

Gender the City

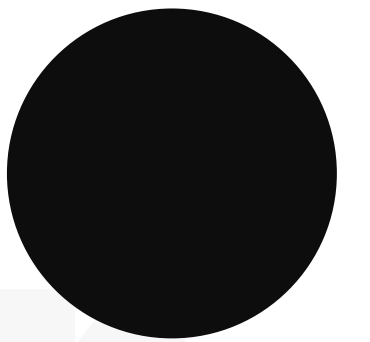
The Different Formations of Belonging

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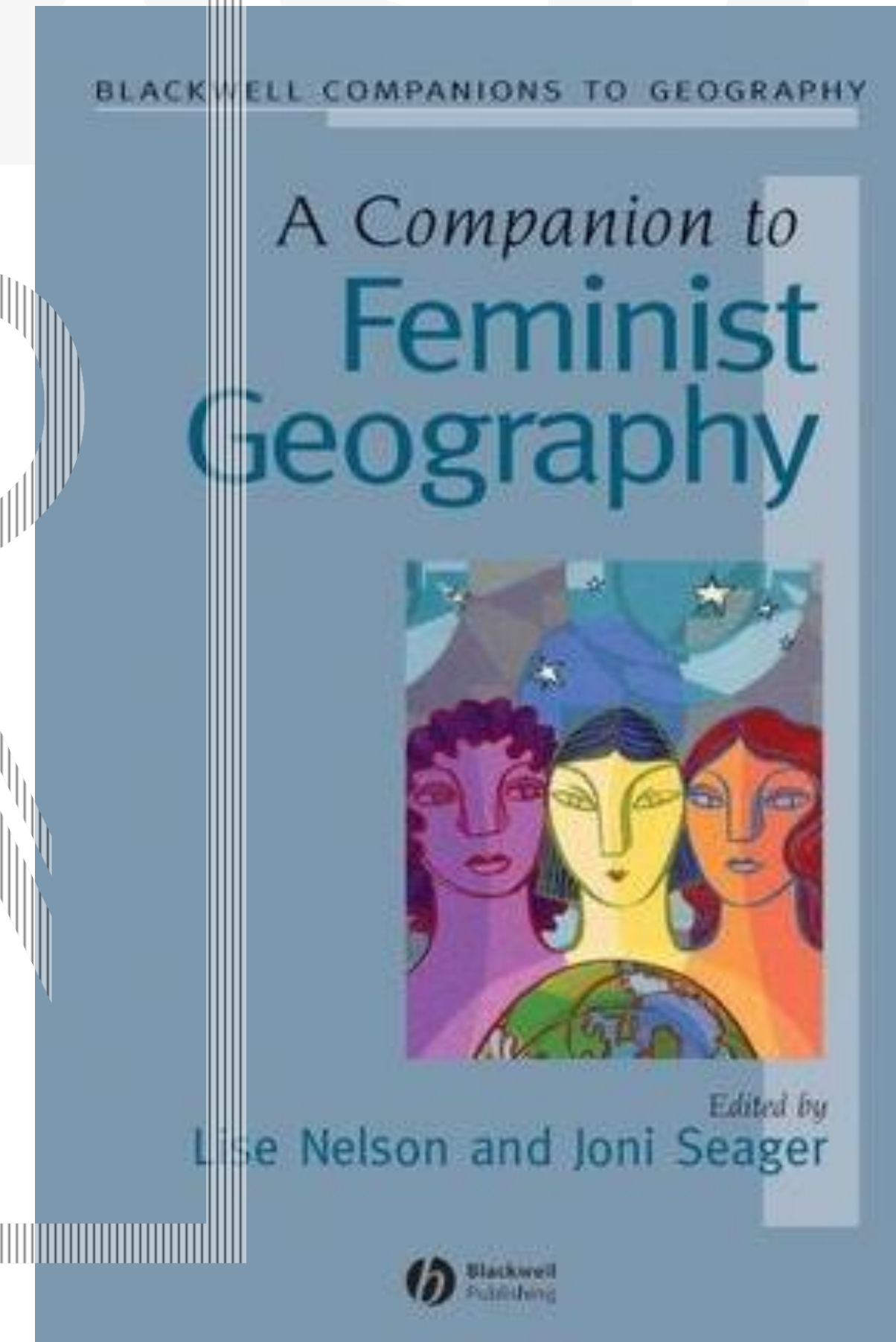
Chapter 17

The Book

A Companion to Feminist Geography

The reviewed text is chapter 17 of the book “A Companion to Feminist Geography”, published in 2005. The book consists of a group of articles 39 articles by different authors, exploring the diverse literatures that comprise feminist geography.

Chapter 17 is titled: Gender and the City: The Different Formations of Belonging, and it discusses citizenship, belonging, exclusion and the spatialities of gendered belonging



The Topic

Gendered Belonging

Women's Daily Practice



Men's Daily Practice



The Premise

The Topic

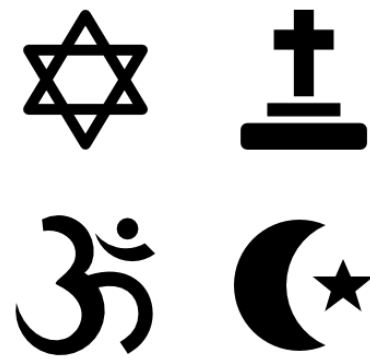
Belonging

The Premise



Formal Belonging

Formal expressions of belonging built in to the different definitions of citizenship



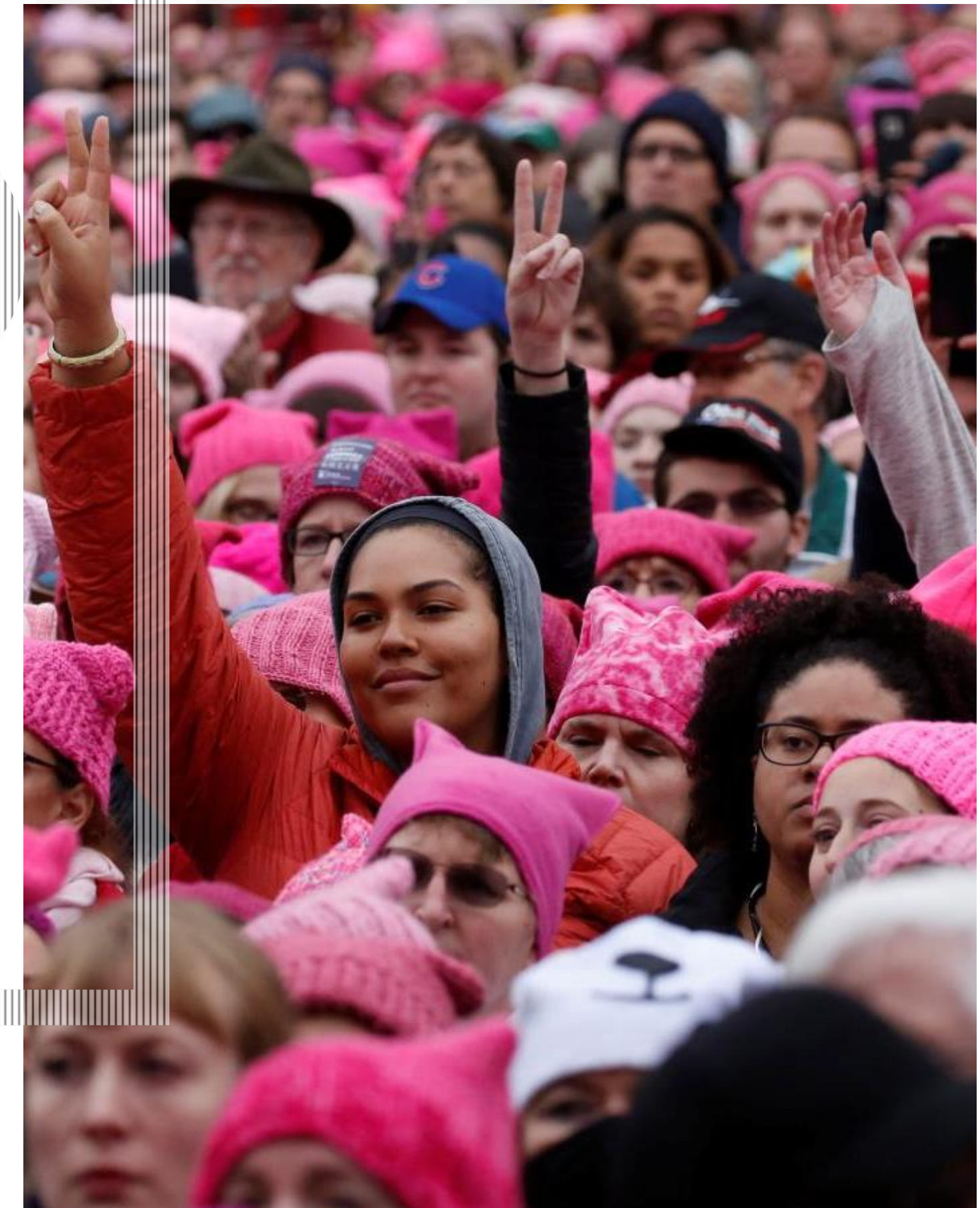
Sacred Belonging

Sacred dimensions of belonging expressed in individuals' and communities' religious and national attachment to territories



Every Day Belonging

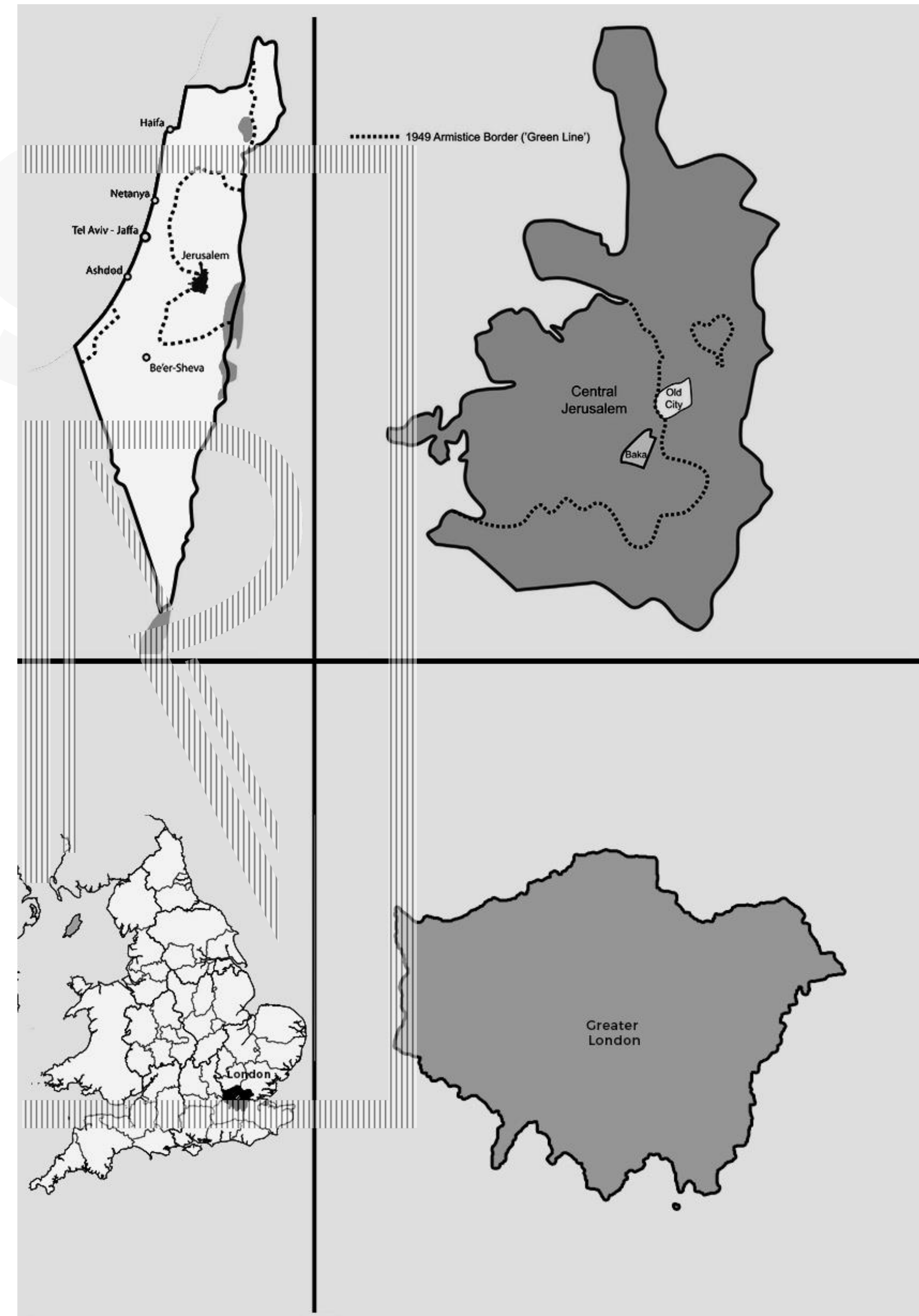
Everyday nature of this sentiment that men and women develop in their daily practices in cities today



Methodology

A Tale of Two Cities

- Qualitative-content analysis research carried out between 1999 and 2002
- On 2 Cities: London and Jerusalem
- Residents were interviewed on everyday experiences.
- In relation to 3 Notions:
 - Comfort
 - Belonging
 - Commitment



Why the Two?

London



Famous for

- Globalization impacts
- Cosmopolitanism
- Openness
- Tolerance
- But also negative and depressing connotations, especially for non-English immigrants

Jerusalem



Home for people of diverse identities

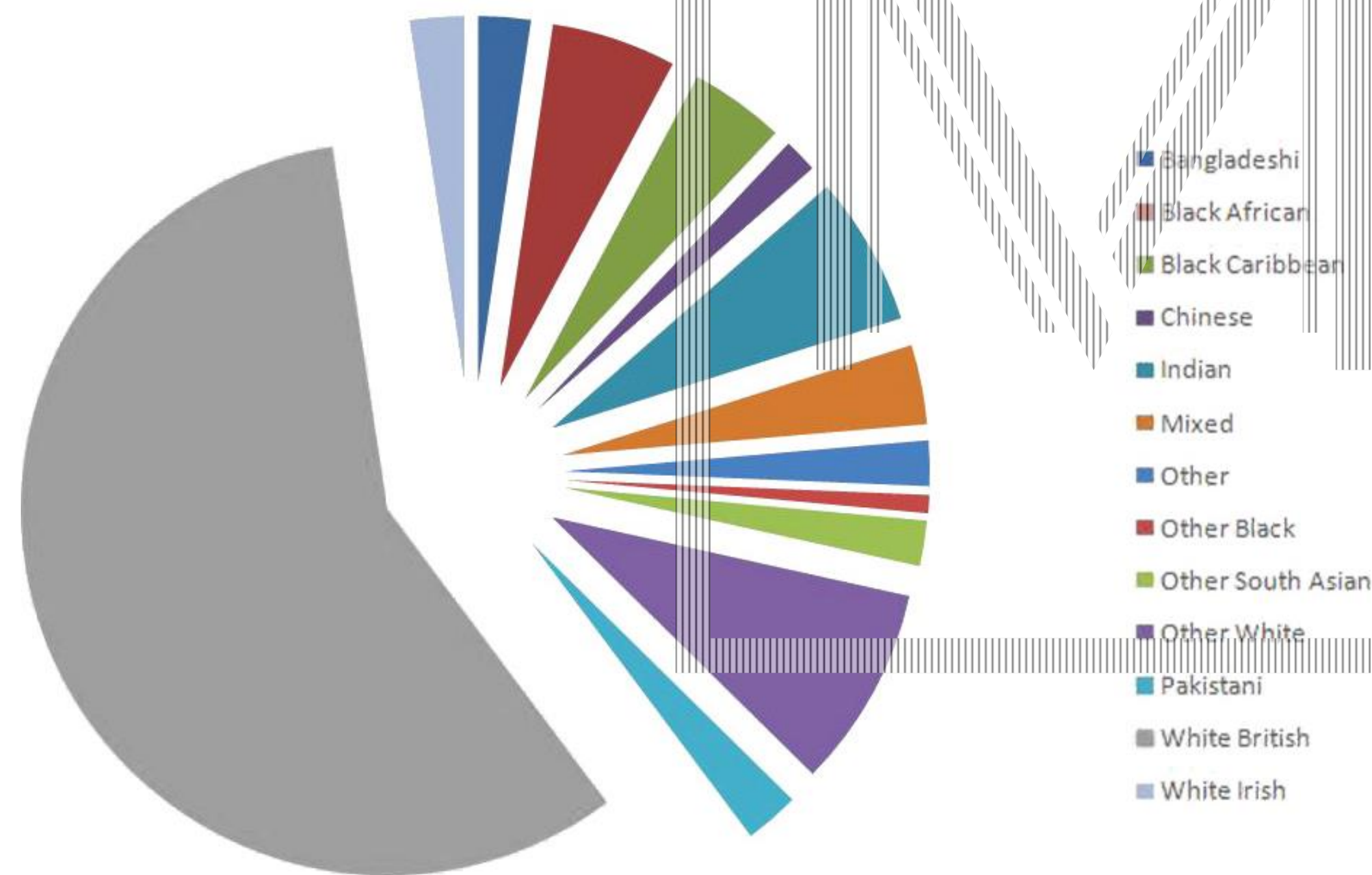
One of the holiest cities in the world

Associated with:

- Rigidity
- Fanaticism
- strict rules
- Boundaries

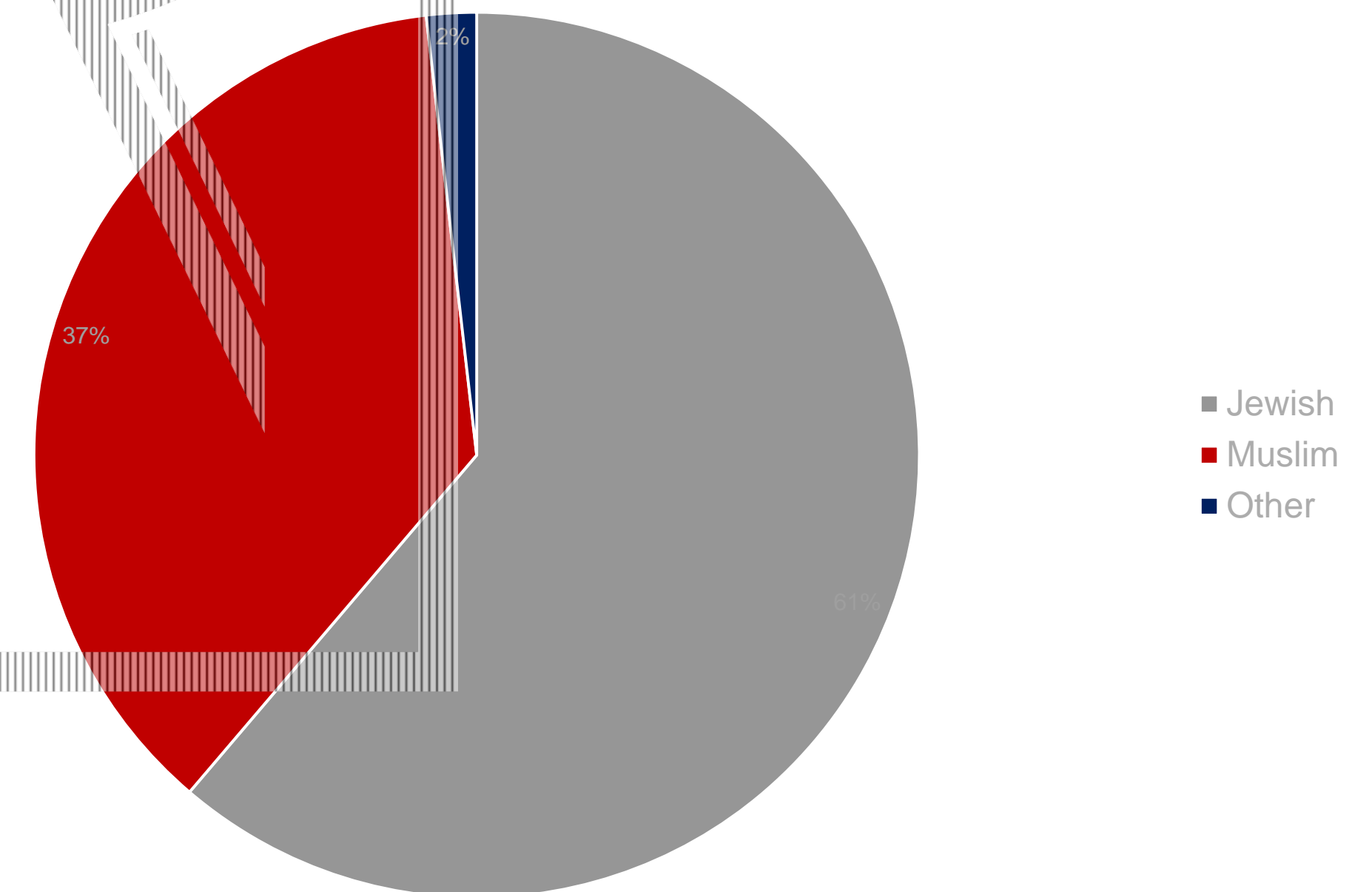
Demographics

London



Source: UK Office of National Statistics 2007

Jerusalem



Source: Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research 2019

Belonging?

Definitions

What is a sense of belonging?

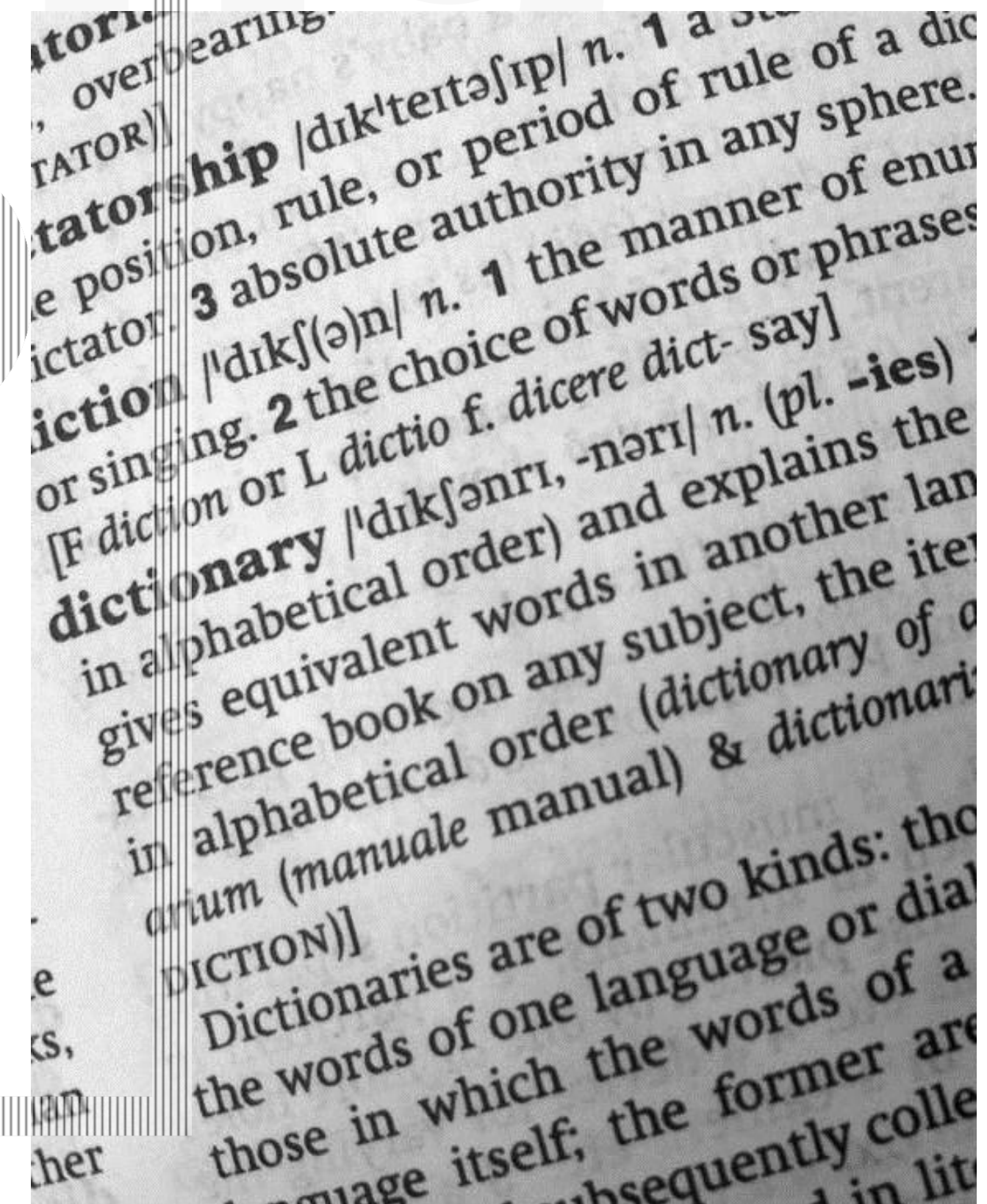
Probyn emphasized the affective dimensions of belonging: **be**-ing, but also **longing** or yearning

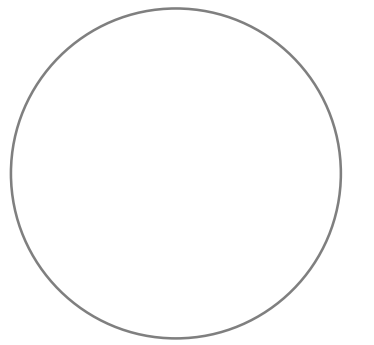
Oxford Dictionary defines “belonging” through three meanings:

- to be a **member**
- to be resident or **connected** with
- to be rightly placed or classified to or **fit in**

Additionally, there is the everyday practices of belonging:

De Certeau’s theory of territorialization “the notion of belonging as a sentiment, which is built up and grows out of everyday life activities”





Belonging?

The research

Territorialization

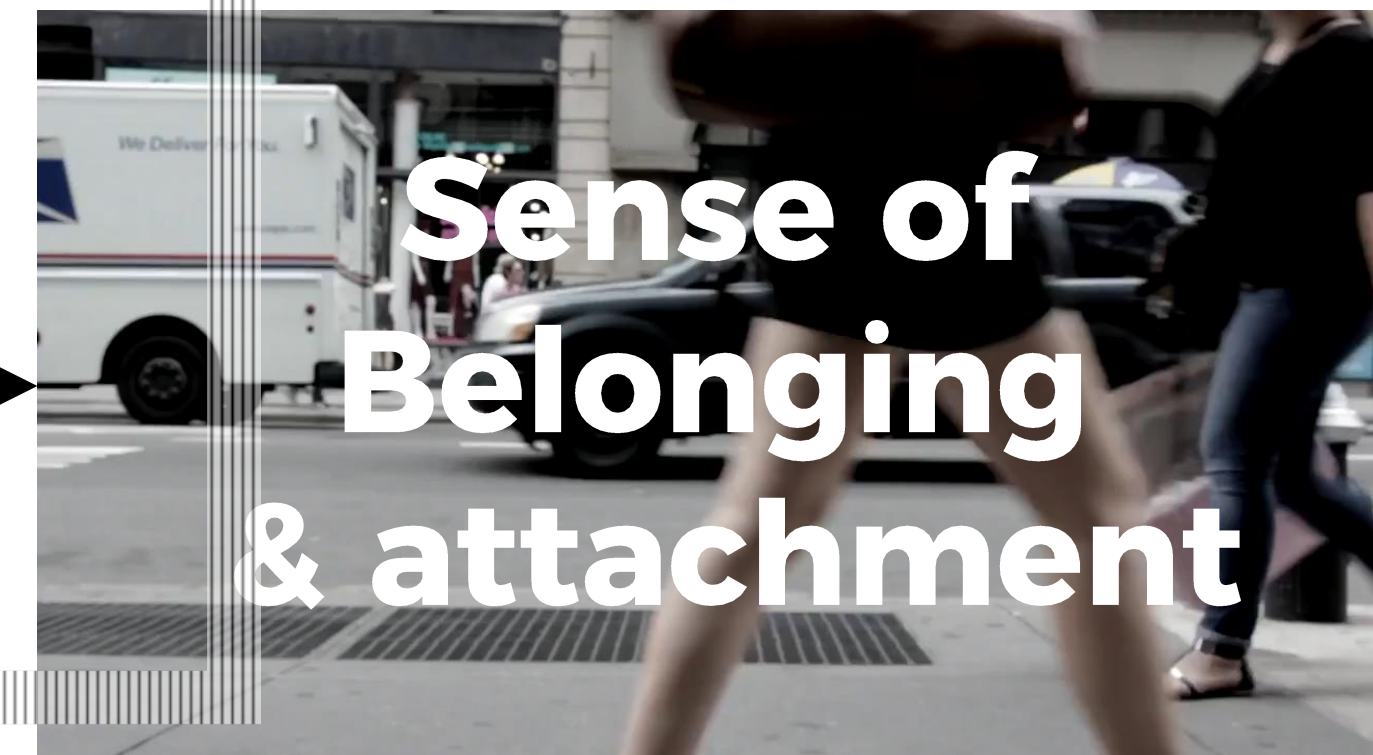
De Certeau defines process in which a sense of belonging is established, a process of transformation of a place, which becomes a space of accumulated attachment and sentiments by means of everyday practices



everyday
walking



accumulated
knowledge,
memory



Belonging?

Gendered Territorialization

This dimension of belonging, which is based on everyday ritualized use of space, has a clear gendered dimension.



Women develop
stronger sense of
belonging due to role
as mothers



For Men, fatherhood
was not a significant
factor in their sense of
belonging

Formal Structures of Belonging

The Discourse around Citizenship

Citizenship is interpreted by Marshall as “full membership in a community,” encompassing civil, political, and social rights.

Definition of citizenship has shifted to a more complex, sophisticated, less optimistic interpretation of exclusions

Spaces of citizenship

The expression in space of the relationship between the state and its citizens from its social and political aspects of rights, and the ways in which spaces of inclusion and exclusion are defined.



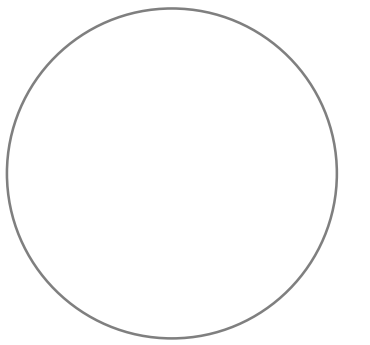
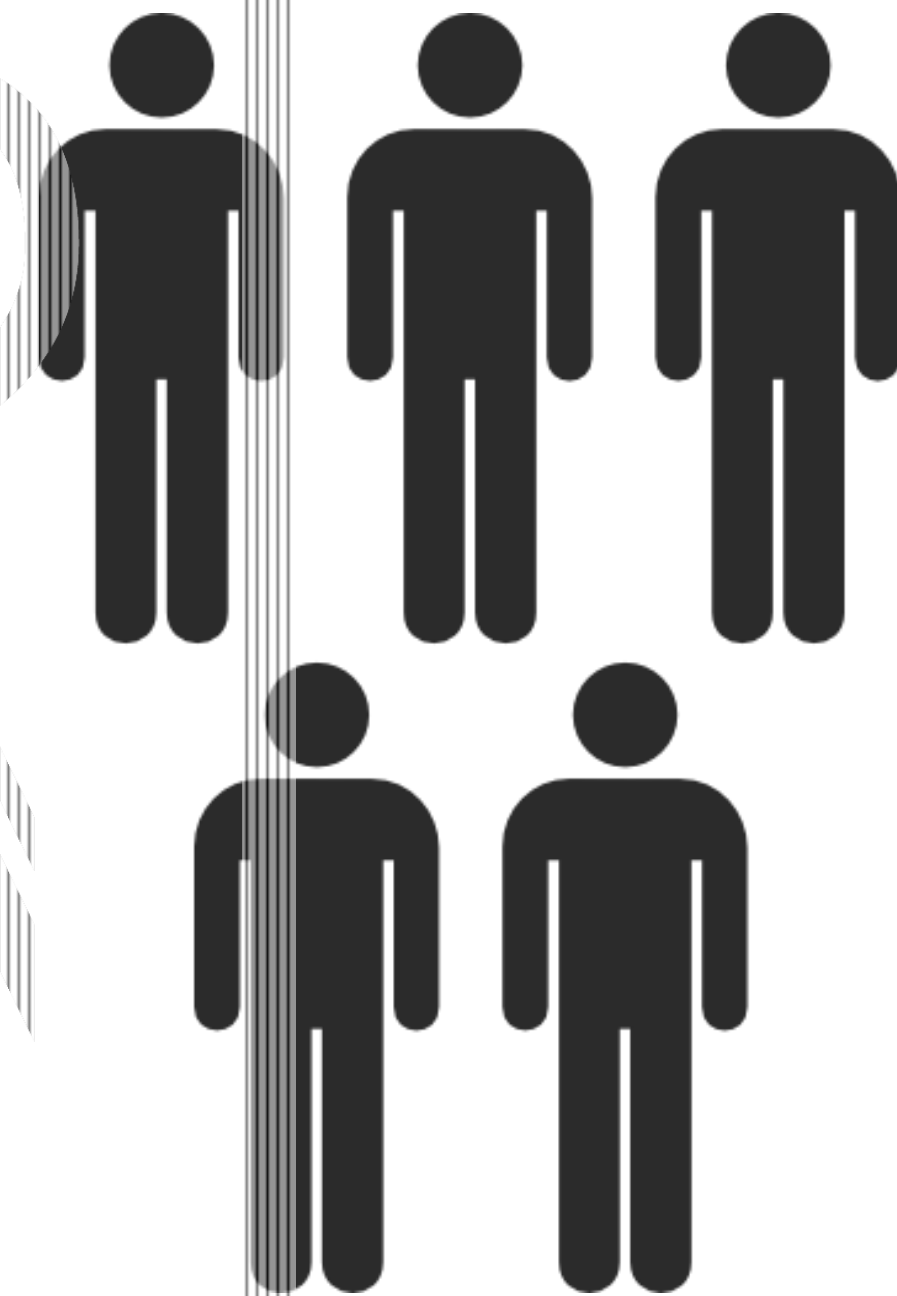
Citizenship, Belonging, and Exclusion

Legitimized forms of Exclusion

Many critics recognize that citizenship by definition is about exclusion rather than inclusion for many people

Citizenship definitions are also spatial.

They dictate in which representations of the rights and duties of citizen are relevant and in which spaces they are not. One such spatial distinction is the separation between private and public spaces



Spatialities of Gendered Belonging and Exclusions

Legitimized forms of Exclusion

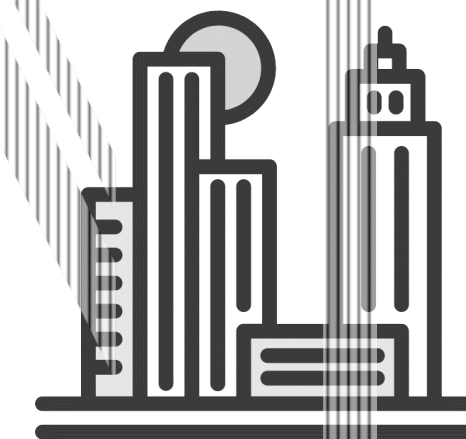
Cultural construction of space has inherent in its symbolism the legitimacy to exclude women from power and influence.

Private



Home
the women's space
the space of stability
reliability, and
authenticity

Public



white, middle- or
upper-class,
heterosexual
male domain

women's spatial mobility is very much dictated if not controlled by these cultural symbolic meanings of "spaces of belonging and dis-belonging" which then become, for example, forbidden and permitted spaces for women in certain cultures

The Safe Space of the Coffee Shop (Cairo)

Legitimized forms of Exclusion

the custom of eating serves to regulate the boundary between the “private” and the “public” and what is “forbidden” or “permitted” in those spaces.

Since their introduction in the mid 1990s, Upscale coffee shops had created a protected niche for mixed-gender sociability in Cairo. The rather exclusive context of the coffee shop helped frame a woman's appearance and comportment as upper-middle-class and thereby guaranteed a certain interpretation of her presence in that space.

In order to provide such a class framing, however, coffee shops needed to secure an unambiguously classy clientele. Social closure was a crucial feature of any coffee shop that wanted to appeal to a mixed-gender upper-middle-class public. The fear of the presence of others was also stirred by the conviction that these others might not abide by the implicit rules of gendered sociability.



Gendered Belonging and Memory

“My home, memory, ownership, family, friends . . . I don’t belong anywhere else”.
Aziza, Palestinian, living in West Jerusalem, Israeli citizenship

Belonging in this respect is linked to **nationalism**, to notions of participation and inclusion in the construction of citizenship identity and membership in one’s own nation.



Gendered Belonging and Memory

“Belonging is very complex, subtle, nothing concrete, often it is familiarity with, memory from childhood with palm trees, I feel more belong [to the childhood landscape] as it is more familiar to me”.
Suna, Egyptian, living in London.

Memory is either “**real**” that is, a personal memory of childhood’s reminiscences or it is a “**symbolic memory**”



Claim, Belonging, and Exclusion in Public Spaces

Claim over “public” space is one of the expressions of belonging in everyday life. Such a claim is usually “informal,”

Claim and appropriation of space are a construct of everyday walking practices. (Performativity)

Space-claiming is also a class issue. It can take various forms of appropriation and territorialization. These are the implicit but sometimes explicit rules of inclusion and exclusion that play a role in the structuring of society and space in a way which some find oppressive and others appealing.

The “boundaries of belonging” are usually symbolic and they may change according to the needs and goals of the hegemony.



Networks of Belonging

The research

“Yes, I feel belong to the Brick Lane area but sometimes I feel that this is actually part of Bangladesh.”

- Ahmed, Bangladeshi-British, London

The Bangladeshi immigrants formulated their own “**networks of belonging**”. It is a neighborhood-oriented network and it keeps their old community ties and their imagined sense of belonging to their homeland.

One of the first things that immigrants establish when they arrive in a new country is the ethnic food stores that sell specific food and spices.



Networks of Belonging

The research

Banglatown has become in many ways a representation of spatial belonging and difference, mostly dictated and shaped by the males in the Bangladeshi society, leaving the women to their private domains.

The fact that most Bangladeshi women are dressed traditionally also makes it a restricted space for women; that is, for most of them the traditional dress, which is dictated and guarded by the males, is a prerequisite for their walking in public spaces.

Similarly, in the ultra orthodox neighborhoods in Jerusalem the sense of belonging is more gender-exclusive.



Immigrants and Indigenous Gendered Belonging

"We are trapped in a time zone. We can't go forward and not backward"

- Harun

The meaning of belonging at home is a complicated issue for immigrants to define. they perceive "home" not as a house or a flat but more as homeland; home is perceived as an emotional place, not as a physical one.

Two identities, immigrant identity and indigenous identity, construct two forms of belonging:

- a dialectic sense of belonging of an immigrant who is also a member of cultural minority.
- a strong sense of belonging of an indigenous person who expresses a strong bonding to his home and city.



The Topic

Conclusions

The Takeout

Belonging as a form of citizenship

is one of the more common interpretations of this term. Official belonging is usually formalized in patterns of citizenship.

Belonging and walking practices

Repetitive daily walking practices are one of the mechanisms of creating an “everyday” sense of belonging. Walking practices are usually gendered, as women’s daily walking routine is usually dictated by their household gendered divisions of roles

A sense of belonging is associated with memory

Belonging has its personal aspects, belonging to places and people that are connected to personal experiences, personal memories. A sense of belonging is also collective. It is based on collective memories and shared symbolism of a community.

Conclusions

A gendered sense of belonging is about power relations and control

larger the category of space the more significant is the role of power relations on one's own feelings of belonging. In public spaces power relations are identified as "claim," "appropriation," "exclusion," "discrimination." Power relations also dictate "the boundaries of belonging."

"The right to belong"

the right of people of different identities to be recognized and the right to take part in civil society

Belonging and urban planning.

Urban planning is the field where expressions of spatial citizenships and belonging are made.

An important connection between a sense of belonging at home and urban planning is the association of order and belonging.

The more people are involved in the decision-making about "the order of functions" in their own street, neighborhood, or even city center the deeper the sense of belonging they develop to these environments.

Thank You

The End!

NMR

