



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Research Commons

<http://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/>

Research Commons at the University of Waikato

Copyright Statement:

The digital copy of this thesis is protected by the Copyright Act 1994 (New Zealand).

The thesis may be consulted by you, provided you comply with the provisions of the Act and the following conditions of use:

- Any use you make of these documents or images must be for research or private study purposes only, and you may not make them available to any other person.
- Authors control the copyright of their thesis. You will recognise the author's right to be identified as the author of the thesis, and due acknowledgement will be made to the author where appropriate.
- You will obtain the author's permission before publishing any material from the thesis.

RE-MEMBERING THOSE LOST:
The Role of Materiality in Narrative Repair
following a Natural Disaster

A thesis
submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Applied Psychology
at
The University of Waikato
by
SHEMANA CASSIM



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

The University of Waikato

2013

ABSTRACT

The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami resulted in a tragic loss of life and immense suffering. This thesis explores the ways in which five people from Sri Lanka worked to address the disruption to their life narratives caused by the loss of loved ones as a result of this tragedy. I demonstrate that the reconstruction of life narratives does not aim to cure; instead it helps people make sense of events, and cope and live alongside the aftermath of a disaster. The theoretical framework for this research is informed by narrative research, practice theory and phronesis. Semi-structured and walk-along interview techniques were used to gather the life narratives of the five key informants. Participant accounts were situated within the community setting of the town of Hikkaduwa, Sri Lanka. Findings indicate that the significance of public monuments for processes of memorialisation and mourning can be contested compared to what is traditionally understood. I argue that *personal* material objects, symbolic spaces and everyday practices can serve as metonyms that enable participants to re-story their fractured life narratives. Everyday acts and objects also allow people to re-member loved ones and past lives lost to the tsunami. While language and texts are still important, I go beyond a focus on *talk* in narrative research in the field of psychology to explore the importance of material objects in sustaining continued bonds with the deceased. Traditional Anglo-American psychological approaches to disaster recovery may be successful in some communities. However, disaster psychology could become more responsive and effective with a greater consideration of the context of culture. This study provides an alternative to the tendency in mainstream psychology to pathologise grief, and highlights the importance of culturally-patterned responses to disaster. I argue that disaster psychology needs to be brought into conversation with other disciplines in order to fully understand how survivors of a tragedy can draw on cultural and community-based resources to build resilience in the face of grief and loss.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am hugely grateful to everyone who helped me along my path to completing my Master's thesis, for their motivation, encouragement, advice and most importantly their patience.

My special thanks goes out to my amazing participants who generously shared their experiences and life stories with me. Without your willingness to talk so freely about your feelings, thoughts and your everyday lives, this thesis would not have been possible. My sincere thanks also extends to my participants' families who welcomed me into their homes and put up with me and my numerous visits.

I am especially indebted my two supervisors Darrin Hodgetts and Otilie Stolte for their never ending motivation, support and feedback. Thank you for all that time spent going through my never ending stream of drafts and meetings and even working on the paper. Thank you for making me believe that I could do it. And thank you most of all for providing me with so many opportunities may it be conference presentations or journal articles or even a push to continue on and do a PhD. Without the two of you I don't think I would have been able to get this far.

I'd like to sincerely acknowledge the scholarships awarded to me during the course of my research: The University of Waikato Master's Research Scholarship, The Maori & Psychology Research Unit Research Graduate Scholarship and the Internal Study Award offered by the University of Waikato. Thank you for funding my various research expenses and travel costs.

I was fortunate enough to encounter a number of additional outstanding academics and scholars throughout the course of my research. I'd like to extend my sincere appreciation and gratitude to Dr Gameela Samarasinghe, Professor Neloufer de Mel, Professor Asanga Tilekeratne, Associate Professor Rogelia Pe-Pua, Byron Seiuli, Dr. Linda Waimarie Nikora and Professor Ngahuia Te Awekotuku for all your advice, contributions and interest in my research. Thank you so all much.

I'd also like to thank Shazna, Mark, Mallika Aunty, Palitha Uncle, Fazana and Pushpakumara for getting me in contact with participants as well as academics. And for also helping me meet people and see places in Hikkaduwa. Without all of your help this research would not have been possible.

Thank you so much to all of my fellow classmates: Abha Dod, Catherine Corbett, Danielle Diamond, Glen Mcquarters, Rebekah Graham, Ruth Seabright and Shannon Beard. I am very grateful that you all were always there for me, putting up with my complaints and all the whining, helping me through all the stress and for always motivating me to keep going. Our catch up/coffee-debriefing sessions were what kept me sane through the last year. You guys are the best and I feel so lucky to be able to call all of you my friends.

Last but not least I'd like to thank my parents and my family. Thank you so much for always supporting me and encouraging me. Thank you for putting up with my constantly changing and unpredictable moods throughout the last year. Thank you for everything. Without you I would not be where I am today.

PREFACE

The Indian Ocean tsunami of the 26th of December 2004 devastated communities by claiming over 220,000 lives, and had a major impact on two million people in countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, India and Sri Lanka (Gamburd & McGilvray, 2010). Over 30,000 lives were lost, over 20,000 sustained injuries and over 500,000 individuals were displaced as a result of this tragedy in Sri Lanka alone (de Mel, 2010; Department of Census and Statistics Sri Lanka, 2005). While these numbers comprise only 2 percent of Sri Lanka's population of nineteen million, the severity of the impact of this disaster caused shock throughout the island (de Mel, 2010). The disaster had an effect on seventy percent of the Sri Lankan coastline, destroying close to 98,000 homes and 168 schools. This further included damage to seventy five percent of fishing fleets, livestock worth US \$4 million as well as infrastructure for transport, main roads and railways (de Mel, 2010; Goonesekere, 2010).

The lack of any early warning systems in Sri Lanka at the time of the disaster, resulted in the television networks and broadcasting stations failing to announce the first signs of the tsunami. Despite the fact that the tsunami struck the east coast of the island half an hour prior to its collision with the south coast, communities in the latter regions were unaware of the situation and were taken completely by surprise (Goonesekere, 2010). This, along with the fact that the term *tsunami* was one that most Sri Lankans had never heard of prior to the event itself ensures that the significance of this tragedy will be engraved in the minds of these communities for years to come (Goonesekere, 2010). For some communities in Sri Lanka however, the devastation caused by the tsunami was just another addition to their existing problems. As de Mel (2007) and Ruwanpura (2010) indicate, in the national psyche, the tsunami was considered the *maha vipatha*; or tragedy of a larger scale, while the everyday *vipath*; or tragedies, continued. In Sri Lanka, this natural disaster thus occurred in the context of pre-existing conflict and displacement. Here, the tsunami represented an additional layer of displacement atop pre-existing political conflict and forced migration, thereby renewing the sense of vulnerability for many survivors of the disaster (Hyndman, 2010; Nah & Bunnell, 2005).

The civil war, which spanned over two decades in Sri Lanka, has been characterised as one of ‘violent competing nationalisms’ (Hyndman, 2010, p. 22), fought between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the government of Sri Lanka. Despite the official signing of a ceasefire agreement effective between 2002 and 2006, various incidents of ceasefire violations as well as political assassinations occurred during 2004 and 2005. As a result the ceasefire began to dissolve during 2006, sparked by a suicide bomb attack in Colombo (Hyndman, 2010). Having commenced in 1983, the end of the 25 year long war was only declared in May 2009 (Hyndman, 2010; Jayawardena & de Alwis, 1996; Weaver & Chamberlain, 2009).

Sri Lanka’s present situation is thereby an expression of a well-documented, long history of struggle (Abeysekera & Gunasinghe, 1987; de Alwis & Hedman, 2009; Hyndman, 2010; Jeganathan & Ismail, 1995; Spencer, 1990; Thiruchelvam, 1996). The conflict has resulted in large scale displacement within the country as well as beyond its borders, and is further accountable for a death toll that exceeds 70,000 people (de Alwis & Hedman, 2009; Hyndman, 2010). Additionally, while the various adversities caused by the ethnic conflict have had direct physical, social, economic and psychological effects on communities in the north and east regions of the island, communities residing in the other regions of Sri Lanka have suffered indirect impacts of war. In the south, violence was just rarer and for shorter spans compared to the north and east, which have witnessed prolonged destruction and displacement (Divakalala, 2010).

Researchers argue that the conflict did not occur merely due to hostilities between political factions, rather, that underlying this raging warfare and violence were social and class tensions that need to be acknowledged and understood (Dunham & Jayasuriya, 2000; Gunasinghe, 1987; Ruwanpura, 2010). Nonetheless, during the immediate onset and aftermath of the 2004 tsunami at least, such tensions were overlooked amid the chaos of meeting so many urgent needs. An overwhelming range of humanitarian assistance initiatives emerged for communities directly and indirectly affected by the disaster with an emphasis on helping those who had lost loved ones, homes, livelihoods and property. Consequently, there was little or no segregation among ethnic, economic, religious, cultural and even political groups in providing assistance to those who

had lost everything (Divakalala, 2010). Research conducted by de Mel and Ruwanpura (2006) suggests that in the south, an air of paralysis and dependence prevailed among communities, where for example women depended on various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or local philanthropic organisations for housing, food and other household supplies and jobs.

It is in this context that my research was conducted; in the South-Western town of Hikkaduwa. The aim of the present study was to document the feelings and experiences of people living in this community affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. I discuss the tsunami as yet another disruption to the continuous flow of local peoples' life narratives and explore the various positive and negative changes to the lives of the members of this community. I further observe the significance of the various state-commissioned tsunami monuments as well as other personal memorials, material objects or art forms, and highlight how these objects have enabled members of this community to *re-member* and *re-story* events and lives as a way to rebuild their lives following the disaster.

The Town of Hikkaduwa, Sri Lanka

This research involved an in-depth qualitative study of people living in Hikkaduwa; a small coastal town located in the Southern Province of Sri Lanka (see Figure 1). I travelled to Sri Lanka for a period of seven weeks to focus on the everyday practices of narrative repair of people in Hikkaduwa. The tsunami was of particular relevance to this community due to the large loss of life and extensive damage in the town. Located about 99km south of Colombo, Hikkaduwa comprises a stable infrastructure with its own schools and medical clinics, as it supports a diverse community including wealthy tourists and local village folk. Home to a population of about 130,000 residents, this town has typically relied on the tourist industry as a prime economic base given its well-earned reputation for having some of the island's most beautiful beaches (de Mel & Ruwanpura, 2006; Places Online, 2011). A drive along the coast through Hikkaduwa marks it in every sense as a seaside tourist village attracting not only backpackers but also the more discerning traveller (de Mel & Ruwanpura, 2006). Other local trades such as way-side clothing boutiques, fast-food restaurants and

various local handicrafts also contribute towards promoting tourism (see Figure 2 and 3 for images of Hikkaduwa). This industry has undergone significant changes during the past two decades as a result of the ethnic conflict since 1983. In particular, the Southern Province experienced an uprising and a period of political turmoil between 1987 and 1989. This, along with events such as an attack at the Bandaranayake International Airport in 2000 has meant a growing recognition that the town's primary reliance on the tourism industry comprises occupational risks to tourists and tourism industry workers over which local communities may have little or no control (de Mel & Ruwanpura, 2006).



Figure 1 Map of tsunami affected districts in Sri Lanka



Figure 2 Images of Hikkaduwa: signpost on entering the town, a stretch of beach and a glimpse of the main town

Alongside tourism, another economic mainstream of the town for many decades has been coral mining (de Mel & Ruwanpura, 2006). Coral mining furnaces were once a common sight along the coastline in and around Hikkaduwa. Despite recent governmental bans on coral mining and coral burning due to its negative impact on the environment however, these furnaces and ovens did not completely disappear; instead they became less of a visible landmark. Until the onset of the tsunami, this industry was still a key source of livelihood and employment for many communities in the area (de Mel & Ruwanpura, 2006). Since Hikkaduwa is a coastal town, the livelihoods of many families were also sustained by commercial fishing, although the tsunami destroyed most of the fishing vessels. Due to the changing national economy, a significant number of individuals also commute to work places in larger cities such as Galle, and sometimes even to Colombo. These individuals typically work as clerical staff, shop assistants, security officials, low-level public servants and private sector employees (de Mel & Ruwanpura, 2006). Hikkaduwa is home to individuals with diverse economic and social standing and thus from different walks of life. The participants of the present research all belonged to middle or lower-middle income groups. The following section provides an overview of the thesis with brief overviews of each chapter.

Thesis Outline

Chapter One provides a critical review of the literature discussing the importance of narrative repair following life changing events. I explore the concept of *narrative*, along with the significance of taking a narrative perspective to life. The chapter considers how various material objects such as the arts, souvenirs, monuments and memorials can function as *metonyms* that become instrumental in facilitating narrative repair within a community following such life changing and disruptive events. Insights from research into illness narratives are applied to national disasters and the significance of artworks such as memorials and/or other symbolic objects to processes of *re-membering* and narrative repair are discussed.

Chapter Two provides a discussion of the theoretical and practical approaches taken to gathering and analysing the narratives of members of the Hikkaduwa community. I consider how Narrative and Phronetic Research, as well as Practice Theory contribute to the theoretical framework of the present study. The chapter discusses the use of semi-structured interviews and walk-along interviews to gather data. Accounts of the processes of transcription, translation, holistic structural analysis, thematic analysis and visual analysis are discussed as modes of data analysis.

Chapter Three highlights the first theme of the findings of the present research; the impact of natural disasters such as the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami as a disruption to life narratives. The chapter explores the various changes and impacts of the tragedy on participants and their families. I uncover the negative as well as the positive consequences of the tsunami. The chapter draws on Buddhist philosophies to argue that adversity such as experiences of trauma and loss may not only enable positive changes in life, but also make available alternative plots to life narratives.

Chapter Four investigates the role of material objects and forms of art that initiate processes of *re-membering*, enabling people to reconstruct their fractured life narratives following a natural disaster. This forms the second theme of the findings of the present study. The chapter highlights the importance of continuing bonds, rather than severing connections with the deceased as a way of learning to live with grief and loss. I document the function of the various public monuments erected in the town of Hikkaduwa following the tsunami, concluding that within this community, feelings of grief and loss were better expressed in more personalised and community based ways rather than through State driven initiatives. The chapter explores the function of various personal material objects or works of art as a way that members of this community privately enact their emotions and established a sense of connection to their past as well as loved ones.

Chapter Five offers key conclusions from the present study. Traditional psychological research on recovery following natural disasters is overly clinical and mono-cultural in orientation with a focus on the diagnosis and treatment of autonomous individuals. I argue that more attention needs to be paid to the importance of recovery processes and how people move through grief or learn to

live with grief in ways that are healthy and culturally appropriate for them. The chapter discusses the significance of incorporating cultural beliefs and practices into psychological research on natural disasters and recovery. I revisit the importance attributed to seemingly mundane material objects and everyday practices as a way of coping and learning to live with the aftermath of a tragedy. The chapter concludes by discussing implications of the present study along with ideas for future research.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
PREFACE.....	vii
The Town of Hikkaduwa, Sri Lanka.....	ix
Thesis Outline	xii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	xv
LIST OF FIGURES	xvii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	19
1.1 Post-disaster Research in Psychology.....	20
1.2 Conceptualising ‘Narrative’	23
1.3 Narrative Reconstruction via the Arts.....	27
1.4 Materiality and Metonyms	28
1.5 The Function of Historical Monuments as Metonyms.....	31
1.6 Re-membling through Memorials	34
1.7 Chapter Discussion	40
CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY.....	43
2.1 A Combination of Theoretical Approaches	43
2.2 Empirical Work.....	46
Research process and recruitment.....	46
Interviews.....	50
Participants.....	53
2.3 Ethical Considerations	56
2.4 Process of Analysis	58
CHAPTER THREE: NARRATIVE DISRUPTION	61
3.1 The Tsunami as a Disruption to Life Narratives.....	61
3.2 The Negative Impacts of the Tsunami	66

3.3 Buddhist Beliefs and the ‘Golden Tsunami’	68
3.4 Chapter Discussion	70
CHAPTER FOUR: MATERIALITY AND NARRATIVE RECONSTRUCTION	73
4.1 Conceptualising Grief.....	74
4.2 The Function of Public Monuments	75
4.3 Narrative Reconstruction through Private Memorialisation.....	78
A mode for expressing emotions.....	78
Establishing a sense of connection with the deceased.....	80
Establishing a link between the past and the present	82
4.4 A Change in the Significance of a Metonym over Time.....	90
4.5 Chapter Discussion	92
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	95
5.1 Natural Disasters and Narrative Repair: An Overview	95
5.2 Locating Grief in Cultural Practices and Material Objects	97
5.3 Further Implications, Research Possibilities and Conclusions.....	100
REFERENCES	103
APPENDIX A: Information Sheet.....	125
APPENDIX B: Sinhalese Translation of Information Sheet	129
APPENDIX C: Interview Guide	133
APPENDIX D: Sinhalese Translation of Interview Guide.....	137
APPENDIX E: Participant Consent Form	141
APPENDIX F: Sinhalese Participant Consent Form	143
APPENDIX G: Summary of Participants’ Profile	145
APPENDIX H: Priyani’s Poems with English Translations.....	147

LIST OF FIGURES

<i>Figure 1</i> Map of tsunami affected districts in Sri Lanka	x
<i>Figure 2</i> Images of Hikkaduwa: signpost on entering the town, a stretch of beach and a glimpse of the main town	xi
<i>Figure 3</i> Memorial in the form of a statue of the Lord Buddha	38
<i>Figure 4</i> Smaller monument in memory of the train wreck.....	39
<i>Figure 5</i> First section of the mural depicting the horror of the train wreck.....	39
<i>Figure 6</i> Second section of the mural depicting the horror of the train wreck	40
<i>Figure 7</i> The dress preserved by Nadhee.....	83
<i>Figure 8</i> Priyantha's private monument	84
<i>Figure 9</i> The antique door knocker salvaged by Nadhee, fixed on the door of her new home	85
<i>Figure 10</i> Nadhee's private monument.....	85
<i>Figure 11</i> Ruins of Kumara's workplace.....	88
<i>Figure 12</i> The remnants of where Kumara conducted political meetings	88

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami caused massive destruction by claiming thousands of lives and causing immense injury and displacement. Psychologists have a long standing interest in such disruptions to life. However, dominant approaches to these events are often culturally blind in assuming that Judaeo-Christian inspired positions to understanding death, injury and recovery are universally applicable. This thesis is informed by insights from indigenous, community, narrative and health psychologies, which consider issues of culture in psychology and centralise the importance of human experience, narrativity and actions. Specific insights are drawn from research into illness narratives and the arts, which suggest that creative expression is instrumental in initiating healing processes that allow lives to continue despite tragedy. I also draw on Buddhist understandings of death and grief as core elements of renewal in life; an area that will be explored more fully in Chapter Three and Chapter Four. I do so in order to understand how particular material objects, including monuments, shrines, songs, artwork and souvenirs can enable people to memorialise, *re-member* and recover from disasters.

Recent psychological narrative research on recovery following illness foregrounds the importance of narrative reconstruction (Radley, 2009). In cases of serious illness, the steady flowing continuity of life narratives can be disrupted, challenging not only the past, but also future hopes and plans (Bury, 1982). Such disruptions can necessitate people to re-assemble their very sense of self and life. Their efforts at re-storying themselves are given form in language, the arts and material practices (Radley, 2009). These insights from research into illness are useful in informing my understanding of how disasters disrupt life projections causing uncertainty and discomfort, and how people work to regain a sense of control over their lives (cf. Bury, 1982; Murray, 2000; Radley, 2009; Tuohy & Stephens, 2012). Such research exploring the connections between the arts, life narratives and major disruptions to everyday life provides a conceptual basis for the present study of narrative recovery following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami in Sri Lanka.

Perceiving the tsunami as a disruption to the continuous flow of a life narrative, this study discusses the role of the arts as well as various material objects in facilitating the reconstruction or re-storying of fractured life narratives. Consequently, material objects are viewed as mediums that enable individuals and communities to live with grief and loss as a result of the tragedy. The application of *Practice Theory* involves a focus on the everyday practices of people in the town of Hikkaduwa, Sri Lanka in coping with their grief and loss. This stance recognises the importance of the engagement in practices as a way of rebuilding a life following immense loss and grief (Shove & Warde, 2002; Warde, 2005).

In the following sections of this chapter I examine mainstream psychological literature on natural disasters to highlight the individualised, clinical and diagnostic approach traditionally taken in this field. I provide an alternative to this tendency to pathologise grief. In order to do so, I explore the concept of the *narrative* along with the significance of narrative repair following a disruption to life. I apply insights from research into illness narratives to natural disasters, and consider the significance of artworks such as memorials and/or other symbolic objects to processes of *re-membering* and narrative repair. Research into material objects such as souvenirs, as well as historical monuments and memorials, informs my explanation of the materiality of remembering and grief. In the final section I argue that objects, structures and spaces can become a means through which people learn to live with grief and loss.

1.1 Post-disaster Research in Psychology

Psychological research into natural disasters primarily focuses on diagnosing abnormalities and resolving trauma, anxiety, depression and grief (de Silva, 2006; Madrid & Grant, 2008; Nikapota, 2006). In practice, our disciplinary engagements have been limited by the dominance of overly narrow and individualistic therapeutic approaches. Research places particular emphasis on risk assessment in terms of individual vulnerability during or following a tragedy (Weinstein, Lyon, Rothman, & Cuite, 2000). Researchers also debate the effect of levels of self-professed risk; or individuals' perceptions of their susceptibility to harm, on exposure to a subsequent natural disaster in the future (Burger & Palmer,

1991; Dolinski, Gromski, & Zawisza, 1987; Lichtenstein, Slovic, Fischhoff, Layman, & Combs, 1978; Tversky & Kahneman, 1974; Weinstein et al., 2000).

Another major area of research involves in-depth enquiries into the various psychological effects of a tragedy (Assanangkornchai, Tangboonngam, & Edwards, 2004; Bland, O'Leary, Farinaro, Jossa, & Trevisan, 1996; Bystritsky, Vapnik, Maidment, Pynoos, & Steinberg, 2000; Madrid & Grant, 2008; Scott & Weems, 2013). Such research varies in its focus from discussions of the short term psychological effects of a natural disaster compared to the long term effects. In the short term, disasters have been found to be associated with increased levels of existential anxiety, severe psychiatric symptoms, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, somatic complaints and nightmares (Assanangkornchai et al., 2004; Bland et al., 1996; Bravo, Rubio-Stipec, Canino, Woodbury, & Ribera, 1990; Caldera, Palma, Penayo, & Kullgren, 2001; Escobar, Canino, Rubio-Stipec, & Bravo, 1992; Madakasira & O'Brien, 1987; Maj et al., 1989; Murphy, 1984; Papadatos, Nikou, & Potarnianos, 1990; Pynoos et al., 1993; Scott & Weems, 2013; Shore, Tatum, & Vollmer, 1986a, 1986b; Wood & Bootzin, 1992). Reflecting common findings, Madrid and Grant (2008) note that individuals with a history of past trauma and loss tend to be at a greater risk of the reoccurrence of anxiety, problems with sleep and concentration, uncontrolled anger as well as other behavioural issues in response to a natural disaster. While the long term effects have been less extensively documented, the existing research suggests that there might be a delayed onset of some symptoms, that symptoms may progress through alternating stages and that significant psychiatric symptoms may remain for as long as 14 years (Assanangkornchai et al., 2004; Bland et al., 1996; Carr, Lewin, Webster, & Kenardy, 1997; Goenjian et al., 2000; Phifer, Kaniasty, & Norris, 1988; Wang et al., 2000).

Studies into psychological symptoms further indicate that higher levels of distress occur for individuals affected by a natural disaster who have also been evacuated from their homes or who experience financial loss due to the disaster (Bland et al., 1996; Maj et al., 1989). These findings indicate a need to pay particular attention to vulnerable groups when planning for the provision of mental health services for disaster survivors. These groups include people

exposed to more severe and longer lasting stress, those from lower socio-economic classes and minority ethnic groups (Assanangkornchai et al., 2004).

As indicated above, mainstream psychological research focuses on the effects of natural disasters on individuals and how they cope with such tragedies, while the effect of a tragedy at a communal level tends to be overlooked. Collins and colleagues (2011) are some of the few researchers in psychology who have recently discussed the importance of the processes of community engagement and participation following a natural disaster. While they do briefly refer to the importance of community narratives and reflective processes for community recovery, there is no detailed discussion of how and why exactly these processes are important. On the other hand, Fernando (2009) and Klein and Schermer (2000), do provide rationales for communal support, and the benefits of sharing narratives among disaster survivors. However, they take a solely clinical perspective by discussing the therapeutic importance of these processes; to normalise stress reactions or reduce symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

In a Sri Lankan context, a majority of post-disaster research following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami in psychology adopts a clinical focus on recovery in line with much of traditional Anglo-American psychology. Consequently, there is an emphasis on the various mental health impacts of the tsunami, including the commonly discussed conditions of PTSD and trauma (Kaplan, 2005; Miller, 2005; Nikapota, 2006). A significant body of research also highlights the importance of creating culturally appropriate programmes to address the psychological recovery of individuals affected by the tsunami in this country (de Silva, 2006; Fernando, 2005, 2009; Kayser, Wind, & Shankar, 2008; Nastasi, Jayasena, Summerville, & Borja, 2011; von Peter, 2008). In contrast, Fisher (2010) took a community approach to examine violence occurring against women in post-tsunami Sri Lanka. She observed increased levels of violence against women in this context due to a number of reasons including lack of privacy, overcrowded living conditions, inadequate consideration to women's protection in the planning of facilities such as toilets and bathing areas in temporary housing following the disaster. These factors along with gender blind programmes and policies

implemented by various agencies for recovery were found to increase overall rates of violence following the tsunami (Fisher, 2010).

Overall, the majority of existing post-disaster research in psychology can be grouped into two categories; individual recovery in terms of psychological symptoms, and communal recovery in terms of the provision of aid and services for disaster relief. The field of psychology rarely tie these two categories together and focus on the everyday practices of a community responding to psychological recovery following a disaster. Moreover, scholars tend to view death and loss with a sense of finality and imply that one needs to *move on* from grief. However this goes against the beliefs of a majority of the people living in Hikkaduwa. Members of this community adhere to their cultural and religious beliefs viewing death and rebirth as an on-going cycle of renewal (Aronson, 2004; Wada & Park, 2009). From a Buddhist perspective, they perceive grief and loss as adversity in life that is not permanent. Missing from the psychological research on natural disasters, in both Sri Lanka and elsewhere, is research into the process of narrative repair itself, and how it can facilitate short and long term community recovery following a disaster. Furthermore, the importance of everyday practices involving symbolic artworks, material objects and places, to processes of narrative repair is an area yet to be explored. In the following section I expound the concept of the *narrative* and discuss how narratives are central to human understanding.

1.2 Conceptualising ‘Narrative’

Narrative research into the quality and experiences of human life constitutes an established area of scholarly endeavour. According to Sarbin (1986, p. 9), ‘human beings think, perceive, imagine, interact and make moral choices according to narrative structures’. While a number of propositions have been debated in relation to the precise definition of the term *narrative* (Brewer & Lichtenstein, 1982; Labov, 1982; LeGuin, 1989; Sarbin, 1986; Schank & Abelson, 1995; Stein, 1982), in general, a narrative can be conceptualised as a temporally and thematically organised description of a series of meaningful events within a certain context (Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000). Temporal organisation indicates a meaningful narrative form of discourse due to an arrangement of

events into a specific sequence. More elaborate definitions may also incorporate additional elements such as ideological background and characters (Labov, 1982; Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000; McAdams, 1988). Thematic organisation refers to the notion that narratives are created for a reason, and concern something that the narrator cares about. Examples include humorous stories that release tension, or life histories that build cohesion or intimacy within a group. A dense description of events and sensory experiences, a general theme, and an ordered and integrated beginning, middle and ending are perceived to be additional features of a narrative (Hanninen, 2004; Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000). The nature and structure of a narrative is explored more fully in Chapter Two.

Despite the importance attributed to life narratives and their various functions, there exists a level of controversy and debate with regards to the existence of an actual narrative structure to life itself. Some researchers argue that in fact there is no narrative structure to life, but that life comprises a messy, chaotic array of events onto which individuals impose a narrative form when viewing it in retrospect (Hanninen, 2004; Widdershoven, 1993). Regardless, a majority of narrative researchers seem to agree that there is indeed a narrative quality to both experience and life itself, and that shared stories reflect and give meaning to various experiences (Hanninen, 2004).

Narrativity occurs at both personal and collective levels. Below, I explore the importance of personal life narratives, and issues relating to collective sense making through the construction and refinement of shared narratives at a community level (Murray, 2000).

Narratives are often explored at the personal level and as circulating primarily within the confines of the individual, to produce what can be termed the *inner narrative* (Hanninen, 2004). Consequently, when narratives are considered, a major focus tends to be attributed to the individual cognitions of the Anglo-American construction of the person as *lonely thinker* (Jovchelovitch, 2007). This inner narrative signifies the organisation of an individual's experience, or rather, the stories one tells one's self, as opposed to the notion of the community narrative shared among group members. Most narrative research conducted by psychologists discusses life narratives as a reflection of the inner workings of an individual's mind, involving a person's sense of identity, conceptions of the past,

a sense of the meaning of life in general, and perceptions of causal relationships between various past events (Crossley, 2000; Hanninen, 2004; McAdams, 1993). The inner narrative can be perceived as a mental process that is continuous, and comprising a number of sub-narratives that vary over time and by its degree of self-reflection (Hanninen, 2004). The concept of the inner narrative does not necessarily suggest that *all* mental processing occurs in narrative form. The internal storyteller can instead be described as the central organiser of an individual's actions and experiences (Hanninen, 2004; Howard, 1991).

The inner narrative is associated with a number of functions related to the regulation of emotions (Hanninen, 2004). For example, significant life changing past events, such as the onset of a serious illness, a tragedy, or the loss of a loved one can be made sense of by the construction of an inner narrative (Crossley, 2000; Flick, 2006; Frank, 1995; Hanninen, 2004; Weber, Rowing, & Scanlon, 2007). Experiences of loss and grief are seen as a disruption to the familiar organised frames of everyday life, creating a sense of instability and unpredictability by breaking down prior life projections. This causes significant discomfort to individuals and creates an intense need to regain control over their chaotic thoughts and emotions (Frank, 1995; Hanninen, 2004; Weber et al., 2007). Hence, narrative repair recreates a sense of order, and calms these disarrayed emotions (Howe, 1993). Research into illness narratives further indicates that the sheer power of narrative interpretation provides meaning as well as dignity to even the most painful experiences and also provides a sense of continuity between the past and the future (Hanninen, 2004; Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000).

The information an individual draws upon in order to make sense of the world and their experiences in it through processes of narrative construction or reconstruction arises from discourses comprising long cultural and social histories (Billig, 2008; Hodgetts, Drew, et al., 2010). Consequently, one's life narrative is not strictly one's own, as it is produced from various social and cultural resources, and can be developed through the dialectics of everyday life (Hodgetts, Drew, et al., 2010; Hodgetts, Stolte, et al., 2010). Whilst narratives can be understood at an individual level, a personal perspective is generated from common experiences or communal level narratives held within a social group (Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000; Murray, 2000; Rappaport, 2000).

Communal level narratives are central to collective identities and help people build and maintain social relationships (Hodgetts, Drew, et al., 2010; Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000; Rappaport, 2000). Collective identities are achieved through the existence of a delicate balance between similarity and difference to others (Brewer, 1991; Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000). Collective identity created by the establishment of a shared narrative has been found to be beneficial to group members in a number of ways; one of which is during times of transition. For example, narratives provided by social institutions, such as religious foundations or other spiritually-based communities have been instrumental in supporting students during stressful transitions from school to college life (Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000; Mankowski & Thomas, 2000). The same narratives can indicate the strength of a group's sense of community, their shared goals, and the structure and function of that community (Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000). Narratives are seen as markers for a group's sense of community by serving as a handbook or 'how to' guide for the conduct of everyday life (Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000; Stuber, 2000).

Communal narratives can refer to stories about groups that are generated from within the groups and which are retold and refined by group members (Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000). These shared narratives reflect the collective experience and knowledge of a community and in most cases are about the group itself. Community narratives can be about the history of a community, for example, discussing the beginning or establishment of that community and how it got to where it is now. They can further include stories of various significant events or themes in the lives of important members of that group (Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000). Such narratives can be presented in various forms such as written or verbal accounts, the use of the arts or any other form of ceremonial or symbolic activity (Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000; Rappaport, 1998; Thomas & Rappaport, 1996). Schank and Abelson (1995) accordingly highlighted the importance of documenting experiences in the form of such narratives. Preventing this information from being forgotten or lost over time makes it available as a resource for deepening tradition and a sense of history, helping communities cope with disrupted or changing environments and to instil hope and inspiration among group members (Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000; Schank & Abelson, 1995).

1.3 Narrative Reconstruction via the Arts

Narrative reconstruction following a life disruption, such as the diagnosis of a serious illness, is a well-documented area in academic research. Engagements in creative expression in the form of art or autobiographical writing has benefitted individuals diagnosed with serious illnesses, including cancer, AIDS, Alzheimer's disease, schizophrenia, autism, bipolar disorder, bulimia, heart disease and even stroke (Carlick & Biley, 2004; Jones, 2006; Radley, 2009). Reviewing and extending this field of research in *Works of Illness: Narratives, Picturing and the Social Response to Serious Disease*, Radley (2009) discusses the importance of stories and pictures as a way of organising thoughts and feelings into a coherent sequence. Such activities provide a narrative basis for observing and comprehending what disruptions stemming from the onset of a serious illness involve.

Narrative reconstruction following an illness can foster comfort to individuals suffering from similar illnesses, by establishing commonality; initiating the recognition of a 'common fate, a shared experience' that can be 'a validating and empowering experience' (Radley, 2009, p. 106). Illness narratives further act as a form of healing agent, that enables individuals to come to terms with their illness. One's willingness to give an aesthetic form to a painful image or fragment of memory from the past such as the onset of a serious illness, can be pivotal to the healing process by acting as a reference point, inspiring future experiences (Radley, 2009; Swatton & O'Callaghan, 1999). Radley (2009) argues that the process of *healing* mentioned in this context does not necessarily correspond to the sense of *cure*, nor does the concept of *redemption* indicate the *saving of what has been lost*. Instead, narratives 'can serve as vehicles for coming to terms, for ways of re-entering the world of the healthy, as part of which there is the requirement that one be self-regarding' (Radley, 2009, p. 128). The onset of a serious illness challenges not only the present and the past, but also future hopes, plans and ambitions. The formation of an illness narrative does not necessarily change the fact that the individual was diagnosed with the illness, neither does it repair the disarrayed past. The re-emergence of these narratives like 'visual snapshots', across varying life events act as reminders to these individuals, of the

complexities of life itself (Swatton & O'Callaghan, 1999). Radley (2009) argues that the objective of narrative reconstruction is not to make forgetting a guiding principle, but to embrace one's fate; no matter how traumatic, and work with it. This perception of narrative reconstruction proves particularly important as psychology tends to have an excessive focus on attempting, unsuccessfully, to *treat* and *cure*, when perhaps learning to *cope* and *live with* is a more appropriate goal.

Similar importance has been attributed to the processes of narrative reconstruction by researchers studying bereavement and grief. The significance of narratives to establish commonality among individuals suffering from grief, causing them to rethink their lives and further enable them to come to terms with their loss, has been reiterated by researchers in this field (Glazer & Marcum, 2003; Witztum & Malkinson, 2009). These studies congruently indicate that the expression of one's emotions as narratives by the use of the arts is a way of making concrete something that cannot be expressed with sufficient dynamism verbally (Glazer & Marcum, 2003). Narrative reconstruction through the materiality of creative work can thus act as a transitional object that attaches individuals to the loved one(s) they lost (Witztum & Lerner, 2008; Witztum & Malkinson, 2009).

1.4 Materiality and Metonyms

Work on the importance of the *material* has been around since the inception of modern psychology (Hodgetts et al., 2010). For example, seminal work by William James implies that for remembering or recollection to occur, one needs to interact with the world (James, 1890; Shusterman, 2008; Stanley, 2012). It involves 'coming into contact with our experience in order to understand, and transform, how we relate to that experience' (Stanley, 2012, p. 207). Challenging aspects of contemporary cognitivism in psychology, James transcends the Cartesian mind/body dualism, which perceives the mind-brain as a mere information processing unit, comparing human beings to computers. James' work implies that notions of remembering or recollection are not solely cognitive, and are actually constructive and inherently materially enacted processes (James,

1890; Stanley, 2012). Applying these notions to the context of a disruptive event prompts the idea that one needs to devise strategies to live alongside adversity and grief so as to get on with life; to re-story life narratives. In order to do that, one needs to acknowledge that the disruptive event or the loss of a loved one is in fact a part of life. According to Radley (2009), a path to accepting one's fate lies in sharing that life event through a form of *representation*. In this thesis, I focus on two key theoretical concepts that are central to the materiality of representation; *metonym* and *re-membering*.

The concept of the *metonym* signifies a situation where a single (material) object represents a larger whole, or when a single reference is used to denote something culturally or spatially associated (Brown, 2006). Metonyms are said to encode various personal histories of individuals, their notions of the ideal self, significant other and self-expression (Kamptner, 1989; Morgan & Pritchard, 2005). This relationship between material objects and human experience has been investigated across fields such as economics, consumer behaviour, geography, history, tourism, media studies, anthropology, sociology and psychology (Miller, 1995; Morgan & Pritchard, 2005; Stewart, 1993). It is of particular interest to note that there has been a shift in research focus from the notion that possessions are merely 'crude and uncontested signs of status', towards an examination of the way in which material objects initiate and encourage self-expression and personal development (Lunt, 1995; Morgan & Pritchard, 2005). These studies emphasise the processes by which personal and social identities are linked with material objects (Basso, 1996; Beckstead, Twose, Levesque-Gottlieb, & Rizzo, 2011; Bender, 1993; Tilley, 1997).

The field of tourism categorises souvenirs as material objects that encode a number of functions and acquire a *secular sacred character*, for example, photographs that encode memories or signify personal histories (Morgan & Pritchard, 2005). These objects are retained and valued due to their extraordinary status and their potential implications for self-definition. Belk (1995) accordingly stated that 'certain goods may come to be seen as extensions of the self' (p. 72). Due to its 'connection to biography and its place in constituting the notion of the individual life, the memento becomes emblematic of the worth of that life and of the self's capacity to generate worthiness' (Stewart, 1993, p. 139). Memories that

affirm an individual's sense of identity are not the only memories evoked, souvenirs can also conjure up involuntary memories of exclusion that challenge personal identities (Morgan & Pritchard, 2005).

Material objects take our focus in understanding narrative processes out beyond mental representations and into how *things* can elicit thoughts, memories, understandings and feelings (Beckstead et al., 2011). Peoples' use of objects in coming to terms with loss for example, is more complex than simply involving an object onto which subjects inscribe various meanings (Beckstead et al., 2011). Webmoor and Witmore (2008) indicate that 'things are an entangled aspect of what it is to be human and many achievements of many people...are always folded together into a thing' (p. 59). Reflecting Glazer and Marcum's (2003) notion of the role of artistic expression in reconstructing life narratives, there is an understanding that the concrete or tangible nature of a material object can be instrumental in initiating feelings that are normally inaccessible, and can further elicit episodic moments of deep affective relevance (Alexander, 2008; Beckstead, 2009; Beckstead et al., 2011). Research into material corporeality argues that while the metonym itself relates to other phenomena; such as history, memory or social meanings as an indexical sign, it is the materiality of the object that is the essential factor which facilitates this process (Beckstead et al., 2011).

Material objects can also act as objects of transition or as touchstones of meaning. Souvenirs are instrumental in triggering powerful memories of various experiences and mediating a sense of place thereby 'enveloping the past within the present' (Morgan & Pritchard, 2005, p. 31). These objects not only act as symbols of past experiences, but also evoke and animate memories which inform the present self (Morgan & Pritchard, 2005). Souvenirs as metonyms can embody memories, emotions and associations derived from personal or shared experiences and become a part of an individual's everyday life (Attfield, 2000; Morgan & Pritchard, 2005). For example, a study conducted by Painter (1986 as cited in Chaney, 1996) examining the relationship between residents of Newcastle and the objects hanging on the walls of their living rooms, indicated that these objects in fact stood for various individuals. They were considered points of reference through the history of their experiences. Material objects can thus evoke memories of the people associated with one's past and memories of place and

landscape. For some, the places and landscapes visited in the past are considered sacred, heavy with personal as well as social significance (Morgan & Pritchard, 2005). Our sense of place and the past is our way of imaginatively engaging with our surroundings, considering it our personal perception of the world. This sense of place cannot be identified without memory, and therein lies the importance of the souvenir.

Morgan and Pritchard (2005) further emphasise the importance of a concrete or tangible metonym as an object of projection. They state that words alone are an inadequate substitute for the expression of experience. Memories are not only closely linked to emotions and associations but also to fragrances, tastes and sounds associated with the past (Morgan & Pritchard, 2005). Souvenirs act as a stimulus that arouses these nostalgic senses, providing a medium by which recollections of past experience can occur (Basso & Feld, 1996; Dann & Jacobsen, 2003; Morgan & Pritchard, 2005; Porteous, 1990). Irrespective of the form of memories they evoke, there is a clear implication of the passage of time in the consumption of material objects. Accordingly, meanings are not fixed or simply located in the object itself. Objects can hold general public meanings, but these become overwritten by inscriptions of personal memories, events, relationships and rites of passage (Kwint, Breward, & Aynsley, 1999).

1.5 The Function of Historical Monuments as Metonyms

Similar to research on the metonymic function of artworks and other material objects that facilitate remembering and narrative repair, studies on historical monuments have also identified the metonymic value of large structures and landscapes. In ancient Rome, for example, various urban icons including monuments and cityscapes were commonly used as metonymic representations of the city, its power and glory (Favro, 2006). During this era, urban icons were perceived as visual identifiers for both the physical and conceptual content of cities. Since the modern technologies of photography and mass communication were not available at the time, few people knew what a particular distant city looked like. Therefore, with the aid of their various shared myths, histories and texts, the Romans created visual representations of these places (Favro, 2006). As

a result, one of the main functions of Roman urban metonyms was to identify a locale. This is evident in a number of ancient coins or narrative paintings where symbolic metonyms were used to depict a particular event or building within the city (Favro, 2006). Prints with an aerial view of the city in particular, such as those depicted in military art, conveyed a sense of paternal care, ownership, conquest, expansion and control to its observer (Favro, 2006; La Rocca, 2001). Paintings of this form were often used by Roman generals in victory parades to advertise and validate military action (Favro, 2006). Visual metonyms for cities have additionally offered a sense of possession. The purchase of an iconic cityscape, for example, provided people with a token of remembrance of the places they visited (Urry, 2002).

In contrast, ancient monuments such as Hadrian's Wall have served as a different form of metonym. Such structures represent various narratives of defensive boundaries or barriers between people and cultures, a reminder of cultural differentiation, and also act as a symbol of security (Nesbitt & Tolia-Kelly, 2009; Whittaker, 1994). The monument is seen as a metonym for a temporal zone between the *known* and the *other*, acting as a marker for the boundaries of Roman power or the *civilised world*. It further signified the division between north and south; the English and Scottish empires (Nesbitt & Tolia-Kelly, 2009). As a material icon, the Wall was perceived as an ideological divide; engrained as such into the psyche of individuals and communities on either side of the structure, creating defensive or invasive attitudes amongst them (Nesbitt & Tolia-Kelly, 2009). The metonymic functions of the Wall and its surrounding landscape have been described in terms of its sensual, visual, traditional and nationalistic meanings (Nesbitt & Tolia-Kelly, 2009; Pearson & Shanks, 2001). Additionally, in relocating portable artefacts from the landscape of the Wall to an individual's own living space, people can forge a link between themselves and the imperial power and ideologies of the creator of the artefact.

Researchers have discussed Hadrian's Wall and various artefacts associated with it as being instrumental in evoking memories of the past, conjuring up embodied encounters; the touch, memories, scents of past events associated with that landscape (Massey, 2006; Nesbitt & Tolia-Kelly, 2009). The monument is said to *speak-for* lives and events of the past. It preserves the history,

values and local memories of the landscape that are constantly recreated and reminisced at each encounter, thus articulating a relationship between body, memory and place (Hoelscher & Alderman, 2004; Tilley, 2006; Tolia-Kelly, 2004). Nesbitt and Tolia-Kelly (2009) accordingly discuss experiences of the Wall almost as a personification, comprising embodied spirits of the past. They draw upon William Hutton's journey along the Wall which revealed his emotional and affective connection to the monument where he felt he could interact with the spirits of the past. These manifestations seemed to help him endure the isolation of his journey (Hutton, 1802; Nesbitt & Tolia-Kelly, 2009).

Echoing previous discussions of the role of artistic expression as well as the significance of material objects to elicit inaccessible feelings (Alexander, 2008; Beckstead, 2009; Beckstead et al., 2011; Glazer & Marcum, 2003); archaeological literature also establishes a link between encounters with the Wall and various emotions evoked. Here, research speaks of feelings of surprise, amazement, astonishment, pleasure, delight and also disappointment; often in relation to ancient remains and the views afforded from them (Hutton, 1802; Nesbitt & Tolia-Kelly, 2009). For Hutton (1802), his experience of the Wall conjured up notions of the strength of the Roman Empire. However, it also acted as a reminder of his own injuries, struggles and frailty. Thus, this monument is not just seen as an archaeological structure, but as an 'organic landscape through which historical...and affective encounters are made and remembered' (Nesbitt & Tolia-Kelly, 2009, p. 384). It is interesting to note that the Wall has a distinctive quality, associating it with major shrines and making it universal in its appeal; where it offers a variety of visitors what each of them desires (Eade & Sallnow, 1991; Nesbitt & Tolia-Kelly, 2009). The example of Hadrian's Wall offers countless ways in which narrative, representation and its materiality itself evokes spiritual and affective connection, identification, and memories of past events and people. This indicates that experiences of metonyms in the form of souvenirs, monuments or memorials do not necessarily have to be reduced to a singular sanctioned view (Nesbitt & Tolia-Kelly, 2009).

Although the words monument and memorial are often used interchangeably, there are some subtle distinctions. Overall, many monuments are erected in part to serve an educational function, promoting official historical

narratives, and contributing towards maintaining social order (Beckstead et al., 2011). Monuments are also often erected by the State to mark a significant historical period, event or person. In contrast, memorials are often linked to a loss of lives; they can be more personal and are said to play a more commemorative and therapeutic role. They provide an environment in which processes of remembering may occur, and individuals and communities can work through various traumatic events of the past. Thereby memorials are said to have a particular focus on the process of healing (Beckstead et al., 2011; Ivy, 2002). Despite differences evident in their definitions of functionality however, similar metonymic importance is placed on monuments and war memorials; where both can act as a metonym for past memories and events.

1.6 Re-membering through Memorials

To recap, across the social sciences there is a significant level of research activity focused on the use of the arts and other symbols to aid the reconstruction of a life narrative. A majority of these studies do not specifically address the significance of monuments and memorials to such processes. Accordingly, this section considers the communal implications and dimensions of tsunami memorials erected in Sri Lanka. I begin with insights from research into war memorials and then focus specifically on the Sri Lankan context.

Memorials can act as ‘powerful vehicles through which social institutions commemorate traumatic and triumphant events’ thus serving as a ‘compelling example’ of ‘memory through materiality’ (Beckstead et al., 2011, p. 195). Similar to a monument, the materiality of a war memorial acts as a social symbol, and provides a medium through which memories of deep emotional relevance as well as social values are encoded and expressed (Barber, 1949; Beckstead et al., 2011). Barber (1949) posits that society and social values project certain sentiments into the physical space; for example, notions of the *sacred* and the *profane*. He suggests that ‘the “sacred” is that toward which men feel respect; what is “profane” is properly carried on in a utilitarian context’ (Barber, 1949, p. 65). In this setting, war memorials are considered to belong to the ‘sacred’ category, where they serve as icons for encoding various social values such as,

social suggestions in relation to life and death, as well as group and individual identity (Barber, 1949; Beckstead et al., 2011). Personal meaning of this nature is legitimised and reinforced by war memorials through various human interactions such as pilgrimages, visits or other commemorative rituals (Barber, 1949; Wertsch, 2007). In short, war memorials act as a tool that enables understanding and evokes feeling through the different ways in which humans engage with and use the physical features of the structure (Beckstead et al., 2011; Boivin, 2008).

The large body of research into war memorials primarily focuses on the function of the shapes, textures and layout of these objects as well as what they are made of and what they signify (Beckstead et al., 2011; Ivy, 2002; Pearson & Shanks, 2001; Rodrigo, 2011). Wars and other traumatic events may result in the destruction of familiar landscapes and the loss of human life. However, such shared tragedies can also operate as a source of social stability. While material traces of traumatic events can be erased, nullified and lost in time, the memory and impact of war can extend beyond the battlefield and can be preserved in ritualistic sites of memory; such as memorials (Beckstead et al., 2011; Nora, 1989). The use of long lasting material such as mortar, concrete or brick in the construction of war memorials is a forceful indication of the social necessity of remembering. Thus, compared to other less durable material, the materials used to create a war memorial instil meaning and significance into these structures that go above and beyond the various inscriptions of names, stories and events. Heritage through materiality continues to *speak* over time (Beckstead et al., 2011; Macdonald, 2006). These features are believed to act as a powerful deterrence to one of modernity's principal rivals; forgetfulness (Beckstead et al., 2011; Brockmeier, 2002).

Great effort has been placed in the restoration and conservation of memorials that fall into disrepair, so that they can continue to maintain their position of significance as markers of past events and those who sacrificed their lives for their country (Beckstead et al., 2011; Grissom & Harvey, 2003). The material used as well as the architectural design of memorials at the Nazi grounds in Nuremberg, Germany were found to elicit numerous affective responses including enthusiasm, awe, fascination and even a notion of group solidarity (Beckstead et al., 2011; Macdonald, 2006; Valsiner, 2006). This landscape was

crafted in a manner that provoked specific messages, shaped individual and communal identity and heightened emotional responses (Beckstead et al., 2011). The material properties of a war memorial encodes not only socially desirable messages and attitudes, but can also act as a medium by which more suppressed, or otherwise socially unacceptable emotions are expressed (Arthur, 2009; Beckstead et al., 2011; Theriault, 2003). Thus, representations of war often depict patriotism and heroism, whereas the harsh realities and pain of war tends to be downplayed or avoided.

War memorials play a vital role as a focus for grief and loss, and can aid a sense of unity and initiate the process of healing for those affected (Moriarty, 1995; Stephens, 2007; Theriault, 2003). One manner in which these structures as a whole evoke healing is by bringing people together and helping them define their public pasts by triggering memories of a shared, common history (Beckstead et al., 2011; Hayden, 1999; Stephens, 2007). Memorials such as the Vietnam Veteran's memorial, allow veterans to reconnect with a community of fellow veterans through sharing and comparing their individual war experiences (Theriault, 2003). Moreover, war memorials provide war veterans as well as grieving friends and relatives with a physical location and a material entity around which to rebuild a tangible connection with loved ones they have lost in war. Hence, war memorials can be perceived as a material and corporeal way by which grieving communities *re-member* those lost. This indicates a connection between the physicality of memorials and their commemorative significance; where the *material structure* or the monument, constructs the *subject* or those individuals lost in the war (Olsen, 2003; Stephens, 2007; Theriault, 2003). As Stewart (1999) states, perception by touch can lead to an alternate type of remembering by bringing life to objects. This validates the notion that memory is not only a cognitive process, but also incorporates actions involving things in the material world (Stephens, 2007). A simple touch or trace of the names inscribed on a memorial has the quality of invoking the memory of those lost friends or relatives as a substitute for the material existence of a body (Stephens, 2007). The list of names appearing on the Vietnam Veteran's monument was a key to remembering as well as re-membering the individual identity of each person lost in the Vietnam War. The list acts as a medium for communication between the living and the dead (Theriault, 2003). In this manner, the practice of re-membering loved ones as

initiated by these memorials draws a grieving community together. Healing occurs by the processes of repair and reconnection to social groups and shared narratives. The perception of memorials and monuments as symbols or icons of an event or series of events can be related back to Radley's (2009) notions of the use of the arts as a representation of a life narrative. This theoretical approach is applied to the understanding of monuments and memorials constructed to commemorate those lost following a natural disaster in Sri Lanka.

The construction of memorials following a tragedy to commemorate lives lost is an occurrence commonly observed across various societies. In Sri Lanka, a number of memorials were built throughout the island in order to remember those affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami (Haviland, 2011; Perera, 2009, 2011). One of a number of public memorials found in the town of Batticaloa; located on the east coast of Sri Lanka, is a medium-sized tower with glowing light fixtures. This structure standing on the Dutch Bar beach comprises a list of hundreds of names inscribed at its base (Perera, 2011). A media article by Perera (2011) describes the memorial as 'a badly overblown version of a traditional lamp, with electricity bulbs replacing the flickers...the kind of record we see in cemeteries all over the island' (para. 5). He goes on to recount a detailed narrative shared by a woman sitting below the structure, expressing her traumatic experiences of the tsunami. The news article describes these memorials as 'sad reminders' of the tsunami. Places that even seven years after the tragedy, relatives come to remember those lost; those whose names are inscribed on the structure (Perera, 2011). Further south in the town of Kalmunai, yet another public memorial stands on the beach, in the form of a tall and narrow four-storied structure. It takes the appearance of a staircase, with concrete pillars on the four corners and viewing platforms on each floor. This hundred foot tall staircase was seemingly constructed with no railings or barriers on either side (Perera, 2011).

The most prominent of all the public memorials constructed in Sri Lanka is found in the small town of Peraliya, Hikkaduwa (Perera, 2009, 2011). Located along the south-west coast of Sri Lanka, this town was the site of a major train wreck as a result of the tsunami. Two memorials are found in this location, one of which is a large statue of the Lord Buddha positioned next to a large artificial lake (see Figure 3). This structure is located about half a kilometre away from the site

where the train was swept away by the giant wave. Closer to where this tragedy took place is another much smaller memorial (see Figures 4, 5 and 6), with a mural depicting the horror of the tsunami (Haviland, 2011; Perera, 2009, 2011). Perera (2009) describes the event stating that;

The twisted hulks of eight carriages and a locomotive swept aside and tossed around like matchboxes by the killer waves. The train was packed with passengers and others who had sought refuge in them when the first wave hit Sri Lanka's southern shore. When the larger and deadlier swell struck them on the tracks, villagers estimate that as many as 1500 died inside. (para. 1)



Figure 3 Memorial in the form of a statue of the Lord Buddha



Figure 4 Smaller monument in memory of the train wreck



Figure 5 First section of the mural depicting the horror of the train wreck



Figure 6 Second section of the mural depicting the horror of the train wreck

The empty remains of the carriages of this train were left standing on the side of the track and was once a sought after location for various media reporters. Today, the carriages have been relocated to a yard in Colombo, and are no longer on display (Haviland, 2011; Perera, 2009, 2011). Despite the relocation of this once significant memorial, media articles suggest that mourners annually visit the place where the structure stood. Every year these friends and relatives would come and clear away the weeds and shrubs in the area and build a form of impromptu grave with their bare hands and mourn their loved ones (Perera, 2009).

In this manner numerous descriptions and speculations of these memorials have been made quite regularly. Various media articles have discussed the aesthetics of the monuments in Sri Lanka and the memories of the disaster that they instigate (Haviland, 2011; Perera, 2009, 2011). Yet, the purpose and effect of these structures and artworks for a grieving community have not been addressed in academic research.

1.7 Chapter Discussion

This chapter highlights that narrative reconstruction following a life changing event such as a natural disaster, from a particularly communal perspective, is important for community wellbeing and recovery. My thesis

explores the relationship between memorials constructed following a tragedy and how these and other material objects are instrumental in the restoration of a community by reinstating the narrative structure of life. My focus is supported by previous research into the arts indicating that creative expression, or metonyms in the form of material objects or souvenirs can be instrumental in initiating these processes of narrative reconstruction. Additionally, viewing monuments and memorials as metonyms, the chapter explores in-depth how communities commemorate the loved ones they lost as a result of war or any other tragedy. Considering the numerous memorials constructed following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami in Sri Lanka, there seems to be a gap in research particularly in the field of psychology, exploring the significance of these structures. Therefore, the present research involves a specific exploration of the concepts of metonymy and re-remembering as initiated by these memorials, to processes of narrative repair following the tsunami. I acknowledge the cultural and personal processes central to the creation of metonyms and how these processes have a reciprocal effect on the psychological functioning of individuals and communities. The following chapter provides a discussion of the theoretical and practical approach taken to gathering and analysing the narratives of people in the town of Hikkaduwa who were affected by the tsunami.

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

The present chapter provides a discussion of the approach taken to gather and analyse the narratives of Sri Lankan community members in Hikkaduwa, affected by the tsunami. I explore the concept and structure of the *Western* narrative, and present how I linked traditional *Western* narrative interview techniques in a manner that fit a Sri Lankan context. I discuss the integration of *Practice Theory* and *Phronesis* as additional approaches that contributed towards the theoretical framework of the present study. Processes of participant recruitment are described, and a brief profile of each participant is presented. The chapter discusses and justifies the use of semi-structured interviews as well as *walk-along* interviews to gather data, and further includes a description of my endeavours to ensure that the present research was ethical. The chapter concludes by presenting accounts of the processes of transcription, translation, *holistic structural analysis*, *thematic analysis* and *visual analysis* as modes of data analysis.

2.1 A Combination of Theoretical Approaches

As discussed in Chapter One; in its most brief sense narratives are ways by which people organise and attribute meaning to their various life experiences (Hermanns, 1995; Li, 2011; Riessman, 1993). Narrative research is biographical in nature and focused on the narration of these life experiences at individual and community levels (Creswell, 2007; Petty, Thomson, & Stew, 2012). Accordingly as a researcher, one of the best ways by which information about such life narratives can be obtained, comprising descriptions of individuals or communities, their positions in life or their relationships to and interactions with their social environments, is by encouraging each member to articulate their life story (Atkinson, 1998; Li, 2011). I thereby primarily employed a *Narrative Approach* to the present study.

Narratives can give meaning to and structure life events into *plotlines* or stories that connect and organise experiences into episodes (Frye, 1957; Herman

& Vervaeck, 2001; Murray, 1997). A main plot within a narrative can be identified by applying the concept of the *five sociolinguistic features of narratives* as proposed by Labov and Waletzky (1997). These features of *orientation*, *complication*, *evaluation*, *resolution* and *coda* have been regarded as ‘a mode of thought’ by Bruner (1997, p. 64). Here, while *orientation* implicates a description of the individual(s) involved, the time, place and situation, *complication* indicates the actual event, which forms the main body of the narrative. *Evaluation* and *resolution* involve the purpose of the story and the result of the main event, respectively. *Coda* returns the reader or listener back to the current moment (Labov & Waletzky, 1997).

The development of the plot over time has also been conceptualised by Gergen and Gergen (1986) encompassing three broad narrative structures; the *progressive narrative*, the *regressive narrative* and the *stable narrative*. While a *progressive narrative* indicates a storyline where the plot shows progress towards the achievement of a certain goal, a *regressive narrative* is characterised by a period of decline or deterioration. A *stable narrative* is indicative of a uniform or steady plot. This increased focus on the linguistic features and the structure of narratives is indicative that the structure and form of a life story is as important as the content of such a narrative (Chase, 2005; Labov & Waletzky, 1997; Li, 2011). This thesis focuses on the content of the narratives produced during interviews with tsunami survivors. I also explore the form and structure of these stories.

In addition to highlighting the importance of form and structure in the field of narrative research; scholars have indicated that these structures may in fact differ across cultures (Li, 2011; Propp, 1968). Propp (1968), for example, states that the structure and formal complexity of Russian fairy tales cannot be compared to fairy tales originating from Western Europe or the Eastern non-Slavic neighbours of Russia due to vast cultural diversity. Similarly, differences in structure have been identified between Western and Chinese narratives (Li, 2011; Lin, 1977; Plaks, 1977). For the purposes of the present study, I have adapted and combined *Western*¹ narrative methods in a way that they can be successfully translated for and applied to a Sri Lankan cultural setting.

¹ The use of the term *Western* tends to hide notions of cultural diversity and assumes a homogenous approach where one does not necessarily exist.

In addition to listening to and analysing verbal accounts of participant life narratives, I also focused on, and interpreted the everyday practices of members of the community of Hikkaduwa. I explored how such practices aided these people to cope with their grief and loss. Thereby I incorporated *Practice Theory* and *Phronesis* into the methodology of the present study.

Practice Theory focuses on the *doing* of various social practices, forming routines and what is considered normal, everyday ways of life (Hargreaves, 2011; Shove, 2004; Shove & Warde, 2002). The approach emphasises the importance of engaging in everyday practices as a way in which individuals and communities come to understand the world around them, and develop their sense of self (cf. Warde, 2005). It is important to note here, that considerations of Practice Theory do not reduce individuals and communities to passive actors performing such practices, instead they are perceived as ‘skilled agents who actively negotiate and perform a wide range of practices in the normal course of everyday life’ (Hargreaves, 2011, p. 83).

In this context, the exact definition of the term *practice* and what entails a *practice approach* is an area of constant debate (Hargreaves, 2011; Schatzki, 2001). Theorists such as Spaargaren and van Vliet (2000), for example, emphasise the position of practices as a link between one’s lifestyle and broader social systems. I adapt understandings of practice with a focus on its various components or elements (Halkier, Katz-Gerro, & Martens, 2011; Hargreaves, 2011; Reckwitz, 2002; Schatzki, 2002; Shove & Pantzar, 2005; Warde, 2005). Reckwitz’s (2002) definition of practice states that it is ‘a routinised type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, “things” and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge’ (p. 249). The present study thereby acknowledges this emphasis on the centrality of ‘things and their use’ in the performance and reproduction of practices in mundane everyday life. The author argues that a practice ‘necessarily depends on the existence and specific interconnectedness of these elements, and which cannot be reduced to any one of these single elements’ (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 250). Consequently, meaning is not restricted to a particular object, behaviour, or set of practices, but is generated by

social actors in the multifaceted relationships and interactions that occur in and construct everyday lives (Giddens, 1979). In order to understand these meanings or the significance of such relationships with objects and practices however, there is a need to interpret these processes, rather than simply accepting them at face value. Thereby I additionally integrated *Phronesis* into the theoretical framework of the present study.

Phronetic research emphasises a need to work in collaboration with participants by drawing on their experiential knowledge and expertise. Instead of simply *giving voice* by restating participant accounts or narratives, there is a complex meaning-making process and co-creation of knowledge (cf. Radley, 2009). Phronesis involves the interpretation of people's everyday situated and lived knowledge (Flyvbjerg, Landman, & Schram, 2012). Participant narratives and actions or practices are thereby combined with the researchers' interpretations and existing literature. This view is informed by Friere's (1986/1990) approach to education that conceptualised teachers and students as co-constructors of knowledge. He highlights the importance of a *conversational approach* to education involving a mutual exploration of topics; an alternate strategy to the conventional *sermon-type approach* that was in practice (Hodgetts, Chamberlain, & Groot, 2011). Friere's (1986/1990) work suggests that the voice of participants is negotiated in dialogue with the researcher. Phronetic research similarly encourages notions of public intellectualism and scholar activism rather than armchair criticism. It further allows case studies to be scaled up globally, and acknowledges that knowledge is culturally, historically and context bound (Flyvbjerg et al., 2012). A combination of research techniques thus proved important for the present study as it enabled me to apply a cultural orientation to my interview and analysis processes. The methods by which I engaged in data collection and analysis are discussed in the following sections of this chapter.

2.2 Empirical Work

Research process and recruitment

The present study was carried out in Sri Lanka; in the town of Hikkaduwa. I travelled to Sri Lanka for a period of seven weeks (from the 4th of June to the

23rd of July 2012), where I initially set up base in my home town Colombo. My first week in Colombo was spent contacting acquaintances with affiliations in Hikkaduwa who offered to help recruit participants for my research. These acquaintances included a provincial counsellor of the area as well as a psychologist working at a local relief agency, which was instrumental in providing housing as well as attending to the mental health needs of communities in Hikkaduwa affected by the tsunami. My acquaintances initially contacted potential participants to explain the purpose of the research and to gain their consent to partake in the study. Once I had received a list of individuals willing to take part in interviews, I was able to go to Hikkaduwa myself to meet these people.

Two informal gatherings were arranged (one by each of the acquaintances assisting me with the recruitment process) so that I could introduce myself to potential participants and further explain the study and the rights of participants. I felt a face-to-face meeting as a form of introduction as to who I am and to explain the ‘how, what and why’ of my research to my participants was necessary. Through this I hoped to ease their possible apprehension about discussing traumatic and even private life stories with a stranger whom they considered a ‘tourist’ at the time. I was born in Sri Lanka, and have lived there for almost 17 years. However, on discussing the details of the present study with the participants, my acquaintances had mentioned that I attend University in a foreign country, and thereby it was assumed that I myself was from a foreign country. I felt that participants meeting me in person and hearing from me, in our native language (Sinhalese) about the details of my research helped us to establish some sense of comfort, trust and acceptance.

This personal introduction enabled me to acknowledge that the everyday interpersonal practices of the participants in this research differed somewhat from those of the traditional *western* world. Thus, a level of cultural consideration was applied to the entire research process, especially when conducting interviews. Indigenous scholars have argued that ‘the level of interaction or the relationship that exists between the researcher and the participant significantly determines the quality of data obtained’ (Pe-Pua, 2006, p. 123). This principle applies to Sri Lankan communities where I, as the researcher, needed to establish a certain level

of acceptance or mutual trust in order to become an ‘insider’ (Pe-Pua, 2006) who could comfortably interact with the participants. This was especially important due to the personal nature of the life narratives that were discussed. The expression of feelings, direct verbal communication and the sharing of personal information are practices that are against the cultural norms of, and are in fact not generally appreciated or valued in many Asian cultures, including Sri Lanka (Conyne, Wilson, Tang, & Shi, 1999; Fernando, 2009). As a result, it was vital for me to conduct myself in a way that encouraged the participants to feel comfortable discussing their life stories with me, and to consider me an ‘insider’ or ‘one of them’ (de Mel & Ruwanpura, 2006; Fernando, 2009; Pe-Pua, 2006).

The fact that this initial introduction was carried out in Sinhalese was also pivotal to gaining the trust of the participants. The Sinhalese are the largest ethnic group in Sri Lanka, comprising over 80 percent of the total population (Fernando, 2009). Accordingly, the first language of all the participants was also Sinhalese. As Fernando (2009) notes, a fluency in this language, along with a Sri Lankan upbringing is an important contributing factor to a successful research process in this cultural setting. My knowledge and experience enabled me to understand the participants’ daily life experiences, world views, rituals, habits as well as various social norms and what was considered appropriate or ‘correct’ behaviour (Fernando, 2009). The importance of what Nastasi and colleagues (2000) term a ‘cultural broker’ in this manner is due to its ability to allow for the interpretation of life experiences from the perspective of the participants, as opposed to an attempt to fit those concepts into western frameworks.

Hanninen (2004) additionally highlights that language can play a central role in the formation of a person’s inner narrative; a concept previously discussed. It has been argued that life narratives can be expressed and also retained in one’s memory in linguistic form. Language can be a way of internally organising experiences (Hanninen, 2004; Vygotsky, 1962). Thereby one mode of successfully communicating one’s life narrative and the various emotions, beliefs and attitudes that go along with it relies on the use of his or her first language. Moreover, the use of a participant’s native language in an interview can unravel various cultural concepts not familiar to western ideologies or the English language (Pe-Pua, 2006), which further become meaningful when embedded in

the Sinhalese language. Therein lay yet another benefit of my fluency in Sinhalese.

In addition to establishing an initial relationship with the participants, during these gatherings I was also able to answer their questions and doubts about their participation in the study as well as provide them with information sheets (see Appendix A and Appendix B for Sinhala translations) and schedule times, dates and venues for initial interviews.

Following these two gatherings which occurred a week after I landed in Sri Lanka, I stayed with family friends who lived in the main town of Hikkaduwa, for a period of five weeks. This enabled me to familiarise myself with the community and local culture. Given that I was born and have lived in Colombo for most of my life, there were slight differences between my own urban background and the rural setting of Hikkaduwa. During my stay in Hikkaduwa, I attended a number of community events along with the family friends with whom I was staying. One such community event included a *dhaane* or alms giving, which is a Buddhist religious function to commemorate and transfer merit to a loved one who has passed away (Tilakaratne, 2012). A number of friends and neighbours gather along with Buddhist Monks from the local temple, to pray or recite *bana* to commemorate the individual who passed away. Functions such as this are a regular occurrence among Buddhist communities throughout Sri Lanka, particularly on the day marking each anniversary of the tragic tsunami. Attending such functions and events enabled me to further familiarise myself and to get involved with the community.

Fundamental to this research was the need to build rapport and to treat participants with dignity and respect. This was particularly important in order to mitigate any possible power differentials between the people living in this rural community and myself as an academic researcher from a relatively privileged background in Colombo. Out of the nine individuals initially suggested to me, I was able to schedule and follow through with interviews with five, as the other individuals seemed to constantly have prior engagements or seemed to avoid confirming times and dates for interviews. I took this as a sign that they did not wish to participate, and did not feel comfortable telling me so, hence I felt that I

should not pressure them into being part of the research. Sri Lankan culture is one that does not promote assertiveness, especially amongst females. Thereby this reluctance to communicate a change of heart regarding participation was not unusual. Neither did I regard it as rude. In fact, the lack of communication in this manner was a sign that they did not wish to offend me by initially showing interest in participation, and then having a change of heart. Nonetheless, this was not a problem with me as my initial research plan involved the interviews of a maximum of only six participants.

Interviews

The topic of this research concerns a very tragic event. Although eight years had passed since the event, the memories of grief and loss were still strongly felt by participants. Given this situation, a single drive-by interview was clearly both inappropriate and too superficial. Instead, I conducted a series of repeat encounters with the five participants. Based on the participants' consent, the first series of interviews took the form of informal discussions as a way of further getting to know the participant. The second series of interviews were *walk-along* interviews. This also allowed me the opportunity to capture and photograph the various material objects of significance to the participant.

Walk-along interviews have become increasingly common in ethnographic research, and are considered a form of *go-along* interview. These interviews involve a researcher accompanying participants on an *outing*, where data is gathered by asking questions, listening and observing (Kusenbach, 2003). In the context of the present research, the *outing* took the form of a walk to and around a monument or space of significance to a participant following the tsunami. Research in this area highlights a number of advantages of using the walk-along method as an interview technique; one of which is the fact that it provides a researcher unique access to a participant's personal biography (Kusenbach, 2003). It brings to the fore the various associations between memory, place and life histories, and can be likened to the pages of a participant's personal photo album or diary. Walk-along interviews can highlight how participants integrate memories of past events and anticipations of the future; information that is usually

difficult to generate through conventional interviews (de Certeau, 1984b; Kusenbach, 2003). This method proved particularly important for the present research as it facilitated more in-depth discussions of the participants' life narratives prior to and following the tsunami.

The interviews themselves took the form of *semi-structured* narrative interviews, which involved verbal exchange and *breaching tasks* (using material objects [souvenirs] and images) to draw out situated stories (Garfinkel, 1967). Breaching tasks involved discussing photographs or material objects that the participant brought to an interview and its significance to the participant's narrative.

Prior to providing a detailed description of my interview process, however, I feel it is important to conceptualise my use of the term *semi-structured* interview in this context, and how traditional interview techniques were culturally patterned and adapted for the purpose of the present study. While I was equipped with a set of interview guidelines (see Appendix C and Appendix D for Sinhala translations) comprising the various themes I intended to discuss along with a number of prompts in the event that the conversation ceased or went off track (Petty et al., 2012), I tended to not concern myself with structure once the interviews commenced. I had consulted a senior lecturer in the Department of Sociology at the University of Colombo; Dr G. Samarasinghe (personal interaction, June 19, 2012), regarding various research practices in Sri Lanka. Being an experienced researcher herself; particularly in the area of trauma and grief, she was aware of the subtle differences between traditional western and more culturally patterned Sri Lankan interview techniques. She mentioned that while there were no specific differences 'set in stone' per se, what she and her colleagues regard as *semi-structured* interviews involved letting the participant steer the conversation. She highlighted that this was especially important when discussing topics such as grief, as Sri Lankans usually dislike discussing their feelings, and once they do start talking about them (which she pointed out would usually occur towards the end of an interview), a researcher should just let them 'get it all out' and 'go with the flow'. I followed her experienced advice when conducting my interviews. If there was a theme on my interview guide that was not discussed during the first interview, I followed it up during the second meeting. Two interview sessions

were carried out with each participant, during which all themes listed in my interview guide were covered.

On commencement of the initial interview I once again briefly explained the research, discussed issues of consent and confidentiality, and answered any questions the participant had. I then requested permission to record each session to which all the participants verbally agreed. It is important to note that although the need for written consent and signatures is a fairly important practice in western cultures, it is not necessarily so in Sri Lanka (Fernando, 2009). Within this cultural setting, verbal agreements were the norm. Nonetheless, if a participant felt comfortable signing a written consent form, I let them do so (see Appendix E for copy of consent form and Appendix F for Sinhala translations); whereas if they chose to provide only verbal consent, then I recorded their statements of agreement to participate in the research.

The series of first interviews usually took the form of a friendly visit where upon my arrival at the participants' house, I was presented with a cup of hot tea along with various other food items such as cake or biscuits or bananas; all of which I had to accept. Among many tourists visiting the country, Sri Lankans have acquired a healthy reputation for their friendliness and hospitality. These offerings of food and refreshments are a cultural practice that occurs not only in the presence of guests, but also any friends and relatives who visit a person's home. When these refreshments are presented, one is expected to accept at least one serving of each item offered, to avoid offending the host. Once the formalities with refreshments were complete, the discussion of life stories was able to commence.

The first series of interviews were considered group interviews, where while the participant related their life narratives to me, their family members and neighbours gathered around listening to the conversation. These spectators did not contribute to the discussions. The presence of an audience did not seem to affect the participants' narration of their life stories. As Sri Lankan culture is communal or collective in character (Fernando, 2009; Sandhu, 2004), this tendency to be present in groups on first engaging with an unfamiliar individual such as myself was quite understandable. I regarded it as their way of sussing me out. As most of

these interviews were carried out in the participants' homes, a number of participants showed me various material objects of significance to them.

The series of second interviews were much more private, involving only the presence of the participant and me. Upon attending these interviews, I was able to present my participants with small gifts of food in return for the hospitality shown to me during the initial sessions. The act of exchanging seemingly trivial gifts such as this is yet another cultural norm in this setting; one is expected to acknowledge the hospitality shown to him or her and give something back in return. Participants who were not able to show me their material objects of significance during the first session, additionally brought forth their souvenirs during these second sessions. Some of these interviews were carried out as walk-along interviews, where participants were able to show me the monuments of significance to them. Overall the second series of interviews comprised discussions of areas not covered in the prior session, and were used as opportunities to clarify any questions I had from the previous session.

Transcripts of the two interviews were presented to participants during subsequent brief meetings (encounters 3 and 4) held with them prior to my trip back to Colombo. This enabled them to alter, delete or add to what they had previously said if they so wished. All participants were satisfied with the transcripts as they were and thus made no changes. During these brief meetings participants were asked to provide their contact details so I could send them a copy of the summary of my research finding, translated into Sinhalese, if they so wished.

Participants

A total of five participants were interviewed as part of the present research. The participants comprised three males and two females, ranging in age from 37 to 57 years. Participants engaged in a variety of occupations and all, except one, had changed their occupations following the tsunami. While the homes of all participants were destroyed as a result of the tsunami, three lost members of their immediate family. The remainder lost close relatives and friends. Three participants were able to show me monuments that helped them

remember the loved ones lost and re-story their lives following the tragic event. One participant engaged in the arts by composing lyrics to songs and poems as a form of recovery. Most participants additionally presented me with other material objects such as shrines in memory of their loved ones, relics salvaged from the rubble of their destroyed homes, or even the clothes they wore on that fateful day.

A table comprising a summary of information about each participant is presented as Appendix G, where pseudonyms have been used to ensure anonymity of participants. A description of each individual participant's profile is presented below.

Priyani was a 37 year old female, who lost both her parents to the tsunami. While she had two older sisters, they were both married and no longer lived with her and her parents. Prior to the tsunami, Priyani was a part-time student, studying to be a teacher like her mother. However, following the tragic event and due to the loss of her parents, Priyani was faced with all the responsibilities of running a house. Household chores such as cooking and cleaning were duties she had never been faced with when her parents were alive. The sudden and unforeseen loss of both her parents caused Priyani to rapidly learn independence, resulting in her discontinuing her studies and focusing on gradually rebuilding her parents' home destroyed by the tsunami. At the time of the interviews she worked in the tourism industry, running a guest house. Priyani still mourned her parents, and had a shrine comprising portraits of each of her parents with garlands of flowers over each. Part of Priyani's morning ritual was to place fresh flowers, and light small oil lamps at each portrait. The repair of her life narrative following the tsunami commenced when she started composing lyrics to songs and poems as a way of expressing her feelings and communicating with her deceased parents. One such song of hers was recorded by a famous local singer and gained airplay over national radio and television in the years following the tsunami.

Ajith was a 46 year old male, whose house was completely destroyed by the tsunami. Although he, along with his wife and son were caught in the waves of the tsunami, they were able to reach safety. He however lost a number of close relatives and friends to the waves. While Ajith engaged in coral reef mining as an occupation prior to the tsunami, he acknowledged that it was in fact an illegal

activity in Sri Lanka. Despite his losses, he viewed the tsunami as a turning point in his life, which helped him better his life, and change his primary source of income to one that was not so dangerous to the environment as well as to himself. He was; during the time of interviews, a security guard at a local NGO (Non-governmental Organisation). Ajith perceived the tsunami as a landmark, differentiating his *old* life and his *new* life. He stated that he possessed only one object that linked this *old* and *new* life. On constructing his new house following the tsunami, Ajith used a single windowpane which he salvaged from the rubble that was his old home. This was the only reminder he wished to have of the tragic event; the only thing that served as a reminder of his past life.

Kumara was a 43 year old male, who was a prominent politician in the area, prior to the tsunami. His house and the office where his political meetings and speeches were held were left in ruins by the tsunami. These structures were left in their derelict state, even up till the time of the interviews. While Kumara had constructed a new house for himself and his family more inland, he admitted that he did not wish to demolish, build over or sell his destroyed stretch of land along the coast. He was an owner and principal of a small private school at the time of the interviews, and the ruins were his only link between this new life, and the old. While Kumara did not lose any immediate family members to the waves, he did lose a number of close relatives and friends.

Priyantha was a 57 year old male, who lost his wife, daughter and his father-in-law to the tsunami. While he had recently remarried and had a son during the time the interviews were carried out, he still mourned his lost family. He too had a shrine in memory of his family, comprising portraits of his first wife and child adorned with garlands of flowers and laid with oil lamps, similar to that of Priyani's. The home he lived in prior to the tsunami was along the coast and thus completely destroyed by the waves. The only indication of the existence of the house was a small monument constructed by Priyantha at the site. The monument was constructed where the only remains of the house; the staircase, stood. Prior to the tsunami Priyantha; like a significant number of men in Hikkaduwa, engaged in coral reef mining. However following the event and the loss of his family he changed his line of work and commenced work in the coconut industry.

Nadhee was a 42 year old female, who was able to reach safety along with her husband and daughter during the disaster. However she lost a number of immediate family members to the tsunami, including her mother, father, brother and sister-in-law. Nadhee too has personal shrines of her lost family members similar to those of Priyani and Priyantha. While the family home that they all resided in at the time was completely destroyed, she and her husband constructed a small monument at the site of the house in memory of her family members. Nadhee had retained a number of material objects from that fateful day including the clothes she and her daughter wore during the disaster and an antique door knocker salvaged from the rubble of their ruined house. Nadhee was the only participant who retained the same occupation; as housewife prior to and following the tsunami.

2.3 Ethical Considerations

The present research was approved by the Department of Psychology Research and Ethics Committee acting under the delegated authority of the University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Committee. This research project was conducted in accordance with the *Code of Ethics of the New Zealand Psychological Society* (New Zealand Psychological Society, 2002). Key points included protecting the welfare and dignity of research participants, informed consent, ensuring that research methods minimise the risk of harm to participants and ensuring appropriate privacy and confidentiality.

I endeavoured at all times to prevent my participants from harm and discomfort throughout the research process. I informed the participants of their right to withdraw from the research at any time during a discussion or within two weeks following the last interview. They were informed of their freedom to withdraw for any reason without any consequence. The participants were further informed of their right to refuse to answer any or all interview questions for any reason. These rights were presented to participants in written form in the information sheet (see Appendix A and Appendix B for Sinhala translations) and also verbally during the first introductory gathering as well as prior to each interview.

The ethical *Code* focuses particularly on the safety of individual and group participants. I was aware that there was a possibility that the exceedingly traumatic and personal nature of the topics under discussion during the interviews could re-ignite feelings of grief and loss among participants. Thereby if a participant were to feel a level of discomfort during or following interviews, they were provided access to a counsellor with whom they could debrief if they wished to do so. Participants were verbally informed prior to each interview that these services were available in the local community and were offered at no cost to them. All consultation costs were to be borne by me. However throughout the research process, none of the participants utilised the counselling services offered.

Participation in the present research was voluntary and participants were provided with complete information regarding what was involved prior to giving their consent. All potential participants were provided with information to explain the nature of the research and how the information they provide was to be used. This information was communicated to participants verbally at the initial introductory gathering as well as prior to each interview. Written information was additionally provided in the information sheet (see Appendix A and Appendix B for Sinhala translations). Interviewees had the opportunity to consider these matters prior to giving their consent verbally or in writing (for a copy of the Consent Forms provided, see Appendix E and Appendix F for Sinhala translations). Consent to record the interviews was further obtained verbally prior to each session.

I assured all participants that their privacy would be maintained. Participants were informed that pseudonyms would be used in all written materials such as the thesis, publications and summaries generated from this research. They were also informed that any personal information would be kept secure and separate from identifying information. I assured them that I would be the only person to know the actual names of the participants. I further assured the participants that recordings and transcripts would be kept secure and would be accessible by no-one other than myself. I mentioned that while information on form as well as content of each narrative would be discussed with my supervisors, I would keep names and identifying details to myself. No identifying information

was included in the final report, and every effort was made to ensure that the participants' information was not identifiable.

2.4 Process of Analysis

Interviews were subject to a *narrative analysis*, by which the form as well as content of each narrative was explored. This analysis took into account how people organised their beliefs and social practices within a particular social setting, the interpersonal processes that occur within a situation, the relevance of social interactions and characteristics, and the contribution of various social ideologies to a life narrative (Murray, 2000). Initially, notes taken during the interviews and transcription processes proved fundamental to my analysis process. Recorded interviews were transcribed in Sinhalese. The preliminary stages of analysis were carried out in Sinhalese as means of preventing various cultural ideologies and concepts not necessarily familiar to the English language from being lost. Methods of *holistic structural analysis* and *thematic analysis* were used to examine the transcripts. Upon establishing initial themes and patterns, the interviews were translated into English for further analysis. I further engaged in *visual analysis* to explore the significance of photographs taken during interview sessions.

A *holistic structural analysis* (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998) was employed as a method of analysing the stories of the participants, as the narratives I gathered moved from one episode to the next in no particular order. I thereby considered it appropriate to analyse each narrative as a whole as the main plot was not often discernible from a single episode, but from the entire narrative. This approach thus focuses on the form and structure of a narrative and emphasis is placed on the development of a plot, reflecting the narrator's construction of his or her evolving life experience (Li, 2011; Lieblich et al., 1998; Riessman, 2008). I began by chronologically rearranging each participant's accounts from the two interview sessions. The process resulted in one biographical narrative for each of the five participants. Each of these chronologically arranged narratives revealed a single main plot; the event of the tsunami. The structure of the development of the main plots over time took on that of a progressive narrative, where participants highlighted their growth and road to recovery following the tragic event despite

numerous challenges including psychological hardships. The holistic structural analysis converted the accounts of two interview sessions per participant into a single chronologically arranged narrative for each participant, enabling further thematic analysis.

Thematic analysis was thereby another technique used to analyse the participants' narratives. According to Riessman (2008) this form of analysis is the most common and straightforward approach used in narrative analysis. Rather than focusing on structure, this method has a focus on content; acts and events, within the narrative (Li, 2011; Riessman, 2008). Through this method I was able to identify key themes in the data which included a group of related categories that conveyed parallel meanings. The analysis held exploratory power, and allowed for a range of themes to emerge. I was able to recognise similarities and differences amongst the data set through discursive interpretations, and to further examine and analyse patterns across the narratives. These themes are presented and discussed in the following chapter.

The method of thematic analysis is based on the notion that data gathered from individuals in a group resemble each other, and thus correspond to the same themes (Li, 2011; Riessman, 2008). The sole use of thematic analysis for the purposes of the present research thereby would have caused me to overlook important differences in meaning and significance that each participant attributed to the same event; a feature that would only have been discernible by analysing narrative form and structure. The additional use of the holistic structural analysis in this manner enabled me to map out the contours of the participants' life stories and also incorporate the social context from which their narratives derive meaning (Li, 2011; Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000). A combination of these analytic methods allowed me not only to establish broader patterns of similarities across participant accounts, but also differences in meaning attributed to similar situations.

While the analysis of interview transcripts enabled the interpretation of spoken material, words serve as only one form of communication. In the social sciences, photography is increasingly being highlighted as an additional, influential method of narrative expression (Hodgetts, Chamberlain, & Radley, 2007; Li, 2011; Mitchell, DeLange, Molestane, Stuart, & Buthelezi, 2005; Radley,

Chamberlain, Hodgetts, Stolte, & Groot, 2010). Riessman (2008) for example, indicates that visual representations of experiences through photographs allow researchers and/or audiences to observe and experience the world through the eyes of the participant. *Visual analysis* through visual narratives; or photographs, thereby provides an alternate form of representation, focusing on aspects of everyday life that cannot be accessed simply by the use of words (Li, 2011; Trafi-Prats, 2009). Alternatively, researchers argue that the meaning of a photograph does not merely lie in the material object captured, except insofar as this is part of the way that people talk about them (Hodgetts et al., 2011; Radley & Taylor, 2003). Thereby the engagement and discussion of a particular photograph allows for meaning to be attributed to the image. As Radley (2011) states; in such a context, ‘the aim of research becomes not so much an understanding *of* the pictures, as an understanding *with* the photographs about the lives of the respondents concerned’ (p. 19, original emphasis). Accordingly, in the present study, photographs taken during interview sessions were interpreted alongside oral accounts presented by participants. The visual images depicting participant experiences complimented and at times even transcended their verbal narratives. This is portrayed in the discussion of findings in the following chapters.

CHAPTER THREE: NARRATIVE DISRUPTION

The findings of the present study revolve around two key components. The first was an exploration of the impact of natural disasters such as the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami as a disruption to life narratives. The second involved consideration of the role of material objects in daily practice to help communities restructure or re-story these fractured narratives. The present chapter elaborates on the first theme. I discuss the various changes to participants' lives and thereby their life narratives that resulted from the tsunami. Participant responses to the aftermath of the tsunami are considered in relation to the phases of *biographical disruption* presented by Bury (1982). The chapter explores first how participants overcame the rupturing of the taken-for-granted aspects of their everyday lives, re-shaping their livelihoods, responsibilities and thinking patterns. I then discuss how the tragedy facilitated the re-storying of participant life narratives by allowing other plots to become possible, which indicates self-reflection and the reworking of identity. This discussion thereby uncovers the negative as well as the positive aspects of the tsunami to communities in Hikkaduwa, Sri Lanka. Finally, Buddhist philosophies provide a basis for me to consider how adversities, including experiences of trauma and loss can enable positive changes in life and spark the development of alternative plots within life narratives.

3.1 The Tsunami as a Disruption to Life Narratives

One of the earliest explorations into circumstances in which everyday environments and routines are disrupted by specific events was conducted by Giddens (1979). Giddens suggested that *critical situations*; for example, major events such as war, or biographically located events such as spirit possession, can cause significant disruption to the social fabric of a community (Bury, 1982; Giddens, 1979; Tuohy & Stephens, 2012). His study preceded an array of research including further explorations into contexts of war as well as events such as immigration and illness as having disruptive effects on biographies and thereby life narratives (Bury, 1982; de Mel, 2003; Graham & Connell, 2006; Li, 2011;

Meares, 2007; Radley, 2009; Tuohy & Stephens, 2012). A pivotal discussion of such situations, considered *biographical disruptions*, stems from the advent of illness. Bury (1982) proposes that illnesses, such as rheumatoid arthritis can disrupt the structures of everyday life and various forms of knowledge that underpin them. A diagnosis of a chronic illness can thus cause the ‘biographic constituents’ of these individuals’ life stories to be ‘shaken to the point of needing re-assembly’ (Radley, 2009, p. 104). Such a diagnosis forces patients to recognise and acknowledge a world of pain and suffering and possibly even death; realms usually perceived as distant possibilities or the plights of others and not themselves (Bury, 1982).

Conversely, Faircloth and colleagues (2004) argue that, rather than cause a biographical disruption, critical situations or disruptive events in fact instigate *biographical flow*. They propose that the concept of biographical flow provides a way of understanding how disruptive events such as war or illness are rendered intelligible (Faircloth et al., 2004; Tuohy & Stephens, 2012). Disruptive events are seen in this context, as something that happens as life keeps moving forward, bringing forth alternative narratives that attempt to re-establish a sense of order, meaningfulness and even a sense of identity (Crossley, 2000; Faircloth et al., 2004; Tuohy & Stephens, 2012). Regardless, research supports the notion that narratives are continually reconstructed throughout the progression of life (Cohler & Grunebaum, 1981; Litvak-Hirsch & Bar-On, 2006).

Insights such as these can similarly be applied to the context of natural disasters. Experiences of loss and grief as a result of a tragedy are seen as a disruption to the familiar organised frames of everyday life. Events can cause a degree of instability and unpredictability by threatening to interrupt prior life projections, resulting in significant discomfort to individuals due to an intense need to regain control over their disarrayed thoughts and emotions (Bury, 1982; Frank, 1995; Hanninen, 2004; Radley, 2009; Weber et al., 2007). Such notions proved particularly relevant to the context of the present study. The ocean that stole the participants’ loved ones and essentially their whole lives, also served as a primary source of livelihood for them and a majority of their community. As Priyani explains:

The ocean is something very close to our hearts. The home that we grew up in used to be right next to the beach. So since I was a little girl, I lived with the ocean. No one taught us how to swim, we learned on our own by swimming in the ocean. Some people are usually afraid of the ocean, but since we were children we were never afraid of it. We used to play in the waves no matter how rough they were. So we used to play and graze our knees in the sand and we were very comfortable that way. Our uncles used to be fishermen and coral miners. We all loved the ocean. It was a huge part of our lives.

Prior to the tsunami, the community of Hikkaduwa did not perceive the ocean as a threat. Even at the time the interviews for the present study were carried out, many of the participants hadn't yet grasped the fact that it was their beloved ocean that stole their lives. As a result, the shock experienced by this community was twofold; not only were they forced to cope with the sudden loss of their family and friends, but they were forced to view the otherwise familiar ocean as an alien and even dangerous entity.

In his discussion of biographical disruption, Bury (1982) links three aspects of disruption to the unfolding of an illness that appear to be borne out in my participants accounts of the tsunami. These aspects include the disruption of *common-sense boundaries*, self-reflection or the questioning of one's identity, and finally, the emergence and mobilisation of resources to face an altered situation. I consider the first and second aspects in this section. The third is discussed later in the chapter and provides a link to Chapter Four; the second analysis chapter, where it is expanded upon in relation to the use of material objects.

Bury's (1982) first stage; the breaching of *common-sense boundaries* that are otherwise taken for granted, is considered the 'what is going on here' stage. This aspect involves attention to assumptions or behaviours not usually brought into consciousness (Bury, 1982). Similar to the onset of a chronic illness, the onset of a natural disaster; in this case a tsunami is equally sudden. The loss of homes and loved ones were regarded, as previously mentioned, with a sense of shock and a degree of confusion. A statement made by Nadhee further validates this view:

At the start we just could not understand how this could happen. What did we do to deserve this? We lost everything. How could we possibly move on from this? Who do we go to for help? Everyone was affected. Some people lost their children to the waves. That is not how life is supposed to go. Parents should not have to bury their children. It all felt so unreal. Like a dream.

In Bury's (1982) words, Nadhee was at a point where her 'common-sense assumptions' had lost their 'grip', and yet 'alternative explanations' had not readily presented themselves (p. 171). She was unsure of what to do and where to seek help; any perception of her future was completely clouded over at this stage. This confusion did not last. As time passed, all participants learned to accept their plight. They learned that they needed to pick up the pieces and move on with life, either on their own or with external help; if not for their own sakes, then at least for the sake of their families. This recognition, as Bury (1982) points out, marks the end of the initial stage. From this point on, participants engaged in processes of self-reflection. They started to question their identity, and contemplated reshaping their biographies or personal life narratives (Bury, 1982; Tuohy & Stephens, 2012).

A fundamental re-thinking of self-concepts and life narratives cause more profound disruptions in traditional explanatory systems, and this forms the second aspect of disruption as discussed by Bury (1982). In the context of the present study, significant changes occurred in participants' life narratives in terms of their thinking patterns, their outlooks on life and their prior life projections and goals. As Priyani explains:

I changed a lot after the tsunami. The way I think and the way I look at life. I was 29 years old when the tsunami hit. But within a year after I lost my parents to the waves, I felt like I had aged by 70 years. I lived with my parents and they used to look after me. I had no responsibilities at all. I was treated, and I behaved like an 18 year old back then, even though I was 29. After my parents were taken from me, I was forced to grow up. I was confronted with all these household chores and responsibilities which I had never even thought of before. [...] My mother wanted me to be a teacher just like herself, and that

was what I was studying to be. But after the tsunami I couldn't continue. I didn't want to continue. I realised that was my mother's dream. Not mine.

Changes such as these not only altered the internal self-concepts of the participants; they also occurred externally, in terms of their lifestyles; their jobs and responsibilities. Four out of five participants completely changed their occupations following the tsunami. Ajith and Priyantha for example, were coral reef miners prior to the tsunami, however the tragedy enabled them to realise the dangers due to the illegality of their profession; not only to themselves, but to their families as well. Thus during the time of the interviews, one worked as a security guard and the other worked in the coconut industry (see Appendix G for a list of pre and post-tsunami occupations of participants). As Ajith explains:

There is a significant difference in how we used to live and how we live now. Our old life was a very difficult and unhappy one. We had no sense of night or day, no freedom. To be honest I do not earn as much as I did when I was coral mining, now that I am a security guard. But that was illegal, so I was always at unease. I was reluctant and afraid to bring my children into that profession. But I had no choice. That was all I knew how to do, and we all needed money. But after the tsunami I stopped that job, and my children started taking their studies seriously.

The onset of a tragedy can challenge not only the past but also future hopes, plans and ambitions, causing individuals to rethink their lives; reminding them of the complexities of life itself (Jones, 2006; Radley, 2009; Swatton & O'Callaghan, 1999). As Radley (2009) suggests, survival becomes a condition; rather than a pre-condition, of one's need to re-examine how he or she arrived at this point in life. The onset of the tragedy not only disrupted the continuous flow of life narratives, it was instrumental in changing the course of these narratives. The tsunami enabled participants to re-story their life narratives allowing other plots to become possible. The members of this community were required to acknowledge and accept the impacts of the tragedy; albeit their negative effects, in order to allow this process to occur.

3.2 The Negative Impacts of the Tsunami

As was to be expected, the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami had a number of negative impacts on people in the community of Hikkaduwa. Loss occurred not only in terms of loved ones, but also in terms of livelihoods; homes, belongings and jobs. As Priyani tearfully recalls, echoing the thoughts of all the participants:

There was a time right after the tsunami when we did not have any food to cook, and the only thing we had to make curry with were the papayas in the tree in our garden. This was before we started receiving help from the various NGOs [non-governmental organisations] and relief organisations. [...] At one point I thought I'd never get to sleep on a bed again. Right after we lost everything we had to sleep on the floor. We didn't even have a proper door to our bathroom because everything was destroyed.

In addition to these losses, people in this community also faced challenges in terms of pride as a result of status. For communities in Sri Lanka, social stratification or notions of status, caste and class are important even at present, despite a widely diffused ideal of social equality (Chapin & Silva, 2001). Caste, perceived as a traditional part of Buddhist and Hindu society in Sri Lanka, is determined by birth into a predetermined status hierarchy. This is typically considered a reward or retribution for the good deeds carried out in an individual's previous life (Chapin & Silva, 2001). Caste identity was traditionally exemplified by occupations and ritual roles, names of individuals and places, social networks and their attire as well as housing. The degrees of difference within the hierarchy of caste were marked by practices emphasising superiority or inferiority, such as through forms of address and seating arrangements (Chapin & Silva, 2001; Leach, 1962; Ryan, 1953; Silva, 1999). Today however, society expresses a level of unease and even resentment toward gestures indicating such hierarchical relations.

Class status on the other hand; determined by attributes such as wealth and education, is increasingly manifested in speech, attire, education and employment even today (Chapin & Silva, 2001). Those belonging to the elite classes for example can be identified by their command of the English language, education in

exclusive schools, executive level employment, exclusive and valuable possessions and their association and access to international networks. In contrast, lower classes are associated with minimal comforts, their engagement in manual labour and a lack of social contact with the elite classes (Chapin & Silva, 2001; Leach, 1962; Ryan, 1953; Silva, 1999). While not typically as prominent or significant as that in countries such as India, social stratifications in Sri Lanka tend to emerge into the forefront of communal beliefs and thinking in particular contexts; and the tsunami proved to be such an event. As Priyantha explains:

It was very embarrassing to us. We were treated like everyone else. We felt like we had lost our status. We had to actually stand in line to receive aid and dry rations. We were not used to it.

Priyantha considered himself and his family as belonging to the lower middle class, yet it was clear that they set themselves apart from those whom they believed were beneath them. They held certain expectations that they should be treated as members of considerable social standing in the fishing community of Hikkaduwa, and this posed a significant level of discomfort to them. Similar thoughts were expressed by Priyani:

[...] With my family background I can't really go around asking for personal donations for myself. I faced hardships like that as well. Even though some people can bow down to others and ask for donations or help in general, we can't do that. Mentally for me, that would have been like I was disrespecting my parents.

In the case of Priyani, the relatively higher social standing of her family meant that during the immediate aftermath of the tsunami at least, she was unwilling and therefore unable to obtain the help she needed. In this context social stratifications seemed to pose a barrier to the degree of aid some participants received; or rather *let* themselves receive.

Nonetheless, despite the varying degrees of adversity faced by this entire community following the tsunami, it was noteworthy that most had learned to overcome their despair by the time the interviews were carried out. A number of participants had acknowledged and accepted that there were in fact positive aspects of the tsunami.

3.3 Buddhist Beliefs and the ‘Golden Tsunami’

Sri Lanka is a predominantly Buddhist nation. Accordingly, all participants of the present study were also Buddhists and believe in the temporality of life. They also follow the notion that one needs to face adversity in life in order to reach enlightenment. The Buddhists adhere to the Buddha’s teachings of the *Four Noble Truths*, where the first is that life is filled with *dukkha* (Mikulas, 2007; Rahula, 1974). A central concept to what is presently known as Buddhist psychology; *dukkha*, translates to ideas of suffering, a sense of dissatisfaction and/or anxiety (Claxton, 1992; Mikulas, 2007). The second Noble Truth is that craving is the source of *dukkha*, as it can cause one to cling onto worldly possessions, which may also include people. The third, is that *dukkha* ends when craving ceases, when one reaches a point where he or she is ‘fully in the present, joyful, peaceful, and compassionate’ (Mikulas, 2007, p. 14). The way to free one’s self from such craving is considered the fourth Noble Truth (Mikulas, 2007). The Buddhist perspective emphasizes the impermanence of suffering; that it is subject to change (Wada & Park, 2009). In the context of grief, loss and adversity, this recognition of the transitory nature of suffering may provide the bereaved with a sense of acceptance and strength to endure their pain or loss, and can enable spiritual and emotional growth and transformation (Kumar, 2005; Wada & Park, 2009).

A growing body of research into post-traumatic growth portrays similar notions of acceptance among those who have experienced major losses and traumatic events, indicating that they often gain positive changes in relation to their sense of self, their relationships with others and their attitudes towards life in general (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2001, 2006; Dow, Ferrell, Haberman, & Eaton, 1999; Linley & Joseph, 2004; Schroevers, Kraaij, & Gamefski, 2011; Schroevers, Ranchor, & Sanderman, 2006; Wada & Park, 2009). It is worth noting here though, that while one can understand and accept such notions at an intellectual level and when providing advice to others, experiencing hardship for one’s self can be more difficult to grasp and work through. Thereby despite being aware of the theoretical aspects or orientations of coping with grief and adversity, emotional difficulties experienced at a personal level tend to be harder to accept and live with.

Nonetheless, a majority of studies into post-traumatic growth have been carried out in relation to adversity in terms of illness. Similar trends were visible in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami. The sudden experience of loss caused by the tragedy seemed to instil a sense of strength and courage among people in the community of Hikkaduwa. As Priyani proudly states:

Today I am strong. I am not afraid to live life, because of the strength I gained through losing everything and everyone to the waves. I don't let anything or anyone bring me down. My goal is to make the best of the life I have now.

The tsunami further provided an opening for participants to turn their lives around. It acted as a form of re-awakening agent, giving them a second chance at life. As Ajith reasons:

I know I was engaged in a profession that was illegal before. I was afraid that my children would also go into the same profession when they grew up. The tsunami helped me realise that I can change; that I needed to change for the benefit of my children. If it wasn't for the tsunami my children would have continued to neglect their studies and started coral mining like me. But now they are receiving proper education. They are taking their studies seriously, and I am very proud of them.

Thus as Wada (2009) suggested, experiences of significant loss can enable people to view their vulnerability, their whole lives in fact, with increased clarity. They are not only able to show a greater appreciation for their own lives, but also show enhanced compassion for others who are suffering (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2001; Wada & Park, 2009). Post-tsunami research conducted in Sri Lanka is consistent with this view indicating that the tragedy prompted overwhelming expressions of empathy, courage and generosity, characterising the commitment of hundreds of community members engaged in rescue efforts or attempts to comfort those in despair (de Mel, 2010). Among the villagers, the disaster was dubbed the *Golden Tsunami*, due to the constant influx of aid flow in terms of food, clothing and housing; luxuries these communities did not otherwise have the means to acquire (de Mel & Ruwanpura, 2006).

The tragedy also opened up further opportunities for communities in Sri Lanka in terms of jobs. For example, increased numbers of men and women joined Non-Governmental Organisations in the aftermath of the tsunami; a sector that actually expanded following the disaster (de Mel, 2010; de Silva, 2009). Similarly Ajith explains:

On one hand the tsunami was sad, because a lot of us lost our homes and families. But on the other hand it did bring some good. Because you see, our children all have honest jobs now. A lot more of them have found jobs now compared to before the tsunami. This is because there are actually more jobs available in these parts now, and also our children are more motivated to study well and earn for their families.

The recognition that there are positive aspects to the tragedy and the acceptance of their situation in this manner can be considered one of the first steps to initiating narrative repair. Hence, as discussed in Chapter One, narrative repair recreates a sense of order to life, and the sheer power of narrative interpretation provides meaning as well as dignity to even the most painful experiences. It further provides a sense of continuity between the past and the future (Hanninen, 2004; Howe, 1993; Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000).

3.4 Chapter Discussion

The present chapter discusses the impact of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami as a disruption to the continuous flow of life narratives of people in the community of Hikkaduwa, Sri Lanka. The tsunami led participants to not only adopt new occupations and responsibilities, but also changed their outlooks on life. For members of this community, the understanding that the tsunami caused a significant disruption to their common-sense boundaries; or the *taken for granted*, became part of their everyday lives (Bury, 1982). For example, in the context of Priyani, as discussed above, the depth of change in her life narrative was anchored even in mundane tasks such as household chores. The tsunami also provided an opening for participants to turn their lives around. It was able to act as a form of re-awakening agent, giving community members a second chance at life. The tragedy facilitated the re-storying of participant life narratives by allowing other

plots to become possible. The people in Hikkaduwa were required to acknowledge and accept the impacts of the tsunami; despite their negative aspects, in order to allow this process to occur.

Studies into community resilience indicate that it is more than just an ability to adapt to change or adversity and bounce back (Hodgetts, Drew, et al., 2010; Norris, Stevens, Pfefferbaum, Wyche, & Pfefferbaum, 2008; Pooley, Cohen, & O'Connor, 2006). Resilient communities are in fact said to 'embrace change as an opportunity for positive growth' (Hodgetts, Drew, et al., 2010, p. 314). Therein lay the importance of cultural and religious beliefs within the community of Hikkaduwa. In the context of grief, loss and adversity, the Buddhist understanding of the temporality of suffering provided bereaved community members with a sense of acceptance and strength to endure their pain or loss (Kumar, 2005; Wada & Park, 2009). Research in the field of humanistic psychology indicates that resilience involves the use of various resources and social networks, along with daily practices and/or survival strategies to access those resources (Hodgetts, Drew, et al., 2010; Reed-Victor & Stronge, 2002). Linking these notions back to the context of the present study, it is clear that this community engaged in exactly that. They used culture and religious beliefs as resources to help re-story their lives; to help them find healthy ways of living *with* their grief. Rather than approaching communities affected by a disruptive event such as a natural disaster as *victims* of the tragedy, the present study implies a need to consider strategies through which such communities construct alternative settings, meanings and/or ways of being (cf. Hodgetts, Drew, et al., 2010).

This marks the third and final aspect of Bury's (1982) discussion of disruptive events. This stage can be identified by the emergence of a response to disruption involving the mobilisation of resources, in facing an altered situation (Bury, 1982). Accordingly, the following chapter discusses the role of material objects and other art forms as additional material resources that enabled this community to re-story their life narratives following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.

CHAPTER FOUR: MATERIALITY AND NARRATIVE RECONSTRUCTION

When people fall ill they resort to whatever they have in their lives – their skills, resources, their relationships – to make sense of the future they have or, in some cases, have left. Only for a relatively few people, perhaps, will this involve writing and publishing accounts, painting pictures or making photographs. And yet the aims of recovering the ability to wonder, to help others see clearly – perhaps for the first time – how things might be, are always the centre of efforts to shape life in the face of illness. (Radley, 2009, p. 14)

For some time, academics have explored how human beings re-story their lives in order to repair disruptions to life narratives that result from events such as illness, migration and war. Material objects such as artworks, memorials, monuments and shrines, have been identified as agents that facilitate processes of narrative reconstruction following such events (Beckstead et al., 2011; Corbin & Strauss, 1987; Deaux, 2000; Frank, 1995; Li, 2011; Macdonald, 2006; Radley, 2009; Theriault, 2003). In accordance with Bury's (1982) third phase of biological disruption, the present chapter discusses the role of material objects and forms of art as resources that initiate processes of re-membering and re-storying, and enable people to reconstruct their fractured life narratives following a natural disaster. I discuss the second theme of my analysis, by first highlighting the importance of *continuing bonds*, rather than *severing connections* with the deceased as a way of moving past grief and loss. Thereafter, I explore the function of the various public monuments erected in the town of Hikkaduwa following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami: concluding that within this community, feelings of grief and loss were better expressed in private. To the fore are participant uses of personal objects to enact emotions and cultivate a sense of connection to past events and lost loved ones. I also discuss the change in significance of these metonyms over time, concluding that re-membering is a constructive process that changes along with time. Such a change can signify how individuals and

communities cope with their grief, move on with their lives and reconstruct their fractured life narratives.

4.1 Conceptualising Grief

While a positivist approach to grief perceives it as a deviation from normalcy that requires corrective action, death and illness have been labelled enemies that need to be overcome (Hedtke, 1999; Hedtke, 2001; Kearl, 1995; Klass, Silverman, & Nickman, 1996). Freud's Psychoanalytic theory, for example, describes grief as a state that one needs to *get over* and *move on* from. It implies a need for detachment from memories of the deceased, and an acceptance of the reality of death as a way of restoring an individual's functional life; offering them a sense of *wholeness* (Davies, 2004; Freud, 1961; Hedtke, 1999; Hedtke, 2001; Klass et al., 1996; Rando, 1995; Stroebe & Stroebe, 1997). Similarly, even today, various beliefs and ideologies about how grief should be handled exist. Some of which indicate that one should return to *normal* as quickly as possible, or that the deceased's belongings should be put away and they should never be spoken of again (Hedtke, 1999; Hedtke, 2001). A dominant view in disaster psychology also posits that the resolution of grief is achieved through severing bonds with the deceased.

A number of scholars have challenged this dominant view however. There exists a body of research that rejects the proposition that recovery requires survivors to discontinue bonds and *forget* the deceased. This stance instead emphasises the importance of continued relationships with lost loved ones (Davies, 2004; Klass, 1993a, 1993b), suggesting that the bereaved need to 'learn to live with the dead in a new way' (Green, 2008, p. 189). The aim of grieving is no longer to gain closure, but rather to achieve resolution as a way of living life with an active memory of the deceased (Anderson, 2010; Green, 2008). This stance is consistent with Buddhist perceptions of life, death and rebirth as being part of a cycle (Aronson, 2004; Wada & Park, 2009). Contradictory to dominant Anglo-American and Judeo-Christian notions of death being indicative of a sense of finality, for Buddhists death does not mark the end of life. Rather death is a part of life, thereby reinforcing the notion of continued bonds (Wada & Park, 2009).

Correspondingly, Buddhist beliefs encourage the bereaved to continue transferring merit towards the deceased, by conducting religious functions such as alms giving's or *dhaana* as mentioned in Chapter Two, to help them through this cycle and to eventually enter the path of enlightenment (Tilakaratne, 2012).

Overall research supporting continued relationships with the deceased thereby suggests that maintaining bonds can facilitate healing, and can occur through various modes ranging from simply talking about lost loved ones, to preserving objects such as photographs and clothing, to evoke memories of them (Davies, 2004; Klass, 1993a, 1993b). The composition of biographies and poetry in memory of the deceased, carrying out rituals; religious or otherwise, as well as establishing monetary memorials in commemoration of them have additionally been signified as ways by which individuals continue bonds with the ones they have lost (Davies, 2004; Klass, 1993a, 1993b; Rosenblatt, 2000; Talbot, 2002). The preservation of material objects or various art forms to continue bonds with the deceased, following a disruptive event for example, does not function as a *cure* to grief, nor does it work towards *saving* what has been lost. Instead, as previously argued in Chapter One, these objects help individuals and communities come to terms with their situation; their loss and grief, and thereby enables them to re-story their life narratives (Radley, 2009).

4.2 The Function of Public Monuments

As discussed in Chapter One, public monuments and memorials can function as material objects that facilitate narrative reconstruction. The materiality of a war memorial for instance, acts as a social symbol, and provides a medium through which social values, memories and emotions can be encoded and expressed (Barber, 1949; Beckstead et al., 2011). I argued that war memorials can additionally act as agents that initiate processes of healing for those affected, by bringing people together and helping them define their shared, common histories (Beckstead et al., 2011; Hayden, 1999; Moriarty, 1995; Stephens, 2007; Theriault, 2003). Applying these notions to the context of the aftermath of a natural disaster; the present research suggests that tsunami monuments can also aid in bringing a community together. For example, three participants indicated that the public

monuments constructed following the tsunami were places where they met old friends and neighbours. As Kumara explains:

[...] we met our old neighbours there. Since we live much more inland now, we hardly meet them otherwise. [...] Many people gathered at the monuments on the day marking the anniversary of the tsunami. It reminded us of how many people were affected by the tsunami. We felt like we were not the only ones who lost everything; that the whole town itself lost something. [...] We all used to light oil lamps to remember the people lost. And we talked about old times. Sometimes it's good you know, to remember the past like that.

Similar to war memorials, tsunami monuments can also aid in creating a shared or collective memory of a disruptive event; in this case, the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami (Beckstead et al., 2011). These structures additionally provided a space where the community could meet and discuss their common fate. These gatherings held a unifying power, and generated a sense of community and belonging, while further signifying the universality of the experiences of grief and loss. Similar to the function and significance of creating *works of illness*, such practices can be both validating and empowering (Arthur, 2009; Fernando, 2009; Radley, 2009).

It is noteworthy that all the participants stated that they gathered at the public tsunami monuments only on the days marking the anniversary of the tragedy. In fact, such monuments were of limited utility in my participants' efforts to remember and recover from the tsunami. They considered the structures themselves impersonal, and felt a sense of detachment in relation to them. As Ajith explains:

We don't go there much, only at each anniversary of the tsunami. [...] We didn't build those monuments ourselves, so we don't really feel anything towards them. It's true, they do remind me of the tsunami, but that's as far as it goes I guess. [...] One of the smaller monuments has a list of names of some people we lost. I suppose I just look at the names of my lost relations on that sometimes when I pass it. That's all really.

The fact that it was various governmental agencies that actually constructed the tsunami monuments in Hikkaduwa, and not members of the community itself, seemed to be an important determinant of the subsequent significance these structures held to the community. Jorgensen-Earp and Lanzilotti (1998) note that public monuments are sometimes constructed as expressions of power. In the context of war memorials, it is acknowledged that the structures do emphasise notions of patriotism, courage and chivalry and thereby promote social unity (Arthur, 2009; Bodnar, 1992; Jorgensen-Earp & Lanzilotti, 1998). However, these sites of commemoration are not univocal celebrations of a collective past, rather, they can be *rhetorical battlegrounds* (Browne, 1995; Jorgensen-Earp & Lanzilotti, 1998); products of ‘elite manipulation, symbolic interaction and contested discourse’ (Bodnar, 1992, p. 20). *Official* expressions of the significance of a memorial can overpower the *vernacular* expressions of the average or *ordinary* community members; the people actually affected by the event that the monument signifies in the first place (Browne, 1995; Jorgensen-Earp & Lanzilotti, 1998).

The solidity and prominence of a public war memorial is also said to function as a shield from the brutality of war; the suffering caused by it, the reality of lives lost and the fragility of life itself (Arthur, 2009). Despite the usual inclusion of lists of names of the deceased on public monuments, their individual suffering tends to be ‘blended, ritualized, and distanced in a symbolic and generalized tribute’ (Arthur, 2009, p. 65). As a result, research suggests that these structures can form as much an agent of *collective forgetting* as that of memorialisation or commemoration (Arthur, 2009; Edkins, 2003). This stance however seems to be at odds with participant accounts from the present study. Members of the Hikkaduwa community who were directly affected by the tsunami did not wish to forget the tragedy, as I will discuss in the following sections. Their efforts at recovery involved remembering rather than forgetting. In accordance with scholars such as Radley (2009), I posit that narrative reconstruction following a tragedy in the path to recovery requires one to embrace his or her fate and work with it, no matter how traumatic.

4.3 Narrative Reconstruction through Private Memorialisation

In the following section I discuss the function of metonyms including the arts, symbolic objects and spaces that enabled participants cope with their grief and loss, and reconstruct their life narratives following the tsunami. This section is presented in three sub-sections. I first observe how the arts can serve as a medium through which emotions can be expressed. Secondly, I explore the role of the arts as well as private memorials as a way by which participants established a sense of connection, and thereby maintained a link to the loved ones they lost. I finally discuss the function of various personal material objects and spaces through which participants maintained a link to their past. Through this section I argue that within the community of Hikkaduwa, notions of re-membering and expressions of grief tended to be more personalised.

A mode for expressing emotions

In the context of Sri Lanka, the pre-existing cultural norms that discourage the expression of feelings in public, as discussed in Chapter Two, influenced participants' expressions of grief (Fernando, 2009). Within this community, one way of expressing grief privately was through the arts. Priyani, for example, admitted that after the death of her parents she needed a way to express her thoughts and feelings. Composing lyrics to songs and poems served as a form of release for her disarrayed emotions. As Priyani explains:

At the time I was under so much pressure, mentally. I was beyond getting help from counsellors. They told me I needed to get medical help. But I refused; I said I can manage myself. I didn't want everyone to know what I was going through. [...] So I just took a piece of paper and started scribbling on it. I wrote anything and everything that came to my head. I was not someone who particularly liked writing in the past. I wasn't really used to writing. But it felt good [...] Every time I thought of my mother, words used to come to me. I used to write them all out. When I wrote, it felt like the pressure was slowly releasing. [...] Eventually after a series of scribbles, my words started making sense, falling in to place you know? I eventually composed a poem.

And then another. After I finished writing each of them, I used to go back and read them. They used to make me cry.

The arts can be a significant contributor to processes of narrative reconstruction, by providing a medium by which thoughts and feelings can be organised into a coherent sequence (Radley, 2009). In a culture that does not particularly appreciate public displays of emotion, such modes of release can be vital for recovery and to enable participants gain resolution from grief. For Priyani, while the process of emotional expression through the composition of poetry occurred in a private setting, she was also then able to share her poems with other community members in a way that was more socially acceptable. Priyani painted scenes with her words; she was able to ‘invoke the visual verbally’ (Hodgetts, Stolte, et al., 2010, p. 272). Priyani’s work thus provided comfort by fostered notions of commonality and shared fate among community members, similar to the function of illness narratives (Radley, 2009). This is apparent in the lyrics of the verses composed by Priyani; as indicated by the extracts below (see Appendix H for complete poems in Sinhalese along with English translations):

*මහා මුහුදේ රැලි අතරේ මගේ අම්මා සැඟවී ගියා,
මහා මුහුදේ රැලි අතරේ මගේ සතුට සැඟවී ගියා,
මහා මුහුදේ රැලි අතරේ සැඟවෙන්න මට හිතෙනවා.*

My mother is lost; shielded by the waves of the great ocean, and so is my happiness. I too feel like shielding myself, hiding among those waves.

*ක්ෂිතිෂය ඉමේ ආකාසේ, ඒ දෙන්නාගේ සිතූම් පැතුම්,
නොමැකෙන ලෙස ලියා තිබෙනවා.
ඒ පැතුමන් ඉටු කරන්නට, ජීවත් වෙනවා.
භවෙන් භවේ මගේ මව්පියෝ දෙපොල පනනවා.*

The thoughts and dreams of my parents lie at the edge of the horizon. They are written in a way that will never be erased. I live to fulfil those hopes and dreams. I hope that in every rebirth they will remain my parents.

These excerpts obtained from two separate poems composed by Priyani, were written a year apart. They indicate a considerable change in her thinking. While the first extract portrays notions of grief and pain, the second tells a story of resolution. The benefit of reconstructing her life narrative through the composition of poems is thus evident in how Priyani seems to have formulated new goals for the future, revealing her determination to live *for* her parents; to honour their hopes and dreams. Priyani's work supports Radley's (2009) proposition that poems can serve as vehicles for coming to terms, and providing ways of re-entering the world of the healthy.

The use of the arts in this manner as a personalised mode of gaining some peace alongside grief has historical roots as well. In Oklahoma City and Dunblane, a primary cultural aspect of the nineteenth century involved conducting private rituals or the construction of personal memorials in the home in commemoration of the deceased (Jorgensen-Earp & Lanzilotti, 1998). Several private memorials of the day included, preserving photographs, embroidered or painted pictures, quilts or scrapbooks of the deceased as well as mourning locket comprising locks of hair belonging to the deceased. Many of these items were considered funeral art and formed an important part of the grieving process (Jorgensen-Earp & Lanzilotti, 1998). They not only enabled the bereaved to come to terms with their grief, they also provided them with a medium by which they could establish a connection with the deceased.

Establishing a sense of connection with the deceased

The use of the arts, as well as a number of varying material objects and memorials, was instrumental in allowing members of the Hikkaduwa community to establish a sense of connection to the loved ones they lost. Practices involving the production of artwork enabled the bereaved to maintain a relationship; or as discussed earlier in this chapter, to continue bonds, with the deceased. One way in which this was achieved was through communication. Priyani for example, used the lyrics of her poems to communicate with her lost parents (see Appendix H for complete poems in Sinhalese along with English translations):

මුහුදු ගොඩට ගැලූ දවසේ ඔය දෙනිනා බේරගන්න බැරි උනාට
සමා වෙන්න අම්මේ තාත්තේ

එදා පටන් මගේ දෙනෙතින් උනු කඳුලුයි තාම ගලන්නේ
 ඔය දෙන්නාගේ සෙනෙහස මිස නැහැ වෙන සෙනෙහසක් වටින්නේ
 මගේ ලොවේ හිරුයි සඳුයි නිවී ගියානේ
 ඔය දෙන්නාගේ පොඩි දූ අද තනි උවානේ
 ඔය දෙන්නාගේ පොඩි දුව ගැන මැවූ සිහින මහා මුහුදට යටව නොයන්නේ
 ඒ සිහිනය ඉටුවනදා, දෙව්ලොව සිට ඔය දෙන්නා, හිනැහෙනවා නේ
 ඒ හින්දයි තවමත් මා ජීවත් වෙන්නේ

Mother and father, I ask for forgiveness for not being able to save you the day the ocean encroached the land. The tears that started flowing from my eyes that day are still flowing today. I do not value any other love aside from yours. You, the sun and moon of my world were extinguished. Your youngest daughter is left on her own today. The hopes and dreams you had for your youngest daughter, did not sink along with the waves. The day those hopes and dreams are fulfilled, you will be smiling down from the world of the Gods. That is why I am still alive.

Similar to the function of illness narratives, these poems served as a healing agent, enabling Priyani to come to terms with her situation; her loss, grief and sense of guilt (Radley, 2009). She was able to gain closure for her nagging guilt of not only her inability to save her parents from the waves, but also that she herself survived. Priyani's words indicate that maintaining bonds by talking to her deceased parents through the lyrics of her poems enabled her to further gain resolution from her grief and loss. Engaging in the arts provides grieving family members with a material entity through which they can establish a tangible connection with the deceased. As previously linked to the context of war memorials in Chapter One, these notions could likewise be applied to private memorials (Glazer & Marcum, 2003).

Private memorials were common in the homes of the tsunami stricken community of Hikkaduwa during the time of the interviews. For example, as mentioned in Chapter Two, two participants of the present study had private shrines in their homes, in memory of the ones they lost to the tsunami. As Nadhee explains:

The shrine makes me feel like my parents are right there with me. I see them every morning when I go to light the lamps at the pictures and place flowers there. I talk to them, tell them my plans for the day, and I wish them well in their next life.[...] If anything important happens in my life I visit my parents' shrines, and ask for their blessings.

The maintenance of a portrait of the deceased upon which flower garlands are placed and oil lamps are lit, is a common practice or ritual among Buddhists in Sri Lanka, forming a religious as well as a cultural norm in the community. In the present context however, these shrines served an additional function. Similar to war memorials, these shrines could also be perceived as a way by which the bereaved *re-member* those lost. The portraits can act as a substitute for the material existence of a body, and thereby provide a medium for communication between the living and the dead (Stephens, 2007; Theriault, 2003). By providing a concrete mode by which participants could speak to the deceased, the arts as well as the private shrines acted as transitional entities that connected them to the loved ones they lost (Glazer & Marcum, 2003; Witztum & Lerner, 2008; Witztum & Malkinson, 2009).

Establishing a link between the past and the present

Connections such as those mentioned above seemed to not only occur between the living and the dead in this context, but also between past and present. Moreover, these links were also established and maintained by numerous material objects and/or personal monuments. One's willingness to give an aesthetic form to a painful image or fragment of memory from the past such as a disruptive event can be pivotal to the process of psychological healing by acting as a reference point, facilitating remembrance and also inspiring future experiences (Chaney, 1996; Radley, 2009; Swatton & O'Callaghan, 1999). For Nadhee, an article of clothing she preserved from that fateful day served not only as evidence of existence but also as proof of loss (see Figure 7). The preservation of her daughter's dress provided her ontological security in the existence or survival of a loved one so young. As Nadhee explains:

This was the dress my daughter was wearing when the tsunami hit. Yes she was only a baby back then. I saved it to remember. Maybe she will forget, because she was so young. But one day she will want to know what happened. And this will help me explain the story to her. I can teach her that we should appreciate this life that was given to us. We need to make the most of it, because we never know when it will be taken away.



Figure 7 The dress preserved by Nadhee

Similar thoughts were expressed by Priyantha, when discussing the small monument constructed on the site where his old house stood prior to the tsunami (see Figure 8):

My house along with my family was completely gone when I got here. There was a gaping empty space where my home used to be. The only thing that remained of my home was the staircase. So I built a small monument there, where I found the staircase. Just as a landmark of where my home used to be. I come here to this monument and think of that day, and think how different life is now for me [...] I am relatively happy now. But this is a reminder to me, of what I once faced, and lost, to get to the position I am in now. Sometimes it even gives me hope

that I managed to rise up to where I am now, despite suffering the lowest of low points.



Figure 8 Priyantha's private monument

Additional material objects of similar significance that were identified in Chapter Two include, an antique door knocker, other private monuments and shrines, the ruins of a past home and workplace, and a windowpane salvaged from the wreckage of a past home (see Figures 9 to 12).



Figure 9 The antique door knocker salvaged by Nadhee, fixed on the door of her new home



Figure 10 Nadhee's private monument

A material object or metonym's ability to serve as a reference point can further enable the maintenance of a link to one's past life or self by restoring a sense of normality to life. As Ajith explains:

Our whole house was destroyed by the waves. But later one of our neighbours said they found a single windowpane in the rubble, which

was not damaged at all. Even though everything else was completely wrecked, that windowpane remained. So I saved it. And we fixed it in the new house we built. For one, it was a way I could remember our old life, but I also had a need to build the new house just like the one we lost. [...] So we built the new house on the foundation of the old one. That was all that remained from the old house; the foundation, aside from the windowpane of course. But I know that the house we live in now is new, even though it looks like the old one. It's just the windowpane that remains from our old life. As a reminder you know? [...] Something like the clothes we wore on the day, say a suit or something, can get lost with time. But something like a window can last. We can't lose or misplace something like that.

Ajith's decision to not only salvage and use the old windowpane, but also to build a new house identical to the one he lost; on the foundation of the old house, was his way of acknowledging that life will go on. Despite a conscious knowledge that everything and everyone around him had changed, including himself; in terms of his occupation and thereby his previous routine for example, his house, or more specifically, the windowpane would always act as a reminder of his past. It provided a sense of continuity between the past and the present. More importantly, this material link to his old life was an object that would last. Ajith's indication that unlike clothing, something such as a windowpane could not be misplaced implies that he did not wish to forget or sever ties with his past, instead he wished to have a constant reminder of his old life; his old self.

The need to re-establish a sense of normality is an area also discussed in relation to serious illness. Radley (2009) provides an example of a man who despite undergoing surgery continued his routine responsibility of chopping wood in his shed in the months following it. He suggests that this was the man's way of signalling that life would still go on; that despite having a serious illness, he was still the man of the house. By carrying out his responsibilities regardless of his condition, the man was not only able to restore normality through his daily routine, but also his sense of identity.

Research conducted by Li (2011) with older Chinese migrants to New Zealand draws similar conclusions. Her study indicates that following a disruptive

event, or rather an interruption to one's life narrative, while it may not be possible to engage in and fulfil the roles, responsibilities and specific titles that were previously held, one tends to acknowledge that the old self is still very much a part of his or her present self. Li (2011) refers to an individual who was a surgeon in China, prior to migrating to New Zealand. While he was unable to re-establish his title as a surgeon in New Zealand, he still continued to engage in his role of helping others, where in his latter circumstance he did so by giving away paintings done by him, as gifts.

Notions of the restorative self can similarly be applied to participants of the present study, in the context of the aftermath of a natural disaster. For example; Kumara was a politician prior to the onset of the tsunami. However, while he and his family survived, he lost everything else to the waves, including his home and workplace and sites where he carried out his campaign duties. Following the tsunami Kumara had changed his profession and was the owner and principal of a small school at the time of the interviews. While his new occupation still enabled him to engage in a number of his previous responsibilities, it further offered him a sense of renewal, allowing him to carry on with life in a more self-fulfilling manner despite the tragedy. Kumara was thus able to repair or re-story his fractured narrative when new and alternate plots presented themselves to him.

Kumara's sense of identity also seemed to be strongly embedded in the ruins of his old workplace. During a walk-along interview at the site of the ruins of his old workplace he explains:

I run a small school now. But I used to be in politics. This is where my offices were [gesturing to a stretch of land with ruins of several buildings]. I usually try to avoid coming here. Because I still feel a great burst of emotion in this place. This was where I was when the tsunami hit. But I can't demolish all this and build over it. I can't bring myself to do it. This is the only reminder I have of my old life. [...] This was where my office was. Broken pieces of furniture are still there you see [gesturing to the ruins shown in Figure 11]. This was where I used to hold my political meetings and speeches. I used to stand there, where the banana trees are in the distance now, speaking

to everyone and the crowd used to stand here where the grass is [gestures to the stretch of trees and grass shown in Figure 12].



Figure 11 Ruins of Kumara's workplace



Figure 12 The remnants of where Kumara conducted political meetings

According to Radley (2009), individuals tend to avoid metonyms ‘that not only “bring back” the past, but make them, as narrators, *sensuously available to the past* in imagery’ (p. 131, original emphasis). This notion seemed to similarly

apply to the present context where Kumara mentioned that he usually avoided visiting this place of significance. This place brought back a rush of emotions, particularly due to the fact that he was at that location during the onset of the disaster. The walk-along interview suggested that Kumara was re-living his past; his life that preceded the tsunami. During the particular part of the interview included above, his expressions implied that his memories stemmed not from a narrator's point of view, but that of a character in the fragment of the narrative of his past life. This supports the idea that place can foster notions of place based identity by serving as a means for *transportation* (Casey, 2001; de Certeau, 1984a). Although time has moved on, and to me, as an external spectator or observer of the narrative, the space seemed like a mere block of land comprising a series of ruins and overgrown shrubs and trees, through Kumara's eyes, he perceived a scene completely different. With the aid of Kumara's narration, I was able to develop some understanding of what the place meant to him. As de Certeau (1984a) states:

places are fragmentary and inward-turning histories, pasts that others are not allowed to read, accumulated times that can be unfolded but like stories held in reserve, remaining in an enigmatic state, symbolisations encysted in the pain or pleasure of the body (p. 108).

Place, or rather one's surroundings, are not only perceived mentally, but also actively *lived* and receptively *experienced* (Casey, 2001; de Certeau, 1984a; Ross, Renold, Holland, & Hillman, 2009). Over time, the meaning or significance of a certain place is shaped and transformed through various practices such as bodily encounters or even by traces of place being inscribed on the body (Casey, 2001; Coleman & Collins, 2006; Ross et al., 2009). For Kumara, his place of significance was not only an office space; it was a part of him. It defined him. It was where he spent most of his days prior to the tsunami, actively conducting meetings and planning and strategising his campaigns. This transformed meaning or significance of a place is stored in one's memory, and therefore memories are what tie an individual to a certain space or place. With the absence of the memory itself, or a narration of the memory, the place holds no significance and has a neutral quality to it (Morgan & Pritchard, 2005). Radley's (2009) research into illness narratives highlights similar ideas where he indicates that for researchers,

as third parties, pictures of empty hospital rooms for example may have a forensic quality to it, and hold no significance. However, through illness narratives, images of patients, nurses, dressings, wounds, drips, pipes and the extent of suffering experienced by the ill can be conjured up, and thus the real meaning of a hospital room can be understood (Radley, 2009). Similar to the war memorials and landscapes discussed in Chapter One, sites chosen by my participants have a metonymic function as *sites of memory* where individual as well as social identities are created and maintained (Beckstead et al., 2011; de Certeau, 1984a; Johnson, 2002; Macdonald, 2006; Nora, 1989). Objects and place in this manner offer proof of participation, being and memory (Hodgetts, Drew, et al., 2010; Li, 2011).

4.4 A Change in the Significance of a Metonym over Time

As argued earlier in the chapter, memory tends to be more of a constructive rather than a cognitive process, and is thereby culturally patterned. This notion accordingly echoes Buddhist beliefs implying that memory should also constantly be subject to change with time (Mitchell, 2002; Wada & Park, 2009; Watson, 1998). Studies into Buddhism and grief indicate that the bereaved themselves, in terms of their beliefs about their past and future, as well as their relationship with the deceased, tend to change as time progresses (Wada & Park, 2009). For example, the meaning a child may find in the death of his father may change as he grows up. While the memories of the deceased may only cause sorrow and pain at first, with time the relationship between the bereaved and the deceased may change to that of a guardian or internal role model (Normand, Silverman, & Nickman, 1996; Wada & Park, 2009). These studies do acknowledge that feelings of sorrow and pain may resurface on occasion. They also suggest that this occurs at different intensities and in relation to alternate aspects of what has been lost (Wada & Park, 2009). Such insights can similarly be applied to the present context of metonyms of significance to live with grief and initiate narrative reconstruction following a natural disaster. Metonyms in the form of material objects or the arts have been used as a medium by which relationships are maintained with the deceased or past lives. Thus the significance or meanings attributed to these objects seem to have changed with time. As Priyani explains:

I used to cry a lot, not only when I wrote the poems, but also when I read them weeks or months later. They made me think of everything and everyone that I lost, and how alone I was. When I read all these poems now, I think of how much psychological pressure I was under at the time, how much I suffered; that I was even suicidal at one point. But I also think of where I am now. How much more independent I am, how much stronger I am. I think about all the life lessons I learned since losing everything that ever mattered to me. [...] It makes me proud sometimes to think that I learned to get back up on my feet, after being in such a dark place.

While facilitating processes of healing, it is also clear that Priyani's poems were once agents that stirred up strong emotions of grief and loss. However, with time their significance changed to that of reminiscent notions of pain that she learned to move past. To Priyani, her poems later signified a sense of achievement. Similar thoughts were expressed by Nadhee and Priyantha in relation to their private monuments (see Figures 5 and 7). They both indicated that while they used to visit these monuments on a regular basis in the months and even years immediately following the tsunami, during the time of the interviews; eight years after the tragedy, these visits were limited to special occasions such as birthdays and anniversaries. As Nadhee explains:

It doesn't mean that we have forgotten them. No, we'll never forget them. They're always here with us. But it just doesn't hurt as much anymore. What can we do. Life goes on. And we have to carry on living, if not for our sakes, then for the sake of our children.

Nadhee's emphasis on the continuation of life can be linked back to the argument made in Chapter Three, in regards to the transitory nature of pain and suffering. This provides the bereaved with a sense of acceptance and the strength to endure their grief and loss. This property also has the ability to facilitate psychological growth and transformation, as well as enable positive changes in relation to one's sense of self, his or her relationships with others and orientation towards life in general (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2001, 2006; Dow et al., 1999; Kumar, 2005; Linley & Joseph, 2004; Schroevers et al., 2011; Schroevers et al., 2006; Wada & Park, 2009). Such a change over time reflects what Bury terms (1982), the mobilisation

of resources to respond to a disruptive event, resulting in a successful re-storying or reconstruction of a life narrative.

4.5 Chapter Discussion

In this chapter I have investigated the role of monuments, more personal material objects and the arts in enabling people in the community of Hikkaduwa to re-member those lost, and to re-story their life narratives. Through an examination of the function of monuments in the reconstruction of life narratives, I recognised the difference between government commissioned monuments and memorials and those privately erected by the members of this community. My analysis suggests that government commissioned public monuments brought the community together, enabling them to establish a sense of shared or common fate. However, my participants also experienced public monuments as impersonal structures due to the fact that they were not erected by community members themselves. Public monuments erected in the town of Hikkaduwa were constructed by governmental agencies. They were experienced as contested objects that were associated with broader socio-political events in Sri Lankan history. These contextual factors restricted their use by participants as everyday focal points for remembrance (cf. Arthur, 2009; Bodnar, 1992; Jorgensen-Earp & Lanzilotti, 1998). In light of the recent civil war, these objects represent state control and conflict. Public monuments served more to remind local people of the State's control in their lives, rather than engaging them in their own processes of grieving and recovery. Moreover, public expressions of grief and pain run against the cultural norms of the local community (Fernando, 2009). All of the participants stated that they gathered at the public tsunami monuments only on the anniversary of the tragedy. They further conveyed feelings of detachment in relation to these structures.

Grief and loss within the community of Hikkaduwa tended to be more personal, and expressed privately. They were also strongly culturally embedded processes. Particular cultural worldviews held by the community, textured participant experiences of grief and recovery. In particular, Buddhist understandings of the continuity and interdependence of life, death and rebirth for

example, reinforced the conception of continuing bonds with the deceased as a way of coping with grief and loss in a healthy manner (Aronson, 2004; Wada & Park, 2009). As a result, rather than severing ties with the deceased, the members of the community of Hikkaduwa maintained a connection with the loved ones they lost through the preservation or construction of personal metonyms.

Personal monuments, memorials, other material objects and spaces aided members of this community to establish connections and links not only to the deceased, but also to past identities and lives. In exploring such processes, my analysis builds upon Radley's (2009) idea of *works of illness* to reveal the importance of *works of loss*. I observe how people can recover and learn to live with grief following a natural disaster. This chapter discusses the importance of material objects, practices and spaces as metonyms that facilitate processes of remembering, by acting as transitional entities. They provide mediums through which loved ones can communicate and maintain bonds with the deceased (Glazer & Marcum, 2003; Stephens, 2007; Theriault, 2003; Witztum & Lerner, 2008; Witztum & Malkinson, 2009). I also highlight the significance of objects and place as *sites of memory* that can foster notions of place-based identities by transporting participants back to times; lives and identities, before the onset of the tsunami (Beckstead et al., 2011; Casey, 2001; de Certeau, 1984a). Through discussing these processes I portray the importance of material objects, practices and place for individuals and communities as they re-story their lives following disaster and loss.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The rise of indigenous psychologies globally, and in particular across a number of Asian countries has become increasingly prominent in recent times. Such developments centralise issues of culture in psychology and call for situated understandings of human experience and actions (Allwood & Berry, 2006; Church & Katigbak, 2002; Pe-Pua, 1989; Pe-Pua, 2006). The present study is informed by, and contributes to this broad development in the discipline of psychology. This chapter integrates the core findings of the study, by revisiting a gap in psychological research into natural disasters. I emphasise that traditional psychological research tends to be overly clinical and mono-cultural in orientation with a focus on the diagnosis and treatment of individuals. This dominant world view, particularly in terms of disaster research, may not be equally applicable to everyone. More attention needs to be paid to the importance of recovery processes and how people move through grief or learn to live with grief in ways that are healthy and culturally appropriate for them. With reference to participant examples, I reinforce the notion that disaster recovery is a culturally-embedded process and discuss the significance of incorporating cultural beliefs and practices into psychological research on natural disasters and recovery. I discuss the importance attributed to seemingly mundane material objects and everyday practices as a way of coping and learning to live with the aftermath of a tragedy. The chapter concludes by discussing implications of the present study along with ideas for future research.

5.1 Natural Disasters and Narrative Repair: An Overview

The Indian Ocean tsunami that occurred on the 26th of December 2004 devastated a vast number of communities in its wake, including the coastal town of Hikkaduwa, Sri Lanka. Community and Applied Social Psychologists have a long standing interest in disruptions to community life. While there exists considerable psychological literature on natural disasters, most research focuses on coping skills and reducing stress, anxiety, PTSD and depression

(Assanangkornchai et al., 2004; Bystritsky et al., 2000; Madrid & Grant, 2008). Psychological research typically takes a deficit-orientated and individualised approach to understanding people and their communities following a natural disaster. More recently, there has been some acknowledgement of the importance of community participation and shared narratives following a natural disaster (Collins et al., 2011; Fernando, 2009). However, there is no detailed discussion of how and why culturally-patterned processes are important. Furthermore, these discussions are limited to individual therapeutic benefits and the need to normalise stress reactions. Sri Lankan literature in the field of psychology, following the tsunami, tends to follow similar orientations (Kaplan, 2005; Miller, 2005; Nikapota, 2006). While there is some emphasis on the creation of culturally appropriate programmes for disaster relief, this mostly addresses individual-level psychological recovery based on Anglo-American values and models of the individual (de Silva, 2006; Nastasi et al., 2011).

Disaster psychology reflects the primacy given in research to the notion of the *lonely thinker* (Jovchelovitch, 2007). While personal narratives and individual biographies are important, psychological research is yet to acknowledge that these do not emerge out of a vacuum. Rappaport (2000) argues for the importance of considering communal narratives in the process of individualised therapies, as an alternative to the psychological profession's emphasis on a *lonely independence* as a marker of health and functioning. He states that 'so-called independent living is held to be the *sine qua non* of a mature and well-adjusted lifestyle' (Rappaport, 2000, p. 13). Yet, ignoring the social and collective nature of narratives and lives reduces the scope for healing and recovery to an individual and lonely task. Moreover, happiness and sorrow are not a straightforward binary where one exists only in the absence of the other. Tragic events; such as the loss of loved ones to the waves, are understandably constructed as *tales of terror* (Rappaport, 2000). However, life is a complex and multifarious business, so our darkest days also hold the seeds for recovery and the ensuing *tales of joy*.

The present study addresses a prevailing misperception in psychological research on natural disasters. Recovery and the resolution of grief are often approached as requiring the severing of bonds with the deceased (Davies, 2004; Freud, 1961; Hedtke, 1999; Hedtke, 2001; Klass et al., 1996; Rando, 1995;

Stroebe & Stroebe, 1997). Yet, is it realistic to expect people to want to or be able to *get over* the loss of a loved one and to *move on* without them? Through this study, I have explored how the bereaved can ‘learn to live with the dead in a new way’ (Green, 2008, p. 189). Participants’ actions of re-membrance, their use and construction of the material, brings to light Buddhist perceptions of life, death and rebirth as being part of a cycle of renewal (cf. Aronson, 2004; Wada & Park, 2009). My participants worked to maintain, develop and enrich their bonds with lost loved ones through the re-storying of their own lives and practices of re-membrance that centralised souvenirs and other material objects such as artwork.

5.2 Locating Grief in Cultural Practices and Material Objects

Buddhist beliefs are engrained in the actions of people in Hikkaduwa and helps explain the importance placed on continuing bonds with the deceased as a healthy way of learning to live with grief and loss (Aronson, 2004; Wada & Park, 2009). Everyday acts that invoke grief and enable remembering, are encapsulated in practices such as alms givings or *dhaana*, lighting oil lamps and laying flowers in significant places. Buddhist beliefs and related everyday practices provide an alternate way of conceptualising death and mourning, in comparison to traditional Judeo-Christian beliefs and practices that are characterised by closure and separation. In particular, the allocation of a time and place for private mourning as well as locating grief in symbolic objects or metonyms may provide participants with a way by which grief and loss can be harnessed. This gives grief a more manageable shape and form. Instead of getting over grief, in this context feelings of grief and loss are given permission to exist, but in a manner that shelters these individuals and their lives from being completely subsumed. In being present with the grief for a defined period of time each day, these feelings can become familiar and perhaps over time, less overwhelming. Therein lies a path to the healthy restoration of a fractured life narrative through processes of *re-remembering* and practices of *re-membrance*. In contrast to dominant Judeo-Christian notions of the finality of death in orthodox psychology, for Buddhists, death does not mark the end of life. Rather, death is a part of life that requires continued bonds with deceased loved ones.

For participants in the present study, grieving leads to the development of ways of living with traces of the deceased (Anderson, 2010; Green, 2008). Central here is the metonymic function of material objects. Maintaining bonds with lost loved ones through the preservation of objects such as clothing, the composition of poetry and carrying out rituals, facilitates healing and enable participants to come to terms with their situations. Material objects and associated practices facilitate the re-storying of their life narratives by acting as transitional entities, providing mediums through which loved ones can communicate and maintain bonds with the deceased (Glazer & Marcum, 2003; Stephens, 2007; Witztum & Malkinson, 2009).

Through this study I provide an alternative way in which disaster recovery can be conceptualised, compared to the predominantly Anglo-American psychology. Psychology places emphasis on talk therapy and reasoning (for example with the use of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy), advocating lifestyle factors (such as exercise, diet and relaxation), or distractions (such as hobbies, sports and movies), as ways to move past grief. Yet, there are times when words and speech are often woefully inadequate for expressing the sheer intensity of experiences, such as those endured by the participants of the present study. In such situations, engaging in the arts, for instance through the composition of poetry, can often communicate what day-to-day language and conversations cannot (cf. Radley, 2009). The poems composed by Priyani give form and shape to her innermost feelings and experiences of grief. This is not merely the work of a lonely thinker. It is a work of loss that draws on shared understandings of what it means to grieve for the people we love and care about. Priyani's poems not only allow her to give substance to her grief, but also to connect her personal experiences to much broader processes of life that affect us all.

In a community that has faced such widespread suffering, the process of recovery need not be a lonely task focused on forgetting. Continuing bonds with the deceased and the past can also restore a new sense of meaning, connection and hope. Research into collective memory suggests that 'memory is not only "stored in brains" but rather distributed through social artefacts and cultural tools' (Beckstead et al., 2011, p. 195). In addition to acting as markers for social events, objects become instrumental for understanding the past, and come to embody

stories relating to past events or narratives (Beckstead et al., 2011). Instead of blocking out past events, one can come into contact with experience in order to understand, acknowledge and accept those events. Similar to the role played by the arts in the processes of remembering the past, material objects can also act as objects of transition or as touchstones of meaning. These objects acquire a 'secular sacred character' as more than symbols of the past, and can become metonyms of present selves (Morgan & Pritchard, 2005). Personal memorials and other material objects aided members of this community to establish connections and links not only to the deceased, but also to past identities and lives.

The seemingly mundane everyday practices of participants that highlight the importance of particular things reflects the need for psychologists to develop better understandings of how people can respond agentively to tragedy. Communities affected by a disruptive event such as a natural disaster should not be considered solely as victims of the tragedy. The question of control over experiences of adversity and subsequent processes of coping following a natural disaster can be fundamentally dilemmatic, complex, ambiguous and value-laden. Notions of *positive fatalism* (cf. Bolam, Hodgetts, Chamberlain, Murphy, & Gleeson, 2003) indicate that although certain situations are beyond an individual's control, there remains a moral obligation not to give in to adversity. This reflects the need to replace 'the traditional either/or binary of psychometric constructs with a fundamentally more fluid, contradictory and discursive conception of control' over one's situation (Bolam et al., 2003, p. 18). Instead of the focus on individual diagnoses of and treatments for grief, there is a need to observe and understand strategies through which agentive communities construct alternative settings, meanings and/or ways of being, to cope with their grief and loss (cf. Hodgetts, Drew, et al., 2010). In the context of the present study, a need to acknowledge the various ways in which Sri Lankan communities can respond to tragedy as agentive and resilient groups is reflected by the significance ascribed to the metonyms and everyday practices carried out by the people in Hikkaduwa.

5.3 Further Implications, Research Possibilities and Conclusions

The present study foregrounds some of the *polysemic* qualities central to seemingly banal practices, spaces and material objects, highlighting their ability to sustain multiple meanings for different individuals (Halkier et al., 2011; Hargreaves, 2011). What may seem to an external observer, like a mere article of clothing, may serve as a reference point and provide a link between an individual's past and present. A block of land overgrown with shrubs may have the ability to transport another individual back in time to a past life. A seemingly ordinary windowpane may be yet another person's only means of maintaining normality in life. Outwardly mundane things can hold inconceivable significance to certain individuals and communities. Conversely, material objects and places that are assumed to hold great importance may in reality be quite insignificant to certain communities. For example, the state commissioned tsunami monuments built in the town of Hikkaduwa, according to the findings of the present study, seemed to play a lesser role in the processes of recovery following grief and loss.

In the context of public monuments and memorials, my findings support the importance of incorporating a consultative process between governmental agencies and community members, in the memorialisation and construction of public monuments. Agencies constructing these structures need to acknowledge that the monuments and memorials should hold meaning and significance for the members of the community in which they are erected, rather than having a sole aim of attracting tourists or signifying notions of superiority. The structures need to be constructed in a manner that establishes a sense of connection and belonging with community members in order to enhance the potential of relevance for people directly affected by and currently working to cope with the aftermath of a disaster.

By way of observing the practices and beliefs of members of the community of Hikkaduwa, it is additionally clear that disaster recovery is a culturally-embedded process. After all, culture is central to who people are, and how they react to disasters and related tragedies. If psychology is to better address the needs of diverse cultures we must acknowledge, understand and integrate cultural beliefs and practices into our disaster responses. This stance holds

particular significance in a context such as that of Sri Lankan communities, where approaching a counsellor for example, in order to learn to cope with an issue tends to generally be against the norm, and is a practice that is usually looked down upon. For Sri Lankan communities, experiences of grief and loss are expressed or handled in a more personal or private setting, as distinctly portrayed by participants of the present study. Therein lies the sheer importance of personal metonyms and practices of re-remembrance to members of these communities; to enable them to reconstruct their fractured life narratives in the aftermath of a natural disaster.

The present study observed how personal monuments and material objects serve as metonyms that instigate narrative repair and re-remembering following a natural disaster. However, my primary focus was on a Sri Lankan community that was predominantly Buddhist. As disaster recovery is strongly embedded in cultural practices and beliefs, communities belonging to different cultures and even different religious backgrounds may cope with grief, loss and adversity in different ways. Future research possibilities may involve observations of communities in other parts of Sri Lanka, and how material objects and symbolic practices help them cope with grief and loss. Such research could, for example, be carried out in areas not dominated by Buddhists, but by Hindus, Muslims and/or Christians. This could further extend to war-torn parts of the country and focus on how communities previously suffering adversity due to direct exposure to war used metonyms and practices of re-remembrance to cope and live with their multiple levels of adversity following the tsunami. Future research could also go beyond the field of natural disaster research, and examine the significance of other public monuments such as war memorials, and observe whether or not they help communities in Sri Lanka cope with experiences of grief, loss and adversity.

To conclude, experiences of loss and grief following a natural disaster can disrupt lives and shared narratives that bond communities; causing people to rework their stories. Narrative reconstruction does not aim to cure; instead it enables people to make sense of events, cope and live in the aftermath of disaster. This thesis explored the significance of monuments and other symbolic objects, places and practices, as metonyms that instigate processes of narrative repair and re-remembering in the setting of Hikkaduwa. Attention was given to participants'

experiences of events and efforts to cope, in part, through interactions with metonyms maintained as symbols of remembrance and to commemorate people lost. I emphasise the importance of taking a bottom-up approach to phronetic research; in terms of theorising as well as practice, rather than one that is top-down and simply tests theoretical abstractions. I have offered new insights into relationships between material objects salvaged and/or preserved following the tsunami in the construction of spaces for re-membrance, and the restoration of community narratives. There appears to be a lot more to disaster relief and recovery than mainstream psychology understands.

REFERENCES

- Abeyssekera, C., & Gunasinghe, N. (1987). *Facets of ethnicity in Sri Lanka*. Colombo, Sri Lanka: Social Scientists' Association.
- Alexander, J. C. (2008). Iconic consciousness: The material feeling of meaning. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 26(5), 782-794.
- Allwood, C. M., & Berry, J. W. (2006). Origins and development of indigenous psychologies: An international analysis. *International Journal of Psychology*, 41(4), 243-268.
- Anderson, H. (2010). Common grief, complex grieving. *Pastoral Psychology*, 59, 127-136.
- Aronson, H. B. (2004). *Buddhist Practice on Western Ground: Reconciling Eastern Ideals and Western Philosophy*. Boston, MA: Shambhala Publications.
- Arthur, P. (2009). Trauma online: Exposure of personal grief and suffering. *Traumatology*, 15(4), 65-75.
- Assanangkornchai, S., Tangboonngam, S.-n., & Edwards, J. G. (2004). The flooding of Hat Yai: predictors of adverse emotional responses to a natural disaster. *Stress and Health*, 20(2), 81-89.
- Atkinson, R. (1998). *The life story interview*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Attfield, J. (2000). *Wild Things: The Material Culture of Everyday Life*. Oxford: Berg.
- Barber, B. (1949). Place, symbol, and utilitarian function in war memorials. *Social Forces*, 28(1), 64-68.
- Basso, K. (1996). *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press.
- Basso, K., & Feld, S. (1996). *Sense of Place*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press.
- Beckstead, Z. (2009, May). *Symbolic journeys and the formation of affective fields*. Paper presented at the Clark University Research Conference, Worcester, MA.
- Beckstead, Z., Twose, G., Levesque-Gottlieb, E., & Rizzo, J. (2011). Collective remembering through the materiality and organization of war memorials. *Journal of Material Culture*, 16(2), 193-213.

- Belk, R. W. (1995). Studies in the new consumer behaviour. In D. Miller (Ed.), *Acknowledging Consumption* (pp. 58-95). London: Routledge.
- Bender, B. (1993). *Landscape: Politics and Perspectives*. Oxford: Berg.
- Billig, M. (2008). *The Hidden Roots of Critical Psychology*. London: Sage.
- Bland, S. H., O'Leary, E. S., Farinaro, E., Jossa, F., & Trevisan, M. (1996). Long-term psychological effects of natural disasters. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 58, 18-24.
- Bodnar, J. (1992). *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Boivin, N. (2008). *Material Cultures, Material Minds: The Impact of Things on Human Thought, Society, and Evolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bolam, B., Hodgetts, D., Chamberlain, K., Murphy, S., & Gleeson, K. (2003). 'Just do it': An analysis of accounts of control over health amongst lower socioeconomic status groups. *Critical Public Health*, 13(1), 15-31.
- Bravo, M., Rubio-Stipec, M., Canino, G. J., Woodbury, M. A., & Ribera, J. C. (1990). The psychological sequelae of disaster stress prospectively and retrospectively evaluated. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 18, 661-680.
- Brewer, M. B. (1991). The social self: On being the same and different at the same time. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*, 17, 475-482.
- Brewer, W. F., & Lichtenstein, E. H. (1982). Stories are to entertain: A structural-affect theory of stories. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 6, 473-486.
- Brockmeier, J. (2002). Remembering and forgetting: Narrative as cultural memory. *Culture & Psychology*, 8(1), 15-43.
- Brown, M. (2006). A geographer reads Geography Club: Spatial metaphor and metonym in textual/sexual space. *Cultural Geographies*, 13, 313-339.
- Browne, S. H. (1995). Reading, rhetoric, and the texture of public memory. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 81, 237-250.
- Bruner, J. (1997). Labov and Waletzky: Thirty years on. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7, 61-68.
- Burger, J. M., & Palmer, M. L. (1991). Changes in the generalization of unrealistic optimism following experiences of stressful events: Reactions

- to the 1989 California earthquake. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*, 18, 39-43.
- Bury, M. (1982). Chronic illness as biographical disruption. *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 4, 167-182.
- Bystritsky, A., Vapnik, T., Maidment, K., Pynoos, R. S., & Steinberg, A. M. (2000). Acute responses of anxiety disorder patients after a natural disaster. *Depression and Anxiety*, 11(1), 43-44.
- Caldera, T., Palma, L., Penayo, U., & Kullgren, G. (2001). Psychological impact of the hurricane Mitch in Nicaragua in a one-year perspective. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 36, 108-114.
- Calhoun, L. G., & Tedeschi, R. G. (2001). Posttraumatic growth: The positive lessons of loss. In R. A. Neimeyer (Ed.), *Meaning Reconstruction & the Experience of Loss* (pp. 157-172). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Calhoun, L. G., & Tedeschi, R. G. (2006). The foundations of posttraumatic growth: An expanded framework. In L. G. Calhoun & R. G. Tedeschi (Eds.), *Handbook of Posttraumatic Growth: Research and Practice* (pp. 3-23). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Carlick, A., & Biley, F. C. (2004). Thoughts on the therapeutic use of narrative in the promotion of coping in cancer care. *European Journal of Cancer Care*, 13(4), 308-317.
- Carr, V. J., Lewin, T. J., Webster, R. A., & Kenardy, J. A. (1997). A synthesis of the findings from the Quake Impact Study: A two-year investigation of the psychosocial sequelae of the 1989 Newcastle earthquake. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 32, 123-136.
- Casey, E. S. (2001). Between geography and philosophy: What does it mean to be in the Place-World? *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 91(4), 683-693.
- Chaney, D. (1996). *Lifestyles*. London: Routledge.
- Chapin, B. L., & Silva, K. T. (2001). Sri Lanka. In M. Ember & C. R. Ember (Eds.), *Countries and their Cultures* (Vol. 4). New York, NY: Macmillan Reference USA.

- Chase, S. E. (2005). Narrative Inquiry: Multiple lenses, approaches, voices. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 651-680). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Church, A. T., & Katigbak, M. S. (2002). Indigenization of psychology in the Philippines. *International Journal of Psychology, 37*(3), 129-148.
- Claxton, G. (1992). *The Heart of Buddhism*. London: Aquarian Press.
- Cohler, B., & Grunebaum, H. (1981). *Mothers, Grandmothers and Daughters*. New York, NY: Wiley.
- Coleman, S., & Collins, P. (2006). Introduction: "Being ... where?" performing fields on shifting grounds. In S. Coleman & P. Collins (Eds.), *Locating the Field: Space, Place and Context in Anthropology* (pp. 1-21). Oxford: Berg.
- Collins, S., Glavovic, B., Johal, S., & Johnston, D. (2011). Community engagement post-disaster: Case studies of the 2006 Matata debris flow and 2010 Darfield earthquake, New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology, 40*(4), 17-25.
- Conyne, R. K., Wilson, E. R., Tang, M., & Shi, K. (1999). Cultural similarities and differences in group work: Pilot study of a U.S. - Chinese task group comparison. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research and Practice, 3*, 40-50.
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. L. (1987). Accompaniment of chronic illness: Changes in body, self, biography, and biographical time. *Research in the Sociology of Health Care, 6*, 249-281.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design; choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Crossley, M. (2000). *Introducing narrative psychology. Self, trauma and the construction of meaning*. Buckingham, England: Open University Press.
- Dann, G., & Jacobsen, J. K. S. (2003). Tourism smellscape. *Tourism Geographies, 5*(1), 3-25.
- Davies, R. (2004). New understandings of parental grief: Literature review. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 46*(5), 506-513.
- de Alwis, M., & Hedman, E. L. (2009). Introduction. In M. de Alwis & E. L. Hedman (Eds.), *Tsunami in a Time of War: Aid, Activism & Reconstruction in Sri Lanka and Aceh* (pp. 9-27). Colombo, Sri Lanka: International Centre for Ethnic Studies.

- de Certeau, M. (1984a). *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.
- de Certeau, M. (1984b). Practices of Space. In M. Blonsky (Ed.), *On Signs*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.
- de Mel, N. (2003). *Fractured Narratives, Totalizing Violence: Notes on Women in Conflict - Sri Lanka and Pakistan*. Islamabad, Pakistan: The Sustainable Development Policy Institute.
- de Mel, N. (2007). Between the war and the sea: Critical events, contiguities and feminist work in Sri Lanka. *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 9(2), 238-254.
- de Mel, N. (2010). The production of disaster: Contextualizing the tsunami and its impact on women in Sri Lanka. In N. De Mel, K. N. Ruwanpura & G. Samarasinghe (Eds.), *After the Waves: The Impact of the Tsunami on Women in Sri Lanka* (pp. 3-16). Colombo 5, Sri Lanka: Social Scientists' Association.
- de Mel, N., & Ruwanpura, K. N. (2006). *Gendering the tsunami: Women's experiences from Sri Lanka*. Colombo 8, Sri Lanka: International Centre for Ethnic Studies.
- de Silva, A. (2009). Ethnicity, politics and inequality: Post-tsunami humanitarian aid delivery in Amparai District in Sri Lanka. *Disasters*, 33(2), 253-273.
- de Silva, P. (2006). The tsunami and its aftermath in Sri Lanka: Explorations of a Buddhist perspective. *International Review of Psychiatry*, 18(3), 281-287.
- Deaux, K. (2000). Surveying the landscape of immigration. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 10, 421-431.
- Department of Census and Statistics Sri Lanka. (2005). *Impact of Tsunami 2004 on Sri Lanka*. Retrieved from <http://www.statistics.gov.lk/Tsunami/>
- Divakalala, C. (2010). 26 December 2004 and after - In search of women's narratives. In N. de Mel, K. N. Ruwanpura & G. Samarasinghe (Eds.), *After the Waves: The Impact of the Tsunami on Women in Sri Lanka* (pp. 188-210). Colombo 5, Sri Lanka: Social Scientists' Association.
- Dolinski, P., Gromski, W., & Zawisza, E. (1987). Unrealistic pessimism. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 127, 511-516.
- Dow, K. H., Ferrell, B. R., Haberman, M. R., & Eaton, L. (1999). The meaning of quality of life in cancer survivors. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, 26, 519-528.

- Dunham, D., & Jayasuriya, S. (2000). Equity, growth and Insurrection: Libelization and the welfare debate in contemporary Sri Lanka. *Oxford Development Studies*, 28(1), 97-110.
- Eade, J., & Sallnow, M. J. (1991). *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage*. London: Routledge.
- Edkins, J. (2003). *Trauma and the Memory of Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Escobar, J. I., Canino, G., Rubio-Stipec, M., & Bravo, M. (1992). Somatic symptoms after a natural disaster: A prospective study. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 149(7), 965-967.
- Faircloth, C. A., Boylstein, C., Rittman, M., Young, M. E., & Gubrium, J. (2004). Sudden illness and biographical flow in narratives of stroke recovery. *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 26, 242-261.
- Favro, D. (2006). The iconicity of ancient Rome. *Urban History*, 33(1), 20-38.
- Fernando, D. M. (2005). Commentary: Interventions for survivors of the tsunami disaster: Report from Sri Lanka. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 18, 267-268.
- Fernando, D. M. (2009). Group work with survivors of the 2004 Asian Tsunami: Reflections of an American-trained counselor. *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 34(1), 4-23.
- Fisher, S. (2010). Violence against women and natural disastersL Findings from post-tsunami Sri Lanka. *Violence Against Women*, 16(8), 902-918.
- Flick, U. (2006). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.
- Flyvbjerg, B., Landman, T., & Schram, S. (2012). *Real Social Science: Applied Phronesis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Frank, A. (1995). *The wounded storyteller: Body, illness, and ethics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Freire, P. (1986/1990). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum.
- Freud, S. (1961). Mourning and melancholia. In J. Strachey (Ed.), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (pp. 239-260). London: Hogarth Press.
- Frye, N. (1957). *Anatomy of criticism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

- Gamburd, M. R., & McGilvray, D. B. (2010). Sri Lanka's post-tsunami recovery: Cultural traditions, social structures and power struggles. *Anthropology News*, 51(7), 9-11.
- Garfinkel, H. (1967). *Studies in Ethnomethodology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Gergen, K. J., & Gergen, M. (1986). Narrative form and the construction of psychological science. In T. R. Sarbin (Ed.), *Narrative psychology: The storied nature of human conduct* (pp. 22-44). New York, NY: Praeger.
- Giddens, A. (1979). *Central Problems in Social Theory*. London: The Macmillan Press.
- Glazer, H. R., & Marcum, D. (2003). Expressing grief through storytelling. *The Journal of Humanistic Counseling*, 42(2), 131-138.
- Goenjian, A. K., Steinberg, A. M., Najarian, L. M., Fairbanks, L. A., Tashjian, M., & Pynoos, R. S. (2000). Prospective study of posttraumatic stress, anxiety, and depressive reactions after earthquake and political violence. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 157, 911-916.
- Goonesekere, S. (2010). A gender analysis of tsunami impact: Relief, recovery and reconstruction in some districts of Sri Lanka. In N. De Mel, K. N. Ruwanpura & G. Samarasinghe (Eds.), *After the Waves: The Impact of the Tsunami on Women in Sri Lanka* (pp. 84-111). Colombo 5, Sri Lanka: Social Scientists' Association.
- Graham, S., & Connell, J. (2006). Nurturing relationships: The gardens of Greek and Vietnamese migrants in Marrickville, Sydney. *Australian Geographer*, 37, 375-393.
- Green, J. W. (2008). *Beyond the Good Death: The Anthropology of Modern Dying*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Grissom, C., & Harvey, R. (2003). The conservation of American war memorials made of zinc. *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, 42(1), 21-38.
- Gunasinghe, N. (1987). Ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka: Perceptions and solutions. In C. Abeysekera & N. Gunasinghe (Eds.), *Facets of Ethnicity in Sri Lanka* (pp. 61-71). Colombo, Sri Lanka: Social Scientists' Association.

- Halkier, B., Katz-Gerro, T., & Martens, L. (2011). Applying practice theory to the study of consumption: Theoretical and methodological considerations. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 11(1), 3-13.
- Hanninen, V. (2004). A model of narrative circulation. *Narrative Inquiry*, 14(1), 69-85.
- Hargreaves, T. (2011). Practice-ing behaviour change: Applying social practice theory to pro-environmental behaviour change. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 11(1), 79-99.
- Haviland, C. (2011, 11 March). *Sri Lanka recovers seven years after its tsunami*. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-12806874>
- Hayden, D. (1999). Landscapes of loss and remembrance: The case of little Tokyo in Los Angeles. In J. Winter & E. Sivan (Eds.), *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* (pp. 142-160). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hedtke, L. (1999, June). *Multiplying death, dying & grief narratives*,. Paper presented at the A Place to Stand: New Zealand Association of Counsellors Conference, Hamilton, New Zealand.
<http://www.rememberingpractices.com/Remembering/Articles.html>
- Hedtke, L. (2001). Remembering practices in the face of death. *The Forum*, 27(2), 5-6.
- Herman, L., & Vervaeck, B. (2001). *Handbook of narrative analysis*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.
- Hermans, H. (1995). Narrative interview. In U. Flick, E. von Kardorff, H. Keupp, L. von Rosenstiel & S. Wolff (Eds.), *Handbuch Qualitative Sozialforschung* (2nd ed., pp. 182-185). Munich, Germany: Psychologie Verlags Union.
- Hodgetts, D., Chamberlain, C., & Groot, S. (2011). Reflections on the visual in community research and action. In P. Reavey (Ed.), *Visual Methods in Psychology* (pp. 299-313). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Hodgetts, D., Chamberlain, K., & Radley, A. (2007). Considering photographs never taken during photo-production projects. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 4, 263-280.
- Hodgetts, D., Drew, N., Sonn, C., Stolte, O., Nikora, L. W., & Curtis, C. (2010). *Social Psychology and Everyday Life*. Basingstoke: Pelgrave/MacMillian.

- Hodgetts, D., Stolte, O., Chamberlain, K., Radley, A., Groot, S., & Nikora, L. W. (2010). The mobile hermit and the city: Considering links between places, objects and identities in social psychological research on homelessness. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 49*, 285-303.
- Hoelscher, S., & Alderman, D. H. (2004). Memory and place: Geographies of a critical relationship. *Social and Cultural Geography, 5*(3), 348-355.
- Howard, G. S. (1991). Culture tales: A narrative approach to thinking, cross-cultural psychology, and psychotherapy. *American Psychologist, 46*, 187-197.
- Howe, D. (1993). *On being a client*. London: Sage.
- Hutton, W. (1802). *The History of the Roman Wall*. London: John Nichols and Son.
- Hyndman, J. (2010). Troubling widows in post-tsunami Sri Lanka: Feminism meets double disasters. In N. de Mel, K. N. Ruwanpura & G. Samarasinghe (Eds.), *After the Waves: The Impact of the Tsunami on Women in Sri Lanka* (pp. 17-41). Colombo 5, Sri Lanka: Social Scientists' Association.
- Ivy, R. (2002). Memorials, monuments and meaning. *Architectural Record, 190*(7), 84-87.
- James, W. (1890). *The Principles of Psychology* (Vol. I & II). London: MacMillan & Co.
- Jayawardena, K., & de Alwis, M. (1996). Introduction. In K. Jayawardena & M. de Alwis (Eds.), *Embodied Violence: Communalising Women's Sexuality in South Asia* (pp. ix-xxii). New Delhi, India: Kali for Women.
- Jeganathan, P., & Ismail, Q. (1995). *Unmaking the nation: The politics of identity and history in modern Sri Lanka*. Colombo, Sri Lanka: Social Scientists' Association.
- Johnson, N. (2002). Mapping monuments: The shaping of public space and cultural identities. *Visual Communication, 1*(3), 293-298.
- Jones, A. H. (2006). Essay writing and healing. *The Lancet, 368*, 53-54.
- Jorgensen-Earp, C. R., & Lanzilotti, L. A. (1998). Public memory and private grief: The construction of shrines at the sites of public tragedy. *Quarterly Journal of Speech, 84*, 150-170.

- Jovchelovitch, S. (2007). *Knowledge in Context: Representations, Community and Culture*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Kamptner, N. L. (1989). Personal possessions and their meanings in old age. In S. Spacapan & S. Oskamp (Eds.), *The Social Psychology of Aging*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Kaplan, A. (2005). Tsunami aftermath in Sri Lanka - Providing psychiatric and psychosocial assistance. *Psychiatric Times*.
- Kayser, K., Wind, L., & Shankar, R. A. (2008). Disaster relief in a collectivistic context. *Journal of Social Service Research, 34*(3), 87-98.
- Kearl, M. (1995). Death and politics: A psychosocial perspective. In H. Wass & R. A. Neimeyer (Eds.), *Dying: Facing the Facts*. Washington, DC: Taylor & Francis.
- Klass, D. (1993a). The inner representation of the dead children and the world views of bereaved parents. *Omega, Journal of Death and Dying, 26*, 255-273.
- Klass, D. (1993b). Solace and immortality: Bereaved parents' continuing bond with their children. *Death Studies, 17*, 343-368.
- Klass, D., Silverman, P., & Nickman, S. (1996). *Continuing Bonds: New Understandings of Grief*. Philadelphia, PA: Taylor & Francis.
- Klein, R., & Schermer, V. (2000). Introduction and overview: Creating a healing matrix. In R. Klein & V. Schermer (Eds.), *Group Psychotherapy for Psychological Trauma* (pp. 3-46). New York: Guilford Press.
- Kumar, S. M. (2005). *Grieving Mindfully: A Compassionate and Spiritual Guide to Coping with Loss*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger.
- Kusenbach, M. (2003). Street phenomenology: The go-along as ethnographic research tool. *Ethnography, 4*(3), 455-485.
- Kwint, M., Breward, C., & Aynsley, J. (1999). *Material Memories: Design and Evocation*. Oxford: Berg.
- La Rocca, E. (2001). The newly discovered city fresco from Trajan's baths, Rome. *Imago Mundi, 53*, 121-124.
- Labov, W. (1982). Speech actions and reactions in personal narrative. In D. Tannen (Ed.), *Analyzing discourse: Text and Talk* (pp. 219-247). Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

- Labov, W., & Waletzky, J. (1997). Oral versions of personal experience: Three decades of narrative analysis. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7, 3-38.
- Leach, E. R. (1962). Introduction: What should we mean by caste? In E. R. Leach (Ed.), *Aspects of Caste in South India, Ceylon, and Northwest Pakistan* (Cambridge: University Press).
- LeGuin, U. K. (1989). *Dancing at the edge of the world: Thoughts on words, women, places*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Li, W. W. (2011). *Shifting selves: Home beyond the house - A study of aging, housing and wellbeing of older Chinese migrants in New Zealand* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand.
- Lichtenstein, S., Slovic, P., Fischhoff, B., Layman, M., & Combs, B. (1978). Judged frequency of lethal events. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Learning and Memory*, 4, 551-578.
- Lieblich, A., Tuval-Mashiach, R., & Zilber, T. (1998). *Narrative research: Reading, analysis and interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Lin, S. F. (1977). Ritual and narrative structure in Ju-Lin Wai-Shih. In A. H. Plaks (Ed.), *Chinese narrative: Critical and theoretical essay* (pp. 244-265). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Linley, P. A., & Joseph, S. (2004). Positive change following trauma and adversity: A review. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 17, 11-21.
- Litvak-Hirsch, T. A. L., & Bar-On, D. A. N. (2006). To Rebuild Lives: A Longitudinal Study of the Influences of the Holocaust on Relationships Among Three Generations of Women in One Family. *Family Process*, 45(4), 465-483.
- Lunt, P. (1995). Psychological approaches to consumption. In D. Miller (Ed.), *Acknowledging Consumption* (pp. 238-263). London: Routledge.
- Macdonald, S. (2006). Words in stone? Agency and identity in a Nazi landscape. *Journal of Material Culture*, 11(1/2), 105-126.
- Madakasira, S., & O'Brien, F. (1987). Acute posttraumatic stress disorder in victims of a natural disaster. *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, 175, 286-290.

- Madrid, P. A., & Grant, R. (2008). Meeting mental health needs following a natural disaster: Lessons from hurricane Katrina. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice* 39(1), 86.
- Maj, M., Starace, F., Crepet, P., Lobraccio, S., Veltro, F., De Marco, F., et al. (1989). Prevalence of psychiatric disorders among subjects exposed to a natural disaster. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*, 79, 544-549.
- Mankowski, E. S., & Rappaport, J. (2000). Narrative concepts and analysis in spiritually based communities. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 28(5), 479-493.
- Mankowski, E. S., & Thomas, R. E. (2000). The relationship between personal and collective identity: A narrative analysis of a campus ministry community. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 28, 517-528.
- Massey, D. (2006). Landscapes as provocation: Reflections on moving mountains. *Journal of Material Culture*, 11(1/2), 33-48.
- McAdams, D. P. (1988). *Power, intimacy and the life story: Personological inquiries into identity*. New York, NY: Guilford.
- McAdams, D. P. (1993). *The stories we live by: Personal myths and the making of the self*. New York, NY: William Morrow.
- Meares, C. (2007). *From the rainbow nation to the land of the long white cloud: Migration, gender and biography* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). Massey University, Auckland, New Zealand.
- Mikulas, W. L. (2007). Buddhism and western psychology: Fundamentals of integration. *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 14(4), 4-49.
- Miller, D. (1995). *Acknowledging Consumption*. Oxford: Routledge.
- Miller, G. (2005). The tsunami's psychological aftermath. *Science*, 309(5737), 1030-1033.
- Mitchell, C., DeLange, N., Molestane, R., Stuart, J., & Buthelezi, T. (2005). Giving a face to HIV and AIDS: on the uses of photo-voice by teachers and community health care workers working with youth in rural South Africa. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 2, 257-270.
- Mitchell, D. W. (2002). *Buddhism: Introducing the Buddhist Experience*. New York, NY: Oxford.
- Morgan, N., & Pritchard, A. (2005). On souvenirs and metonymy: Narratives of memory, metaphor and materiality. *Tourist Studies*, 5(1), 29-53.

- Moriarty, C. (1995). The absent dead and figurative First World War memorials. *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society*, 39, 8-40.
- Murphy, S. A. (1984). Stress levels and health status of victims of a natural disaster. *Research in Nursing and Health*, 7, 205-215.
- Murray, M. (1997). *Narrative health psychology*. Wellington, New Zealand: Massey University.
- Murray, M. (2000). Levels of narrative analysis in health psychology. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 5(3), 337-347.
- Nah, A. M., & Bunnell, T. (2005). Ripples of hope: Acehese refugees in post-tsunami Malaysia. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, 26(2), 249-256.
- Nastasi, B. K., Jayasena, A., Summerville, M., & Borja, A. P. (2011). Facilitating long-term recovery from natural disasters: Psychosocial programming for tsunami-affected schools of Sri Lanka. *School Psychology International*, 32(5), 512-532.
- Nastasi, B. K., Varjas, K., Bernstein, R., & Jayasena, A. (2000). Conducting participatory culture-specific consultation: A global perspective on multicultural consultation. *School Psychology Review*, 29, 401-413.
- Nesbitt, C., & Tolia-Kelly, D. (2009). Hadrian's Wall: Embodied archaeologies of the linear monument. *Journal of Social Archaeology*, 9(3), 368-390.
- New Zealand Psychological Society. (2002). *Code of Ethics*. Wellington: Author.
- Nikapota, A. (2006). After the tsunami: A story from Sri Lanka. *International Review of Psychiatry*, 18(3), 275-279.
- Nora, P. (1989). Between memory and history: Les lieux de memoire. *Representation*, 26(1), 7-25.
- Normand, C. L., Silverman, P., & Nickman, S. (1996). Bereaved children's changing relationships with the deceased. In S. Nickman, D. Klass & P. Silverman (Eds.), *Continuing Bonds: New Understandings of Grief* (pp. 87-111). Washington, DC: Taylor & Francis.
- Norris, F. H., Stevens, S. P., Pfefferbaum, B., Wyche, K. E., & Pfefferbaum, R. L. (2008). Community resilience as a metaphor, theory, set of capacities, and strategy for disaster readiness. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 41, 127-150.

- Olsen, B. (2003). Material culture after text: Re-membering things. *Norwegian Archaeological Review*, 36(2), 87-104.
- Papadatos, Y., Nikou, K., & Potarnianos, G. (1990). Evaluation of psychiatric morbidity following an earthquake. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 36, 131-136.
- Pe-Pua, R. (1989). Pagtatanong-tanong: A cross-cultural research method. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 13(2), 147-163.
- Pe-Pua, R. (2006). From decolonizing psychology to the development of a cross-indigenous perspective in methodology: The Philippine experience. In U. Kim, K. Yang & K. Hwang (Eds.), *Indigenous and Cultural Psychology: Understanding People in Context* (pp. 109-137). New York, NY: Springer.
- Pearson, M., & Shanks, M. (2001). *Theatre/Archaeology*. London: Routledge.
- Perera, A. (2009, 26 December). *In Sri Lanka, tsunami anniversary inspires mixed reactions*. Retrieved from <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1949982,00.html>
- Perera, A. (2011, 1 November). *Forgotten monuments*. Retrieved from <http://lmd.lk/2011/11/01/tsunami-revisited/>
- Petty, N. J., Thomson, O. P., & Stew, G. (2012). Ready for a paradigm shift? Part 2: Introducing qualitative research methodologies and methods. *Manual Therapy*, 17(4), 267-274.
- Phifer, J. F., Kaniasty, K. Z., & Norris, F. H. (1988). The impact of a natural disaster on the health of older adults: A multiwave prospective study. *Journal of Health and Social Behaviour*, 29, 65-78.
- Places Online. (2011). *Vacations Hikkaduwa: Sri Lanka*. Retrieved from http://www.placesonline.com/asia/sri_lanka/hikkaduwa/introduction.asp
- Plaks, A. H. (1977). Towards a critical theory of Chinese narrative. In A. H. Plaks (Ed.), *Chinese narrative: Critical and theoretical essays* (pp. 309-352). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Pooley, J. A., Cohen, L., & O'Connor, M. (2006). Community resilience and its link to individual resilience in the disaster experience of cyclone communities in Northwest Australia. In D. Paton & D. Johnston (Eds.), *Disaster Resilience: An Integrated Approach* (pp. 161-170). Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

- Porteous, J. (1990). *Landscapes of the Mind: Worlds of Sense and Metaphor*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Propp, V. (1968). *Morphology of the folktale*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Pynoos, R. S., Goenjian, A., Tashjian, M., Karakashian, M., Manjikian, R., Manoukian, G., et al. (1993). Post-traumatic stress reactions in children after the 1988 Armenian earthquake. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, *163*, 239-247.
- Radley, A. (2009). *Works of Illness: Narrative, Picturing and the Social Response to Serious Disease*. Ashby-de-la-Zouch, England: InkerMen Press.
- Radley, A. (2011). Image and imagination. In P. Reavey (Ed.), *Visual Methods in Psychology* (pp. 17-28). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Radley, A., Chamberlain, K., Hodgetts, D., Stolte, O., & Groot, S. (2010). From means to occasion: Walking in the life of homeless people. *Visual Studies*, *25*(1), 36-45.
- Radley, A., & Taylor, D. (2003). Remembering one's stay in hospital: A study in recovery, photography and forgetting. *Health: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Social Study of Health, Illness and Medicine*, *7*, 129-159.
- Rahula, W. (1974). *What the Buddha Taught* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Grove Press.
- Rando, T. (1995). Grief and mourning: Accommodations to loss. In H. Wass & R. A. Neimeyer (Eds.), *Dying: Facing the Facts*. Washington, DC: Taylor & Francis.
- Rappaport, J. (1998). The art of social change: Community narratives as resources for individual and collective identity. In X. B. Arriaga & S. Oskamp (Eds.), *Addressing Community Problems: Psychological Research and Interventions. The Claremont Symposium on Applied Social Psychology* (pp. 225-246). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Rappaport, J. (2000). Community narratives: Tales of terror and joy. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *28*, 1-24.
- Reckwitz, A. (2002). Towards a theory of social practices: A development in culturalist theorizing. *Journal of Social Theory*, *5*, 243-263.

- Reed-Victor, E., & Stronge, J. (2002). Homeless students and resilience: Staff perspectives on individual and environmental factors. *Journal of Children and Poverty*, 8, 159-183.
- Riessman, C. K. (1993). *Narrative analysis*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE.
- Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.
- Rodrigo, R. (2011). Between Remembrance and Recreation: Containing memory in urban landscapes. *Memory Connection*, 1(1), 272-282.
- Rosenblatt, P. C. (2000). *Parent Grief: Narratives of Loss and Relationship*. Philadelphia, PA: Taylor and Francis.
- Ross, N. J., Renold, E., Holland, S., & Hillman, A. (2009). Moving stories: Using mobile methods to explore the everyday lives of young people in public care. *Qualitative Research*, 9(5), 605-623.
- Ruwanpura, K. N. (2010). Waves of reality: Spatial and temporal dynamics of post-tsunami development in Sri Lanka - A gender analysis. In N. de Mel, K. N. Ruwanpura & G. Samarasinghe (Eds.), *After the Waves: The Impact of the Tsunami on Women in Sri Lanka* (pp. 65-83). Colombo 5, Sri Lanka: Social Scientists' Association.
- Ryan, B. F. (1953). *Caste in Modern Ceylon: The Sinhalese System in Transition*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Sandhu, D. P. (2004). Cultural, social and family autobiographies. In J. L. DeLucia-Waack & J. Donigian (Eds.), *The Practice of Multicultural Group Work: Visions and Perspectives from the Field* (pp. 75-79). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Sarbin, T. R. (1986). The narrative as a root metaphor for psychology. In T. R. Sarbin (Ed.), *Narrative psychology. The storied nature of human conduct* (pp. 3-21). New York, NY: Praeger.
- Schank, R. C., & Abelson, R. P. (1995). Knowledge and memory: The real story. In R. S. Wyer (Ed.), *Knowledge and memory: The real story. Advances in social cognition*, (Vol. 8, pp. 1-85). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Schatzki, T. R. (2001). Introduction: Practice theory. In T. R. Schatzki, K. Knorr-Cetina & E. von Savigny (Eds.), *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory* (pp. 1-14). New York, NY: Routledge.

- Schatzki, T. R. (2002). *The Site of the Social: A Philosophical Account of the Constitution of Social Life and Change*. Pennsylvania, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Schroevers, M. J., Kraaij, V., & Gamefski, N. (2011). Cancer patients' experience of positive and negative changes due to the illness: Relationships with psychological well-being, coping, and goal reengagement. *Psycho-Oncology*, 20, 165-172.
- Schroevers, M. J., Ranchor, A. V., & Sanderman, R. (2006). Adjustment to cancer 8 years following diagnosis: A longitudinal study comparing cancer survivors with healthy individuals. *Social Science & Medicine*, 63, 598-610.
- Scott, B. G., & Weems, C. F. (2013). Natural disasters and existential concerns: A test of Tillich's theory of existential anxiety. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 53(1), 114-128.
- Shore, J. H., Tatum, E. L., & Vollmer, W. M. (1986a). Evaluation of mental effects of disaster, Mount St. Helens eruption. *American Journal of Public Health*, 76, 76-83.
- Shore, J. H., Tatum, E. L., & Vollmer, W. M. (1986b). Psychiatric reactions to disaster: The Mount St. Helens experience. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 143(5), 590-595.
- Shove, E. (2004). Changing human behaviour and lifestyle: A challenge for sustainable consumption. In L. Reisch & I. Røpke (Eds.), *The Ecological Economics of Consumption*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.
- Shove, E., & Pantzar, M. (2005). Consumers, producers and practices: Understanding the invention and reinvention of Nordic walking. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 5, 43-64.
- Shove, E., & Warde, A. (2002). Inconspicuous consumption: The sociology of consumption, lifestyles, and the environment. In R. Dunlap, F. Buttel, P. Dickens & A. Gijswijt (Eds.), *Sociological Theory and the Environment: Classical Foundations, Contemporary Insights* (pp. 230-250). London: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Shusterman, R. (2008). *Body consciousness: A philosophy of mindfulness and somaesthetics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Silva, K. T. (1999). Caste, ethnicity and the problem in national identity in Sri Lanka. *Sociological Bulletin*, 48(1 & 2), 201-215.
- Spaargaren, G., & van Vliet, B. (2000). Lifestyles, consumption and the environment: The ecological modernisation of domestic consumption. *Environmental Politics*, 9, 50-76.
- Spencer, J. (1990). *Sri Lanka: History and the roots of conflict*. London: Routledge.
- Stanley, S. (2012). Intimate distances: William James' introspection, Buddhist mindfulness, and experiential inquiry. *New Ideas in Psychology*, 30, 201-211.
- Stein, N. L. (1982). The definition of a story. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 6, 487-507.
- Stephens, J. (2007). Memory, commemoration and the meaning of a suburban war memorial. *Journal of Material Culture*, 12(3), 241-261.
- Stewart, S. (1993). *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Stewart, S. (1999). Prologue: From the museum of touch. In M. Kwint, C. Breward & J. Aynsley (Eds.), *Material Memories: Design and Evocation* (pp. 17-36). Oxford: Berg.
- Stroebe, W., & Stroebe, M. S. (1997). Determinants of adjustment to bereavement in younger widows and widowers. In M. S. Stroebe, W. Stroebe & R. O. Hansson (Eds.), *Handbook of Bereavement: Theory, Research and Intervention* (pp. 208-239). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stuber, S. C. (2000). The interposition of personal life stories and community narratives in a Roman Catholic religious community. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 28, 507-515.
- Swatton, S., & O'Callaghan, J. (1999). The experience of 'healing stories' in the life narrative: A grounded theory. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 12(4), 413-429.
- Talbot, K. (2002). *What Forever Means after the Death of a Child*. London: Brunner-Routledge.
- Theriault, K. S. (2003). Re-membling Vietnam: War, trauma, and "scarring over" after "The Wall". *The Journal of American Culture*, 26(4), 421-431.
- Thiruchelvam, N. (1996). Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict and preventive action: The role of NGOs. In R. Rotberg (Ed.), *Vigilance and Vengeance: NGOs*

- Preventing Ethnic Conflict in Divided Societies* (pp. 147-164).
Washington, DC: Brookings Institute.
- Thomas, R. E., & Rappaport, J. (1996). Arts as community narrative: A resource for social change. In M. B. Lykes, R. Liem, A. Banuazizi & M. Morris (Eds.), *Unmasking Social Inequalities: Victims, Voice and Resistance*. Philadelphia: Temple University.
- Tilakaratne, A. (2012). *Theravada Buddhism: The View of the Elders*. Honolulu, Hawai'i: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Tilley, C. (1997). *A Phenomenology of Landscape*. Oxford: Berg.
- Tilley, C. (2006). Introduction: Identity, place, landscape and heritage. *Journal of Material Culture*, 11(1/2), 7-32.
- Tolia-Kelly, D. (2004). Locating processes of identification: Studying the precipitates of re-memory through artefacts in the British Asian home. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 29, 314-329.
- Trafi-Prats, L. (2009). Destination Raval Sud: A visual ethnography on pedagogy, aesthetics, and the spatial experience of growing up urban. *Studies in Art Education*, 51(1), 6-20.
- Tuohy, R., & Stephens, C. (2012). Older adults' narratives about flood disaster: Resilience, coherence, and personal identity. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 26, 26-34.
- Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1974). Judgement under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases. *Science*, 185, 1124-1131.
- Urry, J. (2002). *The Tourist Gaze*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Valsiner, J. (2006, June). *The overwhelming world: functions of pleromatization in creating diversity in cultural and natural constructions*. Paper presented at the International Summer School of Semiotic and Structural Studies, Imatra, Finland.
- von Peter, S. (2008). The experience of 'mental trauma' and its transcultural application. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 45, 639-651.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1962). *Thought and Language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Wada, K., & Park, J. (2009). Integrating Buddhist psychology into grief counselling. *Death Studies*, 33, 657-683.
- Wang, X., Gao, L., Shinfuku, N., Zhang, H., Zhao, C., & Shen, Y. (2000). Longitudinal study of earthquake-related PTSD in a randomly selected

- community sample in north China. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 157, 1260-1266.
- Warde, A. (2005). Consumption and theories of practice. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 5, 131-153.
- Watson, G. (1998). *The Resonance of Emptiness: A Buddhist Inspiration for a Contemporary Psychotherapy*. Richmond Surrey, UK: Curzon Press.
- Weaver, M., & Chamberlain, G. (2009). *Sri Lanka declares end to war with Tamil Tigers*. Retrieved from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/may/18/tamil-tigers-killed-sri-lanka>
- Weber, Z., Rowing, L., & Scanlon, L. (2007). "It's like a....confronting issue": Life changing narratives of young people. *Qualitative Health Research*, 17(7), 945-953.
- Webmoor, T., & Witmore, C. (2008). Things are us! A commentary on human/things relations under the banner of a 'social' archaeology. *Norwegian Archaeological Review*, 41(1), 531-570.
- Weinstein, N. D., Lyon, J. E., Rothman, A. J., & Cuite, C. L. (2000). Changes in perceived vulnerability following natural disaster. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 19(3), 372-395.
- Wertsch, J. (2007). Collective memory. In J. Valsiner & A. Rosa (Eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociocultural Psychology* (pp. 645-660). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Whittaker, C. R. (1994). *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*. London: John Hopkins University Press.
- Widdershoven, G. (1993). The story of life. Hermeneutic perspectives on the relationship between narrative and history. In R. Josselson & A. Lieblich (Eds.), *The Narrative Study of Lives* (Vol. 1, pp. 1-20). London: Sage.
- Witztum, E., & Lerner, V. (2008). Creativity, loss and character. Balakirev: The man had at one time all of music in his hands, but *Creativity Research Journal*, 20(3), 319-327.
- Witztum, E., & Malkinson, R. (2009). Examining traumatic grief and loss among Holocaust survivors. *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, 14, 129-143.

Wood, J. M., & Bootzin, R. R. (1992). Effects of the 1989 San Francisco earthquake on frequency and content of nightmares. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 101*, 219-223.

APPENDIX A: Information Sheet



Re-membering those lost: The role of monuments in narrative repair.

Information sheet

1. What is the study about?

This study aims to document the feelings and experiences of communities in Sri Lanka affected by the Tsunami, and to uncover their life narratives following the tragedy. I intend to explore the significance of the various ‘Tsunami monuments’ and to highlight how they have enabled communities such as yours to ‘re-member’ and re-story events and lives as a way to rebuild your lives following the disaster.

2. Who is the researcher?

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Waikato, New Zealand, completing my Master’s in Community Psychology. This research will be carried out as part of my Master’s Thesis.

While I will be the sole researcher working towards achieving the key aims of the project, I will be working under the supervision of Professor Darrin Hodgetts and Dr. Otilie Stolte from the University of Waikato, New Zealand.

This project has been given ethical approval under the University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Regulations.

3. What will be asked in the interviews?

The following key themes will be covered in the interviews;

- Your life before and after the tsunami.
- The impact of the tragedy on your family.
- Are the monuments meaningful and/or helpful for you?
- Are there any other significant places, objects or art forms that have been important as a way to remember what has been lost in the tsunami?

These themes may take up to 2-3 meetings to cover, and with your consent these will take the form of an informal discussion or a 'walk-along' interview where you can show me the monument or various other objects or places of significance to you.

4. What will happen to the information I provide?

I would like to tape and make a written record of the interview. Your story will be combined with the other information I collect for my Masters Thesis. The thesis will be submitted to the University of Waikato. This information may also later be used to prepare academic papers for publication.

5. Will other people know who I am?

No. In the thesis (and later articles) you will only be identified as a participant of the research. Any details that might identify you, that you wish to exclude from the transcript will be taken out or disguised. All possible care will be taken to protect your privacy.

6. What if I agree to participate and then change my mind?

You may withdraw from the interviews at any time during the discussions or request that particular information is not used. If you wish to withdraw from the research completely please let me know at the time or by contacting me within 2 weeks of the interview (Contact details below). After this time, it will be more difficult to remove information from the analysis.

7. How can I find out about the results of the study?

I can send you a summary of my findings.

8. Who can I speak with about my participation in this project?

If you have further questions or concerns, I will be happy to discuss these with you. You can also contact my supervisors, Darrin Hodgetts and Otilie Stolte. Contact details are given below.

Thank you so much once again for your time.

Shemana Cassim

Contact Details

Shemana Cassim (Principal Investigator), *Phone:* xxxx xxxxxx *Email:*
gsc7@waikato.ac.nz

Darrin Hodgetts (Research Supervisor), Department of Psychology, University of Waikato, PB 3105, Hamilton. *Phone:* +647838 4466 ext 6456 *Email:*
dhdgetts@waikato.ac.nz

Otilie Stolte (Research Supervisor), Department of Psychology, University of Waikato, *Phone:* +647838 4466 ext 6454 *Email:* otilie@waikato.ac.nz

APPENDIX B: Sinhalese Translation of Information Sheet



වියෝ වූවන් සැමරීම: ස්මාරක සහ මතක සටහන් තුළින් යලි ජීවිත ගොඩනැගීම

තොරතුරු පත්‍රිකාව

1. මෙම අධ්‍යයනය කුමක් පිළිබඳවද?

මෙම අධ්‍යයනයේ අලමුණ වන්නේ සුනාමි බේදවාචකයට මුහුණ දුන් ලාංකීය ජන කොටස් ලැබූ අත්දැකීම් සහ ඔවුන්ගේ හැඟීම් ගැන සොයා බැලීමය. බේදවාචකයෙන් පසුව ඔබලා ජීවිතයට මුහුණ දුන් අයුරු දැනගැනීමට මම කැමතී. සුනාමියට පසුව ඔබලාගේ ජීවිත යලිත් ගොඩනගා ගැනීමට උපකාර වූ ස්මාරක සහ මතක සටහන් අධ්‍යයනය කිරීමට මම කැමතී.

2. සමීක්ෂකයා කවුද?

මම නවසීලන්තයේ වයිකටෝ විශ්වවිද්‍යාලයේ ඉගැනුම ලබන්නෙමි. මම සාමාජික මනෝ විද්‍යාව පිළිබඳ පශ්චාත් උපාධිය අවසන් කරමින් සිටින්නෙමි. මෙම උපාධියේ කොටසක් ලෙස මෙම සමීක්ෂණය කරන්නෙමි. තවද, නවසීලන්තයේ වයිකටෝ විශ්වවිද්‍යාලයේ මහාචාර්ය ඩැරින් හොප්ට්ස් සහ ආචාර්ය ඔටලි ස්ටෝල්ට් දෙපලගේ අධීක්ෂණය යටතේ කටයුතු කරන්නෙමි.

මෙම සමීක්ෂණය නවසීලන්තයේ වයිකටෝ විශ්වවිද්‍යාලයේ මානව සමීක්ෂණ ආචාර්යධර්ම පද්ධතියට අනුකූල බවට අනුමැතිය ලැබී ඇත.

3. සමීක්ෂණයේදී කුමන අන්දමේ කරුණු විමසීමට ලක්වේද?

- සුනාමියට පෙර හා පසු ඔබගේ ජීවිතය පිළිබඳ තොරතුරු

- මෙම බේදවාචකයෙන් ඔබගේ පවුලට වූ බලපෑම්
 - ඉදිවූ ස්ථාරක හෝ ඔබගේ මතක සටහන් වලින් ඔබට වූ උපකාරය
- මෙම තේමාවන් ගැන කතා කිරීමට, ඔබගේ අනුමැතිය ඇතිව, හමුවීම් 2-3ක් පමණ ගතකිරීමට බලාපොරොත්තු වෙමි.

4. අපගේ කතා වලින් සපයන තොරතුරු වලට කුමක් සිදුවේ ද?

ඔබගේ අනුමැතිය ඇතිව, අපගේ කතා පටිගත කිරීමට සහ සටහන් කිරීමට මා බලාපොරොත්තු වෙනවා. ඔබ මට සැපයූ තොරතුරු, මා එක් රැස් කරගත් අනෙකුත් තොරතුරු සමඟ මාගේ ජර්මාන නිබන්ධනයට ඇතුළත් වනු ඇත. මෙම නිබන්ධනය සම්පූර්ණ කොට, මාගේ විශ්වවිද්‍යාලය වෙත භර දෙනු ඇත. මෙම තොරතුරු පසු කලකදී අධ්‍යාපන සටහන් ලෙස ද ලේඛණ ගතවීමට ඉඩ ඇත.

5. ඔබ පිලිබඳ තොරතුරු වෙනත් පුද්ගලයන්ට නිරාවරණය විය හැකිද?

නැත. මාගේ ලේඛණ වල ඔබ අධ්‍යයනයට සහභාගී වූවකු ලෙස පමණක් හඳුන් වනු ඇත. ඔබව පුද්ගලිකව හඳුනා ගත හැකි යැයි ඔබ සිතන කවර හෝ තොරතුරක් වේ නම්, එය අනු පිටපතෙන් ඉවත් කිරීමට හෝ සභවා දැක්වීමට හැකිය. ඔබගේ පෞද්ගලිකත්වර ආරක්ෂා කිරීමට හැකි සෑම පියවරක්ම ගනු ඇත.

6. මා මුලින් සහභාගී වීමට කැමති වුවද, පසුව අදහස වෙනස් කරගතහොත්?

කතාවක් අතරතුරදී කතාවෙන් ඉවත් වීමට, හෝ ඔබගේ ඉල්ලීම පරිදි කතා කළ කරුණු ඉවත් කරගැනීමට ඔබට සම්පූර්ණ නිදහස ඇත. මෙම සමීක්ෂණයෙන් සම්පූර්ණයෙන් ඉවත් වීමට ඕන නම්, එම අවස්තාවේදී හෝ සමීක්ෂණය අවසන්වී සති 2ක් ඇතුළත මා අමතා ඒ බව දැනුම් දෙන්නට පුළුවන්. මාගේ දුරකථන අංකය පහත සඳහන් වේ.

7. අධ්‍යයනයේ සොයාගැනීම් ඔබට දැනගැනීමට අවශ්‍ය වේ නම්..?

මා සොයාගත් කරුණු වල සාරාංශ ඔබට එවීමට හැකිය

8. මා සහභාගී වූ කතා පිලිබඳ මට කථා කළ හැක්කේ කා සමඟ ද?

ජර්මාන තිබේ නම් හෝ යම් කරුණු පැහැදිලි කිරීමක් අවශ්‍ය වේ නම් මා එයට ඕනෑම වේලාවක සූදානම්. තවද, ඔබට අවශ්‍ය නම් මාගේ අධීක්ෂකයන් වන මහාචාර්ය ඩැරින් හොප්ට්ස් සහ ආචාර්ය ඔටලි ස්ටෝල්ට් යන දෙපළට සම්බන්ධ විය හැකිය. ඔවුන්ගේ තොරතුරු පහත දක්වේ.

ඔබ ලබාදුන් වටිනා කාලයට නැවත වරක් ස්තූතිවන්ත වෙමි.

මානා කසිම්

සම්බන්ධ විය හැකි අන්දම

මානා කසිම් (මූලික සමීක්ෂකයා), *Phone:* xxxx xxxxxx *Email:*

gsc7@waikato.ac.nz

මහාචාර්ය ඩැරින් හොප්ටස් (අධීක්ෂක), වයිකටෝ විශ්වවිද්‍යාලයේ මනෝ විද්‍යා
සමීක්ෂණ අංශය

Department of Psychology, University of Waikato, PB 3105, Hamilton. *Phone:*

(+64 7) 838 4466 ext 6456 *Email:* dhdgetts@waikato.ac.nz

ආචාර්ය ඔට්ලි ස්ටෝල්ට් (අධීක්ෂක), වයිකටෝ විශ්වවිද්‍යාලයේ මනෝ විද්‍යා
සමීක්ෂණ අංශය

Department of Psychology, University of Waikato, *Phone:* (+64 7) 838 4466 ext

6454 *Email:* ottilie@waikato.ac.nz

APPENDIX C: Interview Guide



Re-membering those lost: The role of monuments in narrative repair.

Interview Guide – Background Sheet

Interviewee: _____

Male / Female Age: _____ Occupation/Livelihood: _____

Where they are from: _____

Family Responsibilities: _____

Session Number: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Location: _____

Duration of interview: _____

Impression of how interview went:

Initial themes to emerge in the interview:

Potential revisions for interview guide:

Re-membering those lost: The role of monuments in narrative repair.

Interview Guide – Researcher Checklist

(1st interview) Introduction

- Thank participant for their time and agreeing to participate
- Introduce self/background
- Explain aims of research and interview
- Provide information sheet and consent form
- Consent for turning recording device on – explain conditions

(Follow up interviews) General follow up questions

- Clarify questions/doubts/comments from last interview

Themes

- A narrative of your life before and after the tsunami.
 - Routine?

- The impact of the tragedy on you and your family.
 - Negative
 - Positive

- The function of things (monuments/objects) on your recovery process.
 - What does this (object) mean to you?
 - What does this object show you about life now?
 - Has its importance changed over time?
 - How long have you had/visited this (object)?
 - How often did you visit the (object) a few years ago/how often do you visit it now?

Summarise main points of interview and encourage further input from the participant

- Would that be an accurate synopsis?
- Is there anything you would like to bring up or thought should have been discussed?
- Do you have any further questions concerning this study?

Reminder

- Follow up interview date/time/place

- Address/contact details for feedback of final interview or to post summaries of research if required

Thank you for your time

APPENDIX D: Sinhalese Translation of Interview Guide



විශේෂ වූවන් සැමරීම: ස්මාරක සහ මතක සටහන් තුළින් යලි ජීවිත ගොඩනැගීම

සමීක්ෂණය සඳහා උපදෙස් මාලාව - පසුතල සටහන්

නම: _____

පුරුෂ / ස්ත්රී වයස: _____ රැකියාව: _____

පදිංචි ස්ථානය: _____

පවුලේ වගකීම්: _____

අංකය: _____

දිනය: _____ වේලාව: _____

ස්ථානය: _____

සමීක්ෂණ කාලය: _____

මගේ අදහස්:

සමීක්ෂණයේ මූලික තේමා:

ප්රශ්න/ගැටලු/වෙනස් කිරීම:

වියෝ වූවන් සැමරීම: ස්මාරක සහ මතක සටහන් තුළින් යලි ජීවිත ගොඩනැගීම

සමීක්ෂණය සඳහා උපදෙස් මාලාව - තේමා ලෙසේනුව

(පලමු සමීක්ෂණය) හඳින්වීම

- සහභාගී වීමට ස්තූති කිරීම
- මා (පරීක්ෂකයා) හඳුන්වා දීම
- සමීක්ෂණයේ අරමුණු පහදා දීම
- තොරතුරු පත්රිකාව සහ අවසර පත්රිකාව සැපයීම
- කතාව පටිගත කිරීමට අනුමැතිය ගැනීම - කොන්දේසි පහදා දීම

(2වන හා 3වන සමීක්ෂණ) ප්රශ්න

- පෙර සමීක්ෂණ වල ප්රශ්න/ගැටලු/අදහස් සාකච්ඡා කිරීම

තේමාවන්

- සුනාමියට පෙර හා ඉන් පසු ඔබගේ ජීවිත කතාව
 - සාමාන්ය දෛනික කටයුතු?
- සුනාමියෙන් ඔබට හා ඔබේ පවුලට වූ බලපෑම්
 - හොඳ
 - නරක
- ස්මාරක/නටඹුන්/මතක සටහන් ඔබගේ ජීවිතයට බලපෑ අන්දම
 - එය ඔබට වැදගත් වන්නේ කෙසේ ද?
 - එය ඔබගේ වර්තමාන ජීවිතයට දෙන පණිවිඩය කුමක්ද?
 - කාලය සමඟ එහි වටිනාකම වෙනස් වී ඇත්ද?
 - ඔබ එය කොපමණ කාලයක් තිස්සේ වැදගත් ලෙස සලකා ඇත්ද?
 - එය (ස්මාරකය) කී වතාවක් දැකබලා ගැනීමට පැමිණ ඇත්ද? (වසර කිහිපයකට පෙර/වර්තමානයේ)

ලැබූ තොරතුරු සාරාංශ කර, තොරතුරු ලබා දුන් තැනැත්තා ව තව කරුණු ලබා දීමට

දිරිමත් කරන්න

- මෙය නිවැරදි සාරාංශයක් ද?
- මීට අමතරව තවදුරටත් සාකච්ඡා කලයුතු යම් දෙයක් තිබේ ද?

□ මෙම අධ්‍යයනය සම්බන්ධව ඔබට අමතර ප්රශ්න/ගැටලු තිබේ ද?

මතක් කිරීම්

□ ඊළඟ සමීක්ෂණ දිනය/වේලාව/ස්ථානය _____

□ අවසාන සමීක්ෂණය සම්බන්ධව කරුණු ලබා ගැනීමට හෝ සමීක්ෂණ සාරාංශ තැපැල් කිරීමට තොරතුරු ලබා දුන් තැනැත්තාගේ ලිපිනය/දුරකථන අංකය

ඔබ දුන් සහයෝගයට සහ වටිනා කාලයට බොහෝම ස්තූතී

APPENDIX E: Participant Consent Form



SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

CONSENT FORM

PARTICIPANT'S COPY

Research Project: Re-membering those lost: The role of monuments in narrative repair.

Name of Researcher: Shemana Cassim

Name of Supervisors: Darrin Hodgetts, Otilie Stolte

I have received an information sheet about this research project or the researcher has explained the study to me. I have had the chance to ask any questions and discuss my participation with other people. Any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to participate in this research project and I understand that I may withdraw at any time. If I have any concerns about this project, I may contact the convenor of the Research and Ethics Committee (Dr Lewis Bizo, phone: 838 4466 ext. 6402 or 856 0095, e-mail: lbizo@waikato.ac.nz)

Participant's Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____



SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

CONSENT FORM

RESEARCHER'S COPY

Research Project: Re-membering those lost: The role of monuments in narrative repair.

Name of Researcher: Shemana Cassim

Name of Supervisors: Darrin Hodgetts, Otilie Stolte

I have received an information sheet about this research project or the researcher has explained the study to me. I have had the chance to ask any questions and discuss my participation with other people. Any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to participate in this research project and I understand that I may withdraw at any time. If I have any concerns about this project, I may contact the convenor of the Research and Ethics Committee (Dr Lewis Bizo, phone: 838 4466 ext. 6402 or 856 0095, e-mail: lbizo@waikato.ac.nz)

Participant's Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX F: Sinhalese Participant Consent Form



මනෝ විද්‍යා අංශය
අවසර පත්‍රිකාව

සහභාගී වන්නාගේ පිටපත

සමීක්ෂණ වියාපෘතිය : විශේෂ වූවන් සැමරීම: ස්මාරක සහ මතක සටහන් තුළින් යලි ජීවිත ගොඩනැගීම

සමීක්ෂකයාගේ නම: ඡමානා කසිම්

අධීක්ෂකයන්ගේ නම: මහාචාර්ය ඩැරින් හොප්විස්, ආචාර්ය ඔටලි ස්ටෝල්ට්

මා හට මෙම සමීක්ෂණය පිලිබඳ තොරතුරු පත්‍රිකාවක් හෝ සමීක්ෂකයා විසින් මේ සම්බන්ධ තොරතුරු පැහැදිලි කිරීමක් කර ඇත. මේ සම්බන්ධව ඕනෑම ප්රශ්නයක් ඇසීමට සහ මාගේ සහභාගිත්වය සම්බන්ධව අන් අය සමඟ සාකච්ඡා කිරීමට අවස්ථාව ලබා දී ඇත. සෑම ප්රශ්නයකටම මට සෑහීමකට පත්විය හැකි පිලිතුරු ලැබී ඇත.

මෙම සමීක්ෂණ වල සහභාගී වීමට මා එකඟවන අතර, මට අවශ්‍ය ඕනෑම විටක ඉන් ඉවත් වීමටද හැකියාවක් ඇති බවත් පැහැදිලි ය. මට මේ වියාපෘතිය සම්බන්ධව කවර හෝ ප්රශ්නයක් වේ නම් ඕනෑම විටකදී සමීක්ෂණ ආචාර ධර්ම කමිටුවේ කැඳවුම්කරුට සම්බන්ධ විය හැකිය. (ආචාර්ය ලෙවිස් බ්ලිස්, දුරකථන අංකය: (+64 7) 838 4466 ext. 6402, (+64 7) 856 0095, e-mail: lbizo@waikato.ac.nz)

සහභාගී වන්නාගේ නම : _____ අත්සන: _____ දිනය: _____



මනෝ විද්‍යා අංශය
අවසර පත්‍රිකාව

සමීක්ෂකයාගේ පිටපත

සමීක්ෂණ වියාපෘතිය : විශේෂ වූවන් සැමරීම: ස්මාරක සහ මතක සටහන් තුළින් යලි ජීවිත ගොඩනැගීම

සමීක්ෂකයාගේ නම: ඡමානා කසිම්

අධීක්ෂකයන්ගේ නම: මහාචාර්ය ඩැරින් හොප්විස්, ආචාර්ය ඔටලි ස්ටෝල්ට්

මා හට මෙම සමීක්ෂණය පිලිබඳ තොරතුරු පත්‍රිකාවක් හෝ සමීක්ෂකයා විසින් මේ සම්බන්ධ තොරතුරු පැහැදිලි කිරීමක් කර ඇත. මේ සම්බන්ධව ඕනෑම ප්රශ්නයක් ඇසීමට සහ මාගේ සහභාගිත්වය සම්බන්ධව අන් අය සමඟ සාකච්ඡා කිරීමට අවස්ථාව ලබා දී ඇත. සෑම ප්රශ්නයකටම මට සෑහීමකට පත්විය හැකි පිලිතුරු ලැබී ඇත.

මෙම සමීක්ෂණ වල සහභාගී වීමට මා එකඟවන අතර, මට අවශ්‍ය ඕනෑම විටක ඉන් ඉවත් වීමටද හැකියාවක් ඇති බවත් පැහැදිලි ය. මට මේ වියාපෘතිය සම්බන්ධව කවර හෝ ප්රශ්නයක් වේ නම් ඕනෑම විටකදී සමීක්ෂණ ආචාර ධර්ම කමිටුවේ කැඳවුම්කරුට සම්බන්ධ විය හැකිය. (ආචාර්ය ලෙවිස් බ්ලිස්, දුරකථන අංකය: (+64 7) 838 4466 ext. 6402, (+64 7) 856 0095, e-mail: lbizo@waikato.ac.nz)

සහභාගී වන්නාගේ නම : _____ අත්සන: _____ දිනය: _____

APPENDIX G: Summary of Participants' Profile

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Occupation/Responsibilities		Family members lost as a result of tsunami		Material object(s) of significance		
			Prior to tsunami	Following tsunami	Immediate	Close relatives	Monument	Art form	Other material object(s)
Priyani	F	37	Part-time student	Tourism industry	√			√	√
Ajith	M	46	Coral reef mining	Security guard		√			√
Kumara	M	43	Politician	School Principal		√	√		
Priyantha	M	57	Coral reef mining	Works in coconut industry	√		√		√
Nadhee	F	42	Housewife	Housewife	√		√		√

APPENDIX H: Priyani's Poems with English Translations

Poems from document 1:

මහා මුහුදේ රැලි අතරේ මගේ අම්මා සැඟවී ගියා,
මහා මුහුදේ රැලි අතරේ මගේ සතුට සැඟවී ගියා,
මහා මුහුදේ රැලි අතරේ සැඟවෙන්න මට හිතෙනවා.

My mother is lost; shielded by the waves of the great ocean, and so is my happiness. I too feel like shielding myself, hiding among those waves.

මහ මුහුද ගොඩබිමට ගැලූ ඒ දිනේ,
අම්මේ ඔබේ දු තනිකර දමා ඇයිදෝ ඔබ යන්නට ගියේ,
මේ ලෝකයෙන් මගේ අම්මා සමුගන්න මොහොතේ එදා,
මගේ දෙනෙත කඳුලු සයුරක් උනා.

මහා සයුර හින්දා දැසින් ගලනා කඳුලුලේල නිමවෙයිද මන්දා..

The day that the great ocean encroached the land, why did you depart leaving your daughter all alone? The moment my mother took her leave from this world that day, the tears I shed formed a sea.

Will the tears flowing from my eyes because of the great ocean ever cease?

නොමැත මෙවන් උතුම් සැපක් අම්මා,
ඔබේ උනුසුමේ රැඳෙනවා වාගේ,
නොමැත මෙවන් උතුම් හදක් අම්මා,
උබේ ආදර හදවත වාගේ..
නොමැත දුවට වරම් අම්මා ලඟ රැඳෙන්නට තරම්..
නොවන් මෙවන් දුකක් කිසිම දිනක ලොවේ

There is no divine comfort like being in the presence of your warmth mother, there is no divine love like your loving heart. You daughter is not fortunate enough to be close to you. There has never been a greater sorrow in the world than this.

මුහුද ගොඩට ගැලූ දවසේ ඔය දෙනනා බේරගන්න බැරි උනාට
සමා වෙන්න අම්මේ තාත්තේ
එදා පටන් මගේ දෙනෙතින් උනු කඳුලුයි තාම ගලන්නේ
ඔය දෙනනාගේ සෙනෙහස මිස නැහැ වෙන සෙනෙහසක් වටින්නේ
මගේ ලොවේ හිරුයි සඳුයි නිව් ගියානේ
ඔය දෙනනාගේ පොඩි දු අද තනි උවානේ
ඔය දෙනනාගේ පොඩි දුව ගැන මැවූ සිහින මහා මුහුදට යටව නොයන්නේ
ඒ සිහිනය ඉටුවනදා, දෙව්ලොව සිට ඔය දෙනනා, හිනැහෙනවා නේ
ඒ හින්දයි තවමත් මා ජීවත් වෙන්නේ

Mother and father, I ask for forgiveness for not being able to save you the day the ocean encroached the land. The tears that started flowing from my eyes that day are still flowing today. I do not value any other love aside from yours. You, the sun and moon of my world were extinguished. Your youngest daughter is left on her own today. The hopes and dreams you had for your youngest daughter, did not sink along with the waves. The day those hopes and dreams are fulfilled, you will be smiling down from the world of the Gods. That is why I am still alive.

Poems from document 2:

හිරු සිරියට සිව්පාවන් විහඟු රහන්නේ,
දොරු කතරක කම්පාවෙන් මුහුද කලාතුරේ,
ජීවිතයේ සුන්බුන් මැද මා තනිවෙන්නේ,
මව්පිය කොහි ගියාද දිය පාරට ඇද්දේ

The animals where basking in the sun's rays, when an earthquake caused the ocean to suddenly encroach the land. Amidst the ruins and

devastation in life I am alone, where did the waves pull my mother and father to?

ඉර බසිනා හැන්දෑවට රැල්ල මගේ ගෙදර ඇවිත්,
දුවේ කියා කතා කරනවා,
ඒ දෙනිනා ඉන්න තැනට එන්න කියනවා,
දේශිකාර හඬට හිතත් හඬා වැටෙනවා

The waves enter my home in the evening as the sun sets and call to me; calling me 'daughter', they call me to where my parents rest. The echoes make my heart cry out in sorrow.

ක්ෂිතිෂය ඉමේ ආකාසේ, ඒ දෙනිනාගේ සිතූම් පැතුම්,
නොමැකෙන ලෙස ලියා තිබෙනවා.
ඒ පැතුමන් ඉටු කරන්නට, ජීවත් වෙනවා.
හවෙත් හවේ මගේ මව්පියෝ දෙපොල පනනවා.

The thoughts and dreams of my parents lie at the edge of the horizon. They are written in a way that will never be erased. I live to fulfil those hopes and dreams. I hope that in every rebirth they will remain my parents.