

**'Thanks to London and to God': living
religion transnationally among
Brazilian migrants in London and
'back home' in Brazil**

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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September 2011

Declaration

I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

Signed

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Abstract

This thesis explores the role of religion in the everyday, transnational lives of Brazilian migrants in London and on their return to Brazil. It contributes to an emerging body of work that recognises the importance of religion within transnational processes and foregrounds the experiences of Brazilians in London, a growing yet still largely invisible new migrant group in London. While the study explores the role of religious institutions in the transnational lives of Brazilian migrants, it works with the notion of religion as lived experience to give due weight to the perspectives of migrants themselves. It examines the ways in which migrants negotiate their religious beliefs and practices in different places and create new connections between them.

The study draws on a qualitative methodological framework, which included 78 in-depth interviews with Brazilian migrants in London and on their return to Brazil, religious leaders, and migrants' family members. It also involved extended participant observation in one Catholic and one evangelical Protestant church in London, as well as at community events and in migrants' domestic spaces in London and five 'sending' towns in Brazil. Empirically, the project reveals some of the ways in which religion functions transnationally through examining how religious institutions and their leaders adapt to new contexts, and how religion becomes a crucial resource for migrants at all stages of their migration experience, including on their return. With reference to migrants' own stories, it explores the ways that they draw on religion to cope with particular challenges related to migration, but also how engagement with the spiritual enables migrants to give meaning to their experiences.

The thesis develops the concept of *transnational religious spaces* to highlight the ways in which religion permeates the spaces of transnationalism and functions within and across multiple scales, including the global, the local, the institutional, the individual, the corporeal and the virtual. These spaces incorporate those who migrate, those who return 'back home', and migrants' families who experience the absence of their loved ones. Yet while *transnational religious spaces* can enable migrants to create alternative spaces of belonging, I argue that they can also be exclusionary, creating new barriers at the same time as opening up existing ones. I also propose a related concept of *religious remittances* whereby changing religious practices and beliefs are transferred across borders, adapting to new contexts.

Acknowledgements

I am greatly indebted to many people who have inspired, supported and put up with me at various stages in the production of this thesis, and to whom I express my deepest gratitude. I would especially like to thank Dr. Cathy McIlwaine for her unstinting support and guidance throughout the process. Not only has her depth of knowledge and research experience never ceased to inspire and challenge me, but I will also always value her kindness, enthusiasm and generosity of spirit. I am also infinitely grateful to Professor Jon May for his constructive and insightful comments on several drafts of the thesis and throughout my research. Funding for this study was provided by the ESRC with an additional fieldwork grant from the Society of Latin American Studies, for which I am very grateful.

The research would never have come about without the invaluable input of all those who participated in this study through generously sharing their time and stories with me. I am extremely grateful to the leaders and members of St Mary's, the CEL and the CEBH and to all the research participants who welcomed me into their churches, workplaces and homes. I wish to especially thank Ana-Carla, Michelle and Cleveson in London; and Geraldo, Odete, Sheila, Michel, Graça, Jesus and Irmã Rosita in Brazil. I also wish to thank Sueli Siqueira, Maria Geralda Almeida and Beatriz Padilla for welcoming me to their research centres and for their encouragements and insights for my project.

A special thanks also to my dear friends and co-members of GEB, Ana, Graça, Yara, Cleveson, Tania and Gustavo for the inspiring discussions about Brazilian migration, for patiently helping me with my Portuguese and for making me truly appreciate the value of teamwork. I would also like to thank colleagues in the School of Geography at Queen Mary. I am grateful to Ed Oliver, Helen McLurg, Marta Timoncini and Jennifer Murray in particular for their support with the practicalities of the project; and to Claire Thompson, Camille Aznar, Evelyn Owen, Mara Ferreri, Natalie Savona, Francesco Salvini, Imogen Wallace, Tim Heinemann and Kate Hardy for providing a supportive, stimulating and enjoyable environment to work in.

I am eternally grateful for the support of my family and friends. Thank you to Sam and Jane for their enthusiasm and generosity, and especially thanks to little Eva for providing a constant source of joy. I would also like to thank Emma and Sarah for

always reassuring me and providing welcome distractions. I wish to express a special thank you to James who has patiently endured the upheavals that this project has brought about over the last three years and lovingly supported me throughout. Finally, I wish to thank my parents for their unabated support, encouragement and inspiration. I dedicate this to them.

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Acronyms

ABRAS	Associação Brasileira no Reino Unido (Brazilian Association in the UK)
ABRIR	Associação Brasileira de Iniciativas Educacionais no Reino Unido (Brazilian Association for Educational Projects in the UK)
CEB	Comunidades Eclesiais de Base (Christian Base Communities)
CEBH	Comunidade Evangélica de Belo Horizonte (Evangelical Community of Belo Horizonte)
CEL	Comunidade Evangélica de Londres (Evangelical Community of London)
CNBB	Conferência Nacional Dos Bispos do Brasil (National Council of Brazilian Bishops)
CRBE	Conselho de Representantes dos Brasileiros no Exterior (Council of Represents for Brazilians Abroad)
GEB	Grupo de Estudos sobre Brasileiros no Reino Unido (Brazilian Migration to the UK research Group).
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IPPR	Institute for Public Policy Research
IURD	Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus (Universal Church of the Kingdom of God)
MRE	Ministério das Relações Exteriores (Ministry for Foreign Affairs – Brazil)
PBE	Pastoral dos Brasileiros no Exterior (Pastoral for Brazilians Abroad)
RCC	Renovação Carismática Católica (Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement)

Glossary

<i>Brasilidade</i>	‘Brazianness’
<i>Culto</i>	Services in the evangelical church
<i>Festa</i>	Festivity
<i>Goiano</i>	Person from the Brazilian state of Goiás
<i>Irmão/irmã</i>	Brother/sister – used among members of the evangelical church.
<i>Ministérios</i>	Church ministries
<i>Missa</i>	Mass held in a Catholic church.
<i>Padre</i>	Father or Priest
<i>Saudade</i>	Feeling of longing, nostalgia or yearning for something or someone that is distant.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Ana arrived in London in 2003, aged 23. She left her home in Aparecida de Goiânia, a small town in central Brazil, where she was living with her parents, Carolina and Manuel, her brother, Rogerio, and her sister Carla. She decided to migrate because she felt she had no other possibility of paying off the debts she had incurred after an accident in which she had written off her car. The car had been essential for her marketing job, as well as being the family's only means of transport. A friend from her church mentioned that a girl in their town was leaving for London where she had heard from other Brazilians living there that it was easy to find work and earn good money. Ana prayed and put the idea to God. Drawing strength from His support, she resolved to embark on her own migration journey. She borrowed money from several friends and family members and went to London.

On arrival at Heathrow, Ana was granted a tourist visa, which she soon exchanged for a student one. Working in a series of low-paid jobs as a cleaner, waitress and shop assistant, she gradually managed to build herself a life in London, studying English, obtaining a job as a receptionist in an estate agency, and marrying a Brazilian man, Alfredo. She still lives in London with her husband and two young children who were born there. The couple are active participants in the charismatic group at London's Brazilian Catholic Chaplaincy, where they regularly perform songs and participate in a weekly prayer group, as well as attending the more traditional Mass. For Ana, religion has played a crucial role in her successful migration experience, not only because of the friends she has made through her participation at the church, who have provided her with a sense of community, but also thanks to what she feels has been God's perpetual protection and spiritual support.

Two years later, Ana's brother, Rogerio, decided to join her in London to try to make some money to pay off his debts, and improve his chances of getting a better job back in Brazil than his work as a petrol attendant. Unlike Ana, however, Rogerio did not make it through UK immigration controls at Heathrow, and was instead sent straight back to Brazil, without even getting the chance to see his sister. Rogerio was deeply disappointed, but he said that he came to realise it was part of God's plan for

him, protecting him from the difficulties he would have faced as an irregular migrant in London, which could have been far worse than his life in Brazil. In 2009, Carolina, Carla, and Carla's young daughter, Yolanda, came to London and, in contrast to Rogerio, they were granted a six-month tourist visa. Carolina arrived in London to support Ana who was about to have her second baby. Carla came to learn English and to work. They all stayed for ten months.

Manuel, Ana's father, stayed at home in Aparecida as his family members travelled between London and Brazil. He was only able to imagine life in London through the stories they told, and the photographs they sent via the Internet. However, he also felt close to them through his prayers, and drew comfort from the knowledge that God was protecting them, and that there was a church they could regularly attend to nourish their faith. He was grateful to London for the opportunities the city had offered his daughter, and for the improvements they had been able to make to their family home and the new car they had been able to buy with the remittances Ana sent home. Above all, he was grateful to God for opening the doors and facilitating Ana's migration, and for keeping her safe.

The story of Ana and her family echoes the experiences of many Brazilian migrants in London, and reveals some of the ways in which religion and migration are closely intertwined. Ana's migration experience would not have been the same had it not been for her religious faith and that of her family, which provided them with support and spiritual guidance in the face of suffering. Yet Ana's religious faith would not perhaps have become such a crucial part of her life had it not been vital in helping her cope with many of the challenges she had faced in London. While social and economic factors undoubtedly influenced Ana's migration trajectory, to focus on these alone would be to neglect a crucial element of her everyday life in London and the nature of the transnational connections she maintained with people and places 'back home' in Brazil.

Through the narratives of Brazilian migrants in London and on their return to Brazil, of religious leaders, and of migrants' family members, this thesis explores the intersections between religion and international migration within and between multiple scales, including the global, the local, the institutional, the individual, the corporeal and the spiritual. While migration research has advanced in recent decades to consider, for example, the transnational nature of migration phenomena, and the

multiple social and economic factors that influence migration flows, one key aspect of such processes remains notably under-researched, namely ‘the powerful influence of religion’ (Hagan, 2008: 156).

Brazilians as a new migrant community in a ‘super-diverse’ city

Migration represents an important and controversial issue within contemporary British society. However, research to date remains selective and often subsumed into debates around race relations or national security. Indeed, London’s Brazilian community received widespread public and media attention in connection with the wave of paranoia surrounding the ‘war on terror’ in July 2005 when the Brazilian migrant Jean Charles de Menezes was shot dead, having been mistaken for a suicide bomber. Yet aside from this brief exposure, Brazilians in London have remained largely invisible.

Despite increasing acknowledgement among scholars of the dramatic changes in the nature of migration flows to the UK since the post-war migrations from the Caribbean and South Asia (Vertovec, 2007; Cock, 2009), migration from Latin American countries, including Brazil, has until very recently been absent from such discussions (McIlwaine et al, 2011, Evans et al, 2011). While large numbers of Latin Americans have migrated to Europe in recent years, partly owing to the increased restrictions on migration to the US since 9/11, existing research that has responded to these shifts has so far been focused predominantly on Spain, which has received the largest number of Spanish-speaking Latin Americans (Pellegrino, 2004; Peixoto, 2009), or on Portugal where Brazilians now comprise 25% of all migrants in the country (Padilla, 2006; Sardinha, 2011).

Factors contributing to the invisibility of Latin Americans within both academic and public spheres in the UK include: the relative recentness of the migration flows, the tendency for migration research to focus on communities with direct colonial or historical links to Britain, and the fact that a high proportion of Latin

American migrants are irregular¹ (McIlwaine, 2011a). With regard to Brazilians specifically, scholars have also suggested that, compared with many other migrant groups, there exist few examples of institutional or informal support networks to mobilise or unite the community (Jordan and Düvell, 2002). In a way that parallels studies of Brazilian migrants in the US (Margolis, 1998; Martes, 2000), there appears to be a relative lack of solidarity among Brazilian migrants in London (Evans et al, 2007).

Yet there is little doubt that London's Brazilian community has grown rapidly in recent years.² This is evident in the emergence of a growing number of Brazilian shops, restaurants and, perhaps most significantly, a diverse range of new religious institutions. Indeed, the UK, and London in particular, has become an important destination for migrants from Brazil, with recent figures suggesting that the UK receives the highest proportion of Brazilians in Europe (MRE, 2009). Brazilian migrants thus represent a significant new migrant community in London (McIlwaine et al, 2011) whose presence contributes to the extensive diversification of migration flows to the city that has led to Vertovec's (2007) coining of the term 'super-diversity'. London's 'ethnoscape' (Appadurai, 1996) no longer comprises merely officially recognised minority ethnic groups in Britain, but rather encompasses,

more migrants from more places entailing more socio-cultural differences going through more migration channels leading to more, as well as more significantly stratified, legal categories (which themselves have acted to internally diversify various groups), and who maintain more intensely an array of links with places of origin and diasporas elsewhere (Vertovec, 2007: 1043)

Moreover, as McIlwaine (2011a: 126) argues in her discussion of London's Latin American population, "super-diversity" exists 'within "new migrant groups"' as well as 'between them' (see also Willis, 2009: 144).

The increasingly complex and 'super-diverse' nature of migration flows has challenged well-established paradigms within the study of migration and revealed the

¹ The terms 'irregular', 'undocumented' and 'illegal' are often used synonymously to refer to migrants who enter and/or stay in a country without the relevant documents authorising them to do so. The term 'irregular' migration is generally preferred as it avoids the implication of migrant criminality and 'best captures the complexity of the issue' (IPPR, 2006: 5; see also McIlwaine et al, 2011). Here I use the term 'irregular', unless citing an interview or other source.

² The term 'community' is problematic when applied to something that may be far from united or static. Indeed, 'Brazilian community' is used here to depict a rather heterogeneous, transient and dynamic group of migrants, but one that is highly recognizable in terms of its sociolinguistic and sociocultural presence and coherence. For a conceptual discussion of community, see Kivisto (2001: 573).

need for new forms of theoretical analysis and research methods (Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007). Analyses of migration that pointed to linear movements from one nation state to another have increasingly been revealed as insufficient in describing realities in which migrants in fact have ‘complex relations to different locales [...] involving social, symbolic and material ties between homelands, destinations and relations between destinations’ (Anthias, 2000: 21-22).

The emergence of ‘transnational studies’ in the early 1990s reflects one response to the conceptual challenges created by the practices of individuals and communities who live their lives across borders and who maintain diverse links with their ‘places of origin’ and with ‘diasporas elsewhere’ (Vertovec, 2007: 1043). Early conceptualisations of transnational phenomena emerged in the US in relation to the practices of labour migrants whose lives involved multiple connections that spanned international borders and who were described as ‘transmigrants’ (Glick Schiller et al, 1995). More recently the notion of ‘transnational social spaces’ has been used to denote the multiple levels of transnationalism and the multi-faceted interactions between wider socio-political contexts and concrete changes in people’s everyday lives (Faist, 1998, 2000; see also Pries, 1999).

Transnationalism has also been increasingly used within studies of migrant groups in Europe, in particular in relation to debates about integration (McIlwaine, 2011b). Scholars have explored the extent to which migrants’ maintenance of transnational ties with their homelands, and elsewhere, hinders or facilitates their engagement with local contexts (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002; Morawska, 2003; Ehrkham, 2005; Cock, 2009; Sheringham, 2010a). Despite the important insights provided by these theorisations of transnationalism, notably absent within such discussion are the processes of return migration and the experiences of migrants who return to their places of origin (Potter et al, 2005). Moreover, the role of religion within these transnational processes has also been largely neglected in research, especially in the UK.

Transnationalism and migrants’ religious trajectories

Just as the diversification of migration flows has led to profound social transformations and challenged well-established paradigms, so too the global religious

arena has undergone dramatic shifts in recent years, and this has led to important changes in the way it is studied (Lechner, 2006). The predictions of widespread secularisation in response to accelerated processes of modernisation and globalisation have been challenged by the emergence of multiple new religious spaces, beliefs, and practices. Indeed, this increasingly complex scenario of religious diversity has led to recent debates among scholars about the notion of a ‘postsecular society’ (see Habermas, 2008) with a significant focus on the spaces of the ‘postsecular city’ (Beaumont and Baker, 2011).

Yet while migration is undoubtedly an important driver for these religious transformations, and while religion is arguably an important factor influencing recent migration flows, there remains a relative lack of research that examines the relationship between these two phenomena especially with regard to the UK. Studies that have explored the interplay between religion and migration have been largely focused on the US context particularly in relation to the impact of migrants’ religious practices on the US ‘religious landscape’ (Levitt, 2007). In the UK, research has tended to focus predominantly on Islam and has generally regarded migrant religion as an impediment to integration (Foner and Alba, 2008). Within recent discussions of ‘postsecularism,’ scholars have studied the increased role of faith-based organisations (FBOs), within civil society (Wills et al, 2009; Cloke et al, 2005, 2010). However, rather than taking migrants themselves as their standpoint, such discussions are concerned with the institutional realm and the role of religion within increasingly complex state-civil society relationships. What is more, while some scholars have considered the religious practices of recent and non-Muslim migrants in London (Garbin, 2010; Krause, 2008), Latin Americans, and in particular Brazilians, have been absent from such research.

Elsewhere, scholars have called for new approaches to religion as ‘lived’ and experienced in spaces and through practices that go beyond the conventionally sacred spaces of institutional religion (Orsi, 1997; Ammerman, 2007; McGuire, 2008). However few studies have drawn out the connections between the experience of migration and religion as ‘lived’ from the perspectives of migrants themselves. Moreover, as well as privileging religious congregations over ‘the spatialities of religion that lie beyond the church and chapel’ (Brace et al, 2006: 38; see also Kong, 2010), research into migrant religion has tended to focus on the receiving context with little consideration of how religion is intertwined with all stages of the migration

process, or of the role it plays in migrants' decision to migrate and their experiences of return (Hagan and Ebaugh, 2003).

Positioning the research and its objectives

This thesis aims to address some of these lacunae in contemporary migration research in the UK by focusing on the experiences of a recent migrant group about which little is known. More specifically, I explore the role of religion in the experiences of Brazilian migrants both in London and 'back home' in Brazil. The focus is thus 'transnational' and incorporates multiple sites into its field of inquiry. I draw on conceptualisations of religion as lived experience in order to give due weight to the perspectives of migrants themselves and the ways in which they negotiate their religious beliefs and practices within different geographical and institutional scales and how they create new connections between them.

My decision to take religion as the primary focus of this study stems, in part, from my experience conducting research among Brazilian migrants in a small town in Western Ireland in the summer of 2008 (Sheringham, 2010a). In the town of 3000 people (of which around a third were Brazilian), there were seven different Brazilian evangelical churches and a Catholic church that celebrated Mass in Portuguese twice a week. As well as attending to the migrants' spiritual needs, the churches also represented important spaces of social support, especially in the absence of more formalised channels of assistance. Thus, in addition to their important role in enabling migrants to nurture their religious faith, these religious institutions, predominantly established by Brazilians for Brazilians, fulfilled multiple functions affecting the social and material lives of migrants. Furthermore, a recurring theme in the narratives of many of my interviewees was how their faith played a fundamental role in their experience of migration and their adaptation to an unfamiliar environment.

Conducting research among Brazilian migrants in London as part of a separate study, I also encountered a vast array of Brazilian places of worship of multiple denominations. Indeed, the emergence of a wide range of Brazilian religious institutions in London has clearly had a major impact on the city's religious landscape contributing to the revival of a waning Catholic Church in some areas (Davies et al, 2006), and the appearance of entirely new places of worship in unexpected locations.

Yet as well as the impact on the city of London, I had many questions as to why migration from Brazil was accompanied by the burgeoning of Brazilian religious institutions as opposed to secular organisations. What role do these places of worship play in the everyday lives of Brazilian migrants? And what is the significance of religion in the lives of these migrants outside these institutions as they cope with the challenges of life in London?

My research seeks to respond to some of these questions as part of a deeper inquiry into the role of religion in the everyday lives and imaginations of Brazilian migrants in London and their transnational ties to Brazil. The broad aim of my research is to explore the interplay between religion and migration processes within and across different geographic and institutional scales. My research objectives involve examination of the following:

- 1) The role of religious institutions and their leaders in the lives of Brazilian migrants in London and back home in Brazil.
- 2) The different ways in which migrants use religious institutions in response to the experience of migration to London, and in the creation and maintenance of transnational ties with Brazil.
- 3) The role of religion in all stages of the migration process between Brazil and London beyond the institutional realm.

Empirically, the thesis focuses on two Brazilian churches in London, one Catholic and one evangelical Protestant, and drawing on the narratives of the church leaders, it explores the role of these places of worship in the lives of Brazilian migrants in London and return migrants in Brazil. The study also moves beyond the congregational settings and explores migrants' religious narratives and the ways in which religion becomes a resource that enables them to give meaning to their experiences. Yet rather than suggesting a separation between the institutional and the individual, between a 'before' and an 'after' migration, between London and 'back home', or between the spiritual and the material, I argue that an approach that conceptualises religion as lived in the lives of migrants in fact challenges the boundaries between these realms of experience.

While acknowledging the important debates surrounding the concept of scale, particularly within the discipline of geography (Marston, 2000; Brenner, 2001), I use the term in this thesis to refer to the multiple and often overlapping realms within which religion is practised and experienced, including the global, the transnational, the institutional, the virtual, the corporeal and the spiritual. The study puts forwards the concept of *transnational religious spaces* which, it is argued, incorporate these multiple scales as well as the junctures between them. Religion's role in the lives of migrants is not confined to the receiving context, but rather influences the entire migration process as well as the lives of those who do not migrate themselves, but who experience the absence of a friend or family member. The ways in which religious practices and beliefs are transferred across borders between sending, receiving and return settings is conceptualised through the notion of *religious remittances*.

Outline of the thesis

Chapter 2 outlines the main theoretical debates that inform the conceptual framework of the study. Since the thesis seeks to consider the interplay between broader processes of religion and globalisation and some of the more grounded ways in which religion is experienced in the everyday lives of migrants, the framework draws on literature from a range of disciplines. The four main sections of the chapter focus on: globalisation and religion, geographies of religion, transnational studies, and religion and transnationalism. I argue that the concept of lived religion is useful for bringing together some of the many ways in which religion is manifested in the lives of migrants. The chapter also proposes the concept of *transnational religious spaces* to capture the ways in which religion in the lives of migrants influences those who return as well as those who 'stay put'. The related concept of *religious remittances* is also put forward to refer to the ways in which religious practices, beliefs and spaces are transferred and modified as they are bound up in the crossing of borders.

Chapter 3 outlines the methodological framework that was adopted for the study, and situates it within wider methodological debates surrounding research on transnationalism and religion. While it draws on data from quantitative surveys that were carried out among Brazilians in London, the research took a broadly qualitative,

ethnographic approach, which included in-depth interviews and participant observation in several research sites in London and Brazil, including three religious institutions. The challenges of researching in these multiple, and often unfamiliar, sites, as well as my position as a ‘non-religious’ observer, are also reflected upon in this chapter. I argue that a multi-sited, qualitative, methodology is needed to capture the ways in which religion is practised and experienced at different stages throughout the migration process.

Drawing on existing literature on Brazilian migration and religion, as well as quantitative data from a recent survey of Latin Americans in London, and on the narratives of my research participants, **Chapter 4** provides some background information in order to contextualise the research within a broader framework. Firstly it considers the Brazilian context: the relatively recent phenomenon of emigration from the country, as well as significant changes within the country’s religious landscape. The chapter then provides some historical background to Brazilian migration to Europe and more specifically to the UK, with a final section that considers religion as a factor within such flows. I argue that in order to understand how religion is an integral factor within the experiences of many Brazilian migrants and their families, and the formation of transnational religious spaces, it is crucial to consider the situation in the sending (and return) setting, as well as the receiving context.

Chapter 5 takes religious institutions as its main focus, and draws primarily on fieldwork conducted in two churches in London and one in Brazil, which had direct ties to one of the London-based churches. Seeking to move beyond rigid denominationally-based concepts of religious institutions, the chapter argues that these churches represent hybrid spaces that are shaped by multiple factors and actors. In particular, the chapter highlights the crucial role of religious leaders in shaping these spaces. Indeed, like migrants, these places of worship and their leaders need to adapt to the challenges of a new environment. The chapter reveals some of the ways in which these churches offer support for migrants and their families, but also argues that they can engender new forms of exclusion.

Chapter 6 also takes religious institutions as its principal field of inquiry, but in this instance the perspective is transferred to that of the ‘users’ of those institutions and thus the migrants themselves. It explores how the churches are used by migrants to address their practical needs relating to the experience of being a migrant, to

socialise with other Brazilians, and to create a sense of community and belonging, but also, to nourish their faith in God. The chapter argues that rather than see these social and spiritual ‘uses’ as separate, the two need to be seen as interrelated, and it suggests that the religious narratives and practices of the research participants often seem to challenge the conceptual boundaries between the ‘sacred’ and the ‘secular’. The use of the Internet among congregants is also explored, revealing new virtual spaces for migrants to access their religion and connect with people and places elsewhere. Finally, this chapter argues that religious institutions can be exclusionary for some migrants who feel that their lifestyles do not fit with the strict moral codes associated with the churches’ doctrines.

Chapter 7 moves beyond the institutional setting, and considers how religion infuses the everyday lives of migrants and their families outside the space of the church. The chapter explores how migrants, both members of the churches and non-members, refer to how their faith is accessible in the spaces that they inhabit in their everyday lives - including their homes, work-places and public transport - and becomes a crucial source of support. The chapter also reveals how religious narratives are used by migrants to make sense of all aspects of their migration experience, in many cases enabling them to see it as God’s will. Finally, the chapter shows how religion becomes an important resource supporting migrants in the creation and maintenance of connections between their lives in London and their families ‘back home’ in Brazil. I argue that a conceptualisation of ‘religion-as-lived’ in migrants’ everyday lives allows a deeper understanding of the religious dimensions of transnationalism, but also of how transnational possibilities impact upon migrants’ own religions.

Chapter 8 outlines the conclusion of the thesis through a summary of the research findings in relation to its main aims. It considers some of the conceptual and empirical contributions of the study, in particular the notion of religion as an integral part of the migration experience, which overlaps with a diversity of different factors, and is manifested across, and within, multiple scales. These findings are captured in the concepts of *transnational religious spaces* and *religious remittances*, which are developed in the thesis. I argue that these concepts represent important contributions to research into transnational migration and religion since they point not only to the crucial role of religion within transnational phenomena, but also incorporate the sending and return settings that are largely neglected within studies of

transnationalism. Finally, the chapter briefly outlines how some of the main findings of the study can fruitfully be taken forward in future research.

Chapter 2

A lived religion approach to migration

The current research examines the role of religion in the everyday lives of Brazilian migrants in London and, more broadly, religion's role in all aspects of their migration experience, including on their return to Brazil. While there exists a vast literature relating to migrant transnationalism and to the changing role of religion in global society, there is a dearth of research that examines the relationship between the two (Vertovec, 2008). As Ebaugh and Chafetz (2002: 3) write, '[w]hile studies of transnationalism have increased in the past several decades, one dimension of the process has been virtually neglected: the role of religion.'

Some recent studies of migration processes have responded to the need to bring religion (back) in, yet this remains largely limited to the US context, and the ways in which migrants have contributed to fundamental changes in the US religious landscape (Warner and Wittner, 1998; Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003; Leonard et al, 2005; Levitt, 2007). Moreover, research that links religion and migration has tended to focus predominantly on the religious institutions themselves and the transnational religious networks they create and enable (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000), or on the role that religion plays in the process of settlement for migrants (Levitt, 2007; Foner and Alba, 2008; Akresh, 2010). In the European context, the few studies that have considered the religious practices of migrants have focused predominantly on Islam (Foner and Alba, 2008; see also Kong, 2010), on transformations within contemporary religious institutions (Smith, 2000; Davis et al, 2006), or on the extent to which religion encourages or inhibits migrant incorporation (Tubergen, 2007).

The ways in which religion impacts upon the lives of migrants in all stages of the migration process – before, during and after they have migrated - has been virtually neglected in migration research (Hagan and Chafetz, 2003). There has also been a marked lack of engagement with the work of scholars who have called for a focus on 'lived' religion (Orsi, 1985; Hall, 1997; McGuire, 2008), or what Ammerman (2007) has called 'everyday religion'. This work provides important insights for my study as it moves beyond the analysis of religion through rigid

denominational boundaries and reveals how religion as lived ‘cannot be separated from other practices of everyday life’ (Orsi, 2002: 172).

In light of the neglect of work that considers the importance of religion among ‘new’ migrants in the UK, the conceptual framework for this study draws on literature from several research areas. Indeed, as Daniel Groody (2010: 32), a Jesuit priest and prominent scholar of globalisation, migration and theology argues, ‘[a]cademic reflection requires its own transborder discourse to understand the complex phenomenon of global migration and its multidimensional implications’. The approach adopted here aims to capture some of the multiple levels of religion’s influence on the experiences of Brazilian migrants. More specifically, the framework seeks to examine the interplay between broader processes of global transformation in which religion plays a major role, and the ways in which the religious practices and beliefs of migrants adapt to such processes in more specific ways in their everyday lives. As notions of transnational interconnectedness and, concurrently, integration and place-making, become increasingly debated and explored, my research seeks to highlight the hitherto neglected importance of religion within such discussions.

The chapter is divided into four main parts. It begins with a broad analysis of how the interrelationship between globalisation and religious change has been theorised, including a discussion of how some institutional religions have responded to, been affected by, and impacted upon global changes. The second part of the review explores some of the ways in which geographers, across the discipline, have engaged with questions of religion, as ‘geographies of religion’ becomes a burgeoning research field. The third section examines some of the key debates associated with ‘transnational studies’, ranging from early work that focused on transnational connections and circuits, to more recent work that explores how transnational processes are individually experienced or ‘embodied’. These debates provide some important conceptual insights for the study of migration and religion. The final section discusses existing literature relating to the religious dimensions of transnationalism and migration. Following an outline of existing work on migrant religious institutions, it discusses concepts of everyday, or ‘lived’, religion and suggests how they can provide a more grounded approach to understanding religion’s role in migration processes. Thus, through bringing together perspectives from the sociology and geography of religion, transnational studies, and more grounded research on the everyday lives of migrants, this chapter reveals some potentially

fruitful insights for examining the role of religion within, but also across, multiple realms of experience.

Religion and globalisation

Against the tide of secularisation

The sleeping giant of religion, whose perpetual dream is our collective dream as a species, has never died, and it is now in the process of at least rolling over and at most leaping to its feet (Csordas, 2009: 1).

Despite the fact that, as Rudolph (1997: 1) remarks, '[r]eligious communities are among the oldest transnationals,' the prevailing literature across the social sciences relating to globalisation, and more recently to 'transnationalism', has tended to ignore religion's vital role within globalising processes (see also Csordas, 2009: 1).³ Theoretical work on globalisation, which proliferated during the 1980s and 1990s in particular, tended to focus on its economic, political and, more recently, cultural dimensions, yet within a broadly secular framework, whereby globalisation was linked to modernity and to a move away from tradition (Vazquez and Marquardt, 2003; see also Beyer, 2006). The established hypothesis among scholars was that modernity would lead to secularisation and the weakening of religion's importance, or at least its withdrawal from the public realm (Berger, 1967; Luckman, 1967, c.f. Casanova, 1994). Indeed, according to Casanova (1994: 17), the inevitability of secularisation was so widely accepted that, until the 1980s, it was almost 'taken-for-granted' that religion's significance would decline. As Vazquez and Marquardt (2003: 4) suggest, '[o]perating under Enlightenment-based notions of history and agency, many social scientists have tended to dismiss religion's capacity to shape social life.'

However, the irrefutable evidence of a religious resurgence in recent decades – most notably in the Global South and with increasing prevalence in major cities of the Global North (Freston, 2001) - has challenged such 'secularising' or 'privatising' predictions (Beyer, 1990; Casanova, 1994), and there is a growing consensus that they

³ 'Transnationalism' and 'globalisation' are highly contested terms, whose meanings are far from clear, and they are often used interchangeably. Yet scholars have pointed to important distinctions between the two terms. My use of the terms follows (broadly) Kearney 's (1995: 548) distinction, in which '[w]hereas global processes are largely decentred from specific national territories and take place in global space, transnational processes are anchored in and transcend one or more nation states.'

were mistaken (Vazquez and Marquardt, 2003:17). Recent theories have suggested not that secularisation is not happening at all - as there is little doubt that religion has lost its visible influence in certain contexts (notably in Northern Europe) - but rather that the reality is far more complex than presumed and that, within such a diverse arena, secularisation represents 'one situation among others' (Berger, 2002: 292; see also Casanova, 1994; Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003; Wilford, 2009).

In tracing the relationship between religion and globalisation, some scholars have noted the historical links with imperialism and the ways in which conquest and colonialism have, as Lehmann (2002: 10) argues, 'almost invariably been associated with religious expansion and conflict' (see also Lechner, 2007: 1024). Yet, while reference to history clearly reveals that globalisation – i.e. the movement of, and connections between, people, ideas, and things at the global scale - is far from a new phenomenon, there is little doubt that fundamental changes in economic, social and political structures have transformed and accelerated global interconnectedness (Coleman, 2000: 55). Such profound changes not only influence the socio-political environments in which we live, but also require new forms of academic analysis, often challenging well-established paradigms. In the search for new paradigms, however, religion's role in 'shaping the various processes contributing to globalisation' (Beckford, 2000: 165) has been largely overlooked.

Robertson's (1992) influential book *Globalisation: Social Theory and Global Culture* discusses the ways in which globalisation involves the simultaneous universalisation of the particular and the particularisation of the universal, and thus suggests how the concept refers 'both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole' (8). With regard to the cultural dimensions of globalisation, these notions have been significant in conceptualisations of how, within a globalising and ever more interconnected context, difference and diversity become, paradoxically, increasingly manifest (Beyer, 2006; see also Appadurai, 1996; Lehmann, 2002).

Following this move from discussions of the large-scale movement of capital and power to more nuanced, grounded work that acknowledges globalisation's multifaceted and creative dimensions (Hannerz, 1996; Appadurai, 1996; Coleman, 2000), calls among scholars for the recognition of religion's role within such processes, and of how religion itself has been transformed, have begun to emerge (Beyer, 2006: 2). Some studies have pointed to the ways in which institutional

religion has responded to, and been transformed by, contemporary processes of change (Beyer, 1990; Casanova, 1994; Woodhead, 2002). Indeed, one clear change has been within the demographics of well-established religion, illustrated, for example, by the fact that Christianity is becoming an increasingly non-Western religion (Woodhead, 2002: 176, see also Miller and Yamamori, 2007: 7). Scholars have also noted that the remarkable growth of Christianity (predominantly Protestant spirituality) in the Global South – notably in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America – has resulted in countries in the South sending missionaries to the Global North (Wuthnow and Offut, 2008: 36; see also Freston, 2001).

Other responses to globalisation from within traditional religions are reflected in what Woodhead (2002: 176) terms the ‘turn to life’: the ways in which religious institutions carry out more progressive functions, grounded in the modern world as opposed to historical traditions and dogmatic theological doctrine (*ibid*; see also Miller and Yamamori, 2007). Others have discussed the emergence of ‘new religiosities’ (see Appadurai, 1996: 7) which challenge well-established notions of what religion means (see also Beyer, 2006: 254) in such a way that in a modern, globalised context religion becomes, as Vasquez and Marquardt (2003: 48) suggest,

a key source of symbolic raw materials in the construction of contemporary identities and life-worlds, often intermixing with other cultural artefacts in ways that defy dichotomies between the sacred and the profane, between the local and the global, and between the modern and the traditional.

Just as the accelerated rate of global transformation has challenged many well-established concepts within social theory, so changes in the nature and role of religion in the contemporary era have arguably challenged the key, ‘classical’ conceptualisations of religion and religious change (Smith, 2000: 34).⁴ However, rather than abandon these conventional approaches (*ibid*), it may be more useful to understand the ways in which they can interact with other theories and contribute to the formulation of new paradigms (see also Lechner, 2006).

It may be argued that a focus on the processes of religious change at the global scale can provide insights into the experiences of people and the subsequent transformations at the scale of the local (*ibid*). At the same time, however, as scholars such as Knott (2005, 2009) have pointed out, a focus on religion at the more micro-

⁴ These include Durkheim – ‘functionalism’, Weber – ‘cognitivism’, and Marx – ‘critical theory’ (see Smith, 2000: 34 for an in-depth discussion of these differing conceptualisations).

scale is also crucial for an understanding of religion's position in a wider context. The interplay between the different spatial scales across and within which religion is experienced and negotiated is discussed in more depth in subsequent sections below.⁵

Indeed, rather than a unilinear process 'from above', globalisation is more usefully understood as a,

multidimensional process, with religion, popular culture, politics, and economics, as necessarily coeval and intimately intertwined, as they are in the lives of the actors responsible for bringing about globalisation in the first place (Csordas, 2009:3).

In the following sections, I discuss in more detail the relationship between globalisation and the spread of, firstly various forms of evangelical Protestantism, and secondly changes within the Catholic Church. The focus on these particular religious denominations within a widespread and multifaceted global religious field relates to the more specific focus of my thesis upon the role of religion within Brazilian migratory flows. Catholicism and evangelical Protestantism represent the most widely represented, but by no means the only, religious denominations within the diverse religious field in Brazil and in the diaspora.⁶

Globalising the spirit: evangelical Protestantism and charismatic spiritualities

I use the terms 'evangelical Protestantism' and 'charismatic spiritualities' to cover a broad spectrum of religious beliefs and practices that have emerged within Protestant Christianity in recent years, yet which are broadly linked through their emphasis on the Holy Spirit and on religious 'experience' (see Stålsett, 2006: 1). While 'Pentecostal' is often used interchangeably with 'evangelical' in much of the literature, especially with regard to Latin America, here I refer predominantly to discussions that

⁵ The concept of scale has been subject to widespread debate in recent years, and indeed some fierce critique, in particular within the discipline of geography (Marston, 2000; Marston et al 2005; Brenner, 2001). Recent scholars have argued that rather than static and pre-given ordering of bounded entities, scale is in fact socially and politically constructed. While acknowledging the dynamic and often contradictory nature of scale as a process as opposed to a bounded hierarchy for 'ordering the world' (*ibid*: 220), the current study concurs with Jonas's (2006) 'pro-scale' perspective. Within such a reading, spatial scale remains a useful concept and can also reveal "'in-between spaces" of action' which have 'hitherto [. . .] been marginalized in work too often preoccupied with global-local binaries' (*ibid*: 402). I use scale in this thesis to differentiate between different, and often overlapping and conflicting, domains of experience and action *within* and *across* which religion is practised.

⁶ See for example, Rocha (2010) for a discussion of the powerful influence of the Brazilian Spiritist faith healer 'João de Deus' (John of God) in Australia. See also Rocha (2006a) for a discussion of Zen Buddhism in Brazil.

refer specifically to Pentecostalism (the largest Protestant movement to emerge in Brazil and much of the Global South (Freston, 2008)), unless otherwise specified.

One key manifestation of change in the global religious landscape in recent decades that has received considerable, and arguably disproportionate, attention among scholars has been the emergence of fundamentalist and charismatic movements from within well-established world religions (Cox, 1996; Coleman, 2000; Martin, 1990, 2002; Corten and Marshall-Fratini, 2001; Robbins, 2004; Stålsett, 2006). Indeed, the proliferation of literature on the growth of Protestant Pentecostalism in particular, is due in part to the significant parallels that have been drawn between its remarkable global spread and contemporary processes of globalisation (Droogers, 2001:59). Freston (2001), for example, has described the spread of Pentecostalism as a form of ‘globalisation from below’ whereby its significant - and ‘usually autonomous’ - growth in recent decades in Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa and East Asia ‘now expands to other countries of the same continents and to the First World’ (Freston, 2001: 197). Indeed, Freston (2008: 255) also notes that Brazil has become the largest Pentecostal country in the world, a phenomenon which is, he argues, reflected in the proliferation of Brazilian Pentecostal Churches ‘in the diaspora.’

While it is generally agreed that contemporary Pentecostalism is ‘[a] “bricolage” of extremely heterogeneous elements,’ many have argued that it is precisely this paradoxical, heterogeneous nature that makes it so compatible with the ‘paradox of difference and uniformity, or flow and closure’ that characterise contemporary processes of globalisation and transnational connections (Corten and Marshall-Fratini, 2001: 1). At the same time, however, the contradictory nature of Pentecostalism - which is manifested in both its organisational forms and its myriad functions in different contexts - has led to divergent interpretations among scholars of its meaning and impact (Robbins, 2004: 118; see also Droogers, 2001: 41). The compatibility of Pentecostalism’s flexible and adaptable form with the fluid, multifaceted character of the globalised world that dislocates and disorients individuals and communities, has also been a prevalent theme of discussion (Cox, 1996; Beyer, 2006). In this sense, Pentecostalism is seen to flourish in a fragmented, confusing, ever-changing world, and invites people to “plunge into the chaos in order to overcome it” by the power of the Holy Spirit’ (Stålsett, 2006: 3).

Many scholars have suggested that Pentecostalism appeals above all to those at the margins of these modernising processes - the 'poor and down-trodden' – providing them with the means to elaborate new lifestyles and 'modes of survival which recover moral and ethical values in the midst of indifference and the chaos of modern society' (César, 2001: 26). Factors such as the informal congregational style and simplicity of establishing new Pentecostal factions, the emphasis on individual advancement through 're-birth'⁷ and the open and flexible approach to theological doctrine are all regarded as fundamental to its appeal (Corten and Marshall-Fratani, 2001). In such ways, Pentecostalism is seen to fulfil, 'new religious needs' in the context of modernity and globalisation (Corten, 2001), responding to 'a tidal change in what religion itself is and what it means to people' (Cox, 1996: 103). With regard to globalisation, therefore, Pentecostalism is seen to match globalisation's simultaneous 'universalisation of the particular' and 'particularisation of the universal' that Robertson observed (Beyer, 2006: 24).

While concurring with the main argument that the burgeoning of myriad forms of Pentecostalism across the world both contributes to, and is a product of, contemporary forms of globalisation (Droogers, 2001: 55), other scholars have drawn attention to the importance of considering the 'internal religious characteristics' of Pentecostalism and 'their articulation within the external circumstances of globalisation' (Droogers, 2001: 41; see also César, 2001; Robbins, 2004; Miller and Yamamori, 2007). For Droogers (2001), interpretations of religion that take 'external social processes' as a starting point, fail to 'do justice to the specificities of a particular religion such as Pentecostalism' (41). The central tenet of Pentecostalism is the Baptism by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost - as narrated in the Acts of the Apostles - during which everyone present was 'filled with the Holy Ghost' and 'began speaking in other tongues'.⁸ Pentecostalism's 'revival' in the twentieth century stems from what is regarded as the 'reoccurrence' of such an event in 1906 at a house in Azuza Street in Los Angeles, California, under the aegis of an African American preacher named William Seymour. It is said that those gathered in the house again felt

⁷ While Pentecostalism is undoubtedly a heterogeneous phenomenon, the notion of 're-birth' through an experience of conversion is a common characteristic across the movement (Droogers, 2001: 45).

⁸ 'And they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance' (Acts 1:4; c.f. César, 2001: 22).

the presence of the Holy Spirit and began speaking in tongues⁹ in accordance with the Biblical text and that they then ‘renewed the promise to be Christ’s witnesses’ (César, 2001: 24).

For Droogers (2001), and others, the ‘language miracle’, which is the ‘founding myth’ of Pentecostalism, is key to understanding its globality: ‘Pentecostals behave like cultural polyglots’ (54) and as such *glossolalia* reflects ‘the victory over linguistic differences, and the new universal language of God’s worldly kingdom’ (55). Robbins (2004) concurs with Droogers on the need to stress how the very diverse ‘specific elements’ of Pentecostal Christianity have enabled it to globalise in such a dramatic way. For Robbins, much of the existing literature on the spread of Pentecostalism and charismatic Christianity presents a paradoxical picture: ranging from, on the one hand, analyses that point to its ability to replicate itself throughout the world, to others that stress its adaptability and ‘indigenization’ (118). Robbins argues, however, that it is more fruitful to examine what is particular about Pentecostalism that ‘leads it to globalise in a way that appears to fit both’ explanations (119). In his more recent discussion of the conversion to Pentecostalism or charismatic Christianity within a whole community of people in Papua New Guinea, Robbins (2009) develops his argument even further, suggesting that the adaptability of these religions to globalisation lies in their mediation of the gap between heaven and earth, or ‘the transcendental’ and ‘the mundane’. He thus suggests that ‘the axial split in Pentecostal and charismatic cosmology between the mundane realm and the more highly valued transcendent one mirrors the split between the local and the more highly valued central or “global” places that make up the social landscape’ (*ibid*: 63).

Miller and Yamamori (2007: 22) also highlight the need to look beyond the ‘functionalist’ perspective in the analysis of religion - in this case progressive Pentecostalism - and its wide appeal. While they acknowledge the validity of such a perspective, they argue that it has often been at the expense of a consideration of the spiritual dimension: the possibility that ‘individuals within the movement sometimes encounter a reality that is *more than* compensation for the trials of life or *more than* the ecstasy of group celebration’ (220, my emphasis).

⁹ Speaking in tongues, known as *glossolalia*, is a key element of Pentecostal worship. It involves believers entering into a kind of trance, or state of ecstasy in which they ‘give voice in incomprehensible sounds’ with the desire to communicate directly with God by means ‘unmediated even by language’ (Corten and Marshall-Fratani, 2001: 5). See also Cox (1996: 86) for a detailed discussion of *glossolalia*.

Arguably, however, both interpretations of Pentecostalism and charismatic Christianity – those that stress the external, social realities which lead to the growing appeal of Pentecostalism, and those which highlight the importance of the spiritual dimension - are valid, and the predominance of one over another depends on the particular context. Thus, existing studies reveal that both the functionalist perspective on religion – i.e., the notion that it is somehow fulfilling a particular, and existing need - and the more Weberian notion that religion provides spiritual meaning, can be applied to Pentecostalism and charismatic Christianity’s widespread appeal (Robbins, 2004), and arguably to religious change in general. This notion of a convergence between the social and the spiritual within religious institutions is illuminating in the context of the current study, which considers the multiple uses, and meanings, that religious institutions take on for migrants. Indeed, rather than seeing engagement with spiritual matters as somehow separate from the concerns of everyday life, this convergence reveals how the boundaries between the two realms are permeable.

The diverse impact and interpretation of Pentecostalism is also revealed in Stålsett’s (2006) anthology of case studies that look at the emergence of Pentecostalism and ‘experiential spiritualities’ in different settings. While in some cases the influence of these religious movements is revealed to be adaptable, and indeed, to provide empowerment for some of its members, in others it is described as becoming a hegemonic and homogenising presence (*ibid*).¹⁰ Furre’s (2006) analysis of the Brazilian *Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus*¹¹ (IURD), for example, points to an entirely different perception of the church’s function, suggesting that it bears more likeness to a transnational corporation than a religious institution (41). In this regard, the IURD’s rigid, hierarchical structure, its preaching of prosperity and self-betterment in ‘this world’, and the explicit emphasis on drawing on the Holy Spirit for ‘very practical purposes’ (Furre, 2006: 41), problematises the notion of what religion is, or rather suggests new readings of religion within a ‘society without mercy’ (*ibid*: 48).

¹⁰ Thus for example, Nadar and Leonard’s (2006) chapter on Pentecostalism among the Indian diaspora in South Africa exemplifies how Pentecostalism can manifest the homogenising impact of globalisation. Wells’s (2006) chapter, by contrast, reveals how Pentecostal church can be empowering – offering forms of resistance and expression for people who have long been without voice.

¹¹ Universal Church of the Kingdom of God.

The Catholic Church in a global world

The recent spread of evangelical Protestantism has been matched by an equal proliferation of studies of the phenomenon, whilst changes in the Catholic Church have received less scholarly attention. Arguably, this is due to the fact that Protestant Pentecostalism's global spread has been paralleled by the decline in affiliation to traditional Catholicism (Casanova, 1994; see also Freston, 2008). Indeed, the Catholic Church, to some extent, has been seen as less adaptable to modernity in view of its fairly rigid and hierarchical organisational basis (Freston, 2008). On the other hand, there have been a number of important shifts within Catholicism that reflect a response to global changes and to more complex interconnections between people and places (Woodhead, 2002; see also Pierucci and Prandi, 2000). Of great significance was the Second Vatican council (Vatican II) from 1962-1965, and the moves to bring the Catholic Church 'up to date' (Woodhead, 2002: 158; see also Lehmann, 2006), exemplified in the emergence of the 'preferential option for the poor'. Liberation Theology, which arose in Latin America following a conference of Bishops in the Colombian city of Medellín in 1968 and which mounted 'a critique of what was seen as the Church's role in defending oppressive social structures' (Lehmann, 2002: 14), has also been widely written about, particularly within studies of Latin American history. Indeed, the impact of Liberation Theology on the doctrines of the Catholic Church is considered by many as symptomatic of (to varying degrees) Catholicism's attempt to adapt to modernity and globalisation (Woodhead, 2002: 158; see below).

For Lehmann (1994: 12), the Catholic Church - despite its dogma and hierarchy - has in fact always been 'a plural, multifarious, inclusive culture, able to absorb and refashion local cultures worldwide in an unending dialectic of the erudite, or institutional, and the popular'. The fusion of indigenous religious forms into mainstream Catholicism in Latin America (and elsewhere) is one example of how Catholicism, far from being one 'religion' or set of beliefs, is in fact a multifarious set of beliefs and practices manifested in different ways by individuals and groups in different settings (Lehmann, 2002: 12; see also Vazquez and Marquardt, 2003: 27). In Brazil, it is widely acknowledged that traditional Catholicism is heavily influenced by indigenous and African religions (Bruneau, 1982). Thus, as Bruneau (1982: 24) remarks, '[a]s the African religions persisted, they adopted the exterior forms or symbols of Catholicism, and rather than being changed by the church, they in fact

changed Catholicism'. In a similar vein, Vazquez and Marquardt (2003: 30) use the example of Catholicism in Latin America, in its wide range of guises, to reveal how religion is by no means static and hegemonic, but rather characterised by diversity and by a constant process of redefinition by different actors, within and across different places and contexts.

In his re-theorisation of the well-established theories of secularisation, Casanova (1994) uses the term 'deprivatisation' to discuss the ways in which religion, and in particular the Catholic Church, after the 1980s, enters the 'undifferentiated sphere of civil society' through which it can offer a unique space of contestation and resistance (65, see also Casanova, 1997). Indeed, within research that has considered the role of religion in the lives of migrants, the increasingly 'public' role of migrant religious institutions as compared to their predominantly invisible everyday lives is a recurrent theme (see below). Thus, some studies of migrant religion reveal ways in which the Catholic Church has been extremely responsive to the needs of new migrants and, in some cases encouraged the elaboration of a 'pan-Latino' identity as a form of solidarity (Menjívar, 1999: 599), as well as a space of protest (Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003: 161). On the other hand, studies have suggested how evangelical Protestant churches are far stronger among migrants given the fact that it is, among other factors, a 'translatable religion and not at all territorial', and thus travels much more easily (Freston, 2008: 261). The Catholic Church, by contrast, is characterised by 'slowness', as its rigid hierarchical structure and bureaucracy mean that rapid response to widespread demographic changes become more complex (*ibid*: 266).

Summing up, Freston suggests that it is too early to say whether this trend is likely to continue, or whether the Catholic Church will in fact revitalise itself and adapt to the context of rapid change (*ibid*). Indeed scholars have noted the emergence of more 'charismatic' elements within the traditional Catholic Church – including a 'turn to the self' (Woodhead, 2002: 172) - which parallel the more individualised, expressive character of Pentecostalism (Lehmann, 2002; see also Droogers, 2001; Levitt, 2001; and Miller and Yamamori, 2007; Theije and Mariz, 2008). Thus, for example, the speaking in tongues, and focus on divine healing, that characterise the worshipping style of the Charismatic Renewal Movement, which emerged in the Catholic University of Pittsburgh in the US in the 1960s, bears striking resemblance to features of Pentecostalism (despite its strictly Catholic base) (Lehmann, 2002: 17).

The movement has become increasingly popular across Latin America, and most notably in Brazil (Pierucci and Prandi, 2000), reflecting, it is argued, a disillusionment with the country's social and political reality - and with progressive Liberation Theology's attempt to engage with it - and a subsequent turn towards possible ways of transcending the everyday struggle of living (*ibid*, 2000: 637; see also Vasquez, 1998: 4, also Chapter 4).

The complex interplay between religion and recent processes of globalisation has, it is argued, challenged empirical and theoretical analyses of religious phenomena. Yet such changes do not occur in an abstract realm, where space is static and passive. The following section discusses some of the diverse ways in which geographers have provided important insights into the study of religion and have begun to explore 'new geographies of religion' (Kong, 2001).

Mapping the geographies of religion

In her early discussion of the 'trends and prospects' for the study of religion in geography, Kong (1990) noted a limited engagement with the complexities of religion and presented an agenda for bringing religion (back) in to social and cultural geography. While Brace et al (2006: 29) contend that 'geographies of religion' are still, 'both disparate and diffuse in terms of scope, purpose and direction, leaving geography as a whole in a weak position to engage with connected debates about religion', Kong's (2010: 755) most recent contribution to the debate argues that, 'no longer can the geographies of religion be considered a moribund interest within the larger geographical enterprise.'

Indeed, even if their treatment of religion remains relatively underdeveloped, (Brace et al, 2006; Procter, 2006; Yorgason and Dora, 2009), geographers across the discipline have undoubtedly begun to recognise the pertinence of religion and spirituality in the modern world (Holloway and Valins, 2002; Kong 2010), and to address fundamental ontological questions raised by religion and the spiritual (Ivakhiv, 2006; Dewsbury and Cloke, 2009). Areas of research in which religion has become significant include religious geopolitics and the popular imagination (Megoran, 2006;

Dittmer, 2007, 2008); geographies of religious identities (Dwyer, 1998; 1999; Hopkins, 2009); religious landscapes, including the impact of religion on urban landscapes (Peach, 2002; Naylor and Ryan, 2002, 2003); urban geographies of welfare provision (Beaumont, 2008; Beaumont and Dias, 2008; Cloke et al, 2005, 2010; Wills et al, 2009); and the infusion of religion and spirituality within geographical research practice (Cloke, 2002; Buttimer, 2006). The following sections will discuss in more depth the latter three areas of research, which have most relevance for my study.

Religious landscapes: from the city to the body

Early geographical work that comprised a religious theme tended to highlight the relationship between religion and the physical (natural) or cultural environment (Huntington, 1945; see also Livingstone 1998), or the spatial patterns relating to religious growth or decline (Shortridge, 1978; Stump, 1981; see also Park, 1994). Notions of 'sacred space' or 'sacred places' have also been an important theme within geographies of religion, involving discussions of the often conflicting meanings of certain religious sites and monuments, and the (often) blurred boundaries between the sacred and the profane (Sopher, 1968; see also Harvey, 1979; Jacobs, 1993). As well as particular sacred sites, scholars have also examined the contested meanings of religious pilgrimages and, for example, the supposed non-religious appropriations of such routes as tourist attractions or adventure holidays (Graham and Murray, 1997).

The city represents an important landscape within which struggles over sacred places, or between the 'sacred' and the 'secular' are manifested (Kong, 1993; Peach, 2002; Naylor and Ryan, 2002, 2003; Connell, 2005; Peach and Gale, 2003). Geographies of planning and urban segregation have considered the impact of new religions on urban landscapes. Naylor and Ryan's (2002) research into 'the mosque in the suburbs', for example, examines some of the negotiations and struggles that occur as minority religious groups move into areas whose inhabitants are unfamiliar with such places and practices. The authors point to processes whereby these places of 'minority worship are marked out, for good or ill, as exotic sites amidst the "normality" of the city' (55).

Whilst some have argued that within many studies of minority groups religious identities are too often simply ‘forgotten or conflated with race’ (Kong, 2001: 212; see also Peach, 2002), more recent work has begun to consider the ways in which religious identities intersect with other identities, including race, ethnicity, gender or generation (Dwyer, 1999; Hopkins, 2007). Thus Hopkins (2007), for example, has demonstrated the ways in which geographies of religion intersect with questions of masculinity, youth and race for young religious men from British ethnic minorities (see also Hopkins, 2004, 2008). Falah and Nagel’s (2005) edited volume entitled *Geographies of Muslim Women* also represents an important contribution, again revealing the complex interconnectedness of religious and gender identities. Similarly, in Gökarıksel’s (2009) discussion of veiling among Muslim women in Istanbul, she describes it as a ‘gendered embodied spatial practice’ in which the body becomes a site of social and religious contestation. Gökarıksel’s (2009) work contributes to moves among scholars to look at religion in a broader sense, in which ‘the religious and the secular’ are seen ‘as mutually and contextually constituted’ (658), as opposed to separate realms of experience. Moreover, her work reveals how religion relates to multiple scales, incorporating the wider socio-political context as well as the individual subjective experience of the body, which itself represents another religious landscape (Gökarıksel, 2007, 2009).

Geographies of welfare provision

Indeed, one key challenge that has been outlined within recent discussions of geographies of religion has been what religion actually means, and where to find it. Moreover, as Procter (2006: 166) writes, ‘[n]o matter what degree of (in)attention has been paid to religion by geographers in recent times, the basic question is whether religion really matters in the world today.’ As outlined above, theories of secularisation that prevailed during the 1960s reflected the widely held hypothesis among scholars that modernity would lead to the weakening of religion’s importance, or at least its withdrawal from the public realm (Berger, 1967; Luckman, 1967, c.f. Casanova, 1994). Yet, as has been shown, the resurgence of diverse forms of religious expression in recent decades has led to a re-appraisal of prevailing secularisation theories. While, for some, the (re)emergence of multiple new religions

suggests that the secularisation thesis is no longer viable, others hold that a more nuanced, fluid, understanding of the concept is required, whereby secularisation *and* new forms of religious and spiritual expression exist and are often closely intertwined (Baker, 2009; Wilford, 2009; see also Kong, 2010).

Similarly, Gökariksel (2009: 658) argues that new perspectives are needed within the ‘geography of religion’, whereby ‘the religious and the secular do not simply compete with one another but also intersect in complex and sometimes contradictory ways’ (see also Knott, 2010). For Wilford (2009: 13), rather than disregarding secularisation as an out-dated concept, geographers should engage more closely with it, by conceiving it ‘as a variable scalar process’ which, he believes, ‘is necessary for understanding the context in which local religious organisations must work, strategise, and survive’ (see also Beaumont, 2008; Molendijk et al, 2010).

In recent years geographers have begun to engage with the philosophical notion of ‘postsecularism’, with a particular focus on the postsecular city (Baker, 2009; Baker and Beaumont, 2011). Rather than a denial of the secular, the postsecular represents a ‘critique of, and response to secularisation in society’ (Cloke, 2010: 223), and a move away from the ‘secular gaze’ which, it is argued, ‘only discerns what is visible and ignores the possibilities of the invisible in whatever form’ (*ibid*). As Beaumont (2010: 8), asserts, the postsecular emerges as,

[g]lobalized societies across the world are found situated in the midst of a series of contradictory processes including simultaneous and dialectical secularization, alongside increasing deprivatization of religion, faith and belief and its re-emergence as a shaper of cultural, political and economic processes.

It seems that it is within such a context – that is, spaces where varying expressions of the religious, the spiritual and the secular co-exist ‘cheek by jowl’ (Kong, 2001: 212) – that many urban welfare providers locate themselves, and geographers have begun to investigate the shifting role of faith groups within such contexts (Baker and Skinner, 2006; Beaumont, 2008; Beaumont and Dias, 2008; Cloke et al, 2005, 2010). With regard to the provision of services to homeless people, for example, Cloke et al (2010: 73) point to evidence of a new ‘postsecular rapprochement’, whereby faith-motivated groups may ‘join with others in third spaces in the city where common ground can be established in the pursuit of ethical ideals and practical service.’ This is not to suggest that faith-inspired groups and individuals did not play a vital role in such services in the past, but rather that such groups are, in

many cases, occupying a more middle ground in which, they argue, ‘Christian charity is being reproduced as relational love and friendship, a gratuitous and creative practice of service without strings, rather than proselytising as the core purpose’ (72).

Wills et al’s (2009) study of the relationship between religion and the ‘politics of employment’ in London reveals the increasing role of religious institutions in what has been conventionally regarded as a secular realm: labour. While the public role of religion has long been contested in the UK (despite the country’s Christian past), Wills et al (2009: 12) point to the ways in which ‘religious spaces are increasingly important as a means for marginalised immigrant communities to associate, organise, and develop a public voice’. Indeed, scholars have pointed to the ways in which the shifting - and often expanded – role of religious institutions, or faith-based organisations (FBOs), in specific places, is linked to more wide-scale political, economic and social changes (Jamoul and Wills, 2008; Beaumont 2008; Cloke et al 2010; Kong, 2010). It is argued that capitalist development, the adoption of neoliberal economic policies, and the subsequent withdrawal of the state from the area of social welfare, have provided ‘new spaces for postsecular praxis’ (Cloke, 2010: 223), within which faith-based organisations have emerged as important actors.

Religion and morality

Geographers have thus begun to acknowledge that engagement with the religious and the spiritual can be illuminating - and arguably essential – for a greater understanding of a wide range of areas of geographical inquiry. Most obviously, perhaps, some have argued that within the field of ‘moral geographies’ and social justice inspired research, a deeper inquiry into religious themes could certainly be fruitful since, ‘[w]hile morality and social justice may exist apart from religion, often, religion is the basis of morality and the impetus for social justice, as well as of intolerance and injustice’ (Kong, 2001: 228; see also Holloway and Valins, 2002: 6).

In a related vein, Cloke (2002) argues for a new reading of ‘moral geographies’, calling for a greater engagement with the spiritual, ‘what is ordinarily invisible, silent and outside’ (602), in the quest to bridge the gap between more abstract discussions of political and ethical geographies, and the everyday practices of ‘living ethically and acting politically’. He argues that, given the widespread

influence of 'religious adherence and spiritual involvement' across the world, elements of such beliefs will have been incorporated into existing moral codes often thought of as 'secular' suggesting 'considerable scope to understanding moral and ethical codes through a spiritual lens' (592-3).

More recently, Dewsbury and Cloke (2009) have elaborated a theoretical framework for understanding what they call 'spiritual landscapes' which denote 'co-existing sets of relations between bodily existence, felt practice and faith in things that are imminent, but not yet manifest' (696). For them, a greater engagement with the spiritual (in which they include, but by no means prioritise, religion) in relation to everyday life is essential to achieve, not a greater understanding of everyday life, but rather an acknowledgement of and sensitivity to the mysterious, un-rationalisable elements that constitute a good deal of it. Thus, for Yorgason and Dora (2009: 631), the geographical study of religion requires less the 'seizing' of religion as a point of investigation, than a two-way dialogue; in which religion 'speaks back through its own specificities', raising methodological and ontological challenges for human geographers. Such insights are useful for my study, as they reveal how understanding religion's role in migration processes must acknowledge how religion cannot be regarded as a separate category, but rather as integral to migrants' everyday lives.

Indeed, understood in these terms, religion is less something 'out there' - a 'feature of human life' that can be defined and theorised as something that is felt, practised, or experienced by recognisable sets of believers (see Ivakhiv, 2006) - than something always already 'inside'. If so, studies of religious phenomena must take into account the more fluid relationship between the so-called sacred and the profane, the religious and the secular. Religion, as Yorgason and Dora (2009: 631) suggest, 'blurs geographical scales and conceptual boundaries: those between the self and the world, life and death, the local and the universal, the private and the public, the introvert and the political, the fixed and the mobile.'

Similar kinds of challenges to 'geographical scales and conceptual boundaries' (*ibid*) - between the local and the global, public and private, geographically fixed and mobile - have been raised by those working on issues relating to migrant transnationalism. Indeed, in order to understand the interrelation between religion and transnationalism, it is important to outline briefly the main debates within 'transnational studies' and consider how they can be useful for an analysis of

religion's role within such processes. It is to research into such transnational phenomena that the discussion will now turn.

Transnationalism, diaspora, belonging

Transnational connections

The term 'transnationalism' was first used by US- based migration scholars who, in their analyses of the flows of labour migrants to and from the country, came to recognise that established migration theories were no longer sufficient to depict 'the multiplicity of involvements that transmigrants sustain in both host and home societies' (Basch et al, 1994: 6; see also Kearney, 1995; Rouse, 1991). While living transnationally was not 'new' (Levitt, 2001), the transformed social, political, economic and cultural contexts in which such transnational practices were occurring required new conceptual approaches and new research methods (see also Smith, 2001). Transnational migration was perceived as closely related to 'the dynamics of globalisation' and the increased porosity of economic and political borders (Portes, 1996: 4).

Since its emergence within migration studies in the 1990s, the concept has been widely adopted by scholars as a framework for understanding the processes and practices associated with contemporary international migration (Bailey, 2001; see also Mitchell, 1997). Indeed, since the initial use of the term, a great deal of research has emerged within the burgeoning field of 'transnational studies'. Early examples focused predominantly on the migration flows to the US (see for example, Kearney, 1991; Rouse, 1991; Basch et al, 1994), and these migrants were labelled 'transmigrants' to denote those 'whose daily lives depend on multiple and constant interconnections across international borders and whose public identities are configured in relation to more than one nation-state' (Glick Schiller et al, 1995). Discussions of transnationalism with regard to migrants in the European context emerged much more recently (see for example, Al-Ali and Khoser 2001, 2002; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003; Rogers, 2004; Ehrkamp, 2005; Bermudez, 2010), and such studies continue to be scarce in comparison to the US examples.

'Transnationalism' has thus been widely regarded as a useful term for describing and analysing exchanges 'involving regular and repeated movements

across national boundaries, in which individuals maintain continuous contact with events and other individuals in more than one place' (Portes, 1996: 2). However, despite its widespread use, many have pointed to the confusion surrounding the concept, and the diverse ways in which it is used (Guarnizo and Smith, 1998; Mahler, 1998; Vertovec, 1999; Glick Schiller, 2004). Points of contention have included doubts as to the actual novelty of the phenomenon (Foner, 1997; Portes, 2001: 182; Levitt, 2002) and as to the role of the state in transnational spheres (Kearney, 1991; Appadurai, 1996). Indeed, while seeking to define the transnational, some early scholars pointed to the emergence of 'autonomous spaces' by transmigrants - from which both sending and receiving nation states are excluded (Kearney, 1991). Appadurai (1996) described the emergence of 'translocalities', and the transformative power of the imagination, which challenged any kind of territorial basis of state claims to sovereignty.

Increasingly, however, transnational scholars have come to doubt such notions of a 'postnational' era, and provide examples which indicate the continuing, or even increasing, significance of nation states and discourses of nationalism, albeit within more fragmented, 'de-territorialised', contexts (Mahler, 1998; Tsuda, 1999; Bailey, 2002; Al-Ali and Khoser, 2002; Jackson et al, 2004; Leitner and Ehrkamp 2006). Thus, for example, Tsuda's (1999) discussion of Japanese Brazilians returning to Japan reveals how, paradoxically, their affiliation with the Brazilian nation state is in fact strengthened when in Japan, as they become, what he calls, 'nationalised transnational migrants' (167). Other scholars have discussed how nation states have adopted specific policies aimed at engaging with their diasporas (Padilla, 2009a, 2011).

The notion of a dichotomy between transnationalism 'from above' and 'from below' (see Guarnizo and Smith, 1998) has also been a subject of debate in the 'transnational studies' literature (Lionnet and Shih, 2005). In early discussions of transnational phenomena, their potentially liberatory, transcendent character was emphasised, with the notion of transnationalism 'from below' perceived as representing popular practices of 'resistance' to transnationalism 'from above', or, 'the hegemonic logic of multinational capital' (Guarnizo and Smith, 1998: 5). Yet more recent scholars have doubted the significance of such distinctions, suggesting how they ignore the highly complex power relations embedded in all forms of social

and cultural change (Mitchell, 1997; Mahler, 1998; Jackson et al, 2004; Grillo, 2007).

As Mitchell (1997: 109) argues:

In numerous celebratory representations of “new” transnational cultures and hybrid subject positions, the powerfully oppressive socio-economic forces underlying the changes are neglected, as are many of the people caught within them.

Disagreement has also emerged with regard to the intergenerational persistence of transnational ties (Kelly and Lusic, 2006) and the definition of what actually constitutes a ‘transnational’ practice. Further critiques revolve around the dehistoricised nature of transnationalism that ignores the precedents and contexts of the phenomena it studies (Waldinger and Fitzgerald, 2004: 1187). This has been extended to the tendency to ‘reify’ transnational practices, without due appreciation of the other complex factors and actors at work (*ibid*: 186; see also Al-Ali and Khoser, 2002: 5; Grillo, 2007).

Despite these various points of contention, however, the term ‘transnationalism’ continues to be widely used, and its continued adoption across multiple disciplines suggests that it remains, potentially, a ‘very robust concept’, for understanding the ‘links between migration, communication, cultural exchange, and subjectivity’ (Dunn, 2010: 3). Indeed, there appears to be some consensus among scholars that the concept needs to be re-defined or re-conceptualised rather than abandoned altogether (Portes, 2001; see also Mahler, 1998), even if the re-definition of transnationalism has itself led to much theoretical debate.¹²

Hannerz’s (1996: 69-70) notion of ‘four organisational frames’ represents an influential framework for analysing the ‘transnational connections’ between people and places. These ‘frames’ include the state, the market, the ‘movement’ frame, and what Hannerz calls the ‘form-of-life’ frame. This framework usefully brings together the different scales upon which these ‘connections’ occur - from the macro (state or market) to the micro (movement and everyday life), and the different actors and places involved – from the commonplace practices of ordinary people, to the actions of the state and market (*ibid*).

¹² While some consider it necessary to closely define and thus narrow the framework of what can be regarded as ‘transnational’ (Portes, 2001; Vertovec, 1999), others call for a broader definition that will encompass the practices and experiences of those who are not directly linked to transnational practices or spaces (Smith, 2001; see also Jackson et al, 2004).

Within their analyses of ‘transnational connections’, scholars have examined the social ties that link one or more places (see for example Levitt, 2001), the economic ties, which includes migrants’ financial remittances (Vertovec, 1999; see also Datta, 2009; Datta et al, 2010), and the political ties, which relate to transmigrants’ political practices as well as the implications of transnationalism for citizenship (Rouse, 1991; Wright et al, 2000; see also Bermudez, 2010). Research has also highlighted the crucial role played by new technologies – including cheap air travel, cheap phone calls and widespread Internet access – in the creation and maintenance of transnational ‘communities’ (Appadurai, 1996; Vertovec, 2004; Georgiou, 2006). However, despite the important insights provided by research into transnational connections, some scholars have argued that in some analyses of particular connections, ‘space’ is perceived as a ‘passive backdrop’ to transnational phenomena rather than, as Jackson et al (2004: 3) argue, ‘constitutive of transnationality in all its different forms.’ The following section will consider some discussions of transnationalism that bring a more explicitly spatial perspective to the study of transnational phenomena.

Transnational spaces

Faist (1998) put forward the notion of ‘transnational social spaces’ to incorporate the multifaceted nature of transnational phenomena (see also Pries, 1999). Just as Hannerz (1996) links the large-scale to the mundane and everyday, Faist’s ‘transnational social spaces’ incorporate ‘transnational small groups, transnational circuits, and transnational communities’ (2000: 191). Faist suggests that space can be distinguished from place in that, ‘it encompasses or spans various territorial locations’ and ‘has a social meaning that extends beyond simple territoriality; only with concrete social or symbolic ties does it gain meaning for potential migrants’ (2000: 45-6). Thus Faist’s spaces denote ‘dynamic social processes, not static notions of ties and positions’ (*ibid*). Jackson et al (2004: 3, emphasis in original) extend this notion even further suggesting that ‘transnational spaces’ also incorporate the ‘*symbolic and imaginary geographies* through which we attempt to make sense of our world.’ In other words, transnationalism affects everyone, not just those who partake in such activities. Such insights are useful for my research, which aims to explore religion’s

influence within and across different geographical scales. Drawing on the concept of ‘transnational spaces’, I develop in this thesis a related notion of *transnational religious spaces*.

Yet while acknowledging the multi-dimensionality and heterogeneity of transnational spaces and the increasing porosity of (certain) borders and boundaries, recent research also emphasises the extent to which concrete localities still matter (*ibid*; see also Conradson and Latham, 2005; Ehrkamp, 2005; Knott 2005, 2009). As Jackson et al (2004: 3) themselves contend, ‘[w]e must not let the often elite ideology of transnationalism blind us to the practical and emotional importance of attachments to and in place’. Smith’s (2001) notion of ‘transnational urbanism’ represents a significant move in bringing some grounding to theories of transnationalism, through, he argues, capturing ‘a sense of the *distanciated* yet *situated* possibilities for constituting and reconstituting social relations’ (Smith, 2005: 237, emphasis in original). Smith (2001) critiques prevailing ‘structuralist’ and ‘economistic’ approaches to globalisation and urban theory, including Harvey’s ‘time-space compression’ framework and ‘global cities’ paradigms, suggesting that both pay little attention to questions of culture and agency and, indeed, to the socially constructed nature of social relations. By contrast, he favours a more agency-oriented, ‘social constructivist perspective’, so as to reconceptualise the ‘urban’ as, ‘a social space that is a cross-roads or meeting ground for the interplay of diverse localising practices of national, transnational, and even global-scale actors’ (127). Yet while Smith’s analysis is important in challenging prevailing approaches to global change that focus on macro-level processes, the emphasis is still on major cities (such as Los Angeles), and indeed is limited to the US context. While it may provide some insights into the role of place in the lives and identities of those who experience such transnational cities, there is little emphasis on the actual place-making practices of migrants within these cities, nor on the situation beyond such cities.

Indeed, while perspectives such as Smith’s (2001) are useful for highlighting some of the ways in which transnational spaces are ‘multidimensional’ and ‘multiply inhabited’ (Jackson et al, 2004), it seems that less attention has been paid to the everyday experiences of migrants within such spaces and indeed their own place-making practices and creation of a sense of belonging (Ley, 2004; Ehrkamp, 2005; see also Conradson and Latham, 2005; Dunn, 2010). The formation of ‘translocalities’ represents a useful conceptual contribution in this regard. For Guarnizo and Smith

(1998: 13), '[t]ranslocal relations are constituted within historically and geographically specific points of origin and migration established by transmigrants.' In this sense, the 'translocal' represents the transnational relationship between migrants and particular localities: those of their places of origin, and those in the places to which they migrate (*ibid*; see also Smith, 2001; Smith and Eade, 2009). Such a focus thus enables scholars to bring transnational research to the more micro scale, examining the actual sites within which migrants themselves create connections with other localities. This perspective is useful for my research and, in particular, for the study of how religion enables migrants to create translocal connections between sending, receiving and return settings within what I call *transnational religious spaces*.

Transnational community or diaspora?

The emergence of widespread interest, across a range of disciplines, in the concept of 'diaspora' also reflects responses to the analytical challenges created by the complex practices and relationships of individuals and communities living their lives across borders, or in places distant from their 'homelands' (Cohen, 1997; Clifford, 1997; Dwyer, 1999; Vertovec, 1999; Vertovec, 2008; Kalra et al, 2005). Moreover, scholars have noted historical and conceptual links between the notion of diaspora and religion, and, as Vasquez (2010: 128) asserts,

because religion and diaspora operate in similar ways in the management of time and space and in the articulation of individual and collective identities, they have historically been closely intertwined, often buttressing and reinforcing each other.¹³

The term's origins lie in the notion of dispersal and it became associated with the Jewish historical experience of being a 'dispersed people sharing a common religious and cultural heritage' (Vertovec, 2008: 276; see also Clifford, 1997). Thus it was originally used to refer to experiences of forced movement, displacement and the inability to return and was then applied to, notably, the mass movement of Africans through the slave trade (Kalra et al, 2005: 9), as well as Armenians, Irish and, more recently, Palestinians. In recent decades, however, its meaning has expanded even further to embrace migrant communities, leading Tölölyan (1991: 4-5) to describe

¹³ See also Vertovec (2009: 141-144) for a discussion of the relationship between diaspora and religion.

diasporas as ‘the exemplary communities of the transnational moment’ and note that the term has come to encompass, ‘words like immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest-worker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community’ (*ibid*).

Often conflated with terms such as ‘minority’, ‘migrant community’ and ‘transnationalism’ (Vertovec, 2008: 275), the term diaspora has been the subject of widespread debate, with some scholars contending that its ‘over-use’ and ‘under-theorisation’ poses a threat to its conceptual usefulness (*ibid*; see also Brubaker, 2005). As Brubaker (2005: 3) warns, ‘[i]f everyone is diasporic, then no one is distinctively so.’ The term has been used both as a descriptive tool – as in the formulation of typologies of common traits shared by diasporic groups (Safran, 1991; Cohen, 1997), as a form of consciousness (Gilroy, 1994; Vertovec, 2008), and to reflect the non-essentialised, fluid, nature of cultural identity, and the dynamic relationship between identity, belonging and place (Hall, 1990; Gilroy, 1994; Brah, 1996; Fortier, 2000; Cock, 2009). Thus, a ‘diaspora consciousness’ points less to a yearning for ‘a common territory’, than to the dynamic process of remembering or imagining that contributes to the construction of an identity (Gilroy, 1994: 207).

Indeed, Brah’s (1996) *Cartographies of Diaspora*, represents a significant departure from the widely held link between diaspora and a (territorial) homeland since, she argues, ‘the concept . . . offers a critique of discourses of fixed origins, while taking account of a homing desire, which is not the same thing as a desire for “homeland”’ (180; see also Anthias, 1998). Here a ‘homing desire’ implies that home is not necessarily a particular place – or homeland - but rather the ‘lived experience of a locality’ (*ibid*: 192). Brah (1996) also coined the term ‘diaspora space’ to encompass not only those who have migrated, but also those who have not, and thus, ‘includes the genealogies of dispersion with those of staying put’ (181). In a similar way to the notion of ‘transnational space’ (see above), this framework is illuminating as it reveals the dynamic, heterogeneous, and often contested nature of the spaces of diaspora (*ibid*: 184). As Fortier (2000: 16) asserts in her more recent discussion of the formation of a collective identity among Italian migrants in London, ‘[t]he space of diaspora weaves new webs of belonging that trouble spatial fields of ‘nation’, ‘home’, ‘territory’, ‘community’.

While ‘transnationalism’ and ‘diaspora’ are closely linked and, as Dahlman (2004: 486) writes, ‘diaspora is often predicated on transnational social relations’, scholars have pointed to important differences between the terms (Van Hear, 1998;

Vertovec, 2009; Evans Braziel and Mannur, 2003; Dahlman, 2004; Kalra et al, 2005; Paerregaard, 2008). As Vertovec (2009: 137) writes, '[d]iasporas arise from some form of migration, but not all migration involves diasporic consciousness; all transnational communities comprise diasporas, but not all diaspora develop transnationalism.'

Here, I use the term 'transnationalism' – and in particular transnational religious spaces - more than 'diaspora' in order to conceptualise the experiences of Brazilian migrants, and the connections they create and maintain with 'back home' in Brazil.¹⁴ While, following the example of some other scholars of Brazilian migration, I use the term 'diaspora' or 'in the diaspora' to refer to the more widespread phenomenon of Brazilians living outside Brazil, to refer to Brazilians in London as 'a diaspora' may imply a 'groupness' (Brubaker, 2005: 13; see also Anthias, 1998) or common consciousness which is far from the reality of the multiple and diverse backgrounds and experiences of Brazilian migrants in London. However, the notion of diaspora in its more metaphorical sense - or as an 'heuristic device' (see Fortier, 2000: 18), referring to 'diasporic stances, projects, claims, idioms, practices, and so on' (Brubaker, 2005: 13), is conceptually useful for the current case. Indeed, as my research reveals, exploring the role of religion in the lives of migrants can be helpful for examining the creation of such diasporic moments, albeit within heterogeneous and often contested 'diasporic spaces', or what I refer to as transnational religious spaces.

Transnationalism and returning 'home'

A wider notion of diaspora can therefore be useful as it enables a conceptualisation of the fluid relationships between people and places, including the 'home' that is, as Al-Ali and Khoser (2001:6) argue, 'a dynamic process, involving the acts of imagining, creating, unmaking, changing, losing and moving "homes"' (see also Blunt and Dowling, 2006). However, as some more recent scholars have argued, research into migration and transnationalism has tended to ignore the 'multi-faceted processes of return migration' (Potter et al, 2005: 2) and thus the reality of return to a territorial

¹⁴ While the term diaspora has been applied to Latin American migrants in some cases, (see for example, Freston, 2008), there is some debate as to whether Latin American migrants can be seen to constitute 'a diaspora' (McIlwaine, 2011b)

homeland, albeit a changing one, for many migrants. As King (2000: 7) asserts, '[r]eturn migration is the great unwritten chapter in the history of migration'. Indeed, Conway (2005: 264) argues that there has been a tendency among transnational scholars,

to investigate the transnational migration behaviour of target samples at only one location in their international trajectory, more often among enclave communities at their core, metropolitan, destinations rather than their peripheral birthplaces and 'home-places'.

For Conway (2005: 267), in his discussion of return migration among Caribbean migrants, these real 'home-places' provide the 'anchors' for migrants to forge a sense of belonging in their host societies as well as a 'much needed territorial fix' because, he argues, they offer 'the return option as a fall-back strategy' (see also Riccio, 2002; Conway and Potter, 2009).

Yet while scholars of transnationalism have provided important insights into how migrants maintain connections with their homelands and remit both financial and social resources - leading to the formation of transnational communities (Levitt, 2005) - far less attention has been paid to the perspectives of migrants themselves who actually return to their places of origin. Existing research that has considered the impacts of return migration have tended to focus on the wider economic aspects of these return flows (Constant and Massey, 2002; Dustmann and Weiss, 2007), and on the effect of migrant remittances on transnational migration and return (Conway and Cohen, 1998; Siqueira, 2009a and b). Thus, for example, Siqueira's (2009a) research, which has considered return migration to Brazil, contrasts the 'frustrations' of returnees who lack business experience and knowledge, and therefore often invest their money in unsuccessful enterprises (which spurs them to re-migrate), with the 'successes' of those who invest wisely and thus enhance their social and economic status 'back home'. Elsewhere, Siqueira (2009b) has compared the impact of return on the social mobility of Brazilian returnees from the US and Portugal, highlighting the importance of the migration context in their multiple experiences. There is also a wide body of literature that explores the wider development impacts of return migration and the ways in which governments from sending countries have engaged, and indeed should engage, with potential returnees (Leichtman, 2002; see also Ghosh, 2000; OECD, 2008).

Despite the increasing interest in the economic and development impacts of return migration, however, few scholars have considered the less visible consequences of return, and the experiences of returnees themselves. This omission is to some extent the result of a view that returning to one's place of origin is 'an unproblematic move to make because migrants are returning "home"' (Hatfield, 2010). However, as Hatfield (*ibid*: 17) argues, such an assumption,

makes no allowance for the challenges of going back to somewhere after having had different life experiences elsewhere and during which time the place being returned to may have changed, in reality and in a migrant's imagination.

Some emerging research has begun to counter this tendency (Ghosh, 2000; Harper, 2005; Tennenbaum, 2007) and considered, for example, the impact of return on family dynamics (Christou, 2006) or the experiences of children of highly-skilled migrants who return home to the UK (Hatfield, 2010). But despite these moves to recognise return as integral to the migration experience, the examples to date focus on longer-term migrants whose return home is usually permanent, leaving a significant gap in research into the experiences of 'new' migrant groups who return home after a shorter period of time, such as the Brazilian return migrants discussed in my research.¹⁵ An important part of this study seeks to address this invisibility and considers the experiences of return among Brazilian migrants 'back home' in Brazil, moving beyond the predominantly economic analyses discussed above. More specifically, and drawing on literature relating to religion and migration (discussed below), it explores how religion becomes an important 'resource' in this process of return.

Everyday transnationalism and place

While, as suggested above, some early accounts of transnationality were seen as 'agency-heavy' and 'structure-light' (Bailey, 2001; see also Mitchell, 1997), arguably a foregrounding of transnational spaces and flows has a tendency to pay little attention to the ways in which transnationalism is actually experienced at the level of everyday practice (Ley, 2004; Dunn, 2010). A new, growing and important area of research in this regard is instead therefore focused on the place-making practices of migrants, which enable both the maintenance of transnational ties, as well as a feeling

¹⁵ See however, Marcus (2010) for a discussion of Brazilians returning from the US to Brazil.

of local attachment or a sense of belonging (Ehrkamp, 2005; see also Morawska, 2003, Sheringham, 2010a).

In this vein, scholars have also called for greater attention to be paid to the ‘everyday dimensions of transnational mobility’, such as household practices, work, and consumption habits, which, it is argued, ‘provide[s] a useful counterpoint to the inflationary tendencies of some writings on globalisation’ (Conradson and Latham, 2005: 229; see also Ley, 2004). Conradson and Latham (*ibid*: 229) also draw attention to what they call “‘*middling*” forms of transnationalism’, suggesting how transnationalism encompasses ‘many more people than just the transnational elites and the developing-world migrants who have been the focus of so much transnational research’ (see also Allon and Anderson, 2009).

In an analysis of the more everyday, lived dimensions of transnationalism, Michel de Certeau’s (1984) *The Practice of Everyday Life* provides some useful conceptual tools. In brief, the work highlights the potential for ‘ordinary people’ to resist dominant norms and structures through their everyday practices of consumption. As such, the work shifts the focus from the producers of ‘products’ (both real and imaginary), to their consumption, or use. While people cannot escape the dominant economic and cultural structures within which they live, they can, it is argued, adapt - and to some extent subvert - them through ‘using’ them to suit their own particular needs. De Certeau (*ibid*) uses various metaphors to illustrate these acts of resistance: from linguistic and textual subversion through acts of reading and writing, to spatial and even temporal subversion through acts of walking, or through political resistance.

De Certeau’s work has been criticised for its celebration of these ‘acts of resistance’ with little consideration of the unequal power dynamics that characterise many of the spaces and texts that he analyses. Nevertheless, the foregrounding of ‘ordinary people’ and their routine practices that extend beyond - and indeed can challenge - dominant structural and institutional frameworks, has nevertheless been influential in research that considers the lives and experiences of people living on the margins, and especially migrants and refugees (Williams, 2006; Datta et al, 2007). In this regard, de Certeau’s distinction between ‘strategies’ and ‘tactics’ has been influential, as he describes tactics as ‘the art of the weak’ in comparison to the ‘strategies’ of those with power (38). While de Certeau does not refer explicitly to the

religious dimensions of everyday life,¹⁶ the focus on the agency of ‘users’ as opposed to producers of knowledge has conceptual relevance for the current study. Rather than focusing purely on the ‘strategies’ of the religious institutions themselves, the current research also foregrounds the actual ‘use’ of churches and religious idioms by migrants, and the religious ‘tactics’, or practices, they create, in both sending and receiving contexts.

Smith (2001: 6) also advocates an ‘agency-oriented’ approach to ethnographic research (which he calls transnational urbanism), in some ways reminiscent of the perspectives of de Certeau. However, according to Smith (*ibid*: 117), ‘everyday life’ in the current, increasingly transnational and complexly interconnected, context is ‘not a fixed object of investigation, a readily discernible set of practices that can be easily located and subjected to empirical observation and cognitive mapping.’ Rather, he argues, the challenge for contemporary ethnographers is to free ‘the everyday’ from its ‘association with purely local phenomena’ (*ibid*). While it may be argued that even in de Certeau’s time the ‘everyday’ was far from a static phenomenon, Smith’s agenda for ethnographic research into transnational everyday life can help in the conceptualisation of the dynamic interplay between movement and fixity that characterise the experience of urban life for many ‘ordinary people’.

Scholars have thus increasingly recognised the multi-scalar nature of transnationalism, emphasising the local rootedness of transnational processes, as well as the ‘distanced’ connections they can create (Smith, 2001, 2005; see also Olson and Silvey, 2006: 807; Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004). Within this growing body of more ‘grounded studies’ (Ehrkamp, 2005) that consider the ‘emplaced’ or ‘situated’ nature of transnationalism, some work has emerged that points to its ‘embodiment’, drawing attention to the ‘sensory, and the emotive elements of movement’ (Dunn, 2010: 1). This shift in focus enables, it is argued, a more complex understanding of the feelings and opinions of the ‘transnationals’, as well as the ways in which they are ‘unevenly empowered’ within such processes (*ibid*). Indeed, scholars have discussed how gender, race, class and generation are among the myriad factors that influence the uneven ways in which transnationalism is experienced (Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Yeoh and Willis, 2005; Datta et al, 2009; McDonnell and Lourenço, 2009;

¹⁶ Chapter 13 does discuss the hegemonic role of the Church, alongside politics, in ‘making people believe’ (see de Certeau, 1984: 177), yet there is no explicit discussion of the ways in which religion can be a fundamental dimension of the ‘practice of everyday life’.

McIlwaine, 2010). Thus, for example, Datta et al (2009: 854) discuss the experiences of low-paid male migrants in London to explore how ‘gendered identities *travel*’ and are, ‘remade at each stage of the migration project’. McIlwaine’s (2010) study of migrant ‘machismos’ reveals how these shifting gender roles are often contradictory and can vary according to factors such as class and nationality.

As well as the specific sites where transnational processes occur, which can reveal processes whereby migrants create their own places of belonging and local attachment, another crucial way in which ‘place counts’ (Kivisto, 2001: 571) is the actual location of these practices within particular nation states (Hannerz, 1996: 174; Silvey and Lawson, 1999; Faist, 2000, 2004). Indeed, the focus on cross-border connections between different locations, often hides the uneven access to such connections, and thus how policies of both sending and receiving states can represent strategies ‘for identifying who has access to certain places and under what conditions’ (Silvey and Lawson, 1999: 128; see also Bailey et al, 2002). As Bailey (2001: 421) suggests, many early accounts of transnationalism paid insufficient attention to ‘how the daily lives of migrants were related to the broader social, cultural, economic, political and spatial contexts they were theorised to be shaping.’

Thus, both religion and transnationalism have become significant fields of multi-disciplinary research and, in both areas, scholars have begun to develop new analytical frameworks in response to the theoretical and methodological challenges posed by such phenomena. Yet there remains a lack of research, in particular in the European context, that draws links between the two, and examines the transnational dimensions of religion, or, in turn, the religious dimensions of transnationalism. Furthermore, there is a significant gap in existing research on the ways in which religion impacts upon migrants’ experiences of return. Through a discussion of some of the ways in which the relationship between religion and transnationalism has been explored in a broader context, the following section will culminate with a consideration of how a ‘lived religion’ approach can fruitfully contribute to such analyses.

Religion, transnationalism and everyday life

Migrant transnational practices involve, or have marked impacts upon, religious phenomena. This includes patterns of organization, personal and group identities, intergroup relations, modes of practice and even elements of faith (Vertovec, 2009: 128).

Notwithstanding the proliferation of research into the practices and relationships of migrants that are conceived of as 'transnational', the religious dimensions of this transnationalism have been largely ignored (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2002; see also Vertovec, 2008). This is despite that fact that 'along with politics, economics, and family', 'religion operates transnationally' and, moreover, is a central element in the lives of many migrants (*ibid*: 190; see also Wuthnow and Offut, 2008). Indeed, scholars such as Levitt (2007: 21) have argued that the study of migrant religion can shed light on broader processes of globalisation and transnationalism, highlighting the need to think 'outside the national box' (see also Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004; Vazquez and Marquardt, 2003: 5). Moreover, a consideration of religion within the discussion of global changes can enhance our understanding of 'what religion is and where to find it on the table' (Levitt, 2007: 15). Levitt (2007: 12) goes even further, drawing direct parallels between globalisation and religion, suggesting that 'we must see the local Mosque or Pentecostal church as part of multilayered webs of connection where religious 'goods' are produced and exchanged around the globe'.

Yet despite a widening acknowledgement of the fundamental links between religion and transnationalism, which is far from a recent relationship (Wuthnow and Offut, 2008: 211), a corresponding body of research is still lacking. Warner (1998: 11) outlines three possible reasons for this neglect. These include: practical difficulties with obtaining data on religious practices; the proliferation of 'new' migrant groups whose numbers outweigh the existence of experts in the field (i.e. who speak their languages etc); and the 'antireligious bias in much of the social science research devoted to ethnic and immigrant communities' (*ibid*). Since Warner's assessment, a number of studies have emerged that examine the religious dimensions of migrant transnationalism, but as the discussion below suggests research remains limited.

Religious institutions and transnational lives

While there is still little research that explores the links between religion and transnationalism with regard to the UK, a growing body of work in the US has considered the crucial role that religion plays in the transnational lives of new migrant groups (Warner and Wittner, 1998; Menjivar, 1999; Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003; Leonard et al, 2005; Levitt, 2005, 2007). Thus, for example, Warner and Wittner's (1998) edited volume focuses specifically on congregations, which, they argue, are key sites in which 'new relations among the members of the community . . . are forged' (Warner, 1998:3). The ways in which religious institutions, and in particular those of ethnic minority groups, have responded to 'the opportunities and pressures of urban change' (20) in the city of Chicago have also been explored (Livezey, 2000) though, in this case, the focus is predominantly on the interaction between religious changes and urban changes, as opposed to the actual 'use' and impact of such changes upon those who experience the city.

The concept of transnational networks has been important within theorisations of how religion functions across borders (Leonard et al, 2005). Thus, for example, Ebaugh and Chafetz (2002) use a broad, multi-level framework, involving network analysis, to discuss the multiple ways in which religion can be transnational. They discuss the 'circular path' of migrants' religious practices which they 'bring with them', 'subsequently adapt to their lives in the US' and, through communication with friends and family back home, which 'influence religious structures and practices there' (6). However, despite its discussion of the different ways in which religion functions transnationally, there lacks corresponding empirical evidence as to how the 'religious structures and practices' in 'their homelands' are actually affected (*ibid*).

To some extent, Levitt's (2007) book addresses this omission in its multi-sited and multi-dimensional scope. Her research explores the religious practices of four migrant groups in Boston, and their home communities, and the focus is on migrants' – and their families' – own experiences and stories. We are reminded of Levitt's (1998) concept of 'social remittances', which refers to the transference of practices, ideas and values across borders as a result of the migration process. While, in this case there is some treatment of the religious dimensions of such 'remittances', the principal focus of the research is on the ways in which the religious practices of migrants are changing the American religious landscape as opposed to actual 'use' of

religion – both institutional and everyday - in the lives of the migrants themselves, and the links with their home communities (Levitt, 2007).

Flores (2005) critiques and indeed expands Levitt's notion of 'social remittances', positing instead the term 'cultural remittances'. He suggests that Levitt's approach does not sufficiently consider the asymmetrical power dynamics within both sending and receiving countries, and the ways in which these are challenged through the 'diasporic experience'. He argues that 'cultural remittances' better encapsulates the way in which 'transnational diaspora life [. . .] necessarily stretches the idea of national belonging by disengaging it from its presumed territorial and linguistic imperative' (23). Following Flores's (2005) line of argument, I develop the concept of *religious remittances* in this thesis to reflect not only how new religious practices are 'remitted', or flow, across borders, but also the ways in which the migrants themselves (and their families) create and experience such 'remittances' in different ways in their everyday lives. This notion of religious remittances also acknowledges Goldring's (2003: 4) assertion that remittances are 'multi-directional' and 'multi-polar' as opposed to flowing primarily in the direction of sending countries.

One of the key themes to emerge in the empirically based research on religion and migration is the supportive role that religious institutions assume for migrants in the host society setting (Warner, 1998; 2003; Brodwin; Hagan and Ebaugh, 2003; Kemp and Raijman, 2003; Hirschman, 2007; Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003; Menjívar, 2006; Ley, 2008). Thus, Vasquez and Ribeiro's (2007) recent study of the role of religious institutions among Brazilian migrants in Florida, for instance, examines how they can become among the few places in which migrants can create spaces of trust, belonging and mutual aid in a comparatively hostile environment (see also Martes, 2000). In Menjívar's (2006) study of Salvadoran and Guatemalan migrants in the US, religious institutions are considered to be vital spaces for support and the formation of community in the face of migrants' uncertain, or 'highly ambiguous' legal status, or 'legal liminality', that impacts upon all aspects of their lives, including their religious practices (1000). Similarly, Kemp and Raijman's (2003) discussion of Latin American evangelical churches that have emerged in Israel to serve the needs of 'Latino' labour migrants there, many of whom are irregular, suggests that these churches have become the 'only protected space where undocumented migrants under the constant threat of deportation acquire a public presence of some sort' (296).

Several authors have also noted the way in which migrants frequent different churches and combine elements of various religious traditions, as they find distinct sources of support within different religious communities (Levitt, 2005; Menjívar, 2006; Alves and Ribeiro, 2002). In addition to the social, and often practical, support offered by particular churches, some scholars have highlighted the ways in which migrants draw upon religious narratives for spiritual support for their experiences of migration and subsequent dislocation and feelings of marginalisation (Hagan and Ebaugh, 2003; Brodwin, 2003; Hagan, 2008). Thus, for example, Brodwin's (2003) ethnography of marginalised Haitian migrants in Guadeloupe describes the ways in which the Pentecostal church not only provides its converts with 'a new reference group and collective identity', but also how the actual religious doctrines of Pentecostalism – 'about the fallen world and the need to separate from it' – provide them with 'an explicit moral commentary about their exclusion' (90).

While there is broad agreement within the existing literature about the crucial role of religion in the lives of many migrants living their lives 'transnationally', and indeed vice versa (through religion's contribution to multiple 'transnational' connections) there is little doubt that different pictures emerge depending on the context, and on the particular migrant group. Thus, for example, while Menjívar (2006) describes the ways in which religious institutions have been 'pivotal' for supporting the Salvadoran and Guatemalan migrants living in 'legal limbo', this situation, she argues, 'will likely differ from that of other contemporary immigrants' (1024-5). Her research reveals a significant contrast between the responses of migrants with uncertain legal status, to those of Cuban migrants, who have fully recognised citizenship rights. While Cubans emphasised the spiritual and moral support of the church, the Central Americans – from the same church – highlighted the social and legal assistance it provided (1026).

The literature also reveals the ways in which different church denominations operate transnationally in diverse ways, and thus contribute to the multiple and often contradictory processes that characterise globalisation (Menjívar, 1999; Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003; Levitt, 2005, 2007). In an earlier study, Menjívar (1999) compares the transnational dimensions of four churches (two Catholic and two Pentecostal) frequented by Salvadoran migrants in Washington DC. While the Catholic church encouraged parishioners to engage with other Latin Americans, and embrace a pan-Latino identity, its activities were very much focused on the US context, discouraging

Salvadoran migrants from discussing purely Salvadoran issues (602). This contrasted with the two evangelical Protestant examples, one of which embraced Salvadoran identity in the US, and maintained direct links with a similar church in El Salvador (204), while another discouraged any kind of expression of national identity, promoting instead a 'pan-Christian' identity in the 'kingdom of God' (610). Menjívar (*ibid*: 190) argues that a focus on the functions of migrant religious institutions is key to our understanding of the ways in which migrants 'foster change from within them'. Such insights are important as they reveal the multiple functions of religious institutions and their crucial role in the (transnational) lives of migrants and, indeed, how religion and migration are experienced differently according to both church denomination and immigration status. However, there remains a lack of discussion of exactly how migrants 'foster change' within their religious institutions and, moreover, how these changes impact upon religious institutions in the sending setting, through migrants' transnational ties and, potentially, on their return.

Indeed, and not surprisingly perhaps, it has been argued that in many cases religion takes on a more important role for migrants than it had played prior to their migration, with migrant churches in the receiving country serving to fulfil more than merely spiritual and social needs (Kemp and Raijman, 2003; Menjívar, 2006; Ley, 2008). Kemp and Raijman (2003: 306) go as far as to suggest that many who have 'shunned religious affiliation in the past' turn to the church in response to their new circumstances and needs. Others have examined the ways in which migrant churches become important agencies in recruiting migrant workers, often creating direct links with potential migrants in the country of origin (Silvey, 2005). Religious institutions thus become crucial players in the creation, maintenance, or indeed constriction, of both formal and informal transnational networks.

A useful way in which the role of religious institutions in the formation of transnational practices and identities has been conceptualised, is through the notion of the religious institution as a 'liminal space' or 'border zone' (Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003: 145). Thus for irregular migrants, for example, a religious community can represent a space in which they can feel some sense of belonging in light of their 'liminal', or ambiguous legal status (Menjívar, 2006; Kemp and Raijman, 2003). Furthermore, the fact that many migrant religious communities become somewhat hybrid religious spaces, in which elements of religious doctrines from various traditions are combined, and new beliefs and practices emerge, perhaps suggests

another way to conceptualise this notion of ‘in-betweenness’ (Warner, 1998: 20; see also Beyer, 2006; Chivallon, 2001).

In fact, the flows of such religious reformulations between receiving and sending societies - what I call religious remittances (see above) – reflect the notion of religious identities and spaces that are, in many cases, far from static or consistent (Freston, 2008; see also Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2002). As part of a transnational religious space, the ‘ethnic’ church or religious institution could also literally represent a border zone - a space creating direct connections between two (or more) places, but being positioned somehow ‘in-between’ them (see Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003).

On the other hand, this notion of religious institutions as in-between spaces, or border-zones, risks ‘de-territorialising’ religion and ignoring the important influence of the particular contexts within which these transnational religious institutions are operating. It also potentially masks the other more negative meaning of ‘borders’ and thus the ways in which religious institutions themselves can represent spaces of exclusion. As Vasquez and Marquardt (2003: 63) write,

[o]n the one hand, religion generates hybridity, opening, in the same ways borders do, liminal spaces of transcultural creativity and innovation . . . On the other hand, religion, like borders, signals difference and even violent, physical exclusion (see also Vasquez and Ribeiro, 2007: 27).

While the notion of border-zone enables us to conceptualise religious institutions as hybrid spaces with multiple overlapping identities, the complex relationship between religious institutions and the receiving context should not be ignored. The current study aims to explore how migrant religious institutions, as well as being transnational, actually engage with local contexts and foster, or perhaps hinder, migrants’ integration into the host society. The following section discusses research that explores such themes.

Religious institutions and migrant integration

The role of religion in migrants’ adaptation to, and inclusion in, their new societies has been a key theme within existing research. Indeed, studies focusing on the US context have tended to emphasise religion’s positive role in migrant incorporation (Foner and Alba, 2008: 360). These observations concur with Herberg’s (1955)

seminal work, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, in which he argued that ‘assimilation’ and ‘becoming American’, which involved abandoning one’s nationality and language, did not include changing one’s religious identity (35). Moreover, Herberg (1955: 40) argued that migrants’ participation in ethnic religious communities actually facilitated the process by which they ‘found an identifiable place in American life’. In other words, the sense of belonging to a religious community with a distinct ethnic identity is not incompatible with a sense of belonging to the host society.

While more recent scholars such as Hirschman (2007: 395) have suggested that such a view is somewhat ‘ahistorical’ and limited in its discussion of the more pragmatic function of the church, the role of religious institutions in supporting migrants as they adapt to new environments is a recurring theme in research, in particular with regard to the US (see for example, Livezey, 2000; Menjívar, 1999, 2006; Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003; Levitt, 2005; Foner and Alba, 2008; Ley, 2008). Hirschman (2007: 413) summarises the pertinent role of religion in meeting the needs of migrant communities in three words: ‘refuge, responsibility, and resources’. It is thus widely argued that the role of religion among migrant groups which, in many cases, involves the maintenance of – or indeed construction of – a strong sense of ethnic identity are, in the US context, regarded as a positive element in their process of incorporation into American life (Foner and Alba, 2008: 363).

The notion of religious communities as important agents in the development of social capital in host society settings has been highlighted by a number of scholars (Levitt, 2005; see also Putman, 2000: 66; Wills et al, 2009). Levitt (2006) explores how faith communities can act as ‘a path to civic engagement’, providing spaces in which migrants can generate social capital in both sending and receiving society contexts. However, as Levitt (2006: 21) also reminds us, this capacity for social capital formation and creation of networks of ‘trust or reciprocity’ does not necessarily imply active engagement with – or ‘building bridges’ toward - mainstream society. Ugba’s (2008) discussion of African Pentecostal churches in Ireland, for example, discusses how, while they enable a sense of solidarity and belonging among their members in the new context, they also, in many ways, set themselves apart from that context, constructing a ‘sociocultural and moral universe that conflicts with the dominant culture and society’ (97).

By comparison with the North American field, literature relating to migrant religion in Western Europe has tended to focus ‘almost exclusively on Islam’, and in this case religion is seen as a threat to integration, creating conflict and problems as opposed to encouraging believers to be good citizens (Foner and Alba, 2008; see also Smith, 2000). Far from emphasising its integrative role in enabling a sense of belonging to host societies, discussions of migrant religion within Europe have tended to point to notions of self-segregation and how religious practices and beliefs, that are often ethnically based, actually impede the social integration of migrant communities (*ibid*; see also Naylor and Ryan, 2002; Wills et al, 2009).

The differences between US- and Europe- focused literature reveal the importance of context in an examination of the links between transnationalism, place and religion. The contextual basis of such links - the ‘specificity of locality’ - are also underlined in studies such as Glick Schiller et al’s (2006) comparative study of the role of a Pentecostal migrant church in a small German city (Halle) and a similarly sized US city (Manchester). For Glick Schiller et al (2006), a focus on a particular religious community within a specific locality reveals how migrants’ transnational and ‘integrative’ practices are not merely defined by ethnic or national affiliations (*ibid*: 614), and also demonstrates that a focus on small-scale cities is important if the debate is to move beyond the dominant global/gateway cities paradigm. Greg Smith’s (2000) work also emphasises the importance of small-scale studies in its concentration on the East London borough of Newham. Yet while other studies take the particular religious denomination as the unit of analysis (Glick Schiller et al, 2006; see also Menjivar, 1999), Smith discusses the diversity of the religious landscape in Newham, and the ways in which a very particular local dynamic can shed important light on broader processes of globalisation, and vice versa. In these European examples, there is a call for governments and policy-makers to recognise the increasingly important role of faith - in its diverse manifestations – in ‘social and political life’ (Smith, 2000: 37), an argument which resonates with scholars (discussed above) who call for a greater engagement with the ‘postsecular’.

Moving to an even smaller scale than the local context, other scholars have pointed to the importance of considering the space of the religious institution itself, which can represent a site where integration and transnationalism can interact and, indeed, engage with each other (Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003; Kemp and Raijman,

2003).¹⁷ Thus, some studies highlight the ways in which migrants perceive the religious community they establish at the church as a kind of extended family (*ibid*: 304; see also Wills et al, 2009: 20; Vasquez and Ribeiro, 2007), or indeed a space that encourages and enables them to feel ‘at home’ (Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003; see also Alves and Ribeiro, 2002; Vasquez and Ribeiro, 2007). Vasquez and Marquardt’s (2003) ethnographic description of two particular churches in a suburb of Atlanta reveals ways in which this feeling of being ‘at home’ can work in different ways: on the one hand, through creating spaces that evoke a sense of ethnic identity with material objects and imaginaries that are reminiscent of migrants’ ‘homeland’, and on the other hand, through enhancing a sense of dignity and belonging in the new context (156).

Thus, the supportive role played by migrant religious institutions is often portrayed through the notion that they are extensions of home (see Casanova, 1994: 64) in which migrants can both imagine, produce and inhabit familiar spaces that enable them to stay connected with their lives ‘back home’. Yet scholars have also pointed to the ways in which these spaces are very much ‘anchored’ in particular places (Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003: 146; see also Ehrkamp, 2005; Krause, 2008). These places, far from being ‘deterritorialised’ are, it is argued, shaped by ‘global economic change, transnational migration *and* local historical factors’ (Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003: 146, my emphasis). Such arguments echo some recent debates within migration studies, which challenge the notion of a dichotic relationship between the local and the transnational, which, as Ehrkamp (2005: 348) argues, ‘overly simplif[ies] complex processes of identity construction, assimilation and adaptation’ (see also Vertovec, 2007, Sheringham, 2010a). Through a consideration of the role of religion in the lives of migrants, my research draws on such insights to consider how religion creates spaces for the ‘subtle interactions of transnational engagement and local feelings of belonging that, far from being merely conflicting, are in fact interconnected in complex ways’ (Sheringham, 2010a: 64).

The extent to which religion facilitates local attachment and/or transnational engagement is, of course, dependent on myriad factors, including not only the actions of the religious institutions themselves - and the macro context within which they are acting - but also the actual practices of migrants themselves, and the ways in which

¹⁷ See also Ehrkamp (2005: 353-4) for a discussion of Mosques among Turkish migrants in Germany.

they use the institutions (Levitt, 2005; see also Menjívar, 2003). Factors including gender, age and socio-economic position are just some of the key issues that impact on the religious practices and identities of migrants, and of course have wider implications with regard to migrants' integration into host societies (Alves and Ribeiro, 2002; see also Vertovec, 2007). Thus, for example, the diversity and fragmentation that characterises the religious arena among Brazilian migrants in Florida, is highlighted in Alves and Ribeiro's (2002) study (see also Freston, 2008). This has in some cases created divisions within the community, producing a sense of community and belonging for some, but at the same time producing new forms of division and exclusion (Alves and Ribeiro, 2002). In addition, as Vertovec (2009: 140) suggests, the 'religious pluralism' that migrants encounter in cities such as London, does not only refer to 'the co-presence of different faiths': in fact, new migrants often encounter 'members and practices of distinct traditions within their own religion'. This has certainly been revealed in existing discussions of the burgeoning Brazilian churches in the diaspora (Martes, 2000; Alves and Ribeiro, 2002).

While some research suggests that migrant religion 'reinforces immigrants' national or ethnic identity with their home country' (Stepick, 2005: 15; see also Fortier, 2000; Chivallon, 2001), some more recent research into large evangelical churches point to the ways in which they seek to project a more universal Christian identity which transcends national boundaries. An important theme within such studies is the ways in which these physical spaces reflect the religious – and in many cases political – objective of the churches. Krause's (2008) discussion of transnational African churches situated in disused warehouses in industrial estates in London points to how in some cases the church 'would describe itself as an African church', while in other instances, when addressing an international audience the church would present itself as 'belonging to global Christendom' (123). Krause's study also highlights the contrast between the church's physical location in a neglected and rundown area at the margins of the city, and the inner space of the church, which uses sophisticated media equipment to create a vibrant African-cum-universal space. Thus, she explores the complex place-making practices of church leaders and the ways in which 'the inner decoration and media play a role to emplace the church within the imaginary social field of neo-Pentecostalism' (*ibid*: 117). Her research suggests how consideration of the physical space of the church and its geographical context can

provide insights into the ways in which religious communities adapt to processes of globalisation and migration (see above; see also Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003).

Transnationalism and virtual religion

As well as foregrounding the physical and geographical contexts of places of worship, recent scholars have also drawn attention to the increasing appropriation of cyberspace among religious communities (Garbin and Vasquez, forthcoming 2012; Oosterbaan, 2011). Indeed, given how the expansive access to new technologies has been an important theme to emerge within the literature relating to globalisation and transnationalism, it is perhaps not surprising that such technologies, and in particular computer-mediated communications (CMCs), are, as Vertovec (2009: 145) contends, ‘now having a considerable impact on transnational religious organization and activity.’

Georgiou (2006: 22) argues that ‘[a]s electronic media are both local and transnational, they surpass the boundedness of geographical positionings and allow people to shape belonging beyond singular categorisations’ (22). Some existing studies of religious congregations have also suggested how recourse to CMCs enables them to simultaneously forge transnational and virtual connections, while at the same time reinforcing a sense of community rooted in locality (Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003; Oosterbaan, 2010b). Thus, in Vasquez and Marquardt (2003)’s research into the impact of CMCs on a variety of migrant religious congregations in two towns in the US South, they conclude that,

[r]ather than setting electronic communications as totally deterritorialised media against a static, homogeneous, and territorial locality, our congregations saw the Net as in dynamic interplay with their physical communities (117).

Oosterbaan’s (2011) study of the use of the Internet by the Brazilian Pentecostal mega-church, the *Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus* (IURD) points to the ways in which the globalising reach of such new media converges with the message of a universal Christian community evoked in the church’s discourse. He argues that,

the adoption and production of popular Internet applications allow the IURD to link Biblical narratives to places and spaces to underscore their global (omni)presence, while simultaneously connecting adherents with one another

in cyberspace, thus enforcing the imagination of a global community of believers (Oosterbaan, 2011: 58-59).

In this sense, Oosterbaan (*ibid*: 59) reveals how the ‘utopian promise of global interconnection through new media’ bears a ‘striking resemblance’ to ‘the prophetic and missionary drive towards a global community of Christians’, and thus represents the ideal medium through which they can project this ‘drive’. This argument is echoed in Garbin and Vasquez’s (forthcoming 2012: 1) recent study of the role of CMCs, as ‘sacralising tools’ among neo-Pentecostal congregations in the Congolese diaspora. They argue that the ‘simultaneously globalizing and localizing, quotidian operation of computer-mediated communications mirrors the powerful, anti-structural but deeply personal and immediate experience of the Holy Spirit.’

Elsewhere, Oosterban (2010b) describes the use of the CMCs among two Brazilian evangelical churches in Amsterdam and Barcelona and, in particular, the ways in which church websites become important spaces through which both leaders and members participate in the religious communities and, through a ‘network of hyperlinks’, can connect with members of similar religious communities in other locations. At the same time, however, Oosterbaan’s (2010b) research concurs with Vasquez and Marquardt (2003) above, suggesting that rather than providing a substitute for face-to-face interactions, ‘online and offline circuits are permeable and [that] offline and online social relations quite often enforce one another’ (p 294).

While such studies are helpful in revealing how CMCs enable religious congregations to adapt to technological advances relating to cultural globalisation, there is a lack of research into how they impact on the religious lives of migrants and thus how such new media enable them to practise religion in different ways as they live their lives across borders. In Levitt’s (2007) discussion of some of the diverse ways in which religion functions transnationally, she mentions how religious communities skilfully use technology which, in many cases, can ‘change how people “attend” religious services and what happens once they are there’ (133). Yet there is little research into how these new technologies change not only *where* and *how* institutional religion is practised, but also reveal how religion can be ‘lived’ across borders. As Vasquez (2010: 132) suggests,

future study of the intersection between religion and diaspora will have to pay close attention to the impact of virtuality, and the explosive growth of global mass media and the culture industry in the construction of religiously inflected diasporic memories, desires, experiences, artefacts and identities.

Moreover, little attention has been paid to how participation in virtual transnational religious networks affects the lives of migrants before and after they have migrated, and thus to how such activities are ‘remitted’ across borders, influenced by and influencing the lives of both those who migrate and those who stay behind. Through considering some of the ways in which the Internet becomes an important resource for migrants to practise their religion across borders, my research seeks to address this neglect.

Religion, migration and social identities

[T]he diversity and rapidity of migration has challenged religious studies to abandon its exclusive focus on the unchanging truths of the great texts, to see these truths as historically constructed by subjects inflected by class, gender, and race, and other powerful dynamics (Vasquez, 2005: 222).

The current research does not take an explicitly gendered, class-, or race-based perspective, and references to gender and social class are made only in specific cases where there were marked contrasts between the narratives of research participants (see Chapter 3). However, sensitivity to how the processes and practices to which the research refers are experienced differently according to factors such as gender, sexuality, race, social class, and indeed migration status were crucial considerations in the methodological framework adopted in the study, and also inform the conceptualisation of religion as lived experience.

The gendered nature of religious practices and, in particular, the changing role of women in religious institutions is an important theme that has emerged within research that has explored the relationship between religion and transnationalism (Ebaugh and Chafetz 1999, Williams 2008, Fortier 2000, Mira and Lorentzen 2002, Shin 2007). Ebaugh and Chafetz’s (1999) research into multiple migrant religious organisations reveals the somewhat ‘ironic’ role of migrant women within them, suggesting that they may be involved in ‘trying to change an inegalitarian gender structure’ within organised religion, while at the same time they are crucial agents for ‘reproducing traditional culture, including its gender component’ (*ibid*: 588). Their research suggests how the ‘expanded functions’ of migrant religious institutions – which often become community centres as well as religious spaces - mean that many

women participate in leadership roles, thus providing them with some ‘recognition and social status’ within the congregation (*ibid*: 600).

Such insights are important as they reveal how migrant religious practices are influenced by and impact on other aspects of the migration experience. Thus just as migration can challenge existing gender roles (McIlwaine, 2010), so too can religion stimulate transformations in social identities and existing power structures. Indeed, some scholars have taken the discussion even further and considered not only women’s changing roles within patriarchal institutional religion, but also how they can draw upon ‘spiritual resources’ as a form of self-empowerment, and as a way to ‘access different forms of power’ (Williams, 2008: 346; see also Garnett and Harris, forthcoming 2012). Thus in Williams’s (2008) study of return Indonesian domestic workers, for example, she considers the ways in which faith provided an important source of support enabling the women to ‘reconcile a paradox of being placed under the Church’s, and also male kinfolk’s, subjection as a weak person, yet maintaining their beliefs as a centring force, which kept them brave [. . .] and strong in the midst of transformation’ (351).

The relationship between religion, race and social class has been an important theme within research into the changing role of religion in Latin America (see Vasquez and Williams, 2005). With regard to the explosive growth of Protestant Pentecostalism in Brazil, for example, scholars have revealed how such growth has been particularly prevalent among people from the poorest sectors of society, while the growth in adherence to Spiritism has been more prevalent among white, middle-class people (Pierruci and Prandi, 2000; see Chapter 3). Rocha’s (2006b) discussion of religion among Brazilian migrants in Sydney reflects these class-based dimensions of religious affiliations, and indeed she goes as far as to suggest that ‘social class plays a more meaningful role than ethnicity in the diasporic community’ (149). Research into religion among Brazilian migrants elsewhere has revealed a more complex relationship between religion, migration and social class. Thus, Martes and Rodriguez’s (2004) study of entrepreneurship among Brazilian migrants in the US concluded that the Protestant, predominantly evangelical, churches provided ‘more favourable environments’ for ethnic entrepreneurship and thus greater potential for social mobility among migrants (135).

Religion is thus experienced and practised in multiple ways, and religious identities intersect with other elements of identity in the negotiation and practice of

everyday life. An approach to religion as lived experience is sensitive to these variations. As Garnett and Harris (forthcoming 2012: 5) contend, such an approach, ‘which takes seriously lived religious experience and the discursive subjectivities’ of church members, represents an important challenge to the ‘rigid and impermeable categories’ often employed in the study of religion. The next section discusses the ways in which a lived religion approach to religion and migration, and a focus on how religion is practised and experienced both inside and outside the congregation, can provide important insights for the study of religion among migrants.

A lived religion approach to migration

[I]n order to understand the place of religion in the contemporary world, it is necessary to examine not just the overtly religious places, but also other spaces of everyday life that may occasionally take on religious functions and meanings (Kong, 2010: 769)

In recent years, some scholars have pointed to the need for more grounded work that considers how religion is actually ‘lived’ (Orsi, 2003; McGuire, 2008), or practised, in the everyday lives of individuals and communities (Vasquez and Maquardt, 2003: 50; see also Ammerman, 2007). Thus, even if the declining ‘orthodoxy of belief and regularity of attendance’ in some areas suggest that religion’s significance there is diminishing, the study of everyday lives reveals how ‘religious ideas and practices may be present even when they are neither theologically pure nor socially insulated’ (Ammerman, 2007: 6). This broader meaning of religion reflects what Appadurai (1996: 7) terms ‘new religiosities’, or what McGuire (2007: 187) describes as the ways by which ‘people make sense of their world – the ‘stories’ out of which they live’. Religion as ‘lived experience’ thus suggests that the religious realm cannot be separated from other everyday practices, and that the boundaries between what and where is religion are increasingly blurred (Orsi, 2003: 172). Indeed, as Vasquez and Maquardt (2003: 226) argue, congregations are but ‘one among many sites of lived religion in the Americas’, and what is needed are studies that are ‘more refined at both the micro and macro levels’.

Scholars have examined the ways in which religion – beyond the formal realm - offers a sense of meaning and hope in what is an otherwise negative or challenging experience (Hagan and Ebaugh, 2003; Levitt, 2007; Hagan, 2008). Thus, for example,

in their discussion of Brazilian migrants in Florida, Alves and Ribeiro (2002: 20) suggest that recourse to religion helps the migrants to ‘understand’, ‘accept’, and indeed justify the ‘emotional and/or material instability’ that characterises their situation, allowing them to perceive it as ‘God’s will’ (my translation; see also Williams, 2008). Hagan and Ebaugh’s (2003) study of a Guatemalan Pentecostal Mayan community migrating to Houston, Texas, focuses on the creative use of religion by migrants themselves to organise, explain, and support their migration experience (1147). In particular, they emphasise the ‘spiritual resources’ with which religious faith provides some migrants, ‘in the decision to migrate and the psychological effects of this on migrants’ commitment to endure the hardship of migration’ (1147). These ideas are developed further in Hagan’s (2008) study of Mexican and Central American migrants, in which she explores migrants’ recourse to religion, to ‘interpret, create, and sometimes transform everyday religious practices to derive meaning for the decision to migrate and to seek spiritual guidance . . . during the process of international travel’ (7). The work conceptualises religion in ‘its broadest sense’, thus referring to ‘all those beliefs and practices sanctioned by the church’, but also, ‘the rich diversity of everyday practices informed by culture and shared experience, and employed and transformed by the migrants themselves to draw meaning in the migration process’ (*ibid*).

Indeed, as Kong (2010: 769) asserts, as well as acknowledging that religion takes place beyond the confines of ‘officially sacred spaces’, scholars must take into account the fact that ‘the ways in which religion is experienced and negotiated are also multifaceted and multi-scaled, from the body to the neighbourhood, city, nation, and across nations’. Thus, in Chivallon’s (2001) discussion of Caribbean churches in London and the creation of a ‘Caribbean identity’, the focus moves beyond the institutions themselves and considers how religion represents an individual experience and thus, ‘also functions along lines that each person draws for himself or herself according to what he or she considers to be his or her personal religious experience which goes beyond the church group’ (474).

For McGuire (2007: 192), the role of religion in the lives of people living at the margins of society – including women and migrants – also reveals how religiosity can be manifested outside the institutional religious sphere, and in response to the most mundane of human concerns. She considers the ‘invisibility’ of many manifestations of everyday religion - such as the creation of sacred spaces in the

domestic sphere, and festivities such as the traditional Mexican celebration known as the ‘day of the dead’ – which, she argues, ‘have been made invisible by the social construction of religion in Western societies’ (66). Her work also draws attention to the ways in which ‘popular religious practices’¹⁸ blur the conventional boundaries between the sacred and the profane, revealing how religious values and beliefs are often used to address the ‘material concerns’ of Latino migrants (55).

McGuire’s work can be situated among that of a growing number of scholars who have explored the ‘variety of religious practices and sites, beyond churches, temples, mosques, synagogues, and such’ (Kong, 2010: 34). One of the key sites of investigation in this regard has been the home, and the ways in which a sense of the sacred can be experienced in domestic spaces in everyday life (McGuire, 2008; Kong, 2002; Tolia-Kelly, 2004). In her discussion of home shrines and religious iconology in the domestic spaces of British Asians, for example, Tolia-Kelly (2004: 321) argues that the shrines represent important sites for the infusion of religion into everyday spaces, but also as symbolic of ‘a cultural identity linked to a space pre-migration.’ Drawing direct links between these domestic religious objects and the migration experience, she argues, ‘[t]he shrine is a valuable site, whose form fits the experience of migration. Shrines are dynamic; they allow growth of a collection of pieces that are sacred and blessed’ (*ibid.*: 319). In a similar vein, McGuire’s (2008) discussion of ‘*altarcitos*’, or miniature altars that Latino migrants, and in this case women, have in their homes, points to the ways in which these domestic religious practices allow these women to access a more intimate, ‘personal connection with the Saints’ (53). The study of religion in the domestic spaces of migrants thus points to the permeability of boundaries between the sacred and the everyday and, moreover, to how belonging and identity become imbued with religious meanings.

Religion has also been theorised as ‘embodied practice’ (McGuire, 2006, 2008; see also Knott, 2005; Vasquez, 2005), which shifts the scale of analysis to the ‘micro’ level of the individual body. This notion of religion as ‘embodied practice’ echoes some of the ideas put forward by Dunn (2010) in relation to ‘embodied’ transnationalism. Rather than focusing on the processes and impacts of

¹⁸ McGuire (2008: 45) acknowledges that the notion of ‘popular religion’ has been ‘badly tainted by negative connotations’ implying a kind of impurity and illegitimacy. She nevertheless uses the term, arguing that ‘[r]ather than treat popular religion as a nonofficial belief system, it is important to focus on how people actually use popular religious elements in their own religious practices and ways of acting in everyday life’ (47).

transnationalism or religion, the scholars in both cases point to the importance of individual, subjective, experience. Yet while the concept of ‘embodiment’ is useful and enables us to consider how lived religion is multi-scaled, one could argue that this analysis confines religion to the theoretically graspable realm of physical and material experiences and still fails to acknowledge the spirit, that which is ‘inside’ and thus invisible (see Dewsbury and Cloke, 2009).

McGuire (2008: 13) argues that a focus on ‘embodied practices’ in fact challenges the theoretical boundary between the spiritual and material self and can reveal the ways in which ‘the sacred is made vividly real and present through the experiencing body’ (see also Orsi, 2005). Such approaches echo some geographical analyses of religion as outlined above (Dewsbury and Cloke, 2009; Buttimer, 2006), whereby religion is ‘intimately linked to human identity’ (Buttimer, 2006: 200) and often inseparable from everyday practice (Cloke, 2002). Rather than representing a separate realm of experience from those ‘called profane’, religion, as Orsi (1997: 7) asserts, ‘comes into being in an ongoing, dynamic, relationship with the realities of everyday life.’ Thus, with regard to migration, religion is, for many migrants, an integral part of the experience - not necessarily because of external ‘visible’ manifestations of religious adherence, but because religion is an essential, albeit invisible, part of their identity – an identity which travels across borders (Hagan and Ebaugh, 2003).

These insights are important for my research which explores not just the ways in which organised religious communities become important sources of support for migrants, but also how religion becomes fundamental to how they make sense of their whole migration experience, and how they live their lives and adapt to multiple settings. My approach is thus informed by Hagan’s (2008: 165) observation that an analysis of religion as ‘practised’, ‘emphasises how people in particular social contexts live *with* or *through* the religious idioms available to them’ (my emphasis).

Concluding remarks

A renewed focus on both sides of diasporic practice – the mobile as well as the rooted – will bring the meaning of religion back to the fore, discussing the meaning of religion both as a factor in forming diasporic social organisation, as well as shaping and maintaining diasporic identities (Kokot et al, 2004: 7).

This chapter has explored four important areas of research that have emerged in recent years: religion and globalisation, geographies of religion, transnational studies, and interdisciplinary research that draws links between religion and transnationalism. It has revealed how religion has become an important subject of inquiry, especially notable in recent work that explores the increasingly blurred boundaries between the sacred and the secular in the space of the city (Baker and Beaumont, 2010). Transnational scholars have, in turn, begun to acknowledge the pertinence of religion with regard to migration and transnationalism, and there exists an emerging body of work that examines the different ways in which religion is manifest within transnational migration flows, and how transnational processes impact upon and create new forms of religious expression.

Yet while scholars of globalisation have acknowledged the fundamental religious aspects of such processes, and religious scholars have begun to advocate a broader approach to religion as ‘lived’, there remains a lack of research into how religion is lived and practised in the everyday lives of migrants and, in turn, how this impacts on the wider context of globalisation. Thus, through an examination of both large-scale approaches to the relationship between globalisation and religion, and more recent studies that have considered the local levels at which religion is practised – ‘everyday’ or ‘lived’ religion – this review of the literature points to the possibilities for research that examines the interplay between these phenomena.

My thesis thus proposes a conceptual framework that will combine some of the key theoretical and empirical insights of these varying approaches to transnationalism and religion to consider the role of religion in the everyday lives of Brazilian migrants in London. As such, it explores how religion helps migrants to create ‘alternative geographies of belonging’ (Levitt, 2005: 400): spaces, practices and beliefs that can facilitate a sense of belonging in London, while at the same time reinforce a sense of closeness to people and places back home in Brazil. This framework challenges the notion of a dichotic relationship between the transnational and the local, between London and ‘back home’, between the spiritual and the material. The study of religion and transnationalism means not just a focus on how migrants’ religious practices are manifested in different places. Rather, it is concerned with the ways in which religion is intertwined with the everyday lives of a great majority of the world’s population affecting not just those who migrate or those who belong to a religious community.

Chapter 3

Researching religion, migration and transnationalism: towards a methodological framework

The overall aim of my research was to explore the role of religion in the everyday, transnational lives of Brazilian migrants in London and to consider how religion, both institutional and beyond, plays a role in all stages of the migration process and hence in sending, receiving and return settings. This chapter discusses the methodological framework that was adopted to address the research objectives. I explain how my fieldwork involved various stages, including participation in a broader quantitative study of Latin American migrants that provided important baseline information for my study relating to the lives of Brazilians in London. Yet despite this recourse to quantitative data, my research took a broadly qualitative, ethnographic approach, which comprised in-depth interviews and participant observation in several research sites in London and Brazil, including three religious institutions.

The first section of this chapter considers the theoretical debates that underpin the various methods chosen, including a consideration of how the emergence of new theoretical paradigms, such as transnationalism, requires new research methods. The second section outlines the specific methodological framework chosen to address my research questions, the rationale behind the approach, and a description of the final sample of research participants in both London and Brazil. The chapter ends with a reflection on the process of carrying out the research. This includes a consideration of some of the ethical considerations and limitations that I encountered during my fieldwork, as well as some reflections on my own positionality in relation to the research process.

Methodological underpinnings for a new field of enquiry

A 'transnational optic' on migration

As discussed in the previous chapter, the multi-disciplinary field of 'transnational studies' emerged in the 1990s and the meaning and use of the term 'transnational' has

since been the subject of widespread debate. However, despite some scepticism as to the actual novelty of ‘transnational’ phenomena, there is little doubt that the term’s emergence coincided with wider theoretical and methodological shifts within social research, whereby the nation-state as a bounded ‘container’ of social relations has been challenged, and debates over structure and agency have come to the fore (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004). Within migration research, both the tendency to regard migrants as victims or subjects within a wider context, and the notion of migration as a process of movement from one socially bounded entity to another, are no longer adequate to analyse and describe such complex and multidirectional processes, places, and people (Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007; see also Silvey and Lawson, 1999). As Levitt and Jaworsky (2007: 142) write, ‘[t]ransnational migration studies requires not just asking a different set of questions about different social spaces but developing new methods for doing so.’ They use the term transnational ‘optic’ or ‘lens’ to refer to a methodological shift that recognises the need: firstly, to ‘include nonmigrants as well as migrants’; secondly, to ‘consider the multiple sites of transnational social fields beyond just the sending and receiving country’; thirdly, to ‘rethink assumptions about belonging’; and finally, to ‘trace the historical continuity of these processes’ (*ibid*). The development of such methods, however, is still in its preliminary stages.

Some examples of early research into transnational migration were criticised for being based on too small (US-based) case studies, which led to calls for more comparative studies of such phenomena (Clifford, 1997; Guarnizo and Smith, 1998; Mahler, 1998; Vertovec, 1999). Further critiques centred on the tendency to focus predominantly on people or communities directly involved in the migration process, without due consideration of the multiple actors who participate in, and are affected by, transnational processes (Vertovec, 2009). Indeed, scholars have acknowledged the shortfalls of examining transnational phenomena from purely macro-level perspectives (focusing predominantly on the structural causes and consequences of migration), or by privileging micro-level analysis (prioritising personal stories over the wider context) (Guarnizo and Smith, 1998). In response, some scholars have highlighted a need for more ‘meso-level’ perspectives, which can encompass both the ‘macro- and micro-dynamics of transnationalism’ (Guarnizo and Smith, 1998: 28-9).

The emergence of ‘multi-sited ethnography’ (Marcus, 1995), or what Appadurai (1996) terms ‘cosmopolitan ethnographies’, also reflects empirical responses to the challenge of researching ‘all sites of the transnational social field’

(Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007: 143), and thus allowing an understanding of migration as a 'process' (Hannerz, 1998: 240). Hannerz (1998: 24) takes this further suggesting that, as well as being 'multi-local', research into transnationalism may need to be 'translocal', so as to capture the actual relations and spaces between sites (see also Horst, 2002). Thus, translocal research would not only involve research in multiple locations, but also explore the connections between these locations: for example, virtual communication, or the actual journeys back and forth between the different research localities. Hannerz (1998: 249) also suggests that transnational and multi-sited studies often imply different temporal relationships between the researcher and the field(s). So, for instance, the site itself may be transient,¹⁹ the inhabitants could be spending as short a time there as the ethnographer, and engagement with the site could be maintained 'virtually' after the research (*ibid*).

A consequence of these necessary methodological shifts to encompass more complex spatial and temporal arrangements - what Stoller (1997) terms 'globalising method' - is the potential 'trade-off between depth and breadth' (Hannerz, 1998: 248). On the one hand, studies that focus only on transnational ties and ignore the actual lived experiences of migrants at the local level arguably fail to capture the continuing importance of specific places for migrants. On the other hand, research that focuses solely on the local context, with the sending society referred to 'only as a source of background information' do not reflect the interconnection between such places (Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007: 143). The current research seeks to address some of the methodological 'trade-offs' and move towards a 'goal' of 'thick and empirically rich mapping of how global macro-level processes *interact with* local lived experiences [...] that are representative of a broader context' (Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007: 143, my emphasis). The choice of an approach that combined recourse to secondary, quantitative data with qualitative, ethnographic techniques in both London and Brazil, was an attempt to incorporate the broader context, while at the same time not losing sight of the need for a grounded methodology that could capture some aspects of the everyday lives of migrants.

¹⁹ See, for example, Horst's (2002) study of Somali refugee camps in Kenya.

Researching religion and migration

The religious situation is indeed in one sense a part of the social and cultural situation and therefore subject to scrutiny and analysis. But in another sense it is something that transcends the social and cultural framework in which it is embedded, and takes on a dimension that relates it to the divine-human encounter to which it ultimately refers (Herberg, 1955: 16).

Understanding religion will require attention both to the “micro” world of everyday interaction, and the “macro” world of large social structures (Ammerman, 2007: 234).

The study of religion also presents many methodological challenges with regard not only to the practical implications of studying the role of religion in the lives of migrants, but also to the very act of analysing religion through the secular language and methods of social science (Brodwin, 2003; see also Coleman, 2002). Moreover, like transnationalism, the study of the religious dimensions of migration is a fairly recent - and trans-disciplinary - theme of research and hence lacks a corresponding and coherent methodology. Indeed, this belated emergence within social research is due, in part, to an ‘anti-religious bias’ (Warner, 1998: 11) within social science and a widely held view that religion’s significance was in decline (see also Cadge and Ecklund, 2007). On the other hand, some recent studies suggest that research into the religious dimensions of transnationalism can reveal important insights into the nature of ‘transnational social fields’, just as a transnational perspective on migrant religion allows new insights into religious practice and change (see Levitt, 2007). In establishing a methodological framework, the current research thus seeks to make methodological as well as empirical contributions to an important and emerging area of investigation.

The interpretation of social phenomena is undoubtedly a challenge for all social research, and scholars across the social sciences have debated the advantages and weaknesses of different approaches to the study of discourses and practices that are ‘foreign’ to one’s own. The notion of ‘translation’ is often evoked to reflect the process of interpreting and representing such practices, whereby ‘translation’ does not refer merely to linguistic communication, but also to cultural systems and meanings (see Clifford and Marcus, 1986). The study of religion reflects a clear example of such a challenge since it is not just about doctrines or discourses, but rather ‘the subjective experience and system of its practitioners’ (Levitt, 2005: 4). Some scholars

have argued that social scientific studies of religion have tended to take a functionalist perspective - whereby religion takes on a particular role in response to a certain need – and have thereby ignored the spiritual dimension (Miller and Yamamori, 2007; see also Brodwin, 2003). Brodwin's (2003) study of evangelical Haitians in Guadeloupe, draws on Benjamin's (1968) concept of translation (among others) to discuss the methodological limitations involved in interpreting religious practices and beliefs through anthropological strategies. Just as Benjamin's theorisation points to how translation should not attempt to be a substitute for the original, so Brodwin's study does 'not treat Pentecostal doctrine as a cultural text' to be translated directly into 'anthropological discourse', but rather the original and the translation are regarded as 'complimentary' and 'overlapping' (86). Drawing on Brodwin's (*ibid*) insights, I was conscious during my own research of the fact that as a social scientific endeavour, the 'translation' of peoples' religious practices could not purport to reflect the 'real thing'. Thus, I sought to engage not with the meanings of the practices and beliefs themselves, but rather with *how* and *where* they were practised, and how this related to the migration experiences of my research participants.

Other scholars of religion have pointed to the methodological, and indeed ethical, challenges of studying religious beliefs and practices that are 'remote' from the researcher's own experience (Coleman, 2002: 80; see also McGuire, 2002). McGuire (2002), for instance, describes her experience studying a group of charismatic Christians in the US and how, despite her seemingly rigorous research strategy involving interviews and participant observation, through which she sought to 'understand' them, the believers by no means felt she had understood them since she had no intention of becoming 'one of them' (200). She thus points to the ethical dilemma of such research, since her reluctance to convert seemed to challenge their integrity as a group whose 'mission' was to spread the word of God (*ibid*).

McGuire's (2002) discussion points to the importance of recognising that the 'ethnographic gaze' can work both ways and that, 'we cannot control the identities and roles that others impute onto us' (200). Moreover, as Coleman's (2002) study of a widespread Christian fundamentalist group in Sweden suggests, we must recognise that the discourses and representations that emerge through fieldwork may encompass but also 'transcend' the writings of the 'secular' researcher (85). Self-reflexivity is thus a key element of such fieldwork, but with an acknowledgement of how self-

reflexivity itself has its limitations, and can never be ‘transparent’ nor, indeed, ‘elude the dynamics of power’ (Rose, 1997: 316; see also below).

Further debates within the study of religion revolve around the context in which the religious practices are carried out. Early studies of religion among migrants tended to focus on migrant congregations in the host society (Warner and Wittner, 1998; see also Cadge and Ecklund, 2007; also Chapter 2), while more recently scholars have called for a ‘lived religion’ approach whereby religion is ‘situated amid the ordinary concerns of life, at the junctures of self and culture, family and social world’ (Orsi, 2003: 172). Vasquez and Marquardt (2003), point to the need for a methodological approach that can incorporate both the formal and institutional religious realms, *and* everyday manifestations of faith and religious identity. They draw on Appadurai’s (1996) concept of ‘cosmopolitan ethnography’ to engage in an anthropology of religion ‘on the move’ that can map the ‘mobile yet always situated ways in which religion links the daily micro-politics of individual and collective identity with a dense cluster of meso- and macro-social processes’ (50).

To capture this interplay between individual experiences and beliefs and religious institutions - and to avoid the ‘reification of people’s religious beliefs, practices and experiences’ (McGuire, 2002: 196) - a qualitative methodology is the most appropriate. Rather than merely describing the discourses and practices of certain religious institutions, or examining levels of attendance among their members, the current study explores *how* religion inhabits the everyday lives and discourses of Brazilian migrants (and their families) themselves. The challenges I encountered during my research will be discussed in more depth below.

A qualitative approach to research on migration

It is widely acknowledged that the research aims and questions should guide the chosen methodological framework (Bradshaw and Stratford, 2000; Spicer, 2004). Thus, while some research into specific issues relating to migration compares data from broad surveys of large numbers of migrants (for example, Snel et al, 2006), my research is concerned with the actual experiences of Brazilian migrants, and the role of religion in their everyday lives, in London and in their home communities, data that could not be captured purely through a survey-based approach. Moreover, given the

multifaceted aims of the study and the necessity for multi-sited (or at least ‘twin-sited’) research, only by using several overlapping qualitative methods could I address the various issues and obtain more than a fragmented perspective.

Quantitative and qualitative approaches have often been presented in opposition to each other, with quantitative methods regarded as more ‘scientific’, ‘value-free’ and ‘objective’, compared to the supposedly more partial or subjective qualitative approaches (Winchester, 2000: 11). Yet such a dichotomy has been widely challenged and, indeed, the seeming ‘objectivity’ of quantitative research has been thrown into question by more recent arguments that point to how *all* knowledge is partial and that this inevitable subjective bias should be made visible throughout research and not hidden under the veil of ‘quantitative’ data (see Pile, 1991).

Indeed, within geography, qualitative techniques have become increasingly important, often as part of ‘mixed methods’ approaches, whereby qualitative and quantitative, or different qualitative, methods are combined (Winchester, 2000: 15). Such an approach is often seen as an effective way of enhancing the quality of research, and addressing issues of validity (Seale, 2004: 76). It may take the form of the ‘triangulation’ of methods, which implies combining qualitative and quantitative methods, or a variety of qualitative techniques, to look at ‘a particular research question to cross-check results for consistency’, or the ‘combination’ of methods to address different aspects, or stages, of the research (Spicer, 2004).

The research design for this study drew on quantitative data from a survey conducted among Latin Americans in London, which included 233 Brazilians, and for which I was one of the researchers (see below). With recourse to this comprehensive baseline information, I opted for a predominantly qualitative approach, including in-depth interviews and participant (or ‘non-participant’, see below) observation. In addition to the challenges outlined above, there are four key reasons why I adopted a qualitative approach. First, while a quantitative survey can be a useful starting point in circumstances where there is little existing information, the data gathered may be insufficient to shed light on the complexity and often arbitrariness of individual experiences (Byrne, 2004; Hoggart et al, 2002). Secondly, a large number of the migrants who participated in the research were irregular, so relying on secondary data or a quantitative study would be insufficient to reveal the richness and detail of the,

often invisible, everyday lives and practices of these individuals.²⁰ Thirdly, the research was concerned with the religious practices and beliefs of migrants (and their families) in London and on their return to Brazil, information that is essentially subjective and as such required an approach that could capture some of the complexity and the contradictions that may characterise such experiences. A final related point is that, given the relative lack of formal means of representation, many migrants remain invisible in the public sphere so the use of in-depth interviews provides a realm within which to ‘give voice’ to fascinating and insightful narratives that remain ignored within mainstream society in the UK (see Lawson, 2000). The techniques and considerations that informed the qualitative approach that I adopted are outlined in more depth below.

Ethnography and ‘non’-participant observation

While ethnographic techniques have traditionally been associated with anthropology, they have become more commonly used across the social sciences, within wider moves towards more qualitative research methods. Arguing for greater recourse to ethnographic techniques within the discipline of geography, Herbert (2000: 551) describes the unique way in which ethnography ‘explores lived experience in all its richness and complexity’. He distinguishes ethnography from interviews, describing the ways in which the ethnographer can gain insights into what participants *do* as well as what they say (*ibid*: 552). Ethnography also implies a more open relationship between the researcher and the research context and participants, lacking the fixed order, or imposition of pre-conceived ideas, that interviews may involve. Moreover, Herbert highlights the ways in which ethnography can be constructive in understanding the relationships between people and places, and between social structures and everyday lives and experiences (*ibid*: 554).

There is no clear definition of ethnography, and as a methodology it has a number of variants and uses. Indeed, ethnography may refer to a particular research technique within a wider methodological framework, or it can have a broader meaning reflecting the predominant methodological approach that encompasses other

²⁰ See Menjívar (2000: 15-17) for a discussion of the challenges of designing research among irregular migrants.

methods such as interviews and discourse analysis. The research design for this study was closer to the latter approach, whereby an overall ethnographic methodology incorporated recourse to other qualitative methods, as well as data collected through a wider survey.

A key component of ethnography is ‘participant observation’, which involves the ethnographer spending a significant period of time engaging with the social group that is the focus of the research (Herbert, 2000: 551; see also Walsh, 2004: 226). Yet ‘participant observation’ can itself imply different approaches, depending on the emphasis given to ‘participating’ and ‘observing’ (Hoggart et al, 2002). Thus, an ethnographer may choose to take a job in the same place as where participants are employed, or move into a residential area where participants live (Cook and Crang, 1995). On the other hand, an ethnographer may take a more clearly observational role, maintaining a detached relationship from those they are studying (Herbert, 2000: 552). It may be argued, however, that successful ethnography implies a balance of both: on the one hand, a deep empathy with the actors and their perspectives, while on the other maintaining the stance of a ‘theoretically informed and logically rigorous social scientist’ (*ibid*).

Since a key element of my research was the role of religion in people’s lives, my position as a non-religious individual was inevitably a factor that affected my position as a participating observer (see below). My position could thus be more accurately described as a ‘non-participant’ observer or, ideally, the position of what Walsh (2004: 233) calls a ‘*marginal native*’. Walsh uses the notion of ‘marginality’ to depict a ‘good’ ethnographer’s position describing it as the ‘poise between a strangeness that avoids over-rapport and a familiarity that grasps the perspectives of people in the situation’ (*ibid*). In a similar vein, Fortier (2000: 9) describes the ethnographer’s position through the metaphor of a ‘threshold’, which she argues, ‘denotes a position that is not quite inside or outside, and it suggests that there is always movement and change in the nature of the relationships between researcher and research setting.’

While I attended a large number of religious services and events, and spent time with people in their homes, which enabled me to gain an insight into the religious practices of Brazilian migrants, my position remained that of a social scientist, an ethnographer. Although I had a certain understanding of some key elements of Catholic and Protestant doctrines, I could not presume to fully understand

– or indeed be able to share - the spiritual experiences and religious beliefs of research participants (see McGuire, 2002; see also above). Yet this was not necessarily a limitation of the research. My interest was not so much in exploring the religious idioms and experiences themselves, as discovering how migrants used them to support, facilitate, or give meaning to their migration experience (see also below). Keeping field notes and a field diary was an essential part of my ethnographic fieldwork.

In-depth interviews

Qualitative interviews have been considered a valuable technique for assessing attitudes and values and, in particular for exploring the ‘voices and experiences’ of people whom researchers may believe to have been ‘ignored, misrepresented, or suppressed in the past’ (Byrne, 2004: 180). Interviews have been a widely used tool in migration research, enabling researchers to engage with the perspectives of migrants to gain more in-depth knowledge of migration processes. Lawson (2000: 174) argues that qualitative interviews with migrants - ‘migrants’ stories’ - can also be ‘informative theoretically,’ and can be used to challenge well-established discourses. Lawson also suggests that migrants’ stories can reveal ‘how social relations of gender and ethnicity differentiate migrants’ experiences in their destinations’ (*ibid*: 175).

Qualitative interviews were a key element of my research design, carried out among participants about whom there was, indeed, a paucity of existing in-depth information. Dunn (2000) distinguishes between ‘structured’, ‘semi-structured’ and ‘unstructured’ interviews. For the current study, a face-to-face, semi-structured interview technique was used, allowing them to take what Valentine (1997: 111) describes as ‘a conversational, fluid form’, but maintaining some common themes for each interview so as to enable some degree of comparability (see also Arksey and Knight, 1999). Thus, while the approach was flexible and responsive to the diverse experiences conveyed to me by participants, an interview schedule was drawn up with the key themes and concepts to be covered through the interviews to address the research aims (see Appendices 1 and 2; see also Arksey and Knight, 1999; Dunn, 2000). Sin (2003) discusses the ways in which the spatial context of qualitative interviews plays a crucial role in the interviewer-interviewee dynamics and points to

the notable lack of reflection on this dimension in much existing research. She thus argues that, ‘the space in which the interview takes place can yield important information regarding the way respondents construct their identities’ (*ibid*: 307). The location for the interview was a key consideration in my interview guide, and was reflected on in my field diary. Indeed, the use of a field diary was another key element in my research framework and enabled me to note down important details regarding the research context that could be captured purely through the audio-recorded interviews (see below).

Power and positionality

It is widely recognised that social research is ‘interleaved with relations of power’ (Dowling, 2000: 22). Indeed, while scholars across the social sciences have increasingly extolled the benefits of qualitative research techniques, including ethnography and qualitative interviewing, this is not without some reservations regarding their validity, reliability and, in particular, the interpretative and representational ‘power’ with which they endow the researcher (see Seale, 2004: 81). In response to such critiques – and also greatly influenced by feminist and postmodernist arguments regarding knowledge and power – qualitative research is increasingly concerned with issues of positionality and reflexivity: how the researcher’s own characteristics and position influence the research process (Hoggart et al, 2002; see also Pile, 1991).

Indeed, for Pile (1991: 459) the debate is not merely about the implications of ‘qualitative’ and ‘quantitative’ approaches, methods that he believes are ‘necessarily complementary’ - ‘a continuum’ - as opposed to separate, but rather about the ‘interpretative’ work that is a fundamental component of all research. Rather than viewing research as involving a ‘distanced and abstract’ researcher, interpretative research involves a relationship in which ‘both interviewer and interviewed try to come to an understanding of what is taking place around them’ (*ibid*). Pile (1991) draws on psychoanalytic theory which, he suggests, is insightful for reflecting on the ‘intersubjective’ nature of the researcher-researched relationship, and the ways in which the interpretation of meaning cannot take place without an understanding of

one's own position as well as the broader context within which the interaction is taking place.

'Self-reflexivity' is now common practice within qualitative research, through the acknowledgement that a 'self-critical awareness of ethical research conduct *must* pervade our research' (Dowling, 2000: 22, my emphasis; see also Denzin, 1997). Reflexivity has thus been widely advocated as a means of 'situating knowledges' or, 'avoiding the false neutrality and universality of so much academic knowledge' (Rose, 1997: 306). Yet some scholars have pointed to how reflexivity itself is not unproblematic since it can assume a transparency and coherence that is, arguably, little different to what Haraway (1991) has termed the 'God-trick': knowledge that presents itself as universal (Rose, 1997). For Rose (*ibid*: 314) 'transparently reflexive positionality' is impossible since the self (i.e. the researcher) is always going to be 'un-centered, un-certain' and 'not fully representable'. Yet rather than strive for such transparency, Rose (1997: 319) suggests that the modest acknowledgement of its impossibility and the recognition that 'the significance of this does not rest entirely in our hands', can in fact produce more radical results in terms of rebalancing the power relations within research.

One issue in the debates around the power relations surrounding qualitative research is the status of the researcher as an 'insider' or an 'outsider'. Some argue that 'matching', whereby researchers should share key characteristics with research participants, can help address some of the issues relating to the unequal power dynamics within research (Herbert, 2007: 253). Yet, as Dowling (2000: 26) points out, being an 'insider' or an 'outsider' to research participants is never simply a case of either/or, since 'we have overlapping racial, socio-economic, gender, ethnic and other characteristics.' Moreover, Fortier (1998: 53) argues that the view that studies 'ought' to be conducted only by 'insiders',

is indicative of a persisting assumption that ethnicity is the primary ground for cultural identity formation and the basis of human relations of solidarity. It obscures a number of social differences of class, sexuality, gender, even ethnicity that exist within "ethnic groups".

Reflecting on her own research, Herbert (2007) suggests that it is possible to overcome the 'insider/outsider dynamic', and that being an 'outsider' can in some cases be constructive since participants may prefer to share their stories with someone who is impartial. In a discussion of her research into the Brazilian Spiritist healer,

John of God (João de Deus), Rocha (2009) asserts that the insider/outsider relationship is a fluid one and that, in her case, her position shifted from an outsider to an insider during the course of her research. She argues that this was not because of her ethnic affiliation with the Brazilian John of God, who in fact would have been more willing to engage with a 'foreign' researcher, but rather because of the length of time spent in the field (*ibid*: 158).

Issues of power and positionality were a crucial consideration in my research, not least since it was concerned with migrants and their religious practices, experiences that are 'foreign' to my own in at least two ways. Moreover, since the empirical study was, in part, informed by certain academic debates surrounding transnationalism and religion, I was conscious of the risk of projecting my pre-conceived ideas onto my interviewees, rather than giving due weight to the complex processes at work. I sought to minimise these limitations and approach the research with as open a mind as possible, seeking to maintain a level of critical reflexivity throughout the process but without letting this reflexivity undermine the integrity of the research and its analysis (see Rose, 1997; see also Denzin, 1997: 8). I kept a field diary throughout the fieldwork process in which, as well as noting down more descriptive details of the research field (see above), I also wrote reflections on *my* role in the research process and the inevitable gaps within my understanding of certain phenomena (see Dowling, 2000: 28). Some of the challenges I encountered during my fieldwork are discussed in more depth below.

Methodological framework

The methodological framework adopted for my study was drawn up to address its main objectives (see Chapter 1), through responding to more specific empirical research questions. These related to: firstly, religious institutions across borders; second, the different ways in which migrants 'use' religious institutions; and finally, religion's role in the migration process, beyond the institutional realm.

1) Religious institutions across borders.

- How do religious institutions adapt to meet the needs of Brazilian migrants in London?
- How do religious institutions respond to the diverse needs of their migrant congregations in the new context?
- How do religious institutions in Brazil adapt to the realities of emigration, and return migrants?

2) Migrants' 'use' of religious institutions.

- How do Brazilian migrants in London use religious institutions in different ways to address their specific needs?
- Do religious institutions enable migrants to create and/or maintain links with their lives back home in Brazil?

3) Religion's role in the migration process, beyond the institutional realm.

- In what ways is religion an important part of the lives of migrants beyond institutional religious spaces?
- What effect do migrants' religious beliefs and practices have on the migration process?
- What effect does migration have on migrants' religious beliefs and practices?

To address these questions adequately, the research approach established was both 'transnational', although grounded in the local contexts around which it was based, and one that was designed to engage with broader issues while at the same time not overlook the important insights gained by individual narratives and memories. The methodological framework consisted of different stages of varying intensity.

The main empirical research was carried out over 13 months (September 2009-October 2010), divided between London and Brazil (9 months in London and 4 months in Brazil). Prior to this, various steps were taken to prepare for this period of in-depth fieldwork including: intensive Portuguese language training (June 2009), a short pilot trip to Brazil (July 2009) and participation in a wider research project among Latin Americans in London (August-October 2009). In addition, for a period

of 4 months I taught weekly English classes to Brazilian migrants at an organisation called ABRAS that offers social assistance to London's Brazilian community (September 2008-January 2009). Since 2009, I have also been on the executive committee of a Brazilian migration research group (GEB), whose aim is to create a dialogue between researchers of Brazilian migration processes, and the wider Brazilian community.²¹ This has been a highly valuable experience that has enabled me to not only establish contacts with many Brazilian migrants living in London, but also provided a forum to discuss and share research relating to Brazilian migration with other researchers. The key stages of my methodology are outlined below.

1) Pilot study

The aims of carrying out a pilot study were to establish some initial contacts in Brazil – both with families of migrants in London and with churches or church leaders somehow linked to London, to explore potential field sites, to familiarise myself with Brazilian Portuguese, and to discern the potential limitations and possibilities of the project. I conducted the pilot study in July 2009, and spent two weeks living with a family who lived on the outskirts of Goiânia, in the state of Goiás. The decision to go to Goiás was based on existing data, which suggested that Goiás was among the most important sending states for Brazilian migrants in London. I had made contact with the family through a Brazilian friend who attended the Brazilian Catholic church, St Mary's, which I eventually chose as one of my case studies (see below). I was looking for somewhere to stay while in Goiás and asked this friend if she knew anyone from there who might be able to help me. She rapidly responded with a list of contacts of people who still had family members living there. I contacted some of the people on the list and met up with one woman (Ana), who said she had spoken with her family and that they would be delighted for me to stay at their house during my visit. Over subsequent weeks, arrangements were made via email and telephone and, on arrival at the airport in Goiânia, I was warmly greeted by the Brazilian family and taken back to their house in Aparecida de Goiânia.

Staying with a family enabled me to be an active observer, so many of my initial observations came from informal conversations with members of the family

²¹ *Grupo de Estudos Sobre Brasileiros no Reino Unido* (Brazilian Migration to the UK Research Group). See <http://www.gold.ac.uk/clcl/geb/>

and participation in everyday activities. I also conducted informal interviews with some other people in the town who had relatives living London and other parts of Europe, or who had returned (see table 3.1, below).²² At this stage interviews were recorded by writing detailed notes during and afterwards.

Among my interviewees was an evangelical pastor, João, who had lived in London for two years, but had returned to Brazil when his visa expired and he was unable to renew it. He told me about an evangelical church in London that had been founded by a Brazilian pastor from Belo Horizonte, in the state of Minas Gerais, and that this pastor had subsequently founded a sister church back in his home town (though had remained in London to work with migrants). João had discovered this church when he was living in London and was delighted to find a place where the worship style and language resembled his own church back in Brazil. He became actively involved in some of the church's programmes to support new migrants arriving from Brazil. Based on this initial interview with João and visits to the church while back in London, I decided to take this church as the second of my case studies (see below).

Table 3.1: Research participants in pilot study

	Male	Female	TOTAL
Family members	1	1	2
Return migrants	2		2
Religious leaders	1		1
TOTAL	4	1	5

2) Brazilians as part of the Latin American community in London

Prior to embarking on my main fieldwork, I worked as a research assistant on a study into the lives of Latin American migrants in London, led by my supervisor Dr Cathy McIlwaine (see McIlwaine et al, 2011). My role involved conducting a series of long

²² I met people who had returned from Ireland, Belgium, Portugal and Spain. I also met someone who had lived in London for 7 years and returned to Aparecida de Goiânia to set up a bar in the main square, called 'Bar London'.

questionnaires with Brazilian migrants, and three in-depth interviews. I also attended various community events, such as the *Carnaval del Pueblo*, and *Brazilian Day* to conduct shorter questionnaires with Brazilian migrants. The survey included a total of 962 participants, of whom 233 were Brazilians. I was also responsible for entering some of the research results into the data analysis software, SPSS. With the permission of Dr McIlwaine, I was able to draw on this data to obtain some important background information on the lives of Brazilians in London, including, for example, information relating to their employment, household structures, regions of origin, immigration status, and religious affiliations (see Chapter 4). Thus, while not part of my study per se, this initial research experience, and the resulting analysis, facilitated the qualitative part of the research: helping me to identify research participants and sites, to situate the project in a broader context, and to identify and narrow down the objectives of the subsequent stages of the research (see Spicer, 2005; see also McLafferty, 1995).

3) *Fieldwork in London*

Locating the research

Informed by some preliminary interviews and observations during my pilot study, I selected two churches as case studies for the fieldwork in London - one Catholic and one evangelical Protestant. The decision to focus on just these two religious institutions was based on the desire to narrow down the research field and give more depth to the study. In fact the churches formed two of many research settings, since my research was also concerned with religion as practised by migrants outside the church environments and, moreover, required fieldwork in Brazil. These particular churches were chosen because they are two of the longest-standing Brazilian churches in London and because they have a large number of congregants.

The evangelical church, which I refer to as the *Comunidade Evangélica de Londres*, or CEL (a pseudonym), was established in 1990 by a Brazilian pastor from Belo Horizonte, in the state of Minas Gerais (see above). While the majority of evangelical churches in London are Pentecostal, the CEL is an independent Protestant church, influenced by Pentecostal doctrines, but without denominational affiliations.

It represents an interesting case study, however, not only because it was one of the first Brazilian churches to be founded in London but also because, since its establishment, the Pastor has founded parallel churches in Brazil, Holland, and Portugal, thus creating a growing transnational church, which originated from the individual pastor's 'calling from God' to come to London. The CEL holds services (which are referred to as *Cultos*) twice a week, on Wednesdays at 8pm, and on Saturdays at 7pm. There is usually a social gathering and meal after the Saturday *Culto*. Other activities, such as prayer groups, a women's group, and sports activities are also organised by church members on other days on the week (see Chapter 4). During my fieldwork I regularly attended *Cultos*, the Saturday social gathering, and other church-related activities that I was invited to join.

The Catholic Church, which I refer to as St Mary's (a pseudonym), is the seat of the Brazilian Catholic Chaplaincy in London, and was established in 2004. St Mary's represents the culmination of a somewhat more complex process than that of the CEL, whereby the larger structure of the Brazilian Catholic Church has responded to the local needs of Brazilian migrants abroad, training and sending priests as missionaries to attend to the pastoral and spiritual needs of potential followers (see Chapter 4). Mass (referred to as *Missa*) is held at St Mary's five times a week – on Thursdays at 7pm, on Saturdays at 7.30pm, and three times on Sundays – at 12pm, 4pm, and 7pm. Also on Sundays at 5.30pm, the 'charismatic prayer group' gathers for a weekly session. During my fieldwork, I usually went to St Mary's on a Sunday as there was always a long social gathering and lunch after the 12pm Mass, during which I met many of my research participants. English classes are also held at St Mary's every weekday, and during the course of my fieldwork, I attended these classes weekly, assisting the teacher who was a member of the congregation. I also attended other events at St Mary's, including two big events ('Hosana Londres' and 'Hosana Oxford') arranged by the charismatic prayer group, and a celebration with the theme of Goiás, where many of the congregants were from. Throughout my fieldwork in both churches I wrote detailed notes in my field diary, recording my experiences.

Accessing research participants and interview spaces

Conducting fieldwork within these two religious settings facilitated my access to research participants. I initially interviewed a priest at St Mary's and a pastor at the CEL, and explained the nature of my study to them. In both cases I was made to feel welcome by the religious leaders, invited to attend the services when I needed to and to participate in other activities. At St Mary's, I was able to access many potential interviewees during the social gatherings after the Sunday Mass, and there were private spaces available at the church in which I was able to conduct interviews. As people became more aware of and interested in my project, I was able to make contact with other people through snowballing whereby respondents provided links to other potential participants.²³ Helping with English classes also facilitated my access to potential research participants.

As well as conducting interviews at St Mary's itself, I carried out some interviews in people's homes (6), and in local cafés (6). I also interviewed two couples together at their request. In all cases interviewees themselves chose the location for the interview. People tended to feel more comfortable when interviewed in their homes as opposed to more public spaces such as cafés or even the churches, and were often more willing to share their stories. I was able to conduct a focus group following one of the English classes at the church. I wanted to conduct at least one focus group in each church to complement the data I collected through in-depth interviews and to see how migrants related their experiences in London in the context of a wider group discussion. In this case, I asked the students in advance if they would be willing to participate in the focus group during the second hour of the class the following week, and they all said that they would. Five people attended and the discussion lasted for nearly two hours (partly fuelled by the drinks and snacks I had brought along with me!).

At the CEL, I had more difficulties accessing potential research participants. My main access to interviewees was through a gatekeeper, Adilson, whom I had met through my participation in a Brazilian research group, GEB (see above). He was able to introduce me to a number of church members, and helped to explain the purposes of my study. Yet although people seemed keen to participate in the project, the fact that the *Cultos* were held in the evening meant that there was less time afterwards to

²³ Snowballing is a sampling technique that involves existing respondents providing links to other potential participants through their own networks of friends and relatives (Margolis, 1998: xi). Its drawback, however, is that, as Margolis suggests, 'the data gathered cannot be generalised beyond the sample at hand' (*ibid*).

conduct interviews at the church itself. On some occasions I was able to conduct interviews before the *Culto* or another church activity, such as the Friday prayer group, or a musical rehearsal. But this was often quite difficult as the *Cultos* required quite lengthy preparation and the setting up of high-tech media equipment, so it was a challenge to find a quiet place in the church. On other occasions I arranged to meet people in cafés, or at their homes. I interviewed one couple together in their small, shared flat in south London.

On at least three occasions, however, interviewees cancelled our interviews at the last minute or, on two occasions, interviewees failed to turn up. I wanted to volunteer to assist with English classes at the CEL, as I had done at St Mary's, but was informed by the pastor that the classes were on hold for an extended period as the teacher had returned to Brazil. Despite these drawbacks, through attending the *Cultos* and other events, and through informal conversations with members of the congregation, I was able to gain an insight into people's lives and experiences in London. Furthermore, interviews with return migrants in Brazil who had attended the church in London enabled me to gain further insights into the perspectives of church members (see below).

I also conducted 5 interviews with people who did not attend St Mary's or the CEL, including two people who worked for organisations that work directly with Brazilian migrants. These people were accessed through existing contacts I had within the Brazilian community and through my participation in GEB (see above). These interviews were carried out in cafés or, in the case of the community leaders, at the headquarters of their organisations.

The general structure of the interview schedule had twelve core themes, each of which had a series of sub-sections (see Appendix 1). It was divided into three main parts, the first looking more generally at the migration experience; the second was concerned more specifically with migrants' lives in London and their links with back home; and the third focused on the religious aspects of migrants' experiences, both before they migrated and with regard to their lives in London. The schedule was adapted in the cases of interviews with respondents who did not attend a religious institution in London. A separate schedule was used for interviews with religious leaders (see Appendix 2). Apart from those conducted during the pilot study, all interviews were recorded using digital audio equipment.

A profile of research participants in London

Table 3.2: Research participants in London

	Male	Female	Religious leaders (male)	TOTAL
St Mary's	10	10	3	23
St Mary's focus group	1	4		5
CEL interviews	7	6	2	15
Non-church members	2	2		4
Community leaders (non-church)	1	1		2
TOTAL	21	23	5	49

Given the relative invisibility of Brazilian migrants of London, it is extremely difficult to determine a statistically representative sample of this population. But working with data from recent quantitative surveys (McIlwaine et al, 2011, Evans et al, 2011), as well as my own engagement with Brazilian migrants in London over a long period of time, I am confident that the range of respondents given voice here are broadly typical of London's Brazilian population. As Table 3.2 (below) shows, a total of 44 people were interviewed, and 5 people from St Mary's participated in a focus group (see Appendix 4 for a full list of interviewees). Of the sample of 49 people, 26 were male, and 23 were female. As well as congregants from both churches, interviewees included 5 religious leaders and 2 community leaders. This explains, to some extent, the male bias in the overall interview sample, as all except one of the interviewees in leadership roles were male. The sample also included 4 migrants who did not frequent a church in London.

With regard to region of origin, the majority were from Goiás (16) or Minas Gerais (11) with São Paulo a close third (10). Other participants came from the states of Paraná, Santa Catarina, Bahia, and Rio de Janeiro. These findings echo those of

existing research on Brazilians in London (Evans et al, 2011), and also confirmed my choice of fieldwork locations in Brazil (see below). The ages of my research participants ranged from 20 to 61, though the majority were aged between 30 and 40. Apart from the religious leaders, 2 interviewees worked for migrant organisations and 2 were academic researchers themselves. However, the majority of research participants worked in low-paid jobs, predominantly in the service sector, again reflecting the findings of recent studies into Brazilian migrants in London (*ibid*; see also McIlwaine et al, 2011). Among the female interviewees, the single most commonly cited occupation was cleaner (8), as well as child-minder (3), beautician (2), or receptionist (2). Some men also worked in cleaning, but most worked either as couriers (5), as kitchen assistants in restaurants (4) or as builders (2). While for most participants, moving to London involved ‘de-skilling’ in relation to their occupation in Brazil (see Chapter 4), the majority of interviewees were from fairly modest, lower middle class backgrounds, and cited economic reasons for their migration.

The interviewees also had a range of different immigration statuses. Nine participants said that they were irregular, 5 of whom were from St Mary’s, 2 from the CEL, and 2 who were not church members. Nine people held European passports (Portuguese and Italian), while 3 people had UK passports, either due to marriage or because of the length of time they had been in the country. Four people had student visas, while others were either dependent on their spouses’ visas, or had tourist visas. Religious leaders had what were referred to as ‘Minister of Religion’ visas. With regard to length of stay, the majority had arrived in London since 2006 (24), while 6 people had been in London for over 10 years.

4) Fieldwork in Brazil

The main fieldwork in Brazil was carried out over a period of 4 months between April and July 2010, in five different towns in the states of Minas Gerais and Goiás (see Figure 3.1). The selection of research sites in Brazil was informed by existing studies relating to Brazilians in London, and confirmed by my own research in London, as well as the pilot trip undertaken in Brazil in 2009.

Figure 3.1: Map showing fieldwork locations in Brazil



Key: ● = fieldwork site.

Minas Gerais

The decision to spend time in the city of Belo Horizonte was primarily in order to conduct fieldwork at the CEBH – one of the Brazilian ‘branches’ of the CEL. The

founding pastor of the CEL, Pastor Marco, had in fact returned to Brazil during the course of my fieldwork, which facilitated my access to the church as he acted as a gatekeeper, introducing me to the church and to members of the congregation. I had also made some contacts with return migrants at the church through contacts at the CEL in London. I spent a total of three weeks in Belo Horizonte. As well as interviewing church members who had previously lived in London and Pastor Marco himself for a second time, I interviewed another two pastors who had been in London (one of whom was Pastor Marco's nephew). I also attended four *Cultos* (which were held on Sundays and Tuesdays) and other church-related activities, including a women's tea party, a church-member's birthday celebration, and a picnic, and helped out twice with English classes, which were held on Saturdays. Because the CEBH was the sole user of the church premises, I was able to conduct interviews in the space of the church itself. I also held some interviews in peoples' homes, which enabled me to gain an insight into their everyday lives.

I stayed with two different families in Belo Horizonte. The first was that of a Brazilian woman who had returned from living in London. She had not frequented one of the churches in my case study, but she had become very involved with a Brazilian Spiritist group in London, having been a practising Catholic in Brazil (see Chapter 4 for a discussion of Spiritism). Her mother was a very committed Catholic. Living in their home allowed me to gain insights into the process of return migration, and the way migration impacts upon family dynamics and religion. The second household that I stayed with was that of a friend of a Brazilian friend in London, whom I met through my participation in GEB.

As well as Belo Horizonte, I spent time in two smaller towns in Minas Gerais: Ipatinga and Governador Valadares. I visited these two places as I had a number of contacts there, provided by research participants in London. In Ipatinga, I stayed for two weeks with the uncle and aunt of one of my interviewees from St Mary's. They themselves had recently returned from London, where they had frequented St Mary's, so I was able to interview them about their experiences there, and their feelings about returning to Brazil. The uncle also acted as a gatekeeper for me to access other potential research participants, and through him I met a large number of return migrants from Ipatinga and another small town close by, which seemed to be a hub of emigration flows to London. In Governador Valadares, I stayed for a week with the family of another of my research participants from St Mary's. Here I was able to gain

an insight into the migration process from the perspectives of those who remain and, indeed, into the way religion permeates their narratives and everyday lives.

Goiás

I stayed in Goiás for 6 weeks, predominantly with Ana's family, with whom I had stayed during my pilot study. The household had changed since I had previously been there as Ana's mother, sister and niece had since gone to London to stay with Ana (see Chapter 1). Thus, staying with Ana's father and brother gave me, once again, an insight into the lives of those who 'stay put', and into the impact of migration upon family dynamics. I also stayed for a week with another research participant from St Mary's who had very recently returned to Brazil, and was living on the small farm she and her husband had bought with remittances sent from London. In addition to contacts I had made through people in London, access to subsequent research participants was through snowballing. The majority of interviews were carried out in people's homes and, as in London, people seemed to feel more comfortable when sharing their stories from within their own homes.



Plates 3.1 and 3.2: Photographs of a house in Goiás done up with migrant remittances sent from the UK. Source: author.

The last part of my fieldwork in Goiás involved a week in Brasilia where I visited the *Pastoral for Brazilians Abroad* (PBE) whose leader, Sister Rosita, I had been in touch with from London. Not only did I interview her and her assistant, I was able also to visit the premises where priests receive training before being sent abroad, and to gain an insight into the kind of support offered by the Brazilian Catholic Church for Brazilians living in London. Thanks to Sister Rosita I also attended a

meeting organised by the government’s ‘Commission for Migration’ concerned with emigration and immigration from/to Brazil at the Ministry of Work; and a meeting organized by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) dealing with irregular Brazilian migration to the UK. Other formal visits included meetings with academics and researchers working on issues relating to Brazilian migration at the University of Minas Gerais (in Belo Horizonte), at UNIVALE (in Governador Valadares), and at the University of Goiás (Goiânia).

The interview schedule was adapted according to the research participants’ experiences. Thus, for return migrants, additional questions were asked about the experience of return, and for family members, questions were adapted to elicit responses relating to the experience of having a family member living in London (see Appendix 1).

A profile of research participants in Brazil

Table 3.3: Research participants in Brazil

	Return migrants		Family members		Religious leaders		TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Goiás	5	5	2			2	14
Minas Gerais	7	9		1	3		20
TOTAL	12	14	2	1	5		34

The aim of my fieldwork in Brazil was not to select a representative sample, but to explore some of the ways in which migration is experienced both by family members of migrants and by migrants who return ‘home’. As table 3.2 shows, I conducted a total of 34 interviews in Brazil. This comprised 4 religious leaders, 3 family members of migrants in London and 26 return migrants. The theme of return became a more significant focus of the research during the course of my fieldwork (see below). Among the return migrants interviewed, 6 were members of the CEBH in Belo Horizonte and had been members of the CEL in London. Ten of the return migrants in the sample had been members of St Mary’s in London, while 10 had been non-practising, or were members of a different religious community in London to those of the case studies. The 3 religious leaders interviewed in Minas Gerais had worked as

pastors at the CEL in London and had now returned to Brazil. While Pastor Marco had returned to the CEBH, the other 2 pastors were now working at different churches. The 2 female religious leaders in Goiás were from the PBE in Brasilia.

The age range of respondents was similar to the London sample, ranging from 22 to 61, with the majority aged between 30 and 40. Among return migrants, the main occupations people reported having held in London were principally cleaner (12) or child-minder (4) among female participants; and catering (8) or couriering (3) among male respondents. With regard to their occupations on their return to Brazil, responses were mixed. 4 people had found work as English teachers, while 2 people had set up their own businesses, and 1 person said that they were in the process of setting up a business. Three women, who had worked as cleaners in London, were now housewives, resuming their roles within their families. Seven people said they were unemployed, which reveals some of the challenges faced by return migrants.

With regard to immigration status in London, 21 of the 26 return migrants interviewed said they had been irregular in London, 3 of whom had frequented the CEL, 9 of whom had frequented St Mary's, and 9 who had not attended a religious community or had attended one other than those in the case study. With regard to social class, all except 1 of the return migrants interviewed described themselves as lower middle class or, in some cases (5), they described themselves as 'poor'.

5) Interpreting and analysing the data

All interviews were transcribed in full from the original recordings. The process of transcription was a key element in the research and analytical process, and enabled me to re-familiarise myself with the conversations I had had with research participants, as well as to recognise previously un-noted features of the interviews. As Seale (1998: 207) argues, '[t]hough laborious, the experience of transcribing can bring a much closer appreciation of the meanings of the data.' The transcripts were then organised into separate files, according to the location of the interview, and to whether the respondent was a church leader, member, or a non-religious participant. Detailed notes from the interviews that were not recorded were also filed with the rest. These files were then revised and coded thoroughly and marked with different colours, using

‘etic’ codes, which related to my initial research questions, and formulating ‘emic’ codes, which emerged from the data itself (Crang, 1997).

Recourse to my field diary was also crucial, revealing how the research had developed and where new themes had begun to emerge, and where I had had to modify the research questions. Thus, for example, one key way in which my research design needed to be modified was with regard to the theme of return migration. My initial intention had been to conduct in-depth interviews in Brazil with family members of people who had migrated to London. Yet, although interviewing family members of migrants had been a key element in my initial research design, in reality I only managed to interview 3 family members, mainly because it was harder to find people who had family members living abroad and, because those whom I did interview did not seem very open to being interviewed. However, in Brazil I met a large number of return migrants with whom I was able to conduct in-depth interviews. I had expected that it would be much more difficult to find return migrants to interview and so had not written this into my initial research design. I therefore needed to re-formulate my research questions so as to incorporate the notion of return, in particular with regard to how return represents an integral part of the migration experience, but also with regard to the role of religion in the return context.

Although I received training in NVivo software, I chose in the end to code the data by hand rather than using computer software as this enabled me, as Blunt (2003: 84) suggests, to ‘interpret stories and memories in a more nuanced and sensitive way than computer coding would allow’. Having conducted all the interviews myself, I felt that I had an understanding of the research settings and dynamics and wanted to be able to draw out some of the connections, contradictions and overlaps between the different research locations and the narratives of respondents. Coding and analysing was thus a ‘creative process’ (Kitchin and Tate, 2000: 239) that involved a series of ‘iterative rather than linear’ (*ibid*: 231), overlapping stages.

Ethical considerations and some reflections on ‘doing’ the research

Ethics

Before embarking on my fieldwork, I submitted my proposal to the Queen Mary Ethics Review Panel and it was granted approval in September 2009. Ethical

approval had also been gained for the pilot study in June 2009. I sought to maintain an ethical approach throughout the research process: from initial design, to fieldwork, to coding and analysis. Thus, the principle of informed consent was a crucial consideration during my fieldwork (Oliver, 2003: 7). I provided an information sheet (in Portuguese) to all research participants in which I explained the nature of the study and how the information obtained would be used (see Appendix 3). Participants were also required to sign a consent form (which I also provided in Portuguese) (see Appendix 3). Participation was voluntary, and the information sheet explained to participants that their anonymity would be preserved (all names were changed) and that they had a right to terminate their involvement in the interview/discussion at any point. I usually read through the information sheet with participants before the interview to make sure they were fully informed, as some were reluctant to read it. The names of the specific religious institutions that formed the basis of my case studies were also changed to protect anonymity.

Based on the insights drawn from existing data (Evans et al, 2007), including my participation in the wider survey (see above), I anticipated that a high proportion of my research participants would have irregular migratory status, so this was a key ethical consideration. It was thus essential for me to present the study in a way that emphasised that the research would not have any legal or political implications, as well as to assure participants that confidentiality and anonymity would be guaranteed. It also meant that it was important for me to gain the trust of my interviewees, and I felt that this was helped by my ethnographic approach whereby I spent a significant amount of time with research participants, either at church-related events, in cafés, or in people's homes. As the research sample reveals, a significantly higher proportion of return migrants interviewed in Brazil informed me that their immigration status in London was irregular. This could be explained by a number of factors. For example, by the fact that one of my key gatekeepers had been irregular and introduced me to other irregular migrants whom he had known, or by the fact that two of my interviewees had been deported. Another possible explanation was the fact that people were more likely to be open about their immigration status in London once safely back in Brazil, where there was no threat of deportation. In general, it seemed much easier to gain people's trust while in Brazil as people would welcome me into their homes, and were usually open about their experiences, grateful to me for listening to their stories.

Due to budgetary constraints, I was unable to pay participants. This did not seem to be a major problem in terms of gaining access to participants yet it did raise questions in terms of what I was ‘giving back’ to the community, aside from the opportunity for people to share their stories with an avid listener. I sought to address this in various ways. For example, at both churches I offered to provide a summary of my findings in Portuguese when the research was complete. I was also able to help with the English classes at St Mary’s and at the CEBH in Belo Horizonte. While I felt that these small steps hardly reciprocated the time generously given to me by my research participants, I sensed from a number of interviewees that by sharing with me their religious convictions, they were fulfilling their commitment to God’s will and to spreading His message to another potential follower (see below).

Language was also an important issue, both as a practical and an ethical consideration. All interviews were conducted in Portuguese, and I asked a bilingual Brazilian friend to check through the interview schedules in advance so as to ensure that the meaning could be communicated as clearly as possible (see Bloch, 1999). While I speak Portuguese, and had prior experience of conducting interviews in the language, the fact that it is not my native tongue inevitably created some challenges with regard to both communication and interpretation during the research (however, see below). Indeed, as Smith (1996: 161) argues (drawing on Spivak [1993] among others), the ‘subtleties’ and ‘nuances’ of a language’ can be ‘lost in translation’. Moreover, translation from a ‘foreign’ language implies not only the communication of words, but also the ‘symbolic structures integral to culture’ that are ‘reflected and embedded in the language used’ (Chamberlain and Leydesdorff, 2004: 230).

On the other hand, while acknowledging the limitations inherent in research involving other linguistic groups, and the impossibility of complete translation, Smith (1996) also points to the opportunities this can provide. She suggests that it can create an ‘in-between space’ across two languages, and can thereby ‘open new spaces of insight, of meaning which dis-place, de-centre the researcher’s assumption that their language is clear in its meaning’ (*ibid*: 163). Translation in this sense can be seen as a positive engagement of two overlapping texts that can be mutually illuminating, rather than a necessarily restricted endeavour (see also above discussion of research into religious practices). In the case of my research, quotations in the text have been translated into English and all translations are my own.

Research challenges and reflections

While in some ways it proved more straightforward than I had expected to access and engage with Brazilians in London, and indeed with return migrants in Brazil, my fieldwork was not without its challenges, both practical and with regard to my own positionality. Thus, in London, finding research participants and arranging suitable times and places for in-depth interviews often presented difficulties. This was because people worked long hours and had little spare time outside work, household chores, contacting their families in Brazil and, indeed, attending church services. As mentioned earlier, arranging interviews was particularly complicated with members of the CEL in London.

Another research challenge related to the expectations research participants had of me, and the blurring of boundaries within the ‘researcher–researched’ (Pile, 1991) relationships. This was perhaps an inevitable consequence of my ethnographic research methods, and my spending long periods of time with research participants, many of whom became friends. Thus, on one occasion, a research participant was due to receive a visit from family members in Brazil and asked if I could write a letter to the Home Office saying that they were my guests in the country. It was hoped that my position as a British citizen would give greater weight to the relatives’ chances of obtaining a visa on arrival. I did want to help as much as I could and to ‘give back’ as much as possible to my research participants. On the other hand, I was not able to bend the rules of UK immigration controls (however much I disagreed with them) and present a convincing case on behalf of the Brazilian family.

On another occasion, in Brazil, I heard one of my research participants explain who I was to one of his friends. He remarked: ‘apparently, in three years, when her work is published, it will be much easier for Brazilians to enter the UK.’ While this was clearly related to my assertion that I hoped my research would promote the rights of migrants in the UK, the reality of my powerlessness to overturn government policy was clearly ‘lost in translation’.

An inevitable research challenge in Brazil was my lack of familiarity with the fieldwork locations. I gradually got used to the unpredictable bus services, my interviewees’ relaxed attitude towards time-keeping and the arrival of dusk at 6pm sharp, usually accompanied by warnings from concerned passers-by that a woman should not be out alone after dark. While staying with families undoubtedly enriched

my research, enabling me to gain insights into people's everyday lives and the multiple levels at which both religion and migration are experienced, it also presented its own challenges. So, for example, the families I stayed with often felt very protective towards me and did not like me going out alone, especially as a young, foreign, woman. One couple I stayed with were so unhappy about me going out alone that the husband insisted on acting as a chaperone, accompanying me to all my interviews. He was a crucial gatekeeper as he introduced me to several of my research participants. On the other hand, the fact that he sat in on many of the interviews I conducted that day inevitably affected the dynamic of the interviews, and the level of confidentiality that I was able to assure participants.

Finally, I want to reflect on my positionality during the fieldwork, which rather than being fixed, was in fact negotiated and adapted at different stages of the research process. During my fieldwork I often felt that being an 'outsider', insofar as I was not Brazilian and not religious, was an advantage and that this helped me to gain people's trust. For example, the fact that my Portuguese was not totally fluent, and that I would sometimes hesitate as I tried to find the right word, meant that people would correct me or make a joke about my mispronunciation, which seemed to make people feel more comfortable and place more trust in me. In Brazil, the fact that I was a foreigner and thus seemed 'out of place' meant that people would seek to look after me, again shifting the balance of power inherent in the research relationship. On the other hand, being British implied to some research participants that I was rich and meant that people made assumptions about my social status. The fact that I was well educated, and hence engaged on PhD research, also seemed to change some participants' reaction to me as they placed me in a socially superior position to themselves. Finally, the fact that I was able freely to cross the border between Brazil and London, while so many Brazilians had difficulties in doing so also placed me in a comparatively privileged position.

Yet I felt that it was possible to overcome some of these differences between the research participants and myself and engage with people on a level that created a connection between us. The fact that I lived in London, and that the interviewees had either lived in London themselves or had a connection with someone living there, created an automatic link and we could talk about different places in the city or comment on some of the idiosyncrasies of British people. The football World Cup was going on while I was conducting my fieldwork in Brazil and many of the people I

encountered supported England as well as Brazil which gave us another shared affiliation and topic of conversation. Participants soon realised that I was not rich in relation to the social hierarchy in the UK, especially as I was living on a student budget. But the subject of class often became a topic of conversation with research participants, and we often talked about the differences in class relations between Britain and Brazil.

The reality of carrying out fieldwork on the theme of religion, while not being religious myself was, however, more challenging than I had anticipated. This led me to reflect on the ways in which my own beliefs and values affected the research relationship. People often presumed that because of my interest in the theme of religion, I was therefore religious myself, and they felt comfortable talking to me about their beliefs. On occasions when research participants did ask me whether I was religious I replied that, although sympathetic to their religious faith, I was not myself a member of a religious community. This often led to participants seeking to convert me, feeling pity for me that I had not ‘yet’ found God. On one occasion, an interviewee held my hand and prayed for me that I would ‘find God’ during the course of my PhD. He was sad that I was living a ‘deluded’ life, but he assured me that ‘it’ would happen soon. Thus my personal beliefs did not fit with my participants’ world-view and I often felt that it was better for me to maintain the initial presumption that I did in fact have God in my life.

My experiences echo Fortier’s (2000) notion of how gender and ethnicity are ‘negotiated’ elements of the research process. She talks about the ‘discrepancy’ between her ‘ethnographic self and what [she] felt [she] believed in’, as she found that her positive relationship with her research participants depended on her maintaining the identity that they projected onto her: Catholic, heterosexual, and seeking marriage and a career (55). In relation to my research, I discovered that my position as a non-religious person was also a negotiable one, which I often needed to adjust according to the setting, or the person I was interviewing. Indeed, this shaped the kinds of relationships I was able to create with research participants. My field diary was crucial for me to reflect on these processes of adaptation and of negotiating a relationship with my research subjects. Such experiences were important realisations of how, as Fortier (1998: 56) argues, ‘both theory and ‘reality’, observation and analysis, are entangled’, and thus how research is shaped as much by the field itself, and the individuals concerned, as by the researcher’s intentions.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter I have presented the methodological approach that I adopted for this study and explained the different stages that were involved in the research process. While I was able to draw on data from two quantitative studies of Brazilian migrants in London (in which I participated as a researcher) for important baseline information, the overall approach adopted was a qualitative, ethnographic one. In addition to a short pilot trip to Brazil in July 2009, it included in-depth interviews with church leaders, migrants, migrants' families and return migrants in London and five 'sending towns' in Brazil, together with extended participant (or non-participant) observation in three religious institutions, community events, and migrants' domestic spaces in both contexts. I have argued that a qualitative approach was necessary to address the main aims of the research, and to capture the experiences and perspectives of those who influenced, and were influenced by, the subject of my inquiry. The methodological framework was designed to remain grounded in specific places, while at the same time not to lose sight of the broader context within which the research is situated.

This chapter has thus set the scene for the study with regard to *how* the research was carried out and with *whom*. Before exploring in more depth the religious narratives of the research participants described here, the following chapter will complete this scene-setting by providing some background to the research and a discussion of the factors that must be taken into account with regard to *where* and *why* is was carried out.

Chapter 4

Diverse religious trajectories: Transnational migration between Brazil and London

Any discussion of Brazilian migration to London and, indeed, of the religious dimensions of this migration flow, requires several important contextual factors to be taken into account. Most obviously perhaps, the dramatic demographic changes in both sending and receiving contexts must be considered, alongside shifting patterns of migration and religious change. In this regard, it is important to consider not only the extent to which Brazilians represent a ‘new migrant group’ in the UK (Vertovec, 2007), but that the very notion of Brazilian ‘emigration’ is a novel one. While Brazil has a long history of receiving immigrants, from Europe since the mid-nineteenth century, and from Japan and other parts of Latin America since the early twentieth century, flows in the opposite direction are much more recent (Patarra, 2005; see also Lesser, 1999). While migratory flows *to* Brazil continue, emigration is more prevalent and according to recent estimates over three million Brazilians currently live outside Brazil, a figure that has more than doubled since 1999.

A second factor that must be taken into account in a discussion of religion among Brazilian migrants in London is the religious field in Brazil itself, which has undergone important changes in recent years (Freston, 2008; Pierucci, 2004).²⁴ Brazil remains the largest Catholic country in the world, yet recent census figures reveal a significant decline in Catholicism over the last twenty years, coupled with a striking increase in Protestantism – in particular evangelical (Pentecostal) movements (Pierucci, 2004; see also Prandi, 2008). These unprecedented changes in Brazil itself are to some extent reflected, and arguably amplified, in the religious affiliations and practices of Brazilians in diaspora, most visibly through the emergence of multiple Brazilian places of worship in receiving contexts (Freston, 2008). Such phenomena raise important questions with regard to the relationship between migration patterns and religiosity (*ibid*).

²⁴ I borrow Freston’s (2008) term ‘religious field’ to reflect what he describes as ‘the idea of a social space in which agents and institutions struggle for ascendancy’ (267).

Finally, the receiving context - in this case the city of London - is crucial for understanding the migration experiences of Brazilians. While Brazilian migration to the US has been widely documented, very little is known about Brazilians in Europe, and in particular in the UK. Indeed, Brazilians in London remain a largely 'invisible' community, geographically dispersed around the city, and lacking visible organisational presence. However, the few studies that have emerged relating to London's Brazilian community have identified churches – in particular Catholic and evangelical ones – as crucial sources of support for Brazilian migrants, as well as some of the few spaces in which they come together to forge some sense of ethnic identity (Evans et al, 2007; Jordan and Düvell, 2002). Moreover, the emergence of these new religious spaces has undoubtedly had a profound impact on London's religious landscape more widely (Davis et al, 2006).

Based on existing studies of Brazilian migrant communities in the UK and elsewhere, together with empirical research carried out for this project, this chapter represents an attempt to bring some contextual coherence to current understandings of religion and transnational flows between Brazil and London. It also refers to primary data collated from a quantitative survey carried out among Latin American migrants in London (McIlwaine et al, 2011, see Chapter 3), with additional information from a recent survey conducted among London's Brazilian community (Evans et al, 2011).²⁵ While this chapter points to some important patterns relating to Brazilian migration, and to religion in both Brazil and within the diaspora, both phenomena are characterised by heterogeneity and thus challenge any attempt to generalise. Just as Brazilians migrate for myriad reasons, so too their religious beliefs and practices are complex and influenced by a range of factors. On the other hand, this chapter argues that place matters. In order to understand the transnational religious spaces within which Brazilian migrants and their families 'back home' adapt and transfer their religious beliefs and practices, I argue that it is important to contextualise the study of religion's role within this particular migration flow – i.e. from particular places in

²⁵ I worked as a research assistant on McIlwaine et al's project, conducting questionnaires and in-depth interviews with Brazilian migrants in London. The dataset from the survey included 233 Brazilians (of a total of 962 respondents). Some of the figures expressed here, which relate solely to the Brazilian data, were drawn from the dataset using SPSS (see Chapter 3). I also draw on Evans et al's final report, which involved a questionnaire survey conducted among 553 Brazilians. I was also a research assistant for a project looking at financial exclusion in London, which included Brazilian migrants (Datta et al, 2009). Thus many of the observations with regard to Brazilians in London come from personal engagement with London's Brazilian community over the last five years.

Brazil to London - and thus take into account the situation in the sending (and return) settings, as well as the receiving one.

Leaving Brazil

The exodus of vast numbers of people from Brazil since the late 1980s represents a reversal of historical trends in a country that, up until the 1960s, had been a recipient of diverse flows of migrants (Sales, 2000; Beserra, 2003; Póvoa Neto, 2006). This included intense immigration from Europe during the mid nineteenth century as Europeans - from Germany and later Italy in particular - were invited by the government (and had their passage heavily subsidised) to work on the country's thriving coffee plantations, predominantly in the state of São Paulo (Klein, 1995). Additionally, starting in 1908 and reaching a peak in the post WWII period, many Japanese citizens emigrated to Brazil, a consequence of a decline in migrants from Italy, and an agreement between the Japanese and Brazilian governments permitting migration from Japan to Brazil. Japanese migrants in Brazil were thus granted work permits by the Brazilian government to work as farm labourers on coffee and cotton plantations. Brazil is now home to the largest Japanese population outside Japan.²⁶

Moreover, unlike many other parts of the world, where emigration 'northwards' (to the US and Europe) began much earlier - most notably through the post-war *Bracero* programme in the US, and the Guest Workers programmes of the 1950s and 1960s in Europe - the process of migration from 'underdeveloped to developed' regions in Brazil was 'contained almost entirely within its own borders' (Sales, 2000; 150-151) Migrants from the poorer Northern regions, or from rural areas throughout the country, would migrate in an attempt to secure livelihoods in the industrial cities further south, predominantly in São Paulo (*ibid*).

However, the recent phenomenon of emigration from Brazil, which is now indisputably widespread, cannot be considered as representing Brazil's transition from a country of 'immigration' to a country of 'emigration'. Indeed, as Patarra (2005: 28) points out, Brazil continues to receive significant numbers of migrants, in particular from other South American countries, as a result of regional trade agreements. However, she argues, 'the contexts, meaning, volumes, flows, networks and other

²⁶ It is estimated that approximately 1.5 million people of Japanese descent are currently living in Brazil. See <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/7459448.stm> (accessed 8/03/10).

important dimensions relating to the internal and external context, are completely different from anything that had occurred in the past' (Patarra, 2005: 25, my translation; see also Póvoa Neto, 2006). Thus, given the complexity and scale of the phenomenon, it seems that classifications such as 'immigration' and 'emigration' are insufficient to capture the complexity of processes that are constantly in flux (Póvoa Neto, 2006: 26). For Sales (2000: 145), the new reality of Brazil represents a 'facet' in its 'recent integration into the international context in times of globalisation.'

There is a general consensus in the literature that the first massive wave of emigration occurred towards the end of the 1980s, known as the 'lost decade' in Brazil (as well as in other parts of Latin America). While some people left the country in the 1960s and 1970s to live abroad as exiles during the dictatorship, the numbers were too few to represent a significant migration flow, and most had returned with the advent of democracy in the early 1980s. Yet the economic crises of the late 1980s gave rise to what Sales (2000: 152) refers to as the 'triennium of disillusionment': a time of hope and expectation at the return of democracy that was soon thwarted by inflation, unemployment and recession. Indeed, the economic mismanagement of the Collor administration in the midst of the crisis, and the rise and fall of several government rescue plans in the space of three years, led to widespread public frustration and lack of confidence in the country's economy. Such 'chaotic' economic conditions, including hyperinflation until 1994, as well as a decline in real wages and high unemployment, reflect just some of the factors spurring Brazilians to emigrate (Margolis, 1998: 11; see also Goza, 2004). Indeed, the limited professional opportunities for young single people of predominantly middle-class backgrounds seeking their livelihoods meant that for many emigration represented, a "'what have I got to lose?" option', a 'temporary, low cost personal investment opportunity' (Margolis, 1998: 12).

Certainly, the consequences of Brazil's unstable economic situation had a significant impact on the country's middle-class, with negative effects that reverberated throughout the 1990s and into the early 2000s. The impact of these factors were related in the narratives of many of my interviewees, some of whom lost their jobs overnight and had no safety nets enabling them to rebuild their life in Brazil. As Ivone, whose father lost his job suddenly and the family were forced to move, recounted,

My dad was an engineer in Brazil and was one of the directors of the company. In 2001 the company decided to hire more staff as the business was doing well. But the taxes for staff were very high, and so the company profits dropped, and my dad went into debt. We were renting an apartment in São Paulo, and we had to leave. My dad went bankrupt and, because my mum's name was in the company – she was declared bankrupt too. We lost everything – they took our car, our TV . . . That was when I came to England and my dad came two years later (24/11/10).

Similarly, Carlos, who had moved to Portugal having lost his job with the national petrol company in 1988, explained the difficulties he faced when he and his family tried to return to Brazil:

We went back to Brazil, but there were no jobs - I'm a qualified accountant but . . . because this was also a period of very high inflation during the government of Sarney, and others . . . and all that strange transition that was going on in the Brazilian government which meant that a lot of businesses were unable to keep going . . . But we set up a restaurant, and things were ok for about 10 years. But . . . the political situation was bad – you know, the impeachment of Collor de Mello . . . very high inflation – almost 100% inflation per month. This caused my business to fold. It failed. And things were really bad between 2000 and 2001. So we decided to leave (08/02/10).

In her discussion of Brazilian migrants in Los Angeles, Beserra (2003) challenges the predominantly economic and neo-classical 'push-pull' model for explaining Brazilian emigration. She draws on Bourdieu's notion of different forms of 'capital' - social, cultural and symbolic, as well as economic - arguing that all four contribute to this migration flow and suggesting that the phenomenon needs to be placed within its wider context, whereby 'discourses on immigration 'have still to be seen as social, cultural and political products' (Beserra, 2003: 12). For Beserra, an important but neglected factor contributing to Brazilian migration to North America is cultural imperialism: 'the ways in which American imperialist ideologies have penetrated Brazilian society', and the seduction of the American dream (*ibid*: 13; see also Beserra, 2005; Margolis, 1998: 12).

The colonial history of European countries and Latin America has also been considered as an important explanatory factor in recent migration trends (Padilla, 2009b; see also McIlwaine, 2011a). Thus Padilla (2009b: 26; my translation) argues in her discussion of Latin Americans in Europe that the 'colonial ties' which involved the 'conquest, colonisation and evangelisation of Latin America' and, in later years, the 'exploitation of natural resources' by Europeans in the Americas, is crucial for understanding recent migration flows, as people 'return' to countries whose language,

religion and culture are similar to their own. While the UK does not have such a clear colonial history with Latin America, McIlwaine (2011a: 4) argues that a postcolonial perspective remains useful insofar as it can ‘provide a much more nuanced interpretation of the complexities of why people move, that recognises the inequalities of uneven global development and the persistence of economic power in shaping people’s decisions.’ Yet for McIlwaine (2011a), such a perspective is only really useful if a ‘materialist interpretation’, that takes into account the everyday ‘survival concerns’ of migrants and the ‘deep-seated inequalities inherent in national and global capitalist systems’, is adopted (14). Indeed, without due consideration of the material realities of migrants’ everyday lives, a postcolonial explanation for Latin American – and in this case specifically Brazilian - migration to London remains abstract and ungrounded (*ibid*).

If economic, social, and cultural factors have undoubtedly played a key role in the massive Brazilian exodus, Sales draws attention to the fact that ‘[the] genesis of migratory flows seems always to depend on fortuitous or random factors that underlie the pioneers’ decision to migrate’ (2000: 155). Such arbitrary factors then lead to the generation of social networks, which in turn lead to more migration flows (*ibid*). In the Brazilian case there are multiple examples of diverse, often chance, phenomena that have given rise to myriad migration flows. The most widely studied of these is the case of Governador Valadares, a small city in the state of Minas Gerais in Brazil, from where a highly significant proportion of the population has migrated to North America. The origins of this flow date back to the presence of American engineers in the city during World War II, who were working in the region’s mineral mining and processing centres (Jouët-Pastré and Braga, 2008: 4). According to some accounts, when these Americans left for the United States, they often invited their domestic employees and other local workers to go with them (Margolis, 1998: 2). While there are several variations of the story (Goza, 2004: 9), scholars concur that there were some pioneer migrants who went to the US and that this led to a significant stream of emigrants which continues to the present day (see also Siqueira, 2003).

During my fieldwork, I spent some time in Governador Valadares, staying with a family who had one son living in the US and a daughter in London. There certainly seemed to be a ‘culture of emigration’ in the town, which I observed not only through my interactions with people who talked about their family members living elsewhere, but in relation to the urban landscape itself, which contrasted with

other towns I visited in the area – with many new houses with large terraces, painted in bright colours – and which had clearly been built from migrant remittances (see also Marcus, 2009). Indeed, I was told that the town was often referred to as *Governador Valadares* due to the vast flows of American dollars invested in the town.

Another example of a somewhat ‘random’ factor giving rise to a migratory flow is the case of Brazilian migration to the small Irish town of Gort, which began in 1999 (Sheringham, 2009, 2010a; see also Healy, 2006). Here, the six pioneer migrants were from the outskirts of Anápolis in the central Brazilian state of Goiás, who had recently lost their jobs in a meat-exporting factory there that had been forced to close. The factory had been managed by an Irish expatriate who arranged permits for the employees to work in a similar factory in Gort (*ibid*). The town rapidly became the destination for significant waves of Brazilian migrants and, at its peak, Brazilians made up nearly 50% of the town’s population of 3000.

The greater economic stability that Brazil began to enjoy by the late 1990s by no means stalled levels of emigration. As Table 4.1 (below) reveals, the numbers of Brazilians living abroad has increased over the last twelve years, with a diversification of destination countries (Patarra, 2005). While the principal receiving country for Brazilian migrants has tended to be the US, significant numbers have in recent years begun migrating to Europe, adding to rather than replacing the US-bound trend (Padilla, 2006). Moreover, sending regions in Brazil have diversified to the extent that, as Margolis (2008: 342) writes, ‘emigration has become a national phenomenon in Brazil’.

Without perhaps addressing the scale of the phenomenon, the Brazilian government – and in particular the two most recent former Presidents, Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (‘Lula’) - has responded to this widespread emigration through a series of policies aimed at engaging with its growing diaspora. These have included the creation, in 2006, of a Directorate for Brazilian Communities living abroad (*Subsecretaria-Geral das Comunidades Brasileiras no Exterior*), within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE), and in 2008, the introduction of annual conferences as spaces for representatives from Brazilian communities across the world to share experiences and concerns. It has also involved the creation of an interactive website called ‘Brazilians in the World’, as a ‘gateway’ to enhance

dialogue with Brazilians abroad (see Padilla, 2009a: 7; see also Padilla, 2011).²⁷ In 2010, President Lula passed a law to expand the scope of this Directive and, in particular, established a Council of Representatives for Brazilians Abroad (CRBE) with 16 elected members to represent the interests of Brazilians in principal receiving regions of Brazilian migrants.

Table 4.1: Estimates of Brazilians living abroad: 1996-2010

Country/Region	1996		2008		2010	
	Estimates	%	Estimates	%	Estimates	%
United States	580,196	41	611,708	20	1,388,000	44
Paraguay	350,000	25	487,517	16	200,000	6.5
Rest of South America	49,444	3	124,191	4	206,923	7
UK	No data available	No data available	150,000	5	180,000	6
Portugal	No data available	No data available	147,500	5	136,220	4.5
Rest of Europe	No data available	No data available	419,094	14	595,669	19
Japan	62,944	18	310,000	10	230,552	7.5
Others	41.265	3	794,752	26	185,449	6
Total			3,044,762	100	3.122.813	100

Source: Ministério das Relações Exteriores (MRE) Registros Consulares. Brasília. Table drawn up by the author.²⁸

Research among Brazilian migrants in Portugal reveals how more recent waves of Brazilians there come from more lower middle class and working class backgrounds than previous ‘waves’, which tended to involve people from ‘the professional middle classes’; a phenomenon which Padilla (2006: 3) describes as the ‘proletarianization’ of migration flows. This trend is echoed in recent studies of Brazilians in other places, including the US (Margolis, 2008) and the UK (Evans et al, 2007, 2011; McIlwaine et al, 2011). Thus, technological advances facilitating and

²⁷ See http://www.brasileirosnomundo.mre.gov.br/pt-br/mensagem_do_ministro.xml (accessed 11/01/10).

²⁸ See <http://sistemas.mre.gov.br/kitweb/datafiles/BRMundo/ptbr/file/Brasileiros%20no%20Mundo%202011%20-%20Estimativas%20-%20Terceira%20Edi%20-%20v2.pdf> (accessed 16/02/11).

reducing the cost of international travel, the widespread circulation of information about potential destination countries, as well as factors relating to globalisation and what scholars have termed the ‘migrant division of labour’ (May et al, 2007), are identified as further key reasons for increased migration from Brazil, and for the possibility of migration as an option for people across the social strata. Indeed, these factors form part of what Padilla (2009b: 29), in her theorisations of recent flows of Latin American migrants to Europe, refers to as the ‘super-thesis’ of globalisation.

Another crucial factor stimulating the migration of Brazilians, and related to all the factors outlined above, is undoubtedly the existence and genesis of ‘social networks’ in receiving contexts, and of what Massey (1990) calls the ‘cumulative causation’ of migration flows (Goza, 2004; Padilla, 2006). It is argued that these networks function before, during and after the migration process – encouraging and enabling the journey for prospective migrants, facilitating the arrival and introduction to the host country, and maintaining links that ease the return journey ‘back home’ (Goza, 2004). Some authors have also emphasised the negative dimensions of such networks, emphasising the lack of solidarity among Brazilian migrants, with people competing for jobs and exploiting one another (Martes, 2000; Padilla, 2006; McGrath and Murray, 2009).

Thus, far from a linear phenomenon, Brazilian migration reflects complex processes relating to multiple factors and actors. The role of religion within such processes is not residual, but rather closely interrelated with many of the issues outlined above - from conquest and colonisation, to more recent processes of globalisation, to random factors spurring individuals to migrate (Vasquez and Ribeiro, 2007). Indeed, a high proportion of participants in my research referred to their faith as an important motivation in their decision to come to London, or in their decision to stay there. Jorge, for example, who arrived in London in 1997, recounted:

Just before I left Brazil, I said to my friends, ‘I’m going [to England] for 6 months . . . But God was telling me that I was going to stay for more than six months, that I am going to stay there for a long time (27/01/10).

Moreover, recent research (including the current project) reveals how Brazilian churches represent crucial spaces for the creation and maintenance of these transnational social networks in both sending and receiving contexts (Martes, 2000; Alves and Ribeiro, 2002; Levitt, 2007).

Brazilians turn towards Europe

Increased restrictions for entering the US are a key factor contributing to important shifts in Brazilian migration patterns in recent years (Margolis, 2008: 354). Indeed, since 9/11, the situation for Brazilians (and, of course, other migrants) living in the US, or planning to migrate there, has become increasingly complicated. Not only have the changes in immigration legislation meant that entry into the country is much more difficult - with many more attempting to enter illegally via Mexico, and increasing numbers being deported - but the lives of those already living in the US have become far more restricted, with clampdowns on the issuing of driving licences (among other things) (Margolis, 2008: 354). While the movement of Brazilians to and from the US – or ‘yo-yo’ migration (Margolis, 1998: 120) - was fairly commonplace, meaning that many migrants to the US would see themselves as ‘sojourners’ rather than ‘settlers’, increased restrictions on the issuing of tourist visas and greater migration controls have meant that Brazilians are more likely to stay in the US, often clandestinely, until they are ready to return home for good (358). The creation of transnational connections, or at least the physical movement between the US and Brazil, is thus considerably limited (*ibid*: 357).

While the US continues to be an important receiving country for flows of Brazilian migrants, Table 4.1 demonstrates how Europe closely follows the US in terms of numbers of migrants. As well as the existence and influence of historical, colonial ties between Brazil and Europe, and Portugal in particular (Padilla, 2006: 3, see above), the intense migration from Europe to Brazil in the early twentieth century has meant that large numbers of Brazilians can trace European descent, and in many cases this enables them to obtain European passports (see McIlwaine et al, 2011; see also Evans et al, 2011). The lack of restriction on movement and working between EU countries since the late 1980s has also meant that many have used these passports to enter and work in the UK. Many Brazilian migrants in Europe are irregular, however, either entering illegally, or ‘overstaying’ their student or tourist visas which, until recently, were fairly easy to obtain. As Table 4.1 shows, the UK receives the highest proportion of Brazilian migrants to Europe (20%), with Portugal, Brazil’s ex-

colonial patria close behind (15%). Italy, Spain, Belgium and Germany also represent important destination countries for Brazilian migrants.²⁹

Brazilians have long been an important part of Portugal's demographic fabric, however it is only in recent years that they have come to represent the largest migrant group, comprising 25% of all migrants to the country (Sardinha, 2011). Scholars have highlighted the colonial ties and consequent linguistic and cultural similarities to explain the phenomenon, as well as economic factors including the 'economic upswing witnessed in Portugal until the mid-2000s' (*ibid*: 986; see also Padilla, 2006). However, despite such cultural similarities, and governmental agreements facilitating migrant flows (Padilla, 2009a, 2011), Brazilians in Portugal suffer high levels of discrimination and social and economic marginalisation (Sardinha, 2011). While in the UK, for example, Brazilians maintain a certain level of 'invisibility' (for a number of reasons outlined below), in Portugal, Brazilians are a highly 'visible' minority, due to their very recognisable accent, and the propagation of negative cultural stereotypes by the Portuguese media (Healy, pers. comm., 19/09/10). Brazilian women, in particular, are often associated with the sex and leisure industries, despite the fact that, as Padilla (2007) observes, the majority are actually employed in the service sector, as cleaners or restaurant workers. Such stereotypes, it is argued, have been reinforced by the transmission of Brazilian soap operas in Portugal, in which women are portrayed as 'highly sexual' (Sardinha, 2011).

'In search of a better life': a profile of Brazilians in the UK

An 'invisible' minority

In comparison to the 'visibility' of Brazilian migrants within the Portuguese social consciousness – and indeed across academic and policy spheres – Brazilians remain largely 'invisible' in UK society, despite their growing numbers. While there is, as in Portugal, an 'exoticised', 'sexy' image of Brazil and Brazilian culture in the UK imaginary, there is an absence of accurate data and research into the actual lives – which are usually far from exotic - of London's Brazilians compared with many other migrant groups, particularly those with historical links with the UK about whom there

²⁹ In November 2010, I attended a conference in Barcelona, entitled 'Brazilians in Europe', in which there were representatives from Spain, Portugal, Italy, Belgium, Germany and the UK.

is more widespread public and academic interest. One example of this ‘invisibility’ is the discrepancy between official and unofficial figures as to the numbers of Brazilians in the UK. Thus, in 1991, the Office of National Statistics documented 9301 people living in the UK who were born in Brazil, which increased to 14,555 in 2001. More recent official data from 2008 puts the number of Brazilians in the UK at 53,042 and in London at 41,380. Yet unofficial figures for the number of Brazilians in London alone estimate somewhere between 130,000 and 160,000 (Evans et al, 2007: 5), while the Brazilian MRE (2009) gives an average estimate of 180,000 in the UK.

This census ‘undercount’, also identified in Margolis’s (1998) study of Brazilians in the US, has several explanations; most significantly the fact that many Brazilians are irregular, either entering the country illegally, or overstaying their student or tourist visas (Evans et al, 2007, 2011; see also Torresan, 1995; Cwerner, 2001; McIlwaine et al, 2011). Moreover, given the fact that many Brazilian migrants regard their migration to the UK as temporary, most have little interest in completing official census forms (Evans et. al, 2007: 6). A further reason for the inaccuracy is due to the fact that, while the Home Office holds records of the number of Brazilians entering the country, the immigration authorities lack sufficient methods of tracking the numbers of people actually residing in the country (*ibid*).³⁰ Finally, the fact that a large number of Brazilians are able to obtain European passports, due to family connections, means that data vary according to whether respondents are asked to give their country of birth (as in the census), or their nationality (as in the International Passenger Survey (IPS)) (Linneker and McIlwaine, 2011: 13).

As McIlwaine (2007: 5) notes, the UK has a long history of relations - economic, diplomatic and cultural - with Latin America, dating back to the eighteenth century. In the Brazilian case, this includes various individuals who have gone into exile in London. Thus, for example, the statesman Rui Barbosa was exiled to London in 1894-5 as a result of his revolt against the military’s involvement in politics, and more recently the Tropicalist musicians Gilberto Gil and Caetano Veloso lived in exile there in the late 1960s during Brazil’s military dictatorship, as their music was considered ‘subversive’ (Decho and Diamond, 1998).

³⁰ See McIlwaine et al (2011: 12-23) for a more detailed discussion of the challenges of calculating the size of the Latin American community in London, and possible ways of estimating the numbers of Latin American migrants. See also Linneker and McIlwaine (2011).

Early studies of London's Brazilian community suggested that Brazilians who came to London in the 1980s and early 1990s were young, single and predominantly from middle-class backgrounds (Torresan, 1995; Cwerner, 2001). Thus, while the economic instability in Brazil may have been a 'push' factor, these studies emphasised other reasons, including the notion of a 'rite of passage' for young people, allowing them to, as Torresan (1995: 35) writes 'improve their social status, construct new identities, be they personal, national or ethnic' (my translation). The creation of social networks among Brazilian migrants in London and elsewhere is also highlighted as a crucial factor influencing the movement of 'prospective migrants' from Brazil (Cwerner, 2001: 16), and also helping new migrants to find jobs once they have arrived (Torresan, 1995: 36). Torresan gives examples of factories in London that had predominantly Brazilian workers as a result of such networks, creating ethnic niches in certain sectors of the labour market.

Recent research suggests some changes in the profile of Brazilians in London, which parallels the changes observed in migration flows to the US (Evans et al, 2007, 2011; McIlwaine et al 2011) and Portugal (see above). Thus, for example, Brazilian migrants from more modest backgrounds are also now migrating to the UK, with a very high proportion in London coming predominantly to work to make money to invest back home (McIlwaine et al, 2011; see also Evans et al, 2011). Indeed, according to McIlwaine et al's data, 57% of all Brazilians in the study cited economic motivations for migrating. On the other hand, the data reveals high levels of education among Brazilian migrants compared to other migrant groups, with over 50% having achieved a university degree or above.

These more recent studies also suggest that Brazilians in London are emigrating from different regions than their predecessors – predominantly from the central and Southern states of Goiás, Paraná, Minas Gerais and São Paulo (Evans et al, 2011), as opposed to the peripheral regions and cities of the South and Northeast, which were the main origins of earlier flows (Torresan, 1995: 35). In addition, it is interesting to note that although Brazilians are from Latin America, they do not tend to identify with other Latin American groups living in London, many of whom have mobilised to create a 'pan-Latino' identity with a certain degree of solidarity. Again, drawing on McIlwaine et al's dataset, only 44% of Brazilian respondents identified themselves as Latin American, compared to over 70% of other Latin American respondents. As observed in similar studies of Brazilians in other countries, Brazilian

migrants – predominantly because of language differences – tend to remain apart from other Latin Americans, creating their own spaces for ethnic interaction and preferring to categorise themselves as ‘Brazilian’ (see Beserra, 2003; see also McDonnell and Lourenço, 2009). Indeed, scholars have commented on how the notion of ‘Brazilianness’ becomes far more pertinent for migrants living outside Brazil; even if they had previously perceived their identity in relation to region or other factors, as opposed to nationality (Margolis, 2008; McDonnell and Lourenço, 2009).

On the other hand, despite this ‘ethnic consciousness’ that becomes more marked in response to the dislocation involved in the experience of migration and the formation of strong social networks, some scholars have commented on the lack of solidarity among Brazilians, and the existence of ‘cleavages’ within the Brazilian ‘community’ (Martes, 2000; Margolis, 1998; Alves and Ribeiro, 2002; McGrath and Murray, 2009). Such divisions have been observed among Brazilians in the UK, with stories of people selling jobs, giving false information and generally excluding other Brazilians from certain social networks (Torresan, 1995: 37; see also Jordan and Düvell, 2002; McIlwaine et al, 2011). My own research also revealed high levels of mistrust among Brazilian migrants, and divisions relating to factors such as region of origin, religious affiliation and social class (among other things). One respondent, Graça, who had been in London for over twelve years, explained how she felt that class divisions in Brazil are transported to, and often intensified in, London:

I think that there is a social aspect that is transported from over there. The social differences in Brazil are reflected in the social networks over here . . . I feel that we are a group, that we have lots of things in common, in that we’re here to do something to make our lives better. But there are also lots of differences. For example, I don’t go to all the places that other Brazilians go to . . . Because there’s this social aspect and there’s that little world of the Brazilian migrant who is undocumented, who doesn’t trust anyone etc – and for me it’s different because I don’t have those difficulties (14/09/10).

Renata, on the other hand, who had recently returned to Brazil, said that class relations among Brazilians in London were very different as:

London breaks down lots of the barriers that a Brazilian is going to have here [in Brazil]. Like yesterday I went somewhere where you could only go if you had an invitation, so everyone who was there was only there because they knew the owner or PR person of the bar. And those people all tend to live in the South zone [of the city]. So there’s this closed circle, no one else could go to that place so you don’t mix . . . But in London it’s not like that, in London you meet everyone – it’s all mixed . . . When you meet people who haven’t had the same upbringing, it’s a bit of a shock . . . it’s interesting (19/04/10).

Yet despite telling me about the friends she made in London who were from all walks of life, Renata also said that she felt that the discrimination against people from Goiás was justified as, she said, they tended to be the population who were ‘ex-convicts’, or who ‘bought false passports’ (Renata, 19/04/10).

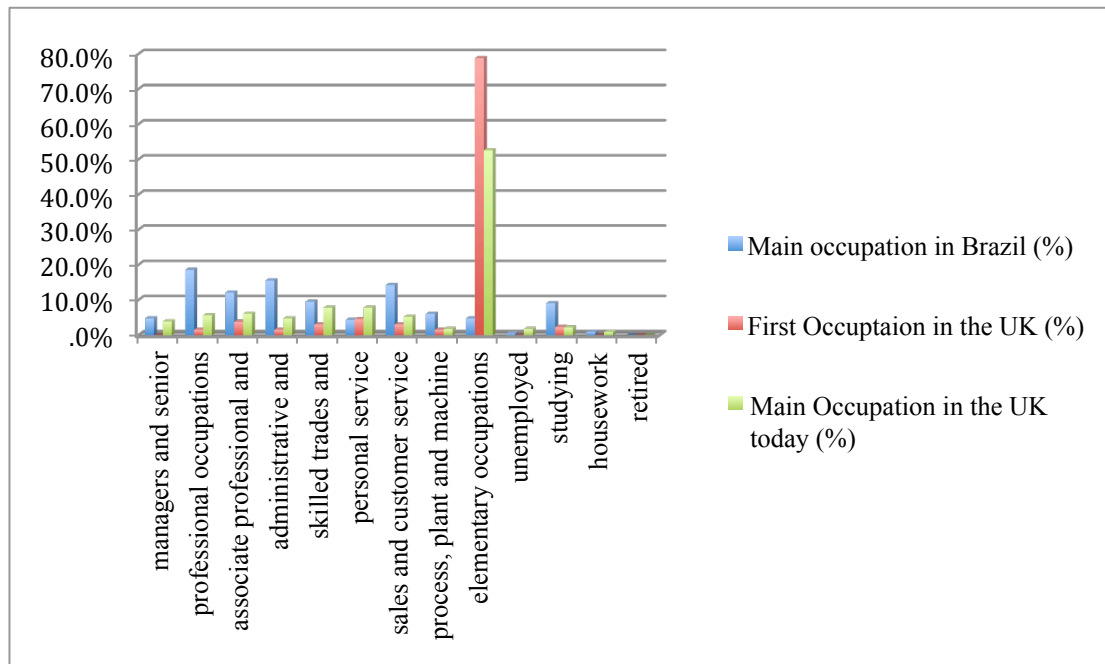
Enrique suggested that class divisions were very different among Brazilians in London than in Brazil, due to the nature of the work that middle class migrants often end up doing. He explained how, when he got his first job in a restaurant as a kitchen porter (the kind of job that educated people would never do in Brazil), for example, he was surprised to discover that the other people there were ‘normal people, there because they need to be, because they want to make something better of their lives’ (31/08/10). For him it was a positive experience being able to interact with Brazilians from very different backgrounds. The main problem, rather, was the reaction of his family and friends back in Brazil who, ‘are from a different social class . . . they know how much time you spent studying to become a qualified worker and they suddenly see you throw everything away to earn money doing this kind of work. That makes you feel bad.’ Indeed, McIlwaine et al’s data reveals interesting patterns relating to migration and social class among Brazilians. While 13% of Brazilians in the sample described themselves as working class in Brazil - compared to 53% who saw themselves as middle-class - in London more than 30% defined themselves as working class.

Employment patterns

These patterns of downward mobility among Brazilians are also reflected in the data relating to migrants’ employment. As Figure 4.1 (below) shows, the majority (53% of respondents) of Brazilians in London are employed in ‘elementary occupations’ (usually ‘unskilled’, low-paid, service-sector jobs) compared to only 5% who worked in these jobs in Brazil. While the data suggests that Brazilians’ employment profiles do improve over time (79% worked in such jobs on their first arrival in London), Brazilians remain highly underrepresented in the more professional and skilled-trade sectors of the labour market. Furthermore, as McIlwaine et al (2011:44) observe, ‘it is extremely rare for Latin Americans to be able to work in the jobs that they had been trained or had worked in back home’. The data thus suggests that migration to London

involves an experience of ‘deskilling’ for the majority of Brazilians, a trend that could be put down to language difficulties, problems of documentation and the lack of transferability for many qualifications received in Brazil.

Figure 4.1: Changes in occupation through migration and settlement



Source: author’s calculations from McIlwaine et al’s (2011) dataset.

The employment profile of Brazilians bears much resemblance to studies of Brazilians living in New York and Boston, as observed by Margolis (1998) and Sales (2000) among others. Broadly reflecting the North American examples, Brazilian women in London are primarily employed as cleaners, while men tend to work in restaurants, as construction workers or, notably, as couriers (McIlwaine et al, 2011; Evans et al, 2011). Indeed, echoing Torresan’s (1995) earlier findings, in which Brazilians occupied particular niches in the labour market, certain restaurant chains and courier companies have large concentrations of Brazilian workers, often employed by or recommended by Brazilian co-workers. During my research in one small town in Minas Gerais, I met and interviewed five people who had all been employed by the same chain of Italian restaurants in London. They had managed to get their jobs thanks to their links with one particular Brazilian, who was the ‘pioneer’ migrant from the town. His success stories communicated ‘back home’, setting the precedent for significant flows of migrants. McIlwaine et al’s dataset reveals how

Brazilian migrants also tend to work long hours (30% working more than 40 hours per week) and the majority (64%) earn less than what is classified as the London Living Wage (see also Evans et al, 2011).

McIlwaine et al's dataset also points to some divergences in Brazilian migrants' experiences in relation to gender. For example, though both male and female respondents were most likely to work between 20-40 hours, men (17%) were more likely to work over 40 hours than women (10%). With regard to pay, however, it seemed that women were more likely to be earning above the London Living Wage (25%) compared to men (11%), though women were also more highly represented (7%) than men (4%) in the lowest pay bracket, below the national minimum wage. With regard to length of stay in the UK, both McIlwaine et al's and Evans et al's (2011) data suggest that women are more likely than men to be uncertain of how long they intend to stay. Twenty-three percent of Brazilian women in McIlwaine et al's survey (compared to 9% men) and 41% in Evans et al's survey (compared to 33% men) said that they did not know how long they would stay. While McIlwaine et al's data showed no significant differences between men and women's responses with regard to whether they intended to stay forever, Evans et al's survey showed that a higher proportion of women (13%) than men (8%) intended to stay in London indefinitely.

The narratives of my own research participants also revealed some interesting differences in relation to changing gender roles and the migration experience. Thus, when asked if she felt that her role in her household had changed since she migrated to London Ana, for example, responded:

Definitely . . . I would see myself as part of this 'new social class' [of women migrants]. Yes, because when you migrate, you have to survive. So women have to work to help out men. There's no way you can just stay at home (20/11/09).

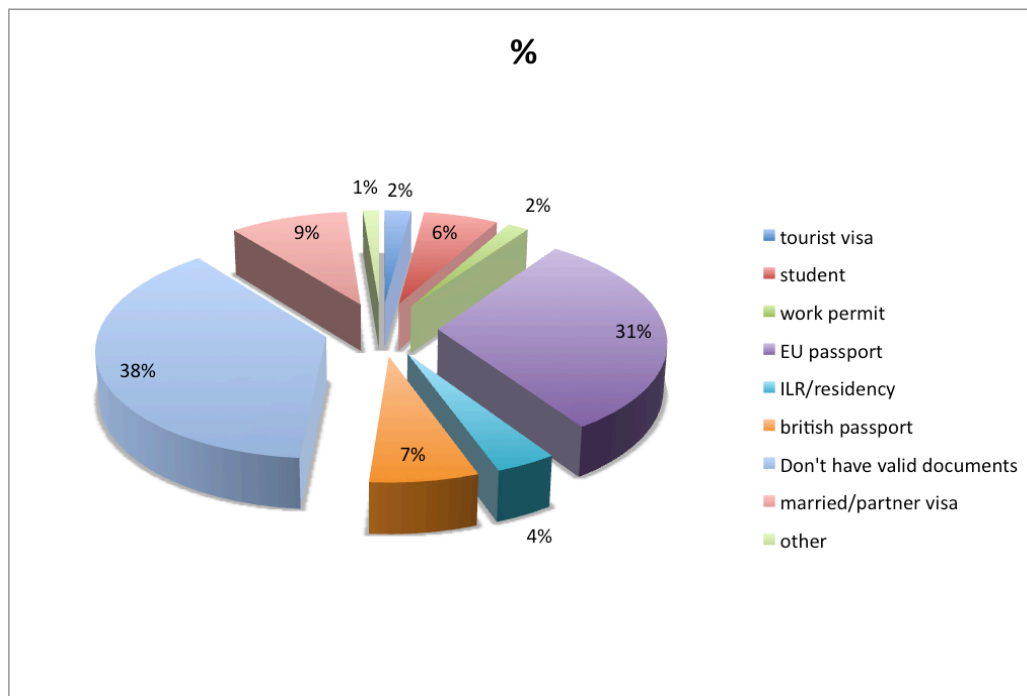
Similarly, Dulce described how in London she felt 'much more independent' in comparison to her life in Brazil (20/11/10; see also McIlwaine, 2010). My research also revealed how these shifting gender roles impacted upon family dynamics for those who stay behind. Thus Manuel, Ana's father - who stayed at home in Brazil when all the female members of his family went to London - told me how he was now in charge of all the cooking, cleaning and housekeeping, roles which had previously been held by the womenfolk in the household (18/06/10). Rather than viewing it as a

positive shift, Manuel was anxious for the women in his family to return so that the ‘appropriate’ roles in the home could be re-instated.

Immigration status

A key challenge facing a large number of Brazilian migrants in London relates to legal status, as there are only limited options available for Brazilians who seek visas to enter the UK (Evans et al, 2007: 52; McIlwaine et al, 2011). As Figure 4.2 (below) reveals, a high proportion (38%) of Brazilian migrants are irregular, or have limited tourist or student visas (8%). This reflects the increased difficulties involved in obtaining legal status, but also the possibilities available for working ‘illegally’ in London. Indeed, according to McIlwaine et al’s (2011: 34) research among different Latin American groups in the UK, Brazilians are the ‘most likely to be irregular’. Similarly, Jordan and Düvell’s (2002) research among irregular Brazilian migrants in London suggested that the relative ease of getting informal work in London compared with the US and other countries in Europe was among their main reasons for choosing to migrate there (101). More recently, however, the proliferation of Brazilians without documents living in the UK has led to many more cases of deportation, with recent Home Office figures showing that Brazilians are the second most likely ethnic group to be deported (Gordon et al, 2009: 45). Indeed, McIlwaine et al’s dataset reveals how, while only 1 out of 233 of the Brazilians in the sample admitted to entering the UK ‘without valid documents’, 89 respondents (or 38%) described their current immigration status as ‘without valid documents’, which suggests that many become irregular while in the UK.

Figure 4.2: Current immigration status among Brazilians in the UK



Source: author's calculations from McIlwaine et al's (2011) dataset

Lack of documentation has also had an impact on the length of stay of Brazilians migrating to London. Existing studies among London's Brazilians, and my own empirical research, echo Margolis's (1998) observations of the conundrum which confronts many Brazilians: their visa has expired but they fear moving back to Brazil without having fulfilled their intentions (Evans et al, 2007: 16). Similarly, Cwerner (2001) discusses the ways in which this legal uncertainty contributes to a sense of temporal 'liminality', or what he characterises as the 'liminal time' of many migrants, whose 'temporal horizons' are constantly changing. Furthermore, for many irregular Brazilians in London, their precarious status actually makes them stay longer, as they are terrified that if they leave they will be unable to re-enter the UK should they need to in the future. Thus, in Evans et al's (2011) study, 32% of respondents said they wanted to stay in London 'indefinitely', but were uncertain of how long they would actually stay.

On the other hand, as Figure 4.1 shows, large numbers of Brazilians (31% of respondents) also have European passports, usually obtained through ancestral links dating back to European migration to Brazil in the early 20th century (see above). Those with passports are entitled to the same social and labour rights as other EU migrants, and are thus in a superior position to those with other immigration statuses.

Such divergent visa situations undoubtedly contributed to the existence of divisions and high levels of mistrust within the community.³¹

Brazilian spaces in London

London's sizeable Brazilian presence is reflected in the growing numbers of shops, restaurants and beauty salons that have been established, predominantly by Brazilians to serve other Brazilians in London. While parts of the boroughs of Brent and Southwark have more concentrated areas of Brazilian shops and businesses – with some areas in Harlesden becoming like a 'little Brazil' – these are quite dispersed around the city, reflecting the geographical dispersal of Brazilians in London. While the data reveals some 'clusters' of Brazilians in the boroughs of Brent in North West London and Lambeth in South London, Brazilians continue to be fairly dispersed across the city, which adds to their relative invisibility compared to some other migrant groups (Evans et al, 2011). Moreover, this geographical dispersal also perhaps reflects the diversity of the population, in line with factors such as region of origin in Brazil, generation, and immigration status.

There are also a large number of newspapers and magazines (at least 5), produced among the Brazilian community,³² and large-scale community events such as Brazilian Day, part of a large Latin American carnival (*Carnival del Pueblo*) held during the summer (see McIlwaine et al, 2011:10). Yet despite the existence of such enterprises, there is a relative lack of formal institutions that represent and mobilise Brazilians in London and provide them with a more visible presence. Some scholars have suggested that the central importance of family networks in Brazil, in contrast to associations with the external world, have meant that 'non-kin' associations are less developed (McGrath and Murray, 2009: 11; see also Margolis, 1994).

There are, however, two formal (secular) organisations that offer support to Brazilian migrants: *ABRAS* (Association for Brazilians in the UK)³³ and *Casa do Brasil em Londres*.³⁴ *ABRAS* was set up in 2006, and *Casa do Brasil* in 2009 (following divisions within *ABRAS*). Both organisations offer legal and immigration

³¹ See Vertovec (2007) for a discussion of legal differentiation within new migrant groups; see also McIlwaine, 2011a, for a more specific discussion of the Latin American case.

³² These include *Leros*, *Brazilian Post*, *Brazil etc*, *Real magazine*, *Vamos!* and *Jungle Drums*.

³³ See <http://www.abras.org.uk/> (accessed 11/07/11).

³⁴ See <http://www.casado brasil.org.uk/> (accessed 11/07/11).

advice, language classes and counselling. There also exist organisations targeted at more specific issues affecting Brazilian migrants, including ABRIR - which provides information on education and Portuguese language teaching for the children of Brazilian migrants, and GEB, a group of researchers who organise workshops and seminars to create a dialogue between researchers and Brazilians in diaspora (see Chapter 3).

More visible, and arguably more widely used among the Brazilian community, are religious organisations - of varying denominations – which represent crucial spaces of support for Brazilians in London. Indeed, Evans et al's survey (2007) of Brazilian migrants in London was conducted through the distribution of questionnaires among Brazilians attending religious services, as it was found that churches (Catholic and evangelical above all) were among the only spaces where large numbers of them would congregate. According to data from McIlwaine et al's (2011) study, 62% of Brazilians attend religious services in London, with 39% responding that they attend every week.

Indeed, a study into the 'needs of migrants in London's Catholic community' (Davis et al, 2006) revealed how, for many irregular migrants, the Catholic Church represented an essential source of support. The study also concluded that 'illegal immigrants' were key to the future of British Catholicism and that, in many areas of London, Masses in Portuguese for Brazilian migrants in particular were more frequent than those in English. Prior to a more detailed discussion of religious beliefs and practices among London's Brazilians, the next section will consider the 'religious field' in Brazil itself (Freston, 2008). A discussion of the religious lives of migrants in comparison with the context of their country of origin raises important questions about religiosity, migration and transnationalism.

'Deus é Brasileiro': religion in Brazil

Bruneau's (1982: 21) assertion that 'Brazil's claim to being the largest Catholic country hides more than it suggests' points to the diversity and contradictions that have characterised the religious field in Brazil. Such a statement appears even more pertinent today in light of the striking changes in the religious affiliations of Brazil's diverse population in recent years, as revealed in the census figures. While

Catholicism remains the predominant religion in the country, the number of people who declared themselves Catholic fell more than 15% between 1980 and 2000, from 89.2 to 73.3% (see Table 4.2, below). According to Ribeiro (2005: 6), these statistics are still an exaggeration, as many Brazilians define themselves as Catholic even when they never go to church, and in fact only 20% of Brazilians are actually practising Catholics. The figures also reveal a notable rise (of nearly 10%) in Protestant - in particular evangelical - affiliations, as well as a strong rise in people who define themselves as having ‘no religion’. According to Freston (2008: 255), Brazil is currently the second largest Protestant country in the world, the largest Pentecostal one and the world capital of Spiritism (see below). The country’s religious field is thus one that can be classified by superlatives. Far from realising the secularising predictions of many twentieth century sociologists of religion, religion in Brazil has diversified, arguably increasing, as opposed to decreasing, in significance (see Chapter 2) in recent decades.

Table 4.2: Main Religions in Brazil 1980-2000

Religion	1980	1991	2000
Catholic	89.2	83.3	73.3
Evangelical	6.6	9.0	15.4
Spiritist	0.7	1.1	1.4
Afro-Brazilian religions	0.6	0.4	0.3
Other Religions	1.3	1.4	1.8
No Religion	1.6	4.8	7.3
TOTAL	100	100	100

Source: Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). Adapted from Pierucci (2004).

The reasons for such shifts are manifold and reflect a combination of global and local factors, seeming to illustrate what Jean-Pierre Bastian (1998) calls the ‘deregulation’ of the Latin American religious field (cf Vasquez, 1999: 3). Thus, for example, the proliferation of Protestant (and in particular Pentecostal) movements has been seen as paralleling rapid processes of modernisation and urbanisation: manifesting a religious movement that is ‘made to travel’, rapidly responding to the

needs of those who feel increasingly isolated and disenfranchised within these processes of transformation (see Chapter 2). At the same time, however, certain shifts are unique to the Brazilian case and reveal the significance of religious faith – in diverse guises – to the country’s population. The broad spectrum of religious affiliations was reflected in the narratives of many interviewees in the current study, as people explained how their chosen religion was distinct from that of their parents, who themselves followed different religious paths from each other. As one respondent, Elena, recounted:

In Brazil I went to all the different churches, I went to the Spiritist centre with my mum . . . And in my family we have an uncle who’s an evangelical pastor – at Assembleia de Deus, and I have another uncle who is Umbanda – he’s a ‘Pai Santo’, and another uncle who is evangelical. And then I have another aunt who is an ardent Catholic (focus group, 24/02/10).

As the figures reveal (see Table 4.2, above), Catholicism remains the majority religion in Brazil, yet within Catholicism several movements have emerged that reflect changes in the nature of religious belief and practice. The two most significant of these are arguably Christian Base Communities³⁵ (CEBs), inspired by Liberation Theology, and, more recently, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement (RCC) (Theije and Mariz, 2008; see also Chapter 2).³⁶ The CEBs emerged in Brazil in the 1960s and 1970s – during the military dictatorship – and are based around Christian values that emphasize the ‘collective interests of the poorer social classes’ and belief in the Church’s political role in fighting for such interests (Pierucci and Prandi, 2000: 630). CEBs still have a significant following (2% of Brazilians according to the 2000 census) and ‘progressive Catholicism’ has an enduring legacy in Brazilian politics, in particular within the Worker’s Party (PT) (Vasquez and Williams, 2005: 9). However, their popularity is undoubtedly declining, and from the mid-1980s onwards, new forms of Catholicism began to emerge, ‘which had a predilection for the development of a personal relationship with God’ (Theije and Mariz, 2008: 39). Indeed, while the CEBs and Liberation Theology focus on the collective rights of, and engagement with, the group, more recent movements such as the RCC focus on the individual and the ‘immanence’ of the sacred (Pierucci and Prandi, 2000, 630).

³⁵ *Comunidades Eclesiais de Base.*

³⁶ *Renovação Carismática Católica.*

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement emerged in Pittsburgh, USA, in the 1960s, and found its way to Brazil soon after, gaining significant popularity since the late-1980s (Pierucci and Prandi, 2000: 630). The fact that the Virgin Mary, the Eucharist, and the Pope remain crucial tenets distinguishes the movement as Catholic. On the other hand, unlike traditional Catholicism or the CEBS, the RCC movement bears some strong resemblances to Pentecostalism (and is indeed sometimes referred to as ‘Catholic Pentecostalism’ [Machado, 1996]). In particular, the emphasis placed on the gifts of the Holy Spirit – including speaking in tongues - and divine healing are notable (Prandi, 2008). Moreover, what differentiates the RCC movement from others within Catholicism, is its apolitical character and the fact that it is based on the individual’s relationship with God, proposing immediate transcendence from the difficulties of everyday living (Pierucci and Prandi, 2000; see also Theije and Mariz, 2008). Thus, traditional Catholicism, whereby the church is ‘frequently regarded as a social necessity – a comfortable presence rather than a compelling force’ (Bruneau, 1982: 21) has in recent years been supplanted by a growing adhesion to movements that involve a more conscious religious participation (see Peirucci and Prandi, 2000: 630). The RCC has gained significant popularity among Brazilians in diaspora, partly owing to their sophisticated use of modern communications technology and adaptation to the forces of globalisation.

Together with the decline in traditional Catholicism, the striking rise in Protestantism - and especially Pentecostalism - is of key significance, accounting for over 15% of the population, and making Brazil the largest Pentecostal country in the world. The emergence of Protestantism in Brazil has three main currents, the first, known as ‘traditional Protestantism’, dating back to the large-scale immigration of Germans to Brazil in the early twentieth century (Shoji, 2008: 55). The second main current, known as ‘Conversion Protestantism’, involved the growth of Pentecostal movements, which originated in Protestant Revivalism in the USA. From the 1970s onwards, these Pentecostal practices emerged in Brazil as renewal movements within various existing denominations (*ibid*; see also Pierucci and Prandi, 2000: 632). More recently, a third main current, known as Neo-Pentecostalism, has emerged; this is characterised, in particular, by the use of the mass media, and the preaching of the ‘Theology of Prosperity’ (*ibid*). While the central tenets and worshipping style are similar to some churches in the US and elsewhere, a large number of Neo-Pentecostal churches have been founded in Brazil and have expanded rapidly elsewhere. These

include the *Igreja Universal do Reino De Deus* (Universal Church of the Kingdom of God), *Deus é Amor* (God is Love), and the *Igreja Internacional da Graça Divina* (International Church of Divine Grace). Indeed, as will be discussed in the following section, the widespread success and international vision of these churches is reflected in their presence in areas where there are large numbers of Brazilian migrants.

Spiritism, a religion (or, as some prefer to describe it, a philosophy) based on the teachings and five ‘textbooks’ of the French scholar Allan Kardec, and sometimes referred to as Kardecism, also has a strong presence within Brazil’s religious field and is increasing in popularity. It involves the belief in the existence of spirits, and in the possibility of communication with these spirits through mediums. In Brazil, Spiritism was popularised by Chico Xavier, a ‘medium’ who became a national hero in Brazil due to what are considered his powers of communication with the spirits, which he ‘psychographed’ into over four hundred books.³⁷ My fieldwork in Brazil coincided with the release of a long-awaited film about Xavier’s life, and the film’s massive popularity was evidence of his importance in the country’s imaginary. Furthermore, the plot of a popular ‘telenovela’ broadcast nightly during my time there revolved around the theme of Spiritism. One respondent, Renata, who described herself as ‘Spiritist’ told me how she had turned to Spiritism as she felt disillusioned with Catholicism, the religion within which she had been brought up:

When I was Catholic, I would ask lots of questions but there weren’t any answers and I found many of the answers within Spiritism . . . Like why are there social divisions, why do some people get on well and others don’t, how to deal with life . . .’ (19/04/10).

I also attended a number of Spiritist ‘meetings’ with Renata, and received a *passé* - or blessing - which, I recounted in my field diary:

the blessing involved two girls standing on either side of me with their hands raised and whispering a prayer. I felt very self-conscious at first and wasn’t sure what to do with myself. But the experience was quite powerful and it did feel strangely good afterwards (field diary, 28/04/10).

³⁷ Psychography denotes the practice of channelling messages believed to be sent from disembodied spirits. The scribes act as mediums, and are usually seen to have special abilities, innate or acquired, that allow them to communicate with higher beings. See Kardec (2007: 257-263) for a detailed discussion of different types of psychography.

According to census data, followers of Spiritism are predominantly urban middle class and highly educated, and they place great emphasis on helping others (Pierucci and Prandi, 2000: 633; see also Rocha, 2009).

While not significantly revealed in the figures, Afro-Brazilian religions, including Candomblé and Umbanda, also maintain a strong cultural influence throughout the country, with distinct manifestations in different regions (Pierucci and Prandi, 2000; see also Freston, 2008). The category ‘other religions’, whose proportions have also increased in the more recent census figures, comprise a wide range of movements including Judaism, Buddhism (in particular among the country’s significant Japanese diaspora), and Adventists, as well as various esoteric sects that are increasing in prominence (Rocha, 2001).

According to the Brazilian sociologists, Pierucci and Prandi (2000), the changing religious field in Brazil, involving the decline of traditional Catholicism and the evident success of movements involving renewal, reorientation, and a turn to the ‘magical’, reflect responses to a crisis in contemporary society. Traditional Catholicism, they argue, has done little to ease the anxieties and suffering that came with political and economic crises, and rapid urban expansion. Indeed, the same could be said for the Brazilian state, whose consistent failure to address the problems of poverty and inequality and whose misuse and even theft of public money, has engendered widespread disillusionment. Such a society has, they contend,

entered a varied religious marketplace, with different plans, focusing on a wide range of possible solutions to the conflicts of the difficult task of living, especially when the material, scientific and intellectual progress is able to offer little of real significance for the lives of this great majority of men and women (*ibid*: 2000: 636).

Within this ‘religious marketplace’, it seems that movements that offer an ‘alternative’ to the realities of everyday life, a transcendence from the fractured and inhospitable society of today, are gaining the greatest appeal. Moreover, far from staying behind in Brazil, this ‘religious marketplace’ accompanies the movement of its consumers across borders, further adapting and adjusting its goods to meet the demands of a new context.

Finally, studies of the changing role of religion in Brazil have also noted the impact on gender roles that such changes have brought about, although there is some disagreement as to the extent of such shifts (Vasquez and Williams, 2005: 10). Pierucci and Prandi’s (2000) discussion of religious participation based on census

data reveals how, while men are most highly represented among traditional Catholics (53%), and among those who say they have no religion, women form a majority in ‘all forms of alternative religious affiliation’, including the RCC (see above), and Protestant Pentecostalism. Indeed, scholars have argued that the growing adherence to Pentecostalism has led to the empowerment of women, and poor women in particular. This has been seen as a consequence of the opportunities for leadership roles within churches, and of the reduction in domestic violence due to adherence to strict moral codes by members and the greater confidence of women within their households (see for example, Burdick, 1993; Chesnut, 2003; Mariz and Machado, 1997). Indeed, scholars have gone so far as to suggest that Pentecostalism can undermine the *machismo* culture that prevails across much of Latin America, including Brazil, ‘domesticating men’ as they take on more household duties. Thus, for instance, while acknowledging that Pentecostalism reinforces many patriarchal values, Mariz and Machado (1997: 41) argue that,

[a]lthough female Pentecostal believers cannot be considered “feminists” . . . the conversion experience does lead to a revaluing of self in relation to God and often that increases women’s autonomy and undermines traditional machismo.

Some scholars have suggested that these trends in Brazil are to some extent reflected in the religious practices of Brazilian migrants, while others have pointed to marked differences, and thus suggest that migration has an important impact on religious beliefs and practices. I argue that rather than conceptualising the religious beliefs and practices of Brazilian migrants in terms of a separation between before/after or Brazil/London these contexts need to be seen as interconnected within what I call a transnational religious space. The next section will discuss some existing work that has considered religion among Brazilian migrants in general, before finishing with a consideration of religion and Brazilian migrants in London.

Religion and Brazilian migration

While there is a notable lack of empirical research into the study of religion among Brazilians in diaspora, early studies seemed to reveal that the religious affiliations of Brazilians only partially reflect the situation in Brazil itself (Martes, 2000; Alves and Ribeiro, 2002; Shoji, 2008; Freston, 2008). Indeed, these studies suggested that the

percentage of Protestants – and evangelicals in particular - among Brazilian migrants was somewhat higher than in Brazil, raising a series of questions relating to religiosity and migration. Thus, for Freston (2008: 259), this phenomenon raised questions as to whether Protestants emigrated more, or whether emigrants tended to convert more.

With regard to the US context, some scholars have argued that the relative abundance of evangelical churches as compared to Catholic ones has to do with the fact that they are far easier and quicker to establish, lacking the rigid hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church (Martes, 2000; Alves and Ribeiro, 2002). Martes (2000) suggests in her study of Brazilians in Massachusetts that, as well as their capacity to be set up quickly and easily, evangelical churches gain widespread appeal as a result of their considerable visibility through their use of the media and other forms of communication. Indeed, she argues that the presence of Brazilian evangelical churches is ‘one of the most visible characteristics of this migratory movement’ (*ibid*: 116, my translation). Other reasons she suggests for the higher proportion of evangelicals in Massachusetts than in Brazil include: the fact that Protestantism (and in particular evangelical strands) is most popular among the lower middle class in Brazil, the class that, statistically, emigrates more; the strong support the Pentecostal churches offer Brazilians who wish to emigrate; and the fact that Pentecostal discourse ‘valorises and gives incentives for social advancement’ among members of the Church, which may provide a justification for migrating (117). She also argues that there is evidence to suggest that evangelical pastors often follow the various migratory flows to establish churches (*ibid*).

Research in Japan points to an even sharper trend, in which evangelical Protestantism is undergoing considerable expansion among Brazilian migrants, while the Catholic Church shows a remarkably low membership and an absence of specifically Brazilian denominations (Shoji, 2008). Here, there is evidence of widespread conversion to Pentecostalism and an abundance of different Pentecostal churches, while the absence of Catholic equivalents means that migrants who do not convert feel obliged to attend the Japanese Catholic services. Thus, while Catholic Brazilians find themselves forced to frequent Japanese religious institutions and adopt religious practices that are not related to their own ethnicity, the Pentecostal churches offer a space for the creation and maintenance of Brazilian ethnic identity (*ibid*: 71).

In their study of Brazilian migrants in two small towns in Florida, US, Alves and Ribeiro (2002: 17) argue that many migrants who defined themselves as Catholics

began attending evangelical churches in the absence of Catholic services in Portuguese. When the Brazilian Catholic Church was eventually established, many of these people reverted to their Catholic affiliation. Such an observation ties in with what Freston (2008: 261) theorises as ‘Catholic Slowness’, whereby the Catholic Church’s territorial and rigid structure makes it more difficult to establish itself, but that it nevertheless retains its significance as it ‘is slowly changing in order to meet the challenge of pluralism and prevent further erosion’ (266). While these studies point to certain tendencies within the religious beliefs and practices of Brazilians in diaspora, it seems too early to draw any definite conclusions.

In recent years, the Brazilian Catholic Church has responded to the dynamics of migration, through the creation – and subsequent expansion – of the PBE.³⁸ The PBE was founded in 1996 when the Archbishop of Newark, US, in response to the growing Brazilian presence in the city, visited the Brazilian Council of Bishops (CNBB) and requested more contact between Brazilian Catholics and their diaspora in the US, through the establishment of some kind of service in Brazil, designed to attend to the pastoral needs of such communities (Milesi and Marinucci, 2003). This was set up by Bishop Dom Laurindo and Sister Rosita Milesi, supported by a number of ‘Scalabrini’ missionaries, and inspired by the example of John Baptist Scalabrini.³⁹

Among the main objectives of the service are training and sending priests as missionaries to work with Brazilians living outside Brazil and organising visits to Brazilian migrant communities to assess their main pastoral needs. Additionally, the PBE defines one of its main challenges as, ‘protect[ing] the migrant from two great dangers: being obliged to completely renounce their own [cultural] identity or, creating ethnic ghettos, refusing to enter into dialogue with the receiving society’ (*ibid*: 2; my translation). The PBE thus sees the role of the Catholic Church as enabling migrants to maintain a sense of Brazilian identity, while at the same time facilitating their engagement with the host society. While perhaps slower than its evangelical counterparts, owing to the institutional bureaucracy of the Catholic Church, the work of the PBE in the last decade therefore represents an important move to respond to the needs – practical as well as spiritual - of the growing numbers of Brazilians who live outside Brazil.

³⁸ Pastoral dos Brasileiros no Exterior.

³⁹ John Baptist Scalabrini was a 19th century Bishop who was renowned for his work with Italian emigrant communities. Scalabrini orders travel to migrant communities to offer pastoral and social support (see Milesi and Marinucci, 2003; see also Fortier, 2000: 107).

Religion and Brazilians in London

Recent, though still limited, scholarship on migrant religion in London has formed part of a wider debate about ‘postsecularism’ and the framing of London as a ‘postsecular’ city, in which religious institutions are now playing a more prominent and visible role than ever before in a number of areas (Beaumont, 2008; Cloke et al, 2010; Wills et al, 2009). While some scholars have challenged the notion of ‘postsecularism’, with its implication regarding London’s earlier secularism (Eade, 2010), there is little doubt that London’s ethnic ‘super-diversity’ (Vertovec, 2007), is reflected in the city’s increasingly multifaceted religious landscape.

Such a diversified religious climate is fertile ground for the proliferation of religious institutions among Brazilian migrants, yet reliable data and qualitative research relating to the religious affiliations of Brazilians in diaspora remains a ‘glaring gap’ in existing research (Freston, 2008). Based on research carried out in 2002-2005, Freston (2008: 262) found that there were at least 30 Brazilian protestant evangelical churches in London, compared to just one Brazilian Catholic priest who celebrated Mass in four different places across the city. Yet the current situation suggests significant changes since then, as more recent figures estimate the number of Brazilian Protestant evangelical churches as at least 50 (Brazilian Consulate).⁴⁰ These range from the internationally established *Igreja Universal do Reino De Deus* (IURD) and *Assembleia de Deus*, which have several bases around London, to much smaller sects and independent denominations – many which have been set up in London by Brazilians in response to growing demand.

By contrast, data from McIlwaine et al’s (2011) recent study show that of the 62% of Brazilian migrants who said that they attended religious services in London, 76% purported to attend Brazilian Catholic churches, compared to just 16% who attended evangelical ones. While these findings appear to challenge existing research into religious practices among Brazilian migrants, there are several explanations (Freston, 2008; see below). Thus, for example, it seems that, as in Brazil, where many people claim to be Catholic but are not practising, many of those who claimed (at

⁴⁰ This estimate is based on the list of Brazilian religious institutions in London provided by the Brazilian consulate. See <http://www.consbraslondres.com/temp/Representacaoreligiosa.pdf> (accessed 23/08/11).

least sometimes) to attend Catholic services in London could well have only been to church once, a response that was reflected in the narratives of some interviewees in the current study.

Yet a significant expansion of Catholic affiliations among Brazilians could also be due to the establishment of the Brazilian Catholic Chaplaincy in 2004. This is based in a Catholic church in East London, where there are now four Brazilian priests, trained and sent over by the PBE, who celebrate Mass in seven different areas of London: Bayswater, Brixton, Crystal Palace, Epsom, Manor House, Soho, Whitechapel and Willesden.⁴¹ This geographical spread across the city reflects the dispersal of Brazilian migrants in London. There are now 13 Masses held in Portuguese every week, predominantly for Brazilians, but which are also attended by Portuguese, Angolan and Mozambican migrants (among others). Moreover, the growth in the capacity of the Catholic Chaplaincy seems to reflect a direct response to the needs of the growing Brazilian population in London, and their geographical dispersion across the city.

While there do not seem to be signs of the CEB movement among Brazilians in London, the RCC is undoubtedly highly popular among Catholic Brazilian migrants in London, with charismatic Mass celebrated by a Brazilian priest in a Catholic church in Soho, and a very significant charismatic prayer group as part of the main Catholic church at St Mary's (see Chapter 5). Explanatory factors for the growing popularity of the charismatic movement among Brazilian migrants are similar to those that are held to explain the increased popularity of evangelical churches: namely, an emphasis on the individual relationship with God, and the desire for an active, emotional, participation in religion. Spiritism also has a significant following among Brazilians in London, with at least five Spiritist groups either established by Brazilians, or with a large number of Brazilian followers. In 2007, the first Umbanda temple was established in London, again reflecting how religious communities respond to the demands of Brazilian migrants.⁴²

With regard to the gendered dimensions of religious commitment among Brazilian migrants, existing data is scarce. In terms of the proportion of Brazilian men and women migrants who attend a religious institution 'sometimes' or 'every week',

⁴¹ There is also a Brazilian priest in Oxford, Father José, who celebrates Mass twice a week for the sizeable Brazilian population in the city.

⁴² <http://www.umbandatemple.co.uk/> (accessed 23/08/11).

McIlwaine et al's dataset reveals very little difference (62% of men, and 61% of women). These findings are reflected in my own research in the CEL and St Mary's, where there seemed to be similar levels of participation among men and women in both churches. This data seems to challenge existing research into the religious affiliations of Brazilians in diaspora which points to higher levels of participation in evangelical churches, in particular among women. In fact, McIlwaine et al's study reveals that a higher proportion of men (7%) than women (4%) described themselves as evangelical, whereas much higher levels of women (40%) than men (26%) defined themselves as Catholic. Interestingly, while 38% of all Brazilians admitted that they did not have valid documents, 47% of all those who said they were churchgoers were irregular compared to just 1% who held a British passport or had a work permit. This reflects some of the arguments relating to migrant religion, which suggest that churches can represent a safe space for Brazilian migrants (see Chapter 2). However, as I show in later chapters, they can also engender new forms of exclusion.

Concluding remarks

Drawing on literature relating to emigration and religion in Brazil, the migration of Brazilians to Europe, and empirical data relating to Brazilian migrants in London, this chapter has provided some background to the current research. It has argued that, in order to understand the role of religion in the lives of Brazilians in London, it is important to consider their everyday lives and experiences: who they are, why they have migrated, and what their lives are like. Far from a homogeneous group with a fairly standard migratory path, Brazilians in London represent a diverse migrant community, but one whose members, for the most part, work in low-paid, service-sector, employment and a large proportion of whom have either no valid documents or insecure migration status. Furthermore, while social networks among Brazilian migrants before, during, and after migration play an important role in the migration process, Brazilians in London represent a disunited community, with high levels of mistrust (Evans et al, 2007). Indeed, scholars of Brazilian migrants elsewhere have observed this 'paradox', whereby the 'other Brazilian' is at once a threat and an essential source of support (Margolis, 1998; Martes, 2000).

The chapter has also argued that for an analysis of the role of religion in the lives of Brazilians in London, a certain understanding of the corresponding role of religion in Brazil itself - a country in which over 90% of the population define themselves as having a religious affiliation – is crucial (Pierruci, 2004). In Brazil, as in London, religiosity is characterised by diversity and change, and is thus not an easily measurable factor. Indeed, rather than a fixed element of migrants’ identities, religion is flexible, and adapts to different circumstances and needs.

Yet while arguing for the importance of context and for attention to be paid to the specificities of this particular migration flow, from Brazil to London, this thesis reveals how both migration and religion become important factors in fostering the changes observable within these contexts. Thus religious beliefs and practices are ‘remitted’ and modified as migrants move across borders between different locales. Moreover, I argue that these particular contexts become closely intertwined within transnational religious spaces. These spaces are dynamic ones, characterised by the interplay between migration and the religious practices and beliefs of migrants and non-migrants at multiple different scales. This chapter has thus merely set the scene for what follows: an in-depth examination - through the narratives of Brazilian migrants, religious leaders, and migrants’ family members in London and ‘back home’ – of the role of religion in the lives of migrants and in their movement between Brazil and London.

Chapter 5

Transnational Brazilian religious institutions in London and ‘back home’ in Brazil

It's in a space like this that the cultural shock alleviates. I don't know any other community that is like the church – whether it's Catholic or evangelical – where people meet so regularly. Maybe there's a football group or something, but the church is, without doubt, the most important organisation for the Brazilian community (Adilson, 09/12/09).

London's burgeoning Brazilian presence has been accompanied by the emergence of growing numbers of Brazilian religious institutions across the city. The correlation of these two phenomena suggests that places of worship play an important role in Brazilian migration processes. Whereas in the past foreign missionaries went to Brazil in large numbers to spread the Christian message, it seems that this flow has changed direction in recent years, with religious leaders following their migrants to expand their mission among the diaspora (Martes, 2000: 113). These processes of 'globalisation from below' (Freston, 2001), or religious 'glocalization' (Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003) – whereby religious institutions tailor their goals and practices to respond to local contexts - are useful for understanding both the shifting role of religion within the context of globalisation, and how such changes are played out at the local level. Furthermore, the diverse ways in which different religious institutions negotiate such relationships are illuminating for an analysis of the ways in which religion travels across borders.

Just as migrants face multiple challenges on arrival, and in adjusting to a new environment in host societies, so too religious institutions and their leaders need to negotiate the new socio-spatial context within which they find themselves. Moreover, as well as acting within specific localities, religious institutions act transnationally, as they are shaped by and shaping migrants' lives that cross national borders, and as they impact upon both sending and receiving contexts. However, as this chapter argues, the transnationality of these Brazilian migrant religious institutions does not fit neatly into a theoretical dichotomy of the 'local' and the 'global', between transnational processes 'from above' or 'from below', or between 'here' and 'there'. Rather, I argue, they operate on multiple scales and through the intersecting agencies of diverse

actors, thus occupying the ‘thick middle ground’ of ‘transnationalism of the middle’ (Mahler and Hansing, 2005) or what I call a *transnational religious space*.

Drawing on interviews with religious leaders in the two case study churches in London, and with religious leaders and return migrants in Brazil, this chapter considers how religious institutions adapt to the migration context, and some of the many ways in which they function across borders. After briefly framing the chapter conceptually, the first section discusses the initial challenges faced by religious leaders, themselves migrants with their own migration narratives. The chapter then considers the ways in which the churches adapt their practices to respond to the diverse needs of migrants, which range from the spiritual, to the psychological, to the practical. The contrasting positions of the two main churches with regard to migrants’ immigration status and civic engagement are also considered here. The third and final section considers the multiple ways in which these religious institutions operate transnationally, creating hybrid, transnational spaces, through the use of communications technology and by supporting and maintaining contacts with return migrants and their families in Brazil.

The focus of this chapter is specifically on religious institutions, in contrast to the following chapters which consider the religious practices and everyday lives of the migrants who frequent these churches. Yet it reveals how, even at the institutional level, overlapping, and potentially conflicting, scales need to be considered, spanning the global, the national, the urban, the institutional, the virtual, as well as the individual agency and bodies of the actors who establish and manage such institutions.

Religious institutions and ‘transnationalism of the middle’

Sacred journeys: transnational religious leaders as migrants

Existing research on migrant religious institutions tends to overlook the importance of religious leaders, especially in relation to the migration trajectories of the leaders themselves. Leaders’ roles and experiences are often subsumed into discussions of their institutions and of more macro-level process of religious transnationalism. However, a consideration of the experiences of religious leaders themselves provides

insights into the relationship between religion and migration, and how religion adapts as it responds to new circumstances.

A recent study of Brazilian evangelical churches in the US explores how some are founded by lay people whose original reason for migrating was not necessarily religious, but whose decision, or ‘call from God’, to establish a church came later on during their experience in the new context (Ribeiro, 2005: 9). It has also been argued that the relative simplicity of establishing evangelical (and in particular Pentecostal) churches partly explains the abundance of diverse - and often very small - denominations among Brazilians in diaspora, especially in comparison to more formal denominations such as the Catholic Church (Martes, 2000; see also Chapter 4).

In the current study, both the evangelical pastor who founded the CEL and the first Brazilian Catholic priest who established the Brazilian Chaplaincy at St Mary’s, had already been religious leaders in Brazil, and their reasons for coming to London were primarily religious: their aim was to serve the spiritual needs of the growing Brazilian community in London. Yet despite their religious backgrounds, there was an interesting contrast between the migration narratives of the leaders from the two churches, which reflect some of the main differences between the structures and values of their institutions.

The evangelical pastor recounted his personal ‘call from God’ which brought him to London to establish a ‘community’ (Pastor Marco, 29/04/10). He explained how, at the time, he was the vice-President of a large Baptist church in the city of Belo Horizonte and was earning the equivalent of ‘fifteen minimum salaries’. So for him, coming to London had nothing to do with money and, moreover, the church he was working for refused to support, financially or professionally, his ‘decision’ to leave. Rather, his motivation came from God: ‘visions, messages from God, many things which confirmed’ (*Historia da CEL*, my translation) that his mission was to go to England. To explain this personal journey, Pastor Marco wrote a short history of the founding of the CEL, which is given to all new members of the church as a part of their training as members of the community. In it he explains how:

[t]hrough several means, God directed me towards England. So I began to get my things in order to obey the vision that God had given me (*ibid*).

The fact that Pastor Marco provides a history of the church to all members reflects his style of leadership in which he seeks to ‘lead by example’. Giving everything up and coming to London with his wife and three children was, for Pastor

Marco, obeying God's will. They arrived in July 1990 with student visas, and matriculated at an English language school in West London, where they also rented a small room. They began their mission by organising prayer groups for Brazilian migrants in a park, and later in their small flat in Harrow Road. They faced many challenges in this initial period owing to their dwindling finances and the looming expiry of their visas. Yet despite such difficulties they persisted, with Pastor Marco 'entirely driven by [his] subservience to God' (*ibid*). In April 1991, they managed to find or, as he describes it, 'God gave them', a more permanent space to work in a Baptist church. This is the space that they continue to rent, for services and other activities, along with three other religious communities – one Filipino, the second 'Latino', and the third, the original British Baptist church. The CEL was thus established through the personal faith of Pastor Marco and it remains free of denominational links with any other Brazilian churches in London. Indeed, it appears that Pastor Marco wished to distinguish his religious community from some other Brazilian evangelical churches, whose motivations were often, in his view, more material than spiritual, influenced by the widespread 'theology of prosperity', a vision he did not share for his community. As he explained:

We don't have any hostility towards them, but it's just not possible for us to work together – there's just no way (29/04/10).

Pastor Marco returned to Brazil in 2009 to continue the 'mission' there, in the town of Belo Horizonte. While he continues to be the 'senior pastor' of the CEL and visits the church in London every year, his son, Neilton, is now the main pastor in the London branch and was invited from Brazil, where he was living with his family, to take on this new role. Thus, unlike his father, Pastor Neilton's religious leadership did not stem from a personal 'call from God'. Indeed, he explained that being a pastor was something he'd 'never wanted' (17/10/09). Yet, since his father needed to return to Brazil to develop the work there, the church leaders felt he would be the most appropriate person to lead the community in London, especially given his previous leadership of the 'ministry of music' there. His becoming the main pastor at the CEL in London was thus part of his duty to the family structure of the CEL and, by extension, to God.

Within the narratives of the Catholic priests, by contrast, there was more a sense of them being sent to London as part of a wider ecclesiastical framework to carry out important missionary work. My interview with Padre José, the first Brazilian

Catholic priest in London, provided a brief history of the establishment of the Brazilian Catholic Chaplaincy at St Mary's. In particular, he explained how it was established in 1996 to celebrate Mass in Portuguese for Brazilian migrants across the city, and how, in May 2004, they obtained a more permanent base in a disused Catholic church in East London. While initially the priests working with Brazilians were not Brazilian, but rather a Portuguese-speaking Englishman and later a man from the Dominican Republic, in 2002 Padre José was sent over by the PBE, an organization set up by the CNBB in Brazil, to serve the rapidly growing Brazilian community (see Chapter 4). Since 2006, another four Brazilian priests have been sent to the UK, responding to the increasing demand for pastoral and social care among migrants. Thus, unlike the individual 'calling' of Pastor Marco, the priests do not choose their destination, rather their 'migration' is part of the wider structure of the Catholic Church, and in response to the needs of a growing Brazilian diaspora.

For the Catholic leaders themselves, such dislocation has its challenges. As one priest described his experience of arriving in London and adjusting to the entirely new context:

Here in London it was . . . it's another world. Because in Brazil I had my routines, my way of living . . . but here it's completely different. In my city . . . there are just 120,000 inhabitants, and everyone is from there. So coming here's a real culture shock (Padre Mauricio, 15/10/09).

Padre Mauricio also recalled how he had been ill during his first year of living in London, and people told him that he was suffering from *banzo* or *saudade* – 'longing' or homesickness – for his home and his family.

The priests have to be prepared to move from one location to another as directed by the Brazilian Catholic Church (or the CNBB), and according to the perceived needs of migrants. One priest, Padre Omario recounted how he came to London in 2002, having lived in the US for five years, working with Brazilian migrants in a suburb of Boston, where he had been sent by the PBE. He was supposed to go back to Boston again after one year in Brazil, but at the last minute was sent to London as one of the priests there was unwell and needed himself to return to Brazil. He described how difficult it was when he first arrived as, unlike his work back in Brazil and in the small community in Boston, London was a big city where Brazilians were dispersed and religion played a minor role in peoples' everyday lives. He explained:

(T)he city is completely pagan and it doesn't have that . . . that religious aspect. There are churches, lots of churches – you know, the physical, visible element - but it's different in that you live here with so many people anonymously . . . so for us as priests the religious aspect that you get in a small town or village is missing in a big city (Padre Omario, 20/01/10).

While the Catholic priests are, therefore, part of a wider institutional framework, they are still individuals moving between different contexts and facing many of the challenges of migrants themselves.

Scales of transnational religion

Religion already comes equipped with messages and rituals that help followers negotiate the many layers of the global experience. Religious organisations are also changing to reflect that reality, creating dense, intricate webs linking local, regional and national players (Levitt, 2007: 116).

The ways in which religious institutions operate, and are reconfigured within the context of transnationalism and broader processes of globalisation, form an important component of Levitt's (2007) discussion of the role of religion in the transnational lives of migrants in Boston. She draws on theoretical concepts from the globalisation literature to outline some of the different patterns of transnational religious organisation. These include the notion of the Catholic Church as a 'transnational religious corporation' (117) comprising 'discreet units that function independently and as part of the larger operation at the same time', or the more 'flexible specialisation' of some Protestant churches (124). Yet while this use of economic language is helpful in differentiating various organisational forms, it also seems to obscure the ways in which the transnationality of religious institutions functions across overlapping scales and through the intersection of multiple agencies (Mahler and Hansing, 2005). Thus, while Levitt (2007) does suggest that religious organisations change in response to new realities, there remains a sense of such institutions operating 'from above', somehow separate from the actions of individual migrants themselves whose transnational activities are carried out 'from below.'

My research findings seemed to concur more with Vasquez and Marquardt's (2003) notion of religion as occupying a space somewhere 'in-between' the micro- and macro- processes that characterise global shifts, and as thus enabling crucial connections between such processes and the multiple actors involved. Within such a

framework, religious institutions occupy a more complex, unstable, 'middle-ground' whose identities and practices, like those of individual migrants, are constantly refashioned and renegotiated in response to new circumstances. Similarly, in Mahler and Hansing's (2005) research into transnational religion among Cuban migrants (or exiles) in Miami, they highlight the conceptual and methodological need for a 'transnationalism of the middle' since, they argue, '[m]ost people operate in and expand a very thick middle ground that links individuals to institutions' (128). While, in both cases, attention is drawn to the multiple scales within which transnational religious activities are carried out, they also highlight how such activities are 'always situated' (see also Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003: 140). Unpacking and peopling these religious institutions themselves enables us to explore this 'thick middle ground' even further and reveals how they are constituted by the actions of their leaders and members, albeit within asymmetrical relations of power.

Again, the migration trajectories of the religious leaders provide valuable insights for the analysis of transnational religion. In line with Mahler and Hansing's (2005) arguments (see above), the leaders' examples challenge the notion of a neat dichotomy between transnationalism 'from above' and 'from below', fitting more into the broad 'middle ground' of transnationalism. In a complementary sense, Conradson and Latham (2005: 229) use the term "*middling*" forms of transnationalism' by which they argue that transnationalism encompasses more than merely 'transnational elites' or 'developing world migrants'. The experiences and practices of these religious leaders, neither poor migrants nor representatives of transnational elites, can thus provide a more holistic understanding of transnational processes and, in this case, of how religion travels across borders. Attention to the agency of the leaders themselves, obviates seeing them as synonymous with their institutions and allows a more complex reading of religious institutions as spaces comprised of overlapping agencies and encompassing different scales, from the global to the local, from the institutional to the individual.

A consideration of the experiences of religious leaders facilitates a more grounded approach to religious transnationalism, revealing how, while the priests and pastors may be representatives of larger organisational bodies, they, as individuals, also contribute to everyday, micro-scale forms of transnational change. Thus, in the case of the Catholic Church, 'transnational development' has long been part of its project to 'disseminate the message of a universal ethics' (Theije and Mariz, 2008:

36). Yet despite its hierarchical structure, centralised in Rome, Catholicism has also had to adjust and adapt to local contexts and, as such, is shaped by changes at multiple scales, as well as contributing to shaping them.⁴³ As mentioned above, the Catholic priests in London are sent by the CNBB in Brazil, itself under the control of the Vatican. However, in the process of their personal movement across borders, and their encounters with new contexts and actors they, in turn, contribute to new forms of religious practice. Thus Padre José, who described himself as ‘quite conservative with regard to Catholic liturgy and celebrations’, recounted how when he came to London he had to ‘open his heart and celebrate Mass with all kinds of people – homosexuals, prostitutes’ (16/02/10). He even said it was going to be a challenge to go back to Brazil, where the parishes were more ‘structured, centralised and orthodox’. On the other hand, he explained how he intends to go back to Brazil to work with young people in schools as he feels more equipped to engage with them and their realities after his ‘mind-opening’ experience in England.

For Pastor Marco, by contrast, his movement to London came from an extremely personal spiritual conviction, the consequence of an intimate accord with God. His decision to dedicate his life to God and the work of Jesus was something beyond words, beyond consciousness, rather something embodied, felt ‘as deep as the last drop of blood in [his] body . . . right up to [his] last . . . breath’ (29/04/10). Pastor Marco’s personal commitment to ‘God’s plan’ led to the formation of a religious institution in a specific locale in London, and the subsequent expansion of this institution to localities in Brazil and elsewhere. Thus, rather than social or economic motivations, Pastor Marco’s migration was fuelled by something beyond the material realm of existence, a spiritual conviction. This supports Dewsbury and Cloke’s (2009) concept of ‘spiritual landscapes’. They argue that scholars need to consider the importance of the spiritual realm, which represents a fundamental force in the lives of many people (see Chapter 2). In studies of transnational phenomena, the importance of the spiritual realm has been notably absent.

Thus, transnational religious institutions exemplify some of the multiple scales within and between which religion is experienced and practised, including the transnational, the local, the community, the individual, and the spiritual. The neglected experiences of religious leaders are key factors in the transfer and

⁴³ See Griffiths and Cervantes (1999) for a discussion of Catholicism and adaptability in the Americas.

translation of religion between different localities, within a dynamic transnational religious space. Moreover, the individual narratives of leaders challenge Levitt's (2007) categorisation of transnational religion and reveal the more flexible, multi-faceted processes and practices that go to make up even the most seemingly 'corporate' religious institution.

Religious institutions in new environments

Shifting institutional discourses

Religious leaders need not only to adjust to new environments within host societies, but also to adapt to the diverse needs of the migrants who frequent their churches and who find themselves in very different situations from those 'back home'. Thus, far from merely replicating churches in Brazil, religious institutions in the receiving society need to be flexible and to take on different roles in response to the new context.

Padre José described this process as a kind of 'broadening', not so much a theological broadening as a disciplinary one, whereby churches – and leaders – need to be open to different behaviours, both with regard to migrants' religious practices within the church, as well as their everyday lives outside. An interesting example of such a 'broadening' at St Mary's was the strong influence of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement (RCC) (see Chapter 4). Whereas all the priests described themselves as coming from the more traditional wing of the Catholic Church, a large number of congregants, particularly young people, form part of a charismatic prayer group. They meet at St Mary's every Sunday at 5pm and have a very active Internet network, through which members exchange thoughts, prayers, and music, and also organise activities, including concerts with Brazilian performers. Indeed, while it is linked to the Brazilian Catholic Chaplaincy in London, the group also has denominational links with the RCC in Brazil which has sent charismatic missionaries to work with Brazilian Catholics in London.

I attended one event organised by the charismatic prayer group at a Catholic church in Oxford, where Padre José, who was originally in London, now celebrates mass twice a week. Coach-loads of Brazilians from the London-based Catholic churches made the trip to Oxford and, including the Brazilian devotees from Oxford,

there were approximately 200 people there. I arrived about half way through the afternoon's activities on a grey, wet, late summer afternoon. The church had a 1960s design - a brick tent-shaped structure with a glass atrium - and it was situated on a busy road outside Oxford's historic centre. Yet this fairly ordinary exterior sharply contrasted with the ecstatic atmosphere of the interior. I was immediately struck by this contrast as I entered the church, which was alive with euphoric singing and dancing. As I noted in my field diary after the event:

I arrived and saw Ana on stage singing and Alfredo, [her husband] playing the guitar. Everyone else was dancing with their hands in the air, jumping and swaying in time with the music. Dulce [another interviewee] saw me as I came in and came rushing over to hug me – I'd never seen her so animated. The atmosphere seemed very different from the Catholic Mass, much more like the Cultos at the CEL. I couldn't believe the amount of energy in the room! (field diary, 30/08/10).

As noted in this extract, the style of worship was reminiscent of the services in the CEL, creating a euphoric, almost transcendent, atmosphere through which worshippers can communicate directly with, and worship, God through their senses, movements and emotions. When I asked him why the RCC was so popular among the Brazilian Catholic migrants, Padre José responded:

[I]t works with your feelings. Although it is not explicitly social or political, it offers much more immediate answers to political and social problems – like if you want a miracle, if you want a cure (16/02/10).

Thus, the large numbers of people at St Mary's who were keen to participate in the activities of the charismatic movement meant that the church needed to be open to these new forms of practice, and to provide space for the charismatic prayer group, and for visits from charismatic priests from Brazil and elsewhere for special events in which they can preach to and pray with devotees. The Catholic Chaplaincy in London thus represents a somewhat hybrid religious space, adapting to the diverse spiritual and practical demands of its migrant members. While still theologically Catholic, and thus formally linked to Rome, St Mary's in London reveals some of the transmutations that can occur as religion travels across borders.



Plates 5.1 and 5.2: Hosana Londres. Event organised by the charismatic prayer group. Source: Veronica (St Mary's).

By contrast, the pastors at the evangelical church depicted the adaptation to the new context more in terms of a 'theological broadening'. Indeed, unlike the centralised denominational structure of the Catholic Church, the CEL is denominationally independent – established by Pastor Marco himself and fashioned according to his interpretation of the Bible. Thus, as Pastor Neilton explained, while the church in London maintained ties with its sister churches in Brazil and Amsterdam, these were fraternal, meaning informal, as opposed to institutional or denominational. Thus, the London-based church sought to remain theologically independent since, as Pastor Neilton explained:

We have a principle that all the churches that God gave the grace to my father to set up have no denominational link. Or rather, each church is independent. My father goes there [to wherever the church is being set up] to help establish the base, but the church is independent (17/10/09).

In fact, although the church did not define itself as Pentecostal, the service style included elements of a Pentecostal service – such as speaking in tongues - and many of the new members had been Pentecostal in Brazil. As Pastor Neilton put it, members brought with them 'theological baggage' and the church needed to respond to their diverse expectations. Yet despite this denominational openness, and the absence of formalised institutional structure (as is the case of the Catholic Church), the CEL was clearly organised around a quite rigid, hierarchical framework based on a particular interpretation of the Bible. Whilst Pastor Marco had been a Baptist pastor in Brazil, he explained that his church was not denominationally Baptist, but rather modelled its style on the teachings of Apostle Paul and his concept of leadership. He

explained how while the Baptist church has a ‘democratic’ model of leadership in which everyone has a vote, Apostle Paul teaches that the leader must not be a ‘novice, so that they do not become proud and fall into the condemnation of the devil’ (Pastor Marco, pers. comm., 24/12/10). ‘The Church of Jesus Christ’, he explained ‘was founded by Him and has a theocratic, representative system of government, led by people who are experienced (mature) in questions of faith’ (*ibid*). This hierarchical, and indeed patriarchal, style of leadership certainly seemed to be reflected in the structure of the church.

In fact, leaders from both churches accounted for the very different role of the church in London compared to Brazil, by pointing to the unstable, transitory nature of the congregation. Yet despite emphasising the contrasting role of churches in the host society context, the leaders also made clear that this did not necessarily mean that religion itself became more important under such circumstances. Rather, they argued, for Brazilians who leave Brazil the church takes on a rather different role. As Sister Rosita, one of the founders of the Catholic PBE commented:

It’s not that Brazilian migrants practise more religion outside Brazil than when they are living here [in Brazil], but rather a need emerges more among migrants as a consequence of their detachment from familiar social spaces, and the loneliness - and often insecurity - that they experience being far from their home country and their loved ones (pers. comm., 4/11/10).

Pastor Neilton from the CEL suggested that the main difference between the church’s role in London and Brazil related to the greater needs of migrants who were far from their families in Brazil. He said,

So peoples’ needs become greater here, because in Brazil, whether they like it or not they have their families . . . so that need for your family, you know, those things that have to do with the family – they are fulfilled by one’s own family there (17/10/09).

In London the church thus becomes a surrogate family where migrants can feel safe and ‘at home’ in an otherwise unfamiliar environment.⁴⁴ Indeed, Pastor Marco explained that one of the main principles of the church (which was established for migrants), again influenced by the teachings of Apostle Paul, was the model of the Biblical family, in which the father figure ‘must be an example for people to follow’

⁴⁴ I noticed at the CEL that the final slide of a Powerpoint presentation that is projected throughout the *Culto* states in large script ‘faça parte da familia’, which means ‘become part of our family’.

(17/03/10). Members address each other as *irmão/irmã* (meaning brother or sister), and, within the family structure, everyone has a role in what are called *ministérios* (ministries). There is a ministry of music (the largest and most important, which provides music for all the services), a ministry of multi-media (in charge of broadcasting the *Cultos* and maintaining the church's website), and a ministry of teaching (in charge of organising English and Portuguese classes, although these were not running at the time of my fieldwork). As Pastor Marco explained, the church encourages people to discover their 'spiritual ability', or particular talent, which they can then contribute to the family structure.



Plate 5.3: Culto at the CEL. Source: Pastor Marco.

Yet within this family structure, discipline was clearly very important. During my ethnographic research, for example, I noted very different profiles of the members of the different churches, reflecting their divergent disciplinary standards. Thus, for example, on one visit to the evangelical church, I noted in my field diary:

The atmosphere here is very different to the Catholic Church, it's much more formal. People are very dressed up – the women are in dresses, men are in suits. The children are downstairs watching the service on the TV – perhaps they're not allowed in the church? Halfway through Pastor Marco's sermon he stopped to tell some people off on the balcony who were chatting, and told

them the importance of paying attention to the word of God. It was quite intimidating! (field diary, 21/11/09).

In contrast to the somewhat rigid disciplinary discourses expressed in the CEL, a loosening of regulations and greater tolerance seemed to form part of the Catholic Church's adaptation to its new context. Indeed, Padre José suggested that while the doctrines of the Catholic Church could never be changed, the '*disciplina*' (discipline) had to be loosened so as to address some of the challenges facing migrants. These included the fact that many devotees were irregular migrants and that there were couples living together outside marriage, as they were unable to marry legally in the UK. These were things that would have been condemned by the Catholic Church in Brazil, but were everyday realities for large numbers of Brazilian migrants and thus had to be accepted. Furthermore, he said that he was fully aware that in the new context many people attended the church to address their practical needs as opposed to their spiritual ones:

People come to church more here than in Brazil – out of need. The majority come to church because they feel a lack, be it of a sense of *Brasilidade* (Brazilian-ness), of their language, of somewhere to live (Padre José, 02/09/09).

The fact that a lot of migrants were short-term residents was another challenge underlined by the Catholic leaders in the receiving context, making it difficult to carry out any long-term 'religious guidance' (Padre Omario, 20/01/10). According to Padre Omario, many people who had never been churchgoers in Brazil, began to frequent the church in London because of loneliness, or even depression. As such, the role of the priest in the receiving context often becomes that of providing more immediate 'psychological support and advice': a shoulder to cry on, or a listening ear for people to recount the problems they face in London and to assuage their guilt from living 'in sin'. He explained:

This search for psychological support often leads to the sacrament of confession, because from this sadness and all these bad things they feel, and see themselves more as sinners because of their situation . . . so this is why they ask for forgiveness for the situation they've got themselves into living outside Brazil and often living with lots of people in the same house. . . so there are certain situations which make them seek our help, our guidance . . . so we act as spiritual leaders but it is very often difficult to separate this from the psychological (Padre Omario, 20/01/10).

Padre Mauricio, by contrast, described his function for Brazilian migrants, who frequented the church in London as:

something, well, truly Christian. It's to provide – what's needed . . . Today, for example, a woman called me – she never comes to church, she's not from the church – but she's fallen badly into drugs, she can't cope anymore. So – it's the priest that she calls – it's the priest who will listen to her (Padre Mauricio, 15/10/09).

Thus, even within the same institution, two very different understandings of what religion is – or rather, what the role of a religious leader is in this context - emerge. While, on the one hand, Padre Omario's comment suggests that the priest's role is broadened to engage with more secular needs and experiences, for Padre Mauricio, the new role involves an expansion of Christianity, or a more universal application of Christian values. In both cases, there is a sense that how they themselves view their role as religious leaders had broadened.

Supporting irregular migrants

One of the most notable differences between the discourses of the two churches relates to migrants' legal status. While the evangelical leaders mentioned the necessity for a certain doctrinal and practical flexibility in response to migrants' needs, they seemed somewhat less open when it came to acceptance of members' behaviour in a different context. In contrast to the views of the Catholic leaders, who seemed to be openly supportive of irregular migrants, the agreed line among the evangelical leaders, drawing upon their reading of the Bible, was explicitly against migrants being irregular, and congregants were encouraged to 'regularise' their situation. Pastor Marco explained how such a stance had its roots in the Bible and the teachings of the Apostle Paul under Caesar during the Roman Empire. He said:

Apostle Paul shows clearly that we must obey the authorities because there are no authorities that have not been established by God. So, based on these biblical teachings, we instruct people that they should change their situations, that they should regularise themselves (17/03/10).

For Pastor Marco, helping people to 'legalise' their situation was one of the church's highest priorities: 'we want to see people growing in all areas – strong, blessed – with a clean conscience before God and our government: my wife and I also have British

citizenship.’ Thus, his own sense of duty towards the British government was also an important factor in urging his members to become ‘regular’. Within the patriarchal leadership structure of the church, he felt that his leading by example would encourage people not to fall into ‘irregularity’ which he felt could in turn potentially lead to other ‘sins’.

Within the Catholic Church, on the other hand, leaders expressed a somewhat more compassionate attitude towards irregular migrants. As Padre Mauricio commented in relation to the number of people in the church who were irregular:

I always need to take a human attitude – always. Nothing can shock me or scandalise me. I can’t be shocked by anything because it could be me – I can also make mistakes. I do. So, above all, I cannot judge anyone . . . So my function as a religious leader is to welcome people. Welcome them and show them the existence of God’s love, of the love of Christ – and make them feel this love in their heart. Any change will come from this discovery (15/09/09)

Sister Rosita from the PBE, whose role included helping to train priests who were going to work among the Brazilian diaspora, outlined the church’s position with regard to irregular migration:

[T]o welcome the migrant and, within the pastoral work of the church, to facilitate their means to ensure a good quality of life and respect of their dignity as a human being. At the same time, the role and mission of the Church and its institutions is to create and/or communicate actions that can help the undocumented to get out of their ‘irregular’ situation (pers. comm., 4/11/10).

She also reiterated that the church’s function in the receiving context should be, ‘along with other organisations, to campaign to widen the legal framework so that migrants have better chances to ‘regularise’ their situations within the country.’

The line of St Mary’s thus seemed to be first and foremost to defend and support the rights of migrants to ensure their dignity and, second, where possible to help migrants to regularise their situation. The line of the CEL, in contrast, was above all to encourage migrants to regularise, which in turn would ensure their dignity and respect within a foreign environment. Perhaps not surprisingly, these different perspectives were reflected in the contrasting membership of the two churches, with far fewer ‘irregular’ members of the evangelical church compared to the Catholic one. As Pastor Neilton commented,

[w]e don’t have a large number of illegals [his term] in the church. Because it’s something we don’t support. We have some, but we don’t support it. Thus

we don't have anyone who is illegal in a position of leadership in the church – this is one of our main principles (17/10/09).

The divergent attitudes towards immigration status were also reflected in the leaders' explanations of the political role of the churches. Thus for Padre Mauricio from St Mary's, the church's role was to represent 'the voice of the voiceless.' This defence of 'the voiceless' was, he believed, the essence of being a Christian, of loving God. He used the example of a recent campaign in London for the recognition of Brazilians as an ethnic minority, in which, he said, 'the church should be the first to protest.' Furthermore, he explained how the Brazilian Catholic Chaplaincy was at the forefront of a campaign for an amnesty for irregular migrants, Strangers into Citizens, as part of their involvement in the London-wide coalition of civil society and faith-based organisations.⁴⁵

By contrast, the CEL preferred to maintain its distance from the political sphere for, as Pastor Marco (29/04/10) explained, 'we feel that it is not part of our mission to get involved with politics. Jesus Christ called us to bring the Gospel'. Indeed, while he recognized that there may well be some 'unjust' laws, their institutional position was that the Bible teaches that we must obey the authorities, whether we agree with them or not. He commented, 'the Bible tells us that we must respect those who govern. Whether they're good or not, God gave them permission to govern' (29/04/10).

Such conflicting attitudes point to quite different interpretations of what it means to be Christian. While that of St Mary's was one of protecting, defending, welcoming everyone unconditionally according to Jesus Christ's example, the CEL seemed to place more emphasis on teaching members to live their lives according to more specific teachings of the Bible which imply abiding by the rules prescribed by those in authority. Furthermore, while the discourse of the CEL draws upon a notion of being Christian based upon the teachings of Apostle Paul and paying taxes to Caesar, the statements of the Catholic leaders often refer to Jesus himself as a refugee:

Important examples for Christians are the biblical narratives, which recount how Jesus himself experienced life as a refugee (when he was still a child and his family had to flee to Egypt), as well as his public life as a wandering preacher (Sister Rosita, pers. comm., 4/11/10).

⁴⁵ Strangers Into Citizens is a campaign led by the civil society organisation London Citizens. It calls for a regularisation for irregular migrants for long-term irregular migrants. See <http://www.strangersintocitizens.org.uk/> (accessed 07/08/10).

The discourses of the two churches echo to some extent Vasquez and Marquardt's (2003:170) observations in their ethnographic comparison of two Latino Churches – one Catholic and one Protestant – in a suburb of Atlanta. While the Catholic church in their study had, they suggest, 'created an alternative public . . . that challenges the discourses being articulated around the table from which its members are excluded', the Protestant church had created 'an alternative to public space that teaches its members "table manners" [. . .] in the hope that such lessons will help members make a place for themselves at the table'. This notion of a 'place at the table' points to the much-debated issue of the role of migrant churches in integration and the extent to which they can represent a 'pathway to civil engagement' (Levitt, 2006), or conversely, how they have the potential of creating new forms of exclusion (Ugba, 2008).

Solidarity, inclusion, integration

As discussed in Chapter 2, within the literature relating to transnationalism and religion, integration represents an important topic of debate. While on the one hand, migrant religious institutions are seen to facilitate integration into the host society, in some cases they are regarded as having a negative effect, representing spaces of marginalisation both from mainstream society and within the migrant community itself (Ugba, 2008). The Brazilian churches in this study revealed some of these potential contradictions.

In both cases, conducting services in Portuguese and creating a familial atmosphere was considered essential in order to support new migrants and help them to cope with the struggles associated with life in London. As Padre José, explained, there are three things that a Brazilian has to do in his/her own language: 'joke, swear, and pray' (*brincar, xingar, e rezar*). While leaders from both churches felt it was important for Brazilian migrants to conduct their everyday lives in English, the church was considered a space in which migrants could come to relax, to replenish themselves, or to find solace. Yet there were some key differences between the two churches in terms of the kind of atmosphere they sought to create, again reflecting their differing values and discourses.

The CEL perceived itself as a 'multicultural', rather than a predominantly Brazilian, church. While the majority of its members were Brazilian, and such

predominance created a strongly Brazilian atmosphere, Pastor Marco explained that there were also Portuguese, Cape Verdean, and even an Iranian member who had converted in London and consequently they made sure that the *Cultos* did not make exclusive reference to Brazil. Moreover, headphones were provided at the beginning of the service for simultaneous translation into English. Pastor Nielton explained that this was because there were some people who attended services at the church whose first language was not Portuguese, including English people married to Brazilians, or migrants from non-Portuguese speaking countries. The church thus sought to ‘reach out’ beyond the Brazilian community in London. Indeed, for Pastor Marco, the church’s mission in London was not merely to serve migrants, but also a ‘debt of gratitude’ in response to the many English missionaries who went to Brazil at the beginning of the last century:

We believe that we have a debt of gratitude to England. I don’t know how far your research has taken you, but Brazil was served by many English missionaries. English missionaries came and brought the Gospel to Brazil. Lots of missionaries . . . So this is in our heart . . . It is like returning to our fathers in faith – serving them in a certain way. This is why we’re beginning an English-speaking ministry, which we recently inaugurated . . . in Bermondsey. And the ministry will have an English school, a seminary, Bible courses – in English – to serve English people as well (29/04/10).

Such a discourse reflects some of McIlwaine’s (2011c) observations on the ‘postcolonial geographies’ of Latin American migrants in London (see also Padilla, 2009b). While, like other Latin American countries, Brazil has no direct historical colonial ties with London, a postcolonial perspective ‘can help us to see how colonialism has generated multiple mobilities and diasporas, be they imperial, labour, trade and/or cultural’ (McIlwaine, 2011c: 3). In this case the missionary conquests of European religious leaders who spread the Gospel to parts of the developing world has, in recent decades, led to a reversal of such missionary flows, as religious leaders follow emigration flows towards Europe (Freston, 2008) and seek to evangelise those who have not yet ‘found God’.

As well as English classes, the CEL offers a course for new arrivals in London called ‘Survive’, which provides practical advice on how to settle in London.⁴⁶ Thus the church positions itself as somehow more than a migrant church, a space for

⁴⁶ Neither the Survive course nor the language classes were running during the course of my fieldwork. While people assured me that they would soon be running a new course, there was a sense that the lack of courses reflected reducing recruitment of new members to the church and perhaps reflected the reducing rate of Brazilian migration to London.

attaining the necessary tools – spiritual, practical, moral – to assist migrants’ eventual integration into wider society and acquisition of a ‘place at the table’ within mainstream society (Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003).

Within the Catholic church, by contrast, there was an emphasis on creating a specifically Brazilian identity, and thus enabling Brazilians in London to maintain close ties to Brazil. So, not only were the service style and songs very ‘Brazilian’, but traditional Brazilian celebrations took on great importance, and the church provided classes in Portuguese and Brazilian culture for children of Brazilian migrants. As Felipe, who worked at the church helping to organise Brazilian social events and Brazilian lunches after Sunday Mass commented, ‘the church becomes like a “little Brazil”’. During my fieldwork in London I attended a number of traditional Brazilian events at the church, including a day of celebrations themed around the state of Goiás – one of the principal sending states for Brazilian migrants (see Chapter 4). There was food and drink - including beer imported from Goiás - and traditional music and dancing, choreographed by some of the many *Goiano* (from Goiás) members of the church. In my field diary from that occasion I noted:

I came today to interview R. I hadn’t realised that there was going to be a big Goiás party - there were so many people there! Padre Mauricio introduced me to lots of people. I had lunch with Carla – she made me taste ‘arroz com piqui’, a speciality from Goiás. She told me that ‘piqui’ is fruit from Goiás which is used to flavour certain dishes (field diary, 22/11/09).

Padre Omario explained how providing a cultural link with Brazil was a crucial element of the church’s role, especially for the children of migrants who may have been born in London, or been in London since they were very young. While they may go to school and speak English, coming to traditional Brazilian festivals at the church enabled them to keep up their Portuguese, and to maintain ties with their ethnic roots. Moreover, Padre Mauricio responded to the question of why the church placed such a strong emphasis on maintaining a Brazilian identity by remarking, ‘there’s no way you can remove your cultural identity . . . It’s your essence, no one can take that away’ (15/10/09). Thus, in his view, maintaining one’s cultural identity was inevitable and did not automatically imply an impediment to integration. Indeed, Sister Rosita argued that:

Maintaining one’s own culture – and religion is part of this culture – is not contrary to integration. Rather it is a necessity and, moreover, it is enriching. It can even have a positive effect on integration if migrants are conscious of

what their being part of the Brazilian community can offer the local community in terms of mutual enrichment (pers. comm., 04/11/10).

Such discourses reflect some recent scholarly and policy debates into the relationship between processes of transnationalism and integration which, it is argued, can be 'complementary' rather than contradictory, and combined in different ways (Ehrkamp, 2005: 361; see also Morawska, 2003; Sheringham, 2010a). Thus, as Sister Rosita suggests, the promotion of Brazilian culture within the Catholic Church does not necessarily impede integration and can in fact facilitate the process.

On the other hand, Sister Rosita did also point to the possibility of the church becoming an 'escape' from the local context, and thus contributing to a kind of self-segregation:

If a migrant isolates him/herself from the receiving society, or refuses to learn about the realities of the local society, frequenting a church – with a service and preaching in Portuguese - could represent an escape from society and this would have consequences for their integration.

Hence the Catholic leaders were aware of the possibility of ethnic segregation, or what one respondent referred to as the 'risk of a ghetto'. They therefore emphasised the other key element of the church's role, which was to facilitate migrants' integration into UK society through providing free English classes 'every day of the week', as well as advice and information about jobs, housing, and visas.

However, the extent to which the church represents the root cause of this self-segregation is somewhat questionable, especially if one considers the 'profound inequalities that create nonreligious barriers to inclusion' (Foner and Alba, 2008: 384). The majority of migrants attending St Mary's were employed in low-paid service sector jobs, often living in overcrowded conditions and, given the 'irregular' status of a high proportion of them, lacked access to basic forms of welfare. So rather than being a hindrance to integration, or exacerbating migrant segregation, one could argue that the church may represent an alternative to other potential forms of ethnic isolation for those already living at the margins of society. Padre José described the role of the church for Brazilian migrants along such lines:

Because London is a city that offers lots of opportunities, from the most refined and sophisticated, to the most promiscuous. It's a dangerous city in all senses, not so much with regard to violence, but in terms of life options. So we are aware that there are lots of young men who become prostitutes, we know that there are lots of girls who become prostitutes or lap dancers . . . Because they need money, they need affection, touch. So, those who don't fall into this

option seek the church - any church, be it catholic, or evangelical. A place where they can find their own language, a familiar way of praying, of being welcomed . . . In Brazil the church is more mystical; you know that big church that rings the bell and people come. Here we had to create a space and alternatives for people to fill in that need, those lacunas in the soul of the Brazilian who lives away from home (16/02/10).

In this sense, church membership is considered not necessarily a way of directly facilitating integration, but rather of avoiding the opposite, that is, Brazilians losing themselves in what is conceived as London's potentially dangerous underworld.

This conception of the religious community as providing a moral framework in a context where migrants may otherwise 'lose themselves' was a common narrative expressed by leaders from both churches. However, once again, while the discourse at St Mary's of migrants being 'welcomed and protected' seemed to be unconditional and all-encompassing, the CEL's line seemed to require a greater willingness to convert, to give one's life to God and follow his teaching. The following quotation from Pastor Eduardo, who had been a pastor at CEL in London for two years and recently returned to Brazil, is illuminating in this regard:

I would say that there were two types of Brazilian migrants in London. Those who committed themselves fully to their objective to earn money and build something back in Brazil. For these people questions of faith were always more secondary – they only sought the church or God when something bad happened. Then there were the other kinds of people who understood that money was secondary, and that they were there because of God's will and that they should follow God's will as they go about their daily lives. For those people the church became a family (27/04/10).

Thus, the 'alternative' offered by the evangelical church seemed to be one that required a full commitment, serving God as one's first priority. As Chapter 6 will show, this all-encompassing involvement in the evangelical church had a strong impact upon the migration experiences of many members while also excluding those who were unable to conform to its rules.

Religious transnationalities

Creating translocal spaces

Thus, both churches developed different ways of providing transnational links with Brazil, while at the same time encouraging migrants to engage with the local context.

These different engagements with the transnational and the local were, to some extent, manifested within the spaces of the churches themselves, evoking very different senses of being Brazilian in London.

The CEL is based in a Baptist church in West London and, as noted, the church itself – a reasonably large, modern building – is shared with three other religious communities. The main space of the CEL gatherings– where the *Cultos* take place – thus remains quite anonymous, with little in its physical appearance hinting at the predominantly Brazilian make-up of its congregation. In fact, the room’s design is very simple: a large, open space with a stage at one end for the pastor, musicians, and other people involved in conducting the service, and a raised balcony at the other, which is used for large congregations. Apart from a large cross behind the stage, the walls are bare, with big windows to allow ample light, though also making the room very cold in the winter months. For the CEL’s services, a huge projection screen is installed to display the words to the songs, often with English translations, and to announce any notices for members of the congregation at the end of the service. In fact, many congregants arrive up to two hours early to prepare the technical and musical equipment in preparation for the service.

Music is indeed a crucial element of the CEL’s services, and the first half hour at least of the *Culto* involves music and singing, usually headed by Pastor Neilton with a group of around six backing singers, two guitarists, a keyboard player and a drummer. Light background music is also played by musicians during the pastor’s sermon, shifting in tone depending on the content of his address, and evoking swiftly changing reactions among the congregants, which range from crying to laughing, from moaning to shouting. The songs tend to be very animated, reminiscent of easy-listening rock music, but the lyrics are always concerned with worshipping Jesus Christ. On one occasion, I noted down the lyrics from the screen:

I came to adore you; I came to prove myself; I came to say that you are my God; you are totally lovable, totally worthy; so wonderful for me (field diary, 17/10/09, my translation).

Despite using their own visual and oral materials, there is nothing – besides the Portuguese language in which the services are conducted - that suggests a particularly Brazilian character to the CEL congregation. Rather, the atmosphere evoked in the service is more concerned with facilitating a communion with God, as opposed to a reminder of life ‘back home’ in Brazil. Following the service,

congregants are usually invited downstairs into a room below the main hall for a social gathering. On Wednesdays this is usually just coffee and snacks, while on Saturday a meal is often served, though the food is seldom Brazilian. There is little doubt that such occasions are intended to foster a sense of communion among congregants, the majority of whom are Brazilian and who themselves imbue the atmosphere with a certain Brazilian flavour. Yet members are clearly encouraged to think beyond their Brazilian-ness, and instead focus their attention on more universal Christian values, spreading the word of God and integrating with the host society.

The physical space of St Mary's in London also has few visual signs of its Brazilian character. It is a large, historic church building, yet despite its traditional Catholic appearance, the style of the services held there is characteristically 'Brazilian' Catholic. Indeed, the particularity of Brazilian Catholicism was one of the main factors cited by my research participants to explain why they attended Brazilian Catholic Mass as opposed to an English, or another Latin American type. Congregants are provided with an order of service – which has been centrally produced in São Paulo and distributed for Catholic services across Brazil and among churches in the diaspora. While providing the basic structure and main readings for the service, the four-page document also includes spaces for the priest to adapt and improvise according to the particular context. This is an example of how the institutional structure of the church has responded to, and indeed facilitated, these glocalising phenomena.

As well as the formal Order of Service, the church also produces a weekly bulletin, provided to all congregants, informing them of church events and activities, and also containing thoughts and opinions about a range of issues, as well as a weekly editorial column, usually from Padre José, now based in Oxford (see above). As in the CEL, music plays a key role in services at St Mary's. Although there is not quite as sophisticated a band as at the CEL, many of the songs – Brazilian Catholic songs - are accompanied by guitar players, backing singers and drummers. The Mass always ends with a series of 'notices', during which the priest announces and welcomes new arrivals at the church, as well as announcing information about jobs, houses or new immigration legislation to be shared within the community. The Brazilian Catholic service thus seeks to evoke a sense of Brazilianness; but, beyond that, it is about being Brazilian in London, and about ways of surviving there.

The Sunday Masses also involve social gatherings: the 12pm Mass is followed by lunch, while tea and snacks served at 5pm fills the gap between the 4pm and 7pm Mass. During these gatherings, the Church Hall at St Mary's is transformed into a Brazilian space, through food, language and music, all evoking a sense of being 'back home' in Brazil. In her discussion of Filipina domestic workers in Hong Kong, Lisa Law describes how the women gather in a central square every Sunday, thereby, she argues, transforming the space into a 'Little Manila', through 'food and other sensory practices' (2001: 276). She writes, '[t]he Philippines is experienced each Sunday through a conscious invention of home, and imagining of place' (*ibid*). In many ways, the Church Hall of St Mary's can be conceived of as an 'invented home', transformed every Sunday into a 'Little Brazil', a place imagined, and invented through food, music, shared histories and faith. As Padre José described with regard to this evocation of Brazil:

So when we first opened our church for Brazilians, it was only for Mass; the English priests only offered Mass. But when I arrived, knowing the Brazilian soul, and listening to Brazilians themselves, we started to offer a different kind of assistance - like lunches with Brazilian food, cable TV with Brazilian channels so they could sit in the hall and watch Brazil – football tournaments, Formula 1 racing, shows that they screen in Brazil on Sundays. We also began to offer an English course for Brazilians (16/02/10).

Thus, interestingly, St Mary's, which is linked to the more universalising framework of the Catholic Church, takes on very Brazilian character and thus responds to the needs of members through creating a space that evokes 'back home' in Brazil. The CEL, on the other hand, although a more independent and small-scale institution, with specific links to an equivalent church in Brazil, seeks to reach out beyond 'Brazilianness' and promote universal Christian values, in which religious identity becomes more important than any nationality-based affiliation.

Virtual transnationalities

The Internet is clearly crucial to the transnational identities of both churches, creating links between London and Brazil as well as playing a key role in promoting and disseminating the work of their religious communities within the Brazilian community in London. Yet, as with the physical spaces and atmospheres of the two

churches, contrasts can be drawn between the ways in which the Internet is used, pointing to the different ways in which they seek to operate transnationally.

The CEL has a well-resourced 'multi-media' ministry, whose functions include maintaining the church's sophisticated website, which is expanding as the church itself expands, and now includes a regular blog, as well as a Twitter profile. The website has a fairly formal layout, reminiscent of the space of the church itself, organised into different sections including: the church's objectives; an archive of key Biblical readings; and a timetable of services and events at the church in West London, and the newly opened branch of the church in South London. Within this formal layout, the website does not display a characteristically Brazilian identity. The church's logo, for example, is an image of a globe, with two arrows forming the shape of a heart surrounding it. The side of the globe displayed reveals Africa and Europe, as opposed to Brazil, thus suggesting a conscious decision to represent a global church that is constantly expanding, as opposed to a church defined along national lines. The website is clearly an important space for the engagement of existing members, for attracting new members, and for maintaining contact with old members, many of whom have returned to Brazil. One of the key features of the website is live broadcasts of the *Cultos* provided for migrants' families, for members who are unable to attend the service in person or, indeed for return migrants (see Chapter 6).

Towards the end of my fieldwork, St Mary's had also begun to broadcast the Sunday midday Mass live. According to Padre Mauricio, the first Sunday broadcast had 575 viewers, predominantly in Brazil, among families of migrants and returnees, but also in London among those who were unable to attend the Mass. As with the CEL, the St Mary's website seems to act as a virtual representation of the actual religious community. Thus, while the space of St Mary's clearly seeks to evoke an informal atmosphere and a Brazilian identity, so the website continues in this vein. The overall design of the website makes strong use of the colours – green and yellow – of the Brazilian flag, and among the different pages of the website is one dedicated to recipes for Brazilian food, and one with news from Brazil. The website also keeps users updated on events at all the different Brazilian Catholic churches in London, and has an archive of Biblical readings, photographs, messages, and videos from past events.

The St Mary's website also has a link to the online prayer group, established by members of the charismatic prayer group, and broadcast live every Tuesday night

at 9pm. This is clearly a widely used resource, both among church members (and non-members) in London, and family members or return migrants in Brazil. There is also a space for users to leave comments about the prayer group and to ask for requests for prayers. This prayer group thus represents an important space for creating and maintaining connections between people and practices in London and Brazil, as the following quotation from the discussion group suggests:

I live in Brazil, but I always hear about you because my brother and my sister-in-law live in London. I would like to ask you to pray for my whole family, and for those two in particular, because it's not easy to live far from one's parents, but with God nothing is impossible . . . God bless you all always so you can take God's word to all those who need it (27th Sept, 2009; accessed 23/11/10).

This person thus uses the web-based resource to keep in touch with her loved ones, with a message mediated through the Internet, the leaders of the prayer group and, ultimately, through God.

Indeed, this extensive use of the Internet reveals how technological advances have opened up important new spaces of religious practice, or what Kong (2001) terms 'techno-religious spaces', extending the reach of religious communities across borders. Accordingly, members no longer need to frequent regular services to be part of a religious community; rather they can 'attend' the service from their own homes, or again as many times as they want (see Levitt, 2007: 133). Yet, while the use of such technologies has undoubtedly facilitated these cross-border, 'un-bounded' (Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003: 106), virtual practices, there is little evidence to suggest that they serve as a substitute for, or threat to, face-to-face engagement with the religious community. Rather than the extensive use of communications technology somehow replacing the actual spaces of the churches and the social interactions that occur within them, the use of the Internet by the CEL and St Mary's suggests how they can in fact strengthen people's connection with the religious community (see also Osterbaan, 2010b). Moreover, the Internet clearly plays a crucial function in how these religious institutions strengthen transnational ties. As Garbin and Vasquez (forthcoming 2012: 9) suggest, '[r]eligious mobility is thus not limited to the physical circulation or migration of worshippers, religious leaders or experts, but also involves the transnational flows and networks of capital, images, sounds and symbols.'

The use of the Internet by these religious institutions also represents another realm within which they participate within what I call a transnational religious space. Thus, as well as spanning the wider context of global religious change, and involving religious leaders who are themselves migrants, these virtual religious practices form crucial means through which church leaders, members, non-members and friends and relatives of members, are incorporated into a complex, transnational space where religious practices and beliefs are shared, exchanged and modified.

Religious institutions and return migration

Within studies of religion and transnationalism, discussion is often limited to the receiving context, and to the role of religious institutions in the adaptation and integration of migrants in a new environment. Since there is a common thesis within this literature that religious institutions take on a more significant role as a consequence of migration, the assumption seems to be that this heightened role diminishes on return, where people are back with their loved ones in a familiar environment. My research among return migrants in Brazil suggests otherwise. In many cases, I found that religious institutions took on an extremely important role in supporting migrants in their process of re-adaptation.

The dispersed and relatively recent nature of Brazilian migration flows to the UK means that the study of religious institutions in the return context is somewhat speculative. Among studies of Brazilian emigration from the town of Governador Valadares, a well-recognised emigration hub, some research has emerged that considers the role of churches, in particular Protestant ones, in the lives of migrants' families, potential migrants, and returnees (see Siqueira, 2009a and b). Yet with regard to return migrants from the UK, which is comparatively much more recent, there is a lack of existing studies.

The CEL has an equivalent 'branch' in Brazil, the CEBH (and elsewhere, see Chapter 4). Yet unlike many migrant religious institutions which are replicated from home to host country, the CEL was founded in London in 1991. Three years later, the pastor exported the work to 'back home' to Belo Horizonte. In this sense the process of transnational religious movement is reversed, the pastor's 'call from God' taking him from the diaspora back to Brazil to carry on the evangelising work there, among

the local community and return migrants. Pastor Marco had briefly returned to Brazil in 1994 to set up the church there but had left another pastor (his nephew) in charge when he returned to London three years later. However, over the years it became increasingly apparent to Pastor Marco that the ‘work did not grow’, prompting his decision to return to Belo Horizonte permanently himself in 2009. He explained:

I can’t really explain the reasons, it’s a matter between him and God. So I came back seeking God’s guidance for the church’s growth, so we’re working in that direction. We believe that it is God who creates the growth of the church – I’m not going to convert anyone, we believe that it’s the Holy Spirit that does this. I will preach the Gospel, serve the community but, in the end, it’s God who converts the people (29/04/10).

The church in Belo Horizonte was thus much smaller than the London equivalent, but the basic style and structure were very similar. The church had approximately 50 permanent members, of whom at least ten were return migrants from London. Some of these returnees had lived in other parts of Brazil prior to migrating but had moved to Belo Horizonte on their return because of the links they had made through the church in London. While all the members of the church were Brazilian, there was a sense that the church was ‘transnational’, its message and indeed membership, transcending its local context. As in London, church members addressed each other as *irmão/irmã* (brother/sister), and it modelled itself on the structure of the family. Also, as in London, the church had a ‘ministry of English’, offering English classes every Saturday, taught by return migrants. When I asked the pastor if these were for people who intended to emigrate he replied:

No, it’s more because Brazil is going to host the World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016, so lots of people are wanting to learn English in order to have the chance to work in their own country (17/03/10).

Thus, while not within the context of migration, the church is once again responding to the needs of its members within a rapidly changing socio-economic climate. Despite being a local church, the CEL in Belo Horizonte was influenced by – and indeed had an effect upon - transnational processes that expanded beyond the walls of the church itself.

The presence of a number of return migrants undoubtedly had an impact on the church’s functions, one of which became that of supporting returnees in their process of re-adaptation to life back in Brazil. Indeed, with regard to irregular migration, some return migrants who had frequented the church in London suggested

that the discourse against migrants being ‘undocumented’ had strong resonance in the consciences of church members. Juliana, who frequented the Brazilian ‘branch’ of the church, had in fact been deported, after living for three years as an irregular migrant in London. She talked of the guilt she had felt, as she had known that the church had disapproved of her actions, but how now she was on a ‘true, honest path’ back in Brazil, and was strongly supported by the pastors there. Wagner, another return migrant, explained that he had returned home as his visa had expired and he felt too much guilt while living illegally in London, knowing that this was condemned by the church. However, despite the church’s openly hard line, irregular migrants were not turned away. As Pastor Neilton said, ‘we wouldn’t let anyone go hungry or homeless’. Rather, they were given support and guidance, both spiritual - through specific prayers - and practical, in their quest for regularisation.

Such attitudes echo the findings of Duarte et al (2008) in their discussion of evangelical churches in Governador Valadares, in the State of Minas Gerais, which has a long history of emigration to the US. They describe how, while the church doctrines were openly against the emigration of Brazilians from the town, which they knew was ‘illegal’ in most cases, the churches continued to provide support to both these migrants and their families who stayed behind. Thus the churches, by necessity, end up adapting to the demands of their members. Even if, they remark, ‘they position themselves effectively against illegal emigration, the churches do not stop supporting those who partake in this process’ (Duarte et al 2008: 10, my translation). The CEL and CEBH seemed to hold a similar attitude, explicitly condemning illegal migration, yet still offering support to those such as Juliana and Wagner whose actions went counter to the official line. However, despite not turning people away, the emphasis on migrants having a clear conscience was undoubtedly a powerful force within the church, creating potential barriers to inclusion for those who were unable to ‘regularise’ their situation.

With regard to St Mary’s in London, unlike the CEL, there was no specific equivalent church in Brazil to which migrants returned, nor did the church have any formal means to maintain contact with return migrants. Indeed, Padre Omario explained that, although the leaders at St Mary’s believed it would be a good idea to create a database to trace members who arrived and left, this was not feasible as people – especially those who were irregular - did not like revealing their personal details. He explained,

People meet up at the church, but they don't want to be found out if their visa has expired or something like that . . . so it would be a good idea to do this, but we could enter into this sensitive area where we could potentially expose someone. . . and we wouldn't want to do that [. . .] As I said yesterday, our job is to offer migrants support through prayer, comfort, independent of their status (20/01/09).

Informally, however, the church did maintain contact with its returnees and, perhaps more commonly, returnees maintained ties with the London church, via the Internet, watching the live broadcasts of the *Missas* or, as mentioned, participating in the online prayer group.

Furthermore, in towns where there were large numbers of people who had emigrated to London, the realities of emigration and, more recently, return, had clearly become prominent issues within some Catholic churches. Thus, for example, at one Catholic Mass that I attended in a small town in Minas Gerais - where a large number of people were either living, had returned, or planned to go to London, due to the existence of strong transnational networks – the priest welcomed three congregants who had just returned from London. He talked about their migration, referring to Christian faith and the notion of pilgrimage. Indeed, it was clear that emigration had become a common phenomenon in the town and that the church had recognised its position within the process: supporting church members with friends and family abroad, and, more recently those who return. These Brazilian religious institutions with members who have migrated, returned or have family abroad thus become important factors in the transnational religious space that interconnects those who migrate, those who stay put, and the multiple factors and actors that play a role in this journey.

Concluding remarks

[W]hatever we might want to define as “religion”, it is sociologically important to approach our object not so much as a given “fact”, as a product already there, an “instituted institution” to which one “belongs” or not, but rather as a dynamic network of moving relations, as a production process, as an institution in the making, as an “instituting institution”, as it were (Maduro, 2002: 604-5).

This chapter has revealed how, in both sending and receiving contexts, the realities of migration compel churches to adapt both their practices and their values to address the changing needs of their members. While the chapter has focused on three specific

case studies of Brazilian religious institutions in London and in Brazil, the narratives of the church leaders and the discourses of the institutions they represent provide some important insights with regard to the ways religion travels across borders, and how broader global and transnational processes interplay with local contexts.

Thus, on the one hand, the churches seek, in different ways, to transcend national borders. The CEL avoids political engagement, emphasising instead its commitment to serving God above all else, while St Mary's represents a global religious institution – the Catholic Church - and, at the same time, creates a 'little Brazil' with strong cultural ties to the migrants' homelands. On the other hand, both churches are embedded in local contexts, having to negotiate the very real borders and boundaries within the new social, cultural, and political environment within which they find themselves. Moreover, the churches need to find ways to adapt their own practices – and indeed shift their own boundaries - in response to changing circumstances. The chapter has revealed how both churches in London broadened, either denominationally, in the case of the evangelical CEL, or with regard to discipline, in the case of the Catholic St Mary's. Yet while both churches provided spaces of solidarity and inclusion for Brazilian migrants, the chapter has revealed how they can also engender new forms of exclusion.

The chapter has argued that rather than seeing migrant religious institutions as operating 'from above' and somehow separate from other migratory phenomena, it is important to consider how they are closely intertwined in such processes. Indeed, the chapter has considered how religious leaders themselves are migrants, whose experiences are often neglected in existing research on migrant religious institutions. Moreover, I have argued that the spiritual conviction of religious leaders - neglected in much of the existing research on religion and transnationalism - needs to be considered as an important motivating factor. Thus, while the focus of this chapter is on the role of religious institutions in transnational processes, it suggests that the multiple activities and agencies that comprise them in fact blur the boundaries – both real and conceptual - between the institutional and the individual, the local and the transnational, the sacred and the practical. It reveals the importance of a multi-scalar approach for understanding how transnational religious institutions operate within a transnational religious space in which their practices and identities, far from being fixed or stable, are mobile and constantly in flux.

Yet while this chapter points to some interesting ways in which churches – in both sending and receiving contexts – find themselves required to adapt to the realities of migration, and points to some of the ways in which religious institutions influence and are influenced by wider processes of globalisation, it is important not to overlook the part played by migrants who are not religious leaders within such processes. The changes manifested at the institutional level are also a consequence of the diverse and constantly shifting needs of the members who ‘use’ their church in a variety of ways to cope with the realities of migration. These multiple ‘uses’ thus also overlap, impact upon, and conflict with institutional practices and discourses, once again making the migrant church a space of hybridity and negotiation which functions across multiple scales. Migrants’ myriad ‘uses’ of and influence upon religious institutions during their migration experience is discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 6

The ‘Brazilian’ transnational church: Social hub and sacred space

Chapter 5 argued that migrant religious institutions need to be unpacked, or ‘peopled’, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the multiple agencies involved in the complex, and often contradictory, processes of adaptation to new local and transnational contexts. To continue with this ‘peopling’ of Brazilian religious institutions in London, this chapter considers the perspectives of Brazilian migrants who use (or used) St Mary’s or the CEL in different ways in their everyday lives. Thus, just as religious institutions (and their leaders) undergo important changes, becoming more or less flexible, to respond to the challenges of migration, so too the religious practices of migrants themselves adapt, also affected by, but also influencing, transformations within the churches. The chapter draws on interviews with Brazilians who frequent, or had frequented, St Mary’s or the CEL in London, and with return migrants in Brazil who attended the churches when they lived in London and some of whom now frequent the CEBH in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. It also refers to some interviews with migrants who, for various reasons, chose not to frequent churches in London.

In his exploratory discussion of the ‘religious field among the Brazilian diaspora’, Freston (2008: 257) puts forward various hypotheses as to what happens to ‘religiosity’ as a consequence of migration. The traditional view, he suggests, was that migration would ‘diminish religiosity, especially when moving to a more secular context’ than the migrants’ homeland. Yet Freston considers whether, in fact, migration can ‘accentuate religiosity as a form of cultural defence’, whether it is transformed ‘from one form to another’, or whether it simply stays the same (*ibid*). Given the relative recentness of Brazilian migration flows, scholars have also speculated about the potential for Brazilian churches to become spaces for ‘collective empowerment’ or civic engagement, or whether they represent – and will remain – insular communities, inward-looking and detached from mainstream society (Vasquez and Ribeiro, 2007: 26). The potential impact that migrants’ religious practices will

have on religiosity in the return context has also been considered (Freston, 2008; see also Levitt, 2007).

While such speculations are interesting and can reveal patterns of behaviour relating to the different ways in which migrants 'practise' religion in sending and receiving contexts, it seems that too much focus on patterns and categories can mask a more complex picture that emerges when we consider the dynamic and fluid aspects of religious practice that change across, but also within, specific contexts and individuals. Thus, rather than substantiating some of the hypotheses outlined above, the examples discussed here reveal multiple scenarios relating to the role(s) of churches in the lives of migrants: both fostering *and* hindering inclusion and solidarity, and frequented for purely spiritual, *as well as* primarily practical reasons. As Vasquez and Ribeiro (2007: 27) argue, churches, 'like any social institution . . . respond in contradictory ways to the spatial and temporal context.' Similarly, as the examples in this chapter suggest, the ways in which migrants use these social institutions are themselves often contradictory and constantly shifting, responding to the multifaceted experience of migration itself.

The chapter considers the use of churches by Brazilian migrants and their families at various stages of the migration experience: first, in adapting to life and surviving in an unfamiliar city; secondly, in forging a sense of collective identity and community in the context of loss and loneliness; and finally, in maintaining ties (in particular 'virtual' ones) with 'back home' and, having returned 'home' to Brazil, with London. It also suggests that an overarching role of the church for many migrants is to enable them to nurture their personal relationship with God.

Through recourse to these various examples, the chapter has three main arguments, which challenge existing literature on migrant religion. Firstly, in contrast to studies that overemphasise the social role of migrant churches, or rather separate the social from the spiritual, I argue that the two need to be seen as overlapping and mutually constitutive within a transnational religious space. Second, the chapter also concurs with the previous chapter and reveals how, while the churches can represent spaces for inclusion and belonging for many migrants, they can also be exclusionary, notably for many devotees who feel that their lifestyles do not fit in with the ethos of the church. Finally, the examples suggest that the use of the Internet by church members, both within the diaspora and back home, plays a crucial role in their transnational religious lives as religious practices and beliefs are *remitted* within and

across sending, receiving, and return contexts. Thus, rather than making generalising separations between different conceptual and spatial domains and scales – sending/receiving; between different uses of the church – social/spiritual; between levels of religiosity – more religious/less religious; and between different realms of participation – real/virtual, the chapter argues for a more nuanced approach, one that seeks to convey how such boundaries are in fact blurred and constantly shifting.

From Brazil to London: seeking the church at times of need

Coping with the challenges of migration

And since we're far away from our families, we don't speak the same language, and the culture is completely different to ours, we need to find ways to cope, and for many people the only way is through the church (Claudia, 29/11/09).

A recurring narrative among interviewees from both churches was the sense of loneliness, emptiness, or lack that characterised the experience of moving from Brazil to London. Such feelings, it seemed, were particularly acute in the first few months after arrival, and often accentuated by the accompanying feeling of disillusionment felt by many respondents for whom the decision to migrate was an individual choice made in search of a better life. Some described the sense of despair they felt at arriving in an unfamiliar environment, not speaking the language, and having to find work in low-paid and often exploitative jobs. In the context of this experience of loss, and often humiliation, the church was described as playing a crucial role, enabling migrants to regain strength and a sense of dignity. As Glaucia, a Catholic woman who had returned to Brazil but had frequented St Mary's when she lived in London, put it:

So the church for me was fundamental in this sense – for the despair, like when you first arrived and when you felt very alone. And then you'd go to the church and you would feel very welcome – everyone was so friendly, and Padre Mauricio was there and always so welcoming . . . So the church gave me courage to confront the loneliness, to say “no, I'm going to overcome it and achieve what I came here to achieve so I can go home” (30/05/10).

In another sense, the church was depicted as a way of escaping, temporarily, from the hostile, unfamiliar environment in London, through seeking protection within a

familiar space. Jorge (27/01/10), an active member of the CEL who had been in London for thirteen years, described the migrants' condition in London as being 'outside their protective realm' – i.e. of family, friends and familiarity that they had in Brazil – which leads them to seek protection, or 'refuge', as another respondent, Danilo (30/05/10) described it, within the church community. Through this weekly dose of sanctuary and comfort, it seemed that the hostility and hardships associated with life in London became less daunting. Church attendance thus comes to represent, for many migrants, a coping strategy, a means to confront the challenges of life in a new environment.

For some interviewees, the church had already been a central part of their life in Brazil, so finding a similar space was important to compensate for the sacrifice that migration had entailed. Such previous religious involvement was particularly common among interviewees from the CEL, whose membership seemed to require a greater level of participation. Thus, as Wagner from the CEL recounted:

[I]n Brazil I had always been very active in the church and this was one of the things that I missed most when I arrived here and I didn't know anyone. . . . So when I came to the CEL and got to know the people here and began to participate more actively in the church I began to feel more fulfilled . . . this is where I made my friends here in London . . . and this is also where I met my wife. So I feel that the church here has always been crucial in my life – as much here as in Brazil (27/01/10).

Wagner's participation in the CEL became far more than just attending the weekly *Cultos* or social gatherings. He, like many respondents from the CEL, was involved in one of the church's *ministérios*. As 'vice-leader' of the music ministry he would go to the church most days for rehearsals or meetings and hence, he suggested, his life in London effectively, 'revolve[d] around the church.' Similarly, Sheila, who was a member of the 'media ministry' at the CEL, listed her week's activities at the church:

I help in the media ministry, and we usually meet on Mondays. And then on Tuesdays I'm now doing Bible Study; on Wednesdays we have the *Culto* and I help out there so I always go; on Thursdays I have the day 'off'; on Fridays at 8pm we have a women's prayer group which I go to; and Saturday's there's another *Culto* . . . on Sunday I relax, or I go to another church (19/11/09)

Luis, who had recently returned to Brazil, began to frequent the CEL as soon as he arrived in London (in 2001) because his brother-in-law was already a member. He described how he had felt very disillusioned for almost a year as he had been accustomed to being very actively involved in his (Presbyterian) church in Brazil,

taking a lead role in various community projects with children in a poor neighbourhood near the church. 'I felt useful,' he explained, 'but when I arrived in London I felt that everything was already organised and structured, and I didn't know where I fitted in' (17/04/10). Gradually, however, he became more involved in the CEL and explained how in the process he learned a lot more about his own faith and his motivation for being actively involved in a faith community:

I realised that sometimes you're in a church and it's really easy for you to, as we say, become 'religious' – to do things just because you feel obliged . . . And I realised that when you believe in God, you have to do it for God – not because you're Presbyterian, Baptist, or some other denomination, it's for God. And if you love God, if you serve God, you will feel useful in any place that God calls you . . . So London is a place that opens our vision of the world.

Finding his 'place' within and adapting to the new style of the CEL was, for Luis, an essential part of his experience of migrating to London, and the lessons that he felt he took 'back home' with him to Brazil. Indeed, it seemed that for evangelical migrants such as Luis, Wagner and Sheila, being involved in the church was not just a way of meeting other Brazilians and confronting loneliness, but rather represented a crucial part of their identity and sense of belonging in London. While all their jobs in London had involved a process of 'de-skilling' in comparison with their occupations in Brazil (see Chapter 4), these 'roles' seemed to be far less important than their vocation within the church's structure and the wider commitment to serving God.

'Born-again' in London

As well as many people who had participated actively in a similar evangelical church in Brazil, many interviewees from the CEL had converted to Christianity in London, a decision that also had a major impact on their overall migration experience.⁴⁷ A common narrative among convertees was how they discovered the church having spent their first months - or years - in London going out drinking in pubs or nightclubs, a period in which they had 'felt something was missing'. This sense of 'loneliness' was often put down to the fact that the friendships they would make in a bar were 'superficial' and transitory, leaving them with a feeling of emptiness (*um*

⁴⁷ In Brazil, being a Christian (or *Cristão/Cristã*) is distinguished from being Catholic referring, rather, to Protestantism or, in most cases, to evangelical churches. Thus the 'conversion' stories of the migrants described here refer to their 'becoming Christian', even if they had previously been Catholic.

vazio). Within such accounts, conversion was depicted in terms of a before and after, a more meaningful way of ‘filling in the lacuna’ that migration had created (Thiago, 24/04/10). Thus, Nuelia, who had been a fairly committed Catholic in Brazil, recounted how during her first two years in London she distanced herself from her faith and would go out almost every evening to nightclubs. She described her experience of conversion in the following words:

I would come out [of the nightclub] and everyone would go home to their houses, alone, sad. And at one of these clubs I asked a friend if he knew a church – I didn’t know anything about evangelical churches. And he said that he knew a church near his house and that they had services every Wednesday. It was just amazing because at the time I was in such need of something spiritual – he could have taken me anywhere! . . . But he took me to the CEL, and from the first day I went there I felt touched – there was a sister (*irmã*) (and afterwards I went to live in her house!) who was giving a ‘testimony’ of her conversion, talking about how her life used to be . . . And for me it was so strange because in the Catholic Church everything is so formal, and you don’t find that engagement with your personal life . . . with your soul. And that’s what I felt that night . . . About a year went past during which I came every week to the church, but I carried on going to nightclubs . . . Until I reached a point when I realised that God had a plan for my life and I decided, I chose to give up everything and have a life with God; to give my life to God (11/08/10).

Thus for Nuelia, conversion implied a process of complete transformation, renouncing her previous taste for nightclubs and dancing and, instead, committing her life to serving God. As Thiago, whom I interviewed in Brazil, but who had experienced his full conversion to Christianity in London, explained: ‘when you take the decision [to dedicate your life to God], you need to change your life’ (24/04/10). While his initial motivation to come to London had been primarily to earn money to make a better life for himself and his family in Brazil, ‘finding God’ and making a commitment to Him, had meant that his motivations had shifted. He explained how he stopped working such long hours and wanted to dedicate his life to ‘God’s work’, becoming more involved in two church ministries: the reception ministry (whose duty is to welcome people to the *Cultos*), and the football ministry (which organised church football games on Sundays).

Lucia’s spiritual conviction to ‘give [her] life to God’ came as soon as she arrived in London as, she explained, although she had not completely converted, the process had begun before she left Brazil:

I already knew that I needed God, and that was why when I arrived here the first thing I did was go to a church [the CEL]. Here I never went to bars, to parties . . . When I arrived, I already knew that I needed God in my life. So I went to the church, I got to know the brothers and sisters (*irmãos*), and I gave my life to God . . . Since I arrived I knew that God was the only saviour in my life (08/12/09).

Thus for migrants who find God and are ‘born-again’ in London, it seems that the material importance of migrating is replaced by, or at least given greater meaning through, a more fundamental spiritual journey (see Chapter 7). The spatial and temporal horizons envisaged when migrating to London also change: migration is no longer an individual pursuit to fulfil a personal objective, but becomes rather part of a much wider project of serving God and carrying out a role within His universal plan. Thus, when I asked Nuelia how much longer she planned to stay in London, for example, she replied:

I don’t know yet. Now I’m Christian, I understand that my life depends on God’s will too. It’s not something that only I’m going to decide, although I would like to go back to Brazil (11/08/10).

Among Catholic respondents there were fewer examples of actual conversion to Catholicism, but a common discourse was that of a more active involvement in, and commitment to, the church in London. Indeed, this active participation was contrasted with a more ‘passive’ religiosity in Brazil, whereby going to church or getting baptised were described as just a ‘habit’ something you do just ‘to be the same as everyone else’ (Claudia, 29/11/10). While, as Jordão commented, ‘everyone’s Catholic in Brazil’, suggesting how Catholicism is so closely interrelated with Brazilian national identity, it seemed that for many of the research participants the experience of loneliness and vulnerability that migration entailed led them to consciously seek their religion. Thus Augusto, for example, described himself as,

Catholic, but lapsed, because in Brazil I didn’t go to church. I would say that I went to Mass about three or four times in my life. In London I started going to church much more often. I’ve already been more times here that I had in my whole life in Brazil (21/02/10).

Vera explained how for her going to church in Brazil was more out of a sense of habit and that ‘any excuse would stop [her] from going – like if someone invites you round for tea, or if the house is in chaos’ (11/12/09). In London, by contrast, she felt ‘obliged to go’, not only because it was her main way of socialising with other

Brazilians, but also because the experience of coming to London ‘makes you realise that you really need God, that you need to seek God’s support.’

These examples echo some of Ribeiro’s (2005: 6) findings among Brazilian migrants in Florida who had, she suggests, ‘practised a “light” form of Catholicism in Brazil but who, through migrating to the USA, re-discovered the scope of a vital commitment within Catholicism itself’ (my translation). Ribeiro (*ibid*) describes this phenomenon with reference to what some scholars have termed religious ‘re-affiliation’ (see for example, Hervieu-Léger, 1999) whereby religiosity that was previously practised somewhat superficially, becomes a more essential part of the process of constructing one’s identity. The current research reveals a similar phenomenon among many Brazilian Catholics in London. While their initial motivation to seek the church was from a sense of loneliness or lack, once there many in fact experience something deeper. It is as if, for some Catholics, the experience of life as a new migrant is a kind of ‘wake-up call’, a reminder of the possibility of support and some kind of meaning from beyond the material realm. As Felipe remarked,

[I]n the face of such loneliness we turn more to God and to the community at the church to find strength . . . But once we’re there we find a different atmosphere. . . and we come to realise God’s role in our lives, what God wants for us at this moment (28/01/10).

Moreover, just as the experience of migration to London is depicted as something that you could never understand until you experience it personally, the need for a greater proximity to a religious community is, in Claudia’s words, ‘something that comes from inside and doesn’t have an explanation, it’s only through living it’ that, she suggests, you can understand its importance (29/11/09).

For many Catholics who became more active members of the church in London, this involved the discovery of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement (RCC) within the church which, as Ana (20/11/09) explained, requires a more intimate, individual, dedicated, relationship to God than traditional Catholicism. For Ana, this stronger personal commitment enabled her to ‘have more courage to go out and fight to pursue her aims.’ The charismatic movement, like the evangelical church, also involves a greater intimacy among participants as they are required to share their experiences through ‘testimonies’ and collective prayer. One Sunday in December 2009, I attended the *Celebra a Vitoria* (Celebrate the Victory), an event organised by

the charismatic prayer group and described on the website as, ‘an afternoon of worship to give thanks for everything God has brought in the last year.’ It was held in the church hall at St Mary’s and, as well as group prayers – in which everyone stood around in a circle with their arms in the air – there was a children’s dance presentation, a performance by the church’s drama group, and live music by musicians who participated in the prayer group. There was also a slot in the programme dedicated to testimonies, where people could go on stage and share their experiences with the audience, giving thanks to God. That day, I wrote the following entry in my field diary:

The atmosphere is very animated and emotional – with lots of singing, laughing, shouting, and people hugging each other. It feels more like an evangelical service, and people are going on stage to give ‘testemunhos’ [testimonies]. A couple just went on stage with their young daughter and, while the band in the background played some light music to suit the tone, they talked about some of the difficulties they had had in the lives, and in their relationships, but how grateful they were for having found the group at the church. They were both very tearful. He said that without their involvement in the prayer group and the ‘grupo de casais’ [couples’ group], he didn’t think they would have been able to cope with their problems. He said that thanks to the group he’d become closer to God and closer to the people he loved. He thanked his mother and father (who he said were watching this on the Internet) and told his family how much he loved them, and how God will protect them (field diary, 13/12/09).

Thus, while the churches clearly do play an important social role for many new migrants, this function does not necessarily supersede, and indeed is not necessarily separate from, the spiritual dimension of participation in the religious community. As the examples above suggest, for many, the initial contact with the migrant church as seeking communion with other Brazilian migrants in London, in fact facilitated their spiritual communion with God. Furthermore, the popularity of the more charismatic expressions of religiosity within St Mary’s had led to the creation of institutional spaces to facilitate such practices.

As well as migrants converting to ‘Christianity’ (in the case of the evangelical church), or experiencing a re-invigorated religious commitment in response to the challenge of migration (in the case of many Catholics), there were also cases of people who, having come to London, moved between different churches of various denominations. This movement between different religious communities suggests that religious affiliation represents a contingent element of one’s everyday life, as opposed to a definitive dimension of one’s identity. While such church-switching is in fact also a fairly common phenomenon in Brazil (see Almeida and Monteiro, 2001) it seems that the experience of migration, and the personal challenges that such a move entails, makes some migrants more open to switching between different religious communities, especially since the churches themselves are often rather different from those in migrants’ home contexts (see Chapter 5; see also Ribeiro, 2005).

Paulo, who had been evangelical in Brazil (although he rarely went to church), began frequenting a Catholic Church in London, initially because of the sense of peace he felt within the physical space of the church:

[W]hen I first arrived and was unemployed, I would often go and sit in the Catholic Church – in Willesden Junction. I would sit there . . . sometimes I would even cry a little . . . I would sit there in the silence, that aura, that energy, that helped me not just get up and leave, that helped me to endure my life here. I felt good when I was there . . . the presence of God . . . I don’t go because of the Saints – St Mary etc., I go because of the purity of the space, for the energy (27/11/09).

After those initial weeks where he would go to the Catholic Church to experience the peaceful atmosphere, Paulo began frequenting the weekly Brazilian Catholic Mass in Soho, and staying for the social gathering afterwards, which he described as the ‘healthiest two hours in his week.’ But despite regularly frequenting the Catholic Church in London because of the good feeling that it gave him, Paulo also

⁴⁸ Within Brazilian scholarship on religion, such practices have been defined as ‘*trânsito religioso*’ (Almeida and Monteiro, 2001), or religious ‘transit’, a concept that does not directly translate into English. Almeida and Monteiro (2001) use the term to refer to cases whereby people rapidly switch between seemingly different religious affiliations within Brazil’s increasingly plural religious ‘marketplace’.

occasionally attended evangelical churches, as well as an English Jehovah's Witness Kingdom Hall in Shepherd's Bush. He explained:

I seek all the possible paths to reach God . . . God is only one – we all have various paths to find him – no? . . . There isn't a different God for each church; every church has its rules, its good things and bad things, so it's up to each person to choose what's good and what's bad' (22/11/09).

Thus, in Paulo's view, if there is only one God, the onus is on the individual to choose the best means through which they can reach Him, if necessary switching between different denominations depending on their specific needs at that moment.

There were also examples of people who switched between churches for practical reasons, as opposed to spiritual ones. Thus, Sonia from St Mary's, who came to London in 2000 when there were fewer Brazilian migrants, explained how when she first arrived she stayed with a Brazilian evangelical family, who frequented a Brazilian evangelical church in London, and she would go to church with them, 'more so I could get out, so as not to stay alone in the house!' (focus group, 24/02/10). Although she quite enjoyed going to the evangelical church, she never felt she could fully commit to it, and was very relieved when she discovered a Catholic church near her home where they celebrated Mass in Portuguese. As soon as the Brazilian Chaplaincy was established at St Mary's in 2004 she became more actively involved with its development, often providing support for the priests at the Sunday Masses. For Francisca, who also regularly frequents St Mary's, attending services at other churches of different denominations was more a matter of 'curiosity' than a desire to diverge from Catholicism. She explained:

I'm Catholic. But I'm curious . . . because God – I believe that there's only one . . . But I want to hear the words of different religions, to compare with mine to see what it is that I want - you know? (*laughs*) Because every religion teaches God's word differently to appeal to its followers (focus group, 24/02/10).

Among evangelical respondents, or rather those who were regular members of the CEL, there were fewer examples of this church-switching. For the majority of members, it seemed that committing to the CEL required a more unconditional pledge to live one's life within a particular framework. Sidney, however, who had returned to Brazil, recounted how, despite being Catholic in Brazil, he began attending *Cultos* at the CEL very soon after he arrived in London and liked it because he felt it 'alleviated for him' the stresses of his life in London and gave him a sense of peace. He also said

that the ‘best things’ he learnt in London were at the church: ‘to help others, to help and to understand, to be less impulsive because before I was very impulsive . . . I learnt to trust people more and to value my friendships’ (30/04/10). Yet despite the church’s importance to his life, Sidney did not choose to convert, primarily because he felt that full conversion did not fit in with his lifestyle – in particular his working hours, and his taste for beer: ‘I felt peace in the church. But I never gave up beer; I like to have a beer . . . but that never harmed anyone.’

Thus, for many new migrants in London, churches, of varying denominations, become important spaces that are used in different ways to confront the challenges of migration to an unfamiliar environment. For those who were actively involved in a church in Brazil, participation in London was a crucial element in their efforts to re-ground themselves and to find a role in the UK. For others, the experience of migration had been accompanied by a kind of spiritual awakening and conversion to Christianity, and so commitment to their faith represented a means to demonstrate this devotion to a new path. There were also those who turned to the church - or various churches - for a variety of reasons related to their condition as a migrant: to find peace, to meet other people, to feel closer to God. In many cases, the initial objective for seeking the church soon changed in response to their experience there. A recurrent thread within such diverse uses of the churches was the search for a sense of belonging, be it belonging to a religious community, belonging to a Brazilian community in London, or belonging to a wider Christian community. The following section will consider, in more depth, the ways in which the church is used to facilitate different forms of belonging within migrants’ everyday lives in London.

The Church and a sense of belonging in London

Belonging to a religious community

Religious organisations represent, for many migrants, the first and only hope for a community, after having abandoned, or lost, that which they knew in their country of origin (Maduro, 2007: 27; my translation)

The majority of interviewees from both case-study churches emphasised the important role that the church played in their lives in London. Both Ana, from St Mary’s, and

Isabella, from the CEL, described the church as the ‘base’ of their life in London; Catholic Felipe and evangelical Wagner described it as ‘fundamental’; while Elenice, who had returned to Brazil just a few months before our interview, said that the church in London was ‘everything’ for her. Within the unfamiliar, anonymous, space of the city, the church represents a space for migrants to feel grounded and to regain strength following some of the feelings of loss that accompanied the experience of migration. Membership of the church was, for many, important because it meant an opportunity to participate in a ‘community’, to experience a collective form of belonging within what is, for many, a very lonely endeavour. The sense of community provided within the church seemed to engender a sense of commitment, trust and solidarity, contrasting with what was often depicted as the ‘disunity’ within the Brazilian community outside the church (see Chapter 4).

The community sought within the church was often evoked in connection to the feeling of loneliness (as discussed above), a gap which life at the church played an important role in filling. Thus as Dulce, who attended St Mary’s in London, remarked:

I was brought up in a religious environment . . . my parents were very religious . . . So, in Brazil, I went to church . . . It’s just that here [in London] I feel an even greater need to go to church – because that’s when you feel a lack – and you go through lots of problems here . . . I couldn’t imagine myself here without having a community – in the church – in which to participate (20/11/09).⁴⁹

For Ana, belonging to St Mary’s meant feeling part of a ‘harmonious’ community in which ‘everyone helps one another.’ Her comments were in response to the question of whether she felt there was unity among Brazilians in London. She explained:

My ‘community’ here is the people from the church. Apart from this, I don’t have much contact with other Brazilians, so I don’t know if there’s much unity. But at the church . . . it’s really good, everyone helps one another. In all senses – like in finding jobs. Independently of whether or not you have a visa, whether you’re legal or illegal, everyone helps each other as much as they can because, in the end, we’re all in the same place, we’re all going to the same place . . . so we all have to help each other (20/11/09).

Indeed, this notion of the church as a space in which Brazilians ‘help each other’ was frequently cited in migrants’ narratives. As Juliane from St Mary’s, remarked, ‘[i]n the church if anyone needs anything a message is sent around. Like if someone needs

⁴⁹ Since our interview, Dulce had returned to Brazil where I visited her in her new home.

a job, or a house or room to rent' (30/11/09). Beatrice, whom I interviewed in Brazil, explained how, after she first went to the CEL she decided, 'this is where I will stay'. She continued, 'it was through people there that I got lots of help with finding jobs.'

As well as providing contacts for finding jobs and accommodation, many migrants described the church as the centre of their social life in London. Thus, Danilo, a return migrant in Brazil, explained how he had frequented St Mary's in London for 'social' as well as 'spiritual' reasons. Thus he would go,

[f]or Mass, but also to meet people – there was always a social gathering after the Mass, so I'd say I'd go to that precisely for the socialising. So, I'd go for the Mass – or rather, the spiritual part, and I'd also go to meet friends, to talk to different people (30/05/09).

Glauca and Paula, also returnees who had frequented St Mary's in London, described the church as their 'only social life there' (30/05/10; 07/05/10). Both women explained how their life in London involved working very long, tiring, hours as cleaners, with little time to relax. Within this context, the church was the only space they would go to socialise and unwind in a familiar environment.

Indeed, perhaps an even stronger discourse among interviewees than the notion of the church as a community was that of the church becoming a family in a context where their real family was far away. This was particularly pertinent among the evangelical respondents, which could reflect the fact that the majority were young and single, and thus not in London with any family members, as opposed to many Catholic respondents who were with at least one family member. So, as Lucia, from the CEL, affirmed,

The church is my family – the people here are my family now. Of course, the church helps us a lot here. I think that without the church it's really difficult to live here. You can survive, but there are lots of things missing – the church is very important for companionship . . . definitely (08/12/09).

Similarly, Tania replied when asked about the role of the church in her life in London:

It is very important for me because I found a family here and I think this provides you with a base, it's like you have to have some kind of structure behind you, a family structure. I came here without my dad, without my mum, without anyone, and I've been here until now without anyone in my family . . . So here [at the church] I have a family structure, you see (13/01/10).

And Florencia, looking back nostalgically on her experience of the CEL in London remarked,

Goodness! There we were like a family! You were welcomed into the homes of the brothers and sisters (*irmãos*) there – it was like, well, just like a family! On Sundays, to go and for everyone to be together... (17/04/10).

She and her husband Luis had returned to Belo Horizonte the year before and attended the CEBH there but, according to Luis, there was no comparison to the familial atmosphere created at the CEL in London, as everyone from the church in Belo Horizonte had their own families, and spent Sunday with them.

Yet despite Luis's laments, the 'church as family' narrative was more pervasive than merely a temporary sense of family created in London. Rather, as discussed in Chapter 5, the founding discourse of the CEL evokes the church community as a family, with members taking a role within the family structure, in ministries, in communion with God, the Father. So, as Thiago, who had also returned to Belo Horizonte and frequented the CEL there, asserted:

The church is a family, as much here as there. Like anywhere in the world. The idea of the church – the body, and the structure, is precisely to be a family. Because that's what the Bible teaches, independent of us being in our own country or anywhere else – do you understand? The church has to be a family (24/04/10).

Similarly, Beatrice suggested that she didn't so much consider the church as a community in London, but rather as a family, a feeling that had continued back in Brazil, where she also frequents the CEBH. She explained, 'the pastor became my father when I was there, and even here now as my father has died, so I see him as my father, and his wife as my mother and I saw the people at the church as my brothers – united – you know?' (25/04/10). As Tania remarked, '[t]hey are not my family by blood, but they are my family by God.'

The feeling of communion with others thus goes beyond the sense of social interaction that helped to quell a sense of loneliness within the condition of being a Brazilian migrant in London. Rather, membership of the CEL, and by extension God's family, involved a spiritual communion with others, with a shared sense of commitment to a wider project to serve God. Yet within this – somewhat patriarchal - religious family it seemed that the (male) pastor held the highest level of authority, as he had been chosen by God to lead by example (see Chapter 5).

An 'alternative' space

It's clear that the tendency for many new migrants in London is this: lots of nights out, dancing, drinking . . . And to avoid this danger of drugs or prostitution, the church – whether it's evangelical or Catholic – offers an alternative, to feel centred, balanced, protected from things that could happen and that could even be irreversible (Padre José, 16/02/10).

A parallel narrative to that of the church as a community - or surrogate family - for migrants, was that of it offering an 'alternative' to other possible spaces of belonging sought by Brazilians in London. This echoes the arguments put forward by the religious leaders themselves with regard to the role of migrant religious institutions (see Chapter 5). Thus, a recurring theme among respondents from both religious communities was that co-worshippers at the church were more likely to be 'good' and trustworthy, as opposed to other people (usually other Brazilians) in London. Paulo, for instance, explained how one of the main reasons he frequented the church in London was that he met people there he felt he could trust:

because people who go to the church – of course we know that they are not perfect – but the people who go there – without doubt you will find good qualities in them, you'll find true words – you know? . . . It's the opposite of when you meet people in a bar, or in the street, in different places in London because . . .the people who are there – they are only there for pleasure... to drink, for women etc. When you are there [in the church], you are there to find God, to find peace (27/11/09).

As this citation suggests, there is a sense that the church provides a moral framework to follow in an otherwise 'immoral' city of pleasures. Such a discourse echoes the notion of 'before' and 'after' expressed in many of the conversion narratives of evangelical interviewees (see above) because, as Sheila remarked, 'when you don't have God in your life, you're vulnerable to this kind of thing. Like going out, getting drunk . . . following a bad path' (19/11/09).

This discourse of a 'bad path', as compared to the 'good path' offered by the church also points to a kind of 'insider'/'outsider' dichotomy, whereby those who are members of the church - or who are believers - have the strength to remain within a good moral framework, whereas many other Brazilians 'lose themselves' and have no clear path to follow. In this sense, religion and the church provide a means by which to control any 'immoral' urges. This remark from Ana, who frequented St Mary's, illustrates such a view:

I would say that without it [the church], without this communion with God, it is very difficult to live here [in London] without doing immoral things. Because the majority of Brazilians come here and they lose themselves . . . They become involved with drugs, with prostitution, sometimes even robbery . . . I think that the church becomes a way of not getting involved, of attempting to get out, or of attempting to avoid [such things] (20/11/09).

Similarly, Nestor remarked that there were, ‘many Brazilians in London who don’t go to church, perhaps even more who don’t go than who do go. But many Brazilians who don’t go lose themselves; they fall into prostitution, they get involved in drugs . . .’ (26/01/10). He continued,

[t]he [Brazilian] community in itself is very disunited. It’s like, everyone for themselves and God for everyone. But here at the church, for example, I know that if there’s anything I need I can count on people (Nestor, 26/01/10).

This image of the Brazilian community echoes the observations of other scholars of Brazilian migration (Margolis, 1994, 1998; Martes, 2000). Margolis (2008: 348) cites the work of Brown (2005, cf Margolis, 2008), who uses the term ‘ethnic ambivalence’ to describe the ‘simultaneous celebration of Brazilianness among small groups with a feeling of ambivalence towards this same Brazilianness when referring to the Brazilian migrant population at large’ (see Chapter 3). Yet within the narratives of those who felt they belonged to a religious institution, it seemed that the stereotypes that emerged relating to the ‘other Brazilians’, whose lives are characterised by prostitution, drugs, or robbery were even stronger. Indeed, the attitude of many research participants towards those outside the church community, revealed a strong sense of ambivalence, or even mistrust and they were described as being ‘opportunists’, wanting to ‘take advantage of you’ because, as Paulo argued, ‘they all come here just to make money – to make money at any price’ (27/11/09). Thus, for respondents such as Pedro, the church was crucial as it offered people,

rules . . . spiritual rules. You need to be able to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong. And if you go to church you have a certain fear of God, and you follow his path which I, and other believers, think is the right path, that of love, fraternity – you know?

Thus, in this view, those who do not go to church are susceptible to following the ‘wrong path’, one where individual gain takes precedence over concern for others in a similar situation.

An exclusionary space

Yet while the above examples reveal some of the ways in which the church provided migrants with a sense of belonging, it seemed that the other side of the coin to the provision of an 'inclusive' space of 'spiritual rules', was the potential exclusion of migrants who felt that their practices or lifestyles did not fit into the moral framework required. Many of these migrants had in fact been churchgoers in Brazil, but factors relating to their individual migration trajectories meant that they felt they did not 'belong' within the religious community.

Dalva and Estevan, for example, a couple interviewed in Brazil, explained how although they were evangelical and frequented a church in Brazil, they had distanced themselves from institutional religion in London because they were living together outside marriage. As Dalva, who had in fact begun frequenting the CEL in London but stopped when Estevan arrived, explained:

I carried on going for a long time but when he arrived the question of us being able to remain 'holy' - let's say - arose, so I stopped going, as I felt I couldn't be a hypocrite at the church . . . because it would have been hypocritical . . . I feel that an example says much more than words . . . so I distanced myself (17/06/10).

Back in Brazil they had got married, and frequented their local Baptist church more regularly than they had before.

For Thiago and Juliana, who had returned to Brazil unexpectedly having been deported, the guilt that they had felt at being 'illegal' in London meant that they had willingly accepted their deportation, knowing that being irregular was condemned by the church and, in turn, by God. Thus, Juliana explained how she could not stay in London illegally because, she said, 'it was wrong, I had to come back.' When she returned to Brazil she had been depressed for eight months but, she explained:

this period of suffering . . . helped me to see my life in a different way. Because, in fact, although it was the toughest period I've ever experienced, it was also one of the best times I've had in terms of discovering myself - seeing my mistakes, and understanding . . . that I really disobeyed God. . . so when I returned God began to make me realise this (24/04/10).

The feeling of living 'in sin' in London had thus brought Juliana closer to God and she felt that this represented an important stage in her personal development. Thus, the above examples suggest that although the sense of living 'in sin' had impacted on

their migration experience, the migrants still felt that the church's attitude was the right one, the benchmark of morality.

Among Catholic respondents, the feeling of guilt associated with being irregular, or of living as a couple outside marriage, was less of a deterrent to their church attendance and some suggested how St Mary's was actually one of the few places where they felt 'more safe' in the context of what was described as a constant feeling of 'oppression and fear of immigration [authorities]' (Fernando, 23/02/10). Indeed, the general feeling among migrants at St Mary's seems to resonate with Martes's (2000: 147) observations among irregular migrants in Boston, who lived with the 'constant and uncomfortable sense of uprootedness', and for whom the 'welcoming atmosphere of the church contrast[ed] with the situation outside, perceived as competitive, with little solidarity or sense of community spirit.'

Yet despite feeling welcomed at St Mary's regardless of their immigration status - a sentiment that corresponded to the discourses of the church leaders (discussed in Chapter 5) - some migrants referred to an incident in the church when a BBC journalist, claiming to be interested in the Brazilian community in London, had in fact exposed the irregular status of many migrants in his television report. Thus, for example, Anete, a Catholic woman I interviewed in Brazil, said that she chose not to frequent the church in London because, having heard this story, she was terrified of being deported (05/05/10). Indeed, one interviewee, Cristiana, who also chose not to frequent a church in London, recounted how one of the few times she did go to St Mary's, soon after the incident, Padre José made an announcement saying, 'I'm not telling you not to participate in the Mass, and I don't want you to distance yourselves from the church, but if you have problems with your immigration status, it's probably better if you don't come to the church' (05/06/10). Rather than condemning irregular migrants, Padre José was seeking to protect them. Yet being irregular herself, Cristiana felt that it would be a risk attending a church in which people had been exposed.

Finally, there were migrants who chose not to frequent the church in London because of the sense of a 'closed community' that it seemed to represent, an insular environment characterised by gossip (*fofoca*). Ivone, for example, who had attended the Brazilian Mass at St Mary's ever since she arrived in London six years ago, told me how she had begun to distance herself from the Brazilian Catholic community because of their reaction to her marriage. She had met a Portuguese man, who was

also a member of the church and who, after about a year of their ‘dating’, had proposed to her. Owing to the fact that she was an irregular migrant, some church members speculated that the marriage was purely for the sake of her obtaining a visa and as a result she felt marginalised by the church community. She told me how she now prefers to attend the English Mass early on a Sunday morning as she feels she can be more anonymous, but also be true to her faith and desire to spread the word of God, as opposed to providing a subject of gossip.

Such examples challenge what Ley (2008: 2063) describes as the ‘spatial dichotomy of external stress and internal security’ that emerged from his research among migrants attending churches in Vancouver. Rather than representing purely inclusionary, secure, spaces for migrants, the above examples suggest that churches can in fact be exclusionary, even for those who define themselves as churchgoers.

A sense of ‘Brazilianness’: help or hindrance to integration?

The first time that I came here I felt, it was like I’d arrived at the Sunday Mass in my town [in Brazil] (Lucia, focus group, 24/02/10).

Another important function for the church with regard to the creation of a sense of community was in relation to cultural continuity: the creation of a familiar ‘Brazilian’ space in which people could feel a sense of being closer to home (see Chapter 5). For new arrivals in London who did not speak much English, the possibility to interact within a Portuguese-speaking environment was important in helping them to cope with the sense of isolation they felt in London. Yet, as with the attitudes of the religious leaders discussed in Chapter 5 (above), the narratives of church members revealed contrasting notions of the extent to which this ‘Brazilianness’ actually facilitated or in fact hindered their integration into wider society in London.

For Claudia, who frequented St Mary’s, it was important to feel part of a Brazilian community within the church as it provided ‘a bit of security to feel that you are close to people who were brought up within the same culture, and who will understand you more than an English person would’ (29/11/09). Similarly, Danilo, now back in Brazil, described how St Mary’s had been an important space for him in London, as it was frequented primarily by Brazilians and thus allowed one to ‘remember your culture, your origins’ (30/05/10).

Indeed, as discussed in Chapter 5, the leaders of the Catholic Church, and indeed those at the PBE who organise training for priests going to London, considered cultural preservation as a key part of the migrant church's role. Sister Rosita described the church as an important space for the conservation of 'popular memory and tradition. Thus, typical religious celebrations, celebrated with much joy and devotion, reflect an affirmation of migrants' ethnic identity' (pers. comm., 4/11/10). The conscious evocation of a 'Little Brazil' - reflecting what Ley (2008: 2070) describes as the 'task of reinvention, of becoming home' - represented, for many, welcome assistance in maintaining ties with their Brazilian 'roots' (see also Vasquez and Ribeiro, 2007). Traditional (Brazilian) Catholic celebrations were thus significant dates in the annual calendar for many migrants, with some kind of commemoration taking place almost every month in the year. As Jaine, who had returned to Brazil the year before, recalled, '[w]e met lots of people at the church – you know? If we didn't go there, we would have been stuck at home, without meeting anyone. We joined the parties, the commemorations; there was always a festivity! And my daughter received her first communion there' (05/06/10).

The largest such event is the *feira junina* – a traditional Brazilian (originally Portuguese) celebration which takes place in June and usually consists of various celebrations - to celebrate St John's day. Felipe, who is involved in organising events at St Mary's, recounted how last year there were eight thousand people involved in the *feiras juninas* (which took place at each of the six churches that comprise the Brazilian chaplaincy) including at least seven hundred English people, and 'other ethnic groups.' The creation of a 'Little Brazil', entailed by events of this kind, suggests a potentially inward-looking, insular practice that may hinder engagement with the host society. For Felipe, however, this can in fact have the opposite effect: far from examples of ethnic self-segregation, such events represent affirmations of 'Brazilianness' that serve to create a cultural dialogue, potentially facilitating integration into the host society:

[T]he English community also wants to know about Brazil, this 'little Brazil' that is created [during the celebration]. So then people will interact, and mix, to help the community integrate (28/01/10).

Yet, while being able to worship in Portuguese, and to attend traditional Brazilian *feiras* was clearly an important factor, it seemed that the appeal of a Brazilian church for migrants went deeper than just language and parties; rather it was

the style of worship that was key, the experience of communion that was so closely interconnected with Brazilian identity. As Nestor related:

[D]uring my first six months I didn't know that there was a Brazilian church in London and I was really depressed, I almost went back to Brazil. Because I went to the English Mass, and it felt like I was at a wake, or in a cemetery – you know that really cold atmosphere . . . I cried, and I felt 'my God, this isn't Mass! This is a funeral.' And then, I discovered the church here [St Mary's], and things changed, my life changed completely. I began to feel like I was home again (26/01/10).

Thus, for Nestor, participation in the church was essential to his adaptation to life in London, giving him the confidence and the sense of belonging to facilitate his feeling of being 'at home' there. He explained how, while he found his first jobs through people at the church, 'now that [his] English is better, he's looking on websites, at the jobcentre, through English contacts' (26/01/10). Indeed, Nestor now gives free English classes every day of the week to Brazilian migrants at the church, thus passing on the skills that he has learnt to other migrants to facilitate their process of interacting with the host society, even if they do still choose to worship in a Brazilian space. Such examples suggest how in some ways, rather than representing an 'escape' from the everyday reality of life in the host society – in this case London – the church can provide migrants with the tools to engage effectively within it (see Chapter 5).

Among evangelical respondents, on the other hand, there seemed to be greater wariness about the potential 'risk of a ghetto' (Adilson, 09/02/10) that participation in a purely 'Brazilian' religious community could entail. Indeed, such a contrast reflects the attitudes of the church leaders themselves. As Chapter 5 highlighted, the leaders of the CEL sought to present the church beyond national lines, thus evoking a sense of a universal Christian identity, as opposed to a Brazilian one. Furthermore, the emphasis placed on obedience to the rules of the host society - inspired by Biblical teachings as well as Pastor Marco's personal sense of gratitude to the UK - meant that cooperation with, rather than resistance to, the host society was an important message conveyed to the congregation. It seemed that such a discourse of obedience, respect and, as a result, integration, had been internalised by some members of the CEL. Thus, as Sheila remarked when asked about the sense of a 'Brazilian' community evoked at the church:

I think that, as you said before, some people go to church because they feel the need to be with other Brazilians and to feel a bit 'at home'. I feel the opposite . . . I think it's important, as we're in an English country . . . we can't live in our own world. We have to respect the culture. We have to be more open to learn to be more involved with English people, not only Brazilians (19/11/09).

Yet in fact, for some worshippers, despite the attempts by church leaders to encourage members to seek a 'place at the table', as opposed to creating an 'alternative public' (Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003: 170), the reality of a locale dominated by Brazilians, many of whom speak no English and interact solely with Brazilians, meant that the church inevitably becomes a 'Brazilian space,' potentially isolated from mainstream society. Thus some interviewees who had left the church after a few years spoke of the dangers of staying only within a 'little Brazil', and the need to 'find a balance' so as to engage more with 'English culture' (Adilson, 09/12/09). Jordão, who frequented the CEL when he first arrived in London but left soon afterwards explained:

I didn't want to stay in an 'island' and I'm really pleased to have been to an Anglican Church because they teach a different way of seeing the Bible. The Brazilian churches always teach the same thing, so you don't learn anything. I think that both cultures have a lot to learn from each other . . . I'm amazed at how some people have no interest in discovering new churches (18/02/10).

The divergent attitudes of migrants from the two churches towards their role in creating a 'Brazilian' space can help us understand what participation within these different religious communities means. For many members of St Mary's, an integral part of involvement in the religious community was participation in the creation of a Brazilian space, forging a collective sense of Brazilian identity in London. Yet through such participation, some migrants seemed to gain a sense of dignity, or self-worth, to cope with some of the challenges of life in London, to share such experiences with other members, but also, to engage within that society with more confidence.

Within the CEL, contrastingly, the emphasis placed on the individual's relationship with God, within the familial framework, meant that for some members, the Brazilian make-up of the CEL and the construction of a shared Brazilian identity were secondary to the importance of communion with a wider religious community of Christians. While for many the space of sociability created by the church was cited as important in their process of adapting to life in London, the use of the social, religious, and moral resources derived from the church also served the wider purpose

of integration, and ultimately evangelisation, within the host society. Indeed, for some respondents, interacting solely with people at the church would undermine one of their main duties as Christians: to spread God's message. Thus Leonardo, for example, described how he had been involved with a violent drugs gang in Brazil, before he was 'saved' - by people who showed him 'God's path' - before it was 'too late'. He explained:

If everyone closed themselves within the church, how would I have found God? How could anyone have told me about God? I could still be there [in Brazil] – dead . . . Because I would have been put in jail, or someone would have killed me . . . But because someone didn't close themselves within the church, they came out and made friends with me, I was able to find God. And I want to do the same for others (27/01/10).

The ways in which migrants' religious faith extends beyond the borders of religious institutions is discussed in more depth in Chapter 7.

Religious practices across borders

Practising religion 'virtually'

As well as an important space for the creation of a community (be it Brazilian, familial, or Christian) in London, the churches play an important role in enabling migrants to maintain ties with Brazil. Thus the Brazilian atmosphere within the churches was a consequence not merely of conscious creation, in the case of the Catholic Church, but also of regular contact with Brazil through the arrivals, departures, and everyday transnational practices of church members.

While the construction of a virtual presence was essential for the religious institutions to attract new members, and to communicate with existing ones, the Internet also played a fundamental role in many migrants' participation in these religious communities. The transmission of *Cultos* and *Missas* over the Internet, for example, provided migrants with greater flexibility as to how they could attend religious services. Thus, for migrants who were unable to attend the service because of their working hours, the Internet was a crucial resource to allow their participation within the church community. Paula, who had returned to Brazil in January 2010 but had participated in St Mary's when she was living in London, recalled:

There were days when I said to myself, ‘ah, today I’m not going to church.’ I was so tired that I would say ‘no I’m not going.’ But I would watch Padre Mauricio’s Mass on my laptop. I would get up early and watch it at home (07/05/10).

Furthermore, for some devotees, this live transmission enabled them to share their religious experience with their loved ones back in Brazil, who could tune in to watch simultaneously with their relative or friend. In the case of both churches, it was not just the formal services that were filmed to be shared virtually; many prayer groups, celebrations, and special events were filmed and made available for multiple virtual viewers, challenging the physical distance brought about by migration. Thus for Wesley and Deborah, who gave their ‘testimony’ at the charismatic *Celebra a Vitoria* event (see above), the fact that their mothers could watch in Brazil was a fundamental part of the experience of communion with other worshippers at the church, and with their families back home. They explained:

W: today, it was shown on the Internet. . .

D: And my mother was in Brazil watching it

W: And my mother was watching too!

D: they were listening to what we said!

W: So when we were up there [on stage] . . . so today we feel as if there isn’t so much distance – we’re not so far from our family in Brazil, because whether we like it or not they were watching us today. So we felt they were close to us. I feel that it’s God’s love that does this. We felt close to our family – despite the distance (13/12/09).

As well as making use of the church’s official websites and prayer groups to communicate and share experiences within the religious community, many members of the churches also communicate virtually via more informal Internet networks through sites such as ‘Facebook’, ‘Orkut’,⁵⁰ and online photograph-sharing sites. Thus members of the CEL have created a specific CEL Facebook page, where members can post photographs and comments, and advertise events to share with the wider community, including the other CEL churches in other parts of Europe and Brazil. Similarly, at St Mary’s, devotees had created a specific website for people to share photographs from church events both among people in London, and their families back home. The Internet was thus an important element in many migrants’ use of religious institutions, enabling them to participate virtually and to remember

⁵⁰ Orkut is a social networking website that is extremely popular among Brazilians. See Oosterbaan, (2010a) for an interesting discussion of the use of Orkut among Brazilian migrants in Amsterdam and Barcelona.

events through the sharing of photographs. There was, however, little evidence to suggest that the Internet was a replacement for (physical) participation in the religious communities. Rather, it seems, migrants have incorporated virtual media into their existing practices as part of the religious community.⁵¹

The possibility of attending a religious service or prayer group transnationally, through virtual channels, was also an important part of the experience of return. Thus, Graciela, who returned to Brazil in December 2007, but had moved around a lot since she had been back, explained how the on-line prayer group at St Mary's had been an important source of support for her, and had enabled to her to keep in touch with her friends back in London:

Maria sent me the link to the church's website, so now we're back, we always watch the on-line prayer group that they show – Messengers of Love. She participates too so in that way we can stay in touch (06/05/10).

She did attend Mass at her local church, but since she had recently moved there from another part of Brazil she did not feel the same sense of unity she had felt with her co-worshippers in London. Juliana in Brazil, who had frequented the CEL in London, explained how, when she returned to Brazil, although she was delighted to attend the CEL in Belo Horizonte, she had missed Pastor Marco's sermons as he was still in London, so she would watch them over the Internet:

I used to watch the *Cultos* because [when I was in London] I was very close to Pastor Marco – so I wanted to see the *Cultos*, to hear his sermons. And then he came back here, so I hardly watch it anymore! (24/04/10)

Once again, rather than a substitute for church attendance, for Juliana the Internet was another resource that she could use to tailor her religious practice to suit her specific needs. Moreover, the use of the Internet among return migrants to remain in contact with their religious lives in London reveals another way in which the boundaries between here and there, before and after, are blurred as migrants participate in a transnational religious space. There is a sense that these migrants use the Internet to maintain embedded in their lives, or at least its religious aspects, as migrants in London.

⁵¹ See Wilding (2006) for an interesting discussion of the use of new 'Information and Communications Technologies' (ICTs) among migrants in Australia. Challenging some of the utopian hypotheses of early scholars of such phenomena, Wilding (*ibid*: 126) argues that new ICTs 'have been incorporated in interesting (rather than exciting) ways into the familiar, ongoing patterns of everyday social life.' See also Oosterbaan (2010a)

Religious remittances: religious practices and beliefs across borders

I prayed so much for my brother [in Brazil] that he started going to church too, knowing that his sister over here goes . . . I know that God listens to our prayers, and that God is, he really is, working in their lives. And one day, I am certain and I have faith that I will see my father and brothers converted (Sheila, 19/11/09).

The movement and exchange of religious practices and beliefs across borders did not just influence the lives of those who had themselves migrated. There were many examples of migrants in London whose new religious experiences had, in some ways, influenced the lives of their families and friends back in Brazil. Such phenomena reflect transfers of what I call religious remittances - a variation on Levitt's notion of 'social remittances', which refer to the movement of ideas, practices and values across borders as a result of the migration process (see Chapter 2).

Thus, for example, among interviewees at the CEL who had been 'born-again' and converted to Christianity in London, spreading the message to their family members and friends in Brazil was an important element in their newfound identity. Beatrice, who had recently returned to Brazil to get married, explained how she had met her husband on a visit back to Brazil when she was still living in London. She recalled:

When we first started going out, and were getting to know each other, I began to teach him the word of God. I went back to London, and he carried on going to church . . . It was very important for me because, if he hadn't converted, he couldn't understand me . . . as husband and wife, it wouldn't work. But glory to God, he saw the right path, he saw that God's presence can really make a difference in our lives – you know? And I didn't need to say anything. He felt this for himself, and he started going to church. . . (25/04/10).

Beatrice's husband's conversion to Christianity, and his becoming a regular churchgoer, occurred while she herself was still living in London and was inspired by her all-embracing commitment to God's word that she had discovered while there. Indeed, it became a condition for her continuing the relationship with him. Back in Belo Horizonte, they both frequent the CEBH and actively participate in church activities.

The religious practices of Ana's family in Brazil had also been influenced by her active participation in St Mary's in London (see Chapter 1). Ana had moved to London in 2003 and, while her family lamented how much they still missed her, they had, over time, found ways to cope with her absence. Both Rogerio, Ana's brother, and Manuel, her father, explained how, while the whole family were fairly devoted Catholics, Ana had always been the most actively involved in the church, and as Manuel put it, 'the most dedicated' (18/06/10). Yet it seemed that her migration to London had made her 'even more dedicated', a process that had influenced the religious lives of her family 'back home'. Rogerio had begun to go to church more since Ana had been in England and had become more active in the Charismatic Renewal group. He explained:

I didn't go to church much before. I would go to some services and things, but she always did. One thing she showed me that influenced my faith was the Charismatic Renewal [movement]. I really like it, and now I go to the prayer groups when I can. I even have some [charismatic] bands that I listen to all the time (16/06/10)

Manuel, on the other hand, went to church less frequently, especially since his wife and second daughter had also moved to London. Rather than helping him cope with their absence, he said that going to church in fact made him more aware of it. He remarked:

It's different. When I go now, I always go with Rogerio, but it feels like there's an emptiness. Because I'm there and I feel like I can see Michelle walking around, Carla sitting next to me – I feel a real emptiness.

Yet despite not going to church, Ana's migration to London, he said, had made him more aware of the power of his faith:

My faith has grown a lot. Because we have faith in God that every day will be better. And things have improved a lot for us. Before, I never had the means to visit my parents [in North East Brazil]. But now she helps me, I have visited them a few times. So thanks to our faith everything can get better (18/06/10).

Thus Ana's migration to London, as well as having a material impact on her family's life back in Brazil – through the remittances she sends back, has also influenced them spiritually, making them more aware of the importance of their faith and how this brought them closer together.

The CEL as an institution also offers an interesting example of *religious remittances*. As discussed in Chapter 5, Pastor Marco, who founded the CEL in

London in 1991, established another ‘branch’ of the church in Belo Horizonte in 1995 to which he has now returned as senior pastor. Since then, more ‘branches’ of the church have been established: in Watford, Amsterdam, and Lisbon in Europe, as well as in other towns in Brazil. The CEL has thus become a transnational church, located in several places, but sharing a common identity and values. Many religious remittances have thus been ‘remitted’ by Pastor Marco himself, his ‘calling’ from God to go to London, his subsequent return to Brazil after twenty years, and his regular contact with London through bi-annual visits and regular contact via the Internet. The CEBH is a hybrid transnational religious space that is influenced by the religious lives of members of the CEL in London and those who return to Brazil.

Indeed, the CEL is also very much the product of the people who frequent its churches, who bring their own practices, beliefs and experiences to the religious community revealing another example of the movement of religious remittances. In Belo Horizonte, I interviewed a number of return migrants who had frequented the CEL in London and, back in Brazil, were regular members of the church there. They kept in contact with their *irmãos* at the community in London through the Internet, but also enjoyed the familiar faces of people who had returned from London too and with whom they could share their memories and experiences. The several members of the CEBH in Belo Horizonte who had been at the CEL in London seemed to play important roles in the church in Brazil. Thus, Thiago explained how one of his main reasons for coming back to live in Belo Horizonte, as opposed to São Paulo, the city that he was originally from, was:

The church [the CEL], the fact that I have friends here . . . and so as to be able to help with the development of the church because, as you can see, the church here is still quite small and is going through changes at the moment. And . . . there are some people who are more trustworthy and, thank God, I’m one of the people Pastor Marco trusts – from the time that we were together in London, the time that I dedicated to the church in London. So he said to me, ‘I would be immensely happy to have you there . . . to know that you were there helping with the growth of the church (24/04/10).

Both Luis and Juliana, also returnees, had also begun to frequent the CEBH in Belo Horizonte on their return and had soon become very actively involved in some of the church’s ministries, in many ways emulating, or expanding, the roles they had played in the community in London. One Saturday afternoon I was invited to a women’s tea

party at the church, where Juliana performed a song. I wrote the following in my field diary:

We all sat around tables, which had been laid out with China teacups and biscuits – very English! The event began with some prayers, and songs, performed by Juliana and Florencia. Then we played some games, including Bingo, and guessing games. My team, somehow, won two of the games, so I found myself ‘onstage’ twice during the afternoon! At the end, Juliana, who had a beautiful voice, performed a song, which she called ‘Mulher da fé’ [woman of faith]. Afterwards she told me how the song had been about her, how her faith had helped her gain more confidence in her musical ability in London, and how back in Brazil she was really working on this. It was interesting to see how she shared her experience in London with the other members of the church (field diary, 17/04/10).

Luis and Juliana were also leaders in the ‘ministry of English’, teaching free English classes to church members once a week. While, as discussed in Chapter 5, the motivation behind the provision of English classes was not to benefit potential migrants, there was little doubt that the experience of having been in London influenced the ways in which they taught their students. On two occasions during my fieldwork in Belo Horizonte, Luis invited me to come to his English classes, to show the students what a ‘real English person’ was like, and how to speak with a ‘real English accent’!

The above examples thus reveal how migrants’ religious practices in London have an effect on the religious field of their home contexts. Yet, as Levitt and Lamba-Nieves (2011: 2) argue, social - and in this case religious - ‘remittances’ work in both directions, and are thus shaped by migrants’ identities and ideas prior to migrating, as well as by their experiences in the host country. Thus it seems that it would be erroneous to see a dichotomy between migrants’ religious practices in London and Brazil. Rather, the religious practices of migrants in London and back home in Brazil in fact blur the boundaries between the ‘here’ and ‘there’, between ‘roots’ and ‘routes’, between social and spiritual, and are remitted in both directions within a transnational religious space.

Returning to the church

Indeed, since social, and in this case religious, remittances are ‘circular’ rather than ‘one-way’ (Levitt and Lamba-Nieves, 2011), and are influenced by multiple factors

and actors, a consideration of the role of religion in the lives of return migrants must also be viewed through a transnational lens that enables us to consider religion, like migration, as a process rather than as a fixed element of one's identity. Moreover, while interviewees talked about their 'different' religious practices back in Brazil as compared to London, such differences were often attributable to practical or personal reasons that were not directly related to religious teaching or the religious community itself.

Indeed, one important issue that emerged in interviews with return migrants was the challenge of re-adaptation. For many return migrants, it seemed that the process of re-entering their lives back in Brazil was more challenging than adapting to being a migrant in London. As Dalva recounted:

I would say that re-adaptation is more difficult than adaptation to London, despite the language barrier and everything. Because when you're in London it's something new that you hope to discover, and you go there as a pioneer, let's say. And there it's crazy, lots of difficulties, every day's a challenge . . . especially in relation to the language in my case. But when you come back to Brazil you're full of expectations, and from the first experiences, the impression that stays with you is one of massive frustration. After so long there you end up fooling yourself and creating a very positive image of Brazil which, when you arrive, you realise isn't real. It was a shock (17/06/10).

Bernardo also suggested that 'coming back [was] harder than going', because, he said, although 'you are close to your family and the quality of life is better than there [in London] where you only worked, financially it's a lot harder than London' (21/02/10). He and his wife Dulce had returned to Brazil three months before and, having spent all of their savings from their time in London on buying a house and a plot of land in the village where Dulce grew up, they were finding it difficult to make ends meet. In the face of such challenges, the support provided by religion was clearly very important, just as it had been in London in helping them to face the challenges of life there. Back in Brazil, they would go to church every Sunday, and Dulce would often go on Tuesdays as well to a smaller prayer group with other members of the village. As Bernardo remarked, '[i]t's important to overcome the difficulties that we're going to face' (21/06/10).

Another narrative among returnees was that of migrants who had not frequented the church in London, but had returned and sought religion, precisely because of the challenge of re-adaptation. Clarice, for example, who had been a fairly devoted Catholic in Brazil, described how she had distanced herself from the church

in London, because, she said, ‘it was a bit far from where I was living, and I was living with people who weren’t really into going to church (laughs!) . . . they led me up the wrong path!’ Yet on returning to Brazil the year before she had begun to frequent an evangelical church with her mother, who had converted in her absence. She explained, ‘I’m on an evangelical path now . . . I really like it, they teach the Bible and I’m understanding it much more than I used to’ (05/06/10).

Thus, rather than losing its importance on return, it seemed that, for many migrants, religion and being part of a religious community, was an important factor in the process of return to life in Brazil. For Juliana, who (as discussed above) was deported and had suffered from depression during her first eight months back in Brazil in 2006, the CEBH in Belo Horizonte was a very important source of support for her, enabling her to re-gain her sense of dignity and trust in God. When asked what she felt the difference was between the church ‘over there’ and the church ‘here’ (in Brazil) she replied:

I think that there isn’t a lot of difference, the faith is the same – I don’t see much difference between the churches in relation to faith. I think that this is something that is in each person’s heart, there’s no way of saying whether the faith in one church is different to the other – this is individual, faith is individual. But I think that, if you were to compare them – they do have some differences. For example, a Brazilian church in a different country – worshippers will pray for different things, they’ll have different needs. Because here in Brazil we have different needs than in London (24/04/10).

Juliana’s words were echoed in the responses of other returnees: the notion that individual faith is the same – it transcends borders – but that the church, inevitably, takes on a different role in a different setting. Such narratives thus seem to illustrate the hypothesis that migrant religiosity is ‘transformed from one form to another’ (Freston, 2008: 257) as opposed to becoming more or less important in the receiving setting. Yet the notion of religion in the migration process shifting from ‘one form to another’ seems to somewhat simplify what is in fact a more complex and multi-faceted process whereby religion, and participation in a church community, take on different meanings for different people according to their particular situations.

A recurring theme within the narratives of respondents from both churches was that the church represented a space within which to nurture and support their personal relationship with God. Thus Ana, who described the church as, ‘the place where you go to nurture your beliefs – in the divine force, in God, in Jesus. So that’s

the church's role for us – to nurture our faith' (20/11/09). Similarly Maria, who was not actively involved at St Mary's, but attended the *Missa* once a week, replied when asked about the role of the church in her life:

I come because . . . goodness! One hour of my life – of the seven days in a week, one little hour that I have to come here, and listen, and sing, and worship God, and show him that I love him, that I worship him, and that I need him in my life'(22/11/09).

For Lucia, 'without the church, it is very difficult to feel close to God.' She continued, 'you can pray at home, but you need the church in order to really feel God's word' (08/12/09). Thus, while there is little doubt that the church also takes on an important social role for migrants, and perhaps serves certain specific functions with regard to the realities of life as a migrant, it would be an oversimplification to focus solely on this social and collective role in the receiving context. Rather, it seems that just as migration is an individual pursuit (which is influenced by and has an effect upon wider frameworks involving institutions and groups), so too religion is, for many, about an individual relationship with God, if one that is, in many cases, supported by, and nurtured within, the framework of a religious institution which may, in turn, take on wider social and practical functions. In this sense, these Brazilian churches represent spaces for the creation and maintenance of both collective and individual identities for Brazilian migrants in London.

Concluding remarks

Not only is the faith immigrants bring with them not monolithic, its size and shape is very much a work-in-progress (Levitt , 2007: 94).

This chapter has explored some of the ways in which migrants use religious institutions in response to the experience of migration. It has considered how churches represent important spaces for responding to some of the needs of migrants: assisting in their adaptation to the host society; enabling a space for the creation of a sense of community; and facilitating both the maintenance of ties with, as well as the return to, Brazil. Yet while the chapter has highlighted some of the social and practical functions of these Brazilian churches in London, it has suggested that these functions cannot be separated from the individual spirituality of migrants and their adaptable uses of religious institutions to fulfil both spiritual and social needs. As Vasquez and

Ribeiro (2007: 21) write, '[i]t is important to recognise that the role of religion [. . .] cannot be reduced to the public functions carried out by churches, despite their importance.' Thus I suggest that it would be naïve to separate the social and the spiritual and suggest, for instance, that attending a church to meet others is 'less religious' than going to church to find communion with God. Rather, it seems that in both sending and receiving contexts the social and the spiritual are inseparable and, moreover, the extent to which one prevails over the other is closely intertwined with the migrant's individual experience, which may be contradictory and constantly shifting.

The chapter has also argued that migrants' religious practices and beliefs in London have a significant impact on the lives of their families and friends back home, and vice versa, as they are 'remitted' across borders. Religious remittances also play a role in the return context as religion becomes an important resource for return migrants to cope with the challenges of re-adaptation. This chapter has also highlighted some of the ways in which Brazilian migrants use the Internet, and in this case church websites, to create, sustain, and expand forms of belonging within transnational religious spaces which also enable them to remain embedded in their religious lives in London.

Depictions of the church as a refuge, a family, a community, were common themes within the narratives associated with both churches, concurring with much of the existing literature on migrant churches. Yet my research also revealed examples of exclusion, of a sense of not belonging among migrants who, despite being religious, felt that they would not fit in to the values of the church community. Thus transnational religious spaces can be exclusionary as well as inclusionary, creating new barriers at the same time as opening up existing ones. Indeed, while the possibilities of new media have opened up new spaces for (transnational) religious expression and communication among migrants, these virtual possibilities do not challenge the very real boundaries that permeate the everyday lives of many migrants in London, including those created by the churches.

Finally, the chapter has pointed to the fact that church attendance is not necessarily the most illuminating way of measuring 'religiosity'. For some respondents, among those not frequenting a church in London, their migration experience was nevertheless marked by a profound spiritual journey, which gave them a narrative to explain their migration. Moreover, many migrants and their families

who did frequent churches felt that the experience would not have been possible without their religious faith. Thus religion, like migration itself is, as Levitt (2007: 294) suggests, a 'work-in progress' which, far from having definitive borders is, in fact flexible, multifaceted, and determined by individual experience. The ways in which religious faith is manifested beyond the institutional sphere of the church are explored in more depth in the next chapter.

Chapter 7

Narratives of religion-as-lived (across borders)

[T]he key questions concern what people *do* with religious idioms, how they use them, what they make of themselves and their worlds with them, and how, in turn, men, women, and children are fundamentally shaped by the worlds they are making as they make these worlds (Orsi, 2002: 172)

While Chapter 5 considered some of the ways in which Brazilian churches in London adapt to the migration context and function transnationally, Chapter 6 explored the diverse uses of these churches among migrants. With reference to religious institutions, and from the perspectives of religious leaders and migrants, both chapters argued that a broader understanding of religion is required in order to fully engage with the ways in which religion is intertwined with the migration experiences of Brazilians in London. This chapter develops further this more holistic conception of religion, and considers the role of religion (which incorporates notions of spirituality and faith-inspired practice) in the lives of migrants outside the institutional religious realm.

As Ribeiro (2005: 2) suggests, the search for meaning in life that ‘religious experience’ implies is rooted in the everyday lives of individuals and ‘does not necessarily imply participation in a religious community.’ It thus follows that it is important to consider how religion, this ‘search for meaning’, is experienced in spaces and through practices that go beyond participation in a religious community. Indeed, just as institutional religious spaces are often used to address everyday concerns – for example, migrants attending church to find a job or a room to rent - so the everyday lives of many migrants and the spaces they inhabit can themselves be imbued with religious and spiritual meanings (McGuire, 2007). Moreover, religion often becomes an important means through which migrants explain, justify and cope with the physical and emotional aspects of their migration process.

Drawing on interviews with Brazilians who frequented the CEL and St Mary’s, as well as with return migrants and family members of Brazilians in London conducted during fieldwork in Brazil, this chapter considers some of the different ways in which religion – as it is lived and practised in everyday life - can provide

important ‘spiritual resources’ throughout the migration experience (Hagan and Ebaugh, 2003: 1146). It also draws on some interviews with people who did not participate in a particular religious community, but for whom their religious faith, or engagement with a personal spirituality, played an important part in their everyday existence.

The analysis here is based on what migrants say and do, and how they perceive their experiences, as opposed to what they actually feel spiritually, or indeed *how* they connect with ‘up there’. But it does point to a broader understanding of religion, one which moves beyond the narratives provided by institutional religion and one which, as Ammerman (2007: 9) suggests, ‘leaves open the possibility’ that the boundaries between “‘religious” and “secular”” are ‘permeable.’ In the context of migration, this permeability of boundaries and transcendence of scales takes on an even greater significance, as migrants forge connections between multiple places and realms of experience, at the same time as creating new ones (Levitt, 2007). Yet few scholars have drawn connections between this broader understanding of religion - as lived experience - and the migration process, or considered how religion, beyond the congregational setting, becomes a crucial resource in the everyday lives of migrants and their families at all stages of the migration process. This chapter argues that a ‘lived religion approach’ (Orsi, 2002: 174) provides many insights into how religion is closely intertwined in the migration experiences of Brazilians in London and on their return, as well as for their families whom they leave behind.

A broader understanding of religion and spirituality among Brazilians

Conceptualising religion through migrants’ narratives

Too often, our concepts for describing and analyzing individuals’ religions simply fail to capture how multifaceted, diverse and malleable are the beliefs, values, and practices that make up many (perhaps most) persons’ own religions (McGuire, 2008: 5).

Religion is an ‘unstable signifier’ (Ivakhiv, 2006) and thus can mean many things, from a ‘marker of identity’ to a ‘broad category of societal concern’ (*ibid*: 173). It can be differentially perceived depending on whether seen ‘from within’ or ‘from without’ (*ibid*). Moreover, as the previous chapters have argued, even within a

particular institution, religious ideas and practices can take on multiple meanings depending on the perspectives of different people, in different places, at different times. Thus, rather than attempt to find a binding definition of religion and its role in the migration process, this chapter suggests that it is precisely the instability, malleability, and plurality of religious meanings that make it a crucial and integral consideration in the study of migration processes and the multiple ‘identity trajectories’ (Kolstø, 1996) that such movements entail.

Vasquez (2005: 224) argues that ‘the exclusive focus on meaning and signification in religion has ignored the material, embodied, place-making dimensions of religion.’ He suggests that the category of religion is ‘socially contingent’ and thus it seems that more attention should be paid to how individuals interpret, embody and practise religion in ways that go beyond what he describes as the, ‘unchanging truths of great texts’. The narratives of many participants in the current research reveal these different understandings of religion and the role of religious faith in their everyday lives.

The notion of how one’s individual relationship with God must be a continual and unconditional one was, of course, a pertinent narrative in the discourses of the two churches, expressed in many of the sermons of the religious leaders. This extract from my field diary describes a *Culto* at the CEL on the occasion of one of Pastor Marco’s visits to London after his permanent return to the CEBH in Belo Horizonte:

He [Pastor Marco] is clearly a huge celebrity at the church and the evening was more formal than usual. Everyone was dressed up very smartly, and the children were downstairs, watching the service on a TV screen . . . His sermon had different strands including ‘Deus é Provador’ (God is the Tester), Deus é Fiel (God is Loyal), and Deus é Aperfeicoador (God is the Improver). At one point he exclaimed ‘A true Christian can’t do anything if God cannot take part’ while at another point he said, ‘Even in your habitual pastimes you can give glory to God (field diary, 21st Nov 2010).

Yet while the institutional religious leaders instructed members to bring religion into their everyday lives, migrants’ responses revealed multiple - and often diverging - understandings of this personal relationship with God, and of how this impacted upon their lives beyond the boundaries of the congregation. A consideration of religion in the everyday lives – and habitual pastimes - of migrants thus allows us to go beyond *what* religion means, and consider rather *where* it is practised and experienced, and *how* it comes to take on different meanings for different people.

Within the narratives of most respondents, the word ‘religion’ was often used interchangeably with the word ‘faith’, referring to their strong belief in God and acceptance of His divine power. In some cases, however, respondents drew a distinction between the two terms, suggesting ‘religion’ was too narrow to encompass their ‘faith’ in God, which reached out to all aspects of their existence: from the church community, to their families in Brazil and in London, and to their individual experiences. As far as possible, I use the term ‘faith’ or ‘religious faith’ here to refer to what reflects a personal belief. Following Hagan’s (2008: 7) definition, I use ‘religion’ to refer to institutionally based expressions of religiosity, but also to the beliefs and practices that are ‘employed and transformed by migrants themselves’ and their families as they seek ‘to draw meaning in the migration process.’

Thus while religious institutions were, for many, important spaces in which to ‘nurture one’s faith in the divine force of God’ (Ana, 20/11/09), it seemed that this faith functioned independently of participation in the church community. So for Ana, for instance, although St Mary’s – and the Catholic Church more broadly - was ‘fundamental’ in her life, she suggested that the term ‘religion’ did not go far enough to describe her personal relationship with God, which embraced ‘everything’. She explained:

I wouldn’t so much say religion, but God, contact with God, to always be looking for God, seeking communion with God – that’s the root of everything. Of my life, of my family, it’s the root.

Similarly Nestor, who taught English at St Mary’s every weekday evening, remarked:

The most important thing for me isn’t the Catholic Church, but my faith, what I believe in. Independent of me being in the church, I know that God is with me all the time (26/01/10).

Indeed, the notion of God’s presence being a constant source of comfort or protection was a pervasive narrative among the respondents from both churches. Jorge from the CEL, who worked as a bus driver, said that his ‘communion with God’ went far beyond his participation in the *Cultos* twice a week. He explained:

God is with me at all times. My whole life has been an evangelical life, a Christian life . . . and this . . . is not just on Saturdays and Sundays at the church. It’s Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. At work – so for example when I’m driving [the bus], my spirit is connected to God – do you understand? So, it’s like that . . . that’s not to say that I don’t sin. But I’m always connected to him – do you understand? (27/01/10).

Walter had attended the CEL when he first arrived in London, but decided to move to an English-speaking evangelical church as he felt it was important for both his and his family's 'integration' into wider society. He made an important distinction between merely going to church, and a true contact with God, which for him implied something deeper than merely attending the church. He explained,

I believe that once God controls your life . . . you have much more confidence in what you can achieve . . . But I also feel that people cannot confuse a deity – God – acting in your life, with . . . the simple practice of going to church (25/02/10).

Walter's comments concur with those of several other research participants, in which they suggested that while going to church was a religious 'practice' that was important for collective worship, it functioned primarily as a means to support and nourish their faith and individual relationship to God, which they saw as part of their everyday lived experience. Moreover, for many of my research participants, it seemed that the experience of migration intensified the importance of this religious faith, or at least made them more aware of it. As Felipe, from St Mary's, commented:

The church represents the moment to feel together with others, to feel that warmth of everyone being together. But, for me it's more a question of faith. And when you're far from your family this . . . becomes stronger, because you feel isolated, alone, without strength (28/01/10).

The notion of religious faith as an all-encompassing, and often challenging, relationship with God was particularly prevalent among research participants from the CEL, reflecting the sense of being 'born-again', and of drastically changing one's lifestyle that conversion implied (see Chapter 6). Indeed Sheila, from the CEL, made a similar distinction to Walter (above) – between religion and actually 'living by God's word'. Yet she took the argument even further, pointing to a certain 'hypocrisy' in people who saw themselves as 'religious' merely because they frequented a religious institution. Rather than a 'religious person', she saw herself as a 'disciple of Jesus.' She continued,

Lots of 'religious' people go to church, they just go to church. And when they're at church, they're Saints. But when they leave church and go home, they're completely different. Because they don't live by God's word. They just live by saying 'I'm religious' and they go to church because it creates a good impression. But at home, at work, they're bad people, people with a bad heart (19/11/10).

In this understanding, religious faith is something that is far more than merely the act of going to church, it is something that permeates all aspects of one's everyday life, something that, as Thiago who had returned to Brazil remarked, 'is to be lived daily . . . It's for life' (24/04/10).

Leonardo, also from the CEL, compared the experience of living by one's faith to the physical sense of nourishment provided by food. He remarked:

Living by faith means it's what you live on, it's something that you . . . like when you get up in the morning and you have an English breakfast – so you can feel full until 2pm and you feel good, you feel well-fed. That's what life with God is like. When I get up, I need to have my communion with him . . . to seek his guidance . . . and if you don't get this nourishment from faith, this support . . . then disbelief can enter your heart and you become weak (27/01/10).

Yet the importance of faith in everyday life within migrants' narratives was not limited to those who were members of religious institutions. Thus Graça, for example, described the importance of her personal faith in her everyday life, but she distinguished herself from someone whose faith depended on a particular religious institution. She remarked:

I pray every day, I pray when I wake up. The difference is that I don't have a rigid routine . . . I don't know if God exists or if he doesn't, I choose to believe that he does. I know people who don't believe in anything, but we believe as it makes us feel good (14/09/10).

Manuel, whom I interviewed in Brazil and whose daughter Ana had been living in London for the past 7 years, made some interesting comments regarding his faith, and its meaning in a wider context:

I have a lot of faith. I strongly believe in God. Without Him, we're nobody. That's why we have a body and we can speak. What is there in nature that can explain all this – the stars, the light of the sun and the moon? People can't do it with their own hands. So you have to have faith that there exists something divine that explains our lives. Now I don't know from here onwards – all this about our spirit – that I don't know. I know that religion has a lot to say about it, but I'm not certain where it ends (18/06/10).

Thus for Manuel, his strong belief in God enabled him to explain his place in the world, and human existence in general. While 'religion', by which he seems to refer to the more formal religious doctrines, provides certain explanations, for him what is important is a belief in God, a sense of the divine, in order to give meaning to what happens in 'our lives'.

Thus, the narratives of migrants discussed above point to several ways in which they understand their religion. They reveal how religion is not something tangible or easily definable but rather means different things to different people enabling them, in multiple ways, to ‘make sense of their world’ (McGuire, 2007: 187). Moreover, the examples suggest that while religious institutions are important for many people, religion’s meaning and influence extended beyond the ‘religious narratives supplied by institutions’, and thus can refer to ‘the myriad individual ways by which ordinary people remember, share, enact, adapt, create and combine the ‘stories’ out of which they live’ (*ibid*). Indeed, understanding religion – or better, faith - in this broader sense challenges the notion of a separation between the sacred and everyday life since religion forms an integral part of people’s identities (Buttimer, 2006) and infuses the very spaces and practices within and by which everyday life is lived and constructed (Orsi, 2002: 172).

Faith in quotidian spaces

Thus, if one’s personal relationship with God means religious faith is to be lived, and is not confined to a denominated sacred space, it follows that for many believers, this faith is accessible beyond the space of the church: at work, at home, on public transport, in daily interactions with other people. This was a recurring narrative among research participants from both churches, as the following extracts from migrants’ narratives reveal. For Sheila from the CEL, for example, God’s continual presence in her everyday life was a fundamental part of her self-development, helping her to deal with particular situations and revealing to her how she could change. As she explained:

And God – he isn’t with me only inside the church. He’s with me at my house, at my work, it’s like . . . at times when everything, when everything feels like it’s going wrong . . . it’s those times, it’s those situations that He uses to work on you, to make you realise different things, how you need to change (19/11/09).

Other respondents expressed God’s presence more in terms of a constant source of comfort or protection. So, for example, Marta explained during our focus group discussion at St Mary’s:

It's not every Sunday that I come to church, but that doesn't mean that I distance myself from God. Because we can be in touch with God just as much here in this room, as at home, you can be in touch with God anywhere. I don't need to be in 'His' house every Sunday - do you understand? Because we can create 'His' house anywhere. So I'm in touch with God at any moment, when I'm leaving home, when I'm getting on the bus, getting the tube, I'm in touch with Him the whole time (focus group, 24/02/10).

Felipe, also from St Mary's, who worked as a chef in a hotel, described his everyday life as a continual dialogue with God:

Sometimes I leave my house - from my house to the hotel if I leave at 5am when there's no traffic takes eight to ten minutes. I wouldn't say that I pray, rather, I chat to God. I wake up and when I put my foot on the ground, [He's] the first thing that comes into my head . . . and I change my clothes, brush my teeth, have my breakfast, go to the hotel, I'm still chatting to Him, and sometimes my conversation still hasn't ended. Sometimes, even if I'm doing something my mind is still with Him . . . it's comfort, it's strength, it's a source of trust . . . My whole day I work and chat to God (28/01/10).

During an interview with Jaine at her home in Brazil, where she had returned a year before, she suggested that 'religion' (her word), was present right there in the room with us as, she said, 'everything's good, we're not lacking anything - you have food, you're at peace with your family and your friends.' Yet at another point during the same interview, Jaine commented, referring to her experience in London, that 'religion . . . God becomes more important when you're far away from home . . . when you're feeling very lonely and you need comfort from Him' (05/06/10).

The above examples point to different notions of where and when religion becomes important: providing an example to follow and challenging people in particular situations, or representing a constant source of support and reassurance. In these understandings, religion is a personal experience and also an inventive practice whereby one can access religious faith through individual, or indeed 'intersubjective' contact with the divine (McGuire, 2008).

If the space of the church is not necessarily a prerequisite for faith to be 'lived', then it was perhaps not surprising that among interviewees who did not frequent a church in London, religious faith was still referred to as an important element in their everyday lives. So, as Cristiana, whom I interviewed at the same time as Jaine, but who was more suspicious of institutional religion than her friend and had not attended a church in London remarked, 'I don't need the church to find God.' She continued,

God can be in my home. I sit down for a moment and I think, ‘dear God, how good the world is, I am healthy and happy . . . Because I have had a lot of barriers in my life and I managed to overcome the obstacles that I had in my life . . . I think that it’s in these moments . . . that’s when I speak to God. I don’t need to be in a church to do this (05/06/10).

Carlos, whose wife, Isabella, frequented the CEL, described himself as someone ‘with strong beliefs,’ but explained how he was wary of institutional religion. His mistrust was based on the corruption surrounding some of the large evangelical churches that have emerged in Brazil in recent decades, but he was also critical of what he described as the ‘sumptuousness’ of the Catholic Church, and its rigid hierarchical structure. For him, the formal structure of a church was unnecessary for understanding the ‘word of God’. He explained:

I mean, Jesus Christ himself . . . he did not preach in temples . . . He preached in the fields . . . I’m not saying that today in the 21st century people will preach in fields, but I don’t think you need a church to preach God’s word (08/02/10)

For Carlos, religion was not about worship in the organised boundaries of a church and indeed his own personal ‘religion’ was based on his own readings of religious texts.

Thus religious faith, or a sense of the divine, did not require attendance at services in a religious building and in fact, for some, could be felt more strongly in more private spaces such as the home. Enrique, a student who had lived in London for three years, said that his ‘personal spirituality’ was something that he felt when he was ‘on his own,’ in the comfort of his home. Although he had been baptised in Brazil, he had taken to frequenting an Umbanda temple with his mother when he was at home from university. Since he had been in London, however, he had not felt any strong affinity with organised religion even though, he explained, he did believe in ‘something’; some kind of ‘spiritual force’ in his life. For example, he described how sometimes he felt the need to light a candle when he was on his own, to give thanks or to create some kind of connection to this intangible force that he could feel working in his life. When asked if this was an expression of religion, he replied:

I think that it can be described as faith, but I think that it’s more in the intimate sense. Since I don’t have a specific religion, my need doesn’t oblige me to go to a space like a church, or a religious temple. I can do this at home, light a candle to make me feel comfortable, to feel good. I believe that this is a personal faith (31/08/10).

Thus, just as so-called ‘sacred spaces’ can take on features of people’s everyday lives, so people often imbued their everyday lives, outside the church, with spiritual meanings, through particular practices such as lighting a candle – like Enrique - or praying, or through material religious iconography. During my fieldwork in both London and Brazil I spent time in many people’s homes, and noticed some of the ways in which the material domestic space became ‘sacralised’, through the presence of religious objects or religious practices. In London, I visited Vera’s flat on a number of occasions, both before and after my trip to Brazil. She lived in a small flat in East London, with nine other people, including her husband, daughter, son-in-law, grand-daughter, and another family. As well as working as a cleaner in the early morning and evening, Vera worked from home as a manicurist and beautician, and as a child-minder. The flat was thus a hub of activity: Vera’s clients would come to have their nails painted or legs waxed, while others would drop off their children for her to look after. At the same time, the other inhabitants of the flat would come and go, often to eat or sleep before heading out to their next workplace. Yet within this unadorned space, in which the often mundane, practical realities of everyday life were carried out, there was a small shrine to the Virgin Mary and Jesus, positioned on a shelf in the kitchen. On one occasion after I had visited Vera’s house I noted in my field diary:

There were nine people living in the house, as well as the three young children that Vera was babysitting. Vera was complaining about how she felt she was always cleaning as the house got so dirty with so many people. She said that she had to clean the bathroom every day. I noticed a little shrine in the kitchen – a cross, with images of the Virgin Mary (Nossa Senhora de Fátima) and Jesus. The shrine was small and intricate, but clearly very important given the lack of any other decoration in the house (field diary, 11/12/09).

Almost a year later, I returned to Vera’s house after having been in Brazil conducting fieldwork. While in Brazil I had interviewed her niece who had informed me that Vera’s husband had been run over by a car outside their house, and suffered very serious injuries. Four months after the accident, Vera recounted how her husband had been in hospital for thirty-five days, and had been told he would be unable to work for a further six months. She and her daughters had taken on more hours cleaning so as to compensate for the family’s loss of income as a result of the accident. They had been regular members of the congregation at St Mary’s, but had

been unable to go to church as much and instead prayed at home, or occasionally watched the *Missa* 'online'. Looking at the shrine, Vera told me how it was thanks to God that he had not been killed, and how as a family their faith had helped them to get through this difficult time. She said that there was no doubt that without their faith, they would have returned to Brazil immediately.

In his seminal work *A Casa e a Rua* (1985), the Brazilian anthropologist Roberto DaMatta, draws a distinction between the spaces of the home '*a casa*', and that of the street '*a rua*' in Brazilian society. He writes,

I[]f the home can be described as a space of calm, restfulness and hospitality . . . everything that is associated with the idea of 'love', 'affection' and 'human warmth', the street is a space that can be defined as the exact opposite. A space which belongs to the 'government' . . . and which is always full of fluidity and movement. The street is a dangerous place (DaMatta, 1985: 40, my translation).

These spaces are also gendered, with the home - the private domain - pertaining to women, and the street - the public realm – experienced as a predominantly male space (*ibid*); see also Marcus, 2010). While DaMatta's analysis has been criticised for its somewhat essentialist depiction of Brazilian society (Vasquez and Ribeiro, 2005: 24) and while, moreover, the context he refers to has been affected by accelerated processes of globalisation, the analysis does provide some insights into the home/street, inside/outside dichotomy evoked in the narratives of some of my respondents (see also Dias, 2010). Thus, for Vera's family, the home is felt to be a safe space, which is sacralised, and thus allows them to access their faith and seek solace and support. Moreover, as Vasquez and Ribeiro (2005: 25) argue in their discussion of the role of religion in the lives of Brazilians in Florida, given the sense of exclusion and invisibility experienced by Brazilian migrants it is perhaps 'not surprising that migrants have sacralised their homes and 'domesticated' their churches, creating a protective space in the midst of a hostile environment' (my translation).

As well as domestic shrines, crucifixes, and copies of the Bible, which many people kept beside their beds, some respondents also referred to portable religious objects, such as scapulars, which they would carry in order to feel, as Fernando who was undocumented, remarked 'a bit protected' (23/02/10). Lucia, from St Mary's, said that she carried around with her in her purse an image of Nossa Senhora de Fátima that her sister had bought her from Portugal, and another one of Jesus. She

explained how these were important for her and she would look at them when she was feeling ‘alone, or homesick.’

Religious imagery and objects were also important for Rogerio and Manuel (the father and son of Ana whom I interviewed in London), in whose home – in the state of Goiás - I also stayed for several weeks during my fieldwork in Brazil. It seemed that for both men, such religious iconography took on a particular significance since the other members of their family had gone to London. As Manuel commented, ‘[n]owadays when Rogerio sits down to eat he looks at the cross and prays, he thanks God. Even if I don’t do it out loud, I give thanks in my heart’ (18/06/10). Rogerio also wore a cross round his neck which, I noticed, he would kiss before a meal and whenever he set out on a journey in his car.

In this sense, these material religious objects become closely linked to the migration experience. Not only do they provide a source of spiritual support as they enabled migrants to access the sacred outside the church, they also evoked memories of people and places ‘elsewhere’. As Tolia-Kelly (2004: 321) suggests in her discussion of home shrines (see Chapter 2), such objects can evoke memories of life ‘pre-migration’ or, in the case of Rogerio and Manuel, of their family members who have emigrated. Yet these religious objects are also closely associated with the mobility that characterises the migration process and reveal how religion itself is mobile, adaptable, and shaped to respond to migrants’ (and nonmigrants’) shifting needs and demands.

The possibilities for migrants and non-migrants to engage in religious practices via the Internet (as discussed in the previous chapters) of course represents yet another way in which religion can be transportable, and brought into the space of the home. Not only did migrants and returnees recount how they occasionally watched *Missas* or *Cultos* as they were transmitted live on the Internet, but some would also engage in online chat rooms, prayer groups, or share links to prayers and sermons by certain preachers, or photographs of religious events or phenomena. Such practices again imply a merging of the spiritual and the everyday, the traditionally religious and the modern, as migrants engaged in practices through which ‘new religiosities’ (Appadurai, 1996: 7) were forged.

Living by faith and doing 'good things for others'

The above examples thus point to some of the different ways in which religious faith was described by many respondents. In most cases, faith was seen as somewhat separate to membership of a church, and the church itself was considered to be a space that might or might not complement or nourish one's faith. Another prevalent narrative was the relationship between faith and morality - living according to God's example – a link that went beyond the institutional bounds of religion. Thus Graça, who was not affiliated to any particular church, commented that faith, 'gives you moral values to live in society. We learn this when we learn about religion' (14/09/10).

Estevan, who had returned to Brazil, had also not frequented a church in London because (as explained in Chapter 6) he and his girlfriend, Dalva, lived together 'outside wedlock' and felt they could not live their lives according to the moral values promoted by the church. Yet he still regarded himself as someone with a strong faith, which had enabled him to follow a 'good path' in London. He explained:

Someone who has faith, who really believes in something, will always have that as a kind of [moral] boundary in their life. So, for example, if you were to steal something, your conscience would know that stealing isn't good, so it's a limit that you have. So in everything that you do, if you're Christian you will put that as the basis of your life. You will say 'God, help me!' You pray, you ask God. I think that your religion is always going to help you in some way. And I had this with me [in London] (17/06/10).

Estevan also pointed to the contrast between the deeply embedded nature of religion and spirituality in Brazil, and the increasing secularity of Europe. He commented on how Europe was 'where everything began, the birthplace of Catholicism, Christianity practically emerged solely from there and spread to the rest of the world.' But, he continued,

today the process has reversed: Europeans have abandoned their faith and believe more in human science . . . if something cannot be scientifically proven, they don't believe it . . . Here in Brazil, like in the rest of Latin America, people are very Catholic, very Christian. The question of faith is very deeply ingrained in our lives (17/06/10).

For him, this contrast became very clear during his experience in London, and he suggested that this was why many Brazilians lost their faith 'over there' as they 'become more materialist.' Thus in this view, religious faith – and its ethical

implications - is depicted as an important element in the cultural identity of Brazilians, but one that can be challenged through the migration process, and encounters with the social mores of a new culture. Moreover, Estevan's observations about faith and religion were not based on church attendance, but rather on the more invisible expressions of religion: peoples' values and the ways in which they conducted their everyday lives.

Jordão, in London, was not a regular churchgoer, but described himself as Christian and 'crazy about God'. He took an intellectual approach to religion, and said that through his studies of religious texts he had 'come to the conclusion that [he] had been created by God . . . and that there is Good and Evil in the world.' He continued:

I studied Darwin and I didn't believe in the theory of evolution. This is a theory that was thrown at us so that we believed it, but it's only theory, and there's lots of controversy surrounding it. If 'Good' and 'Evil' don't exist, then life doesn't have any meaning (18/02/10).

Despite not participating in a religious community, Jordão 'lived' by his faith, which in his view meant that he 'lived' according to what he studied in the Bible. He explained how he sought to find 'practical applications of what [he] read in the Bible.' One example, relating to his personal life, that emerged during the interview had to do with his three-year old daughter, who had been born with a genetic disability. His wife was pregnant again, and the doctors had encouraged them to have a test, as there was a 25 percent chance that this baby could also have the disability. They refused because, he explained, they would never abort the child even if the tests did show the worst. He said:

It's a human being, it's a life and I can't throw that away . . . It's sacred because God granted it. According to evolution, there is no God, there is no sense of what is sacred . . . no sense of what is right or wrong (18/02/10).

In a similar vein, Tania described the Bible as her 'practical guide,' encouraging her to follow the 'right path' (13/01/10). She was a member of the CEL and, like some of the participants discussed above, also made an important distinction between the term 'religion' and her personal relationship with God or rather, with God's teachings. Thus Jordão, Tania and Estevan distinguished the scientific or human from the religious or 'ethical', which for them represented the 'right path' to be followed in their lives. Moreover, this distinction was especially important in the face of the multiplicity of possible paths available to migrants.

The ethics surrounding immigration status was another important theme within migrants' narratives. Thus, in contrast to the institutional narrative of the CEL, which disapproved of members with irregular status, or the more compassionate - and indeed political - attitude of St Mary's towards undocumented congregants (see Chapter 5), some migrants offered their own interpretation, which enabled them to justify their situation, and create a sense of dignity. Paulo from St Mary's, for instance, believed that God's power superseded any other structures of authority. He explained:

I think that I'm here because of God's plan, because the world is God's creation. It's not Tony Blair's, not Gordon Brown's . . . I believe that it's due to a divine power that I have the right to be here as long as I want to, but the rules of man say that I don't. I follow the rules of God so, as long as he allows me to be here, I will stay . . . If I have to leave tomorrow, it will be because of God's will (27/11/09).

Similarly Graciela, who had returned to Brazil, but had lived as an irregular migrant in London, replied when asked if she felt any sense of guilt at being undocumented:

No, I didn't feel any guilt because I was undocumented, because I wasn't to blame. I always asked God and so it was due to his will that I was able to enter [illegally] . . . I always believed this. I didn't feel any guilt that I was committing a sin . . . I wasn't robbing anyone, I was going about my work as an honest person (06/05/10).

There was also a sense within migrants' narratives that living by faith implied 'doing good things for others' (Sheila, 19/11/09), or what scholars have described as 'faith-motivated' practice (see Cloke, 2009). Thus, for instance, Nestor's personal faith in God was what inspired him to 'help people' through providing free English classes at St Mary's. He remarked, 'I always try to do the best I can . . . For example, these classes I give are for free. I know that it is good to help people . . . it's my religion' (26/01/10). Isabella from the CEL, who recounted how she had been exploited by people whom she had trusted in London, as well as when she worked in Portugal a few years before, remarked:

I believe in God . . . and God gives us his vision, that we can help, that we can try to help as much as possible, so here anything we can do to help others we do, precisely because of the fact that we haven't received much help, so we do the opposite . . . For me that's religion (08/02/10).

Leonardo and Adilson both described their work helping 'prostitutes and drug addicts' in Soho, inspired by their faith which teaches them to 'love others.' Leonardo, from the CEL, commented on his religious motivations, stating that:

[t]he Bible tells us this – ‘have joy with those who have joy, and cry with those who cry.’ And since I’ve been here – nine years helping – I love helping people. I love to find someone who is talking about suicide, involved in drugs. . . and this is what lots of Brazilians do here . . . and work with them, walk with them support them and then after a year see how they are completely changed and have hope (27/01/10)

Manuel, in Brazil, explained how for him, his religious faith meant ‘doing good things and wanting good for others’. He said that nowadays it was difficult to help people, as you need to be in a good financial position. But, he said, he would never leave anyone hungry – as this is what God teaches us. He gave the example of a particular day when two men he was working with – whom he knew were struggling financially – had not had any dinner, and so he had given them two ‘*marmitex*’ [plastic containers full of hot food] that he had bought. ‘They were really pleased,’ he remarked, ‘I knew that I had food at home, but I didn’t know if they had any. I really like to help people’ (18/06/10).

Thus, as this section has revealed, religious faith is not a factor that can be separated from the realities of many migrants’ everyday lives, but rather represents something that can be drawn upon to interpret, challenge, or indeed justify their lives. Thus, in different ways, my research participants expressed how their faith, which was not necessarily associated with affiliation with a religious community within a church, was a fundamental part of their everyday existence, determining not only what they did and the decisions they made, but also *how* they explained their everyday realities. Moreover, the examples reveal how faith can be experienced and performed within and across different scales and localities that constitute transnational religious spaces: within a religious institution, within the home, adorning the body, but also as an integral part of an individual’s identity.

Faith and migrating to London

God’s protection in transnational everyday lives

I’d say that it’s religion, faith in God, that gives us support in a foreign land (Marta, focus group, 24/02/10).

A common narrative among respondents, including those who were not participants in a religious community, was the notion that their individual faith was the ultimate solace during difficult times. Indeed, for some migrants, the power of their faith had become more apparent to them as a result of their migration experience and the challenges they had faced. Maria, from St Mary's, explained how since she had arrived in London, she could feel God's presence 'all the time.' She explained:

When you're walking in the street you feel God's presence because he is protecting you from someone, from a thief . . . from some kind of danger, a car, something that's out of control, a hole in the road, or something bad that might happen. And this is important all the time (22/11/09).

Marta, also from St Mary's, described how her religion had helped her cope with the 'very difficult moments' she had experienced in her first few months in London. Yet as well as the recurring notion of God's ubiquity, many migrants referred to specific moments in their everyday lives in London when they could sense God's presence and protection. For Lucas, who had returned to Brazil a year before the interview, the power of faith was such that it could 'move mountains' (04/05/10) and this popular Brazilian expression took on a stronger meaning for him during his experience living as an irregular migrant in London, with a false Portuguese passport. He recounted one occasion when the police came to search his house, as they were looking for a telephone bill from a previous resident in the house. He recalled how terrified he felt as he watched them go through all his things, '. . . and me, with my false passport – hidden inside the headboard of the bed! But they didn't find it. And I believe it was because God was protecting me . . . because they didn't find my passport' (04/05/10).

His wife, Liliana, also talked about how faith provided a sense of feeling 'protected' (by God) and 'sheltered', and how this was crucial for her in London, giving her 'someone to turn to' when she felt lost. While she and Lucas were Catholic and had frequented St Mary's, for Liliana 'faith is very important, whatever religion you are. But you have to have a religion. You have to have faith' (04/05/10). Echoing some of the examples mentioned above, in this reading of faith, one's individual relationship with God seemed to transcend any denominational affinity.

Liliana's notion that religious faith was to some extent imperative to survive the hardships of migration was also evident in Jordão's remarks in which he pointed to the divergent trajectories of migrants with and without faith in God. He said:

Lots of people despair, kill themselves or do drastic things here . . . but because I believe in God, I know that what I'm going through is because He's allowing it, and if He's allowing it, then it's because He will give me strength to get through it, so there's always hope. And of course there are people in the Bible who went through similar or even worse situations, and they persevered and God didn't abandon them, he was always loyal (18/02/10).

Jordão's comments suggest that not only is God a source of comfort and protection but religious narratives also provide a sense of hope that things will work out, through the stories of people who had managed to survive similar or worse ordeals.

Samuel, who was irregular and worked as a kitchen porter in a restaurant in central London, recounted an incident when a policeman followed him onto the bus and to his home. Nominally Catholic, he did not go to church in London as he said that he did could not spare the time in his working week and also that his wife was a Jehovah's Witness and would not approve of him frequenting the Catholic church. Yet he described how, on this occasion and others, he had felt God's protection because the policeman, having asked him a number of questions to which he responded in his extremely broken English, eventually let him go without asking to see his papers. 'It must have been God', Samuel remarked, '[t]here was no other explanation' (02/03/10).

As mentioned in Chapter 6, Anete, who had returned to Brazil, chose not to frequent a church in London because she was too frightened. She was irregular and hence wary of any public space where she felt she could draw attention to herself. 'I didn't go to any churches', she said, 'I left work and went straight home' (05/05/10). On one occasion her workplace was raided, very soon after she had left, and five of her friends who worked there were deported. Escaping this 'close shave', as well as another instance when police surrounded her home, was for her, as for Samuel, a sign of the protection granted to her by her faith. Furthermore, when asked if she prayed when she was living in London, she replied:

Every day . . . I spoke to God in order to go there, and to come back. I spoke to Him . . . He knew that I wasn't really young enough to still be going there, but that that was the only opportunity I had as when I was younger I had young children, and no one to look after them (05/05/10).

In this sense, God not only provided an important source of support and protection during her time in England, 'He' also enabled her to justify her migration. 'He' could understand why she went when she did, and when she decided to return sooner than

she'd hoped because her child was suffering from depression, 'He' was there to listen. The ways in which this individual faith and contact with God was used within migrants' narratives to explain and justify their migration will be discussed in more depth in the next section.

Migration and divine providence

It was God who opened the doors for us . . . It was God who prepared everything (Ana, 20/11/09).

For many research participants, God's presence was not just an everyday comfort but also a crucial factor in their migration experience, 'opening doors' and enabling them to achieve what they were able to achieve in London. This notion of 'the hand of God' acting in different ways in their everyday lives was a recurring theme, as revealed in the following examples. Wagner, from the CEL, had been in London for 9 years and had spent the first 7 of those living and working as a housekeeper and gardener for a wealthy elderly man who lived in North London. By 2009, he had saved enough money to buy himself and his wife a house in Hemel Hempstead, and they planned to settle in the UK for the foreseeable future, unless, he said, 'God had other plans' for them. He remarked:

I see everything that has happened in my life as directed by God . . . my coming here, my going to his [the elderly man's] house, all the time living with him and saving money – everyone knows how expensive life in London is . . . with my financial situation, I wouldn't have been able to, even if I'd worked . . . so I see all of this as directed by God, from my leaving Brazil to my life over here (27/01/10).

Anderson, who had returned to Brazil a year ago, was critical of institutional religion, which he believed was 'more commercial' than what, in his view, 'faith' should represent. He had thus not frequented a church in London, nor back in Brazil, but said that he had always believed in God and felt that this 'faith' had contributed to his successful migration story. He recounted:

Thanks to God everything worked out there . . . I didn't have any problems in London. Everything worked out, I always had good jobs. I started washing dishes, but after two years I was already a chef, so I worked for 3 more years as a head chef . . . I was one of the best in the restaurant . . . I came back here and everything worked out here too. So that's my faith . . . I believe that God is with me (16/06/10).

Sheila, who had ‘converted’ to Christianity (at the CEL) in London, explained how it was since she had ‘given her life to Jesus’ that she had noticed the ‘hand of God’ in everything that had happened to her, including her obtaining a job as a receptionist in a bank in the City. She explained:

[i]t was God who opened the door – you know – I can’t say that it was just me. It was God because, it’s like, there were so many people competing for the job, including English people who had experience working as receptionists here in the City – they usually take on girls who already have this kind of experience. I didn’t have any experience. So I feel that it was the hand of God – you know? (19/11/10).

Similarly Tania, also from the CEL, worked as a travel agent and had managed to obtain a work permit in London. Knowing that this was something very difficult for migrants to obtain, she considered it a ‘blessing from God’ in response to her gratitude and dedication to him since, she explained, as the Bible says, if you ‘please the Lord, He will satisfy the secrets of your heart.’ So, she remarked, ‘I think that this was something that God did for me. I did things to please him and he looked after me, that’s how it was’ (12/01/10).

Hagan (2008) analyses the role of religion in the trajectories of Mexican and Central American migrants and their perilous journey crossing the border into the US. She gives the example of one female migrant, who, like many of the others in her study, ‘credits her success to her faith which, she says, has grown deeper and stronger through the migration experience’ (108). Although referring to a very different context, the examples cited above echo the narratives of Hagan’s research participants, as migrants explained their successes, and indeed failures, as an example of ‘God’s will’, and acknowledged that such a relationship requires a two-way relationship whereby you need to satisfy ‘His desires’ so ‘He will satisfy yours’.

Moreover, for some research participants, the ‘hand of God’ enabled miracles to happen. So Florencia, for instance, who had returned to Brazil a year before our interview, recounted the ‘miracle’ that had allowed her to go to London to join her husband, Luis. He had been in London for four months, and the family had invested the little they had in paying for his plane ticket and initial weeks in London, with no extra funds to finance the journey for Florencia and their son Victor, who stayed at home in Belo Horizonte. Struggling to make ends meet, and with little money being sent by Luis, who was himself having trouble finding work in London, Florencia felt

helpless and could not see a way of making it to London so that their family could be reunited. But, she explained, it was at the moment when she felt there was no hope that ‘a miracle happened.’ A friend, whom she had ‘not seen for years’, having unsuccessfully tried to go to the US on his own, had decided to change his route and try to go to London. But he wanted to go with someone else to improve his chances of crossing the border. He thus offered Florencia a deal: he would lend them the money for the tickets if he could go with them to London and stay with them until he found work. This was a ‘powerful’ experience for Florencia, a ‘miracle’ granted by God since, she explained, she went from ‘not seeing any possibility of going [to London], and then suddenly a door opens like that – and He puts someone there . . . and everything starts coming together’ (17/04/10).

Carla, a strong Catholic, who came with her mother to join her sister Ana in London, also saw the miraculous ‘hand of God’ in their being granted a six-month visa on entering London at Heathrow (see Chapter 1). She explained:

As they say, ‘my God is a God of the impossible’ and when you believe [in Him] you will have the courage to confront many things. That was what happened when we were allowed in and we truly believed (03/02/10).

Carla’s brother, Rogerio, had in fact attempted to come to London two years before but had been denied entry and sent immediately back to Brazil (see Chapter 1). When asked what this implied in terms of ‘God’s will’, she replied:

It’s something that we call ‘the mysteries of faith.’ When you really believe in God you can’t question Him . . . because he gives us the free will to do what we want. The fact that he had managed to get his things together to go made us think ‘ah, God is letting this happen,’ and when he arrived and everything went wrong . . . we asked ‘why is God not letting him in?’ . . . And so we believe that he didn’t enter because . . . this wasn’t what God wanted for him. And in any case when he came back he managed to get a much better job (03/02/10).

Rogerio, whom I interviewed back in Brazil had a similar understanding of God’s intentions and remarked: ‘[i]f I didn’t get in it was because it wasn’t God’s will. You have to have God in between. Without God, we can’t do anything’ (16/06/10). Once again this example reveals how religious narratives can enable migrants to interpret the often contradictory or inexplicable events in their lives, accepting them as ‘God’s will.’

For many migrants, these miracles - or ‘mysteries of faith’ - were determined by a particular God whom they construed in particular ways, and their stories were

often influenced by their specific religious affiliation, or a certain reading of the Bible. Others, such as Graça, who did not attend any religious institution, nor see herself as having a particular religious affiliation, believed that ‘there were many things that wouldn’t make sense’ if it were not for a ‘divine force’ that she felt protected her. She remarked, ‘I don’t know if it’s this God or that God. I don’t know, and that doesn’t worry me anyway.’ In her view, faith was something personal, which had to do with how you understood the mysterious things that happened in life and the presence of a divine force that transcended the ‘real.’ Thus, she explained:

Depending on your beliefs, you will see the same situation or the same phenomenon, and give it a different label. So I think it’s what you feel most comfortable with. I believe in an *energy*, I believe in God’s protection, or a guardian angel, or other people who have already died, but who have evolved spiritually and protect you (14/09/10).

On the other hand, while she believed in a divine force, or what she felt she could define as ‘God’, for her ‘God only does what we cannot do ourselves.’ Rather than rely on miracles, she believed that she needed to ‘take responsibility’ for what happened to her. She said, ‘I have to do everything that I have the possibility of doing to resolve my situation . . . and what I can’t do, He will do. But I have to take responsibility for what happens.’

Transnational ‘religion-as-lived’

[I]mmigrants and migrants establish connections between heaven and earth that stretch as well between one environment and others and among friends, families and teachers, and others around the globe, in their new environments and in the ones they left (Orsi, 2002: 173).

Faith across borders

Understanding religion as ‘lived’ thus encourages us to consider the permeability of some of the presumed conceptual boundaries between, for example, the sacred and the profane, the institutional and the everyday, the secular and the religious. A focus on ‘lived religion’ in the context of migration, also blurs the boundaries between ‘here’ and ‘there’ - between the people’s lives ‘back home’ and in the new context – revealing how religion and spirituality play a fundamental role in facilitating the transnational lives of many migrants. Indeed, religion can enable migrants to forge a

sense of belonging in a new setting and give them strength to feel ‘at home’ and confront the often hostile environment in which they are marginalised and made invisible. Yet as well as enabling migrants to engage with new places, religion also enables migrants, as Hagan (2008: 5) comments, to ‘stay closely connected to their homeland and to members of shared culture, tradition and faith throughout the world.’ Religion can thus act as a mediator, enabling links between different localities.

Just as migrants often related how their faith was an important resource in helping them to meet the challenges of life in London, and indeed, in helping them to explain and justify their lives there, faith also had an important function in facilitating their connections with ‘back home’ in Brazil. Thus Dulce, for example, who had been in London for seven years - having left her two fifteen-year-old (twin) sons back in Brazil - described how her faith helped her feel closer to them:

You’re far away from your family, but I know that God is looking after me here, and God is looking after my sons over there [in Brazil] . . . So God connects us. Do you see? Because God is in our prayers . . . he’s here in our prayers for them (20/11/09).

Similarly, Juliana, who had returned to Brazil and frequented the CEBH there, explained the ‘link’ that God had provided for her in London as she knew that her mother in Brazil was praying for her, ‘I always prayed for them, I asked God . . . my mother always prayed, so, in the sense that she knew that I wanted to fulfil God’s will in my life, we always had this link’ (Juliana, 24/04/10). Lucia, from the CEL in London, made a similar remark, suggesting that while she did not have any family in London, she ‘[knew] that God [was] looking after’ her and, through her strong faith that ‘God [was] protecting her family’ back in Brazil (08/12/09). Arturo, who had not frequented a church in London and was not affiliated to any organised religion, explained how his faith had helped him to feel closer to his family:

because I was always asking Him [God] to protect them. Because it’s really difficult to be far away from home, because from one minute to the next something bad could happen and you can’t do anything because you’re far away . . . For example, if someone in your family dies, you have no way of saying goodbye to them. But your faith helps you a lot (23/06/10).

Another common narrative was the notion of faith, and the connection provided by the sense of an omnipresent ‘God’, as helping migrants to suppress their homesickness - ‘*matar a saudade*.’ Ana, for example, described her faith in God as an ‘anaesthetic’, saying, ‘it’s like [H]e gives me an anaesthetic to fight *saudade*

(homesickness)' (Ana, 20/11/09). Similarly Claudia, also from St Mary's, explained how her faith helped her to overcome her homesickness for her friends and family in Brazil as, she explained, 'you find yourself praying to *matar a saudade*, hoping that God will help us to connect with those we've left in Brazil . . . because we end up distancing ourselves from there as we try to make a life here' (29/11/09).

As well as enabling those who were in London to create links with loved ones back in Brazil, faith was also important for their families 'back home', helping them to confront the sense of absence, and *saudade*, caused by emigration. Thus Sofia, whose daughter had been living in London for the last seven years, whose son was in the US, and whose husband worked for the navy so was nearly always away, explained how she would not have been able to cope had it not been for her strong faith. She remarked:

If I didn't have faith, I wouldn't be able to overcome my difficulties. My daughter is in London, my husband has always worked far away – God gives me the strength to overcome this. I always turn to my faith and I know that, thank God, my daughter does too (10/05/10).

Carolina, whose daughter Ana had also been in London for seven years at the time of our interview and before she herself went to London (see Chapter 1), explained how for her and her family, '[r]eligion is everything'. She continued, '[i]f I have a day without praying it feels wrong, as if something's missing. I pray for her and I know she prays for us' (05/06/09). Thus Carolina, like Sofia, drew on her faith to fill the absence created by her daughter's migration to London. For both mothers, the fact that their daughters also had a strong faith was a crucial element in this spiritual connection they created across borders, with God acting as a fundamental intermediary. Manuel, Carolina's husband, also used narratives of faith to explain Ana's migration to London, and the success she had had there. He explained:

The first thing I thought [when she left] was, it's in 'God's hands. May it turn out according to His desires . . . May He soften the hearts of the people there at the border [in London] . . . so that they open the doors for her. Now, since they did open the doors for her, I am grateful to the English. I would really like to visit England. I don't have anything against England. I even support their team! (18/06/10).

In Manuel's words, Ana's successful crossing of the UK border and subsequent achievements in London were thus thanks to God, but also to the generosity of the English. Through this intertwining of the spiritual – a divine force – and the reality of

the arbitrariness of crossing the border, Manuel ‘made sense’ of his daughter’s migration trajectory.

Samuel, in London, who was undocumented and did not frequent a church, said that he felt that it was thanks to his mother’s faith back in Brazil that he had managed to stay so long. He explained how she was a committed Catholic and prayed every day, and thus he felt that his protection in London was provided to him vicariously through his mother’s faith. He remarked:

The day I left, she said that she would ask God to make sure that it is a kind person at the border and that they will let me in and that God will look after me there. And this has always been in my head. So I feel that God protects me, through my mother’s prayers (02/03/10).

Once again, these examples suggest that faith acts as a powerful intermediary enabling migrants to create connections across borders, with different people and places which participate in what I call *transnational religious spaces*. Moreover, they point to the intersubjective nature of lived religion within transnational religious spaces, as the religious trajectories discussed above involved not just migrants themselves but those who had stayed put. Religious practices and beliefs are shared, exchanged and modified as they are ‘remitted’ across borders. Some interviewees’ narratives suggested that religious language – and the act of praying, of seeking God’s protection – had been a fundamental part of their everyday lives even prior to their migration. Thus Adilson, for example, argued that the notion of ‘divine providence’, of feeling ‘guided by God’, is not just related to migration but is central to many peoples’ lives in Brazil. He continued, ‘we believe that our whole lives – both in Brazil and here [in London] - are influenced by this belief’ (09/12/09). Yet it seemed that, for many, the experience of migration had enabled new connections to be made between the spiritual and the material, between their lives in Brazil and in London. In this sense their narratives revealed how migration can be what Timothy Smith (1978: 1175) depicts as a ‘theologizing experience’, as religious faith becomes intensified as a result of migration, and religious practices are remitted across borders through the migration process.

Migration as a material and spiritual journey

In unexpected ways, then, the migration journey strengthens and intensifies religious commitment and becomes a spiritual journey (Hagan, 2008: 167)

With the ‘hand of God’, or a divine force, represented as a fundamental element in the migration experience, there was a sense within the narratives of many migrants that their migration journey also represented an important spiritual one. This notion of a spiritual or sacred journey does not presume that the experiences of all migrants necessarily took on sacred meanings. Yet within the responses of many interviewees it seemed that there was an important connection between the material, the social, and the spiritual within their migration trajectories.

Dulce, whom I had interviewed in London where she had frequented St Mary’s, had returned to Brazil during the course of my fieldwork, and invited me to visit her at her new home on a *chácara* (small farm) in central Goiás. She told me about the financial difficulties she and her husband had had before they went to London as her husband, Bernardo, had fallen badly into debt. But she said that thanks to God they had been able to save enough money in London, and thanks to God she herself had been able to earn and save money to invest ‘back home’. Similarly Liliana, also a returnee, explained how the opportunity to earn money in London which was, in her view, granted by God, had enabled her to buy a whole set of new furniture for her house, and had, for the first time, given her some financial independence from her husband, whose career in politics had led to their being constantly ‘broke’ (04/05/10). In both cases, migration had given these women a sense of empowerment within their deeply embedded patriarchal family structures. These social remittances, whereby the women were able to raise their social and financial status within the family hierarchy, were also infused with religious meaning, as the migration success itself was, in their view, attributable to the hand of God.

Indeed, as discussed above, many migrants drew on religious narratives to explain, justify, and celebrate their whole migration experience and their gratitude to God. As Nuelia responded when asked whether she would describe her experience in London as a positive one:

It’s great! I am really happy to have had this experience, because a lot of people would like to do what I’m doing but they don’t get the chance, even

more now with the problem of getting documents. So I see this as a tremendous opportunity. I am very grateful to God for this (11/08/10).

Ana, made a similar comment as she remarked: 'I believe that while we are here, we need to make the most of this opportunity that I believe God has given us. I believe it was God who gave us the opportunity to be here' (20/11/09).

Even for many of those who did not describe themselves as 'religious' or frequenters of a church, their faith played an important role in their everyday lives and many thanked God for protecting them, and prayed to Him to help them in the future. As Samuel, who had five children back in Brazil, explained:

So, I pray every day . . . And I ask God to help me, to help my children, and I thank Him – for everything – for me being here, for me having achieved what I achieved, for having paid off my debts . . . and for my children, for God to look after them (02/03/10).

Indeed, Samuel was among the many respondents whose faith had intensified as a result of the experience of migration to London. In his case, the protection that God had given him in London (thanks to his mother, see above), and his children back in Brazil, had made him extremely grateful to God, to the extent that he said he intended to start going to Church on his return to Brazil.

Others described these changes in terms of a kind of 'spiritual development', by which they referred to the ways in which their life had changed as they have become more in touch with their spirituality. So, as Graciela, who had returned to Brazil, replied when asked how she felt she had changed as a result of her migration experience:

My whole life changed with regard to feeling grateful to God for the simple things in life. My love for my family tripled. Goodness, how I missed them! My spiritual life changed. I realised that my life only made sense with my family – I realised the importance of God for this (06/05/10).

Similarly, Beatrice, who had frequented the CEL and returned to Brazil two years before, reflecting on her life in London and how she had changed as a person, remarked:

I had real encounters with God – I was much closer to God, I felt closer to God . . . you know? Because it was me and God – I didn't have my family there, so I was with God. So I grew a lot spiritually there. And consequently I grew as a person (Beatrice, 25/04/10).

Within such narratives it seemed that faith had taken on new meanings as it was felt and practised in multiple ways in everyday life, in response to the realities of the migration experience. Thus, religion in the lives of London's Brazilians was not just manifested within the space of the church. Rather, for many, a divine presence - transcending national and institutional borders - was integral to their everyday struggles and feats. Moreover, as their faith accompanied migrants across borders, it took on different meanings and was modified, adapted and in many cases intensified at different stages of the journey. These religious remittances thus have influence both within and beyond institutional religious spaces.

Concluding remarks

This chapter has examined some of the ways in which religion is practised, experienced, and lived outside the formal, institutional realm, among Brazilian migrants, returnees, and migrants' family members in London and Brazil. It has argued that such a focus provides important insights into how religion is closely intertwined in the transnational lives of many migrants and their families, in both sending and receiving settings, and through the connections and remittances (social, economic and religious) that flow between the different places. Religion can transcend borders and boundaries while, as Csordas (2009) reminds us 'in some instances forg[e] new ones'. It is portable, adaptable and forms an important part of people's everyday lives, and how they construct their identities within their world and forge connections with those of other people and other worlds.

Religion is also experienced within and across multiple and overlapping scales: the transnational, the institutional, the domestic, the individual and the corporeal. This chapter has argued that religion can act as an important resource in creating connections between these various scales enabling migrants to forge a sense of belonging in the new context, while at the same time facilitating connections with people and places elsewhere. Transnational religious spaces are thus created through the interconnection between these various scales and domains within and across which religion is practised and experienced.

The multiple ways in which religion seeps into the everyday transnational lives of migrants and nonmigrants suggests that religion's importance implies far more than mere participation in a religious community, and is perhaps more accurately understood as 'an ever-changing, multifaceted, often messy – even contradictory – amalgam of beliefs and practices that are not necessarily those which religious institutions consider important' (McGuire, 2008: 4). Thus, while the migrants' narratives discussed here clearly draw on religious idioms supplied by religious institutions, these idioms clearly took on new meanings as migrants responded to new situations and lived their religion, or faith, across different geographical and institutional scales and domains. This chapter suggests that just as scholars of transnational religion must consider some of the multiple ways in which religion is lived, so scholars of lived religion must consider how religion is lived transnationally.

Chapter 8

Conclusions

I wouldn't have any of this without God. This was possible thanks to London, and to God.

These words, cited in the title of this thesis, are those of Anete, a 61-year old Brazilian woman who had returned to Brazil in 2008, having lived in London as an irregular migrant for three and a half years. I return to these words to conclude my study as they illustrate clearly some of the themes that have run throughout the thesis. These were the words that Anete exclaimed as she showed me round her newly refurbished and extended house in a small town in Minas Gerais where she had lived her entire life. Anete had embarked upon her migratory journey for material reasons: she had decided to go to London to work and so fulfil her dream of renovating and extending her home. But the journey had also been a profoundly spiritual one: it had made her aware of the power of her faith, and made her grateful to God for His protection and guidance in London, and for the material benefits that her migration had allowed her to accrue. Anete's religious faith had been important for her in London where she had lived in constant fear of deportation. But it was also essential on her return to Brazil as she confronted the challenges of re-adapting to life 'back home'.

In this thesis I have argued that religion is fundamental to the lives of many Brazilian migrants and their families. Yet religious experience has been a largely neglected theme in migration research. I have argued that while religious institutions provide crucial spaces for spiritual and social support for migrants, a broader conception of what I refer to as 'religion-as-lived' among migrants, drawing on Ammerman's (2006) more general concept of 'everyday religion', enables us to see how migrants and their families *use* religion in multiple ways throughout their migration trajectory. This broader notion of religion reveals how it is multi-scalar: it functions across different scales ranging from the global to the local, the transnational to the individual, the institutional to the corporeal. This thesis responds to recent calls among scholars for studies of migration, and indeed of transnationalism, to incorporate sending and

return contexts, as well as receiving settings, into their fields of inquiry (see for example, Potter et al, 2005). In this final chapter, I bring together the principal themes and arguments of my research in relation to my original research questions. And I outline the conceptual and empirical findings of the study and point to some pathways for future research.

The transnational religious lives of a new migrant community in London

Migration flows between Brazil and the US have been widely documented, and more recently there has been a burgeoning of studies of Brazilians in Portugal, as well as other countries in Europe. With regard to the US and Portugal, scholars have also begun to consider the return context (Marcus, 2009, 2010; Siqueira, 2009a, 2009b) and thus acknowledged how, as Marcus (2009: 174) argues, '[m]igration processes are as much about those who leave Brazil for receiving communities in the US as they are about those who return to Brazil (i.e. returnees) and what happens to sending communities.' Yet with regard to Brazilian migration to the UK, which has grown significantly in the last decade (McIlwaine et al, 2011), scholars have been slower to explore the diverse experiences of this new migrant community.

This thesis thus makes important empirical contributions to studies of migration in the UK through its focus on a relatively recent migrant group in London, about which there is little existing research. It has examined the phenomenon of migration from Brazil to London from both sending and receiving perspectives and revealed how Brazilians in London form a highly diverse group with a range of backgrounds and multiple motivations for migration. While economic reasons for moving are clearly the most widely cited, I have argued that a focus on economic factors should not mask the other multiple social and cultural factors that contribute to the decision to migrate, including the significant role of religion. Through the incorporation of sending and return settings, my research took a transnational perspective and revealed the emergence of 'translocal relations' (Guarnizo and Smith, 1997) between multiple locales and the creation of 'transnational spaces' (Jackson et al, 2004). These spaces are created through the flows of people, goods, and

information back and forth across borders, and also incorporate those who do not themselves partake in these cross-border movements.

More significantly, my study has explored the religious dimensions of these translocal relations and transnational spaces and the creation of what I call *transnational religious spaces*. Yet far from representing abstract, de-territorialised spaces, I have argued that ‘place counts’ (Kivisto, 2001: 571), and that in order to understand the flows between these locales and within these transnational religious spaces it is crucial to take into account the contexts within which they occur. Thus, I suggest that the role of religion in the migratory movement from Brazil to London is influenced by the complex religious field in Brazil, which affects and is affected by the religious lives of Brazilians in diaspora and those who return. In turn, my study has shown how the receiving context, in this case London, has an important impact on migrants’ religiosity and on migrant religious institutions as they adapt to entirely new environments.

An important focus of my research was Brazilian religious institutions and I chose two churches in London, and one in Brazil, as case studies through which to explore my research questions. The focus on religious institutions reflected my desire to examine how they are affected by wider processes of globalisation, in which religion plays a major role. I also sought to explore the ways in which these religious institutions and their leaders adapt to the migration context and respond to the diverse needs of migrants, as well as those of migrants’ families and returnees.

My research revealed how these religious institutions function transnationally in different ways and create connections between multiple places. The CEL was established as a result of the religious convictions of one man, Pastor Marco, and fashioned according to his reading of the Bible. Over the last twenty years, however, the church has expanded significantly, becoming a transnational religious institution with branches in Brazil, the Netherlands and Portugal. Indeed, after I had finished my fieldwork I discovered that the church had actually changed its name to incorporate the word ‘International’ as an umbrella term to embrace all the churches within the network. St Mary’s, on the other hand, is already part of a global religious organisation, the Catholic Church. Yet in contrast to the globalising zeal of the CEL, the priests in London described their practices as very much rooted in, and adapted to, the local context. They explained how in response to the diverse needs and demands of church members, many of whom were irregular, the church leaders needed to

modify their approaches, in particular with regard to members' behaviour. My study has thus revealed how these religious institutions and their leaders adapt in different ways to the realities of migration and to the changing environments within which they find themselves. It also reveals how religious leaders themselves are migrants with their own migration trajectories and their own responses to the challenges that such journeys entail.

Religious institutions thus represent hybrid, fluid, spaces, which are the products of the activities and agencies of multiple actors. Indeed, as well as highlighting the agency of religious leaders in the creation of migrant religious institutions, my study reveals how these institutions are shaped by the practices and beliefs of their members who use them in different ways as they respond to the challenges of migration. Migrants frequent these churches to create a sense of community or family in London, in the absence of familiar social networks. These religious institutions also represent spaces for migrants to maintain connections with Brazil, and in the case of St Mary's, to forge a sense of ethnic identity as Brazilians in London. Finally, my research highlights how some migrants switch between churches, often crossing denominational boundaries to address different needs, while other migrants become more actively involved in, and fully committed to, their own particular institutions.

While my study highlights the social and practical roles of churches, which clearly become more important in the migration context, I also argue that these cannot be seen as separate from their fundamental role in the spiritual lives of migrants, who use the churches to nourish their personal relationships with God. I suggest that religion creates spaces to challenge widely-held dichotomies between the social and the spiritual, and the practical and the sacred, which are in fact, I argue, closely intertwined. Migrants use churches to address material *and* spiritual needs and religion represents an important component of how they go about their everyday lives.

My findings concur with studies that discuss the role of religious institutions among migrants in other settings, which show how they represent spaces of belonging, inclusion and familiarity in contrast to a hostile and unfamiliar environment outside the church (Martes, 2000; Ley, 2008). This sense of belonging was provided through the creation of spaces within which migrants could feel at home with other Brazilians in London, and at the same time maintain connections with people and places 'back home' in Brazil, a process that was facilitated by the churches' virtual presences on

the Internet. Yet my research also revealed the ways in which both churches sought to offer migrants tools to engage with the host society in London, through the provision of English classes or advice about housing and finding jobs. This study thus corroborates recent arguments that transnationality and integration can be 'complementary' as opposed to contradictory and that migrants can engage in transnational activities at the same time as living in, and feeling part, of their receiving society (Morawska, 2003; Erkhamp, 2005; Sheringham, 2010a).

However, my research has also revealed how religious institutions can be exclusionary spaces, even for migrants who described themselves as religious. Thus, the CEL, for example, took an explicitly critical attitude towards migrants with irregular migratory statuses, and although those who were irregular were not turned away many were discouraged from becoming members of the church because of the strong sense of guilt irregularity entailed. Moreover, the promotion of a predominantly Brazilian identity at St Mary's may, albeit unintentionally, exclude other migrants who speak Portuguese but do not share Brazilian cultural customs and values. Indeed, while the challenges of migration compelled many migrants who had not been churchgoers 'back home' to frequent a church in London in response to particular difficulties, my findings reveal how even those who had been devoted church members in Brazil felt that their lives in London could not fit into the moral or cultural framework established by the Brazilian churches there.

Another key empirical contribution of my study emerges from the inclusion of a focus that moves beyond the congregational setting. This broader perspective reveals how, for many migrants, religion plays a fundamental role in all aspects of their everyday lives and, indeed, all aspects of their migration process. The study highlights some of the ways in which migrants' faith provides them with a feeling of protection in London and support through difficult times, but also how engagement with the spiritual realm enables them to give meaning to their entire migration experience, before, during, and after their return. It reveals how faith becomes accessible in multiple spaces including work places, public transport, people's homes, and virtually via migrants' use of the Internet to practise, share and exchange religious beliefs and ideas.

As well as crossing the boundary between inside and outside the congregational realm, the study also moves beyond the receiving setting and reveals how the changing religious beliefs and practices of migrants impact upon sending and

return contexts. It has shown some of the ways in which migrants' religious lives in London are shaped by their religious beliefs and practices back home in Brazil together with the new situations they face in London. In turn, as migrants return from London to Brazil, their religious lives are influenced by their experiences in London as well as the context of re-adapting to their lives in Brazil. The study has also pointed to some of the ways in which the religious lives of migrants' families back home adapt in response to the absence of their loved-ones, the contact they maintain with them, and the experience of their return to the family. Transnational religious spaces are thus not confined to migrants themselves, or indeed to religious institutions. Rather they encompass the experiences of those who remain as well as those who return 'back home'.

Living religion transnationally

In addition to the largely empirical contributions outlined above, this study makes some key conceptual contributions to an emerging body of work that seeks to identify the intersections between religion and transnationalism. Importantly, it relates arguments put forward within existing scholarship - in particular within geographies of religion and transnational migration studies - to the experiences of a recent migrant community in the UK and highlights some important new theoretical approaches for analysing these intersections. Moreover, as outlined above, it expands the field of investigation both beyond the receiving setting and beyond the institutional realm. In so doing, the study reveals how, just as migration needs to be theorised as a dynamic process which encompasses a multiplicity of people and places, so too religion is not static or place-bound, but rather represents a dynamic and shifting network of beliefs and practices that are affected by, but at the same time influence, the migration process.

More specifically, I wish to point to three significant conceptual contributions made by my research, which could provide insights for future studies of religion and transnational migration. The first is with regard to scale, and the different realms within which religion is experienced and negotiated. While a review of different fields of research reveals how religion functions across different scales - from the global, to

the local, to the institutional, to the individual body –little attention has been paid to the junctures between these various scales and the permeable boundaries between them. My research reveals how greater sensitivity to these scales and to the points of overlap between them enables a deeper understanding of how religion is closely interrelated with other factors and actors that impact upon religious institutions and the everyday lives of migrants. So, for example, I argue that religious institutions are formed through the dynamic, and often conflicting, interplay between global religious changes, historical sacred doctrines, and the practices and beliefs of the leaders and members who ‘people’ those institutions and live their lives across borders. Such insights respond to Vasquez and Marquardt’s (2003: 225) call for greater attention to be paid to the ways in which congregations are ‘locales of mixing, multiplicity, overlap and contradiction’ as well as ‘sites of boundary formation and maintenance.’

A focus on the multi-scalar nature of religion also challenges the conceptual boundaries set up within existing studies, between the sacred and the mundane, or practical, realities of migrants’ everyday lives. My research reveals how, for many migrants, religion infuses all aspects of their everyday lives even for those who do not frequent a religious institution. Faith is thus accessible in multiple places, including workplaces, homes, and public transport and different locales in London and Brazil. The virtual religious spaces provided by the Internet also represent an important means by which migrants can access and practice their faith in, as well as creating connections between, different places. In this sense, I argue that religion can be conceptualised as an intermediary dimension, which both creates and sustains links between a variety of people in a multiplicity of spaces and temporalities.

A second, related, conceptual contribution of my study is the concept of *transnational religious spaces*. These, I argue, are created through the interplay between the multiple scales of religion outlined above. The notion of transnational religious spaces draws on broader conceptualisations of transnationalism and diaspora, which consider transnational or diasporic ‘spaces’ that encompass many more than just those who migrate and partake in transnational practices (Jackson et al, 2004; Brah, 1996). Jackson et al (2004: 3) argue that ‘focusing on the spaces of transnationality . . . opens up ways of exploring [the] multiplicity of transnational experiences and relations.’ Applying these insights to the study of religion, I argue that a focus on transnational religious spaces enables us to conceptualise how religion permeates the spaces of transnationalism, affecting those who migrate, those who

return 'back home', and the families who experience the absence of their loved ones. Such insights are important for both geographers of religion, who seek to emphasise the spatial dimensions of religion (Kong, 2010), and for scholars of transnationalism who explore the transnational religious connections between different locales (Levitt, 2007).

Indeed, this study highlights how religion influences all stages of the migration process for many migrants. As well as being an important motivating factor for migration, religion represents a crucial source of support for migrants in London, and plays a fundamental role in the creation and maintenance of transnational ties. Going beyond the important insights provided by scholars of transnational religion who highlighted religion's role before and during the migration process (Hagan and Ebaugh, 2003), my study argues that religion is also a crucial factor for migrants who return 'back home', as much as for those who remain. All of these locales and actors participate in different ways and with varying degrees of intensity within transnational religious spaces. Moreover, many factors, including gender, class and immigration status affect the ways in which migrants operate within these spaces.

Within these transnational religious spaces, I have put forward the concept of religious remittances, drawing on Levitt's notion of 'social remittances'. This, I argue, provides a useful term for conceptualising some of the ways in which religious practices and beliefs are transferred, exchanged and shared across borders, influencing and influenced by different contexts. This conceptual input contributes to developments within studies of transnational phenomena that go beyond the material exchanges of people and goods across borders, and consider the symbolic and imaginary ties that influence the ways in which people give meaning to their lives (Appadurai, 1996; Flores, 2005; Jackson et al, 2004). I argue that religion is transformed as it travels between different domains and that, in turn, these transformations influence the ways migrants live their lives transnationally.

The role of the Internet in facilitating these religious remittances also emerges as an important theme of my research. Thus, for example, migrants' families in Brazil can watch religious services attended by their relatives living in London. Moreover, migrants and their families can communicate with each other through posting messages on the websites of their religious institutions or through other social networking sites. The Internet thus enables migrants and their families to share and exchange elements of their religious lives across borders. More significantly, it

enables return migrants in Brazil to remain embedded in their religious lives in London as they confront the challenges of re-creating their lives back home. Thus while scholars of migrant religion have recently turned attention to the growing importance of the Internet among religious institutions (Garbin and Vasquez, forthcoming 2012; Oosterbaan, 2010b, 2011), I argue that more attention should be paid to the creation of virtual religious spaces beyond the institutional framework.

Finally, my study highlights how religious beliefs and practices travel across borders not just through institutions and formal networks, but also as an integral part of the identities and experiences of many migrants. This ‘lived religion’ approach to religion and transnationalism enables us to consider how religion is not a tangible, concrete subject of inquiry, but rather something that is often inseparable from other aspects of the migration experience, and is manifested through daily practices and narratives. Thus, as well as analysing the movement of people, ideas and material ‘things’ across borders, I have argued that scholars of transnational migration need to give more space in their analyses to the spiritual realm, to what is ‘invisible’ but fundamental in the everyday lives and actions of many people. Thus, rather than separate the institutional from the everyday, the spiritual from the material, and in this case, localities ‘back home’ in Brazil from places in London, an emphasis on ‘religion-as-lived’ in relation to transnationalism blurs these conceptual boundaries and reveals instead the ‘fluidity, conflict, and paradox’ (Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003: 225) that characterise transnational religious spaces.

Pathways for future research

My research constituted a specific case study of the role of religion within a particular migratory flow, between Brazil and London. Yet it provides some important insights for the study of religion and migration, and illuminates a number of potential areas for research in a wider context. I briefly outline below some of the ways in which the insights from my study could be taken further with implications for both academic researchers and policy makers.

Firstly, the Brazilian religious institutions that were a focus of my study represent a small part of a vast array of Brazilian religious institutions of multiple

denominations that have emerged in London in recent years, including Spiritist centres, Umbanda and Candomblé temples as well as myriad evangelical Protestant churches. Future research could take a wider, comparative approach to the multiple Brazilian places of worship in London. Such studies could explore, for example, the relationships between them and the characteristics of the Brazilian migrants who frequent them and examine how (and if) the members can be differentiated along lines such as gender, class, race or region of origin. A comparative approach that examines the role of Brazilian religious institutions in relation to those of other migrant groups in London would also be a fruitful direction for further research.

Second, future studies could examine in more depth the role of new migrant religious institutions in London in filling important gaps left open by the state, in the context of an increasingly predominant neoliberal agenda that impacts on the provision of welfare (Cloke et al, 2005, 2010), as well as on the provision of other services such as immigration and employment advice. Such research could thus consider the nature of the services provided, and the extent to which they represent effective replacements for those provided by secular or state-led organisations, or whether such services are incomplete and indeed, subject to conditions that foster new forms of exclusion for migrants. Studies along such lines would be important for policy makers who need to take more note of the crucial role of religious institutions in the welfare of migrants. At the same time, however, policy makers should also acknowledge that religious or ‘faith-based’ organisations are not a panacea for addressing the gaps in the provision of services for migrants.

A third significant avenue for future research into transnationalism and religion would be to explore the role of religion within transnational family relationships and across generations. In this thesis I argue that religion’s role within transnational processes needs to be analysed in both sending and receiving settings, and thus should consider how those who ‘stay put’ are affected by such processes and are implicated in the creation of transnational religious spaces. Drawing on these insights, further inquiries could consider what happens to family dynamics when migrants convert to different religious denominations as a result of their migration, and commit themselves to paths that are considerably different to their initial migration objectives. Thus, for example, if the religious institution becomes a surrogate family for migrants when they migrate, what happens to the family unit when they return? Can religious remittances actually have a negative impact on

transnational family relationships and, indeed, on the experience of return? In this regard, future research could also explore in more depth the role of the Internet in the positive and negative impacts of religious remittances.

My thesis reveals how religion is not merely about culture or ritual, although these can form an important part of it. Rather, religion is closely related to how people cope with their lives, and furthermore, how they relate to each other. In this regard, religion and spirituality need to be seen as integral to rather than separate from migrants' identities and practices. Religion and transnationalism, separately and in combination, represent multi-faceted 'identities of becoming', in a 'world of becoming' (Connolly, 2011). A consideration of the role of religion in the everyday lives of migrants and in the places they inhabit has wider religious, *and* secular, implications stretching far beyond what may be perceived as merely a religious field, and the lives of Brazilian migrants in London.

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Appendix 1: Interview schedule – migrants in London/returnees

Name of interviewee:

Date of interview:

Age:

Place of interview:

Occupation:

Life in Brazil:

Can you tell me something about what your life was like before you left Brazil?
(Area where you lived, rural-urban, family, education, work, history of migration in family)

Migration experience:

Can you describe your migration: why and how you migrated? (Reasons, choice of country, organisation of movement, family networks/came alone)

What visa did you come in with?

Do you have a visa at the moment?

Settling in London:

Can you tell me about your first experiences of moving to London?

How did you feel?

Did you have family here/there already?

Did you feel welcome here/there?

Were there any particular people/organisations that helped you in the initial period?

What were the main challenges when you first arrived?

Work

What had you planned to do when you moved to London?

How did you go about finding work? (Via family, community, networks, agencies?)

Can you describe the jobs that you've done since coming to the UK/you did while in the UK? (experiences, length of time in job, reasons for leaving)

Can you tell me about your experiences of working in your current job/last job?

(Hours, workload, promotion, training, subcontracting, discrimination, meet expectations – feelings)

Can you tell me how you feel/felt about your job?

Do/did you work with other Brazilians?

How does/did it compare to the type of work you did before you came to Britain?

(for London respondents only):

How long do you plan to do this job for?

Overall, do you think you're better off here or before you came to London? (More or less money?)

Do you have any other sources of income? (from renting rooms, part-time or extra work?)

Where do you turn if you don't have any money? (For example, friends, relatives, money lenders, organisations for Latin Americans etc.)

If you are able to save any of your income, what do you use it for? (remittances, if so to whom? What are they used for?)

Households

Type of accommodation?

Do/did you live near other Brazilians?

Living in London is very expensive – I wonder if I could ask you a bit about how you cope/ed?

Do/did you have any other forms of income, or help with income?

(Savings with them? Support from extended family UK and abroad, benefits – problems claiming, other work)

Where do/did you go to do your shopping?

What is your role in the household and since coming to the UK has this role changed?

(How, why?)

Leisure:

What do/did you do at weekends?

Nationality of friends?

Are/were you a member of any organisation/club?

Do/did you tend to go to Brazilian places – shops/restaurants etc?

What do/did you think of the Brazilian community?

Do/did people support each other?

Religion and life in Brazil prior to migrating:

Were/are you a member of a church/religious organisation in Brazil?

If so, which one (s)? (i.e/ what denomination, if more than one – which ones)?

How often did you attend religious services in Brazil? How important was religion in your life in Brazil before you migrated? (prayers, rituals, religious occasions)

Did you attend the church for any other reasons apart from religious ones?

Religion and migration to London:

Did your church in Brazil support you in any way with your migration to London?

Were there any members of your church already in London, or ones who had returned?

Did you find any information about migration from contacts at your church?

Did your religious faith affect the decision to migrate/migration experience?

Religion and life in London:

Do/did you attend a church in London?

If so, which one(s)? (i.e./denomination – if more than one which ones, why?)

Is/was it a similar denomination to the one you attended in Brazil? If not, why did you switch denominations? Does your family in Brazil frequent a similar church to you?

Have you always attended the same church here or did you change denomination?

How often do you attend religious services?

Do you go to church for any other reasons aside from religious ones? If so, please explain.

Do you feel like religion is more/less important in your life now you live in London?

Do you feel that religion has affected your decision to stay in London?

Links with home (and religion):

How do/did you keep in touch with your family and friends ‘back home’? (how often, what ways?)

Do/did you send any money home? (who to?/what for?)

Do/did you feel that your religion helps you to feel closer to your family back home?
If so, please explain.

Feeling ‘at home’ in London (and religion):

Do/did you feel at home in London?

In what ways do you feel that your life has changed since you’ve been in London?

Do/did you feel that you have changed as a person since you’ve lived here/there?

What role does/did religion play in your life here/there?

Return (for returnees only):

When did you return to Brazil?

Why did you decide to return?

Can you tell me a bit about the experience of returning (was it how you expected? Did you find it easy to find work?)

Do you stay in touch with people in London? If so, how?

Do you attend a church here in Brazil? If so, is it the same denomination as the one you attended in London?

Do you feel that your experience in London has changed your religious beliefs and practices in any way?

Do you feel that you have changed as a person as a result of your experience in London? If so, in what ways?

Any questions?

Appendix 2: Interview schedule – religious leaders in London/Brazil

Name of interviewee:

Date of interview:

Age:

Place of interview:

Church:

Life in Brazil:

Can you tell me something about what your life was like before you left Brazil?

(Area where you lived, rural-urban, family, education, work)

Migration experience:

Can you describe your migration: why and how you migrated? (Reasons, choice of country, organisation of movement, family networks/came alone)

Settling in London:

Can you tell me about your first experiences of moving to London?

How did you feel?

Did you feel welcome here?

What were the main challenges when you first arrived?

Religion in Brazil:

Were you already a priest/pastor in Brazil?

If so, in which denomination (evangelical)?

What led you to become a priest/pastor?

Did you have contact with many people who had migrated/planned to migrate, or who had families living in London (or elsewhere) before you came/went to London?

If so, was it important to bring this into the religious services in Brazil?

Religion in London:

How did you become a pastor/priest in London (i.e. was it an institutional decision or personal?)

How do/did members find out about the church?

In what ways have you had/did you have to adapt your practices in London – as compared to in Brazil?

How would you describe your role as a religious leader in London? In what ways is it different to your role back in Brazil?

What are the main challenges of being a priest/pastor here in London?

Role of the religious institution in London:

How would you describe the role of a religious community in London? In what ways is this different from the church's role in the sending setting?

What services does/did the church offer aside from religious services?

What is/was the church's attitude towards irregular migrants?

Do you feel that the church should play a role in helping migrants to integrate into host society in London?

Links with Brazil:

Does your church have links (institutional or other) with any churches in Brazil?

Do you feel that it's important to maintain a sense of Brazilian identity through the religious community? If so, in what ways?

Members of the church:

How would you characterise the members of the church? (class, region of origin, are/were there members from outside Brazil?)

Do people tend to come regularly or are there different people each time?

How do you feel about members who frequent/ed the church only occasionally?

Returning to Brazil (for leaders who have returned):

When did you return to Brazil?

Why did you decide to return?

Can you tell me a bit about the experience of returning (was it how you expected?)

Do you keep in touch with the religious institution you were part of in London? If so, in what ways?

Do you feel that your experience in London has changed the way you see your role as a religious leader in London?

Any questions?

Appendix 3: Information sheet and consent form in Portuguese (and English)



Informação sobre a pesquisa: Religião e Migração

Gostaria de convidá-lo/la a participar deste projeto. Só concorde em participar se você se sentir a vontade, a decisão é toda sua. Se voce decidir não participar, nenhuma desvantagem resultará para voce e o convite termina aqui. Por favor, leia a seguinte informação cuidadosamente antes de tomar uma decisão quanto a participar do estudo, para que saiba porque o estudo está sendo conduzido, e o o estudo requer de você. Caso tenha dúvida, basta solicitar esclarecimento ou qualquer outra informação que deseje. Se você decidir participar, será preciso que assine o formulário em anexo. De qualquer modo, voce tem inteira liberdade para abandonar o estudo em qualquer momento, sem necessidade de justificar-se.

Estou fazendo uma pesquisa sobre o papel da igreja – ou da religião em geral – nas vidas dos brasileiros que vivem em Londres e gostaria de convidá-lo a participar deste projeto.

Gostaria de saber suas razões para vir a Londres, qual a igreja ou a comunidade religiosa que frequenta e, como esta instituição lhe ajuda a manter contato com o Brasil. Também gostaria de saber se existem comunidades religiosas no Brasil que apóiam as pessoas que querem emigrar e se têm conexões com pessoas que já estão em Londres.

A sua participação me ajudará a entender o papel da religião para os imigrantes brasileiros em Londres. Este entendimento é importante já que os brasileiros são imigrantes relativamente recentes em Londres e pouco se sabe sobre suas vidas e sobre o papel da religião em apoiá-los.

A informação que você me fornecer será tratada como confidencial e não deverá ser partilhada com pessoa ou instituição alguma. Nos casos em que a informação precise ser partilhada, utilizarei um nome fictício, de modo que não haja possibilidade alguma de que voce seja indentificado/a.

Se não houver objeção de sua parte, quero gravar sua entrevista. O objetivo único desse procedimento é poder reconhecer suas respostas durante o processamento dos dados da pesquisa. Uma vez utilizados esses dados obtidos, a gravação será apagada.

Para aceitar este convite é só assinar a autorização abaixo. Se houver alguma coisa que você não compreenda, ou se quiser mais informação, por favor, me pergunte!

Muito obrigada.

Olivia Sheringham (Queen Mary, University of London) osheringham@qmul.ac.uk

Autorização

Preencha este formulário depois de ler as informações anexadas e/ou depois de ouvir as explicações sobre o projeto de pesquisa.

Título do projeto: *Everyday Transnationalism: the role of religion in the lives of Brazilian Migrants in London and 'back home'*
(O papel da religião na vida dos migrantes Brasileiros em Londres e no Brasil)

Queen Mary Research Ethics Committee Ref: _____

(Ref. do Comitê Ético de Pesquisa do Queen Mary, Universidade de Londres)

. • *Obrigada por estar considerando participar deste projeto. A pessoa responsável por esta pesquisa deve lhe explicar o projeto antes que você aceite o convite.*

. • *Se tiver qualquer pergunta sobre o projeto, faça-a ao pesquisador antes de se comprometer a participar. Uma cópia deste formulário ficará com você para referência futura.*

. • *Entendo que posso notificar os pesquisadores que não mais desejo participar deste projeto a qualquer momento durante a pesquisa e então me desligar imediatamente.*

. • *Autorizo o uso de minhas informações pessoais para os propósitos deste projeto de pesquisa. Entendo que essas informações serão tratadas com confidencialidade e manuseadas de acordo com o 'Data Protection Act 1998'.*

Participante:

Eu _____ confirmo que o projeto de pesquisa mencionado acima foi explicado e concordo em participar deste estudo. Li as informações acima e as anexadas e, entendo o que este projeto envolve.

Assinatura:

Data:

Pesquisador:

Eu _____ confirmo que expliquei cuidadosamente a natureza deste projeto, as atividades a serem desenvolvidas e os possíveis riscos envolvidos na participação neste projeto proposto ao voluntário.

Information sheet in English



The role of religion in the lives of Brazilian migrants in London and 'back home'

I would like to invite you to be part of this research project, if you would like to. You should only agree to take part if you want to, it is entirely up to you. If you choose not to take part there won't be any disadvantages for you and you will hear no more about it.

Please read the following information carefully before you decide to take part; this will tell you why the research is being done and what you will be asked to do if you take part. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

If you decide to take part you will be asked to sign the attached form to say that you agree.

You are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

I am conducting a study into the role of religion in the everyday lives of Brazilians living in London, or who have family or friends living in London. I am interested in finding out why people come to London, which churches or religious communities they become members of in London, and how these enable them to stay in touch with Brazil. I am interested in finding out if religious communities in Brazil support people who are planning to migrate to London, and if they help to create ties with people who are there. I am also looking at the ways in which churches support migrants when they arrive in London and throughout their experience in the city. I am also interested in the importance of religion in helping migrants to face the challenges of migration. The information you give me will be used to build up a picture of the role of religion for Brazilian migrants. This will be very important, as Brazilians are a relatively recent migrant group in London and very little is known about them. In addition, very little is known about the role of religion in supporting new migrants in the city.

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign the consent form – which is attached.

Consent form

Please complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research.

Title of Study: **Everyday Transnationalism: the role of religion in the lives of Brazilian migrants in London and 'back home'**

Queen Mary Research Ethics Committee Ref: _____

- . • Thank you for considering taking part in this research. The person organizing the research must explain the project to you before you agree to take part.
- . • If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.
- . • *I understand that if I decide at any other time during the research that I no longer wish to participate in this project, I can notify the researchers involved and be withdrawn from it immediately.*
- . • *I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes of this research study. I understand that such information will be treated as strictly confidential and handled in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.*

Participant's Statement:

I _____ agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in the study. I have read both the notes written above and the Information Sheet about the project, and understand what the research study involves.

Signed:

Date:

Investigator's Statement:

I _____ confirm that I have carefully explained the nature, demands and any foreseeable risks (where applicable) of the proposed research to the volunteer

Appendix 4: List of interviewees

Interviews in London

	Name (pseudonym)	Age	Date of interview	Church affiliation?	Occupation in London	Visa held in London	Region of origin
1	Padre Mauricio		15/10/09	St Mary's	Priest	Minister of Religion	São Paulo (state)
2	Padre José	58	02/09/09 & 16/02/10	St Mary's (Brazilian Catholic Chaplaincy)	Priest (Oxford)	Minister of Religion	São Paulo (state)
3	Pastor Neilton		17/10-09	CEL	Pastor	Minister of Religion	Minas Gerais
4	Ana	29	23/10/09& 20/11/09	St Mary's	Student/ Estate agent	Student	Goiás
5	Sheila	32	19/11/09	CEL	Receptionist	Portuguese pass port	São Paulo (state)
6	Dulce	44	20/11/09	St Mary's	Cleaner - domestic	Student	Goiás
7	Maria	28	22/11/09	St Mary's	Receptionist	Italian passport	Goiás
8	Pedro	27	22/11/09	St Mary's	Waiter in restaurant	Dependent on wife's passport	Goiás
9	Paulo	33	27/11/09	St Mary's/ Brazilian Catholic church in Soho	Construction	none	Goiás
10	Adriana	45	29/11/09	St Mary's	Cleaner - domestic	none	Goiás
11	Claudia	21	29/11/09	St Mary's	Works for church - admin	Italian passport	Santa Catarina
12	Juliane	21	30/11/09	St Mary's	Cleaner - offices	student	Minas Gerais
13	Antonio	30	01/12/09	St Mary's/ Brazilian Catholic church in Soho	Security	Dependent on wife's visa (though separated)	Goiás
14	Lucia	27	08/12/09 & 10/12/09	CEL	Childminder		Minas Gerais
15	Adilson	40	09/12/09	CEL, but now CityGate (English evangelical church in London)	Runs courses for new arrivals at CityGate	Work permit (employed by church)	Rio De Janeiro (state)
16	Vera		11/12/09	St Mary's	Childminder/cleaner/beautician	none	Goiás
17	Deborah (Wesley's wife)	26	13/12/09	St Mary's	Cleaner (domestic)	Italian passport	Goiás
18	Wesley (Deborah's husband)	34	13/12/09	St Mary's	KP in restaurant	Dependent on wife's Italian passport	Goiás
19	Tania	35	13/01/10	CEL	Travel Agent	Work permit	São Paulo (State)
20	Padre Omario		20/01/10	St Mary's	Priest	Minister of	Minas Gerais

						Religion	
21	Nestor	34	26/01/10	St Mary's	Cleaner and English classes at church/private	Residency (married to Portuguese woman)	Minas Gerais
22	Jorge	42	27/01/10	CEL	Bus driver	UK passport (length of residency)	Minas Gerais
23	Braulio		27/01/10	none	Runs Brazilian organisation in London	UK passport (length of residency)	
24	Leonardo	34	27/01/10	CEL	Cleaner	Student	São Paulo (state)
25	Wagner	35	27/01/10	CEL	Courier	Dependent on wife – portuguese passport	Minas Gerais
26	Felipe		28/01/10	St Mary's	Works as chef in hotel and church admin	Work permit?	Minas Gerais
27	Carla	26	03/01/10	St Mary's	Cleaner	Tourist (6 months)	Goiás
28	Carolina	55	03/01/10	St Mary's	Caring for her grandchildren	Tourist (6 months)	Goiás
29	Iracema	36	03/01/10	none	Works for organisation the works with Brazilians	British passport (marriage)	São Paulo (city)
30	Isabella (Carlos' wife)	54	08/02/10	CEL	Cleaner - domestic	none	Bahia
31	Carlos (Isabella's husband)	61	08/02/10	CEL	Unemployed. Suffered accident in previous job as courier	none	Bahia
32	Jordão	39	18/02/10	CEL, now Citygate	Electrician-free-lance, but works in private hotel	Italian passport	Espírito Santo
33	Augusto	27	21/02/10	St Mary's	courier	none	Goiás
34	Fernando	43	23/02/10	St Mary's	Works in shop warehouse	none	Paraná
35	Walter		25/02/10	CEL, now CityGate	Has his own courier company	German passport	São Paulo
36	Samuel	33	02/03/10	none	Chef in restaurant (run by Brazilians)	None	Minas Gerais
37	Pastor Marco		17/03/10	CEL	Pastor	Minister of Religion	Minas Gerais
38	Nuelia	28	11/08/10	CEL	PA to an Israeli businessman	Italian passport	Santa Catarina
39	Monica	22	11/08/10	CEL	Cleaner	Student	Goiás
40	Flavia	47	30/08/10	none	Researcher	Residency (length of stay)	São Paulo (state)
41	Enrique	30	31/08/10	none	Assistant teacher in school for	Portuguese passport	São Paulo (state)

					autistic children.		
42	Graça	41	14/09/10	None, though initially attended Spiritist centre in London	Researcher	residency	São Paulo
43	Ivone	20	24/11/10	St Mary's	waitress	spouse	São Paulo (state)
44	João	33	27/11/10	St Mary's	Assistant in restaurant	Dependent on wife's visa	Goiás

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	Name Pseudonym	Age	Occupation in London	Visa held in London	Region of origin
1	Ignacio	34	cleaner	Dependent on spouse	Goiás
2	Elena	22	student/cleaner	Student	São Paulo (state)
3	Lucia	38	childminder		São Paulo (state)
4	Marta	43	housewife	Spouse - married	Santa Catarina
5	Sonia	59	cleaner		São Paulo (state)

Interviews in Brazil

	Name (pseudonym)	Age	Date of interview	Church affiliation?	Occupation in London	Visa held in London	Occupation in Brazil	Region of origin
1	Luis (Florenca's husband)		17/04/10	CEL - London CEBH - in Brazil	Courier	Dependent on wife's student visa /	English teacher	Minas Gerais
2	Florenca (Luis's wife)		17/04/10	CEL - London CEBH - in Brazil	cleaner	Student	English teacher	Minas Gerais
3	Renata	33	19/04/10	Spiritist – London and Brazil	Student/travel company	Student	unemployed	Minas Gerais (BH)
4	Pastor Gustavo	58	19/04/19	CEL - London Baptist church in Brazil	student	tourist	pastor	Minas Gerais (BH)
5	Thiago	26	24/04/10	CEL- London CEBH - Brazil	Cleaner/caretaker of leisure centre	student	cleaner	Sao Paulo (state)
6	Juliana	33	24/04/10	CEL- London CEBH - Brazil	Cleaner (domestic)	Student/none	English teacher	Minas Gerais (BH)
7	Beatrice	31	25/04/10	CEL- London CEBH - Brazil	Cleaner (domestic)	student	administration	Minas Gerais (BH)
8	Pastor Edouardo	36	27/04/10	CEL- London Baptist church - Brazil	Auxiliary pastor - CEL	Minister of Religion	English teacher	Minas Gerais (BH)
9	Pastor Marco		29/04/10	CEL	Pastor CEL	Minister of Religion	Pastor CEBH	Minas Gerais (BH)
10	Sidney		30/04/10	CEL- London No church - Brazil	Furniture maker	none	Furniture maker	Minas Gerais
11 **	Dona Daniela	84	1/05/10	Spiritist - Brazil	n/a	n/a	Spiritist leader	Minas Gerais (BH)
12	Liliana (Lucas's husband)		04/05/10		Cleaner/Childminder	none	House-wife	Minas Gerais (Ipatinga)
13	Lucas (Liliana's husband)		04/05/10	St Mary's – London Local Catholic church - Brazil	Kitchen Assistant in London restaurant chain	none	Electrician	Minas Gerais (Ipatinga)
14	Matteo	28	04/05/10	None – London or Brazil	Kitchen Assistant in London restaurant chain	none	disabled	Minas Gerais (Ipatinga)
15	Michel	38	04/05/10	None – London or Brazil	Kitchen Assistant in London restaurant chain	none	Retired (disabled)	Minas Gerais (Ipatinga)
16	Anete	61	05/05/10	None –	Child-	none	Free-lance	Minas

				London Local Catholic church – Brazil	minder/cleaner/chaambermaid/waitress		saleswoma	Gerais (Ipatinga)
17	Graciela (Rodrigo's wife)	33	06/05/10	St Mary's London Local Catholic church – Brazil	Childminder	none	Unemployed	Minas Gerais
18	Rodrigo (Graciela's husband)	32	06/05/10	St Mary's London None – Brazil	Cleaner/care-taker in hotel	none	Factory worker	Minas Gerais
19	Paula	33	07/05/10	St Mary's London Local Catholic church – Brazil	Cleaner – domestic/offices	none	Going to open up her own bar	Minas Gerais
20	Lucia		07/05/10	St Mary's – London None- Brazil	Cleaner (domestic)	none	None yet-just had baby	Minas Gerais
21*	Sofia - daughter lives in London	58	10/05/10	Local Catholic Church - Brazil	n/a -	n/a	Housewife	Minas Gerais
22	Danilo	34	30/05/10	St Mary's - London Local Catholic Church - Brazil	Kitchen assistant in restaurant	none	Salesman –	Goiás
23	Glaucia	26	30/05/10	St Mary's - London Local Catholic Church - Brazil	Cleaner (offices and domestic)	none	housewife	Goiás
24	Cristiana	34	5/06/10	None – in London or Brazil	Cleaner (domestic)	None	Own business	Goiás
25	Clarice	32	5/06/10	None – London evangelical church in Brazil	Cleaner (offices and domestic)	None	Student	Goiás
26	Jaine	44	5/06/10	St Mary's - London Local Catholic Church - Brazil	Cleaner/Child-minder	None	Housewife	Goiás
27**	Ir. Inez		10/06/10	n/a	n/a	n/a	PBE - Brazil	Goiás
28*	Roberto	25	11/06/10	n/a	n/a	n/a	IT technician for military	Goiás
29	Anderson	30	16/06/10	None –	Kitchen	None	Shop –	Goiás

				London or Brazil	assistant in restaurant restaurant		construction materials	
30*	Rogério	22	16/06/10	n/a Local Catholic church in Brazil	n/a	n/a	Petrol attendant	Goiás
31	Dalva	37	17/06/10	None – in London Evangelical church in Brazil	Cleaner/Childminder	none	Student	Goiás
32	Estevan	34	17/06/10	None – in London Evangelical church in Brazil	Kitchen assistant in restaurant restaurant	none	Military Policeman	Goiás
33*	Manuel	59	18/06/10	n/a Local Catholic church in Brazil	n/a	n/a	Driver for local electricity firm	Goiás
34	Bernardo	41	21/06/10	St Mary's London Local Catholic church in Brazil	Courier	Dependent on wife's student visa	Farmer	Goiás
35	Arturo	23	23/06/10	None – in London or Brazil	Kitchen assistant in restaurant restaurant	none	Barman	Goiás

* Family members who had not been in London

** Religious leaders who had not been in London