

A Multiplicity of Place?- Integral Research and Augmented Reality

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In New Zealand, (as in many other colonised nations) multidimensional (and intrinsically spiritual), understandings of place are often marginalised within materialist, reductionist ways of knowing (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2008; Peat, 1994; Semali & Kincheloe, 1999). This PhD research project explores the potential of augmenting and geo-locative mobile technologies to help us re-engage with the multidimensional nature of places in which we live. Through the portal of our phones and tablets, it may be possible to disrupt, articulate and re-articulate ways of engaging with place. However, on a more critical note, it may also be possible to see these technologies as another, more sophisticated, way of colonising the natural world. The research uses a meta-methodological framework (known as Integral Theory) (see Esbjorn-Hargens, 2006; Esbjörn-Hargens, 2009; Esbjörn-Hargens & Wilber, 2006; Hedlund, 2010) in order to engage inclusively with the complex ontological and epistemological relationships that co-construct understandings of place based practice in two different locations. In the spirit of this framework, data was gathered for this research project from (first person) subjective experiences and reflections (based on experiences, experiments and explorations); inter-subjective (second person) points of view (gathered in semi-structured conversational interviews); and objective (third person) materials (user statistics; third party research; scientific data). So far, most importantly, there have already been benefits to the communities involved and the researcher. In terms of research, the multi-methodological approach has allowed for a number of different perspectives to be brought to the explorative process – and has, more importantly, allowed for different ontological and epistemological paradigms to co-exist rather than be subsumed within each other.