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**BODY-FOCUSED SPIRITUALITY: THE IMPACT OF SPATIAL
STRUCTURAL CHANGES ON RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE**

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Abstract: Drawing on insights from the spatial turn, this analysis examines the role of spirituality in religious experience, particularly focusing on how the body becomes central to transcendent experience in relation to spatial structural changes. It investigates how the emergence of hybrid social spaces contributes to the decline of institutionalised religiosity and how new forms of religiosity amplify the role of individual meaning-making. The paper focuses on how changes in the spatial structure of religious spaces are transforming the perception of the body among religious persons and how body-centred spiritualism is becoming central to religious experience. In this context, the paper discusses both the secular sources of spiritual bodily experience and the new features of sacred experience associated with the changed spatial structure. The analysis interprets this complex phenomenon in terms of body-focused spiritualism. The theoretical novelty of the analysis lies in the fact that, while interpreting spirituality and embodied transcendental experience, it not only relies on classical authors of spatial theory, but also draws on insights from phenomenological analysis in its interpretation of social spaces, the conceptual (spatial) domains of reality, and the body.

Key words: religion, spiritualism, transcendental experience, sacred and secular space, hybrid social spaces, body-focused spirituality, sacred sub-universe

1. Research Tradition and Theoretical Perspective

Since the description of the Spiritual Revolution (Heelas and Woodhead 2005), sociological research has increasingly focused on religiousness that emphasize individual transcendental experiences (Flanagan and Jupp 2007; Houtman and Aupers 2007; Voas 2009; Lynch 2007; Cortois et al. 2018). Analyses of Western societies have convincingly argued that one of the most significant recent trends in religiosity is the growing appeal of spirituality to a broader audience. The study of this increasingly widespread—though not historically unprecedented—form of religious experience has added substantial new insights to our understanding of contemporary religiosity. These analyses, which explore spirituality and the meaning of the body, generally examine temporal trends in religious experience and focus on how the relationship to transcendence is being transformed in an increasingly postmodern society (Ammerman 2013; Bibby 2019; Marshall and Olson 2018; Steensland et al. 2018).

Although the “spatial turn” — a shift in perspective that has been present in social science for decades (Lefebvre 1991; Bourdieu 1985, 1992; Foucault 1980; Giddens 1985; Soja 1989, 1996; Shields 2013)— has influenced social theory, far fewer analyses have addressed the spatial aspects of spirituality’s rise. In particular, few studies have focused on the spatial context of the body’s significant role in spiritual experience. This paper draws on insights from the spatial turn to interpret the role of spirituality in religious experience, with a particular focus on the spatial structural changes that place the body at the center of transcendent experience.

The paper explores how recent spatial structural changes have contributed to the decline of traditional, institutional religiosity and the increasing emphasis on individual spiritual experiences. The theoretical novelty of this analysis lies not only in its use of classical spatial theory to interpret spirituality and body-centered transcendental experiences but also in its incorporation of phenomenological analysis to interpret social spaces, conceptual (spatial) domains of reality, and the body. The analysis also examines how the centrality of the body reinforces religious syncretism and transforms individuals’ relationships to the otherworld. Additionally, it explores how this shift increases the subjectification of charisma among religious individuals. These phenomena are discussed under the term “body-focused spirituality” (a detailed explanation is provided in the paper’s reflection).

Our study examines the body’s privileged role in religious experience from the perspective of spatial theory. The spatial turn’s novelty is its view of social spaces as factors that fundamentally shape social relations.

This means that spatial relations themselves play a formative role in shaping the social forms, actions, and attitudes characteristic of society and its structures. From a sociological analysis of religion, the significance is that the spatial structure of society is not a passive entity but a factor that fundamentally shapes individuals' relationships to religiosity in general and to transcendental experiences in particular (Halbwachs 1980, 128-156, 1992). It could be argued that spaces constructed by human actions influence the content of religiosity, affecting the nature of religious experiences in both individual and collective settings. This includes determining the focus of specific forms of religiosity, such as collective rituals or personal connections with the divine.

The transformations of the last few decades, often labeled as postmodern, have brought significant changes to society's spatial structure and have profoundly impacted the social forms of religiosity. Perhaps the most decisive change has been the dissolution of society's stable spatial structure and the emergence of fluid spaces (Giddens 1985; Bauman 2000; Löw 2016), which have replaced the previously distinct sacred and secular spaces with a system of diffuse spaces (Hervieu-Léger 2002; Schroer 2019, 199-216). This is mainly manifested in the emergence of sacred content in previously clearly secular spaces, as if freeing them from their former confinement. For example, this can be seen in the emergence of major religious events (e.g., World Youth Day) as media events, the prominence of religious leaders (e.g., the Pope) as media personalities, the increase in televised and online worship services, and the public appearance of sacred content (such as the growing popularity of pilgrimages). Conversely, predominantly sacred spaces are also increasingly displaying secular content, which is evident in the popularization of religious content and its intertwining with secular culture (Knoblauch 2008, 2009, 2021; Hepp 2009; Chambers 2013). The secularization of sacred spaces and the profanation of secular spaces result in dynamically changing social spaces in flux, where coexisting and divergent understandings sometimes conflict, while at other times they are less reflective of one another (Kong 2011; Oosterbaan 2014; Costa 2018; Berg 2019).

This social change not only results in a hybridization of sacred and secular spaces but also impacts religious institutions and religious experiences themselves. One of the most important consequences of these changes is that religious institutions, which once held unquestioned authority, now have to compete in the religious marketplace with an increasing number of meanings and structures (cf. Roof 1999; Bowman 1999; Stark and Finke 2000; Redden 2016) to successfully convey their messages to those receptive to transcendence. Changes in spatial structure thus significantly reduce the role of institutional religiosity, opening up a wide space for small groups that were previously peripheral or powerless

in the sacred field (e.g., small religious communities, sects), but most notably for individual religiosity.

At the same time, the role of online spaces in religious experience is increasing (Campbell 2010, 2013; Cheong 2017; Campbell and Tsuria 2021). Yet, religious experience in virtual spaces, encompassing both collective and individual contexts (from online activities of small religious communities to personal viewing and listening to religious content), remains deeply embedded in the actor's everyday physical space experience (Campbell and Connelly 2020). The increased role of online space, however, dislocates individuals from their local realities (Berger 2020). This altered spatial experience further relativizes the role of traditional religiosity in orienting religious persons. Indeed, online space transmits a vast number of religious messages capable of conveying inner satisfaction and harmony to the individual without any connection to the local culture or tradition of the religious person. This further increases religious syncretism and fosters a spirituality increasingly detached from the content of traditional, institutional religiosity, focusing more on individual needs and preferences (Leopold et al. 2014).

2. Changes in Spatial Structure and the Increasing Role of the Body in Transcendental Experience

The transformation of social spaces has provided individuals with more opportunities to move away from the collective beliefs and normative principles that previously defined their religious experiences, allowing them to focus more on themselves (Holloway 2003; Wigley 2018a, b). This shift also fundamentally restructures the way individuals relate to their bodies, opening the door to a form of religiosity that prioritizes the body's expectations, preferences, and needs in religious experiences. This new perspective on the body is naturally linked to changes in the spatial structure of society. While a detailed discussion of the historical development of this issue is beyond the scope of this analysis, it is worth recalling that in the Christian tradition, which has significantly influenced Western religiosity, the dualism of body and soul was emphasized (Löw 2016, 15-16). In this tradition, the focus was clearly on the soul, representing impermanence and the possibility of eternal life. The soul was central in a religious tradition focused on life after death, while the body, associated with transience and sensuality, was viewed as a negative point of reference. Consequently, for the religious person, the task was to humble the body, suppressing its desires and feelings (Giordan 2009).

This conception of the body changes significantly with the spatial shifts of the modern age, as the dominance of sacral spaces is replaced by a worldview shaped by secular spaces. This transition brings a new perspective to the understanding of sacral space, emphasizing the

mundane over the otherworldly. The body gains value through the lens of economic interests that decisively shape the modern world. As a consequence of this shift in perspective, the regulation of health and the body becomes essential (cf. Löw 2016, 93-94), replacing spiritual content in a secular space defined by production and material success. While this modern conception of the body does not negate the soul, it no longer views it in terms of divine or otherworldly content, instead relegating its analysis to the domain of modern psychology, which emerged in the 20th century (cf. Freud 1990; Foucault 1990). However, these features alone do not fully describe the modern conception of the body. The spatial structure of modern society is characterized by the fact that the contents of body and soul are shaped—albeit to a lesser and diminishing extent—by both the traditional Christian conception of sacral space and the secular conception of the body, objectified by the economy, public health, and science.

Scholars of religion have paid little attention to how this dual tradition has been transformed by changes in the spatial structure of society in recent decades. The spatial structure of postmodern society is no longer characterized by a sharp separation between secular and sacred spaces, but by a hybrid spatial structure that blurs the boundaries between the two, with each space bearing the influence of the other (Bognár 2024). In our interpretation, this also reshapes the sacral experience of the body. Indeed, with the dissolution of stable spaces, the secular contents, which are much more dominant in Western society by the 21st century, gain greater influence in shaping the orientation of religious individuals. In other words, with the hybridization of social spaces, the values of secular society increasingly diffuse into sacral spaces, shaping the values of religious individuals. This change in values and the convergence between the values of religious and non-religious individuals has been a recurrent finding of quantitative sociological research on religion in recent decades (cf. Storm 2016, Bognár and Kmetty 2020, 2023, 2025).

We attribute significant importance to these changes in the spatial structure, as they increasingly align the religious worldview, which traditionally focused on the afterlife and contempt for the body, with the approach of secular space. Two of the most significant features of this alignment are the strengthening of a worldly perspective among religious individuals and the postmodern “rehabilitation” of the body. The body image in spiritualism, which centers on individual preferences, aims to achieve bodily health, much like in the secular spaces of the modern age. In other words, the body is no longer seen as an entity to be despised and conquered, but as a fundamental point of reference through which the individual can achieve wholeness and harmony. In this form, the spiritualism of the postmodern age reflects the influence of the secular spaces of modernity, emphasizing the importance of the body while also reflecting an attitude from the modern sacral space, which finds its focus

in the reception of transcendental experiences. Here, we observe the impact of hybrid spaces on the altered perception of the body.

The concept of the body in contemporary spiritualism is also novel in that the sharp opposition between body and soul, as observed in both the Christian tradition and the secular spaces of modernity, is being eliminated due to the influence of hybrid social spaces (cf. Coakley 1997). The individual who focuses on personal spiritual experiences seeks to resolve any opposition that threatens this harmony to create inner peace. It is important to recognize that this is not merely an internal psychological endeavor but is deeply rooted in the individual's altered experience of space. We refer here to the spatial structural effect whereby the diffusion of secular space into sacral space is accompanied by an increasing reinforcement of the secular space's worldview. That is, the value system of secular space also shapes the body perception of religious individuals, expressing the value system of the (secular) modern moral order (Taylor 2007).

The concept of the body as a unity of body and soul took root in individual spiritualism at an earlier stage, of course. It is also due to changes in the spatial structure that this transformation can be observed in traditional, institutional religiosity. Indeed, research in recent decades has shown that secular values and, above all, the popular culture that expresses these values, have a strong influence on the content of religiosity within the church (cf. Knoblauch 2008, 2009, 2021). This influence is evident in the fact that church liturgy and institutional communication have also moved away from traditional messages that contrast body and soul, and have shifted their focus away from addressing religious individuals with visions of the body's damnation. Instead, the message of body-soul harmony has become central to church communication. At the same time, mental health has emerged as a specialized field in its own right, and training professionals in this field has become an essential task for church organizations. These efforts reflect the importance of a message that emphasizes harmony between body and soul, as well as a changing perception of the body. Moreover, church researchers have sought to demonstrate that religiosity has a positive impact on physical and mental health (Clements and Ermakova 2012; Zimmer et al. 2019), even in relation to social media use (Wood et al. 2016).

3. The Transcendent Experience as a Tool for Healing the Body

The shift in society's spatial structure has led to a fundamental transformation in religiosity, placing the body at the center of religious experience. As a result, the body's senses and their signals —whether positive or negative— have gained increasing importance for religious

individuals in determining their transcendent experiences. This emphasis on bodily harmony is driven primarily by the absence of such harmony, implying that achieving a healthy body requires a healing process. In the following, we will explore why religious individuals often lack this harmony and how this absence is related to the spatial dynamics of society.

We have observed that changes in the spatial structure of post-modern society have diminished the role of authoritarianism, which once fundamentally shaped the individual. This has created more space for personal self-constitution (cf. Jameson 2012). This liberation has led to a decline in the influence of institutional hierarchies, paving the way for body-focused spiritualism as a crucial source of religious experience. However, this shift does not erase the lingering effects of previous societal structures. Spiritualism, which has gained prominence alongside these spatial changes, is partly shaped by past social influences and by experiences outside the transcendental realm. Thus, individuals seeking bodily harmony through religious experience are significantly influenced by factors that are both external constraints and social influences unrelated to transcendental experiences.

These social and spatial influences explain why individuals must contend with the powerful hierarchical forces that shaped their personalities in the past. These forces imposed external expectations rather than encouraging self-focus, exerting a coercive effect on personality formation (cf. Foucault 2000). These influences affect both the physical and mental health of the individual, much like the social pressures found in spaces where transcendental meaning-making is limited or absent. This is particularly true in the worlds of work and state administration (cf. Habermas 1995), where, even in postmodern society, secular expectations continue to shape the individual's capacity for meaning. It is not surprising, then, that individuals open to transcendence perceive these social constraints as threats to their physical and mental health — threats that only sacred experience can counterbalance.

This perspective reflects a worldview deeply rooted in Western culture: the notion that the harmony of the individual, in proximity to God, is disrupted by the human world created after the fall, preventing true harmony from being realized. Therefore, for the religious person, physical and mental health are attainable only through a return to the divine realm. This foundational belief suggests that body-centered spiritualism, much like the theological literature rooted in Christian tradition, seeks to restore a fractured harmony. The changes in spatial structure have expanded this inherently religious endeavor, introducing entirely new features that differentiate it from the practices of earlier religiosity. This shift is mainly due to the fact that body-focused spiritualism no longer aims solely at the unity of the soul. Instead, as Meredith McGuire, a pioneering author in this field, argues, it seeks a

“mindful body” (McGuire 2008), where the physical body and its experiences play a central role, challenging the traditional dualistic conception. The body thus becomes the focal point of (self-)healing, and this altered understanding of the body brings new meaning and context to the healing process itself.

In this body-focused spirituality, the goal is not to heal the soul in isolation but to eliminate the factors that limit the person and cause illness, working within the unity of body and soul (Odgers-Ortiz et al 2021). As a result of these spatial changes, this approach seeks to liberate itself from all constraints that could hinder the fulfillment of the self. Healing, therefore, is not limited to spiritual restoration but embraces a holistic approach, employing techniques that address both physical and psychological aspects of the body. In line with society’s hybrid spaces, these techniques are diverse, drawing on all elements of the new body concept to develop a highly hybrid healing process aimed at achieving the desired harmony.

The self, seeking liberation from external constraints, naturally employs traditional religious practices like contemplation and prayer. However, in the context of self- and body-focused spirituality, prayer often takes place in personal or small group settings, where individual preferences—rather than the dictates of institutionalized religion—shape its content and technique. Additionally, this pursuit of harmony extends beyond prayer to various meditation practices, characterized by their departure from institutionalized, collective religious images (Philo et al 2015). As part of the expanding religious syncretism, influences from other world religions and cultural traditions outside of ecclesiastical religiosity (often categorized as superstitions) play a central role.

The primary aim of this healing is to focus on the body, the vessel of spiritual experience, and to achieve harmony by healing it from the mental distress caused by the pressures of secular society and collective religiosity. This spirituality, which seeks wholeness, also aims to heal the physical body, creating an authentic and harmonious reception of spiritual experience (Tiggemann and Hage 2019). Consequently, it incorporates a wide range of healing techniques, from various diets, massages, exercises, and dances to breathing and sound techniques (Otterloo 1999; Gerber 2009; Foy and Mueller 2018). All of these methods strive to transform the body into a blissful and perfect space for religious experience.

In addition to physical conditioning, body-focused spirituality also involves healing techniques that rely on forces not directly experienced in the physical realm, such as paranormal phenomena. Examples include the practices of feng shui, Ayurveda, and yoga. This spiritualism legitimizes previously unrecognized esoteric knowledge and differentiates itself from ecclesiastical religiosity, which has historically regarded these approaches as superstitious or occult. Notably, with the advance of the spiritual

revolution, even ecclesiastical institutions have become more permissive of these interpretations, placing greater emphasis on their spiritual mystical traditions to explain miracles (cf. Knoblauch 2008, 2009; Bindi and Giménez Béliveau 2022).

A new perspective in body-focused spirituality is the inclusion of topics traditionally considered taboo in religious traditions (cf. Foucault 1990) as means of healing and even as important sources of harmony for a body open to transcendence. Consequently, changes in the spatial structure have led to a reevaluation of sexuality —traditionally rejected by sacred spaces— as a factor that can enhance the transcendent experience for those seeking wholeness. Techniques that view sexual intercourse as a source of transcendental experience, such as tantric sex, which aims for a mystical encounter with sacredness beyond mutual pleasure (Urban 2000, 2006), are becoming increasingly integrated into European spiritualism. In body-focused spirituality, the practice of sexuality thus becomes a transcendental experience that realizes the balance and harmony of the body.

4. The Body as a Receptacle of the Intellectually Enclosed Transcendent World

From the discussion so far, it is evident that transcendent experience serves as a means of healing within a spiritual perspective that centers on the body in its quest to connect with the sacred. This transcendental experience, however, is clearly distinct from the realities of everyday life, specifically the secular spaces where rational actors operate within society. Drawing on phenomenological literature, we can assert that body-focused spirituality generates a sub-universe, one that is separated from the everyday experiences of the external world (Ayaß 2017). While the world of everyday reality remains the primary realm for religious experience, it also serves as the reference point against which individuals seeking transcendental experience define their spiritual journeys. This transcendent realm is often interpreted as an intellectually enclosed space, distinct from the everyday, where spiritual experiences unfold. In this sense, we can speak of a crossing of boundaries, where the individual consciously steps away from the mundane world and engages in a transcendent experience that can be shared intersubjectively (Schütz 1962, 335; Schütz-Luckmann 1989, 131).

The central characteristic of religious experience in both modern and earlier societies is that this boundary-crossing typically occurs within a community of believers, in the sacred spaces of institutionalized religiosity (e.g., churches during masses in the Western world). However, the socialization of faith as a collective religious experience, along with its social regulation, is increasingly being replaced by individual strategies of boundary transgression by religious persons. This shift is marked by the

individual creation of a sub-universe of religious experience that is distinct from the everyday world. Consequently, boundary crossings are now formed by individual rites that are only partially linked to collective religious traditions (such as prayer) and are more akin to a patchwork of spiritual practices, incorporating elements of previously unacknowledged knowledge and other world religions. Given the changes in the spatial structure of society and the rise of individual-focused religiosity, clearly identifiable spaces for these boundary crossings no longer exist. Any social space in which an individual can initiate such a boundary crossing may be considered, regardless of whether it is within a secular or sacred societal space. Recent research indicates that these crossings frequently occur in non-places (Wigley 2016, 2018 a, b). However, since boundary crossings typically rely on the self-constitution of the individual, they can also occur in the secular work environment and the increasingly prevalent online spaces (Campbell 2010, 2013, 2021; Cheong 2017; Campbell and Tsuria 2021).

From a phenomenological perspective, transcendental experiences can emerge through entry into the sub-universe of religion. These transgressions are often understood as spatial and temporal closures, but in the context of body-focused spirituality, it is perhaps more valuable to emphasize the role of the body as a space of perception. As society's spatial structure evolves, the body increasingly becomes the focal point of transcendental experience. Merleau-Ponty, a key figure in the phenomenology of perception, describes the body as a constant element in our grasp of the world, a condition for openness to the world around us (Merleau-Ponty 2012). Aligning with our discussion, Merleau-Ponty also highlights the dynamic nature of bodily perception: it is not a passive reception but is characterized by movement and activity at the most fundamental level of experience. The grasping of phenomena occurs within an experiential field, underpinned by a not-yet-conscious and unarticulated understanding of the world. In other words, perception — and the construction of spaces — is bodily, with conscious operations like reflection and intellectual understanding following later. Thus, the perception of reality is deeply intertwined with prereflexive schemas, which play a crucial role in shaping our worldview (Merleau-Ponty 2012).

This phenomenological interpretation brings us closer to understanding the traits of body-focused spirituality. With the spatial structure of society changing, the body becomes the creator of sacred space-time and the site of sacred experience (Holloway 2003). Entry into transcendental experiences also occurs through bodily perception, leading to an increased association of boundary-crossing symbols with the body. The body emerges as the vessel for transcendental experiences, detached from collective sacred spaces, with its adornments (clothing, body jewelry, earrings, necklaces, etc.) reflecting the religious person's spiritual orientation. Similarly, individual rituals that facilitate access to the intellec-

tually enclosed transcendent world are centered around the body. For a spirituality that is increasingly detached from collective religious imaginaries, the body becomes the focal point of transcendental experiences, opening up possibilities for dialogue with ultimate realms of meaning (e.g., the afterlife, paradise) that are absent from everyday experience. These journeys between different realms of meaning are enabled by the activity of bodily perception.

Although Merleau-Ponty did not specifically address the extent to which social circumstances influence the nature of bodily perception — since his phenomenology emphasizes the prereflexive nature of these perceptions— it is reasonable to assume, based on insights from the spatial turn, that the dynamics of bodily perception are shaped not only by anthropological factors but also by changes in spatial structures. We believe this is especially pertinent in the case of body-focused spirituality, where the evolving structure of social spaces further accentuates the individual's dynamic orientation. Indeed, modifications to society's spatial structure have diminished the influence of stable power structures that once limited the dynamics of bodily perception as external constraints, by designating how the body should be perceived from the outside. In postmodern society, the erosion of these stable structures provides individuals with greater latitude for a more personalized perception of the world. The social impulses resulting from these changes in spatial structure enhance the dynamics of anthropological prereflexivity described by Merleau-Ponty. It is no surprise, then, that spirituality, which heightens the self-constitutive role of the individual, has been viewed by many (Williams 2014; Pursuer 2018) as a critical social function of late modern liberal democracy, capable of liberating the individual from social constraints.

This shift in perspective reshapes the relationship between body-focused spirituality and the afterlife, leading to what we term the subjectivization of charisma. Both phenomena are tied to the centrality of the self and stem from a spirituality defined by bodily perception. This privileged role of the body in spiritual experience obviously influences the individual's relationship with the afterlife. From the perspective of body-centered spirituality, death is not seen as a liberation from the body or a path to salvation but rather as the unwanted loss of the body, which is the focal point of religious experience. Spirituality's focus on the body finds it difficult to view death as a positive outcome, resulting in a break from the collective religious tradition of Christianity, which often grapples with the notion of the body's destruction.

As a consequence, there is a significant increase in the number of people in Western society who, while identifying as religious and Christian, also believe in reincarnation (Hervieu-Léger 2006; Voas 2009; Popp-Baier 2010). This belief in reincarnation does not necessarily imply strict adherence to or even knowledge of Hindu or Buddhist traditions.

Instead, it represents an adaptation, mediated by popular culture, aimed at preserving the centrality of the body for adherents of body-focused spirituality and offering hope for the survival of this entity. Furthermore, the belief in reincarnation can help alleviate the existential anxiety of religious individuals in search of identity, as it constructs a world within the intellectually enclosed sub-universe of religion that offers harmony in the afterlife.

The evolving relationship with the afterlife is a clear indicator of the broader consequences of changes in spatial structure, which call for a more fluid, dynamic form of religiosity. This shift also brings about changes in the understanding of charisma, which remains a key element in religious worldviews. While charisma is still associated with some form of supernatural power or special knowledge, what is new is that, as spatial structures change, the authority and respect traditionally associated with charismatic individuals increasingly lose their collective character. This shift relativizes not only ecclesiastical authority and the beliefs of institutionalized religion but also the church's ability to designate who possesses charisma. The loss of a stable spatial structure undermines the power of institutionalized religiosity, manifesting in the collective acceptance of charisma.

For body-focused, individual-centered spirituality, it is the individual's judgment that identifies the charismatic person, reflecting the democratization that follows from the spatial structural changes. This transformation can be termed the democratization of the sacred (Giordan 2009), and it is accompanied by a dynamic change in religious authorities themselves. Consequently, the object of charisma becomes vulnerable to the individual's evolving needs for inner harmony through transcendent experiences. In this way, changes in the spatial structure of society result not only in hybrid spaces and fluid structures but also in a body-focused spirituality whose constant movement shapes ever-changing forms of sacred experience, contrasting with the greater stability of earlier eras.

5. Conclusion

Our analysis examined the impact of changes in the spatial structure of society on contemporary forms of religiosity. We sought to highlight how the transformation of once-distinct secular and sacred social spaces has reshaped religious experience, giving rise to individual forms of religiosity, particularly body-focused spirituality. Our analysis demonstrated that both these spatial changes and the increasing significance of virtual spaces have played a role in bringing new forms of religiosity to the forefront of individual meaning. Conversely, the extent to which these sacred experiences can foster inner harmony and balance for the individual is a crucial determinant of their appeal.

A key finding of our analysis is that the body-focused spirituality of postmodern society is linked to the spatial structural changes in society over recent decades. We argued that the evolving concept of the body within spirituality, and more broadly in contemporary religiosity, can be explained by the emergence of hybrid spaces in society, particularly the profanation of sacred spaces. This new religious body image is primarily understood in terms of the infiltration of secular conceptions of the body into sacred spaces. This development gives rise to a secular understanding of the body that leads religious individuals to prioritize the needs and inner harmony of the body. Instead of the traditional religious dichotomy between body and soul, there is now a tendency to seek balance between them through religious experience. To this extent, this 'postmodern rehabilitation' of the religious body is shaping a new body image within religiosity.

Another novel perspective of our analysis is the interpretation of intellectually enclosed sacred spaces as sub-universes detached from everyday reality, following the phenomenological analytical tradition. We highlighted that the sacred experiences of body-focused spirituality are no longer tied to any specific social space but can occur in any social space due to the hybridization of social spaces. Our phenomenological analysis revealed the impact of the prereflexive traits of bodily perception on transcendental experience and religiosity in general. This led us to outline an identity that is resolutely self-centered yet constantly in flux, shaped by the dynamics of spatial structural change.

The rise of body-focused spirituality significantly impacts both individual identity and, by extension, the structural features of society. Indeed, religious identities in flux must contend with all the challenges inherent in constructing an identity without a stable center. The difficulties in defining the self, constructing a coherent life narrative, and the resulting fragility of identity are challenges specific to postmodern society but are amplified by the rise of body-focused spirituality. This is particularly true since the ever-changing external social conditions and the individual's quest for transcendence—rooted in bodily impulses—lack the constancy needed to stabilize identity. This makes it especially difficult for individuals to achieve the harmony they most desire through spiritual experiences tailored to their person and inner balance. The difficulties and potential failures in this process may warrant further examination. Additionally, the transformation of religious experience within this context will also impact the macro-level integration of society, influencing the extent to which it can underpin or hinder shared values and actions among individuals.

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