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The American University in Cairo
School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

A RELIGIOUS SPACE AS A PLACE FOR MIGRANTS IN CAIRO

A Graduate Thesis Submitted to
The Center for Migration and Refugee Studies
under the supervision of Dr. Gerda Heck

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

By
Alexsa MacDowall

Submitted to the Thesis Committee

May 26, 2020

Abstract

The American University in Cairo

Alexsa MacDowall

“A Religious Space as a Place for Migrants in Cairo”

The focus of this study is an international, English speaking Anglican congregation that worships in Cairo, Egypt. Through participant observation and in-depth interviews, fifteen congregants of varying nationalities and backgrounds were interviewed in order to understand how the church is a place of meaning for them, as migrants. By this congregation being the focus of study, this thesis contributes to migration research by being a non-ethnic pathway of study, religion, and it contributes to research conducted in the Global South. Findings and observations are understood primarily through the theoretical framework of space and place provided by Yi-Fu Tuan. Place making is analyzed through the lens of time, aesthetics, and people. The length of time one interacts in a space, and the intensity of their experiences in the space, contribute to knowing a space and it being endowed with meaning. Aesthetics, what they teach and reveal, the actions they call individuals to, and how they facilitate an interaction in a transcendent space additionally contribute to a space being meaningful. Lastly, through relations and social dynamics, value can be added and taken away from a space being meaningful. Findings show how meaning is not derived from one specific source, but that meaning is multi-layered and how each person attributes meaning to the church varies and differs individually, although there is overlap. This thesis aims to contribute to literature on migration, placemaking, and religion.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

On a lush island in the midst of the Nile, close to Cairo’s bustling downtown, lay the Anglican Diocese of Egypt, North Africa, and the Horn of Africa. This diocese serves as the Anglican seat for one hundred and fifty Anglican churches in eight countries stretching across North Africa and the Horn of Africa, and it also supports more than thirty organizations that serve the community in Egypt.¹ The diocese’s administrative and ministerial offices and various outreach programs are housed together with All Saints’ Cathedral, the “mother church of the diocese,” within a gated compound in Zamalek.² This compound is a space filled with activity, as people from all around the world come here to volunteer, to receive aid, to attend continuing education classes, to work, to make friends, and to worship.

This location for the diocese is rather new in comparison to the history of Anglicanism in Egypt. Based on earlier church records, Anglicanism was first brought by missionaries in the early 1800s, and the first Anglican church was built in Alexandria in 1839.³ Over the next few decades, the growth of the Anglican church and Britain’s presence in Egypt (and eventually Britain’s occupation of Egypt) were integrally connected. In 1876, the first Anglican church of Cairo was established, and it “became the main center of worship for many British residents in Cairo.”⁴ After congregants outgrew this first cathedral in Cairo, a new cathedral was constructed in 1938 in Downtown Cairo.⁵ Another significant turning point in the Anglican church was in

¹ “Who We Are.” *The Diocese of Egypt with North Africa and the Horn of Africa*. Accessed May 14, 2020. <http://dioceseofegypt.org/who-we-are/>.

² “All Saints Cathedral, Cairo.” *The Diocese Of Egypt With North Africa And The Horn Of Africa*. Accessed September 17, 2019. <http://dioceseofegypt.org/all-saints-cathedral-cairo/>

³ “History Of All Saints Cathedral - The Diocese Of Egypt With North Africa And The Horn Of Africa”. *The Diocese Of Egypt With North Africa And The Horn Of Africa*. Accessed February 23, 2019. <http://dioceseofegypt.org/history-of-the-diocese/>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

1974 when the first Egyptian bishop was ordained, and what followed was “a new era of training and equipping indigenous leaders.”⁶ Then in 1978, the Anglican cathedral in downtown was demolished to make way for the construction of (what is presently called) the 6th October Bridge.⁷ In return for the demolition, the Egyptian government provided land in Zamalek for a new cathedral to be built, which is where All Saints’ is located today.⁸

I came to know about All Saints’ in 2016, not while living in Egypt, but while living many miles away in Dallas, Texas. At this time, I was working with refugee communities and taking Arabic at a local university taught by an Egyptian professor. After having finished the Arabic courses offered at this university in Dallas, my professor recommended I continue my Arabic studies in Cairo. When my professor had lived in Cairo, she taught at a premier language institute, and she also taught at All Saints’ language school, a local language center. Considering these options before me, I researched both centers and discovered that All Saints’ not only had a guest house I could possibly live in, but they had a refugee ministry with which I could potentially volunteer. It was because of these additional offerings that I chose to move to Cairo and study Arabic at All Saints’.

After arriving in Cairo and learning more about the cathedral, I discovered that they offered weekly worship services in Arabic, which I started to attend. This was a bonus to learning Arabic and volunteering at the cathedral, as attending church is a regular and important part of my life. Over time, I discovered that All Saints’ offered many other worship services,

⁶ “History Of All Saints Cathedral - The Diocese Of Egypt With North Africa And The Horn Of Africa.” *The Diocese Of Egypt With North Africa And The Horn Of Africa*. Accessed February 23, 2019.

<http://dioceseofegypt.org/history-of-the-diocese/>

⁷ “History Of All Saints Cathedral - The Diocese Of Egypt With North Africa And The Horn Of Africa”. *The Diocese Of Egypt With North Africa And The Horn Of Africa*. Accessed February 23, 2019.

<http://dioceseofegypt.org/history-of-the-diocese/>.

⁸ Ibid.

including services in English. From late 2016 until early 2019, I was a regular attendee in the “English Speaking Congregation.” Initially, I was rather surprised at the diversity of attendees, as it was unlike any church I had ever attended. The turnover rate also caught my attention, as I often met new people that joined the congregation, and I often said goodbye to current congregants, even though I was only a member of the community for just under three years. It was thought-provoking also to observe how the congregants that were migrants used their Christian faith to navigate being in a foreign land. And as time went on, there were many other dynamics I observed that led me to question the function of All Saints’ in the life of these congregants. It was because of these observations and questions that led me to choose All Saints’ as the starting point for my thesis, making All Saints’ the point of focus for this study.

This project seeks to answer questions such as: How is the church a place of meaning for congregants that attend the English Speaking Congregation? How do time, aesthetics, and people contribute to the church being a place of meaning for a congregant? By addressing these questions, this thesis aims to contribute to literature on migration, placemaking, and religion.

Theoretical Framework

To begin to discover if and how All Saints’ English Speaking Congregation is a meaningful place for those congregants that attend, it is necessary to start with the theory of space and place. Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan describes space as a blank sheet upon which meaning can be given, and it can be organized so that it meets one’s biological and social needs.⁹ It is when space is defined, or meaning is given to it, that it is then deemed a place.¹⁰ Meaning is

⁹ Yi-fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1977). 54.

¹⁰ Tuan, *Space and Place*. 136-148

determined by an object's or location's value, which is socially and independently constructed. Therefore a place is defined as a center of felt value and an accumulation of memories and sentiment.¹¹ As Tuan states, "what begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value."¹² A primary way through which this happens, Tuan explains, is via experience and knowledge of a space via the senses. He explains that once a space is known and the person is familiarized with the space, which can happen through routines and rituals as well as an intense experience, then it has the possibility to develop meaning and definition, it is a place.

Numerous factors contribute to a space being a place of meaning; the factors that will be the focus of this thesis is the role of time, aesthetics, and people. Time is a vital factor to consider as the English Speaking Congregation is mostly composed of migrants who only are in the community for a short duration of time, to which Tuan poses the thought-provoking question, "How long does it take to know a place?"¹³ One perspective that Tuan presents is based on extensive time in a space, as "attachment, whether to a person or locality, is seldom acquired in passing."¹⁴ As an example of the role of time, think of an employee who goes to their workplace every day. Even though their experience may be uneventful, it is because they repeatedly go to this place that over time, the worker is so familiar with their workspace that they know the place on a deep level, which requires little thought.¹⁵ Another perspective, which is supported by Tuan as well as philosopher James Feibleman, is that place making is not about the length of time one spends in a space as much as it is about the intensity of the events in a space that make it a

¹¹ Tuan, *Space and Place*.33.

¹² *Ibid.*, 6.

¹³ *Ibid.*,183

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 184.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 127.

meaningful place.¹⁶ Feibleman provides the example of a man who travels the world in a year and has little attachment versus this same man seeing the desert, just in a glance, yet feeling overwhelming joy.¹⁷ The intensity of the beauty of the desert and the way it makes him feel contributes to the desert being a meaningful place. Tuan summarizes this perspective by saying, “While it takes time to form an attachment to place, the quality and intensity of experience matters more than simple duration.”¹⁸ Based on these two theories of time in place making, I am interested to know how time is a factor when so many congregants only attend the church for a short duration of time. For those that attend for a short duration of time, do they have an intense experience at the church whereby the length of time is irrelevant? For those congregants that have attended for a long duration of time, are they familiar with the church on a subconscious level that this makes the church a meaningful place? Have these long-time attendees also had intense experiences at the church, which contribute to the church being a meaningful place?

The second factor that is considered when researching how All Saints’ is a meaningful place is the role of aesthetics, which includes the architecture of a space, as well as physical elements in a space. Tuan uses the example of a cathedral to show how architecture can “reveal and instruct” the observer about the space.¹⁹ Looking at the cathedral, its centrality in the city, its height, and its weight are bold and command presence. Inside the cathedral, the architecture and the elements within such as the cross, the altar, the pulpit, and the stain-glassed windows teach Christian doctrine.²⁰ These visuals not only carry meaning for those that follow Christianity, but they also call congregants to action in the space of the cathedral, such as calling congregants to

¹⁶ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 184.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 184.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 198.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 114.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 114.

take communion, to have a reverent spirit, and to bow at the altar.²¹ This study seeks to understand if the architecture and the aesthetics of All Saints' cathedral are a factor that contributes to the church being a place of meaning as well as how do the aesthetics and which aesthetics prompt congregants to take part in religious actions that contribute to a meaningful spiritual experience for them.

Another essential point about aesthetics is that they “give knowledge of something greater beyond,” which happens because of the theology that they are representing.²² The aesthetics and the actions that follow are the medium through which worshippers engage in a secondary space, a transcendent space, and it is to this secondary space that can be the ultimate place of meaning for Christians.²³ For Ingie Hovland, her focus was on ten evangelical churches, but her findings help to provide understanding to my findings within the Anglican context. She observed that “Evangelicals learn to live with another possible space always in view, in addition to the space around them, and to steer their deepest allegiance and identity towards the other space.”²⁴ Meaning that evangelical Christians are not placeless, but their place making on earth has a temporal component. They have a way of deterritorializing, and they do this through a focus on ‘other spaces’ or utopian places.²⁵ She found that evangelicals think about this ‘other space’ in two ways: heaven, the space that is reached after life on earth, and the Kingdom of God, which is already here and also not yet.²⁶ While congregants find the church to be a place of meaning, through the mode of aesthetics (as well as through the factors of time and people), the church is a space in which there is an interaction with a transcendent space, and it is this

²¹ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 114.

²² *Ibid.*, 114-116

²³ Ingie Hovland, “Christianity, Place/Space, and Anthropology: Thinking Across Recent Research on Evangelical Place-Making,” (February 21, 2016): 331-58.

²⁴ Hovland, “Christianity, Place/Space, and Anthropology”, 331-354.

²⁵ *Ibid.*. 331-354.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 331-354.

transcendent space which can be the ultimate place of meaning. If part of the Christian experience then is to place make in the church in a temporal way, I am interested in understanding how congregants in the English Speaking Congregation place make in relation to this theory. Perhaps it is not so much about All Saints' being a place of meaning but that it is a space that facilitates an engagement with a spiritual space.

The last factor that is considered in the church being a place of meaning is the role of people. Arguing that people are a critical factor in place making, Tuan reviews the developmental stages from infancy to adulthood and shows that even from infancy, not only is a parent crucial to adding meaning to a space but the child's parent is their primary 'place' as they provide the child with food, safety, and love.²⁷ As the child grows, they become attached to not only significant persons, but they also develop attachments to objects, ideas, and localities.²⁸ He notes that regardless of a child's age, even into adulthood, human beings remain to be a high source of meaning and value. Take, for example, a couple in love, who can "dwell or rest in another's love."²⁹ Within a space, individuals not only have the ability to add meaning, particularly through the way that they care for others and the genuine human exchange that happens, but they also can take away meaning from a space. While people can be 'place,' a place can lose its meaning if the relationships are not right; the people become an irritation, not a comfort.³⁰

Those that contribute to a place being meaningful, sociologist Pierre Bourdieu argues, is in some regards predetermined by underlying factors, such as one's habitus and one's possession

²⁷ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 138.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 138-139.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 138-139.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 140.

of capital.³¹ While the habitus is a complex concept, it is like a second nature, an embodied history (such as skills, ways of acting and being, taste), dispositions, actions and thoughts that are had and done on a subconscious level, all of which start being formed in childhood.³² The habitus is learned from individuals in a social group, and it is also the habitus that reproduces to distinguish one social group from another.³³ Individuals also possess capital, which is broken down into various subcategories: cultural capital, social capital, and economic capital. He describes cultural capital as being embodied in the mind and body, such as a person's skill, including language competency, ability to play an instrument, and education, social capital is based on relationships and membership in a group, and economic capital is financial resources.³⁴ Individuals are ascribed their position in a space, in a power hierarchy, based on their individual habitus and the capital they possess when they enter a social field.³⁵ Meaning that the more capital an individual has in a space, whether it be forms of cultural, social, or economic capital, their position in the space will be more powerful. In addition, when individuals with ranging levels of capital interact in a social space, the levels of inequality will be great, impacting place making. With the congregation at All Saints' being composed of congregants from many different habitus and varying amounts of capital, how are relationships within the church and within whom are congregants building community.

³¹ Pierre Bourdieu. *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*. London: Routledge. 1984.

³² Bourdieu. *Distinction*.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Pierre, Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," trans. Richard Nice, chapter 9 in John G. Richardson (ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (Greenwood Press, Westport, CN, 1986).

³⁵ Bourdieu. *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*. London: Routledge. 1984.

Literature review

Brief History

When we look to earlier literature in the field of spatial theory and religion, one of the most influential spatial theorists was Henri Lefebvre. In 1974 he published a book that questioned the Cartesian approach of space by suggesting that “the historical mediations of space, the production and reproduction of space and spatial practices and representations of space” be the focus of spatial theory.³⁶ His book, and the theories of space within, contributed to a ‘spatial turn’ which brought a new way of thinking about space.³⁷ At this time, the scholarship was predominantly secular, and the field of space and religion was negligible.³⁸

Within the separate realm of religion, scholars had been studying sacred landscapes and physical spaces, but they did not study religion through the lens of geography or space. Then in 1971, Jonathan Smith contributed to the field of religion through the spatial lens with two important concepts; one, he took the concept of a physical, geographical map, including territory, and used it in a metaphorical sense, and two, he encouraged the idea that place is in the individual and place is socially organized; physical space follows the social space.³⁹ He stated, “Human beings are not placed, they bring place into being, and they do this, specifically in the case of sacred spaces, through ritual.” Veikko Anttonen built upon Smith’s theory by arguing that rituals make a space sacred, and for a ritual to happen, the human body, including the mind, emotions, and the boundary of the body, is required.⁴⁰ In 2001, Emily Kong encouraged scholars to go beyond the sacred spaces and study religion in secular spaces as well as investigate multi-

³⁶ Kim, Knott, “Spatial Theory and the Study of Religion,” *Religious Compass* 2/6, 2008:1102-1116

³⁷ Knott, “Spatial Theory and the Study of Religion,” 1102-1116.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 1102-1116.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 1102-1116

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 1102-1116.

scalar levels of religion at the global level to the personal, body level.⁴¹ Since this period, scholars have researched religion and space in more detailed arenas, which includes migration, where my thesis finds itself.

Rituals

Echoing Jonathan Smith's view that place is brought into being through the body participating in rituals, there is growing empirical evidence that supports this aspect of religious place making. Mary Macdonald (2003) stressed that space is transformed into place through the "religious work" of worshippers, and the way that they make worlds of meaning is by working with the physical as well as the spiritual world around them.⁴² One article that captures the centrality of rituals in place making is by Kristine Krause (2008). In the past, sacred spaces were very much associated with buildings that were deemed religious, such as churches, mosques, and temples. In London, churches were once regarded as centers of the community, with very ornate and architecturally beautiful buildings that contributed to place making. But during Krause's research in London, she observed that in many cases, West African migrants started churches in industrial areas, in some instances in secular buildings, such as warehouses. The "warehouse-style," what started out of necessity, has become popular because it provides an open, functional space in which to perform religious rituals, with the end goal of bringing about the Holy Spirit. Her study not only shows that rituals are a factor in place making, but that the lack of aesthetics that were typically associated with churches in the past, is not a hindrance to place making. Instead, the warehouse's functional aesthetics set the stage for the people to perform religious

⁴¹ Ibid., 1102-1116.

⁴² Knott, "Religion, Space, and Place: The Spatial Turn in Research on Religion." 29-43.

rituals, which brought about the Holy Spirit, transforming space into place.⁴³ The space of a ‘secular’ functional warehouse is changed into a sacred space, a place of meaning, through the religious actions that are performed.

Just as rituals can contribute to place making, we can see that the lack of being able to perform rituals can prevent place making. This was, unfortunately, the case for the Dinka congregation at All Saints’ church, the same church where I am conducting my research, as they were trying to reterritorialize through their religious rituals, but were unable.⁴⁴ For the Dinka, they had a complicated relationship with All Saints’ and a complex relationship with those who govern the space. Being that most of them were refugees, they were grateful for the safe space in which they were able to worship collectively in the Dinka language. Still, they felt frustrated as they were unable to perform rituals as they did in Sudan because church leadership would not allow it and also because the space of the church did not facilitate the rituals. Religious rituals they had practiced in Sudan required an open field in which they could dance with loud voices and without clothes. This prompted the priest to remark, “There is no space for us,” an expression meaning that they were unable to place make in the space of All Saints’.⁴⁵ From this study, conducted by Carla Daughtry 2016, we can see how the physicality of a space, the power that is governing the space, and the lack of rituals, can prohibit place making.

One ritual that can be seen as a central place making technique is that of prayer. Prayer is a ritual whereby the actor is using their body in a physical, performative, way to interact in a secondary spiritual realm. David Garbin (2014) highlights the importance of prayer for

⁴³ Kristine Krause, “Spiritual Spaces in Post-Industrial Places: Transnational Churches in North East London,” 109-30. 2008

⁴⁴ Carla Daughtry. “Conflict and Community in Church-Based Refugee Havens in Cairo: The Quest for Space to Be Dinka.” *The Arab Studies Journal*, vol. 14 no. 2 (2016): 39-59.

⁴⁵ Daughtry, “Conflict and Community in Church-Based Refugee Havens in Cairo.”

Congolese migrants in London and Atlanta. He observed that prayer was a tool by which they grounded themselves in London, a city that had put them in the margins. It has also allowed them to engage in a spiritual transnational space, as they pray for their community in Congo. Garbin describes their prayers as a spiritual energy that is not prohibited by borders. Similar to these findings, Manuel Vasquez and Kim Knott, in *Three Dimensions of Religious Place Making in Diaspora*, concluded that for Christian migrants in Johannesburg, prayer is a central place making technique as it is of a performative nature, a ritual, which engages with the physical and spiritual realm, whereby they are “rooted amidst the rootless.”⁴⁶

Transnational Religious Ties

Another significant topic within religion, migration, and place making is that of transnational religious ties. One section included in this topic is how ethnically homogenous immigrant churches in the Global North stay in connection with their country of origin, and it is through these ties that exchanges are made. One study that shows this is by Helen Rose Ebaugh (2004). She observed how congregants from six ethnically homogenous congregations located in Houston and New York exchanged religious practices with those from their community back in their home countries in Asia, Central and South America, which affected the global religious landscape. On a more individual level, transnational exchanges are made, as is shown by Elizabeth McAlister (1998/2002), as Haitians in the United States use their Catholic and voodoo practices to create a space for themselves. These practices provide an ethnic identity for them in the United States, and the practices help them to stay in connection with their community in Haiti, particularly around religious holidays and through prayer. In London, Vasquez and Knott

⁴⁶ Manuela Vasquez and Kim Knott, “Three Dimensions of Religious Place Making in Diaspora,” *Global Networks* vol.14 no.3 (2014): 335

(2014) highlight through the religious rituals, or as the authors call “habits,” of purification, prayer, visiting holy sites, and Qur’anic recitation, which are based on the life of Prophet Mohammed, Muslims “relive the experience of faith” and are connected to the universal Muslim Ummah.⁴⁷

Social Services

Within the literature on migration and religion, there is a substantial number of findings as to how religious spaces function as community and aid centers for migrants, which contributes to place making. From the sociological perspective, Stephen Warner (1993) argues that places of worship have historically and presently provided assistance to immigrants who are without formal sources of support.⁴⁸ Cecilia Menjivar (2001), by researching Latino churches in Arizona, found that churches were heavily assisting Guatemalan and Salvadorian migrants as they were not receiving aid from the United States’ government, contributing to the church being a prominent place of meaning.⁴⁹ The church assisted with material goods, housing, employment opportunities, and Christian counseling. In Cairo, Julie Picard (2013) concluded that for most Christian African migrants living in Cairo that evangelical Protestantism served as a multi-purpose resource by providing them with spiritual support, community, resources, and opportunities to find work.⁵⁰ Amira Ahmed (2010) who conducted her research at All Saints’, focused on the variety of humanitarian services the church offered to the community, particularly

⁴⁷ Vasquez and Knott, “Three Dimensions of Religious Place Making in Diaspora,” 341.

⁴⁸ Stephen Warner, “Work in Progress toward a New Paradigm for the Sociological Study of Religion in the United States,” *American Journal of Sociology*, vol 98 (1993): 1044-93.

⁴⁹ Cecilia Menjivar, “Latino Immigrants and their Perceptions of Religious Institutions: Cubans, Salvadorans and Guatemalans in Phoenix, Arizona,” *Migraciones Internacionales*, vol. 1 no. 1 (2001): 65-88.

⁵⁰ Julie Picard, “Religious Mobilities in the city: African Migrants and New Christendom in Cairo.” In *Religious Conversions in the Mediterranean World*, edited by Nadia Marzouki and Olivier Roy (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) 43-59.

Sudanese refugees.⁵¹ Within the space of the cathedral compound, a migrant could worship, receive assistance (financial, material, and medical), in addition to being trained as a domestic worker, making it a place of meaning because of all the encompassing ways it met their needs.

Ethnicity and Religion

Although it has not been explicitly stated until this section, it can be seen from the literature included above, religion and ethnicity are entangled and a part of religion and place making. Mark Mullins (1987) stresses that religion and ethnicity go together and that they are essential to our understanding because culture is often preserved in ethnic houses of worship. Peggy Levitt (2003) highlights how religion and nationality not only ‘go together,’ but they can often reinforce one another. This can be seen in the examples above, but to provide an additional example, ethnicity and religion are tightly woven at a Salvadorian evangelical congregation in DC, where Cecilia Menjivar (1999) conducted studies. The church’s religious and cultural practices in the church and their shared identity were Salvadorian. One congregant explained that when she entered the church in DC, it was like she was transported back to El Salvador, as she said, “It’s like one church in two places [DC and El Salvador].” In contrast to this, the other two churches she interviewed were not of the same ethnicity, which effected transnational ties and the collective identity of the church. At a Catholic Church of Latinos in DC, the priest tried to emphasize a pan-ethnic identity. He encouraged the congregation to get involved in local community projects, as opposed to their home countries, so as not to “divide themselves to live in two different places.”⁵² The third church was an ethnically heterogeneous evangelical church

⁵¹ Amira Ahmed. “‘I need work!’: The Multiple Roles of the Church, Ranking and Religious Piety Among Domestic Workers in Egypt.” *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, vol. 11 no. 3-4 (2010) 362-377.

⁵² Cecilia Menjivar, “Religious Institutions and Transnationalism: A Case Study of Catholic Evangelical Salvadoran Immigrants,” 589-612. 1999

that had a pan-identity of being “one in Christ,” but the church did encourage congregants, from whichever their country of origin, to preach the Word of God back to their individual countries. What can be learned from these findings is that if worshippers do not have a shared ethnicity or nationality, the social dynamics, rituals, and transnational ties of a multi-ethnic congregation will be different than ethnic congregations, which will ultimately affect place making.

While Menjivar’s article includes the dynamics within two multi-ethnic congregations, this is a very rare find. During the process of conducting research for this project, it was challenging to find literature on multi-ethnic congregations. Included within this specific field of religious place making, not through the ethnic lens, is Ebaugh and Chafetz (2000), who conducted a study in Houston, amongst Buddhist, Christian, and Muslim congregations. At a church that was composed of 48 nationalities, they found that the congregation’s attention was on their shared Christian faith rather than their cultural differences, and this was accomplished by using the English language. While there can be unity in shared faith, there is also the social dynamic by which congregants seek out those most like them. David Ley (2006), when interviewing leaders from 46 immigrant churches in Vancouver, found that congregants wanted to form relationships with congregants who had similar shared experiences and backgrounds. Similarities in language, ethnicity, place of origin, how many years the congregants have lived in Vancouver, and economic status. He recalls one interview partners saying, “Birds of a feather don’t just flock together, they bond like crazy glue together...I often see immigrant Korean ladies who flock together and have a kinship due to their similar experiences and background.”⁵³ These studies show that the composition of migrant churches has many implicating effects on

⁵³ David Ley, “The Immigrant Church as an Urban Service Hub,” *Urban Studies Journal*, vol.45 no. 10 (2006): 2057-2074.

place making such as social dynamical, transnational ties, and shared identity, that stretch beyond ethnic and cultural preservation.

Contribution

My hope is that this thesis can contribute to the current literature in two specific ways. The first stems out of location. While the majority of migration takes place between countries in the Global South, migration research is mostly conducted in the Global North. Migrants in the Global North that are reflected in current studies, generally speaking, settle. Take, for example, Ley (2006) and the many generations that grow out of the churches in his study in Vancouver or Mullins (1987) through his study of what he calls the “life cycle of ethnic churches,” which consists of multigenerational families in churches throughout Canada. While research conducted in Global North countries is highly valuable to understanding place making, much of this research lacks the mobility, the movement, and the transient nature of migrants that is found within the All Saints’ community, and perhaps within other places of worship in the Global South, where many migrants are not settled but temporarily making place. My thesis is focused on a religious space in the Global South, in which many of its congregants temporarily interact in the space. This thesis is important because it gives us a different and/or fuller picture of how religious spaces contribute to place making in the Global South, with congregants that are more mobile and transient.

The second way that I hope my thesis can contribute stems out of All Saints’ being a non-ethnic pathway of study, according to Nina Glick-Shiller (2006). Much of the current research is conducted through the nation-state lens, even though there is substantial research that supports the claim that relations are not bound within nation-state borders. By this thesis focusing on a

non-ethnic pathway of study, it does not encourage methodological nationalism, and it supports the concept that social relations are transnational and are not contained within nation-state borders. Additionally, studying a non-ethnic pathway is important as to not “obscure the diversity of migrants’ relationships to their place of settlement.”⁵⁴ I would also argue, based on the literature shared above, that studying migration through the ethnic lens leads to religious spaces providing, supporting, and fostering transnational links, it reinforces ethnicity and nationality, and it highlights the reterritorialization of national practices. By this thesis studying migration and religion through the non-ethnic lens, there is a better understanding of space as well as migrants’ relationship to locale and settlement, aside from the nation-state lens and these three effects aforementioned. Furthermore, this thesis provides understanding to the congregant’s relationship to place outside of the common bonds of ethnicity and nationality as All Saints’ English Speaking congregation is not composed of one ethnic group or nationality. This is also important as it further supports studying migration through a non-ethnic pathway providing us with a deeper understanding of migrants’ relationship to locale and settlement.

Method

Selecting this research group

Aside from my personal interest in better understanding how All Saints’ is a place of meaning in the lives of its congregants, an additional reason that this congregation was chosen as a focus of study is that not only is All Saints’ English Speaking Congregation a transnational community which Alejandro Portes (1997), Peggy Levitt and Nina Glick Schiller (2004) encourage scholars in the field of migration to research, but it is a transnational community that

⁵⁴ Nina Glick Schiller, et al. “Beyond the Ethnic Lens: Locality, Globality, and Born-Again Incorporation.” *American Ethnologist*, vol. 33, no. 4 (2006): 612–633.

is not based on ethnicity.⁵⁵ Nina Glick Schiller, in her article, *Beyond the Ethnic Lens*, encourages researchers to seek out non-ethnic pathways as it can aid in better understanding and/or a different perspective on the migrant's relationship to place of settlement and localities.⁵⁶ There will also be less contribution to methodological nationalism, which is important as methodical nationalism approaches research from the perspective that social networks are contained within a nation-state border and that the society within is homogenous, with a shared history, values, and customs and migrants, those outside of the nation-state, are different.⁵⁷ Stepping away from this research approach is applicable in the sense that All Saints' English Speaking Congregation is an example of a transnational community, not a nation-state community.

Questions to be answered

To understand the function of All Saints' Church in the lives of those that attend the English Speaking Congregation, this thesis aims to answer: How is the church a place of meaning for congregants that attend the English Speaking Congregation? What is the role of time in the church being a place of meaning for a congregant? Is the length of time or the intensity of experience more pertinent for the church to be a place of meaning for a congregant? What is the role of aesthetics in the church being a place of meaning for a congregant? How do aesthetics and the actions that follow point congregants to a transcendent space, outside of the cathedral?

⁵⁵ Alejandro Portes, "Immigration Theory for a New Century: Some Problems and Opportunities." *International Migration Review*, Vol. 31, No 4 (1997): 799-825 and Peggy Levitt and Nina Glick-Schiller, "Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society." *International Migration Review*, 38 (2004): 1002-1039.

⁵⁶ Glick Schiller, et al. "Beyond the Ethnic Lens: Locality, Globality, and Born-Again Incorporation." *American Ethnologist*, vol. 33, no. 4 (2006): 612-633.

⁵⁷ Glick Schiller, "Beyond the Ethnic Lens." 612-633.

What is the role of people in the church being a place of meaning for a congregant? How do people in the congregation add or take away from the church being a meaningful place?

This thesis is situated within current discussions surrounding migration, placemaking, and religion, and it aims to contribute to literature on religious spaces, placemaking, and multi-ethnic congregations.

Limitations and ethical issues

Being that I conducted research within the community I worship, there were advantages as well as limitations. One advantage is that by having previously formed relationships it gave me direct access to potential interview partners. I also felt that congregants were more willing to share their story as they knew me on a personal level and trusted me, which perhaps would have been less likely for someone outside of the community. On a logistical level, time and effort were not spent on finding interview partners, getting to know them, and establishing basic trust.

But just as having prior relationships with interview partners provided advantages, I think it also was limiting. It possibly made interview partners not feel the freedom to share their genuine feelings about their experience at the church, for fear that their words would come back to haunt them, as I also attend the church. They also could have felt pressured, because of our relationship, to portray a positive image of the church by only contributing to the discussion in positive ways. I felt this to be particularly true when trying to understand social dynamics and the role of people in place making in the church.

Also, throughout the entire process of data collection and writing this thesis, I felt a heightened awareness of the fact that I approach this project with biases, being that I am a human, but more so that I am an attendee of the church and a Christian. I actively struggled to try

and approach the data and analysis with as much objectivity as possible, but found this to be a challenge, and fear that the analysis of my findings has not lived up to their true potential.

Consent

As I am a regular attender at All Saints, receiving verbal and written consent from my interview partners before starting the interviews was of high importance. Before I submitted my thesis proposal, I sought and received permission from the priest of the English Speaking Congregation at All Saints' to conduct research at the church through methods of observation and by interviewing some of the congregants. Before I began each interview, I explained to the interview partner the consent form, including their rights. Some interview partners, especially ones that had conducted research on their own in an academic setting, were very familiar with consent forms and signed with little explanation. The form did not seem to alter our interview as we talked at a level of familiarity as we typically would in church. For some of those that were less familiar with consent forms, it seemed that the form brought a level of formality to our interview and less like two friends having a conversation.

While I agree with the procedure of consent, I felt it limited me from using my experiences and observations in the church that I had acquired prior to receiving IRB approval and written consent from my interview partners. I was so intently aware of the need to have consent, that the findings in this thesis are only those that were observed after IRB approval and were discovered during my interviews.

While no one was, to my knowledge, physically or emotionally harmed because they participated in this research study, I was constantly aware of the potential for there to be ethical issues, particularly surrounding consent. For some of my interview partners, because of my

previously established relationship with them, I knew details about their life that they did not share during our interviews. For respect for them, as well as the principle of consent, I purposefully left out those details.

Methods Used

The data received for this project was based on two methods of research, participant observation, and in-depth interviews. By using participant observation, it allowed me as a researcher to observe my interview partners in their natural setting of the church as well as participate with them in routine activities at the church.⁵⁸ In addition, it permitted me to use my five senses, which included observing the actions of congregants and listening to the sounds of rituals, the people, the environment.⁵⁹ The method of observation also proved particularly helpful for understanding social interactions and dynamics. This method provided a way for me to “check for nonverbal expression of feelings, determine who interacts with whom, grasp how participants communicate with each other and check for how much time is spent on various activities.”⁶⁰

Participant observation took place in many areas within the space of the cathedral grounds. Inside the cathedral, I paid particular attention to the physical space and religious symbols. During the services, I took note of religious practices, especially practices that combine the spiritual and physical and practices that are shared by Anglicans worldwide. Before, during, and after the worship services, I observed the interaction of congregants; what do they do, who

⁵⁸ Kawulich, B. B. (n.d.). “Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method.” *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 6(2), 43rd ser. Retrieved May, 2005.

⁵⁹ Kawulich, “Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method.”

⁶⁰ Richard Schmuck, “*Practical action research for change*.” Arlington Heights, IL: IRI/Skylight Training and Publishing. 1997.

do they talk with, with whom who do they sit? Observations were particularly interesting after the services as congregants sit on the veranda, talk, and drink tea together.

I also observed the cathedral space, outside of service days and times. Although this thesis is predominately focused on the congregants of the English Speaking Congregation, the cathedral space was continually being used in a plethora of ways by various people. The space was rich with observations and data as refugees, migrants, and Egyptians filtered in and out of the space as they worked or used services within the compound. The most interesting observations that were found through this method was who and how the space was used throughout the week by congregants. For some of my interview partners, they work at the diocese, others volunteer at the diocese library, one works at the café and guesthouse, and some only come to the cathedral for services. These interactions that they have at the cathedral also affect how the church is a place of meaning for them.

The second method that I used in the collecting of research for this thesis was in-depth interviews. This method was chosen so that I, as the researcher, could see the world through the interview partner's point of view as it relates to the church being a place of meaning.⁶¹ As opposed to using a structured method, in-depth interviews allowed me to collect many perspectives and stories related to the church, even if findings from one interview partner to another were conflicting.⁶² It also gave me the opportunity to hear about an interview partner's personal feelings, opinions, and experiences.⁶³ As I wanted to understand each interview partner's unique story, this method provided a way for me to conduct interviews one on one, face to face, as opposed to a group. When conducting the interview, I asked open-ended, neutral,

⁶¹ Amit Marvasti, "Qualitative Research in Sociology." London: Sage Publications. P. 14-33. 2004.

⁶² Marvasti, "Qualitative Research in Sociology." 14-33.

⁶³ Natasha Mack and Cythia Woodson, "Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide." *Family Health International*, 28-50. 2005.

questions to each interview partner, then I listened attentively, and followed up with questions that were based on their responses.⁶⁴

Participants

For the in-depth interviews, all of the participants were from the English Speaking Congregation, as that is the main focus group of this project. My strategy in collecting interviews was to make sure I had a good sample of the diversity in the church. This included gender, age, nationality, economic status, and family status (single, married, children). I individually contacted congregants and shared that I was researching for my thesis and that I wanted their perspective. Those I interviewed were not the only ones I asked to be interviewed, but they are the ones who were interested and/or whose schedule permitted. No incentives were given for their participation. In total, I interviewed fifteen people.

Procedure

Each interview started with an explanation of the consent form, followed by open-ended questions. The questions related to their life in Cairo, such as why they came to Cairo, what are they doing in Cairo, and do they foresee themselves leaving Cairo? If so, when? Questions also surrounded their history at All Saints', how they came to attend, their history with attending Anglican churches, as well as their current experience at the church, which was the main focus. Questions such as why they come to this church, what do they receive from coming to this church, what do they do, what is their community like at the church? The goal of these open-ended questions was that congregants would address and answer, on a large scale, how is All

⁶⁴ Mack and Woodsong, "Qualitative Research Methods."

Saints' a place of meaning for them personally, but more specifically, their responses would answer the role of time, aesthetics, rituals, and people in place making. Each interview partner was interviewed once in person. Then I conducted follow up interviews over the phone, through text messages, and through emails. During the interview, I took general notes and then directly after I recorded all details I could recall from the interview. I also labeled the interview with specific take away points that were later part of the data coding.

Reflections in the field

Upon reflection, the process of constructing this thesis was an enriching and challenging experience. On a personal level, I am appreciative that this thesis brought clarity to many of the dynamics I had observed within the space of the church within the last two years. I enjoyed that this thesis has given me the opportunity to sit and listen to the stories of interview partners. During each interview, I learned more about their lives and their situations in Cairo, how one congregant can find meaning in the church in a completely different way to another congregant, and yet how there can also be many commonalities between them.

On an academic level, learning how to research well, how to collect data, how to analyze the data, and how to communicate the findings, in written form, in a way that is coherent, thorough, and interesting, was very much a challenge. Still, I am thankful for this opportunity as it has allowed me to grow in these areas. Before this thesis, I had minimal knowledge related to religion, migration, and place making. Reflecting on the literature, Tuan's theory on time's factor in place making is my favorite concept that I have learned through this process, as both the length of time and the intensity of an experience can contribute to place making. It has given an explanation to experiences in my own life, as well as in the lives of family members and friends.

Chapter 2: Time

According to geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, meaning, as relates to place, is determined by whether or not something is a center of felt value and an accumulation of memories and sentiment.⁶⁵ As Tuan states directly, “What begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value.”⁶⁶ How each person assigns value to a space is independently determined, and various factors contribute to a space being a place of meaning. One of the factors of place making is the role of time in a person’s ability to place make.⁶⁷ Tuan presents the notion that a space must be known by an individual for the space to be meaningful to that individual, which leads him to present the question, “how long does it take to know a place?”⁶⁸ This is an important and applicable question to consider for this thesis, as many congregants in the English Speaking Congregation only attend for a short duration of time because they live in Egypt only for a brief time. During the last two years that I researched and wrote this thesis, six of my fifteen interview partners left Egypt due to job changes, completion of an education program, financial difficulties, and/or visa problems, showing that the question of time in place making is highly relevant.

Tuan presents two possible answers to his question of, “How long does it take to know a place?” which serve as the theoretical framework around which this chapter is structured. The first possible answer is that for an individual to know a place, it requires time.⁶⁹ He argues that sentimentality and familiarity do not happen in passing, but rather it is a repeated pattern of action via routine experiences through the use of the senses that contribute to knowing a place. A

⁶⁵ Yi-fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1977). 33.

⁶⁶ Tuan, *Space and Place*. 6.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 183.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

space and the objects within have the ability to possess deep meaning for an individual through “the steady accretion of sentiment over the years.”⁷⁰ To better explain this concept, he gives the example of a man who has, as he calls it, ‘predictable and routine patterns of movement.’ The place the man works, the home he lives in, even the material objects he uses in the house, such as his armchair, generally remain the same year after year. His routine use of these locales and objects leads to a level of familiarity such that the man can perform his actions automatically, almost without conscious thought, further contributing to the meaning of the place.

In contrast to the man with ‘predictable and routine patterns of movement,’ Tuan gives the example of a man who has ‘complex and irregular patterns of movement.’ He is a man that changes jobs often, leading him to move to different locations, leading him to change homes, which affects the material objects he owns and uses. His locales and the material objects within them, are many and diverse and often changing. Tuan concludes that for this type of mobile individual, his experience and his appreciation of place is superficial. While he can “know” about the place in a short amount of time, he does not have a “feel” for the place, which can only be acquired in time.⁷¹ While both of Tuan’s examples are rather extreme cases, as in reality, individuals can be anywhere on the spectrum between having regular and irregular patterns of movement, he uses these examples to support his claim that the more mobile an individual, the more difficult it will be for that space to be meaningful.

Tuan’s second answer to the question, “How long does it take to know a place?” is that an individual can know a place via a brief, intense experience.⁷² This argument is also supported by philosopher James K Feibleman.⁷³ Together, these theorists argue that “the importance of

⁷⁰ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 33.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 183.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 184.

⁷³ James K, Feibleman, *Philosophers Lead Sheltered Lives*, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1952) 55.

events in any life is more directly proportionate to their intensity than to their extensity.”⁷⁴

Continuing with Tuan’s example of the immobile man versus the mobile man, he provides a third example to explain this argument. He shares a story of a man who travels to the desert for the first time in his life. The desert is vast and barren, and unlike anything he has seen before. The beauty of the natural landscape captivates him. In the brief time he is there, it is this unexplainable experience of the beauty of the desert, that contributes to the desert being a meaningful place for him.

If it is possible for a brief intense experience to contribute to a place being meaningful, then he suggests that the opposite is also true, one can spend many years in a place, and it still be unmeaningful. Tuan provides an example of a man who spent many years living in the same town and working in a monotonous job, who had very few, if any meaningful or significant experiences. He has very few memories of this place, even though he spent many years living and working there, because his experiences were insignificant.

What these theoretical concepts show is that the factor of time in place making is flexible and that it is just one element that contributes to a congregant finding meaning in the space of the church. No amount of time will guarantee whether or not the church space will be meaningful to a congregant because place making is also dependent on the experiences that happen in the time that they are in that space.

The Church as an Equipping Center

Before serving as priest of the English Speaking Congregation, the current priest and his wife, an older couple from South Carolina, had experience leading international congregations in

⁷⁴ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 184.

various countries around the world. What was different about All Saints' English Speaking Congregation, which they first discovered during their interview process, was that, in the words of the priest, his role would be "to give pastoral care to a moving people." This description of the congregation as being a "moving people" he would soon discover would be a central characteristic of the All Saints' English Speaking Congregation. Now having pastored the congregation for almost four years, the fact that many congregants are involved in the church community for only a short duration of time, it has impacted the way he pastors the congregation, including his vision for the church. He explained,

"I think knowing that quite a few [congregants] would be around for only one or two years gave me a sense of urgency to welcome new congregants into the community, to be intentional in building relationships with them, and to equip them with spiritual tools. It also shaped my vision for the church, which is that All Saints' would be an equipping center for the congregants to grow in knowledge, faith, and skills that they could carry with them to the next place they go."

Based on his statement, it is the congregants' lack of time in the church, which impacts his role as priest. Their short duration of time in the space effects the way he does ministry and his vision for the church. It is as if time is not on his side. He is racing or competing against time, which is seen from the descriptions he uses: *urgency* to include newcomers into the congregation, *intentionality* in building relationships, and *equipping* them with spiritual tools before they leave. His goal is that regardless of the amount of time in the church that their time would be meaningful.

Based on Tuan's theory of time, it is because many of the congregants are in the church for a short duration of time, that the priest is trying to foster "intense experiences." It is more about the quality and intensity than the length of time, more about the brief, meaningful, important happenings in the life of a congregant than a "steady accretion of sentiment."

Meaningfulness of the church, from the priest's perspective, is derived through three primary avenues, which he based on the teachings of Apostle Paul: One, through the weekly Bible based sermons; this includes equipping the congregants with study tools so they can read the Bible with understanding. Two, through the spiritual mentorship they receive from the priest and the wider church community. Three, through the weekly Bible studies, that offer teachings with practical life applications. Yet, he not only views the church as an equipping center but also as a locale in the migrants' transnational journey, based on the second part of his vision. He, as the priest, finds value in his job when congregants are equipped with knowledge, faith, and skills in the church, and they take them to the next place they go.

From the findings below, four congregants share their experience in the church and the role that time has played in their ability to find meaning in All Saints'. They also share how All Saints' has or has not been an equipping center, which has contributed to it being a place of meaning.

Eight months as a congregant at All Saints'

Through the help of a Nairobi based employment agency, a young lady from Kenya to Cairo in 2017, with a plan to work for two years, save money, and then move to Dubai to have a better life. When she first arrived to Cairo, workers from this agency took her passport, explaining that they would process a work visa on her behalf. This seemed logical at the time, until they told her that she had no other option but to work as a domestic worker, which was never part of the plan when she was making arrangements in Nairobi. When she tried to take back her passport, as well as other personal items they had taken, in order to leave the agency, she received many abusive threats from her employment agent. Scared that the situation would

get worse, she approached the Kenyan embassy for help, but they told her that she needed to get her passport back on her own. Their lack of support was highly distressing to her as she was a newcomer in Egypt, a foreigner with very few connections, and she felt her country's embassy turned a blind eye to her situation. Thankfully, after a couple of months, she was able to leave the agency with the help of a Kenyan Catholic priest in Cairo. He was familiar with this employment agency, and through his connections and position of leadership, he was able to influence them to let her leave.

While it was not through All Saints' that she received help to break away from the agency, she recalled the significant impact that All Saints' had on her short time in Cairo. During her time at the agency, she shared that All Saints' served as a place of refuge, a place where she received emotional and spiritual support, which brought her relief amid intense difficulty. It was at All Saints' where she was a committed attendee and volunteer, the place where she found her community. For her, she defined community by this idea that she is not alone; the church provides comradery and care, which was particularly meaningful as she came to Cairo alone, knowing no one in the country. Community is also defined by this shared experience of being a migrant, which makes her feel understood and gives her a place in the group. She felt supported by the community at the church as they were a source of encouragement, and they helped her in practical ways, such as providing her with financial support and helping her find a new job as a retailer in an art shop. In particular, she was grateful for the priest, who was kind and approachable, and from whom she received spiritual guidance and counseling.

She also heard religious teachings through the women's Bible study on Monday mornings and through the weekly sermons on Fridays, which brought understanding and comfort during her trying situation. She shared,

“It was through the teaching at All Saints’ that I was able to hear God in the middle of my mess. The teachings and sermons reminded me that there is hope for my situation and that God is a god of second chances, which has helped me not to give up.”

What is particularly interesting about what she shares above is that Julie Picard encountered very similar statements when she conducted her study of transit African migrants in Cairo.⁷⁵ She concluded that for migrants, religious beliefs increased and became stronger in exile because “religion offers hope for people in difficult and precarious situations.”⁷⁶ One thing we can conclude is that for this congregant, part of All Saints’ meaningfulness as a space is in relation to the “difficult and precarious situation,” which she faced with the employment agency. The church rose to meet her at the level of the “intensity of her experience” with the employment agency through their support, assistance, and through the religious teachings, which contributed to the church being a meaningful place for her, even though she only attended the church for eight months. Yet while All Saints’ was a place of support, life in Cairo had proved to be challenging and unlike what she had imagined. It no longer seemed like a wise plan to work in Cairo to save up for Dubai, which prompted her to return home to Kenya.

After being in Kenya for over a year, I did a follow-up interview with this congregant to see if her time at All Saints’ continued to impact her. While she was only in the church for eight months, I was surprised to discover that All Saints’ was not just a forgotten memory, but instead, she continued to recall the biblical teachings she had learned at the church. She spoke of them being ‘life changing’ as they continued to impact her later, a year after her time in the church. Not only did the teachings give her hope during her problematic time in Cairo, but she also explained a more significant overarching theological shift that occurred. She explained that

⁷⁵ Julie Picard, *Religious Mobilities in the City: African Migrants and New Christendom in Cairo*, (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

⁷⁶ Picard, *Religious Mobilities in the City*, 46-47.

before attending All Saints', her theology was based on the belief that she needed to perform religious acts to receive God's love. It was through All Saints' that she learned that God's love is freely given to her, regardless of her actions. This shift was personally powerful for her as it has allowed her to accept God's love, and it has enabled her to be more forgiving towards others, particularly her family members, now that she is back home and caring for her mother.

When we reflect on Tuan's two arguments on time and placemaking, length of time can be set aside. She did not share any elements of familiarity that came about because of repeated pattern of actions or her routines in the space that contributed to a steady accretion of sentiment, and additionally, she was only in the space for eight months.⁷⁷ While she did not refer to one particular moment that would fit into Tuan's category of an "intense experience," the church ministered to her and met her needs when she was living through an intensely bad experience with her work. Also, the shortness of time she spent at the church does not seem to affect her spiritual growth, the forming of community, and her acquiring of theological knowledge, which are all aspects that contributed to All Saints' being a place of meaning. Tuan's argument for knowing a space via an intense experience seems to be a more applicable explanation to this congregant's experience. Tuan even states that significant events in life are most often linked to intensity, not the duration of time, which can be seen in her expression of the biblical teachings she received being "life changing." Or as Tuan would state, is it this "quality of experience" at the church which makes the church a valuable place.

Even though Tuan argues that mobile individuals experience and appreciation of place is superficial, as they do not have a "feel" for the place, which can only be acquired in time, I would argue that it is the intensity of her experiences that has allowed her to have a feel for the

⁷⁷ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 33.

church, not just superficial knowledge about the church. She has interacted with the church through various avenues that were crucial to her personal quality of life in Cairo as a migrant (community, biblical education, finances, counseling, receiving a job). These avenues through which she has derived meaning from the church are encased by this overarching vision for the church, which is that the church would be an equipping center; that the congregants would take with them skills, knowledge, and faith to the next place they go. The impact of the teachings, and the meaningfulness of the church, is further confirmed by the fact that a year after having left All Saints', she continues to be affected by the teachings she was equipped with in the eight months she attended. She has taken the religious knowledge gained at All Saints' to the next place she went. In this way, we can also see how by her not physically occupying the space of the church, it is through the accumulation of memories and sentiment that All Saints' continues to remain a meaningful place, even though she no longer attends.

Three and half years as a congregant at All Saints'

Another congregant is a middle-aged American woman who moved to Egypt in Fall 2015 to work as a counselor at an international school in Cairo. For the four years that she lived in Cairo, she attended All Saints' for three and a half years, almost her entire stay in the country. Reflecting on her time at the church, she shared that it was a place where she experienced "tremendous growth" as a Christian, which contributed to it being a special place.

Similar to that of the Kenyan congregant, the church functioned as an equipping center where she was taught religious teachings that contributed to her growth as a Christian. Through attending the sermons on Friday, she was equipped with religious teachings that she expressed were biblically based, encouraging, and applicable as she could apply them to her day to day life

as a counselor in Egypt. During the Bible study on Monday nights, the material covered was rich in theology, as she learned the basic tenets of Christianity and Christian history. She felt that the group members added a unique element to her growth as they often provided different perspectives on topics covered, sometimes because they did not grow up in the Christian religion, they were not from her culture, or they practiced Christian traditions differently. Even though the commute to church on Monday nights would take an hour and a half to attend, she rarely missed the Bible study because of the benefits she felt she received.

She also shared how some of her Christian growth was accelerated by her situation in Cairo. Although she had a stable job that she enjoyed, an adequate income, and a safe place to live, she spoke of how being a foreigner in Egypt strengthened her faith as a Christian. With the comforts and familiarities of the United States removed, this created an atmosphere for her to turn to her Christian faith for solace and guidance. She also had more time to spend in the church in Cairo than she would have in the United States, as she was free from family responsibilities, and she was less distracted by extracurricular activities she enjoyed as they were unavailable in Cairo. As supported by Picard's findings that difficult and precarious situations strengthen a migrant's faith while in exile, it was the combined challenges of being a foreigner in Egypt and the religious services that the church provided, which contributed to the church being a place where she experienced "tremendous growth."

In addition to the religious teachings that she attended weekly, she had an "intense experience" at All Saints', what she calls her "most impactful moment at the church," which contributed to the church being a place of meaning. In April 2017, two churches in Tanta and Alexandria were bombed during Palm Sunday, the Sunday that precedes Easter Sunday.⁷⁸ This

⁷⁸ "Egypt's Coptic Churches Hit by Deadly Blasts on Palm Sunday." BBC News. April 9, 2017. Accessed December 19, 2019. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39544451>.

horrifying news circulated back to Houston, Texas, where many of the congregant's family lived. Knowing that she attended church in Egypt, they were scared for her safety, and they strongly advised her not to attend All Saints' on Easter Sunday. My interview partner was conflicted at this time, as she felt the decision to go or not to go was a test, a choice between her fear and her faith. After considering the variables of the situation, her final decision was determined by whether or not All Saints' would remain open for Easter Sunday service. And that is what transpired, All Saints' remained open for Easter Sunday, encouraging her to choose faith over fear.

When she arrived at the main street in front of All Saints' on Easter Sunday, she was taken aback to see the road heavily securitized with metal barricades, checkpoints, police cars, a military tank, and military officers. Because of this security apparatus, cars were not allowed to pass on the road in front of the church, giving her no other option but to exit the vehicle on the main street and walk through the securitized barricade. As she sat in the car, it was a deciding moment. She was already going against the wish of her family members by attending the church, but now, because of the securitized barrier in front of the church, she felt her security was jeopardized even more. By exiting the car and navigating her way through the block long checkpoints, she felt it would be a clear sign to those in the streets that she is Christian, a potential target on Easter Sunday.

Amidst her fears, she made the decision to get out of the car, pass through the checkpoints, and walk to the church. Although she did not know it at the time, this decision would be "the most impactful moment" for her in the three and a half years she attended the church. Reflecting on this moment, she equates that action of walking to the church as her public

testimony of baptism, which is immensely significant for a Christian. The decision was significant as she interpreted her action as choosing her faith over her fear, which further solidified her faith as a Christian. In addition, the action of walking through the securitized checkpoint gave her a sense of solidarity and pride that she was part of a church community that was committed to gathering believers in worship even if their safety was threatened. It was a significant moment that solidified her faith and, in her words, “changed her life.” Three years later, she still recalls this significant experience when sharing the reason for her Christian faith with others.

It can be concluded that All Saints’ was a place of meaning primarily because of her intense experience, which took place on Easter Sunday, as it was on this day where her Christian faith was tested and solidified. When we reflect on Tuan’s description of an intense meaningful experience, all that is required is a “brief” event, which is of quality for a place to be meaningful. This can be seen in the congregant’s description of her Easter Sunday decision which was “the most impactful moment” in the three and a half years she added. Reflecting even on the time that was required for her to make the decision in the car, to get out of the car, and walk to the church, was minutes, and these minutes are what she is still talking about three years after the fact. She also says that this decision “changed her life,” meaning that it was a significant event in her life, a key indicator that she had an “intense experience.” Interestingly so, this phrase, “changed my life,” is nearly the same description that the Kenyan congregant used, as she said that the biblical teaching she received were “life changing.” Specifically, because of the occurrence on Easter Sunday, All Saints’ as a place will not be a forgotten memory because of the significance that it holds.

An additional point that these findings show is that it is not length *or* intensity of experience, but it can be both. I would challenge Tuan's binary categories based on the findings of this interview partner as meaning related to time is much more complicated and layered. We can see this in that the intensity of her experience primarily contributed to the church being a place of meaning, but her length of time in the church also added to the church being a place of meaning. Similar to the Kenyan congregant, the church functioned as an equipping center, where she was provided with religious knowledge that she could apply to her daily life in Egypt and that overall contributed to her "tremendous growth as a Christian." This congregant developed a "familiarity" with the place and she performed "repeated patterns of action," which according to Tuan contributes to a place being meaningful through attending both the weekly sermons and the weekly Bible studies for three and a half years.⁷⁹ It was also her interactions with church congregants, particularly ones in the Bible study, that added a layer of richness to her growth, which contributed to "the steady accretion of sentiment" in the space.⁸⁰ Even the lengthy routine of commuting on Monday nights to the study, because of after work traffic, not only shows that the Bible study was a priority but that the length of time it took for her to arrive and return home on Mondays is included in her length of time invested in the church.

While Tuan concludes that both intensity and length of time produce meaning, based on these findings, it would seem that it is different types of meaning. We can see this through her description of the Easter Sunday decision, which was this "most impactful moment" that changed her life, versus, the repeated pattern of attending the religious teachings and sermons, interwoven with her interactions with the congregation, which contributed to familiarity and

⁷⁹ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 183-184.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 183.

ultimately her tremendous growth as a Christian. Both intensity and length arrive at meaning, but it is slightly different types of meaning.

The experiences of these two interview partners, the Kenyan woman who was a congregant in the church for eight months and the American woman who was a congregant in the church for over three years, help bring clarity to the function of time in place making. In both cases, we can see how their short duration of time in the church did not prohibit the church from being a meaningful place. In both cases, we can also see how the church was an equipping center. The priest can be encouraged, and also consider his job successful in that these two short term attendees felt welcomed into the congregation, and they were equipped with spiritual tools (knowledge, faith, and skills) that they have carried with them to the next place they went. They also share this commonality by which they described an element of the church being “life changing.” And lastly, we can see a commonality in that difficult situations contributed to the increase in their faith.

Yet overall, for both congregants, their time in the church is rather minimal. They are the congregants that are temporally in the space and the ones that are personally contributing to the movement in the space. There are also congregants within the church who have been a part of the community for longer periods of time. Although they are in the minority, they are the constant attendees, and some of them carry on the ministry of the church while other migrants come and go. I was particularly interested in interviewing some of these long-term attendees to see how Tuan’s factor of length of time played out in their lives. Do they focus on the steady accretion of sentiment over the years that has led to the church being a place of meaning or do they also focus on brief intense experiences they have had in the church, which contribute to place making?

Twelve years as a congregant, twenty years at All Saints'

The current lay Eucharist of the English Speaking Congregation has been involved in the diocese in different capacities since early 2000. As an Ethiopian refugee, he first came to know All Saints' through their ministry to refugees, Refuge Egypt. Although many Ethiopian and Eritrean refugees interacted in the space of the diocese compound, there was no worship service offered for Amharic speakers at this time. With his background in Bible training, and with his passion for evangelization, preaching, and prayer, and with the presence of many Amharic speakers within the space of the church, my interview partner started an Amharic speaking Bible study, which eventually grew to over a hundred people. In addition to worshipping together weekly, they worked together, outside of the church, to serve the wider Amharic speaking community in Cairo.

In 2008, this growth prompted the Bishop of the Anglican diocese to hire an Amharic speaking Anglican priest to be the leader of the Amharic group, making the group an official Anglican congregation. This pained my interview partner, as he was the individual who started and was leading the Amharic speaking congregation, and yet he was not chosen to be the priest over the congregation. A more qualified individual, an ordained priest, was chosen to lead the group. After the new Amharic leader was appointed as priest, the congregation dissolved over time, which my interview partner attributed to the congregants not agreeing with the leadership style of the new priest, but also because the priest was resettled to the United States, and the Bishop was unable to find a replacement to serve as priest. The dissolving of the congregation grieved my interview partner as he experienced all his life's work, in those past eight years, just dissolve. He also felt lost and unsure of next steps. He considered going to the United States to live with his sister and brother, so he applied for family reunification, but in his words, "I never

heard back.” While waiting in Cairo, trying to figure out next steps, he continued to attend All Saints’ as “God renewed his heart.” He felt encouraged to continue attending and serving at All Saints’, even though there was no more Amharic congregation, as he expressed that he was happy and content to work with all people, “as God is the god of the whole world, not just Ethiopia.”

The ways that my interview partner finds the church to be meaningful has changed within the past two decades he has attended. He even described his time in the church in two distinct periods. From 2000 to 2008, he refers to this period as the “serving period of his life,” when he was leading the Amharic congregation. Serving this congregation gave him a purpose in Egypt, and he felt this was why God had him to live in Egypt. During this period, he found significant meaning in serving the Amharic congregation. He described this time of serving as being highly fulfilling and highly time consuming. He described it as being “his life” as he was helping the people, what felt like, twenty-four hours a day.

In 2008, the church became a place of struggle, distress, and disappointment as the congregation that he started and invested in was placed under the leadership of another individual. From 2008 until now, he refers to as the “training period of his life.” The church is the “training ground” where God is the teacher, teaching him humility through difficult circumstances. This humility is grown through his role in the church, as now he has significantly fewer responsibilities, he is no longer the leader of a congregation, but he volunteers as a lay Eucharist, in an administrative and ministerial support role to other priests at the diocese. Outside of the services, the majority of his free time is spent in prayer and reading the Bible. He is often at the church and available to pray with people, and sometimes he preaches in the Sudanese Arabic and Egyptian Arabic congregation.

When we reflect on the factor of time, Tuan's two binary categories of length or intensity do not work for my findings because it is both length and intensity. The length of time has created the opportunity, the space, for the lay Eucharist to have intense experiences in the church, which has affected how he has found meaning in the space. The length of time has brought about meaning as this congregant has spent an extensive amount of time, two decades, in some relationship to All Saints'. This time has allowed him to "develop a steady accretion of sentiment," "develop repeated patterns of action," and length of time has allowed him to not just "know about" All Saints' but to have "a feel for the place," according to Tuan.⁸¹ The intensity of experiences has also brought about meaning as this congregant has experienced brief intense moments in his life, such as starting and growing the Amharic community, to watching it dissolve, to not being resettled to the United States. Lastly, while both length of time and intensity of experience produce meaning, it is different types of meaning. Familiarity by attending, worshipping, and serving in the church for twenty years is another kind of meaning when compared to the intense experience of losing the congregation or the disappointment of not being resettled. Also showing that meaning includes problematic and negative experiences that contribute to the meaning of a space, not just positive experiences.

For the Kenyan congregant and the American congregant, because they were involved in the church for shorter periods of time, their experiences in the church (yet "life changing," intense, and memorable) were minimal. To what extent do short term congregants like the Kenyan and American congregant really know and have a feel for the church when their experiences in the space were limited by time? The lay Eucharist, who has attended the English speaking congregation for twelve years, passionately answered this question by emphasizing that

⁸¹ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 183.

they have a superficial knowledge of the church. This concept of superficially knowing a place echoes Tuan's first theory on time; individuals who stay in a place for a short duration of time have a superficial relationship with place. They are unable to have a "feel" for a place because it only happens with time; they just "know about" the place.⁸² He explained that during the twelve years that he has served as the lay Eucharist for the English speaking congregation, he has volunteered and worshipped alongside three different priests. He observed that by a new priest leading the congregation every few years, the priest begins this work on a huge learning curve. Each new priest starts from the beginning, as they learn about their role in the church, the role of the church in the community, about the congregants' lives, and how he can serve them, and overall, he must learn how to live in Egypt, including language learning. All of this learning takes time. When the priest has started to really understand and contribute to the congregation and the church at large, he leaves. In some ways, this personally affects the lay Eucharist, because the new priests turn to him as a source of help and knowledge. Yet his more significant concerns, of which he focused on during our interview, are that there is an overall lack of unity in the congregation, and there is a disconnectedness in the community of the church because most of the congregants and the priests are temporarily in the space. Their temporary time in the space translates into a lack of congregants serving together, a lack of praying together, and a lack of deep and meaningful community. This particularly affects his ability to find meaning in the space as he is passionate about prayer and evangelism, which he feels are not being well executed. Based on his time in the church, and from his point of view, the congregation is not growing in number of congregants nor growing in spiritual depth, which he attributes to their short time in the space

⁸² Tuan, *Space and Place*, 183.

What is interesting about the lay Eucharist's comments on superficiality is that they do not seem to be shared by the Kenyan congregant and the American congregant. While they were in the congregation for a short duration of time, they both spoke of the profound spiritual growth that they experienced through the religious teachings of the church. The Kenyan congregant also spoke of how the church was a place of refuge for her during her challenging time with the employment agency. Through the church community, she received practical help, encouragement, and even a job, which shows that she found meaningful community. For the American congregant, she attributes part of her growth as a Christian to the contribution of the group members in her Bible study. She also felt particularly united with her fellow congregants when they worshipped together on Easter Sunday, even though it was a potentially dangerous situation. This does not mean that the Lay Eucharist's observations and experiences are inaccurate, but perhaps he himself feels disconnected from the congregation, a lack of unity with the congregation, and a lack of deep community with the congregation. Because he has the experience of not being the priest of the Amharic congregation, there is much disappointment and a lack of highly fulfilling purpose, and there is also disappointment in that he is passionate about prayer and evangelism, but they are executed poorly, which also could be impacting his perspective. He could also have his perspective because he has been at the church for a longer period of time, so he has been able to observe more of the broader dynamics that happen within the church, whereas the Kenyan and American congregant were experiencing dynamics within the church for a brief moment in time. Lastly, it is not only the factor of time here that affects meaning for him, but it is also the social relations that contribute to how meaning is assigned in these twenty years he has attended.

Twelve years as a congregant at All Saints, ' eight years as an employee

Another congregant, a middle-aged man from South Sudan, has been attending the English Speaking Congregation for twelve years. His uncle had made a deal with him; if he could make it to Egypt from South Sudan, then he would be his sponsor and pay for his airfare to the United States. For financial reasons, the uncle has unfortunately been unable to fulfill this promise. While the congregant from South Sudan is understanding, this failed plan has caused him to stay in Egypt much longer than he initially thought, offering him with few possible options to leave. While waiting to resettle, he started attending the English Speaking Congregation at All Saints' in 2008 as he grew up attending Anglican services in English in South Sudan. In some part, because of his knowledge of Anglican services, but also because he was an active volunteer, reliable, and able to connect well with people of various cultures, the priest of the English Speaking Congregation recommended to the diocese that he be hired as a full-time employee. He is now in his eighth year of working in a support role to the Bishop and priests of the diocese by preparing the sanctuary for the six worship services that happen weekly in addition to preparing for events and lectures that occur at the diocese. At a minimum, his job consists of preparing the technology, sound, liturgy books, alter table, priestly garments, and elements for communion. He works at the church six days a week, a significant amount of time in the church space, both as a worker, but also as a worshipper in the church space.

In the twelve years he has attended the English Speaking Congregation, he has been one of the long term congregants who has experienced the movement of priests and congregants who are a part of the community for a short period of time and then leave. While he expressed the sadness he feels each time he says goodbye to congregants who become his good friends, the short-term involvement of congregants does not affect his ability to place make nearly as much

as that of the coming and going of priests. In these twelve years, he has worshipped under the leadership of multiple priests, but he particularly recalls the last three priests, who were also the priests under whom he worked. Reflecting on the last three priests, he noted one priest that was “very active” when caring for the congregation outside of the weekly service time, such as visiting congregants in their homes, leading Bible studies in various areas throughout Cairo, and facilitating activities for community building and spiritual growth. By the priest organizing these events, it gave my interview partner many more opportunities to interact with the priest and the congregants, and it gave him more opportunities for spiritual growth, which contributed to the church being a meaningful place in his life. When this priest left Egypt, the new priest, which is the current priest, did not continue most of these extra activities. While the church is still a place of meaning for him, it is different because he primarily interacts with the congregation only during the service, one time per week.

It is not only the way the priests lead the congregation but also the way they teach the weekly sermon. Similar to that of the Kenyan and American congregant, the weekly sermon is a significant factor that contributes to the church being a place of meaning for them. Over the years, the South Sudanese congregant has come to particularly appreciate sermons that are biblically based and taught in a way that is straight forward, simple, and under an hour, which he has found to be the case with the last three priests of the English speaking congregation. This is in contrast to his experience of listening to the sermons in the Sudanese Arabic Congregation. He finds those sermons to be long, a service can last up to five hours, and the content can often be filled with the priest’s personal commentary, as opposed to being scripture focused. With expressive hand gestures and laughter, he exclaimed,

“When I listen to the South Sudanese priest, I think ‘Can you talk about Jesus or Mary or Joseph... or anyone from the Bible and just not tell us about your life story? Stick to the Bible!’”

Not only are the spiritual teachings gained from the sermons a significant factor in the church being a place of meaning for him as a congregant, but also *how* the sermons are preached seem to be of high importance.

From the information he shared above, we can see how the church is a place of meaning for him as *a congregant*, but he also shared how being an *employee* of the church impacts his ability to place make in the church. His role of congregant and employee overlaps, especially when he is attending the English Speaking Congregation. One moment he can be found sitting amongst the congregation, listening to the sermon, and the next moment he can be found replacing a microphone that suddenly stopped working. He as a worshipper and he as a worker are one and the same, and they are not separate, which does not seem to present a problem as he shared,

“I feel as if my job is serving, which is my worship to God. To me, the English Speaking Congregation is one body with different parts, and we are serving together in different ways. Just as some congregants lead the worship time or some teach the kids, it’s all serving together.”

In some ways, it seems as if his job adds to his ability to find meaning in the church. He feels unified with the congregation, and he is contributing to the group, as they serve God together. But as an employee, he has many more responsibilities than those who just volunteer once a week in the congregation. He expressed that his job is very time consuming, which is reasonable considering that he is responsible for preparing six different services weekly, in addition to events at the church. He shared that his schedule is so full that he rarely goes out with friends, and although he would like to study to become a doctor, his job at the church is too time

consuming. There is, unfortunately, no time to work and study, and he needs the job at the church in order to live. While he has thought about looking for another job, a job that pays more and is less time consuming, he is thankful for his job at the church because it is reliable, it provides him with money to live, he works in a safe place, and many of the workers are his friends.

When reflecting on this man's interview, the way he has found meaning in the church is more directly related to the amount of time, the twelve years of attending the church and eight years working in the church, six days a week, that he has developed "predictable and routine patterns of movement" in the church place, which aids in the church being a place of meaning to him.⁸³ During the interview, he did not share any brief experiences or significant life events that would support the theory that intense experiences have brought about meaning. During the twelve years he has attended, he has had the time to develop a "steady accretion of sentiment," which in some ways is based on the way the priest leads the English Speaking Congregation and the way the priest teaches the sermons.⁸⁴ Specifically, as a congregant, we can see how the role of the priest works as a catalyst, aiding in or hindering his process of finding meaning in the space. And since the person in the position of priest changes every few years, this man's sentiment, feelings, experiences in the church, change, which affects nuances of him finding meaning in the space of the church.

Regarding his role as an employee, he did not seek out this opportunity, but instead, it came about because plans with his uncle failed, and during the process of attending as a worshipper, he was offered this job. He finds meaning in this job in that it meets his practical needs, and he is serving God, but at the same time, he has complicated feelings toward being an

⁸³ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 182.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 33.

employee at the church as he has no time for friends, he is just making enough money to live, and the rigorous schedule makes it impossible for him to attend school to pursue his dreams to become a doctor. In this way, once again, we can see how meaning consists of both the positive and problematic.

Conclusion

When we reflect on the question posed by Tuan, “how long does it take to know a place?” we can conclude that there is no specific amount of time that answers this question. Additionally, while Tuan puts forth these two categories of length vs. intensity, the findings that it is much more complicated and layered, it is not *either* length *or* time, but it can be both. Such as the example of the lay Eucharist; he has been in the church for a long period of time, and he has had intense experiences in the church. Additionally, while both length of time and intensity of experience may both arrive at meaning, the types of meaning can be different and unequal. Lastly, time creates the opportunity for more experiences to happen, such as with the example of the Ethiopian and South Sudanese congregant.

Based on the responses of the priest and four different congregants, it can be concluded that time is a factor in their ability to find meaning in the space of the church, but it also is about the experiences that they have in the space as well as social dynamics that contribute to placemaking. Congregants experience the church in different ways which means that how meaning is assigned to All Saints’ varies. For the priest, there is a sense of urgency and intentionality to be a successful contributor in the church being meaningful, through his vision of the church functioning as an equipping center. And we can see that the priest is successful in this, as the Kenya, American, and South Sudanese congregant spoke of the church equipping

them with religious teachings which are a significant contributor to place making. Although the Kenyan and American congregant no longer attend, All Saints' remains to be a meaningful place because of the positive experiences they had and the knowledge and skills they have taken with them. Additionally, for them, we can see their Christian faith, which was equipped and exercised in the church, increased in exile, and offered them hope. Lastly, we can see how the problematic experiences of the Ethiopian lay Eucharist and the South Sudanese congregant contribute to defining meaning in the space right alongside their positive experiences. All of these dynamics contribute to the complexity of place making and the role of time.

Chapter 3: Aesthetics

In addition to time, Tuan states that the aesthetics of a space, the way a space physically looks, is an additional factor that contributes to a person's ability to find meaning in a space, and he provides five general ways in which aesthetics contribute to place making.⁸⁵ First, the aesthetics, including the architecture, of a space are a factor as they can instruct, reveal, and teach the viewer about the space. Second, material objects can possess deep meaning for an individual, such as a favorite armchair (the example from the previous chapter on time), through "the steady accretion of sentiment over the years" or a "brief intense experience."⁸⁶ Third, a symbol is a material object, an aesthetic, which gives knowledge beyond itself, and no linguistic mediation is needed. Fourth, aesthetics call observers to action. Fifth, aesthetics help one to understand "another and far greater glory."⁸⁷

External Description of the Cathedral

To bring better clarity to the role of aesthetics in place making, Tuan provides a detailed description of a cathedral, which is particularly helpful when trying to understand the role of aesthetics for congregants that worship in All Saints' Cathedral. He argues that the way the church space physically looks reveals information and instructs the viewer about the space.⁸⁸ Looking at the cathedral's centrality in the city and its external architecture, its height, and the weight of its stone, the building commands presence.⁸⁹ Looking at the internal architecture, the religious artwork and the stain-glassed windows, which depict stories from the Bible, teach

⁸⁵ Yi-fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 114.

⁸⁶ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 33.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 116.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 114.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

Christian doctrine. The architecture of the high ceilings and the alter call congregants to perform religious actions, and the architecture and aesthetics point congregants to “another and far greater glory.”⁹⁰

Following Tuan’s theory that the architecture of a building and its layout can reveal and teach about the space, we begin by observing the outside of All Saints’ Cathedral.⁹¹ Its size is substantial and tall, taking up almost the entire left side of the Anglican complex. To enter the cathedral, long steps lead worshippers up onto a wide platform that wraps around the front of the cathedral. For the cathedral to be situated on a platform displays its significance and importance, according to Tuan, while at the same time, the platform is approachable and humble as congregants and visitors can be found sitting under its shade and socializing with one another.⁹² The specific architecture of the cathedral is perhaps the most eye-catching. Its style is unique, and unlike the traditional Anglican churches found in England, particularly because of the roof of the building. Multiple congregants described the roof of the cathedral to look like a Bedouin tent, which they interpreted to represent hospitality or that the earth is a temporary home for Christians. For the very top of the cathedral, some described it to look like the top of a crown, which they felt represented Jesus’ crown, as he is referenced as the King of Kings. There are also more interpretations, as Carla Daughtry, during her studies at All Saints’ Cathedral described the “blooming image of the steeple” to look like a lotus flower, which according to ancient Egyptian culture represents eternity.⁹³ She interpreted this lotus flower style, with its opened petals, to be a welcoming sign to those that come into its space.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 116.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 114.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 38.

⁹³ Carla Daughtry, “Conflict and Community in Church-Based Refugee Havens in Cairo: The Quest for Space to Be Dinka.” (*The Arab Studies Journal*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2016) 39-59.

⁹⁴ Daughtry, *Conflict and Community in Church-Based Refugee Havens in Cairo*, 46.

If Tuan's theory that the architecture "reveals or instructs" us about the space, then we can learn that because of the cathedral's creative architecture, perhaps it is less of a traditional, formal, high church. When the building was being constructed in the 1980's, the church leadership and congregation desired for the church to communicate that the space is approachable, not austere. This is particularly interesting since the cathedral is the head church for all Anglican churches throughout Egypt, North Africa, and the Horn of Africa. This is the architecture and the message that they chose to convey for a diocese that is in a high place of leadership in Africa. Additionally, because of its unique style, it is not immediately recognized as a church, which perhaps is part of the reason this architecture style was used. It is situated between the Marriott Hotel and the UNHCR Processing Office for Syrians, welcoming people from all walks of life. As the findings will show throughout this thesis, the way the worshippers interpret and describe the external architecture, such as a hospitable place, their home, a place where they encounter Jesus, speaks to how they find the church to be meaningful to them.

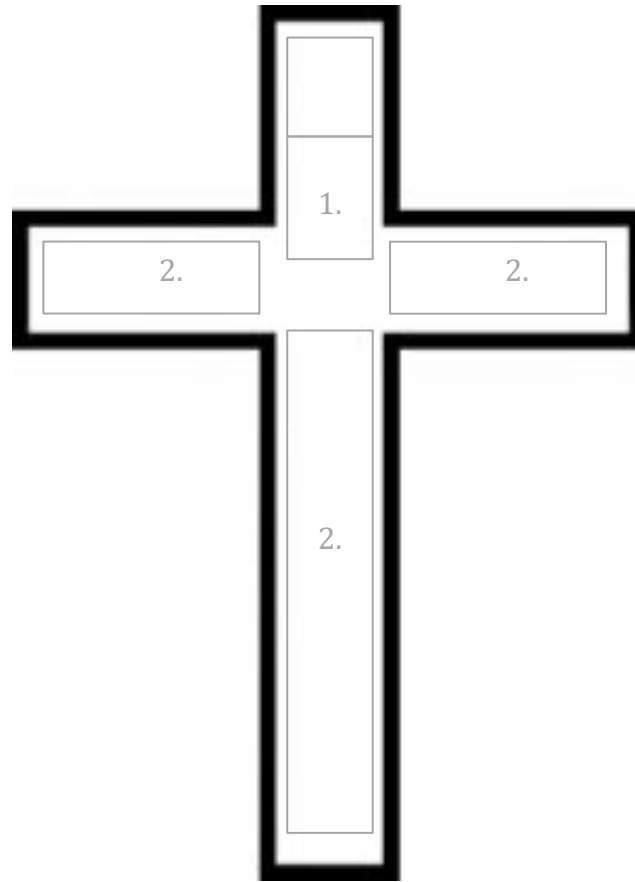
The Theme of Crucifixion

Upon entering the cathedral, through its tall wooden doors, one walks down a long carpeted aisle with symmetric rows of chairs on both sides. The layout of the sanctuary teaches Christian doctrine as it is in the shape of a cross, the primary religious symbol of Christianity. Tuan explains that a symbol is, "when its [object's] own nature is so clear and so profoundly exposed that while being fully itself it gives knowledge of something greater beyond" and a symbol is powerful in that "it is direct and does not require linguistic mediation."⁹⁵ The message of the church layout being in the shape of the cross is clear: the crucifixion of Jesus is the

⁹⁵ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 114.

theological foundation upon which the church is built. Continuing with this crucifixion theme, suspended above, within the tent-like ceiling, is a large multi-colored stained-glass chandelier, with sharp edges, representing and resembling the crown of thorns Jesus wore during his crucifixion.

The chandelier is surrounded by four inner walls of the sanctuary, which are painted with well-known stories from the Bible. Three of the walls are collages, which contain stories from the beginning of creation until the time of Jesus on earth. Their style is abstract and modern, yet the stories are discernable. The last mural, which is on the fourth wall within the cathedral, is the main wall that one sees when entering the cathedral. It is a single story from the Bible, a depiction of the Last Supper, where Jesus introduces the sacrament of communion to his disciples before his crucifixion. It is in a Coptic style of art, paying homage to Egypt's Coptic Orthodox brothers and sisters. It is quite fitting that the "Last Supper" would be the largest mural and the central focus of the cathedral since the ritual of communion commemorates the central teaching of Christianity, Christ's crucifixion, and also because multiple interview partners spoke of the significance of communion to them.



It is also fitting that this “Last Supper” image would be the central focus as the ritual of communion is conducted upon the communion table, which is situated directly below the mural on the middle of the platform, the main stage, of the cathedral (Number 1). The platform is the main focus for the congregation (Number 2) as it is directly in front of them. It is significant in size, taking up the entire top of the cross layout. The platform can be considered to be separated into two sections by a wooden partition that runs horizontally across the space. The space in front of the partition is the part of the platform that is seen by the congregation, and it consists of chairs for church leadership, a raised lectern, altar railings, and the communion table.

One of the congregants, who is a seminary professor from Canada, who teaches at the Anglican Diocese's School of Theology, shared his perspective on the aesthetics of cathedral, including the platform, and how they work together to bring meaning to the space,

“The Protestant tradition tends to have a more words/ear centered way of thinking about knowing God as opposed to an image/sight way, which is oftentimes reflected in the way the furniture is arranged in an Anglican church. If the church has a raised lectern, then it highlights the importance of the gospel being proclaimed, and a simple table reminds you that it's not an altar where sacrifices are offered. If stained glass windows and other images aren't venerated, they are simply narrating the story of salvation. I believe on biblical and theological grounds that the Word takes priority over image, ceremony, and form. That's not to say that the latter are therefore optional, but that they're designed to serve the ministry of the Word. After the priority of the Word, for me personally, music contributes to my worship experience, then the architecture, and the furniture (what the arrangement -- or the absence or items -- might mean).”

Based on this congregant's words, we can see Tuan's argument that the aesthetics “reveal, teach, and instruct” both for him as a worshipper, but also from his perspective as a professor. The aesthetics of the cathedral are working together to support the teachings of scripture, and this is seen in the raised lectern, the communion table, and stained-glass windows. For him personally, the Word takes presentence, and aesthetics are secondary in contributing to the church being a place of meaning. We can also see how the aesthetics are calling him to an internal action, such as focusing on the teaching of scripture and remembering Jesus' sacrifice.

Up until this point in the chapter, findings have specifically related to how aesthetics contribute to the church being a meaningful place. Aesthetics such as the external architecture of the cathedral, the Bible story murals, and stained-glass windows, and the layout of the platform, according to Tuan, teach Christian doctrine. While this may be true, that they teach and instruct, it does not automatically mean that congregants are aware or receiving these teachings from the aesthetics. While many interview partners made general references to the beauty of the cathedral,

for most of them, the role of aesthetics seemed to be void in their place making or perhaps the aesthetics were playing a role in place making, but for my interview partners, they were unaware of this dynamic. This is not to say that aesthetics is not contributing to place making, but as the findings below will show, it is more about how the aesthetics call them to action and how the aesthetics are a means by which they interact into a secondary, transcendent, space. This dynamic affirms the comment made by the seminary professor; particularly in a protestant denomination, aesthetics are secondary as they support the teaching of the Word.

Aesthetics call worshippers to action and to interact in a second space

Two ways that aesthetics contribute to place making, according to Tuan, is that they call congregants to action, and they assist the worshipper to “apprehend effortlessly another and far greater glory.”⁹⁶ From Tuan’s perspective, these are not combined events, but instead, he comes from the view that these happening are independent, aesthetics call to action and/or aesthetics assist the worshipper in apprehending a spiritual space. Towards the end of Tuan’s description and explanation of a cathedral, he very briefly gives an example of a man who, outside of the cathedral, has tried to envision God and heaven but states that it is a “modest” attempt. Yet, it is the beauty of the space of the cathedral, which “enables him to apprehend effortlessly another and far greater glory.”⁹⁷ And he says nothing more, he ends there, at a critical point.

Based on my findings, I found that these series of events are not unrelated but that they are linked; aesthetics teach, they call to action, and through the action, there is an interaction in a transcendent space. This is important to differentiate as my findings show that actions are the key that make it possible for them to interact in a second space. In contrast, Tuan just states that the

⁹⁶ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 116.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 116.

aesthetics assist in the worshipper *apprehending* another space, a transcendent space.

Additionally, my findings show that they not only apprehend this other space but that this space can be so meaningful that some interview partners give their allegiance to this space.

Because Tuan's theory of space and place falls short in explaining this "far greater glory," Ingie Hovland provides a framework to understand the experiences of my interview partners. During her study of evangelical congregants in the United States, she asks the question, "How do evangelicals place make?"⁹⁸ Her conclusions, while from evangelical congregants, help to provide understanding to my findings within the Anglican context.⁹⁹ She argues that one of the features of evangelical place making is their orientation towards transcendence. She concluded that evangelical Christians are not placeless, but instead, there is a temporal component to their place making, they have a way of deterritorializing and they do this through focusing on 'other spaces' or utopian places.¹⁰⁰ Through her research, she found that they most often think of the "transcendent space" in two main ways: heaven, the space that is reached after life on earth, and the Kingdom of God, which is already here and also not yet.¹⁰¹ Hovland says that the Kingdom of God gives evangelical place making a dynamic by which two different places are interacting in one place.¹⁰² Meaning that while the aesthetics and the actions that follow are performed in the space of the cathedral, their actions allow them to engage with a secondary, transcendent space. The church is a physical building (space 1), but through congregants participating in religious rituals, they interact with a spiritual space (space 2),

⁹⁸ Ingie Hovland, *Christianity, Place/Space, and Anthropology: Thinking Across Recent Research on Evangelical Place-Making*, (Religion, 46:3, 2016), 335

⁹⁹ Hovland, *Christianity, Place/Space, and Anthropology*: 331-58.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 346.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 348.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

making the church (space 1) a platform for a space beyond (space 2).¹⁰³ And it is to this transcendent space that their ultimate loyalty, or place making, lies.

This framework helps to bring clarity to experiences that were articulated by some of my interview partners. One of those partners being the Ethiopian lay Eucharist, who was introduced in the previous chapter. He described that the layout of the church, including the platform, the partition, the space behind the partition, and the placement of the communion table, all teach Christian doctrine,

“Unlike in the Old Testament or with Judaism, there is no literal ‘Holy of Holies,’ an area where only the purified and ‘sanctioned priests’ can enter because we believe all believers in Christ are priests. But the Anglican stage is set up in a similar way as a reminder to us. The alter in the Old Testament was where the priest would sacrifice perfect lambs, which was in front of the holy space, so for us, we put the communion table, instead of the altar table, in front of a space that represents the holy space, recognizing that Jesus is in between God [the holy space] and the people [where the congregation sits, in front of the stage] and he gives the people access into the holy space because he was the sacrifice.”

Although no words are being used, the aesthetics and the layout of the platform teach Christian doctrine by proclaiming the core message of Christianity; Christ’s crucifixion brings communion with God.

The aesthetics of this space also call the lay Eucharist to action. Because the space represents the “Holy of Holies,” the space in which Jewish priests talk to God, the lay Eucharist spends a significant amount of time in this space, multiple hours, almost daily, praying to God and reading his Bible. On the day of my interview with him, I actually could not find him at the church until someone told me that he was in this tucked away area within the cathedral. When I found him, he was the only person in the space, sitting on a straight-back wooden chair, with his shoes off, Bible in hand, and reading. If you recall from the previous chapter, from the year 2008

¹⁰³ Ibid., 348.

until now, he sees his life as a training period, which is why he spends such a significant amount of time praying and reading in this space; he is preparing himself spiritually for whatever comes next.

The aesthetics of the platform not only teach Christian doctrine, but they call the lay Eucharist to action, to pray and to read his Bible, and it is through these religious actions that the space on the platform becomes particularly meaningful. Meaning comes about because of the extensive amount of time he spends there, almost daily, for hours, since 2008. Additionally, it is through these religious actions, particularly that of prayer, that contributes to place making and allows him to engage with a secondary transcendent space. His prayers are being said in the church, but the prayers are directed out of the church. To strengthen this notion that this space is particularly meaningful to him, he claimed that while he prayed throughout the city and in his home, it was in this space at the church that he found his prayers most answered, including his prayers of physical healing.

While he place makes in the cathedral, we can see that his place making is of a temporal quality as he shared, “Citizenship of any nationality is not important to me for my true citizenship is in heaven.” This comment was made in reference to the difficulty of being a refugee in Cairo, the disappointment he faced by not being the priest of the Amharic speaking congregation, and the pang of being rejected for family reunification. His comment expresses that his “deepest allegiance and identity” are to this alternative Christian space, and his Christian membership provides him with tools to engage the public sphere.¹⁰⁴

In these ways, we can see a progressive series of events, which Tuan fails to connect; the layout of the platform teaches Christian doctrine, which calls him to prayer, and through prayer,

¹⁰⁴ Peggy Levitt, “You Know Abraham was Really the First Immigrant: Religion and Transnational Migration”(New York, International Migration Review, Vol 37, Number 3, 2003), 847-873 and Hovland, 348.

he engages with a transcendent space to which he gives his ultimate allegiance. The aesthetics and prayer contribute to the church being a place of meaning for the lay Eucharist, but they also facilitate an experience with the second space, which is the utmost place of meaning.

Partaking in the ritual of communion

For interview partners, the most meaningful aesthetics that they often mentioned was that of the communion table and the elements of wine and bread. These communion elements, and the actions that accompany them, contribute to place making while also pointing congregants to a transcendent space. For most congregants, when explaining why these elements were meaningful, they answered in concise and straightforward ways, such as; I am following Christ's example, because I get to participate with action what I believe, and I partake out of habit. For the priest of the congregation and the seminary professor, they provide a more in-depth description.

For the seminary professor, he shared that taking communion is so religiously significant to him that it is one of the main reasons he attends church. He describes the meaning of the communion elements, the action it calls him to, and how he is pointed to "the other space."

"During the Lord's Supper I'm invited as a Christ-follower to remember Jesus' sacrifice for us, to look forward to the Banquet that awaits us, and to remain in him as I receive the bread and the wine. Prayer Book doctrine and liturgy are clear that by faith and by the Spirit's work in me, I experience a present feeding on Christ. But rather than "looking for Jesus" in the bread and the wine, I believe that communion is spiritual, meaning relational, so that we "feed on him in our hearts by faith, and with thanksgiving." So Christ draws us into his life as we come to him in faith, and that way, the Supper is a means of sanctification."

The aesthetics of the communion table prompt him to remember Jesus' sacrifice, look forward to the Banquet, a feast that Christians believe is to happen at the end of time, and remain

in Christ as he eats the bread and wine. During the ritual, he says that he is not “looking for Jesus in the bread and wine,” rather these aesthetics facilitate a spiritual experience for him, he experiences a type of sanctification as he communes with God. He shared that because of what he experiences during this ritual that All Saints’ is a place of meaning, but that the cathedral more so serves as a platform for him to interact with this transcendent space.¹⁰⁵

The priest of the English-speaking congregation further emphasized this concept that the religious action of communion points congregants to “another and far greater glory” reaching beyond the space of the church which affects the way that congregants relate to the church space:¹⁰⁶

“When we take communion, something really does happen, but it is within the believer, and it is within the spiritual realm. In our service, we are testifying that Jesus has died for us, and in some sense spiritually, the body and blood is not just a symbol but a spiritual transaction that takes place that lifts us up to the heavenly places in Christ. We are entering into a space that is beyond time. We are communing with, in some sense, the saints in light of the faithful. Rejoicing in heaven, we are lifted up together to worship the Lord.”

He believes that while physically the bodies of the congregants are in the cathedral space when they partake of the communion elements and the ritual that surrounds them, they are entering a spiritual space. Peggy Levitt, in her study of religion and transnational migration, notes that religious spaces have a way of being in a physical geographical boundary, but also transcending the boundaries and creating alternative spaces, which we can see through the ritual of communion.¹⁰⁷ While an aesthetic is a symbol when “its own nature is so clear and so profoundly exposed that while being fully itself it gives knowledge of something greater beyond” the priest argues that the bread and wine do not just give knowledge, but he believes

¹⁰⁵ Hovland. *Christianity, Place/Space, and Anthropology*, 348.

¹⁰⁶ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 116.

¹⁰⁷ Levitt, *You Know Abraham was Really the First Immigrant*, 861.

that there is a spiritual transaction that occurs.¹⁰⁸ Further showing how these physical elements facilitate a spiritual experience.

Recalling Tuan's point that aesthetics prompt worshippers "to respond with a more or less automatic act, such as kneeling" an American congregant who attended the church from Summer 2018-Summer 2019 spoke of how the communion table prompted her in this exact way,¹⁰⁹

"Worshipping at All Saints' was truly a meaningful time for me. The one thing I will always remember was how powerful it was to kneel before the table of Christ and receive communion in such a diverse community. Every week now, when I take communion at my church in the US, I remember that I am remaining in community with all of those people each and every week. While I only keep in touch with a handful of people, I still know that I am in community with those people."

For this congregant, the communion table and the communion elements at All Saints', prompted her to kneel and take communion alongside her fellow congregants. This shared action, which was performed each week, for a period of a year, bonded her with the congregation to the point that while she no longer attends All Saints', she is reminded of this community when she takes part in communion in America. Various researchers, including Stephen Warner, support her claim of congregants bonding through actions. Warner particularly noted that actions and motions which involve the movement of the body can bond a group of people with different cultural backgrounds together by creating new communities.¹¹⁰ In a way, this "new community" which was formed in part through the partaking of communion, has remained because the ritual continues to be practiced by a worldwide community of Christians, even though she no longer is physically present amongst the group. While the communion table and altar railings are bound to place in All Saints' Cathedral, the ritual is not bound to place, which allows her to continue in

¹⁰⁸ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 114.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 114.

¹¹⁰ Stephen Warner, "Religion, Boundaries, and Bridges," (*Sociology of Religion*, vol.58. no.3, 1997): 217-238.

this ritual regardless of place. An interesting, additional point that her experience shows is that while the aesthetics call her to action, she does not describe interacting in a transcendent space, such as heaven. She makes the point that the action of taking communion reminds her that she remains in community with the All Saints' congregation, a community that reaches outside the space of the church, similar to that of a transnational community. Showing that the aesthetics of communion, which called her to action, contributed to All Saint' being a place of meaning, and even now, as she is not physically occupying the space of the church, she is reminded of this meaningful space when she takes communion.

Conclusion

The function of aesthetics in All Saint's being a place of making is multi-layered. As physical objects, they can be meaningful because their presence holds memories and sentiment, particularly if the object has remained in one's life for an extended time, such as Tuan's example of a favorite armchair, as was shared in the previous chapter on time. Aesthetics can also teach, instruct and reveal, which within the Anglican context is expressed in the layout of the cathedral, the objects within, and the arrangement of the furniture which support and direct the worshipper to Christian teachings. Although, the factor of architecture and the aesthetics of the cathedral in place making are limited in their effect in that they are bound to place. Yet, they are multi-purposeful, multi-dimensional, and are a significant factor in place making in that they facilitate the participation in rituals, they assist one in an interaction with a transcendent space, and they impact belonging, all of which are not bound to place.

Tuan argues that the aesthetics call worshippers to action and/or the aesthetics give knowledge of a space beyond the church walls. But as my findings show, there is a link between

these occurrences. The great significance of aesthetics is that in calling congregants to action, not only do these actions contribute to place making but that the actions are a way by which congregants interact with a transcendent space, such as through prayer and the taking of communion. It is this transcendent space that can be a more meaningful space than the space of the church. Making the aesthetics a doorway to a place of belonging, whereby they are providing congregants with tools that help them to navigate living as a migrant in Cairo. This is particularly helpful for those that are marginalized or who feel that they have no place in Cairo. Being able to place make in this transcendent place is meaningful, as they always have a place in the Kingdom of God.

Chapter 4: People

The last and final factor that contributes to place making that will be discussed in this thesis is the role of people. This chapter does not aim to single out the role of people, as social dynamics have been and are woven throughout a congregant's experience. Even reflecting on the chapters of time and aesthetics, social dynamics were taking place and impacting place making even though they were not the factor of focus. Instead, this chapter aims to highlight the role that people have in adding meaning to All Saints' and some of the ways they contribute and take away meaning. To capture some of the essence that the role of people play in place making, one Egyptian congregant shared the Arabic proverb,

جنة من غير ناس ما تنداس

Which she loosely interpreted to mean that paradise without people is not paradise. A place can be so wonderful, perfect as heaven, but if there are no people, does not that mean the place is no longer heaven?

From Tuan's theoretical perspective, people are able to contribute to and take away meaning from a space, what Tuan refers to as the "right and wrong" kinds of people, through their interactions with others.¹¹¹ While he uses these binary categories, the characteristics that make up a "right" and "wrong" person are much more fluid and are dependent upon how each person personally defines a meaningful relationship. However, he does provide a general outline. The right kinds of people that contribute to the meaning of the space are those who are a source of care and comfort and those with whom one has a genuine human exchange.¹¹² Yet even he

¹¹¹ Yi-fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).

¹¹² Tuan, *Space and Place*, 139-141.

articulates that “genuine human exchange” is difficult to define, it is challenging to generate, it is not guaranteed or able to be deliberately designed.¹¹³ Not only can people play a role in place making, but they can also be place. Reflecting on early childhood, Tuan notes that for infants, their parent is their primary place because it is from them that they are cared for, protected, nurtured, and fed.¹¹⁴ As the child grows into an adult, “possessions and ideas are important, but other human beings remain the focus of value and the source of meaning.”¹¹⁵ For the “wrong” kinds of people, he describes the interactions as ones that quickly drain a place of meaning because they become an irritation, not a comfort.¹¹⁶

From the social perspective of Pierre Bourdieu, he takes Tuan’s concept of the “right” person and suggests that the “right” people are somewhat determined by underlying factors and characteristics, what he names habitus. The concept of the habitus is in one way unique to each person, but it is also what defines and sustains a social class, it is a set of dispositions which impacts an individual’s habits, skills, taste, and way of thinking.¹¹⁷ In addition to the habitus, each individual also possesses capital, which contributes to the structuring process of the habitus. It includes economic capital (finances and assets), cultural capital (language, education), and social capital (individuals you know).¹¹⁸ When individuals engage in human interaction, a social field is created, by which their habitus and varying levels of capital, place them in unequal positions of power to one another.¹¹⁹ This inequality not only can affect social relations amongst the individuals in the social field but also it can impact their relationship to place.

¹¹³ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 141.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 138.

¹¹⁵ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 138-139.

¹¹⁶ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 141.

¹¹⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, *The logic of practice*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press. 1990. 52

¹¹⁸ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Forms of Capital*, trans. Richard Nice, chapter 9 in John G. Richardson (ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (Greenwood Press, Westport, CN, 1986).

¹¹⁹ Bourdieu. *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*. London: Routledge. 1984.

When one interacts in a habitus in which they are from, Bourdieu argues that it gives them a sense of place. He explains,

“When habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, it is like a “fish in water”: it does not feel the weight of the water, and it takes the world about itself for granted. It is because this world has produced me because it has produced the categories of thought that I apply to it, that it appears to me as self-evident.”¹²⁰

He also states the opposite; when one interacts in a field that is different than the one in which they are from, they can experience a “destabilized habitus” whereby the individual is “torn by contradiction and internal division, generating suffering.”¹²¹

For one Egyptian congregant, who spent her childhood growing up in California, her experience captures this theory well, as she shared,

“My relationships are mostly with the expats in the church, those that also had a western upbringing. I feel like a kind of familiarity with them, there is like a union between us. They understand where I am coming from and I understand where they are coming from. I can connect with those types of people. But I just cannot connect with anyone. My lifestyle was very, very different than most Egyptians here. I relate more to the expats at the church than I do to my native Egyptian friends.”

Her upbringing has affected who she forms community with in the congregation and how this similarity in habitus gives her a place to belong in the congregation.

The Priest of the English Speaking Congregation

As interview partners shared their experiences, the priest was a significant figure in the church being a place of meaning for many of them. This is not surprising, as he is the primary individual who is responsible for leading and caring for the congregation. For some interview partners, they described their relationship with the priest to be one in which they received care,

¹²⁰ Pierre Bourdieu, *An invitation to reflexive sociology*, (Polity Press, 1992)127-128

¹²¹ Pierre, Bourdieu. *Pascalian meditations*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press. 2000.160.

one of Tuan's credentials for the "right" type of people that contribute to place making.

Recalling the young Kenyan woman who shared in the Time Chapter, a large part of her experience in the church was being cared for during her problematic job situation. When asked about the community at All Saints', she shared,

"I can never forget the people at the Zamalek church. Although I cannot remember every single person, the community gave me hope that I am not alone, they uplifted my spirits, and also, I felt connected with them because we had this common element that we were all migrants. But I especially remember the priest. He was so nice, approachable, and when I was in a difficult time, I had several counseling sessions with him. He encouraged me. You know, when I first came and had a problem, he helped me financially? I will always remember him as a loving father and pastor. I will never forget that. Also, I remember the ladies from the women's Bible study; one of them helped me to get a job."

In a general sense, she has very fond memories of the people at All Saints' and her interactions and relationships were quite positive. When describing the specific relationships that were meaningful to her, the priest was the "right" type of person as she describes her relationship with him to be like that of a "loving father and pastor." She felt cared for by him in the ways he provided for her, like a father, and gave her counsel, as a pastor. Tuan also uses the relationship of a parent and a child to explain the essential element of care in place making.¹²² He also cares for his congregation by teaching scripture and administering communion, foundational elements in the church, which are important to congregants. In the Time Chapter, this Kenyan congregant spoke of the "life changing" religious teachings she received from the church, teachings that were predominantly taught by the priest, contributing to his powerful, influential, and central role in the space.

But it is not only the priest that cares for her as she shared her feelings toward the congregation. She describes community based on the congregation providing her with encouragement, hope, and connecting her with a job, particularly against the backdrop of her

¹²² Tuan, *Space and Place*, 31-32

situation of being alone in Cairo and the painful experiences she had with her previous job. She also defines community on this shared experience of being a migrant, which makes her feel understood and gives her a place in the group, even though the congregation is composed of individuals from various social classes, cultures, and nationalities. For this individual, we can see Tuan's argument that care is a central element in place making as she defines and expresses her meaningful relationships based on the care she has received. The priest and fellow congregants are able to care for her because of their higher levels of social, economic, and cultural capital, placing them in a higher position of power. Yet, she feels united with the congregation as they have this shared experience of being a migrant in Cairo.

Recalling the South Sudanese congregant who was introduced in the Time Chapter, the role of priest is also a significant figure in the church being a place of meaning, but the social dynamics are more complex and nuanced. The phrase "role of the priest" is used intentionally, because unlike the Kenyan congregant, this South Sudanese congregant has worshipped and worked under multiple individuals who have served in the role of priest, both within the English Speaking Congregation and the Sudanese Arabic Congregation. From his experience and years attending All Saints', the priest works as a catalyst, aiding in or hindering his process of finding meaning in the space as the priest is the main one who determines how the congregation is led, how the services are conducted, and how the sermons are preached, all factors that contribute to the church being a place of meaning for him.

Twenty years ago, when he arrived from South Sudan and first started attending All Saints', he worshipped with the English Speaking Congregation as he grew up attending an Anglican church in English in South Sudan. He also chose this congregation as he expressed that he enjoyed being in community with those of different cultures. He felt comfortable and able to

connect with those not from South Sudan because, in his words, he was open to different ways of thinking and living, and he is not a person that is tightly tied down by cultural norms and practices. As an example, he did not agree with many of the views, rituals, and practices of marriage that were followed by his own family in South Sudan and ways of thinking that had continued and were implemented during the marriages and the practices leading up to the weddings in the All Saints' Sudanese Arabic Congregation. Seeing that he was attending the English Speaking Congregation, congregants from the Sudanese Arabic Congregation encouraged him to start attending their service. Being that he is South Sudanese, they asked him, "Why do you not worship with us?" As if to imply, why do you worship with the foreigners and not your own people?

Their invitation prompted him to attend, and he was even involved by singing in the choir, but he eventually stopped worshipping with this congregation primarily because of the way the congregation was led. He felt that those in leadership were unfairly giving positions to people in the congregation based on favoritism, not qualifications, which included his personal experience of observing congregants not being allowed to join the worship team, of which he was a part. During the sermons, he felt the leadership would teach one thing, but outside of the sermon, their actions would reflect something else, which he felt was hypocritical. He also felt that the teachings were not focused on the Bible, which did not help him learn or grow as a Christian. So, while he continues to work for the leadership of this congregation, as he is an employee of the diocese, he does not worship with them for these reasons.

The way that he defines his relationship with the priest of the English Speaking Congregation is somewhat in juxtaposition to his experience with the leadership of the Sudanese Arabic congregation. He described the current priest as practicing what he preached and that he

taught directly from the Bible. He described the English Speaking Congregation as working together as one body, a body that he felt a part of. Based on his experience of worshipping under the leadership of the last three English Speaking priests, it is especially when the priest is active in organizing activities, visiting congregants in their homes, and leading Bible studies in groups throughout Cairo that he feels more engaged and a part of the church, all of which contribute to the church being a meaningful place for him.

Based on Tuan's argument that care and genuine human exchange are two main factors that contribute to meaningful relationships, based on this interview partner's experience, it seems to be much more nuanced. Focusing on those in leadership, they are significant figures that determine meaningfulness. It can be seen that "genuine human exchange" is a dynamic in meaningful relationships as the "wrong" type of priest is one that is not genuine, but rather hypocritical and one that shows unfair favoritism. These negative experiences, according to Tuan, led the place "to be drained of meaning" so that the congregant felt "irritated and not comforted" to the point that he was driven out, unable to worship with this congregation.¹²³ For this congregant, he appreciates the way the English Speaking priest leads the congregation with less of a bent towards favoritism and hypocrisy, but he does not describe his relationship with the English Speaking Priest to be one of care. Instead, the priest facilitates opportunities for him to grow in his religious knowledge and activities for him to engage with the congregation, which are important to him.

The congregation also contributes to the church being a place of meaning, not necessarily because he feels cared for by them or because he has a genuine human exchange with them, but because he feels like he belongs in this group that is composed of various backgrounds and ways

¹²³ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 139-141.

of thought. For him, belonging is based on the congregation consisting of people from multiple habitus with various ways of thinking, a group that is not based on nationality, or is “tightly tied down by cultural norms and practices.” Belonging for him is also based on serving together as a congregation, as opposed to excluding people from serving. Recalling Bourdieu’s “fish in water” theory, a sense of place in part comes about when one interacts in a social world of which they are a product, “When habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, it is like a “fish in water” ...because it has produced the categories of thought that I apply to it.”¹²⁴ For this congregant, he initially sought out community and a worship experience with the English Speaking Congregation, because he felt “he was not so tied down by cultural norms and practices” dispositions that he felt South Sudanese have. Which, in one way, seems to indicate that he does not share a similar habitus with the South Sudanese congregation. Rather, it appears that his values, his way of thinking, and behavior are more in line with the English Speaking Congregation, even though he is more apt to have place of origin, language, ethnicity, and the experience of being a South Sudanese migrant in Cairo in common with congregants in the Sudanese Congregation. He feels in part that he belongs with the English Speaking Congregation, a group of people of varying habitus, but not necessarily a habitus from which he was a product.

For another South Sudanese congregant, she too has a history with All Saints’. Those in leadership of the diocese, the Sudanese Arabic congregation, and the English Speaking Congregation have been significant figures that have impacted her ability to place make. After she fled the war in South Sudan and arrived in Cairo in 1998, she began worshipping in the Bari Speaking Congregation at All Saints’. Then in 2004, she recalled that those in a position of

¹²⁴ Bourdieu, *An invitation to reflexive sociology*, (Polity Press, 1992)127-128.

power at the diocese attempted to combine all South Sudanese worshippers into one congregation. The leadership of the Bari congregation was, unfortunately, unable to “hold their ground,” in her words, unlike the Dinka congregation, forcing her to either leave All Saints’ or worship with a different congregation. This was a challenging time for her, as her community dissolved, and she was no longer able to worship in the Bari language. Many of the congregants left All Saints’ to worship in Bari in the Anglican church in Ma’adi, but because of her history at All Saints’ and also because the Zamalek location was more convenient to her, she decided to stay at All Saints’ and worship.

Since that time until now, she has worshipped with both the English Speaking Congregation, on Fridays and Sundays, and the Sudanese Arabic Congregation, on Sundays. She worships with both congregations as a way to thank God for providing for her and giving her hope while in Cairo. This is in light of the many hardships she has faced in life. While in South Sudan, her husband disappeared during the war, and in Cairo, she lives separated from her children and grandchildren, who are in South Sudan. She has been waiting for resettlement for decades, and she is unable to return to South Sudan for fear of danger. To try and escape these hardships, she attempted to commit suicide three different times. Looking back on these failed attempts, she praises God that she still lives and breathes.

Similarly to the South Sudanese congregant, those in places of authority and power, such as the priest of the English Speaking Congregation, the leadership of the Sudanese Arabic Congregation, and the Bishop of the diocese have all been main contributing factors which have added and/or taken away meaning from the church. Her experience with the current English Speaking priest is overall quite positive as she described him to be like a shepherd, caring for his flock by the way he leads the congregation, the way he relationally interacts with them, and

the way he teaches them the scriptures. For her personally, she has felt shepherded by the priest, by his approachability, the compassion he expresses towards her challenges in Cairo, and the impartial way he interacts with her and the other congregants. Her opinion of the English speaking priest is somewhat held in comparison to her experience with the leadership of the Sudanese Arabic Congregation, similar to that of the other South Sudanese congregant. From her point of view, they are taking away meaning in the space as they do not preach the Word of God, even though the services are five hours long, and she does not feel cared for by the leadership of this congregation for it feels as if the leadership is not concerned about the wellbeing of their congregation. She has noticed that more congregants from the Sudanese Arabic congregation have started attending the English Speaking service, which she believes is because they share similar opinions.

Her experiences at All Saints' also stretch beyond the cathedral, where she worships, which impacts place making. At the beginning of 2019, the church hired her to work as a cleaner at the diocese's café, the hotel, and the guest house. Although the job requires significant physical effort and can be taxing, she was in great need of finances and welcomed the job. She also attends a seminary course on theology, on Monday nights at the church, something that she enjoys and feels that this educational opportunity would not have been available in South Sudan, given the current situation. These various ways that she experiences All Saints' adds another layer of meaning to the space of the church.

When reflecting on Tuan's component of care contributing to meaningful relationships, we can see this to be applicable in the way this congregant describes her relationship with the English Speaking priest. He is caring like a shepherd, versus the leadership in the Sudanese Arabic Congregation, who are unconcerned for the wellbeing of their congregation. In some part,

the way she views the leadership of the Sudanese Arabic Congregation is impacted by the experience she had with them many years ago, whereby her congregation, the Bari congregation, was canceled, and she had to choose to leave the church or join another congregation. While she does not feel cared for by the leadership of the Sudanese Arabic Congregation, her irritation and discomfort are not at the level to which it has prompted her to leave the congregation, like other Sudanese congregants. She continues to worship with them each Sunday, as worshipping God for providing for her, a way of caring for her, is a higher priority than her own comfort or relationship with the leadership of the church. Therefore, people, the priests, are a factor in the church being a place of meaning, but she is still able to worship.

Lastly, there is this larger story of the congregation just being a part of her experience at All Saints'. It was not only the leadership of the Sudanese Arabic Congregation that decided to cancel the Bari service and invite Bari congregants to join their congregation. This decision was ultimately determined by the Bishop of the diocese who is in charge of all ministries within the cathedral. The bitter memories of losing the Bari congregation is mixed in with the other interactions she has with the diocese, her weekly seminary classes, which she enjoys, and her job as a cleaner, with all its complexities.

There is one concluding interview partner whose experiences also highlight the role of the English Speaking priest as the most significant contributing relational factor to his place making. For a European congregant, he and his wife have attended for the past four years, and he works as an ambassador. As a committed Christian, he emphasized that his primary reason in coming to church is to learn, receive spiritual nourishment, and serve. When he enters the church space, he does not come with the mindset that he is an "ambassador," he explained, but that he enters with the mentality that he is a "disciple of Jesus." This mindset of a "disciple" has

propelled him to lead children's church and to preach the sermons when the priest is absent. Based on observation, he is engaging and seemed to be liked by many congregants as after the services he often can be found sitting, socializing, and praying with congregants of all different backgrounds. Yet, he explained that his relationships with the majority of these congregants were shallow. He felt that he was unable to develop deep relationships with many in the church because knowing that he was an ambassador, with access to powerful social connections and resources, congregants would seek from him financial and political assistance, which he felt strained the relationship.

While most of his relationships lacked depth, he described two meaningful relationships that had developed at the church, one with the priest of the English Speaking Congregation and the other with the Bishop of the diocese. He described these relationships as being "genuine and deep," and he found that with these individuals, there was a shared commonality and understanding of being in a "position of loneliness," as he called it, which bonded these individuals.

For this congregant, one of the marks of a meaningful relationship, which contributes to the meaning of a space, is when a relationship consists of human exchange that is genuine.¹²⁵ While Tuan even articulates that "genuine human exchange" is challenging to define, and it is challenging to generate, the experiences of the European congregant bring some clarity to this point.¹²⁶ He describes that his relationship with the priest and the Bishop is not shallow, but they are deep, and they are genuine. While he learns religious teachings from the priest, like the other congregants, his dynamics with the priest go beyond this priest/worshipper relationship, as he describes his relationship with the priest to be like that of a friend.

¹²⁵ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 139-141.

¹²⁶ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 141.

His friendship with the priest can somewhat be explained by their shared habitus and their high positions of power in the space of the church. He and the priest are both in leadership positions, which places them in a similar rank within their own social field; for the European, as an ambassador, he is the leader of his embassy staff, for the priest, he is the leader of the English Speaking Congregation. They are also from the Global North and of a similar habitus with high levels of capital. In this way, we can see that the church as a space provides this congregant with individuals who are also powerful people with access to capital.¹²⁷ Because of their powerful positions and possession of capital, the relationship is not based on resource exchange, and there is this understanding that all three of them are in powerful positions whereby others are under their leadership which at times puts them in a position that can be isolating and lonely; points of relatability that are factors which contribute to meaningful relationships.

As an additional point, when this congregant comes to the church to worship, he also desires to shed his powerful ambassador persona and take on this humble disciple persona, someone that is learning and receiving. By claiming this persona of being a disciple, there is the potential idea that all congregants are on the same social level as disciples of Jesus. But in reality, he is still acting as an ambassador through his relationship with the priest, and many congregants still are interacting with him as ambassador, this powerful person that can provide help. Inconsistency can be seen in this identity of being a disciple, where he “serves,” but serving does not seem to encompass him using the resources and connections that he has in his position as an ambassador to serve those in the congregation. I would argue that he is unable to develop deep relationships with those who are seeking after his assistance because the relationship is not

¹²⁷ Pierre, Bourdieu, *The Forms of Capital*, trans. Richard Nice, chapter 9 in John G. Richardson (ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (Greenwood Press, Westport, CN, 1986).

mutual, whereby both individuals are caring for each other, which would contribute to a meaningful relationship. Perhaps, the European congregant feels that congregants do not seek out his friendship based on his character, but based on his capital, making the “wrong” types of people are those that seek the capital he possesses.

Congregants of the English Speaking Congregation

While findings above have shown how the role of priest and the individual who fills this position is a significant figures in the church being a place of meaning, there were also interview partners whose focus was more so on their interactions with fellow congregants. For the American woman who was introduced in the Time Chapter, she described her relationships at the church to be “deeper and more genuine,” than the relationships she had at work, which is rather significant as she spent considerably more time at school and her coworkers were primarily from Global North countries, individuals with whom she shared a similar culture, similar habitus. The main reason for why her relationships with those at All Saints’ were “deeper and more genuine” was because the congregants “shared her love of Christ,” unlike her coworkers. Not only did congregants of a different habitus not cause her to “experience suffering,” but she appreciated their differences as they added a richness to the congregation, which helped her to grow as a Christian. Focusing particularly on the congregants that attended the weekly Bible study, many of them came from very different backgrounds with life experiences that were entirely unrelatable for her. She appreciated this diversity, which she found was expressed through their understanding of the Bible, their Christian traditions, and how they lived out their faith in Cairo. These dissimilarities challenged her in her own understanding of Christianity and in how she applied her faith.

Also, she felt cared for by the congregation, as she found them to be “exceptionally open and friendly,” which made it easier for her to make friends since she described herself as being shy and an introvert. She reasoned that part of their acceptance of new people joining the congregation was because they were accustomed to a transient migrant culture, whereby people came and went often. During times of difficulty, she expressed that there was always someone in the congregation she could talk with, which made her feel cared for but also made her feel that the congregation was her family while she lived in Egypt. This feeling was embodied during the last service that she attended in Summer 2019, when the congregation circled around her and blessed her with a sendoff prayer,

“This prayer time encompassed all of what it means to be a part of a Christian community. You always have people around you that love and support you, and even when you are called to go somewhere else, they want you to know how much you were loved and supported.”

Recalling this memory, it was so significant that it was one of her top five memories during her entire four years in Egypt.

For this congregant, meaningful relationships consist of Tuan’s factors of care and genuine human exchange. Unlike the ambassador through, her most genuine relationships were not based on shared habitus but based on their shared Christian faith, something like a Christian habitus, which includes individuals of different ethnicities, places of origin, faith backgrounds, and experiences. This Christian habitus was more conducive to genuine human exchange than the habitus of culture that she shared with her coworkers from the Global North. Additionally, it was through this Christian community that she felt cared for, supported, and challenged as a Christian. Her relationships with fellow congregants stretch beyond cared and genuine exchange as they also significantly contributed to her growth as a Christian in Cairo. This is particularly

important to note, as she shared in the Time Chapter that All Saints' was a meaningful place primarily because she grew in her knowledge of Christianity and in her faith as a Christian.

While the American congregant seemed to really benefit positively from her interactions with fellow congregants, as they taught her, cared for her, and with whom she had genuine relationships, for a long time attending Egyptian congregant, his relationships with those in the congregation is complex. He described the congregation, as a whole, to be sincere and kind, but not too involved in his personal life, which he appreciated, as his primary purpose in attending All Saints' was to listen and to learn from the sermons. Although, as he shared more, a significant amount of his social interactions are based on him serving as a resource to migrants in the congregation. As an individual who is from Egypt, who speaks Arabic, who has a lot of knowledge about living in Cairo, as well as relationships outside of the church that he has built over the years, these are helpful resources for migrants. He believes that he is a witness for Christ by the deeds that he does, which in part propels him to serve, and additionally, he enjoys being able to help migrants in the congregation, as it gives him a sense of purpose. He also knows what it is like to live in another country as a migrant, as he too was a migrant in England, studying medicine. He recalled fond memories of attending a small Anglican church outside of London, where he was the only foreigner. The congregation accepted him into their community and cared for him as a young, single man, a newcomer to England. Having been a recipient of care, he now sees part of his role at All Saints' to be one that serves and cares for the migrants in the congregation.

While he, in part, derives meaning from serving, he described numerous effects that happen within the church because the congregation heavily consists of migrants. One outcome is that the church does not have internal support. If the priest, deacons, and volunteers are migrants

that are temporarily in the community, there is a constant overturn which he, in some part, makes him feel responsible for continuing on the ministry as a long-term attender. Because of their temporality, he also felt that many congregants only attend the services, but they are not involved in serving in the church, which additionally adds another layer of responsibility. Another effect of the congregants being transient, he felt, was that they superficially know Cairo, which translated to them having a lack of connections and networks. He expounded upon this point by saying that there are congregants that come to him in need of a job, a place to live, and recommendations on reliable service providers. They particularly seek his help because he is someone who has lived in Cairo for multiple decades, and he has this knowledge, unlike many of the transient migrants. From all of these effects, he feels that many leadership responsibilities are on him and a handful of congregants who remain in the congregation year after year, which he finds challenging.

Because of the congregation's overall transient nature, his closest relationship is with three Egyptian sisters. They come from a similar habitus and share a significant possession of capital, such as being Egyptian, they are well educated, he and two of the sisters were educated in England, they all live in the upscale neighborhood of Zamalek, and they are similar in age. But he shared that he is closest to them primarily because they have consistently attended and been involved in serving in the congregation with him over these twenty years. They remain a constant as others in the congregation pass through.

There are various ways that Tuan's points of care and genuine human exchange fall short. In one way, it is as if this congregant is not very invested or involved with his fellow congregants as he did not express any deep relationships with congregants. He does not describe any of his relationships to be based on him receiving care or having a genuine exchange. Even this

relationship that he has with the three Egyptian sisters is not based on Tuan's factors but based on their longevity in the church together and in the sharing of church responsibilities. His lack of caring and genuine relationships is confirmed in that his primary reason for coming to the church is to learn from the teachings, and also, he appreciates that congregants are not too involved in his life.

The social dynamics that he has at the church seem to surround this idea that he is serving the migrants in the congregation. In a way, he is a provider of care. Caring for others is something he enjoys, and it gives him purpose as he is older, single, and retired. By caring for others, it also puts him in a position of power, even over influential people in the congregation, such as the priest and the ambassador. It is because he has this capital of being a native Egyptian, which is unique and valued amongst a group of transient migrants, in addition to his cultural capital (Arabic language, knowledge of services available in Egypt), social capital (connections to employment opportunities and government workers) and economic capital (ability to pay for congregant's basic needs). While some of the more financially well off congregants may have the economic capital to help fellow congregants in need, they seem to be lacking other forms of capital such as social connections and a lack of local knowledge that not only would be of benefit to them but assist some of those within the congregation that need support. Their lack of capital, propels those in need in the congregation to seek assistance from this Egyptian congregant, contributing to his position of power. At the same time, he feels responsible, burdened, and perhaps animosity as he and the few other long-term attendees carry on the ministry of the church. In these ways we can also see that Tuan's binary categories of the right and wrong types of people do not work, as migrants within the congregation are both the right

and wrong kinds of people who both contribute and take away meaning from the space of the church, showing that social dynamics are much more complex.

Conclusion

In a space like All Saints', where most of the congregants are migrants who have left behind families and other social networks in their countries of origin, the church has the potential to provide community for these migrants. Relationships with individuals in the church also have the potential to be so powerful that they can actually be place. But as the findings above have shown, the social dynamics that each person is a participant in are different and unique to each individual as many layers contribute to social dynamics and as social dynamics are weaved throughout each congregant's varying experiences in the church.

Findings also showed how social dynamics go beyond Tuan's points of care and genuine human exchange, and they encompass both the positive and negative types of meaning. People can contribute to place making in positive ways, as they can affect one's purpose, one's belonging, and one's personal and spiritual growth. While Bourdieu puts forward the concept that when one interacts in a habitus in which they are from they feel a sense of place, this habitus can reach beyond a shared cultural habitus and can also include a habitus that is based on the shared faith of Christianity as well as a habitus that is based on the shared experience of being a migrant. In addition, people can contribute to place making in negative ways such as being dependent, not contributing, being hypocritical, showing partiality, and by using one's power in unhelpful and at times harmful ways. Lastly, the findings show that just as the same person can take away meaning, they can also contribute meaning, showing that Tuan's binary categories of the right and wrong people fall short. This is seen in the example of leadership at the diocese

dissolving the Bari service while also providing seminary lessons as well as the case of the migrants in need giving purpose to the retired Egyptian while also causing him to feel burdened.

Conclusion

Recalling Tuan's definition for place, it is a space that is known, endowed with value, and a center that houses an accumulation of memories and sentiment.¹²⁸ Amongst the many programs and services All Saints' offers, it provides a space for migrants to have religious experiences, to be equipped with knowledge, faith, and skills, to meet people and build community, to serve one another, and to be employed. Layered and woven throughout these experiences are the factors of time, aesthetics, and people which are not independent factors, but they work together in contributing meaning. While there is some overlap in experiences in the church, each interview partner's experience is uniquely different, uniquely theirs in their process of place making in the church.

Analyzing place making through the lens of time was essential as many congregants at All Saints' only stay for a short duration of time. Initially, I was unsure how time would affect place making as the majority of literature on placemaking, religion, and migration is focused on settled congregants who are within religious communities for long periods of time. But as my findings showed, time did not seem to negatively affect or prevent meaningful place making from happening for those that attended for a short duration of time. Two of the short-term attendees even described that they experienced "life changing" occurrences in the church, which was not inhibited by shortness of time. Time also showed that for congregants that no longer attend the church, no longer physically occupy the space, the church has the potential to still be a place of meaning because of the experiences they had, the relationships built, and the skills, knowledge, and faith they were equipped with in the space.

¹²⁸ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 6, 33.

The findings also showed that when congregants are engaged within the congregation for a long duration of time, there are many more opportunities, much more time, for them to interact with the space and the people of the church in varying ways. Based on interviews with short term attenders, it seemed that their time in the church was highly positive, with few negative experiences. Whereas for long term congregants, they have experienced many more facets of the church, which includes positive, meaningful experiences, as well as bad leadership, disappointment, the effects of worshipping with short term congregants, as they help receive and send off congregants (and priests), as well as continuing the work of the church after people leave. While both the length of time and the intensity of experiences contribute to meaning in the space, findings showed that it could be different types of meaning. Attending the church for many decades brings about familiarity and routine patterns of movement, which is another kind of meaning than a quality, yet brief, moment.

Whether congregants attend the church for a short or long duration of time, their experiences are primarily happening within the cathedral, the space in which they weekly gather together to worship. The aesthetics within the cathedral, such as Bible murals, the altar table, and the cross layout of the church, can be meaningful to congregants in and of themselves because of what they represent and the Christian doctrine they teach. But as the findings showed, meaning for congregants was not so much derived from what the aesthetics physically look like or what they represent, but they are meaningful because they call congregants to action. This was expressed through the layout of the platform and the placement of the partition and communion table. Because of what the space behind the partition represents, it calls congregants to prayer. The altar table and the wine and bread also compel congregants to partake in communion. Through these actions of prayer and taking of communion, findings showed that these rituals

contribute to place making in the space of the cathedral, but ultimately, they showed that ascetics focus the congregant's attention upon a transcendent space. Through the action of prayer and taking communion, congregants are, in a way, transported to a transcendent space. Showing that while aesthetics are bound to place, the interactions that they facilitate are not bound to place. This impacts place making as some congregants give their utmost allegiance to this transcendent space, making All Saints' Cathedral, a place of meaning, but in a temporary sense. This can be particularly helpful to congregants who are marginalized, or they feel that they do not have a place in Cairo. By having the option to place make in this transcendent space, they always have a place.

Just as time and aesthetics are contributing factors to place making, so too are people, yet social dynamics affect and are weaved throughout one's experiences in the church. As most of my interview partners came to Cairo with little or no prior connections, the church provided a space for them to meet people and build community. As the findings showed, people can positively contribute to meaning. This was most often seen as congregants described being cared for in emotional and practical ways, being supported and encouraged, being taught religious teachings, being able to serve others which gave them purpose, and being able to relate. The most central figure that contributed to the church being a place of meaning was that of the priest of the English Speaking Congregation as he is the one that leads the congregation, teaches the sermons, administers the communion, and cares for the people. Many congregants expressed that they felt cared for and shepherded by him and that he led them and taught them well. Findings also showed how those from a similar as well as a different habitus can positively contribute meaning.

People can also take away meaning from the space, causing discomfort. Characteristics such as neediness, hypocrisy, dependency, favoritism, dissimilar ways of thinking, and using one's power to cause harm, were all found within the findings. Particularly those in leadership within the diocese took away meaning from the church through the ways they led their congregations or through the dissolving of a congregation, causing some individuals to leave, worst case scenario, or they continue attending, but strained relationships affect place making. Findings also showed how those from a different habitus, as well as a similar habitus, can negatively contribute meaning.

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