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Tracing lines in the lawscape: Registration/pilgrimage and the sacred/secular of law/space

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to draw upon sacred/secular 'journeying' to explore the inherent movement invoked by the state's documentation of the life course. In tracing this motion, the paper follows two intersecting pathways – the literal travel of those who register a life event and the figurative 'journeying' of legal identity. The argument develops from a case study conducted at the Beaney House of Art & Knowledge (Canterbury, UK): a museum, gallery, library, café, community exhibition, tourist information point, and registration hub. But rather than using the building as a frame, to follow more closely the activity of registrars and citizens, I locate imaginative potential in the Beaney's 'tessellating' spaces. Accordingly, the spatial account which is developed is 'fictive' in its very nature and offers an implicit critique of a bureaucratic act of governance embedded with legal fiction. In doing so, the paper contributes to critical work on registration which deploys the language of 'journeying' to outline the performative force of state documentation, and more broadly, to spatial approaches which illustrate patterns of movement within the 'lawscape' (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015). The paper argues that the 'journeying' of registration represents a pilgrimage, whereby individuals are 'called' to bureaucratic space at the centre of their local sphere, and the certificates they take with them, much like the badges of medieval pilgrims, are 'takeaway tokens' of the state – documents which impress legal identities upon us.

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[1] See https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/journal-author-archiving-policies-and-re-use (accessed 5 May 2020).
[2] See https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0038026120915705 (accessed 5 May 2020).

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> Civil registration is about the continuity of an entire life span. In more than any other public space, the office of the Civil Registry deals in the registering of human bodies as they pass through life.
>
> (Lund, 2001, p. 12)

Introduction: The pilgrim passport

The motivation for this paper resides in a leaflet which sits upon the 'bibliographic altar' of my desk (Cvetkovich, 2012). Against a kaleidoscope of decorative patterns, the front cover depicts Saint James as a pilgrim walking barefoot along the greenery, gazing upwards into a distance far beyond the viewer's imagination. The palm-sized booklet unfolds from its concertina form to explore the central themes of pilgrimage: space, place, and vulnerability.[1] Although the text provides only a brief overview of these expansive topics, each heading is accompanied with the symbolism of footprints, shells, steeples, and signposts; whilst each page is densely packed with images of maps, guidebooks, passports, and prayer beads. Drawing attention away from these religious undertones, a selection of carefully worded questions emphasise a 'secularised' connection between people and place: 'What *journeys* have changed you? Is there a *place* that is important to you? Do you have a *treasured souvenir* to remind you of this place?'

Alongside a fridge magnet, a paper model of Durham Cathedral, and a 'lucky cat' from a trail around the cobbled streets of York Minster, the answer was that I had picked up the leaflet on pilgrimage, and taken it away with me as a 'token of place' (Price, 2013). But whilst the ultimate destination was the architecture of Anglican Christianity (Irvine, 2015), I found myself wandering museums, art galleries, and botanical gardens – the 'storied places' (Lane, 2002) or 'secular steeples' (Ostwalt, 2012) where sacred affect is embodied within the mundane realm of the everyday.[2] After all, my journey to the North of England was motivated by the gravitational 'pull' towards a landscape which embodied my own search for identity and belonging (Maddrell, Terry, & Gale, 2015). As the 'pilgrim passport' illustrates, then, pilgrimage sites are not restricted to those which share explicit associations with the divine, but rather, are 'places in motion' (Kinnard, 2014, p. 4) which *become* sacred because of the meaning that individuals, culture, or society invest in them.

In making this journey of 'return' (Harman, 2017), I had been hoping to find a sense of direction for my research project. Following a conversation with a parent, who had attended

the local library to register her son's birth, and recalled her surprise at receiving children's fiction alongside a copy of the certificate, I had stumbled across the Beaney House of Art & Knowledge (the Beaney). Located in the heart of Canterbury (UK), the Beaney provides local residents with: a museum, gallery, library, café, community exhibition, tourist information point, and registration hub. Immediately, these 'tessellating' spaces caught my attention.[3] Under one roof, the Beaney had brought together a community (see also, Freeman & Blomley, 2019): mums exchanging parenting tips, visitors peering at worldly artefacts, tourists gathering brochures, and those seeking shelter in the bones of the building – as they huddled for warmth underneath a sign which read *'loading bay constantly in use'* (Field notes, 9 March 2018). Amongst this hive of activity, it seemed curious to witness the presence of those registering births and deaths in the library's glass cubicles. However, I was struggling to find a spatial framework which captured the lines of movement bringing these people into contact – and how it *felt* to be stood amongst it.

But when I picked up the leaflet, from the undercroft of York Minster, it seemed as though an alternative route might unfold. In the crypt-turned-museum, a series of objects were on display for *'Tourist, Traveller, Pilgrim?'* – a temporary exhibition which encouraged visitors to, 'think about the many different journeys they take through their own lives and how they can connect those journeys to something much greater than themselves' (Archbishop of York, 2017). And as I glance at the leaflet which is now on my desk, I recall being drawn to the words 'pilgrim passport', and the feeling of my thoughts drifting away, as I started to consider the 'journeying' of registration alluded to by Sarah Lund (2001).[4] At the sight of a baptismal font, this evolving connection only seemed to deepen, since the ritual architecture evoked the Anglican origins of state documentation – when the parish church *was* the 'community hub' and the movement to be recorded was the passage of the Christian soul (Szreter, 2012).[5] And in the space vacated by one journey coming to an end, another was set in motion.

The paper which unfolds in the following pages, then, is the result of bringing the 'pilgrim passport' back to Canterbury – itself a notable place of pilgrimage. In making this conceptual 'journey', the paper engages with two bodies of literature. Firstly, it contributes to critical work on registration which deploys the language of 'journeying' (Keenan, 2019) to outline the 'fictive' power of title registries (Keenan, 2019; Pottage, 1995) and birth documentation (Yngvesson & Coutin, 2006). In conversation with these literatures, the paper adopts an explicitly religious sense of 'journeying' to explore the 'placing' effect of registration, in which, bodies are set in motion to 'fix' legal identities in the moment of recognition. Secondly, the paper contributes to a growing body of research which emphasises the

performative force of movement by tracing juridical 'techniques' of walking or burial (Barr, 2016, 2017). Adding to this discussion, the paper engages with pilgrimage theory to illustrate the *immateriality* of law in motion, configuring the sacred/secular as a spatial boundary which invokes the imaginative realm of the 'lawscape' (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015).

The aim, then, is to draw upon sacred/secular 'journeying' to explore the inherent movement invoked by the state's documentation of the life course. In tracing this motion, the paper follows two intersecting pathways – the literal travel of those who register a life event and the figurative 'journeying' of legal identity. It is structured into three substantive parts which, in turn, explore bureaucratic 'journeying', the Beaney's registration space, and the place of the souvenir. The argument builds from Sarah Lund's (2001) ethnographic analysis of 'documentary peregrinations' (2001, p. 17), in which bureaucratic forms are shown to mediate a sensory encounter with the state (see also Hull, 2012).[6] But rather than using the building as a frame, to follow more closely the activity of registrars and citizens, I locate imaginative potential in the Beaney's tessellating spaces.[7] In other words, the paper adopts a spatially-embedded approach in which unlikely concepts are mapped onto everyday space (D. Cooper, 2014). Accordingly, the spatial account which is developed is 'fictive' in its very nature and offers an implicit critique of a bureaucratic act of governance embedded with 'legal fiction' (Pottage, 1995). Moving forward, the paper turns to a discussion of the legislative framework which interweaves the 'journeying' of registration with the religious affect encountered in the movement towards place.

Best Lane, Canterbury: Bureaucratic 'journeying'

> 'From very shire's end of England, down to Canterbury they wend, to seek the holy blissful martyr, quick to give his help to them when they were sick.'
>
> (Chaucer, 2003, p. 3)

In a city steeped in its spiritual heritage, the footsteps of medieval pilgrims are easily traced. At a time when the sacred permeated everyday life, pilgrimage was strictly regulated by the canonical discipline of the medieval Church and conducted in a spirit of penitence and redemption (Tomasi, 2002). Within this culture of saintly devotion, pilgrims were drawn to Canterbury in search of the miraculous. Thomas Becket's shrine was considered a sacred space where the sick could be healed – a physical means of accessing the divine through the medium of touch (Josipovici, 1996, pp. 68–69). But whilst traditional pilgrimage has been defined by 'the journey to a distant sacred goal' (Barber, 1991, p. 1), registration compels citizens to travel in search of state documentation, and, ultimately, legal recognition (Szreter,

2007). As such, when these imprints upon the city's streets are overlaid with my own journeys back and forth, it is the movement towards place which comes into view:

> I'm making my way to the Beaney on a cold evening in late February. Whilst the registrars have headed home for the day, and the museum doors have long since shut, the library will stay open until eight p.m. tonight. The council has kindly agreed to let me into the registration cubicles and I'm hoping that the gentle hush of activity will allow me to take photographs.
>
> The walk is no more than fifteen minutes from my home just past the train tracks in an area known as St Stephen's. Arriving at a busy roundabout connecting all four corners of the locality, my hand brushes against iron railings affixed with the Canterbury Cross – a decorative embellishment which weaves Anglican Christianity into the fabric of the city.
>
> As I pass by the remnants of the Blackfriars Priory, my attention is drawn to silhouetted shapes gathering in the soft glow of the Quakers' meeting house, a traditional dwelling with a small garden that backs on to the River Stour. At the intersection where the theatre meets the river, I pause for a moment and listen as the Cathedral bells ring out – blanketing the city in a sustained din.
>
> Turning on to Best Lane, I make the final steps of my brief journey. On the left of the street, Canterbury's famous saint proudly adorns the banner of the Thomas Becket pub. As the lane joins the High Street, a bronze statue depicts Chaucer as a pilgrim, on a plinth located just outside Eastbridge Hospital. Now a small tourist destination, the building was initially a resting place for medieval pilgrims, as they journeyed towards the shrine of their martyr.
>
> (Field notes, 22 February 2018)

In this brief walk through the city, the physical contrasts between secular 'journeying' and medieval pilgrimage are readily apparent. The enduring image provided by *Canterbury Tales* (Chaucer, 2003) is one of pilgrims travelling together in large groups, riding for miles on horseback, and telling stories along the way (Tomasi, 2002). But for those who come to the Beaney, whether to conduct fieldwork or to register a life event, the travel is performed with ease and takes place within the locality. Certainly, there are sacred journeys which seem to only acquire spiritual meaning if the pilgrim traverses a landscape (Frey, 1998).[8] Yet, for those who journey to Walsingham, a site of Marian devotion in Norfolk (UK), the village feels like a 'second home' which is 'sacred' precisely because it is *both* 'exceptional' and 'familiar' (Coleman, 2000). In a further displacement of 'distance', the daily commute can also be considered a form of sacred 'journeying', where individuals use prayer, meditation, or music to embed spirituality within the mundane space of routine travel (Wigley, 2018). Importantly, then, traditional pilgrimage has been subject to an everyday reframing in which the 'sacred' no longer appears as an otherworldly force embodied in the distant 'beyond' of holy place.

Alongside this everyday reframing, anthropologists have played with the nebulous qualities of the 'otherworldly' to expand pilgrimage into apparently secular realms. Most clearly, this has been achieved by exploring affective travel to emotionally charged landscapes, such as: battlefields, disaster sites, and memorial space (Hamrin-Dahl, 2010; Hyde & Harman, 2011; Sather-Wagstaff, 2011). In addition, the literature has identified the key role that communities play in creating 'sacred' meaning by turning to: iconic sites in sporting history (O'Connor, 2018), places associated with popular entertainment (Reader & Walter, 1993), and spaces of queer culture and heritage (Howe, 2001). Anthropologists have also ventured into the political realm by highlighting the veneration of national figures (Morinis, 1992), the actions of grassroots movements in establishing 'cult' heroes (Margry, 2008), and, more broadly, the inscription of nationhood, identity, and belonging onto contested landscapes (Kinnard, 2014). These literatures cover a wide terrain. However, they are united in the belief that pilgrimage is a useful concept to explore the powerful connections people form with place.

It is this ever-constant blurring of the sacred/secular which arises in 'journeying' towards the Beaney's registration space. As my fieldnotes illustrate, 'religious affect' is stamped across every nook of Canterbury. It is alluded to in the residential districts bearing the names of famous saints, woven into the daily infrastructure, kept alive as local residents gather in the community, and evades public space in all its sensory forms. As such, sacred/secular tension is written into the materiality of every lived moment in the city (Knott, Krech, & Meyer, 2016). This 'religious affect' is central to Canterbury's sense of place: it is how the council attracts its tourists, celebrates its heritage, and performs its collective memory.[9] And as Olivia Barr (2017) reminds us, sacred matter is also embodied in the movement across the 'lawscape' (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015):

> Even for those not overtly carrying a religious form of law themselves, the act of walking past churches, cemeteries or other religious architectural emblems also potentially leaks into the layers of legal footprints triggered, and left behind, in a kaleidoscope of bricked memories and multiple layers of bricked laws.
>
> (2017, p. 225)

In recognising these imprints, the point is not to suggest that all those who register a life event must experience a sensory encounter with the 'sacred'.[10] But rather, my fieldnotes illustrate that an essential component of 'place' is religious affect, which is resident in the everyday of public space, and not solely the sites of pilgrimage which acquire mythical force. This is significant because the 'sacred' has symbolic meaning. As Jacob Kinnard argues, sacred space is 'rarely about what we conventionally call religion' (2014, p. 4), but rather,

functions as an 'index' of identity and belonging (see for example, the contested sacrality of 9/11 memorial space). Accordingly, the movement invoked by the state's documentation of the life course sets bodies in motion through lawscapes which are rich in 'sacred' meaning.[11]

The basic premise of this 'bureaucratic journeying' is the locality requirement. As section 1(1) of the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953 ('the 1953 Registration Act') states, 'the birth of every child born in England and Wales shall be registered by the registrar of births and deaths for the *sub–district* in which the child was born' (emphasis added). Similarly, deaths must be recorded either where the person has died, or, where the body has been found (s 15 of the 1953 Registration Act). Importantly then, civil registration follows a 'law of place' (Layard, 2010), whereby the abstract realm is divided into spatial units of administration inscribed with locality. The significance being that legal identity is mapped onto the location of the body at the time of birth or death – a bureaucratic enmeshment of people and place which foregrounds the meaning scripted into the *where* of the process. But as my fieldnotes indicate, legal place is not static: it is made and unmade in the movement of bodies across space and time (Barr, 2016).

These 'legal footprints' (Barr, 2017) can be traced back to the 'in-person' provision. The legislative framework for civil registration places a duty upon parents, relatives, and 'qualified informants', to provide the requisite information and to sign the register, in the *presence* of the registrar, within 42 days of birth or 5 days of death (ss 2, 16, and 17 of the 1953 Registration Act). In conjunction with the locality requirement, then, the legislative emphasis upon 'presence' compels the movement towards place, as citizens are 'called' to attend registration space within their local administrative district. In the context of an American mental health court, this 'spatio-temporal mechanism', whereby the state governs through a system of appointments, has been read as an exercise of jurisdiction, which invokes and suspends movement by attempting to 'fix' people in time and space (J. Cooper, 2018). Although state documentation is produced in a singular meeting, this particular moment is also an act of 'placement'. As Lund notes, 'by coming to the registry as required within the time frame allowed, parents comply with a standardisation of their child's place in the community' (2001, p. 12). And at the Beaney, this 'placing' is materialised in bureaucratic space, as citizens are required to record life events in a community hub.

But it is not simply the individual which is set in motion. As Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos notes, 'when a human body moves, a whole assemblage of material and immaterial bodies moves along' (2015, p. 5). As such, to recognise movement within the

'lawscape' (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015) requires a closer inspection of 'non-human' material, and consequently, the 'paper trails' which unfold in the registration process (Yngvesson & Coutin, 2006). The first direction of travel is one of 'centralisation' (Pottage, 1995). Since state documentation follows the law of place, superintendent registrars must send certified copies of the registers, on a quarterly basis, to the General Register Office, for the purpose of collating a public index (ss27 and 30 of the 1953 Registration Act). This 'centralising' motion is reversed as certificates are taken away from the local registration hub to enter the intimacy of the familial home. But as Yngvesson and Coutin write, 'instead of only trailing in to the past, papers jut out into the future, requiring the selves who are authenticated by these documents to chart new and sometimes unanticipated courses' (2006, p. 184). In other words, the very act of registration may produce further movement, beyond the initial meeting, as those who are interested may use the index to trace their genealogy (Edwards, 2018) or to find the details of their birth parents (Clapton, 2014). In this sense, the movement compelled by state documentation intertwines bodies and paper to mediate spatial boundaries of private/public, state/individual, and, family/community.

This papered movement leads to the figurative 'journeying' of registration. As state-authored biographies, identity documents record basic particulars: names, dates, address, sex/gender markers, parental details, occupations, and local districts – weaving together a bureaucratic portrait of legal identity (sch 2 of the Registration of Births and Deaths Regulations 1987). But state documentation does not simply reflect an existing or 'natural' state of being, rather, it is through registration that a relational framework of legal identity is performatively enacted (Spade, 2015). As Yngvesson and Coutin eloquently phrase it, 'papers literally enliven and extinguish persons' (2006, p. 179). During the documentation of the life course, then, a transitional sense of 'journeying' arises, as citizens move from having no official status to receiving the recognition of the state (Lund, 2001). Yet, this 'journeying' is prescriptive, linear, and stabilising.[12] Since the act of registration produces written records which are 'fixed in time, but which must be used throughout the life-course' (McCandless, 2017, p. 54). As such, this bureaucratic act of governance has a 'placing' effect, in which, bodies are set in motion to 'fix' legal identities upon paper. Arriving at the Beaney's registration space, the paper now turns to the sacred/secular tension of this 'placing' through the concept of liminality.

Mezzanine: Liminal space, community, and citizenship

As Canterbury's museum and library, the Beaney is an unlikely place to find registration. Rising high above its neighbouring shops, the building maintains a distinctive presence in the bustling city centre with its striking Tudor-style façade, embellished with terracotta mosaic panels, and a leaded bay window at its centre. The ornate structure imposes a sense of significance with its elaborate decoration and markers of the otherworldly: gargoyles jut out from below the roof, hand-carved griffins guard the entrance, and cherubs grace the original Victorian signage. Certainly, the building's outward appearance leaves no visible trace of the bureaucratic space hidden inside. And yet, the charm of the Beaney lies in its idiosyncrasy. Turning the High Street corner, onto the entrance off Best Lane, the structure flattens out and assumes the utilitarian feeling of an urban warehouse. With the addition of a modern extension, then, the Beaney has adjoined two polarising styles, a structural change with significance beyond the aesthetic, since it was during the refurbishment that Kent County Council (KCC) decided to merge its services (KCC, 2015).

When the Beaney reopened in 2012, the registration of births and deaths had moved from its old home at the city's registry office to the mezzanine floor of the library. Today, the registration service is enmeshed within the everyday activity of the Beaney: with an open-plan waiting area, two frosted glass cubicles, and a reception desk cluttered with council-printed leaflets. As such, the mezzanine is an unbounded space with no clear distinction between the bureaucratic and the social. In the quiet hum of the library, the echoes of chit-chat, the smell of coffee, and the 'ping' of a book being checked out intermingle with the faint noise of registration – the meeting's call-and-response punctuated by the staccato clicks of a keyboard. Indeed, one of the few spatial demarcations is provided in the form of an A4 piece of paper, permanently attached to one of the glass cubicles, which announces to those nearby – '*registration in progress: do not disturb*'.

The explanation for the merge can be found in the council's policy documents. Introducing the Libraries, Registration, and Archives (LRA)'s draft strategy for the coming years, KCC outlines the 'challenges of the financial climate' and the need to 'ensure these key public buildings are being used to their full potential' (KCC 2018, 4). It appears, then, that the decision has been made on economic grounds, and rather than being a product of design, the unlikely cohabitation of the mezzanine reflects a broader programme of cuts to public services (see for example, Freeman & Blomley, 2019; Robinson & Sheldon, 2019).[13] This 'market logic' reappears as the council describes the benefits of local registration – 'a fully

integrated service which allows people using [it] to choose their most convenient location' (KCC 2018, 20). Thus, KCC presents the compact use of space as a matter of pragmatism, which facilitates registration for local residents by offering a wider range of choice – an explanation which seems far removed from the concerns of pilgrimage.

But in the following passage, the Beaney's unlikely space of registration appears to be more than simply the accidental by-product of austerity governance:

> The role of the LRA service is to deliver Library, Registration and Archive services that support local people and businesses throughout their lives. Our services are open to everyone, but also targeted to help those who most need the offer. Through these services, people can improve their literacy and foster a lifelong love of reading; are supported in finding information, developing the skills to use online channels and becoming more active citizens; register key points in their lives and the lives of their families; and come together to form strong community ties (KCC n.d., 4)

When this 'passioned' (Satkunanandan, 2019) sketch of the council's services is mapped onto the mezzanine, the 'sacred' tension of bureaucratic 'journeying' becomes apparent. The classic paradigm of Christian pilgrimage is outlined by Victor and Edith Turner (1978), who describe pilgrims as wilfully removing themselves from the structures of secular society, to enter the 'betwixt and between' (Turner, 1969, p. 95) of liminal space. In this extraordinary setting, pilgrims experience 'communitas' – a human bond of togetherness without the constraints of hierarchy or social structure (Turner, 1969, pp. 96–97). This 'ritualised' understanding of 'journeying' is embodied in the Beaney's architecture, where registration is performed on the mezzanine – a 'liminal' space suspended above the library and below the art galleries. As the Beaney's registration area is unbounded, this 'liminality' has a material impact, for whilst the scattering of semi-colons suggests that the facilities have distinctive roles to play, the specification clearly places registration within a framework of locality, community, and citizenship. In a similar vein to those who gather in the liminal space that the Turners describe, then, 'bureaucracy is also a way our lives are brought under a common structure' (Satkunanandan, 2019, p. 25).

Elsewhere, the language of 'journeying' emerges as KCC outline how their approach to registration will achieve the council's stated ambition of 'enriching people's lives'. Under the sub-heading of 'community activities', KCC write: 'Supporting lifelong and family learning remains a priority. From the very beginning at birth registration we will signpost to LRA and other services to support new parents and families' (KCC 2018, 20-21). As such, registration

is positioned as a 'legal origin' which sets in motion a lifelong bureaucratic 'journey', with the council 'signposting' a linear pathway through the services of local government.

People & Places: Sacred token, secular ritual

In the aftermath of Becket's martyrdom, a new craft was developed to provide souvenirs for the thousands of pilgrims travelling to Canterbury Cathedral. Until the thirteenth century, the tokens were exclusively designed as ampullae – miniature vessels which were decorated with images and suspended from the neck (Lee, 2009). Since medieval folk believed Becket's blood could heal the sick, the material was carefully collected and diluted for future generations (Lee, 2009). The ampullae were considered sacred because they held tiny portions of this 'Canterbury Water' (Lee, 2009). After the vessels were phased out, badges that could be attached to the pilgrim's clothing became fashionable (Lee, 2009). The tokens earnt those who wore them special privileges and spiritual protection along the road, whilst they also advertised the shrine, and how far the pilgrim had travelled (Lee, 2009). In a society where faith and superstition prevailed, the souvenir trade provided significant revenue for the medieval Church, which sought to establish monopolies wherever a shrine was located (Webb, 2001). As such, the pilgrim souvenirs blur the lines between sacred relic and token commodity.

[Insert figure 1: The Beaney's medieval pilgrim badges depicting Thomas Becket and his

tomb

© Canterbury Museums and Galleries]

A selection of pilgrim badges, dating from the twelfth to fifteenth centuries, are on display in the Beaney's *'People & Places'* gallery. Adjacent to a large oil painting depicting the assassination, a small glass cabinet contains badges of Becket's head, his episcopal gloves, and a minimalist impression of the tomb. A wider range of souvenirs were also available at the shrine: badges depicting Becket on horseback giving a blessing, Canterbury bells, and ampullae – some of which were inscribed with the legend 'Thomas is the best physician for good people that are sick' (Loxton, 1978, p. 189). Today, the tradition is kept alive as visitors to Canterbury Cathedral can purchase replica badges from the neighbouring gift shop. But if registration is a form of bureaucratic 'journeying', can state documentation be understood as a 'takeaway token' of place?

In a similar vein to pilgrims who reach a sacred site, citizens who register a life event can take a variety of material away with them. During the meeting, the information is processed

electronically, and those present are invited to purchase a copy, in short and/or long form, at a minimal cost (see Gov.UK, 2019). As part of the charity initiative 'Bookstart', those who register a birth in England and Wales will also be given a book pack, which is designed to encourage reading from an early age (see Gov.UK, 2019). At the Beaney, blue/pink versions of the birth certificate and family trees are also available to purchase. Accordingly, the 'souvenirs' of registration are the reading packs, family trees, commemorative certificates, and legal forms which may be taken away as a reminder of the process.

There is, of course, a distinction to be made between the materials which have been designed as keepsakes and the official documentation. As Wendy Hunter and Robert Brill note, 'in many countries, a birth certificate is necessary to attend school, receive health care, inherit property, open a bank account, gain access to credit, obtain other forms of identification, vote, and receive a death certificate' (2016, p. 191). Clearly, then, there are material consequences to having (or not having) state documentation – which may be overlooked by using the language of 'token'. And yet, souvenirs and legal papers are both products of exchange. When individuals purchase a birth certificate, they 'buy' into the legal system, with the document acting as a 'receipt' of transaction – a point which is alluded to the council's depiction of its libraries and registration service as an 'offer' (KCC, n.d., 4). Whilst the language of 'souvenir' displaces the certificate's legal form, then, the term's market associations may be used to illustrate the 'currency' of official papers.

As kitsch items which trade solely in the currency of sentiment, souvenirs appear to reflect a touristic consumption of place (Kaell, 2012). Indeed, the sale of mementoes in the proximity of 9/11's memorial space has proved controversial – with some critics portraying the market as a 'Disneyfication' of tragedy which offends the sanctity of the site (Sather-Wagstaff, 2011). But whilst media discourse frames the souvenir trade as a particularly modern controversy, the Beaney's medieval artefacts are testament to the enduring friction between the sacralisation of space and touristic acts of rememberance. The pilgrim souvenirs were manufactured for considerable profit (Webb 2001). However, they were deeply intertwined with place and forged a powerful bond between pilgrims and the otherworldly – evoking tactile questions of place, movement, and memory.

As such, the Beaney's medieval artefacts can be used to explore the spatial dynamics of registration. During the Middle Ages, it was a remarkable experience to leave one's home behind, and to travel afar, in the hope of encountering the divine (Tomasi, 2002). The souvenirs were ethereal markers of place which provided tangible reminders of the journey

and conjured a feeling of perpetual return to the shrine. More precisely, the tokens were considered 'metonymic signs' – the pilgrim symbolically appropriated the sacred matter by owning a small portion (Blick, 2005). This was particularly true of ampullae whilst badges were considered to be 'touch relics' which became imbued with the otherworldly when they were pressed against the shrine (Lee, 2009). The tokens were revered, not because of any intrinsic worth, but because of their intimate connection with the sacred space they depicted.

Similarly, state documentation is inherently connected to the space it is produced in. As Yngvesson and Coutin explain, 'the birth certificate *returns* to birth, retroactively defining a particular birth as legally cognizable, as an event that produces a particular legal person and establishes legal parentage…through such returns, persons are made and unmade' (2006, p. 178). Yet, as they argue, this 'return' is self-referential, since the certificate 'cannot lead back to birth but only to birth as a legally cognizable event' (Yngvesson & Coutin, 2006, p. 178). In other words, it is not the birth (or death) which is authenticated by state documentation, but rather, the moment of recognition itself – registration is premised upon a 'legal fiction' (Pottage, 1995). As 'fragments' of governance, then, official papers are 'metonymic signs' which manifest bureaucratic space and mediate a 'propertied' relationship with the state. In addition to its legal form, the birth certificate is a papered marker of registration space which records the connection between people and place and bears witness to the 'journeying' of registration.

Interestingly, medieval pilgrim badges may have been crafted from lead to intentionally invoke the symbolism of documentation. When the impressionable material was affixed to correspondence, the seal became a physical embodiment of the noble person's authority – testifying the document's authenticity and certifying the sender's enduring presence (Lee, 2009). Drawing on this imagery, medieval folk summoned the appearance of their martyr when they pinned the badges to their clothing. As Jennifer Lee notes, 'the badge was an approximation of the saint having stamped his seal onto the body of the pilgrim' (2009, p. 166). Although it is not physically attached, state documentation acts like the seal upon the letter or the badge upon the pilgrim – it maps legal identity onto the body and 'seals' it with the authority of the state. As a souvenir of registration, the certificate invokes a perpetual return to the moment of recognition experienced during the meeting (Yngvesson & Coutin, 2006). Accordingly, the 'journeying' of registration performatively enacts legal identity by 'fixing' it in bureaucratic space – people are 'placed' by the documentation they receive.

Concluding remarks

This paper has traced the lines of movement which unfold from the state's documentation the life course. The starting point was the 'locality requirement' – a legislative provision which compels 'informants' to attend a meeting in their local administrative district. As we saw in the Beaney's registration space, the 'inward' movement of citizens to a 'community hub' at the centre of the locality, is a key means by which legal identity is performatively enacted. But whilst 'informants' must travel to register a birth, the identity which is established in the process belongs to the child. This is significant because it reveals two kinetic acts – 'journeying' across the local sphere and returning with the 'takeaway tokens' of the state. It should, of course, be noted that legal certificates are state-inscribed documents with considerable legal force. But if registration is a form of bureaucratic 'journeying', then state documentation has a significance which lies beyond its surface. As tangible reminders of the journey, the Beaney's medieval pilgrimage artefacts provided an opportunity to explore this 'more-than-legal' force and revealed the contradictory movement invoked by the state's documentation of the life course – the 'journeying' of registration sets bodies in motion to 'fix' legal identities.

Acknowledgements

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Notes

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[1] Whilst this paper builds from a Christian understanding, pilgrimage is a feature of all major world religions and encompasses a broader sense of spiritual 'journeying' (Barber, 1991).

[2] As Conrad Ostwalt explains, 'A postmodern Western worldview no longer places God in opposition to humanity; rather, place itself works in opposition to human being and thus becomes otherness itself. So, rather than mediating the divine Other, sacred places are the "other" – holiness is not contained within a sacred place, holiness is the otherness of place – powerful, seductive, and challenging to human being (2012, p. 90)'.

[3] These 'tessellating' spaces have not gone unnoticed. In a video celebrating the Beaney's 'fifth birthday', a visitor remarks: 'I see it as the heart of the city because you have everything in one place.' See: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5WOqgbkKMO8.

[4] The leaflet was a replica of the passports kept by those on the Camino de Santiago to prove they have travelled the 100 kilometres (by foot, bicycle, or horseback) which are required to be welcomed as a pilgrim by the Catholic Church (Nilsson, 2018). Registration itself has been described as 'a *passport* to protection' (United Nations Children's Fund, 2013) because of its substantial impact upon the 'life chances' of children from birth.

[5] Until the enactment of civil registration in 1836, parish records were the only legally-valid source of documenting birth, death, or marriage, which caused significant problems for Jews, Quakers, Catholics, and Nonconformists (Szreter 2012). As such, the ever-constant blurring of sacred and secular space has always been bound in the exclusionary politics of identity and belonging.

[6] This term alludes to an early form of pilgrimage which referred to wandering rather than a mapped-out journey to sacred place (Irvine, 2015).

[7] Imagination plays a central role both in experiencing 'place' and identifying the sacred. As Jacob Kinnard writes, 'Places are very much not limited to their physical dimensions, to the stone and steel with which they are constructed. They become embedded in our individual and collective imaginations, and as such become part of the ongoing formation of our identities' (2014, xvi).

[8] Along the sprawling routes which compose the Camino de Santiago, the emphasis on movement renders 'place' a secondary consideration, and the means of travel can often be the defining line between being welcomed as a fellow pilgrim or disregarded as a tourist (Frey, 1998).

[9] Although my field notes capture a distinctly Christian affect, the medieval Jewish quarter was located directly opposite the Beaney and continued along Best Lane, where many prominent members of the community lived. For a virtual trail of this history, see: http://www.jtrails.org.uk/trails/canterbury. The Anglo-Jewish aspect of Canterbury's heritage tends to be forgotten and receives little attention in either the tourist material or the Beaney's *People & Places* gallery.

[10] It should be noted that there is as much a distinction in the sensory perception of space as there are physical differences in movement (Judge, 2017).

[11] Indeed, adopting a strictly secularised framework of pilgrimage risks overlooking the implications of 'secular' as a term and the wider trajectory of its use within legal discourse (Herman, 2011).

[12] See for example, the diverse experiences of transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming individuals whose 'journeying' is 'constrained' by a bureaucratic act of governance which assigns a legal gender at birth (D. Cooper & Renz, 2016; Grabham, 2016).

[13] Kent County Council provides 28 registration spaces – 22 are libraries, four are 'gateways' and one is a stately home.