

Kutsal Mekânlara Duygusal Bağlanma: Din Psikolojisinde İhmal Edilen Alana Katkı

Emotional Attachment to Sacred Spaces: A Contribution to a Neglected Area in Psychology of Religion

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Öz:

Dini sembollerin ve öğelerin bağlanma teorisi yönünden incelenmesi, din psikolojisi alanının en önemli konularından ve amaçlarından biridir. Bağlanma teorisi ile ilgili mevcut çalışmaların çoğu, Tanrı'ya bağlanma, inanç gelişimi ve manevi hayat konularını içermektedir. Bununla birlikte, dini bir sembol olarak kabul edilen kutsal mekânlara bağlanma, psikolojik bağlanma teorisi bağlamında yeterince ele alınmamıştır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma, farklı dini inançlara sahip dindar insanlar üzerinde yapılan çalışmaların kutsal mekânlara bağlanma yaklaşımı hakkındaki mevcut çalışmaları gözden geçirmeyi ve kutsal mekânlarla anlamlı ilişkiler açısından bağlanma teorisinin kapsamlı bir teori olarak görülüp görülemeyeceği konusunda geniş bir anlayış getirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu makalede, kutsal mekânlara bağlı hissetmenin olumlu duyguları ve yakınlığı koruduğu ve böylece güvenli bağlanma özelliklerine benzediği sonucuna varılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Din Psikolojisi, Bağlanma Kuramı, Kutsal Mekânlar Bağlanma, Dindarlık

Abstract:

The study of religious symbols and elements in terms of attachment is one of the most important topics and objectives for the field of psychology of religion. Most of the existing studies on attachment theory included the topics of attachment to God, faith development, and spiritual life. However, attachment to sacred spaces, which are regarded as a religious symbol, has not been adequately addressed in the context of psychological attachment theory. Therefore, the present study aims to review the current studies on attachment approach to sacred spaces where studies on religious people with different religious beliefs continue to be carried out, and also to bring a broader understanding of whether attachment theory can be viewed as a comprehensive theory in terms of meaningful relations with places. It has been concluded that feeling connected to the sacred spaces preserves positive emotions and maintain proximity, and thus resembles safe attachment characteristics.

Keywords: Psychology of Religion, Attachment Theory, Sacred Spaces Attachment, Religiosity

1. INTRODUCTION

For decades, researchers have benefitted numerous psychological theories to see if there is a close relationship between psychology and religion. One of the relevant theories used by researchers is attachment theory, which refers to the innate evolutionary system and provides psychoanalytic insights into the early stages of human life (Bowlby, 1969; 1988). In previous studies, it has been understood that caregivers or mothers are important attachment figures as a symbol of protection and safety for infants at the stage of development, and this understanding has inspired researchers to be interested in studying other factors related to attachment. For that reason, researchers were interested in how the attachment theory, defined as social and emotional bonds to caregivers or mothers during their developmental stages, reflected on the lives of individuals in adulthood (Weiss, 1973).

In this sense, researchers in the field of psychology of religion believed that divine-related components could also be viewed as attachment figures; hence, they attempted to apply attachment theory to religious beliefs and behaviours (Kirkpatrick, 1992, 2012; Counted & Zock, 2019). When the literature pertaining to such inquiry is reviewed, it is seen that the majority of the studies on religion and attachment have been restricted to only examining perceived relationships with God (Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992), spiritual and mystical experiences, attachment to God (Culver & Denton, 2017), and prayer (Byrd & Boe, 2001; Ellison, Bradshaw, Flannelly, & Galek, 2014). Only recently, the topics related to people-environment research has attracted growing interest among researchers. On the other hand, it is believed that the environment in which humans live forms individuals' thoughts and behaviors, and thus shapes an important part of their personalities. In this connection, one important element that is linked to the environment is sacred places. Undoubtedly, a place with various elements makes people's lives meaningful with what they feel and experience (Counted, 2017); however, there is not enough evidence about the importance of attachment to sacred spaces in order to provide a safe haven in fearful and troubled times.

Because of the lack of clear and concise investigations about how the psychological mechanism of attachment processes manifests in religious lives, place attachment in this study will refer to people's affectional bonds to sacred spaces. In other words, the relationship between people and sacred places – that is, their emotional ties to places through religion and how such places assume a special status among believers – will be reviewed through the existing literature. Therefore, the paper starts by a brief summary of what the assumptions of attachment theory are. Then, attachment to sacred space within the context of place attachment literature will be reviewed. Understanding attachment processes to sacred space can then help the individual in dealing with difficult situations and daily life stressors. In this way, the given general knowledge as to the attachment to sacred space might be fruitful areas of exploration for researchers working on religion. Consequently, to see how the infant's sense of security fits in attaching to a place for the religious adherents and their communities, attachment to sacred spaces and its psychological processes will be taken under examination with regard to the existing literature.

2. ATTACHMENT THEORY

The basic principles and constructs of attachment theory, first presented by Bowlby and later expanded by Ainsworth and colleagues (1973, 1978), were detailed in three influential volumes named *Attachment and Loss* (1969, 1973, 1980). The claims in the volumes are based on the fact that all people are born with psychobiological and ethological attachment systems. According to this theory, a child illustrates attachment behaviours to his/her mother or a primary caregiver as an innate evolutionary process when there are unexpected stimuli or a threat. Bowlby has described this process as *internal working model*, which refers to a qualified personality functioning and promoted mental health (Bowlby, 1973). Given the importance of the caregiver-infant interactions, Ainsworth (1973) and colleagues (Ainsworth et al. 1978) have later postulated three attachment behaviours based on the findings obtained in a study defined *the strange situation*. So that, the pattern of attachment behaviours of the infant is manifested as secure, anxious-avoidant, and anxious-ambivalent styles. In secure style of attachment, the infant uses the attachment figure as a secure base in the face of stressful situations and want to maintain proximity. Here, as long as infants get regular and reliable responses from the attachment figure, he/she would behave comfortably during or after the separation from the attachment figure and continue to explore the environment. In anxious-avoidant attachment style, when the attachment figure is emotionally unavailable and less concerned with the needs of the infant, the infant would not care the separation at all and would tend to ignore the attachment figure. In anxious-ambivalent style, when the attachment figure sometimes expresses responsive and near to the infant and sometimes not, the infant would constantly be angry and become insensitive and reluctant to their environment (Culver & Denton, 2017; Cobb, 2017). In this context, the person whom the child establishes a close relationship and feels safe with when he needs it is called the attachment figure.

Briefly, there is no doubt that maintaining proximity with the parent or caregiver is crucial for the infant's self-identity development (Bowlby, 1988; Morgan, 2010; Hart, Limke, & Budd, 2010). To date, several empirical evidence has stated, through a secure relationship, the child receives a healthy attachment that leads to long-term benefits such as positive psychological outcomes (Schore, 2003), self-esteem (Bylsma, Cozzarelli, & Sumer, 1997), and personality behaviors (Mickelson, Kessler, & Shaver, 1997).

Moreover, some attachment theorists have put forward the assumption that the patterns of attachment experienced in the early stages of life show their effects across the life-span, and also suggested that the attachment pattern of one's relationship with the caregiver turns into later relational attachment behaviours (Cobb, 2017). In fact, it is asserted that behavioural patterns of attachment developed during the first experiences of life can influence not only future trusting relationships with significant others but also specific places where the individuals seek a secure base (Bowlby, 1980). For instance, such attachment patterns may vary in the ways by individuals who are emotionally attached to the person they interact with, the groups they are connected to, the places they surrounded by (Morgan, 2010). Therefore, the potential attachment to religious figures or symbols in times of stress as same as the mechanism of the infant-caregivers attachment would help to maintain proximity. That is why the integration of place attachment into various components of religiosity would take a great deal of attention in psychological research.

3. RELIGION AND RELATIONAL ATTACHMENT

Recently, many researchers asserted that attachment theory has a potential to provide a strong theoretical framework for inquiries of the psychology of religion (Kirkpatrick, 2012; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 2008). Notably, individuals' connectedness and/or closeness to God would bring to mind a secure attachment process in which individuals seek to have a sense of self-attachment to life (Kirkpatrick, 2005; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990; Rowatt & Kirkpatrick, 2002). Accordingly, studies on attachment and religion revealed that the way individuals perceive a distant or close relationship with God and the way they hold beliefs about God show reflections of a healthy mother-child attachment style (Miner, 2011). Later, a number of studies have also found that attachment to God has a function that supports spiritual and psychological health, such as religious well-being, optimism, life satisfaction, and so forth (Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992; Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2008; Bradshaw, Ellison, & Marcum, 2010).

Based on the assumptions about God-human relations, this research suggests that attachment to sacred spaces can also provide a basis for studying attachment to other objects, which are perceived as an attachment figure. However, previous research has not paid attention to possible divine symbols that could respond to the person's emotional state, except for attachment to God or faith development (Hart, Limke, & Budd, 2010). Moreover, given the idea of attachment to sacred places, the characteristic features of divine symbols have remained uncertain.

4. ATTACHMENT TO SACRED SPACE AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL MECHANISMS

After coming to the world, people try to understand and make sense of the outside world in which they live. This recognition effort creates many bonds between the individual and the environment. Considering the relationship between the environment and people, religious places, especially sacred spaces, have a much more important status for religious adherents. In this sense, place attachment has been found very important for individuals in many religious groups or communities (Reed, 1978). According to Reed, efforts to seek comfort using safe space in attempts to get to know the environment may represent the emotional aspects of religion through which the individual finds himself safe and secure.

There are various preferences and circumstances in people's lives that are affected by their religion – including, but not limited to, their choice of food, dressing forms, home design, places of worship, graveyard specification and socialisation within certain communities. Sacred places (places of worship, in particular), assume great importance within the lives of believers as an attachment-based component of their day-to-day existence. Most religions have special buildings or places in which people meet. Such places of worship are, for example, generally called synagogues in Judaism, churches in Christianity and mosques in Islam. Earlier studies have defined place attachment as an emotional and affecting bond held towards a place (Altman & Low, 1992), an environment with privileged value (Lewicka, 2011) and an emotional attachment to the divine (Counted, 2016; Counted, 2018). Here, the attachment bonds created between individuals and sacred places invokes queries as to how sacred places encourage and build communities, whether such spaces give people peace to undertake worshipping, if these special locations are denoted as where something memorable or terrible may have happened or if pertinent localities manifest as a place in which to celebrate religious beliefs without judgment.

Many researchers have sought to identify or answer how places are given a unique, sacred space status, if religious believers have to belong to some religious places in terms of their faith or belief, why people feel the need to go to these spaces and if such areas only consist of a building or if there is there a specific form of dynamics that make them special for religious people (Ainsworth, 1982). Such inquiries are the basis on the idea of whether people began to think their sacred places like a home to them, or just an environment or a random building (Altman & Low, 1992; Hay, 1998; Janmaat, 2017). There is no doubt that the emotional aspect of religion plays a big role in the theory of attachment and thus people's attachment to particular sacred places is important in terms of attachment theory as the place where they can ask for help from God. That is, it is important to demonstrate whether early childhood attachment style can mirror one's affectional bonds to special places in adulthood whereupon there is a strong belief that, through these spaces, God is always perceived as a secure base in times of difficulties. For instance, a religious believer may assume divine place as manifesting locations in which he/she can remember or talk to God, can undertake a kind of meditation, prayer fulfilment, and so on (Counted & Zock, 2019). In this belief, the dynamics of sacred places may therefore play a significant role for believers in maintaining this attachment.

Certain religious traditions or sacred objects have long been examined in terms of the phenomenon of multiple psychological outcomes. Through these examinations, both the meaning and dynamics of sacred places within the lives of people are also important to be understood. The notion of sacred, here, includes everything that is referred to as holy-related or holy in nature. In order to better understand religious place attachment, emphases must be given as to what kind of experiences believers have in their respective sacred places. Since these places being able to fall outside of where they live, reviewing several aspects of these sacred spaces such as emotional connectedness to place, the emergence of sacred place attachment, self-identity, and socialization could be an ideal way for obtaining a wider understanding of attachment theory and religious interactions.

4.1. Emotional Connectedness to Place

The understandings or conceptualisations of a sacred space can be changeable among different people or groups – as a result of the expression of a sacred space invoking every kind of perception available to a given locality. In this regard, how sacred spaces are categorised through different dimensions is highlighted in a study by Mazumdar and Mazumdar (2004). For example, these spaces can be considered as one's home, an altar in the home or memorials – all of which are considered to comprise small spaces. In contrast, sacred spaces can also be considered on the macro level – such as entire cities (like Jerusalem, Mecca and Banaras). In expanding this scope, one can even see large areas of land or whole nations – such as the Land of Israel for Jews or the land of Kuds for Palestaniens or Kaaba¹ for Muslims – as comprising sacred spaces (Counted & Zock, 2019).

Furthermore, sacred places can be human-made structures – such as mosques, temples or synagogues. One's home, as a micro sacred space, can symbolise strong affective ties of emotional connectedness when compared to many other sacred objects. Mazumdar (2005), in discussing the role of emotional attachment in regards to social formation and place identity, indicated a special characteristic of home by marking a Hindu *area*, known as

¹ Large cubic structure with black silk clothes.

the *pooja room* in which religion is learned. Hinduism holds that the strongest sacred area of the house is not restricted to the *pooja room* and can instead be the kitchen or a threshold. Alternatively, when looked at from a different aspect, this can comprise an attachment to the land, its trees, the flowers or plants. Here the important thing, overall, is for an individual to feel a belonging to something important to them, doing so for their religion (Giuliani, 2003). In a similar manner, many tangible aspects can be planned in accordance with religious symbolism. In India, for example, villages and towns are constructed in response to the traditional culture held, with this including the design of streets as well as the location of temples, monasteries and village halls (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004).

4.2. The Emergence of Sacred Place Attachment

Religious people believe that religion and spirituality may occur in expected and unexpected places across the spectrum of everyday life. Sacred places not only link people to people and/or family to family, but they also strongly link people to their religion (Counted & Watts, 2017). However, the notion of place is based on an interactive relation between persons, physical settings and the activities that arise or occur in given places. Scholars reason that believers value some places more significant than others due to their sacred statuses (Ruback, Pandey & Kohli, 2008). In the grand scheme of things, many believers (including Hindus, Muslims, Jews and Sikhs) assume specific cities to manifest as sacred places. As certain cities possess vital importance to them, such localities represent places of creation and centers-of-the-earth while also being a symbolisation of identity (Counted & Watts, 2017; Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004).

It can therefore be asked what kinds of attachment feeling do believers have towards sacred places and whether this comprises mere ideological place attachment or religious place attachment. Most psychologists claim that this process occurs mostly as a form of religious place attachment. To better illustrate this, Counted and Watts, (2017) provides an example of religious place attachment that arises in relation to a core principle of Judaism. In their study, it is noted how believers accept the bestowing of God's actions and blessings upon the Nation of Israel in the *Promised Land*. It is also denoted how this narrative derives from the Bible, thereby evaluating this passage in light of religious place attachment with regards to references geographic specificity in responding to psychological needs, namely as it is perceived that the story has become manifestly true (Giuliani & Feldman, 1993; Giuliani, 2003; Counted & Zock, 2019). For such individuals, sacred events, actions, and places are of vital importance and thus have a special place in their lives. This is also the case for people from other religions – such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam (Counted & Zock, 2019).

4.3. Self-Identity or Self Psychology

Recent studies have argued that religion holds an ability not only to define and legitimate modern society, with the building of new places of worship being evidence of this but also leads to the construction of identity. It might be anticipated that, in light of their personal religious beliefs or response to religion itself, many people experience a sense of the transcendental via sacred places, particularly when encountering the beauty, or power of the natural world (Williams & Vaske, 2003). Studies indicate that place identity is a form of reflection pertaining to a sub-structure of self-identity in the lives of the individual (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004). The existing literature conveys, albeit in a limited way,

whether people feel a strong attachment to sacred places and through these feelings, such places become a part of one's identity.

In a similar manner, place identity is described as playing a big role in nature and the physical world – including in relation to the self-identity and social experiences of individuals (Proshansky, 1978). Mazumdar and Mazumdar, (1993:239) point out that, in Proshansky's view, self-identity is composed of a 'spiritual self' and a religious self and that self-identity can be understood as being when *'[t]he spiritual self transcends the boundaries of religion and religious dogma and practices. It involves arriving at a personal understanding of situatedness in this world and a connection of the here and now of to the beyond, the unknown and unknowable'*. From this, it can be seen how one's spiritual identity can become connected with sacred places (such as Jerusalem, Taj Mahal or Kaaba as shown in Table below) and thus these kind of places are admissible sacred places for believers (Counted & Watts, 2017). Swan (1988), in a similar vein, has asserted that when believers visit places that are sacred to them, they encounter a mind space in which their feelings become clear and explicit.

Mazumdar & Mazumdar (1993) have paid attention to how, in Hinduism, one's spiritual self and identity are faithfully tied to religious self and note that, because communion with God is the most important undertaking for a Hindu, everybody has to endeavour to maintain that communion. Hence, Hindus believe that spiritual identity can develop via meditation, contemplation, the seeking of harmony with every kind of creation in nature and through/in sacred places (Cobb, 2017). Notably, similar processes and conclusions can be identified in relation to other religions.

Religious self can also foster alongside and through a religious identity – for example, among Hindus, Jews, Muslims and Christians. For these believers, the self-processes of religion, thanks to sacred practices and experiences in sacred places, occur in abundance (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 1993; Counted & Watts, 2017). Alt başlık olması halinde başlıkların sadece ilk harfleri büyük harfle yazılmış olmalıdır. Alt başlık olması halinde başlıkların sadece ilk harfleri büyük harfle yazılmış olmalıdır.

Table. A Sample of Sacred Places as Expressions of Religions and Their Attachment Objects (Cited from Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004)

Religion/ Sacred Places	Hinduism	Judaism	Islam	Buddhism	Catholicism	Sikhism
Sacred	Banaras	Jerusalem	Mecca	Budh	Rome	Amritsar
Cities	Mathura		Medina	Gaya, Sarnath	Jerusalem	
Sacred	roadside	Wailing Wall,	mosques	temples,	cathedrals,	Golden
Structures	shrines/ temples	synagogues	roadside shrines	stupas, monasteries	churches, monasteries, shrines	Temple, gurudwaras

Sacred Burial Sites	no burial sites	tombs of religious personages	tombs of religious personages		
Sacred Places in Nature	all of nature (esp. mountains, rivers and lakes)	specific places made significant due to special events	specific places made significant by special events	mountains, rivers, lily ponds	sites of healing waters/miracles/visions of Virgin Mary (e.g., Lourdes)

For believers, the formation of religious identity can be due to the great importance given to a sacred place in itself. Considered from this point of view, the role of a city at the macro level in the lives of believers in many religions can be described not only as a sacred behaviour but also collective consciousness (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004). For example, it was described by Elon (1989:62,118) how “[t]he air over Jerusalem is saturated with prayers” and how “Jews who come to Jerusalem have ‘felt’ its ‘awe and wonder’, because they believed God dwelt in Jerusalem”. Jerusalem has therefore assumed a significant position within the consciousness and lives of Jewish people. This includes specific areas or structures within the city – for example, the Western Wall. Here, because of their strong faith, followers write prayers, pleas and hopes on small pieces of paper and insert these into gaps in the stone wall (Hazleton, 1986). Some believers tie the Western Wall to their own emotions.

Mecca, another sacred place, within which the Kaaba is located, has assumed vital significance in the lives of Muslims for several reasons. For a Muslim, this place is of great importance in terms of the life and actions of the Prophet and of Islam as a religion. In this sense, the Kaaba is the center of the religious world for Muslims. Likewise, the well of Zamzam in Mecca and the plains of Arafat where the Prophet preached his last sermon are very significant sacred places for such believers. Such sacred cities or places illustrate how religion helps to ascribe historic, physical and symbolic qualities by means of producing a connection between people, religion and place (Low, 1992).

4.4. The Role of Sacred Spaces for Socialisation

One’s commitment to place can be explained via the process of religious socialisation as well as the importance of place, whereby religious communities play a big role in the formation of identity (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004). Accordingly, it is necessary to examine social aspects of religion and its particular connection with the attachment of place in terms of place ritual, place artefacts, and place experiences.

Every religious community has their own belief structures and figures/items/constructs of belief conveyance – as includes parents, religious educators (to teach prayers), rituals, stories, symbols and/or personal experiences of certain places. Through this, place ritual is a reminder and an invoking aspect of religion that helps to complete a person’s identification with a sacred place. Mazumdar & Mazumdar (2004:390), in noting this, have depicted how

reminders can take the form of daily prayers or special occasion invocations: *“For Jews in diaspora, physically dispersed and separated from their sacred places, engagement in place ritual was a significant mechanism through which distant places were made central and kept active in their worldview, ethos and consciousness”*.

Place ritual is also important in the daily lives of Muslims, whereby believers turn to Mecca in prayer wherever they are (i.e., regardless of which country they are in or if they are in a mosque or a home). Other behavioural traits undertaken by Muslims in regards to the sacred place of Mecca is that believers ensure their feet are not turned towards Mecca when they go to sleep and that, when a Muslim dies and are buried, their head must face Mecca (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004). The diverse definitions held concerning sacred places among people highlight quite distinct territorial expressions of religious belief and behaviour (Park, 1994).

One of the most effective ways of religion is to use place artefacts, which are pieces that can provide a physical connection to a place. Such artefacts can express both physical and symbolic properties and may manifest as murals, paintings, replicas and photographs (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004). All of the religions aforementioned in this paper deploy such devices – within the homes and/or public sacred spaces of believers – in order to define the religious reality of adherents. For example, in Hinduism, people use special paintings, pictures or replicas of famous Hindu temples – such as the Minakshi Temple in Madurai, the Sun Temple in Konarak, the Jagannath Temple in Puri and the Venkateshwara Temple in Tirupati (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004).

Similarly, place artefacts are used in some Jewish and Muslim homes and synagogues/mosques. For Jews, the purpose of artefact usage is to ensure that Jerusalem remains vivid in their minds while, for Muslim, artefacts are used to invoke remembrance of and to solidify the connections held with sacred places (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004).

Place visits and pilgrimages also strongly compel socialisation among believers in terms of the undertaking of learning experiences. The undergoing of a pilgrimage gives individuals a chance to experience their religious past, to walk and to pray in locations in which prophets, saints or other holy men/women have traversed and prayed (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004). According to Park (1994), a pilgrimage represents the basic physical explanation of such sacred places, a result of a significant number of people travelling to such places from around the world, sometimes expecting to receive a special blessings or healings as a consequence of their trip and sometimes seeing pilgrimage merely as a duty.

5. CONCLUSION

In this paper, the bonds between people and attachment figures, especially attachment to sacred spaces, have been examined through the lens of attachment theory by overviewing the existing literature. Also, evaluations have been made on how and why sacred places are specially positioned for believers, such as exposing self-identification, and/or the interaction with a particular environment, so that the social aspect of religion can play an important role among believers in maintaining attached to significant sacred places. As mentioned above, some previous studies have revealed various attachment figures such as attachment-based spirituality (Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990), or attachment to God (Culver & Denton, 2017). However, the attachment to sacred spaces and its reflections on

individuals were not yet fully understood in the psychology of religion. Drawing an effective scientific framework for comprehensive research on religion-people attachment models, the purpose of this article is to highlight sacred spaces as an attachment mechanism.

As obtained from the literature, it has been a primary goal to illustrate the relationship between people and the environment, through sacred space attachment both on an individual and social level. Another purpose has been to uncover whether such place attachment is religious or ideological. Here, it has been shown that the places which are selected by religious believers are not completely random or merely derived from religious commitments. Instead, several instigations – such as the divine power as attributed to God, the social and spiritual power attributed to educators/persons significant within the religion and the personal power experienced when people feel a divine touch in/at a sacred place – have also been identified and connected to the formation of sacred places for individuals. In this way, the efforts have been made mirroring the importance of the child-mother attachment to the individuals' relationships with the divine-related places.

Many religions have an important psychological effect, especially in times of crisis and threat, of individuals. Therefore, in terms of protective mental health, it is a fact that religion has a clearly motivational function in the individual's life (Kirkpatrick, 1992). This article has determined that several meaningful elements in religious life can strengthen the social effects of physical environments. Based on the evidence obtained from the existing studies, it is possible to say that feeling attached to sacred spaces resembles secure attachment characteristics in which the individual maintains positive emotions through prayer or ritual, and free from distress.

It is suggested that sacred space attachment as a different pattern of religiosity may be an increasingly fruitful area for further research that could provide some basis for a different attachment style. This paper provides a warrant for further studies on attachment to sacred spaces in different religions via the use of qualitative and quantitative methods. This might be a lead for researchers to enrich the field via further investigations.

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GENİŞ ÖZET

Geçmiş yıllardan beri herhangi bir dine mensup kişilerin belirli (kutsal) yerlerde Tanrı ile bağlarının ifade biçimi pek çok bilim dalının araştırma konusu olmuştur. Fakat bu farklı dinlere mensup kişilerin kutsal mekânlara bağlılıklarının dini yaşamlarındaki yansıması incelendiğinde, bu ilişkinin bebek-bakıcı temelli bağlanma kuramı ile ilgisinin olup olmadığı açık değildir. Bu konuyla ilgili yayınlanmış çalışmaların çoğu, ağırlıklı olarak Tanrı'ya bağlanma ve bakıcılar, manevi yaşam ve bağlanma arasındaki ilişki gibi konuları araştırmıştır. Ancak, kutsal yerlere yönelik bağın psikolojik süreçleri ve inananların o mekânlara attıkları anlamlar yeterince araştırılmamıştır. Dolayısıyla bu çalışmada, dindar insanların kutsal yerlere bağlanmalarının bir dizi olası psikolojik mekanizma ile nasıl bağlantılı olduğunu daha iyi anlamak için ağırlıklı olarak, mekânlara duygusal bağlanma, kutsal yerlere bağlanmanın ortaya çıkışı, öz-kimlik, ve son olarak sosyal ve toplumsal etkileşim başlıkları altında ele alınmıştır.

Pek çok insanın, mensubu oldukları dine göre hayatlarını idame ettirdikleri görülür ve dolayısıyla din, insanların hayatlarında oldukça belirgin bir etkiye sahiptir. Örneğin ibadet yerleri, yemek seçimi, giyinme biçimleri, ev düzenleri, mezarlık şekilleri ya da sosyalleşme biçimleri gibi pek çok unsur dindar insanlar için çeşitli dini yaşam motifleri olarak tezahür eder. Özellikle ibadethaneler, yani kutsal sayılan mekânlar inananlar için toplumsal ve sosyal varlıklarının bağlanma temelli bir bileşeni olarak büyük önem taşımaktadır. Dinlerin çoğunda, insanların biraraya gelebildikleri özel yapılar veya yerler vardır. Bu kutsal alanlar makro düzeyde - örneğin bütün bir şehir (Kudüs, Mekke ve Banaralar gibi) ve mikro bir kutsal alan olarak ev, cami, tapınak veya sinagog gibi yapılar olabilir. Daha önceki çalışmalar, mekâna yönelik bağlanma biçimini, bir yere duyulan duygusal ve etkileyici bir bağ, maneviyat temelli bir bağ, veya Tanrı'yla iletişim yeri şeklinde tanımlamışlardır. Burada, bireyler ve kutsal yerler arasında oluşturulan bağlanma biçimleri, kutsal yerlerin toplulukları nasıl cesaretlendirdiği ve inşa ettiği, bu tür yerlerin insanlara ibadet etmeleri konusunda huzur verip vermeyeceği, bu özel yerlerin akla kötü çağrışımlar getiren bir obje olup olmayacağı konusunda sorgulamalar yapılmasını sağlar. Ayrıca, kutsal yerler insanları yalnızca insanlara ve/veya aileye bağlamakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda insanları dinleriyle güçlü bir şekilde ilişkilendirerek kimliğin bir sembolizasyonu haline gelirler. Bu nedenle inananların kutsal yerlere yönelik ne tür bir bağlanma hissine sahip olduğu ve bunun sadece jeolojik yer tutumu mu yoksa dini yer tutumu mu olduğu sorulabilir. Din psikologlarının çoğu, kutsal mekânlara bağlanmanın, çoğunlukla, çocukluktaki güvenli bağlanma biçiminin tezahürü olarak ortaya çıktığını iddia ederler.

Özetle, bu araştırmanın amacı, kutsal yerlerin psikolojik bağlanma yaklaşımı çerçevesinde açıklanıp açıklanmayacağını tartışmaktır. Bağlanma teorisi ve mekân ilişkisine dair literature, duygusal bağ, kimlik ve sosyal etkileşim gibi deneyimlerin değerlendirilmesi dahil edilerek mekânlara bağlanma konusunun psikolojik yansımaları tahlil edilmiştir. Başka bir deyişle, insanlar ve kutsal yerler arasındaki ilişki - yani din aracılığıyla belirli yerlere olan duygusal bağlar ve bu tür yerlerin inananlar arasında nasıl özel bir statü kazandığı gibi sorular incelenmiştir.