

Smoke Gets in Your Eyes:

The Blurred Lines of the Secular and Sacred at the Cham Shan Temples in Canada

By

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Abstract

Sacred and secular spaces have a long and complicated relationship with each other. Often, this relationship has been one of separation, each having its particular place within society. Even scholarship on sacred space assumes this separation, asserting an either/or binary. Through applying the spatial analysis to the Cham Shan Temple in Thornhill, ON and the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa in Niagara Falls, ON, and examining the interaction by adherents and tourists at these locations, the either/or mentality of space is shown to be limited. The apparent distinction becomes blurred and transparent as these temples serve a multitude of purposes, both secular and sacred. Instead of continuing an either/or approach to space, a both/and approach, along with understanding space as existing on a continuum allowing the sacred in the secular and the secular in the sacred, would better serve future endeavours.

Dedicated to those I have lost on my path,

Those who walk it with me now,

And those I have yet to meet.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Manifestations of religion abound in various forms, one only need walk around Kingston, ON for example, to verify the presence of religion. Buddhism, once considered an exotic religion obscured in mystery, has, like Christianity, settled across Canada. Religion has a tangible, physical form found in the construction and preservation of spaces such as churches, temples, mosques, and religiously affiliated private educational institutions. Localized structures are unique to their particular place, gaining sacredness from the believers who utilize them on a daily, weekly, monthly, or annual basis. In addition, historical and sociocultural frameworks established by society created the backdrop for these structures.

Religion is nothing without adherents who express, physically, emotionally or morally, their religion by drawing on the human senses. The visual aspects of religion are but one way to express religion within society. Sound is a vital and common feature in how religion is revealed, including bells rung, chants sung, or confessions spoken. The aroma of burning incense, candles, or paper money, or special plants including tobacco and sweet grass, and sacrificial offerings of food, whether cooked or uncooked, entice our senses. In relation to scent, we call on the sense of taste, in the sharing and eating of special foods. Finally, engaging in the sense of touch, we sit on or kneel at pews, caress prayer beads, cross the chest, bow, or touch icons.¹

These more ritualistic aspects of religion – burning incense, chanting, sharing meals, kneeling – in connection with a physical structure, demonstrate clearly how religion, especially Buddhism, manifests in society. These different elements, the tangible and less-than-tangible, the

¹ For a more elaborated discussion on the use of the senses by religion, see Shampa Mazumdar, and Sanjoy Mazumdar. "Sacred Space and Place Attachment." *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 2009, 231-42. Additionally, for a similar but more detailed description of this concept in relation to religious sites in China see Elizabeth Harvey. "Religious Space and Place in Modern China." *The Arbutus Review* 3, no. 1 (2012): 37-52.

sights, sounds, smells, taste, the sensations of religion, which tend to occur in discrete spaces, nevertheless intermingle with the environment at large, becoming a part of a larger social mosaic.

Buddhism is lived through the aforementioned senses, and within space. What is space, especially sacred space, and how does it relate to the study of religion? Kim Knott points out in *The Location of Religion: A Spatial Analysis*, “[o]nce it is clear that I do not mean *outer space*, the listener [or reader] often settles for an image of *abstract space*...Abstract space...conveys a sense of emptiness, of being a passive container for bodies and objects, of being homogenous.”² We overlook space, relegating it to little more than a background, a setting, for sacred rituals and practices to take place. Abstract space “...may contain religion or even be a *tabula rasa* or backdrop against which it is enacted,”³ however, this is not the type of space that religion lives in, rather space should be understood materially and metaphorically, physically and imaginary.⁴ Imagining space in these ways is central to examining how we understand Buddhism in modern secular societies. While understanding space is crucial to understanding Kim Knott’s spatial analysis methodology, which forms the backbone of the subsequent chapters, we must differentiate and clarify sacred space even further.

Roger W. Stump in *The Geography of Religion: Faith, Place, and Space*, declares that, as with other terms in the study of religion, “...efforts to define the meaning of sacred space have been a recurring source of conflict within and between religious groups, and between religious groups and secular forces.”⁵ Nevertheless, sacred space is understood as being sacred because those who recognize and use it as a sacred space have deemed it such. Sacred space is defined as

² Kim Knott. *The Location of Religion: A Spatial Analysis*. (London: Equinox Pub., 2005). 12

³ Ibid,12

⁴ Ibid, 13

⁵ Roger W. Stump. *The Geography of Religion: Faith, Place, and Space*. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008). 28

having a direct connection between space and the superhuman, thus, it is important to the interactions between humanity and the superhuman.⁶ Additionally, we designate certain sites as sacred due to their association with the history of specific religious groups.⁷ Alternately, a sacred space may be designated as sacred for its perceived home of the superhuman or the location for superhuman manifestations, miracles and revelations.⁸

Stump continues by stating that sacred space consists of a variety of spaces and places with "...geographical space represent[ing] a crucial trait of religious systems."⁹ The variety of spaces and places understood as sacred include the cosmic scale, which encompasses everything else and includes concepts of hierarchal worlds.¹⁰ Confined within this material earth we find lands, "...represent[ing] the most broadly conceived expression of [tangible] sacred space."¹¹ These spaces are not stagnant nor perpetually designated, which poses difficulties when multiple religions claim rights over the same location. Nonetheless, land plays a central role in a religion's past, present and future and is central to the development of adherents' identity and ethos.¹²

Aside from these larger scale sacred spaces, there are those on a smaller scale, with adherents "...hav[ing] defined a great variety of more local spaces in the material world, in reference both to natural features and to human structures."¹³ Thus, there are natural spaces, a small river, or a mountain range, that are understood as and treated as sacred spaces. In addition to natural sacred spaces, the scale narrows even further, with unique local spaces – shrines,

⁶ Ibid, 26

⁷ Ibid, 25-26

⁸ Ibid, 26

⁹ Ibid, 301

¹⁰ Ibid, 306

¹¹ Ibid, 309

¹² Ibid, 309

¹³ Ibid, 312

places of worship, or ritual places and ordinary local spaces, utilized "...in the everyday enactment of religion in a community."¹⁴ Finally, adherents also construct sacred spaces on a more personal scale, establishing micro-scale sacred spaces that include tangible objects as elaborate or simple as an altar, goblet, or symbol, or less tangible spaces created within the body, as through mediation.¹⁵ In this way, with the variety of possible sacred spaces from the cosmic level to the micro-scale, it is "...[s]acred space [that] in effect represents the manifestation, visible or imagined, of a religion's worldview."¹⁶ William E. Paden states succinctly,

[a]ll humans have the experience of space, but religious cultures endow special places as gateways or connectors to the world of the sacred. Religious systems orient life around certain fixed points that form a site of communication with the gods. The sites may be natural, provided by the environment, like certain rivers or mountains, or they may be human constructions like shrines and temples. Sometimes these linkages are explicitly understood to connect heaven and earth, the above and the below. Around such an axis, or 'Centre of the World,' the rest of the world, the ordinary world, rises up and receives value.¹⁷

Stump and Paden underscore how space is an essential aspect of any religious practice and is adaptable to individual and communal needs. Moreover, Stump and Paden demonstrate the complexity of sacred space as it exists within a person, shrines and altars, or within nature. In other words, any space has the potential to become sacred through how we interact and interpret a space. Paden and Stump focus more on how the relationship between 'heaven' and 'earth' is grounded in physical, tangible space. While the physical aspect of space is important it is only one part of what fully constitutes sacred space.

¹⁴ Stump, *The Geography of Religion*, 323

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 328-329

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 329

¹⁷ William E. Paden, "Comparative religion," in *The Routledge Companion to The Study of Religion*, ed. John Hinnells (London: Routledge, 2010). 232

According to the Jackson and Henrie statement in Chris C. Park's *Sacred World: An Introduction to Geography of Religion*, sacred space is "...that portion of the earth's surface which is recognized by individuals or groups as worthy of devotion, loyalty or esteem. [S]acred space does not exist naturally, but is assigned sanctity as man [*sic*] defines, limits and characterises it through his [*sic*] culture, experience, and goals."¹⁸ While sacred spaces, as with any constructed space, do not naturally occur, coming into existence through human interaction, they are real places on the ground, thereby relating back to the creation of the physical landscapes of worship and death.¹⁹ In classifying sacred space, Park points out that not all sacred sites have equal status or perceived holiness, even amongst believers, rather there are degrees of sacredness.²⁰ There are different reasons why a sacred space is selected, including how a space is associated with people who are particularly significant, or because they are associated with myths and legends of a religion. In addition, sacred spaces may be recycled, in other words, a different religion might now occupy sites once used by another.²¹ Sacred space is not chosen randomly rather it is chosen then made extraordinary through ritual practice. Furthermore, sacred space, which can be centripetal or centrifugal, local or universal, can be walked on without being entered, as individuals must ritually take part in making the space sacred.²²

Related to this selection is the designation of a sacred space, in that once a site is selected and understood as being sacred, it tends to be designated as such in perpetuity.²³ The final point in relation to sacred spaces and their use is the desire to protect and preserve them. This desire can be a mixed blessing, in that while there is a special status associated with these spaces,

¹⁸ Chris C. Park. *Sacred Worlds: An Introduction to Geography and Religion*. (London: Routledge, 1994), 250

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 250

²⁰ *Ibid*, 250-1

²¹ *Ibid.*, 251-2

²² Knott, *The Location of Religion*, 96

²³ *Ibid*, 252

making them top priority for protection, ironically, it also encourages mass numbers of visitors, both secular and spiritual, who can end up damaging the very thing they want to experience for themselves firsthand.²⁴ Cultural and religious sites receive thousands of annual visitors, which naturally takes a toll on the sites, unfortunately, a small percentage of tourists also engage in harmful activities, graffiti, climbing on or touching relics are primary, that increases gradual wear and tear of a site which can lead to a crackdown on visitor behaviour and freedom to explore.²⁵

This relationship between protection and preservation of sacred spaces brings up the discussion of tourism. Similar to sacred space, tourism is a complex phenomena, it emphasizes a combination of pleasure, leisure, recreation, and travel. Burkart and Medlik define tourism as an “amalgam of phenomena and relationships,” which arise from the movement of people from one place to another or multiple destinations, involves visiting destinations outside of one’s normal area which gives rise to distinct activities and usually a temporary respite (a few days, weeks, or months). The purpose of the visit is solely for enjoyment, not business or vocational reasons.²⁶ On the other hand, pilgrimage, as Tomasi states, “...can be defined as a journey undertaken for religious purposes that culminates in a visit to a place considered to be the site or manifestation of the supernatural.”²⁷ While each has a different emphasis, we find both include devotion to enjoyment in tourism, and enjoyment of devotion in pilgrimage. Furthermore, tourism and pilgrimage are no longer distinct entities. Religious sites, previously preserved for specific

²⁴ Ibid, 253

²⁵ For example, the Lascaux Caves, famous for the persevered prehistoric paintings found within, is a prime example of the inadvertent damage that visitors can cause. Even though the caves were open to the public for a relatively short time, the containments introduced into the cave’s ecosystem caused mold to grow on the walls, almost permanently damaging the fragile art. Without proper care and attention to the damage that tourists can cause to a space, whether purposefully or not, more sites will come to the same fate as the caves.

²⁶ A.J. Burkart, and S. Medlik. *Tourism: Past, Present and Future*. (London: Heinemann, 1974), 39

²⁷ Luigi Tomasi. "Homo Viator: From Pilgrimage to Religious Tourism via the Journey." In *From Medieval Pilgrimage to Religious Tourism: The Social and Cultural Economics of Piety*, ed. William H. Swatos and Luigi Tomasi, (Westport: Praeger, 2002), 3

purposes, are now culturally significant, emphasizing the religious aspect of pilgrimage gave way to secularity, instead of personal salvation to enter the otherworld, escape from the daily-grind to enjoy worldly activities and places, became preferred.

Tomasi continues, stating that today "...the distinction between pilgrimage driven by faith and tourism for cultural and recreational purposes no longer holds,"²⁸ rather there is now a mingling of sacred and mundane activities, adherents and tourists, in an entangled web of religiosity, consumerism, and other purposes. For Wong et al, religious and tourists sites fuse and:

Visitors may come to a sacred site to worship, for an interest in such places as contributors to culture and heritage, or simply out of idle curiosity to see places of interest with friends and family... [o]ther motives may include a wish to enjoy natural and cultural landscapes given that many such sites are in locations of natural beauty or heritage importance... Additionally, some might wish to muse the relationship between the divine and the human on a basis other than that of the original religious faith associated with the place.²⁹

Pilgrimage was the precursor to travelling for leisure, adherents laid the groundwork for future tourists, and tourism, particularly tourism to religious sites, can now be understood as religious tourism.³⁰ Indeed, Oakes concludes, "...it has become common to observe the extent to which religious sites, sacred architecture, pilgrimage paths, and the lure of the metaphysical are all now commodified for tourists."³¹

Kim Knott is apt to declare that there has been a spatial turn in the study of religion, and through a critical engagement with her spatial analysis, I will utilize her method with a specific goal in mind: to examine how sacred spaces are multi-faceted and multi-purpose spaces.

²⁸ Ibid, 21

²⁹ Cora Un In Wong, Chris Ryan, and Alison McIntosh. "The Monasteries of Putuoshan, China: Sites of Secular or Religious Tourism?" *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing* 30 (2013): 577-94. Accessed March 24, 2015. Taylor & Francis Group Online, 578

³⁰ Tim Oakes. *Faiths on Display Religion, Tourism, and the Chinese State*. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010), 8

³¹ Ibid

Through a detailed, qualitative, and methodical analysis of the Cham Shan Temples, I seek to demonstrate how religion is a multi-faceted phenomena existing everywhere. As comparison is at the base of all things, particularly the study of religion, I provide an analysis of two of Cham Shan's temples since no two spaces are the same. Paden says, "[s]eeing similarities and differences is a basic activity of the human mind. The perception of relationships and patterns is the way individuals and cultures organize their experience in the world."³² Thus, while I restrict my focus on a specific branch of Buddhism as established in Canada, I would be negligent, given my interest in sacred spaces, if I focused only on one temple. Comparison, in association with spatial analysis and tourism, grants greater insight into the Cham Shan organization itself. Inspecting the unique particularities of each site allows us to see the similarities and differences that exist, and attempt to explain their existence. Through this inspection, I plan to answer what is the first activity the majority of tourists notice, discuss, and take photos of, both inside and outside of the temple; what are the most common questions tourists have when they go to the temple, and what appears to be the first physical part of the temple geared toward tourists, if any? How do these tourist-focused aspects compare and contrast with adherents and is there a distinct difference between the two?

Paden concludes, "Comparative perspective uncovers relationships between phenomena that would otherwise be unseen, and links those patterns to a broader interpretive theme or concept."³³ Critiques of comparison are reasonable since historically it has been used to gloss over the interesting and important differences among cultures while simultaneously uplifting the status of a particular religion over all others (the trend in the nineteenth century was to prove

³² Paden, "Comparative Religion," 225

³³ Paden, "Comparative Religion," 240

Christianity was superior).³⁴ Nonetheless, I shall endeavour to not fall into this pitfall by ensuring to elaborate extensively on each site while favouring neither.

The editors of *Wild Geese: Buddhism in Canada* issued a challenge – or a call to arms – that sought more Canadian-based advanced studies in Buddhism. This challenge followed the momentum of the works of Janet McLellan and her *Many Petals of the Lotus: Five Asian Buddhist Communities in Toronto* and Bruce Matthews *Buddhism in Canada*, which sought to shed light on the ever-growing popularity and growth of Buddhism across Canada. The editors of *Wild Geese*,

...call for further studies, which would be informed by these theoretical reflections and will in turn provide additional data and analysis to better establish this nascent field of Buddhism in North America. We need more basic field-work studies of the many Buddhist communities and Buddhist personalities across Canada. And, because Buddhism is not some disembodied religion that exists separate from actual living people, we need to collect the life stories of teacher and practitioners of Buddhism.³⁵

My analysis of the Cham Shan Temples, which represent Tiantai Buddhism, not only responds to this call but also steers the focus on an interaction that reveals a blurring of the line between secular and sacred, tourists and adherents.

Chapter 2: Spatial Analysis

A spatial turn occurred in the mid-1980s when the role of space, first explored in geography, became a field of study in social, cultural, and religious theory.³⁶ This chapter investigates the

³⁴ John R. Hinnells, “Why Study Religions,” in *The Routledge Companion to The Study of Religion*, ed. John Hinnells (London: Routledge, 2010), 14

³⁵ John Harding, *Wild Geese: Buddhism in Canada*, ed. John S Harding, Victor Sogen Hori, and Alexander Soucy. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), 405

³⁶ Knott. *The Location of Religion*, 1-2

spatial methodology created by Kim Knott, whose work draws particularly on Henri Lefebvre and his *The Production of Space* as well as Foucault, de Certeau, and Massy. Using their bodies of work Knott identified five key terms to analyze location of religion within any place, object, body, or group, whether religious or secular. They are:

- 1) Body as the source of space
- 2) Dimensions of spaces
- 3) Properties of space
- 4) Aspects of space
- 5) Dynamics of space³⁷

By outlining Knott's reasoning behind the development of her method, her utilization of Lefebvre and of course her establishment of five attributes for spatial analysis, I will present how these tools will be used to analyse the Cham Shan temples.

In the introduction to *The Location of Religion: A Spatial Analysis*, Knott explains that her spatial analysis works to discover religion in an increasingly secular world. She states there are three main reasons that brought her to the development of her spatial analysis. First, a spatial analysis, dedicated to examining religion through a spatial methodology, is timely as “[i]deas about space underpin[ing] discussions on urbanisation, globalisation, identity, diaspora, commodification and consumption, and the nature of modernism and postmodernism...are important in debating contemporary religion.”³⁸ In recent years, the study of space, particularly sacred space, has made a new and prominent claim within religious studies with scholars agreeing that the ways individuals and groups create and interact with their environment through

³⁷ Kim Knott, "Spatial Theory and the Study of Religion." *Religion Compass* 2, no. 6 (2008): 1102-1116. Journal Compilation. 1108

³⁸ Knott, *The Location of Religion*, 1-2

religious practices is essential to understanding religious phenomena.³⁹ With this renewed focus on “[t]he study of religious space, like the study of religious material culture, requires that interpreters keep a foot in the material world at the same time as they address theological, ideological, and experiential meanings, and...scholars have been uniquely successful in parsing these connections.”⁴⁰ While the examination of the role of space in religion may have once been a minority interest, we now recognize space as dynamic, and consisting of material, metaphorical, and imagined properties.⁴¹

Additionally, methodologically, spatial analysis is an innovative perspective to the study of religion, with the spatial turn “...refresh[ing the study of religion] with theoretical resources and debates from a variety of profitable resources...[providing] valuable lenses through which to view data on religion.”⁴² This is not to suggest that the study of religion has ignored space in the past. Rather, the spatial data related to religion focused on studies of sacred landscapes, pilgrimage routes, places of worship, missionary excursions, global religious developments, and cyber-religious networks, all the while indifferent to geographical or spatial offerings.⁴³ Whereas existing literature concerned itself with a predication on religion or the sacred as either an essential part of human nature and experience or the landscape as a condition of the domain under study, Knott’s approach intends to study religion, space, place, and location without importing such a predication.⁴⁴ As Knott notes, this goal, while perhaps admirable, was idealistic to the point of naivety as the process of disentangling the study of religion, as we know it today,

³⁹ Jeanne Halgren Kilde. "Space, Place, and Religious Meaning." *Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art and Belief* 3, no. 2 (2007): 277-78. 277

⁴⁰ Ibid. 277-8

⁴¹ Knott, *The Location of Religion*, 13

⁴² Knott, "Spatial Theory and the Study of Religion." 1102

⁴³ Ibid, 1103-1104

⁴⁴ Kim Knott, "Spatial theory and method for the study of religion," *Temenos*, 2, no.41 (2005):153-184. White Rose Research Online. 4

from its Western Judeo-Christian heritage has been nigh impossible. The purpose of Knott's spatial analysis is to recognize not only the importance of space in relation to the study of religion, but to discover the location of religion within everyday spaces, whether explicitly religious or not.

She accomplishes locating religion in a secular location in her book through an examination of the left hand, which is representative of her overall theory. The left hand, which I use to guide my own use of the senses, is much more than just another section of the body, just as the senses are more than a bodily function. The left hand has its own representations and perspectives, and social, mental, and physical characteristics. By focusing on its particularities, we can gain an appreciation of its uniqueness within a whole.⁴⁵ The left hand is a tangible part of the body, as well as metaphorical, an intangible symbol of the profane, deviant, alternative, and marginal. Similarly, the senses share this tangible and intangible nature. Through her examination of the left hand, Knott locates the religious in a seemingly secular space and underscores the importance of studying religion locally. As Knott notes, “[i]n the closing decade of the twentieth century, those of us studying religion in local perspective seemed to be ‘running against the grain’ there always seemed to be more important issues to research than religion and locality.”⁴⁶

Studying religion locally has a number of advantages, including recognizing that the religious life of a particular community has its own interactions, influences, demographics,

⁴⁵ Knott dedicates four chapters in *The Location of Religion: A Spatial Analysis* outlining the physical, social, and mental space of the left hand, religious and secular commentary on the ‘good’ and ‘evil’ and hierarchical ordering of the left and right hands (with preference given to right-handedness), to list a few. Suffice it to say, there is far too much material to summarize adequately on her case study of the left hand herein, however, being a left-handed individual (but adapting as most do in a cruel right handed world to be ambidextrous), I found her analysis to be amusing and insightful.

⁴⁶ Kim Knott, “From Locality to Location and Back Again: A Spatial Journey in the Study of Religion.” *Religion*, no.39 (2009):154-60. 154

sociality, economics, politics, and so forth.⁴⁷ Furthermore, “[b]y starting from the particular rather than the general and by focusing on what happens to religions within designated local space, [we] challenge the ‘World Religions,’ approach with its focus on discrete, generic traditions and normative beliefs and practices that is so common in religious studies.”⁴⁸ Breaking down the World Religions approach allows us to recognize the different levels that religion exists on, and that religion is not stagnant and nicely packaged. Rather, religion is evolving, and mixes general and local scales in its make-up. Additionally, “...the movement away from the modernist regime of collecting, classifying, comparing, and typologis-ing (*sic*) data on religion towards seeing religion as a dynamic and engaged part of a complex social environment or habitat, which is itself criss-crossed with wider communications and power relations.”⁴⁹ In connection with these two main advantages is the requirement that scholars are multidisciplinary and polymethodic in their approach to gain a fuller picture of reality that necessitates engagement, negotiation, and accountability to the locale. Investigating the local does not mean ignoring wider realities; rather these connections must be kept in mind.

By studying religion locally, it offers considerable pedagogical value as it opens up the opportunity for researchers to observe and evaluate their place within the local and the effect they can have.⁵⁰ I emphasize Knott’s particular interest in research occurring at the local level, as this is precisely where I take my cue. While Knott seeks to locate religion in the secular, but nonetheless local, level, I seek to discover the secular within religion, through my analysis of two “thoroughly” religious spaces. By limiting myself to the near at hand, but not ignoring the

⁴⁷ Kim Knott. "Geography, Space and the Sacred." In *The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion*, ed. John R. Hinnells. (London: Routledge, 2010), 477

⁴⁸ Knott, "Geography, Space and the Sacred," 478

⁴⁹ Knott, *The Location of Religion*, 119

⁵⁰ Knott, *The Location of Religion*, 119-120

general, I hope to gain a better appreciation of whether or not these religious spaces are, in fact, completely religious.

Five Attributes of the Spatial Analysis

As mentioned above, Knott's spatial analysis of religion encompasses five aspects which, taken together, establish a methodology which can locate religion. In particular, her methodology is especially useful for locating religion in secular places, communities, and objects, but they are not restricted to only locating religion in the secular world. The first of these, the body as the source of space, is foundational to experiencing and representing space and for talking about the environment, society and relationships, time and progress, culture and the sacred.⁵¹ The body is much more than just the sum of its physicality and biology and by looking for the signs of the body, we can find the location of religion in any given place.⁵² The body is where we discover religious and secular discourses working and religious discipline may play itself out in the body through clothing and gestures, thus reflecting a particular discipline as well as conditioning the body.⁵³ The body also indicates how religion and the secular are maintained and reproduced and the body is our source of scale and dimensions.⁵⁴ Furthermore, the body also "...involves examining the physical, social and mental dimensions of space [which] enables religious data to be considered in the context of the material and physical world, the space of social relationships, and in ideological, imaginary and cosmological locations."⁵⁵

⁵¹ Knott, "Spatial Theory and the Study of Religion," 1108

⁵² Ibid, 1108

⁵³ Ibid, 1108

⁵⁴ Knott, "Spatial Theory and the Study of Religion," 1108

⁵⁵ Ibid, 1109

The second attribute of spatial analysis, the dimensions of space, addresses how people experience space through sense, thought, and practice.⁵⁶ We conceive space physically, mentally, and socially, therefore space can no longer be solely restricted to geometric coordinates and the physical domain, but it cannot be overlooked as, without the physical, the mental, and social would have no place to exist.⁵⁷ The mental aspect of space is free floating and detached from physicality, and provides a tool of imagining, giving expression to possibility, cultural difference, imagination, and social relations.⁵⁸ Space is socially produced and reproduced through religious and secular organizations, networks, and casual exchanges.⁵⁹ In these ways, space is multi-dimensional, it is through the culmination of physical, mental, cultural, and social interaction, along with, as Knott puts it, "...an intrinsic connection between social relations and space, [that constitutes space]."⁶⁰

The properties of space underscore configuration, simultaneity, extension, and power. Configuration of a space speaks to the arrangement of a space, whereas simultaneity refers to the dynamic nature of a space that simultaneously encompasses religiosity and secularity, the local and the global.⁶¹ Extension refers to the idea that spaces are subject to time as spaces have multiple and complex histories, which we see through how a space is utilized and reutilized throughout time. The mixing of the diachronic, dealing of phenomena as they occur and change over time, and the synchronic, dealing with phenomena within a limited period of time, is at the crux of understanding religion from a local perspective because places do not remain the same. However, while their physicality may change, the social and mental memories of what used to

⁵⁶ Knott, *The Location of Religion*, 36

⁵⁷ Knott, "Spatial theory and method for the study of religion," 8

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 8

⁵⁹ Knott, "From locality to Location and Back Again," 158

⁶⁰ Lefebvre as quoted by Knott, *The Location of Religion*, 127

⁶¹ Knott, "Spatial theory and the study of religion," 1110

belong remain. The property of power intermingles with other properties and comes in the form of knowledge and social power.⁶² Space is produced and shaped through struggle, grounding ideas, beliefs, principles, and values, thus making them realities that affect and effect those who use them.⁶³ Through power, in relation to space, different groups vie for control, gaining and losing space over time, thus gaining and losing power as well.

Knott "...takes [her] inspiration and much of [her] method from the project of Henri Lefebvre [being] inspired by his enthusiasm for a spatial analysis and his hopes that it offers a transdisciplinary and timely approach to the understanding of social and political relations, as well as the possibility of uniting previously separated fields of enquiry."⁶⁴ As such, the heart of the fourth attribute, the aspects of space, is based on Lefebvre's *The Production of Space*, in which he offered a new field to reunite the physical, social, and mental concepts of space. Lefebvre's conceptions of space as perceived, conceived, and lived, provide useful tools for considering how people experience the space they inhabit as well as how they use and represent space.⁶⁵ Perceived space is the taken-for-granted everyday space that consists of its own logic and is closely associated with the body, incorporating a repertoire of gestures, movements, and behaviours, which account for the physical and social dimensions of the space they occur in, but not completely controlled by these.⁶⁶ Conceived space, on the other hand, focuses on the "...dominant, theoretical, often technical representations of space that are produced by planners, architects, engineers, and scholars, which express a dominant ideology."⁶⁷ The last aspect, lived

⁶² Knott, "Spatial theory and method for the study of religion," 11

⁶³ Ibid, 11

⁶⁴ Knott, *The Location of Religion*, 11

⁶⁵ Knott, "Spatial Theory and the study of religion," 1111

⁶⁶ Knott, "Spatial theory and method for the study of religion," 12

⁶⁷ Ibid, 13

space, we experience through imaginative and symbolic use of physical space, often resulting in the overturning, temporarily, of the dominant order.⁶⁸

Finally, space is dynamic. Space can and does change, in “...its relationship to power, history and time, its condition to simultaneity and the various ways in which it is experience and represented.”⁶⁹ Space is not merely the background to human activity, but an animated feature in society, particularly in relation to the study of religion at a local perspective. Knott writes:

Recent social and cultural theory has reconceived ‘space’ as dynamic, in terms of its relationship to power, history and time, its condition of simultaneity and the various ways in which it is experienced and represented. No longer is it seen as the passive container or backdrop for human activity. It is thoroughly enmeshed in embodiment and everyday practice, knowledge and discourse, and in processes of production and reproduction, and, consequently, it is enmeshed in religion no less than other areas of social and cultural life.⁷⁰

Of course, space does not exercise agency on its own, rather it is through people who express their agency in and through space that it exists. Space is not merely a product, but rather can influence the creation of new, similar yet different, spaces.⁷¹ Space is continually contested, as there is no singular fixed definition, thus it is open to discussion, and full of potential, bringing together various properties, dimensions, and aspects, embodying within it practices, ideas, and sensations – in these ways, space is active and dynamic.

Commentary

In his article, “A Response to Kim Knott,” Michael York reviews a paper written by Knott on The Community Religions Project in Leeds that she led. While he found the paper interesting and informative, he raises two important points for consideration, which can also be

⁶⁸ Knott, “From locality to Location and Back Again,” 159

⁶⁹ Knott, “Spatial Theory and the Study of Religion,” 1111

⁷⁰ Ibid, 1111

⁷¹ Knott, “Spatial theory and method for the study of religion,” 15

applied to her other works.⁷² Both are based on “...Knott’s basic premise [of] whether, “local religions can only be fully understood when a researcher appreciates their dynamic engagement with the character of the locality.””⁷³ York suggests removing the word ‘fully’ from her premise, stating that it is doubtful researchers can ever fully understand a situation. I would agree with his assessment, particularly if a researcher is an outsider to the location they are studying. In her article, “Insider/outsider perspectives” Knott does address the debate around insider versus outsider perspectives, especially as they relate to the study of religion. In it, she lays out a continuum that begins with a complete observer (and thus wholly an outsider), moves to observer as participant, followed by participant as observer, then complete participant (an insider).⁷⁴ I will not go into detail how she outlines the positives and negatives of each role in this continuum; rather I want to underscore her conclusion. Drawing on Collins, who advocates the abandonment of a dichotomous viewpoint, Mandair, who favours the study of religion being one of self-discovery as a counterbalance against objectivist tendencies, and Floor, calling for a reflexive dialogue between scholars and those they study, Knott concludes that:

[her] own view, formed in the context of developing a spatial methodology... is that *all* interlocutors – whether secular observers, religious participants, or those who strategically move between the two positions – are actors within a single knowledge-power field... The ‘secular’... is indeed in the same field of action and discourse as the ‘religious’, and, although the field contains operational boundaries, groups and factions, all those within are in one sense ‘insiders’, although as they go about their business they variously constitute themselves and others as ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ in accordance with their ideological and social purposes.⁷⁵

⁷² He raises more points in his response which Knott does address in her other works and thus do not need to be discussed here.

⁷³ Michael York, “A Response to Knott.” *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*, no.10 (1998):291-296. 293

⁷⁴ Kim Knott. “Insider/outsider perspectives.” In *The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion*, ed. John R. Hinnells (London: Routledge, 2010). 262

⁷⁵ Knott, “Insider/outsider perspective,” 270-271

Therefore, York's assessment that researchers should remove the attempt to 'fully' understand local religion is correct as such an attempt is far-fetched, a better assessment would for researchers, regardless of their affiliation to a place, be flexible in their approach.

Besides suggesting that 'fully' be removed from the premise, he suggests that 'dynamic' also be removed as "[n]ot all encounter between local religion and locality need necessarily be dynamic. Religion can often be diffused throughout society and work in non-obvious and subtle manners. If we concentrate on the dynamic alone, we could easily miss other, more immediately invisible effects of religion on community or locality on religion."⁷⁶ His concern of focusing on the dynamic, or the lively and vibrant aspects of religion that are often the easiest to see, often is done to the detriment of the presumably idle, dull, and passive elements that are crucial to a better (but not full) understanding a location. His concern is understandable and through my spatial analysis of the Cham Shan temples, I endeavour to notice the dynamic and idle aspects of religion to better inform my analysis.

The spatial analysis developed by Kim Knott follows a spatial turn that has occurred in the study of religion. Knott draws on the work of numerous scholars, in particular the work of Lefebvre to create a methodology that identifies the body as the source of space, the different dimensions, properties, and aspects that make up space, and the dynamic nature of space. While her methodology was developed to locate the religious in the secular, I utilized these five attributes, as well as Knott's focus on the local over the general, to discover the secular, everyday world within the religious, sacred world. Through focusing on the local level, researchers can appreciate religion as manifested nearby and to challenge the stereotyped "World Religions" discourse. Religion exists because adherents bring it into existence, and thus religion

⁷⁶ York, "Response to Kim Knott," 294

is subject to an array of perspectives, interpretations, and examinations in determining the answers to the questions posed by the religious and non-religious, and the student and scholar alike. Knott proposes that her spatial analysis can produce greater insight into a number of issues, including:

“...the everyday practices of religious people; the infusion of spaces by religion and discourse about religion; the religious production of places and spaces; the competing ideological position within and between contemporary religions; the presence (survival?) of ‘religion’ in a ‘secular’ context; religious (and secular) power relations, including relations of gender, sexuality, class, and race; the politics of religious identities and the contestation of spaces; [and] the utilization by religions of capital and their transmission with the flow of capital.”⁷⁷

In my use of this method, I endeavoured to discover the everyday practices of the Cham Shan temples, the infusion, and production of space by religious and secular forces, the presence of religion in a secular context, power relations between the religious and secular, and potential areas of contestation.

⁷⁷ Knott, *The Location of Religion*, 6

Chapter 3: Historical Overview

Chinese Buddhism in Canada: Historical Overview

To form my analysis of the Cham Shan Temples, it is important to outline the history of the development of Buddhism in Canada by examining the policies that affected immigration and cultural attitudes in general and the temples in particular. Chinese Buddhism has been part of the Canadian mosaic for generations. In fact, “[p]eople of Chinese origin have long been a part of the Canadian ethnic mosaic [with the first] mass wave of migration from China [arriving] around the middle of the nineteenth century when starvation, economic catastrophe, civil war and foreign exploitation compelled many Chinese to seek a greater chance of survival and economic opportunity overseas.”⁷⁸ The Chinese who suffered through these social ills migrated to all parts of the world, with a relatively small percentage immigrating to Canada.

Many Chinese arrived in search of fulfilling dreams of discovering the fabled Gold Mountain and finding their fortune; however, reality quickly pressed down on them. Many, in desperation, turned to work as cheap labour, often with dangerous conditions, taking up jobs Caucasian Canadians deemed less desirable. Due to citizenship denial and the heavy head tax, the Chinese population grew slowly, all the while resentment and discrimination continued to grow exponentially. Ironically, resentment grew as a result of their willingness to take unwanted, dangerous, low-paying jobs, forcing them to live in social and economic segregation.⁷⁹ Interwoven into Chinese culture, Buddhism provided solace during times of difficulty. However, maintaining their religiosity was not easy as Canadians, primarily Christians, despised them and their faith. This was compounded by the fact that “...many missionaries set up their centres in

⁷⁸ Tannie Liu, “Globalization and Chinese Buddhism: The Canadian Experience.” (PhD diss., University of Ottawa, 2005). 31

⁷⁹ Ibid, 33-37

Chinatown in order to save the lost souls [when] a lack of understanding of Asian traditions was at the heart of the conflict.”⁸⁰

Despite the conditions thrust upon them, and, quite likely, the restrictive policies, Chinese immigrants remained and informally introduced Buddhism to Canada. This was particularly true in Eastern Canada as Chinese immigrants attempted to escape the hostility experienced in British Columbia. While Chinese emigrated from East Asia to the Wild West, they were eventually driven to Eastern Canada by racial hostility and discrimination. As aptly stated in the introduction of *Wild Geese: Buddhism in Canada*: “History is not without a sense of irony.”⁸¹

Eventually, in 1967, Canada’s immigration laws were overhauled to strip away blatant racist restrictions and tendencies to be replaced with one that is race-neutral and based on points dependent on level of education, ability to speak one of Canada’s official languages, occupation, age, and family members.⁸² These new policies meant “...the selection of immigrants based on the immigrant’s potential economic contribution to Canada that the Chinese were placed on equal footing with immigrant of other ethnic origins.”⁸³ Following the implementation of the point system, several waves of Chinese immigrants arrived, and continue to arrive, in Canada, making Chinese the largest visible minority in Canada. Today, they account for over one million of Canada’s population with Chinese Buddhists composing more than half the Buddhist devotees in Canada – doubling since 1981.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Ibid, 41

⁸¹ "Introduction." In *Wild Geese: Buddhism in Canada*, edited by John S Harding, Victor Sogen Hori, and Alexander Soucy. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010. 5

⁸² Ibid, 4

⁸³ Liu, “Globalization and Chinese Buddhism,” 44

⁸⁴ Henry C.H Shiu. “Buddhism after the Seventies.” In *Wild Geese Buddhism in Canada*, edited by John S Harding, Victor Sogen Hori, and Alexander Soucy. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010. 87-88 and Peter Beyer. “Buddhism in Canada: A Statistical Overview of Canadian Censuses from 1891-2001.” In *Wild Geese Buddhism in*

The explosion of Buddhism in Canada can be attributed to another policy change that occurred in 1971. That year Canada became the first country to adopt a multiculturalism act as official policy. For immigrants,

Canada affirmed the value and dignity of all Canadians citizens regardless their racial or ethnic origins, their language, or their religious affiliations. [This policy] is fundamental to our belief that all citizens are equals [and] ensures that all citizens can keep their identities, can take pride in their ancestry, and have a sense of belonging [which gives] Canadians a feeling of security and self-confidence, making them more open to, and accepting of, diverse cultures...encourages racial and ethnic harmony and cross-cultural understanding.⁸⁵

McLellan, in the introduction of her book *Many Petals of the Lotus: Five Asian Buddhist Communities in Toronto* relays how the Toronto Buddhist Church incorporated Protestant Christian material and organizational models into their Buddhist practice to better fit and reflect mainstream society. This adaptation indicates how, prior to the implementation of the Multiculturalism Act, there was an expectation and social pressure to conform to the mainstream religious institutions and identities in order to thrive within Canadian society – assimilation was preferred over diversification.⁸⁶ Individuals with strong ethnic and religious identities are now encouraged to maintain their identities to add to the overall multiethnic and multi-religious mosaic – in response to these changes Buddhism, particularly Chinese Buddhism, has flourished in Canada.

A significant percentage of Canadian Buddhists reside in Ontario, particularly in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). According to the 2001 Census, there were 300,345 Buddhists

Canada, edited by John S Harding, Victor Sogen Hori, and Alexander Soucy. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010. 112-116

⁸⁵ "Canadian Multiculturalism: An Inclusive Citizenship." Government of Canada, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Communications Branch. October 19, 2012. Accessed March 15, 2015. <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/citizenship.asp>

⁸⁶ Janet McLellan. *Many Petals of the Lotus: Five Asian Buddhist Communities in Toronto*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999. 5

across Canada, the largest population (107,530 out of 172,352 Buddhists in Eastern Canada) living in the GTA.⁸⁷ Toronto remains an ethnically diverse city, people choose to settle in Toronto for the numerous opportunities and established social networks. The concentration of Chinese Buddhists in Ontario, my own backyard as it were, helped form my decision to focus on the Cham Shan organization for my analysis. Furthermore, contemporary research illuminates the Buddhist tesserae of the Canadian mosaic, research started by Janet McLellan's thorough overview of the state of five Asian Buddhist communities in Toronto.

In her chapter "Chinese Buddhists in Toronto," McLellan indicates that the increase of Chinese immigrants to the GTA led to the establishment of "...more than twenty-three Chinese Buddhist temples and associations within Toronto, several of which have undergone expansion or developed sister branches within the city."⁸⁸ She is careful to point out that each temple represents a distinct social and religious affinity, even though Chinese Buddhism can be analyzed collectively as a unique religious system. Likewise, the temples themselves represent several schools of thought, including Ch'an, Pure Land, Tiantai, and Vajrayana, as well as comprising of institutions that range from multi-temple such as Cham Shan and Fo Guang Shan Temples, both undergoing expansion, and smaller temples with specific, singular focuses.⁸⁹ The Chinese population in the GTA continues to grow, with dominant Chinese neighbourhoods encompassing a mix of residential, commercial, educational, social, entertainment, and religious components, in downtown Toronto, Scarborough, North York, Mississauga, Markham, and Thornhill.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Beyer, "Buddhism in Canada," 120

⁸⁸ McLellan. *Many Petals of the Lotus*, 159

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 159

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 162-163

Chinese Buddhism in Canada: Masters Sing Hung, Shing Cheung, and Luk To

The Cham Shan Temple and its numerous sister temples were not spontaneously built by lay followers; they are an accumulation of years of work and intertwined cultural, social, and personal histories. As such, it is important to pull out the personal history of the first masters who were responsible for the establishment of the temples. Prior to its renaming and expansion, Nam Shan temple, predecessor to the Cham Shan temple, was founded in Toronto in 1968 by Masters Sing Hung and Shing Cheung, the first recorded Chinese monks to arrive in Canada and regarded as the founders of Chinese Buddhism in Canada.⁹¹

Master Luk To was particularly important in helping Masters Sing Hung and Shing Cheung find their path to Canada. Recognizing the market for Buddhism to flourish in North America, he carved a path for Chinese Buddhism to spread to North America, eventually establishing the American Buddhist Association in New York.⁹² Masters Sing Hung and Shing Cheung eventually joined the Qingdao Cham Shan College, later meeting Master Luk To in Hong Kong, then, in 1967, he invited them to join him in America then travel to Montreal for the World Expo as a special treat.⁹³ During their visit, they met Mrs. Yingjing Yutang, the founder of the North American Buddhist Association, who expressed her concerns over the lack of a proper Chinese Buddhist temple in Toronto, urging them to stay in Canada to establish one, with her organization's support.⁹⁴ As Master Shing Cheung stated,

She noticed that there were a lot of Chinese in Toronto but no Buddhist temple. She was concerned as a Buddhist...she encouraged us to come to Toronto to set up a temple...provid[ed] us with funds to purchase a permanent place in

⁹¹ Liu, "Globalization and Chinese Buddhism," 102

⁹² Tannie Liu, "Globalization and Modern Transformation of Chinese Buddhism in Three Chinese Temples in Eastern Canada." In *Wild Geese Buddhism in Canada*, edited by John S Harding, Victor Sogen Hori, and Alexander Soucy. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010., 278 and Liu, "Globalization and Chinese Buddhism," 105-106

⁹³ Liu, "Globalization and Chinese Buddhism," 103-4

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 106

Toronto...we did not accept her offer right away [as we] wanted to come and survey the situation. Therefore, when we first arrived in Toronto, we were just renting a house as a temple.⁹⁵

Thus began the establishment of the now multi-complex Cham Shan Temple. The first permanent facility was purchased in 1968 after the monks realized that renting was not logistically sensible as they were subject to the whim of their landlords and, as the group of followers continued to increase, rendered rentals insufficient. Property was eventually purchased on Southill Drive and Nam Shan (South Hill) was established. However, even this property was soon outgrown, therefore, when a piece of land in Thornhill was donated in 1973, the property was utilized to serve as the site for a newly constructed temple.⁹⁶ Located at 7254 Bayview Avenue, the temple was constructed over the next five years, with the main hall completed in 1978, and was named Cham Shan Temple as a tribute to the Qingdao Cham Shan Temple where the Masters studied. In addition to the main temple in Thornhill, there are ten more locations. However not all locations are open to the public, some serve as residences for monks and nuns or house relics and scriptures not for public viewing. The location of the temple itself is in an area with numerous established places of worship, including Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, and Zoroastrian. Nonetheless, despite the fact that the temple is located near competing places of worship, “[i]t symbolizes the presence of the Chinese Mahayana Buddhism in Toronto and is a source of pride among many Chinese.”⁹⁷

The location of the temple within the Greater Toronto Area poses some difficulty. It is located outside of the main core of Toronto – not within close proximity of the subway line although it is located along two bus routes – the location is convenient for individuals who drive, but not as convenient for those using public transit. Due to the less convenient location came the

⁹⁵ Ibid, 106-107. For a more detailed history of the Masters, see Liu “Globalization and Chinese Buddhism.”

⁹⁶ Liu, “Globalization and Modern Transformation,” 279

⁹⁷ Liu, “Globalization and Chinese Buddhism,” 109

desire and need for multiple locations to better serve the community. This resulted in the purchasing of the location at 1330 Bloor St. West, the present Hong Fa Temple, which is one block away from the Lansdowne Station, thus far more easily accessible. The temple, built in a former restaurant, is a smaller version of the main Cham Shan Temple, with four levels, offering a mediation hall, main temple, library, dining hall, and offices.⁹⁸ It is also not as architecturally grand as the Thornhill location. While the Cham Sham temple was constructed in the traditional style of a palace surrounded by a garden, the Hong Fa temple is situated on a commercial street, surrounded by shops, a bank, a church, and a Value Village. The building blends into its environment with no real distinction between it and its surroundings – walk down the street and there it is.

The next major purchases were in 1995 when a thirty thousand square foot building was renovated into the Cham Shan Buddhist Gallery and Library in North York, which displays numerous Buddhist statues, art, houses a library, meditation/lecture hall, and dining room.⁹⁹ Also purchased in 1995 was the land in Niagara Falls for the construction of the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa, located at 4303 River Road. In both the stupa and the main hall over ten thousand Buddha statues are housed, mostly smaller, gold leaf casts that serve to represent eternity or infinity. Each location of the Cham Shan organization has unique features as well as sharing similar traits, serving to teach and promote the Tiantai and Pure Land schools of thought. The temples are, "...a place to learn the Buddhist dharma, particularly the Tiantai doctrines, as well as a place to increase one's merit according to the Buddhist karmic law of cause and effect."¹⁰⁰ What began as a small, rootless community attempting to fit in has now flourished

⁹⁸ Ibid, 109. Unfortunately, the temple was closed during my research trip so I was unable to visit inside, thus I am relying on Liu's descriptions rather than my own.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 109

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 279

into a widespread, strong community consisting of branches reaching across central and southern Ontario that continues to expand and plan for its future.

Chapter 4: Smoke and Water: Temple Descriptions

Cham Shan Temple

As previously mentioned, according to Liu, the Cham Shan temple was constructed to model traditional Chinese temples in China that resembles a monastery within a garden. To an extent, this desired look is accomplished. As I



do not drive, and recall one of the reasons for the construction of Hong Fa temple was for a more convenient location, I took a bus to the nearby stop and walked ten minutes to the temple itself.

The immediate area is residential, with large, upscale houses on either side of Bayview Avenue, cars rushing past in both directions. Socially, this is an important feature to keep in mind.

Donated to establish a permanent presence, the land had to be large enough to accommodate a growing community. Thornhill, a community of the still largely rural, but rapidly urbanizing, City of Markham, besides having land available, had a relatively strong Chinese presence, which continues to increase. According to Census Canada, the demographic profile of Markham in 2011 had a population of 300, 135 of which 134,690 were of East and Southeast Asian origin, with 38.3% (118,875) of the total population of Chinese origin. As an important part of Knott's analysis is to examine the specific (local), with its own unique make-up, interactions, influences, economics, and politics, examining the social dynamics of the temple and its immediate surrounding area helps to paint a more vibrant picture of its role within the larger community.

The first indication of the temple is a green, wooden fence divided by concrete pillars, with the Canadian flag, a red flag with gold lettering that reads Cham Shan Temple in English and Chinese, and the universal Buddhist flag lining the top of the fence (fig. 1). The universal

Buddhist flag was designed in 1885 but not adopted as the flag of Buddhists until 1952 at the World Fellowship of Buddhists.¹⁰¹ No specific information regarding the Cham Shan Temple's flag exists, in all probability it was created when the temple itself was established. Each flag represents how the dynamics of social, cultural, and power work in unison to establish various identities. The Cham Shan Temple flag signifies a desire to mark their territory within the landscape. The Canada flag symbolizes the temple's recognition of its Canadian context while the universal Buddhist flag serves as a connection with the local and global

Figure 1 Cham Shan Temple fence decorated with flags

Buddhist community, connecting the Cham Shan Temple with worldwide Buddhist organizations.¹⁰²



Figure 2 Cham Shan Temple main gate with lion sculptures

¹⁰¹ Christmas Humphreys. *A Popular Dictionary of Buddhism*. 2nd ed. London: Taylor & Francis E-Library, 2005, 72

¹⁰² Ibid.

The main gate is built in the traditional Chinese style with double eaves, peaked roof, a multitude of red peace lanterns cascade down the sides of the gate.¹⁰³ On either side of the gate are two white protection lions perched on red blocks that have the wheel of samsara carved on them (fig. 2). Immediately in front, as you enter the compound, is a shrine of Budai (布袋) – nicknamed the Happy Buddha – the representation of the future Buddha, Maitreya. There is faint, recorded chanting emanating from the main area of the compound mingling with the sound of cars driving by. A residence for monks stands to the left, painted white with yellow windows with a wrought iron and concrete fence that separate it from the rest of the compound (fig. 3). The



Figure 3 First residence for monks



¹⁰³ This architectural style, aside from having practical uses, is a result of ancient cultural principles, wherein curved, upturned corners kept evil spirits at bay as it is believed they would bounce off the roofs and thus unable to cause any malice.

courtyard of the house is paved smooth and has landscaped trees, however the tidiness of the grounds is disrupted by the presence of industrial recycling, garbage bins, and piles of rubble (fig 4 and 5). It has the façade of a suburban household undergoing renovation, and the barely audible chanting, overpowered by



Figure 6 Happy Buddha Shrine

traffic sounds, does little to dissuade this first impression. The Budai shrine is quite simple in comparison to the other buildings and shrines on the compound. Four red pillars hold up an arched roof for protection from the elements, four small round red lanterns hanging from the roof provide symbolic illumination for the smiling, white marble statue (fig. 6). The offerings of potted plants, incense, candles, and smaller statues, further adorn the small shrine, the smell of

Figure 4 Paved and treed courtyard with industrial recycling bin



Figure 5 Pile of rubble between house and shrine

incense permeates the air, and a single, grey, weatherworn kneeling stool completes the shrine. To the right hand side of the shrine's alcove is the entrance to a house, signs indicating it as the Tan Xu Hall, a memorial to the reform Master Tan Xu (fig. 7).¹⁰⁴ During my visit, two groups visited the shrine. The first group, two young couples with a toddler, separately entered the shrine, bowed, knelt on the stool then lit incense before leaving. Then two male volunteers, indicated by their yellow vests, came to clean the area, removing older, burnt-out incense sticks; these two groups represented two of the three main types of people who utilize the space – adherents and adherents who are volunteers. The last, aside from the occasional outsider or tourist like me, are the monastics.



Figure 7 Tan Xu Memorial Hall

¹⁰⁴ See Liu regarding the importance of Tan Xu to modern Chinese Buddhism

The features of the compound suggest a suburban house but the large parking lot, stretched across the compound, does not, though it does indicate a communal use of the space.

Other distinct, non-residential features also capture the senses, including the traditional Chinese style building with a bright yellow ramp and stone stairwell. Both are weatherworn

despite their short existence, with chipped red handles exposing cold, grey metal underneath suggesting some age and, perhaps, lack of maintenance. The ramp and stairs lead to a tall building, with thick red pillars and a distinctive, double eave green roof that catch the eye of visitors and separates it from the residential

buildings (fig. 8 and 9). This houses the Di Zang and Ancestral Halls, the roof style is indicative of Chinese architecture, around the entire building are tinted windows, which offer just enough natural light into the space but also create a sense of privacy. At the top of the stair is a courtyard with a large inscribed stone incense burner, some planters, and stone statues of arahants. Here, while the eyes are busy with the decorations, the sound of recorded chanting is much clearer as you approach the main hall of the complex, creating a transition between the secular world with its honking and rushing of traffic and the chanting of the sacred world.



Figure 8 Weatherworn ramp leading to Ancestral Hall



Figure 9 Weatherworn staircase leading to Ancestral Hall

On the main floor of the Di Zang and Ancestral Halls building is a wooden double door, locked, and barred from public use – a sign indicates to use the side door – despite the fact that these doors have the appearance of originally being intended as the main entrance; the reason for their closure is unclear. On either side of the doors are four tall, tinted windows with inscriptions in traditional Chinese characters. Even though the temple is new, and built well after the introduction of simplified characters, traditional characters are largely utilized throughout the complex. This is likely a means of preserving the cultural integrity and tradition of the ancient Chinese language into which sutras were first translated. It also adds a power dynamic as younger generations, and native speakers, may be unable to understand fully the writings, and thus must rely on others to assist them in their cultivation. Furthermore, it speaks to the fact that, while English is used sporadically at the temple, “in general, ethnic Buddhism in Canada remains culturally exclusivist,” to certain degrees.¹⁰⁵ While certain aspects of Chinese Buddhism are exclusive, that does not mean they do not welcome outsiders. In fact, when asking permission to wander around, make observations and take photos, the volunteers I spoke to were completely happy to let me – a couple even talked to me about the temple. The volunteers requested that I just take photos of the exteriors of the buildings and to be respectful of the halls and those using the spaces. Of course, this meant I had to rely heavily on my senses to form and remember the interior spaces; nonetheless, I endeavoured to be as thorough as possible with my descriptions.

Upon entering the Ancestral Hall, there are signs posted requesting meats, seafood, and alcohol not be made as offerings, in accordance with the Buddhist practice of vegetarianism and refraining from alcoholic beverages. The walls are covered with glass and wooden cases housing plaques with names and photos of individuals who have passed away, tables placed around the

¹⁰⁵ Bruce Matthews. *Buddhism in Canada*. London: Routledge, 2006. xix

room are covered in offerings of fruits, particularly oranges and apples, as well as potted flowers and plants. There are also a number of bowls of oil, candles, and lit incense, once again permeating the air with their scent. Positioned throughout the hall in front of the cases are seated golden Buddha statues that vary in appearance from relatively simple to more ornate designs. In the centre of the room are three long tables, covered in a long orange tablecloth and lined with chairs. Arranged on top of the tables are book holders and prayer books. At the back end of the room is another solid, taller, dark wood table with upwards curved corners, similar to the double eaves of the roofs. Placed on this table are a variety of offerings, similar to those in all the halls. However, the statues represent a number of differently positioned Guan Yin and the Buddha, statues of arahants and the Three Sages of the Pure Land. The room is quite large and brightly lit by fluorescent lighting, with minimal natural light coming in through the side doors, and smells strongly of incense and fruit.

On the second floor of the building is the Di Zang (地藏) Hall.¹⁰⁶ Tinted windows line the front of the room; a short stairwell leads to a wraparound balcony. Set in the right wall is a small kitchenette with a sink and cleaning supplies, a stark contrast from the decorations, display cases, and offerings that make up the rest of the items in the room. Cleaning is a necessary component of any space, and while having cleaning supplies in a devotional area may appear unusual to outsiders, it is quite pragmatic as it ensures the break from the sacred is fleeting. A large, ornate display case in the centre of the room houses a golden Di Zang statue surrounded by

¹⁰⁶ Di Zang, often translated as Earth Store Bodhisattva, is the Chinese representation of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, the Bodhisattva of Great Aspiration, whose desire is to refrain from obtaining Enlightenment in order to help other beings in achieving that very goal and, in particular, he assists those who are reincarnated and suffering in the realm of hell. Zhiru Ng. *The Making of a Savior Bodhisattva Dizang in Medieval China*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007. 1-3

artificial flowers, in addition to three kneeling stools on the marble floor is a red offering table is laden with a variety of offerings.

On the right wall, close to the kitchenette, is a smaller display case that houses an encased dharma protector, with its own offering table and stool. Lining the walls of the back half of the room are glass display cases with empty memorial plaques, and the final display, a memorial for the previous Masters of the temple. The memorial, made up of photographs of the Masters, is set back on a glass table covered in a yellow cloth, with flowers, an incense burner, candles, and plates with watermelons, apples, chocolate, crackers, scented candles, porcelain Bonsai, orange, and apple trees, and bowls filled with rice or sand, serving as decoration and offerings. The rest of the room houses extra stools, some electric fans, and brooms in the corners. The room's back doors are opened, allowing air and recorded chanting to flow up and around the high ceiling. The room itself is fairly well lit from windows at the rear of the room, and the space is painted in light shades of white and yellow, which adds to the lightness of the space and enhances the illumination of the sun. While natural light is mostly used, there are fluorescent lights in the ceiling should the need arise, however the overall space has a natural sense of light and scent. In addition to the vaulted ceiling and many windows, the room has the unique architectural feature of four red pillars that do not appear to serve any purpose other than to be aesthetically pleasing. The windows, the colouring, the loftiness, along with the smells and sound of the space add to an overall sense of grandeur and reverence.

There is an addition to the back half of the building, the Pu Xian Hall. Rectangular and relatively sparse in comparison to the first halls,



Figure 10 Pu Xian Meditation Hall

it serves as a mediation hall, with carpeted floor, stools, and a few offering tables (fig. 10). Heading towards the main doors of the Main Dharma Hall, I entered a small vestibule where shoes are to be removed and replaced with sandals. Packaged incense is available for use, along with some lit incense filling the small space with the now familiar scent. Entering the hall through a glass door you come face to face with the workstation, and the five large statues that occupy the hall, to the far left another Di Zang, in the centre, Buddha, to the right a golden Guan Yin, and two smaller golden Buddha statues between the three main ones. Peace lanterns hang from the display cases, while donation boxes and stools are on the floor in front of the different statues. The hall is well lit with natural light streaming in through windows and artificial light from chandeliers; recorded chanting and the lingering smell of incense are quite prominent in the space.

A gift shop is located in the basement of the Main Dharma Hall, selling a variety of goods, including bracelets, statues, charms, incense, candles, CD/DVD recordings of chanting, and prayer beads specially donated by the Master of the temple. A sign indicates that



Figure 11 Gift Shop in basement of Main Dharma Hall

every item, along with the shop itself, has been blessed by the three jewels of Buddhism, the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, with a video of the blessing playing in one corner of the shop, serving as proof of this claim (fig. 11 and 12). The proceeds of any sales will go to funding the grand scale Four



Figure 12 Sign in Gift Shop indicating the purpose of the shop and that all items were blessed

Buddhist Sacred Mountains/Wutai Shan Buddhist Garden project in Peterborough, ON. There is also a tea store, a smaller information booth regarding the same project, volunteer centre, kitchens, and the Five Contemplations Dining Hall – which occupies a significant portion of the available floor space of the Main Dharma Hall basement and the basement of the third main building, the Guan Yin Hall. The smells of incense and food, made up of simple rice and vegetables, come along with piped chanting throughout the dining hall.

The last main building in the complex is the Guan Yin (观音) Hall. In the basement, the dining hall has a stage arranged with tables, chairs, and a reclined Buddha statue – even when eating Buddha is present. A stairwell leads to the second floor library. Only open weekends, lunar moon days, and holidays, the library has a variety of books for free distribution, with a request that individuals take only two books. These free books, as well as magazines, CDs, and DVDs of chanting, include books about the life of Shakyamuni Buddha, Buddhism as education, principles of Buddhism, and information regarding vegetarianism, mindfulness, and the Dharma, offered in simpler stories for children and complex translations of sutras. The Guan Yin Hall occupies the top floor of the building. A shelf with sandals stands to the side of the door's threshold, creating a transition between the mundane and the profound with the small action of readying oneself to enter the hall. Turning the corner, the grand Guan Yin statue comes into view, completing the transition. Incense, while available and allowed in the other halls, is expressly prohibited anywhere near the statue, if visitors are in any doubt, there is a yellow line painted across the floor a “no incense beyond this point,” notice in English and Chinese, the only incense burner nearby is outside on the wraparound balcony. The room is T-shaped, with a short vertical section and a wide, larger horizontal section. The walls are plastered with posts displaying information about the organization, its masters, and its different locations. The Guan Yin statue

creates quite the first impression, her thousand-arms stretching upwards to the vaulted ceiling, her many hands hold items meant to assist her in helping those in need, and her thousand-eyes looking outwards over the world. Crystal chandeliers hang from the ceiling above the ornate offering table. A cabinet with fortune sticks for divination occupies a spot on the right hand side wall, the walls are brick-laid and painted yellow in sections. The only sound is the shaking of fortune sticks by a devotee, amplified by the silence, reminiscent of rain, and the soft turning of pages by a nun, seated, reading in a corner, almost hidden because of her quietness, each action giving me the sense this hall is for quiet contemplation and seeking guidance.



Figure 13 One of the building models for Wu Tai Shan Buddhist Garden



The back half of this building, similar to the first, is another addition, the Manjusri Hall, housing the main information centre for the Wu Tai Buddhist Garden. There are models of the planned buildings (fig. 13) and posters of construction plans, estimated costs, and donation



Figure 1125 Guan Yin Pavilion

pledge forms (fig. 14). The final features of the compound, where the recorded music



Figure 16 Guan Yin Pagoda with pond

blends with the sound of traffic and the faint aroma of incense floats on the air are Guan Yin Pagoda and Guan Yin Pavilion with a pond (fig. 15 and 16). A large incense burner, two covered bronze bells, and another Budai shrine, with an offering table and donation box complete the compound. When leaving the compound to return to the secular world with its rushing traffic, turning left clearer signs indicate the temple's space. A "Cham Shan Temple" sign and a massive engraved stone and tile Na Mo Amitabha Buddha, decorated with lotus carvings, are set into landscaped grass, delineating the sacred space from the secular surrounding.

Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa

The Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa, also called the Ten Thousands Buddha World Peace Relics Pagoda, is located at 4303 River Road, Niagara Falls ON, construction started in 1995 and the doors were opened to the public on July 1st, 2001.¹⁰⁷ City records list the Cham Shan Temple of Canada as a non-profit organization established October 26, 1975. According to the organization, the goal was to spread Buddhist teachings of compassion and understanding to achieve world peace.¹⁰⁸ The temple, with its sacred relic stupa, was established to fulfil an apparent need for a symbol of peace within Canada. Niagara Falls, one of the natural wonders of the world, is visited by "...hundreds of thousands of tourists flock[ing] to see this amazing waterfall. But in this place of such extraordinary wonder there is not [a single] symbol representing peace. Many Asians who come to the Falls are Buddhists and hope to see there a pagoda promoting world peace."¹⁰⁹ Clearly, the organization and the Masters were concerned over the lack of apparent symbols of world peace and sought to rectify the situation by constructing, with the encouragement and permission of the municipal government and residents,

¹⁰⁷ *Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa Brochure*. Cham Shan Temple, 2015.

¹⁰⁸ Canada, Ontario. Planning, Building, & Development City of Niagara. *Ten Thousands Buddha World Peace Relics Stupa Information*. Niagara Falls, ON.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid

a prominent symbol. The temple serves as a beacon of peace extended to its immediate surroundings and the greater global community, setting an example for the world to follow Canada's lead along the path to peace, with the future of humanity in mind. The Masters of the temple believe it can serve as a small means to lighten, temporarily, the hardships of visitors, enlightening their hearts and souls, by extinguishing sorrows and pains.¹¹⁰ Not only does the temple serve as a symbol for the cultivation of peace, it is symbolic of the future, and an open venue for use by all people to gather and experience.¹¹¹

The temple complex creates a unique feature in the landscape of Niagara Falls as its goals of creating and symbolizing peace and being future-oriented contrast with the fleeting experiences of the tourist driven industry. The temple is situated directly across from the Niagara River where class six, the highest classification, rapids rush past. While the rapids are expressly forbidden to be traversed, given their danger, an adrenaline rush comes from being near a place of danger, which is why the Niagara Falls Parks Commission has built a boardwalk "...at the very edge of one of the world's wildest stretches of white water. [Visitors can] marvel at the relentless power and beauty of nature, and how the deep and narrow Great Gorge was created. Trillions of gallons of water are forced into this accelerating trough – the sight will take your breath away!" The attraction is one of many available to tourists and has a dedicated hop-on, hop-off WEGO bus stop.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹¹ Ibid

¹¹² "White Water Walk Facts." Niagara Parks. Accessed June 10, 2015. <http://www.niagaraparks.com/niagara-falls-attractions/white-water-walk-facts.html>.



Figure 17 Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa front gate

The equally breathtaking Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa shares the same area, with its impressive size and contrasting nature. The entrance to the grounds is very similar to the temple in Thornhill, with white, stone guardian lions on each side of the gate and, unlike the wooden enclosure of the Cham Shan Temple, a chain-link fence surrounding the complex (fig.

17). The layout appears as a logical, straightforward large square, a parking lot directly to either side of the front gate, two buildings – the stupa and the main temple hall – plus a Guan Yin Pavilion to the rear of the compound occupy the land. All three structures are clearly visible and immediately accessible, no need to wind your way through the compound to access them.



Audible recorded chanting, hidden in decorations lining the parking lot adds to the overall ambiance of the space. A drum pavilion stands in the left parking lot, a Guan Yin statue and bell pavilion in the other.¹¹³ The tallest, most impressive structure is the seven-storey stupa, towering over the hotels, visible for quite some distance, stamping the sky with its presence.¹¹⁴ Low stairs and a grey-white stone ramp lead to the entrance. The stupa itself is grey with golden-bronze tinted half-

¹¹³ According to Laurence G. Thompson, "Some Symbols in Buddhist Icons." In *The Chinese Way in Religion*. Encino, Calif.: Dickenson Pub., 1973, 107 bells are symbolic of impermanence as sound is perishable.

¹¹⁴ For example, I walked to the Whirlpool Park which is a few kilometres away and at an outlook there could still make out the top of the stupa, though not as a clearly as when I was on River Road.

oval windows on all four sides and a double eave roof. Placed along the bottom stairs are guardian lion sculptures, on the first landing stands a large, multi-leveled incense burner, on the second landing stands a metal, three-foot cauldron in front of the red main doors (fig. 18). Unfortunately, I was not allowed to take photos of the inside of the stupa; however, in addition to my observations, I managed to obtain floor plans from Niagara Falls City Hall outlining the interiors. As you immediately enter the first floor, there is a small welcome area, a desk holds a guestbook, information about guided tours, a list of what each floor holds, and a poster clock indicates when the next tour will leave. A quick glance at the guest book showed visitors from Winnipeg, Texas and Pennsylvania, who described the stupa as gorgeous, beautiful, and peaceful.

The Main Dharma Hall houses the impressive and massive, bronze seated Buddha, standing at approximately ten metres in height.¹¹⁵ In fact, the Buddha, crafted in China then shipped to Canada in pieces and reassembled, is so large that the stupa was built after so that it could be built around the statue to ensure proper measurements. Although the bronze statue is the most impressive feature of the room, there are a number of Bodhisattva statues sharing the platform, sided with thick marble pillars, with the giant Buddha. In front of the statues are drums and wooden musical instruments on an ornate red, white, green, black, and gold offering table laden with flowers. The platform is roped off to ensure no one can approach the Buddha too closely, hanging from the ceiling are banners, chandeliers, and lanterns. Behind the grand Buddha statue, in a small alcove, is a statue of Maitreya Buddha, the future Buddha. However,

unlike the statues at the Thornhill location, he is not the representation of the happy, round monk-like character, rather

*Figure 18 Ten Thousand Buddhas
Sarira Stupa*

¹¹⁵ Canada, Ontario. Planning, Building, & Development City of Niagara. *Ten Thousands Buddha World Peace Relics Stupa Information*. Niagara Falls, ON.

he is represented in a similar fashion as the Maitreya Buddha, to either side of him are two statues of Guan Yin. The golden statue of Maitreya is decorated with offerings of flowers, incense, a garland of miniature light, with a donation box and stools completing the space. The walls of the first floor are covered in paintings, some depicting Shakyamuni's life story, other images of arahants, and still others depicting the Western Paradise – the desired land – in Pure Land Buddhism.

As I attended a guided tour to see the upper floors of the stupa I was unable to record my observations and thus cannot provide a detailed description. However, one key action was walking counter clockwise up the stairs so that we walked around the whole floor before coming back to the stairwell where there are literally over ten thousand cast, gold leaf miniature Buddhas lining the walls. I was disappointed to discover the third floor library is closed to the public, but fortunately the numerous, diverse statues of the Buddha, Bodhisattvas and arahants throughout the stupa were enough to occupy my time and attention. The seventh, last floor, houses the sarira relics, small stones made from the cremated ashes of the temple Masters, and the large Bell of World Peace, rung only on special occasions. On the top floor is where the sarira relics, which are small stones from the cremated ashes of the temple Masters, are housed, as well as the large Bell of World Peace, which is only rung on very special occasions. The guide mentioned that when the temple first opened, they only had one sarira relic, however the space was so positive and peaceful, that the relic was able to multiply spontaneously to six. There is a wraparound balcony on this level providing an excellent, bird's eye view of the temple grounds and the surrounding area.

Directly across from the stupa is the two storeyed, brightly painted, temple. Smaller than the stupa, its eye-catching red, green, and yellow exterior walls offset the greyness of the stupa



Figure 19 Two storeyed temple

(fig. 19). The temple occupies space horizontally, making up for its lack of vertical stature. The main worship space is in the centre of the room, with an information table displaying the Wutai Shan Buddhist Garden project to the right, to the left two offices, behind which is the small gift shop. A corridor leads to the rear of the building

where, past a vestibule holding a Budai statue and screen with images of the Buddha, the Five Contemplations vegetarian restaurant and kitchen are, beyond which are the washrooms, another museum and library, two mediation halls, and meeting rooms complete the floor.¹¹⁶ A sign in the centre of the restaurant explains the Five Contemplations.¹¹⁷ Beneath this, a vow, to be recited upon completing a meal, ensures Buddha's teachings are always at the forefront of the mind. A wooden Maitriya, an offering table with fruit and plants, a donation box, and a single stool provide simple décor for the restaurant.

Sharing the space with the main worship hall are paintings of arahants and Buddhas and more cast gold leaf Buddha miniatures, completing the total ten thousand on the compound. The prominent statue in the space, on a platform raised from the red tiled floor, is a golden Guan Yin. To either side of her are her attendants, and in front are smaller versions of her image, including a golden thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guan Yin. Several more statues and offerings of fruits, plants, and ceremonial musical instruments share the room with Guan Yin. Hanging from the

¹¹⁶ Canada, Ontario. Planning, Building, & Development City of Niagara. *4304 River Road Floor 1*. Niagara Falls, ON.

¹¹⁷ Consider the amount of work involved to bring food to the table; consider whether or not one's virtue is sufficient to enable one to accept this offer; guard the mind from transgression from which greed is the principal cause; food is like medicine to keep the body from wasting away; and this food is accepted in order to realize Buddhahood.

ceiling are giant red lanterns, and long, colourful, stationary banners, a scant two feet from sweeping the floor. Resident monastics perform twice-daily services, where visitors are welcome to sit and listen. When there are no services, the space itself is quiet, with no music playing, and as no incense is left in the main hall, there is no lingering scent. The last area open to the public is the small gift shop, which is only opened by volunteers when people express an interest in looking around. Inside the gift shop are items similar to the Cham Shan Temple. Again, the sales of these items will go towards funding the Wutai Shan Buddhist Garden. Two display tables provided limited information about the project, a stark contrast from the scale model and dedicated room in Thornhill.



Figure 16 Replacement slabs



Figure 15 Replacement tiles



Figure 13 Wen Shu Pagoda

Situated between the Guan Yin Pavilion, the main temple building, and the stupa, is even more parking, through which grass and weeds

have grown, creating cracks in the cement. Behind the main building, kept somewhat out of sight, are replacement slabs for the pavilions and tiling is being added to the wire gate, an attempt, perhaps, to beautify the space (fig. 25 and 26). An interesting facet of the space is that the music, quite audible at the main entrance, is not as present in other areas of the compound, including the stupa and main temple where there is nearly complete silence. Additionally, as incense is quickly removed from inside and less utilized in general, there was no distinct aroma in the space.

Although the temple is owned by the Cham Shan organization, the physical layout, the location, and the individuals, outside of volunteers and the few monastics, present in the space created a different atmosphere in comparison to the Thornhill location. Many of the visitors to this location were transitory, pausing to take photos of the stupa, engage in passing conversations

with volunteers about Buddhism and the temple, browsing the gift shops and free books, exclaiming how peaceful and beautiful the space is before returning to secular experiences just across the road.

Chapter 5: Application of the Spatial Analysis

As suggested by the descriptions above, the temples are places of sensory experiences, they are interconnected, and arguably the most significant in the analysis of these temples. It is through our senses – sight, sound, scent, touch, and taste – that the temples are imbued with liveliness, in the strategically placed aesthetics of the temples, such as the brightly coloured and traditional designed buildings, ornate statues, and decorations that draw out our senses. Thus, while

Colour, a major component in sensory perceptions, affects us visually and emotionally... Since visual sense is directly connected to the brain, visual memory brings attachment to the colours of our environment... Colour plays an equal role in aesthetic value; it depends on how colour is placed and co-ordinated.¹¹⁸

Colours impart culturally derived meanings and usage, dating back to ancient China: “Colour is not only an aesthetic issue but also a cultural one... even in ancient times colour took on a special significance.”¹¹⁹ The colours represented at the temples adhere to aesthetic and cultural sensitivities, and serve to remind visitors, whether adherents or tourists, of the dual heritage of Buddhism and Chinese Buddhism. As Victoria Yau states, “[u]se of strong primary colours on building exteriors is a special feature of Chinese architecture. Often, the following colours were used for exterior decorations: White and blue for platforms and terraces; Red for columns and buildings; Blue or turquoise for the beams, brackets and soffits; Yellow or green for glazed roofs.”¹²⁰ Each colour was assigned a preferred place, such as red, which brings fortune, is used on eaves, outer walls, columns, and buildings. Therefore, when visitors to the temples see the specific colours, understanding the cultural significance of the colours enhances the

¹¹⁸ Victoria Yau. “Use of Colour in China.” *The British Journal of Aesthetics*. 34, no.2 (1994): 151-62. Accessed June 15, 2015. 152

¹¹⁹ Ding Ning and Catherine Bone. "Concerning The Use Of Colour In China." *The British Journal of Aesthetics*. 35, no. 2 (1995): 160-64. Accessed June 15, 2015. 160

¹²⁰ Yau, “Use of Colour.” 151

understanding and appreciation of the space; however, as with the green fences at the Cham Shan Temple, sometimes the accepted practice is not always adhered to.

Similarly, colours, in association with the body and maintaining a division between the religious and the secular conveys itself on individuals' clothing. Volunteers are present at each temple, and each, regardless gender or age, wore a bright yellow vest emblazoned with Cham Shan Temple Volunteer. Not only were the volunteers marked by their commitment to the temple with their vests, their interactions within the temple also marked them as unique features of the space. Volunteers clean the grounds, remove and replenish incense and offerings, work as receptionists, librarians, and cooks for visitors and residents. Through these actions, the volunteers not only distinguish themselves from everyday adherents, they also acquire karmic merit necessary for improved future lives, the desire is to obtain enough merit to be reborn in the Pure Land.¹²¹ In addition to standing out from the crowd through what they wear and do, thus fulfilling a religious and cultural aspect, volunteers create a social space within the temple, freely spending time and effort on the temple to give back to the community.

The other distinct population at both temples are resident monks and nuns. Cham Shan Temple has twenty monks and nuns associated with it and the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa has a monk and two nuns. It should be pointed out that the onsite residences at Cham Shan Temple are for monks only, with offsite residences for the nuns. Each monastic represents a singular body where religion is displayed through what is worn, as to be a wholly devoted member of the sangha, not just a lay follower, is to take up the robe. The *kasaya* or *jiasha* (袈裟), the monastic robes, with its symbolism in colour and use, distinguishes the select few who have given themselves completely to the teachings of the Buddha, as taking up the robe means

¹²¹ Liu, "Globalization and Chinese Buddhism," 124

adherence to strict and restrictive rules.¹²² However, being robed also affords a certain level of power and social status. For example, the few members of the sangha are offered the highest possible respect by the laity and are given authority over the proceedings of the temples themselves, within the confines of their rules. In this way, monks and nuns wield power, predominantly the power of knowledge, over the laity. The relationship between monks and nuns is again a relationship of power, in the tenets of Buddhism there is a built-in hierarchy, which places extra restrictions on nuns – restrictions that have been scrutinized in recent years.¹²³ The last group at both locations were outsiders, mainly tourists, particularly at the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa, a result of its establishment in a tourist city and close proximity to a tourist attraction. The attire of tourists distinguishes them from volunteers and monastics, in addition to their actions and interactions with the spaces.

While sight is a key component of the temples as they are imbued with cultural and power attributes, the other senses also come into play, especially scent and sound, with taste and touch not as tangible. The structures of the temples are distinguished from the larger community through recorded chanting emanating from hidden speakers in the courtyards. The chanting reflects Buddhist practice and serves as an auditory cue to entering a sacred space. Similarly, incense signals adherents' actions and intentions toward the temple.¹²⁴ It is interesting to note that at the Cham Shan Temple, incense was a prominent and lingering scent, where a higher

¹²² To see more discussion regarding the symbolism imbued in monastic clothing, see page 86-107 in John Kieschnick. *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.

¹²³ Liz Wilson. "Buddhism and Gender." In *Buddhism in the Modern World*, edited by David L. McMahan. 257-272. New York: Routledge, 2012. 264-264. As this is not in the scope of my study, this is not the place to go into great detail regarding this hierarchy but it does pose an ongoing power struggle within the sangha. For more information refer to Liz Wilson's chapter and her further reading suggestions.

¹²⁴ Lighting incense is routine at Chinese temples, and serves many purposes, such as purifying the space, a means of keeping time, and as an offering, with the adherent's concerns and hopes carried on the smoke, to the Buddha, Bodhisattvas, and arahants. The use and history of incense in China is a long one, predating the introduction of Buddhism. For more discussion on incense, see page 77-78 in Kieschnick, "*Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture*."

number of adherents were present, whereas at the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa, incense was limited and restricted in use and placement. During my research at the Stupa, I saw only one individual light incense during prayer, otherwise the incense was left in its packaging – available but ignored. This contrast between the two temples represents a small difference in features of the two spaces – while both serve the general purpose of spreading the dharma, the location of each place influenced the actions taken by visitors. From my observations, all the visitors to the Cham Shan Temple appeared to be adherents. Adherents include regulars, who are identified by their black robes, indicating they have taken refuge in the Buddha, or black inner garments with a brown outer garment to indicate that they have taken the precepts. Others include those who were merely incense burners, thus cursory visitors to the temple who attended only during major festivals to make sacrifices and ask for favours.¹²⁵ As such, both regular and occasional adherents to the temple know the required practices and customs of the temple and thus take part in offering incense. On the other hand, the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa, being located right next to a main tourist hub, receives numerous tourists to the space, thus participation in Buddhist practice is minimized or non-existent.

Our perceptions of scale and dimensions are formed through our sense, which are then wrapped in cultural particularities. The main buildings of the temples, while having to comply with Canadian building standards and codes, are comprised of culturally specific components serving as reminders of the temples' Chinese ancestry. Thus, each main building that houses a worship hall has Ming-inspired architectural features of brick and mortar construction and heavy tiled roofs with large overhangs.¹²⁶ However, the senses are the source for how we perceive and

¹²⁵ Liu, "Globalization and Chinese Buddhism," 119

¹²⁶ "Buddhist Monasteries (Chinese)." In *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Chinese Culture*, edited by Edward L. Davis. New York: Routledge, 2005. 70

interact with the layout of the temples – through our senses concepts of ‘above and below,’ ‘left and right,’ ‘front and back’ are manifested, “...the extremities of the body become central to organizing positions in the different regions of space.”¹²⁷ These concepts have built-in social hierarchies encapsulated by the subconscious organizing of important facets of the temple higher up or in the foreground. For example, each main hall at the Cham Shan Temple has a raised entrance and the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa is raised up on a platform, reaching for the sky. The other main building at the Stupa is situated near the front of the complex, houses important statues in the building’s anterior. At each temple, restaurants, gift shops, and minor rooms are reserved spots below or behind main exhibits, although they fulfil specific roles, they are secondary.

In addition to the influence that people have on space and space has on the senses, the temples are interactive spaces. This is experienced through some of the same traits already mentioned; how the space is configured, with the main buildings situated at the centre of the compounds, and, in the case of the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa, making its mark on the skyline of Niagara Falls, soaring above the immediate, low-rise buildings. Furthermore, each compound is laid-out with distinct, yet co-existing sections. The residences for the monks, while in close proximity to the main worship halls of Cham Shan Temple, have a fenced partition between them and the other buildings, thereby creating a partial separation between the various functions of the temple. The site plan ensured that each necessary feature was given its precise place within the available land, including purpose built and carefully laid out parking lots. Accessibility concerns, for elderly or disabled individuals, were also addressed with the inclusion

¹²⁷ Knott, *The Location of Religion*, 16

of ramps leading up to the Stupa and the Ancestral Hall, from which point almost all other areas are accessible.

Additionally, unlike traditional temples in China with raised thresholds, all entranceways are flush with the floor, to assist in ease of access, regardless of potential physical restrictions. The inclusion of ramps and low thresholds not only emulates the belief that Buddhism is available to all; it also fulfills social expectations that acknowledge and include the needs of individuals with accessibility concerns. Ever since Shakyamuni Buddha started to teach the Fourfold Path over 2,500 years ago, emphasis was made that anyone could be part of the sangha, and "...by opening up the pursuit of the Middle Path to any and every one, the Buddha created a context wherein the path would be quite widely accepted."¹²⁸ Acceptance has become a feature of Buddhism, the fundamental teaching of Tiantai is that anyone has the potential to become a Buddha, therefore, in order to live the teachings, those with physical disabilities must be granted the same access to the teachings and practices as those without. Although the temples are arranged to accentuate the practice of Buddhism outside social and cultural elements are not ignored.

Moreover, the temples are spaces that simultaneously encompass religion and secularity, the local and the global. This simultaneous nature is particularly apparent at the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa. It was built with the specific intention of serving as a source of peace for the immediate surroundings in particular, Canada in general, and the world as a whole. Likewise, it was recognized in the planning stage that hundreds of thousands of tourists come to see the great natural wonder of the Niagara Falls and Niagara River; with the temple built right across from a main tourist attraction, local and global visitors could easily cross its threshold. Tourists

¹²⁸ William R. LaFleur. *Buddhism: A Cultural Perspective*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1988. 17

to the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa clearly demonstrate how the sacred and the secular blend within the same space and that this blending is beneficial, not calamitous. Tourists are given the opportunity to experience and participate in a unique setting, engage with an ancient culture, and take a break from the hustle bustle of the everyday. While not a typical resource, online reviews left by tourists who have visited to the Stupa provide insight into how they view and relate to the space. Tripadvisor.ca, a popular online forum where members of the public can submit reviews and rate places all around the world, has a listing for the Cham Shan Temple in Niagara Falls, that has received many reviews.¹²⁹ Setting aside the fact that the name is listed incorrectly on the site, reviews and rates are an important aspect of the tourist experience, as tourists are given the ability to publicly express their thoughts of the activities they engaged in while on vacation. The majority of the reviews exalted how interesting, beautiful, serene, and unexpected the temple was, expressing gratitude for the chance to take in a different side of Niagara Falls, getting away from the commercial tourist attractions normally associated with the city. While the majority of reviews were positive, there were reviews that questioned the purpose of the temple, declaring it to be out of place, not a real working temple, and little more than a money maker for the organization.¹³⁰ It is interesting to note that the two most recent negative reviews contained contradictory statements. One says that the temple is not at all a tourist attraction, there is a price to enter, and that it should never have been built.¹³¹ The other states that, while open to the public and offering free tours, these tours are limited to the weekends only,

¹²⁹ At the time of writing this, 22 reviews had been left for the temple. "Cham Shan Temple, Niagara Falls." Cham Shan Temple (Niagara Falls, Ontario). Accessed July 20, 2015. http://www.tripadvisor.ca/Attraction_Review-g154998-d3547891-Reviews-Cham_Shan_Temple-Niagara_Falls_Ontario.html.

¹³⁰ "Do Not Expect to See a Real, Working Temple." Cham Shan Temple (Niagara Falls, Ontario). Accessed July 20, 2015. http://www.tripadvisor.ca/ShowUserReviews-g154998-d3547891-r290539174-Cham_Shan_Temple-Niagara_Falls_Ontario.html#REVIEWS. and "Religious Money Maker Not a Tourist Attraction." Cham Shan Temple (Niagara Falls, Ontario). Accessed July 20, 2015. http://www.tripadvisor.ca/ShowUserReviews-g154998-d3547891-r256200604-Cham_Shan_Temple-Niagara_Falls_Ontario.html#REVIEWS.

¹³¹ "Religious Money Maker Not a Tourist Attraction." Cham Shan Temple (Niagara Falls, Ontario).

and that the place is policed by volunteers who limit access, and that it is very touristy.¹³² What all these reviews highlight are how the spaces are perceived in various ways by the diverse people who use them, and that there are certain expectations as to what to expect in a temple, hence the disappointment that one tourist experienced when the Stupa appeared to be too touristy to be a “real” temple.

I want to draw on Kevin Lewis O’Neill’s theory of affective space from, “Beyond Broken: Affective Spaces and the Study of American Religion” to elaborate simultaneity of space and that the temples are sites where the sacred and the secular are blended together, even though that goes against what is expected. Scholars continue to stumble into the pitfall that the sacred and the profane are completely separate from each other as first proposed by Emile Durkheim. He, and those who followed, understood the sacred and the secular as “...the world of the sacred is by definition a world apart...all that is usual in our dealings with one must be excluded from our dealings with the other.”¹³³ Durkheim elaborates on this point, claiming that not only is the sacred world separated from what he calls the profane world (referring to the non-sacred, the everyday, the non-special), but the two are too distinct from one another to even meet.

Knott’s spatial analysis works at breaking down this apparent, albeit, in my opinion, inaccurate divide, with her suggestion of space encompassing the religious and secular simultaneously; O’Neill expands on this aspect and offers a theoretical tool for analysis – that of affective space:

...the attention to broken space, namely the assumed division between the sacred and the profane as well as the local and global, limits the kind of political [social and cultural] relationships that a scholar can posit between religion and space.

¹³² "Do Not Expect to See a Real, Working Temple." Cham Shan Temple (Niagara Falls, Ontario).

¹³³ Carol Cosman. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, by Emile Durkheim, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. 236

This is because broken space...presumes a world of already existing distinctions. These include distinctions between the sacred and the profane, between the *here* and the *there*, between North and South, between the local and the global, and so on. The result is a scholarly imagination interested in meaningful differences rather than hierarchical interconnections...an alternative approach [is] *affective spaces*. Affect is similar to emotion or feeling, but has much more to do with the body than either. Affect is raw, reactive sensation...Affect as a religiously managed and politically manipulated sensation makes legible a series of space that are not necessarily territorial by that are nonetheless deeply political. These include, for example, the felt distance that exists between *us* and *them*, between *high* and *low*, and between the *sinner* and the *saved*.¹³⁴

In this way, Knott's proposal that space simultaneously encompasses the religious and the secular and O'Neill's theory of affected space underscore that space is "neither/or" but rather is "both/and." Religion and secularity do interact within the same space, as evidenced by the numerous local and global tourists who enter the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa for a short time and engage with the religious as secular bodies.

Playing off this simultaneous amalgamation of the religious and the secular is the fact that the temples' spaces are subjected to more than just their immediate surroundings and their immediate times. The Cham Shan Temple was built originally at a time of heightened need, as there was a lack of representation of Chinese Buddhism in Toronto during the 1970s. However, the temple now competes with a variety of Buddhist temples from China, Southeast Asia, and East Asia, which has meant that the numbers dedicated to the temple has dropped. The temple once held sway over hundreds of regularly attending devotees and thousands of casual "incense-burners," especially during customary Chinese New Year celebrations, but now they must compete for devotees.¹³⁵

¹³⁴K. L. O'Neill. "Beyond Broken: Affective Spaces and the Study of American Religion." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 2013, 1093-116. Accessed September 6, 2014. doi:10.1093/jaarel/lft059. 1094-95

¹³⁵ Liu, "Globalization and Chinese Buddhism," 119-120

The social and cultural changes within Canada around immigration and multiculturalism led to changes in the utilization and popularity of the temple itself, and while it is still a prominent aspect of Chinese Buddhism in Toronto, and continues to grow in other parts of Ontario, time and history continue to affect it. In this way, the Cham Shan Temple was built to address a certain need at the time, thus being synchronic in its beginning, but has developed and changed over time, thus embracing and imparting a diachronic core. Equally, the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa is subject to the same influences of time and history, however, the Stupa was built with the express interest and goal of addressing not just a singular, small community's needs but the need for a place of peace within the Canada. Nonetheless, the place has come under diachronic and synchronic stresses, specifically as Buddhism has grown in popularity, as more tourists use the temple. Today, tourists seek out unique sites that can offer them solitude from otherwise tumultuous experiences. Thus, we find within the Stupa guest book, comments lauding it as a gorgeous, beautiful, and peaceful space.

In relation to the tourists at the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa, we experience how space is dynamic and adaptable and that sacredness is only actualized through use. Thus, for tourists, the temple is not seen and treated necessarily as a religious space, but rather as another interesting attraction among many attractions found in Niagara Falls – the main difference being that the temple is a cultural attraction rather than a natural one. What this interaction underscores is that a single space can mean many things simultaneously and that a sacred space can be entered without being trodden on.¹³⁶ Furthermore, space is subject to change and is a vibrant component of human activity: what distinguishes the sacred from the secular and vice versa is merely our interaction and perception. It is through the actions and sensibilities of adherents and

¹³⁶ Knott, *The Location of Religion*, 96

tourists alike that the physical space of each temple becomes more than its physicality. Recall how I mentioned incense, a common offering at Chinese temples, was a heady fragrance at the Cham Shan Temple where more adherents attended regularly, whereas, at the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa the expected scent is non-existent where more tourists interacted with the space. This small difference in the use of incense accentuates the fact that it is people, their practice and association, casual or long lasting that change space. A temple may be a temple in physicality, but it may not remain so in thought.

While space is dynamic and open to individual interpretation and contact, a space can influence and be reproduced in other spaces, thereby leading to the creation of new, similar, yet different spaces. This influence and reproduction of space can be found with the relationship between the Cham Shan Temple, the original space, and the succeeding temples, such as Hong Fa Temple and the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa. Each of the previous Cham Shan spaces have come together to a pinnacle with the ongoing construction of the grand Wutai Shan Buddhist Garden complex in Peterborough. This continual expansion serves as proof that space is not static; rather it is living and lived. Each time the Cham Shan network expands, it increases its social and cultural power, constantly reaffirming its place within Canadian society. Likewise, with each new space, elements of ancestral space(s) are included, with new elements added to create a unique space. Thus, both the Cham Shan Temple and the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa have main temple halls that house the key Buddhas and Bodhisattva statues, as well as statues of arahants, decorations of incense burners, peace lanterns, specific colouring, and design features. However, each temple also has unique features – Cham Shan has three main worship halls in addition to onsite residences for monks, whereas Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa has only two focal structures, and, while the main two-storied building is the same design as the ones

at Cham Shan Temple, the Stupa is completely different from its predecessor. Similarly, the construction underway of the Wutai Shan Buddhist Garden, according to the schematics and models, will once again share similarities with its numerous and varied predecessors, including similar construction, decorations, and statues, with the defining and unique feature of the main temple to be built in the traditional Tang style, the so-called Golden Age of Buddhism.¹³⁷ The temple, estimated to cost upwards of \$100 million, is being built through the financial support of adherents and tourists alike, through donations dropped in the numerous donations boxes, the purchase of construction curios (such as bronze tiles, statues, pillars), and gift shop purchases.¹³⁸

As the application of the spatial analysis has demonstrated, the temples serve multiple purposes, religious and secular. Religiously, they serve the Chinese Buddhist community throughout Ontario. They provide spaces that more than fulfil religious need; they are places of learning, retreat and participation for the most devout members of the sangha and casual members of the laity.¹³⁹ Each temple offers prayer services, meditation sessions, lectures on the dharma, sutra readings, and chanting, along with hosting a variety of festivals throughout the year.¹⁴⁰ Other than worship halls, the Cham Shan Temple has a library for public use, while the library at the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa is closed, they do offer guided weekend tours of the stupa from June to October, the peak tourist season, along with twice-daily services. Aside from the numerous religious ceremonies, the temples are gathering places and focal points for

¹³⁷ This style, called dougong (斗拱), requires intricate interlocking wood brackets, with no use of nails or other fastenings.

¹³⁸ "五台山 Mount Wu Tai." 湛山精舍 Cham Shan Temple. 2015.

<http://www.chamshantemple.org/messages/fourmountains/index.php?channelId=5&ionId=0&itemId=0&langCd=CN> Own translation. See also Dorje Kirsten. "Cham Shan Temple in Canada Building Replica of China's Sacred Mountains." Buddhist News. March 19, 2015. <http://enews.buddhistdoor.com/en/news/d/55771> and Shengguang Shi. "Wutai Shan Temple." Ven. Shengguang Shi. <http://shengguangshi.blogspot.ca/p/four-great-bodhimandalas-temples.html>.

¹³⁹ McLellan, *Many Petals of the Lotus*, 165 and Liu, "Globalization and Chinese Buddhism," 119

¹⁴⁰ Janet McLellan. *Many Petals of the Lotus*, 167 and Liu, "Globalization and Chinese Buddhism," 116-117

the larger Mahayana Buddhist and Chinese communities. They establish and maintain social networks and cultural identities through reinforcing traditional values, activities, and language.

Furthermore, one of the main appeals of the temples to recent Chinese Buddhist immigrants is that they offer familiar architecture, rituals, and teachings from Tiantai temples as found in China and other parts of Asia, presenting a strong, unyielding Chinese presence in the face of better-known, notable places of worship.¹⁴¹ Contrasting the pull of the familiar is the pull of the unfamiliar for tourists. This is more prevalent at the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa given its locale, but Cham Shan Temple also draws in outside attention due to its lay-out, its traditionally designed building, and its peculiarity within a residential setting. Each temple provides a space for devotees that fulfil their needs; however, temple aesthetics and curiosity invariably draw the attention of outsiders.

¹⁴¹ Liu, "Globalization and Modern Transformation of Chinese Buddhism," 281

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Ever since research on sacred space began with Durkheim, who purported that religion is that which is set apart from profane, everyday realities, sacred space has been treated in the same manner – as apart from everyday spaces. Durkheim's words continue to influence modern understandings and discussions around the relationship between the sacred and the profane, or the religious and the secular. It is the works of Durkheim, and early scholars who followed, that the study of sacred space is undertaken with an either/or concept, as highlighted by O'Neill's discussion of affective space, which has established binaries within the world. Sacred space is seen as separate from secular space, and their relationship is one of opposition, and mutual exclusion. The secular should not include the sacred, and the sacred cannot include the secular. They are set up against one another, each with its proper place within the whole. This binary relationship between sacred and secular space is not limited to these alone but permeates many themes: the public versus the private, us versus them, local versus global. We construct our world through binaries, both in the abstract with good versus bad, and the tangible, sacred versus secular space. This makes sense, as "...from a neuroscience perspective, the use of binaries...has been described as a basic artefact of human thought and behaviour rooted deep in our unconscious...the brain is hardwired to react to stimuli in a binary way."¹⁴² Binaries may have some use to form first impressions of the world; however, they are reductive and oversimplify our realities. As such, we must challenge the binaries that we create as our world is

¹⁴² Johnathan Cinnamon. 2015. "Deconstructing the Binaries of Spatial Data Production: Towards Hybridity." *The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe Canadien* 59 (1): 35-51. doi:10.1111/cag.12119. 37

made up of much more than totalizing either/or mentalities.¹⁴³ To borrow the phrase, the map we make of the world is not the actual territory.¹⁴⁴

We must attempt to overcome our either/or approach, and our compartmentalizing of space. Scholars must reflect on what purpose creating and maintaining binaries serves in our studies, especially in the study of religion. The tendency to continue to see the sacred and the secular as separate, to create seemingly impenetrable boundaries between the two, is still predicated on the idea that the sacred is something special, something apart from the everyday, as proposed by Durkheim all those years ago. While sacred space may be unique within any given locale, on account of its unique physical construction, it should not be treated as special. Certainly, as scholars and outsiders, we should remain respectful, but we must not be timid in our research of sacred space due to binary conceptions of sacred and secular. Space exists on a continuum, wherein we find the sacred in the secular, and the secular in the sacred. Space does not have to be one or the other, rather it encompasses aspects of both depending on how, why, and by whom it is used – space is far better understood as both/and. To relegate space to specific binary categorizations diminishes the complexity of space and the relationships it has in an explicit culture and society as a whole.

The Cham Sham Temple and Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa are unique features of their respective geographical locations and encapsulate unique aesthetic, architectural, social, and cultural facets, is their physical imprint any more special than say the river or traffic that rush past their front gates? Space is just space, regardless its association with sacredness or

¹⁴³ Ibid, 38

¹⁴⁴ This idea of “the map is not the territory” is explained further in J.Z Smith’s *Map Is Not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions*. University of Chicago Press, 1978.

secularity. Knott's goal was to discover the sacred within the everyday, the ordinary secular world, while my goal, through an application of her spatial analysis to the temples, has been to discover the secular within the sacred, as demonstrated through how tourists use the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa. Moreover, I have demonstrated the uniqueness of the temples as spaces of sensory experience and interaction, how they are dynamic, subject to growth, decline, and change, each space being socially and culturally made is much more than just a sum of its physicality, made special through use. We see how space exists on a continuum, and the falsity of the apparent division between the sacred and the secular on the bodies of adherents and tourists alike, found in their actions and understanding or lack thereof. Tourists enter the Cham Shan Temple and the Ten Thousand Buddhas Sarira Stupa, particularly the latter, not knowing what they will encounter. The first sight tourists tend to notice inside the grounds is the grand stupa, they stop to take pictures, talk, and perhaps take a guided tour, photos of the impressive threshold and exterior of the stupa appeared to be favourites of the thirty plus tourists I saw, and asking volunteers questions about the temple's history, construction, and future plans. While each temple is a place of worship for devotees, there are opportunities for outsiders to learn and participate in the temple activities, such as taking in a vegetarian meal at the Five Contemplations Hall, buying memorabilia from the gift shops, or making donations. Temple features designed to fulfil the needs of devotees also serve tourist desires to participate in and experience the spaces.

When tourists enter these spaces, they do no harm to the attached sacredness of the space. Tourists enter only the physical space of the temple, rarely entering the social and cultural space wherein religiosity largely exists. To tourists the temples are attractive for the architecture, sensory stimulation, and oddity whereas for adherents the temples are much more. They are

places of learning, of social gathering, and cultural merit for the individual, the community, and the world. The increase in tourists entering and sharing the same space as adherents helps us to reconceptualise our understanding of space as existing on a continuum, reflecting the complexities of reality, wherein the sacred and secular are drawn in an increased blurring of boundaries.

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