

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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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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ZLWKPFROOHDJXHVSURIHVVRUVDQGHYHURQHHOVHDW4XHHQVKDVEHHQUHZDUGLQJEH

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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* that it is clear that I do not mean *outer space*, the listener [or reader] often settles for an image of

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 a unique social trait.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 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 unique ethos.¹²

Aside from these larger scale sacred spaces, there are those on a smaller scale, with 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, 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-visible, 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, 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 physical aspect of space is important it is only one part of what fully constitutes sacred space.

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Introduction to Geography of Religion, sacred space is ³« WKDWSRUWLRQRIWKHHDUWKV VXUIDFH

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*]@XOWXHH\$HLH@HDQJRDOV¹⁸ 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,

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 ³« the distinction between pilgrimage driven by faith and tourism for cultural and recreational purposes no ORQHUKRÓGV´

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

6KDQYWHPSOHVVLQFHQRWZRVSDFHDPDGHQKQNDVYV@HLQJVLPLDULWLHVDQG

differences is a basic activity of the human mind. The perception of relationships and patterns is

WKHZDLQGLYLGXDOVDQGFOWXUHVVRUJDQLJHWKHLUH[³²SHULHQFHLEQWKEZRUG'

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?

3DGHQFRQFOXGHV&RPSDUDWLYHSHUVSHFWLYHXQFRYHUVUHODWLRQVKLSVEHWZ

that would otherwise be unseen, and links those patterns to a broader interpretive theme or

FRQFHS³³ 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 3DGHQ&RPSDUDWLYH5HOLJLRQ'

³³ 3DGHQ&RPSDUDWLYH5HOLJLRQ'

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 ±

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

religious practices is essential to understanding religious phenomena.³⁹ With this renewed focus

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,

and

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 theoretical resources

and debates from a variety of perspectives through which to

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

of religion

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 .LP.QRWWSDWLDOWKHRUDQGPHWKR GIRUWKHVWXGRIHQJLRQ (2005):153-184. White Rose Research Online. 4

sociality, economics, politics, and so forth.⁴⁷ Furthermore, ~~EW~~WDLQJIURPWKHSUWLFXODU rather than the general and by focusing on what happens to religions within designated local space, [we]KDOOH_/5GH_!@!SYU]p@U@ rather than the ggns wdi2 68sco r58 Tmt040>600030046t564(d 11 0

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

~~PHQLRHGDERYH.QWWY~~ 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

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, *the relationship 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 .QRWW6SDWLDOWKHRUDQGPWKRGRIRUWKHVWXGRIUHOLJLRQ´

⁵⁸ Ibid, 8

⁵⁹ .QRWW3URPORFDOLWWR/RFDWLRQDQG%DFN\$JDLQ´

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

⁶¹ .QRWW6SDWLDOWKHRUDQGWKHVWXGRIUHOLJLRQ´

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.

.QRWWWDNHVKHUIQVSLUDWLRQDQGPXFKRIKHUEHWKRGIUERPWKHSURMHFWRIHQU
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 ZHOODVWKHSRVVLELOLWRIXQLWLQJSUHYLRXVOVHSDUD⁶⁴WAGIHHOGVRIHQOTXLU\
the fourth attribute, the aspects of space, is based on Lefeb⁶⁵YUH⁶⁶*The Production of Space*, in which he offered a new field to reunite the physical, social, and mental concepts of space. /HIHEYUH⁶⁷FRQFHSWLRQVRIVSDFHDSHUFHLYHGFHQFHLYGDLGOLYHGSURYLYGHXVHIXO
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 GRPLQDQWWKHRUHWLFDORIWHQWHFKQLFDUHSUHVHQWDWLRQVRIWVSDFH⁶⁷WKDWDUHSU
architects, engineers, and scholars, which express a dominant ideology.⁶⁷ The last aspect, lived

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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 FDQDQGGRRHVFKDQJHLQWVUHODWLRQVKLSWRSRZHU history and time, its condition to simultaneity and the various ways in which it is experience and UHSUHVHQW. 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:

5HFHQWVRFLDODQGFXOWXUDOWKHRUKDVUHFRQFHLYHGVSDFHVDVGQDPLFLQWHU 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

,QKLVDUWLFQHS\$HVSRQVHWR.LP.QRWWOYLFKDHQ news 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 .QRWW3URPORFDOLWWR/RFDWLRQDQG%DFN\$JDLQ´

⁶⁹ .QRWW6SDWLDO7KHRUDQGQGWKH6WXGRI5HOLJLRQ´

⁷⁰ Ibid, 1111

⁷¹ .QRWW6SDWLDOWKHRUDQGPWHKRGIRUWKHVWXGRIUHOLJLRQ´

7KHUHIRUHRUNVDVVHVVPHQWWKDWUHVHDUFKHUVVKRXOGUHPRYHWKHDWWHPSWWR

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.

%HVLGHVVXJJHVWLQJWKDWIXOOEHUHPRYHGIURPWKHSUNWPKDMIGQVXLJHVVV
also be removed DVQEWDOOHQFRXQWHUEHWZHHQORFDOUHOLJLRQDQGORFDOLWQHGGQHF

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 LQYLVLEOHHIIHFVWRIUHOLJLRQRQFRPPXQLWRUORFDOLWQHGGQHF⁷⁶ 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 weIODV.QRWWVIRFXVRQWKHORFDORYHUWKKHHQHJHDO to locate 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 stereotypHG³R rld

5HOLJLRQVGLVFRXUVH5HOLJLRQH[LWVEHFDXVHDGKHUHQWVEULQJLWLQWRH[LWVHQF

⁷⁶ RUN5HVSQRQVHWR.LP.QRWW'

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:

and discourse about religion; the religious production of places and spaces; the competing ideological position within and between contemporary religions; the power relations, including relations of gender, sexuality, class, and race; the politics of religious identities and the contestation of spaces; [and] the utilization

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, ~~the~~ 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

⁷⁸ 7DQQLH/LXØREDOLJDWLRQDQG&KLQHVH%XGGKLV7KH&DQDGLDQ([SHULHQFH3K'GLVV8QLYHUVLWR12WV 2005). 31

⁷⁹ Ibid, 33-37

Chinatown in order to save the lost souls [when] a lack of understanding of Asian traditions was
DWWKHKH DUWRIWKHPRQIOLFW⁸⁰

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*:⁸¹

Eventually, racist restrictions and tendencies to be replaced with one that is race-neutral and based on points
age, and family members.⁸² These new selection of immigrants based 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
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 Univer()1 /P 90 0 0 1 72.024 131.9 Tm /P 90 ,1F325tssT3(-)-2(So)21 7200 0 1 7200 0 reaMCID 13

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 multicu

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

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

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.

7KHWHP SOHVDUH&

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 orig

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 () ± nicknamed the Happy Buddha ± the representation of the future Buddha, Maitreya. There is faint, recorded chanting emanating from the main area of the

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 WKHVKULQHVDQFRYHLVWKHHQWUDQFHWRDKRXVHVLJQVLQGLFDW

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;

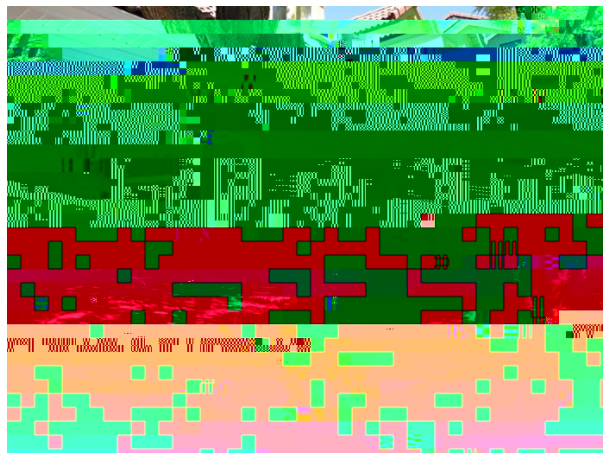
these two groups represented two of the three

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.

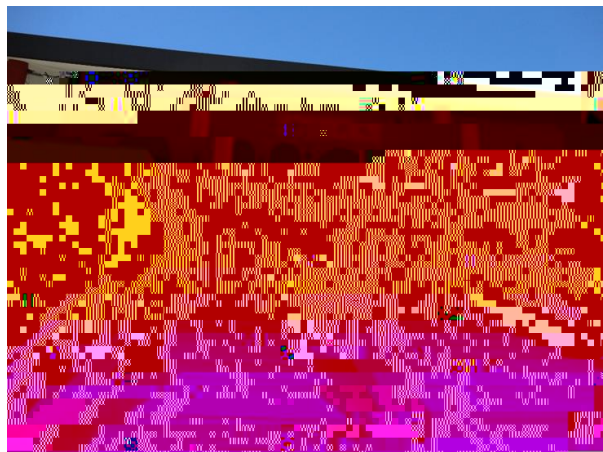


¹⁰⁴ See Liu regarding the importance of Tan Xu to modern Chinese Buddhism

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



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, ZKLOH(QJOLVKLVXVHGVSURUDGLFDOODWWKHW,HPSOHLQIHQHJDC) Canada remains FXOWXUDOOH[FOXVLYLVWWRFHUWDLQGHUHSPEXpects 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 () 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

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

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

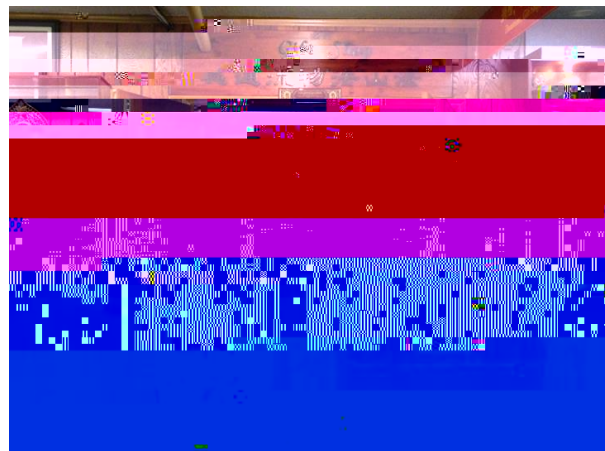


Figure 11 Gift Shop in basement of Main Dharma Hall

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

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

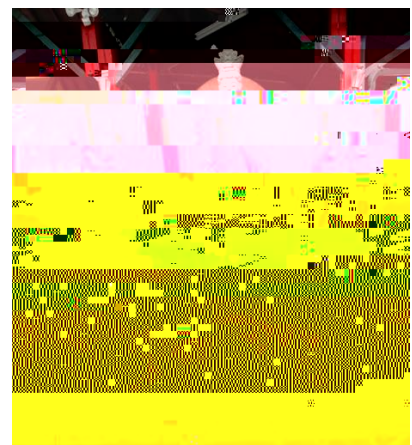
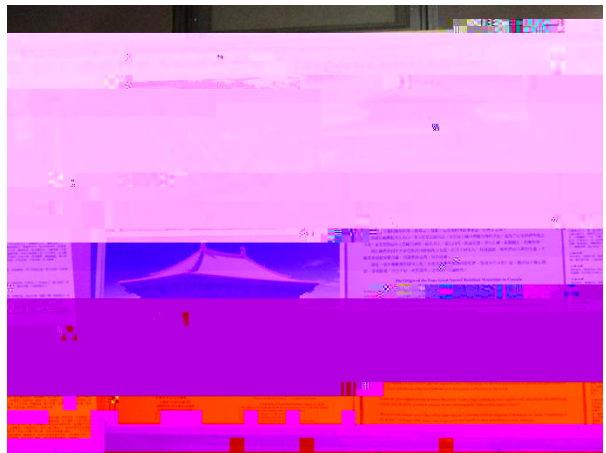
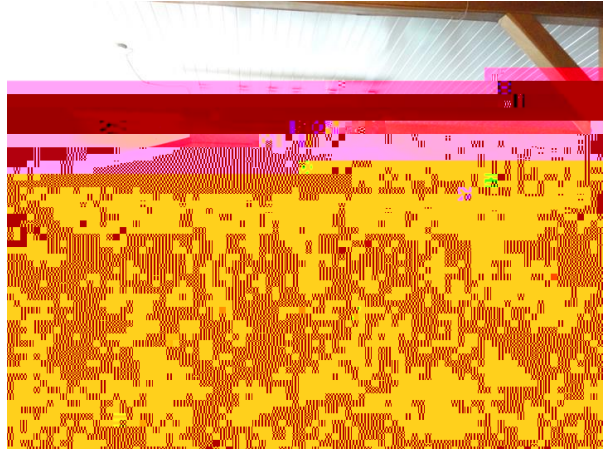


Figure 16 Guan Yin Pagoda with pond

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 WKHWHPSOH VSDFH\$&KDP6KDQ7HPSIQDQGDVVL YH 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 it 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 KXQGUHGVRIWKRXVDQGVRIWRXUJYVWVSRH 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 SDJRGDSURPRWLQJZRUGSHDEH¹⁰⁹ly, 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. 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 CRPPLVLRQKDVEXLOWDERDUGZDONDWWKH YHUHGJHRIRQHRIWKHZRUOGVZLOGHVWVWUHWKIPWIZKLCWH 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 EUHDWKDZID. The attraction is one of many available to tourists and has a dedicated hop-on, hop-off WEGO bus stop.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Ibid

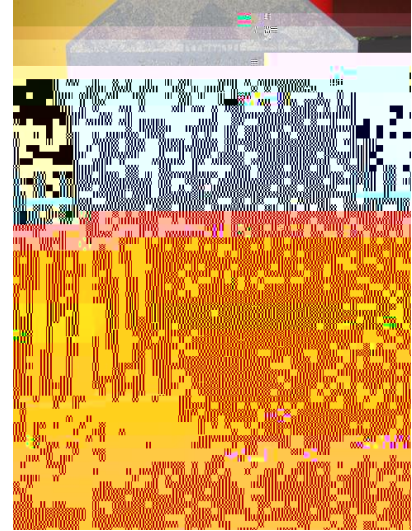
¹¹¹ Ibid

¹¹²

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, t

The last significant feature on the grounds is the Guan Yin Pavilion, located along



the back gate (fig. 20). The pavilion has two storeys, the top storey, like the main temple, is not open to the public, however the façade provides an excellent view of the second storey statues. The main attraction is the tall Guan Yin statue, centred and framed by the pavilion and contrasted against the red and yellow bafaed and yellow

Situated between the Guan Yin Pavilion,
the main temple building, and the stupa, is even

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.

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

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,

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

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, ~~DQGEFRSHQLQJXSWKHSXUVXLWRIWKH0LGGOH3DWKWRDQDQGHYHURQHWKH%XGGKDFUHF~~ ~~FRQWH[WZKHUHLQWKHSDWKZR~~¹²⁸~~XOGEHTXLWHZLAHOPFRUSWHG~~ come 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

This is EHFDXVHEURNHQVSDFH&UHVXPHVDZRUOGRIDOUHDGH[LVLWLQJGLVWLQFWLFL
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
UDWKHUWKDQKLHUDUFKLFDOLQWHUFRRQHFWLRQVDDQDQWUQDWLYHDSSURDFK
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

,QWKLVDZ\QRWW\SURSRVDOWKDWVSDFHVLPXOWDQHRXVOHQFRPSDVVHVWVKHUHOLJLR
VHFXODUDQG2\HLOO\WKHRURIDIIHFWHGVSDFHXQGHUVFRUHWK&WVSD\KHWQVILWKHUF
ERWKDQG5HOLJLRQDQGVHFXODULWGRLQWHUDFWZLWKLQWKHVDPHVSDFHVDVHYLGHQFI
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
WKDWWKHWHPSOHV\SDFHVDUHVXEMHFWHGWRRPRUHWKDQMXVWWKHLULPPHGLDWHVY
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
RQFHKHOGVZDRYHUKXQGUHGVRIUHJXODUODWWHQGLQJGHYRWHHVDQGWKRXVDQGVRI
EXUQHUVHVSHFLDOOGXULQJFXVWRPDU&KLQHVH1HZHDUFHOHEUDWLRQVEXWQRZWKHP
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/ift059. 1094-95

¹³⁵ /LXØREDOLJDWLRQDQG&KLQHVH%XGGK&DVP´

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 Buddas Sarira Stupa is subject to the same influences of time and history, however, the Stupa

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

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

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

secularity. .QRWWΨJRDOZDVWRGLVFRYHUVKHVDFUHGZLWKLQWKHHYHUGDWKHRUGLQDU

world, while my goal, through an application of her spatial analysis to the temples, has been to

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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~~HHBHWHHQD\$WDWWEEDO2HHHSQDQNM~~

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