sacred by the Catholic Church in 1858. Likewise, Gettysburg has been sacralised externally as a means of remembering the war and occasions that happened there (Chronis and Hampton, 2006).

al., 2009).	being "Chevy people".	especially when the gift is one of sentimental value, such as a handmade quilt.	attributed to the objects, as demonstrated by O'Guinn (1991).		

Sacred Perpetuation/ Maintenance Process

Separating the Sacred and the Profane	*Sustaining of Rituals*	*Bequests*	*Tangibilised Contamination*
Separation was found by Belk et al. (1989) in collectible objects separated as part of a sacred collection, which it would be inconceivable to the collector to think of as selling items. Furthermore, movement from the tinned cranberry sauce to the home bowl is a form of separation enabling the removal of the marketplace and the perpetuation of sacredness during the Thanksgiving ritual (Wallendorf and Arnould, 1991).	The annual pilgrimage to Lourdes every year is a clear example of maintaining the ritual of sacred pilgrimage.

However, equally, the ritual of remembrance for experiences such as the death of a loved one, the events of WWI, WWII and 9/11 sustain these times, although they are dark and sad, as sacred moments that have changed the world and impacted upon the lives of many people. | The passing of heirlooms or sacred rituals onto family members, such as wedding rings of deceased parents, a wedding dress, or even recipes or family traditions, are all examples of bequests. | Souvenirs are a key example of tangiblised contamination, whereby moments and experience are tangibly contaminated with the Sacredness of the moment (Belk et al., 1989) with "sacred traces" (Morinis, 1991) of the Sacredness of the site/ experience/ moment believed to have been imbued upon the souvenir for those at home, or for the self once home. |

Table 1: Table of Sacralisation Processes based on Belk et al. (1989)

Religious Parallelisation

Many consumer research studies have drawn parallels with religiosity, one such study being an Apple Newton Brand study conducted by Muniz and Schau (2005), which illustrated the use of religiously-connotated language by consumers and advocates of the Apple Newton Brand community with words and phrases such as "conversion", "miraculous recovery", "faith being rewarded", and even "resurrection" (2005, 740-747) describing their Apple Newton. Kozinets and Handelman (2004, 702) suggested a similar idea of parallelisation with religion:

"The insight that contemporary consumer activists draw their collective identities from historical evangelical religious identities has theoretical and practical implications. With their tales of conversion, epiphany, righteousness, abstinence, damnation, prophesy, and empowerment, consumer activists set themselves apart from consumers to such an extent that the two groups almost seem to be living in different worlds. One world is luxurious, solipsistic, evil, and unreal. The other world is Spartan, self-sacrificing, good, and real".

The use of religious descriptors consequentially becomes a metaphor for good versus evil, and this metaphor has appeared in numerous consumer research studies to date. For example, Tumbat and Belk (2011) traced a continuous tension between the experienced and inexperienced climber, and discussed who had more right to climb the mountain. Similarly, tension-fuelled findings were given in consumer research on the consumption

and possession of certain products; for example, Luedicke, Thompson and Giesler (2010) found that Hummer consumers perceived themselves as being 'better' than those stigmatizing them over their possession of a Hummer, viewing their possession of the Hummer as emblematic of their heroic and victorious status as stimulators of the US economy. Such feelings point towards associations with martyrdom being placed upon the self, as consumers embrace the stigmatisation they receive for their consumption habits. Giesler's (2008) examination of music downloading hacking heroes demonstrated such a phenomenon, with martyrdom status placed upon hacking heroes who are seen not as criminals, but as true lovers of music and as revolutionaries breathing life into the music industry. Likewise, "martyrdom related satisfaction" (Muniz and Schau, 2005, 744) was utilised by consumers of the Apple Newton brand as a means of conveying their positive feelings and resolve in not conforming to cultural trends and standing against those who would stigmatise them for such non-conformity. All of these metaphorical examples of 'good versus evil' point towards sacralisation through quintessence (Belk et al., 1989, 15), whereby experiences and objects are sacralised through the perceived status of quality and class. The Hummer owners place status on fellow consumers based on their consumption habits and view themselves as 'better' than those (i.e. environmentalists) who stigmatise them, while, the Apple Newton consumer perceives themselves to be 'better' than the conforming trend follower.

Goulding, Shankar and Canniford (2009, 764) found a further religious parallelisation in their work on consuming the clubbing scene, observing that "the analogy between dance

culture and religion is at its most obvious in these converted places of worship, where the congregation (the clubbers) and the minister (the DJ) are separated by distinct spatial zones and where the DJ metaphorically preaches from the pulpit". They continued that "the DJ attains shaman-like status, entertaining and controlling the crowd, helping to heal their anxieties and exorcise their demons; as such, DJs attract cult like followings" (Goulding et al., 2009, 765). The language used by Goulding et al (2009) has clear religious connotations, drawing parallels between the DJ and a spiritual or religious leader. Just as the religious leader would aid their congregation in a journey towards transcendence, the DJ equally leads their congregation of clubbers through dance and music towards transcendence and in doing so, gathers fans who resemble disciple-like followers. This example leads on to a further parallelisation popular within consumer research discussion – the celebrity sacralisation process.

Celebrity Sacralisation

It seems apt that the home to many of the biggest global celebrities is Los Angeles - the 'City of Angels' - as nowadays celebrities are often attributed with cult-like status, and treated like deities in light of their celebrity status. With modern day celebrities such as actors, pop-stars, sport stars, DJs and even chefs often being canonized and sacralised by fans, thus, religious scholar O'Mahoney (2008) expressed the belief that modern-day society is giving rise to "secular saints". This phenomenon has been noted within consumer research, with many scholars discussing the presence of a "celebrity sacralisation process" (O'Guinn, 1991; Schau and Muniz, 2007; Hewer and Hamilton,

2011). O'Guinn (1991) introduced this phenomenon to consumer research with his investigation into the Barry Manilow Fanclub, which found that many fans viewed Barry Manilow as a demigod, or built connections with transcendence and with God through the celebrity, with one fan explaining (1991, 5) "I believe in God, and I kind of think God sent Barry to help me. I think a lot of people feel that way, he's got a special gift and he kind of reaches out to a lot of people". Consequently, Barry Manilow was found by O'Guinn (1991) to be an "emotional conduit" for many fans, connecting them with the Sacred, leading O'Guinn to suggest that "celebrity worship is substantially borrowed from religion… religion has so many points of contact with so many aspects of believers lives that it is sometimes hard to see where it starts and stops" (1991, 1-4). A similar phenomenon was observed by Schau and Muniz (2007) while studying Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers' fanclub, and further by Hewer and Hamilton (2011) in their research into Kylie Minogue. Equally, outwith the music industry, Kozinets (2001) found a similar occurrence to O'Guinn (1991) with some Star Trek fan-sumers experiencing communication with the Sacred and God through their consumption of the hit TV show. Other Star Trek fan-sumers found the show to be more than mere entertainment, but rather that it formed an ideology and "civil religion" (Kozinets, 2001, 77) in itself. Belief in sci-fi shows' religious ideology is not a new phenomenon, with David Voas (2006, 108) finding a strong number of predominantly young men aligning themselves with the "Jedi" (Star Wars) religion in the UK, believing themselves to be "Jedi Knights". Alignment with diverse commercial and brand ideologies such as those offered by Star Wars (Voas, 2006), Star Trek (Kozinets, 2001), Barry Manilow (O'Guinn, 1991), Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers (Schau and Muniz, 2007), Kylie Minogue (Hewer and Hamilton, 2011), American Girl Place (Borghini et al., 2009) and

Harley Davidson (Schouten and McAlexander, 1995) can be dated to the early 1990s; however, recent popular culture demonstrates that this occurrence remains present, relevant and continuous.

The recent and global success of the British X-Factor-created boy band One Direction has resulted in the growth of a group of loyal fans named 'Directioners', who will follow the band across the globe, and limitlessly remain true and loyal to it, with some such Directioners admitting to being members of the faction of fans who would kill for the band (Charalambous, 2013). The recent UK Channel Four documentary which shed light into the life of these Directioners received criticism from the followers for portraying them negatively, and such followers have in turn received support from band member Liam Payne, who expressed his love for his followers, and rallied his Directioner fans to "be proud" of themselves on Twitter (Charalambous, 2013).

These examples show the three components of brand community; consciousness of kind, moral responsibility and rituals and traditions, as outlined by Muniz and O'Guinn (2001). By deeming themselves part of the Directioner faction, the fans gain a sense of togetherness and a bond in their love and following of the One Direction celebrity ideology. Their following (and at times borderline stalking) of the band from tours even to their hotel rooms suggests their maintenance of rituals and traditions in following the band wherever they go. Finally their extreme devotion, contemplation of murder and at

times execution of threats for the band demonstrates their clear moral responsibility and belief in their role as a 'Directionary Disciple' to the band.

These three components of brand community (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001) can equally be witnessed in the currently discussed celebrity sacralisation, and also the previously discussed religious parallelization sections, prompting the question of whether Belk et al. (1989, 32) were perhaps correct in their belief that "as religion provides less of an extraordinary experience, people look elsewhere for experiences that transcend everyday life", and that "Western society needs transcendence [and] like it or not, to our benefit or peril, consumption has become such a transcendental vehicle for many" (1989, 32).

However, consumer researchers have argued that religion is enduring and necessitated by humankind (Muniz and Schau, 2005; Davies and Yip, 2004; Maclaren, 2009). This viewpoint is in line with Inglehart and Baker (2000 as cited in Muniz and Schau, 2005) who believed that "Religion endures because it offers things that humans still need. People need religious affiliation and all of the things that such affiliation provides". Consequentially, some studies point towards the idea of material goods completely replacing and displacing the components and attributes offered by religion, e.g. Lastovicka and Sirianni (2011) found that some consumers will place the personal love they would feel for partners, and family members upon material goods. Nonetheless, Palmer and Gallagher (2007, 47) found, in their study of lapsed Catholics, that despite

no longer practicing the faith, many Catholic informants continue to place no "deep-seated loyalty" upon certain brands or services, finding that the teachings from the Catholic faith remained with the lapsed Catholic, leading them to conclude that individuals were searching for, "a deep-seated spirituality", resonating with Bellah (1985 as cited in Lyon, 2000, 23) who viewed religion as being a "habit of the heart".

Such searching for "deep seated spirituality" (Palmer and Gallagher, 2007, 47) is widely prevalent within consumer research and further supported by Hirschman (1985, 144) that an "integrative-contemplative consumer is alive and dwelling among us". Her belief is that there are two consumer types: the first type being those who "acquire possessions to achieve materiality" (Hirschman, 1985, 144), whereas the second type, Hirschman believes, "acquires possessions to attain ethereality" (1985, 144). Hirschman (1985) believes that certain consumers will consume in a manner that relates to wider aspects such as their moral judgements, religious views, beliefs, etc. In short, some consumers will consume to be more materially rich, whilst others in Hirschman's (1985) view will consume as a means of becoming more spiritually, sacredly, morally rich. Nonetheless, if any object can become sacred, where is religion's place? This leads onto a recent discussion in consumer research on the absolute Sacred versus the metaphorical sacred.

The Metaphorical sacred versus the Absolute Sacred

It will have been noted by the reader that throughout the thesis so far, reference has been made to the Sacred, in capitalised form; this is in light of the influence of Plato upon this study, in particular his Theory of Ideas and Forms (Cooper, 1997; Fox, 1945). Plato believed that our souls pre-existed our corporeal bodies and lives, and that as such they are aware of an Absolute, Perfect state, which from the Christian perspective of this study would be God/Heaven. Accordingly, Plato distinguished between Greatness and greatness, Sacred and sacred, and Absolute and absolute, with the former referring to the 'Whole Idea', the complete picture, whilst the latter refers to a glimpse or form or part of this Absolute, Perfect state. Platonic thinking believes that upon becoming part of the corporeal body, the soul (spirit) can no longer remember the aforementioned Perfect state in its entirety; instead, it merely has recollections or glimpses of this state. In short, we suffer from a "nostalgia for Paradise" (Eliade, 1958) which is brought to life through interaction with the everyday, mundane world. The ubiquitous nature of consumption in modern day society (Arnould, 2007) coupled with the persistent and ubiquitous nature of religion makes it easy to understand why humankind parallels many consumption activities with the Sacred. Thus, are the activities of white water rafting or motorbike riding Sacred? No, they are merely consumption activities which, when partaken by certain individuals, stir emotions and feelings which parallel the recollection of the soul on the Perfect/Heavenly state, becoming "emotional conduits" (O'Guinn, 1991) and enabling communication with the Sacred to be entered into but which are not the Sacred in themselves. Dawn Iacobucci (2001) began such a conversation within consumer research through her differentiation between the

capitalised Sacred and the small lettering of sacred, with her belief that most consumer research has focused on the latter form of sacred. She critiqued such studies as being more commercial in focus, calling for consumer researchers to investigate the field in a manner that would "entertain angels" (2001, 111), focusing more on the Sacred than the commercial. In light of this call, coupled with the aforementioned work from Plato, Higgins and Hamilton (2012) found that even the Crucifix is a metaphorical form of the Sacred, suggesting that what has been researched to date in consumer research has been:

"…The 'consumption of sacred vessels' not the consumption of the absolute form of the Sacred. Thus in short, Arnould and Price's (1993) informants consumed the Sacred vessel of white water rafts as a method for building connection with their Sacred; likewise Hamilton and Hewer's (2009) "salseros" consumed the salsa dance floor as a sacred vessel for connecting with their Sacred. And in the religious context our Catholic consumers consume the crucifixes in their churches, homes, and around their necks as sacred vessels for building connection with their absolute Sacred".

They concluded that "the material world provides a platform enabling man to connect with the Sacred" (Higgins and Hamilton, 2012, 19). In this way the aforementioned celebrity, experience or products can be viewed as sacred vessels which are not Sacred in themselves, but metaphorically sacred vessels which enable communication with the Absolute. Fernandez and Veer (2007, 707) echoed such logic in their work on jewellery consumption amongst Hindus, whereby jewellery is consumed and worn due to the

alluring sounds it gives to the gods when it tinkles, suggesting that the jewellery therefore provides them with a direct communication method with the Hindu gods. Turley (2009, 61) mentioned similar vessels which are utilized by the consumers of St Brigid's Holy Well. When seeking a favour, the consumer leaves behind at the well "a material metaphor enabling the supplicant to visualize in a concrete manner what they wish the saint to accomplish on their behalf". This is in line with material culture scholar Colleen McDannell's (1995, 19) belief that "at times the gap between human and divine can be bridged [and] that bridge at times can be material" (1995, 19). However, as outlined by Rinallo (2009, 62), despite much consumer research investigation of the sacralisation process, very few studies have been concerned "with the use of consumption goods to seek transcendent experience".

However, recently consumer research has responded to this call, with Hirschman, Belk and Ruvio (2014, forthcoming) finding that not only can goods help consumers to seek transcendence; consumer culture today plays an important role in the construction of ideas and images of the afterlife. Consumers can potentially (and often do) conceptualise Heaven and the afterlife in relation to consumption and materiality. Hirschman et al. "anticipate that consumers may view the afterlife as a place where the consumption inadequacies found on earth no longer exist… in short life goes on as before but only the positive aspects are present; all sources of negativity are removed" (2014, forthcoming, 2-3). Consequently, in understanding the current image of the afterlife, these authors have found that "current experiences are being projected forward". As consumer culture has such dominance in society, consumption is one such

experience being "projected forward", with a person's religious and consumption practices "projected as part of [their] heavenly existence" (Hirschman et al., 2014 forthcoming, 4). Consumers try to imagine a world that is comprehensible and relatable to the everyday, but equally is free from pain, worry, anxiety, etc.; which, in short, is "more perfect" (Hirschman et al., 2014 forthcoming, 4). However, is the 21st century changing perception of Heaven a further sign of secularisation?

In answering the above question, we can return to the work of Mircea Eliade who believes that "…the Paradisal land of perfect freedom remains unchanged; it is just that man's view of it has undergone a great many displacements – from paradise in the biblical sense to the exotic paradise of our contemporaries' dreams" (Eliade, 1958, 433). Eliade demonstrates the idea that notions of paradise change as society evolves, so while in Biblical times it would have been of a beautiful garden reminiscent of the Garden of Eden or the Garden of Gethsemane, in the 1950s in which Eliade wrote, an exotic paradise with white sandy beaches and lazy hammocks was the popular metaphor. Nowadays, in light of the ubiquitous consumer culture surrounding us, the perfect consumer society free from inadequacies, access restrictions and money worries has become the current image of Heaven and the afterlife for many consumers, in line with Durkheim's belief that "precisely because religion is a primordial phenomenon, it must yield more and more to the new social forms which it has engendered" (Durkheim, L'Annee Sociologique, as cited in Pickering, 1984, 453). Thus, he believed that religion has evolved as society has evolved, and Eliade also believed that the idea of Heaven and the afterlife would change in line with society of the time. But, following this view, the

idea of Paradise will change not only from era to era and society to society, but also from consumer to consumer. The reason for this is due to the aforementioned inability within humankind in attempting to understand the Absolute and what, in fact, the Heavenly state will be. For, "the human mind learns by comparison of the unknown with the known. But this comparison can only give us approximate rather than Absolute Knowledge" (Nicholas of Cusa[7] as cited in Sigmund, 1963, 245). Nicholas of Cusa's words are perfect for understanding how humankind creates images of the Absolute through comparison with the familiar. This position was supported by McDannell (1995, 28) in her explanation that in imagining the face of Jesus, people will not imagine faces of "a first-century Jew" (McDannell, 1995, 28), but will imagine a familiar face. Everyone interprets the glimpses of the perfect heavenly state differently; thus, each Heavenly image changes from one to another dependent upon a) the prevailing social structure, and b) the personal circumstances, upbringing, ideology, and background of each individual.

In the dominant consumer culture of the Western world, consumption has indeed become "a vehicle of transcendent experience" (Belk et al., 1989, 2) not only enabling to communicate with the Sacred but also at times to conceptualise what the life-after with the said Sacred will be like. However, in their attempt to open sacred conversations into consumer research and break down the dichotomy of the Sacred and the Profane, Belk et al. (1989) unintentionally created a new dichotomy, whereby consumer research

---

[7]It is important to highlight that following Plato, Plotinus, who was a student of Plato, began to spread Plato's teaching, resulting in the neo-Platonist school of thought. Nicholas of Cusa was a Neo-Platonist, as was St. Augustine of Hippo, and ultimately Catholicism is built upon and influenced greatly by Neo-Platonic. i.e. Platonic thinking.

either looked at the sacralisation process or the secularisation process. The second, less investigated process of secularisation will now be discussed more fully.

2.4.3 The Secularisation of the Sacred

What is Secularisation?

Sociologist David Lyon describes secularisation as a "multidimensional concept" (2000, 28) with three levels: the institutional, organisational and personal. Institutional secularisation refers to the split between the Church and State, with the breaking apart of religious institutions from health, welfare, politics and education. The downfall of geopolitical Christendom[8] is therefore one such example of institutional secularisation. The second level, organisational secularisation, refers to the internal secularisation of religious organisations themselves; for example the change of the Catholic Mass[9] from Latin to local languages could be viewed by secularists as one such sign of organisational secularisation. Finally, the third level of personal secularisation is that due to growing secularisation at the prior two levels, people become disenchanted with religious fervour and belief, consequently suffering what Lyon has described as a "secularisation of consciousness" (2000, 30). This loss of faith and religious support

---

[8]Geopolitical Christendom refers to the era when the Christian faith had control over state, education, politics, the marketplace, etc.

[9]Catholic Mass is a holy service for Catholics, where they will hear the word of God and are taught by the priest how the Gospel (Bible) remains relevant in modern day and how to live their lives according to God's will. Mass is the most Sacred of Catholic rituals. Attendance at Mass is compulsory for Catholics every Sunday and throughout the year during holidays of obligation, such as Christmas Day, Good Friday (commemorating the crucifixion of Christ) and All Saints Day on the 1st of November (when Catholics celebrate and pray for all the saints).

means that when "facing life issues without the benefit of religious interpretations, (people) turn instead to other sources of explanation, justification, or hope" (2000, 31), such as the marketplace, brands and consumption, as has been discussed previously in this chapter. Consequently secularists believe that in modern times, religious institutions face a dilemma, to "accommodate to modernity and risk practical and doctrinal dilution of the faith, or resist modernity and risk marginalisation as an irrelevance" (Lyon, 2000, 30).

As has been mentioned, the sacralisation process has gained far more research interest and contribution than its counterpart - the secularisation process, within consumer research. In their classic paper, Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry (1989,8) discussed the latter process, predominantly offering examples of organisational secularisation, such as the change from the Latin Mass to English, or local languages in Catholicism, the substitution for more modern styles of music within services, and the commercialisation of religious festivals. Belk et al.'s (1989) study, when placed in its socio-historical context, surrounded by the widespread belief in the death of religion and the reign of secularisation, can easily be seen to follow the absorption tradition offered by Haddorff (2000). However, their work has been integral in shaping the sacred consumption horizon, and although fewer consumer research studies have been conducted regarding the latter secularisation process, much research within sacred consumption has followed belief in the absorption tradition explained by Belk et al. (1989).

Work within this area has focused predominantly upon the tangible consumption of religions and religious ideology, with a popular paper being O'Guinn and Belk's 1989 study of Heritage Village, USA. Heritage Village was a Televangelist theme park and a commercial site of pilgrimage for Televangelist followers until its closure around the same time the paper was published. Findings from the study showed that at Heritage Village, USA, consumption was not seen as a hindrance to faith, as many other Christian denominations deem it, but rather consumption at Heritage Village was "a religion in which wealth and opulence [were] venerated" (1989, 237). O'Guinn and Belk (1989, 234) found throughout their study that the Sacred and the secular had become so interrelated that a real question "of where sacredness resides at the site – in God or in the goods" was raised. O'Guinn and Belk (1989) observed that central to the pilgrimage site was not a religious temple or church, but a commercial mall, which became a veritable "cathedral of consumption" (Ritzer, 2005) at the televangelist shrine. Similar to Heritage Village, study of the "civil religion" (Kozinets, 2001) of Star Trek has found the symposiums and pilgrimage-like events for the civil religion to centralise not on the philosophy and quasi-religious ideology of the TV show, but rather on consumption (Kozinets, 2001, 77). Eliade (1958) discussed the 'centrality notion' in his work on sacred place, noting that within sacred sites, the focal points are always placed at the centre, and these generally are the main basilicas, cathedrals, apparitional sites, etc. However, as outlined above in the case of Heritage Village and Star Trek, the shopping mall is placed at the centre, further supporting the belief of O'Guinn and Belk

(1989, 237) that not only has religion "become a consumption object, consumption has become a religion".

Further research examining the secularisation process, which resonates with O'Guinn and Belk (1989), was done by Davis and Yip (2004, 115). Within their study of the youth consumption of Pentecostalism in Australia, they found that "the images of Jesus clearing the temple of commerce or the worshipping of the golden calf that the traditional churches point to as anti-materialistic teaching are not focused on in these New Christian Movement Churches (NCMs)". Nonetheless, these two studies which looked at the secularisations occurring within religious spheres tended to look at the New Christian Movement churches, which have been both praised and condemned for their elaborate focus on commerce. In such new-age Christian contexts, the future fear of Bartholomew (2000, 86) of there being a danger "of the Bible being fitted into a consumer framework" may well already be becoming reality.

Belk et al. (1989) claimed that another main secularization area is the commercialization of religious festivals. Considerable work has been conducted in this area of sacred consumption. For example, Sandikci and Ger (2007, 610) pointed to secularizations taking place within the Islamic religious festival of Ramadan, which is becoming more commercially focused, and gradually being transformed "from a religious ritual to a holiday marked by consumption". This study reflects Schmidt (1991) on the commercialization of religious holidays, and Hirschman et al. (2011,

441), who found that "it is possible that when religious festivals are held in dominant settings, a greater frenzy of holiday consumption may occur due to a societal level of "hysteria" or loss of control; individuals may feel there is a social "tidal wave" pushing them to excess". Holy periods are therefore argued to be periods which give rise to more consumption, whether in the preparation and cleansing of the home and the self ahead of the religious festival, or in celebrating the religious period through gift-giving.

Kimura and Belk (1987) found the creation of the "Japanese Christmas", which in no way relates or adheres to any of the Christian premises of Christmas, to be a sign of the growing globalization and commercialization of religious festivals. Similarly, much work from the Journal of Consumer Behaviour (JCB) relating to sacred consumption has addressed the commercial sides of Christmas and utilized them in studies to examine the brand awareness of children through their letter writing to Santa (O'Cass and Clarke, 2001) and the Christmas consumption habits of shoppers during the build up to the festive period (Gurua and Tinson, 2001). Nonetheless, despite growing research indicating commercialization of religious festivals, McKechnie and Tynan (2006, 136) found that such was not a new phenomenon, but rather, that it dates back to the late 1800s. Equally, McKechnie and Tynan (2006) found that despite commercialism having a hold on the Christian festival of Christmas, the purchases were merely "a backdrop on the focal family-centred celebration" (2006, 141), agreeing with Hirschman (1988) on sacred consumption relating to the focal points of life, such as love, family and friends. Additionally, the previously-cited work by Gurua and Tinson (2001) presented an interesting emergent finding that many young consumers dislike the

commercialisation of Christmas and are much more traditional in their thinking than society realises, leading the authors to conclude that "Christmas is a complex commercial and social event" (2001, 60).

Such complexity and conflicting meanings, raises secularisation discussion once again. Although strongly advocated in the 1980s when Belk et al. (1989) published their seminal work, as outlined earlier in this thesis secularisation theory has been described even by its supporters as an "essentially mistaken" theory (Berger, 1999). Equally as has been mentioned, many authors such as Hervieu–Leger (1986) have argued that there is a third and often overlooked option: that religious organisations most likely "face both ways at once", towards the traditional religious faith and the modernity of the 21st century, leading now onto the discussion of secularisation and consumer culture as it is today.

2.4.3.3 Secularisation, Consumer Culture and the 21st Century

David Lyon (2000, 8) described secularisation theory as providing "a handy catch-all concept within which all kinds of phenomena could be interpreted, from the emptying of church pews to the decreasing references to God in political speeches". At its core, the work of Lyon (2000) discusses how religion continues to exist and adapt in what

many perceive to be postmodern times, utilising the metaphor of 'Jesus in Disneyland'[10] to sculpt his discussion. He refers to layers of secularisation, explaining that an event such as "Jesus in Disneyland" could be perceived as representing an "inner secularisation", in which the churches' movement out from specific Sacred spheres such as church and shrine, into more secular spheres such as Disneyland, points towards the "demystification" of the Sacred through which the church and religion becomes "less and less distinguishable from the rest of the world, and entertainment rather than obedience its real dynamic" (2000, 9). However, he continues by arguing that scholars or non-supporters of secularisation theory could equally view such change as a "transformation" or "restructuration" of religion, offering a secondary view that people experiencing the "Jesus in Disneyland" event may have perceived it to be a context and event "co-opted for religious purposes". Thus, he suggests that religion co-opted Disneyland for religious purposes via the event as a means of further spreading religious ideology, and hence was not subjecting itself to "inner secularisation". Consequently, he concludes that religion needs to be released from the "secularisation straightjacket" (2000, 9) in order to be "rethought in fresh ways".

Thus, for Lyon (2000, 9) the academic belief in secularisation theory is the problem, not religion itself; he claims that "without the academic presumption that religion's social

---

[10] Lyon discussed an actual event that he researched during which Disneyland in California had a specific day called the Harvest Day Crusade where it was open to different Christian sects. These Christian sects had complete run of the theme park, offering and conducting Christian performances, prayer services, etc., all conducted publically with the backdrop of Disneyland. He used the research conducted at this event to develop his metaphor of Jesus in Disneyland as a means of explaining how religion persists in postmodern times.

significance declines in the modern world, its actual social significance may be gauged appropriately" (2000, 9). Ammerman (1994, 296) set out a similar belief, suggesting that part of the reason why society believes religion to be in decline is because today we have the means of "predicting transition and decline". She continued that many scholars like Finke and Stark (1992) have suggested "that our pictures of a pious, Puritan colonial America are quite out of focus, and that we are far more "churched" today than we ever have been before. When we begin to read the history of religion from the bottom up, we may see a constant "both-and", rather than a decline from all to nothing" (Ammerman, 1994, 296). Kurtz (2012, 17) further supported the view that such belief in a bygone era with full church pews and perfect piety is a romantic notion, explaining that "it is unlikely that medieval or early modern Europe was really the religious utopia people often think". Studies such as Stark's (1999) revealed a far from "pious culture", uncovering "evidence of a widespread lack of participation in church and remarkable ignorance of the basics of Christianity, even among the clergy" (Kurtz, 2012, 17). All of which supports Colleen McDannell's (1995, 8) belief that the Sacred and profane are at their core "constructions of scholars and not always part of the awareness of those involved in practicing religion".

Often within consumer research, the focus has been upon the co-option of religion for consumptive purposes with the prevalence of the absorption tradition prevailing over sacred consumption discussions. However, this tradition rejects "the traditional view of religion, which presumes that it is grounded in a transcendent reality…instead religion simply articulates socially constructed ideas about the Sacred and the Profane, [with]

the Sacred and the Profane constantly redefining themselves according to the dominant ethos of society" (Haddorff, 2000, 490-491). Such focus, led Iacobucci (2001, 111) to her differentiation between the 's'acred and the 'S'acred mentioned above, and her desire to witness consumer research rising to the call to "entertain angels" through the study of the "'S'acred", the study of the "wholly different". Her desire for less commercially focused research has been answered over the last decade through the second revisionary ambiguous voice.

2.5 The Ambiguous Voice in Sacred Consumption

In the early 1900s W.E.B. DuBois presented his theory of "double consciousness", along with his belief that people can have a multi-faceted conception of the self. Although originally based on an African American context, this theory was said by McDannell (1995, 206) to be applicable to other contexts, including religion. The growing secularism and separation from church and state occurring through institutional secularisation as outlined previously, has led to society today maintaining religion in private spheres. However, in light of our fragmented, individualistic, technological and consumption-orientated modern society, the "double consciousness" of DuBois is even more prevalent today. Consumer research has spoken of the tearing or fractioning of the self (Jafari and Goulding, 2008) and the need to satisfy multiple selves (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995). Thus, with one foot firmly planted in 21st century consumer society, and the other within religious faith and ideology, it is only too apparent that religious followers must envelope a "double consciousness" in seeking to be seen as distinct yet

equally wishing to be part of the norm, seeking the spiritual, the Sacred, the "set apart" (Durkheim, 1912/ 2008), yet equally the everyday, the mundane. This chapter mentioned earlier that Hirschman (1988, 353) was tremendously insightful in proposing her concept of "mediating consumption" which referred to consumers' attempts to mediate "between the oppositions of sacred and secular consumption". Beruschavili and Arnould (2005, 79) further suggested the need for focus upon this idea by asking "how do religious consumers negotiate this inherent contradiction between the dogma of Christian freedom from possessions and the "dogma" of a material culture fixed on possessions?" Consequently, within this second voice of sacred consumption, influenced by the revisionary ambiguous tradition (Haddorff, 2000), light has been shed on this double consciousness amongst religious consumers by investigating the ways in which religious consumers are able to negotiate and balance their religious beliefs with consumer culture.

2.5.1 Balancing Traditional Religious Belief with Current Consumer Culture

Touzani and Hirschman (2008), in their research into Ramadan observance in Turkey, found that the holy festival did not see consumers rejecting but, rather, embracing consumption, and seeing "a radical transformation of the way of consuming and living" and "reversals of consumption" occurring. Consumption ceased during the day and markets were open at night and for longer hours, enabling Muslims to take to the streets and the squares and continue to consume, yet simultaneously remain faithful to their religious belief. Touzani and Hirschman (2008) share the belief of Sandikci and Ger

(2010) that "Islam is neither a threat nor a panacea for consumerism and capitalism".

Hirschman et al. (2011, 434), in their investigation into consumption behaviours during the Abrahamic[11] religious festivals of Christmas, Passover and Ramadan, similarly found that the "marketplace 'trappings'" of holy feasts such as Christmas with "the food, the stockings, and the tree, were not seen as competitive with Christianity". These authors went on to posit that a relationship of symbiosis, not opposition, existed between the marketplace and religion during and in the run up to religious festivals for Christians, Jews and Muslims alike. Such a symbiosis was also found by Sandikci and Ger (2010) in their investigation into the 'Tessatur' fashion industry in Turkey in which adoption by the Islamic religion of fashion and marketing techniques was not a sign of secularisation but one of symbiosis (2010, 32). The marketplace was not simply "co-opting" religion, but rather playing "a much more complex and multifaceted role in increasing both the appeal and visibility of tesettur" (2010, 32) and in turn creating further "dissemination" and "proliferation" of Islam across young Turkish female consumers.

Such findings lie in opposition to the argument put forward by Kozinets and Handelman that religion is "one of the most powerful threats to [the] global consumerist ideology today" (2004, 702), believing that the "depth of lasting commitment, legitimacy, and authenticity" (2004, 702) prevalent among religious communities will continue to cast religion and consumerism in opposition to one another. Consequently, the findings and belief of revisionary consumer researchers such as Touzani and Hirschman (2008),

---

[11] Abrahamic Religions refer to the monotheistic religions of Christianity, Islam and Judaism, which all have origins in the prophet Abraham.

Sandikci and Ger (2010) and Hirschman et al. (2011) are in direct opposition to those consumer researchers acting within the absorption tradition. Nonetheless, such revisionary consumer research follows Hirschman and her belief that "the natural and the supernatural are intertwined during consumption, and to attempt to segregate them in theory – especially with the all too frequent assumption that secular interests dominate spiritual ones – is false" (1985,144), in line with Haddorff's view (2000, 499) that "since the market is omnipresent but not omnipotent, religious ethics should not simply condemn the economic realm, rather it must learn to dialogue with it…seeking ways to creatively engage with it [the market]". Consequently, the ambiguous tradition, like the absorption tradition, perceives the relationship between religion and consumption to be symbiotic; however it rejects the functionalist viewpoint of the latter tradition, proposing that reality and religion are not socially constructed, and refusing to view religion as a "purely human phenomenon" (Haddorff, 2000, 493). This viewpoint asserts the possibility of "the market's power expanding into society", but "refuses to accept the total secularism of religion and a dystopian disenchantment" (2000, 494). Thus, such a tradition refuses to "simply demonise or sacralise the market" (Hardorff, 2000, 499-500), instead attempting to better understand the dialogue between religious institution(s), religious follower(s) and the marketplace.

A prime and recent example of understanding such ambiguity and unpicking the dialogue between religion and the marketplace within consumer culture is found in the

work of Rinallo et al. (2013c) on the consumption of the fashion rosary bead[12]. The rosary bead is sacrosanct for Catholics; however the eroticisation and commercialisation (McDannell, 1995; Rinallo et al., 2013c) of Catholic imagery, in particular by pop icon Madonna in the 1980s, has led to a "fashionisation" of the Catholic rosary. Such a trajectory would most likely be viewed as secularisation by followers of the absorption tradition; however, Rinallo et al. (2013c) found that consumption of the fashion and branded rosary bead can have a "dual nature," being "both sacred and secular at the same time" (2013c, 36), and enabling religious consumers to simultaneously be in fashion and in good faith. This idea gives rise in consumer research to the great "interplay between the "great tradition", which comprises the major continuing component of a religion, and the "little tradition", which consists of the way such components are appropriated, modified, and re-imagined over time by local communities and individuals" (2013, 37). Consequently, it is demonstrated that the co-presence of religious symbolism and the marketplace does not necessarily remove the importance of the religious symbol, nor secularise the faith behind it. Rather, the fashion rosary continues to aid its consumer/wearer in further reaching transcendence and communicating with the Sacred.

---

[12] Rosary beads are Catholic praying tools, used to pray The Rosary to Our Lady the Mother of Jesus Christ. A Rosary consists of a sequence of prayers; one Our Father, ten Hail Mary prayers and a Glory Be prayer. This sequence is then repeated five times to make one complete decade of the rosary. There are five decades of the Rosary, each symbolising and enabling those praying to meditate on a series of events within Jesus Christ's life. For example, the Sorrowful Mysteries meditate upon the events leading to Jesus' death upon the cross, whilst the Joyful mysteries meditate upon the happy moments of Jesus' life, such as his birth and first presentation in the temple.

This example of the work from Rinallo et al. (2013c) leads onto a second theme within the ambiguous voice of sacred consumption - discussion of the consumption of religious and spiritual material culture.

2.5.2 Consuming Religious and Spiritual Material Culture

"Jesus Junk", "Holy Hardware", "Catholic/Christian Kitsch" (McDannell, 1995) are all terms used as a means to describe the materially religious goods consumed and sold at Sacred pilgrimage sites, in Christian/ religious stores, in religious institutions, etc. However, often these terms are used derogatorily, with some consumer researchers believing such items to be "offensive" (Belk et al., 1989; Turley, 2013) and an "inappropriate mixing of the Sacred and the Profane" (Belk et al., 1989, 25), and consequently that they represent a secularisation of religion. However, material culture scholar Colleen McDannell (1995) opened up discussion into what has been and remains a neglected research area - religious material culture, by tracking its roots, and the changing meaning of such goods in the everyday life of the religious consumer, concluding that religious material culture was not a phenomenon invented "during the twilight of the twentieth century" (1995, 223) but was actually carried forward by religious consumers and sellers from the nineteenth century.

American sociologists Park and Baker (2007) echoed McDannell through their work on the consumption of religious material goods, also finding that this form of consumption is neither "a new or recent phenomenon" (2007, 501), but rather has been around in the

USA since the 1700s. In truth, the presence of material culture within the religious sphere can be dated as far back as the Egyptians who believed in the importance of material goods to the extent that they buried their dead with everything they could potentially need in the afterlife. Within monotheistic religions, such as Christianity, equal fervour for the material plane can be traced back as far as the 3rd century, offering initial insight into the cult of relics within Christianity, with Empress Helena of Constantinople (Saint Helena) journeying in search of what she believed to be part of the True Cross of Jesus Christ. Today, Catholic churches, basilicas, cathedrals, pilgrimage sites, etc., all have at least one material, saintly/religious relic attached to them, with the Catholic tradition of placing a Sacred relic beneath the altar of the church, dating back to times of persecution where Mass was secretly said over the tombs of dead saints in the catacombs[13]. However, despite the connection between materiality and religion not being a new phenomenon, criticism against such materiality newly arose in the 20th century (McDannell, 1995; Park and Baker, 2007).

Park and Baker explained that since the 20th century, religious consumption has taken on "new dimensions in the selling and professing of the Sacred" (2007, 502), with more products available than ever. However, they by no means suggest that religious consumption or "Jesus junk" reflects a growing secularisation of religion, instead stating that through religious consumption, many experience increased levels of religious capital. The authors found that religious consumption habits are now

---

[13]Catacombs are underground passageways that are used as burial sites, most often for Saints, Popes and Figures of Christian significance, as they are mostly aligned with the Roman Empire and Christianity/ Catholicism.

undertaken more selectively by consumers, with more decision and time dedicated to choosing the consumption object. Within consumer research, Laran (2010) presented quantitative findings indicating that consumers make less indulgent decisions and are more self-controlled when temporal distance is farther away. As such, the findings from Park and Baker (2007) when positioned alongside those of Laran (2010) could suggest that consumers of religious consumables are more selective due to the overarching reason for them consuming the products being an attempt to achieve a better relationship with God, whom they will meet only in death, which ultimately is the longest temporal distance possible in life. Additionally, the prolonged time given to selecting the religious goods might also point to the symbolic and deep meaning that the goods can provide in consumers' lives. Thus, Park and Baker (2007) would agree with McDannell (1995, 1) and her belief that it is:

"Not enough for Christians to go to church, lead a righteous life, and hope for an eventual place in heaven. People build religion into the landscape, they make and buy pious images for their homes, and they wear special reminders of their faith next to their bodies. Religion is more than a type of knowledge learned through reading holy books and listening to holy men. The physical expressions of religion are not exotic or eccentric elements that can be relegated to a particular community or a specific period of time" (McDannell, 1995, 1).

McDannell continues that "people learn the discourses and habits of their religious community through the material dimension of Christianity" (1995, 1-2), a view in line

with the findings from consumer research to date on religious jewellery (Fernandez and Veer, 2007; Higgins and Hamilton, 2012) not being conspicuously worn, but rather utilised as a vessel enabling communication with the Absolute – with God – in short, enabling religion and faith to be built into the everyday "landscapes" of religious consumers' lives. Religion is complex, difficult to grasp and often misunderstood; however, the material dimension may be one way that religion can be better understood and the meanings of religious life better "deciphered" (McDannell, 1995, 2), for, as McDannell (1995, 3) outlines, "Christianity is not only practised in Churches". Recently some consumer researchers interested in sacred consumption have begun to investigate the practicing of faith outwith such religious spaces by looking at the material consumption of religious goods.

2.5.3 Religious Consumption within Consumer Research

Zwick and Chelariu (2006) found in their investigation into the consumption of the 'hijab', that the materially sacred veil was utilised as a branding tool when consuming an online Islamic matchmaking site, 'Shia'. They found that for many young Muslims utilising the matchmaking site, the 'hijab' became an aid in finding the correct partner. It was utilised not as a means of portraying conformity with cultural conventions but, rather, as a means of expressing individual "conservative attitudes, religiosity and Islamic values to a potential husband" (2006, 390). McDannell (1995, 221) found similar findings in her investigation into the Mormon faith group, in that the

consumption and wearing of particular clothing by a male Mormon coupled with his absence of a wedding ring signified "availability" to interested future spouses.

The above examples have discussed the public consumption and demonstration of religious symbols and messages such as belief levels and marriage availability. However, Wong (2007, 464) found that the placement and showcasing of religious objects in the homes of Malaysian Muslims similarly communicated their religiosity and were not mere tools of societal conformation. Furthermore, Jafari and Goulding (2008, 85) found that for many young Iranians who felt stressed upon leaving the domination of the East and entering the freedom of the West, if unwilling to convey their cultural and religious roots via clothing such as the hijab, were able to "communicate the essence of themselves and their culture, through material possessions and activities" in the privacy of their homes. Finally, Sandikci and Ger (2010) in their investigation into the consumption of the Islamic female 'Tessetur' fashion industry found that the consumption of the fashion not only signified religious belief but also confirmed the female consumer as a contemporary Muslim woman who did not conform to "the prevailing ways of behaviour" (2010, 30). When taken together, all these findings reaffirm the belief of Cosgel and Minkler (2004, 340) that "consumption institutions assist in the communication of religious identities to others".

In order to better understand the consumption of religious goods and religious materiality, consumer research needs to look beyond their symbolic properties and

instead study the importance and role such goods play in the marketplace (McDannell, 1995). This is because if a consumer is consuming religious goods, they may opt-out of other goods. For example, as is the case with the context of this thesis in opting to consume a week-long pilgrimage to Lourdes, often Lourdes consumers will opt out of consuming a week-long holiday purely for relaxation in the sun. Consequently, consumer research needs to gain more insight into the "material manifestations of religion" (McDannell, 1995, 4), i.e., what is it that the religious consumer gains from consuming the religious/ sacred good, service and experience as opposed to the secular? This is a research gap that this thesis aspires to fill. However, the small amount of work within this area has to date predominantly focused upon the Islamic context, so further research needs to be conducted into the Christian and Jewish contexts with regards to the Abrahamic religions, and investigation into Buddhism, Hinduism, and other world religions and faiths would be a means of better developing our understanding of religious consumption from a consumer research perspective. This said, a strong theme and developing area of research that has received a substantial level of focus within sacred consumption discussion has been the consumption of the spiritual as opposed to the religious.

Spirituality and Consumption

Sociologist and secularist Steve Bruce (1992, 1996) views modern times as having given rise to a "consumer religion". By this, he refers to the new-age movement where people shop around for a religion that fits them, resonating with the idea of new-age

spirituality - the "bricolage-esque" (Ammerman, 1994) built spiritual belief, which fuses both Western and Eastern ideologies and philosophies. Thus, for Bruce (1992, 1996), people today shop around for, and 'try on' different religions, and even at times merge multiple ideas from different religions as a means of sculpting their own unique new-age spiritual religion. Heelas and Woodhead (2005) believe that increasingly, "religion is giving way to spirituality", with rising numbers of people professing themselves as spiritual but not necessarily religious. Within sacred consumption discussions there has been a strong level of focus upon new-age spirituality, described by Ammerman (1994, 298) as a putting together of "an everyday faith out of multiple cultural elements, elements that sometimes sound pious, sometimes secular", by Hellas (2008) as having the self "locked" at the centre, and by Rindfleish (2005, 344) as "a turn to the self", portraying new-age spirituality as in line with the growing individualism of the 21st century, a suggestion further supported by Carrette and King (2005, 14) and their belief that new-age spirituality has led to an "individualisation of religion".

Rinallo et al. (2013b, 2), in their conceptual work on spirituality and consumption differentiated completely between the spiritual and the religious, arguing that separation of spirituality from religion stems from "two distinct but related phenomena: the secularisation of society and the postmodern behaviour of spiritual seekers, who mix and match from different sources to customise their spiritual beliefs" (2013, 2). The separation of religion and spirituality is, however, complex. This thesis is not positing that religion and spirituality are the same, as many scholars have already emphasised

(Carrette and King, 2005; Rinallo et al., 2013a); however, spirituality can and is often given a voice through religion just as it equally can and is given a voice through the consumption of bricolage-built new-age spiritualities. Therefore, it is difficult to claim a complete split between the two. Such complexity in separating both was equally exemplified by Rinallo et al. (2013a) within their aforementioned work; despite claiming in their introduction that a differentiation exists between religion and spirituality, they continue throughout the book to offer a mix and match of contexts relating to the consumption of both new-age spiritualism (Kedzior, 2013; Scott and Maclaren, 2013; Gould, 2013) and religion (Rinallo et al., 2013c; Izberk-Bilgin, 2013; Turley, 2013). In doing so, they exemplified the difficulty in the differentiation of religion and spirituality, hence the earlier suggestion of the usage of sacred consumption as a umbrella term, drawing all the presently discussed consumer research discussions together.

To date, sacred consumption research investigating the consumption of new-age spiritual goods such as crystals, gemstones, statues, candles, etc., has viewed such goods as having become "social products" (Rindfleish, 2005). Kedzior (2013), for example, investigated the role marketplace offerings play in creating spiritual experience and found that the consumption of gemstones, crystals and jewellery once "charged" (sacralisation through ritual) with powerful energy from the new-age spiritual vortexes of Sedona transformed them into "keepsakes" (2013, 187), storing the power and energy of the vortex for the consumer to maintain following their new-age pilgrimage. However, such rising belief of spiritually material goods as "social

products" (Rindfleisch, 2005), and the commercialisation of such goods, has led some scholars to believe in a growing secularisation of the spiritual (Gould, 2006). Thus, the parallels between religious material culture and spiritual material culture are uncanny, further supporting Scott and Maclaren's (2009, 60) claim that "we are still spiritual seekers".

Further, there has recently been discussion of the "new-atheists movement" (Johnstone-Louis, 2013): a commercialisation of non-religious and non-spiritual belief and following. In fact, Alain de Botton (2012), in his work entitled "Religion for Atheists", suggested that instead of the usual atheistic mocking, ridiculing and criticism of religion, atheists should steal religions tactics for building community, togetherness and places where fellow atheists can come together. Such ideology is perhaps paradoxical to the tenets of atheism; however, the idea has taken hold, as a recent article in the Sunday Herald (Duffy, 06.10.13, 16) discussed a plan for atheistic assemblies and services in Glasgow and Edinburgh, which planned to substitute hymns such as "All things bright and beautiful" with secular songs such as "Eye of the Tiger". Thus, engagement with the Sacred, the spiritual and the religious are deemed to provide humankind with attributes such as friends, family and a 'we-ness', which remains relevant and popularly sought after today, despite a prevailing belief in individuality and self-centeredness.

This section on spiritual consumption has been devoted to demonstrating that a growing body of work on sacred consumption has, and continues to, investigate the consumption

of spiritual materiality. However, and most importantly, this section has further demonstrated a contribution of this thesis - its conceptual drawing together of sacred consumption, further supporting the argument that sacred consumption is a better umbrella term for all consumer research discussions relating to consumption and sacredness, spirituality, religion, ritual, transcendence, etc. Furthermore, this section on religious and spiritual material culture has not only evaluated the importance and relevance of the consumption of such materiality, but has also led onto the emerging conversation within this second ambiguous voice of sacred consumption. In consuming such religious and spiritual materiality, consumers are likely recently to opt out of other consumption choices; thus, religion and spirituality have a clear influence upon consumer behaviour.

2.5.4 Religious Affiliation and Religiosity's Influence on Consumer Behaviour

As mentioned in the introduction chapter, a common belief within consumer research is that Belk et al.'s (1989, 8) well-known work pioneered the concept of sacred consumption. However, although their work in the area has been essential in furthering the idea of sacred consumption, it did not mark its beginnings. In 1974, Engel began work in the area through an assessment of the effectiveness of the marketing strategy of a Protestant Church in Asia and the South Pacific. This research adopted a marketing strategy orientation following the popular mandate of the time to investigate and understand "what marketing managers do" as opposed to focusing upon "how and why consumers behave as they do" (MacInnes and Folkes, 2010, 900). Two years later, in

1976, Engel produced research positioned more in line with the latter consumer-focused perspective with his assessment of "basic life-style activities, interest and opinions – for the purposes of uncovering felt needs for spiritual growth" (1976, 98). This survey-based research found that the Christian sects The Assembly of God and the Lutheran Church had different influences on consumption behaviour and consumption outlooks, with the Lutheran church found to have a more secularist viewpoint than the Assembly of God. Thus, his findings initiated a stream of research investigating 'religious affiliation and religiosity's influence upon consumer behaviour', a conversation within the field sacred consumption that remains strong and active today.

Religious affiliation refers to someone's alignment with a particular religious group, whilst religiosity refers to the level of following, commitment, adherence to and belief in a particular religious ideology. Religiosity is a hard thing to measure; nevertheless, there have been quantitative studies within consumer research offering scales and models attempting to assess and calculate religiosity (Wilkes, Burnett and Howell, 1986). Now that an offering of the terminology in this section has been offered, discussion of the research found within the field of sacred consumption to date will be shared.

Following Engel's (1976) example, Hirschman began work within the area of sacred consumption in the early 1980s in light of her belief that "religion may serve to link consumers to a style of life that determines not only what and how much is consumed,

but why it is consumed" (1983, 132). Her three investigations (1981, 1982, 1983) into religious affiliations' influence upon consumer behaviour investigated Catholicism, Protestantism and Judaism and led to results "strongly suggestive of the importance of pursuing religious affiliation as a source of influence on consumer behaviour" (1982, 231). In particular, she found that religious affiliation influenced "consumer innovativeness, information acquisition, media exposure, and opinion leadership" (1982, 231). Following on from her work, a strand of research has grown around the idea of religious affiliation influencing consumer behaviour. For example, Sood and Nasu (1995) found that religious affiliation influenced religious consumers' perceptions on pricing, as well as their consideration of, and actual buying of, products.

Over time, religiosity itself has become a component of study. For example, in 1994, Delener presented results which strongly indicated marketing's need to acknowledge the "religiousness" (1994, 48) of a consumer, due to its affect upon their consumption behaviour. Following this, Siguaw and Simpson (1997) presented results from the Southern USA pointing to religiosity influencing Sunday shopping behaviour, with many Southern US consumers adopting Sunday Sabbath maintenance behaviours by avoiding consumption on the Sabbath, in line with Mittelstaedt's work (2002, 8) on "blue laws" - "historic example(s) of religious prohibition of when trade can take place". Siguaw and Simpson (1997) proved that the 'blue law' of the Christian Sunday Sabbath keeping has huge importance and power for some consumers, who will adhere to non-marketplace exchange on the Sabbath. Following this, Essoo and Dibb (2004) presented results which proved that not only does shopping behaviour differ amongst

different religious groups, but also that the dogmas and the level of religiosity and belief in certain religions can influence consumer behaviour. As such, they found that Hindus, in following their fatalistic ideology, were "less demanding, less thoughtful, less traditional, less practical and less innovative in their shopping behaviours than either Muslims or Catholics" (2004, 705). More recently, Veer and Shankar (2011, 555) found religiosity to influence consumption within the Christian context, finding that highly Christian consumers will be more likely to purchase luxurious items when "materialistic claims are suppressed", but that when these claims are not suppressed, such consumers' intention to purchase the luxury items will "drop significantly". In short, the above findings, coupled with the discussions throughout this second voice of sacred consumption, have outlined the different ways in which highly religious consumers are able to balance their "conflicting identities" and "cope with an increasingly materialistic society" (Veer and Shankar, 2011, 547).

2.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the objective of this chapter was to outline the importance of the area of sacred consumption and examine the two main voices of sacred consumption – the absorption and the ambiguous voice – as means of conceptually outlining this growing, yet still neglected, area within consumer research. The chapter opened with McDannell's (1995, 5) argument that "in Christ there is a blurring of the material and the spiritual; the Sacred voice and the profane human body". Consequently, in outlining the two sacred consumption voices identified to date within consumer research, this

chapter has begun to illuminate some of the ways in which the religious consumer lives

with one foot in 21st century consumer culture and the other foot rooted in traditional

religious ideology.

CHAPTER III: EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENTIAL CONSUMPTION AND PILGRIMAGE

3.0 Introduction

In 1982, Holbrook and Hirschman called for consumer research to focus upon the experiential aspects of consumption, with consumption increasingly becoming viewed as "involving a steady flow of fantasies, feelings, and fun", all of which could be found and "encompassed" through what Holbrook and Hirschman termed "the experiential view" (1982, 132). Since then, a growing area of consumer research has investigated the "experiential view", with a further strand of research emerging in light of the above call which has begun to investigate the consumption not only of experiences of the everyday, but experiences of the extraordinary. Consequently, the present chapter will discuss two core areas of contribution by this thesis to the knowledge in this subject field: extraordinary experiential consumption (EEC) and pilgrimage, drawing theory from consumer research, anthropology and sociology.

3.1 Extraordinary Experiential Consumption (EEC)

Henry and Caldwell (2007, 171) found that through the consumption of heavy metal music, consumers of the head-banging scene were able to experience "feelings of

elation" which in turn enabled them "to forget the grind of everyday life". These experiences resonate with the idea of "experiential transcendence" (Lifton, 1973 as cited in Belk, 1988), in which individuals partake in activities and experiences as ways of transcending the world. Further, Arnould and Price (1993, 25) found that consumption of rafting experiences enabled consumers to transcend the "commercial, and create bonds of friendship with guides and strangers that are profound and intimate". Similar experiences have been noted in the consumption of diverse experiences including skydiving (Celsi, Rose and Leigh, 1993), the new-bikers sub-culture (Schouten and McAlexander, 1995), the US Mountain Man experience (Belk and Costa, 1998) the consumption of henna–night ceremonies (Ger and Holt, 2000), salsa dancing (Hamilton and Hewer, 2009) and belly dancing (Wort and Pettigrew, 2009).

The idea of transcending everyday life has been peppered throughout many EEC studies, often through discussion of the idea of *communitas* drawn from Turner (1969), described by Tumbat and Belk (2011, 43) as a temporal state of social anti-structure, during which individuals are temporarily liberated from "the obligatory everyday constraints of their normal statuses and roles". Communitas has its roots in the tribal research conducted by Turner; however, Turner and Turner (1978) later also found the temporal social anti-structural state within religious pilgrimage. Thus, in situating and better developing this thesis, communitas has become an extremely influential concept.

3.2 Communitas

Turner and Turner (1978, 250) defined communitas as "a relational quality of full unmediated communication, even communion, between definite and determinate identities, which arises spontaneously in all kinds of groups, situations, and circumstances". They went on to explain that communitas does not merge identities but, rather, temporarily liberates people from their usual identities and their conventional, structuralised norms.

It must be noted that scholars often assume communitas means 'anti-structure', and use the terms anti-structure and communitas interchangeably. However, Turner (1969) never viewed communitas as the complete antithesis of anti-structure - instead, it is a form of temporal "social" anti-structure, whereby the prevailing social structure of the time is cast off along with age, gender, and social class, for Turner believed that "people are free to be themselves when they are not acting institutionalised roles" (Turner, 1967, 101). Thus, for Turner (1969), pure unmediated anti-structure only occurs when both communitas (social anti-structure) and liminality are present.

Liminality refers to being in a "transition state" (Turner, 1969):

> "During the liminal period, neophytes are alternately forced and encouraged to think about their society, their cosmos, and the powers that generate and sustain them.

Liminality may be partly described as a stage of reflection. In it those ideas, sentiments and facts that had been hitherto for the neophytes bound up in configurations and accepted unthinkingly are, as it were, resolved into their constituents" (Turner, 1967, 105).

Turner continues that "liminality is the realm of primitive hypothesis, where there is a certain freedom to juggle with the factors of existence" (1967, 106). However, Turner (1982, 44-45) never believed liminality to be a continuous state, as although it is "exotic in its appearance, [liminality] can never be much more than a subversive flicker. It is put into the service of normativeness almost as soon as it appears". Likewise, he never thought of communitas as extending beyond its temporal status, but rather saw it operating in continuous dialogue with social structure, believing social life to be a "type of dialectical process that involves successive experience of high and low, communitas and structure, homogeneity and differentiation, equality and inequality" (1969, 97). Thus, for Turner, ultimately communitas "can only be grasped in some relation to structure" (1969, 127). His belief in the dialectical process between structure and communitas led him to distinguish between different forms of communitas; existential (spontaneous) communitas, normative communitas and ideological communitas (see Table 2). He outlined (1967, 98) that in being "unstructured", one "is at once de-structured and pre-structured", pointing to the idea of structure and communitas in a continuous cycle with one another. In becoming unstructured, one is automatically entered into the liminal state, and thus begins preparation for re-structuring.

Typology of Communitas	
Existential/ Spontaneous	Existential/spontaneous communitas refers to a spontaneous "happening" or event that sparks a complete undiluted separation from social structure. Turner (1982, 47) believed that the spontaneity of communitas could "seldom be sustained for long". As the communitas group develops a "protective social structure" around their experience, the communitas becomes "converted into a norm-governed relationship".
Normative	Normative communitas is the "attempt to capture and preserve spontaneous communitas in a system of ethical precepts and legal rules – pilgrimage sites when institutions begin to become involved. Turner and Turner (1978,135) mention that normative communitas derives from spontaneous/existential communitas, and is the need to organize resources and keep social control, instinctive to humankind. He continues that "existential communitas eventually ceases to be spontaneous, becoming organized into a perjuring social system; in other words, comes to terms with its social structural environment". Thus, the spontaneous becomes quasi-structured.
Ideological	Ideological communitas refers to the "formulation of remembered attributes of the communitas experience in the form of a utopian blueprint for the reform of society" (Turner and Turner, 1978). This refers to the attempts to spread the temporal communitas state into society forever, which cannot be done. However, Turner (1982, 48) offers other forms entitled "religious communitas" and "communitas utopia" within the realm of ideological communitas (1982, 49). The latter is "found in variant forms as a central ingredient, and connected with the notion of "salvation" in many of the world's literate, historical religions. Hence, Turner (1982) suggests that the religious ideology of Catholicism and the Catholic belief in salvation in the life to come through Heaven is a form of searching for communitas.

Table 2: Typologies of Communitas

As the table above mentions, spontaneous/existential communitas refers to a spontaneous "happening" or event that sparks a complete, undiluted separation from social structure. An example of spontaneous communitas can be found in the context of this study – Lourdes. As was discussed in chapter one, the pilgrimage site began because of a series of apparitions of Our Lady, the Mother of Jesus Christ, experienced by a fourteen-year-old peasant girl in 1858. Consequently, processions to, and visiting of, the site during these apparitional times, and the unofficial pilgrimage to the grotto, (the site of the apparitions) that became established during this time are prime examples of such undiluted spontaneous communitas, which challenged the prevailing societal structure and norms of the time in Lourdes, in France and in Catholicism, creating a form of anarchy in relation to the social order of the day. However, it must be emphasized that Turner (1982, 47) believed that such spontaneous communitas "can seldom be sustained for long".

As a communitas group develops a "protective social structure" around their experience, the communitas is "converted into a norm-governed relationship". Thus, Turner and Turner (1978) in their work on pilgrimage, never viewed pilgrimage as a spontaneous form of communitas, but, rather, as normative communitas, which can be described as "a destructuring communitas experience" (Morinis, 1992, 8). Normative communitas is a "heightened sense of camaraderie, of closeness, of specialness, a significant reduction in the normal structures of society that separate group from group, but lacking the full "communitas" character of existential communitas" (Stanley, 1992, 79). For Turner, normative communitas was a mid-point between full, pure existential

communitas and structure, "where under the influence of time, the need to mobilize and organize resources, and the necessity for social control among the members of the group in pursuance of these goals, the existential communitas is organised into a perjuring social system" (1969, 132). Turner (1969) believed that society needs structure in order to work effectively, but that equally, we need moments of communitas, accordingly suggesting that communitas and structure cannot be completely removed from socio-cultural processes (Turner and Turner, 1978, 252). There "may be a continuous cycle of Communitas/structure/Communitas", for example, that "religious vision becomes sect, then church, then a prop for a dominant political system, until communitas resurges once more from the liminal spaces" (1978, 252).

Turner's communitas has not been immune to criticism. Many scholars believe his ideas to be "questionable" (Morinis, 1992), especially in light of the anti-structural state not being found in other pilgrimage studies. For example, Pfaffenberger (1979) found that the Sri Lankan pilgrimage site of Kataragama, a site for both Hinduism and Buddhism, showed signs of tensions and differences between differing castes, in terms of the reasons for, and ways of, going to the shrine. In his work on Andean Indian pilgrimages in Peru, Sallnow (1981, 1987) found signs of a re-affirming, not a dissolution, of social boundaries and distinctions amongst pilgrimage groups. Furthermore, Eade (1992) found signs of structure and hierarchy throughout his twenty-two years of volunteering at Lourdes, leading Eade and Sallnow (1991) to view pilgrimage as an "arena for the expression of competing religious and secular discourses" (Reader, 1993, 12). Equally

within consumer research, communitas has recently begun to receive criticism, leading onto discussion of communitas in relation to consumer research.

3.2.1 Communitas and Consumer Research

As mentioned above, this research became influenced by the Turnerian communitas idea in the light of a high presence of discussion and finding of communitas within consumer research studies investigating extraordinary experiential consumption contexts (e.g. Arnould and Price, 1993; Schouten and McAlexander, 1995). Such consumer research has witnessed the type of cycle outlined above from spontaneous to normative communitas. For example, Celsi, Rose and Leigh (1993,7) found that although the consumer of skydiving escaped the formal structures of mundane society, the "perceived competence" of the consumer in their skydiving ability becomes "a critical factor in [skydiving] social status". As such, although they are said to be temporarily escaping social structure, ultimately consumers are entering into a new form of social structure where they are not judged on their social class, gender, age, ethnicity, or religion but instead on their ability to skydive. A similar idea was raised by Belk and Costa (1998) on the Mountain Man experience, where again, although the consumers of this natural experience were said to escape the structures of modern-day Western society, they enter into a new social structure where they are judged on their ability to authentically recreate and engage in the Mountain Man experience. Kozinets (2002, 24) further supported such change from spontaneous to normative communitas in his investigation into the consumption of the Burning Man experience, which found a

shared belief amongst many informants was that the event had become "too rule-bound and had lost its wildness" (2002, 24). As such, it is clear that consumers in these contexts have escaped social structure, entered into a state of communitas and then re-entered into a new state of quasi-structure (normative communitas) once again.

Importantly, the dialectic of communitas offered by Turner (1969) and Turner and Turner (1978) has not yet been fully addressed within consumer research. From a thorough reading of Turner and his critics work, it is recognizable that consumer research to date has specifically lacked discussion of the different types of communitas, and especially the idea of normative communitas, which is clearly apparent within the EEC work outlined above. The mid 2000s saw the consumer research criticism of communitas begin, starting with the revision by Martin, Schouten and McAlexander (2006) that their initial findings into the motorbike subculture in 1995 were more complex than they had previously believed. Then, in 2011, an outright critique of the idea came from Tumbat and Belk in their study on consuming the Everest experience. In their work, Tumbat and Belk claimed that in consumer research, "extraordinary experiences are always understood as special and sacred with transcendental qualities of the liminal" (2011, 53). They found, however, that unlike white water rafting (Arnould and Price, 1993) and skydiving (Celsi, Rose and Leigh, 1993) the consumption of the extraordinary experience of climbing Everest did not bring about a state of communitas but, in fact, the complete opposite occurred. Instead of togetherness there was selfishness, and instead of peace there was tension. This observation led them to suggest that the prevalent sense of communitas within extant consumer research is potentially a

"romantic idea" (2011, 53) and that "consumer behaviour scholars have yet to appreciate and understand these competitive, individualistic and positional aspects within extraordinary marketplace performances that have been treated previously perhaps as more ideal for communitas" (Tumbat and Belk, 2011, 46). They called for future consumer research to investigate the consumption of extraordinary experiences in more depth, searching not just for the "idyllic" but potentiality for the "communal and the individualistic character" (2011, 58).

However, Turner (1982, 47) described a paradox of communitas as being that "the more spontaneously "equal" people become, the more distinctively "themselves" they become; the more the same they become socially, the less they find themselves to be individually. Yet when this communitas or comitas is institutionalised, the newfound idiosyncratic is legalised into yet another set of universalistic roles and statuses, whose incumbents must subordinate individually to a rule". This is the case with the studies looking at communitas in consumer research to date (Celsi et al., 1003; Schouten and McAlexander, 1995; Belk and Costa, 1998), which have shown that as individuals enter into "the unmediated relationship" of communitas, they become socially connected and more together, yet they also view themselves as being different from the crowd, not following the rules or norms, but challenging them instead.

In short, Turner means communitas to be a state of coming together socially as a group of individuals, yet simultaneously viewing the self as individually differentiated, and in

maintaining and protecting such individuality and distinctiveness, the social communitas begins to become structured. So, it follows that the Mountain Men of Belk and Costa (1998) differentiate themselves from the crowd and the mainstream by getting back to nature and merging together as a social group through their interest, consumption and adoption of the Mountain Man experience as a lifestyle. However, structures begin to arise as issues of authenticity begin to separate the spontaneous group into subsequent castes. The recent work of Canniford and Shankar (2013) demonstrates such normative communitas well through the differentiation between long-board and short-board surfers, with the affinity and communitas between the group shared not through their common experience of getting back to and being at one with nature but, rather, their shared ideology on correct and authentic surfing.

The argument and critiques of the Turnerian idea of communitas that have most recently entered into consumer research can themselves be re-critiqued through the work of Turner (1969). Turner has stated from the outset that communitas a) is not a complete anti-structure b) is not solely about the communal, as it also includes the individual and c) has different levels, with the normative level being the point between communitas and structure. As has been demonstrated above, what is termed communitas most often within consumer research has been found to be normative not spontaneous, undiluted communitas. Yet, to date, no discussion of normative communitas has arisen within extraordinary experiential consumer research studies. Consequently, this thesis believes that communitas within consumer research merits further discussion and study. Equally, this thesis believes that further investigation of the consumption of pilgrimage

through a consumer research and EEC lens will inevitably enable understanding of the growing extraordinary experiential phenomenon and will help to take consumer research and its discussion of communitas back to its root context of pilgrimage. However, closely aligned with communitas and pilgrimage is the concept of liminality; therefore, prior to discussing fully pilgrimage theory, this thesis will discuss the concept of liminality.

3.3 Liminality

Liminality has its roots in the work of Van Gennep (1909/1960) on rites of passage. For Van Gennep (1909/1960), liminality was one of the crucial phases in a rite of passage – the phase of transition, stemming from the Latin word for threshold, *limen*. Turner (1969, 95) defined liminality or liminal entities as "neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention and ceremonial". Consequently, liminality refers to moments, times and things that are simultaneously "in and out of time" (Turner, 1969, 96) - in short, it is the "mid-transitional" phase (Turner and Turner, 1978, 249) within a rite of passage. Turner (1969, 96) discussed the relationship between liminality and communitas, sharing that during phases of liminality, societies can become "unstructured or rudimentarily structured and [a] relatively undifferentiated *comitatus*, community, or even communion of equal individuals who submit together to the general authority of ritual elders", thus aligning with the discussion of communitas presented above.

Turner and Turner (1978, 253) differentiated between liminal and liminoid (or quasi-liminal), with the latter referring to societal "features resembling those of liminality…but not identical with it". Such features represent a "dismembering of the liminal" (1978, 253), generally

developing outside of "central economic and political processes" (1978, 253) and often to be found at the margins of society. However, as mentioned above, liminal entities generally "submit together to the general authority of ritual elders" (1969, 96); therefore the liminal period is often obligatory in nature, whereas Turner and Turner (1978) outlined liminoid processes as being engaged with voluntarily. Consequently, in their seminal work on pilgrimage, Turner and Turner (1978) aligned pilgrimage as a *liminoid* not *liminal* experience. The pilgrim's experience was believed to engage with liminal attributes such as release from mundane societal structure; equalizing of status and dress; communitas; and journeying (being in transition). However, pilgrimage was viewed by Turner and Turner (1978) as voluntarily not obligatory, and therefore as quasi-liminal (liminoid). Consequently, it can be seen that communitas, liminality (liminoid) and pilgrimage are interwoven, so an understanding of all three is clearly of high importance to this study. As such, as introductions to communitas and liminality have now been provided, the third aspect of this relationship - pilgrimage – is presently discussed.

The precise roots of pilgrimage are unknown and untraceable but scholars believe pilgrimage to have been about since the times of Ancient Greece

BC: Pilgrimage has been said to date back as far as the Ancient Greeks, with the Old Testament parable of the Jewish Exodus from Egypt viewed as a pilgrimage.

AD: Following the death of Jesus and the rise of Christianity, pilgrimages began within Christianity with many making pilgrimages to the grotto and crib of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem.

11th Century: Saw pilgrimages been made to the assassination site of St. Thomas Becket in England and pilgrimages to the Blessed Virgin became popular with Shrines throughout Europe and the rest of the world

14th-17th Century: The Reformation saw much uprising against pilgrimage resulting in a period of iconoclasm (destruction of material icons and symbols of faith and many Pilgrimage Shrines).

1939-1945: The Second World War and directly following it, a new type of pilgrimage occurred, as people were unable to come to the site, the site came to them. As "it was no longer the faithful who travelled, but the statue of Our Lady" (1994:28), with the statue from Fatima (known as the Pilgrim Virgin) touring throughout the world.

20th-21st Century: Recent scholars have begun to look at pilgrimage becoming apparent in places of historical darkness or death, such as graveyards (Walter, 1993), concentration camps (Kaelber, 2002) and war memorials (Chronis and Hampton, 2008). Similarly, growing secularism of the 21st century has found secular places such as Graceland, the late home of Elvis Presley (King, 1993) and Disneyland (Moore, 1980) as well as extraordinary experiences such as white water rafting (Arnould and Price, 1993) and consumption experiences like the American Girl consumption experience (Borghini et al, 2009) all viewed as pilgrimage.

AD: Pilgrimages are found throughout the New Testament, with the life of Jesus Christ often mentioning he and his family partaking in a pilgrimage, often to celebrate Passover.

337AD: Within Christianity as early as 337AD many pilgrimages were made to the tombs of saints and martyrs, with Rome seeing many pilgrimages being made to the tombs of Peter and Paul.

13th Century: Saw the existence of 'penitential pilgrimage'. Originally for lesser forms of public penance, however, as time went by penitential pilgrimage became increasingly obligatory, with higher-level sins often repented with through 'penitential pilgrimage'. For example, many accused of witchcraft during the middle ages, if lucky enough to escape burning at the stake, would be sentenced to penitential pilgrimages in atonement.

1830's: Witnessed resurgence in pilgrimage, beginning with numerous pilgrims journeying to meet with the "charismatic confessor" (1994:25) St. John Vianney, the Cure D'Ars in France. As well the increase of Marian shrines, shrines honouring Our Lady the Mother of Jesus Christ, resulting in the Modern pilgrimage era being known as "the Age of Mary".

Figure 13: Timeline of Pilgrimage

3.4 Pilgrimage

3.4.1 What is Pilgrimage? Situating and Defining Pilgrimage

Pilgrimage is a rich and complex area which is hard to define, and has no known origin, as explained by Catholic priest, renowned pilgrimage scholar and theologian, Rene Lauretin (1994, 10-11):

"To some extent there have been pilgrimages throughout time and space. For example, among the ancient Greeks there was the cult of Apollo, god of medicine. Among the Jews, there were the biblical sites associated with the patriarchs or the prophets".

Lauretin continues (1994, 11) that pilgrimages have remained persistent throughout the ages and across religions, with Muslims journeying to Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem, and despite Buddhists often stating their pilgrimage to be more "interior" than "exterior" in nature, he tells of Buddhists often welcoming pilgrimages to sites in South Asia and the East. Turner and Turner (1978) and Lauretin (1994) offer rich and insightful histories of pilgrimage, and the Timeline of Pilgrimage (figure 13) offered at the beginning of this section to provide the reader with a better understanding of the development of pilgrimage, is based on the histories of both scholars.

Defining pilgrimage is no easy feat either. Turner and Turner (1978,7) adopt a religious and spiritual perceptive regarding pilgrimage, pointing towards the idea that if mysticism is concerned with the interior relationship one has with God, then pilgrimage is the exterior method which enables the relationship with God to be built. In defining religious pilgrimage, Lauretin (1994, 9) returned to the root of the word, 'Peregrinus' which means 'stranger', continuing that pilgrimage has its roots in 'per ager', meaning "one who goes through a field, or one who goes across a frontier". Thus, from a Christian perspective, pilgrimage is defined by Lauretin (1994, 1) as "human endeavours, a bodily movement, a physical going forth that engages body and soul". This echoes with Turner and Turner (1978, xx-xxi) and their belief in pilgrimage as "a lengthy, laborious bodily act, involving some idea of a connection with a long-dead spiritual Figure at the end of it". As such, pilgrimage has obvious roots in religion and is a "visible embodiment of religious values" (Turner and Turner, 1978, xxiv), the aim of which is "to recreate or to strengthen our bonds with God" (Lauretin, 1994, 12), a process which ultimately "…liberates us, detaches us from what shackles us and creates in our heart a place of welcome for Christ" (Lauretin, 1994, 37). In short, pilgrimage in the Christian sense is an earthly journey during which closeness to God is found, and an attempt made to escape the aspects of everyday life, which "shackle" us. Although Turner and Turner (1978) are anthropologists not theologians, they researched specifically religious pilgrimage contexts, most likely causing their alignment with such a religious and spiritual pilgrimage perspective. This thesis is also investigating a religious pilgrimage context, but it is doing so via a consumer research lens, hence the need for a wider understanding of pilgrimage.

Wider anthropological understandings of pilgrimage view the experience as a mandate for movement (Morinis, 1992). Thus, for Morinis (1992, 3), pilgrimage is the term used "wherever journeying and some embodiment of the ideal intersect". Glazier (1992, 135) argued that although most often aligned with a sacred place, pilgrimage can incorporate journeys with "no specific destination". Following from such beliefs, sociologists Reader and Walter (1993) have spoken heavily of the idea of the modern, secular pilgrimage. Other sociologists have discussed the pilgrimages made to Graceland, the home of the late Elvis Presley (King, 1993), war graves (Walter, 1993) and football fields following tragic events like the Hillsborough Disaster (Davie, 1993). Likewise, through his work investigating pilgrimage at Disneyland, Moore (1980) found that for children and adults alike, Disneyland can be a place of childhood, nostalgic and "playful pilgrimage" (1980, 207). Reader (1993, 5) differentiated between religious and secular pilgrimage, arguing that "when talking of pilgrimage in the religious traditions, one is only touching upon some of the many manifestations of pilgrimage". Following on from that, the predominant focus on religious pilgrimage has led all academic disciplines to "restrict" (1993, 3) themselves to these other manifestations of pilgrimage. Thus, just as Belk et al. (1989) found the Sacred to be "operant" in Domains outwith religion, many scholars posit the same to be true of pilgrimage.

So, what is pilgrimage in the 21st century? In all the reading conducted for this research, similar key descriptors of pilgrimage resounded across many disciplines: consumer research (Arnould and Price, 1993), theology (Lauretin, 1994), anthropology (Turner and Turner, 1978), sociology (Reader and Walter, 1993), religious tourism

(Vulkonic, 1996; Shackley, 2006), and sacred geography (Vidyarthi, 1978). The key descriptors were: *movement and journey, sacred/spiritual magnetism, religion and spirituality, ideology, and the ideal*.

Pilgrimage is believed to have at its core *movement* away from home, from the familiar, on a journey to an unfamiliar and at times unknown destination. The desire to go on such an unknown and unfamiliar journey lies in the *Sacred/spiritual magnetism*, the magnet-like ability of a pilgrimage site to draw pilgrims continuously and recurrently. There is belief that in journeying to such a place, engagement with a specific ideology will be possible, such as Catholicism at Lourdes, childhood nostalgia and playfulness at Disneyland or, as will be discussed in the forthcoming pages, etiquette and manners at American Girl Place (Borghini et al., 2009). Despite discussions of secular pilgrimage becoming more apparent and accepted today, there remains a high level of religious pilgrimage sites, and a strong belief that the word pilgrimage is synonymous with *religion and spirituality*. Finally, pilgrimage theory often points towards the experiencing of an *ideal*. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Theory of Ideas and Forms offered by Plato in antiquity stated that the soul's pre-existence prior to corporeal life has encased within it an understanding, a memory, a glimpse of remembrance of what the Sacred, the Absolute, the Ideal is. Therefore, upon entering the pilgrimage site, whether it is Lourdes, Disneyland, Anfield Stadium or Graceland, this remembrance or glimpsing of the ideal is afforded to the pilgrim. Thus, when aligned together, the above descriptors point to pilgrimage being the mid-point between heaven and earth, the "rupture in the ordinary Domain, through which heaven peaks" (Morinis, 1992, 5).

However, we also need to ask: why is humankind focused upon glimpsing this ideal, of glimpsing Heaven? Why are we persistently "spiritual seekers" (Scott and Maclaren, 2009, 60)? Saint Augustine of Hippo believed that the answer to this was that life is itself one long pilgrimage.

The Pilgrimage of Life

"The true commonwealth of the Christian soul is in heaven; in this world we are but sojourners in transit, foreigners, exiles, pilgrims waiting until the time of our return to the home-country to which we truly belong (Philippines 3:20)"

(St. Augustine of Hippo, cited in Wand, 1963, 14).

The preceding excerpt from 'The City of God' by Augustine originates from the New Testament and raises the idea of life itself being a pilgrimage. Augustine believed that "a certain shadow of this heavenly city was to be seen on earth, serving as a prophetic symbol of things to come rather than an immediate presentation of it… A certain part of the earthly city was made to be a Figure of the heavenly, having no significance of its own, but serving as a Figure of the other city, that is heavenly, and so being 'in bondage'. It was not founded for its own sake, but in order to point to the other" (Augustine of Hippo, cited in Wand, 1963, 243). Eliade's work in the mid-twentieth century later resonated with Augustine through his ideas of 'Labyrinths', which are

rituals "…to teach the neophyte, during his sojourn on earth, how to enter the Domains of death without getting lost" (1958, 381). Thus, Eliade believed that Sacred places like Lourdes are pieces of the labyrinth, almost like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, which help to prepare man for when they will come face to face with the Absolute/God. Eliade further supported the idea of life in itself being one long pilgrimage when he stated: "the supreme rite of initiation is to enter a labyrinth and return from it, and every life, even the least eventful can be taken as the journey through a labyrinth" (1958, 382). More recently, Lauretin (1994, 9) supported this idea of the existence of a pilgrimage of life: "pilgrimages, which highlight and punctuate the existence of Christians are like a rehearsal for this great journey which ends in the meeting with God" (1994, 13), leading him to conclude that pilgrimages are a symbol "in miniature of the great journey of human life toward God" (1994, 15). In Christian ideology, engagement with pilgrimage sites like Lourdes is therefore something of a miniature pilgrimage inside the overarching pilgrimage of life.

Turner and Turner (1978, 1) observed that "both quantitatively and qualitatively, pilgrimage has been surprisingly neglected by historians and social scientists", and despite the lapse of over 30 years since their study, this neglected research discipline remains across all disciplines, particularly within consumer research (Morinis, 1992; Scott and Maclaren, 2013). The forthcoming section will now outline the growing consumer research area investigating consumption and pilgrimage.

3.4.2 Consumer Research and Pilgrimage

Scott and Maclaren (2013, 195) expressed the belief that no pilgrimage-specific study has yet arisen in consumer research. They are both correct and incorrect in their belief, because often within consumer research, discussions of pilgrimage have fallen into three different areas; new-age pilgrimage (O'Guinn and Belk, 1989), secular/brand ideological pilgrimage (Kozinets, 2001; Borghini et al., 2009), and most recently, a body of consumer research which is beginning to specifically investigate religious and spiritual pilgrimage (Scott and Maclaren, 2013, Kedzior, 2013; Turley, 2013; Moufahim, 2013). However, prior to discussing these three growing areas within consumer research, examination of the relationship between pilgrimage and the marketplace must take place.

Consuming Pilgrimage: The Marketplace and Pilgrimage

> *"Pilgrimage is probably the ritual form most susceptible to appropriation by commercial, secular interests, as being the most diffuse and hence the most purveyable"* (Moore, 1980, 216).

The commercial appropriation outlined by Moore (1980), has been allied with pilgrimage for centuries. Turner and Turner pointed out that 'The Friday Market' in Walshingham, home to the Sanctuary Our Lady of Walshingham, has been a ritual since King Henry III granted the right to hold a weekly market there in 1226 (1978,

183). Turner and Turner (1978, 234) continued that the "spiritual economy" (McDannell, 1995) built around pilgrimage sites has in turn set the standards and become the prototype for the "economic structure" of today. This idea of pilgrimage being a "prototype" for the modern economic structure is not a new concept, as many religious tourism scholars like Rinschede (1992, 53) have pointed to pilgrimage being the "oldest type of tourism". Scott and Maclaren (2013, 196) expressed the similar belief that pilgrimage sites are "place-directed markets" whereby marketplaces of exchange are "created by the crowds drawn to a sacred place" (2013, 196). Scott and Maclaren saw such "place-directed markets" as often neglected within consumer research - an incomprehensible neglect, since such markets are of equal importance and numerous as those specifically "created by marketplace or even anti-marketplace promoters" (2013, 196). Consequently, leading on to the work within consumer research aligning with and specifically investigating pilgrimage.

Consumer Research and Pilgrimage: Specific Cases

The aforementioned work by O'Guinn and Belk (1989) on consuming the Televangelist theme park Heritage Village, USA, is the first piece of consumer research found to have investigated a specific pilgrimage context. That said, the work was very commercial in its focus. As outlined in the preceding chapter, Heritage Village did not have a religious building at its centre, rather, it had a shopping mall, with the pilgrimage site becoming a place where "religion [had] not only become a consumption object, consumption [had] become a religion in which wealth and opulence are venerated" (1989, 237). Following

from this work, Belk (1992) focused on a context that was less commercial in focus. His work on the meanings of possessions during the geographical movement of the Mormons between 1847-1869 was termed as an Exodus and many parallels were drawn with the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land. During the Exodus of the 1800s it was found that possession of material goods and tools both helped and hindered Mormon pilgrims along the way. Their losses of material goods were interpreted as tests and trials from God and the focal goods such as Bibles and religious consumption objects were ingeniously hidden as a means of preserving them from thieves along the pilgrimage route, thus ensuring the goods' safe arrival at their new home in the Promised Land. This work has many elements, which help to build understanding of the meanings given to the possessions while pilgrims are (in the case of the Mormons) journeying over long periods and facing stigmatization.

Abreu (2006) investigated the differing perceptions between clergy and pilgrims over the brand of the pilgrimage site at Fatima in Portugal. Her work examined whether pilgrims perceived the Shrine in the same way as the Church desired the Shrine to be viewed. It found that there was a discrepancy between the mission statement, the objective of the Shrine and how the pilgrims actually viewed the Shrine, resulting in Abreu (2006) concluding that perhaps the Shrine needed to reposition its brand image. This work, however, was again more commercial in nature than "angel entertaining" (Iacobucci, 2001). Thus, until recently, the level of focus upon pilgrimage contexts within consumer research, specifically regarding religious and spiritual pilgrimage, has been neglected (Scott and Maclaren, 2013). However, as discussed earlier, consumer

researchers have been quick to adopt ideas from pilgrimage theory, such as communitas (Turner, 1969), into their research contexts, particularly within the EEC area. Consequently, a body of research has developed within consumer research that parallels and relates to pilgrimage ideas and theory.

Arnould and Price (1993, 7) were key scholars in relating pilgrimage to consumer research, finding "hints of the themes of pilgrimage [such as] intensification and rediscovery of self, and communion with nature and others" in their investigation into the consumption of the white water rafting experience. Equally, Kozinets found similar "hints" of pilgrimage themes within Star Trek fandom (Kozinets, 2001), a community found to produce a "form of Sanctuary" for its consumers (followers). In his later work on the Burning Man experience (Kozinets, 2002; Kozinets and Sherry, 2013) he drew many parallels with pilgrimage, such as the movement away from, and inversion of, everyday life found at the Burning Man experience, alongside a temporal escape from the dominant social structure. In short, he argued that this led the Burning Man experience to become a secular pilgrimage that opposes the dominant ideologies and norms of society. Kozinets and Sherry (2013, 263) concluded that Burning Man is "simultaneously a sacred playground and a serious lesson".

It was mentioned above that a core facet of pilgrimage is the consumption of a specific ideology; thus, the brand ideology discussions (Borghini et al., 2009) prevalent in consumer research are integral to this pilgrimage conversation. Borghini et al. (2009,

371) outlined that often through the consumption of a retail brand ideology, "shopping becomes pilgrimage" and likened the American Girl Place experience to "a trip to the Holy Land or a visit to Mecca", with the experience affording its consumers a secular pilgrimage during which an ideology of etiquette, taste, and moral correctness can be consumed. Many successful companies, such as Disney (Moore, 1980), Nike (Peneloza, 1994; Sherry, 1998) and American Girl (Borghini et al., 2009), have clearly utilized such marketplace logic, promoting a strong brand ideology as a means of increasing their sales and customer consumption. In many ways, they have copied and inverted the set-up of pilgrimage, whereby consumption has peripherally gathered around the religious pilgrimage sites for years. Today in the creation of secular brand pilgrimages, consumption is not peripheral but central.

Further work within the area of pilgrimage consumption came from Turley (2009: 2013) on the shrine of St. Brigid's Well in Ireland. Turley (2009: 2013) investigated the leaving behind of goods at the Sacred well, and developed a discussion of what McDannell (1995, 140) would term "the economy of salvation". An economy of salvation involves the exchange of goods and gifts, and donations at shrines and chapels, etc., as a means of establishing "a series of obligations between those on earth and those in Heaven" (McDannell, 1995, 140). Similarly, work from Scott and Maclaren (2013) and Kedzior (2013) has built further understanding of the consumption of spiritual pilgrimage, with the former investigating consumption at Glastonbury and the latter consumption of the vortexes of Sedona. The former work from Scott and Maclaren (2013), however, posits negative findings on pilgrimage, with both scholars

suspecting the gradual disappearance of a distinction between pilgrimage and tourism; they found that "the widespread expectation that tourism is commercial in nature while pilgrimage is not reflects only nostalgia" (2013, 206).

These findings however, are in contrast to the recent work by Moufahim (2013) on religious pilgrimage and consumption. Moufahim (2013, 2) further develops understanding of gift giving, finding that "secular and sacred consumption are entwined in the context of religious pilgrimage" and that within the context of Islamic-Syrian pilgrimage, consumption is "necessary for a pilgrimage experience to be successful" (2013, 2). The use of the word "entwined" is very interesting, as it identifies the "ambiguous tradition" (Haddorff, 2000) to be at work in such Islamic-Syrian pilgrimage settings. The Sacred and the secular through entwining are joined and linked, but neither is overtaken by the other. Thus, unlike Scott and Maclaren (2013) who saw the distinction between sacred and secular, tourism and pilgrimage as merely nostalgic, Moufahim (2013, 17) believes that the role of consumption in religious and spiritual pilgrimage is complex and calls for future consumer research to gain a "better understanding of religious markets and religious commodities", a call that this current thesis answers.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided insight into two core areas to which the research contributes, extraordinary experiential consumption and pilgrimage. As outlined in the preceding

chapter, consumer research has established only a very limited conceptualisation of sacred consumption - of the relationship between the Sacred, the religious, the spiritual and consumer culture. Yet, as outlined in chapter two, religious and spiritual ideology can have a huge influence on consumer behaviour. Consequently, this chapter has demonstrated pilgrimage to be a rich context in which to develop current understanding of sacredness, consumption and, equally, further pilgrimage theory. The marketplace can be seen clearly within the pilgrimage setting (Moore, 1980; Scott and Maclaren, 2013). Additionally, a pilgrimage setting is a place where exchange is everywhere, but the exchange in this case is not always economic: it can also be a symbolic and spiritual exchange. Furthermore, the debate arising within recent consumer research literature on the complexities of structure versus communitas, with its roots in pilgrimage theory, further makes the pilgrimage setting the ideal place for meeting the suggestion of Tumbat and Belk (2011) of investigating "other extraordinary experiential consumption choices in light of these two intersecting frameworks" (2011, 58).

The pilgrimage setting is really the original extraordinary experience, having paved the way for the hedonic, "play-fuelled pilgrimage" (Moore, 1980). As such, it is a perfect setting to further uncover if a) communitas is in fact a "romantic notion" (Tumbat and Belk, 2011), and b) better understand the relationship between religious ideology and consumer society.

Now that an in-depth insight into the core literature base for this thesis has been offered and discussed, the following chapter will provide insight into the building, development and carrying out of the present research study.

CHAPTER IV: METHODOLOGY

"…But these are the things that you cannot explain, they are the things that you cannot quantify, co-ordinate or arrange in any way, and that is why you have to go, that is why you have to really experience it in a new way and that is why you cannot talk to people about Lourdes, you just have to go…" (Vignette from an interview with Sister Anne in May 2013).

4.0 Introduction

Sister Anne's comment is an appropriate way to open this methodology chapter, as she succinctly supports the chosen methodology by demonstrating that the context of Lourdes is not one which lends itself to a quantifiable lens. From the outset, this study has always sought deep understanding, and has therefore adopted an interpretive paradigm, contributing towards conversations in the area of consumer culture theory (CCT) in consumer research. Following the framework offered by Crotty (1998, see Figure 14), the following chapter begins by discussing the interpretive philosophical underpinnings of this study alongside its adoption of a hermeneutic philosophical perspective and the justification for such an approach. A discussion of the ethnographic research methodology is then offered, with extensive explanation of the specifics of the ethnographic study and data collection methods. Finally, the chapter concludes by setting out the sampling procedures, data management and analysis techniques, validity and reliability assessment, and study limitations. Now that an overview of the chapter

has been given, it can begin by discussing the first stage in the interpretive framework -
the philosophical assumptions made.
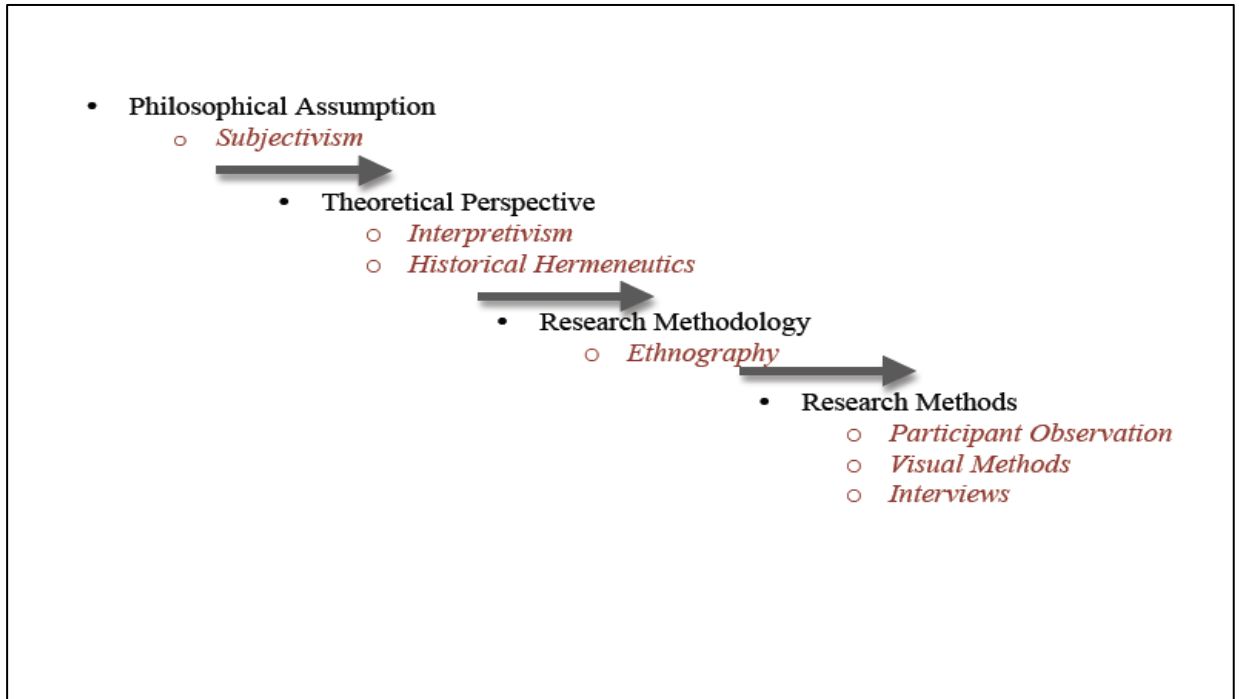
Figure 14: The Interpretive Framework of this study, based on Crotty (1998, 6)

4.1 The Philosophical Assumptions of this study: Epistemology

Epistemology is "inherent" (Crotty, 1998, 8) in the theoretical perspective and
methodology chosen for a particular study. Epistemology is described by Hamlyn
(1995, 242) as dealing with "the nature of knowledge, its possibility, scope, and general
basis". Additionally, Maynard (1994, 10) described epistemology as being "concerned
with providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are
legitimate". The three main epistemologies discussed by Crotty (1998) are Objectivism,
Constructionism and Subjectivism. Table 3 offers an overview of these three
epistemologies.

Epistemology	Main Tenets	Traditional paradigm adopted	Traditional Methodology adopted	Traditional Methods adopted
Objectivism	Believes that "meaning, and therefore meaningful reality exists as such apart from the operation of any consciousness" (Crotty, 1998, 8). Accordingly, objectivism is searching for objective, universal truth.	Positivism	Survey research	Statistical Analysis
Constructionism	Believes that people construct meaning in their lives and as such adopts the anti-realist perspective that "there is no objective truth waiting for us to discover it. Truth or meaning comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities in our world…meaning is not discovered it is constructed" (Crotty, 1998, 8-9).	Interpretivism (E.g. Phenomenology)	Phenomenological Interviews	In-depth unstructured /semi-structured interviews
Subjectivism	Believes that "meaning does not come out of an interplay between subject and object but is imposed on the object by the subject" (Crotty, 1998, 9). Therefore, it is often believed that in subjectivism "meaning is created out of nothing" (Crotty, 1998, 9); however this is not the case, as Crotty (1998, 9) explains, "humans are not that creative…we import meaning from somewhere else". He continues by explaining that the meaning we gain and then import may stem from influencers in our lives such as our dreams and our *religious beliefs.*	Interpretivism (E.g. Hermeneutics)	Ethnography	Participant Observation resulting in field notes, and in-depth interviewing. With a hermeneutic perspective the key focus is on textual data

Table 3: Overview of the three popular Epistemologies

It is important to note that the preceding offering of traditional paradigms, methodologies and methods by no means implies that these are the only options available to a researcher when adopting a particular epistemology. Rather, it offers an overview of the main epistemological positions and examples of how methodologies in general are built around such epistemologies. As mentioned by Crotty (1998, 12), although some epistemologies are heavily entwined with certain theoretical perspectives, i.e. constructionism and phenomenology, "if it suits their purposes, any of the theoretical perspectives could make use of any of the methodologies and any of the methodologies could make use of any of the methods", so the choice is dependent and specific to each individual study. Consequently, this study was built on a subjective epistemology, and an interpretive hermeneutic paradigm was coupled with an ethnographic methodology. The next section offers a justification for this decision, beginning with the positioning of the study within the realm of subjectivism.

4.1.1 Subjectivism versus Objectivism and Constructionism

In developing this study, an epistemological quandary arose around the context and nature of the study which brought with it the ideology of Catholicism. As was discussed in the literature review and will be further discussed throughout this chapter, Catholicism is grounded in a Catholic realist perspective which, following Platonic philosophy, adheres to the Theory of Ideas and Forms. Therefore, Catholics believe that there is an objective, universal truth – God - however, they equally believe that complete, holistic understanding of this absolute truth is impossible whilst living. As

such, Catholic belief is that glimpses of the Absolute are given to humankind from God but, as discussed previously, these glimpses are witnessed and interpreted by each individual differently, therefore there is a real sense of subjectivity within Catholicism. Consequently, in Catholicism, the ways by which communication with the absolute is made is subjective, but belief in an absolute, the core dogma of Catholicism - belief in God, in Christ - is the objective truth.

Figure 15 below offers the objective-subjective continuum set out by Morgan and Smircich (1980, 492), upon which the liminal position which this research study takes has been mapped in relation to its Catholic realist perspective. Therefore, the assumption of reality within this study lies between belief in reality as a symbolic discourse - that "human beings live in a world of symbolic significance, interpreting and enacting a meaningful relationship with that world" (1980, 494) and reality as a contextual field of information, whereby "human beings are engaged in a continual process of interaction and exchange with their context – receiving, interpreting, and acting on the information received, and in so doing creating a new pattern of information that effects changes in the field as a whole" (1980, 495). However, as can be seen, both realities mention "interpretation", with the idea that human beings need to "interpret" reality in some way. This, coupled with the research idea, to understand why consumers consumed the Lourdes pilgrimage experience", tipped this study further towards a subjective epistemology as it sought to gain deep "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) and understanding, as opposed to building a generalisable truth and universal law.

Table 1
Network of Basic Assumptions Characterizing
The Subjective—Objective Debate within Social Science

	Subjectivist Approaches to Social Science					Objectivist Approaches to Social Science
Core Ontological Assumptions	reality as a projection of human imagination	reality as a social construction	reality as a realm of symbolic discourse	reality as a contextual field of information	reality as a concrete process	reality as a concrete structure
Assumptions About Human Nature	man as pure spirit, consciousness, being	man as a social constructor; the symbol creator	man as an actor; the symbol user	man as an information processor	man as an adaptor	man as a responder
Basic Epistemological Stance	to obtain phenomenological insight, revelation	to understand how social reality is created	to understand patterns of symbolic discourse	to map contexts	to study systems, process, change	to construct a positivist science
Some Favored Metaphors	transcendental	language game, accomplishment, text	theater, culture	cybernetic	organism	machine
Research Methods	exploration of pure subjectivity	hermeneutics	symbolic analysis	contextual analysis of Gestalten	historical analysis	lab experiments, surveys

492

Figure 15: Objective- Subjective Debate, from Morgan and Smircich (1980, 492)

Now that a rationale for choosing the subjective over the objective epistemology has been provided, the reasons why this study choose a subjective and not a constructionist epistemology must be discussed, returning discussion once again to the to the Catholic Realist perspective.

Lourdes as a Catholic shrine has at its core the dogmas of Catholicism, which are grounded in Platonic thinking and thus has realism at its core, placing the platonic and realist perspective of Catholicism in opposition to the anti-realist perspective of constructionism. As discussed in Table 3 above, constructionism believes that there is "…no objective truth waiting for us to discover it. Truth or meaning comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities in our world…meaning is not discovered it is constructed" (Crotty, 1998, 8). The subjective perspective, however, holds that "meaning does not come out of an interplay between subject and object but is imposed on the object by the subject" (Crotty, 1998, 9). Therefore, it is often believed that in subjectivism, "meaning is created out of nothing" (Crotty, 1998, 9) but, as Crotty (1998, 9) argues, "humans are not that creative…we import meaning from somewhere else", and he continues to explain that meaning often derives from influencers in our lives, with one such influencer being religious beliefs. Thus, the adoption of a subjective epistemology supports the Catholic belief in an over-arching structure or truth, whilst simultaneously combining that belief with the inability to fully comprehend God whilst on earth. Catholics believe in meaning being "discovered", not "constructed" (Crotty, 1998, 9), as meaning is shown to them through the overarching truth and belief in God via interactions with objects, places, people, nature, and

126

everything that exists on earth; for each individual, these interactions can and will mean different things. The subjectivist epistemology therefore incorporates the realist perspective of Catholicism in the form of a belief in God, but equally allows subjective meanings and ways of communication with objective truth, with God to the fore.

Given this overview and justification of the epistemological positioning of this study, the two further assumptions, relating to ontology (the study of being), and axiology (the study of value) respectively, will now be discussed.

4.1.2 Ontology and Axiology in this Study

Crotty (1998, 10) does not see a need to deal with ontology individually, mentioning that if ontology were to be situated, it would "sit alongside epistemology informing the theoretical perspective. For each theoretical perspective embodies a certain way of understanding what is (ontology) as well as a certain way of understanding what it means to know (epistemology)". As such, Crotty believes that epistemology and ontology "emerge together" (1998, 10). This "emerging" occurs in the present study, as the Catholic context requires alignment with an epistemology fitting the Catholic realist perspective, reflecting that the Catholic ontology follows a realist belief in the overarching truth of God, and accepting the possibility of an epistemological ability to interpret the "glimpses" of the overarching truth which occasionally appear through earthly interactions. Hence, it is clear that Crotty (1998) is correct that ontology and epistemology are entwined and do inform the theoretical perspective adopted for a

study, for the alignment of the Catholic realist perspective with a subjective epistemology has been key in the decision to adopt a hermeneutic interpretive paradigm in the present study, more of which will be discussed later. The axiological assumption of this study must first be discussed, a discussion which brings to the fore an important aspect of this study – I, the researcher's, own Catholic faith.

Anthropologist Victor Turner (1974; 1978) discussed the idea of "the root paradigm" as going "beyond the cognitive and even the moral to the existential Domain, [for] paradigms of this fundamental sort reach down to irreducible life stances of individuals, passing beneath conscious prehension to a fiduciary hold on what they sense to be axiomatic values" (1974, 64). Generally, root paradigms are religious in nature; consequently, the researcher follows a Catholic root paradigm. However given that Lourdes is grounded in the Catholic faith, as are most of the informants in this study, the Catholic root paradigm is not only found within the researcher, but also in relation to the ideological belief of the Sanctuary of Lourdes and within the informants of this study. Consequently, the researcher's Catholic root paradigm imbues them with a high level of 'Verstehen' (Weber; 1890/ 1949; Dilthey, 1924; Wax; 1967), bringing value to the research. 'Verstehen' is a German word best translated as 'understanding', and due to this widely accepted translation, it is often considered the root of Interpretivism. Axiology refers to the study of value, and whether value arises from objective or subjective aspects of experience. It is believed that the shared Catholic root paradigm found at the core of the Lourdes shrine, within most informants of this study, and within

the present researcher, brings value in the form of a shared understanding of the Catholic faith.

Furthermore, the successful management of many consumer research studies which bring researchers close to their contexts further supports the belief that my own close proximity at the emic level brings value to the study. For example, Gould (2006, 2013) shared a similar closeness to his research in drawing upon his own experience as a practitioner of the spiritual "arts of consciousness", and explained that having a direct understanding of research contexts as opposed to a "filtered understanding" (Gould, 2006, 77) from others can help "sharpen" (Gould, 2006, 77) research analysis through familiarity at the emic level. Likewise, Jafari and Goulding (2008) drew upon the native Iranian culture of Jafari within their investigation of Iranian youths, acknowledging that this shared culture resulted in familiarity with "cultural norms, and of course the language" (Jafari and Goulding, 2008, 77). Indeed, many consumer researchers have cited the considerable time and endurance required to gain acceptance and understanding at the emic level. Schouten and McAlexander (1995) mentioned that only "with increased time and stature within the sub-culture, we were privileged to understand those same neophyte experiences from a new vantage point as more seasoned insiders". Throughout this study, however, I found myself immediately welcomed and initiated into the context of Lourdes, I believe due to my shared practice and understanding of the Catholic faith. Additionally, and as is discussed later in this chapter, I gained access to informants predominantly through influential "gatekeepers" (McCracken, 1988) from my own Catholic community in Glasgow. These

"gatekeepers" helped me due to already knowing me and my family; as such, they trusted that I would develop and conduct research in a proper and ethical manner. Consequently, my close proximity at the emic level has brought great value to the study.

The discussion so far has supported my close proximity as valuable at the axiological level through bringing increased access between the Sanctuary, informants and myself. Also the discussion of recent consumer research studies involving a close proximity between the researcher and their context further supports this practice as legitimate, valuable and acceptable. However, what does this close proximity mean at the philosophical level? We must ask - which paradigm fits with such closeness? My own Catholic faith afforded a deep level of "pre-understanding". Within research, preconceptions are often viewed to be "prejudices", which will therefore be negative influences on a research process; however, the hermeneutic view enables these preconceptions to become positive (Arnold and Fischer, 1994; Thompson et al., 1994). Therefore, this study finds itself adopting an interpretive hermeneutic paradigm, however prior to specifically discussing the hermeneutic paradigm, the theoretical perspective of interpretivism and the contributory area of this study, CCT, must be discussed.

4.2 Interpretive Theoretical Perspective of this Study

To complement the subjective epistemology utilised by this study, an interpretive theoretical perspective is adopted. Crotty (1998, 67) defines interpretivism as seeking

"culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world".

Interpretivism seeks depth and understanding, as opposed to positivistic, objectively sought after generalisablility and universal truth. Within research, the battle between the positivistic and interpretivistic perspective has been long, arduous and cross-disciplinary in nature, and consumer research has not been free from this battle. Interpretive Consumer Research (ICR) has only emerged in the last thirty years and the contributory area of this thesis, Consumer Culture theory (CCT), has only in the last decade become prominent and gained a place in consumer research discussions, the trajectory of which will now be discussed.

4.2.1 Interpretive Consumer Research to Consumer Culture Theory

The roots of a paradigmatic shift in consumer research towards an acceptance of Interpretivism can be dated back to the 1930s. At this time, dissatisfaction arose within consumer research over "polling and surveying [as it] appeared in the marketing literature. The information gained seemed descriptive, mechanical and not explanatory enough" (Levy, 2006, 6). Following this critique, a greater acceptance of qualitatively driven data became apparent in consumer research, a tradition that continues today. The catalyst, however, in bringing greater acceptance of interpretive consumer research occurred in the 1980s when a number of esteemed anthropologists, sociologists and literary critics joined marketing departments and sought to "broaden their perspectives" (Belk, 1995, 61). The resulting "Consumer Behaviour Odyssey" involved acclaimed academics travelling across America in Summer 1986, with the intention of being "set

apart from the ordinary, turning away from our familiar Summer routines in favor of an ignoble motor home and the strange and wonderful encounters of the road" (Belk, 1987, 358). Since 1986, many consumer researchers have followed in this Odyssey's footsteps, with increasing numbers of researchers adopting an interpretive philosophical perspective. Interpretive Consumer Research (ICR) is interested in the symbolic, socio-cultural, historical, ideological and experiential aspects of consumption, drawing theoretical inspiration from a wide variety of research traditions such as the social sciences, arts and humanities. Like all interpretive research, the goal of ICR-inspired research is not "the truth" but "hermeneutic understanding or Verstehen" (Shankar and Goulding, 2001, 8), with ICR researchers interested in offering "an interpretation not the interpretation" (2001, 8) of a particular research context.

The growth of more and more interpretive consumer research studies has resulted in "many nebulous epithets" (Arnould and Thompson, 2005, 868) being used to "characterise" such research, including interpretivist, post-positivist, postmodern, relativist, humanistic, and naturalistic, with Arnould and Thompson (2005, 868) seeing each label as "more obfuscating than clarifying". Consequently, in response to possible confusion and as a "battle plan for the development of the field and in order to allow young researchers belonging to the CCT community to be legitimised and to be viewed as attractive as their mainstream competitors". (Cova, Ford and Salle, 2009, 571), in 2005, Arnould and Thompson provided consumer research with the "pragmatic branding strategy" (2007, 4) of Consumer Culture Theory (CCT). Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) refers "to a family of theoretical perspectives that address the dynamic

relationships between consumer actions, the marketplace, and cultural meanings". Arnould and Thompson (2005, 868) go on to explain that CCT researchers "share a common theoretical orientation towards the study of cultural complexity that programmatically links their respective research efforts". Although acknowledging that the varied nature of CCT makes it difficult to attribute a clear typology to the area, Arnould and Thompson (2005, 871) did set out a typology with four main components: consumer identity projects, marketplace cultures, the socio-historic patterning of consumption, and mass mediated marketplace ideologies and consumers' interpretive strategies.

This specific study relates to at least two of the above components, 'marketplace cultures' and the 'socio-historic patterning of consumption'. Arnould and Thompson (2005) explained 'marketplace cultures', and investigated the ways in which consumers "forge feelings of social solidarity" (Arnould and Thompson, 2005, 873); and the previous literature review's discussions of extraordinary experiential consumption and communitas (e,g. Arnould and Price, 1993, Celsi et al., 1995) are clear signs of such marketplace cultures, with togetherness and bonds being formed amongst consumers based on their shared consumption preferences. Consequently, such togetherness and bonds – 'communitas' (Turner, 1969; Turner and Turner, 1978) - has become a core facet of this study and bolsters its investigation into consumption of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience. The socio-historic patterning of consumption refers to institutional and social structures influencing consumption and marketplace forces, and again, as outlined in the literature review, a growing body of literature has demonstrated

religion to be a core influence upon consumer behaviour (Hirschman, 1982; Siguaw and Simpson, 1997; Essoo and Dibb, 2004; Sandikci and Ger, 2010). This thesis wishes to further uncover the influential nature of religion upon consumer behaviour by questioning why consumers choose to consume the Sacred pilgrimage over the secular sun, sea and sand holiday – with the personal assumption that there is a sacred drive to consuming the Lourdes pilgrimage, in turn indicating that institutional religion influences consumption and marketplace forces. In short, CCT fits this present research study like a glove.

Now that an overview of the theoretical positioning of this study has been offered, the next section outlines the chosen research paradigm of historical hermeneutics in greater detail.

4.2.2 The Hermeneutic Interpretive Paradigm

"Hermeneutics is the study of understanding, especially the task of understanding texts… They [hermeneunticians] call for more subtle and comprehensive modes of understanding. The field of hermeneutics grew up as an effort to describe these latter, more specifically "historical" and "humanistic" modes of understanding" (Palmer, 1969, 8).

Hermeneutics was, and remains, the "science of biblical interpretation" (Crotty, 1998, 87). The root of the word hermeneutics stems from the Greek god, Hermes, who was the messenger between the gods and the people of Greece, with the role of "transmuting what is beyond human understanding into a form that human intelligence can grasp" (Palmer, 1969, 13). Friedrich Ast (1778-1841) discussed the concept of "spiritual unity" in his work on hermeneutics, believing that "because Geist [the spirit] is the source of all development and all becoming, the imprint of the spirit of the whole is found in the individual part; the part is understood from the whole and the whole from the inner harmony of its parts" (Palmer, 1969, 77). As Palmer outlined, for Ast, Geist was the root of "all development and all becoming"; therefore, when placing this idea into context with the Catholic realist perspective of this study, Geist refers to God and the imprint on the soul. Catholics believe that the soul is a gift from God that provides glimpses of the Perfect state following death, resonating with the aforementioned Platonic Theory of Ideas and Forms. For, just as the Ancient Greeks believed that Hermes could communicate to them the messages of the gods, similarly, Catholics today interpret certain interactions and events in their lives, as well as sites like Lourdes, rituals like Mass and objects like the crucifix, as messages linking them and helping them to understand God. For Catholics, the world is a platform of messages linking them to their overarching truth – God (Higgins and Hamilton, 2012).

Palmer (1969, 118) outlined that through hermeneutics, the "whole receives its definition from the parts and reciprocally, the parts can only be understood in reference to a whole" (Palmer, 1969, 118). Consequently, hermeneutics is a process "bringing to

understanding" (Palmer, 1969, 13) texts and messages. Understanding is believed to be brought through three modes: expression, explanation and translation, leading to a "Hermes Process" (Palmer, 1969, 13). Palmer (1969, 13) suggested that a "Hermes Process" erupts when "something foreign, strange, separated in time, space, or experience is made familiar, present, comprehensible; something requiring representation, explanation, or translation is somehow "brought to understanding" – is "interpreted"". The foreign assumption of hermeneutic texts can however create "distantiation" and "alienation", described by Crotty (1998, 90) as creating a problem by making the interpretive process difficult. He cites that this foreign assumption of the texts (or in this case data) must be "tempered" (1998, 90), especially since a paradoxical assumption of hermeneutics is "an affinity of some kind between text and reader" (1998, 90). Consequently, hermeneutics calls for an affinity between interpreter (or in this case, researcher) to have a "commonality" and text (or in this case, context). Bleicher (1980, 2) further supported this idea: "(a) central insight of hermeneutic philosophy asserts that social scientist or interpreter and object are linked by a context of tradition – which implies that he already has a pre-understanding of his object as he approaches it, thereby being unable to start with a neutral mind".

Gummesson (1991, 50) explained pre-understanding as referring to knowledge brought to the study through the experiences, theory reading and life teachings experienced prior to the study, seeing understanding as the knowledge that develops throughout a study. He also asserted that a lack of pre-understanding can result in "serious shortcomings" and an increased likelihood of research being "misleading". Suitably, the hermeneutic

paradigm, with its emphasis upon pre-understanding as well as its aim of bringing insight and understanding to light, boosts this study.

Accordingly, the "Hermes Process" can be seen in the current study as the scarcity of prior consumer research investigating the consumption of pilgrimage, leading to religious pilgrimage consumers currently being misrepresented and misunderstood within consumer research. My shared Catholic faith, however, places me in a position to enter this "strange and foreign" research context, to listen to and understand the context, to explain and understand what is expressed through consumption of this context, and finally to translate/interpret these understandings back to consumer research. I thereby take on the role of messenger between the religious consumer of the Lourdes pilgrimage and the consumer research community.

Bleicher (1980, 3) differentiated between "hermeneutical" and "hermeneutic", with the former said to convey "methodological orientation whereas the latter should indicate a more fundamental, philosophical concern". So far in this thesis, a conscious differentiation between hermeneutic and hermeneutical has been offered, as both concepts are involved in the study. The interpretive hermeneutic paradigm is the window through which this study looks, whilst a hermeneutical mode of analysis (discussed later in this chapter), is adopted as a means of building interpretation. Palmer (1969), Crotty (1998) and many others have extensively debated whether hermeneutics should be adopted as a paradigm, as it is in this study, or merely in a "run of the mill" (Crotty, 1998, 110) manner as a method for analysis and interpretation. Crotty (1998,

110) explained that in adopting a hermeneutic philosophy, there is a "certain mystique to be reckoned with", and that there must be acknowledgement of the "grandeur and profundity, a certain aura, about what is going on" (Crotty, 1998, 110). In light of this, the Catholic realist perspective that sacred places like Lourdes enable communication with divinity, provides a clear example of a phenomenon where there is belief in a certain "aura", "mystique" and "grandeur" at work.

In deciding upon a paradigm, I did not enter into a decision lightly, wary of labelling the study with any rubric that could potentially contradict the ideology of Catholicism, and thus misrepresent the context, the informants and my own faith. In short, of all the different sub-paradigms under the umbrella of interpretivism; e.g. social constructionism, symbolic interactionism, and phenomenology, the hermeneutic philosophy is most fitting for this study, marrying as it does the Catholic realist perspective, the close proximity of the researcher and the study's aim for deep understanding. However, just as interpretivism has its many sub-paradigms, hermeneutics has different schools of thought. Table 4, below, offers an overview.

Hermeneutical School of Thought	Main Tenets
Schleiermacher: Hermeneutics as the Science of Linguistic Understanding	This movement and Schleiermacher's work has been viewed as founding modern hermeneutics, launching it from solely belonging to the theological discipline to allowing cross-disciplinary adoption. The viewpoint of this school is that textual reading is very similar to "listening to someone speak. Speakers use words to express their thoughts and listeners are able to understand because they share the language that a speaker employs" (Crotty, 1998, 93). Thus, empathy arises between author (informant) and interpreter (researcher). This school views hermeneutics as simultaneously grammatical and psychological, believing that the hermeneuticist has the ability to "divine and elucidate not only the intentions of the author but even the author's assumptions" (Crotty, 1998, 93).
Dilthey: Hermeneutics as the Methodological Foundation for the Humanities	Dilthey was Schleiermacher's biographer and one of the most respected philosophers of the 19th century. His belief was that "human understanding can never exhaust the real and that in the real there will always remain something unknowable and ineffable...For Dilthey there are universal spiritual forms shaping the particular events one encounters in social experience, the texts humans write, the speech they utter, the art they create and the actions they perform are all expressions of meaning" (Crotty, 1998, 93-94). However, Dilthey also believed that "objectivity and validity" can be gained but that more must be learned about the author's world and the "interpreter's own beliefs and values are given less play" in doing so (Crotty, 1998, 95). Additionally, he viewed hermeneutics more as a methodological foundation than a core paradigm; as such, Dilthey was critiqued by many, especially Heidegger, who criticized Dilthey's view for an over-emphasis on method and positivism.
Heidegger: Hermeneutical Phenomenology	Influenced by his mentor Husserl's phenomenological roots, Heidegger viewed hermeneutics as referring "neither to the science or rules of text interpretation nor to a methodology for the humanities, but to his phenomenological explication of human existing itself" (Palmer, 1969, 42). Thus, he viewed hermeneutics as the "revelatory aspect of "phenomenological seeing" whereby existential structures and then Being itself come into view" (Crotty, 1998, 96). For Heidegger, hermeneutics brings about an "unveiling of Being" (Crotty, 1998, 100).
Gadamer: Historical Hermeneutics	A student of Heidegger, Gadamer disagreed with both Schleiermacher and Dilthey, like Heidegger viewing hermeneutics as a paradigm rather than a methodological tool. Equally, he differed from his mentor in not viewing hermeneutics as "phenomenological seeing", instead viewing mankind as "thoroughly historical" and possessing a "historically effected consciousness" (Crotty, 1998, 100); because of this historical aspect within us, we are able to "link with the tradition of the past and interpret what has been handed on". His historical hermeneutics were a mode of "fusing" (Gadamer, 1977/2008) and mediating the past with the present. In Gadamer's historical hermeneutics, the interpreter is not maintained at a distance from the interpretation as is the case in Dilthey's school, but rather the "interpreter's own meaning enters in as well" (Crotty, 1998, 102).

Table 4: Overview of Hermeneutic Schools of Thought (based on Palmer, 1969; Gadamer, 1977/2008; Crotty, 1998)

The schools of thought set out in the table all have components relating and relevant to this particular study; for example, the empathetic nature of Schleiermacher, and the "pre-understanding" of Heidegger are both crucial to this study. Equally, there are resonances between Plato's Theory of Ideas and Forms and Dilthey's belief in the inability of humankind to ever fully understand life and absolute truth, and the continuance of life being "something unknowable and ineffable" (Crotty, 1998, 93-94). Constantly throughout the thesis I have attempted to place the data collected into the historical context not only of the historicity of Lourdes (which began with the apparitions) but also the historicity of the Catholic faith as it has been over the last 2000 years. Additionally, the informants' personal histories are core to how this study is interpreted, and Gadamer's historical hermeneutic (1977/2008) allows the "fusion" of all these present and past histories, or "horizons" (1998, 101) as Crotty termed them. Consequently, of all the schools of hermeneutic thought, Gadamer's (1977/2008) fits best with this study, offering a paradigm that interprets the "fusion" of the past and present, fusing everything together – the context, the Catholic realist perspective and the researcher's own close proximity at the emic level. Thus, it is important now to discuss the importance of hermeneutics within consumer research.

4.2.3 Hermeneutics and Consumer Research

A seminal piece looking at hermeneutics within consumer research was the study by Arnold and Fischer (1994). This work arose in response to the growing usage of "hermeneutic" terms in consumer research, with the aim of explaining hermeneutics and

its importance and contribution to consumer research, concluding that the inclusion of hermeneutics would "enable (consumer) researchers to draw more consciously, critically, and powerfully on their own [pre]-understanding of the everyday phenomena that we study" (Arnold and Fischer, 1994, 66), and that not only would consumer research benefit but that as human beings, researchers would grow through the learning of "self-understanding". As such, the incorporation of hermeneutics into consumer research is viewed as positive by many consumer researchers (Holbrook and Grayson, 1986; Holbrook and O'Shaughnessy, 1988; Hirschman, 1990; Thompson et al., 1990; and Thompson 1997).

Thompson (1997, 452) supports the usage of hermeneutics as a means of bringing "consumption stories to life", mentioning that consumer researchers "must possess the background knowledge needed to recognize the relationships between these narratological structure of consumers' consumption stories and the rich texture of their self-identities and life-world contexts" (1997, 452). He calls for consumer researchers to position the consumption habits of consumers in line with their wider cultural and personal lifestyles, whilst simultaneously calling these same researchers to adopt a hermeneutic paradigm to ensure high levels of "expertise" and the ability to "play" (1997, 452). By this, Thompson means that experts in hermeneutics have "a more "automatic" command of their background knowledge" (1997, 452), whilst simultaneously as players, "they are not distanced from the game" (1997, 452). This latter call from Thompson (1997, 452) for the player being close to the game, supports researchers' presence in the field; consequently, he supports not only the close

proximity of the researcher at the emic level, but also the usage of hermeneutics in contexts necessitating in-situ interaction, such as ethnography, the chosen methodology for this study.

It could however be questioned whether a hermeneutical paradigm, which draws on textual data, would be compatible with an ethnographic methodology, particularly one that draws on visual as well as textual data. Both Thompson (1997) and Arnold and Fischer (1994, 61) support the use of visuals, with the latter observing that "while early versions of hermeneutics would suggest that these texts be written, philosophical hermeneutics emphasis on ontological understanding may lead to the study of a broader variety of textual forms". Arnold and Fischer (1994) continued that popular consumer research methods include interviews, field notes and visuals, all of which are consistent with a traditional ethnographic methodology. This supports the adoption of an ethnographic methodology when adopting a hermeneutic paradigm.

Consequently, now that a justification for the adoption of the interpretive hermeneutic paradigm has been offered, and the positioning of this study within CCT (Arnould and Thompson, 2005) explained, the thesis can move onto discussion of its ethnographic methodology.

4.3 Research Methodology: Ethnography

"Ethnography is the study of people in naturally occurring settings or 'fields' by methods of data collection which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not also the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner but without meaning being imposed on them externally" (Brewer, 2000, 6).

Brewer (2000) highlighted the main components of ethnography as a research approach enabling the study of people within their natural settings, capturing the meanings they attach to society. It involves the active participation of the researcher, but generally in a way that does not influence or affect the researched field. Brewer (2000, 10) differentiated between "big" ethnography and "little" ethnography, with the former referring to the belief that all qualitative research – i.e. all research not applying quantitative methods - falls under the bracket of ethnography. The latter, which is the perspective adopted in this study, refers to the belief that ethnography is "one particular way of doing qualitative research" (Brewer, 2000, 18), an idea which could spark argument that ethnography is merely a method, especially given Crotty's (1998, 3) description of method being "the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyse data related to some research question or hypothesis". The perspective taken in this study, however, agrees with Brewer (2000) that ethnography is not merely a method but rather "a style of research that is distinguished by its objectives, which are to understand the social meanings and activities of people in a given 'field' or setting, and its

approach, which involves close association with, and often participation in this setting"
(Brewer, 2000, 11). Thus, this study argues that since ethnography does not entail the
application and use of one type of method, but rather the simultaneous application and
utilisation of a combination of differing methods which can include participant
observation, field notes, visuals, informal interviews and in-depth formal interviews (as
in this particular study), so ethnography can be considered a research "style" rather than
a mere method.

Accordingly, now an understanding of ethnography as a methodology has been
provided, this thesis will discuss ethnographies within consumer research.

4.3.1 Ethnography and Interpretive Consumer Research

Ethnography and consumer research have gone hand in hand since the late 1980s (Belk,
Fischer and Kozinets, 2013, 63), with ethnographies and ethnographic methods
becoming predominant in studying consumer research contexts such as family
heirlooms (McCracken, 1988), poverty (Hill, 1991), servicescapes (Bitner, 1992) like
Nike Town, ESPN and American Girl Place (Peneloza et al., 1998; Sherry, 1998;
Sherry, Kozinets, Storn, Duhachek, Nuttavuthisit and DeBerry-Spence, 2001; Borghini
et al., 2009), subcultures such as the bikers of Schouten and McAlexander (1995) and
even cybermarkets (Fischer, 1999; Venkatesh, 1998). A core theoretical area of this
thesis, as the literature review discussed, is extraordinary experiential consumption and
the central influencing papers - from Celsi et al.'s (1993) skydivers, Arnould and Price's
(1993) rafters, Belk and Costa's (1998) mountain men, Goulding et al.'s (2009)

clubbers, Tumbat and Belk's (2011) climbers, to Canniford and Shankar's (2013) surfers - have all adopted ethnographic methodologies. Belk, Fischer and Kozinets (2013, 65) recently described successful ethnographies as enabling consumer researchers to peer through "a vivid window into the world of others, a chance to bridge an intersubjective boundary and gain a more profound understanding". Clearly, all the ethnographic studies listed here have successfully enabled consumer researchers to peer through such "vivid windows" (Belk et al., 2013, 65), illustrating the need for ethnographic researchers to have what Sherry (1998, 4) described as a "diversified toolkit" as a means of successfully researching the sites (Sherry, 1998, 4).

Over the years, consumer research studies have conducted traditional ethnographies, but it has also witnessed movement towards visual ethnographies (Peneloza et al, 1998) and critical ethnography (Peneloza, 1994). Traditional ethnography in consumer research looks to "build social theory" (Peneloza et al., 1998, 352), through participant observation, field-notes, and interviewing. In contrast, visual ethnography still has the overarching goal of building social theory but sees the utilisation of visual methods such as photography as enabling researchers to "privilege" what consumers "do" as well as what they "say" (Peneloza et al., 1998, 352). As such, visual ethnography enables "aspects of culture never successfully recorded by the scientist, although often caught by the artist" (Bateson and Mead, 1942, xi) to be communicated in the ethnographic text.

The current consumer research study aims to provide consumer research a deep and "vivid view" (Belk et al., 2013, 65) into the window of pilgrimage and consumption; accordingly, an ethnographic methodology fits this study best in enabling such depth and holistic understanding through the use of a "diversified toolkit", such as visuals, fieldwork (notes) and interviews. Consequently, the thesis sits comfortably within the domain of what consumer researchers to date have termed traditional ethnography, with utilisation of a "diversified toolkit" comprised of the traditional methods of participant observation and in-situ field note-taking, supplemented by informal in-situ interviews and in-depth semi-structured interviews to build a more cohesive and thorough understanding of the Lourdes experience by incorporating as many consumer voices as possible. However, the 'diversified toolkit" of the Lourdes ethnography discussed here also includes visual ethnographic traits, with visuals such as photos and videos used as a means of capturing and "privileging" (Peneloza et al., 1998, 352) what Lourdes consumers both say and do.

So far, this section has provided an understanding of and rationale for the use of ethnography in this study through a discussion on the acceptance, use and place of ethnography within consumer research. Still remaining to be discussed, however, is the Lourdes ethnographic study itself, so throughout the following section I will introduce an overview of the Lourdes ethnography whilst simultaneously discussing the final component of the interpretive framework – the research methods used. To better capture and illustrate the depth and immersion of the Lourdes ethnography, Figure 1, offered in chapter one and again below (see page 157), provides an ethnographic research timeline

based around the hermeneutic spiral (Gummesson, 1991; Stenbacka, 2001). Consequently, prior to discussing the intricacies and specifics of the Lourdes ethnography, the hermeneutic circle/spiral must first be discussed.

4.3.2 The Hermeneutic Circle/Spiral

Within consumer research, Thompson, Locander and Pollio (1990, 433) viewed the "hermeneutic spiral or circle" to be a core concept within hermeneutic philosophy, enabling fusion between the different levels of understanding throughout a study. In explaining the hermeneutic circle, Palmer (1969, 87) argued that understanding is a "referential operation" in that as humans we learn, make sense and understand through comparisons with what we already know. Palmer (1969, 87) continued that "what we understand forms itself into systematic unities, or circles made up of parts. The circle as a whole defines the individual part, and the parts together form the circle". Consequently within hermeneutics, the hermeneutic circle symbolises the dialectical interaction between the parts and the whole, with each giving meaning to the other, leading understanding itself take a "circular" form, with the hermeneutic circle said to represent an "area of shared understanding" (Palmer, 1969, 87). Nonetheless, Palmer does admit that the idea of the hermeneutic circle involves a "logical contradiction" (1969, 87), for how can one grasp the whole without first knowing the parts - yet a circle is essentially whole in shape, so where, then, does pre-understanding begin and whole understanding end?

The difficulty in the theoretical symbol of the hermeneutic circle led Gummesson (1991, 61) to assert that the "hermeneutic circle ought to be more accurately called the hermeneutic spiral", since it is an "iterative process whereby each stage of our research provides us with knowledge; in other words, we take a different level of pre-understanding to each stage of the research". Consequently, the hermeneutic timeline (see figure 1), followed Gummesson's (1991) spiral trajectory. This timeline has a dual role, primarily outlining the different parts that make up the whole Lourdes ethnography, whilst simultaneously illustrating the hermeneutical iterative interpretation process of the entire research study. The study is therefore by no means a "smash and grab ethnography, where observers breeze into the field and are quickly out again" (Brewer, 1994, 61) but, rather, a deeply immersive and iterative process.

The timeline (figure 1) equally follows the hermeneutic access levels offered by Caroline Stenbacka (2001, 554) as a means of demonstrating the "high quality" of the research study through the open demonstration and documentation of "pre-understanding, access stages, continuous reflection and finally understanding" (Stenbacka, 2001, 555). Consequently, in taking the reader through the Lourdes ethnography, the following section is broken down into the seven stages; pre-understanding, initial access, access to the organisation, access to the team, access to the informant, access to the person, and finally holistic access to the phenomenon.

- Future research study planned to uncover the voice of the sick consumer of Lourdes.

NEW STUDY

HOLISTIC ACCESS TO PHENOMENON

- Week long reflective fieldtrip in May 2013.
- Analysis and interpretation of all data following the framework offered by Spiggle (1994)

UNDERSTANDING

ACCESS TO PERSON

REFLECTION

ACCESS TO INFORMANT

REFLECTION

- Spring 2012 began a series of depth interviews with Scottish pilgrims.
- Summer 2012 participated pilgrimage with the Archdiocese of Glasgow.
- Late 2012- Early 2013 futrher interviews and follow-up interviews conducted.

ACCESS TO TEAM

REFLECTION

ACCESS TO ORGANIZATION

REFLECTION

INITIAL ACCESS

REFLECTION

- Three week field trip June/July 2011
- Week long field trip Eastertide 2012
- Ten-day fieldtrip June 2012.

PRE-UNDERSTANDING

- Immersion in secondary data on sacred consumption, extraordinary experiential consumption (EEC) and pilgrimage theory.

REFLECTION

REFLECTION ON PHENOMENA

- A four-day immersive field trip in April 2011.
- Throughout 2011 access was granted and strong network developed with the Archdiocese of Glasgow.
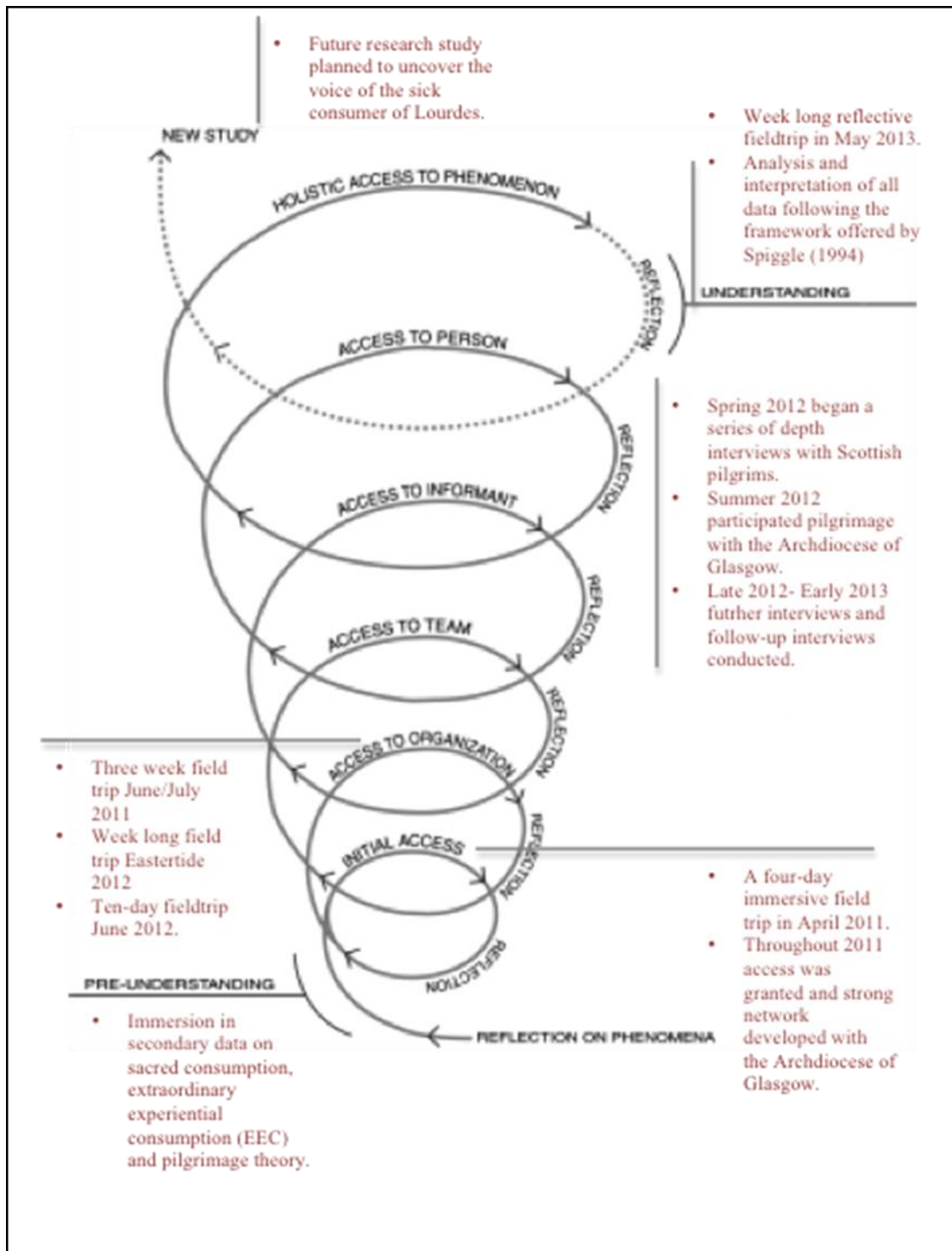
Figure 1: Ethnographic Timeline based on Stenbacka (2001)

4.4 The Lourdes Ethnographic Study

Stage One: Pre-Understanding

As discussed earlier in this chapter, pre-understanding refers to knowledge brought to the study through the experiences, theory reading and life teachings experienced prior to the study. For Gummesson (1991) a lack of pre-understanding can produce "serious shortcomings" in a research project. Gummesson and Stenbacka further differentiated between first–hand and second-hand pre-understanding, with the former referring to first-hand experience and the latter to second-hand understanding from readings, along with the argument that the former is "more valuable" (Gummesson, 1991; Stenbacka, 2001).

A high level of first-hand pre-understanding is present within this study because since my birth I have been immersed within, taught, and practiced the Catholic faith, thus instilling a strong degree of first-hand pre-understanding of the Catholic cultural setting within me. In light of this, this ethnographic study began in October 2010 by building second-hand pre-understanding through immersive reading of the consumer research literature on sacred consumption, experiential consumption and cross-disciplinary theory on pilgrimage. This aided in building my understanding of the theoretical discussion surrounding the study prior to moving forward into the field.

Immersion and the gaining of further second-hand pre-understanding and development of the literature review continued into 2011. However, around the beginning of that year my lack of first-hand, in-situ experience at Lourdes was increasingly apparent as I began to feel the sentiments discussed by Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Garner and McCormack-Steinmetz (1991, 15), that the time had come when I needed to "expand my repertoire" and "learn by doing". I was reading copious theory on pilgrimage and on the consumption of extraordinary experience, sacredness and even copious writings on Lourdes itself, but something was lacking. I was unable to make the direct connection between these readings and the context itself, and no amount of pre-understanding was helping to advance my full understanding of the context and study. It was clearly time to enter the field.

Stage Two: Initial Access

Initial access to Lourdes was undertaken in April 2011 through a four-day immersive fieldtrip, during which I investigated and observed both Sacred and secular aspects of Lourdes by visiting the religious sites such as the grotto, the Sanctuaries, the Stations of the Cross, and the different churches and chapels. I also participated in religious services, attending Mass, confession, and processions. Given that a predominant focus of the study was to investigate the role of the marketplace at Lourdes, in addition to visiting the religious side of Lourdes I also toured the shops and marketplace of the Lourdes town, visiting the tourist spots of Lourdes via the touristic Lourdes train (Le

Petit Train de Lourdes),. These tourist visits followed a series of steps outlined by the Sanctuary entitled the "Footsteps of Bernadette". Each year, the Sanctuary of Lourdes has a different pastoral theme[14] that is introduced as a means of helping pilgrims to better strengthen their spiritual and faith lives. The "Footsteps of Bernadette" were introduced as the pastoral theme for Lourdes' 150th anniversary in 2008. In this activity, all pilgrims were asked to engage in visiting the different places of importance in Bernadette Soubirous' life as part of their 2008 pilgrimage, and although no longer the pastoral theme for the Sanctuary, the tradition of visiting and consuming these historical sites remains active.

The initial access fieldtrip involved playing my role as a tourist as I gained my bearings in the field of Lourdes that I would investigate and become deeply immersed within over the next three years. Throughout this visit I recorded copious visuals and field notes of interesting observations and points about which to read further. My observations at this time began to illuminate the presence of four main consumer types to the Lourdes experience, as outlined in Table 5.

---

[14] Over the three years of this ethnography the pastoral themes were: in 2011, to pray the prayer the Our Father with Bernadette; in 2012 to pray The Rosary with Bernadette; in 2013, the theme was Lourdes as a door towards faith; and currently in 2014, the pastoral theme is The Joy of Conversion, during which pilgrims are asked to reflect on why they and the many other pilgrims, both past and present, come to Lourdes (www.en.lourdes-france.org/deepen/fundamental-texts/theme-2014).

Consumer Type	Main Behaviours/ Role	Initial ideas of ability to access	Ease of recognition of Consumer Type
Sick Pilgrim	Consumes Lourdes to seek aid with their illness. They are often brought to the front and seen as the VIPs at Lourdes.	Due to ethnical approval and the desire for the study to be ethnographic, the decision was made from an early stage NOT to seek the sick consumers' voices in this study. Due to the lengthy time delays in gaining ethical approval, it was felt such approval would in turn delay entrance into the field and limit the data collected and understanding gained.	Often easily recognisable due to signs of illness. Most often, sick consumers are transported in blue voitures (cars), pulled by volunteers.
Volunteer	Consumes Lourdes to help the sick as well as strengthening and focusing their own faith journey.	From the outset of this study I was very interested by the volunteers as they fund themselves and pay between £700-£1000 to journey to Lourdes and work hard for a week. As such, I wanted to understand why they made such a consumption decision. Access to these consumers would be possible, but would require my active volunteering on site at Lourdes.	Often easily recognizable, as the volunteers wear specific uniforms. Within the hospitality group, females wear white nurse dresses in honour of the sick pilgrims; males wear blue vests with 'hospitality' written on them. The pilot study "piloting" voluntary service with which I volunteered in 2011 wore yellow vests with a large blue 'I' on the back to signify information. In the case of the Scottish pilgrimage group I participated with, the female youth group volunteers wore tartan sashes over white dresses and the male youth group members wore the kilt, as a means of

			group alignment with the Glasgow pilgrimage and voluntary alignment with the Sanctuary.
Foot/ Ordinary pilgrim	Consumes Lourdes as a means of strengthening their own personal faith journey; they are neither sick nor openly work with the sick but they are on pilgrimage to engage both "body and soul" (Lauretin, 1994, 1).	An interesting and accessible consumer group, especially through the role as a pilote, where I was able to freely chat with the pilgrims and visitors to the shrine.	Difficult to separate as they wear normal, everyday clothing and could be pilgrims or passers-by. Some of this consumer group may wear a group neck scarf or pin if journeying with a pilgrimage group.E.g. during fieldwork in 2012, a large French pilgrimage group of 20,000 all wore a light blue neck scarf to indicate alignment with the pilgrimage group. Also, during the participatory pilgrimage of 2012, all were given a blue and white (resembling St. Andrew's cross flag) neck scarf, but relatively few pilgrims wore this.
Visitor/ Passersby	Usually whilst touring the Pyrenees, these consumers will happen upon Lourdes and visit the Sanctuary and town as a means of "seeing what it is all about".	Interesting perspective and voice to gain; throughout the ethnography these voices were uncovered during immersive fieldtrips. However, they are difficult to distinguish and capture. Serendipitous capturing of this voice was the predominant means of generating data.	Very difficult to separate, as like foot/ordinary pilgrims they wear normal, everyday clothing. Sometimes more conspicuous passers-by were bikers touring the Pyrenees on motorbikes, who would often pass through Lourdes, and their insight was gathered often whilst in-situ at Lourdes.

Table 5: Lourdes Consumer Typology

Pre-understanding ignited in me a deep interest in the voluntary consumer at Lourdes, as I had previously failed to understand the logic behind a consumption choice, particularly during recessionary times, which cost consumers £700-£1000 for a week of working hard caring for the sick. Thus, the primary outcome of this initial field trip was a gained understanding of the differing voluntary groups at Lourdes, developing an increased knowledge on how to gain successful access to such groups and the Sanctuary itself. Upon reflection on the data gathered during the initial field trip, a decision was made to focus predominantly upon two of the main consumer types - the voluntary and ordinary pilgrims, with the passer-by voices being serendipitously gathered in-situ at Lourdes. A decision was also made to apply as a volunteer with the French "pilote" service at Lourdes, and upon gaining formal acceptance with this service, access at the Sanctuary level was granted and the third stage of the study began in June-July 2011.

Stage Three: Access to the Organisation (Context)

The "pilotes" are essentially "meeters and greeters" at Lourdes who provide general information on Mass and service times, offer directions, and maintain quietness at the grotto. Immersion in this voluntary role afforded copious time spent directly on-site at Lourdes, permitting first-hand experience of the Lourdes voluntary role. This fieldtrip was driven predominantly by a wish to follow the methods of participant observation, informal interviews and visual data collection, as I gathered in-situ observations of "the daily life of informants in their natural setting: watching, observing and talking to them

in order to discover their interpretations, social meanings and activities" (Brewer, 1994, 59). Observations were noted through extensive substantive and analytic field note-taking, with daily on-site observations and informal conversations with consumers recorded as short notes or in short audio voice recordings and later typed more fully as a means of ensuring recall of important observations.

Throughout the three weeks, networks were developed with key informants, with initial access gained to the Four Scottish Ladies and the Head of English Chaplaincy for the Sanctuary of Lourdes. These connections were cultivated, maintained and developed over the three years of study, and remain strong today. My changing role throughout the research process from researcher, to volunteer, to pilgrim and to friend as I met different individuals was noted throughout this fieldtrip and the subsequent fieldwork in both my observational field notes and reflective journal. This aligned with the belief expressed by Hamilton, Dunnett and Downey (2012, 281) that we take "multiple roles on throughout the research process".

The changing roles I faced were also in parallel with changes in my own attitudes and belief towards Lourdes, pilgrimage, and religion, as my observations showed Lourdes in a different light from theory. The fieldtrip afforded me the opportunity to witness some of the darker elements of Lourdes (discussed more fully in the analysis chapters), which until that point had not been apparent in my own second hand pre-understanding. Additionally, through my own personal circumstance of dealing with the death of a

beloved grandfather during this time, I experienced the same emotional turmoil and need for healing that was later to be discussed by in-depth informants. The June/July 2011 fieldtrip likewise gave insight into some secular-like events occurring within the Lourdes Sanctuary and town, with fieldwork recording the annual motorbike (figure 16) and traveller's (gypsy) pilgrimages (figure 17), as well as the movie premiere of "My Name Is Bernadette", the modern retelling of the visionary Bernadette's life, which premiered within one of the three local Lourdes cinemas. Back dropping these secular-type events was my observation of a growing excitement about the forthcoming passing-through of the Tour de France in Lourdes in late July 2011.

The "pilote" service, being French in nature, sought people who had linguistic skills, thus my knowledge of French and Spanish helped me to gain further insight into different cultural perspectives and consumption behaviours at Lourdes. My linguistic ability enabled sound understanding, as the observations and informal conversational sentiments shared by French and Spanish pilgrims during the pilot study and fieldwork trips were later mirrored by the feelings of English-speaking in-depth interview informants. I also was able to speak with a plethora of people from different backgrounds, as I spoke with pilgrims from other Christian denominations, and entered into discussions with passers-by who had never heard about Lourdes nor understood much about Catholicism, and who wished to have more information. Others I spoke with included members of the Jewish and Muslim faiths who were visiting the Sanctuary and who, again, asked questions about the shrine and "what it was all about?"

At other times I found discussions arising with passers-by who were completely irreligious, or were not impressed with the Sanctuary and/or the surrounding town.

Figure 16: The annual motorbike pilgrimage (June 2011): during the pilgrimage the bikers and their equipment were given a special blessing for their safety.

Figure 17: The annual travellers' (gypsy) pilgrimage (June 2011): during the pilgrimage the animals belonging to the travellers received a special blessing.

I believe that the status of volunteer and the uniform of the "pilote", which aligned me with the Sanctuary lent me a high level of trust and access to a multitude of pilgrims from different backgrounds, cultures, languages and situations. This would not have been possible had I not engaged in the voluntary "pilote" role. Burgess (1982, 45) argued that in participant observation, the main tool or "instrument" is the researcher. Throughout this fieldtrip, it became obvious that although I was an insider at Lourdes on the shared faith level, I was not an insider at the Lourdes level – i.e. I was not what was later to be termed by informants "a Lourdite" – someone who frequents Lourdes often or even over a lifetime. Thus, I was a quasi-insider to some degree, able to speak the same Catholic language as the consumers of the site, able to understand the rituals and the sentiment behind going to Lourdes, etc., but I still lacked an understanding of

consumers who have an affinity with the site, and particularly, of the healthy consumers who consume the site annually, sometimes over a lifetime. Many academics argue for the need for researcher distance, to ensure that researchers do not "go native" (Brewer, 2000) in the field. My "quasi-insider" position that ensured such "going native" did not occur, as in true pilgrimage style I was positioned in the liminal state, non-native (non-Lourdite) yet simultaneously closely aligned to the ideology of the context. As such, there was a lot to learn and understand, and the observations made throughout this fieldtrip enabled an understanding of the normative and non-normative behaviours at the Sanctuary, in turn informing the interviews both at informal and formal levels.

Brewer (1994, 61) distinguished between "participant observation" and "observant participation", with the former involving "the acquisition of a new role" and the latter referring to the "utilization of an existing role, to observe aspects of either familiar or unfamiliar setting". In this study, I engaged at the "observant participation" level at the Sanctuary of Lourdes, as I volunteered, practiced my faith (prayed, attended Mass and Catholic rituals and processions), and observed simultaneously. Although the context was unfamiliar at first, my familiarity with Catholicism, coupled with my role and status as a volunteer, aided in my being accepted and beginning to understand the phenomenon of consuming Lourdes.

This role of "observant participator" was primarily exercised during the June/July 2011 fieldtrip. Following this, a further six and a half weeks of field work strengthened my access at the Sanctuary/ organisational level.

A seven-day fieldwork trip was undertaken in Spring 2012 to coincide with the most important Catholic festival of the religious calendar, Easter, enabling simultaneous insight into the shrine during this important festival and also outside of the busy and peak summer times. During this fieldtrip, connection with the Head of English Chaplaincy was further strengthened by a short informal meeting raising future points and themes for the formal in-depth interview that I planned to undertake during the field-trip visit of June 2012. Additionally during this time, serendipitous interaction with the marketplace began via the building of connections and networks with different shop-owners and vendors at Lourdes, affording greater insight into the interesting and important role of the marketplace at Lourdes and also beginning to shed light on the perspective of the Lourdes vendors. One such connection was with Michaela, the vendor of antique Lourdes postcards (e.g. figures 2 and 29 which are illustrative of these postcards). My personal consumption of a range of these postcards from each decade dating from 1860s to the present day boosted my understanding of the historical nature of vending and consumption at Lourdes, permitting "fusion" (Gadamer, 1977/2008) between the historical consumption patterns of 1860s Lourdes with the modern day consumption patterns of Lourdes.

Following this fieldtrip, I undertook a ten-day fieldtrip to Lourdes in June 2012, during which previously established networks were strengthened. I met with and discussed ideas and gained insight from pilgrims I had previously met, such as Caroline from Ireland (who I will discuss later in this chapter) and the Four Scottish Ladies, who were to become in-depth informants for the study. Additionally, the aforementioned connection and correspondence with the Head of English chaplaincy at Lourdes, Fr. Brendan, continued with the conducting of an in-depth interview with him. Fr. Brendan was to become an important "gatekeeper" (McCracken, 1988), affording access to the behind-the-scenes areas of the Lourdes Sanctuary, such as the media centre of Lourdes and the Lourdes historical archives.

Additionally, this fieldtrip afforded a rare opportunity to be in Lourdes at the same time as a large French pilgrimage group of over 20,000 pilgrims, whose pilgrimage included rare and commercial/secular-type events including the creation of a Human Rosary Bead (figure 18), and a concert given by The French Priests – an award-winning singing group of three French priests that parallel the Irish Priest sensation (figure 19). The documentation and experiencing of these secular-type events resonated with my previous research gatherings, such as the motorbike and gypsy pilgrimage observed in June/July 2011. Consequently, the field notes gathered played a crucial role in documenting my observations, impressions and thoughts as a researcher during these events; however such events are "aspects of culture never successfully recorded by the scientist" (Bateson and Mead, 1942, xi); as such, the visual capturing of these events

became crucial in documenting and helping to further develop understanding of the
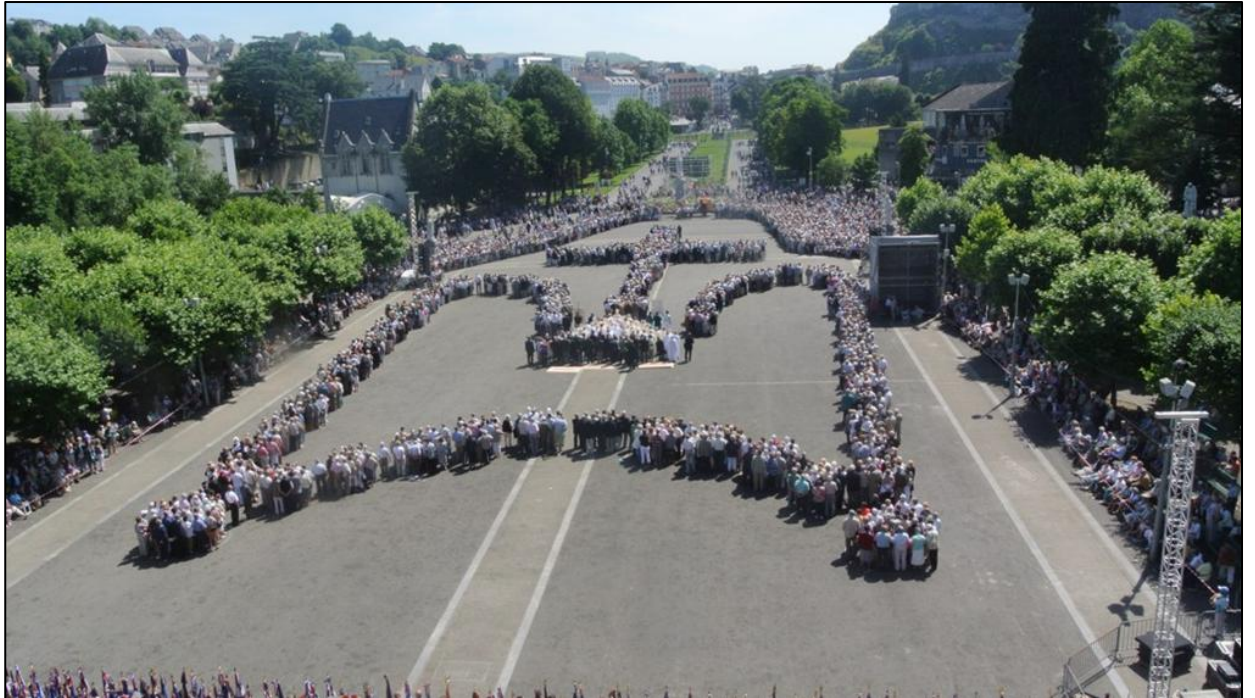
Lourdes consumption phenomenon.

Figure 18: The Human Rosary Bead was the annual pilgrimage photograph for a large French-speaking pilgrimage of 20,000 in June 2012.

Figure 19: The Priests Concert was held before the magnificent Basilicas in Rosary square and was reminiscent of a secular concert

In his work on historical hermeneutics, Gadamer (1977/2008) argued that historical (not modern) art is a text within itself, seeing the artists of historical pieces as authors, and the interpretation of artwork as interpreting the author's (artist's) meanings directly. The visuals captured at Lourdes during this study are by no means artistic, and I do not claim myself to be the author of these photographs or videos; rather, I see the people, places, actions, objects, etc within the visuals to be the authors. They are the storytellers communicating part of the reasons why they consume Lourdes. In short, the visuals speak and communicate components of the Lourdes experience, and their capturing has been successfully incorporated and translated, aiding the building of the interpretation offered within this study. Thus, although this study adopts a historical hermeneutic paradigm, it disagrees with Gadamer (1977/2008) with respect to visual methods, for the perspective here is that it is not only through historical art or through renowned historical artists that meaning, understanding and interpretation can be found. Rather, modern visual capturing by even the most novice of photographers (like the researcher) can be incredibly useful in demonstrating the normative behaviours and reasoning behind consumption and human activity. An absence of visual methods from this study would have being a serious shortcoming, with these visuals when triangulated with text and immersive experience proving crucial in further uncovering the hidden meanings behind the consumption experience of the Lourdes pilgrimage.

Following the June 2012 fieldtrip, I returned for a week-long participatory pilgrimage in July 2012 alongside the Archdiocese of Glasgow pilgrimage. This fieldtrip provided the opportunity to gain in-situ experience, as throughout the week my roles ranged across

that of researcher, pilgrim and volunteer, often simultaneously, affording the coveted "season insider" (Schouten and McAlexander, 1995) perspective, as I travelled and journeyed as part of the pilgrimage group and worked with sick pilgrims on the trip. Throughout the week informal interviews were conducted with pilgrims whilst informal updates and discussion were conducted with in-depth informants whom I had interviewed prior to the pilgrimage. The insights gained from these informal updates strengthened and verified the interview responses, as informants often informally mirrored responses to those given in their interviews. Additionally, these on site discussions enabled emerging themes to be further supported and gave insight into new ideas and themes that I could discuss upon returning from the pilgrimage. The pilgrimage also afforded the opportunity to gain further recruits for interviews, and a predominant gatekeeper was found in the medical director for the pilgrimage group, James, who became not only an in-depth informant alongside his wife Veronica, but also enabled access to the Miracle Bureau of Investigations at Lourdes, a visit that further provided insight and perspective for the study.

Final access to the Sanctuary was arranged for a reflective week undertaken in May 2013. From the outset when building and planning this study, a final week was planned for the end of the study as a further means of providing good practice regarding "reflexivity" (Brewer, 1994). This week coincided with my presentation at a research conference held at Lourdes. At this conference I proposed one of the core contributions of this thesis, and received good feedback and advice on how it could be strengthened and supplemented, providing the "new eyes" (Wallendorf and Belk, 1989) required in

good ethnographic and naturalistic studies. This reflective fieldwork week following the conference enabled the fine-tuning and reflection on all the data collected over the three years and was a crucial time in bringing the interpretation to the holistic point of understanding which is shared and offered in the forthcoming chapters of this thesis.

Fieldwork was not only done in-situ at Lourdes. Throughout this ethnography, many serendipitous and planned days/nights were spent in meetings and in places aligned with the Sanctuary of Lourdes in France. For example, prior to the 2012 fieldtrips to Lourdes, a data collection opportunity arose in Glasgow when I was told of a religious service to Bless (sacralise) a jumbulance – a double-decker bus equipped as a transportation ambulance to safely transport extremely sick pilgrims to Lourdes (figure 20). Due to health and safety regulations, it is becoming increasingly difficult to transport the sickest of the world to Lourdes; fewer and fewer stretcher cases therefore now go to Lourdes, however the jumbulance enables the very sick to journey to Lourdes safely. This blessing ritual took place at the National shrine to Our Lady of Lourdes in Carfin, Scotland, and I was thereby afforded the opportunity to witness a unique ritual blessing and also to visit the subsidiary National shrine to Lourdes in Scotland. Further to this, during a personal vacation to Paris in October 2012, I engaged in a day of fieldwork as I travelled to the nearby town of Nevers in France to visit another National shrine in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes (figure 21). This convent is extremely important to Lourdes as it became the home of the visionary of Lourdes, Bernadette Soubirous, when she entered the Church as a nun, and it subsequently became her final

resting place. There, the body of Bernadette Soubirous, which has uniquely and mystically never decomposed, is encased in a glass coffin in the convent.

Figure 20: The Jumbulance is a double-decker bus which functions as an ambulance transporting the sickest pilgrims to Lourdes.

Figure 21: The National Shrines to Our Lady of Lourdes: the top shrine is in Carfin Scotland, whilst the lower shrine is in Nevers, France and is the resting place of the visionary Bernadette, whose incorrupted body is displayed in the church of Nevers.

Additionally, in gaining access to the teams and informants as the next section describes, I had a number of meetings with the Archdiocese of Glasgow Lourdes Organising Committee and with the youth group pilgrimage team of the Archdiocese of Glasgow that I was to accompany in July 2012. All of these research-focused trips generated additional field notes, observations, and illuminations of understanding being built, all of which helped to build the holistic ethnographic analysis and interpretation offered in this thesis. That said, although access to the Sanctuary/organisation was maintained throughout the entire ethnographic study, following the Easter 2012 visit I was aware that to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon, I needed to "step into the mind of another person, to see and experience the world as they do" (McCracken, 1988, 9). Thus, in taking the study to the next level it was necessary to extend the research beyond field-notes, observations and visuals and utilise the "most powerful method in the qualitative armoury" (McCracken, 1988, 9) - the in-depth interview.

Stages Four, Five and Six: Access to the Team, Access to the Informant and Access to the Person

Access to the team and subsequently to informants and the person followed two main sampling forms, concerned with "gatekeepers" (McCracken, 1988) and emergent or serendipitous sampling. A key "gatekeeper" (McCracken, 1988) was found in the historian at the Archdiocese of Glasgow, who became informant Marie. Marie enabled the access and gathering of Lourdes archival data from the Glasgow Archdiocese which, although not directly referred to within this study, aided in building further pre-

understanding. Also, whilst simultaneously agreeing to be an informant herself, Marie was crucial in enabling the granting of access at the team level. Through Marie and my own parish priest access was gained and initial contact made with the aforementioned youth group and Archdiocese Lourdes committee members as well as contact with many of the key informants that I later interviewed and journeyed with in July 2012.

A series of interviews began in May 2012 with various different Catholic consumers of Lourdes, ranging from a ninety-three year old woman who had volunteered at the site for the last 60+ years to first-time consumers to Lourdes who were only seventeen years old. Multiple interviews were undertaken with some of the informants, particularly with the first-time consumers of Lourdes.

Serendipity played a significant role in the recruitment of both formal and informal interviews, with the reflective fieldwork trip of May 2013 producing the serendipitous undertaking of two further interviews. One was with a young French women, Yasmina, who regards herself as spiritual not religious, and has followed and lived in the ashram of the Hindi Guru Amma (the Hugging Guru) for the last five years. I met Yasmina through the conference I attended and at which I presented in Lourdes in May 2013. Following the conference she asked me to teach her more about Catholicism and Lourdes, with our tour round the Sanctuary resulting in the serendipitous conducting of a short and insightful interview, which gathered Yasmina's opinion on the Lourdes Sanctuary and the surrounding commercial town.

Additionally, the aforementioned conference at Lourdes concluded with an insightful roundtable discussion between a hotel chain owner in Lourdes (private sector), the Mayor of Lourdes (public sector), and a leading member of the hospitality service of the Sanctuary (not-for-profit sector). This discussion was extremely insightful in gathering different perspectives on Lourdes, and in demonstrating affirmation and comparison with the data collected up to that point, with many of the sentiments shared during the roundtable mirroring the responses and the analysed data themes and ideas already collected. This discussion allowed triangulation between my own findings and the three perspectives shared during the round table: the political, the commercial and the not-for-profit. Following this roundtable discussion the opportunity arose to speak with the owner of the chain of hotels in Lourdes, and through this interlude, another serendipitous interview was undertaken, providing further insight into the voice of the Lourdes vendor.

Ethical approval was granted and informed consent given by all of the informants in each interview. In the case of the youths at seventeen years of age, both the youth informant and the guardians of the youth provided informed consent. The interviews followed a semi-structured flow following the work of Thompson (1996:1997), Thompson et al. (1990), and Thompson and Hayto (1997) on in-depth interviews, with sub-topics and questions designed around each sub-topic asked of each informant. Discussion around the religious background of the informant was used as a warm-up to help create a more comfortable atmosphere within the interview, whilst simultaneously offering some historical background on the informant, remaining consistent with the

historical hermeneutic perspective of this study. Although a basic layout and discussion guide helped to guide the interview, the interview itself was semi-structured, allowing the informants to guide it in their own directions, and at times the interviews mirrored the work of Thompson et al. (1997, 19) in that "the course of the interview dialogue was set largely by the participant". Consequently, it was this semi-structured and "conversational quality" (Thompson et al., 1997, 19) of the interview that enabled emergent themes to come to the fore. The semi-structured approach worked extremely well as all the informants were comfortable, and offered insightful responses which a fully structured interview may not have provided, in turn often enabling the informant to become what Rubin and Rubin (1995, 11-12) termed a "conversational partner".

Throughout the ethnography, nineteen in-depth interviews were conducted with a total of twenty-three informants; Table 6 offers an overview of the in-depth interview informants below. Some interviews were individual, and others were conducted in small groups or in couples. Also, some informants, such as the first time consumers to Lourdes, underwent multiple interviews as a means of documenting their consumption story. In meeting the recommendations of Thompson et al. (1997, 19), I "sought to create a context in which the participants felt at ease and comfortable in discussing their experiences and perceptions". Consequently, upon scheduling the interviews I asked informants where they would feel most comfortable having their interview. Some informants preferred a neutral space, choosing cafes and restaurants close to the city centre in Glasgow. Others suggested my office or theirs, and a few asked me to visit their home. The interviews ranged from 30 minutes to 4 hours, averaging 2 hours in

length, with all interviews audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim, adding up to over 1000 pages of transcript. Interview themes included discussions of togetherness, pilgrimage, the meaning of Lourdes, and the marketplace of Lourdes. Through iterative data analysis, emergent themes of family and emotional healing and intensity came to the fore; accordingly, these themes were added into the semi-structured forms of future interviews, and the sample was widened to involve the recruitment of more family members as a means of further understanding the emerging theme of family. Confidentiality was maintained through the use of pseudonyms both for the informants and all other people mentioned within the interviews and field notes. The in-depth interview method was vastly important in developing and building the interpretation and understanding offered in this thesis, with the fieldwork being of equal importance, and within this fieldwork many of the informal interviews that provided the insight which then helped to develop the in-depth interviews was found. Thus, a small discussion of the informal interview will now be offered.

My fieldtrips revealed that every consumer of Lourdes has their own individual "Lourdes story" of why and how they initially came to Lourdes, and why they have continued to come. The "pilote" role enforced a recording of the number of pilgrims I spoke with throughout the day, so it is known that this role afforded me the opportunity to speak with 774 people over a sixteen-day period, by working from 9am to 5pm daily, averaging daily discussions with approximately 49 people. A thorough reading and noting of the different informal voices captured at Lourdes demonstrates that over the eight weeks of immersive fieldwork, approximately 900 informal informants were

spoken with. Some chats lasted no more than three to five minutes but were nevertheless insightful, with key words, phrases and ideas expressed, whilst others would last far longer, becoming informal, short conversational interviews. These informal interviews might begin as discussions about the weather, a Mass or procession or service or a sharing of a Lourdes story, etc., and then progress into a small, informal interview, often with themes which had arisen from the field observations being discussed, such as the darker side of Lourdes, the idea of togetherness, the expression of emotion at Lourdes, and the Lourdes marketplace. Equally, points made by the informant were sometimes discussed further to gain more insight and understanding into their sentiments. However, it should be noted that at all times I was overt about the research and my position as a researcher and made all informants, both informal and formal, aware of the study. Permission was asked of all informal informants prior to their inclusion in the field notes and the wider study. Without exception, all agreed as long as their confidentiality was maintained. Additionally, some of these informal interview informants were met repeatedly throughout the research study, resulting in some, such as the Four Scottish Ladies, becoming key in-depth informants.

Informant Name	Age	No. of Interviews	Religion	Occupation	No of Times to Lourdes	Initial Consumption Influence
Danielle	18	2	Catholicism	Student	First time	School/ Catholic Education
Frances	17	2	Catholicism	Student	First time	Family: Mum, Dad and Brother
Fr. Brendan	73	Multiple	Catholicism	Priest	Lives in Lourdes	Clergy Member
Kelly	35	2	Catholicism	Secondary School Teacher	6	Best friend and best friend's family
Lisa	19	1	Catholicism	Student	5	Family: Three generations of family go to Lourdes together
Lilly	24	1	Catholicism	Primary School Teacher	7	Family: Mum and family went upon diagnosis of her mum's cancer
Miriam	25	1	Catholicism	Marketing Assistant	11	Family: Four generations of family go to Lourdes together
Matthew	22	1	Catholicism	Student	5	School/ Catholic Education
Marie	54	Multiple	Catholicism	Historian	50+ times	Family: First journeyed to Lourdes in womb, Lourdes is a family tradition for her family.
Patricia	93	Multiple	Catholicism	Retired	60+ times	Family: Maternal influence
Phillip	61	1	Catholicism	Business Man	21+ times	Newspaper advertisement
Pierre	40	1	Catholicism	Hotel Chain Owner	Lourdes Native	Family: Family owns chain of hotels in Lourdes
Sr. Anne	37	1	Catholicism	Nun	8	Family: Mum and Dad Influence
Yasmina	27	1	Spiritual not Religious	Researcher	First time	Spiritual Guru Amma influenced her to go.

The Matthews Brothers						
Garry	25	1	Catholicism	Secondary school teacher	6	Family: Brothers who volunteer together, both influenced by parents. The brothers were interviewed together.
Jacob	26	1	Catholicism	Primary school teacher	12	
The Taylor Family						
Veronica	60	1	Catholicism	Retired	11	Family: James and Veronica are husband and wife. They were interviewed together. Paul is twin brother to James and brother-in-law to Veronica and was interviewed alone and separately.
James	63	Multiple	Catholicism	Doctor	11	
Paul	63	1	Catholicism	Secondary School Teacher	10	
Four Scottish Ladies						
Christine	63	Multiple	Catholicism	Retired	13	Friendship: Almost sister-like relationship that has developed through volunteering in Lourdes together. The Four Scottish Ladies were interviewed together.
Kitty	66	Multiple	Catholicism	Retired	10	
Iris	67	Multiple	Episcopalian	Retired	8	
Rachael	74	Multiple	Catholicism	Retired	10	

Table 6: Table of Informants

Earlier in this chapter, I mentioned an important and recurrent informal informant named Caroline, from Ireland. Caroline and I first met during the June/July 2011 fieldtrip and during this introductory meeting we talked together for over forty minutes, with Caroline sharing her own special "Lourdes story". Throughout the week of her pilgrimage, Caroline and I serendipitously and repeatedly bumped into one another, leading her to invite me out for dinner and drinks with her pilgrimage group at the end of their week at Lourdes. This serendipitous "bumping into" was a recurring pattern throughout the research process, as in the June 2012 fieldtrip I once again "bumped into" Caroline and we continued our discussions which, following permission from Caroline, were recorded as field notes.

In light of these serendipitous meetings, I planned to conduct an in-depth interview with Caroline whilst on-site at Lourdes in June 2012. However, as this fieldtrip and my encounters with Caroline continued, I learned that she had very recently lost her only daughter to suicide. The iterative analysis of all data collected ahead of the June 2012 fieldtrip had shown Lourdes to be a place of emotional intensity and healing. Consequently, I felt it would be inappropriate and morally wrong of me to ask Caroline to conduct an in-depth interview in her grieving state, as these emotions were clearly raw and she spoke often of her pain and suffering and how she felt she could speak openly to me as I was outwith, rather than close to, her home situation. Consequently, I asked permission from Caroline to use our discussions within the research, but I did not wish to abuse the level of trust she had in me by conducting an in-depth interview at

that time, as I feared that such an interview might raise points and memories that would place Caroline in a state of vulnerability.

I mention the informal informant Caroline for two reasons at this stage in this methodology chapter. Firstly, the decision not to conduct an in-depth interview with Caroline in light of her grieving and vulnerable position was only illuminated in light of the on-going, iterative data collection and analysis. Without the initial field-work I would have not been able to devise a strong in-depth interview; however, equally, without the emergent findings from the in-depth interview of emotional intensity and healing I would never have been aware of the potential threat that such an interview could bring to Caroline. Consequently, Caroline's situation is a perfect example of the iterative, part-to-whole hermeneutical analysis that this study has undertaken in coming to a holistic understanding and interpretation. Secondly, Caroline personified a growing concern I had felt regarding the often incredibly deep and difficult sentiments shared by informants during in-depth interviews. All the interviews were filled with laughter, but equally some produced tears and I worried that, being inexperienced in my research career, I could potentially inadvertently expose my in-depth informants to a place of vulnerability (Hamilton et al., 2012; Jafari, Dunnett, Hamilton and Downey, 2013).

Due to this concern, I engaged in an introductory course to counselling as a means of better understanding the core conditions of counselling (Rogers, 1951): empathy, unconditional positive regard (acceptance), and congruence (genuineness). This course

better prepared me to deal with difficult discussions and sentiments shared throughout the interviews, and I also found that it also helped with my own self-reflections, and in turn with my interpretation of the data collected over the three years. It enabled me to place myself in the "shoes" of my informants and to try to see the world through their eyes, to see their responses and beliefs in the context of their own situations and lives, bringing me to the sixth stage of the spiral - access and understanding of the person themselves. Furthermore, in reflecting upon my own reflective diaries and intakes I better understood myself and my own preconceptions and biases which I could then place in context and include in the interpretation offered here.

Wallendorf and Brucks (1993, 342) explained that "ethnography increasingly employs reflexivity within research by adopting an analytical and authorial stance that explicitly discusses the presence of the particular participant observer". The keeping of a reflexive research journal was therefore maintained as a means of ensuring transparency throughout the research process. This maintenance enabled a better understanding of myself, which in turn helped me better understand others, for as Shankar and Patterson (2001, 492) shared, "before we can ever hope to understand others, we must first understand ourselves". This awareness of my own preconceptions and the pre-understanding I brought to the study enabled the interpretation offered in this thesis to reflect the consumers who had spoken within this study, the fieldwork gathered, as well as myself - all parts of the whole research process, without research centralisation being placed upon the researcher alone (Wallendorf and Brucks, 1993, 342). This encouraged a "polyphonic" interpretation in which I, as the researcher, am "placed explicitly in the

text, in dialogical authorship" (Shankar and Patterson, 2001, 494) with the informants of this study.

This latter discussion concludes the Lourdes ethnographic data collection journey, but opens up a new discussion on the ways in which the data was managed, analysed and interpreted throughout this ethnographic study, leading onto the final stage in the hermeneutic timeline – holistic access to the phenomenon.

Stage Seven: Holistic Access to the Phenomenon

"Thick description" (Geertz, 1973) is crucial to interpretive research studies, but managing such thick and vast data collections can be problematic. Consequently, this study adopted and now discusses components of the framework offered by Spiggle (1994) in the management, analysis and interpretation of current data, as a means of gaining holistic access to, and understanding of, the phenomenon of consuming the Lourdes experience.

Data Management

Spiggle (1994) explained that analysis helps to break down the vast, thick data set into manageable pieces, whilst interpretation helps to make the foreign, strange and "distant"

more familiar and "near" (Spiggle, 1994, 492). In analysing the data set of this study, the analysis components of categorisation, abstraction, comparison and iteration were utilised throughout the entire research process in order to provide a more holistic understanding of the ethnographic study.

Categorisation involves classifying and labelling parts of the data set. Spiggle (1994, 493) explained the essence of categorisation to be "identifying a chunk or unity of data as belonging to, representing, or being an example of some more general phenomenon". Related to the idea of coding, categorisation involves the grouping together of similar themes, ideas, and concepts, in turn enabling a better understanding and interpretation of the data set. Within this particular study categorisation was conducted inductively, with emergent themes and categories unearthed gradually throughout the ethnography. It should be noted that this categorising was conducted throughout, not at the end of the data collection process, as it was through the iterative process of data collection and analysis that the ethnography was built and a strong understanding of the phenomenon developed.

Abstraction builds upon categorisation, going "beyond the identification of patterns in the data" (Spiggle, 1994, 493), grouping categories into more "general conceptual classes". Comparison was then used within this study as a means of exploring the "differences and similarities across incidents" (Spiggle, 1994, 293). Comparison was adopted at both the analysis and the collection stage, with comparisons made between the different data categories. During data collection, informant sampling and fieldwork

studies were both designed in a manner enabling strong comparisons to be made across different categories and groupings. For example, in designing and building the informant sample, a sample incorporating young, old, male, female, volunteers and pilgrims was ensured. Although some of the groupings outweighed other groups, the sample was generally built with a view to having a rich comparable group. Additionally, throughout the research study, as serendipity led to meeting and gaining data sets, interviews, responses and field-work, the study was tweaked slightly to incorporate the gathering of further data to enable comparison within the findings. For example, the categorising and abstraction of data during the first year and a half of the ethnography unearthed the emerging theme of family and its importance in consuming the Lourdes experience. The sample and data collection were then tweaked to further include different family members and data on family as a means of further exploring and enabling comparison of this emergent theme. Additionally, the serendipitous recruitment of two informants during the May 2013 fieldtrip meant that the sample of in-depth informants extended beyond the Catholic or Christian denomination through informant Yasmina, who described herself as spiritual not religious, allowing further comparison to be made. Thus, comparison, like categorisation and abstraction, was an important component of this research study. However, the iterative analysis of the data collected throughout the ethnography was equally vital.

Iteration "involves moving through the data collection and analysis in such a way that preceding operations shape subsequent ones. Iteration implies that investigators do not perform specific research stages in a sequential manner but move back and forth

between stages" (Spiggle, 1994, 495). Throughout this chapter, illustration of this iterative movement has been shared to demonstrate the "iterative process" (Spiggle, 1994, 495) as core to this study, with the movement "back and forth" between the context and data (emic), and theory (etic) enabling the building of an "evermore holistic" (Thompson, 1997) understanding.

Iterations were built in two ways: primarily "intratextual" (Thompson, 1997, 441) iterations were built from parts into a whole, with texts being read in their entirety then subsequent readings being undertaken "to develop an integrated understanding of the consumption meanings conveyed by the text" (Spiggle, 1994, 441). For example, the interviews of this study were read primarily as a whole. Following this, categories and themes emerged and the text could then be dissected into smaller categories and passages. Finally, subsequent readings of the entire text would enable relations between the passages, categories and abstractions to the entire whole interview text.

Moreover, throughout the iterative process, "intertextual" iterations were developed, during which I "gained insight from an interview text". Through subsequent analysis and interpretation throughout the research process I began to "reconsider previously interpreted texts in light of this newly developed understanding" (Thompson, 1997, 441). A good example of such "intertextual" iteration, which is discussed in more detail in the forthcoming analysis chapters, is my interpretation of the emergent theme of attitudes towards the "tacky" Catholic kitsch products sold at Lourdes. Throughout the interviews, the informants generally discussed these products negatively; thus, my

initial interpretation was that these were "negative" signs of commercialisation occurring at Lourdes. However, as the ethnography continued, the iterative backing and forth between the different parts and the whole interview, coupled with field notes and visuals, illuminated that these goods have far more symbolic and important meaning in the entire Lourdes pilgrimage experience than the sole parts of the interview had demonstrated, or indeed, than my initial interpretation had perceived. Thus, this iterative process and engagement with the data enabled me to become "sensitised to new questions and precipitate revisions" (Thompson, 1997, 441) of my initial interpretative viewpoint, enabling this study to "be open to possibilities afforded by the text rather than projecting a predetermined system of meanings into the textual data" (Thompson, 1997, 441). This process enabled a more "unified interpretation" to be found and shared within the thesis.

Data Interpretation

The above section has outlined the procedure utilised in this thesis to analyse the data set; however, as outlined previously, analysis breaks up the data set into manageable chunks, whilst it is the interpretation which offers understanding. The above discussion of the iterative back and forth process between the emic and the etic has begun to shed light on interpretation within this study. Spiggle (1994, 497) asserted that the "intuitive, subjective, particularistic" nature of interpretation "renders it difficult to model or present in a linear way". Consequently, it is clear that in interpreting the data set of this

ethnography I remained consistent with the hermeneutic paradigm of the study, by adopting a hermeneutical mode of interpretation.

As previously explained, hermeneutics is the study of "understanding" (Palmer, 1969, 8). The historical hermeneutic paradigm adopted within this thesis enables a fusion between the past, present and future "horizons", thus enabling a fusion between the history of Lourdes (the apparitions), the present situation and consumption experience of Lourdes and the future hopes and expectations of those consuming Lourdes. The adoption of a hermeneutical mode of analysis further enables fusion between the different levels of understanding, resulting in the sharing of an "evermore holistic" (Thompson, 1997) and "unified" (Spiggle, 1994) understanding. Figure 1 (see page 157) indicates the process of iteration between pre-understanding, the access stages, continuous reflection and final understanding as outlined by Stenbacka (2001, 555) which is deemed crucial in conducting "high quality qualitative research".

As can be seen in this study, the hermeneutic circle enables a fusion of understanding from pre-understanding to all the iterative understandings developed throughout the ethnographic study. Thompson et al. (1994, 435) observed that "any research account of a research participant's self-interpretations is always informed by the intellectual background and theoretical interests of the researcher". In short, fusion cannot be amongst consumer scripts alone, but must also be between the researcher and their informants. The adoption of the iterative circle (or spiral) as a means of interpretation

within this study thus not only enables fusion between the differing levels of understanding, but also between the research and informants, and between the past, present and future.

Validity and Reliability

Wallendorf and Belk asserted that "any research approach, regardless of the philosophy of science from which it emanates, requires ways to assess the trustworthiness of the research" (1989, 69). Consequently, many of the suggestions made by Wallendorf and Belk (1989) in relation to methods to ensure the collection and interpretation of trustworthy research were followed throughout this research process.

The credibility of the study was established through the "prolonged engagement" at the site of Lourdes enabling the development of "an understanding of the phenomenon, group or culture" (Wallendorf and Belk, 1989, 71). In deciding the length of time to engage and remain immersed within Lourdes, it was decided that my pre-understanding and awareness of Lourdes from my practice and upbringing within the Catholic faith, coupled with my previous study in the area of pilgrimage, placed Lourdes within the realm of "familiarity" for me. Although I was by no means a "Lourdite" or a frequent consumer of the Lourdes experience I did have a strong awareness and knowledge of the setting and the faith surrounding it. This in turn placed the context further towards my own "home culture", meaning that the fieldwork could be of shorter duration and

engaged in more quickly given that the context was already a part of my "experiential portfolio" (Wallendorf and Belk, 1989, 71). Consequently, immersive fieldwork lasting eight weeks in total was conducted over three years beginning in April 2011 and ending for the purposes of this thesis in May 2013. The time span spent at Lourdes therefore exceeded the traditional "two complete cycles" (Sherry and McGrath, 1988), as I spent, over the three years of this ethnography, two complete ethnographic cycles at Lourdes during its busiest seasonal times, the summer months between June and July. However, I additionally spent time at the shrine during periods of religious importance to the Catholic faith, Easter, and times outwith the busy seasonal cycles in May and April as a means of gaining comparable insight during quieter times and during religiously significant times.

Credibility was further boosted through the use of triangulation across both sources and methods. Purposive sampling was employed as a means of gaining comparable insight across the in-depth interview informants. Furthermore, the triangulation of different methods and data collections (from participant observation, field note journal and reflective journal maintenance, visual data collection, serendipitous informal and formal semi-structured in-depth interviews), lent further credibility to the interpretation. Triangulation was carried out across field notes, visuals and interviews all supporting common themes, whilst my own reflections on the process and experience of the study uncovered my own biases and preconceptions, further strengthening the interpretation offered in this thesis.

Additionally, the presentation of iterations and levels of the analysis and interpretation offered throughout the process at conferences and workshops enabled "debriefing by peers" to occur, illuminating "critiques and questioning" of the emerging interpretation I was offering and allowing further reflection and development before I became "fully committed to it" (Wallendorf and Belk, 1989, 73). Further "debriefing" was afforded through continuous meetings with supervisors and presentations within my university department, where insights were gained and critiques given that helped to better formulate and develop the interpretation. Additionally, general chats with family and friends also illuminated reflections, critiques, questions and serendipitous ideas, and helped to develop and bring fresh perspective, and "new eyes" (Wallendorf and Belk, 1989) to the study.

Finally regarding credibility, verbal, informal members' checks were undertaken, particularly with in-depth informants throughout the study. The pilgrimage of July 2012 was suitable for this as it enabled initial ideas and themes to be discussed informally and verbally with informants, in turn promoting greater insight, and clarifying any confusion over terms and ideas shared by informants during interviews. Further to this, I, the researcher took on multiple roles during the pilgrimage (Hamilton et al., 2012) during which I was simultaneously researcher, pilgrim, friend, and volunteer. Therefore, general group discussions and conversations with informants throughout the pilgrimage week saw an unguarded and spontaneous re-sharing of many of the same sentiments they had shared during their interviews, which for some had been undertaken many months previous to the trip. Wallendorf and Belk (1989, 77) suggested that more merit

should be placed upon the "spontaneously" made statements of informants. Although the semi-structured nature of the in-depth interviews used in this study ensured a level of spontaneity and averted the pre-planning of answers, the re-sharing of these same sentiments during spontaneous conversations later in the process further strengthened the data and the final interpretation of this thesis, as it was a demonstration that informants were not "tricking", "lying to" nor "deceiving" the researcher in their interview replies.

The preceding point introduces an important element. This study intermittently collected data; I entered and exited the research context of Lourdes, and likewise I conducted in-depth interviews periodically. Wallendorf and Belk (1989, 75) suggested "returning to informants or sites months or even years later when things should have changed". Following this advice afforded the time and distance from data collection and permitted the back and forth process between "part–to-whole" (Thompson, 1997) essential in building and developing interpretation. "Self-revelation" (Wallendorf and Belk, 1989, 78) has been said to be a sign of good interviewing skills, and I found this to be true, for when asking people to open up about something that is generally, in our secularly-driven 21st century world, kept in the private sphere, I found that being open myself was extremely effective. My informants were incredibly open, sharing pain, suffering, illness, death, bullying, as well as happy moments that they had shared with deceased family members, friends and pilgrims. Therefore, complete desensitization from these emotions on the part of the researcher/interviewer would not have been welcomed; rather, in sharing parts of my own experience, and in empathising with

informants, I found that they were often more open and divulged much more than I had anticipated, and in turn we were able to temporarily connect as "fellow humans" (1989, 78).

The preceding sections have offered a thorough overview of the Lourdes ethnography, demonstrating the gaining of access across the different stages of the process, and the iterative analysis between pre-understanding, data, reflections and theory which led to the findings and understanding which are shared in the forthcoming analysis chapters. However, no study is perfect, and although I have striven to build as a strong a study as possible, there are still limitations inherent in the research, which will now be discussed.

Limitations

The close proximity of the researcher to the context and religion studied was not regarded as a hindrance but rather, as an asset aiding access and trust to be built with informants. That said, Spiggle (1994, 499) suggested that the subjective nature of interpretation means that no two researchers will analyse and interpret data in the same way, so working in interpretive groups was suggested to "minimize the possibility of idiosyncratic readings". However, the individual nature of the thesis makes working in groups impossible. Nonetheless, it must still be noted that a group of researchers interpreting this same data set could add extra rigour and value to the research and may have led to a completely different interpretation from that outlined and shared here.

A further limitation facing this study is its predominant contextual grounding in Glasgow, Scotland. Although fieldwork was conducted at the French shrine at Lourdes and a number of its informal informants were French and Spanish, the majority of informants were native to fluent English speakers, with the majority coming from the UK. Additionally, twenty of the twenty-three in-depth interview informants were Scottish. However, given that this study was not seeking to generalise results, but rather to gain depth and "thick description" this limitation does not delegitimise the value of this study. However, future research could look at the consumption of the Lourdes experience outwith this Scottish and Glaswegian context, utilising this study as a means of comparability and refutability (Spiggle, 1994).

Further to this, a limitation lies in the focus of this study on Lourdes alone. There are a plethora of other Marian, Catholic and other religious pilgrimage sites. However given the time, cost and personal constraints of a thesis, the decision was made to restrict the study to one site as a means of successfully gaining highly sought after "vertical thinking" (deBono, 1971, cited in Gummesson, 1991, 54) and deep understanding. Nonetheless, future research could look at other pilgrimage sites, both within and outwith the Christian/Catholic faiths as a means of gaining further understanding of the phenomenon of consuming pilgrimage which, as outlined in the literature review, is in its infancy in the field of consumer research.

4.5 Conclusions

This chapter has offered an overview and justification for the epistemological, philosophical, and methodological decisions and adoptions made throughout this research study. Following the framework offered by Crotty (1998), the chapter followed the specific framework of this study, discussing the subjective epistemology, interpretive hermeneutic philosophy, ethnographic methodology and qualitative methods of participant observation, visuals, and informal and formal in-depth interviews.

Discussion of the latter methods was interwoven with a description of the Lourdes ethnography undertaken over the last three years. In short, this ethnography, which began in 2010, resulted in eight-weeks in-situ fieldwork at Lourdes during which approximately 900 informal informants were consulted, approximately 1,500 visuals were collected, and close to 300 pages of field notes were written. In maintaining good ethnographic practice (Brewer, 2000) I maintained a reflective journal, which over the three-year ethnography has resulted in over 350 pages of reflections. Supplementing the on-site collected data, nineteen interviews were conducted with twenty-three informants, ranging in length from 30 minutes to four hours, averaging two hours and generating over 1000 pages of transcribed text. Additionally, to obtain a more complete and holistic understanding of the Lourdes consumption phenomenon, I attended a number of Lourdes committee meetings and visited two National Shrines aligned with Our Lady of Lourdes, one in Nevers, France and the other in Scotland. The

ethnographic process has been shared via the hermeneutic spiral timeline (Gummesson, 1991; Stenbacka, 2001) as a means of simultaneously illustrating the researcher's deep immersion in conducting this ethnography at Lourdes, and equally demonstrating the "high quality" (Stenbacka, 2001, 555) of this study, through the iterative back and forth process between pre-understanding, data collection, reflection and theory, all of which led to a final complete and holistic understanding and interpretation of the phenomenon, which will be presented in the forthcoming chapters. In coming to the final stage in the hermeneutic spiral, the holistic access to the phenomenon; I discussed the data management, analysis and interpretation procedures adopted throughout this study and finally, before concluding this chapter I offered a review of some of the limitations facing this study, suggesting potential future studies that could build upon and utilise this current ethnography as a source of comparison.

To conclude, this research pilgrimage has been a slow journey from a place of unfamiliarity to one of familiarity (Morinis, 1992), beginning with the introduction, which outlined the context and backdrop of this study. Familiarity was further gained through the detailed literature review and knowledge of the development of the methodological structure of the study. Thus, in keeping with the tradition of hermeneutics, of bringing this unfamiliar into the realm of familiarity (Palmer, 1969), this research pilgrimage now extends towards the goal of providing and sharing a holistic interpretation, leading onto presentation of the analysis and findings of this study.

PART II

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS: AN INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Analysis and Findings

The overarching aim of this thesis, as outlined in the introductory chapter, is *to investigate the consumption of religious pilgrimage, with specific focus upon 21st century consumption of the Catholic Sanctuary of Lourdes in France*. Consequently, the following chapters take the reader further towards understanding what it means to consume Christian pilgrimage in the 21st century. Accordingly the next section follows the example of Arnould and Price (1993, 28) who advised that "rather than organize around the sequence or type of data, findings are organised around the story to be told". For, throughout the ethnography it became apparent that all Lourdes consumers have what they call their own unique "Lourdes Story". These stories are important at two levels: firstly, they share the narrative of Lourdes, with the stories becoming almost word of mouth advertising for the site. Most importantly to this study, they also give insight into why consumers come to Lourdes, consequently, the forthcoming chapters will revolve around the Lourdes stories of particular informants. This section offers findings which address objectives one and two, thereby eliciting insight into why pilgrims continue to consume Lourdes today, and understanding the role of the marketplace in the Lourdes pilgrimage experience, ultimately bringing the reader to a

more holistic understanding of the Lourdes consumption phenomenon. Before doing so, the scene must be set with regard to Lourdes, in two respects: a) this ethnographic study and my own initial perspective of the context; and b) what the pilgrimage experience means to the consumers consulted in this study.

Lourdes: My Ethnographic Account

The Sanctuary bells were playing Ave Maria, the stroking of twelve chimes signalling midnight. We'd just arrived, it was raining and cold but I forced my mum to take me to the Grotto: "I need to see what all the fuss is about, please". She relented like all mums, "but first we have to say hi to The Crowned Virgin statue, its tradition". We said our hellos then she set off past the magnificent basilica. "Mum, where are you going, should we not go in here?" She laughs, "Nah, that's just the showpiece, the real magic happens round the corner". I followed her, under the arches, past the taps where people were filling plastic bottles, washing their faces and taking sips of the famous Lourdes water. We entered a queue following those in front, all of them touching a rock, it was shining, I assumed, from the rain. But as we drew closer, I realised it was not water but the rock was in fact smooth. "It's because of the huge numbers of people that touch it," my mum explained as though reading my mind. "Wow" I began to say but stopped as I was greeted with the scene before me. The magnificent, illuminated statue, the sound of nothing but the flowing water and the crackling candles. I was struck by the quiet whimpering from a woman praying on her knees before the statue tears rolling down her cheeks. I suddenly caught sight of other people sitting before the grotto and I was

195

awestruck. Despite the number of people there was silence, silence I'd never experienced before. It was as though I was in the world yet not at the same time, and I remember thinking, "this must be what the scholars mean by liminal". I turned to my mum and she was smiling at me almost knowingly but said nothing except "grab a wing", and with that I slipped my arm through hers and we began our walk round the Grotto together (an ethnographic account written by the researcher following the initial April 2011 fieldtrip).

My initial fieldwork visit was undertaken in April 2011 with my mother, who had been to Lourdes with our parish a few years before. The contrast between my mum's initial "magical" experience at Lourdes in 2008 and my "underwhelming" experience at the Vatican around the same time is what initially made me consider the relationship between religion and consumption, and ultimately, it was the root occurrence leading me to conduct this thesis. During this initial field-visit I experienced what I was later in field-notes to term a "magical", "lighter" experience of Lourdes. I witnessed and experienced all the wonderful components of Lourdes which are spoken of by the scholars whose work I had immersed myself in (Turner and Tuner, 1978; Lauretin, 1994; MacDannell, 1995), recalling their writings on the sense of togetherness, the sense of wonder, awe, magic, and the power of place. However, upon conducting my second fieldtrip to Lourdes later in June/July 2011, I began to see cracks in the "magical" façade. As I noted, "*at times I am overwhelmed by the wonder and magical qualities of this place and the people you meet, but I also struggle as I've said before, to*

see where the transference of the Lourdes spirit comes into play in; a) everyday life but also; b) whilst in Lourdes" (field-note from day eleven of June/July 2011 fieldtrip).

At this time in my PhD studies, I was heavily influenced by the work of Turner and Turner (1978). However, I must also acknowledge my own Catholic preconceptions of Lourdes and pilgrimage, which, when coupled with my early interpretation of Turner and Turner (1978) and my "magical" first encounter at the Sanctuary, all led to my personal creation of a romanticised image of Lourdes. At the time of conducting these fieldtrips, I had not read the work of John Eade (1992) on the structural, hierarchical, or as I refer to it in my field notes, the "Darker side of Lourdes". Thus, I was completely taken aback to be faced with hierarchy, structure and the existence of a human realm, with my field work at this time bringing to the surface a plethora of negative observations and happenings. Consequently, I questioned why people willingly spent an exorbitant amount of money going to Lourdes, and wondered what they could possibly gain from the experience. Interviews and further field work trips to Lourdes over the next two years began to probe further in addressing these questions, uncovering if any of the "living communitas" spoken of by Turner and Turner (1978, 230) remained at Lourdes in the 21st century. Had Lourdes become over commercialised, had it become overly contaminated by civilisation (Arnould and Price, 1993; Belk et al., 1989)? Over the three-year period, my own preconceptions became more and more apparent. I re-immersed myself in Turner's work and with my new insight began to reinterpret my initial readings. I was not the only driver bringing about my changing perspective of Lourdes, though, as the informants played a key role in bringing about such change and

realisation through sharing their perspective on Lourdes, which when coupled with my own observations, notes and visuals began to open my eyes to what consuming Lourdes is really about. The following section begins to discuss the consumer perspective of Lourdes through informant Paul's narrative.

The Consumer Perspective of Lourdes: Paul's Story

Paul (63) has always had an awareness of Lourdes. From a young age, he and his twin brother (fellow informant) James, were introduced along with their other siblings to Lourdes via their mother, who journeyed there often. They were also ingrained with the Lourdes spirit through the family attendance at Lourdes Days held in Scotland. Lourdes Days witnessed Paul and his family participating in similar processions and rituals offered and conducted at Lourdes. Although he had never physically been to the town of Lourdes, for Paul as a child his mother's influence, his attendance at Lourdes Days and the souvenirs he received from the shrine all helped him to "learn the format" of the Sanctuary.

In light of this awareness, he shared that his first visit to Lourdes, as a twenty-three year old, was filled with wonder and excitement. As he tried for the first time to navigate his way through Lourdes, the "old hands" (those who frequented Lourdes often), would speak in a language of their very own; "we will meet you at St Michael's Gate, St Joseph's Gate" – and I asked myself which Gate, where are these gates? And you would gradually get used to the language and even the Basilicas - which one you would go

into?" He recalled the noticeable boundary between the Sacred and the secular, with the former encased within the Sanctuary gates whilst the latter, secular, town hosted a plethora of restaurants, hotels and religious shops. He was, and still is, surprised at the shops selling flashing Our Lady statues, and continues to be bewildered that people "seem to want them". He is likewise continually surprised by the number of people who ask him to bring them back water, medals, rosaries, or trinkets from Lourdes, continuing that with reference to the Lourdes water he has often thought, "you could save yourself a lot of trouble by filling it up at Glasgow airport on the way back and they would never know the difference". But, he shares, "this you could never do", and that instead, you collect the water and pray hard that on the way home "the plane is going to get off the ground".

Paul is also constantly amazed by the number of people asking him to light candles for them and/or people they know, to post their petitions[15], and the privilege and trust they imbue in him through this task. The giant pilgrimage candles (figure 22) have always astounded Paul, so he spends time searching for details of the origins of the candles such as where the pilgrimage group who lit it have come from, thinking of the pilgrimage groups he has become familiar with or met over the years, and like fellow informant Rachael, generally just pondering "what are the stories behind those candles?" (Rachael). Furthermore, despite the passing of forty years, Paul still cannot get over the irrationality yet specialness of the Baths, as he recalls his initial reaction of horror at firstly being plunged into freezing, cold water and then being given no towel

---

[15] A petition is a written note to a saint, or in the case of Lourdes, to Our Lady of Lourdes, asking for help, advice, sharing worries, woes, desires, fears, or stresses. Thus, they are very personal (almost diary-like) and a high level of trust is given to the intermediary who is asked to take the petition on behalf of the writer.

with which to dry off. He shared that this goes against his childhood, when his mother would have scolded and warned him of catching pneumonia if he did not dry himself after bathing. Yet, at Lourdes, it's the norm not just for the healthy, but also for the sick.

Figure 22: Candles at Lourdes, the above picture illustrating some of the larger pilgrimage group candles which are often lit and left at Lourdes.

Paul spoke of the togetherness and the crowds during the torchlight procession, and the magical quality of this ritual. But he equally recalled the human traits; the fear that the candle would either blow out or start a fire, and the complete amazement that Lourdes has not had a serious fire, especially in light of the chatting, the cutting in front of and

bumping into one another that occurs during the Torchlight Procession. Further to this, he spoke often of the stories he had heard from his uncle and circumstances which he had also experienced himself, of the "little tensions", "national stereotypes" and "fisticuffs" existing between pilgrimage groups. His uncle often told him how his pilgrimage group would fight to lead the procession, especially ahead of German pilgrimage groups. These tensions, coupled with my own observations of the "darker side of Lourdes" which are discussed more fully in chapter five, bring to mind recent arguments from Tumbat and Belk (2011) and their belief in communitas being a potentially romantic idea. Yet despite these "little tensions", Paul recalls his experience of going down to the Grotto for the first time, and the sense of peace, respect and complete silence he experienced and continues to experience there today. Consequently, romanticism is perhaps a somewhat premature word to align with the clearly complex Lourdes experience. Equally, Paul is constantly astounded by the "happiness" of Lourdes, expressing his initial shock that, in a place catering to the sick, the dying, and the hurt, laughter is the dominant sound. This leads Paul to believe that at Lourdes there exists an atmosphere that is "totally different from any other place you could go to".

Shared descriptors of Lourdes were; "topsy-turvy" (Fr. Brendan), "bubble" (Lilly), and "Brigadoon" (Kitty), together suggesting Lourdes to be a magical, parallel world, a place that exists yet does not exist at the same time. Informants described Lourdes as "indescribable" yet they continuously strive and desire to describe it, to tell their "Lourdes stories and moments". So, all at once, Lourdes becomes "indescribable" yet "describable". It is described as "the whole package" offering "fun", "joy", "happiness",

yet simultaneously as an experience that brings about a level of "zombification-like" (Kitty) tiredness. It is a place of emotional and sacredly intense moments that are often described as "greet (cry)-fests", where pain, suffering, grief, and illness are all expressed, confronted, and, for many, unburdened. These contrasting descriptors have led some to describe the Lourdes experience as a "fungrimage", i.e. an experience marrying both fun and pilgrimage, both sacred and secular, both the individual and the self. The informants continuously married together paradoxical terms like "fungrimage", "Lourdes junky", "Holiday with Our Lady", yet simultaneously they struck a definitive chord between the Sacred and the secular, the self and the collective, and day and night. Consequently, two consistently prominent themes were found across all the informants in addressing what the Lourdes pilgrimage experience was: "Indescribable Lourdes", and "The Laughter of Lourdes".

INDESCRIBABLE LOURDES

"…The place is unique and last year I was asked to make a short presentation to the youth group and I said to them it was indefinable, untouchable, unquantifiable, you cannot really express in words what Lourdes is about, it is just a sense you get. And that sounds very pious and I am not deeply pious but it is a different place. I have not been to Fatima[16], I have not been to Medjugorje, so I cannot compare them. But I have been

---

[16] Fatima, Medjugorje and Knock in Portugal, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Ireland respectively, are all Marian Shrines. Similar to Lourdes, these sites are dedicated to Our Lady the Mother of Jesus Christ, who is believed to have appeared in these places and hence they have become extremely popular Christian pilgrimage centres

to Knock and I would not say it was comparable, Lourdes is just special… Unless you

go and see, touch, feel and experience, you cannot relate to it" (James, 63).

Arnould and Price (1993, 37) found in their study on the consumption of the white water rafting experience that their informants equally described the experience to be "indescribable", noting that "a consistent theme was "you almost have to do it to really understand the experience". This theme was similarly recurrent across all the informants in the present study:

"Because Lourdes is a very difficult thing to describe, it does not matter how many books you read about it and how much you talk to folk about it. Until you go, you cannot really understand it, there are so many other factors at play, you know" (Sr. Anne, 37).

"…It's hard to describe to folk – see folk who haven't been before it is - we always say that especially because a lot of our friends will say "why do you go to that, it will cost you a fortune to go and whatever else, and you're giving up your holidays and stuff?" But, it's difficult to describe… I think like Garry (his brother) said you're making such a great impact on people's lives… So it's just the chance to do that" (Jacob, 26).

Both Sr. Anne and Jacob illustrate the "indescribable" nature of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience, yet despite the informants' shared belief in the inability to describe the Lourdes pilgrimage experience they all enjoyed discussing Lourdes and sharing their "Lourdes stories", offering a range of descriptors in trying to explain what Lourdes means to them: "family", "fun", "faith", "love", "reflection", "spirituality", "serenity", "laughter", and "hope", with most informants describing Lourdes to be a "home away from home". Arnould and Price (1993, 42) called for future research to look at the "underlying cultural scripts in examining consumption experiences" (1993, 42). One such "underlying cultural script" emerged in the form of a shared belief in the "caricatures" and "assumptions" that people not aligned with Lourdes have about the site, as demonstrated by Kelly:

"…We always talk about this - that if you've not been to Lourdes, it's very difficult to explain to somebody who's not been what it's like. Because everybody's kind of got like a fixed vision in their mind of what it's like, and to a certain extent, all those kinds of caricatures of it are true as well. But for all the things that are really, really fantastic about it, it's very difficult to explain what those are" (Kelly, 35).

Repeated reference was made to the "assumptions" and "caricatures" people who had never been to Lourdes made about those who are frequent consumers of the experience. A discussion of the assumptions of what the typical Lourdes consumer is like is presented in chapter six. In the meantime, the current section will begin to illuminate a

core assumption that people often make regarding the shrine, an assumption that not only non-pilgrimage or non-Lourdes consumers, but also informants and the researcher, have made about Lourdes. This is that in catering to the sick, Lourdes cannot be a happy place. Consequently, many informants discussed their surprise at the dominant sound in Lourdes being laughter.

THE LAUGHTER OF LOURDES

"I thought it was very noisy, that was my immediate thought, it was very noisy. But then I realised, as you listened more, a lot of that noise was happy noise, like laughing and chatting and joyful especially when there were a lot of youths there. When we had been there the American youths had been there, and there was a huge amount of them and it was just great to see them. There was lots of laughter, and they were running about pushing chairs and all that. So my initial thought was it was noisy but I soon realised it was happy noise" (Kitty, 66).

Given the high number of sick, dying, handicapped, and mentally and physically ill people at Lourdes, it is no wonder that many assume Lourdes would be a place of sadness; tears of pain rather than tears of laughter. As will be discussed fully in chapter six, Lourdes is a place of sad emotion, and one in which many tears are shed; however, these tears are equalled by many chortles of laughter as the Four Scottish Ladies (ages 60+) explained succinctly through their belief that in Lourdes there is "more laughter than crying" and by Danielle (age 18) who admitted, "I probably cried every day but I

definitely laughed so much every day as well". Lourdes is therefore a place where both tears of joy and pain converge, and yet where the tears of joy are perhaps unexpected to many:

"...That was the shock that I got the first time I went because I thought it would be severe and miserable and I was quite shocked. Walking about late at night, all these pubs and people singing and I thought, "oh I thought I was coming to a place of deep reverence" [laughs]" (Christine, 63).

"The thing you hear in Lourdes, the overwhelming thing that you hear is laughter, people laugh and enjoy themselves, and even the sick. All ages, all shapes, all sizes, people just laugh and enjoy themselves at Lourdes" (James, 63).

The expectation that religion has a fundamental seriousness at its core is actually a new assumption. Moore (1980, 207) explained that play and ritual, and therefore religion and fun, have been allied components in a "meta-process of expressive behaviour" since humankind's "mammalian past". Further adjectives expressing fun were frequently mentioned when explaining favourite memories and times at Lourdes, one example being informant Marie (54)'s reply when asked what she remembered from her first experience at Lourdes back in the 1960s: "probably the unholy bits, the singsongs in the cafes, the company, the craic (chat), just the fun of it". The enjoyment of the unholy parts of Lourdes, however, tended to have one common element – people, community,

togetherness - as Kitty recalls, she and the Four Scottish Ladies enjoyed their times together at night after volunteering during the day, "…We would meet up at night so I enjoyed that and hearing everybody's stories and we always had great fun, didn't we? Good laughs, swapping stories and how we would fix things, you know" (Kitty, 63).

Many words were used throughout this study to describe the Lourdes pilgrimage experience; "odd", "strange", "funny", and the field-notes are littered with the French word "*particulière*", which translates to special or distinctive. Therefore, for all the informants, Lourdes is as Marnham (1982, 138) described, "a very odd place indeed". Further, it is a very odd place that is a beacon for the sick and suffering of society, but rather than being a place of sombreness, Lourdes gives "a lot of life and a lot of fun" to its consumers (Garry, 25). Lourdes, it seems, is unique, with many informants sharing the belief that the Lourdes experience could not be "replicated" elsewhere. In fact, Kelly shared many times throughout our meetings that attempts by the youth group to recreate the Lourdes experience had failed: "you know, we have tried to recreate in the past lots of times a retreat, a reflective weekend, social weekend, social occasion, a family day, we have tried to recreate them so many different times and they just don't work" (Kelly, 35). Table 1 offered an overview of the sacred maintenance processes (Belk et al., 1989), through which consumers could ensure that sacredness is perpetually maintained within sites, moments, times, goods and experiences. Consequently, the "adherence to the ritual behaviour" (Belk et al., 1989, 26) of consuming Lourdes and the inability to recapture the experience elsewhere is a sign of one such maintenance process, ensuring that the sacredness of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience is sustained.

To conclude, this section has aimed to provide the reader with a better understanding of what Lourdes means to its consumers, a crucial process if holistic understanding of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience is to be gained. Paul's narrative was shared due to his echoing of the same sentiments of all informants on what Lourdes meant to them. Lourdes is a place of paradoxes, reversals, contradictions, and irrationalities. It is a place of fun as well as sadness, a place of "mixed feelings". It is also a place where faith, fun, family and friendship align, where sacred Sanctuary co-exists with secular shops, where tears stem from both pain and laughter, and a place of the world yet not of the world. It is now easier to understand why informants find it difficult to describe Lourdes. As a researcher and visitor, I have been immersed in Lourdes for the last three years and I still cannot find the perfect adjective - the best and most fitting descriptor of Lourdes I have found over the last three years is "*particulière*" – "special, distinctive" – and that to me, and the informants of this study, is Lourdes.

This thesis now begins to address the first of its objectives: *to gain insight into why pilgrims consume Lourdes in the 21st century*. Earlier, I shared my shock upon uncovering the darker side of Lourdes, and in truth there is a dark, human side to Lourdes, just as there are dark and light kratophanous properties to sacredness (Fernandez and Veer, 2007). However, like the white water rafters studied by Arnould and Price (1993, 25) and the Muslim pilgrims examined by Moufahim (2013), the Lourdes consumer often focuses more on the light, positive "attributes" of the experience. These attributes of Lourdes are the reasons why the consumers of this study

continue to consume the pilgrimage experience, with the lightness shining through in three main areas: Communitas, Liminality and Kinship, and it is to an examination of these areas that this thesis now turns.

CHAPTER V: COMMUNITAS

5.0 Communitas at Lourdes: Yasmina's Story

Yasmina (27) has always been highly critical of Christian, and in particular Catholic, faith, a criticism she inherited from her mother who had no tolerance for religion, and was wary of it in any form. Despite this, as a child Yasmina received a plastic bottle in the shape of a woman from her Catholic grandmother; a bottle that she now realises came from Lourdes. Yasmina shared that as a child, she slept with this plastic bottle, and although not realising at the time, as she had never been taught what prayer was, she prayed to the Lady on the bottle, feeling drawn to and protected by her. Growing up, she later forgot all about the bottle, the Lady and the prayers she had said as a child, instead following her mother's belief that religion was something to be wary of. She completed her business degree, bought a lovely flat in the South of France, worked day and night, fell in love, and believed she was completely happy. That is, until one evening when she sat on her balcony overlooking the sea and thought, "is this it?"

Unsure of what she should do, she quit her job, left her boyfriend and her seafront flat, and found herself heading to India, where she met Amma, a Hindu Guru popular for healing people through holding them in a deep embrace. Since then, Yasmina has been at the Ashram with Amma, where she is currently working at a university conducting research into Amma and Hinduism. Yasmina is not a Hindu, preferring to label herself as "spiritual not religious". Her research, however, resulted in her being invited to the

Miracles and Management Conference held in Lourdes in May 2013. She admitted that she did not wish to come to Lourdes, but ultimately did so "kicking and screaming", having run out of excuses. Finally she decided to ask Amma for advice on what she should do and Amma replied, "you must go". Thus, she came to Lourdes.

She came sceptical about the shrine, believing it to be a "hoax", and a "moneymaking machine", and she was therefore completely surprised to find in Lourdes what she terms a "cosmopolitan" and "magnificent" feel:

> "I feel it is cosmopolitan because so many different nationalities are coming here, so many nationalities and different ages and different colours of skin, you walk around and there are so many different languages, it is really magnificent actually. And I would say that it is cosmopolitan because so many different people in society are coming here, all these sick people usually in society you would keep them at home. You wouldn't allow them to go outside because the facilities are not there, so here everybody can express themselves, they can be here you know, they just can be" (Yasmina, 27).

Initially agreeing to only come for the conference, following her initial visit to the Sanctuary Yasmina decided she wanted to remain in Lourdes for a few extra days, in order to better understand what it was all about. She met with me frequently over these days and often exclaimed her surprise at feeling that Lourdes was like a "protective

bubble" in which she felt "safe" and "at home", much as she does when with Amma in the Ashram. As our time together came to an end, she shared that "although I still do not completely understand why the Catholic Church needs so much wealth and why they killed so much in the past, I can appreciate what Catholicism today, especially Lourdes, can give to people".

Yasmina's spiritual lifestyle had in fact caused considerable tension between her and her mother. However, she had managed to convince her parents to visit her at the Ashram the year prior to our meeting. She told how upon meeting Amma, her mother felt touched, and that from that moment on, their relationship "began to mend". She further shared that her mother was displeased at her coming to Lourdes; however, she left Lourdes with the belief that she could change her mother's perception by sharing with her the "magic", "cosmopolitan" and "utterly magnificent" time she had experienced there.

As will be outlined in the chapter seven, at Lourdes the world comes together as "one family", and all the informants echoed Yasmina's belief, in the temporal presence of communitas at Lourdes, with descriptors of the pilgrimage experience highlighting a place where a "topsy-turvy" value system is brought to the fore, where the sick, old, young, and all marginalised peoples come and are placed at the forefront; in short, "nobody is a nobody at Lourdes" (Fr. Brendan).

"…Here we gather and all are welcome. In Hitler's view of life, he wanted to make the perfect society and so he got rid of the disabled and a few more, but here they take pride of place and that is putting topsy-turvy on the world again, where they come first, and it reminds us of the importance of each and every individual" (Fr. Brendan, 73).

"Well I love in Lourdes the fact that they have got lanes for wheelchairs in the road because I have never seen that anywhere else in the world" (Christine, 63).

The impressions offered above demonstrate that despite the lapse of over thirty years since the study on Marian pilgrimage and Lourdes (Turner and Turner, 1978), communitas retains a position of importance. All the informants of this study shared that a major influence on their consuming the Lourdes experience has been the fact "all are welcome" and can "come together" at Lourdes, and that the marginalised in society are brought to the front and catered for. After all, as Christine pointed out, where else in the world is there a lane for wheelchairs?

"…Why are people so kind here all the time? Now when you are a bit older and a bit wiser you see tensions and such, but still there is something very valid in that perception of real goodwill. I suppose the thing that really, really struck me was the classic thing that is so cliché, all of those people who are so generally marginalised in our society, all the sick, the old and the handicapped, they are the ones who are

really the Kings and Queens of the outfit and I love that, I love it for once we are

seeing with the eyes that God wanted us to see with" (Sr. Anne, 37).

John Eade (1992, 24), in his scholarly work on Lourdes, heavily critiqued the Turnerian

idea of communitas, believing that not only do structure and hierarchy prevail at

Lourdes, but also that the front and centring of the sick was "archaically insulting" to

people who wished to be just like everyone else. Many, like Sr. Anne, however, find the

"front and centring" of the sick to be one of their favourite aspects of Lourdes, seeing

the care and focus upon the sick and marginalised of society as "something wonderful",

drawing them back annually. The vignette above from Sr. Anne is further evidence of

the persistence of communitas at Lourdes. However, her reference to "tensions"

alongside the above reference to Eade (1992) offers a hint of − the darker side of

Lourdes, as referred to in the previous chapter.

5.1 The Darker Side of Lourdes: Evidence of Hierarchy and Structure

Consistently throughout the generally positive interviews, informants also referenced

the presence of "officialdom", "authoritarianism", "politics" and "power trips" during

the Lourdes pilgrimage experience. Often, "nationalistic tensions" and "national

stereotypes" (Eade, 1992, 26) were felt between different cultures. As outlined by

Marie, "the Italians have always jumped the queues", whilst two of the Four Scottish

Ladies found the male French volunteers at Lourdes "aggressive":

Christine: "I think the wee men at the Grotto are, I think there is total ignorance sometimes and I am not racist in any way, manner or means as you well know but I think it tends to show in the French".

Kitty: "The power I think goes to their heads and the men at the Grotto we found, as I told you, were rude and brusque and pompous and almost aggressive sometimes towards people" (Christine, 63 and Kitty, 66).

Further tension was felt between "normal folk and very devout people" (Jacob), and even between different groups within the same Archdiocese; Miriam outlined tensions between some youth group members and some of the Hospitality members from the Archdiocese of Glasgow:

"I hate occasionally the politics that go along with it and the assumption that some of the older ones have that because you're young, you're stupid. You know I really hate that. I hate that some of them, and it is some of them – it is a minority, a total minority, of hospitality think "you're just young, so you don't matter as much". "Well, actually I'm 25, I've got a job and I'm living in the world and even if I wasn't it doesn't matter", you kind of come across that at times in Lourdes" (Miriam, 25).

Furthermore, throughout my field visits I myself witnessed instances of structure and hierarchy, most often demonstrated amongst the 'brancardier', a specialized part of the Hospitality volunteers at Lourdes:

"...And then I began to silently say a quick Hail Mary (prayer). I got halfway through my prayer when I suddenly felt a finger be forcefully "dunted" – which is the only way to describe this - into my shoulder and I knew it was brancardier. So quickly I completed my prayer, whilst the finger remained in my shoulder, and I turned to move at which point the forceful finger in my shoulder finally moved and as I looked at the man who had "dunted" me, I was met with the most scornful, growling expression. He made me feel as though I had committed a mortal sin, when really all I was doing was praying in a Sanctuary... Now I appreciate they have a role to do and it wasn't not being given the time at the grotto, I appreciate we cannot linger there too long - although to be fair I was there about a minute and a half if I were lucky - it was the manner in which he done it. I have just watched one of the other ladies on grotto duty and she gives pilgrims a tender touch on the back to signal them along, and then a small smile and the pilgrims move along without any issue, and without feeling hurt, or upset or embarrassed as though they've done something wrong..." (Field note from day eight of June 2012 field trip).

Eade's work (1992, 26) was based on his own experience as a volunteer with the Hospitality at Lourdes for over twenty-two years. His experience prompted criticisms of

the "hierarchical system", seen as present at Lourdes, which had "enraged volunteer helpers for many years". The present research has found that now, more than twenty years later, these same criticisms persist at Lourdes, with hierarchical splits found at the nationalistic and age level. In particular, many of the youth group shared similar feelings to Lilly of occasionally feeling underappreciated by the older pilgrims who volunteered in the Hospitality group.

"…It's like obviously they [Hospitality] are there to help, of course they are, but a lot of the time it's like "they're just the youth group" and I think, well, we do so much and I don't… 90% of the time we are completely appreciated, definitely. But, see sometimes, that 10% of the time - one year there was one women and she had a whistle and was blowing a whistle at us as if we were dogs and I was like "no, I'm not going to listen to her if she's going to blow a whistle for my attention. We're adults!" (Lilly, 24).

Many informants believed these hierarchical behaviours were apparent in more "conservative", "older" pilgrims and hoped that, over time, these behaviours and mannerisms would "disappear" (Rachael). Many informants mentioned "softening", "bettering" and "some changes" to Lourdes, seeing the culprits of the hierarchical structure as a "complete minority" (Miriam) and tension arising only "10% of the time" (Lilly). However, the reality of the hierarchy is something that all informants, alongside myself, felt went against expectations of Lourdes. Many believed that the treatment should be better, as illustrated by Christine:

"Could I just say something because I went to Wimbledon and it was like old English gentlemen that treated you very well and, ushered might be the word, but you were treated with dignity and it was so nicely done, and to me that is the way that you should be getting treated in Lourdes. But in Lourdes it is like pushing and pulling all the time" (Christine, 63).

Experience of "pushing and pulling" was shared by most of the informants throughout this study, with many sharing their "surprise" and "shock" at the "military-like operation":

"I mean when we take the sick round, it's like the military… do you know what I mean? You're like "everybody, Go! Go! Go!"… And it's all rushed" (Lilly, 24).

"Like sometimes it was crazy it was like a military operation to try to keep you together coming through when there was a crossover at noon or something. I did not like that because it was so frantic and it was stressful for the pilgrims and it was stressful for us [volunteers] and that was totally in contrast to where you were, you know somewhere so calm and sacred and reverent, or it should be" (Danielle, 18).

Many informants were shocked when, at times, the atmosphere of Lourdes was antithetical to their expectations of a "calm" and "reverent" place. Consequently, in light of such "hierarchies", "power trips", "rudeness", and "military-like operations", how then for the consumer is the experience one that remains "just wonderful", "fun", "fantastic", and the "best experience of my life"?

Eade (1992, 26) saw the hierarchy and structure amongst volunteers as an "obstacle to the maintenance of solidarity". However, as mentioned above, the present informants acknowledged the "hierarchies" and the "officialdom" at Lourdes as an occasional occurrence, which happened only "10% of the time" (Lilly). Fernandez et al. (2007) offered the idea of both benevolent (good-sacred) and malevolent (bad-sacred) properties being encapsulated within sacredness. Given that Lourdes is a Sacred place, the darker side of Lourdes including its hierarchies, tensions, and "pulling and pulling" components could all be viewed as such malevolence, which ultimately counterbalances the benevolent camaraderie, and spiritual and jovial components. The Lourdes consumers consulted in this study often shared how they "separated", "ignored", or did "not overly focus upon" such malevolent components, consequently following the mantra of the Muslim pilgrims of Moufahim (2013, 17) whereby such negatives are "overshadowed by the intensity of the emotional and spiritual experience, by the camaraderie that developed among the group members and by the jovial encounters with other pilgrims and local residents". Separation was a core instrument aiding the Lourdes consumer in ensuring that such negatives were "overshadowed" (Moufahim,

2013). This idea leads us on to Sr. Anne's story and her offering of the "double dimension" of Lourdes.

5.2 The "Double Dimension" of Lourdes: Sr. Anne's Story

At the age of fourteen, Sr. Anne (37) came to Lourdes under her parents "initiative", and her time at Lourdes began to instil within her a longing to grow closer to God which grew and led to her deciding in her twenties to dedicate her life wholly to her faith and become a Nun. For Sr. Anne, Lourdes embodies "a double dimension", encapsulating individual and group moments. The grotto late at night is a time when she can concentrate on her individual relationship with God, when she feels she is "right at the heart of God and right at the heart of myself". She continues that although people will have "crazy notions" and perhaps not like themselves, at the grotto she feels "you accept yourself just the way you are there, you are totally at ease in the presence of God, that is what the grotto is for me, and that is why I love it". In discussing the secondary part of her "double dimension", Sr. Anne offers the Torchlight procession (figure 23), which for her is "the whole of creation moving with one voice, the pilgrim people moving together". These moments with her fellow brothers and sisters are "global", but equally, are "important parts" of her holistic relationship with God, for as Sr. Anne observes, "we are not isolated people".
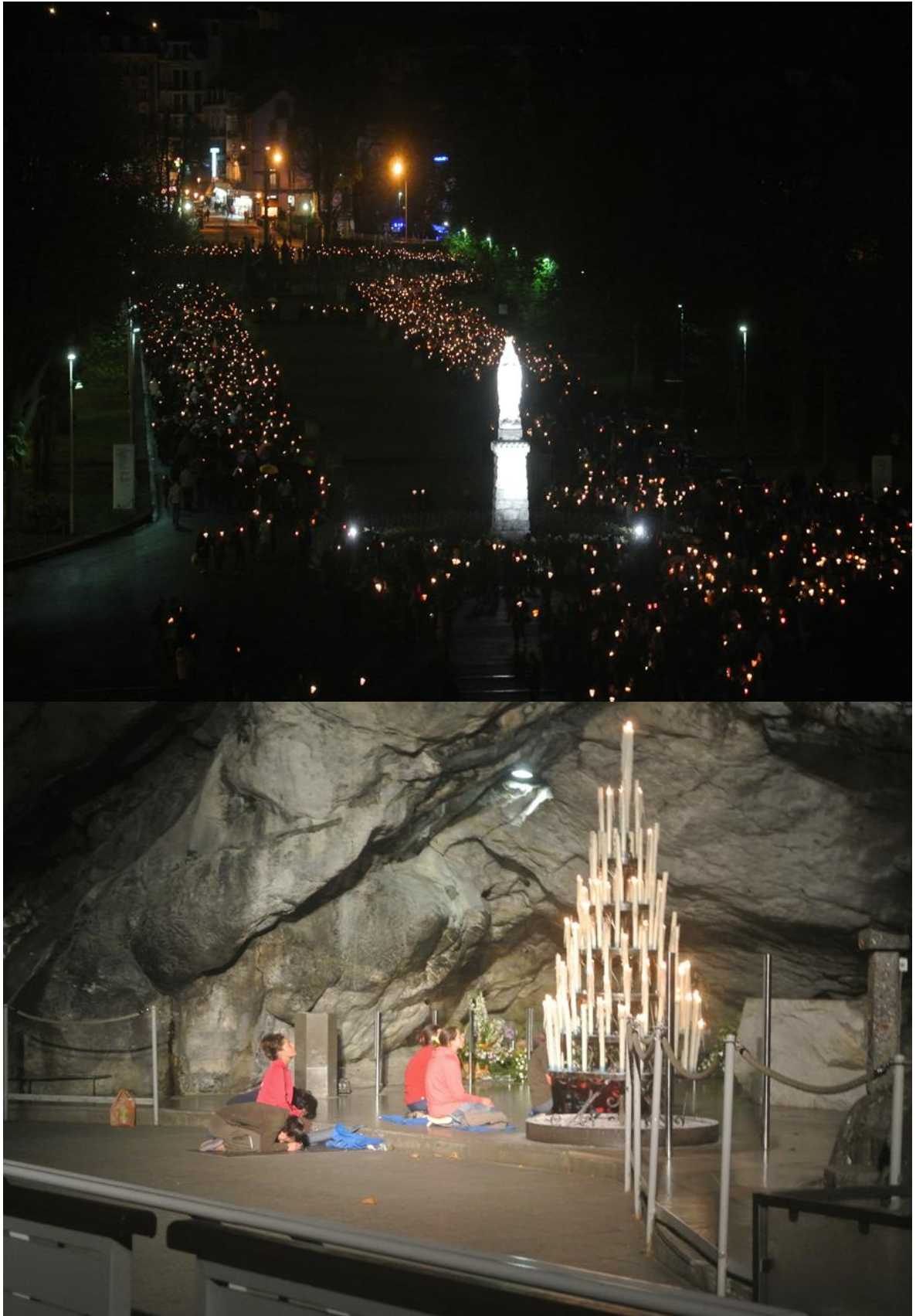
Figure 23: the Double Dimension of Sr. Anne; the torchlight procession where she feels "the whole of creation moving together with one voice" and the grotto at night, where she feels she "is at the heart of God and right at the heart of herself".

This double dimension of self-times and group-times, separation and compartmentalisation between the Sacred, the secular, the self, the group, daytime and night-time was echoed by all the informants, with the general consensus that during the daytime Lourdes was a "cauchemar" (nightmare) due to the high levels of bustling crowds and noise. In contrast, the grotto at night was when many found Lourdes to be at its most sacred and special:

"During the day, yeah, it's like a tourist attraction a lot of the time but I think at night it's like a different place. It's just so peaceful and just to sit with yourself" (Lilly, 24).

"It was so, so different. During the day was great. I was astounded with it because every second person was talking a different language to you and there are folk with cameras and taking pictures of everything. There are all the people in uniforms that were youth groups like us. Nuns and priests galore; they were everywhere. It was just… it was so, so busy…. But then we went down at night and it was just a stark contrast. It was so quiet, like, talking like this (lowers voice), even at this level, was too loud. You had to whisper to each other and then you felt you were being, you were kind of invading it a bit because if you went down to the grotto, it was pretty much silent the whole way down, unless it was a wee bit windy. You didn't really hear… you could hear the river, you could maybe hear the wind in the trees or some of the trees moving or whatever. You couldn't really hear anything else. And you would see some people there but it'd be absolutely silent - it was so nice. I love

going down to the grotto at night and I love going to where the candles are at night as well because it's so, so quiet. And you can just… you can think and, or not think. You can just sit there and just, it's one of the few places, I think, where it's just, you can really totally just zone out from the rest of the world because of how quiet it is" (Matthew, 22).

Across not only the informants but also all the pilgrims spoken with on-site at Lourdes there was a mirroring of Matthew and Lilly's sentiments, contrasting the busy daytime with the quietness and tranquillity of night. Consequently, it becomes apparent that despite the busy daytime which generates the darker side of Lourdes, pilgrims find a quiet, peaceful, lighter side; they find their time, their place, their moments and in finding these they become attached to Lourdes, as Rachael shares below:

"The noise originally, very, very noisy, what actually made me feel better was the night-times. Iris had said hear the music, you know you open up your window and you hear the hymns in the air, hear the river and see the Castle on the hill and things, that really was something special and then when you see it when it is quieter you get the feel of it" (Rachel, 74).

The tincturing sound of sacred hymns during quiet night-times helped Rachel better understand and "get the feel" of the experience, making Lourdes "something special" to her. Night-time and/or early morning times echoed amongst most informants as a quiet,

special time where they enjoyed spending time on their own, or in small groups at the grotto. For as Patricia shares below these times are "more peaceful" permitting something of a more personal connection between the individual and deity to be built:

"The Grotto is much more peaceful at night-time; there isn't so much noise around. It's not kept as quiet as it used to be, it used to be you would no more talk on the grotto grounds than fly. Now I mean they are going through the Blessed Sacrament square and they are smoking away at their cigarettes and dropping them and what have you, and there is a lot of noise that you get during the day that you don't get at night. Or first thing in the morning like on your way down to the hospital you can pop down there to the grotto and just have a wee quick hello for the day" (Patricia, 93).

Canniford and Shankar (2013) found that surfing consumers often employed "purification practices", such as masking or purging, to help deal with the contradictions and social tensions brought about by consumption resources which they felt were creating "betrayals" to the consumer's romantic experiences of nature. However, the data presented so far has demonstrated that the consumption side of Lourdes is not in fact the element creating the malevolent "darker side of Lourdes". At Lourdes consumers, not consumption, create the structures, hierarchies, tensions, and "the pushing and pulling". Patricia illustrated that it is the consumers themselves who are smoking cigarettes, making noise, and dropping litter in the Sanctuary grounds, leading her to believe that the Sanctuary, and in particular its focal point - the grotto - is

"not kept as quiet as it used to be". However, it can be also seen in the informants' comments that Lourdes consumers often implement a separation "masking practice" (Canniford and Shankar, 2013, 1065). Consequently, this study supports the findings by Canniford and Shankar (2013) on masking practices - short-term, temporary solutions enabling consumers to "hide contradictions" within particular settings. Canniford and Shankar (2013, 1065) offered two types of these: experiential and ideological. The former refers to an "intense focus of attention" on the focal aspects of an experience whilst the latter refers to the silencing or removal of particular contradictions. For example, as will be discussed more fully later in this thesis, many informants separated the Sacred Sanctuary and the secular marketplace at Lourdes through a clear ideological masking practice. However, the separation of the times and moments presented so far, e.g. by Patricia and her early morning or late evening visits to the grotto, are clear signs of experiential masking practices, enabling consumers to temporarily silence the malevolent, noisy, tension-filled components of the Lourdes experience and permitting them to intensely focus upon their own relationship with Our Lady of Lourdes and, in turn, with God.

The consumers of this study may seem to be contradicting their own viewpoints as they claim that communitas remains prevalent and important in the Lourdes experience today, yet simultaneously seek their time and place, their own moments in the experience, demonstrating the individual characteristic found in the work of Tumbat and Belk (2011). However, it must be remembered that, as discussed in chapter three, pilgrimage was always aligned with normative, not spontaneous, communitas (Turner,

1969; Turner and Turner, 1978). Thus liminally was positioned between full, existential communitas and structure, and furthermore for Turner (1969), the communitas found in pilgrimage sites was always in one in dialogue with structure. For although Turner (1969) believed communitas to be "the subversion of people from their normal duties and rights" (1982, 45) during which they enter into an "unmediated relationship between historical, idiosyncratic, concrete individuals" equally he did not believe it to be a state leading people into full communion with one another.

Gurvitch's (1941, 487) idea of communion was "when minds open out as widely as possible and the least accessible depths of the 'I' are integrated in this fusion (which presupposes states of collective ecstasy)". However, for Turner (1982, 45) communitas does not merge identities but, rather, is a state during which the "preservation of "individual distinctiveness" is maintained" (1982, 45). Following this viewpoint, Reader (1993, 14) cautioned that when investigating pilgrimage, a failure to view both the individual and the communal units of a pilgrimage system risks misunderstanding the "broader social meanings and processes". This study avoids such weakness, finding that the communal moments are crucial in creating the sense of togetherness and state of communitas (Turner, 1969). However, equally crucial are the self-moments during which the darker elements of Lourdes are purified through separation, and thus the Sacredness of the pilgrimage site is maintained (Belk et al., 1989).

As such, investigation of the consumption of a religious pilgrimage experience through a consumer research lens confirms that normative communitas remains a crucial theme drawing consumers annually to the site. Therefore, this study supports Turner and Turner (1978) and their alignment of normative communitas with religious pilgrimage sites. Consequently, it disagrees with Tumbat and Belk (2011, 43) and their stated belief that consumer research has adapted Turner's anti-structural work to frame "extraordinary consumption activities as rather romantic and predominantly communal enterprises". They continue their argument by implying that "the structure-anti-structure dialectic that has shaped consumer behavior scholars' understanding of extraordinary experiences is problematic" in their context of Everest. However, I argue instead that to date within consumer research there has been no structure-anti-structure dialectic. It has failed to discuss a) the different communitas types and b) the continuous cycle - the existence of a continuous interchange between both structure and anti-structure - after all, for Turner, communitas "can only be grasped in some relation to structure" (1969, 127). Consequently, this thesis has begun to look more specifically at this dialectic, and through this focus has found a "subtler form" (Reader, 1993) of communitas, which will be discussed more fully in Christine's narrative.

5.3 Communitas Continuas: Christine's Story

For Christine (63), as with so many people spoken with over the last three years, Lourdes is an integral part of her life, touching her intermittently throughout the entire year. During our times together, Christine often spoke of her voluntary role as a hospital

visitor in Scotland. Christine shared with me the narrative of a particularly touching and poignant acquaintance she had established through her voluntary role, with Sarah. Sarah was on dialysis for kidney failure and upon hearing that Christine was going to Lourdes, shared her very own touching Lourdes story and asked a "big favour" of Christine upon her next visit to the Sanctuary.

Sarah explained that she had a daughter who had a medical condition making it impossible for her to grow, and that sadly she had died when she was only thirty years old. However, she recalled taking her daughter to Lourdes and having such a "wonderful time", as for the first time ever her daughter was "accepted" and "free". She shared her and her daughter's, affinity with St. Theresa of Liseux with Christine. Christine explained the Catholic tradition to send or gift St. Theresa a yellow rose or roses either in thanksgiving or as a form of "economic salvation" (McDannell, 1995). During Sarah and her daughter's time in Lourdes they conducted a very personal sacred-family ritual in which they each threw a yellow rose into the River Gave, which runs through the Sanctuary, to honour Saint Theresa of Liseux. She recalled this as a very "happy", "powerful" and "emotional" shared moment, and asked Christine if she could on her behalf conduct the same ritual in honour of the saint, but also to honour her "precious little girl". Christine described how "touched" and "privileged" she felt to be asked this, and recalled the moment she and the other Scottish Ladies threw the roses in the water for both Sarah and her daughter as "a particularly powerful and memorable time".

Belk (2010, 728) mentions that "like sharing generally, the state of liquidity means that selves flow together. When this happens we symbolically become one so that, at least for a moment, the former me and you, as well as mine and yours, become us and ours". Thus, in conducting the above ritual, Christine and the Scottish Ladies enter into a temporal state whereby they "flow together" with the recipient of the favour, her daughter, and also with the deity for whom the ritual was initially conducted. Water is one of the five signs of Lourdes alongside the light, the rock, the crowds and the sick[17]. As such, it is no surprise that many of the interactions between the primary consumers of the experience and those at home involve water.

This replication of such a special ritual was an exceptional finding; however, the sentiment of doing something for those unable to come to Lourdes (lighting candles, posting petitions, saying prayers, having a Mass said, having a bath (again water) and even for one pilgrim making the pilgrimage on behalf of another) resonated across everyone encountered over the three-year ethnography.

> "…People seem to like it, for you to light a candle there because for many I think they feel that they cannot physically get there, but like to be associated with what happens, and just simply lighting a candle does that" (Paul, 63).

---

[17] The five signs of Lourdes are; the water that flows at the grotto and is highly consumed at Lourdes, the crowds (pilgrims) that gather there annually, the sick who come annually in search of healing, the light is the 700 tonnes of candles burned annually, and the rock refers to the rockery of the grotto upon which Our Lady appeared.

"I personally don't write out any petitions, lots of people give me petitions from home, from the parish they will say "will you take them with you, and I do, and they will give me donations for candles and Masses or whatever and I will take all that with me as well. But personally I don't put in a written request, I tell Our Lady what I want [laughs lightly]" (Patricia, 93).

"I put them in every year, but not for myself - for other people, because I feel that I am there; I don't need to write the petitions, I am doing them verbally myself. Somebody came and said to me, "oh that is terrible, you should be putting them in". I could not see why, I could not see the logic to that, but yes every year I get them from other people to put in" (Veronica, 60).

The preceding interview excerpts describe the tradition of taking petitions or lighting candles on behalf of people unable to journey to Lourdes themselves. I have done so a multitude of times, as I have been asked to light candles and post petitions for friends, family, colleagues, and informants throughout the three years. Equally I was involved in the reverse process - having others post petitions or light candles for my own intentions, particularly when trying times were facing my family, my friends, or I. As this behaviour is ingrained within Catholicism, I initially overlooked it. However, as I became more immersed in the data I realised the profound symbolism behind the action of physically taking the written petitions, donations for candles, or sentiments, and consequently the worries, thoughts, and illnesses of others, to Lourdes. As brothers

Jacob and Garry demonstrated, such intermediary giving to deity and outpouring of trust and faith is touching:

"This year when we went at Easter, the school I'm in, because I was taking one of the wee boys from my class as well, all the people in the school were really interested and a lot of parents were interested. And the head-teacher sent out a wee note saying "if anybody would like a petition taken over and put into the grotto, then hand it into school and Mr. McCauly and the little boy will take it over", kind of thing. So, when we were going we had hundreds and hundreds… Parents from the school were coming in and were like, "this is from his grannie and this is from the woman next door, and this old lady up the road" and so in the end up we went with pages and pages, but it was on wee scraps of paper, ripped out the newspaper with something written on it, just hundreds and from people who didn't even believe or weren't necessarily of our religion or our belief. But, just writing wee things like "can you pray for this yin [one], pray for that yin [one]". It was amazing I couldn't believe the response, so it ended up we had three or four big A4 envelopes, and, I mean, each of them was filled up by six or seven inches full of petitions, it was unbelievable, we must have put in, honestly, hundreds" (Jacob, 26).

"…This year, because I'm in the secondary school, I just sent out an email saying, "listen, going to Lourdes if anybody wants any petitions handed in, post them in my pigeon box", and every day, I was getting floods and floods of folk posting things in. And you're talking about, again like Jacob said, some people were putting them

231

on prayer cards or you know bigger envelopes with them all sealed, other people were just writing them on scraps of paper and handing them to me in the corridor*, and saying "stick that in for me, will you?"" (Garry, 25).

The response to the call for petitions and candles "amazed" the brothers, and the posting of "hundreds" and "floods" of petitions for others at Lourdes signifies a subtler process of communitas. For Jacob and Garry in tangibly taking the sentiments from people at home to Lourdes (via petitions, donations for candles), not only did they experience Lourdes themselves but they also enabled a core part of the experience - emotional unburdening – to be open to, and shared with, those at home. As such, the primary consumer, like Jacob and Garry, of the Lourdes experience become a sacred vessel (Higgins and Hamilton, 2012), enabling communication between the sender and the recipient – Our Lady of Lourdes. Consequently, returning to Belk (2010, 728), although not all of the actions involve the sign of water, they all represent a "flowing together" in that the primary consumer becomes connected with those individuals at home, who in turn become secondary consumers of the Lourdes experience.

This idea brings to the forefront a new finding on communitas, for despite such intermediary behaviours being intrinsic to the Lourdes experience since the birth of the pilgrimage site, academics researching Lourdes and pilgrimage over the years (Turner and Turner, 1978; Marnham, 1982; McDannell, 1995; Lauretin, 1994; 1999) have never spoken of the deep and symbolic meaning behind such rituals. The importance of such actions was underlined by informants in their shared feeling of "privilege" at having

been asked to, and trusted to, undertake such actions pertaining to the personal relationship between the secondary consumer and deity. Chapter four of this thesis offered a consumer typology of Lourdes (Table 5) including all types of primary consumer to Lourdes; however, the emergent findings from this study illuminate that not only is Lourdes consumed by primary consumers, but also by a plethora of secondary ones, and a subtler form of communitas is equally available to them.

In discussing communitas, Reader (1993) believed that critics were incorrect to have condemned the Turnerian idea, and that scholars viewing communitas as a fallacy or mere romanticism were mistaken. Rather, Reader (1993, 242) believed that "future debates" on communitas demanded attention and called for scholars to focus upon its "subtler forms", proposing that communitas could potentially be "located more on the individual level than on the group and community levels". Thus, using Christine's story as an exemplar, the moment at which the Scottish Ladies cast the flower into the water, the boundaries separating Lourdes from Sarah's homeland of Scotland and likewise the boundary between Sarah, the primary consumers - Christine and the Four Scottish Ladies - and deity is broken down. As such, this simple ritual of casting a flower into water enables a flowing across geographical and earthly planes to take place, enabling a secondary consumer to gain the somewhat "subtler" form of the communitas often experienced at Lourdes. However twenty years after Reader's (1993) call for new research to look at subtler forms of communitas, no research has appeared in any discipline until now. Consequently, this thesis offers insight through its introduction of a subtler form of communitas entitled; "communitas continuas", thereby offering a new

contribution not only to consumer research but also to theological, sociological and anthropological dialectics on structure and anti-structure.

In developing communitas, Turner (1968, 96) indicated his preference for the "Latin term "communitas" over "community", to distinguish this modality of social relationship from an "an area of common living"". Thus, in line with Turnerian thinking, this study adopts the Latin term "continuas" stemming from "contineo", meaning "to hold together". 'Continuas' carries notions of continuation and extension, thus illuminating the idea that this "subtler" form enables the communitas state to be engaged in outwith the geographical region of Lourdes. Consequently, "communitas continuas" refers to *a temporal and subtler communitas state traversing social, geographical and earthly structures temporarily holding together individuals both within and outwith the experiential setting.* It must be mentioned however that 'communitas continuas', being a subtler form of communitas, does not recreate or reproduce the first-hand Lourdes experience for the secondary consumer. Neither is it creating "pure communion" or a merging of identities, for in being a subtler form of communitas it is more individualistic in nature. Table 2, above, offered a typology of communitas types, one type being ideological communitas - the attempt to spread the temporal communitas state into society forever – which, given the temporal nature of communitas, is believed to be impossible. This contribution of a subtler form of communitas continuas, however, presents a means by which such attempts of spreading a more permanent form of communitas can be conducted, with the communitas state no longer confined merely to the experiential setting.

As discussed so far, the communitas form is found not through the taking of things back, such as souvenirs, but rather, through the taking of something to the context itself, and not necessarily for the primary consumer, but at times for other secondary consumers. This ritual of taking things to pilgrimage sites is not unique to Lourdes or Catholicism, as outlined by Paul: "The Wailing Wall is absolutely stuffed with bits of paper and that is the Jewish way of doing it at the Wailing Wall, so it is not just uniquely Catholic" (Paul, 63). However, the lack of research into the taking of items with oneself on behalf of the self and/or others has yet to be explored across any discipline, and so further probing of this idea will be extremely relevant to consumer research and tourism in particular in relation to the idea of gift-giving. Recently within consumer research, Moufahim (2013) has explored the meaning of gifts and gift-giving from a religious pilgrimage context, discussing her idea of the "soteriological gift" (Moufahim, 2013, 13). Moufahim (2013, 14) explained a soteriological gift as "an important and original form of spiritual gift, offered to loved ones, both living and the departed". Consequently, these gifts are completely for others; they are not self-interested, and as such are aligned most closely with the "pure gift" (Belk and Coon, 1993) due to the gifts' "pricelessness", "unconstraint (by time and place)" and "immateriality". The aforementioned petitions, candles and most particularly prayers for others at Lourdes resonate with the soteriological gift; however, Moufahim (2013) investigated Islamic pilgrimage, with findings indicating that such gifts were gifted most often to family members. At Lourdes, by comparison, it has been demonstrated that prayers, petitions, candles are not only for family but also for friends, colleagues, acquaintances and sometimes even strangers. However, this thesis has found that a human intermediary was not the only means of engaging with this subtler form of

communitas, with technology found to aid secondary consumers in the further dissemination of communitas continuas, leading onto Fr. Brendan's narrative.

5.4 Technology and 'Communitas Continuas': Fr. Brendan's Story

Seventy-three year old Fr. Brendan has been the Head of English Chaplaincy since 2009, a role that oversees all matters pertaining to the running of English chaplaincy at Lourdes. Fr. Brendan claims it sounds "very glamorous, but in truth I am a Lourdes trolley-dolly". One of the essential aspects of his role at Lourdes is answering queries from English speaking pilgrims, a demanding task given the high quantity of emails, letters, phone-calls he receives daily. He shared that approximately half of these inquiries are generic, information seeking, and at times ridiculous; for example, he received an email inquiring "how do I get from India to Lourdes, to which I replied, Google it".

Others, though, are more than inquiries - they are desperate pleas, petitions from those unable to come to Lourdes. He spoke emotionally about a recent email and situation he was dealing with, where a woman from the Far East was desperately seeking his prayers before the grotto and his advice on how to deal with her abusive husband. He related that the woman had shared her belief that her husband was "with someone else and that she desperately wanted to save her marriage but did not know what to do". He continued that for this woman, the pain is "internal", it is not an open sickness or illness, but an "internal anxiety and fear", explaining that his taking her inner fears and

236

anxieties before the grotto "is helping her with her life". Fr. Brendan believes that he must answer these emails and queries, and for him, part of the magic of technological advancement is that it enables "Lourdes to become more accessible to the world".

In their 1989 work, Belk Wallendorf and Sherry claimed that contemporary religions' use of technology demonstrated "secularization through the broadcast of sacred rituals into what may be profane spaces or times… That by becoming more linked to the secular, religion may have undermined its own sacredness, opening the way for other foci of sacredness. That is as religion provides less of an extraordinary experience, people look elsewhere for experiences that transcend everyday life" (1989, 8). However, Belk (2013, 18) recently posited that "we need to consider not only how the digital world helps us extend our sense of self but also what type of self and relationships it helps us extend". Data gathered from this ethnographic study has shown signs that the digital and technological world is often a friend, not a foe, in the consumption of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience. As outlined by Fr. Brendan above, the state of communitas was continued geographically to those outwith Lourdes via the internet, enabling secondary consumers to at least partially access an emotional unburdening and the chance to feel "part of something bigger than the self". Consequently, this permits the religious and emotionally burdened components of the self to be shared, and likewise the relationship with deity and with the entire family of Catholicism to be entered into, all via technology. Thus, technological advancement and usage is not seen as a threat to, or a secularisation of, the religious Sanctuary of

Lourdes. Neither has the usage of technology made Lourdes a less extraordinary experience; rather, the Sanctuary has embraced the technological and digital world:

"The communications, and the last bishop was very good in that, the whole television, Lourdes can be watched and it is watched by about 156 countries through Lourdes TV. Some of them only a minute, they will go into the grotto, and you can place a petition at the grotto, like what happens is you send in a petition that is copied onto something and they are all put onto – I don't know if it is weekly or what – but they are all put onto a CD or a DVD and there is a box down below [referring to the petition box in the grotto] so they are placed in the grotto – and it is done over there in the studios. You can get a candle placed in the grotto through the internet; I mean, you can see the Masses through the YouTube videos I have done and through Lourdes TV. It is all very good, the whole press thing that is set up" (Fr. Brendan, 73).

Until now, this thesis has shown that secondary consumers can sometimes gain 'communitas continuas' through an intermediary primary consumer, and further, the above narrative from Fr. Brendan has illustrated that although an intermediary is still at work, technology has enabled the subtler form of 'communitas continuas' often gained at Lourdes to be ever more globally accessible. This newly introduced, subtler form of communitas is thereby shown "to be located "more on the individual level than on the group and community levels" (Reader, 1993, 242). Secondary consumers can individually experience Lourdes via television, and can place petitions or have candles

lit at Lourdes, all without having to a) go to the site directly or b) have an acquaintance to take the petitions or light the candles, further breaking down geographical boundaries which might otherwise render the rituals of petitions and candles at Lourdes inaccessible. A further example of this subtler form of communitas is demonstrated by Phillip, as he shares his story of a sick pilgrim and friend who often experiences Lourdes throughout the year via the Internet and Lourdes TV:

"I think it brings to other people, like I said to you about a friend who did travel as a pilgrim, and now health-wise is not so good, and so she will tell me both what is happening in the Domain and what is happening on their Facebook and all sorts of things… So I think that for some it is really good" (Phillip, 61).

As chapter three discussed, pilgrimage theory usually asserts that pilgrimages have "movement" at their core (Morinis, 1992, 15). However, this contribution of 'communitas continuas', coupled with the recent invention and growth of virtual pilgrimages via electronic and digital means raise the question of what future pilgrimages might be like, especially in light of such technological evolvement? Early pilgrimage sites such as Glastonbury in England and St. Brigid's Well in Ireland are renowned for having undergone a "transmutation" (Morinis, 1992, 104) from being sites of polytheism to monotheism; as such, the present findings raise the possibility of technological "transmutations" occurring within pilgrimage, and if so, ask: will tangible movement remain important to pilgrimage? These questions are clearly outwith the

scope of this study; however, what can be posited is that at present in Lourdes, the digital world helps consumers, in particular secondary consumers, who are not able to personally consume the Lourdes experience, extending their relationship with the Sanctuary and in turn entering them into a state of 'communitas continuas'.

Returning now to the soteriological gift offered by Moufahim (2013), some clear similarities and differences are to be found in the petitions, prayers and candles of Lourdes. One other major difference is that the soteriological gift (Moufahim, 2013) has no monetary alignment, with payment made entirely through prayers, not money. At Lourdes, however, money is exchanged for candles lit, petitions posted, and access to the Sanctuary, so in many ways actions that create the above-discussed 'communitas continuas' are economically consumed.

5.5 Consuming Communitas

Catholics are taught that money is profane and Church is Sacred, and consequently desire to consume Sacred places, churches, basilicas, cathedrals, the Vatican, and Lourdes as a means of drawing closer to the Sacred and moving further away from profanity. But, to consume such places often needs money, a problem which necessitates engagement with the profane. The informants of this study cannot consume the Sacred Sanctuary of Lourdes without paying for a flight, a hotel, food, drink, and souvenirs; thus, money is generally exchanged at the peripheral areas of Lourdes and prior to the experience. However, the Sanctuary is a "veritable city within a city"

(Fargues, 2011), playing host to the sick, to volunteers, and equally employing thousands annually. It is therefore a "machine that needs to keep ticking, 365 days a year, 24/7" (Fr. Brendan), and Lourdes like The Vatican, is not merely a sacred Sanctuary but a business that needs money to pay for this catering to the sick, for its pilgrims, and its employees. Thus, Lourdes is ironically a place where pilgrims continuously separate the Sacred and secular and is simultaneously Sacred and secular: a Sacred Sanctuary offering its pilgrims the chance to draw closer to God, but also a secular institution that must engage with profane money to offer the Sacredness to its pilgrims.

McDannell (1995, 6), however, cautions that "if we immediately assume that whenever money is exchanged religion is debased, then we will miss the subtle ways that people create and maintain spiritual ideas through the exchange of goods". Given that no entrance fee is charged at Lourdes, anyone can enter, regardless of their means, age, race, creed, or situation in life - hence the site's strong and continued presence of normative communitas. The annual running of the Sanctuary comes through the 700 tonnes of candles that are lit annually, the "floods" of petitions posted annually and the kind generosity of "donations" and "offerings" given for the ritual of lighting and posting said candles and petitions and coming to Lourdes.

Belk et al. (1989, 32) discussed the idea of removal from the "economic orbit", which refers to "the processes used by consumers to remove an object or experience from a

principally economic orbit and insert it into a personal pantheon, so that the object or experience becomes so highly infused with significance that it becomes a transcendental vehicle". Thus, Lourdes has an "economic orbit" (Belk et al., 1989, 32) but consequently also maintains the Sacredness of the Sanctuary (Belk et al., 1989) through the all important word "offrandes" (offerings, donations). Importantly, an offering, gift, or donation is exchanged rather than a set price being charged, thus removing such monetary exchanges from the economic and commercial economy to the "economy of salvation" (McDannell, 1995). Such terminological loopholes, which maintain sacredness, are, again, not unique to Catholicism. Moufahim (2013, 11) demonstrated that the selling of the Qur'an was "removed from the realm of merchant transactions"; consequently, money for the Sacred text was offered as a gift alongside a "formulaic blessing" to the vendor. As such, for both primary or secondary consumers of Lourdes, engagement with the Sacred, and the engagement with, and gaining of, the normative communitas or communitas continuas state comes through monetary exchange, but a monetary exchange in a form that would entertain the angels of Iacobucci (2001) in that it focuses upon salvationism, not capitalism. Such exchange nonetheless places either the primary or the secondary consumer in a liminal position between community and individual, pilgrimage and homeland, the heavenly and earthly, a situation leading this findings section onto its second theme – liminality.

CHAPTER VI: LIMINALITY

6.0 Feeling Liminal in Everyday Life: Kelly's Story

As someone who is musically gifted, Kelly (35) always finds herself "being actively involved" in playing music for her church. When I met her she was the leader of the Archdiocese of Glasgow pilgrimage music group. Her active involvement with her faith, however, has over the years led to her realisation in the existence of a Catholic "caricature" shared not only by those not aligned with Catholicism, but also amongst fellow Catholics. Kelly shared that having played for years "in a music group in my church, people just assume you are dead holy, you have a tremendous faith, you pray all the time - it is almost like this "bible basher" label that people would put on you. I don't mean that people are being condescending, it is just that they assume that about you and that you subscribe to everything that goes along with it". She continued that such caricatures are also placed upon people involved with Lourdes.

> "…I think a lot of people who are maybe not that involved in their faith, or people who are not Catholic, don't have an idea of what Lourdes is. They know it is a holy place, and they probably think of it as a holy place where a lot of sick people go. I think that is maybe what they imagine and I think even people that are involved in their faith and hear of people going to Lourdes think of it as only holy people go - only dead holy folk go to Lourdes. You know, if I am talking about it at my work I sometimes sense from people, and you get this when you are involved in anything

to do with the church, people who think that is a mark of how holy you are, if that makes sense?" (Kelly, 35).

Kelly feels that this caricature is misrepresentative of consumers of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience and continues to strengthen the previously discussed idea of the "indescribable" quality of Lourdes, explaining "that is why I think it is difficult to describe to somebody what it is like unless they are there, because you know what it is like - it is (a) party atmosphere a lot of the time, you know it is like Ibiza in some situations". Kelly believes that many of the volunteers go to Lourdes for spiritual reasons, but equally for the "sense of community, the sense of service or the sense of something else" continuing that the assumptions, and caricatures of the Lourdes consumer as "dead holy" are often untrue, especially for Kelly who concludes that "it is certainly not all true for me".

Kelly touches upon a shared belief held by informants that many people assume that going on pilgrimage or going to Lourdes is a "mark" of religiosity. Accordingly, many informants differentiated and separated themselves from the "very pious" or the "dead holy". This separation between the more "devout" and "pious" can be understood better when related back to the wider consumer scripts in which informants recalled, upon mentioning they were going to Lourdes, that people often assumed they were part of "The God Squad", or "Crazy Catholics". Thus, the religious nature of Lourdes instinctively creates assumptions of what the experience should and would be like, even

amongst fellow Catholics. I, the researcher , a fellow Catholic, fell into this "assumption" trap, as I recalled in my field-notes surprise at *"how much fun the large pilgrimage groups have"* (Day 12 of June/July 2011 fieldtrip), with the notes filled with comparisons between Lourdes and traditional hen-party, and clubbing holiday spots such as Blackpool, Benidorm and Ibiza. However, as field-work continued and I became more immersed in the data, I was reminded of an informant from a previous study I had conducted who mentioned that Catholics have the capacity to "party hard and pray hard" (Fr. Campbell, as cited in Higgins, 2010), an idea echoed by many Lourdes youth volunteer informants, who follow the mantra of "work hard, play hard".

Turner (1969, 95) defines liminal entities to be "neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention and ceremony". Earlier, the literature review discussed that Catholicism has been heavily influenced by Platonic thinking, and in particular, in discussing the pilgrimage of life, the separations between the City of Man and the City of God introduced by Augustine of Hippo. It was demonstrated that Augustine never intended the separation between the City of God and the City of Man to mean Church and State; rather, he meant the division between the heavenly and earthly realm. Thus, in following and adhering to the logics of both Plato and Augustine of Hippo, Catholics find themselves continuous pilgrims, continuously liminal, living life as a layover prior to, and helping them gain entrance to, the heavenly realm. Consequently, Catholics are placed continuously "betwixt and between" the spiritual and heavenly laws. In discussing liminality, this thesis has found that not only were the sick, the old, the poor, the mentally ill, and those

generally deemed as liminal in everyday society catered to at Lourdes; rather, all Catholic informants resonated the idea of feeling liminal in their everyday lives, with Lourdes helping them to cope with this state of being. This consistent feeling of liminality in everyday life, however, was not necessarily due to their indoctrination with the aforementioned Platonic and Augustinian logics, but instead to the stigma they felt at times in light of being Catholic.

Within Scotland, the setting for this thesis, the feeling towards Catholicism is often said to be bleak, with many believing Catholics a marginalised group in Scotland. For example, a Herald newspaper article from the 2nd of June 2013 posited that "anti-Catholicism is demonstrably present in Scotland" and that "religious hate crimes against Catholics are more numerous than hate crimes against all other religions" (Kearney, 2013). The article illuminated a negative Scottish perspective of Catholicism, with an opinion poll from 2011 finding 68% of Scots to have an "unfavourable opinion" towards Catholicism, whilst 51% of Scots did not view the Catholic Church as "being a force for good" (Kearney, 2013). Consequently, with this cultural setting as a backdrop, many of the Catholic consumers consulted in this study, although never directly describing themselves as marginalised, pointed throughout their interviews towards feelings of marginalization and stigma. Accordingly, it became apparent that their consumption of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience was a means of temporarily escaping the marginalization, judgement, and censure sometimes experienced due to their Catholic belief. Many informants explained that consuming the Lourdes pilgrimage experience allowed them the temporal opportunity to spend time in a "secure

group" and to practice their faith with "like-minded people" - people with a "common purpose".

"I feel like I'm allowed to be a Catholic there as well. Because I went to a Catholic school, and even in Catholic school, I would get picked on for going to Mass. I feel like everybody in Lourdes is there to be with God, and I just feel more free to do that…Whereas sometimes, I mean, it would never stop me practising my faith but sometimes I feel at home that you're not really free to do that, whereas in Lourdes everybody is there for that reason…I feel like in this day and age it's okay to persecute against Catholics but it's not okay to persecute against any other religion. That's just my personal opinion, I don't feel like everyone is out to get us and all that, but I just feel like there's a general assumption that it's a bit weird to be a Catholic… Because everybody is, I mean not everybody is Catholic in Lourdes, don't get me wrong, there are a lot of people that aren't spiritual at all, they're just there to help or for help, but the majority of people are Catholic, and those that aren't they are obviously a lot more accepting than people back home " (Lisa, 19).

Lisa therefore finds that Lourdes allows her the freedom to be Catholic without fear of being judged "weird". The feeling of others perceiving being Catholic and practicing Catholicism as "weird" was echoed by many informants, in particular younger ones, as illustrated by Danielle below:

"…Quite often a kind of modern perspective on being religious is to do with, it is almost kind of portrayed as being a compromise, like if you want to be a Catholic or something, well you cannot do this and you are not going to be able to say that or do that. It is viewed as something that is almost like detracting from your experience and I think that would be very easy to believe if that was all you're kind of exposed to. But going to Lourdes, where you are with lots and lots of young people, just to be around people who were all very much the same… and they wanted their faith, they wanted to have a good time and they were able to make it work having the two. I just thought that was really important, because I just see it everywhere that people are talking about being a Catholic as if it is sort of detracting from being able to do what you want. As if you are really missing out on something amazing by having a faith. I am like, well of course we are not because of the amount of fun we had, like how could that ever be inferior to anything else that people are doing" (Danielle, 18).

Earlier, the idea that many people unfamiliar with Lourdes from both Catholic and non-Catholic backgrounds perceive the experience to be one that would be sombre, with no level of fun attached was discussed. This was also the expectation held by many informants from this study ahead of going to Lourdes, as outlined earlier by their surprise at the "laughter" of the place in reality. Danielle illustrates that this sombre stereotype extends beyond the pilgrimage setting, affecting the perception of what Catholicism is like – that being Catholic in some way "detracts" from your life, is a "compromise" where faith and fun cannot be combined. However, earlier studies have

shown Catholics to be more fun and socially orientated than other religious groups, such as Jews and Protestants (Hirschman, 1982). Consequently it can be found that Lourdes has helped Danielle to work through this prevalent stereotype, enabling her to realise that she is not "really missing out on something amazing by having a faith". Danielle demonstrates that this stereotype is a "modern perspective" regarding religion, pointing to a shared belief from many informants that in 21st century society there is an "unacceptability" attached to discussing religion and faith in the public sphere. During Christendom, religion publically touched all aspects of life, however with Christendom's decline, religion and faith have been sent into the private sphere, with previously private aspects of life, such as sexuality, brought to the fore. This change was illustrated by Sr. Anne below:

"…When we are going about our daily lives, we are studying, we are working, we are doing whatever, you don't stop particularly, in the usual run of things you don't stop and think about what you are doing with your life. You don't look at the bigger picture, you don't ask the harder questions, nor are you often in an environment where you can talk about the things of God. We can talk about everything under the sun; and you are on the bus and you are hearing people talk about very inappropriate things to do with their sex life or whatever, but when it comes to the things of God and spiritual life we just clam up. It is as if we don't have the vocabulary to talk about it and then you go to Lourdes and there is acceptability about it. We may not be able to articulate it very well but there is a feeling of wanting to, and a sense that it is okay to talk about these things, these kinds of

religious experiences we have, that we would never mention here in Scotland, but you do in Lourdes. We are particularly bad for it because in the UK we are far too sophisticated to talk about God and the spiritual experiences we have; you can imagine the faces - they would just look and go "you are a weirdo, you know, the Crazy Catholic, I think we will just pigeon hole her right there because she is a psycho" - the Crazy Catholic thing" (Sr. Anne, 37).

The above comments resonate with the "caricature" shared earlier by Kelly, and equally illuminate the feeling of stigma that many informants have experienced due to practicing their faith. The Voice Group (2010, 386) discussed the difference between motherhood as an "institution" and motherhood as an "experience, with the former referring to "society's expectations of mothers" and the latter referring to "what mothers actually experience". A similar differentiation is identified in this study, as an institutional perception of how society views Catholicism, which differs from how Catholics experience their faith. In the opening story in chapter five, informant Yasmina equally demonstrated such differentiation, viewing Lourdes and Catholics through the negatives and history of the institutional Catholic Church. However, upon experiencing Lourdes, her opinion was changed: "I can appreciate what Catholicism today, especially Lourdes can give to people". Sr. Anne further discusses the institutional Catholic perception by explaining that often, people who practice Catholicism are "pigeon-holed" by society as "crazy" or "psycho", resonating with the stereotyped perceptions of practicing Catholics as "Bible Bashers" (Kelly) or "part of the God Squad" (Paul). Therefore, it became apparent that for many of the consumers in this study, their

pilgrimage to Lourdes enabled them a time and place where they were free to be Catholic without the aforementioned societal assumptions and stereotypes. Equally, at times it was found that informants felt Lourdes helped them to communicate a better and more representative image of Catholicism.

> "…I think it gives a different vision of Catholicism. That it is not insular, that we don't live in wee ghettos, that we do things in a totally different way now, much more ecumenical…Socially it is good - you meet different people, you always feel, very, very safe and secure there, because so many people are quite like-minded so you can say things, you can do things, just to talk as well about what is happening in the church and different issues and that type of thing in what is a safe environment. You know you are not going to get shot down in flames by people, because in general terms they will think something similar" (Paul, 63).

This sense of freedom to discuss religion, faith, spirituality and Catholicism echoed across all the informants, with everyone mentioning the idea of experiencing "safety" and "security" whilst at Lourdes in such discussions. However, it was also found that, particularly for young informants, the experience and connections made at Lourdes helped in dealing with the "crazy Catholic", "bible basher" stereotype upon return home, as outlined by youth Danielle:

"A couple of my other friends who really are not religious at all, they were a bit dismissive of me going there: "why are you doing that with your summer, like why are you not going to Malia, or something?" And I did not really have an answer for them, I was like "oh I have got asked to go and I want to go". But when I came back, what happened was I went on a night out with these friends and we ended up bumping into lots of people who I had met at Lourdes. And what I felt was that my friends wanted to say to me: "oh I did not realise you went with normal people, like I thought you would be like in a habit[18]". And they totally wanted to say that to me and I knew that they did not want to offend me. But it was important to me, for them to see that, that I actually had a good time with normal people and it was not anything crazy" (Danielle, 18).

Pilgrimage and pilgrims have suffered from negative perceptions throughout history. The pilgrimages of the Middle Ages had penitential overtones as sinners of all types from murderers to thieves to accused witches were sent on pilgrimage for penance. This created and sustained the "caricature" of the pilgrim as someone disagreeable, particularly within certain cultural folklores in which the pilgrim has been awarded a similar status to "gypsies" or "bogeymen" (Reader, 1993, 122). Although not seen as particularly bad or scary groups of people in society today, it seems that this negative pilgrim "caricature" has persisted, but evolved to become a perception whereby a pilgrim is not necessarily a bad person, but a "goodie-goodie" (Paul), a "dead holy

---

[18]Often perceived as the headpiece of a nun or sister, in fact a religious habit refers to any distinctive set of garments worn by members of clergy (male or female) signifying the order to which they belong.

person", or a "crazy" person who goes against the prevailing secular perspective. Thus, to Danielle, it was important for her peers at home to see that the people who consume the Lourdes pilgrimage experience are "normal", just like them, and that Lourdes is not as they had assumed it to be, communicating the real experience of being Catholic and going on pilgrimage to Lourdes, as opposed to the institutional and societal assumption.

Scholars such as Iannaconne (1988) and Kurtz (2012) have viewed the sacrifice and stigma felt by religious followers generally not as costs but, rather, as deliberate choices. These followers are believed to desire "tension with the dominant culture", as a means of creating a "distinctive identity" (2012, 18). Further to this, consumer research that has investigated stigmatization within a religious context (Sandikci and Ger, 2010) has found that particular consumption choices, such as the consumption of the modern "tesettur" fashion in Turkey, register a "virtuous consumption choice". The consumers of this fashion believe their consumption choice will enable them "to live their faith more truly and become a better Muslim" (2010, 30). As such, they seek the stigma attached with the consumption choice - to be differentiated and to differentiate themselves from others within the predominant societal worldview. The consumers in this study, however, do not appear to have the same yearning for separation or differentiation from everyday society. Their consumption of the Lourdes pilgrimage is not about becoming more "virtuous" or "better Catholics"; rather, it is about having a special time and place where they are free to be Catholic in a way in which they cannot at home. This is similar to the Star Trek community (Kozinets, 2001, 72), in permitting consumers a community where those perceived as outcasts in mainstream society could

find a place. This study has uncovered that through consuming the Lourdes pilgrimage experience, informants are able to escape temporarily "stigmatic boundaries" and find a "form of Sanctuary and acceptance" (2001, 72). Such freedom in expressing their Catholic faith enables many informants to experience a restoration of faith and a "recharging of their spiritual batteries", as Rachael's story now illustrates.

6.1 "Recharging Spiritual Batteries": Rachael's Story

Although she has always practiced her faith, seventy-four year old Rachael explains that she has annually visited Lourdes over the last ten years to be "more in contact with God". She admits that although "full of good intentions" to attend Masses and services throughout the week whilst at home in Scotland, she finds it difficult to commit to these. However, at Lourdes she feels that "the opportunities are there and you take them, and I get more out, spiritually speaking, of that week than any other time of the year".

Resonance with Rachael was found across most informants, with a shared belief that "spiritually" speaking, the informants were "better able to concentrate" on God whilst at Lourdes, with many attributing Lourdes with permitting a "recharging of spiritual batteries" (James), a "reconfirmation of faith" (Iris), and "confirming you again closer to God" (Rachael).

"…You get the whole feeling of renewing yourself and it always feels emotionally, spiritually, and sometimes even physically, and I don't mean that there was anything wrong before - just (that) you feel you are walking, you know, buoyed up or whatever, there is definitely the feeling of release from that" (Veronica, 60).

For the informants, these effects continued following their week at Lourdes, with many speaking of feeling their faith "to be at its strongest whilst at Lourdes" (Lilly), to remain "bitten by the Lourdes bug" (Garry) when first home, and in short better able to "concentrate on Mass" and on their faith.

"I always feel... not more compelled to go to Mass, I always go to Mass. But I focus more in Mass when I come back from Lourdes than I do any other time of the year because it does change you and it does kind of give a bit of spiritual uplifting and kind of refocuses you on your faith when you go to Mass, but then it dies off again sometimes [laughs]" (Jacob, 27).

"Oh there is a spiritual need for me to go alright [laughs]… No, I'm not kidding, I do definitely need and I find that I get it at Lourdes – a great peacefulness from Lourdes. I thought the first time I went, "this is the way we should live all the time", but we don't, we come back home and get back into our old bad ways again" (Patricia, 93).

The "spiritual uplifting" gained from the consumption of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience, in turn helps consumers in this study to "refocus" on their faith upon return home. However, most shared this "refocus" to be temporal with consumers after a while returning to their "bad ways". A further temporal takeaway from the Lourdes experience is its instillation of pride and honour in being Catholic, with many informants sharing Lourdes as making them feel "proud to be Catholic' and "happy to be Catholic". These feelings are not surprising given the recent bad press surrounding Catholicism. For the Catholic Church has been hit with many scandals since the beginning of this decade, starting with the child abuse scandals of 2010-2011, and continuing with the sex scandal that rocked the Catholic Church of Scotland in Spring 2013, resulting in the resignation of the highest-ranking Catholic in the UK, Cardinal Keith O'Brien. Consequently, many shared the sentiment of Danielle, that "a lot of the churches own shortcomings are a real struggle for me". In light of these negative occurrences, many informants felt that through their consumption of the Lourdes experience they were better able to deal with both the prevailing viewpoint and stigma that society currently attaches to Catholicism, and, equally, the shortcomings of the Church itself. Consequently, unlike the consumers of Sandicki and Ger (2010) who sought to be "virtuous" and "better Muslims" through their consumption decisions, the Catholic consumers of this study are not seeking to become "better Catholics" or people per se, but more precisely, they are seeking a bolstering of their faith. In consuming Lourdes, many informants feel the experience not only recharges their spiritual batteries and reconfirms them as close to God but also restores their pride and joy at being

Catholic. In short, it restores their faith in their Catholic faith. Furthermore, although many informants agreed that Lourdes had reignited their faith in Catholicism, they also shared that the experience helps them to extinguish their fear of strangers (Bauman, 2000), thus restoring their faith in humanity: as Jacob said, Lourdes "re-invigorates your belief in folk", leading now to Veronica's narrative.

6.2 Reinvigorated Belief in Humankind: Veronica's story

Veronica (60) has consumed Lourdes alongside her husband James eleven times, and each time she goes she sees something "remarkable". However, when asked to discuss her most touching, favourable memory of Lourdes she recounted how one very specific moment reigns above all. Veronica recalls doing the High Stations one year and being mesmerised not by the stations themselves or the ritual of walking round the stations, but by the action of one young, male volunteer.

She told how her niece, Cara, who volunteers with the youth group, had a sick friend who came to Lourdes one year. This young girl was only sixteen and had a terrible stomach illness making her "just skin and bone really", astonishing doctors that she was "still alive". And Veronica recalls how despite her illness, the girl was a "happy, happy wee girl". Her dream was to do the High Stations, however as previously outlined, the High Stations are a particularly laborious ritual, uphill and over rough terrain, so, as Veronica remembered, "there was no way on earth she could have" gone up the High Stations, at least not on her own. However, Veronica continued that she "could not

believe her eyes" when she happened to look down whilst doing the High Stations herself that year:

"And one of the youth boys took her on his back and took her right up and back down the High Stations. He set her down when they stopped at the Station and held her, while she stood, and then he put her back on his back and walked her up…Now I don't know who the boy was, I don't know what his name was or anything, but I could not get away with the fact that he had thought to do that, and actually was able to do it for her" (Veronica, 60).

Although unaware of it, the young volunteer and the sick girl through their shared experience of the High Stations permanently and strongly imprinted upon Veronica's mind: "(you) don't often get the chance to see that side of youths". This sentiment was shared amongst many older informants, with Veronica's husband, James, sharing that Lourdes permits the rare opportunity to "see the youth, who are generally spoken ill of, at their best and you see something of humanity in an accepting way". A point that Kelly and Paul continue:

"I love to watch some of those younger folk and how they work with old people and how they work with children. I never fail to be impressed by them and so many things touch you when you are in Lourdes" (Kelly, 35).

"Favourite memories: probably some of the experiences with the young people and how they react, because you can get quite jaded at times in thinking… I mean, I personally don't think that all young people are bad, but when you listen to and you read the press the only thing that you tend to get are all the negative aspects. And, working in a school, I know that there are a huge amount of good things that go on but probably the only things that are talked about are most of the negatives. With the young children and the young people in Lourdes, the way that they respond… you know, you think at times they don't have much faith or the opportunity to, and it is not the done thing to be seen to be doing things like that; you know, the perception of "I don't want to be one of the God Squad, definitely don't want to be there". And yet when they go there, they can behave in a totally different way and will do things, you know they will help the sick, they will wipe the face of people, there is a goodness to them that comes out, so seeing that in the young people is inspiring" (Paul, 63).

Further to youth being seen in a different light, many informants explained that they felt that their consumption of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience allowed them a rare opportunity to witness humankind at its best. As Kitty shared, when life gets her down she "just thinks of Lourdes and all the good kind of people that are there, and it kind of restores your faith again", resonating with Jacob and his belief in Lourdes having the ability to "re-invigorate your belief in folk".

Often, this research's informants mentioned making or having a "friend in the sick", yet the people spoken with in this study generally volunteered with the Archdiocese of Glasgow, and as such, most of the sick were elderly pilgrims. Nonetheless, age and gender barriers are broken down at Lourdes, as the aged trust youths completely, with deep and lasting friendships often forged across age groups. This might be seen as a strange form of interaction, especially in light of media portrayals of the sick and aged as vulnerable consumers, who should fear youths as they are likely to "prey" on them, not "pray" with them. These broken barriers between ages and genders and the sick and healthy were further illuminated by Sr. Anne:

"Also, age is dissolved because you find very beautiful relationships, meaningful relationships between folk who are 18 with 70 year olds and 80 year olds that don't just last for the week in Lourdes but carry on. And, they are real relationships and based on real-life experience in Lourdes. So, all sorts of things like that are collapsed and just the defences that we put up in our own minds to not let people in and the guards that we put up - they are also meaningless there" (Sr. Anne, 37).

Consumer research has discussed the idea of consumers being cognitively younger than their actual chronological age (Goulding and Shankar, 2004). However, focus has tended to be placed upon the consumption habits of those who would seem unlikely, or not of the correct age bracket, to consume certain experiences: for example, the 30-40 age group consuming rave culture. This study finds once again that chronological age is "inadequate" in helping consumer research to understand "underlying consumer

motivations" (Chua et al., 1990, 880). However, rather than cognitive age, it is found that age barriers completely "dissolve" at Lourdes, with young, old, and middle-aged most times becoming equals. A prime example of this is the contrast in ages of the volunteers consulted throughout this study, with 92-year-old Patricia volunteering and working in Lourdes just as 18 year old Danielle does. Furthermore, through such "dissolution" of age, friendships are often formed between the young and the old, as outlined above by Sr. Anne. This is something of which the researcher has first-hand experience, having formed a strong friendship with the Four Scottish Ladies over the three years - despite over forty years' age difference, we now meet up regularly for coffee and I join them in their annual summertime pilgrimage and picnic to a local Scottish retreat and pilgrimage centre, Schoenstatt.

The breaking down of barriers as discussed above again indicates the strong presence of communitas at Lourdes; however, such trust and friendship between differing peer groups is a rarity in today's world. Bauman (2003. 89) argued that in meeting strangers today, one must exercise "vigilance". Likewise, Croft (2006, 1069) discussed the idea of the "marketization of insecurity", with security and safety becoming commercial industries in light of the rise in home security systems. Combining these points it is no wonder that the world of today is so often feared. However, at Lourdes these insecurities and uncertainties are replaced by trust, as there, humankind is not perceived, as they often are by the media, at their lowliest but, rather, at their greatest, and this re-invigoration in people's faith in humanity helps the consumers to temporarily shed

insecurity and uncertainty and feel completely "secure", "safe" and "at home" in Lourdes, leading now to Lisa's narrative.

6.3 Moving out from Liminality: home away from home: Lisa's Story

Throughout her early teenage years, Lisa (19) battled with emotional problems and although still today she remains "very, very closed off", she admits she is better able to deal with her emotions as a young adult. She declares that Lourdes is central to her dealing with her emotional issues, sharing that "I'm better able to deal with things whilst I am there, and it's easier to deal with things when I am first back".

"When I go to Lourdes, I definitely feel like it gives you the tools to deal with things when you come back. I definitely find that when I come back, I mean until further into next year again and I'm like "right, get out my face, I don't want to talk about it". But, definitely for a time when I come back, I'm able to sit and talk to my mum about things and stuff like that. Whereas, Tuesday night there, my mum was trying to talk to me about stuff and I was near enough ready to scream, I was like "why are you doing this, you know I can't do this". Whereas in Lourdes, I know that there's times that I will sit down and have chats with her; that (it) is kind of okay to do that. And then I'll come back and I think "well why can I not do it here?" You know, I will be able to do it a bit more… Lourdes does make it easier to open up about things, and know that it is okay to let some people in sometimes. Like it's not just

you against the world, I've definitely learned that it's not just me on my own" (Lisa, 19).

The attachment felt by Lisa to Lourdes, and the emotional help she has gained from Lourdes are particularly strong. She admits to feeling "safest" and "happiest" whilst at Lourdes, and that in many ways for her, "it was better than home", concluding that "I genuinely feel like at Lourdes I can be myself and that's good enough, whereas back home I definitely don't feel like that at all, that one week out of the fifty-two weeks a year I feel like I can be myself".

Although Lisa's case is more the exception than the norm, many informants echoed the general sentiment of Lisa: that Lourdes was "home-like", "safe" and "secure". Popular descriptors used by informants included "home away with home", "familiar", "comfortable", "homely", and "welcoming". Paul asserts that "There is a homely atmosphere, there is a comfort to it, there is safety and security, not that you don't get that elsewhere but you could do things there [Lourdes] that you couldn't do in the centre of Glasgow". Likewise, Miriam feels "you're only there for a week in the year, so it's a really short thing but you kind of feel that you've never been away. It's just so normal and you just fall right back into it". Sr. Anne mentions that the Lourdes pilgrimage experience offers a "lovely" attribute in that it is a "lovely thing to go to a foreign place and meet people from the same town as you" (Sr. Anne). Patricia succinctly sums up her feelings of familiarity and homeliness at Lourdes by explaining that she goes to Lourdes "just to say hello", as though simply popping in for tea at a relative's, neighbour's or friend's home. These feelings of security, safety, and homeliness at

Lourdes, were not only experienced by regular and frequent consumers, but also by first-time visitor and sceptic Yasmina (27), who described the Sanctuary as a "protective bubble". McCracken (2005, 36) claimed that homely places are places where one can "really be comfortable and not worry about things", continuing that "homeyness helps the individual mediate his or her relationship with the larger world, refusing some of its influences and transforming still others" (2005, 46). Such homeyness is found at Lourdes, with informants sharing that they feel safe, secure and at home, thus "put at ease" whilst at Lourdes.

Croft (2006, 1058) put forth the idea that historical narratives create the family home as a place of refuge and safety, whilst the exterior world remains a place of uncertainty and insecurity. Such a belief was shared by the informants, who echoed common descriptors such as a "bubble", "safe space", "secure place" and "Brigadoon" when describing Lourdes. All of the informants spoke of the secure, and home-like feelings Lourdes generated in them, with descriptions often pointing towards Lourdes being a parallel universe, a place that was of the earth yet simultaneously not, as outlined by James who described Lourdes to be "of the world yet separate from it".

These ideas of the safe and "home away from home" elements of Lourdes elicit ideas of escapism. Initially, I thought that escape was what consumers were seeking; however, the hermeneutic analysis of the data showed escapism to be too simplistic an interpretation. The "homeliness", the "safety", and the "security" all found and desired at Lourdes was "not escape from life, but probably temporary escape from the world"

(James, 63). Thus, Lourdes offers an escape not from the life problems that the individual pilgrim faces, or the difficulties that worry them, but a (temporary) escape from the busy 24/7 world, as succinctly outlined by Phillip (61): "the blackberry stays at home…it is a release, you just switch off". However, as mentioned above, it was not a complete escape from life-world worries and problems, with informants sharing taking their pain, suffering, anguish, etc. with them to Lourdes.

"I don't think it brings an escape, it is not like running from something, it is like running to something. It is another new wonderful world, I am not escaping the world that I am in, I am just entering a totally new one" (Christine, 63).

The words from Christine: "I am not escaping the world I am in", illustrate the taking of life-world problems to Lourdes. The pilgrimage context enables a setting where consumers can temporarily escape the pressures of these life-world problems, gaining the strength they need to better deal with such issues upon return from the experience.

"…It does allow you to escape and there is a sense in which we all need that, we need a bit of a change: we need to physically remove ourselves from whatever is going on in our lives, you know. And, all sorts of people go to Lourdes with all sorts of worries that they do feel that they need a break from and that is okay - but it is always, you know a real pilgrimage is always with a view to coming back and

facing that situation far stronger, refreshed, renewed, that you have grown from that experience" (Sr. Anne, 37).

As previously discussed, faith is a core component drawing consumers to the Lourdes pilgrimage experience as they seek a place where they can, and are free to be and profess openly, their Catholic faith. The release and dealing with other aspects "going on in our lives" (Sr. Anne), such as emotional issues and worries, were also crucial to consuming the Lourdes experience. Many of the youths in particular mentioned that Lourdes helps them for example with their confidence, or with the grief of losing a loved one: in short, it helps in building their sense of self. As Lilly shared, Lourdes helped and continues to help her to grieve for her mum, and enables a place where she can temporarily rekindle time with her mum. Meanwhile, Garry spoke of the transformation and confidence-building his brother Jacob gained from his role as a volunteer at Lourdes:

"It changed you as well (referring to Jacob), because he was a dead quiet guy and like really shy and didn't speak much, and then he came from Lourdes and he was just loud, noisy, and full of confidence. I had noticed him getting more confident, and then I came back from Lourdes and I said to my mum and dad "you won't believe what he is like out there, he is like standing on tables, up playing guitar and singing to like fifty, sixty people in a café and all the kids are seeing this" and my mum and dad were like "aye, no he's not" and I was like "I'm telling you that's

what he does when he is there". So is that a miracle? I don't know? A social miracle perhaps I don't know [all laugh]" (Garry, 25).

Likewise, Danielle described regaining a sense of herself that years of bullying at school had caused her to repress:

"I had been very badly bullied at school, and I felt that I really had to almost quieten down my personality, I think if you were to ask people from school that knew me, they would say that I was very quiet, that I was quite subdued. But I know that I am quite chatty, I know that I am quite loud and happy but I couldn't afford to show people that because I kept getting it thrown back at me. I did not ever lose that but I was not able to use that part of myself. So as soon as I had the opportunity I was like, this is brilliant, I can do this, I can talk to people, I can make these jokes and things like that, that I could never really do before. So, it was great, it sort of showed me in a way that I was not the problem, I was fine on my own, it was the people around me that weren't ready to accept me when I was at school" (Danielle, 18).

Fernandez (1986, 160) asserted that we would be better understood as "dividuals" as opposed to "individuals" as we "negotiate multiple and often incompatible memberships in separate self-contained associations". This idea is congruent with work on the idea of multiple and fragmented selves (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995). Jafari and Goulding (2008, 88) discussed the idea of the "torn self", which refers to "the inner

conflicts and tensions that result from extreme systems of domination and the desire to resist". They found that young Iranian consumers felt torn between their faith, their Iranian culture and their desire for Western freedom. A torn self can also be witnessed in consumers of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience, but at the pre-consumption period, as prior to consuming Lourdes they often feel torn and stigmatised between the pressure of modern day society and their belief in Catholicism. However many youths in particular also feel torn over components of their own self-identity such as their feelings and emotions (Lisa), confidence (Danielle, Jacob and Matthew), and family identity (Lilly). Jafari and Goulding (2008, 88) suggested that consumption is a major contributor in creating the "torn self"; however this study finds consumption not to be a creator of, but rather a *repair to* the "torn self". It is shown that a sense of freedom is gained through the consumption of the Lourdes pilgrimage, where the consumer is free to be a consumer: to be young, old, sick, healthy, educated, uneducated, pilgrim, volunteer, mother, father, brother, sister, grandparent, friend or lover; to be confident, grieving, fun, sad, vulnerable, strong and to be Catholic.

Self and identity discussions within consumer research have been numerous: the core versus extended self (Belk, 1988), the transition self (Schouten, 1991), the fragmented self (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995), the work versus home self (Tian and Belk, 2005), "the coherent self" (Ahuvia, 2005), the "torn self" (Jafari and Goulding, 2009), etc. However, the "coherent sense of self" offered by Ahuvia (2005) is crucial to this study. Although Ahuvia (2005) sees merit in the multiple selves theory and ideas within consumer research, he also found them to be limiting in their suggestion that at the core

of each person is an "authentic self". He therefore asks whether such a self is potentially a romantic notion, suggesting through his own research that the consumption of loved objects not only expresses a sense of self but can transform "the self into some new desired form" (2005, 180). Consequently, he believes that rather than people having multiple selves, they consistently "strive to resolve identity conflicts" (2005, 181). His work suggests that the consumption of loved objects acts as "synthesizing solutions" (2005, 181) to such identity conflicts, and ultimately helps consumers to move closer towards a more "coherent" sense of self. A similar finding is presented in this study, with the consumption of the Lourdes experience helping consumers to experience a "coherent" sense of self. It must be mentioned that such coherence is only temporary, as after all, as Ahuvia (2005, 181) explained, "the ongoing nature of life renders each resolution inherently tentative and imperfect". As shared by many informants, the effects and positives gained from Lourdes, although strong upon initially arriving home from the site, always diminish over time leading them to desire "a recharging of their spiritual batteries" at Lourdes again. This finding thus takes consumer research on self and identity outwith the confines of object, product and tangible possessions by suggesting that experiential consumption can be a powerful "synthesizing solution", aiding consumers in working through identity conflicts and finding at least a temporarily balanced and coherent sense of self.

This section has discussed how the consumption of Lourdes affords the opportunity to experience many different feelings and experiences, leading consumers to temporarily experience a more "coherent sense of self" (Ahuvia, 2005). At Lourdes, the consumer

experiences moments of fun, happiness and laughter interspersed with moments of pain, and sadness. But, more importantly, these emotions are all accepted at Lourdes, leading now onto the following important finding within the theme of liminality – emotional healing.

6.4 From Liminal to Whole: Emotional Healing at Lourdes: James' Story

James (63) first journeyed to Lourdes in 1978, and since then he has volunteered there twelve times, each time working as a medical doctor to the sick pilgrims journeying with the Archdiocese of Glasgow. He shares that at Lourdes, people tend to get "hung up" on the physical miracles - the "I was blind but now I see" kind of miracle. However, it has been his experience that at Lourdes, healings and miracles are of a smaller yet equally important kind. He explains that Lourdes is a place where people are better able to let go of pain and sorrow, but more than this, Lourdes is a place where people are able to "display such emotion".

"I mean you are displaying emotions in Lourdes that you would never dream of doing here [referring to Scotland] because folk would laugh at you - but they are able to do it there. Lourdes is a much more tactile place, people touch and cuddle there in a non... in a simple way that they would not dream of doing at home with no baggage. There is nothing behind it, there is no agenda, there is no attempting anything else and they will do that there, whereas you could not do that here" (James, 63).

Thus, for James, the greatest healing that occurs at Lourdes is the emotional kind, with Lourdes offering people a "whole raft of emotions" and a "safe space" where they can let go of certain emotions. This belief was equally shared amongst all informants - that it offers a place where it is "socially acceptable" to let go of emotions like pain, and anguish.

"It's totally accepted more, see when I was in the youth group with HCPT[19], they always do a kind of ceremony on the last night and there isn't a single person who doesn't cry at it. I mean, I think it's because people are emotional about leaving the kids, people are emotional because it's getting to the end of the week, and they know they aren't going to see people for months at a time, and other folk are just reflecting on everything, and you cry and it's totally okay. And you know that way you'll get guys who are right, rough, hard guys, who would never dream of crying, and then they are standing there bubbling, like blubbering away and you're standing there with your arm round them and it's not like you will stand in the pub later and be like "oh, you were crying, haha", it's just totally... you put your arm around them then it's done" (Garry, 25).

---

[19]HCPT is a pilgrimage trust which takes disabled, sick and disadvantaged people to Lourdes annually. At Easter time the trust takes approximately 1000 disabled and disadvantaged children to Lourdes, whilst in the summer they take around 1500 disabled and disadvantaged adults

"A lot of times in normal life, you know, if you're upset you don't talk about it all*;* that kind of thing. In Lourdes it's ok just to cry your heart out, you know and that's ok, people get that and don't judge you, and just are there to support you and give you a hug and that kind of thing… People have other issues as well, like my friend's baby nephew died just last February, he was only six months old, you know, and so she's obviously found that... she was very upset, and my other friend's mum died five years ago, so things like that. And I was upset but I just was upset for them, upset for my friends but that's ok. Everybody just hugs each other, has a wee cry on their shoulder, that's it. And then once everybody's done that, that's ok, nobody judges it and then everybody goes back to the pub and has a drink. So, it's a totally safe space to do it and nobody will think "oh for God's sake" or try to make you happy... you know how people sometimes are uncomfortable with you being sad or being quiet or whatever. It's *ok, have a good old greet (cry) and then once you're ready to go you'll leave and that's it kind of thing, you know. It's definitely a safe space"* (Miriam, 25).

The informants often spoke of the Glaswegian social order as "undemonstrative", requiring a "stiff upper lip" and as a place where you "don't show emotion", especially not in public and for some not even in private. James shared that "typically, West of Scotland people are very introverted and don't like to show their emotions but Lourdes brings it out and that is really quite profound". Craig (2004), in her acclaimed work 'The Scots Crisis of Confidence', spoke of emotional intelligence in Scotland, asserting that "a strong feeling in contemporary Scotland is that it is self-indulgent to spend time

analysing yourself in any way" (2004, 274). Equally, she found through her work that many Scots had little "understanding of 'the value of emotional and spiritual intelligence, or whether and how it could be fostered'" (2004, 277). However, as James mentioned, in consuming the Lourdes experience a "profound" opportunity is given to the Lourdes consumer as they are able to escape this national social norm and expectation and instead enter into a place where they can freely focus on themselves and their emotions. Thus, Lourdes becomes something of a "therapeutic landscape" (Gesler, 1996, 96) whereby the built environment of Lourdes alongside "social conditions, and human perceptions combine to produce an atmosphere which is conducive to healing". This finding resonates with the work by Kozinets (2002, 20) on consuming the Burning Man experience, whereby consumers of the event "concentrate" during the burning ceremony on "what they would like to eliminate in their lives, what they came to burn" (2002, 20). However, as discussed above, the Lourdes experience is not about burning or completely eliminating worries, troubles or anxieties but, rather, gaining support and a means of dealing with these issues upon returning to everyday life.

To date, consumer research has found "pleasure" to be "foundational for understanding experiential consumption" (Goulding et al., 2009, 759). However, this thesis posits that although pleasure is important, pain, anguish and emotional intensity can also be core aspects and foundational influences in consuming extraordinary experiences. Goulding et al. (2009, 768) continue that "society and the marketplace provide many legitimate forms of pleasure for people who are required to exhibit discipline and rationalised

restraint in their everyday, working lives" (Goulding et al., 2009, 768). But what about pain, worry, anxiety, sickness, and grief, which are equally restrained in everyday society? This thesis provides consumer research with a context whereby such negative emotions are not only permitted and acceptable, but even desired – as consumers wish to feel, and deal, with their pain and suffering - in short, to feel vulnerable.

Baker, Gentry and Rittenburg's work (2005, 136) introduced the idea of vulnerability to consumer research and marketing, believing that "no one chooses to experience vulnerability. Yet all of us, on occasion, will experience vulnerability". They isolated the societal idea that vulnerability is something to be feared, something stigmatic and undesirable. However, this study has uncovered that vulnerability at Lourdes goes beyond the sick pilgrim, with many sharing that they felt physically and emotionally vulnerable in their position as a volunteer:

"…You are leaving yourself open to things that you don't think you have got the skills for. If you are in Lourdes, you would be working with people that are older or vulnerable or you are working with people with learning disabilities or physical disabilities, things that you are maybe not exposed to when you are at home. Or, you are working with children or you are working with sick people or dying people that are with their families and in that context you maybe think… particularly as a young person you are thinking: "I am not going to be able to offer anything there, I am not going to deal with that" or "I don't have skills in that area". And then, when you are

in Lourdes, you kind of leave yourself open to that and develop skills when you are there that you did not think that you had, or you see something in yourself that you did not think was there beforehand. And even although that puts you in a kind of vulnerable position, you are kind of supported by all the other people that are around you in the group, that are going through the same things or have maybe been there before, and it leaves you quite emotional and it leaves you quite physically tired, you know, worn out, but there is something that is much more rewarding, much bigger out of it that you get" (Kelly, 35).

Kelly's words are particularly powerful in sharing a common sentiment among the informants - that in volunteering and helping those often deemed by society as vulnerable (the sick, the disabled, the old, etc.), the consumer is "left open" to vulnerability. However, where Kelly speaks of vulnerability in opening the self up to new experiences, tasks and roles, Sr. Anne speaks of Lourdes enabling consumers to become spiritually vulnerable.

"Vulnerability is a big word for Lourdes and it encapsulates a lot as well. Allowing yourself to be vulnerable is a thing we never do, and you do it in Lourdes, and actually it is all right to be vulnerable. The whole of Lourdes say that it is okay because when you are vulnerable you are weak, and when you are weak God is your strength, and that is what Lourdes is about" (Sr. Anne, 37).

It therefore follows that Lourdes is a consumption experience in which vulnerability is sought after – with the consumer wishing to make themselves emotionally vulnerable, "unguarded", and feeling "safe" to do so in Lourdes, with many informants speaking of feeling "vulnerable" and "open" to God in a way they cannot be anywhere else and simultaneously being "open" and "vulnerable" to others. Ironically, those interviewed often spoke of feeling vulnerable to those people who are often deemed by society as "actual vulnerable" (Baker et al., 2005) such as the old and the sick. This raises the idea of "perceived vulnerability" (Baker et al., 2005), which, it is argued, occurs when we perceive or deem someone to be vulnerable while they may not see themselves as such. For, although society may perceive the sick and disabled as vulnerable as they will be on stretchers, wheelchairs – or at Lourdes voitures, it became apparent that at times Lourdes in its "topsy-turviness" questions who at Lourdes is sick and vulnerable. Informants echoed the idea that "the person pushing the wheelchair potentially is sicker than the person in it". Therefore, it can be seen that in consuming the Lourdes experience, those perceived as non-vulnerable by society can become vulnerable emotionally, physically and spiritually. However, unlike the extant theory on vulnerability to date (Baker et al., 2005), this status of vulnerability is not a weakness, is not a stigma and is not negative but rather is strengthening, inspiring and positive.

Although all the informants spoke of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience enabling a temporal reprieve from the everyday and presenting them with a place where they were free to be Catholic, to be vulnerable, to be emotional and to be "more themselves", they equally acknowledged that the experience was "intense", "overwhelming", "tiring" and

had the potential to make one an "emotional wreck" (Matthew). This perspective leads now onto the final theme within this section on liminality – the intensity of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience and the role which the marketplace plays in alleviating such intensity.

6.5 Emotional and Spiritual Freedom and Imprisonment: Danielle's Story

Eighteen year old Danielle volunteered at Lourdes for the first time in July 2012, and following the pilgrimage she spoke animatedly and excitedly about Lourdes, saying that she "loved every minute of it", and found the experience to be a "happy blur". However, she also asserted, like all the other informants, that the experience, although "amazing", was equally "tiring", and at times even "emotionally draining". In sharing her fondest memories of her first pilgrimage to Lourdes, Danielle recalled the day she and the youth group members joined hands and ran temporarily away from the spiritual Domain of Lourdes; a unique moment encapsulating the themes spoken of thus far: communitas and liminality.

Danielle explained that she was unaware what was happening, as no one had shared this youth group tradition with her prior to going to Lourdes, "but everyone told me to join hands, so I did". And then the youth group, the entire group of approximately sixty youths began to run from the spiritual Domain of Lourdes out into the secular marketplace.

"All of us joined hands, and ran all the way through the town - we must have ran about half a mile and we were running through cars and it was mental but we were all holding on to each other and no-one could run properly because we were all laughing and we properly could not breathe" (Danielle, 18).

She continued to explain that during this moment of "madness" they stopped traffic, with "people honking their horns at us and we ran through a shop as well, like we went all the way through it, and we were all holding hands and we just kept running". She mentioned that the streets of Lourdes must have been "littered" with bags and jumpers that had fallen off as the group ran through the town, but that no-one in the group cared at that moment because they were having too much fun. Danielle acknowledged this moment as a favourite because in this moment she felt that she was freed temporarily from the "seriousness" of the experience, the work, the emotion; the group "were just absolutely daft for 15 minutes and no-one cared, it was just so daft and I was like, this is brilliant" (Danielle, 18).

Bauman (2000, 81) shared the metaphor that "when many people simultaneously run in the same direction, two questions need to be asked: what are they running after and what are they running from". Many of the informants of this study said that the spiritual experience of Lourdes liberated them from the everyday, permitting a place where they were free not only to be Catholic but also to be themselves completely, in turn

temporarily experiencing a more "coherent sense of self" (Ahuvia, 2005). However, they equally felt the pilgrimage experience to be "intense", "draining" and at times emotionally "very raw", and "very difficult", as illustrated by Phillip below:

"I mean, we have seen sick and disabled children, and you've seen their mothers come with them and you think "oh s**t", and you actually think, that's not fair - why should that happen to them? But you can't go down that road because otherwise you'd be driving yourself crazy. But these mothers and fathers and husbands and wives, they are coping with that 24/7, 365 days a year; you've only got that for a week" (Phillip, 61).

Many informants echoed Phillip's view that at times the witnessing of other people's pain and suffering was emotional, hurtful, and difficult. Equally, many shared how such emotion must be silenced at times, with the informant only temporarily dealing with such pain, whereas the families of and the sick/disabled consumer deal with that "24/7, 365 days a year". I experienced such silencing of my own emotions whilst volunteering at the baths in July 2012:

"Working in the baths this morning was incredibly emotional. An English woman named Karen McCormack came in; when she went into the bathing area she nearly fainted, and couldn't get her bath. It was then I discovered she was English, and being the only English speaker in the group today I stayed with her, as she was

really weary, we got her some water, we got her dressed. She mentioned to me "oh I hope Our Lady hears my prayers and I might get better now" and I said she would and that I will be praying for her also, and I will do as she has really touched me. And she answered, "please pray for my children because I don't want them to have to grow up without a mother". I just melted, I knew I had to wait until she left, but when she did I properly melted, I couldn't keep the tears in… I must admit today I felt like I was really giving of myself in a way I never have before - I was providing the people coming through the baths with something they needed - support and comfort when they felt alone and isolated and hurt, and that was a real pleasure but I equally feel drained, emotionally. I keep seeing Karen's face in particular, I keep hearing her words, and I just wish, pray, beg that she will be okay, that she will be there for her family. Everyone keeps saying I need to distance myself from the people coming through the baths, but how do you do that when they are literally begging for life, for health, for time – how do you cut yourself off from that?" (Field note from day six of the July 2012 fieldtrip).

The above note documents a particularly poignant moment for me at Lourdes, at which I remember truly understanding the emotional intensity of volunteering at Lourdes. Still today, two years on, I can see Karen's face and hear her words without a moment's hesitation. I remember feeling my insides melt, the pain, the emotion, the question "why?" - something I never really do, but I questioned "why God, why her?". But I also remember feeling that I could not let her see my emotion, as she was going through it - not me - so what right did I have to upset her more? Therefore, I can fully apprehend

why informants feel the need at times to silence their emotional intensity. I dealt with this emotion by writing about it whilst sitting before the grotto later that day, a method that I employ often to let go of my feelings and emotions. Throughout the three years of the study, many informants shared different ways of dealing with the emotions they experienced at Lourdes, with the marketplace of Lourdes being a shared space for temporarily escaping such emotion.

"A lot of it is really quite intense emotionally and spiritually, it's all really intense. And I think part of the thing about going out into the town - like, we pass the shops to go back to our hotel, and I think it can be good inasmuch as it can kind of give you some light-hearted relief. It can help. As good as I think the intense experience is, I think having that all the time, like, purely for a week, would drive you crazy. I think you would just be a wreck. You'd be an emotional wreck by the time you came home, so the town offers some light-hearted relief from that" (Matthew, 22).

Many agreed with Matthew that continuous immersion with such intensive emotions and experiences, even if only for a short week, would leave one "emotionally wrecked". This returns us to Bauman (2000, 81) as the Lourdes consumers spoken with in this study clearly run *after* and consume Lourdes as a means of running from their everyday life-worlds, where they have issues, pain, suffering, and some at least feel stigmatized and unable to fully express or embrace their Catholic faith. But equally, whilst at

Lourdes they seek a temporal reprieve from the intense experience, and thus run *from* the Sacred Sanctuary, towards the secular marketplace, which offers relief.

Further to the above, married couple James and Veronica shared their ritual undertaking of a mini-pilgrimage to the town of Bartres[20] during their pilgrimage week in Lourdes. This mini-pilgrimage is often undertaken alongside James's twin brother Paul and some friends, allowing them to walk as a kinship group (both physical and social) in the footsteps of the visionary Bernadette. However, they also mention that it affords them some temporary escape from the intense Lourdes experience:

"I don't feel necessarily that I actually need it*,* and it is only once you have done it and you come back down into Lourdes that you think, you know*,* that actually was quite good. But I think I could *well,* there was one year that we did not get out of Lourdes, we did not go to Bartrès and I wouldn't say it was any the less, it just added something extra when you have been out and you come back down*;* you just feel that you are revving up again" (Veronica, 60).

Earlier, this study discussed how "movement" is intrinsic with pilgrimage (Morinis, 1992), with Morinis arguing that without movement there is no pilgrimage, merely Sacred place. He outlined that movement between two distinctly different poles is key

---

[20] Bartres, is a small town close to Lourdes (about an hour's walk uphill). It has alignment with the visionary Bernadette who lived there for a period as a child with her aunt.

to the pilgrimage process: the "Familiar", referring to the known, human, social, imperfect and mundane world, and the "Other", referring to the mysterious, divine, ideal, perfect and miraculous world. Morinis stated that movement between these poles enables pilgrims to mediate "the opposition between them and permits various sorts of resolution. The pilgrim is a cursor that shifts from problem to answer, in the hope of working a mediation and resolution between the imperfection he knows and the ideal he seeks" (1992, 26). This symbolic moving between the Sacred Other and the secular Familiar, outlined by Danielle, Matthew and Veronica above, was found to be consistent across all the informants, with the commercial town of Lourdes found to have its own important role to play in the Lourdes experience. Consequently, the movement between the Sanctuary and the town becomes the consumers attempt to create "mediation and resolution between the imperfect and the ideal" (1992, 26). Consumers bring their worries, illnesses, anxieties and emotions to Lourdes and attempt to deal with and reflect upon them and gain strength to better deal with such issues upon their return home. Preston (1992, 34) proposed that a significant question to be asked of pilgrimage sites is how they become centres of "wholeness for fragmented people and provide atmospheres of physical and psychological healing". This study replies that the key to the removing of fragmentation and production of the whole comes through the back and forth process between the "Familiar" and the "Other" (Morinis, 1992), which acts as a "synthesizing solution" (Ahuvia, 2005) in offering consumers a setting where they can build a more coherent sense of self. In short, at Lourdes all components of the self: the Catholic, the consumer, the family member, the pilgrim, the sick, the healthy, the youth, the aged, the happy, the sad, the worried, the elated, the joker, the singer and dancer as well as the pray-er can simultaneously "be".

Thus, the Sanctuary and the marketplace of Lourdes become partners in the "whole package" (Kitty, James), making the experience unique for the Lourdes consumer. Theory on experience often distinguishes between "serious" and "play" (Abrahams, 1986), with work and everyday life being said to equal serious experience, and hedonistic, fun and extraordinary said to equal play experience. Equally within consumer research, extraordinary experience has often found emotions of joy, thrill seeking, happiness, and hedonism to be dominant. A new contribution is therefore provided to consumer research here through the illustration that at times, experiences need to be simultaneously serious and playful, happy and sad, life giving and tiring, weak and strong, quiet and noisy, individual and together, liberating and enslaving, relaxing and intense, and most importantly, sacred and secular. As this chapter and the theme of liminality now draw to a close, it will have been noted by the reader that throughout the previous two chapters, references to family and kinship have been prevalent, thus leading on to consideration of the final theme and associated finding addressing the first objective of this study – kinship.

CHAPTER VII: KINSHIP

7.0 Kinship

Van Gennep (1909/1960, 68) differentiated between "physical kinship" and "social kinship", with the former relating to the bond between blood relatives, and the latter referring to a kinship established with people outside the "physical" family. This chapter will look at both types of kinship groups and their relation with, and importance to, consuming the Lourdes pilgrimage experience, beginning with the "physical kinship" (family) group. When asked what initially brought them to Lourdes, nineteen out of the twenty-three interview informants replied that a family member, peer group member or close friend had been the predominant influence. Indeed, the common descriptors of what Lourdes means to informants mentioned above were: "family", "fun", "faith", "love", "reflection", "spirituality", "serenity", "laughter", and "hope". Consequently, in discussing the physical kinship (family) group, focus will be placed on three of these descriptors - faith, hope and love.

7.1 Faith, Hope and Love

7.1.1 Faith: Marie's Story

"Faith - Strong or unshakeable belief in something. The complete confidence or trust in a person, remedy, thing, etc."

(Collins English Dictionary, 1992, 555).

For Marie (54), Lourdes is more than an annual trip to a Sanctuary - it is part of her entire being. She journeyed to Lourdes in her mother's womb, and recalls knowing "Lourdes hymns before I could even speak, because they were sung to me". Her life is ingrained with touching memories revolving around her pilgrimages to Lourdes, such as making her First Holy Communion there and leading the evening candle-lit procession in her communion dress. Viewing herself as a "Lourdes person" and her family as "Lourdes people", she often refers to her annual journey not as a pilgrimage but, rather, as the maintenance of her "family tradition".

> "I was introduced to Lourdes even before the cradle…I always had family, friends and relatives with me, and especially during my childhood, so Lourdes was part of it…Lourdes is so much part of me that after nearly half a century I don't always sit down and define it, I just accept it…It is certainly part of the fabric of my life" (Marie, 54).

Marie's family tradition of consuming the Lourdes pilgrimage experience is fully embedded within "the fabric of her life", to the degree that she has never even considered going to any other Catholic pilgrimage site, such as Knock or Fatima.

> "I've never been tempted to go to Fatima, and I suppose that is in part the family tradition. And I've never felt the need to doubt that family tradition... I mean, dad used to wind mum up when we would arrive at Lourdes station, and say "I want to

go to Fatima", when he knew we weren't going to Fatima, but he just knew which buttons to press [laughs]… Well, she [her mother] had introduced all of us to Lourdes, and she just didn't feel the same prompting towards Fatima or even to Knock".

Marie's mum played a crucial role in establishing their "family tradition" and encouraging Marie to embrace her lifelong consumption of the Lourdes pilgrimage. Just as the consumption of the Blackpool experience has been described as an "intrinsic ritual of community" (Obrador, 2012, 408), the consumption of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience signifies an intrinsic "family ritual" for Marie's family, which is key to "creating, revising, reinforcing and passing on family identity" (Epp and Price, 2008, 54). The "winding up", teasing interaction between Marie's Mum and Dad at Lourdes demonstrates that family life extends beyond the home and homeland. This supports Obrador (2012, 410) who argued that family holidays are an important "home making practice", as Marie recalls this interaction, registered by her laughter, as a happy memory, and part of the tradition of going to Lourdes. Since childhood, Marie's life has remained rooted around Lourdes, as she is an active member of the Archdiocese organising committee, and annually volunteers at Lourdes. Family rituals are said to maintain "a sense of continuity of identity over time through ritual practices that mark their heritage" (Epp and Price, 2008, 54), and Marie's continued alignment with Lourdes demonstrates her continued sense of her family heritage as "Lourdes people".

Similarly to Marie, many informants expressed that they shared a strong family affinity with Lourdes. For example, Lilly described Lourdes as "kind of special to my family, not just me, to my family." Furthermore, the findings revealed several cases of "generational connections" (Borghini et al., 2009, 367) which had been built and maintained at Lourdes, with three and four generations of the same family often consuming the experience together. For example, Miriam (25) discussed how her fifteen-week-old nephew was to make his first trip to Lourdes alongside herself, her grandfather, grandmother, mum, dad, brother, sister, and brother-in-law. Likewise, Lisa (19) mentioned her grandmother, grandfather, mum, brother, aunt, uncle and cousins as all being in Lourdes together annually, leading her to feel that "everything" she needs is in Lourdes during that week. This idea of a multi-generational family togetherness is contrasted with the regret felt by Kitty for not taking the opportunity to experience Lourdes with her mother when she was offered the chance:

"…My mother was a great one, she always wanted to go to Lourdes and she eventually managed to go in 1968, and I was 22 then, and her friend who was going with her became ill and could not go, and my mother asked me to go and to my great regret to this day, I did not go. You know what it is like when you are 22 - every time I go to Lourdes I still think I would have loved to have that memory of having gone with my mother but anyway I didn't… that was where I got all my feelings for Lourdes, was from my mum" (Kitty, 66).

In common with the literature on socialisation (Moore, Wilkie and Lutz, 2002), informants of all ages often pointed towards consumption of Lourdes as being primarily due to the intergenerational influence of their parents or grandparents. This is unsurprising, as within the culture of Catholicism, when a parent decides to christen their child they make an agreement with God to bring their child up within the Catholic faith until they are of age to take responsibility for their own religious decisions. Consequently, the familial influence on children going to Lourdes can be viewed as a further sharing of the Catholic faith beyond more habitual practices such as daily prayer. This makes the parents religious "gate-keepers" (Lindridge and Hogg, 2006, 980), aiding their children in "negotiating cultural boundaries", particularly in religious maintenance.

Kitty's comment that "you know what it is like when you are 22" highlights the unique positioning of some of the younger informants of this study. Carr (2006, 135) found that over half of parents "described their ideal holidays as being very different from those of their adolescent children and vice versa". Unlike the popular assumption that this age group are more inclined to holiday with friends, this study illustrates instances where they value the time spent with family, often forfeiting traditional sun, sea, sand or clubbing holidays for the annual pilgrimage to Lourdes. Although some informants referred to initially "being dragged" (Sr. Anne) or "forced to go" (Garry) to Lourdes by family members, most often their parents, this initial lack of enthusiasm often changed during the actual experience:

"…My parents came into my room all excited, guess what, we have booked up to go to Lourdes and I was like wow, I was not too impressed. I thought okay but excuse me for not just going bananas with excitement here, and honestly I wasn't, I was so ambivalent about the whole thing. But of course I went, so purely because of my parents, and I had an absolute ball from start to finish, it really changed my life… So I really went just because I was dragged but from that moment on - it wasn't dragged but it was totally their initiative, my mum and dad's initiative - but after that I was really determined to go" (Sr. Anne, 37).

Sr. Anne, indicates that her initial consumption of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience was somewhat chore-like and forced upon her. However, following her first pilgrimage to Lourdes she found herself not only wanting but "determined" to return again, a sentiment equally shared by Garry:

"…I just wasn't really into the whole idea: I think the idea of working with young kids, that idea didn't really appeal to me. And then a free place came up, somebody dropped out about a week before, and the place had been all paid for and my mum and dad just basically forced me. They said: "Look, it's a free trip, go and if you don't like it you don't have to go again". And I went and it was absolutely, just incredible, like nothing I had ever done before in my whole life. And I was just totally hooked, and have never missed it since, and I don't think I ever will miss it, I think I'll just go every year" (Garry, 25).

The sharing of terms such as "absolute ball", "incredible", "life-changing", and "being hooked" echoed amongst the informants, reinforcing the theme of fun which is found in connection with Lourdes. Chapter six extensively discussed the idea of the "caricature" of Lourdes, with informants facing the stereotypical preconception that in going to Lourdes they were "dead holy, you have a tremendous faith, you pray all the time, it is almost like this bible-basher label that people would put on you" (Kelly, 35). However, Kelly continues that in reality the Lourdes experience resembles a "party atmosphere a lot of the time, you know it is like Ibiza in some situations". Indeed, Hirschman (1982, 158-159) found that more Catholics than Protestants or Jews cited going to a disco, to see a movie, or entertaining guests in their home as their choice of solution to a weekend night consumption dilemma, thus they were observed to choose more socially 'fun' activities than other religious groups. The "fun-less" Catholic stereotype has perhaps become synonymous with the religious group, but what this study uncovers is that this stereotype is clearly incorrect and more than this, it is not only incorrect in secular settings, but equally within a sacred setting.

Parallels of the fun to be had at Lourdes, said to resemble the fun of a "clubbing" holiday or an "18-30" holiday, were often shared, resonating with Davis and Yip (2004) who argued that the social interaction function of the church evolves as society and culture does. Tourism literature often notes a separation between the "family holiday and the clubbing holiday" (Obrador, 2012, 414-415), the former aligned with "moral correctness" and the latter with "drunkenness, disorder, and immoral attributes". To

date, consumer research often links fun with hedonism and fantasy (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982); however, just as the Pentecostal services simulated "the nightclub but without alcohol" (2004, 116), the Lourdes experience simulates the fun-filled holiday but rather than the hedonism and moral incorrectness aligned with such holiday types, it is shown that the consumption of the Lourdes experience provides its consumers with a context where they "can have it all" - faith, family and fun.

7.1.2 Hope: Jacob's Story

"Hope - A positive emotion that varies as a function of the degree of yearning for a (goal-congruent, future oriented) outcome appraised as uncertain, yet possible"

(MacInnis and Chun, 2006, 77).

Upon his diagnosis of a rare form of skin cancer at the age of eleven, Jacob (now 26) was sent to Lourdes by his parents. He recalls not really understanding why he was in Lourdes, as although aware he was sick, he was unaware of the intensity of his illness. He also remembers his Lourdes experience as being fun-filled; of having an excellent time, which was interspersed with some poignant, powerful and faithful moments. The experience clearly left an imprint on him, as he recalls telling his parents upon return from his initial Lourdes pilgrimage that he would return as a volunteer when he was old enough. For Jacob, the gift of hindsight and reflection on his first experience enables

him to realise that the point of Lourdes is not so much about curing, healing or miracles, but rather that Lourdes "offers hope to people":

"…As a kid, I never really understood why I was there, other than that my mum and dad sent me – my mum especially – and I think I realise now that it does just offer hope to people, and kind of a wee bit of inspiration almost. Because the people that you see, they are from different walks of life, they have different disabilities and they have different social situations or whatever it is, and you see them going and if they can take a wee bit of hope from it then that is a kind of inspiring thing to actually see" (Jacob, 26).

The idea of Lourdes offering hope to people introduces the notion of "yearning" which is interlaced with hope; as Lazarus (1991) argued, people feel greater hope in relation to things they deeply "yearn" for. Jacob explains that his consumption of Lourdes gave hope to his parents and family at home, who were more aware than he was of the seriousness of his condition. Doctors and science told them it was likely his illness would return, so his parents sought hope from a higher being. Mittal and Royne (2010, 51) found that "parents are likely to be more motivated to influence their children's stylistic and health-related consumption than consumption of more mundane, utilitarian products". Consequently, when health is at risk, particularly in a child, and hope is needed, Lourdes is a valid consumption choice for the Catholic parent. Although

Jacob's parents were not physically present with him in Lourdes, Jacob's pilgrimage was nevertheless important to his family's identity:

"I had literally just had the skin cancer tumours removed and stuff and then I went to the baths and I've never had any – well I've had wee complications but nothing major – and that for me is quite... because at that stage the doctors had told my parents that it was probably something that could come back. And because I was so young it was kind of undocumented that somebody so young could suffer from that kind of strain and yet after that it never returned. So I would, I'm not loathe to say but I don't want to jump out and say "it was a miracle" but I would say that there was something there" (Jacob, 26).

Both Jacob and his family believe that he received - perhaps not a miracle, but "something" from that initial Lourdes experience which strengthened his health. The idea of gaining "something" from Lourdes was a common theme, relating back to the idea of Lourdes being "indescribable". Similarly, Frances, a seventeen-year-old informant ahead of her first journey to Lourdes, shared her hope that she might gain "something" from the experience in the same way that her mum, dad and brother had:

"Lourdes is somewhere that has done something for my mum, and it has done something for my dad. And, my brother went and my brother ended up getting a job after it… He pretty much works as a carer part time, and he got that from going to

Lourdes because they were looking for carers, so for him it has helped him out a lot in that way. So, I do feel it must do something" (Frances, 17).

Frances demonstrates that even though it may be difficult to articulate, pilgrims are hopeful that through the consumption of Lourdes their lives will be improved. Unlike the hope held by Jacob's parents, Frances's comment resonates with MacInnis and colleagues' various work on self-hope as she seeks "something" for herself from consuming Lourdes (MacInnis and deMello, 2004; MacInnis, deMello and Patrick, 2005; MacInnis and Chun, 2006). Whether for the self or for others, many spoke of the "gift of hope" gained from Lourdes, and Fr. Brendan explains this succinctly with his description of the hope Lourdes gifted to a man with emphysema:

"…A guy here from Wales and he had emphysema - he had been in the mines in Wales and his lungs were going. And he came here every year and he was interviewed afterwards, and the interviewer told him "but you're not healed you still have the emphysema, so it's done you no good?" And the man said "oh, it did" and the interviewer asked "how?" and the man said it gave him hope to continue for another twelve months" (Fr. Brendan, 73).

The research data is filled with examples of informants yearning for hope - Patricia shared that her mother first consumed Lourdes as a means of helping her baby daughter who had been diagnosed with hearing impairment, whilst Lilly and her family first

consumed Lourdes alongside her mum who was battling cancer. Pavia and Mason (2004) found that consumption played an essential role in aiding cancer sufferers through their illness, and likewise it can be seen through the consumption of the extraordinary experience of a pilgrimage to Lourdes that aid in one form or another can be received in times of illness. However, unlike the cancer sufferers studied by Pavia and Mason (2004) this study sheds light on the consumption of the experience not only in aiding the primary consumer, i.e. the ill or vulnerable pilgrim, but also in identifying that the hope is extended to their immediate and extended family. Faith brings parents and family members to place hope in higher orders and beings like God, especially when society and science decide that hope is unlikely and uncertainty reigns. McDannell (1995, 19) shares that "through grace the intellect is driven towards faith… the will is driven towards hope; and the whole being is driven toward love". Thus, it is easy to see that faith and hope are interlaced, but at the core of the yearning leading to hope, is love.

7.1.3 Love: Lisa's Story (Part II)

> "*Love – an intense emotion of affection, warmth, fondness, and regard towards a person or thing*" (Collins English Dictionary, 1992; 923).

To Lisa (19), Lourdes is "everything". Her annual pilgrimage to Lourdes gives her a week in which everything she needs is "right there". As discussed in chapter six, having battled emotional problems throughout her early teenage years, Lisa finds it difficult to

deal with her emotions at home, as she struggles to find a balance with her brother and grandfather, who do not like the expression of emotion, and with her mum, who wants Lisa to share her emotion more. This struggle leads her to feel she is "not the nicest to her mum". Therefore, she uses the week in Lourdes to spend time with her mum, not only in the religious setting, but also within the wider Lourdes marketplace, where they have coffee and lunches, giving her mum the time she feels that, emotionally, she cannot always give at home.

"I also go with objectives, like with my family as well, because we go as a family and I'm not the nicest maybe [laughs lightly] to my mum and things like that. And my mum's not well, she's got MS… I don't know what it is about Lourdes, but I feel different about being with my family that week. Like, it's a joy to be with them, whereas at home I'll just sit in my room… whereas I always strive to like spend as much time with them as I can. I'll always go and like when I get there if I see my mum struggling I'll be like I need to go and listen to her. Whereas – you know, just like listen to her talking - whereas in the house I'm like "right okay" [in a disinterested voice]. I know that sounds really bad, but I'll always try and spend as much time with them as I can. Because it feels different and I don't know what it is about it, but it just feels like, it's not even I just don't mind doing it, but it is a pleasure to be with them" (Lisa, 19).

Family holidays are often causes of "family conflict" (Carr, 2006), with Gram (2005, 2) finding that family holidays are not always harmonious but often "generate stress and

conflicts". However, Lisa's consumption of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience enables a sharing of time with her family that is "conflict-free", resulting in Lisa mentioning that she feels the experience to be "better than home", as Lourdes affords her a place where she can better live with her family. Some informants shared this idea of being able to better relate to family members, or see family in a different light whilst at Lourdes. For example, James shared that Lourdes enabled him to witness "characteristics" in his son which he had never seen:

"Because fathers and sons are sometimes very undemonstrative to each other, but he probably saw in me and I certainly saw in him characteristics that he probably would not want to show and his empathy towards disabled children was incredible and his patience, we had never seen that. Richard was a very kind of bright boy, always kind of lived at the margins; well, not at the margins, he pushed boundaries, that kind of thing, he was probably like myself and we saw a different side and it was amazing" (James, 63).

Therefore, consuming the Lourdes experience with family did not negate the experience but rather it aided in the family's ability to "be and do" (Morgan, 1996) family things. Research to date has focused upon the idea of "being family", placing focus upon family as a structure that is defined by its membership. For example, traditional definitions coincided with the concept of the nuclear family (Berger and Berger, 1983), while more recent work has considered increased family diversity (Cheal, 2002).

Although there has also been recognition of the contested, ambivalent and undecided character of contemporary family arrangements (Stacey, 1998), there still remains much interest in the structural boundaries that define the family. However, some critics argue that "the family" does not exist (Bernardes, 1997, 28) and indeed, the incessant use of the term "the family" implies that all families have the same format (Muncie and Sapsford, 2003), thereby downplaying family activities and practices. Consequently, another school of thought on family research has focused upon the idea of "displaying family" (Finch, 2007, 66), "where the meaning of one's actions has to be both conveyed to and understood by relevant others." The interplay between individual, family and relational identity was also recognised by Epp and Price (2008, 51) who introduced the concept of family identity enactments "as communicative performances, that is, rituals, narratives, everyday practices, and other forms in which families constitute and manage identity."

This study aligns more fully with Morgan (1996) in terms of the concept of "doing family", which shifts attention from family structure to family activities; in other words, the emphasis is placed on "doing" rather than "being." For Morgan (1996, 190), "Practices are often little fragments of daily life which are part of the normal taken-for-granted existence of practitioners." Understandings of the family have therefore emerged from studies of everyday activities (Epp and Price, 2008); for example, research has explored the significance of sharing family mealtimes (Cappellini and Parsons, 2012). Many such everyday activities become habitual and require little conscious thought, e.g. going to Sunday Mass together as a family (as mentioned in this

study). In other words, practices "have a degree or fixity and solidity rooted in their everyday character" (Morgan, 1996, 190).

This study has emergently revealed family as central to the Lourdes experience. The rationale behind the consumption decision of the Lourdes experience is not a desire to conspicuously display being "the family", but rather, to enable the practice of "doing" and building the intimate social world of family. Undoubtedly, families engage in an array of practices whilst at Lourdes, ranging from religious practices (praying, attending religious services, participating in processions etc.) to more hedonistic practices (family meals, purchasing souvenirs, etc.). However, I suggest that the latter, more hedonistic activities in particular are often second to "doing family", whilst the former religious activity helps to build, strengthen and "do" not only the immediate family but the wider religious Catholic family. Whether family members are having a coffee together or watching a concert is less important than the fact that the family is united. In other words, family is the main activity, and the emphasis is on familying. Consequently, I offer to consumer research and research on family the idea of "Familying", which refers to the practicalities and activities that a family undertake as a means of building and strengthening their intimate familial social world - the activity of "doing" family.

7.1.4 "Familying" at Lourdes

At Lourdes, the family is afforded time together for familying. Although previous work has recognised the importance of family time, these findings do not necessarily match

existing expectations of what family time should be made up of. The data reveals that consuming Lourdes may be considered as a family tradition for many respondents. Daly (2001, 288) found that family time structured around traditions was based on the "social reproduction of memories." In other words, family time, from this perspective, is less about pleasure in the present moment than a "mental construction" intended for future use, somewhat similar to the "family gaze" perspective put forward by Haldrup and Larsen (2003). However, I would argue that a familying focus at Lourdes brings much greater attention onto the present, recalling Lisa's comment that "everything" she needs is "right there." This is not to deny that informants will have fond memories of their time at Lourdes (indeed, the Lourdes stories that informants told during interviews are themselves a form of displaying family), nor indeed to deny that they hope their Lourdes experience will help them in the future. However, I suggest that the benefits from familying at Lourdes are more immediate. Informants do not view pilgrimage to Lourdes as an obligation that must be honoured to safeguard future family identity but, rather, they enjoy the experience while it happens. For example, Lisa shared her feeling that at Lourdes she could be with, and help, her family in a way which she cannot manage at home. Consequently, Lourdes for her becomes a platform upon which she can simultaneously be with her family and strengthen her familial bond.

Daly (2001, 291) also considered family time as "unidirectional construction consisting of what parents do for the sake of their children." This implies that family time (much like the family itself) is constructed around various assumptions concerning the roles, functions and obligations of each family member. However, this context offers an

alternative perspective that moves away from normative understandings of family structure. Instead of a child-centric family structure, at Lourdes a family-centric structure emerges in which socially-constructed expectations dissolve and blur. This means that, for example, the "caring role" shifts depending on the nature of the family circumstances: sometimes the child is prioritised (as in Jacob's story), but sometimes it is the parent who takes centre stage as outlined by Sr. Anne and her recollection of feeling "annoyed" at times during her daily life, for not having the time to be able to just chat with family and in general with people whilst at home. She mentioned that in light of her father's recent death she wishes to spend her next pilgrimage to Lourdes giving extra time to her mother in a way which she does not find possible at home:

"I am really happy that my mum is going, she is going to be a big concern for me while I am out, not in a terribly negative sense but I just want it to be so good for her, and I want to be generous with my time as far as I can. I mean, she knows that I am working in the Hospitality, and she is delighted for me to do that, and she is older now and cannot do as much but she is a big focus for me for this time" (Sr. Anne, 35).

Epp and Price (2008, 50) believe that a major challenge facing family identity today are "increasingly elective and fluid interpersonal relationships", a point supported by Haldrup and Larsen (2003) who claimed that, due to living in an era of liquid modernity (Bauman, 2000) and "pure relationships" (Giddens, 1992), "families are in constant

302

need of performing acts and narratives that provide sense, stability and love to their familial relations" (Haldrup and Larsen, 2003, 26). I disagree that Lourdes is a platform for performing family or displaying family; instead it is a place where "doing" family is possible, and the sense, stability and love of family is found – in short, where "familying" is conducted. This finding differs from consumer research to date in that rather than furthering discussion of family structures (Lindridge and Hogg, 2006; Mason and Pavia, 2006) or of family identity (Epp and Price, 2008; 2011) I suggest a new focus: the actual building of intimate family bonds and relationships – the "doing" of family – the "familying".

Further to the idea of "familying", it became apparent that Lourdes is a place where family is created, as I met with at least four romantic couples that had met one another through the Lourdes pilgrimage experience. This led Marie to jokingly compare Lourdes with a dating agency:

"There are a lot of marriages, even among the Scottish pilgrims, I could think of at least half a dozen marriages where the couple met in, at and through Lourdes, and they are now bringing their families when they can afford it. I mean, there was a few years where I thought, "wow, Lourdes is almost becoming a dating agency"" (Marie, 54).

Miriam (25) likewise mentioned knowing "quite a few couples who've all met at Lourdes and are now married and with wee (little) kids". Twin brothers James and Paul (63) said their sister got engaged at Lourdes. One of the Irish pilgrims encountered during fieldwork spoke of her sadness that the recession had prevented her family from accompanying her to Lourdes that year. Her family's story and affinity to Lourdes was as strong as Marie's as she recalled that she had met her husband at Lourdes, became engaged at Lourdes and spent the first few days of their honeymoon there. Over the years they had made numerous pilgrimages to Lourdes with their two children, thus instilling the importance and family tradition of annually consuming Lourdes. It therefore seems that through love comes the potential for the next generation and future consumers to realise the Lourdes pilgrimage experience. Furthermore, the romantic love cultivated at Lourdes often grows across all forms of love within the agapic love paradigm (Nygren, 1989; Belk and Coon, 1993) as romantic love can grow to become family love and/or brotherhood love in the form of the friendships made at Lourdes (leading now onto the social kinship group); but, at the core of all of these is spiritual love. Consequently, in consuming the Lourdes pilgrimage experience it seems that Corinthian 13:13 is correct in saying "*and now abideth faith, hope, love, these three, but the greatest of these is love*".

7.2 The Social Kinship Group: Patricia's Story

At ninety-three years of age and having not long recovered from a hip replacement, society might think it is time for Patricia to sit back and take life easy, but she feels

differently. Volunteering and visiting Lourdes for the first time in 1949 was not Patricia's choice, but her mother convinced her to go, and Patricia has never looked back since, as she continues to volunteer with the Archdiocese of Glasgow Hospitality at Lourdes and has done so for over sixty years. She recalls her first experience at Lourdes as being "just wonderful" a descriptor which remains true sixty years on. Although having a deep and ingrained Catholic faith, Patricia shared that she is not particularly good at praying; she could never have gone to Lourdes and "gone around praying all day – so I tried to make my work my prayer". Thus, her annual pilgrimage to Lourdes offers her the chance to "just say hello" not only to Our Lady of Lourdes, but also to the copious friends and adopted Lourdes family she has gained over the last sixty years.

During one of my visits with Patricia she shared a particularly sad story of recently losing one of her good friends, Daniel. Daniel and Patricia had met during one of her first visits to Lourdes and their friendship continued over the years, with her becoming friends with Daniel's wife too. They "never failed" to send Christmas cards back and forth and she always sent Daniel a card from Lourdes if he was unable to visit one year. Unfortunately as the years passed her good friend developed dementia and was placed in a nursing home and upon my meeting with Patricia one day she shared that he had recently passed away. She continued however on the brighter note that "it was people like that that you got to know at Lourdes and you were friends with them for the rest of your life really". She said that she still has many of these life-long Lourdes friends and meets with them every month for a coffee or a meal. She concluded that "the

friendships made" are core memories, reminding Patricia of the "specialness" of Lourdes.

Goulding et al. (2009, 760) discussed the idea of "sociopleasure", whereby pleasure is generated through feelings of solidarity and togetherness. However, as illustrated by the above narrative from Patricia, often consumption of the Lourdes pilgrimage provides the consumers of this study with social relationships extending beyond friendship, and beyond mere solidarity and togetherness, entering into the domain of kinship. Their consumption of the Lourdes experience bestows "a Lourdes Family" upon them.

"I'm thinking this summer, Cath, Mary, Ashley, Paddy, Nula, (and) Mhairi are all coming. And this is the third time with them, and I will take a day out with them and we'll socialise and have a drink, and I'll write to them during the year, and we have bonded, we are like a little family, and Lourdes has done that. My life is richer because they are here, and their lives are richer because of me, and they are not just acquaintances, and that is one of the things that can happen in Lourdes – genuine time with each other" (Fr. Brendan, 73).

Bauman (2000, 199-201) offered the idea of "cloakroom communities", and similarly, Kozinets (2002, 21) offered the "sudden community", both of which refer to temporal, short-lived communities surrounding a specific event or spectacle. Consumer research has witnessed the discussion of such temporal communities (Celsi et al., 1993;

Goulding et al., 2009), with one example being the white water rafters of Arnould and Price (1993, 38) wherein the bonds created between the consumers were temporal in nature in that they existed only during the experience. The relationships formed at Lourdes, however, although often "sudden" in their creation, have a more lasting effect than the aforementioned "cloakroom" and "sudden" communities, with terms such as "life-long friendships" and "deep-bonds" used by many informants. The idea of strangers coming to be "lifelong", "bonded" friends is arguably quite an uncommon finding in society today. As previously discussed, Bauman (2003, 89) cautioned that in "meeting a stranger you need vigilance, first, and vigilance second and third", and that the saying "don't talk to strangers…has now become the strategic precept of adult normalcy" (Bauman, 2000, 109). Accordingly, dominated by fears over security, change, and vulnerability, humankind often quashes the emotions of trust, compassion and mercy which can be "suicidal" in our "game of survival" (Bauman, 2003, 89). Yet, in Lourdes, this quashing and need for survival is silenced, as illustrated by Sr. Anne's sharing that the strong bonds created with strangers at Lourdes, are such that "you feel like you have known them for a million years". Similarly, although Bauman (2003, 89) believes that "coming together" is only utilised selfishly as a means of ensuring one gets what they desire, at Lourdes the bond is unselfish, pure and true, with some lasting quite literally a lifetime, as Patricia described.

On discussing their arrival home from Lourdes, many youth informants shared their feelings of suffering the Lourdes malaise of "the doom" or "the PLBs – the Post Lourdes Blues". Regarding the latter, PLBs, Garry commented that "everybody suffers

from them when you come back from Lourdes, so that just shows how much your life changes when you are there, and then you come back to your normal mundane life, it's depressing" (Garry, 25). Youth informants, in particular, recalled feelings of longing for and missing the Lourdes experience and the familial-like bonds formed there:

"You sleep practically the full day the Monday because you're so, so tired. Then you wake up at whatever in the afternoon of the Monday but you just wake up like "I'm alone". Because usually, you're waking up and you've got two or three people in your room and you're getting up, you're going for breakfast together, you're going for lunch together, and you go for dinner together and you get ready together and you're going out at night and you're going to sleep and they're there, and… Like, your friends are there with you constantly. So, then you kind of wake up and as much as you've got your family, of course, but you wake up and you're like "pft, I miss everyone, so much". And you miss being there, it's not even just you miss everyone; you just miss being there, you miss all the stories. But then, of course, the Monday night there's a reunion, like you get back on the Sunday at midnight, Monday night there's a reunion every single year. So, you've got to go out on the Monday night" (Lilly, 24).

As outlined above, Bauman (2000) believes that we live in a "liquid modern" society, where social relationships and community are slowly becoming obsolete. However, the above comment highlights that a solidified relationship reigns at Lourdes, as Lilly indicates her sense of loss upon realising she is truly alone again upon her arrival home.

308

This sense of loss is however quickly remedied in the planning of a reunion, ensuring maintenance of the familial bonds of brotherly and sisterly love forged at Lourdes. First-timer to Lourdes, Danielle, also discusses such sense of loss and familial bonds:

"Well, people always talked about how the first morning you wake up, once you get home, you feel "the doom", and I absolutely felt "the doom". Because we arrived home in the middle of the night, so when I woke up the next morning and I saw my room and things and I saw my suitcase lying on the floor I was like, "oh I am not ready for this". Because every morning I would wake up, and my friend in the bed opposite me, like I was always up first, and I would be throwing shoes at her and things to wake her up and that just became part of, like we were kind of annoying each other but I was so happy to have her there and to have the other girls upstairs…" (Danielle, 18).

The "shoe-throwing" interaction between Danielle and her friend resembles a somewhat sister-like interaction, illustrating the deep bonds she forged whilst at Lourdes. Danielle, being a first timer to Lourdes, acknowledged in her pre-pilgrimage interview that she did not know any of the girls she would share a room with. Yet after such a short time they can playfully throw shoes at one another without fear of insult or argument, leading Danielle to believe the group, through their "little tensions" and "imperfections", to be reminiscent of a family:

"It was like a family… Not everyone is going to be best pals, but you will all need to work together and things, and families are not the best of pals, like they don't always get on. If there were differences and things, it was almost like, as opposed to being a perfect group where everyone is in harmony, it was much more like a family in that way" (Danielle, 18).

Thus, the social kinship bond which is created through consumption of the Lourdes experience is unique as it resembles not only the bonds of a strengthened community, but for many consumers creates relationships bordering on family. Ironically, unlike the letter- and card-writing of older generations, as described by Patricia, the social kinship of youth informants is often maintained through the liquid modern outlets of social media; Danielle shared that such outlets are integral in her dealing with "the doom", saying that "…All I wanted to do was to see everyone right away and there was a kind of furious adding everyone on Facebook and organising a night out and all of that" (Danielle, 18).

As previously discussed, Canniford and Shankar (2013, 1063) found technology to often "betray" the naturalism of the beach and the surfing context they studied; however, at and following the Lourdes pilgrimage experience, the use of technology through virtual communication is not viewed pessimistically. Bauman (2003, 62) believes that virtual communication creates "shallow and brief" connections, however social media can be utilised as a tool aiding the Lourdes consumer to further solidify the connections they have made there, enabling them to organise the "must-attend Monday

night reunion" (Lilly) and further reunions throughout the year, which in turn leads to Lourdes becoming much more than a mere week of the year, or a one-off experience. Rather, Lourdes becomes a "part of life in many ways" (Paul), "part of the fabric of my life" (Marie), or even a part of their entire being, as Miriam (25) shares: "I can't really imagine a summer without it. Just I think I'll be heartbroken when I have to stop, you know, and it would have to be a really big reason why I have to stop going. For, it's just part of me". Belk (2013, 493) recently argued that the "digital world helps us extend our sense of self", and building on this work, this study demonstrates a case where the digital world enables the consumers of the Lourdes experience to communicate and further not only their sense of self, but also their sense of social kinship.

The insight offered thus far has been drawn from particular pilgrimage groups, and has reflected the strong bonds created amongst them. However, many of the informants spoke of wider family-like groupings, and of the Lourdes experience having created a connection between consumers in which they felt as though they were "one family" (Fr. Brendan):

> "…We are one family, you find that very much in Lourdes. At Mass one morning, and this was just the English Mass, we had people from Africa, from Vietnam, from Korea, from Sri Lankra, from India, from Australia, from Canada, from Mexico, from Ireland, England, Scotland… But like, within the seventy people who are there, you have this little thing of the world almost, now if you multiply that with

the different language Masses that are going on*, and all the different groups that are here, - the world is here"* (Fr. Brendan, 73).

Accordingly, all the informants felt that the Lourdes experience afforded them the opportunity not only to consume time with their faith, their physical family, and their social family, but also with the wider family of Catholicism, with many saying the Lourdes pilgrimage experience allows them the chance to feel part of "something bigger", part of "a huge global community" (Kelly, 35). Paul put it as follows: "You are part of the universal church at Lourdes, not just local Parish, Diocesan, National or whatever, you know it is International and no matter what colour, creed, language that you speak you are part of that" (Paul, 63). This shared feeling resonates strongly with the previously discussed findings on communitas (Turner, 1969, Turner and Turner, 1978), bringing the present study's findings chapters to a full circle in discussing the first objective of the study by returning once again to the theme of communitas. For the world-wide Catholic family found at Lourdes, a sense of togetherness, a sense of communitas, is created, which reaffirms Lourdes as a "safe space" where consumers are free to be Catholic, to be family, and in short, to just be.

7.3 Conclusion

The past three chapters have offered insight into the first objective of this study, providing relevant excerpts from the narratives explaining why the consumers spoken with in this study consume the Lourdes pilgrimage experience. Communitas, liminality

and kinship are central in bringing consumers annually and recurrently to the small Pyrenean town. Chapter six demonstrated that just as the Sacred Sanctuary of Lourdes is desired by consumers as it provides temporal escape from the mundane aspects of everyday 21st century life. The spiritual, emotional and physical intensity of the Sacred experience leaves consumers desiring temporal escape from such intensity, and they therefore sometimes run from the Sacred Sanctuary towards the secular marketplace. We can now move on to the fourth and final chapter of this section, and discussion of the second objective of this study: understanding the role that the marketplace of Lourdes plays in the entire Lourdes pilgrimage experience.

CHAPTER VIII: THE ROLE OF THE MARKETPLACE IN THE LOURDES EXPERIENCE

8.0 "Two Separate Worlds": Lilly's Story

Upon her mum's cancer diagnosis, Lilly (24) and her family journeyed together to Lourdes. Lilly's favourite memory of Lourdes centres on her first arrival, when she went with her mum to the grotto late at night. The peace and tranquillity she experienced there has been imprinted upon her mind, making the grotto at night her favourite time and place in Lourdes even now. That said, Lilly recalls her initial "shock" at the "tack" present in the town of Lourdes: the "bright, flashing shops" and the "sparkling Our Lady souvenirs", leading her to see the town almost as a "tourist attraction" and completely separate from the Sacred Sanctuary. As she shares, "Lourdes as a whole, I think is very tacky. I think it's like a Blackpool for religion but I think the Domain[21] - that's sacred there".

The preceding chapter began to demonstrate that the marketplace has an important role in creating the "whole package" of the Lourdes experience. However, throughout the three-year ethnography, all the informants shared Lilly's sentiments, separating the Sacred Sanctuary from the secular, tacky town. Common descriptors of the town and marketplace of Lourdes included: "superfluous", "unnecessary", "meaningless",

---

[21]As mentioned earlier in the thesis, the Domain is the word often used to describe the religious Sanctuary of Lourdes, referring to the Sacred Sanctuary, and the town kept distinct as the secular marketplace.

"Blackpool-esque", "tacky", "vulgar", "secular", "not sacred at all". Thus, informants continuously dampened the importance of the town and displayed a shared belief in a clear boundary existing between the Sacred Sanctuary and the secular commercial town. Belk et al. (1989, 23) asserted there "being no evidence that the Sacred and Profane can mix with impunity and maintain sacredness. The boundaries are permeable, but well-guarded", and the clear and consistent separation found amongst the informants in this study further demonstrate such "well guarding" and maintenance of the Sacredness imbued within the Sanctuary of Lourdes. Lilly viewed the two as being "separate worlds", whilst for Sr. Anne (37) upon entering the Sacred Domain, "it was almost as if the air round about it was different". Meanwhile, for Jacob:

"…The Domain is sacred, but the town round about it is just kind of superfluous. It's kind of like... we often say it's kind of like the Domain is the Domain and outside it is like Blackpool but with holy stuff. To take folk who haven't been before, if you just took them through the town without going to the Domain they're going to think, "what is this, is this just a joke?"" (Jacob, 26).

The literature review discussed O'Guinn and Belk's (1989) work on the Televangelist theme park Heritage Village, where the marketplace mall was found to be at its centre, and the Christian parables of the Golden Calf (Exodus 32) and Jesus' anger at the temple marketplace (Matthew, 20:1-16) seemingly forgotten, and replaced by an ideology encouraging and tolerating consumption, materialism, "luxury and self-indulgence". This was not found at Lourdes, with the commercial elements of the

secular town not justified but critiqued by informants as being contradictory to the dogmas of Christianity. James recalled images of such parables whilst reflecting on the Lourdes marketplace, whilst Frances likewise mentioned the contradiction of the town to the spirit of pilgrimage and Catholicism:

"I found the town "tatty", I did not like it, it reminded me of the... what was the biblical quote in the Temple, the buyers and sellers[22]. I did not like that, but then that is common to all shrines, it is just persuasion, but the Domain is quite different - it is the proper Lourdes and it is serene and spiritual" (James, 63).

"I mean, the lights were a bit much, a bit weird, and all the tacky products and that. I mean, if it's meant to be a holy place I did wonder why do they need to have lights – I mean like the tacky fluorescent lights, you know?" (Frances, 17).

Veer and Shankar (2011, 556) discussed the idea of people outwith the Christian faith being critical of Christians who live material- and consumption-driven lives, with these behaviours viewed as contradictory to the dogmas of Christianity. The Catholic consumers' separation between the Sacred Sanctuary and the "superfluous" commercial town may well be their justification and movement away from the material and consumer lifestyles that others would potentially critique. However, hermeneutically, it

---

[22]James is referring to the New Testament parable of the buyers and sellers, as outlined in chapter one.

was found that despite a shared belief in the "two different worlds" of Lourdes; the "sacred", "special", "proper Lourdes" Sanctuary and the highly criticised "superfluous", "joke-like", and "tacky" commercial town, the informants engaged freely and openly with both of these "different worlds", with many discussing throughout interviews and on-site conversations their favourite memories and times at Lourdes, which had often taken place in the commercial, secular town, leading Sr. Anne to assert the town to be a valid part of the whole pilgrimage experience:

"I love walking through the streets of Lourdes, it is funny, I mean because I love passing people by, I love seeing them, I love working out where they are from, and just smiling at them and saying hello. There is such a good atmosphere round about that area; it is still very much a pilgrimage area, and we are all there for that so I love walking about the streets" (Sr. Anne, 37).

So far, this thesis has often made reference to the idea of the "whole package". Such reference is in light of an echoed response across many people met over the last three years, that Lourdes as an experience offers its consumers the "whole package" - time for faith, fun, family and friends.

"I just enjoy the whole package of being there, and that includes quite a few things because it is a Holy place, but also, seeing the kindness, the care and the help that the sick get, the loving care that they get. I have to say our own little

group, … I got inspiration from each person in the group in different ways, just what they did and so I enjoy that, and of course I enjoy when we met up at night, if we were all doing different jobs and then we would meet up at night for some dinner and a drink" (Kitty, 66).

"There is the kind of blanket memory of friendship, the spirituality, just the package. I mean, people talk about package holidays - Lourdes is probably the ultimate package because it covers everything; there are just so many memories and so much fun apart from the serious side" (James, 63).

This need for both the fun and the faith - for the whole package - was shared amongst informants, with the word "balance" often used:

"Well, you need the fun as well as the piety. Piosity is almost like the Scots phrase a 'Holy Willy', whereby you're almost too holy for this world. And I mentioned the word balance earlier, I think that you need the fun and the faith" (Marie, 54).

The need for both fun and faith was echoed across all the informants, with consumers from this study acknowledging that although it is geared towards God and the Sacred, Lourdes was still ultimately bounded to earth, and must consequently meet human realities, such as the need to eat, drink, sleep, rest, talk, pray, laugh and cry.

"Well you cannot always be on a religious high there, you live your life in reality so you have got to feed yourself and sleep, and have social contact with people. So if you just went to Lourdes and spent the whole time away in isolation from everybody down at the Grotto or whatever I don't think that would be as good as having a balance, a mixture, meeting different people and different cultures and languages" (Paul, 63).

Thus, Lourdes is a place where the Sacred, spiritual, social, and secular can all be found. The consumers of this study clearly "separate" what they perceive as sacred and what they perceive as secular, and their use of language – the "special", "sacred", "serene", "spiritual" Domain, versus the "tacky", "superfluous" marketplace/ town is testament to this. However, as outlined in the preceding chapter, pilgrimage at Lourdes is centred on movement back and forth between these two separate spheres, ultimately creating the "whole package" that is the Lourdes pilgrimage experience. This need for movement back and forth between the Sacred and the secular spheres returns us to the theme of liminality, with consumers more than ever facing a liminal position between heaven and earth. The Domain allows them a time, place and moment where they are free to "juggle with the factors of existence" (Turner, 1967, 106). Yet equally, the marketplace makes available to the consumer the means to escape such "existential factors" when the experience becomes too intense. The goods and products sold within this marketplace play a unique and important part in aiding the consumer to temporarily escape such existential, emotional intensity – leading us now on to a discussion of the importance of Catholic Kitsch at Lourdes.

8.1 Catholic Kitsch at Lourdes: Matthew's Story

Twenty-two year old Matthew "just loves Lourdes" and often spoke of his hope and desire that someday his twin brother would come to Lourdes with him, sharing that he knows his brother will "have a blast", and that it would be nice to experience Lourdes with him. He continued that part of the drawback for his brother is his lack of understanding of "what Lourdes is all about", further strengthening the earlier findings that the Lourdes experience is "indescribable", and often has "goodie-goodie", "Crazy Catholic", overly pious assumptions and "caricatures" aligned with it. Matthew shared that such lack of understanding of "what Lourdes is really like" is prevalent amongst his friends as well as his brother; thus, as Matthew shared more about his Lourdes experience, it became apparent that he uses the marketplace of Lourdes, and in particular its "tacky" offerings in a unique way.

Matthew mentioned that he had bought "the ultimate tacky gift" – glow-in-the dark luminous rosary beads (figure 24) for all of his friends, and he described the sensation that such "tacky" beads caused when one of his friends wore them to a UV party. The beads, he continued, were a "hit" across the party, with his friend telling him: "Matthew, they were a hoot. Everyone wants to know where I got them from". To which Matthew replied "tell them all the way from Lourdes, brought lovingly all the way from Lourdes". Previously, Matthew shared his belief that the marketplace offers primary consumers "light-hearted relief" from their intense spiritual and emotional experiences. His discussion continued to follow this thought-stream of the marketplace

being "playful", "light-hearted" and "fun", descriptors that Matthew shared, and which are equally relevant and present through the whole Lourdes experience. Consequently, in buying such a fun, kitsch yet equally symbolically religious[23] product for his friends, Matthew manages to communicate the "whole package" to them - the fun and the faith which the Lourdes experience permits.

Figure 24: Matthew's Luminous Rosary Beads

The term 'Kitsch' has an "unclear etymology" (McDannell, 1995, 164), stemming from the German word "Kitschen" which means "to collect rubbish from the street". Other linguistic derivatives of the word kitsch equally do not place it in a positive light, with derivative meanings such as "to make cheap" and "to make haughty and puffed up"

---

[23] I say "symbolically religious" as the beads are rosary beads, and, as outlined in the literature review, the rosary is a praying tool to help Catholics say the sequential prayer to Our Lady. Thus it is a sacred vessel enabling meditation and communication between the earthly and heavenly realm, and consequently it is often revered and treated with respect by Catholics.

(McDannell, 1995, 164-165) being offered. McDannell (1995, 163) described the modern day continuance of such negative perceptions towards kitsch, sharing that kitsch means to "loot" and subsequently "water down" art and culture, continuing that kitsch is generally seen derogatively as "anti-art" and to contain a "negative moral dimension". Consequently, critics often use the metaphor of the "dizzy blonde" when referring to kitsch, believing that although "sensual", kitsch is equally "simple minded" (McDannell, 1995, 182).

Regarding religious kitsch, the French use the word "bonieuserie" (McDannell, 1995, 165), which refers to both "religious knickknacks" and the "notion of the conformingly banal". The English language has no such term, therefore alliterative and derogative terms such as "Catholic/ Christian kitsch", "Holy hardware" and "Jesus Junk" (McDannell, 1995, 222) have become accepted terms and commonly used labels to describe the kitsch, tacky religious objects sold in shrines and religious stores globally. Within consumer research, Catholic Kitsch has been discussed by Turley (2013, 169) as alluding to goods which are viewed as "anachronistic, clichéd, derivative, mass–produced, populist and in poor taste". This viewpoint resonates with Belk et al. (1989, 25) and their belief that the Christian images of 'Our Lady on a sea shell' point to a kitsch decontextualisation and are "offensive" and an "inappropriate mixing of the Sacred and the Profane". Equally Kozinets (2001, 82) proposed that sacred meanings are eroded by articulations of "crass materialism". Consequently, within consumer research the general consensus is that such religiously kitsch objects desacralise the Sacred (Belk et al., 1989). This said, however, Belk et al. (1989, 12) acknowledged that

what one consumer may view to be religious kitsch may to a religious consumer be special and sacred. This thesis supports this viewpoint as it has uncovered the religious kitsch object to hold a deep and symbolic meaning. Despite the luminous rosary bead often being described as tacky by informants, it was discovered throughout the three-year study that quite often "one's tack is another's treasure" (Sr. Anne, 37):

"Those Rosary Beads, the luminous ones, I have a pair of them. They belonged to somebody who used to be very friendly with my granny, my Spanish granny, who died in 1930. So, my dad was only five when she died and it is the only physical thing that I have that is remotely associated with her. You know, somebody very close to my Gran had these hideously tacky plastic luminous Rosary Beads, so for that reason I keep them because of what they mean. I can get over the tack, I mean I would not flaunt it in public, but I could get over the tack if the thing really meant something to me" (Sr. Anne, 37).

Consequently, the "inalienable wealth" (Curasi, Price and Arnould, 2004) of the luminous rosary, as the only tangible link between Sr. Anne and her deceased Gran, enables the young nun to "get over the tack". A similar symbolic importance was imbued upon a luminous Our Lady statue (figure 25) by a female French volunteer whom I met during the fieldwork of June/July 2011. Andrea kept a luminous statue of Our Lady in her bedroom, and upon noticing it I was shocked, as my own Scottish Catholic upbringing automatically categorised such an object as tacky. Thus, with

Andrea being very devout and strong in her faith, it seemed strange to me that she should own such an item. However, upon asking Andrea the meaning and significance of the statue, she replied, "I know it's luminous and I know it is "bonieuserie"[24] but when I wake during the night and see the statue shining, I feel protected and safe knowing that Our Lady is watching me" (field note from day eleven of June/ July 2011 fieldtrip).

Figure 25: Andrea's Luminous Our Lady Statue

---

[24] This field note also included the following field note, It is important to share this additional information as it demonstrates the hermeneutic layering of understanding developed throughout this study. "*I have never heard this word before, Andrea explains it to refer almost to the French for religious tack as she mentioned it is used in relation to religious objects only. I've now checked it and it does indeed refer to religious tack, I also popped the word into Google scholar just to see if anything has been done in this area within a French context and it has directed me to an English piece of work by Colleen McDannell, so I will check her work out once home*".

Thus, the often perceived as "tacky" luminous products have very different symbolic meanings attached to them, resonating with McDannell (1995, 66) and her belief that "it is not simply that objects used in different contexts have different meanings, it is that within one context the same object may have many different meanings". Firstly, for Matthew the luminous rosary is a "mnemonic device" (Shackley, 2006, 100) around which Lourdes narratives and the essence itself of the experience is shared. For Sr. Anne and Andrea, the luminous rosary and statue become vessels enabling them to connect with the deceased and deity. Thus, at its core, the luminous religious good becomes a communicative device, whether as a means of communicating with deity and past generations or a means of communicating the fun, social side of Lourdes.

Within the Lourdes marketplace, the Catholic kitsch object is clearly "embraced" by both vendors and consumers, with a vendor in one of the busiest Lourdes shops disclosing that the biggest seller in Lourdes is the glittering, colour-changing Our Lady statue shown in Figure 11.

"...I went into the big blue hospital looking shop, and was buying my sparkly Our Lady statues and began chatting with the woman serving me. I asked her: do the statues sell very often, and by which cultures, and she said "they sell like crazy, they are our biggest sellers although the luminous products are also popular, but the sparkling Our Lady statues are our number one sellers". She explained that they are bought by "people from all over the world, not just one

*particular culture, everyone likes them" (*Field note from day seven of May 2013 fieldtrip*)*.

This glittering religious kitsch-object initially shocked Lilly (24) but won her over in the end:

> "Well, the tackiest thing I have is a glittery Our Lady statue that changes colour if it is dark or light. So, it is blue and if it goes sunny it turns purple, it is really nice! I bought that because I thought to myself*:* "that's really nice, that's glittery". I remember bringing my friends back one and they were like "oh my God, are you serious, this is from Lourdes?" But they kind of loved it as well. That's the tackiest thing I have ever bought [laughs]… I've still got it, I've still got it in my room, it sits on my window ledge, I've had that for years now, years" (Lilly, 24).

Ironically, as shared at the beginning of this chapter, Lilly initially found the sparkling Our Lady statue "shocking" during her first visit to Lourdes, and still today she views this statue as "tacky" and kitsch. Her laughter signifies the "laughter provoking" (McDannell, 1995, 50) attribute of the kitsch item, but equally she shares that she finds the object "really nice". She bought the statue during her first trip to Lourdes when she was only 14 years old, despite her initial shocked reaction to it. Yet, ten years later, this glittery, kitsch item remains on her windowsill. Her keeping of the statue coupled with

her laughter resonates with the work of McCracken (2005, 26) and his belief that "objects can also be homey when they are informal and playful in character". Chapter six discussed Lourdes as a "home away from home" for consumers. Thus, the keeping of the sparkling Our Lady over the years coupled with the laughter and fondness Lilly still demonstrates when discussing this object suggests that the "whole package" of the Lourdes experience can be rekindled and preserved in the homeland, instilling the sense of the fun and faith within the home which was had during the experience.

Ahead of going to Lourdes Danielle, like Matthew, mentioned that her brother seemed confused as to why she would want to go to Lourdes. She spoke about gifting him a religious fashion bracelet (figure 26) as a means of communicating to him that Lourdes is not "happy clappy" or "crazy", but was actually a place where you could have fun:

> "I bought a really nice religious fashion bracelet for my brother, it is black with silver and with Saints pictures on it. And for someone like my brother, because of his age, he is 14, he is a boy, maybe slightly less comfortable to display his faith and yet he wears that bracelet every day" (Danielle, 18).

Figure 26: Danielle's Religious Fashion Bracelet

Earlier, it was discussed that Danielle was happy when her friends at home realised that the people she volunteered with at Lourdes were "normal", and here is a similar occurrence, as she wishes to communicate the same "normalcy" to her brother. This further supports that the religious kitsch product at Lourdes has a deeper function as a communication tool of the "fun", "light-hearted", "laughter" side of the experience, with many, predominantly youth consumers of the Lourdes experience utilising Catholic kitsch objects as communication tools to their peers at home. However, this did not mean that the kitsch object was consumed only by youths, as the more mature Four Scottish Ladies (63, 66, 67, 74) outlined their unique utilisation of a religious kitsch glass mug as a measurement tool, as follows:

Christine: Did you hear about Melissa and Kitty measuring out their drinks?

Kitty: I thought that we were not going to talk about this [all laugh]… We had these glass mugs, with the handles, and on the front was the apparition scene on the front, and that is what we had our wee drink with at night.

Christine: I always measure my drink, because I don't drink very much as you know [laughs]. But I always measure it by the capful, and Kitty and Melissa when they discovered that Iris and I did that, had got these mugs. So then they decided, well we will just have it to the bottom of Bernadette's feet…

Kitty: If we just wanted a wee one [laughs]… But as the night was going on, it was to the bottom of Bernadette's veil, then to the end of the first decade of the rosary, and slowly the measure crept upwards [all laugh].

Although it had been bought as a functional consumption object, something to drink their tipple from, over time the above glass became a "mnemonic device" around which the social side of the Lourdes experience could be retold and shared with others. The primary consumers of the glass mugs were Kitty and her best friend Melissa; however, the tacky glass mug has since become "meaningful in the specific pattern of relationship" (McDannell, 1995, 205) between the Four Scottish Ladies, communicating their happy, social times together, and although not "binding" them to the Sacred, the glass and its narrative does "bind" them to one another (McDannell, 1995, 45). The transition of the Lourdes kitsch object to one of symbolic and deep meaning, and a group "mnemonic device" was shared amongst many informants, most notably Miriam through her "Father Abraham frog" (figure 27):

"…We do a song when we're in Lourdes at the party night. It's called Father Abraham and it's "Father Abraham" [sings lightly], and it's like actions and we do all these things and so, you're jumping about all this, kind of thing [mimics the actions]. And one of the years I was a shift leader and the group bought me a frog, and it says Lourdes on it and the arms and legs go like this, and it's hanging up on my window…They obviously saw it and thought that is Father Abraham, so yeah, I've got that still" (Miriam, 25).

Figure 27: Miriam's Father Abraham Frog

Miriam's Father Abraham Frog is a clear "metonym" (Belk et al., 1989, 17) with the gift linking Miriam and the tradition of the Father Abraham dance at Lourdes with the people with whom she consumes Lourdes annually, her family, her friends, etc. However, it also links her with those who gifted the dancing frog to her, consequently making the object special, important and "inalienable" (Curasi et al., 2004) to Miriam. In chapter two, sacralisation via quintessence was discussed, including Belk et al.'s assertion that "some sacred objects seem ordinary, yet are regarded and treated as extraordinary" (1989, 15), with quintessential objects possessing the rare ability of being "just right". Consequently, the tacky, kitsch object at Lourdes becomes "just right" for many. However, the irony is that quintessence is found through the goods being "tacky", "laughter provoking" (McDannell, 1995) and thus 'quintessentially wrong' in many ways. Nonetheless, the objects become quintessentially right for the Lourdes consumer through successfully communicating the "whole package" of Lourdes - the fun, the social side, the laughter, as well as the religion.

That said, throughout the study separation was made between the "true", "proper" or "tasteful" religious good and the "tacky", "fun" "kitsch" religious good, with the former seen to be more important and special. In Catholicism it is traditional to have religious items blessed by a priest in order to imbue them with sacredness. Such blessings resonate with the idea of the sacramental offered by McDannell (1995, 19), which refers to "something that is more than a sign or a symbol but less than a sacrament[25]",

---

[25] Catholicism has seven sacraments, Christening (baptism), Confession, Eucharist, Confirmation, Marriage, Priest/Sisterhood, and Death, with Catholics partaking in at least five of these sacraments throughout their lives.

continuing that, like sacraments, the sacramental "serves as a doorway between the Sacred and the secular". For example, a Catholic will often have the crucifix they wear and the rosaries they pray with blessed, which will make them more symbolic sacred vessels, enabling communication with deity to be opened (Higgins and Hamilton, 2012); however, they will not be as important as, say, the ritual sacrament of making one's First Holy Communion. In consuming the religious and the tacky religious good at Lourdes, separation between what was religious and what was kitsch was often determined by which goods would be appropriate to have blessed by a priest. As Matthew observed, "I don't want the priest to bless shot glasses, or luminous rosaries - I think that's just taking the pee a bit".

Miller (2010, 48) explained that different pot sizes and shapes in the Hindu faith imbue the pot with either pure or impure status, with "…The most open-mouthed, the most angled rims associated with the most polluting foodstuffs such as meat and beyond that pots for urination for the elderly, while the most closed and rounded forms are associated with milk, which in Hinduism has sacred connotations". Consequently, he claims that the need for so many pots within Hinduism is reflective of the "complexity and elaboration of symbolic ritual and social distinctions" (2010, 48). As outlined repeatedly throughout this section, there is a shared "social distinction" held amongst the informants that certain products are tacky, such as the luminous beads, the sparkly Our Lady statues, etc. However, this "complexity" of social distinction is dealt with through the symbolic ritual of a priest's blessing - by having those items blessed that are sacredly driven, such as a rosary set, a medal, and a crucifix.

Morinis (1992, 6) discussed the idea of the "cult of traces", explaining that the tradition of pilgrims taking a souvenir back to the homeland is not a new occurrence. However, he continues that the cheap souvenir is made purposively "tawdry", as it symbolizes "the ideals of the shrine but in no way attempts to rival or reproduce the perfection it contains for that attempt would be to negate the uniqueness of what is situated far off and make tangible what is the ideal". The separation between the "proper" religious and the "tacky" religious good at Lourdes can thereby be said to signify two communicative processes. The first, "proper" religious good, when shared with those at home or reused by the primary consumer at home, harkens back to the religious dimension and spiritual essence of Lourdes with its unburdening and healing attributes. However, the "tacky" good, when shared with those at home or again consumed for the self, often links back to times with others, communicating the fun, social side of Lourdes. In chapter five, Sr. Anne offered her idea of the "double dimension" whereby she felt that Lourdes encapsulated both aspects of her relationship with God – personal time with God, and time with others. An equal double-dimension is prevalent here, with the marketplace offerings at Lourdes permitting both serious communication with deity through the "proper" religious product, and the jovial, "tacky" religious good at the same time communicating the fun side of Lourdes. Thus, the "tacky" good is never consumed as a means of communicating a "perfect ideal" of Lourdes, but rather, the imperfection, the "tawdriness" of the product makes it perfect through which to communicate the laughing, social, imperfect, human side of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience.

So far the "tacky" religious product has been shown to enable informants to rekindle or communicate their happy times and moments at Lourdes. However, many spoke of the religious "tacky" product as often having a deeper, personal meaning, aiding them or another in their day-to-day life.

"I think when I first came home and I was still all hyped up I used to wear them [religious fashion bracelets (figure 28)] quite a lot, and obviously holy bracelets are kind of a fashion accessory anyway, but I did feel for me that I was wearing them for a reason. I was not just wearing them because I had bought it in Top Shop. I bought them because I suppose in the back of my mind I was thinking I was in Lourdes, and I was so happy to be there, and I was quite hyped-up by the general atmosphere that I thought I wanted to bring a bit of this home with me. If I buy a bracelet, and I can wear that everyday then I am not walking about with a nurse's dress and sash on but for me it is a part of Lourdes, and I have got that with me, and yet it is kind of acceptable because it is like a fashion thing" (Danielle, 18).

Figure 28: Danielle's inconspicuous religious fashion bracelet, which resembles many of the rubber charity bracelets sold today.

Rinallo et al. (2013c, 36) recently discussed the wearing of rosary beads as a symbol of religiosity as potentially placing a consumer under a "panoptical gaze", with these objects going against the prevailing secularism and as such being perceived as out of kilter with everyday life. Given the present feelings of negativity towards Catholicism in Scotland, such wearing and demonstration of religiosity via rosaries and religious jewellery could well place a "panoptical gaze" upon its consumer; by pigeon-holing the consumer as a "Crazy Catholic" or a "Bible Basher". However, on the other hand, the current fashionable status of religious bracelets and rosaries (Rinallo et al., 2013c) has made society more open and accepting of the consumption, wearing and use of such goods. Thus, the religious bracelet and rosary becomes consumable in every sphere of life, not just in the private or religious. A first glance at the consumption of the religious

fashion item would likely assume a signalling of the commercialisation or secularisation of the Sacred (Belk et al., 1989). However, this study finds resonance with Rinallo et al. (2013c, 36) by finding the fashionable religious object to take on "a dual nature, both sacred and profane at the same time. As religious objects, they draw consumers nearer to a sense of the divine, to God. However, they also make consumers feel more beautiful, more desirable, and more desired".

Chapter six discussed that a temporal "coherent sense of self" (Ahuvia, 2005) is gained throughout the Lourdes pilgrimage experience. Now, it is demonstrated through consuming these religious objects which are deemed to be "tacky" or "kitsch" that a further "coherent" sense of self is gained, as the often-repressed Catholic sense of self is freed and expressed through the everyday wearing and consumption of such goods. For, just as an iPhone, clothing, car, hobby and eating habit all demonstrate different fragments of the self, the wearing of the dual fashionable and religious bracelet or other object equally demonstrates belief in the Catholic faith, but without fear of stigma or marginalisation; in short, without the fear of being placed under the "panoptical gaze".

That said, Rinallo et al. (2013c), discussed the open and conspicuous wearing of religiously fashionable goods such as rosary beads. Park and Baker (2007, 504) suggested that due to consumerism being more prevalent amongst younger generations, potentially "younger cohorts will consume more religious goods…Especially as consumption has become an increasingly important symbolic marker of identity". In

this study, it is found that the consumption of religious fashion bracelets and goods is more popular amongst youths, in line with Park and Baker's findings (2007). However, although some did wear the currently fashionable and conspicuous religious bracelets,[26] most wore the less conspicuous, rubber fashion bracelets that could relate to any number of brands, charities or associations (figure 28). These were worn inconspicuously whilst in the home country as a means of avoiding the "panoptical gaze" (Rinallo et al., 2013c), not worn to be conspicuous "markers" of Catholic identity or as signifiers of a "virtuous consumption choice" (Sandikci and Ger, 2010).

Such inconspicuous wearing of Lourdes fashion bracelets resonates with the inconspicuous wearing of Mormon sacred clothing (McDannell, 1995, 206). However, for Mormons the secret, inconspicuous wearing of sacred garments was found to be at times liberating and equally at other times a "burden" (1995, 221). The inconspicuous wearing and consuming of fashion religious bracelets from Lourdes, however, did not point to the same tension, but was viewed by many as a balancing technique, or as shared by Danielle, an "assimilation tool" - a means of conforming to dominant social structure and "fitting in" whilst equally inconspicuously demonstrating faith. As discussed in the literature review, Beruschavili and Arnould (2005) asked how religious consumers negotiate religious dogma with the dominant social structure of consumer culture. This thesis has found balance to be the answer to that question, with the Catholic consumers in this study often displaying their faith and their Lourdes

---

[26]These bracelets relate to the fashion bracelets with saints' images upon them sold in many high street stores such as Topshop and worn by many celebrities today.

experience through the wearing of fashionable and inconspicuous bracelets which have Lourdes and Catholicism, not secular ideology, at the centre.

Consequently, many informants shared how the marketplace offerings at times enabled them to recapture the faithful spirit of the Lourdes experience, as outlined by Matthew:

> "Just a wee bracelet I picked up…But I find occasionally I'm like, if I see it, I'm like "phew" [exhales a breath out] "just be calm, just calm yourself down, it'll be alright, just take a deep breath and go". It kind of just reminds me about everything about Lourdes, about the experience, of the kind of better person I want to be. And I'll be like, "Right. We're okay. We're all right. Just carry on, and try and be a better person" (Matthew, 22).

Miller (2010, 50) believes that "objects are important, not because they are evident and physically constrain or enable, but quite the opposite. It is often precisely because we do not see them, the less we are aware of them the more powerfully they can determine our expectations by setting the scene and ensuring appropriate behaviour, without being open to challenge. They determine what takes place to the extent that we are unconscious of their capacity to do so". However, Matthew's words, above, and the responses from many informants are contrary to this idea, for they are conscious of the object, although its religious alignment may be inconspicuous to others, its effect is very evident, known, and liked by the informants in this study. As Matthew shares, his

Lourdes bracelet reminds him of his experience at Lourdes and the tenets of Catholicism aligned with the pilgrimage experience, consciously reminding and aiding him in trying to be the "better person" he wishes to be. Consequently, the informants of this study were not unaware of the impact of the religious products, with the goods often "putting things in perspective" (Lisa), and giving a "fresh perspective" (James) to the informants. Frances's religious fashion bracelet consciously reminds her that she is "part of" a wider, global community:

"I mean, like my saints bracelet [touching and pointing to her fashion bracelet once again], it makes me feel like I am part of a community. That's why I kind of like going to church, because you feel part of something, it sort of brings everyone together. And I feel that by having this bracelet on, it's kind of holding that same thing" (Frances, 17).

Consequently, although they may be inconspicuous to others, such religious items do not "fade out of focus" and "remain peripheral to the vision" (Miller, 2010, 51) of the informants in this study; rather, the informants are highly aware of the symbolic nature of the goods and the goods' influence upon their behaviour. The religious kitsch object is often transformed into something deeply symbolic and meaning-filled. Higgins and Hamilton (2012) uncovered that religious jewellery, such as the wearing of a cross or crucifix helps religious consumers to communicate with the Absolute Sacred – God. However, within this study it has been found that often, and predominantly amongst

youths, religious objects are inconspicuously worn as a means of communicating not necessarily with God, but rather with the communitarian and Christian essence, spirit and healing power of Lourdes. Thus far, the commercial Catholic kitsch object has been viewed as having more of a symbolic than a functional usage; however, the study also unearthed that many of these goods simultaneously have functional, utilitarian and symbolic properties, as illustrated by informant Phillip and his narrative of "big beads for big prayers", which will now be discussed.

8.2 Functional and Symbolic Catholic Kitsch: Phillip's Story

For over twenty-one years, Phillip (61) has volunteered with the charity ACROSS which takes the sickest of the sick to Lourdes via a jumbulance – a double-decker bus equipped as an ambulance. Over the years he has met with many interesting characters, some of whom have become close, lifelong friends. Whilst leading a group one year he received a large set of rosary beads (figure 29) as a gift - rosary beads so large "you could hang them on top of the door and they could reach the ground and the beads themselves were the size of my fist". He accepted the gift but never used them, and spoke of the gift as being jokingly given to him and the beads being "tawdry". He explained how a good friend whom he had met via ACROSS, Melanie Mullen, shared with him only a year before our meeting that she and her family were going through some really tough times, and that they needed "big prayers". Phillip laughingly told how he packaged the rosary beads off with a note saying, "Here are big beads for big prayers".

Figure 29: Phillip's Big Beads

As she has her elderly and ailing parents living with her, and her grandchildren are often around her home, it is not unusual for four generations of the Mullen family to be around Melanie's house, and they pray the rosary together on a daily basis. As such, Phillip told how during the family rosary, given Melanie's ailing father's health, he often lost his rosary bead and thus track of the prayer. He continued that in light of Melanie's father continuously moaning about losing his rosary, Melanie jokingly gave

him the big beads, saying: "Well, you won't lose this one". Phillip continued that over time, the big beads have become functionally used by the Mullen family, with Melanie's grandchildren all using the big beads when saying the rosary together.

Belk et al. (1989, 9) cited Becker (1986) and his belief that to maintain its sacredness within an object, the Sacred object must be set apart and consequently remain "beyond mundane utility". However, this study has found that often, sacred and religious goods are both functional and symbolic. For, although the above beads were initially viewed as "tacky" and "laughter provoking" (McDannell, 1995), at their core they remain known as a prayer tool aiding a Catholic to say the rosary. Consequently, with time and through sacralisation via gift giving (Belk et al., 1989), the big beads became a sacred functional and symbolic prayer tool to the Mullen family. Similarly, in returning to the narrative of the symbolic "mnemonic" glass of the Four Scottish Ladies, the glass was functionally bought, and became symbolically laden over time. However, Kitty said that she has kept the glass, and takes it to Lourdes with her whenever she returns. Thus, the glass retains its functional capacity, making it simultaneously a simple, functional liquid holder as well as a symbolic and heavily laden mnemonic device.

Bauman (2003, 76) asserted that "human solidarity is the first casualty of the triumphs of the consumer market". This study finds that often, consumption within the Lourdes marketplace creates further a human solidarity that spreads beyond the Sanctuary gates and France, as items become symbolic and often tangible and functioning "mnemonic devices" through which personal and group narratives of Lourdes can be shared and

rekindled. Consequently, this study finds that often through the Lourdes marketplace the previously introduced 'communitas continuas' is shared, gifted and experienced.

> "…I also do at home my Eucharistic ministry [administering the Eucharist to the sick], *and the sick that I go to in their home, I get little crucifixes when I am in Lourdes,* and if I get a new patient I give them a wee crucifix and a wee bottle of Lourdes water and a candle, and they can have that all ready for me coming in the next time. So, I bring home quite a lot of those just to have in case I get new patients, you know, to go and see and I get those blessed at the grotto" (Patricia, 93).

Many informants shared a consumption tradition with Patricia in that they brought Lourdes consumption goods back for those at home. In the above instance, Patricia consumes and stores the aforementioned crucifix, candle and Lourdes water to share with people she will administer the Eucharist to in future. This tradition is deeply symbolic, as only the sickest of the sick are deemed ill enough to be excused from attending Mass, and are often appointed a Eucharistic minister - a member of the lay people, who will travel to the sick person's home either on a Sunday or during the week to distribute the Holy Eucharist to them. In distributing the Eucharist in someone's home, there is a tradition to lay out, if possible, a mini replica of an altar, with a white

cloth, a crucifix, and a blessed candle burning, as a means of replicating the layout of the Catholic Mass[27].

The alignment of Lourdes with the sick of the world thus makes Patricia's consumption package deeply symbolic as within this small package she literally bottles up the healing and curative water and encases the essence and spirit of Lourdes. The laying out of these objects (figure 30) every time Patricia meets with the sick to whom she distributes the Eucharist is a further example of communitas continuas, for in the laying out alongside the Sacred ritual of distributing the Eucharist, a breaking down of the boundaries between sick and healthy, Lourdes and Scotland, and Heaven and Earth occurs. Thus, the status of these objects transcends the function of "concrete reminders" (Gordon, 1986, 137) that is often aligned with souvenirs, as they simultaneously become used, functional objects as well as symbolic tools that enable communication and engagement not only with deity but with the wider family of Catholicism[28].

---

[27] Within Catholicism the crucifix is a symbol of Christ's death on the cross for his people, representing the purest and truest of sacrificial gifts (Belk and Coon, 1993, 407), whilst the lighting of a candle is ritualistic, with the belief that the candles burning is a "symbol of prayer" (Marnham, 1982, 154).

[28] I say "the wider family of Catholicism", because through the ritual of Mass it is believed that all Catholics globally are joined and bound together, becoming one family. Thus, the small package does not only symbolically bind the secondary consumer (the sick) with Lourdes, but also with the entire family of Catholicism through the ritual of receiving the Eucharist.

Figure 30: Patricia's Eucharist Ministry Layout

A unique point regarding Patricia's consumption and sharing of the objects mentioned above is that she purchases them without knowing whom they will be for, and later shares them with strangers. This, again, goes against the mantra of liquid modernity and Bauman's (2003, 89) caution for "vigilance". However, for many other informants, similar objects were bought and stored away with the view of giving them not to strangers but to family members or friends at special times such as the rites of passage of birth, baptism, marriage, First Holy Communions and home-moving:

"I always get a wee supply of them, it is wee crosses, not crucifixes but ceramic crosses, and I get them blessed and I give them to people that have babies, and so I always have a supply of them for new born babies" (Rachael, 74).

"Sometimes I get plaques of Our Lady, Mother and Child, and that is because Our Lady says that you should have holy pictures up on your wall. You know how today we have sort of got rid of that tradition, but Our Lady says you should always have them. So, I quite often give them to people who are getting married, surreptitiously in with the money, in the hope that they will put them up on their wall, they have been blessed and hopefully they will have something sacred in their house" (Christine, 63).

Bauman (2003, 74) claimed that "the order obsessed state fought (at its own peril) anarchy, that trade-mark of communitas, because of the threat to power-assisted routine; the profit-obsessed consumer market fights that anarchy because of its obstreperous productive capacity". Bauman therefore views the marketplace and communitas as in competition with one another, and the marketplace as an enemy to communitas. However, the vignettes above illustrate that the marketplace is not in fact a threat but, rather, an aid to communitas, enabling its continuation. Such continuation of the sentiments, spirit and state of communitas via the marketplace is not a new occurrence, as it has been around since the 1940s. Figure 31 shows a postcard consumed and sent from the Sanctuary of Lourdes in 1948, with the inscription on the postcard making

tangible the intangible action of prayer, communicating to recipients of the postcard that

they have been prayed for at the Blessed Grotto of Lourdes.

Figure 31: Postcard send from Lourdes in 1948. The inscription reads: "I have prayed for you at the Blessed grotto". Identical Postcards are still sold and are very popular at Lourdes, demonstrating that the marketplace and Sanctuary of Lourdes have been in relationship together for many years.
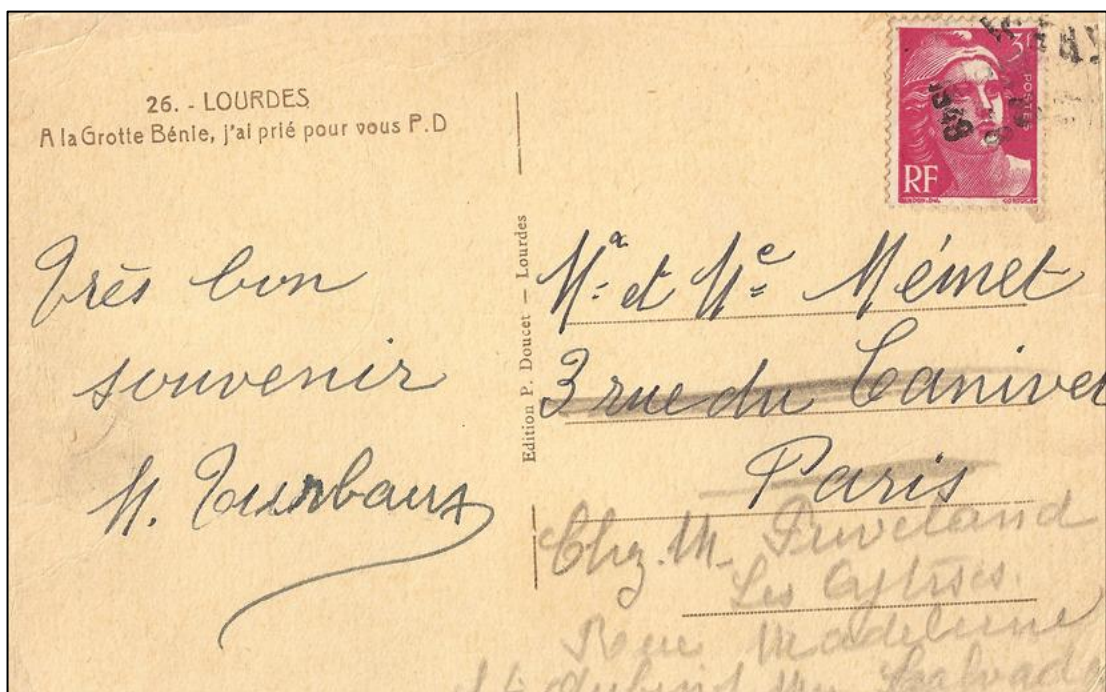
Earlier, this study's contributory offering of the subtler form of communitas continuas was said to partly align with ideological communitas. Turner and Turner (1978) defined ideological communitas as referring to "the formulation of remembered attributes of the communitas experience in the form of a utopian blueprint for the reform of society". Given the individual nature of the subtler form of communitas continuas, it is unlikely to bring about such reformation at a wider societal level; however, it is believed by informants of this study that the actions producing the essence of communitas continuas do help to bring about reformation at the individual level. However, given that the finding of the secondary Lourdes consumer is emergent, it is impossible at this stage to fully understand the perspective of these consumers, the informants at times did point to the goods they had taken back as stimulating such a state, as outlined below by Christine:

"Do you know, I got a pendant with Lourdes water within it for my sister-in-law and she was just saying to me the other day. She is quite posh, and I thought she will think this is tack, but I gave her this as part of her 70th birthday. And, she was saying to me the other day on the phone, "do you know I have barely got it off, it has helped me". She has been through a lot of bad times, and she said "it has helped me and I just keep touching it when things are getting tense"" (Christine, 63).

Consequently, this study posits that in consuming the marketplace offerings either for the self or for the other, both the religiously kitsch and the religiously proper

symbolically and functionally communicate the message and essence of Lourdes, even at times enabling the subtler form of 'communitas continuas' of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience to be offered to primary and secondary consumers alike. As such, consumer culture can help to produce the communitas continuas state, thereby unshackling communitas from its geographical strait-jacket. This thesis therefore disagrees with the consensus established within consumer research to date, that religious kitsch is merely "crass" and "offensive" (Belk et al., 1989; Kozinets, 2002; Turley, 2013), and aligns instead with McDannell's (1995, 34) belief that such religious consumption objects are not merely the "flotsam of consumer culture but significant pieces of a meaningful whole".

To conclude this analysis and findings section, the introduction offered greater insight into what Lourdes meant to the consumers with whom the research spoke, and chapters five through seven then explored the first objective of this thesis, gaining a deep understanding of why consumers continue today to consume the Lourdes pilgrimage experience. Findings have confirmed the themes offered by Van Gennep (1909/1960) in his work on Rites of Passage, and Turner and Turner (1978) on pilgrimage to remain key to the pilgrimage experience, with the themes of communitas, liminality and kinship remaining central in influencing the annual and recurrent consumption of the experience. Finally, the present chapter eight shed insight into the crucial and important role played by the marketplace of Lourdes in creating the "whole package", that is, the Lourdes pilgrimage experience, eliciting new understanding for consumer research on the nature and meaning of the religious kitsch product often consumed at Lourdes.

McDannell (1995, 3) suggested that "Christianity is not only practiced in churches", and I conclude this analysis and findings section by supporting this point, as this research has illustrated a context wherein both Sacred Sanctuary and Secular Shop are essential and crucial in creating the "meaningful whole" of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience.

CHAPTER IX: CONCLUSIONS

9.0 Introduction

The overarching aim of this thesis has been to investigate the consumption of religious pilgrimage, with a specific focus placed upon the 21st century consumption of the Catholic Sanctuary of Lourdes in France. This final chapter will provide the reader with a synthesis of the findings which have emerged, clarifying the core theoretical contributions the study makes to consumer research and CCT, along with the presentation of suggestions and directions for future research.

9.1 Theoretical Contribution

This section provides further insight into the core contributions of the research, beginning with the three predominant contributions relating to the research themes of communitas, liminality and kindship (family) which together have answered objective one of this study: *to gain insight into why pilgrims consume Lourdes in the 21st century.* The second objective of the study: *to understand the role the marketplace plays in the Lourdes pilgrimage experience*, has been discussed through the findings of the preceding chapter on the important role of the Lourdes marketplace, in turn contributing towards the specific area of sacred consumption and kitsch consumption. Finally, this section

provides discussion of a conceptual contribution stemming from this thesis which will help to further develop the theoretical understanding of sacred consumption.

9.1.1 Communitas

The theme of communitas provides two core contributions for consumer research with regard to extraordinary experiential consumption, particularly relevant to consumer research discussions on structure and social anti-structure (communitas).

Contribution One: Challenging the Communitas Dialectic in Consumer Research

Over the last three decades consumer research has found the social anti-structural state of communitas to be central in consuming extraordinary experiences (Arnould and Price, 1993; Celsi et al., 1993; Belk and Costa, 1998). However, recent consumer research has begun to critique communitas as being potentially "romantic" (Tumbat and Belk, 2011). This thesis, however, challenges the terminology used within consumer research in reference to social anti-structure (communitas), revealing that to date within consumer research there has been insufficient discussion of the different types of communitas (normative, existential/ spontaneous, ideological, religious); in short, of the "dialectic" of communitas.

Turner (1968) always viewed communitas to be in dialogue with structure, and consequently, upon investigating pilgrimage, always viewed the communitas state as one of normative not spontaneous/existential communitas (Turner and Turner, 1978). The present study found the normative communitas state to remain at Lourdes, with the breaking down of social structures such as age, gender, ethnicity, health, social class or religion all evident at Lourdes, making Lourdes a place where "nobody is a nobody". That said, it was also found through this study that the pilgrimage site is liminally positioned between structure and communitas with hierarchies, and a "darker side", found there. Consumers, however, dealt with this darker side through the implementation of a separation "experiential masking practice" (Canniford and Shankar, 2013, 1065) – a short-term, temporary solution enabling them to "hide contradictions" within particular settings (Canniford and Shankar, 2013), thus "maintaining" the sacredness (Belk et al., 1989) of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience in their lives. Consequently, the informants of this study were found to follow the mantra of the pilgrims of Moufahim (2013, 17) whereby such darker elements of the experience were "overshadowed by the intensity of the emotional and spiritual experience, by the camaraderie that developed among the group members and by the jovial encounters with other pilgrims and local residents". This demonstrates that the normative communitas state and the "living communitas" (Turner and Turner, 1978) remain a core influence in bringing consumers to Lourdes year after year. In light of this, this study argues that discussion of communitas is still relevant to, and can be further developed within, consumer research through further terminological and theoretical discussion of the differing types of communitas, and the communitas dialectic.

Contribution Two: "Communitas Continuas"

In light of Reader's (1993) call for research investigating the more individually-driven "subtler forms" of communitas, this thesis has identified, and therefore contributes, one such form: "Communitas Continuas". "Communitas Continuas" refers to *a temporal and subtler communitas state traversing social, geographical and earthly structures temporarily 'holding together' individuals both within and outwith the experiential setting*. This form of communitas links with Turner and Turner's (1978) idea of ideological communitas, seeing the spreading of a more permanent form of communitas and the de-shackling of communitas from the experiential setting.

In particular, the idea of taking things not *from* but *to* the site for the self and others - in the form of candles, petitions and prayers, and additionally the ability to post petitions and ask for prayers through technology - were found to be crucially important to the Lourdes experience. These actions often enable both primary and secondary consumers, when not in Lourdes, to gain something of the communitarian, spiritual essence of the Sanctuary; in short, to experience "communitas continuas".

Intermediary behaviours such as lighting candles, saying prayers, posting petitions, having Masses said, for people at home, etc., together form an interesting finding emerging from this study. Although these behaviours have been intrinsic to the Lourdes experience since the birth of the pilgrimage site, academics researching Lourdes and

pilgrimage (Turner and Turner, 1978; Marnham, 1982; McDannell, 1995; Lauretin, 1994; 1999) have never discussed the deep and symbolic meaning behind such rituals. Nevertheless, the importance of such actions were outlined repeatedly by the present study's informants in terms of their shared feelings of "privilege" at having been asked, and trusted, to undertake such actions relating to the personal relationship between the secondary consumer and deity, with these actions undertaken as a means of temporarily holding together and connecting primary consumer, secondary consumer and deity. Therefore, this raises a) the profile of such actions, as well as b) illustrating further the presence of a secondary consumer to Lourdes for the purposes of future research studies on pilgrimage, both in consumer research and other disciplines.

The secondary consumer was equally found to be able to consume part of the essence of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience, not only through the above mediation of primary consumers, but also through the use of technology and consumer culture, with technology enabling secondary consumers outwith Lourdes to experience the subtler form of communitas continuas. Consequently, this permits the religious and emotionally-burdened components of the self to be shared, and likewise, the relationship with deity and with the entire family of Catholicism to be engaged with, all via technology. Thus, contrary to Belk et al.'s (1989) belief in the alignment of religion with technology to signal secularization, this thesis has found that technological advancement and usage is not a threat to, or a secularization of, the religious Sanctuary of Lourdes. Rather, the availability and usage of recent technology has made Lourdes a

more extraordinary experience which is accessible to all, even if one is unable to personally visit the site.

In referring to consumer culture and communitas continuas, monetary exchange was found to be central in conducting the aforementioned intermediary behaviours, such as posting petitions, lighting candles, etc., and in turn engaging with this thesis' offering of the subtler form of communitas continuas. The alignment of money and capitalism with religion is often viewed negatively, as it is taken to be a sign of secularisation (Weber, 1905/1958; Belk et al., 1989), with money seen as the biggest profanity. However, this thesis found that at Lourdes the "economic orbit" (Belk et al., 1989, 32) is dealt with via an ideological masking practice (Canniford and Shankar, 2013), with the Sacredness of the Sanctuary maintained (Belk et al., 1989) through the use of the word "offrandes" (offerings, donations). This finding extends Canniford and Shankar's (2013) work on masking practices and those authors' belief in such practices always being temporal – the offerings for Masses, prayers, and to the Catholic Church have, after all, been intrinsic in Catholicism for millennia, making it a more enduring masking practice. Haddorff (2000, 498) suggested that "religion provides moral judgements for and against the market"; thus, utilisation of the "donation" signifies a moral judgement offering a justification for alignment with the economic and capitalistic markets at Lourdes, moving such monetary exchanges from the economic and commercial economy to the moral-esque "economy of salvation" (McDannell, 1995). This contribution has significant impact upon consumer research because market logic is often perceived as a weakening influence on social ties and communal ideologies

(Bauman, 2000; Kozinets, 2002). However, this study has found this not to be the case - rather, the marketplace via the economy of salvation strengthens and prolongs social and communal ties and even enables the subtler form of "communitas continuas" to be gained.

9.1.2 Liminality

The theme of liminality within this research offers consumer research two core contributions. The first contribution, "A Coherent Self", adds to theory on the self and symbolic consumption. The second contribution, "Consuming Vulnerability", adds to theory on extraordinary experiential consumption and vulnerability and consumption.

Contribution One: A Coherent Self

Consumer research to date has found the religious good or service to be consumed as a means of portraying a "virtuous consumption choice" (Sandikci and Ger, 2010), thus accepting the validity of the stigma aligned with such faithful consumption. Lourdes, however, is consumed not to portray the consumer as virtuous, but rather as a means of escaping temporarily "stigmatic boundaries", and finding a temporal "form of Sanctuary and acceptance" (Kozinets, 2001, 72). Consequently, it was found that often, prior to consuming the Lourdes experience consumers suffer a tearing of the self (Jafari and Goulding, 2008), whereby at times they feel censured, marginalised or stigmatized

because of their Catholic faith, and thus feel unable to fully express their Catholic selves outwith the private and religious domains. Consumer research has often critiqued consumer culture as creating such "tearing of the self" (Jafari and Goulding, 2008); however, this study demonstrates that the marketplace is not always the creator of such tearing, but rather, that it can repair the torn self. Through the consumption of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience it was found that many consumers gained a temporary "coherent" (Ahuvia, 2005) sense of self, with Lourdes providing them with the temporal opportunity to be unrestrictedly young, old, sick, healthy, educated, uneducated, pilgrim, volunteer, mother, father, brother, sister, grandparent, friend or lover; to be confident, grieving, fun, sad, vulnerable, strong and to be Catholic.

Consumer research to date has demonstrated that a "coherent sense of self" (Ahuvia, 2005) can come through the consumption of objects. This study furthers consumer research within the area of self and identity by taking such research out of the confines of object, product and tangible possessions, and suggesting that experiential consumption can be a powerful "synthesizing solution" (Ahuvia, 2005) aiding consumers to work through their identity conflicts to find at least a temporarily balanced and coherent sense of self.

Contribution Two: Consuming Vulnerability

Consumption of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience was found to be emotionally difficult, hard and painful at times. However, such feelings were not viewed negatively, but instead as providing consumers with a safe space in which to unload and unburden. Feelings of pain, anger, grief, upset, anxiety were all experienced, and were better dealt with at Lourdes than at home. Extant consumer research has found "pleasure" to be "foundational for understanding experiential consumption" (Goulding et al., 2009, 759), however, this thesis posits that although pleasure is important, upset, pain, anguish and emotional intensity can also be powerful emotions in shaping the consumption of extraordinary experiences. However, to date such emotions have not been documented or discussed in the subject field literature. Goulding et al. (2009, 769) suggested that contained "losing it practices" are mandatory in enabling consumers in the long-term to deal with the rigid and restrained social structure where freedom and "losing it" are not the norm. Consequently, such contained practices enable consumers to better deal with everyday society. Lourdes is one such contained practice; however, where Goulding et al. (2009) spoke of hedonistic pleasure seeking, Lourdes offers the emotional, vulnerable "losing it practice" through providing its consumers with desired reversals of structure, such as the freedom to publically express and discuss their religion, and equally, the desire and freedom to feel and be vulnerable.

The impact of the above finding for consumer research is that it suggests that potentially in our hedonistic world where perfection is sought yet rarely gained, consumers are finding themselves disillusioned with such quests for perfection and the need to be constantly perfect. In such a world, where is the place to deal with the human factor that we are imperfect; we do hurt, we do cry, we do bleed, and we do die. Consequently, it seems that in the perfect world of today few places and spaces cater to these imperfections, and so consumers seek out diamonds in the rough, like Lourdes, where they can gain both what they want – fun, playful, social times, and what they need - communication with the Sacred, emotional support, help with worries, pain, etc. They consume the "whole package" of sacred and secular, pleasure and pain, Catholicism and consumption, needs and wants.

In light of this, this thesis presents a contribution towards research on consumer vulnerability. In consumer research up until now, vulnerability has been viewed as negative, stigmatic and weakening, in short, unwanted. As Baker et al. (2005, 136) have acknowledged, "no one chooses to experience vulnerability. Yet all of us, on occasion, will experience vulnerability". This study, however, demonstrates that at times vulnerability is chosen; it is desired and it is not weakening, it is not stigmatic and it is not negative, but rather it can be strengthening, inspiring, empowering and positive. Thus, consumers consume Lourdes with the desire to become both emotionally and spiritually vulnerable. Consumer research has often discussed the marketplace either as being inaccessible to those perceived as vulnerable (Mason and Pavia, 2006) or as placing consumers in a vulnerable position (Hamilton, 2012). Therefore, the alignment

between vulnerability and the marketplace is never one of coherence, however at Lourdes the opposite occurs, whereby the marketplace enables consumers to gain what they seek and need – vulnerability - therefore it can be seen that a more coherent relationship between vulnerability and consumer culture is created at Lourdes.

9.1.3 Kinship

The theme of kinship which is threaded throughout this thesis provides two contributions to consumer research. Contribution one, "Familying and Family, Emotion and Consumption", can be applied to specific discussions on family and consumer research. The second contribution, "The Lifelong Friendship Versus the Cloakroom Community", specifically relates to the area of extraordinary experiential consumption.

Contribution One: "Familying" and Family, Emotion and Consumption

This study complements existing consumer research that has tended to approach family and consumption through the lens of daily, habitual consumption, such as that relating to brands, products or service choices (Epp and Price, 2008; Cappellini and Parsons, 2012). By focusing on a type of experiential family consumption that is beyond the mundane, the present research has demonstrated how time spent away from home can encourage new forms of reflection on the family. The family is revealed as being central to the Lourdes experience, with the rationale behind the consumption decision of the

Lourdes experience stemming not from a desire to conspicuously display being "the family" but, rather, enabling the practice of "doing" and building the intimate social world of family.

Families engage in an array of practices whilst at Lourdes, ranging from religious practices (praying, attending religious services, participating in processions, etc.) to more hedonistic practices (family meals, purchasing souvenirs, etc.). However, this thesis suggests that the latter hedonistic activities in particular are often second to doing family, whilst the former religious activity helps to build, strengthen and "do" not only the immediate family but the wider religious Catholic family. Whether family members are having a coffee together or watching a concert becomes less important than the fact that the family is united. In other words, family is the main activity; the emphasis is on "familying", which refers to the practicalities and activities that a family can undertake as a means of building and strengthening their intimate familial social world - the general activity of "doing" family. Prior consumer research has focused on family structure (Lindridge and Hogg, 2006; Mason and Pavia, 2006) and identity (Epp and Price, 2008: 2011), however this thesis demonstrates that the actual building of intimate family bonds and relationships – the "doing" of family, or "familying" - is just as crucial as family identity, and suggests that consumer culture has a role to play in providing access to the contexts in which such "familying" can take place. Without consumer culture there would not the be trains, planes, hotels, shops, cafes, bars, and the overall means in place to consume the Lourdes pilgrimage experience, and therefore the activity of "familying" could not take place.

Additionally, the findings have revealed that "familying" is driven by emotion, and by faith, hope and love, thereby extending insight onto the often-overlooked influence of emotions on family consumption (Park et al., 1991, Hamilton et al., 2006). In profiling faith, this study demonstrates how faith can help to reignite family times and traditions. Accordingly, consuming the Lourdes experience restores faith in Catholicism, and simultaneously restores faith in family. In profiling hope, this thesis furthers the limited consumer research into the concept, which has viewed hope in rather hedonistic terms. One hopes to look more beautiful; therefore one consumes a new brand of make-up, or one hopes to be more confident so one consumes plastic surgery. This study extends the work of MacInnis and Chun (2006) by demonstrating that hope traverses the self; further, it is an emotion not always tapped into by marketers, but rather a by-product of a consumption experience and having an important communal and familial focus. Finally, in profiling love, the dominant focus on "romantic love" (Belk and Coon, 1993) within the agapic love paradigm is extended, offering an instance where several forms of love are found. At Lourdes, romantic love (which is often discovered and cultivated at the pilgrimage site) becomes familial love, with family traditions of consuming Lourdes becoming prominent for many families. At its core, consuming the Lourdes experience has the love of God, signifying spiritual love.

To summarise this contribution, it has been demonstrated that just as the family holiday provides a context to "enact an identity as a united, stable and loving family" (Obrador, 2012, 413), the Lourdes pilgrimage offers an opportunity where consumers can conduct

the activity of "familying", by strengthening their sense, stability and love of family (Haldrup and Larsen, 2003, 26). In short, Lourdes offers an opportunity where consumers can have it all - time for faith, fun and family.

Contribution Two: The Lifelong Friendship Versus the Cloakroom Community

Throughout the findings chapters, Bauman's (2001) "cloakroom communities" and Kozinets' "sudden community" (2002, 21) were discussed, both of which studied temporal, short-lived communities surrounding a specific event or spectacle. Consumer research has witnessed the discussion of such temporal communities (Celsi et al., 1993; Goulding et al., 2009), with one example being the rafters of Arnould and Price (1993, 38) where the bonds created between the consumers were temporal in nature, as they existed only during the experience. The relationships formed at Lourdes, however, although often "sudden" in their creation, have a more lasting effect than the aforementioned "cloakroom" and "sudden" communities, with consumers often becoming lifelong friends, and their relationships resembling familial, social kinships as opposed to temporal, short-lived connection, e.g. Patricia and the friendship she gained with Daniel during one of her first visits to Lourdes, which literally extended beyond the pilgrimage week and lasted for the rest of his life. Consequently, this thesis demonstrates that at times, the consumption of extraordinary experiences does not result in temporal bonds but rather in meaning-filled "genuine time together" which grows to become a familial-like connection and a relationship that often spans a lifetime. In turn,

Lourdes offers consumers a setting where distrust, and the need for vigilance (Bauman, 2003), is dissolved, and where consumers do not view one another as "consumption objects" (Bauamn, 2003) but rather the selfish, short-term relationship is replaced with a more trusting, and pure one. To date, consumer research investigating the consumption of extraordinary experience has focused solely upon the core experience. By looking beyond the week's pilgrimage experience itself, the present study provides insight into the possible relationships and occurrences that stem from, and continue after, the consumption of an extraordinary experience. Such takeaways were discussed by informants as being crucially important and were appreciated throughout the experience; consequently, this study suggests that further discussion of consumer behaviours post-experience could provide interesting consumer insights.

9.1.4 Sacred Consumption

This thesis makes two contributions towards the area of sacred consumption, primarily extending work on the idea of the "symbiotic relationship" (Sandikci and Ger, 2010; Hirschman et al, 2011) or, as discussed in the literature review, the "ambiguous relationship" (Haddorff, 2000) between religion and consumption. Secondly, to date, religious kitsch objects have been viewed as tacky, tawdry and "secularizations" of the Sacred (Belk et al., 1989; Turley, 2013), but this thesis provides new insight into this belief, finding such goods in fact to be symbolic and functional goods, crucial to, and important in, enhancing the Lourdes pilgrimage experience.

Contribution One: The Coherent Relationship between Religion and Consumption

As discussed in the literature review, sacred consumption research adopting a revisionary perspective has discussed the presence of a "symbiotic" (Sandikci and Ger, 2010; Hirschman et al., 2011) relationship existing between religion and consumption. Thus, the general consensus has been that although religion and consumer culture are interdependent upon, and closely associated with one another, they are never subsumed nor absorbed by the other (Haddroff, 2000). That said, there is still the prevailing idea that such structures are opposites, and hence a belief that each tolerates the other due to their interdependence and association, but they are not in harmony with one another; rather, they are in an "ambiguous relationship" (Harddorff, 2000). This study furthers these discussions by offering findings which demonstrate that the ambiguous relationship can at times develop into a more coherent and harmonious relationship.

To date within consumer research, work investigating pilgrimage has often found the commercial trappings of pilgrimage sites to be secularisations and negative influences upon the experience (Kozinets, 2002; Scott and MacLaren, 2013). For example, Scott and MacLaren (2013) recently suggested the separation of pilgrimage from tourism to be mere romanticism. This study, however, aligns with the recent findings from Moufahim (2013, 13) that "secular and sacred consumption are entwined in the context of religious pilgrimage" and that at times this is "necessary for a pilgrimage experience to be successful" (2013, 2). Within this study, the consumption of the Lourdes

pilgrimage enables consumers to temporarily escape the everyday. However, engagement with the Sacred is spiritually and emotionally intense, with many fearing that complete immersion for a week would leave them "emotional wrecks". Consequently, the marketplace offers "light-hearted relief" from such intensity, with temporal movement towards the Familiar secular shopping district, and away from the Other Sacred Sanctuary (Morinis, 1992).

Such movement creates the modern day Lourdes pilgrimage, with the back and forth between the Sacred Sanctuary and the secular shops enabling a balance to be made between the Other and the Familiar, and the Sacred and the Secular, culminating in the creation of the "whole package" of the Lourdes experience which incorporates both the fun and the faith. Beruschavili and Arnould (2005) asked: how can religious consumers negotiate religious dogma with the dominant social structure of consumer culture? This thesis posits that balance and mediation between the two is crucial in such a negotiation. However, unlike the prior consumer research, which has found balance coming in the form of "reversals of consumption" (Touzani and Hirschman, 2008) with consumption times and spaces separated from religious times and spaces, this study has found a simultaneous fusion between Catholicism and consumer, which in turn offers an "interstitial space" (Goulding et al., 2009, 765) in which consumers are free to publically express and discuss their faith outwith the private Sanctuary gates. Consequently, this study has found consumer culture to sometimes enable a more "coherent" (Ahuvia, 2005) sense of self, through which negotiation between religious dogma and consumer culture becomes temporarily balanced and coherent.

Many scholars have suggested that the close alignment between the commercial and the religious creates situations of "contestation" (Belk et al., 1989; Gesler, 1996; Kozinets, 2002, with Gesler (1996, 104-105) sharing that "Lourdes continues to be a place which is contested between those who seek a commercial profit and those seeking a spiritual retreat, between tourists and pilgrims, between sacred and profane". However, holding such belief alongside a belief in an ambiguous and difficult relationship between the Sacred and the marketplace is a scholarly created issue. Consequently, this thesis finds no real "contestation" between marketplace and religion to exist at Lourdes. Indeed, at least from a consumer perspective, religion and marketplace are friends not foes there; they are caught up in not an ambiguous relationship but rather form a more "coherent" relationship. The consumers who were informants in the research separated between sacred and secular, so philosophically and indoctrinally speaking such a contestation exists, but their physical consumption behaviours demonstrate that Lourdes is a place where both consumer culture and Catholic religion come together coherently.

This finding impacts broadly upon consumer research, for with over 84% of the world population aligning with religion, engagement with the Sacred is a core attribute sought after by consumers today. Consequently, consumer research needs to better understand religious consumers and how they physically negotiate between religious dogma and consumer culture (Beruschavili and Arnould, 2005). As outlined in the literature review, religious ideology often has a crucial influence over political, societal and consumption choices (Hirschman, 1981: 1982: 1983; Veer and Shankar, 2011), and, as outlined in the findings here, Lourdes is chosen often over all-inclusive, cruise or sand, sea and sun

holidays because it offers a temporal escape from the mundane and permits a place where a pilgrim is free to be simultaneously and without contestation a Catholic and a consumer.

Contribution Two: Religious Kitsch

Within the prior consumer research, the religiously kitsch object has always been viewed negatively (Belk et al., 1989; Kozinets, 2001; Turley, 2013), with the former believing the religiously kitsch object to be "offensive to the Sacred" and to lead the "faithful away from religion rather than towards it" (Belk et al., 1989, 25). However, at Lourdes, the presence and selling of such goods does not by any means negate the experience to its consumers; quite the opposite, as for most it offers the "light-hearted relief" and movement towards the Familiar (Morinis, 1992) which they feel they need, and which is intrinsic to the modern 21st century pilgrimage to Lourdes. The role of the tacky Lourdes souvenir is not inconsequential, nor "superfluous", but rather, particularly for youths, it is a mnemonic, storytelling aid and communicative tool, communicating the "double dimension" of the Lourdes pilgrimage – faith and fun.

Shackley (2006) pointed out that most prior research examining the commercial within pilgrimage has looked at the "commercialization process" (Vulkonic, 1996), or the socio-cultural impact of the commercial centre (Greenwood, 1989). She thus suggested that "…It remains uncertain to what extent this commercialization affects the quality of

the visitor experience", continuing that "…it seems probable that the provision of these varied merchandising opportunities meet the expectations of most of the visitors in one way or another" (2009, 99). This study begins to address such uncertainty, demonstrating that the marketplace of Lourdes and the "merchandising opportunities" offered there do not in any way detract from the Lourdes experience, but rather are "embraced", offering consumers "light-hearted relief" and temporal escape from their religious and emotionally-charged experiences. The religious kitsch goods themselves are often utilized in unique, innovative ways, through which they can become both symbolic and functional means of spreading the communitarian essence of Lourdes. The said goods therefore do not become "shackles" but neither are they mere "instruments of the self" (McCracken 2005, 3). Instead they become instruments of both the communal and the self, uncovering the "broader social meanings and processes" (Reader, 1993, 14) of the Lourdes pilgrimage. Consequently, the essence of the 21st century pilgrimage to Lourdes is literally bottled, packaged, and "tangiblised" (Moufahim, 2013) within the tacky, tawdry, yet "quintessentially right" religious kitsch good.

The religious kitsch good was found in this thesis not only to be simultaneously functional and symbolic, but also at times to rekindle the essence of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience itself, creating for some primary and secondary consumers the subtler form of "communitas continuas" and rekindling the essence, spirit, and message of the experience. Consumer research to date has looked at objects as extensions of the self (Belk, 1988); however, this thesis illustrates that objects can be extensions or (re)-

engagements[29] of the place, the experience. These objects transcend the function of "concrete reminders" (Gordon, 1986, 137) that is often aligned with souvenirs, becoming simultaneously used, functional objects as well as symbolic tools that enable communication and (re)-engagement with the Lourdes essence and message, with deity and with the wider family of Catholicism. Consequently, they act by 'holding together' these actors in a moment of "communitas continuas".

9.1.5 Conceptual Contribution to Sacred Consumption

The literature review illustrated a clear lack of terminological and linguistic agreement in relation to consumer research investigating consumption and sacredness, spirituality, religion, ritual, transcendence, secularism, pilgrimage, etc., consequently raising the question of how such research should be labelled. Such labelling issues have been further and most recently demonstrated by Rinallo et al. (2013b) in their conceptual offering on spirituality and consumption. However, their continuous separation between religion and spirituality, coupled with their repeated interchanging references to sacred, spiritual and religious themes indicates that clearer terminology and improved conceptualisation of this growing research stream must be achieved to enable future consumer researchers to better position their work and to speak with a shared dialectic.

---

[29]I have used (re)-engagement to signify that "communitas continuas" via the religiously tacky good bought in Lourdes can be engaged with or re-engaged with both by a primary consumer or a secondary consumer of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience.

Consequently, the literature review in this thesis offered the perspective that sacred consumption is a strong umbrella term under which all sacred-consumption focused studies can and should be positioned. This thesis does not claim that its conceptual offering is exhaustive, but it offers an initial building block shedding light on the issues, themes, discussions and findings prevalent within sacred consumption discussions to date in consumer research. It is hoped that in time, this conceptual piece can be further strengthened and can help future sacred consumption researchers to position their work and their contributions more clearly.

As such, this thesis calls for future consumer researchers to converse over the sacred consumption dialectic. Such conversation will enable consumer researchers interested in the area of sacred consumption to better position their research, and to have a better terminological basis upon which to frame research projects investigating the relationship between sacredness and consumption. A better conceptualisation, positioning and understanding of research pertaining to the consumption of sacred, religious, ritualistic, transcendental, and spiritual contexts, and their relationship to the marketplace, is called for.

At this point, the present thesis's suggestions for future research are presented.

9.2 Suggested Areas for Future Research

The following section outlines suggested areas of future research which have been uncovered by this thesis. Suggestions are provided for each of the core contributions, followed by a sharing of future research suggestions based on a limitation of this thesis.

9.2.1 Communitas

In light of finding a lack of prior discussion of the communitas dialectic offered by Turner (1969) and Turner and Turner (1978), this thesis calls for consumer researchers to more fully discuss this dialectic by introducing and discussing the intricate dialectic and types of communitas, in order to re-evaluate the terminology used within consumer research to date in discussions on communitas. Further to this, the thesis also calls for consumer research to investigate extraordinary experiential consumption settings in search for "subtler forms" (Reader, 1993) of communitas. Such investigation will in turn help consumer research to better understand the intricate dialectic between social structure and social anti-structure.

This thesis calls for future research to investigate the deep meanings and associations behind the actions of taking and leaving something behind at a site, be it Sacred or secular. This is relevant wherever letters are posted, flowers laid, candles lit, or gifts left as a means of extending support and/or seeking help with life problems. Examples include contexts of bereavement and loss, such as the flower and candle shrines left at

the sites of people's deaths, and sacred and secular sites where the leaving behind of writings is traditional, such as the petitions of Lourdes and other Marian and Christian shrines, postings on the Western Wall in Jerusalem, and (from a secular setting) Juliet's wall in Verona, where tourists annually ask the fictional character of Juliet for intervention and support regarding their love life. It is believed that further study within this area would help to better understand how consumers use the marketplace to negotiate the unpleasant and emotionally painful feelings and issues they face in everyday life. Such investigation would equally contribute towards gift-giving conversations within consumer research, potentially furthering the work of Moufahim (2013) on the soteriological gift.

9.2.2 Liminality

Further to the above suggestion, this thesis calls for experiential consumer research to further investigate the consumption of contexts which elicit painful and hurtful emotions and "losing it practices" (Goulding et al., 2009) as a form of emotional escape and aid in everyday life. Additionally, the present research calls for consumer researchers to investigate further the idea of vulnerability and whether the status of vulnerability is always stigmatic and undesirable, or alternatively if there are potentially further consumption contexts which are both sacred and secular where vulnerability is sought after rather than avoided.

9.2.3 Kinship

In light of the contribution of "familying", this thesis calls for future research to look into other ways by which consumption aids family bonding and connection – in "familying". Investigation should be carried out into how consumer culture can help a family to "do" not merely "be" or "display" family. Furthermore, regarding family and consumer research, future studies should further examine both physical and social kinship groups. Bauman (2000) believes us to live in a "liquid modern" society, where social relationships and community are slowly becoming obsolete. This thesis, building on its findings regarding lifelong friendships, calls for consumer researchers to challenge belief in "cloakroom" (Bauman, 2001) and "sudden" (Kozinets, 2002) communities by investigating contexts and consumers wherein both physical and social kinship (Van Gennep, 1909/1960) are found to persist.

9.3.4 Sacred Consumption

The thesis calls for future consumer research to investigate the existence of "symbiotic" (Sandikci and Ger, 2010; Hirschman et al., 2011) and "ambiguous" (Haddorff, 2000) relationships between religion and consumption. There is a need to better understand the complex relationship between the marketplace/consumer culture and religion, spirituality, sacredness, ritual, transcendence, etc., and the marketplace. Additionally, this thesis calls for consumer research to investigate the meaning of the religious kitsch

good, in particular the idea of goods not only being extensions of the self but also having powers of (re)-engagement with a place or experience.

9.2.5 Contextual Future Research

Contextually speaking, future research conducted at Lourdes should investigate and uncover the voices both of sick consumers, and of secondary consumers of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience.

To date, no research study of Lourdes has shed light on sick consumers; consequently, future research should uncover whether the "front and centering" of the sick, so loved by the volunteers and pilgrims spoken with in this study, is in fact "archaically insulting" (Eade, 1992, 24), or alternatively, whether Lourdes offers a servicescape which not only enables the gaining of faith and spirituality, but also allows access to a marketplace. It is hoped that such findings would contribute further towards conversations about consumer vulnerability, and equally at the policy level communicate the protocols, procedures and inner-workings that make Lourdes accessible to sick consumers. Furthermore, the voices of sick consumers voice may potentially illuminate some procedures, protocols, and inner-workings at Lourdes that are unfriendly, and that should therefore be removed from the religious servicescape and from future marketplaces.

Given that the existence and experience of the secondary consumer is an emergent finding from this study, it would be interesting to hear from these unseen consumers of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience to discover if the intermediary actions of primary consumers, technology and consumer culture through acts such as posting petitions, lighting candles, saying prayers and equally if the receiving of mementoes such as prayer cards, medals, and tacky objects, aid these unseen consumers in partially experiencing the essence of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience. In short, are they able to experience the "communitas continuas" state offered by this thesis?

A limitation of this study has been its focus upon one context of pilgrimage only. Consequently, regarding the wider context of pilgrimage, future study should investigate a wider range of religious pilgrimage settings as well as secular pilgrimage settings as a means of gaining a greater holistic understanding of what pilgrimage means in the 21st century and why consumers choose pilgrimage over other experiential consumption activities.

9.3 Conclusion

To conclude, this thesis has taken the reader on a research pilgrimage, gaining understanding of the 21st century consumption of religious pilgrimage through the example of the Catholic Marian context of Lourdes in France. This journey has uncovered the themes of kinship, communitas and liminality, originally offered in the studies by Van Gennep (1909/1960), Turner (1969) and Turner and Turner (1978), as

central in consuming the Lourdes pilgrimage experience. Equally, the marketplace at Lourdes has been found to not negate nor secularise the pilgrimage experience, but rather, the movement intrinsic with pilgrimage (Morinis, 1992) in the 21st century has evolved to incorporate the back and forth between the Other Sacred Sanctuary and the Familiar Secular Shop, consequently aiding the consumer in gaining the "whole package" of the Lourdes pilgrimage experience. This interpretative research study contributes towards discussions on family and consumer research, extraordinary experiential consumption, sacred consumption, and consumer vulnerability, and as well as outlining its contributions to consumer research, the thesis has offered a variety of suggested future research areas, particularly within the areas of sacred consumption and consumer vulnerability.

It is hoped that this thesis will have helped the reader to gain a more holistic understanding of why consumers continue to consume the pilgrimage experience of Lourdes in the 21st century. In short, the stigma and stereotype of Catholicism leads consumers to feel liminal in their daily lives, and to seek a place where they can freely express and discuss their faith. Equally, the stereotype of Lourdes as a place for "crazy Catholics" is found to be incorrect; rather, it is a place of sociability as well as spirituality - a place of tears and laughter. The fun and the faith of Lourdes are huge draws for consumers, as are the times spent with physical and social family units, times spent individually with God, and together with pilgrimage groups. In short, Lourdes offers consumers the chance to temporarily find a "coherent" (Ahuvia, 2005) sense of self, and the relationship between marketplace and religion there is not ambiguous or

tension fuelled, but is one of "coherence". Throughout this research, the question raised by Beruschavili and Arnould (2005): "how do religious consumers negotiate this inherent contradiction between the dogma of Christian freedom from possessions and the "dogma" of a material culture fixed on possessions?", has often been shared. The thesis has begun to answer this question and the short answer is "coherence". Coherence is central to consuming the Lourdes pilgrimage experience – a coherent sense of self, coherence between market and religion, coherence between family members, and coherence between young, old, sick, healthy, rich, poor, volunteer, pilgrim, between different faiths and different races. Although, this coherence is usually only temporary, it allows the consumer the strength to go on in their daily lives for another year.

In opening this thesis, the first excerpt from the June/July 2011 field notes was offered along with personal reflections on the song "You Got the Love" by Candi Staton. During the May 2013 fieldtrip, all field notes as well as the preliminary analysis of the interviews and data collected were re-read as a means of reflecting completely upon the entire three-year ethnographic pilgrimage. Upon re-reading the excerpt offered in the introduction, I found myself listening to the song again, and writing the following field note. In reproducing it here, the thesis comes full circle.

"Having re-read over all the field notes I find myself reflecting on one of my initial fieldtrips in June/ July 2011. I reflected on the Candi Stanton song but I find myself

re-listening to the song just now as I sit just over the bridge facing the grotto and I

find it's quite a symbolic song for Lourdes.

> *"Sometimes it seems that the going is just too rough*
> *And things go wrong, no matter what I do*
> *Now and then it feels, like life is just too much*
> *But You've got the love, I need to see me through".*

In 2011 as I was embarking on the fieldtrip I questioned the rationality of why consumers would choose Lourdes, why they would wish to consume an experience where they work hard and pay huge amounts of money to do so? I assumed it was a sacred drive - they wished to better know God, to enhance their faith. Now as I approach the end of the thesis, I realise the Sacred drive is only part of the answer. Yes, consumers want to draw closer to God, to Our Lady, but they also just want a place and some space to almost take a breathe and be able to deal with everything that is going on in their lives; the pain, the hurt, the happiness, the work, the stress, in short they need something to see them through and they find that at Lourdes. And they find it through God, through family, through friendships – in short and as cheesy as it sounds Lourdes offers them the "Love" they need to see them through at least for another year (Field note from day nine of May 2013 fieldtrip).

REFERENCES

Abrahams, R.D. (1986). "Ordinary and Extraordinary Experience" in Turner, V., Bruner, E.M. (1986). *The Anthropology of Experience,* University of Illinois Press, Chicago, pp. 45-72.

Abreu, M. (2006). The Brand Positioning and Image of a Religious Organisation: An Empirical Analysis, *International Journal of Nonprofit Voluntary Sector Marketing*, Vol. 11 (2), pp. 139-146.

Ahuvia, A.C. (2005). "Beyond the Extended Self: Loved Objects and Consumers Identity Narratives, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 32 (1), pp. 171-184.

Ammerman, N.T. (1994) Telling Congregational Stories, *Review of Religious Research*, Vol. 35 (4), pp. 289-301.

Annuario Pontifico. (2013). Citta del Vaticano, Rome, pp. 2352.

Arnold, S., Fischer, E. (1994). "Hermeneutics & Consumer Research", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 21 (1), pp. 55-70.

Arnould, E.J., L.L. Price. (1993), 'River Magic: Extraordinary Experience and the Extended Service Encounter', *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 20 (June), 24-44.

Arnould, E.J. (2004). Beyond the Sacred-Profane Dichotomy in Consumer Research, *Special Session Summary for Advances in Consumer Research,* Vol. 31 (1), pp. 52-54.

Arnould, E.J., Thompson, C.J., (2005). Consumer Culture Theory (CCT): Twenty Years of Research, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 31 (4), pp. 868-882.

Arnould, E.J. (2007). "Should Consumer Citizens Escape the Market?", *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* Vol. 611 (1), pp. 96-111.

Baker, S.M., Gentry, J.W., Rittenburg, T.L. (2005). Building Understanding of the Domain of Consumer Vulnerability, *Journal of Macromarketing*, Vol. 25 (2), pp. 128-139.

Bartholomew, C. (2000). "Christ and Consumerism: An Introduction" in Bartholomew, C., Moritz, T. (2000). *Christ and Consumerism: A Critical Analysis of the Spirit of the Age*, Paternoster Press, Milton Keynes, pp. 1-12.

Bateson, G., Mead, M. (1942). *Balinese Character: A Photographic Analysis,* Academy of Sciences, New York, pp. 277.

Bauman, Z. (2000). *Liquid Modernity,* Polity Press, Cambridge, pp. 228.

Bauman, Z. (2003). *Liquid Love*, Polity Press, Cambridge, pp. 162.

Becker, H. (1970). *Sociological Work*, Aldine Publications, New York, pp. 357.

Belk, R.W. (1987). The Role of the Odyssey in Consumer Behaviour and Research. *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 14 (1), pp.357-361.

Belk, R.W. (1988). Possessions & The Extended Self, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol.15 (2), pp. 139-168.

Belk, R.W., M. Wallendorf, J.F. Jr, Sherry. (1989). "The Sacred and the Profane in Consumer Behaviour: Theodicy on the Odyssey", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 16 (1), pp. 1-38.

Belk, R.W. (1992). Moving Possessions: An Analysis Based on Personal Documents from the 1847-1869 Mormon Migration, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 19 (3), pp. 339-361.

Belk, R.W. and Coon, G.S. (1993), Gift Giving as Agapic Love: An Alternative to the Exchange Paradigm Based on Dating Experiences. *Journal of Consumer Research,* Vol. 20 (4), 393-417.

Belk, R. W. (1995). "Studies in the New Consumer Behaviour" in Miller, D. (ed). (1995). *Acknowledging Consumption: A Review of New Studies*, Routledge, London, pp. 58-95.

Belk, R.W. & Costa, J.A. (1998). The Mountain Man Myth□: A Contemporary Consuming Fantasy, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 25 (3), pp.218-240.

Belk, R.W. (2010), 'Sharing', *Journal of Consumer Research,* Vol. 36 (1), 715-734.

Belk, R.W. (2013). Extended Self in a Digital World, *Journal of Consumer Research,* Vol. 40 (October), pp. 25.

Belk, R.W., Fischer, E., Kozinets, R.V. (2013). *Qualitative Consumer and Marketing Research,* Sage Publications Ltd, London, pp. 240.

Berger, B. and Berger, B. (1983), *The War Over the Family*, Hutchinson, London, pp. 252.

Berger, P. L. (1999). "The Desecularisation of the world" in Berger, P. L. (ed.), *The Impact of religious Conviction on the Politics of the Twenty-first Century,* Grand Rapids MI: Eedrmans, pp. 143.

Bernardes, Jon (1997), *Family Studies: An Introduction,* London, Routledge, pp. 219.

Beruchashvili, M., E.J. Arnould. (2005). 'Negotiating Competing Dogma: Religion and Mundane Consumption', as cited in Ger, G. (2005). 'Religion and Consumption: The Profane Sacred', *Advances in Consumer Research: Special Session Summary,* Vol.32 (1), pp.79-81.

Bitner, M.J. (1992). Servicescapes: The Impact of Physical Surroundings on Customers and Employees, *The Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 56 (2), pp. 57-71.

Bleicher, J. (1980). *Contemporary Hermeneutics: Hermeneutics as Method, Philosophy and Critique,* Routledge & Kegan, London, pp. 288.

Borghini, S., Diamond, N., Kozinets, R.V., McGrath, M.A., Muniz, A.M., Sherry, J.F. (2009). Why Are Themed Brandstores So Powerful? Retail Brand Ideology at American Girl Place, *Journal of Retailing*, Vol. 85 (3), pp. 363-375.

Borgmann, A. (2000). "The moral complexion of consumption". *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 26 (4), pp.418-422.

Brewer, J.D. (1994). The Ethnographic Critique of Ethnography: Sectarianism in the RUC, *Sociology*, Vol. 28 (1), pp. 231-244.

Brewer, J.D. (2000). *Ethnography*, Open University Press, Philadelphia, pp. 211.

Bruce, S. (1992). *Religion and Modernization*, Oxford University Press, London, pp. 240.

Bruce, S. (1996). *Religion in the Modern World: From Cathedrals to Cults*, Oxford University press, London, pp. 272.

Burgess, R. (1982). *Field Research: A Sourcebook and Field Manual*, Allen and Unwin, London, pp. 286.

Canniford, R., Shankar, A. (2013). Purifying Practices: How Consumers Assemble Romantic Experiences of Nature, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 39 (1), pp. 20.

Cappellini, B. and Parsons, E. (2012). Sharing the meal: food consumption and family identity in *Research in Consumer Behavior*. ed. Russell Belk. Vol. 14 (1), pp. 109-128.

Carr, N. (2006). A Comparison of Adolescents' and Parents' Holiday Motivations and desires, *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, Vol. 6 (2), pp. 129-142.

Carrette, J., King, R. (2005). *Selling Spirituality: The Silent Takeover of Religion,* Routledge, London, pp. 194.

Celsi, R.L., R.L. Rose, and T.W. Leigh. (1993). "Exploration of Leisure Consumption through Skydiving". *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 20 (1), pp.1-23.

Charalambous, S. (2013). "We love you guys and know how dedicated you are': Liam Payne defends 'Directioners' on Twitter after One Direction documentary upsets loyal fans" from The Daily Mail on the 16.08.13, http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-2395842/Liam-Payne-took-Twitter-defend-Directioners-1D-documentary-upsets-loyal-fans.html - last accessed 09.12.13.

Cheal, David (2002), *Sociology of Family Life*, Hampshire, Palgrave, pp. 224.

Chronis, A., Hampton, R.D. (2008). Consuming the authentic Gettysburg: How a tourist landscape becomes an authentic experience*, Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, Vol. 7 (2), pp. 111-126.

Chua, C., Cote, J. and Leong, S. (1990). "The Antecedents of Cognitive Age", *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 17 (1), pp. 880-885.

Cooper, J.M. (1997). *Plato: The Complete Works*, Hackett Publishing, Cambridge, pp. 1808.

Cosgel, M.M., Minkler, L. (2004). Religious Identity and Consumption, *Review of Social Economy*, Vol. 62 (3), pp. 339-350.

Cova, B., Ford, D., Salle, R. (2009), Academic brands and their impact on scientific endeavour: The case of business market research and researchers, *Industrial Marketing Management*, Vol. 38 (6), pp, 570-576.

Craig, C. (2004). *The Scots' Crisis of Confidence,* Argyll Publications, Argyll, pp. 308.

Croft, R. (2006). Folklore, Families and Fear: Exploring the Influence of the Oral Tradition on Consumer Decision-making, *Journal of Marketing Management*, Vol. 22 (99-10), pp. 1053-1076.

Crotty, M. (1998). *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process*, Sage Publication, London, pp. 248.

Curasi, C. F., Price, L.L., Arnould, E. J. (2004), "How Individuals Cherished Possessions Become Families' Inalienable Wealth", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 31 (3), pp. 609-622.

Daly, K. J. (2001). Deconstructing Family Time: From Ideology to Lived Experience. Journal of Marriage and Family, Vol. 63 (2), 283-294.

Daniel, L. (2013). *When Spiritual Not Religious is Not Enough: Seeing God in Surprising Places, Even in Church,* Jericho Books, Hachette Book Group, New York, pp. 224.

Davie, G. (1992). "You'll Never Walk Alone: The Anfield Pilgrimage" in Reader, I., Walter, T. (1993). *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture,* The Macmillan press, London, pp. 201-219.

Davis, T., Yip, J. (2004). Reconciling Christianity and Modernity: Australian Youth and Religion, *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 31 (1), pp. 113-117.

DeBotton, A. (2012). *Religion for Atheists,* Penguin Book Ltd, London, pp. 320.

Delener, N. (1994). Religious Contrasts in Consumer Decision Behaviour Patterns: Their Dimensions and Marketing Implications, *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 28 (5), pp. 36-53.

Diamond, N., Sherry, J.F., Muñiz, A.F., McGrath, M.A., Kozinets, R.V., Borghini, S. (2009). American Girl and the Brand Gestalt: Closing the Loop on Sociocultural Branding Research. *Journal of Marketing,* Vol. 73 (3), pp. 118-134.

Dilthey, W. (1924). *'Ideen uber eine beschreibende und zergliedernde Psychologie'in* G. Misch (ed.) Wilhelm Dilthey: Gesammelte Schriften V. Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner.

Duffy, J. (2013). "And now for Something Completely Different: An Atheist Church for Scotland", from the Sunday Herald on the 06.10.13, http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/home-news/and-now-for-something-completely-different-an-atheist-church-for-scotland.22343112 - last accessed 09.12.13.

Durkheim, E. (1912/2008). *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life,* Trans. Cosman, C., Cladis, M.S., Oxford University Press, London, pp.358.

Eade, J. (1992). Pilgrimage and Tourism at Lourdes, France, *Annals of Tourism*, Vol. 19 (1), pp. 18-32.

Eade, J., Sallnow, M.J. (1991). *Contesting the Sacred: the Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage,* Routledge, London, pp.188.

Eliade, M (1958). *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, University of Nebraska Press, Nebraska, pp. 484.

Ely, M., Anzul, M., Friedman, T., Garner, D., McCormack Steinmetz, A. (1991). *Doing Qualitative Research: Circles Within Circles*, The Falmer Press, London, pp. 245.

Engel, J.F. (1974). Understanding the Market for Christianity: A Report on Asian Christian Strategy, *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 1 (1), pp.505-510.

Engel, J.F. (1976). Psychological Research in a Cross-Cultural Non-Product Setting, *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 3 (1), pp. 98-101.

Epp, A. and Price, L. (2008). Family Identity: A Framework of Identity Interplay in Consumption Practices. *Journal of Consumer Research* Vol. 35 (1), pp. 50-70.

Essoo, N., S. Dibb. (2004). Religious Influences on Shopping Behaviour: An Exploratory Study, *Journal of Marketing Management*, Vol. 20 (7/8), pp.683-712.

Fargues, C. (2011). *Lourdes,* MSM Publications, Lourdes, pp. 224.

Fernandez, J.W. (1986). "The Argument of Images and the Expereicne of Returning to the Whole" in Turner, V., Bruner, E.M. (1986). *The Anthropology of Experience,* University of Illinois Press, Chicago, pp. 159-187.

Fernandez, K.V., Veer, E. (2004). "The Gold that Binds: The Ritualistic Use of Jewelry in A Hindu Wedding", *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 31 (1), pp.55.

Finch, J. (2007). Displaying Families. *Sociology,* Vol. 41 (1), 65-81.

Finke, R., Stark, R. (1992). *The Churching of America – 1776:1990: Winners and Losers in our Religious Economy*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, pp. 347.

Firat, A.F., Venkatesh, A. (1995). Liberatory Postmodernism and the Re-Enchantment of Consumption, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 22 (3), pp. 239-267.

Fischer, M M. J. (1999). Worlding cyberspace: Toward a critical ethnography in time, space, and theory, *Critical anthropology now: Unexpected contexts, shifting constituencies, changing agendas*, edited by George Marcus, Boydell and Brewer Ltd, Suffolk, pp. 245-304.

Fox, A. (1945). *Plato for Pleasure*, Westhouse Publications, UK, pp. 170.

Gadamer, H.G. (1977/2008). *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, University of California Press, California, pp. 243.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The Interpretation of Cultures.* Basic Books, New York, pp.480.

Ger, G., D.B. Holt. (2000). Consuming Ritual: Reframing the Turkish Henna-Night Ceremony, *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 27 (1), pp. 209-214.

Gesler, W. (1996). Lourdes: Healing in a Place of Pilgrimage, *Health and Place*, Vol. 2 (2), pp. 95-105.

Giddens, A. (1992*). The Transformation of Intimacy: Love, Sexuality and Eroticism in Modern Societies*, Polity Press, London, pp. 205.

Giesler, M. (2008). "Conflict and Compromise: Drama in Marketplace Evolution", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 34 (6), pp.739-753.

Glazier, S.D. (1992). "Pilgrimages in the Caribbean: A Comparison of Cases from Haiti and Trinidad" in Morinis, A. (1992). *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage,* Greenwood Press, Connecticut, pp. 135-147.

Gordon, B. (1986). The Souvenir: Messenger of the Extraordinary, *Journal of Popular Culture*, Vol. 20 (3), pp. 135-146.

Gould, S.J. (2006). Cooptation Through Conflation: Spiritual Materialism is Not the Same as Spirituality, *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, Vol. 9 (1), pp. 63-78.

Gould, S. (2013). "Spirituality as Introspection and Introspection as spirituality in Consumer Research" in Rinallo, D., Scott, L., Maclaren, P. (2013). *Consumption and Spirituality,* Routledge, London, pp. 231-241.

Goulding, C., Shankar, A. (2004). "Age is just a Number", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 38 (5/6), pp.641-658.

Goulding, C., Shankar, A., Canniford, R. (2009). The Marketplace Management of Illicit Pleasure, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 35 (5), pp. 759-771.

Gram, M. (2005). Family Holidays: A Qualitative Analysis of Family Holiday Experiences, *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, Vol. 5 (1), pp.2-22.

Greenwood, D.J. (1989). Culture by the Pound" in Smith, V. (ed.), *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Pennsylvania, pp. 341

Gummesson, E. (1991). *Qualitative Methods in Management Research,* Sage Publications, London, pp. 212.

Gurau C., J. Tinson. (2001). "Early evangelist or reluctant Rudolph? Attitudes towards the Christmas commercial campaign". *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, Vol. 3(1), pp. 48–62.

Gurvitch, G. (1941). "Mass, Community, Communion", *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 38 (18), pp. 485-496.

Haddorff, D.W. (2000). "Religion and the Market: Opposition, Absorption, or Ambiguity?", *Review of Social Economy*, Vol. 58 (4), pp. 483-504.

Haldrup, M., Larsen, J. (2003). The Family Gaze, *Tourist Studies*, Vol. 3 (1), pp. 23-45.

Hamilton, K (2012) Low-income families and coping through brands: inclusion or stigma? *Sociology*, Vol. 46 (1). pp. 74-90.

Hamilton, K., Hewer, P. (2009), 'Salsa Magic: An Exploratory Netnographic Analysis of the Salsa Experience', in *Advances in Consumer Research* Vol. 36 (1), pp. 502-508.

Hamilton, K., Dunnett, S., Downey, H. (2012). "Researcher Identity: Exploring the Transformatory power of the research experience", *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, Vol. 11 (4), pp. 275-282.

Hamlyn, D.W. (1995). "Epistemology, History of" in Honderich, T. (1995). *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 242-245.

Hellas, P., Woodhead, L. (2005). *The Spiritual Revolution: Why Religion is Giving Way to Spirituality*, Blackwell, Oxford, pp. 226.

Heelas, P. (2008). *Spiritualities of Life: New-Age Romanticism and Consumptive Capitalism,* Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, pp. 283.

Henry, P. & Caldwell, M. (2007). Headbanging as Resistance or Refuge: A Cathartic Account. *Consumption Markets & Culture*, Vol. 10 (2), pp.159-174.

Hervieu-Leger, D. (1986). *Vers Un Nouveau Christianisme?* Cerf Publications, Paris, pp. 395.

Hewer, P.A., Hamilton, K. (2011). On Consuming Celebrities: The Case of the Kylie E-Community, *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 38 (1), pp. 274-280.

Higgins, L. (2010). *Religious Consumption: An Investigation into the ways in which the current financial crisis has affected the consumption of Mass amongst Catholic consumers*, MRes Dissertation, University of Strathclyde, pp. 161.

Higgins, L., K. Hamilton. (2012). Is the Crucifix Sacred? Exploring the Ways in which Catholic Consumers Build Connection with God through Consumption, *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 39 (1), pp. 300-306.

Hill. R.P. (1991). Homeless Women, Special Possessions, and the Meaning of "Home": An Ethnographic Case Study, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 18 (3), pp. 298-310.

Hirschman, E.C. (1981) American Jewish Ethnicity: Its Relationship to Some Selected Aspects of Consumer Behaviour. *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 45 (3), p.102.

Hirschman, E.C. (1982). Religious Differences in Cognition Regarding Novelty Seeking & Information Transfer, *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 9, pp. 228-233.

Hirschman, E.C. (1983). Religious Affiliation and Consumption Processes: An Initial Paradigm, *Research in Marketing*, Vol. 6 (1), pp. 131-170.

Hirschman, E.C. (1985). Primitive in Aspects American of Consumption Society Modern. *Society*, Vol. 12 (2), pp.142-154.

Hirschman, E. C. (1988). "The Ideology of Consumption□: A of Syntactical and Analysis "Dallas" "Dynasty"", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 15 (3), pp.344-359.

Hirschman, E.C. (1990). Secular Immortality and the American Ideology of Affluence, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 17 (1), pp. 31-42.

Hirschman, E.C., A.A. Ruvio, M. Touzani, M. (2011). Breaking Bread with Abraham's Children: Christians, Jews and Muslims' Holiday Consumption in Dominant, Minority and Diasporic Communities, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 39 (3), pp. 429-448.

Hirschman, E.C., Belk, R.W., Ruvio, A. (2014 forthcoming). Cognition, Culture and Consumption in the Afterlife, *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 31 (1).

Holbrook, M.B. and Hirschman, E.C. (1982), The Experiential Aspects of Consumption: Consumer Fantasies, Feelings, and Fun. *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 9 (3), 132-140.

Holbrook, M.B., Grayson, M.W. (1986). The Semiology of Cinematic Consumption: Symbolic Consumer Behavior in Out of Africa, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 13 (3), pp. 374-381.

Holbrook, M.B., O'Shaughnessy, J. (1988). On the Scientific Status of Consumer Research and the Need for an Interpretive Approach to Studying Consumption Behavior, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 15 (3), pp. 398-402.

Iacobucci, D. (2001). 'Commonalities between research methods for consumer science and biblical scholarship', *Marketing Theory*, Vol.1 (1), 109-133.

Iannaccone, L.R. (1988). A Formal Model of Church and Sect, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 94 (1), pp. 241-268.

Izberk-Bilgin, E. (2013). "Theology Meets the Marketplace: The Discursive Formation of the Halal Market in Turkey" in Rinallo, D., Scott, L., Maclaren, P. (2013). *Consumption and Spirituality,* Routledge, London, pp. 41-53.

Jafari, A., C. Goulding. (2008). "We are not terrorists!" UK-Based Iranians, Consumption Practices and the "Torn Self", *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, Vol. 11 (2), pp. 73-91.

Jafari, A., Dunnett, S., Hamilton, K., Downey, H. (2013). Exploring researcher Vulnerability: Contexts, Complications and Conceptualisation, *Journal of Marketing Management,* Vol. 29 (9/10), pp. 1182-1200.

Johnstone-Louis, M. (2013). "No Gods. No Masters? The "New Atheist" Movement and the Commercialisation of Unbelief" in Rinallo, D., Scott, L., Maclaren, P. (2013). *Consumption and Spirituality,* Routledge, London, pp. 54-65.

Kaelber, L. (2002). The Sociology of Medieval Pilgrimage: Contested Views and Shifting Boundaries, in Swatos, W.H., Tomasi, L. (2002) *From Medieval Pilgrimage to Religious Tourism: The Social and Cultural Economics of Piety*, Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002, pp.51-74.

Kearney, P. (2013). "Scotland has an issue with anti-Catholicism. That's a fact ... and we have to face it", from the Herald on the 01.06.13,

http://www.heraldscotland.com/comment/columnists/scotland-has-an-issue-with-anti-catholicism-thats-a-fact-and-we-have-to-face-it.21235091 - last accessed 09.12.13.

Kedzior, R. (2013). "Materialising the Spiritual: Investigating the role of Marketplace in Ceating Opportunities for the Consumption of Spiritual Experiences" in Rinallo, D., Scott, L., Maclaren, P. (2013). *Consumption and Spirituality,* Routledge, London, pp. 178-194.

Kimura, J. Belk, R.W. (2005). Christmas in Japan: Globalization Versus Localization, *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, Vol. 8 (3), pp. 325-338.

King, C. (1993) "His Truth Goes Marching On: Elvis Presley and the Pilgrimage to Graceland" in Reader, I., Walter, T. (1993). *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture,* The Macmillan press, London, pp. 92-104.

Kozinets, R.V. (2001). Utopian Enterprise: Articulating the Meanings of Star Trek's Culture of Consumption, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 28 (1), pp. 67-88.

Kozinets, R.V. (2002). Can Consumers Escape the Market? Emancipatory Illuminations from Burning Man, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 29 (1), pp. 20-38.

Kozinets, R.V., J.M Handelman. (2004). Adversaries of Consumption: Consumer Movements, Activism and Ideology, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 31 (5), pp. 691-704.

Kozinets, R., Sherry, J.F. (2013). "The Autothemataludicization Challenge: Spiritualizing Consumer Culture through Playful Communal Co-Creation" in Rinallo, D., Scott, L., Maclaren, P. (2013). *Consumption and Spirituality,* Routledge, London, pp. 242-266.

Kurtz, L.R. (2012). *Gods in the Global Village: the World's Religions in Sociological Perspective*, Sage Publications, UK, pp. 380.

Laran, J. (2010). Choosing Your Future: Temporal Distance and the Balance between Self- Control and Indulgence, *Journal of Consumer Research,* Vol. 36 (6), pp.1002-1015.

Lastovicka, J.L., Sirianni, N.J. (2011). Truly, Madly, Deeply: Consumers in the Throes of Material Possession Love, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 38 (2), pp. 323-342.

Lauretin, R. (1994). *Pilgrimages, Sanctuaries, Icons, Apparitions: An Historical and Scriptural Account,* The Riehle Foundation, Milhead, OH, pp. 103.

Lauretin, R. (1999). *Bernadette Speaks: A Life of Saint Bernadette Soubirous in Her Own Words*, Pauline Books and Media, Toronto, pp. 665.

Lazarus, R.S. (1991). *Emotion and Adaptation*, Oxford University Press, New York, pp. 557.

Levy, S.J. (2006). "History of Qualitative Research Methods in Marketing" in Belk, R.W. (2006). *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods in Marketing*, Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd, pp. 3-16.

Lindridge, A., Hogg, M.K. (2006). Parental Gate-Keeping in Diasporic Indian Families: Examining the Intersection of culture, gender and Consumption, *Journal of Marketing Management*, Vol. 22 (99-100), pp. 979-1008.

Luedicke, M.K., Thompson, C.J. & Giesler, M. (2010). Consumer Identity Work as Moral Protagonism: How Myth and Ideology Animate a Brand-Mediated Moral Conflict. *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 36 (6), pp.1016-1032.

Lyon, D. (2000). *Jesus in Disneyland: Religion in Postmodern Times*, Polity Press, Cambridge, pp. 188.

MacInnis, D.J., de Mello, G.E., Patrick, V.M. (2004). Consumer Hopefulness: Construct, Relevance to Internet Marketing, Antecedents and Consequences, *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising*, Vol. 1 (2), pp. 1-14.

MacInnis, D.J., de Mello, G.E. (2005). The Concept of Hope and its Relevance to Product Evaluation and Choice, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 69 (1), pp.1-14.

MacInnis, D.J., Chun, H.E. (2006). *Understanding Hope and its Implications for Consumer Behaviour: I Hope, Therefore I Consume*, Foundations and Trends in Marketing, Vol. 1 (2), pp. 96.

MacInnis, D.J., Folkes, V.S. (2010). The Disciplinary Status of Consumer Behavior: A Sociology of Science Perspective on Key Controversies, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 36 (6), pp. 899-914.

Mason, M., Pavia, T.M. (2006). When the Family System Includes Disability: Adaptation in the Marketplace, Roles and Identity. *Journal of Marketing Management,* Vol. 22 (9/10), 1009-1030.

Mahan, J.H. (2007). "Reflections on the Past and Future of the Study of Religion and Popular Culture" in Lynch, G. (2007). *Between Sacred and profane: Researching religion and Popular Culture,* I.B. Tauris, London, pp. 47-62.

Marnham, P. (1982). *Lourdes: A Modern Pilgrimage,* Image Book Publications, pp. 272.

Martin, D.M., Schouten, J.W., McAlexander, J.H. (2006). Claiming the Throttle: Multiple Femininities in a Hyper- Masculine Subculture, *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, Vol. 9 (3), pp. 171-205.

Maynard, M. (1994). "Methods, Practice and Epistemology: The Debate about Feminism and Research" in Maynard, M., Purvis, J. (eds). (1994). *Researching Women's Lives from a Feminist Perspective*, Taylor and Francis, London, pp. 10-26.

McCracken, G. (1988). *The Long Interview*, Sage University Press, London, pp. 88.

McCracken, G. (2005). *Culture and Consumption II: Markets, Meaning and Brand Management*, Indiana University Press, Indiana, pp. 226.

McDannell, C. (1995). *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America*, Yale University Press, Connecticut, pp. 312.

McKecknie, S., Tynan, C. (2006). Social meanings in Christmas consumption: an exploratory study of UK celebrants' consumption ritual, *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, Vol. 5 (2), pp. 130-144.

Miller, D. (2010). *Stuff*, Polity Press, London, pp. 220.

Mittal, B., Royne, M.B. (2010). Consuming as a Family: Modes of Intergenerational Influence on Young Adults, *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, Vol. 9 (4), pp. 239-257.

Mittelstaedt, J.D. (2002). A Framework for Understanding the Relationships between Religions and Markets, *Journal of Macromarketing*, Vol. 22 (1), pp. 6-17.

Moore, A. (1980). Walt Disney World: Bounded Ritual Space and the Playful Pilgrimage Center, *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 53 (4), pp. 207-218.

Moore, E.S., Wikie, W.L. and Lutz, R.J. (2002). Passing the Torch: Intergenerational Influences as a Source of Brand Equity. *Journal of Marketing,* Vol. 66 (2), 17-37.

Morgan, D. (1996). *Family Connections: An Introduction to Family Studies*, Polity Press, Cambridge, pp. 224.

Morgan, G., Smircich, L. (1980). The Case for Qualitative Research. *Academy of Management Review*. Vol: 5 (4), pp. 491-500.

Morinis, A. (1992). *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage,* Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, pp. 325.

Moufahim, M. (2013). Religious Gift Giving: An ethnographic account of a Muslim Pilgrimage, *Marketing Theory*, Vol. 13 (4), pp. 421-441.

Muncie, J., Sapsford, R. (2003), "Issues in the Study of the Family," in John Muncie, Margaret Wetherell, Mary Langan, Rudi Dallos and Allan Cochrane (eds.), *Understanding the Family,* Sage, London, pp. 336.

Muniz Jr, A., O'Guinn, T.C. (2001). Brand Community, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 27 (4), pp. 412-432.

Muniz Jr, A. & Schau, H. (2005). Religiosity in the abandoned apple Newton brand community. *Journal of Consumer Research: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly*, Vol. 31 (4), pp.737-747.

Nygren, A. (1989). Agape and Eros in Solbe, A (ed). (1989). *Eros, Agape, and Philia: Readings in the Philosophy of Love*, Paragon House, St. Paul, MN, pp. 305.

Obrador, P. (2012). The Place of the Family in Tourism Research: Domesticity and Thick Sociality by the Pool, *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 39 (1), pp.401-420.

O'Cass, A., Clarke, P. (2001). Dear Santa, do you have my brand? A study of the Brand Requests, Awareness and Request Styles at Christmas Time, *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, Vol. 2 (1), pp. 37-53.

O'Guinn, T.C., R.W. Belk. (1989). Heaven on Earth: Consumption at Heritage Village, USA, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 16 (2), pp. 227-238.

O'Guinn, T. C. (1991), Touching Greatness: The Central Midwest Barry Manilow Fan Club, in Highways and Buyways: Naturalistic Research from the Consumer Behavior Odyssey, *Special Volumes, Association for Consumer Research*, pp. 102-111.

O'Mahoney, T.P. (2008). *Has God Logged Off?: The Quest for Meaning in the 21st Century*, The Columbia Press, Dublin, pp. 156.

O'Shaughnessy, J., Holbrook, M.B (1988). On Scientific Status of Consumer Research and the Need for an Interpretive Approach to Studying Consumption Behaviour, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 15 (3), pp. 398-402.

Palmer, R.E. (1969). *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidigger and Gadamer*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, pp. 283.

Palmer, A., D. Gallagher. (2007). Religiosity, Relationships and Consumption: A Study of Church Going in Ireland, *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, Vol. 10 (1), pp. 31-49.

Park, J.Z. and J. Baker. (2007). "What Would Jesus Buy□: American Consumption of Religious and Spiritual Material Goods". *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 46 (4), pp.501-517.

Park, J., Tansuhaj, P.S. and Kolbe, R.H. (1991). The Role of Love, Affection, and Intimacy in Family Decision Research. *Advances in Consumer Research,* Vol. 18 (1), 651-656.

Pavia, T.M., Mason, M.J. (2004). The Reflexive Relationship between Consumer Behaviour and Adaptive Coping, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 31 (3), pp. 441-454.

Penaloza, L. (1994). Atravesando Fronteras / Border Crossings: A Critical Ethnographic Exploration of the Consumer Acculturation of Mexican Immigrants, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 21 (1), pp. 32-54.

Penaloza, L., Thompson, C.J., Schouten, J., Sampath, R., Meamber, L. (1998). Just Doing It: A Visual Ethnographic Study of Spectacular Consumption Behavior at Nike Town, *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, Vol. 2 (4), pp. 337-465.

Pfaffenberger, B. (1979). The Kataragama Pilgirmage: Hindu-Buddhist Interaction and It's Significance in Sri Lanka's Polyethnic Social System, *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 38 (2), pp. 253-270.

Pickering, S.F. (1984). *Durkheim's sociology of religion: themes and theories*, Routledge & Kegan Paul plc, London, pp.557.

Preston, J.J. (1992). "Spiritual Magnetism: An Organizing Principle for the Study of Pilgirmage" in Morinis, A. (1992). *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage,* Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, pp. 31-46.

Reader, I., Walter, T. (1993). *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture,* The Macmillan press, London, pp. 250.

Reader, I. (1993). "Dead to the World: Pilgrims in Shikoku" in Reader, I., Walter, T. (1993). *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture,* The Macmillan press, London, pp. 107-136.

Rinallo, D. (2009). "'Living a Magical Life': Sacred Consumption and Spiritual Experience in the Italian Neo-Pagan Community", in Scott, L., Maclaran, P. (2009), "'Roll your own" Religion: Consumer Culture and the Spiritual Vernacular', in *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 36 (1), pp. 61-62.

Rinallo, D., Scott, L., Maclaren, P. (2013a). *Consumption and Spirituality,* Routledge, London, pp. 280.

Rinallo, D., Scott, L., Maclaren, P. (2013b). "Introduction: Unravelling Complexities at the Commercial/ Spiritual Interface" in Rinallo, D., Scott, L., Maclaren, P. (2013). *Consumption and Spirituality,* Routledge, London, pp. 1-25.

Rinallo, D., Borghini, S., Bamossy, G., Kozinets, R.V. (2013c). "When Sacred Objects Go Brand: Fashion Rosaries and the Contemporary Linkage of Religion and Commerciality" in Rinallo, D., Scott, L., Maclaren, P. (2013). *Consumption and Spirituality,* Routledge, London, pp. 29-40.

Rindfleish, J. (2005). 'Consuming the Self: New Age Spirituality as "Social Product" in Consumer Society', *Consumption, Markets and Culture,* Vol. 8 (4), pp. 343-360.

Rinschede, G. (1992). Forms of Religious Tourism, *Annals of Tourism,* Vol. 19 (1), pp. 51-67.

Ritzer, G. (2005). *Revolutionizing the Means of Consumption: Enchanting a Disenchated World,* Pine Forge Press, US, pp. 258.

Rogers, C. (1951). *Client -Centered Therapy*, Constable Publications, pp. 560.

Rook, D.W. (1985). "The Ritual Dimension of Consumer Behaviour", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 12 (3), pp, 251-264.

Ross, S. (2013). The Harvest Fields Statistics 2013, http://www.wholesomewords.org/missions/greatc.html - last accessed the 09.12.13.

Rubin, H.J., Rubin, I.S. (1997). *Qualitative Interviewing: the Art of Hearing Data*, Sage, Thousand Oaks: CA, pp. 288.

Sallnow, M.J. (1981). "Communitas Reconsidered: The Sociology of Andean Pilgrimage", *Man*, Vol.16 (2), pp. 163-182.

Sallnow, M.J. (1987). *Pilgrims of the Andes: Regional Cults in Cusco*, Smithsonian Institute Press, Washington, DC, pp. 351.

Sandikci, O., G. Ger. (2007). Globalisation and Rituals: Does Ramadan Turn into Christmas?, *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 34 (1), pp. 610-615.

Sandikci, O., G. Ger. (2010). Veiling in Style: How Does a Stigmatized Practice Become Fashionable? *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 37 (1), pp. 15-36.

Schau, H.J., A.M. Muniz Jr. (2007). "Temperance and Religiosity in a Non-Marginal, Non–Stigmatized Brand Community", Cited in Cova, B., Kozinets, R., Shankar, A. (2007). *Consumer tribes*, Butterworth Heinemann, Oxford, pp. 339.

Schmidt, L.E. (1991). The Commercialization of the Calendar: American Holidays and the Culture of Consumption, 1870-1930, *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 78 (3), pp. 887-916.

Schouten, J.W. (1991). "Selves in Transition: Symbolic Consumption in Personal Rites of Passage and Identity Reconstruction", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 17 (2), pp. 412- 425.

Schouten, J.W., J.H. McAlexander. (1995). "Subcultures of Consumption: An Ethnography of the New Bikers", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol.22 (3), pp. 43-61.

Scott, L., Maclaran, P. (2009), '"Roll your own" Religion: Consumer Culture and the Spiritual Vernacular', in *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 36 (1), pp. 60-63.

Scott, L., Maclaren, P. (2013). "Consuming the Mists and Myths of Avalon: A Case Study of Pilgrimage in Glastonbury" in Rinallo, D., Scott, L., Maclaren, P. (2013). *Consumption and Spirituality,* Routledge, London, pp. 195-207.

Shackley, M. (2006). "7 Empty Bottles at Sacred Sites" in Timothy, D., Olsen, D. (2006). *Tourism, Religion and Spiritual Journeys*, Routledge, London, pp. 304.

Shankar, A., Goulding, C. (2001). Interpretive Consumer Research: Two More Contributions to Theory and Practice, *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal,* Vol. 4 (1), pp. 7-16.

Shankar, A., Patterson, M. (2001). Interpreting the Past, Writing the Future, *Journal of Marketing Management,* Vol. 17 (5/6), pp. 481-501.

Sherry, J.F., McGrath, M.A. (1989). "A Comparative Ethnography of the Gift Store," in Hirschman, E.C. (ed), (1989). *Interpretive Consumer Research*, Association for Consumer Research, Minnesota, pp. 209.

Sherry, J.F. (1998*). Servicescapes: The Concept of Place in Contemporary Markets,* American Marketing Association, Chicago, pp. 632.

Sherry, J.F., Kozinets, R.V., Storn, D., Duhachek, A., Nuttavuthisit, K., DeBerry-Spence, B. (2001). Being in the Zone : Staging Retail Theater at ESPN Zone Chicago, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, Vol. 30 (4), pp. 465-510.

Sigmund, P.E. (1963). *Nicholas of Cusa and Medieval Political Thought*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, pp. 244.

Siguaw, J.A., P.M. Simpson. (1997). Effects of Religiousness on Sunday Shopping and Outshopping Behaviours: A Study of Shopper Attitudes and Behaviours in the American South, *The international Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*, Vol.7 (1), pp. 23-40.

Sood, J., Y. Nasu. (1995). Religiosity and Nationality: An Exploratory Study of their Effect on Consumer Behavior in Japan and the United States, *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 34 (1), pp. 1-9.

Spiggle, S. (1994). Analysis and Interpretation of Qualitative Data in Consumer Research, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 21 (3), pp. 491-503.

Stacey, J. (1998). *Brave New Families: Stories of Domestic Upheaval in Late-Twentieth-Century America,"* University of California Press, Berkeley, pp. 323.

Stanley, J.M. (1992). "The Great Maharashtrian Pilgrimage: Pandharpur and Alandi" in Morinis, A. (1992). *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage,* Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, pp. 65-87.

Stark, R. (1999). Secularisation, R.I.P., *Sociology of Religion*, Vol. 60 (3), pp. 249-273.

Stenbacka, C. (2001) Qualitative Research Requires Quality Concepts of Its Own, *Management Decision*, Vol. 39 (7), pp.551 – 556.

The Voice Group, (2010). Buying into Motherhood? Problematic Consumption and Ambivalence in Transitional Phases, *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, Vol. 13 (4), pp. 373-397.

Tian, K., Belk, R.W. (2005). "Extended Self and Possessions n the Workplace", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 32 (2), pp. 297-310.

Thompson, C.J., W.B. Locander, H.R. Pollio. (1990). The Lived Meaning of Free Choice; An Existential-Phenomenological Description of Everyday Consumer Experiences of Contemporary Married Women, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 17 (3), pp. 346-361.

Thompson, C.J., Hirschman, E.C. (1995). Understanding the Socialized Body: A Poststructuralist Analysis of Consumers' Self- Conceptions, Body Images, and Self-Care Practices, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 22 (2), pp. 139-153.

Thompson, C.J. (1996). Caring Consumers: Gendered Consumption Meanings and the Juggling Lifestyle. *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 22 (4), 388-407.

Thompson, C.J. (1997). 'Interpreting Consumers: A Hermeneutical Framework for Deriving Marketing Insights from the Texts of Consumers' Consumption Stories'. *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 34 (November), pp. 438-455.

Thompson, C.J., D.L. Hayto. (1997). 'Speaking of Fashion: Consumers Uses of Fashion Discourses and the Appropriation of Countervailing Cultural Meanings'. *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 24 (1), pp. 15-42.

Touzani, M., E.C. Hirschman. (2009). 'Cultural Syncretism and Ramadan Observance: Consumer Research Visits Islam', *Advances in Consumer Research,* Vol. 35 (1), pp: 374-380.

Tumbat, G. & Belk, R.W. (2011). Marketplace Tensions in Extraordinary Experiences, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 38 (1), pp.42-61.

Turley, D. (2013). "Forming Sacred Places and Possessions: Pilgrims at St. Brigid's Holy Well" in Rinallo, D., Scott, L., Maclaren, P. (2013). *Consumption and Spirituality,* Routledge, London, pp. 165-177.

Turner, V. (1967). *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual,* Cornell Publications, New York, pp. 405.

Turner, V. (1969). *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure,* Aldine Transaction, New York, pp. 213.

Turner, V. (1974). *Drama, Fields & Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca & London, pp. 309.

Turner, V., Turner, E.L.B. (1978). *Image & Pilgrimage in Christian Culture*, Columbia University Press, New York, pp. 281.

Turner, V. (1982). *From Ritual to Theatre: the Human Seriousness of Play,* PAJ Publications, New York, pp. 127.

Turner, V., Bruner, E.M. (1986). *The Anthropology of Experience,* University of Illinois Press, Chicago, pp. 391.

Van Gennep, A. (1909/1960). *The Rites of Passage*, Routledge, London, pp. 198.

Veer, E., Shankar, A. (2011). Forgive me, Father, For I Did Not Give Full Justification For My Sins: How Religious Consumers Justify the Acquisition of Material Wealth, *Journal of Marketing Management*, Vol. 27 (5-6), pp. 547-560.

Venkatesh, A. (1998). Cyberculture: Consumers and cybermarkets. In *Servicescapes: The concept of place in contemporary markets*, edited by John F. Sherry, Jr., 343-75. NTC Business Books, Chicago, pp.632.

Vidyarthi, L.P. (1978). *The Sacred Complex in Hindu Gaya*, Asia Publishing House, Oxford, pp.232.

Voas, D. (2006). Religious Decline in Scotland: New Evidence on Timing and Spatial Patterns, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion,* Vol. 45 (1), pp. 107-118.

Vulkonic, B. (1996). *Tourism and Religion*, Pergamon, Oxford, pp. 208.

Wallendorf, M., Belk, R.W. (1989). "Assessing Trustworthiness in Naturalistic Consumer Research" in Hirschman, E.C. (1989). *Interpretive Consumer Research*, Association for Consumer Research, Minnesota, pp. 69-84.

Wallendorf, M. and Arnould, E.J. (1991), `We Gather Together': The Consumption Rituals of Thanksgiving Day. *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 18 (3), 13-31.

Wallendorf, M., Brucks, M. (1993). Introspection in Consumer Research: Implementation and Implications, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 20 (3), pp. 339-359.

Walter, T. (1993). "War Grace Pilgrimage" in Reader, I., Walter, T. (1993). *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture,* The Macmillan press, London, pp. 63-91.

Wand, J.W.C (abridged and translation). (1963). *St. Augustine's City of God,* Oxford Univerity Press, London, pp. 416.

Wax, M. L. (1967). 'On Misunderstanding Verstehen: A Reply to Abel'. *Journal of Sociology & Social Research,* Vol. 51 (3), pp. 323-333.

Weber, M. (1905/1958). *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Routledge, London, pp. 271.

Weber, M. (1890/ 1949). *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, Trans. Shils, A., Finch, H.A., Glencoe Free Press, Illinois, pp.188.

Wilkes, R.E., Burnett, J.J., Howell, R.D. (1986). On The Meaning and Measurement of Religiosity in Consumer Research, *Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 14 (1), pp. 47-56.

Wong, L. (2007). "Market Cultures, the Middle Classes and Islam: Consuming the Market?", *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, Vo. 10 (4), pp. 451-480.

Wort, F., S. Pettigrew. (2003). Consuming the Belly Dance*, European Advances in Consumer Research* , Vol. 6 (1), pp. 187- 192.

Zwick, D., C. Chelariu. (2006). "Mobilizing the Hijab☐: Islamic identity negotiation in the context of a matchmaking website". *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, Vol. 5 (4), pp.380-395.