

INDEX

PILGRIMAGES, SACRED PLACES AND PATHWAY TO RWYC VOL.12, N.1, 2025

Rana P.B. Singh, Olimpia Niglio, editors

PILGRIMAGES, SACRED PLACES, AND THE PATHWAY TO RWYC (RECONNECTING WITH YOUR CULTURE): PERSPECTIVES AND APPRAISAL Rana P.B. Singh, Olimpia Niglio	5
PILGRIMAGES AND PATHWAY TO RWYC (RECONNECTING WITH YOUR CULTURE): SCENARIO AND MESSAGES Rana P.B. Singh, Olimpia Niglio	21
BUDDHIST SACREDSCAPES: SPIRIT OF PLACE, AND THE PATHWAY TO RWYC THROUGH PILGRIMAGE Rana P.B. Singh, Pravin S. Rana	45
PILGRIMAGE, SACRED SITES AND THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE MIRACULOUS Martin Gray	69
COMPREHENDING ROMANESQUE CHURCH PORTALS ALONG THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO: (IN)MATERIALITY OF RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPE Hee Sook Lee-Niinioja	89
CONSERVACIÓN DEL PATRIMONIO CULTURAL EN EL TRIÁNGULO DEL ORO DE COLOMBIA: INTEGRANDO SUSTENTABILIDAD Y SIGNIFICADO ESPIRITUAL DEL PAISAJE Kevin Alexander Echeverry Bucurru, Fabiola Colmenero Fonseca, Javier Cárcel Carrasco, Alejandro Guzmán Ramírez	105
PILGRIMAGES AND RELIGIOUS TOURISM IN MEXICO: ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL IMPACT ON HERITAGE CONSERVATION. Fabiola Colmenero Fonseca, Juan Francisco Palomino Bernal, Ramiro Rodríguez Pérez	119

SACRED PLACES, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE. THE GREAT PILGRIMAGE OF THE DANCES TLATELOLCO-LA VILLA (MÉXICO) Victor Fernando Medina-Martínez; José Antonio García-Ayala; Blanca Margarita Gallegos-Navarrete	131
PAISAJES DE LA AUSENCIA. LA MEMORIA, EL TIEMPO Y LO SAGRADO EN EL PROYECTO DEL JARDÍN DE SEFARAD Carlos Rodríguez Fernández; Sagrario Fernández Raga; Flavia Zelli	143
SACRED SPACES AND THE DIGICENE: ENGAGING THE HYBRID OCCUPATION OF AN INDIAN RELIGIOUS PRECINCT Anubhav Borgohain, Rasika Haval	155

International Partner



PILGRIMAGES, SACRED PLACES AND PATHWAY TO RWYC

Vol. 1



QUE SOY
ERA
IMMACULADA CONCEPTION

SACRED PLACES, AND THE PATHWAY TO RWYC (RECONNECTING WITH YOUR CULTURE): PERSPECTIVES AND APPRAISAL

RANA P.B. SINGH¹, OLIMPIA NIGLIO²

¹ Banaras Hindu University, India

² University of Pavia, Italy

ranapbs@gmail.com, olimpia.niglio@unipv.it

Accepted: December 15, 2024

ABSTRACT

Pilgrimage as a rite of passage operates liminality, i.e., transitional space between the material world and the metaphysical reality. Sacred space is an extraordinary place where the sacred is linked to physical reality. The interrelatedness of sacred landscape combines the absoluteness of space, relateness of places, and comprehensiveness of landscape, and all these altogether result in a 'wholeness' carrying the inherent and imposed spirit of 'holiness', called 'sacredscapes'. Ultimately, the wholeness of the landscape creates a theosphere of 'faithscape' that encompasses sacred place, sacred time, sacred meanings, sacred functionaries, and sacred rituals and embodies both symbolic and tangible psyche elements in an attempt to reveal humankind's identity in the cosmos. Within the system of complex interconnectedness and interactions among cultures, heritage, and landscapes and their resultant attributes—all that are rooted in the past, together, we seek to search ways, paths, and means that are implied for framing and making a base for the UN Sustainable Development Goals Target 11.4, focussing on 'Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'. Together with community development, nature-based education, and pilgrimages to reveal the spirit of places are part of the cultural process of transformations. **R W Y C - Reconnecting With Your Culture** – is a visionary mission and movement, re-appraising interconnectedness between Locality and Universality – Holiness (*humanity*) to Wholeness (*sublimity*): Humanism to Spiritualism. The role of culture is vital to developing perspectives of shared and participatory policies and fostering the development of humanity through co-sharing ethics, spirituality, and the spirit of place. This introductory paper presents a synoptic review and appraisal of the trends in this direction and contextuality.

Keywords: Sacred ecology, Sacredscapes, faithscape, transcendental experience, Sacred-Mundane reciprocity, Spirituality, Spirit of Place.

SACRED PLACES: CULTURAL CONSCIENCE

Among the attributes of sacred geography, 'space' serves as the contextual envelope in which all other processes take turns. Consideration of 'space' together with 'landscape' in social and cultural theory and geography has taken a serious concern by the spatial turn and post-modernistic thoughts since the 1980s. Also, the spatial sense has opened a fresh insight into understanding sacrality and religious notions. Sacred cartography and sacred geometry provided spatial vision to sacred geography (cf. Knott 2005, pp. 11-20). The 'spatial' is a social construct, as many theorists thought; nevertheless, it is also a spiritual, visual, contextual, and emotional notion that human beings possess inherently. It may be projected metaphorically, metaphysically, mystically, and all together, which Greek thought called *cosmos*.

In the frame of sacred geography in Māyā culture, such notions are linked to geographic features and associated gods and beliefs (cf. Bassie-Sweet 2008). However, in a recent study, the sacred complex of the holy city of Puri is studied on the line of sacred geography, emphasising structure, organisation, and cultural role in forming a sacred centre (Patnaik 2006). At the same time, another study projects the cosmic geometry and spatial ordering of sacred cities in India (cf. Singh 2009b). Such studies indicate the increasing quest and fascination to understand and experience sacred geography (cf. Singh 2011).

The transcendent becomes intrinsic in the sacred space, and the devotee can access God ('Infinite Sublime'). The sacrality of such places stays thus as a physical immanence of the divine spirit. However, our contemporary

world witnesses contrasting approaches to sacred spaces—in different ways, varying contexts, and diverse cultural traditions. In some parts of the globe (especially in Western Europe), there is a decrease in the interest in religious buildings as places for worship due to the declining tendency of practising believers; resultantly, such structures are sometimes repurposed as public institutions, hotels or restaurants. In other regions, one can testify to a renewal of intense attention directed towards religious architecture and sacred places, especially in Orthodox communities in the Balkans and other places. These contradictory tendencies and dynamics in understanding the role of sacred buildings highlight the transformation of sacred spaces as areas for affirming religious identity and negotiating power resorts. Buildings concentrate on different values, expectations, and social projections of a spiritual community, and most times, the physical place where the building is consecrated bears importance of its own (Calian 2021, pp. 139-140). More comprehensively, cultural heritage is defined in terms of values expressed as historical, artistic, sacred, scientific, and other related attributes while linking with the significance of identity and inheritance (Niglio 2014).

In the prime conception of sacred geography, it is believed that divinities are also “born of the earth, of space, of the sea, and of the starry sky, they are still here among us, still alive. Among the inspiring ruins of the great temples, the sleeping gods are always ready to be revived” (cf. Richer 1995, p. xxi). Three broad areas of research emphasised in the study of sacred geography, especially projecting sacred places, are (a) *the ritual-spatial context* of sacred places at various levels of social organisations — individual, family, society, and cultural group — and in different contexts and ways; (b) *the growth of meanings and feelings* attached to sacred places, taking history as a means to elucidate the sequences of their existence, continuity and maintenance; and (c) *a typology of sacred places* in terms of contrasts, similarities, and degrees of manifest powers (cf. Singh 2009a, pp. 236-237).

Lane (2001, p. 15) suggests four axioms associated with the character and layout of sacred places; they are instrumental in understanding the relationship between human beings and the environment — the frame of sacred geography. These four phenomenological axioms are:

1. ***Sacred place is not chosen, it chooses.*** It is a construction of the imagination that affirms the independence of the holy. God chooses to reveal himself only where he will. It is perceived as a place quietly seeking a person out, whispering beyond all the previous efforts to locate and fix the place of power.

2. ***A sacred place is an ordinary place, ritually made extraordinary.*** The *locum sacrum* is frequently found to be surprisingly unremarkable, esteemed a strong background for ‘place because of neither its sublime setting nor its consciousness’, as Swan (1991, pp. 9-10) reported in the context of functional importance in the community's life. It becomes sacred because of certain ritual acts performed there, setting it apart as unique.

3. ***Sacred places can be trodden upon without being entered.*** Its recognition is existential, not ontologically discerned; identifying a sacred place is thus intimately related to states of consciousness.

4. ***The impulse of sacred place is both centripetal and centrifugal, local and universal.*** One is recurrently driven to a quest for centredness — a focus on the particular place of divine encounter — and then at other times driven out from that centre with the awareness that God is never confined to a single locate.

Since the first step of human evolution, the idea of the particularity of place, *mysterium tremendum*, has been part of the human environment (cf. Otto 1923). Joseph Campbell (1974, p. 184) asserts that “the idea of a sacred place where the walls and laws of the temporary world may dissolve to reveal a wonder is apparently as old as the human race”. Identifying a place as a sacred place is never essentially one of individual recognition; “in actual fact, the place is never ‘chosen’ by man, it is merely discovered by him” (Eliade 1958, p. 369). In some way or another, the ‘spirit of a place’ attracts and reveals to man; that is how he merely ‘finds’ them but cannot make or select their positions.

In spite of the growing field of environmental psychology and sacred ecology, the issue of understanding sacred places has not yet caught proper attention. The most challenging task is effectively grasping the basic question of understanding the deeply rooted meaning and message. James Swan’s leadership in running the ‘*Spirit of Place Symposium Program*’ has been an actual march of awareness in this respect since 1987. During this short period of seven years of annual programmes,

“Exploring how modern people might — become more aware of the subtle significance of place, several scientists shared our growing understanding of how electromagnetic fields and unusual air, water and soil chemistry at certain places could help explain their uniqueness. A common finding among cultures all around the world, we found, was that at sacred places, there is more life force energy, which has both secular and sacred qualifies. Our understanding of subtle fields and their influence on our lives is just beginning to be understood”.

The human response to the environment and understanding the intrinsic meaning is portrayed by the concept of “*topophilia*”, a neologism, which includes all the human being’s effective ties with the material environment. In geography, this idea was introduced by Yi-Fu Tuan (1974). However, the issue of psychic and archetypal environment is not considered in this context. The prefix ‘*topo*’ itself refers to topography primarily. Chora stands out as the oldest Greek word for the place where the beingness of humankind is preserved. Accepting historical antiquity and insight, Walter (1988, p. 120) suggests the idea of *Chorophilia*, the emotional attachment to a place in contrast to *chorophobia* in place of *topophobia*. Thales (ca. 624 - 548 BCE), a great scholar of geometry and a philosopher, is supposed to have said: “Of all things that are, the most ancient is God, for he is uncreated. The most beautiful is the cosmos, for it is God’s workmanship. The greatest is place, for it holds the things” (cf. Walter 1988, p. 121). Walter (ibid.: 5) argues that “our places will not improve until we change our form of topistic (*a holistic mode of inquiry for a deeply insightful experience of place*), experience, and that it is humanly possible to

change it". In Oriental thought, "The quality of nature that creates life is the life force energy, which is "chi" in China and "ki" in Japan. On both the human body and the earth's surface, there are said to be special places where the life force energy has an unusual abundance and quality, as well as connecting pathways or meridians where extra energy flows. These places on the body are referred to as acupuncture points. In the landscape, there are special holy places, sei-chi, where strong spirits, kami, in the Shinto tradition, are said to reside" (Swan 2010, p. 323).

In a study of spatial dimensions of religion, with special reference to 'sacred places' and 'profane spaces', the term *geographics* is proposed, and three distinct yet interrelated broad areas of inquiry concerning the development of religious self-understanding are proposed (Scott & Simpson-Housley 1991, pp. xii-xiv): (a) *literal role*, (b) *symbolic role*, and (c) *eschatological* (cognitive) role with prophetic and apocalyptic vision. These roles are associated with particular places, regions, or geographical phenomena and lead to religious self-understanding.

Based on the 'Spirit of Place Symposium Program', Swan (1992, p. 225) concludes, "The spirit of a place is the result of the interplay between the spiritual world and nature, and the collective product of the interactions of the people of that area too. When they all come into harmony, the spirit of the place can really work its magic best". Swan (1992, pp. 200-201) further observes that 'the sacred places are the "earth heritage" where one can experience the vibration of the earth energy. They require special care for preservation and protection'. Describing the psychic connection between people and place for enhancing mental health, Vine Deloria, Jr. (cf. Swan 1992, p. 237) states that "unless the sacred places are discovered and protected and used as religious places, there is no possibility of a nation ever coming to grip with the land itself and national psychic stability is impossible".

Powerful places in history became cities and were responsible for generating entire civilisations, which seemed to condense the culture and values of those civilisations in one place. For example, Varanasi is known as the cultural capital of India and microcosmic India. This character of place is called "orthogenetic" — creating and sustaining the ethos and moral order of the whole culture. Of course, primarily, such places, or cities, have developed self-image as they reproduce the cosmological order and make it accessible on the human plane (Eck 1987, p. 2).

Places differ simply from their contextual difference; it may be their physical environments or the human responses due to various reasons different cultures have their vision, interpretation, and symbolism related to the environment and their utility in survival and reproduction. The study of place, its milieu and human context will be set within the physical and entire human-created landscape. In geography, as a discipline, most of our concerns have been only about engineering, not understanding. We claim that geography is accurate and unified, but we don't know where and what it is! Suppose we accept that geography is the study of Earth as the home of humankind. In that case, a study of places is to be initiated by their understanding, experiencing and receiving the messages inherently communicated by them. For this change, we have to come out of our geographic cage, and this change is to be taken as a mission. Johnston (1991, p. 253) feels that

"Only in that way will we ensure understanding of wholes — places — which are much greater than the sum of parts, and then With full understanding we can move much more confidently towards the fashioning of better places: to rephrase one of Bunge's (1973) important epigrams — 'May the world be full of happy places'".

At present, the unified way to approach social and cognitive environments is encouraging geography to accept the salience of place as a great potential. One such example is to experience and expose the messages of multi-religious shrines or a single shrine that attracts adherents from various religions whose separate identities record contestation and conflicts (cf. Singh 2008). Above all, such shrines are the healing foci of the most fundamental human pilgrimages, the quest for well-being (cf. Bhardwaj 1987, p. 114).

AXIOMS FOR READING THE SACREDSCAPE

The following primary and self-evident rules (axioms) are posited by Lewis (1979, pp. 15-26) for reading the landscape, which in modified (in an Asian context) form are useful in reading the Sacredscape (cf. Singh, Rana 1995, pp. 102-103):

1. *The Sacredscape is the clue to culture.* The human impingement trusted upon and cognised by the devotees provides strong evidence of the kind of human culture we possess in the past, preserve in the present, and will continue in the future. In other words, they refer to our processes of becoming. Historically, human beings searched for the sacred power of place for their own sake and imitation while mythologising and making them alive through ritualisation. These activities later converge into a religious tradition.

2. *The Sacredscape refers to cultural unity and place equality.* All the items and aspects in the sacredscapes are no more and no less important than other items in their role as clues to cultural tradition. Sacred journey and circumambulation are as important a cultural symbol as the territorial extension, and changes in people's attitudes and behaviours show the process of "existence-maintenance-transformation-and-adaptation." This journey finally converges to make a whole — a unity — that is how sacredscapes become holy.

3. *The common features of Sacredscapes possess intrinsic meaning.* What we see by a common eye is only the outside appearance; however, an invisible intrinsic meaning would be understood only through faith and deeper feelings in the cultural context. At super-shrine like the Hindu centre of Varanasi, Stirrat (1984, p. 208) claims that religious activity embraces both worlds, with no distinction drawn between the pragmatic and the transcendent:

“religious activities at such shrines are both matters for making merit for the eternal life and means of gaining benefits in this world.”

4. *For the Sacredscape, history matters.* Lewis (1979, p. 22) says: “That is, we do what we do, and make what we make because our doings and our makings are inherited from the past.” The sacredscapes are the cultural heritage resource where history matters. The symbolism, mythology, ritualisation process, and the ultimate faithscape evolved – all are subject to the historical transformation process and human adaptation; therefore, they need special care (cf. Verschuuren, et al. 2010).

5. *The Sacredscapes make little sense if out from sacred ecology.* The human psyche and manifested power in the sacredscape are essential for making it exist and continue. The manifestation of sacred realities in ordinary objects is called ‘hierophany’ by Eliade (1959, p. 11). They have specific locations interpreted in a broader context of symbolism and where human beings perceive divine power in an ethereal form of consciousness. They replicate the *macrocosm* on the earth as a *mesocosm*, which is further revealed at the level of the *microcosm* (human mind and faith or an individual shrine or temple).

6. *The messages conveyed by Sacredscapes are obscure.* The human psyche varies from one to another, local to regional, and the “messages” conveyed are so varied that broad generalisation is impossible. For understanding and analysis, several questions are put before the habit of asking them simply by doing so: What does it look like? How does it work? Who designed it? Why? When? What does it tell us about the way our society and culture work? To understand the message, one has to be a part of the pilgrimage as a pilgrim, avoiding looking like a pilgrim. This requires a deep sense of the cultural tradition and faith in the frame the followers follow (cf. Gothóni 2010). The landscape, especially the sacredscape, communicates only to those who can read its messages (Faustich 1994, p. 12).

The sacred landscape combines the absoluteness of space, the relativeness of places, and the comprehensiveness of the landscape. Altogether, this constitutes a ‘wholeness’ that conveys the inherent spirit of ‘holiness’, which we call ‘sacredscapes’; these, being part of the sacred heritage, are regulated and reproduced by those of faith and in their sacred rituals. Accordingly, as faith adherents within sacred space, we form a sense of ourselves and our-place at varying scales of space-time (Singh & Niglio 2025, p. 13). We begin from the local scale, and here we may first experience the sacred message through the spirit of place – its *genius loci*, and the power of place – *potentia est*: place speaks, place communicates; this way, we experience sacred heritage (Singh and Rana 2020, p. 75). Sacredscapes are distinct and unique cultural symbols of the creativity of human culture (cf. Schafer 2024). If the sacredscapes disappeared, there would be a loss of historical and cultural connections of heritage within the human psyche and cosmology. This frame would also result in the loss of the human spirit and creativity in drawing near to the ultimate; humans would stop practising metaphysics and give up the search for cosmic interconnectedness between human beings and the earth-spirit (Singh 1995b, p. 108). Let us pray: “May the sacred places be your friends, and you theirs. They are there to help people find out who they are and become themselves, in service to the Earth and all its creatures” (Swan 1990, p. 224).

DIMENSIONS OF SACRED HERITAGE AND LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

The notion of sacred geography refers to an all-encompassing reality that maintains the *prāṇa* (ethereal breathe/ life-force) through an interactional web of the five gross elements (*Feng-shui* in China, Fig. 1). The *Feng-shui* is similar to the Indian five gross elements (*pañcha-mahābhūtas*) doctrine that deals with combinations and ordering among the five elements (space/sky, air, water, fire, and earth). The Korean *Pung-su* is identical to Chinese *Feng-shui*, as both of the principles of landscapes refer to the breath of life (*prāṇa* in India, *ki* in Korea, *ch’i* in China), and are closely related to wind and water (see Singh & Olimpia 2023a, p. 33; Kim and Singh 2023). The interactional web of the network these gross elements may further be reflected in at least five dimensions (cf. Pogačnik 2007, pp. 5-6):

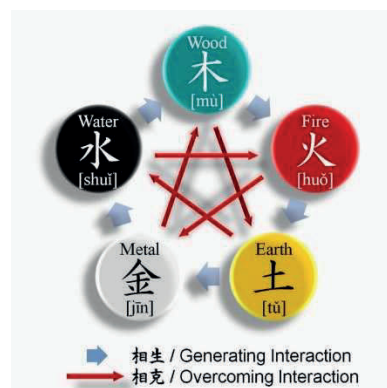


Fig. 1. Wuxing (*Feng-shui*) elements, China: interconnectedness and interaction.

(i) *Dimension of eternity* — representation of primaevial vibration, the divine all-presence, the light of light, e.g., a sacred territory covering sacred heritage.

(ii) *Archetypal dimension of reality* — the inherent quality of spatial manifestation that preserves the sense of planetary creation or archetypal patterns behind reality, e.g., representation of other sacred places of India in the sacredscapes of Banaras.

(iii) *Dimension of consciousness* — the operational system of cosmic ideas and archetypes that makes the mindset and covers the range from mental to emotional and from intuitive to rational — ultimately making the 'belief systems', e.g., various myths, folk beliefs, and rituals that make the consciousness always alive, active and expanding.

(iv) *Etheric dimension* — possessing vital-energy or bio-energetic dimensions, symbolised with ether that invisible holds and manifests the rest of four elements, e.g., Vital energy fields, Earth chakras, and channel/or site of vital power or places of healing.

(v) *Material dimension* — the dimension in which the embodiment of minerals, plants, animals, human beings, landscape features, stars, and the Earth's crust takes place — the visual world of physical perceptibility.

The knowledge and experience of sacred geography (*geomancy*) 'can provide travellers with the tools to deepen their contact and interaction with the land and its sacred energy of the culture they visit and to create an exchange of energy between the visitor and the visited place' (cf. Pogačnik 2007, p. 239). At present, the unified way to approach social and cognitive environments encourages geography to accept the salience of place as a great potential — this is the concern of *sacred geography*, a lived landscape that is "relational and it evokes emotion and attachment" (Eck 2012, p. 11). Many spots are considered to possess an extraordinary intensity of sacrament, and that's how they became places of pilgrimage. This whole system becomes part of sacred geography. Unique features of landscapes, e.g., mountains and hills, rivers and their banks, natural springs, lakes, forests, and groves — those having some distinctive features are conceived as sacred spaces and get linked to pilgrimages (Singh, Rana, & Olsen 2022, p. 135).

EXPRESSING SACREDSCAPES AS A FUNCTION

Sacredsapes function as a system of communication power and embody this diversity of character needs to be recognised in various contexts and concepts. Meinig (1979) has proposed the 'ten versions of the same scene', which may be taken as significant notions expressing sacredscapes (cf. Singh, Rana 1995, pp. 103-104):

1) as *Nature*. The sky above, the ground beneath, and the horizon binding the two provide the basic frame as theologically expressed: Sky the father, Earth the mother, thus we all are brothers and sisters. The sacral power perceived by human beings in history was a realisation of nature-spirit.

2) as *Habitat*. Every landscape is a piece of the Earth as the Home of Mankind. Man constantly works as a viable agent of transformation, change and creator of resources (like heritage). In short, man is domesticating and cosmicising the earth.

3) as *Artefact*. In the process of transformation and change, man sets his mark on the landscape. The monuments, shrines, temples, and related structures all testify to human imprints on sacred territory and are visible as artefacts in the sacredscape.

4) as *System*. Man and his interaction with the sacredscape form an intricate system of systems — some visible, but many invisible. This system is a part of belief that implies faith in man as essentially omniscient — after all, he is also a part of the cosmos and God. In the cosmos, one is related to the other, and everything is related to the other like a 'Self-regulating system' narrated in the Gaia hypothesis.

5) as *Problem*. To understand better is a notion to achieve religious merit more perfectly and make rituals better for more profound experiences. As human beings, the performer may incorporate something from all these other views: it evokes a reverence for nature, a deeply felt concern for the earth as habitat, and a conviction that as a child of divinity, we can search for our identity in the cosmos.

6) as *Wealth*. In a broader view, everything has or affects value within a market economy. As heritage resources, sacredscapes and their associated monuments and functions are to be appraised as property for monetary transactions, such as the development of pilgrimage tourism. This view of sacredscape is future-oriented, for market values are continually changing, and one must assess the trends and demands of the future. Of course, this notion is completely Western, rooted in American ideology. However, to maintain and preserve sacredscapes, a market-oriented value system should be promoted with care and caution as a viable strategy.

7) as *Ideology*. Seeing and visualising the sacredscape vary from person to person according to the ideology used — it may be in the context of only abstract structure or objectivity or the context of relative underpinnings or subjectivity. Similarly, there are disciplinary ideologies, such as sacred *vs.* secular and several dichotomies. Meinig's remark is notable in this context: "To see the landscape as an ideology is to think about how it was created, but there is another way of doing that which, while at its best is reflective and philosophic, is also much more detailed and concrete (Meinig 1979, p. 43).

8) as *History*. All the underpinnings before our eyes are a complex cumulative record of the work of nature and man in a particular place. The visible feature at a sacred place, or in the sacredscape, yields to diligence and inference a great deal of historical past. The physiognomy and chorology record several layers and facets of

change and transformation. In itself, a sacredscape is the process and the product in space and time; thus, it is an accumulation. However, it is not easy to interpret it in a concrete historical context.

9) as a *Special Place*. Sacredscape is a special place, as an individual piece in the infinitely varied mosaic of the Earth where the 'spirit of place' (*genius loci*) plays a vital role in making it distinct — a mosaic of a variety of patterns, relationships, interactions, meanings — between human being and the divine realm. The specific communicating character of sacredscape is the particularity of place, *mysterium tremendum*.

10) as *Aesthetic*. The aesthetic view requires a special conscious detachment by the observer. Sacredscape as art conveys the message for better understating the harmonic relationship between humankind and nature-spirit. In fact, "it seeks a meaning which is not explicit in the ordinary forms. It rests upon the belief that there is something close to the essence, to beauty and truth in the landscape" (Meinig 1979, p. 46). It also holds meaning that link us as individual souls and psyches to an ineffable and infinite world (*ibid.*, p. 47).

HERITAGE ECOLOGY: SACREDSCAPES TO THE EARTH MYSTERIES

Heritage ecology as 'a way of knowing' follows a system resulting in a holistic view – holism – where all the parts have their distinct characteristics despite being part of the three; however, together by the unifying principle, they form a *whole* at the end. This system is meticulously explained by an analogy of the 'Earth Mysteries Tree' comprehended by Devereux (1991). He has explained how the seven groups of subjective branches flourish on the top and, at the next level, emerge into three main branches, resulting in a final shape of three whose roots lie in 'the Living Earth' (Fig. 2); Devereux's taxonomy and a systems approach would be a guideline for the comprehension and practise of communicating sacred landscapes (cf. Singh 1995b):

1) *Archaeology*. This branch refers to the perception and cultural image of time as projected onto the remnants of antiquity – a product and possessor of our ancestral worldview, which has several dimensions to see and understand.

2) *Being and Seeing*. To experience *genius loci*, the spirit of place, one has to understand the inherent meaning possessed at a place and the messages conveyed in this respect. To perceive and envision such messages, one needs "clear seeing" – *clairvoyance*, without any preconceived concepts, "that means being open to feelings as well as to observations (Devereux 1991, p. 88).

3) *Ancient Astronomy/ Cultural Astronomy*. The association of astronomy and sacredscape is a traditional one in most of the old cultures. The archaeo-astronomical explanations synthesise the ancient scientific truth and their perceived images used in society. In the case of India, the solar shrines and their associated myths in Varanasi are compared with the values of the Global Positioning System of satellites (GPS; Garmin GPS 75 Receivers), which shows a firm correspondence (cf. Singh & Malville 1995). Astronomy was an element of the archaic societies' spiritual worldview (Devereux 1991, p. 126).

4) *Sacred Geometry*. The perception of cosmic transformation and integration from heaven (*macrocosm*) to the earth (*mesocosm*) and further to individual shrines or sites (*microcosm*) shows the hierarchical form of wholeness. When it takes the form of ground plan geometry, it is called sacred geometry. The ancient plan and design of sacred places and sites denote such outlines.

5) *Folklore & Mythology*. "Myth is the high form of the art, and tells us much about the workings of the human psyche. Myth, like sacred geometry and measures, is perennial and relates to our inner lives now just as much it ever did; it is only that we have lost touch as a culture with the patterns of consciousness that mythological motifs represent (Devereux 1991, p. 155).

6) *Seeing and Monitoring at Sites*. There has been a tradition of watching and understanding mysterious forces manifested at sacred sites of antiquity (Devereux 1991, p. 169). Indeed, there exists some extrasensory perception element in human sensitivities. Devereux (1990 and 1993) describes many examples and details of sporadic physical monitoring of prehistoric sites.

7) *Geomancy*. Descending at the second level of the Earth Mysteries Tree, the issue of integrated aspects of ancient sites is considered. Geomancy is a kind of yoga for entire cultures – a way to keep human activity in harmony with nature; in a geomagnetic paradigm, the seat of divinity, Mother Earth, is perceived as comprising both matter and spirit" (Anderson 1986, p. 27).

8) *Correspondence and Symbolism*. If geometry and numbers represent the ultimate systems' language, then correspondence and its close companion symbolism represent the oldest and most profound form of systems thinking (Devereux 1990, p. 227). They are deduced from nature itself, for example, the numerical symbolism and its correspondence to astronomical cognition.

9) *Energies*. The above last three together ultimately distil down to a question of energies of some universal force. This 'force' is a deeper dimension of geomancy and human psychic and spiritual relationship with it (Devereux 1990, p. 294).

10) *Use of Sites*. From shamanism and ritual acts to pilgrimages and, recently, tourism – all define the special use of all the sacredscapes and sites (cf. Verschuuren, et al. 2010). Pilgrimage is a shared story of understanding through the gates of *dharma*; similarly, it is used in other ways, too.

11) *The Living Sacred Earth*. After all, let us guess how deep and far its roots are in making the Earth a living organism. The transpersonal experience is one of the ways to experience the inherent earth spirit. In the vein of Naess's philosophical sense, deep ecology (*transpersonal ecology*) is suggested as a distinctive approach to

ecophilosophy and is worthwhile to apply in this context (cf. Fox 1990, p. 204). About the sacred living nature of Earth, Mitchell (1989, p. 4) rightly suggests:

“The earth was sacred, not because pious people chose so to regard it, but because it was in fact ruled by spirit, by the creative powers of the universe, manifest in all the phenomena of nature, shaping the features of the landscape, regulating the seasons, the cycles of fertility, the lives of animals and men”.

Devereux (1990, p. 308) says: “Our culture has to develop what will be for it new understandings about both mind and planet. That synthesis is essential if the Global Tribe is to survive”; and finally (ibid.): “These ‘new’ sets of connections have to be made if we are to reorient our worldview. The ancient, sacred places can help us make them”.

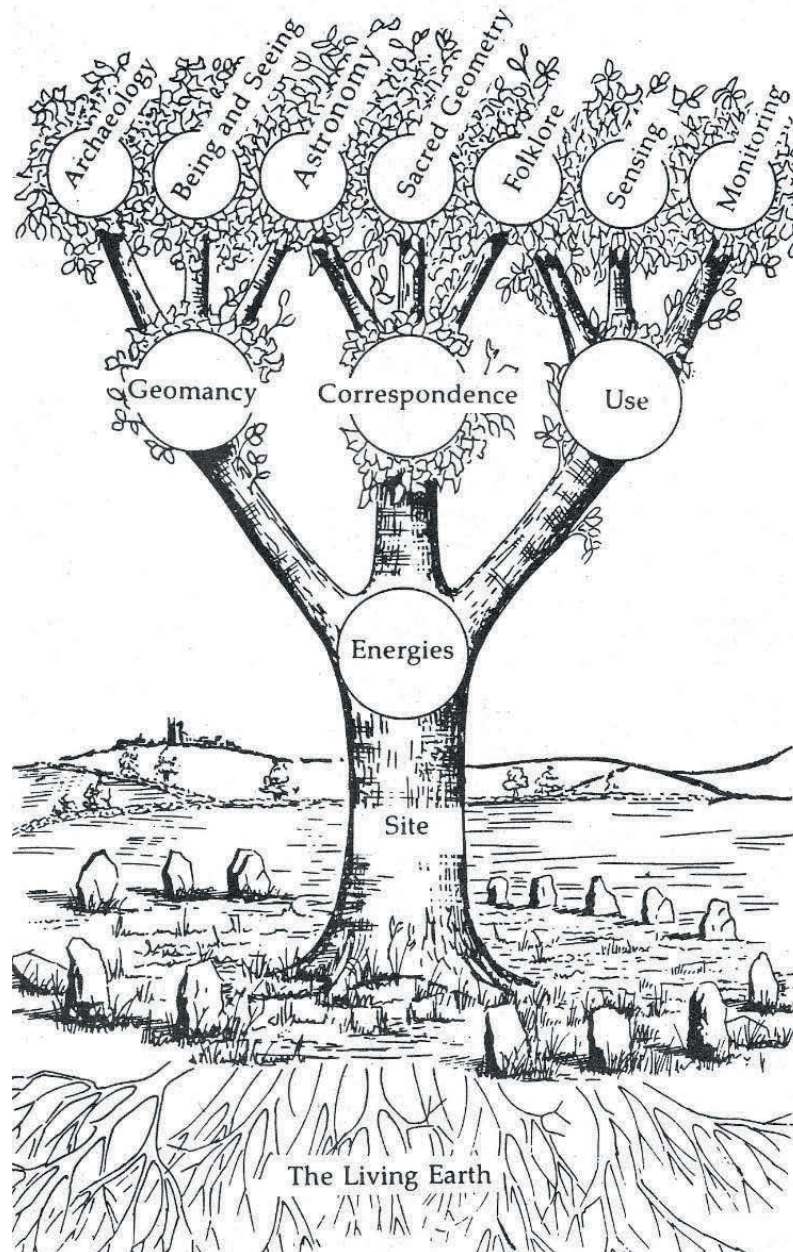


Fig. 2. The Tree of Living Earth (after Devereux 1991, pp. 40-41).

CONTEMPORARY CONCERNS: RECONNECTING WITH YOUR CULTURE

From Mecca to Graceland, Canterbury to Vatican City, special places affecting the human spirit have been luring multitudes of visitors throughout history. Where are the world's most important pilgrimage sites? Who are the pilgrims? Why are they going? How do they behave once they reach their destinations? Pilgrimage is a comprehensive compendium of the basic facts on Pilgrimage from ancient times to the 21st century. The recent most classic two-volume encyclopaedia presents 500 alphabetically arranged articles on pilgrimage, both religious and secular, in all religions and time periods and popular culture, arranged into five categories: the

abstract-theoretical such as apparitions, veneration of relics, and pilgrims in music and art; incidentals such as dress, offerings, mementoes, and prayer; people important to the development of pilgrimage; pilgrimage infrastructure such as hospices, transportation systems, laws, and guidebooks; and specific sites (Davidson and Gitlitz 2002). This work has established the path of pilgrimage studies, especially exposing the importance of sacred places and their associated traditions; of course, it has limitations in selecting sites and their coverage. This work helps explain the attraction and importance of pilgrimage for millions of people, regardless of nationality or religion.

Says the Bible: “Blessed are those whose strength is in You. They have set their hearts on pilgrimage” (*Psalm* 84: 5). The Israelites knew it; David knew it; the writer of Hebrews knew it; also, John Bunyan knew it. In this mystical world, we are strangers and pilgrims always moving on a noble quest! We’re passing through this place on a sacred journey to somewhere else — from this world to the realm of terrestrial. The stories of experiential feelings and understanding explore the approaching of each day as a pilgrimage — a chance to move one step closer to our ultimate goal and to experience tastes of that goal, even now, through prayerful awareness, study and meditation at once both internal and external (Foster 2010).

The visit to sacred sites and sacredscapes, the effort to understand, and the work to keep the mind and heart open to the sacred manifestation and reciprocally communication are all charged with vision, insight, and purpose (c.f. Jarow 1986, p. 12). This is the real pilgrimage – ‘enacting an internal process in the external world’. Heritage ecology is also a pilgrimage – a way of relating to the land (*Earth spirit*) and the people (*Human psyche*) (Singh & Niglio 2025, p. 14). It is possible “by working in certain ways at the ceremonial arrangement and juxtapositions of monuments and natural contours to at least start to share the worldview of the ancient (Devereux 1992, p. 119). Illustrating the case of Japan, a study surmised that people entering the sacred enclosures had been endowed with a gift that they shared with the lifeworld.

Nevertheless, “a simple visit might provide a spark for a mind sufficiently attuned, an ideational perspective appropriately adjusted. This space, this tiny cutting of a slice of land far off the beaten track of contemporary Japan, is “officially” disguised, and it is dual; but truly more so, it is myriad” (Oberg 2021, p. 238). Of course, “Christianity arrived on the island of Shikoku, Japan, from the neighbouring island of Kyushu in the mid-sixteenth century, an event commemorated by a signboard and gravesite, where some of the early converts to the faith were buried. The sanctified area exhibits what might be expected of Hidden Christian spatiality: a quasi-Buddhist nature, syncretistic Shinto elements, and offertory tools, each of which would be quite out of place in any other “Christian” context” (Oberg 2021, p. 214). It is also noted that “an item like the “church stone” in the Hidden Christian gravesite at Horie (Matsuyama City, Ehime Prefecture, Japan, Fig. 3) was/is probably more decorative than anything, being neither an icon per se (such as its juxtaposed “crucifix” statue) nor a “borrowed” emblem from the culturally standardised Buddhist and Shinto realms like the “five-wheeled tower” or the “Kami house”, also to be found in the same sacred space. The dual (or disguised) usage of this small portion of the burial ground might rather be single and not binary: it is simply there for the viewing benefit of everyone—purely aesthetics” (Oberg 2021, p. 237).

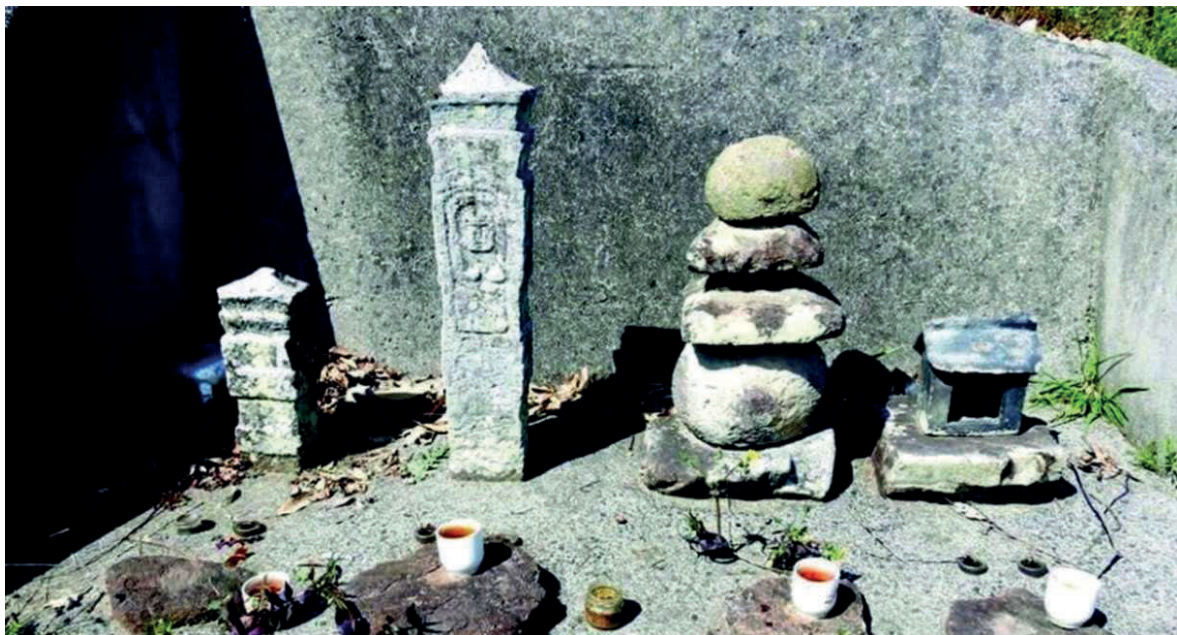


Fig. 3. Hidden Christian gravesite at Horie, Matsuyama City, Ehime Prefecture, Japan.

It is believed that travel broadens one's horizons, especially from insiders' views. But a pilgrimage, on the other hand, expands one's consciousness and conscience to a mystic nature. Thus, the end result of a pilgrimage is the capacity to see the sacredness in the places that are visited and a link to be established. One such sacred place is the vast territory of the Maya world, where thousands of pyramid temples form a network or web of interconnected sacred sites. These sites, like Tikal in Guatemala and Copan in Honduras, are remnants of a complex and highly advanced civilisation that existed on the continent of the Americas, forming what was known as the Land of the Plumed Serpent, where pilgrimage was taken as the most common and strong force of realising belongingness and unity between divine and human realm (Wigowsky 2010).

Even though the entire earth is considered sacred in the Oriental World, several aspects of the natural environment are deemed more sacred than others in Hinduism. For example, as Eliade (1958) notes, in Hinduism, as well as in other religious faiths, mountains are "endowed with a twofold holiness: on the one hand, they share in the spatial symbolism of transcendence—being "high", "vertical", and "supreme"—and on the other, they are the especial domain of all hierophanies of atmosphere, and therefore, the dwelling of the gods" (ibid., p. 99). Moreover, mountains serve as cosmic pillars, acting as the *axis mundi* between heaven and earth: "One can pass from one cosmic zone to another" (Eliade 1958, pp. 99-100). Because of their physical distinctness, their dense vegetal cover, being the source of many rivers, acting as territorial markers, their calm and quiet characteristics, and several other corresponding cosmic and spiritual geographies, mountains are viewed in Hindu cosmology as places of sacred wisdom and enlightenment (see Cooper 1997). In fact, "There is a certain worldview of mythical history associated with these geographical places—a narrative of *being* sacred by creation, rather than being *made* sacred" (Baindur 2009, p. 47).

In Hindu *purāṇic* folklores, Mount Kailash (Fig. 4) is the home of Shiva, the supreme god of completing the cycle of birth, re-birth and completion of the cycle of transmigration, and continuing that like spiral destruction, along with his consort goddess Parvati and their children. That's why Kailash is believed to be the centre of the world (*axis mundi*)—the ultimate destination of souls and heaven. Kailash is also considered a sacred abode of the supreme divinity in Buddhism, Jainism, and Bon. Kailash is eulogised as the home of Buddha Demchok in Buddhism, in Jainism called Mount Ashtapada—the place where Rishabhadeva attained freedom, and in the Bon religion believed to be the home of the sky goddess Sipaimen. Ancient epics and treatises have eloquently described this sacred abode's beauty and divine power.



Fig. 4. Mt Kailash (in Tibet, China) from the northern side.

From the Christian viewpoint, the world's pain demands our activism; still, the urgency and pervasiveness of need distract us from our need to find ourselves in Christ, making us increasingly vulnerable to burnout — personally and communally, both. A recent study tells one such story of a fragmented life, showing how God awakens us to the truth about us and the truth about him as we embark on the journey to sacred places, he lays out for each of us (Heuertz 2010). The Christian pilgrimage originates in the Exodus of the Jews from ancient Egypt, but it has changed and adapted with the passing centuries. In medieval times, millions of pilgrims spent months travelling across Europe to visit holy cities and shrines, and today, a modern revival has blurred the lines

between pilgrimage and tourism and made places such as Iona, Taize and Santiago de Compostella contemporary Meccas. This journey can be explained through historical-cultural approaches (Bradley 2010).

An anthropological study of life at a Bolivian pilgrimage site, emphasising power and pilgrimage, focuses on the experiences of pilgrims and how, in their Marian devotion, they express and learn to live with the various inequalities they experience in everyday life as part of their lifeways and lifeworlds. Issues of poverty and class inequality, of course, lead them to approach the Virgin of Urkupina to support them in their quest for economic betterment and a good social life, where the predominance of females is apparent (Derks 2010).



Fig. 5. The Great Buddhist Stupa of Sanchi, Madhya Pradesh, India.

Sacred places may harbour particular forces associated with 'prehistoric cultures' that are sustained and maintained even today, mostly as a kind of modern pilgrimage tourism (cf. Knudsen and Waade 2010, p. 231). The Buddhist *stupas* (Fig. 5) along the trade routes developed into pilgrimage sites, attracting devotees and traders — the two reciprocal and complimentary function counters serving each other. Brave traders such as the Sogdians, whose faith was Buddhism, travelled to India from distant China. This network of exchange emerged along the borders between agricultural China and the steppe nomads during the Han Dynasty (206 BCE – CE 220), in consequence of the inter-dependence and the conflicts of these two distinctive societies that developed the pilgrimage path known as Silk Road (Liu 2010, p. 85). On 22nd June 2014, after years of preparation among countries, the property of the Silk Roads: the Routes Network of Chang'an-Tianshan Corridor (Fig. 6), was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. This 5,000 km section of the extensive Silk Roads network is a transnational site crossing China, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, stretching from Chang'an/Luoyang, the central capital of China in the Han and Tang dynasties, to the Zhetyysay region of Central Asia.

To fulfil its mandate and commitment to developing a deep-seated education in culture and heritage and realising a sustainable future, RWYC has complemented its programmes and courses in communities and schools with several closely related pedagogical activities, strongly emphasising pilgrimages and visits to sacred places. Included here are international seminars and conferences on subjects such as *Culture as an Idea and Reality* in conjunction with ICOMOS (18th April 2021), *Reconnecting With Your Culture in the World* with the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (20th November 2021), and *Culture: Key to Systemic Change and Sustainable Development* (23rd April 2022); the creation and circulation of exhibitions of young people's drawings in Italy, Japan, India, Mexico, Columbia, Indonesia, Venezuela, Brazil, Morocco, Germany, Canada, USA, and other countries in the world; distribution of periodic newsletters and comprehensive bulletins; creating collaborative arrangements with such organisations as EDA International Research Centre, New European Bauhaus, American University of Europe, and others, and promoting such relevant and recent publications written by prominent RWYC associates, like dealing with regenerating cultural religious heritage (Niglio 2022, Singh & Niglio 2023, p. 10), emerging cultural geographies (Singh, Ravi, et al. 2022), Placemaking and cultural landscapes (Singh, Niglio, & Rana 2023a), Culture and cultivation in understanding the cosmic whole (Schafer 2022), and Sacred heritage and pilgrimage in cities (Singh & Niglio 2025). In a similar vein, using the platform of a bi-annual *International Journal of Architecture and Engineering: EdA Esempi di Architettura* (Aracne Editrice in Rome, Italy), the four

volumes, each one consisting of two issues (*editors*: Singh & Niglio), have, respectively, covered the themes of “Historic Cities & Cultural-Religious Heritage” (vol. 9, 2022); “Reconnecting Culture, Heritage, & Architectural Symbolism” (vol. 10, 2023); “RWYC: Reconnecting with Culture, Landscapes & Sustainability” (vol. 11, 2024); and “Pilgrimages, Sacred Places and Pathway to RWYC” (vol. 12, 2025). All these volumes are represented with contributions from different parts of the earth.

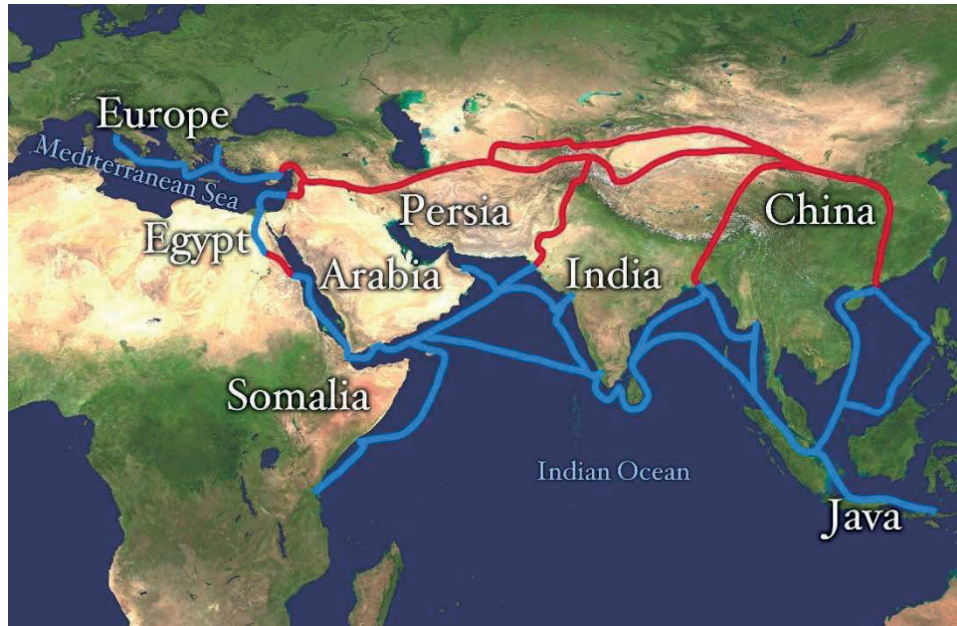


Fig. 6. Silk routes that linked sacred sites of Asia in the ancient past.

COVERAGE OF THE *EDA* (12, 2025): PREAMBLE AND OVERVIEW

The institution of pilgrimage to sacred places is an ancient and continuous tradition in most of the cultures. Pilgrimage is a sacramental process that symbolises the participation of the pilgrim in the spiritual realm and actively establishes a reciprocal relationship between the pilgrim and the divine; that's how the transformation exists from 'realisation' to 'revelation'. Pilgrimage as a rite of passage operates liminality, i.e., transitional space between the material world and the metaphysical reality.

Sacred space, a destination in the pilgrimage system, is an extraordinary place where the sacred is linked to physical reality. The interrelatedness of sacred landscape combines the absoluteness of space, relativeness of places, and comprehensiveness of landscape, and all these altogether result in a 'wholeness' carrying the inherent and imposed spirit of 'holiness', called '*sacredscapes*'. Ultimately, the wholeness of the landscape creates a theosphere of '*faithscape*' that encompasses sacred place, sacred time, sacred meanings, sacred functionaries, and sacred rituals and embodies both symbolic and tangible psyche elements in an attempt to realise humankind's identity in the cosmos.

Within the system of complex interconnectedness and interactions among cultures, heritage, and landscapes and their resultant attributes—all that are rooted in the past, together, we seek to search ways, paths, and means that are implied for framing and making a base for the UN Sustainable Development Goals Target 11.4, focussing on 'Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'. Together with community development, nature-based education, and pilgrimages to reveal the spirit of places are part of the cultural process of transformations.

RWYC - Reconnecting With Your Culture - is a visionary mission and movement, re-appraising interconnectedness between Locality and Universality - Holiness (*humanity*) to Wholeness (*sublimity*): Humanism to Spiritualism. The role of culture is vital to developing perspectives of shared and participatory policies and fostering the development of humanity through co-sharing ethics, spirituality, and the spirit of place. The special issue of *EdA- Esempi di Architettura* [vol. 12, (no° 1~2, 2025)] attempts to always be illustrative to keep pace with these issues—theoretically, philosophically, implicatively, and regionally. Professionals and scholars from various disciplines are invited for papers to explain these issues. As great cultural awakening occurs today, this volume will help make the path easier, rational, smooth, happy, and harmonious. Following the above preamble and perspectives, CFP- Call for Papers was issued, and the following sub-themes were crystalised:

i. *Interconnection among Pilgrimages, Sacred Places, Culture, and Heritage*: Literary & Historical context—trends; the Role of institutions and Community organisations; Cultural landscape approach, faithscapes; Sacred routes, Culture & Pilgrimage traditions: typologies.

ii. *Cultural interconnectedness: Sacredscapes, Spirituality, and Human Security*: Culture as Holistic frame; Pilgrimage Mandala; Culture-Nature reciprocity; Chains and Changes: 'Succession-Sustenance-Sustainability'; Transformative conscience, Ecoliteracy.

iii. *Ethics, Civility and Moral Imperative*: Reverential Development & RWYC; Non-formal education, Courses and sense of ethics; Cultural Education and Human Development; Human rights & security; Cultural transformation; Geopiety; Ecological cosmology, Buddhist ecology.

iv. *RWYC - Progress Reports: County, Regional, & Local levels*: National representations, Goals and achievements: generalised ideas, linkages, ideologies, and laws; RWYC and Jena Declaration: Perspectives and implications; RWYC - co-shared and collective awakening.

v. *Cultural Performances and Intangible Cultural Heritage*: Indigenous knowledge; the role of ICH in cultural awakening; Deeply-rooted education and cross-cultural contexts, the context of youth; Representation of festive and performance arts promoting cultures – linking RWYC.

vi. *Culture and Spiritual Image in Landscape Architecture*: Design, cultural codes, metaphysical meanings, aesthetics, change, and continuity; Links among cultures, cultural distinctiveness, and cultural heritages; Culture vis-à-vis Sacred and Heritage Ecology; Culture: Worldview & Cosmology, and Ecotourism; Sacrality of Space and Time: Cultural Wholes.

vii. *Culture and Pathway to RWYC vis-à-vis Sustainability*: Planning and development of sacred centres through RWYC; heritage, Heritagization & Sustainable Planning; dialogue under UN SDGs Target 11. 4 to achieve the 2030 Agenda and Cultural Sustainability.

After scrutiny and review, 24 papers have been selected and arranged in two parts (*EdA*, (no° 1 and 2, volume 12), considering the symmetry and interlinks of the themes and coverage. The **First** issue consists of twelve papers that deal with Interfacing pilgrimages, sacred places, and the pathway to RWYC (Reconnecting With Your Culture) – perspectives and appraisal; Sacred places and pilgrimages – appraising the world scenario of religious tourism; Buddhist sacredscapes: the spirit of place, and the pathway to RWYC through pilgrimage tourism; Pilgrimages places around the world: experiencing, understanding, and sharing; Comprehending Romanesque church portals along the Camino de Santiago: (in)materiality of religious and cultural landscape; The house of Mother Mary in Ephesus, Turkey as a site of miracles: a contextual interpretation; Conservation of cultural heritage in Colombia's golden triangle: integrating sustainability and spiritual meaning of the landscape; Nomadic wisdom and cultural resilience: a reconnection with Changpa heritage of Aamchi healing in Ladakh; Pilgrimages and religious tourism in Mexico: environmental and cultural impact on heritage conservation; Sacred places, culture, and heritage – the great pilgrimage of the Dances Tlatelolco-La Villa (México); Landscapes of absence – memory, time and sacredness in the Sefarad Garden Project; and Sacred spaces and the Digicene: engaging the hybrid occupation of an Indian Religious Precinct.

The **Second** issue contains twelve papers covering topics like Hindu pilgrimage places, archetypal representation: the pathway to RWYC; Sacred Spaces and Cultural Continuity: exploring the cultural landscape of holy cities in India; Gangasagar, where the holy River Ganga meets the Sea: Puranic folklores, Rituals, Intrinsic Values, and Cultural Renaissance; Rivers of faith – understanding cultural adaptations in the Brahmaputra Basin; Pilgrimage routes and sacredscapes of Ayodhya, India: interfacing ancient and modern rituals of cultural identity; Dakshineswar Temple environs: transcendence of a cultural landscape into a sacredscape; Tanger pour Tahar Ben Jelloun – un pèlerinage littéraire entre culture, spiritualité et humanité; Le patrimoine au service du développement durable, RWYC un projet innovant; L'utopia di una terra promessa – Il terremoto del 1857 e la colonia di Battipaglia; Reconnecting with a traumatic past: Mama Muxima Sanctuary, Angola; Sacred geographics: the interplay of pilgrimage and heritage in Bhubaneswar, Odisha; and Creating Gurdwaras for the Sikh Diaspora in Australia.

TOWARDS DESTINATION

In the form of a preamble, in the beginning, an exposition of "Sacred Places, and the Pathway to RWYC" is presented by Singh and Olimpia that reflects upon some of the issues about sacred places and cultural heritage and together their role in making the pathway of RWYC - moving towards its destination of cultural sustainability (where culture serves as the fourth pillar and covering set, and vision of deeply-rooted education). Being co-pilgrims walking on the path of sublime continuity, we wish you a good reading; we also hope these messages will be an important occurrence for reflecting to understand the role of intercultural dialogue and the importance of insightful and awakened walking together to build a better and sustainable future. These topics are important premises for understanding our international pedagogical programme "RWYC", which will continue in varying contexts in the perspective call. One should remember what Swan (1990, p. 219) says: "If the Earth has a mind, the keepers of the sacred places have a very important part to play in aiding the stability and vitality of humanity's consciousness, as well as the earth's and their own." The mission and programme under the RWYC try to keep pace with this march.

"It is now important to work on the components of different cultures and their sacred landscapes, on the enhancement of local cultures and heritage, and above all, to enhance the uniqueness, creativity, excellence, integrity, and diversity of everyone because all this favours the growth of the human resource in the form of a more resilience, cohesiveness, and interconnected systems" (Singh & Niglio 2025, p. 13, cf. Singh & Niglio 2023b).

An example of the Lithuanian experience may be cited as an example of local involvement in a heritage regeneration programme. This viewpoint will activate programmes of humanisation and education on heritage and culture, which are the bases for a sustainable and harmonic future based on the centrality of human heritage and human awakening (Niglio 2023, p. 486, also Niglio 2021).

“RWYC - Reconnecting With Your Culture - a visionary mission of awakening the youth to prepare for the global understanding, human services and preserving our cultural heritage in the cosmic frame of Culture-Nature interfaces through the quality and deep-ecology rooted Education and Dialogues: a march re-appraising interconnectedness between locality and universality - Holiness (*humanity*) to Wholeness (*sublimity*). The RWYC attempts to awaken and vision — Education for life; Education through life; Education throughout life”.

*Envisioned, provoked, and designed by: Prof. Dr. Olimpia Niglio
Structured, framed, and written down by: Prof. Dr. Rana P.B. Singh*

REFERENCES

- Anderson, Richard F. 1986. Divining the spirit of place. *Yoga Journal*, September- October: 27-31, and 56-58.
- Baidur, Meera 2009. Nature as Non-terrestrial: Sacred Natural Landscapes and Place in Indian Vedic and *Purāṇic* Thought. *Environmental Philosophy*, 6 (2): 43–58.
- Bassie-Sweet, Karen 2008. *Maya Sacred Geography and the Creator Deities*. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.
- Bhardwaj, Surinder M. 1987. Single religion shrines, multireligion pilgrimages. In: Singh, R.L., & Singh, Rana P.B. (eds.) *Trends in the Geography of Pilgrimages. Homage to David E. Sopher* (pp. 105-116). National Geographical Society of India, Varanasi, Research Pub. 35.
- Bradley, Ian 2010. *Pilgrimage: A Spiritual and Cultural Journey*. Lion UK, London.
- Calian, Florin George 2021. Editorial – special issue “Sacred Space in Motion”. *RES- Review of Ecumenical Studies* (Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania, DOI: 10.2478/ress-2021-0037), 13 (2), August: 139-144.
- Campbell, Joseph 1974. *The Mythic Image*. Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- Cooper, Adrian 1997. *Sacred Mountains: Ancient Wisdom and Modern Meanings*. Floris Books, Edinburgh and London.
- Davidson, Linda Kay, & Gitlitz, David Martin 2002. *Pilgrimage: From the Ganges to Graceland: an Encyclopedia*. ABC-CLIO, Santa Barbara. 2-vols.
- Derks, Sanne 2010. *Power and Pilgrimage: Dealing with Class, Gender and Ethnic Inequality at a Bolivian Marian Shrine*. LIT Dr W. Hopf Verlag, Berlin and Münster.
- Devereux, Paul 1990. *Places of Power*. Blandford, London.
- Devereux, Paul 1991. *Earth Memory*. Quantum, London.
- Devereux, Paul 1992. *Symbolic Landscapes*. Gothic Image, Somerset. U.K.
- Devereux, Paul 1993. *Secrets of Ancient and Sacred Places: The World's Mysterious Heritage*. Blandford, London.
- Eck, Diana L. 1987. The City as Sacred Center. In: Smith, B. , & Reynolds, H.B. (eds.) *The City as Sacred Center*. ISSA vol. XLVI. E.J. Brill, Leiden: 1-11.
- Eck, Diana L. 2012. *India: A Sacred Geography*. Harmony Books, Random House Inc., New York.
- Eliade, Mircea 1958. *Patterns in Comparative Religion*. Sheed & Ward, London.
- Eliade, Mircea 1959. *The Sacred and the Profane*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc., Orlando, FL.
- Faulstich, Paul 1994. Dreaming place: Land and myth at Nyinipi. *Environments* (Waterloo), 22 (2): 3-12.
- Foster, Charles 2010. *The Sacred Journey: The Ancient Practices*. Thomas Nelson, Nashville TE.
- Fox, Warwick 1990. *Towards a Transpersonal Ecology*. Shambhala, Boston.
- Heuertz, Phileena, & Tickle, Phyllis 2010. *Pilgrimage of a Soul: Contemplative Spirituality for the Active Life*. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL.
- Jarow, Rick 1986. *In Search of the Sacred: A Pilgrimage to Holy Places*. Quest Books, Wheaton, IL.
- Johnston, Ron J. 1991. *A Question of Place*. Blackwell, Oxford.
- Kim, Syun-Kyun, & Singh Rana P.B. 2023. Pung-su: Evolving Cultural Landscapes and Placemaking in Korea. In: Singh, Rana P.B.; Niglio, Olimpia, & Rana, Pravin S., (eds.) *Placemaking and Cultural Landscapes* (pp. 39-59). Springer Nature Pte Ltd., Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-6274-5_3
- Knott, Kim 2005. *The Location of Religion: A Spatial Analysis*. Equinox Publishing Ltd., London.
- Knudsen, Britta Timm, & Waade, Anne Marit (eds.) 2010. *Re-Investing Authenticity: Tourism, Place and Emotions*. Volume 20 of Tourism and Cultural Change. Channel View Publications,
- Lane, Belden 2001. *Landscapes of the Sacred. Geography and Narrative in American Spirituality*. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.
- Lewis, Pierce F. 1979. Axioms for reading the landscape. In: Meinig, Donald W. (ed.) *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*. Oxford University Press, New York: 11-32.
- Liu, Xinru 2010. *The Silk Road in World History*. Oxford University Press, New York.
- Meinig, Donald W. 1979. The Beholding Eye. In: Meinig, Donald W. (ed.) *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*. Oxford University Press, New York: 33-38.

- Niglio, Olimpia 2014. Inheritance and identity of Cultural Heritage. *Advances in Historical Studies, Scientific Research*, 2 (1): 1-4. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/als.2014.21001>; <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/271297558>
- Niglio Olimpia 2021. Towards a humanist education: understanding cultural heritage to redesign the future. *Academia Letters*, <https://doi.org/10.20935/AL3223>
- Niglio, Olimpia, (ed.) 2022. *Regenerating Cultural Religious Heritage: Intercultural Dialogue on Places of Religion and Rituals*. Springer Nature Pte Ltd. Singapore.
- Niglio, Olimpia 2023. Reconstructing Cultural Paradigms. Experiences in East Europe: The Historical Memory of the Historical Centers in Lithuania. In: Mena, Fernando Carrión, & Pico, Paulina Cepeda (eds.), *Urbicide: Death of the City* (pp. 467-487). The Urban Book Series. Springer Nature Switzerland AG, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-25304-1_23
- Otto, Rudolph 1923. *The Idea of the Holy. An Enquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational* (Das Heilige: über das Irrationale in der Idee des Göttlichen und sein Verhältnis zum Rationalen; Breslau, 1917), translated from German by J.W. Harvey. Oxford University Press, London.
- Patnaik, Nityanand 2006. *Sacred Geography of Puri: Structure and Organisation and Cultural Role of a Pilgrim Centre*. Kalpaz Publications, New Delhi.
- Pogačnik, Marko 2007. *Sacred Geography. Geomancy: Co-creating the Earth Cosmos*. Lindisfarne Books, Great Barrington MA.
- Richer, Jean 1995. *Sacred Geography of the Ancient Greeks. Astrological Symbolism in Art, Architecture, and Landscape*. SUNY Press, Albany, NY.
- Schafer, D. Paul 2022. *The World as Culture: Cultivation of the Soul to the Cosmic Whole*. Rock's Mills Press, Oakville, ON, Canada.
- Schafer, D. Paul 2024 (November). *Creating Portraits of the Cultures of Countries in the Holistic Sense to Enhance Well-Being and Come to Grips with the World's Most Difficult Problems*. Home Page, World Culture Project Website: www.worldcultureproject.org
- Scott, Jamie S. 2010. Pilgrimage and literature. In: Singh, Rana P.B. (ed.) *Sacredsapes and Pilgrimage Systems* (pp. 13-60). Planet Earth & Cultural Understanding Series, Pub. 7. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K.
- Singh, Rana P.B. 2008. The contestation of heritage: the enduring importance of religion. In: Graham, Brian and Howard, Peter (eds.) *Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity* (pp. 125-141). Ashgate Publs., Aldershot and London.
- Singh, Rana P.B. 1995a. Towards deeper understanding, sacredscape and faithscape: an exploration in pilgrimage studies. *National Geographical Journal of India* (NGSI, Varanasi), 41 (1), March: 89-111.
- Singh, Rana P.B. 1995b. Heritage Ecology & Caring for the Earth: A Search for Preserving Harmony and Ethical Values. *National Geographical Journal of India*, 41 (2), June: 191-218.
- Singh, Rana P.B. 2009a. Sacred space and faithscape. In his: *Geographical Thoughts in India: Snapshots and Vision for the 21st Century* (pp. 227-265). [Planet Earth & Cultural Understanding Series, Pub. 2]. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne U.K.
- Singh, Rana P.B. 2009b. *Cosmic Order and Cultural Astronomy. Sacred Cities of India*. [Planet Earth & Cultural Understanding Series, Pub. 4]. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne U.K.
- Singh, Rana P.B. 2011. Sacredscapes and Sense of Geography: Some Reflections. In: Singh, Rana P.B. (ed.) *Sacredsapes and Pilgrimage Landscapes* (pp. 5-46). Planet Earth & Cultural Understanding Series, Pub. 7. Shubhi Publications, New Delhi.
- Singh, Rana P.B., & Niglio, Olimpia, (eds.) 2023a. Reconnecting Culture, Heritage, and Architectural Symbolism. [special issue], *Esempi di Architettura, International Journal of Architecture and Engineering* (ISSN print: 2384-9576, ISSN- e-version: 2035-7982, Aracne Editrice in Rome, Italy), Vol. 10 (no° 1~2).
- Singh, Rana P.B., & Niglio, Olimpia 2023b. Walking on the path towards 'Reconnecting Culture, Heritage, and Architectural Symbolism'. *EdA Esempi di Architettura, International Journal of Architecture and Engineering* [Aracne Editrice in Rome, Italy], Vol. 10 (no° 1): pp. 4-19. DOI 10.53136/97912218053521.
- Singh, Rana P.B., & Niglio, Olimpia 2023c. Culture-Nature Interfaces vis-à-vis Reconnecting Cultural Landscapes and Heritage: An Asian Scenario. *EdA Esempi di Architettura, International Journal of Architecture and Engineering* [Aracne Editrice in Rome, Italy], Vol. 10 (no° 1): pp. 20-37. DOI 10.53136/97912218053522
- Singh, Rana P.B., & Malville, John McKim 1995. Cosmic order and cityscape of Varanasi (Kashi): The Sun images and cultural astronomy. *National Geographical Journal of India*, 41 (1), March: 69-88.
- Singh, Rana P.B., & Olimpia Niglio 2025. Sacred Heritage, Landscapes, and Pilgrimage in Cities: Some Reflections. In: Singh, Rana P.B., & Olimpia Niglio (eds.), *Sacred Heritage and Pilgrimages in Cities* (pp. 3-18). The Urban Book Series (ISSN: 2365-757X). Springer Nature Switzerland AG, Cham.
- Singh, Rana P.B.; Niglio, Olimpia, & Rana, Pravin S. 2023. Interfaces among Placemaking and Cultural Landscapes: Review and Appraisal. In: Singh, Rana P.B., Niglio, Olimpia, & Rana, Pravin S. (eds.), *Placemaking and Cultural Landscapes* (pp. 1-22). Springer Nature Pvt Ltd., Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-6274-5_1

- Singh, Rana P.B., & Rana, Pravin S. 2020. Faith and Place: Hindu Sacred Landscapes of India. In: Edensor, Timothy; Kalandides, Ares, & Kothari, Uma (eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Place* (pp. 75-87). Routledge, Taylor & Francis. London & New York. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429453267-6>
- Singh, Rana P.B.; Rana, Pravin S., & Olsen, Daniel H. 2022. The Environment as Sacred Space: Religious and Spiritual Tourism in Hinduism. In: Olsen, Daniel H., & Timothy, Dallen J. (eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Religious and Spiritual Tourism* (pp. 135-151). Routledge, London. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429201011_10
- Singh, Ravi S., et al., eds. 2022. *Practising Cultural Geographies*. Springer Nature Pvt Ltd., Singapore.
- Stirrat, Richard L. 1984. Catholics and the riots in a historical perspective. In: Manor, James (ed.) *Sri Lanka in Change and Crisis* (pp. 196-213). Croom Helm, London & St. Martin Press, New York.
- Swan, James A. 1990. *How the Living Earth Sees Our Friendship*. Bear & Company Publishing, Santa Fe, NM.
- Swan, James A. 1992. *Nature as Teacher and Healer. How to Reawaken Your Connection with Nature*. Villard-Random House Books, New York.
- Swan, James A. 2010. Sacred Places of Japan: Sacred Geography in the vicinity of the cities of Sendai and Nara. In: Singh, Rana P.B. (ed.) *Sacredscapes and Pilgrimage Systems*. [Planet Earth & Cultural Understanding Series, Pub. 7]. Shubhi Pubs., New Delhi: 319-332.
- Tuan, Yi-Fu 1974. *Topophilia*. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
- Verschuuren, Bas; Wild, Robert; McNeely, Jeffrey A. , & Oviedo, Gonzalo (eds.) 2010. *Sacred Natural Sites: Conserving Nature and Culture*. Earthscan Publications, London.
- Walter, Eugene V. 1988. *Placeways. A Theory of the Human Environment*. The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.
- Wigowsky, Paul John 2010. *Maya Pilgrimage: Xibalba, Maximon, and Our Galaxy*. AuthorHouse, Bloomington, IN.

