

## THE RELIGIOUS FACTOR IN HUMAN GEOGRAPHY: ITS FORCE AND ITS LIMITS

In concluding his treatise on human geography Jean Brunhes put the question, 'What would the earth have been like had not mankind appeared and spread over it?' In making a response, we undoubtedly are both judge and party.

We have to admit, nevertheless, without either pride or modesty, that man is responsible at present for a notable share of the superficial aspects of the earth. At certain points, where he has persevered for a long while, this share is indeed pre-eminent. Through his labour and his attention he has created an infinite variety which expresses itself in those manifold 'lands' of various functions, those 'cantons' which bear the name of 'land' because they have come to constitute a unity of landscape and, closely related to it, the methods of its exploitation. Step by step, and not without errors, the inhabitant has turned each corner of virgin soil to a particular purpose, a better yield in human terms. To attain this better yield, the scene has been worked over in its soil, in its vegetable mantle, has been furnished with cultivated plants, with selected trees, with roads and houses. It has taken on a physiognomy suitable to human service.

### *Man the Author of Landscapes*

Without man the surface of continents certainly would have developed some variety; but this would have been limited to vaster, less individualised divisions, more like the climatic or vegetable zones as they exist today particularly in the undeveloped regions, their very names indicating the imprecision of their outlines; the Brazilian sertão, the Argentine pampas, the Russian taïga, the Finnish tundra . . .

The richest variety of little regional landscapes or *pays* could develop only in zones of ancient and dense humanisation. Even today few regions of the earth have attained this stage of fine variety, the *pays* stage, one might say. The major part of western Europe and the Mediterranean area have reached it, and so have many regions of the Far East. In certain new continents some landscapes have begun to evolve diversity and, in some cases, can presume to take the name of *pays*.

Thus in French Canada *pays* have emerged in Beauce, in Charleroi, in Beauré. Not only has the *pays* emerged from the great monotonous forest which covered it and taken a certain 'human' appearance (in Beauré, the long *rangs* of several kilometres), but man himself, in turn, has been fashioned by the countryside. He has become a *paysan*, a man of the *paysage*, an *habitant*, as the French Canadian says so expressively, to such a point that he draws upon himself nicknames from his neighbours. The people of Canada's Beauce are called *jarrets noirs*, 'black hocks', because of the boggy soil they work: a symbol of the intimacy between the people and the land they have created. In their turn, these folk make fun maliciously of surrounding places. In Burgundy, we find the contrast between the *gratte-roches* or 'rock-scratchers' of the stony plateaus and the *cul-terreux* or 'dirt-bottoms' of the lower and marshy districts.

Nothing like this exists in the newer regions, such as the Canadian North-west, where the contacts between man and his chosen corner of the earth have not been so long. If local names, names of *pays* are to come up at all, they must reflect not only physical differences but that intimate and lengthy colloquy, carried on from generation to generation, between the same people and the same soil.

So it seems that the progressive humanisation of the earth translates itself into an ever greater wealth of variety. Civilisation does not evolve toward uniformity as much as one might think; it contains, rather, a major potential of variety. Ancient Gaul did not know the little *pays* of later times. They took shape, gradually, in proportion to the intensity of human labour, *pagus* after *pagus*. It is interesting to study the lives of

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these *pays*, which are the result of man's labours. Certain ones die; others are born, according to the evolution of the differentiating factors.

Thus the little canton of Ostabat, in the French Basque country, had developed traits which distinguished it from any other *pays*: for this longitudinal depression, on the junction of several highways which carried the crowds of pilgrims to the famous pass of Roncevalles, was filled with a vast number of *pensions* and hostels to lodge the pilgrims. The distinctive function of the place was that of lodging; and by this it acquired its proper name, Ostabat, the place of hostels.

Likewise the town of Grandval, in the Haut-Jura region, has established itself as a *paysage* thanks to the special craft of its *paysans*, the Grandvalliers. They were expert wagoners. Out of the tall fir trees of their mountains they manufactured those long, narrow, four-wheeled carriages which enabled them to export all sorts of merchandise from their plateau and made of them eventually the finest drivers on all the highways of France, and even of Europe. It was the wagoners of Grandval who assured the military transports during Napoleon's Russian Campaign and, later on, the stage-coach services on all the French highways.

In the delta of the river Ebro the evolution was different. Once a region of swamps, frequented by hunters, fishermen, and smugglers, as well as by herdsmen who looked after the fierce bulls, this region became in the nineteenth century a *ribière*, a land of rice plantations; and the new settlers, the *ribierencs*, found themselves in sharp contrast with the *garrigens* of the nearby hills, the *garrigas* with their olive trees.

Thus it is undoubtedly man rather than nature who is responsible for the origin of those little *paysages*, which then become *pays* and represent a high degree of humanisation of the earth.

Living vestiges of the whole human caravan across time and space, these phenomena sum up the work of man and constitute a geographic balance-sheet of mankind. It is the task of human geography to separate and explain the various aspects of this balance-sheet to retrace the stages of the journey.

No other animal species, no matter how industrious, has up to this point so marked the face of the globe. If we should draw up a geography of the work of other living species, a geography of ants or beavers, for example, we would easily perceive the overwhelming superiority of the work of man, even though other species outstrip our own in number and in density. Animals are often content to strew the earth with their remains, their fossils, even to the point of forming, merely by their

accumulation, entire rocks. Man, on the contrary, has left only a few rare fossils, and, geologically, no human rock formations exist.

Man has been a *faber* to an amazing extent. Of his immense terrestrial work we shall remember here only those facts which are sufficiently important and constant to be visible on a large scale, determinative of the character of the 'land', or *paysagique*, 'landscapish' we are tempted to write despite the neologism, which is debatable but expressive.

### *The Role of the Spiritual*

What are the factors or powers which have made man so industrious and have enabled him even to become the creator of landscapes?

In the first place, undoubtedly, it has been the necessities of his existence, the struggle for life. To wage this struggle, he made use of a peculiar faculty, his intelligence, which differs from those of all other beings and is far superior to them: a curious immaterial force, which has spread with man all over the surface of the earth, creating a veritable 'noosphere', as Father Teilhard de Chardin called it, subtly introduced amongst the other spheres: hydrosphere, atmosphere, biosphere. Despite its spiritual character, it has had its influence upon the other material spheres.

This new force at the disposition of man has been employed by him to battle and enthrall nature, to ensure his domination over matter. This is indeed the essence of dynamic human geography, the geography of the great struggles of man against the elements of nature: man and the forest, man and the mountains, man and the wind, man and the steppes . . .

Yet man has employed this force also for other purposes, detached from matter and corresponding to a peculiar internal capacity to fabulise: an astonishing labour of the mind, by and for itself, which takes man out of his material environment. It is this force, above all, which has created the vast domain of supranatural, supernatural ideologies and has established on earth the religious factor.

Our task here is not to explore the origins of this creation of the mind but to bring into relief its visual and material consequences. For this creation of the mind, religion, by definition so far remote from all things material, came to have major repercussions in the physical world. Every idea tends to become force and translates itself into facts. These have been powerful enough, occasionally, to leave such important and enduring marks that they became a physical part of the *paysage* and gave it its special character. Thus we find landscapes, shaped by man, where the

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hall-marks of this world of religious facts are more or less overpowering. There are regions, worked over by man, which are not uniquely the result of his struggle against a thankless and hostile nature but bear elements which cannot be explained merely by the adaptation of man to nature, by simple physical determinism. Other mechanisms have come into play, mechanisms emanating from man himself or, at least, from his religious life. To the question of Jean Brunhes with which we opened these pages, it is thus necessary to add a second one: What would the earth have been like without the divine and the sacred? In other words, what is the part of religious causality in the weaving of those striking regional landscapes with which man has covered his earth?

These hall-marks of the sacred are found in the different elements which compose regional landscapes. We have tried to order them according to the great labour fronts of the human caravan: as they determine the forms of settlement, of habitation, of exploitation, of movement. We do not deny that such a classification is arbitrary to a large extent. But it has the merit, in our opinion, of affording a great deal of visual simplification.

#### *The Influence of Religion on the Form of Settlement*

This religious factor does not have an equal bearing upon all the elements that compose the human landscape. Religion, at least through its exterior manifestations, is generally linked to the social, to the point that the religious act has been treated occasionally as a merely social act. In any case, this explains the fact that the intervention of the sacred has had such a vast influence upon the form of settlement. Religion, in fact, has encouraged the gregarious attitude in man. Between the two tendencies of separatism and gregariousness, religion has thrown its weight most frequently on the side of the latter, and it has undoubtedly contributed to making of man, among all living creatures, a being most devoted to the group life.

There have even been religions of a particularly urban character, which have thus been responsible, at least to some extent, for the rise of that curious phenomenon, the city. For many cities got their start as residences of the gods. This was so notably in ancient Egypt and in early Greek civilisation. The first centuries of Christianity left the majority of countryside outside the sphere of Christian influence. The countryside was the domain of the 'pagans', the *pagani*, who became *paysans*, or 'peasants', and only tardily did it benefit from parochial life. Mohammedanism likewise acquired and preserved its greatest purity only in the cities.

Many religions, no doubt, have produced recluses and hermits who, on the contrary, have sought isolation. How many religious establishments have chosen sites in deserted places! But this seclusiveness itself has been a factor in grouping, and anchorites and monks have been originators of agglomerations of many kinds.

It is probably rare that a system of settlement lacks any intimate association with a religious regime. We merely need to remember the totemic villages of many oceanic areas; the solar villages of ancient Scandinavia; the villages grouped round a central church and its nearby cemetery; or those dispersed settlements, with the religious edifice in the centre of dispersion, as visible as possible to all and serving as a rallying point for the dead . . .

Few settlements lack a more or less important religious support: even the nomadic groups of herdsmen have their mosque tents, and the amphibious settlements of marshlands or deltas have their chapels or temples on barques, as is the case in the delta of Tonkin or the lowlands of the Parana. The house of the divinity, the temple, is one of the great meeting places, occupying, more often than not, the essential point round which the more or less circular ranks of habitations are placed. Has it been the point of departure, the first kernel of settlement, or has it been superimposed on extant settlements, conquering for itself the most eminent position? Rarely can we establish the genesis of a settlement and identify its first beginning.

#### *The Church and the Rang in French Canada*

Here, however, is an example particularly instructive from this point of view. The form of the original Canadian settlement is the *rang* or strip farm: i.e., a series of rectangular lots with their façades or fronts on the shorter sides, along a river or highway. The houses are constructed on these fronts, along the line of communication. They follow one another at regular intervals, with their lots of land in the rear. Originally, there was no plan behind this kind of arrangement. The allotment merely served the purpose of parcelling the clearings as they were gradually cut out of the forest.

Meanwhile, these strictly Catholic settlements felt the need of installing their churches during an early phase of their development. The church took its place in one of the *rangs*, on a lot of which it occupied the façade. Soon it became surrounded by annexes—presbyteries, schools, convents, and cemeteries—which gradually invaded the façades of some of the neighbouring lots. Some citizens came progressively to rejoin the *rang*

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of the church, to get closer to it. These particularly included old folk who would leave their property to their children and who desired, in their declining years, to follow the services more easily and to watch the numerous people flocking to the church. This kind of social life suited their conditions as persons living on past earnings, as one says in Canada. They bought small fractions of lots on the façades near the church. To distinguish them from the larger property holders of the *rangs*, they were called *emplacataires*; for they owned merely *emplacements* of very small dimensions, and not 'lots'.

Thus the church, by the mere fact of its physical installation, promoted a small revolution in the primitive quadrature. In this settlement, constituted merely by longitudinal dispersion, it inserted some curious forms, still arranged longitudinally, but marking already the beginning of agglomeration. Without the church the settlement would have consisted only of equal geometrical blocks. Geometry had to yield to the associative power of religion.

It goes without saying that such adjustments between the church and the *rangs* were not always made without difficulties. There were many conflicts over the location of the religious edifice and its appendages. The proximity of the church raised the value of adjacent lots, or at least the value of the façades, which could be parcelled and sold at a good price to the *emplacataires*. These disputes over the site of the church would even lead to schisms. Sometimes the church had to be moved to satisfy the needs of newer *rangs*, especially when the original places along the rivers and front lines were abandoned, and homes established themselves along the inner highways or *chemins de rangs*.

This associative power of the centre of a cult varies according to religions. In the same Canada the Protestant church did not provoke analogous modifications. The 'meeting house' did not exercise any such attraction; many of those houses, indeed, remained completely isolated. The grouping in long villages is much rarer among these Protestant communities. Even the dead remain dispersed; often there is no cemetery, and the mortal remains are buried on private property.

In French Catholic Canada, on the contrary, the cemetery is an important element of settlement. The day when there are more dead than living marks an important date in the not yet very long history of any village in that region: a date which is announced with a certain pride; for it signifies that the village is consolidated, that it will be difficult henceforth to displace it. The dead have made it definitely sedentary. The presence

of a well-furnished cemetery gives proof of the stability and vitality of the settlement. The families feel themselves bound to their soil by their dead. They emigrate less easily, and the phase of the pioneer settlement, still fraught with precariousness, is definitely over.

### *The Geographical Role of the Dead*

Strange is the role of the defunct, who bear down so heavily upon the geography of the living—as, for that matter, the thought of death weighs upon the whole psychology of man.

Of all the creatures living upon this earth only man appears to have the certain knowledge that he will some day cease to live. The theme of death at the end of life has occupied in an amazing way man's imagination and, especially, his religious thought. For the majority of men the departed are not those who have ceased to be but those who have entered into another life. It has even been held that this very certainty about death's unflinching advent must lead men to the imaginary creation of future lives and thereby to an immense camouflage of the end of real life.

Geographically, this pre-occupation with the dead has translated itself materially and visually into a series of facts, so numerous and important that they have become part of the landscape. Thus the dead, who are no longer with us, are often the most important occupants of the earth. For the idea of death is one of the essential geographical characteristics of the human species.

There are houses of death, cities of death, voyages of death. Any geography of man's habitat, i.e., of the constructive work of man, which failed to take into account the labour on behalf of the dead, would be a truncated geography.

Death and the dead claim their place. Throughout history, there have been civilisations of which we know scarcely more than the life beyond. Many races have left only mortuary landscapes. In Egypt, the living resided in provisional huts of earth or rush, of which nothing remains, while the dead had enduring abodes of brick or stone. Whole districts were set aside and furnished for the dead, especially islands, where cumuli or hypogea, often placed as far to the west as possible, saluted the sunset where light and life are spent. The island of Iviza, the smallest of the Balearics, appears to have had this sepulchral function during the Carthaginian epoch. This explains the importance and wealth of the cemeteries excavated there, which are out of proportion to the small size and poverty of the island. Its human landscape was dominated,



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undoubtedly, by the life of the Great Beyond. Certain valleys of Egypt and the region of Palmyrus offer an analogous picture.

#### *Houses of Divinity*

Often overwhelming labour has been executed for the dead. Yet the most gigantic constructive effort ever engaged in on the surface of the earth has not been concerned with the lodging of people, alive or dead. It has been lavished on the shelter of a strange being whom the majority of humans recognise above them, the Divinity.

'He who is not of this world' occupies, geographically, a major place in this world. All materials, all styles have been put to work to receive Him. Often it is only for Him that different types of architecture and the most important methods of building are devised. The home of the divinity is as prominent in the history of dwelling (history of art!) as it is in its geography.

The divinity has often invaded even the homes of the living. In Africa, there seems to be a certain connexion between round houses and the people devoted to zoolatrous cults, while square dwellings appear to be linked particularly to astrological religions. In other places we find ritualistic orientations of the façades, sometimes towards the setting sun, as in Madagascar, sometimes toward the sunrise, and various other devices to draw upon the house the protection of the deities (e.g., the roofs, with crooked angles, and the angular doors of Chinese houses).

Of course, the habitation responds first of all to a primordial need for shelter: Man is of a living species which requires a lodging place. He is not adapted to an integral life in the open air because his body is not so constituted as to resist, without clothing, all the variations of climate. The home is built in order to create that human 'microclimate' which, with regard to heat, light, and biological environment, is most favourable to the race.

But at the same time the house creates a spiritual environment; I should be tempted to say, a religious climate. Fustel de Coulanges has definitely shown that the Roman dwelling was 'first of all a scene of a domestic cult'. How many homes have served, more or less, the same purpose, among the Berbers, Madagascans, Chinese, Slovaks, and other races?

#### *The Role of Religion in Nomadism or Sedentary Life*

Quite often this domestic cult has made the home fire, once lighted, unmovable; in other words, it has fixed the home. Exposed to the chronic

instability of climate, of sunlight, of crops and harvests, mankind might well have been driven to a chance nomadism, governed only by the seasonal moving of livestock between complementary zones, as so many animal species have adopted it. Perhaps it is due to the intervention of religion that man, in certain cases, has been able to overcome the difficulties of sedentary life, which implies foresight, reserves, and storehouses so as to avoid the hazards of the territory. The fact of stability has opened an ever widening horizon of the concept of appropriation, with its limits and frontiers which, for a long time, maintained a sacred character. The religious idea thus contains within itself stabilising qualities which have contributed towards making the human species sedentary and which have incited it to undergo the efforts and sacrifices necessary to live in one place and to resist the appeal of 'greener pastures' elsewhere.

On the other hand, the religious idea contains virtually a great mobilising force. Displacements of men are not governed by natural needs alone. There have been explorations for divine or holy reasons, sacred discoveries, voyages to seek the place where the sun rises or sets, quests for promised lands or lost paradises. Such are conveyed by the tales of the Argonauts or of the hunt for the Golden Fleece. The distances covered by oceanic navigators for ritualistic reasons (Potlatch, etc.) are truly astonishing. The immense importance of pilgrimages, crusades, and missions is well known; and how many people live but for the sake of embarking, once in their life time, on a great voyage: St. James of Compostela and those who have gone to the Holy Land, to Mecca, to Benares, and, in our times, to Lourdes, Lisieux, Sainte Anne de Beaupré, or Fatima . . .

### *Religion and Demography*

A great many attitudes and inclinations of man are understandable only if one takes into account those ideas of the Beyond which are conveyed by the various religions. Demography is filled with precepts and tendencies of religious origin, which may favour or restrain the birth rate, increase or decrease the number of marriages, teach respect or disdain for life or for death; bring human groups into ferocious opposition or fraternal association. The variations in the human effective force thus depend, at least partly, on spiritual imperatives able to thwart or to reinforce the natural factors.

These manifold spiritual exigencies have not made themselves felt everywhere in the same manner and with the same force, neither in space nor

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in time. What kind of geography, what kind of history of the realm of the spirit should we know?

To begin with, we should make a distinction between people with clergy and people without clergy. In the direction indicated by the research of Gabriel Le Bras, we should, then, draw up statistical lists of religious vocations and practices, which would enable us to establish exactly the comparative density of religious facts.<sup>1</sup>

*The Limits of Religious Imperatives in Geography*

How and in what measure does this religious imperative impose itself upon the geographic domain? To what power has man submitted most often both himself and the landscape he has marked by his presence? Has it been Nature, immense, external, inert; or rather his internal capacity to fabulise and, more particularly, his religious imagination?

The origin and the mechanism of this twofold influence escape us more often than not. Besides, it is possible that these two causalities are not so independent from and opposed to each other as they appear to be today. No doubt, there always has been the possibility of correspondences between religious facts and physical factors, with ritualistic precepts sanctioning or even reinforcing natural predispositions.

This original association of the two 'determinisms' may escape us today. Changes or later extensions of various factors are apt to obscure the primitive agreements. Physical conditions may change, or, on the other hand, religious precepts may be transformed by an evolution of rites, and the accord between the two, clear at the beginning, is blurred.

In certain cases, a natural 'wisdom' would reveal itself, with which mankind would fall in line and which, subsequently, religious thought would endow with its special authority. Later on such 'wisdom' might cease to appear wise, and its anachronism might incite us to believe, perhaps wrongly so, in a religious derivation. In reality such 'wisdoms' of man correspond to variable attitudes, to concepts—we might be tempted to say, to mentalities. It is to these that we must resort in order to explain certain geographical facts. We are faced here with interventions of a different kind, not religious in the strict sense of the word, but rather of a psychological character. To make a clear distinction between these various attitudes of the spirit would require an unusual

<sup>1</sup>cf. the report of the Third International Conference of Religious Sociology at Breda, Holland, in the *Senola Cattolica* (Milan), LXXIX, 1951, pp. 234-44.  
cf. also G. Le Bras, 'La Géographie Religieuse'. *Annales d'Histoire Sociale*, 1945, pp. 8-112.

amount of sagacity, capable of relinquishing its own logical habits: Other kinds of logic (they have even been called 'pre-logic') no doubt have dominated humanity over those long epochs in which customs and standards, later conserved in their entirety or modified only slightly, were first established.

One of our foremost collaborators, Georges Hardy, has formulated, in our *Collection of Human Geography*, a psychological geography which opens up new routes of discovery. We have ourselves given examples in our *Géographie et Religions*: the type of house constructed on a foundation of piles does not always seem to have been conditioned by reasons of natural adaptation, i.e., it does not seem to be linked exclusively to the requirements of low ground and marshes, but to correspond to psychological relations which man has developed between himself and the earth. The latter was considered by certain peoples as a baneful domain, reserved for hostile powers and for death: it was thought prudent to avoid all direct contact with it. What mentality lies hidden within this attitude; what complex, in the sense of psychoanalysis, has been able to dictate this imperative?

Likewise, when the Scandinavians constructed their villages and aligned their houses in the direction of the 'rotation' of the sun, they may have been influenced by a solar cult or by causalities unknown to us. At any rate, this custom corresponded to their general system of thought, to their mentality, one might say, to their spiritual age, and, no doubt, to their social status.

Many facts of today are relics of vanished mentalities. One might ask, for instance, why, in western Agenais (region of Marmande) people build a type of low house, with wooden frame and only one story, with large fronts open at the gables, while in eastern Agenais (region of Serres) they construct their houses entirely of stone, with two stories adorned with galleries and great staircases. Surely this difference is not due to natural causes and conditions, which are identical in the two regions, but rather to spiritual attitudes *vis-à-vis* materials or elements, which we are no longer able to reconstruct but which could spring from religious impulses.

It seems, for example, that for a long time odours and perfumes had religious meanings which we are no longer able to grasp. Good and evil thus were supposed to have different odours: The expression, 'to die in the odour of sanctity', undoubtedly testifies to this belief. Improper suggestions were thought to have bad odours which ought to be driven

out. Hence the important role of purifications through perfumes, fumigations, and disinfections. This also explains the ancient importance of perfumes, revealed by the fact that they were among the first products to enter into the cycle of large-scale commerce. Since the tenth century there has been a traffic in incense, from Hadhramaut to the Hindu temples, in exchange for numerous odorous goods of sub-Himalayan India, such as musk. The antiquity of traffic in myrrh is likewise well established (cf. the offerings of the Three Magi). The world of odours has been full of the sacred, and there was once, without doubt, an 'age of odours'. Our modern psychological complexes in regard to odours are not the same. Is it that our senses no longer perceive the odour of the good and the sacred? Or are our interpretations different? In any case, the geography of odorous plants and the commerce in such products have changed radically.

A contemplation of the religious factor in appraising a datum in human geography does not afford any self-sufficient explanation. It rather carries the problem into other fields. The task of the geographer, obviously, consists in circumscribing, as closely as possible, the part played by religion. In spite of these inevitable limitations, there remains a large balance of geographical facts, inscribed into the earth in such density as to constitute landscapes, whose religious origin cannot be denied. Are these facts beyond the reach of science simply because they do not fit any physical or economic explanations? Here once again we encounter that irritating problem of determinism.

At any rate, external causes act upon man only through the intermediary of their psychological interpretation. Ideas and, especially, beliefs are interposed everywhere between man and the products of nature.

If certain races face their homes toward west, like the Madagascans, they do so, perhaps, because they like to enjoy the benefit of the setting sun or because they are thus better protected from the rainy winds of the monsoon period, blowing from the east. But they may also be motivated by a respect for the general movement of the universe, which to them seems reflected in the course of the sun. It would seem monstrous to such people to fail to submit to the sacred mechanism of the universe—and this is where the religious imperative comes into the picture.

Which of these motivations is the decisive one? As a matter of fact, it is a rather general custom in Madagascar to have the home face west, and this is true even where the rainy winds come from the west, as is the case on the southern coast of the great island. Besides, the Madagascans follow the direction of the sunset at all the great events of their lives. When

a Madagascan dies, he is carried out of his home, his feet carefully turned toward the west; and he is buried in that same position. The inhabitants of the great island call themselves, quite simply, 'those who look toward the Sunset'. Perhaps these customs reflect the reality of those ancient migrations which carried the people of Malaysia as far as the African isle in search of an Eternal Sunset.

There have been psychological states in which the sacred and the natural are extremely confused. The modern geographer cannot reject such complex causalities under the pretext that they do not correspond to his logical and simple way of thinking.

In their efforts to manage the earth many human groups have been guided, and are still guided, by complex motivations in which the natural is curiously tinged by the spiritual.

It was Lévi Bruhl who raised the question of whether mystical knowledge, so wide-spread in former times, should not be considered as the reflex of an imperceptible reality, and whether our mind has not been deformed by the modern disciplines. 'People who have not yet overused logical knowledge and the concept of causality', he wrote, 'show an astonishingly well developed mystical attitude. Among civilised peoples, this attitude has been largely smothered by conceptual thought.'

The difficult research of religious geography, which we should like to see pursued by young geographers, obviously cannot aim at satisfying the believer any more than the disbeliever. The great task ahead consists in exploring, with minute care, with wisdom, and with affection the motive powers which have driven the human species to this point of industry and creativeness in fashioning geographic landscapes.