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The Cultivation of Therapeutic Landscapes: A Medical Anthropological Approach to Understanding the Health and Wellbeing Qualities of the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas

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Abstract

Medical anthropology researchers have just begun exploring therapeutic landscapes as the benefits of location are just now being understood in the field as potentially promoting a sense of healing and wellbeing. Some cultural heritage sites are translocated sites that are important to disseminate traditional cultural knowledge. While some of these cultural heritage landscapes become formal cultural resources, others also add a level of therapeutic quality to their existence. The Garden of 1,000 Buddhas was such a location. Discerning how these sites develop and are mitigated through affective responses, messaging symbols and personal beliefs was an important part of the process. How these were linked to the social and symbolic environments of the therapeutic landscape was not well known. For this reason, it became important to explore the central questions: How do affective responses, personal beliefs, and messaging symbols at the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas impact visitors' social and symbolic environments? Are affective responses, personal beliefs, and messaging symbols integral in therapeutic landscape development? To fully explore this question, three subquestions should be explored which will then provide adequate responses to the central question. These three subquestions will be as follows: 1) How do affective responses emerging from interacting with a cultural heritage site influence the visitors' health and wellbeing outcomes from visiting the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas?, 2) How are visitors' personal health and wellbeing beliefs formative in the construction of a therapeutic landscape where no official health and wellbeing attributes are articulated by the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas site management?; 3) How does visitor placement of health and wellbeing messaging symbols throughout the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas impact the social environment of the therapeutic landscape at the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas? Answering these questions will demonstrate how they are related and the impact they have on

the social and symbolic environments. The answers to these questions will also facilitate an

understanding of how therapeutic landscapes develop and their relationship with cultural heritage

sites.

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Proposal Study

1.0 Introduction to the study

Most people think of cultural heritage sites as longstanding locations embodied with cultural meaning and significance. This understanding ignores diasporic communities' attempts to reclaim their culture through developing and maintaining new landscapes as these locations are considered contemporary. Very little research has focused on translocated contemporary cultural heritage sites as these sites do not conform to the dominant Western conceptual framework. The lack of focus on these sites may be attributed to the absence of deep ancestral roots, which is an underlying assumption for cultural heritage demarcation.

The Garden of 1,000 Buddhas (Garden hereafter) is one such site developed as a Tibetan Buddhist international peace garden for the enjoyment of all visitors despite their ethnicity or religious background. As a translocated contemporary cultural heritage site, the Garden's minimal messaging leaves a noncurated experience, and therefore, visitor site interaction occurs through their own understanding and cultural lens. The site has manifested both as a cultural pilgrimage site for Tibetans and Tibetan Buddhists, and a therapeutic landscape where visitors come to grieve, a location for meditation, a place to maintain spiritual wellbeing and healing other afflictions. Research has yet to address if affective responses from visiting a cultural landscape promotes health and wellbeing; nor has researching personal health and wellbeing beliefs been explored as a means for socialization through visitor interaction, and how other visitors identify or internalize these therapeutic qualities. Affective responses are embodied

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responses, feelings and sentiments a location elicits through interaction (Waterton & Watson, 2013). This qualitative study will implement an ethnographic approach exploring the research question: how do affective responses, personal beliefs, and messaging symbols at the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas impact visitors' social and symbolic environments and are these integral in therapeutic landscape development?

1.1 The Problem

Current cultural heritage and medical anthropology exploring therapeutic landscapes has focused on how landscapes have multiple meanings, and the political dynamics focused on inequalities (Winchester & McGrath, 2017). One aspect that is largely overlooked is the intersection of symbolic space and social relations and how these impact health (Winchester & McGrath, 2017). This is an imperative juncture to explore as health and healing occurs in a social space, whether constructed or emergent through site interaction. Affective responses and personal beliefs are a critical dynamic of site visitation but have not been explored in depth as a means to facilitate health and wellbeing in the creation and maintenance of a therapeutic landscape. Furthermore, it is not well understood what social influences including personal beliefs promote therapeutic landscape develop from engaging with a cultural heritage landscape where health and wellbeing are emergent through site interaction. The importance of this research is paramount as these findings could influence how researchers integrate the built, social, and symbolic environments in official therapeutic landscapes (including hospitals and care facilities) to promote a more holistic version of health and wellbeing for patients dealing with chronic and long-term illnesses, such as cancer, mental trauma including grieving the death of a friend or family member; and even helping people manage depression and recurrent depressive episodes better.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this ethnographic study is to discover how translocated contemporary cultural heritage sites become imbued with and maintain therapeutic qualities through visitor experience and interaction with the site. This research will explore links between affective responses, and health and wellbeing, as well as exploring how personal beliefs are constitutive in the formation of a therapeutic landscape. Furthermore, this study will explore how visitors who contribute symbolic messages through dedicating plaques and leaving offerings impact the social environment for subsequent visitors.

1.3 Research Questions

Affective responses are an important avenue to gauge the significance of cultural landscapes and cultural heritage through direct site interaction. Research has clung onto affective response as a means to determine visitor responses to sites, but this is not usually applied to explore health and wellbeing outcomes from site visitation. Health and wellbeing beliefs are not a focal area for cultural and therapeutic landscape research and must be explored through this lens as these dynamics may be learned or passed on to other visitors. Lastly, the site is unique as it allows for personalization and there is no cultural and therapeutic landscape research exploring this aspect and how personalization may impact the social and symbolic landscape. For this reason, this study will focus on these central questions: How do affective responses, personal beliefs, and messaging symbols at the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas impact visitors' social and symbolic environments? Are affective responses, personal beliefs, and messaging symbols integral in therapeutic landscape development?

1.3.1 Three Subquestions

1. How do affective responses emerging from interacting with a cultural heritage site influence the visitors' health and wellbeing outcomes from visiting the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas?

2. How are visitors' personal health and wellbeing beliefs formative in the construction of a therapeutic landscape where no official health and wellbeing attributes are articulated by the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas site management?

3. How does visitor placement of health and wellbeing messaging symbols throughout the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas impact the social environment of the therapeutic landscape at the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas?

These three subquestions will focus on each area of the central question to formulate an adequate and robust response. The first of three subquestions is how do affective responses emerging from interacting with a cultural heritage site influence the visitors' health and wellbeing? Cultural heritage research has shifted towards integrating affective response into cultural heritage site analysis (Crouch, 2015; Smith, 2014; Waterton & Watson, 2013). Affective responses are defined as embodied responses, feelings and sentiments that interact with the physical world provokes in the observer (Waterton & Watson, 2013). Affective responses are quickly becoming a means to explore visitor reactions through site interaction (Smith, 2014). Much of this research only focuses on how these affective responses engender a sense of belonging, nationalism, and at times, conflicting feelings about a heritage location (Sather-Wagstaff, 2015; Smith, 2014). While research in the fields of cultural heritage and therapeutic landscapes share many similarities, affective responses have mainly been explored in cultural heritage research; it has not been a major therapeutic landscape research endeavor. The only exception was Darvill et al. (2019) who explored participant mental wellbeing working in archeological heritage sites, the main research purpose explored the positive impact socialization

has on mental health outcomes. Research pertaining to affective responses and health and wellbeing still needs further exploration. For this reason, this subquestion will explore if health and wellbeing outcomes are impacted by affective responses generated through visiting a cultural heritage site.

The second subquestion is how are visitors' personal health and wellbeing beliefs formative in the construction of a therapeutic landscape where no official health and wellbeing attributes are articulated by site management? Medical anthropological literature has depicted that health and wellbeing beliefs are culturally reinforced and emergent through personal experiences, political dynamics including access to healthcare, and belief systems including religion (Brown & Barrett, 2010). Previous research indicated that people explore alternative medicine due to distrusting biomedical approaches, dissatisfaction of biomedical outcomes, and to establish a personal self-centered care to take charge of their own illnesses (Sivén & Mishtal, 2012). Other research has indicated the form of medicine must align with their personal beliefs, cultural beliefs, and to promote the continuation of traditional/cultural medicine (Riordan & Schofield, 2015; Sivén & Mishtal, 2012). Still other research has indicated that tailoring the environment to one's health needs is important for a continuation of previous lifestyles they had before illness negatively impacted their lives (Karasaki et al., 2017). While previous research has illuminated use of alternative medicine, and has indicated the necessity to explore personal environments, these areas of research do not explain how personal beliefs are constitutive of therapeutic landscapes at a noncurated site. Visitors' personal health and wellbeing beliefs may reflect similar themes rejecting the biomedical dominant model and one that focuses on personal health care needs. It is well known that Garden visitors who come for health and healing occasionally leave offerings including letters or pictures for the deceased or personal prayers for

spiritual wellbeing. Describing how personal beliefs influence site interaction is important as these beliefs may be formative in the socialization process of imbuing a cultural landscape with therapeutic qualities. This question will examine the intersection of personal health and wellbeing beliefs and site interactions to determine if these beliefs are formative to the site interaction process and health and wellbeing outcomes obtained.

The third subquestion is how does the personal placement of health and wellbeing messaging symbols throughout the site impact the social environment of the therapeutic landscape at the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas? Previous therapeutic landscape research has demonstrated that social and symbolic environments are integral aspects of a therapeutic landscape (Gesler, 2003), but how these environments are constructed has not been explored. Medical anthropology has begun to explore the importance of how therapeutic landscapes incorporate social and symbolic landscapes (Winchester & McGrath, 2017), but this intersection of social and symbolic landscapes has not been fully articulated. Recent medical anthropology exploring therapeutic landscapes focused on clinical care spatial dynamics in poverty stricken areas (Cooper, 2017), transforming homes into care facilities (Karasaki et al., 2017), and exploring contested therapeutic locations (Mokos, 2017). Therapeutic landscape researchers have yet to explore how individuals impact social and symbolic environments. With the potential for visitors to inscribe plaques with personalized messages through financial donations and the ability to leave personal objects and messages throughout this site, the symbolic nature of these endeavors has the potential to impact the social environment, and therefore co-create the therapeutic landscape. These dynamics must be explored further.

1.4 Delimitations

Delimitations were boundaries the researcher used to determine were included as potential research participants and who would be excluded. The delimitations assist to define our population of interest:

- Individuals who were legally defined as adults, which is individuals 18 years old or older.
- Visitors who journeyed to the Garden for therapeutic reasons.
- Adults who lived near the Garden in the surrounding communities believed the location was therapeutic.

1.5 Limitations

As with all qualitative research, this research is not generalizable but may demonstrate transferability to similar situations. This research is limited to the trustworthiness of interviewees, as well as their ability to recall information accurately. As in all qualitative studies, a significant limitation is the interviewee's desire to socially identify with the interviewer whereby giving feedback that is believed the interviewer wishes to hear. Lastly, visitors interviewed may reflect experiences that are not reflective of other visitors who interact with the site for other personal reasons.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study will help to determine if and how affective response generated through interaction with a cultural landscape facilitates visitor health and wellbeing as very little research has explored this juncture. Furthermore, this study will examine the role personal beliefs signify regarding health and wellbeing and the socialization process of these beliefs. Researching the importance of the social and symbolic environments have on health and

wellbeing outcomes through an anthropological lens is important area of interest for therapeutic landscape and medical anthropological researchers alike (Winchester & McGrath, 2017). For this reason, this study will examine if personal beliefs regarding health and wellbeing are socialized through cultural processes. Because visitors can personalize this particular site, it is possible to explore these symbolic manifestations and the impact they have on the social environment. Exploring symbolic and social environment dynamics and their role in therapeutic landscape development may prove valuable to integrating these environments into official health and wellbeing settings as these environments have yet to be integrated in these locations.

1.7 Summary

Understanding how contemporary cultural landscapes and cultural heritage sites become imbued with therapeutic qualities is an important aspect to research as this dynamic is currently not well understood. The implications of determining how this occurs is vital research as these findings may be applicable to expanding therapeutic qualities in official healthcare and wellbeing facilities. Exploring if affective responses derived from visiting a cultural heritage site facilitates health and wellbeing outcomes is critical research as it could have direct applications to therapeutic landscape development. Furthermore, understanding how personal beliefs regarding health and wellbeing may be constitutive to the cultural process of the location will demonstrate how sites are imbued with therapeutic qualities. Lastly this research will explore cultural processes that influence the social and symbolic environments of a contemporary cultural heritage site to become imbued as a therapeutic landscape through a medical anthropological perspective as this process has not been well articulated.

1.8 Literature Review

This literature review explores the connection between cultural heritage, cultural landscapes and therapeutic landscapes and how each of these are an integral aspect of health and wellbeing. This literature review then focuses on social and symbolic environments through therapeutic landscape. The last portion of this literature review focuses on personal beliefs and affective response dynamics and current limitations.

Cultural heritage framework originated from a Western conceptual framework where cultural norms are an expression of beliefs and ideals that a group of people pass from one generation to the next. Cultural heritage embodies many different aspects of our everyday lives. Cultural heritage in its broadest sense can be defined as

> "a cultural legacy which we receive from the past, which we live in the present and which we will pass on to future generations…[it] is not limited to monuments and collections of objects. It is also comprised of living expressions in heritage from our ancestors It is socially significant to how we identify as people and it also requires a memory of the past." (Silverman & Ruggles, 2007, p. 12)

Cultural heritage has been dichotomized into tangible and intangible forms. Tangible forms of heritage are the physical embodiments of culture, which include artwork, buildings, monuments, traditional clothing, and religious representations (Harrison, 2013; Sather-Wagstaff, 2015). Intangible forms include practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills that encompass a culture in question (Riordan & Schofield, 2015). While Western cultural heritage models view these dichotomously, both tangible and intangible aspects are intertwined and

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overlap significantly. Tangible forms also contain intangible connotations as all tangible cultural material is bound up with intangible cultural meaning and significance (Harrison, 2008).

The review of literature focusing on the Western cultural heritage model has mainly been articulated through a modernistic framework which is problematic for authentically framing cultural heritage sites. This occurs because the Western model bifurcates dichotomously between intangible and tangible aspects while reducing non-Western heritage forms into a universal Westernized lens even in pluralistically diverse settings (Whitt, 2009; Cocks et al., 2018). Furthermore, through nostalgia for the past, whether imagined or real, the modernistic framework situates heritage within a linear sense of time where the past is unattainable (Berliner, 2012; Harrison, 2013; Lowenthal, 2015). Thus, cultural heritage is always in relation with the past that is reimagined and reinvented in the present for the future (Lee, 2008).

This linear relationship is incongruent with non-Western cultural heritage concepts. A prime example is exemplified in India where time is cyclical, which connects "…regional histories of monuments linking social structures, space and time" (Ray, 2012, p. 82). This cyclical time can be seen through an Indian and/or Tibetan lens that views the human life recurring cycle: birth, life, death, and rebirth.

The difference in time through both a Western and Buddhist conception can further accentuate time especially regarding the past. Nostalgia is further explained through the Western conceptual framework as people yearning for the past and tradition as a counter to modernization (Harrison, 2013). This nostalgic concept of a yearning for a forgone past is the antithesis of Tibetan Buddhist beliefs of impermanence (Peleggi, 2012). According to Buddhism, the main source of suffering is attachment to both physical and mental objects as permanently and inherently existing (Peleggi, 2012). Impermanence is the realization that all things are transient

and bound to decay (Bodhi, 2005; Pelden, 2007; Peleggi, 2012; Pistono, 2014). This is not to say that material objects, such as religious statues and temples are unimportant, but rather that the construction of these objects are linked to other religious activities such as merit making, another core concept of Buddhism. In short, merit making is offering resources to restoration projects or benefiting people in need. Buddhist practitioners gain merit which karmically places them in a better position to achieve happiness and enlightenment (Peleggi, 2012). Maintaining both tangible and intangible religious cultural heritage also benefit others through the act of safeguarding Buddha's teaching for future generations is thus a method to achieve happiness. These are in contradiction to the nostalgic concept and must be accounted for in researching non-Western cultural heritage sites.

Cultural landscapes are an integral aspect of cultural heritage literature where both intangible and tangible forms of heritage emerge giving significance of a location to a community that shares culture. Landscape is a very complex notion that is difficult to define as it assimilates cultural concepts of location that are internalized, but it is also an external object with its own independent existence (Tilley & Cameron-Daum, 2017). Tilley & Cameron-Daum (2017) saw landscape as being constitutive in individual identity as well as an entanglement of persons and landscape in which material and social are intertwined. The interactions of landscape and people are the basis on which culture is constructed and constrained.

Natural landscapes are considered untouched wilderness areas that have a dichotomous relationship with cultural landscapes but these are seen as an integral to cultural identity (Cocks et al., 2018; Harrison, 2008, 2013). This dualistic nature – culture conception must be acknowledged also as a cultural concept that originated in Europe during the Enlightenment period (Harrison, 2008). This discourse was used as a means to detach indigenous people from

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their traditional lands (Harrison, 2008). The fact is, all natural landscapes are cultural constructions embedded in settler countries whereas Western European countries lack a nature-culture distinction (Harrison, 2008).

Cultural landscapes hold significance to a group of people who share the same culture (Cocks et al., 2018). Cultural landscapes are a type of landscape that tells a cultural story where 'cultural sedimentation,' also known as the built environment, gather on a natural landscape (Byrne, 2008). According to UNESCO there are three types of cultural landscapes (UNESCO, 2008). First, the landscape is intentionally created by humans where gardens and other aesthetically pleasing locations are built which are often associated with religious or monumental buildings (UNESCO, 2008). The second type are organically evolving landscapes stemming from initial social, economic, administrative, and/or religious imperatives and is developed specifically as a response to its natural environment (UNESCO, 2008). Lastly, an associated cultural landscape is one where powerful religious, artistic or cultural associations of the natural element rather than material cultural evidence, which may be insignificant or even absent is imbued with cultural significance (UNESCO, 2008).

This previously outlined cultural landscape framework is through an official UNESCO lens used to designate landscapes with cultural significance. This framework is typically used to inscribe cultural landscapes as official cultural heritage locations through a top-down approach often implemented by outside officials (Baird, 2014). This is problematic as this form of cultural heritage is a western framework used that often overlooks local cultural conceptions of landscape and the significance it has on the everyday lives of locals and how they interact with these locations (Cocks et al., 2018). According to Cocks et al. (2018), cultural landscapes are an integral location where local cultures can leverage their own agency to fulfill their self-

determining desires, as well as signifying belonging and social justice. Since cultural heritage is largely conceptualized through a Western framework and by the dominant cultures, minority cultural constituents' self-determination and social justice were overlooked even though these elements are held as human rights (Baird, 2014). A reason why sites like the Garden develop is due to the importance of self-determination to practice religion without any hinderance or censorship by dominant cultural groups. Tibetan Buddhist organizations in general could be seen in this light as these have been spreading to the west as both a way to safeguard Tibetan Buddhist culture as well as spread Buddhist teachings in the West.

Unfortunately, diasporic communities, including Tibetans, lack access to their cultural landscapes which must be recreated in their new homeland. This not only propels cultural landscape creation but also influences the overall culture of the community in diaspora as it is re-created. This cultural re-creation occurs but it is not equivalent to the culture back home as local dynamics rarely meet the demands of the diasporic culture in situ (Lee, 2008). The Garden is a perfect example as it has been constructed using traditional Tibetan building techniques and iconography but overall, the Garden is unique as no other location like it exists either inside the Tibetan ethnic regions in Asia or in diaspora. In essence, the Garden is a Tibetan re-creation, but it should not be assumed to represent the traditional culture back in Tibet. However, through primary research at the Garden, it is evident that this cultural landscape is important to Tibetans in diaspora even if the Garden is a contemporary embodiment of Tibetan heritage.

Therapeutic landscapes are also a specific type of cultural landscape. Therapeutic landscapes are integral to health and healing through directly experiencing a cultural landscape. Gesler's therapeutic landscapes (2003) was ground-breaking research that teases apart therapeutic landscapes into four environments including: natural, built, symbolic and social.

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Natural and built environments are conceptually dichotomized within the Western cultural

heritage conceptualization (Smith, 2006). There is a general belief that nature heals and is

viewed as being untouched by civilization (Gesler, 2003); whereas the built environment

facilitates healing through purposeful adaptations on the natural landscape reflecting cultural

norms, beliefs, economic development and technological innovations (Lehr & Cipko, 2010).

These physical environments extend beyond our current conception of landscape to an

environment attributed with agency and power (Darvill et al., 2019).

Symbolic and social environment research indicated that culturally driven interpretations

play a significant role between place and health (Huang & Xu, 2018) while cultural

interpretations vary and change in relation to tangible items, such as statues, may obtain

additional connotations from the ones originally intended overtime (Peleggi, 2012). Emotional

healing through touristic experiences at cultural heritage tourist attractions, and the social

benefits of connecting with others, and their inner self has positive mental health benefits have

been explored (Cho et al., 2016; Smith, 2014; A. Williams, 1998) especially while engaging in

hobbies where participants can experience emotional refuge and non-demanding social

interaction spanning multiple weeks (Darvill et al., 2019; Heaslip et al., 2020).

Importantly, therapeutic landscapes, according to Gesler (2003) exemplify universal

value spanning space, time and culture. Other researchers, including cultural heritage and

pilgrimage researchers, have determined that universal values are potentially an overstatement as

belief, multicultural, and individualistic experience are through a relativistic lens (Darvill et al.,

2019; Devereux & Carnegie, 2006; Ostergaard & Refslund Christensen, 2010; Wilson, 2003).

This is the philosophical dilemma between modernist and critical heritage studies frameworks

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where critical studies deconstructs the universal by creating an inclusive backdrop allowing for a rich conceptualization of heritage (Winter, 2015).

To illicit this more inclusive framework, Waterton and Watson (2013) have proposed moving away from a piecemealed theoretical framework reliant on modernistic ideals and establishing a unified cultural heritage theoretical framework focusing on the dialogic process visitors engage in at Cultural heritage locations and cultural landscapes. Their proposal enlists visitor affective responses as a means to explore cultural heritage significance and site complexity through individual affective responses from experiencing a site and how these interactions illicit affect (Smith, 2014; Waterton & Watson, 2013). Affect is comprised of emotions, feelings, subjective responses and sensibilities (Crouch, 2019). A primary reason why it is important to explore affect is because people go to sites that elicit emotion and feeling (Smith, 2014). Smith's (2014) findings indicate that visitors display an array of registers of engagement, which reinforce what people already know and feel. In other words, site visitation reifies visitor beliefs through validating experiences.

Crouch (2019) takes Smith's (2014) affect analysis further indicating that visiting cultural heritage spaces gives meaning to our everyday life. Through this engagement it brings visitors back to being human and being alive (Crouch, 2019; Waterton & Watson, 2013). Affective responses are physical/emotional responses generated through a dialogical interaction culminating as a lived experience at cultural heritage site (Newell, 2018).

In summary, cultural heritage research has explored landscape and environment mainly through a Western framework. Due to the Western framework limitations, cultural heritage researchers have embraced the critical turn adopting a postmodernist approach as well as relying on other social science research areas including therapeutic landscapes, pilgrimage, and cultural

heritage to determine the significance. This approach delves into personal experiences to articulate the impact of visiting sites and visitation outcomes. Therapeutic landscape theory devised by Gessler (2003) has advanced the understanding of how therapeutic landscapes facilitate healing through experiencing natural, built, symbolic and social environment interactions. Cultural heritage and therapeutic landscape researchers have established the positive impacts of site visitation through a Westernized framework. To advance cultural heritage and therapeutic landscape research, health and healing focusing not only on visitor outcomes but explore the intersections of affect, personal beliefs, and the social – symbolic dynamics are explored. Contemporary translocated cultural heritage locations such as the Garden are prime research areas to document and analyze therapeutic landscape development.

1.14 Summary

Implementing these methods will be critical to discovering how the Garden as a translocated contemporary cultural heritage location has been reframed through cultural processes to incorporate therapeutic landscape dynamics. A qualitative methods approach is a preferred method to discover these dynamics as visitor – site interaction is a mitigated cultural process that is interactive and even contested. Exploring each of the three subquestions through participant observation will enable the researcher to explore health and wellbeing beliefs are formative to how visitors interact with a cultural landscape. The role of affective responses in perceiving the cultural landscape as therapeutic, and the interaction between the symbolic and social environment through personalization. Participant observation tools that will be used include unstructured interviews, informal interviews, field observations, field notes, and photos. Each of these participant observation tools will be analyzed using NVIVO software to discover

codes, themes, and categories which will be necessary to answer the three subquestions which

will inform an adequate response to the central question.

Chapter Two:

Garden of 1,000 Buddhas Field Site

2.0 The Basics

The Garden of 1,000 Buddhas (Garden hereafter) is an extremely unique Tibetan

Buddhist international peace park located in Arlee, Montana on the Flathead Reservation, a

reservation mainly composed of Kootenai, Pend d 'Oreille, and Salish Native Americans tribal

members. It is a self-proclaimed international peace park accessible to all people regardless of

nationality or religious affiliation. No other Tibetan Buddhist cultural site like this anywhere else

in the world. The location has become a pilgrimage location and cultural heritage site for a wide

variety of people around the world. Despite its uniqueness, it has gained its cultural heritage and

pilgrimage status through cultural mediating processes including authenticity and legitimacy

(Lauer, 2015). The site is a contemporary and reimagined/recreated embodiment of Tibetan

Buddhist cultural landscape that is inserting its cultural legacy in American society through

Tibetan Buddhist customs and norms.

The Garden began development through the dedication and hard work of a Tibetan

Buddhist tantric master known as Gochen Tulku Sang-ngag Rinpoche (Rinpoche hereafter). The

origins of the Garden are rooted in Tibetan Buddhist prophecy predicted by Padmasambhava, the

patriarch of Tibetan Buddhism in the eighth century. Padmasambhava foretold that "When the

iron bird flies and horses run on wheels … the Dharma will come to the land of the Red Man"

(*Chinese Buddhist Encyclopedia.*, 2020). Many Tibetans believe Padmasambhava prophesized

the spread of Tibetan Buddhism to North America that consequently occurred from the mass

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exodus of Tibetan Buddhist gurus who fled China's occupation of Tibet. The prophecy is validation for gurus to spread Tibetan Buddhism in the West.

Besides prophecies, dreams and visions are important in the spread of Tibetan culture and Tibetan Buddhism. A prime example of this is intertwined in the founding and development of the Garden. The story began even before Rinpoche came to the United States. When Rinpoche was young and still living in Tibet, he had a vision of a peace garden shaped like a lotus flower centered in a mountainous valley. Sadly, Rinpoche was imprisoned shortly after the Chinese occupation of Tibet where he remained for approximately 10 years. After finally being released, he eventually made his way to the United States to teach Tibetan Buddhism. While passing through the Jocko Valley just north of Missoula, Montana, Rinpoche noticed that the rolling hills surrounded by formidable mountains perfectly resembled his lotus shaped valley vision he had as a child(*Garden of 1,000 Buddhas Video*, 2009). This synchronization of vision and potential reality propelled Rinpoche to locate viable land for purchase. He found a parcel of land for sale and with the Salish and Kootenai Tribal Leaders' blessing, Rinpoche purchased 60 acres and immediately began raising funds, planning, and constructing the Garden.

Almost immediately, the Garden adhered to the Tibetan cultural landscape through the intentional design. Some important aspects of a cultural landscape include a landscape that is intentionally designed to include cultural heritage objects (Cocks et al., 2018). These cultural landscapes also include religious, artistic and or cultural associations bound up in natural elements (Cocks et al., 2018). The Garden perfectly fits Cocks et al.'s (2018) cultural landscapes through the construction of Tibetan iconographic symbols, structures and statues as well as establishing the role of the natural environment where the soft rolling hills have been interpreted as the petals of a lotus. In effect, the Garden signifies a translocated cultural landscape that is

continuously being molded into a microcosm of Tibetanness in North America that is being adapted by Western society.

In this manner the Garden is not only a garden of peace but a Tibetan cultural landscape reinvention in North America. The Garden is a reinvention because of the way it was and continues to be constructed. The general concept of the Garden not only reflects Tibetan identity but also invites people from other backgrounds to experience the cultural landscape. In general, there are few demarking signs to signify how the Garden should be interpreted. This leaves visitors the ability to interpret the site as they wish.

It is important to note that while visitors may interpret these symbols and icons based on their own beliefs, each element of each symbol or icon has significant meaning for Tibetan Buddhism. For Tibetan people, religion and culture are interwoven into a cultural fabric of everyday life. Buddhism is not only a religion for Tibetan people but guides individual actions on a daily basis. The religious and Tibetan cultural iconography represented in the Garden reflects this rich history through the plentitude of statues, carvings, mandalas, and prayer flags for each one that adorn the grounds. Statues of historical Tibetan Buddhist icons including King Trisong Detsen, the king known to bring Buddhism to Tibet, are placed throughout the Garden. In total there are 10 historical Tibetan Buddhist figures enshrined on the grounds.

The Garden also embodies all three branches of Buddhism, which are Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana. Tibetan Buddhism is Vajrayana Buddhism which contains all of Shakyamuni Buddha's (the historical Buddha) teachings. All three branches share iconographic symbols such as the Dharma wheel, representing the eight-fold path, Buddha statues, slogans from Shakyamuni Buddha found in the Tripitaka, and stupas. There are 1,002 Buddhas on the spokes of the Dharma Wheel and 1,002 Stupas encircling the perimeter of the garden.

The Dharma wheel and stupas are tangible representations of Buddhist philosophy. The Dharma wheel has eight spokes that represent the eight fold path which includes: Right View, Right Thinking, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Diligence, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration (Hanh, 1998). The philosophy behind the eight fold path is that when a person practices each part of the path, joy peace and insight are developed (Hanh, 1998).

A stupa represents the body and enlightened mind of the Buddha (Stutchbury, 1991). Within Tibetan Buddhism there are eight different types of stupas including Heaped Lotuses, Enlightenment, Many Doors, Great Miracles, Descent from the God Realm, Reconciliation, Complete Victory and the Nirvana Stupa (Pacheco, 2019). Each stupa represents a significant milestone in the Buddha's life. The 1,002 stupas lining the periphery of the Dharma Wheel are in the form of the Stupa of Enlightenment (Pacheco, 2019). Each level from the base up represents one aspect of the path to enlightenment (Pacheco, 2019).

Figure 2-0-1 Shakyamuni Buddha Statue

Figure 2-0-2 The Eight Stupas of Enlightenment

The Mahayana path incorporates the ideal of the Bodhisattva, a being that will help bring all sentient beings to the state of enlightenment (Wallace, 2011). Mahayana figures including Guan Yin, a Bodhisattva figure whose actions are idealized in Chinese Buddhism. Guan Yin (Avalokiteśvara in Sanskrit) means "Observing the Sounds (or Cries) of the World" (*Chinese Buddhist Encyclopedia*, 2020). She embodies both compassion and loving kindness.

The Garden also displays the Prajnaparamita, also known as the Heart Sutra, is another Mahayana representation. The Prajnaparamita is a famous Buddhist text that teaches emptiness through compassion (Brunnhölzl, 2017). The Prajnaparamita is inscribed on eight black marble plaques in the innermost part of the Garden. Each one is affixed to a pedestal encircling Yumchenmo (for information regarding Yumchenmo see below), the main Garden statue. Each plaque is written in a different language including Chinese, English, French, Japanese, Sanskrit, Spanish, Thai, and Tibetan.

Figure 2-0-3 Guan Yin Statue

Representations of Vajrayana Buddhism are also common at the Garden. Vajrayana Buddhism is "a branch of the universal vehicle in which the practitioner engages in tantric practice" (Tegchok, 2005). In other words, Vajrayana Buddhism is considered a form of Mahayana Buddhism as it incorporates the Bodhisattva path to enlightenment but adds tantric practice as a method of realization. Tantra can be defined as a meditational method that incorporates various sutra teachings into one text, which focuses on Buddhist deities as an archetype to instill specific Bodhisattva qualities that meditators incorporate into their consciousness (tricyle.org, 2019). Tantra is a method used to realize the ultimate nature of reality (Tricyle.org, 2019). These deity representations are finely detailed deity figures infused with iconography that is associated with Tantric meaning and philosophy. Items in the deities' hands or items worn by them always signifies some aspect of the Buddha's teachings or Buddhist philosophy. Deities and other tantric symbols represented at the Garden include Zambhala Mandala, Vajrasattva Mandala, the Vajrakilaya Stupa, magnetizing prayer wheel, and Yumchenmo, the Mother of all Buddhas (Central Figure in the Dharma wheel) (a detailed description of each of these is listed in the definition section).

Each of these statues or stupas are empowered using what is called a tsogching. Tsogchings contain Tibetan Buddhist mantras, herbal medicines, organic material, cloth and/or ashes from a prominent Buddhist master (Chöd Teachings, 2020). This gives life to the statue where the statue is viewed as powerful and embodies wisdom and compassion whereas an unfilled statue is viewed as a lifeless piece of metal (Chöd Teachings, 2020). These empowered statues are imbued with specific enlightening qualities in their corresponding meditational tantric texts.

Figure 2-0-4 Yumchenmo Statue

Figure 2-0-5 Zambhala Mandala, Vajrakilaya Stupa and Magnetizing Prayer Wheel (Left to Right)

2.1 Garden Board, Management and Personnel

For the last decade, the Garden has undergone several changes to the Board of Directors positions to facilitate the Garden needs as a certified 503(c) nonprofit organization. Each iteration changed and rebalanced its members in order to guarantee the appropriate measures were taken to ensure Rinpoche's vision is actualized in the most fiscally responsible manner. Most recently, the nonprofit board member positions have been filled by all Tibetans with the exception of Rinpoche's wife. These members include Rinpoche's brother, Newang Gelek (Khen Rinpoche hereafter), the abbot of the Garden; another brother who is the abbot of the Taiwanese center, a cousin who lives in New York and a local Tibetan who dedicates his time and resources to help actualize Rinpoche's vision of the Garden.

The board members of the Garden and management overlap considerably. Although Rinpoche no longer lives on the premises, he still orchestrates major projects and identifies all the retreats that will be held at the Garden annually. Rinpoche entrusted his brother Khen Rinpoche as the abbot of the Garden in 2008. Khen Rinpoche lives on location and fills the general manager role. Khen Rinpoche employs a handful of employees in specific positions to ensure the everyday tasks are accomplished. These positions include Gift Shop Clerk, General Garden Caretaker, Administrative Coordinator and part-time Tibetan-English translator.

All other roles including media, fundraising, audio/video editing are actively filled by resident volunteers. Tibetan Buddhist philosophy dictates that people should not work for Dharma (Buddhist) organizations. Tibetan Buddhists believe that serious students/practitioners should donate their time and energy to fulfill the needs of the Dharma, Sangha and especially those of their spiritual teachers. The purpose behind this is to allow the students to generate merit. Merit can be seen as beneficial actions that help with personal growth and help relate to

the sacred or holy (Trungpa, 1993). Volunteering then is considered a twofold act. It benefits the overall organization and also benefits the volunteer to grow spiritually with the ultimate aim of achieving enlightenment.

At any given point in time, there are between five to ten resident volunteers and employees who work for the overall benefit of the Garden. These people live and work at the Garden for an extended period of time. Many of them come to the Garden during a transitional period in their lives. Most of the dedicated personnel end up at the Garden due to unfavorable circumstances, which include sudden unemployment, unexpected loss of a loved one, and as a means to reinvent their lives to benefit society and themselves by diligently following the eight-fold path and other Tibetan Buddhist ethical teachings.

While the majority of the resident volunteers and employees are Tibetan Buddhists there is a significant portion who do not follow the Tibetan Buddhist path. Most of these non-Buddhists employees/volunteers are interested in Tibetan Buddhist philosophy and use their time working at the Garden to explore its meaning and significance in their lives. These non-Buddhists are not forced into converting to Buddhism as Buddhist philosophy prohibits aggressive proselytization. Due to this non-proselytizing philosophy, the cohort working and living at the Garden represents a vast array of beliefs and philosophies that are not necessarily congruent with Tibetan Buddhism in general. One example of this is that there have been various volunteers who believe in a supreme deity who is all-powerful, never changing and permanent. Buddhist philosophy dictates that the entire universe including all beings that live in it are subject to impermanence and continual change (Bodhi, 2005). These philosophical differences are one of the primary reasons why some non-Buddhist volunteers and employees leave the Garden.

2.2 Tibetan Buddhist Meditations and Teachings

The Garden is far more than only a Tibetan cultural landscape as one of the main functions of the garden is to teach Tibetan Buddhism to devoted practitioners. Every Tibetan Buddhist practice uses symbolism through the implementation of deity images, food offerings, as well as using ritual objects to remove negative spirits in the vicinity, develop mental focus and reveal the ultimate reality of existence. Some of these practices also focus on alleviating attachment to worldly possessions and reducing an individual's aversion to negative stimuli (Jamyang Khyentse, 2012).

The Garden follows the Nyingma School of Buddhism. The Nyingma School is one of four Tibetan Buddhist schools and is known to be the oldest as it was established circa 779 CE. under Padmasambhava who came from Uddiyana, which is considered a part of Pakistan today, to Tibet (O'Brien, 2018). Most of the Nyingma teachings are loosely organized compared with the other three schools of Tibetan Buddhism that were later introduced into the region. Within the Nyingma school of Buddhism there are numerous lineages that contain entire teachings and instructions that take a Tibetan Buddhist practitioner from the very foundation of practice all the way to the most advanced level with the ultimate goal of achieving enlightenment. Each lineage attempts to demonstrate its authenticity through establishing its teachings to Shakyamuni Buddha. Generally, Nyingma Tibetan Buddhists must complete ngöndro (foundational practices), kyerim (intermediate practices), dzogrim (intermediate practices) and dzogchen (apex level practices) to understand the true nature of mind and hopefully achieve enlightenment.

In order to practice any type of Tibetan Buddhist meditation a student must receive what is called an empowerment or *rLung* (རླུང). This is a ritual that confers the right of the student to

practice a specific meditational practice which can only be bestowed by an authentic Tibetan

Buddhist Vajra master or guru (Pistono, 2014). Through the empowerment or *rLung* the

student's mind is ripened to understand the ultimate reality as well as receive actual instructions

on how to practice the specific meditation (Chenagtsang, 2014). Rinpoche and Khen Rinpoche

only give empowerments in person as empowerments utilize physical substances and actions that

confer the initiation to the student. These empowerments are important to transfer the Tibetan

Buddhist cultural traditions maintained in each lineage from one generation to the next.

Rinpoche is a lineage holder for various Nyingma lineages including Namchak and Yanti

Nagpo lineages. Both lineages are regularly practiced at the Garden and taught during retreats.

Approximately 250 people a year attend these retreats offered at the Garden. Some of these

retreats last for up to one month while for others the duration is over a weekend. The focus of

each retreat varies based on level of practitioner and the purpose of the retreat. In general, there

are eight to nine different types of retreats at the Garden per year:

1.	***Namchak Ngöndro***: This is a preliminary practice that is the foundation of all

higher levels of Tibetan Yoga. To successfully complete ngöndro, a student is required to

accumulate over 500,000 mantra recitations in combination with physical actions and/or

meditational foci (Yangti Nangpo Retreat, 2017). On average, it takes a student three

years to complete all required sections.

2.	***Pema Traktung***: A healing retreat that focuses on curing mental and physical

diseases as well as clearing away meditational obstacles. All levels of Tibetan Buddhist

practitioners are admitted to attend this healing retreat.

3.   ***Dzogchen Teachings***: The pinnacle level of Tibetan Buddhist practice. Dzogchen is split into two categories: Trekchö and Tögal. Trekchö is one of the formless completion meditation practices (Jamyang Khyentse, 2012). Tögal is an approach believed to leap over impure mental constructions by seeing the environment like a rainbow (Mingyur, 2020).

4.   ***Yeshe Lama***: A specific Dzogchen retreat which is the pinnacle level of all Tibetan Buddhist teachings.

5.   ***Tögal Teachings***: One part of Dzogchen practice known as the leap-over method that focuses the practitioner's mind on seeing the environment like a rainbow (Mingyur, 2020).

6.   ***Sangwa Yeshe Drupchöd***: A great accomplishment ceremony in the form of a deity practice aimed at awakening one's own true nature. This retreat is open to all levels of Buddhist practitioners.

7.   ***Summer Buddhist Studies Program***: An annual retreat that teaches about Buddhism philosophy and covers Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana types Buddhism from the Tibetan Buddhist point of view. Each level is taught over subsequent years.

8.   ***Phowa***: A practice that focuses on the transfer of consciousness from the body to a Buddhist pure realm at the time of death.

9.   ***Yanti Nagpo***: A special cycle of teachings that includes ngöndro, kyerim, dzogrim and dzogchen levels of teachings. kyerim, dzogrim and dzogchen teachings include various practices that are often assigned to students depending on their aptitude.

Even though the lineage is viewed as an unbroken lineage, many of these texts have a fascinating origination occurring well after the establishment of Buddhism in Tibet. Most of the Namchak texts were discovered by Tertöns who are Buddhist masters that have located hidden Buddhist sacred texts. These texts are called terma, which at one point in time were concealed and hidden by other revered Buddhist masters. Terma are meant to be rediscovered in the future when the specific teachings are of greatest benefit (*Ripa Ladrang Foundation*, 2015). Terma were hidden in earth, water, sky, mountains, rocks and even the mind (Thondup Rinpoche, 1997). Tertöns then are drawn to specific locations where they are able to access the terma through their developed mental powers in order to divulge the terma's meditational practices to the Tibetan Buddhist community. Terma are continually being found all over Tibet and the Himalayan region. Through the cultural acceptance and promotion of terma continually being added to the Tibetan Buddhist cannon, Tibetan Buddhism is able to continually reinvent and adapt itself to maintain its relevancy in an ever-changing environment.

Unfortunately, parts of many texts used at the Garden were destroyed or lost due to the Chinese occupation beginning in 1951where the Chinese would destroy any Buddhist texts they came across. To recompile these meditational texts, Rinpoche would borrow versions from other related texts, and use the specific portions to fill in the missing parts. This was possible due to the fact that all texts follow a formula from start to finish that includes lineage prayers, taking refuge and bodhicitta, a detailed explanation of the meditational palace and meditational deity, the actual meditation practice using mantra and visualization, dissolution of the meditational palace and deity visualization and conclusion of the practice. Parts can be taken from complete practices, and adapted to texts that are missing specific parts to make the texts complete once again.

Actual practices are held in a secluded house in the Northwestern corner of the Garden property. Most students come from the surrounding area to attend practices. These are regularly reoccurring practices. Each practice is held once a month based on the Tibetan lunar calendar.

During summer months, special meditational practices are held outside in the center of the Garden in front of the Yumchenmo statue where Garden tourists can watch the ceremonial acts. The Garden does not offer any formal interpretation or translation as all practices are held in Tibetan. Only the students and teachers understand the symbolism and what is involved in the practices. Tourists observe these practices as if these were reenactments at a famous civil war site. Even though these practices are usually open to anyone, no tourists seem to want to engage in the practices nor do they ask questions about the practices. Tourists are left with their own interpretation of the significance and ritual aspects of the practices.

During normal years, retreats, teachings, practices and the occasional tourist spectacle would occur quite frequently. COVID-19 has had a direct impact on practitioners coming to the Garden for retreats and regularly scheduled practices. One benefit that manifested due to the pandemic was the implementation of daily online practices to help practitioners manage and cope with the pandemic. This is a stark difference in how teachings and practices have been performed in the past. Almost all teachings and practices were almost solely held in person before the pandemic. In some regards the pandemic has made teachings and retreats more accessible to practitioners all over the country and even the world as these events were being held on online using Zoom.

2.3 Garden Visitors

There are a variety of activities drawing people to the Garden including tourism, volunteering, pilgrimage, and for Buddhist retreats. Local visitors are also a special inherent group of people who visit the garden as they partake in each of these activities. While these activities may be bound into specific categories of visitors at the Garden it is important to note that these categories overlap significantly. Many people who come as tourists will inevitably decide to volunteer at the Garden while some tourists, volunteers and/or pilgrims are so captivated by the location that they decide to stay for Buddhist retreats.

2.4 Tourism

Every year 30,000-35,000 tourists come to the Garden for various personal reasons. Most tourists visiting the Garden were usually on their way to Flathead Lake, Glacier National Park or Missoula, MT. Tourists frequently visit the Garden, spending anywhere from 20 minutes to an entire day to appreciate its beauty. Only a small number of these tourists identify as Buddhist. Oftentimes, these visitors have prior meditation experience and seek out serene spots within the Garden to engage in contemplation. Some of them become deeply captivated by the site, and are intrigued by its presence within a Native American reservation, prompting them to delve into the origins of the Garden and Tibetan Buddhism. A considerable number of tourists choose to dedicate their time volunteering in the Garden, driven by a desire to expand their knowledge about the location and fully immerse themselves in its offerings.

In addition to providing valuable labor, these tourists play a crucial role in sustaining the Garden by contributing financially and making purchases at the Gift Shop. The Gift Shop primarily offers Tibetan Buddhist memorabilia, such as miniature statues, Buddhist books, altar

items, thangkas, bells, and drums. However, it also caters to tourists who wish to commemorate their visit to the Garden without specifically seeking Tibetan Buddhist iconography. For such visitors, the shop offers a variety of items, including T-shirts designed by the Garden staff, shawls, clothing inspired by Nepali and Indian styles, as well as Tibetan jewelry.

2.5 Retreatants

Retreatants comprise a distinct group of individuals who are devoted practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism and consider Rinpoche and/or Khen Rinpoche as their primary spiritual guides. These retreatants primarily hail from the United States and Canada, with some also originating from various regions of Asia, including Tibet, Taiwan, Japan, and China. When these retreatants visit the Garden, their main purpose is to participate in Buddhist retreats, during which they receive formal meditation instruction directly from their teachers.

The majority of Rinpoche's students who attend the Garden's retreats are well-versed in meditative practices and possess substantial experience in this field. These dedicated retreatants have been engaged with the Garden for a considerable period of time, displaying a steadfast belief in the authenticity of Rinpoche's teachings. They firmly hold the conviction that these teachings trace their origins back to Shakyamuni Buddha himself, perpetuated through an unbroken lineage passed down from teacher to student.

2.6 Pilgrims

Ethnically Tibetan pilgrims coming to the Garden have increased exponentially over the course of the last year. It is possible that the COVID-19 pandemic may play a role in the increase of Tibetan pilgrims coming to the Garden. Working remotely has allowed many visitors to continue to work and travel the United States at the same time throughout the pandemic. This

influx in Tibetan pilgrims may be due to international travel restrictions abroad leaving Tibetans unable to visit cultural heritage sites located in Himalayan countries. Furthermore, even when there are no travel restrictions, obtaining a visa to visit Tibet specifically can be a difficult process in general (Personal Conversation, 2020). Tibetans visit the Garden as a means to connect with their cultural heritage. Some of them feel the need to contribute to the Garden in some manner. Most of them stay for a few days to volunteer on various projects, organize and cook a dinner for the entire Garden employees/volunteers and/or donate money to the organization. Above all, each of these Tibetans wants to spend some time with Khen Rinpoche to receive teachings and his blessings.

2.7 Local Visitors

Local visitors in western Montana frequently visit the Garden, either seeking tranquility on a pleasant summer afternoon or contemplating recent unfortunate events in their lives. Many of these individuals actively contribute to the Garden's maintenance by volunteering their time to weed flower beds or assist with special projects. These local volunteers differ from resident volunteers as they typically dedicate only a day or two at a time.

Among the local visitors that are interested in Tibetan Buddhism attend retreats and occasionally start practicing Tibetan Buddhism under Rinpoche's tutelage. Additionally, there are local Native Americans from the Flathead Reservation who also visit the Garden. On certain occasions, these individuals bring Native American drums and walk through the Garden, drumming and singing in their native language. While the exact purpose of their actions remains unknown, the interaction between Native Americans and the Tibetan cultural landscape presents a unique opportunity for further exploration.

2.8 A Location for Healing

Visitors also view the Garden as a transformative location where they come to heal physically and emotionally. Most noticeable healing occurrences at the Garden involve a gathering of visitors for either a memorial or annual gathering to celebrate the life of a loved one who has died. Other visitors grieve the loss of their loved one privately and bring a picture with some sort of message on it placing it near one of the Buddhist statues.

Some visitors commemorate their loved one(s) by sponsoring a Buddha, prayer flags, sitting bench, stupa, tree, or other Garden structure. Sponsoring features, allows the mourners the opportunity to inscribe a personal message on a plaque. The messages are simple and brief but these plaques give sponsors the opportunity to designate a physical object and location for commemoration purposes.

Figure 2-0-6 Memorial Wreath

Figure 5 and 6 Memorabilia left at the Garden to commemorate the lives of people who have died.

Other visitors visit the Garden as a method to combat illnesses and mental disorders.

Some of these diseases include cancer, chronic pain, Lyme Disease, and depression. If Khen

Rinpoche learns that a visitor has some sort of ailment, he will diagnose the causes of the illness

as well as devise beneficial treatments. Khen Rinpoche can medically consult with visitors as he

has in-depth knowledge of Sowa Rigpa (Tibetan Medicine) as he comes from a familial lineage

of healers who have practiced Sowa Rigpa for generations. Khen Rinpoche reads his patient's

pulse to determine what sort of ailment he or she currently has. He also compounds some herbal

remedies for patients and may perform Tibetan Buddhist healing practices to restore health while removing any negative spirits that may be causing the illness.

What is interesting about visitors coming to the Garden for healing is that there is no indicator or message originating from Garden management for visitors to believe the location has healing properties for those with illnesses or for those who are grieving. The belief that the Garden is a place for healing is more of an organic process originating from the visitors themselves. This is undoubtedly due to the attributes visitors have placed upon Tibetan Buddhism whether these are realistic or are unrealistic.

2.9 Summary

The cultural re-creation of Tibetan culture and Tibetan Buddhism has culminated into an authentically unique Tibetan cultural heritage location known as the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas. This cultural re-creation was prophesized by Padmasambhava, the founding father of Tibetan Buddhism and actualized by Rinpoche due to his vision he had when he was a child. Today the Garden serves as a unique cultural heritage location as well as an international peace park made for all people who want to learn about Tibetan Buddhism. The Garden not only incorporates Tibetan Buddhism but integrates other forms of Buddhism extending beyond Tibetan cultural heritage while being grounded in Tibetan Buddhist symbolism. Visitors experience the Garden in different ways depending on their cultural and religious background. There is little evidence that the Garden attempts to guide the experience of visitors which allows visitors their own interpretation to the garden. The significance of this location encompasses multiple ethnicities that share commonalities through pilgrimage, examination and adoption of cultural heritage and explore the very essence of reality in this translocated cultural space. Exploring the significance of this site as a translocated cultural heritage location and its significance in American society as

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the site is imbued with concepts and ideas that originate from visitors themselves as well as

displaying a Tibetan Buddhist identity that has been left open for interpretation by visitors.

Chapter 3:

Literature Review

The intersection of medical anthropology, affective responses, cultural heritage, cultural landscapes, and therapeutic landscapes has just begun being explored. Within these intersections medical anthropology researchers are interested in the social, and symbolic environments and how these environments may facilitate or potentially detract from health and wellbeing. This chapter will explore literature focused on cultural heritage, cultural landscapes, therapeutic landscapes, pilgrimage studies, and tourism to demonstrate the current conceptualization of the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas (Garden hereafter) while demonstrate a need for further research focused on contemporary translocated cultural heritage sites and how these manifest health and wellbeing qualities. This literature review will then implement affective response dynamics along with symbolic and interpretive anthropological aspects within a postmodernist framework that will be used in data analysis of this research to provide a pluralistic analysis based on types of visitors who generally explore the garden for various types of health and wellbeing. The purpose of this literature review is to accentuate, articulate, and synthesize what has been done as well as demonstrate the need to expand on medical anthropology research pertaining to the symbolic and social dynamics of cultural heritage sites, and therapeutic landscapes while decentering the universalistic approach based in modernism, which by its definition, is incapable of integrating multiple discourses. The literature will then explore how affective responses, personal beliefs, and personalization can help contextualize site interaction and explore the constitutive nature of therapeutic landscape.

3.1 Medical Anthropology

Medical anthropology is the study of health and healing systems, including applied research focusing on the improvement of therapeutic care in both clinical settings and or public health programs (P. Brown & Barrett, 2010). Much of the current applied medical anthropological research focuses on overcoming political, economic, and ethnic barriers to healthcare access (P. Brown & Barrett, 2010; Farmer, 2004; Kenworthy, 2017; Mendenhall, 2019; Nichter, 2008; Yates-Doerr, 2015), as well as exploring means to increase acceptance and use of biomedical proven therapeutic techniques in communities that are weary of biomedicine (Heydon, 2011; Nichter, 2008).

Various medical anthropologists have explored these social and symbolic environments and how these impact health and wellbeing through a strictly medical lens. Claude Levi-Strauss explored both the social and symbolic relationship of a shamanic healer and his patient in his famous article called *The Sorcerer and His Magic* (P. Brown & Barrett, 2010). One of the most important outcomes of this research was how the patient's belief in the shaman was a critical dynamic that even eclipsed the importance of the shaman's belief in his ability to cure (Brown & Barrett, 2010). This research had important implications for future placebo and nocebo research that further demonstrated the abilities of the doctor or medicine to cure patients is influenced by patients' belief (Brown & Barrett, 2010). While this research is critical to understanding how other cultures' social and symbolic systems are integral to health and healing community members affiliated with the same cultural background, it is constrained through that very viewpoint.

With the definition of health and wellbeing expanding from the absence of illness to a multitude of different definitions encompassing physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and our

relationship with our environment, medical anthropologists have also expanded their range in research area. Recently, medical anthropologists have taken an interest in cultural heritage, and therapeutic landscapes especially at the nexus where social and symbolic environments intertwine to facilitate health and wellbeing (Winchester & McGrath, 2017).

Medical anthropology researchers have begun to explore stigmatized locations (Mokos, 2017), spatial significance of healthcare access in poor communities (Cooper, 2017), the transformation of living spaces to accommodate stroke victims' physical disabilities caused by stroke (Karasaki et al., 2017), amongst many other implications location may have on health. Each of these research endeavors explores how spatial dynamics of the location become an integral facet of health and wellbeing. Each of these areas of research focuses on the intersections of therapeutic landscapes and health and wellbeing from a slightly different angle that complements not only medical anthropology but also therapeutic landscapes and/or health geography. This intersection also provides a space for medical anthropologists to explore therapeutic landscapes through theories rooted in anthropology, including political economy of health, and critical medial anthropology frameworks.

Researching cultural heritage, medical anthropology and therapeutic landscape intersections is important to explore as the health and wellbeing benefits manifesting through interacting with these environments in medical anthropology has just begun. Cultural heritage, cultural landscape, and therapeutic landscape literature will be a pertinent area for medical anthropologists to explore to integrate current health and wellbeing findings.

3.2 Cultural Heritage Origination

It is vital to understand of documenting the origins of cultural heritage as these founding concepts; while outdated today, they still impact how cultural heritage is viewed, engaged with, and consumed. Cultural heritage frameworks and research are rooted in a Western paradigm that has been grafted onto other cultural locations of significance; these frameworks have profound impacts on site management as well as which aspects should be viewed as safeguarded and which ones may be discarded (Su, 2018). Through this historical vantagepoint, the evolution of cultural heritage illuminates its origins and the need for transformation as it is not only applied to Western cultural heritage sites but to sites throughout the world with rich backgrounds containing traditional concepts that fall outside of this Western framework.

Cultural heritage has been an integral aspect of the social sciences for quite some time. It became a central focus of international politics during the World Heritage Convention in 1972 (UNESCO, 2008) but its origins date to the industrial age. This framework has its roots in European society and culture that emerged from conceptualizing objects and relationships to those objects a certain way (Harrison, 2013). Cultural heritage in its broadest sense can be defined as sets of present-day attitudes to and in relation with the past (Smith, 2006; Harrison, 2013). Cultural heritage became a feature of the state as a means to reproduce established forms of social hierarchies (Gentry & Smith, 2019), where the primary form of heritage was wrapped up in state identity politics (Smith, 2006). This state sanctioned form of cultural heritage became the official form of cultural heritage through the state's authorized discourse. The first official cultural heritage function implemented by a state can be traced back to France through the Commission des Monuments Historique, a government institution that focused on registering

historic buildings in 1837 (Harrison, 2013). Much of this official discourse has been implicated in nation building and nationalism in general.

The main focus of cultural heritage originally pertained to tangible representations including buildings, monuments, and physical representations (Harrison, 2013). Intangible cultural heritage (ICH) has its roots in tangible cultural heritage through the public sphere (museums, historic houses, etc.) and nation-building (erecting monuments) (Harrison, 2013). Some of the ICH theory and methodological frameworks typically address the perceived threat and loss of cultural identity, which originated in the late 1960s from indigenous peoples in post-colonial countries for a right to govern their community's heritage (Smith, 2006; Fairclough et al., 2007). It was not until UNESCO adopted the Convention for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2003 that ICH became the vanguard of international focus promoting cultural diversity (ich.unesco.org, 2019). Intangible cultural heritage is defined as "the 'practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills' present in a culture, along with 'instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewithin' (Article 2.1)" (Jones, 2018; Riordan & Schofield, 2015; p. 280). The definition of ICH also includes the ability of this culture's people to determine what is worthy of safeguarding (Alzahrani, 2013).

Previously, intangible was used by cultural heritage researchers to differentiate it from tangible using a dichotomous lens (Harrison, 2013). Today, cultural heritage researchers realize that tangible and intangible as well as cultural and natural landscapes are inherently connected. ICH often uses tangible objects that are symbolized through a cultural process that is continually being redefined from one generation to the next (Harrison, 2013). This separation of intangible cultural heritage from the tangible object deconstructs the symbolic relationship.

This Western cultural heritage framework, including both tangible and intangible forms, are firmly grounded in modernity that includes key concepts in order to frame and conceptualize how cultural heritage is enacted, viewed, and proliferated. Modernity is linked to modernization that took place in Europe and the USA (Daly & Winter, 2014). Two key Modernity concepts reinforce the importance of safeguarding cultural heritage locations. First, all things are considered threatened with decline and decay (Harrison, 2013). Second, Modernity has an oppositional relationship with tradition and the past (Harrison, 2013). The juxtaposition of Modernity with the past is the primary agent that forms "nostalgia for 'old things' and for tradition, as a refuge from those aspects of modernisation" (Harrison, 2013, p. 25). This concept creates the need to root the present with past cultural traditions spawning official mechanisms to thus safeguard culture (Harrison, 2013). Furthermore, nostalgia is manifested in community members who experience identity problems (Lee, 2008). Modernization creating nostalgia within the cultural heritage framework is generally applied to modernized cultures as well as to colonized cultures as modernity in Harrison's concept focuses on the progress of social, economic and technological processes—the hallmark of Western societies (Harrison, 2013).

Building on modernity concepts driving cultural heritage frameworks, Smith (2006) articulated the current cultural heritage practices used and refers to these as Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD). Some implications of this AHD are that cultural heritage knowledge and values are the sole property of the cultural heritage expert (Smith, 2006). The problem with this approach is that the cultural heritage knowledge and values the expert believes are relevant may counter what cultural members believe are important as well excluding those members from participating in defining their own cultural heritage (Su, 2018). This discourse is framed as

universal where all alternative discourses are negated or devalued representing forms of injustice, exclusion and hegemony (Daly & Winter, 2014; Su, 2018).

This universal concept is a fundamental aspect of both AHD and modernity that funnels cultural heritage research into a unilateral approach devoid of alternative or even conflicting forms of cultural heritage. Furthermore, cultural heritage is conveyed in an ahistorical, disparate way, removed from its sociocultural context (Daly & Winter, 2014). The problem with this universal approach under the guise of modernism is fact that the selection of cultural heritage avoids unjust practices and religious conflicts that were as much a part of cultural heritage as the touted positive aspects. These negative forms of cultural heritage are important for communities to learn from in order to avoid repeating and/or transcending mistakes of previous generations (Winter, 2014).

It is well known that the Western conception of cultural heritage is a dominant framework that translates non-Western cultural heritage site concepts into the Western framework to articulate the significance of these locations. Unfortunately, this translation only represents the viewpoint of the Western expert. Furthermore, this Western framework forces non-Western site management to conceptualize their sites through a Western lens in order to achieve UNESCO world heritage designation (Su, 2018). The importance of world heritage designation is important as the designation identifies locations with outstanding universal values as well as becoming a marketing tool for promoting tourism (Harrison, 2013). The problem with this approach is that there are no mechanisms to delist world heritage designation thus signifying that designation is universal and unchanging (Harrison, 2013).

One key issue that has been noted throughout cultural heritage literature is the concept of *authenticity*. The AHD framework researchers believe that authenticity is rooted in originality in

both tangible and intangible aspects of cultural heritage (Smith, 2006; Su, 2018). Su (2018) pointed out that the Chinese culture for example may acknowledge a temple that has been rebuilt as authentic as the original temple as the purpose behind the new structure is the same as the "original" temple. Besides tangible differences, the Western concept of modernity is not applicable to Asian concepts of impermanence and regeneration (Fong et al., 2012). Furthermore, even within the Western concept of authenticity there is variation. Su (2018) notes that the French have believed authenticity encapsuled restoring buildings to a historic period where any additions since that period would be removed whereas English would have kept these additions as these reflected historical changes. What Su (2008) illuminated was the fact that even the Western concepts of authenticity are not necessarily congruent. The key concept regarding authenticity that Su (2018) has uncovered was the fact that *authenticity* has always been in the purview of the culture in which the discourse was taking place. This variation may be an indication of who has authority to deem a location with specific cultural heritage qualities while rejecting others. Using one of the Western concepts of authenticity was thus problematic when used in non-Western cultural heritage projects.

Because of the constrained authentic viewpoint dominating the Western viewpoint, the Garden may be considered inauthentic cultural heritage while using Tibetan iconography. During the initial Garden construction phase, many prominent Tibetan Buddhist teachers wondered why Rinpoche would not simply build a monastery or temple for annual retreats. A garden is not the usual space to proliferate Tibetan Buddhist culture and history and therefore may be considered a whimsically artistic interpretation of true Tibetan Buddhist culture. As Rinpoche noted, the reason to construct a garden is to allow as many people as possible to experience a location intended for everyone regardless of ethnic, or religious background. For Rinpoche, authenticity

was the use of authentic Tibetan Buddhist techniques to bring life to the statues, and stupas. The layout of the location as a garden does not authentically detract from this Tibetan Buddhist location as it is believed that just being in the presence of these holy objects will bring the greatest benefit to visitors whether they realize it or not. Rinpoche's belief that kindness and compassion towards all beings is demonstrated in the development and purpose of the Garden as a location for meant for everyone is authentic Tibetan Buddhism in action. According to Tibetan Buddhists, the most important thing is to benefit others. While a temple or monastery would be beneficial to Tibetan Buddhist practitioners, a garden implementing a culturally Tibetan landscape could benefit even more people. Authenticity in this case is how Tibetan Buddhist iconography is presented in order to benefit all visitors who happen upon the location.

The purview of the designated location is not only based on cultural significance, but on other aspects of the location that may overshadow cultural heritage designation. Often locations containing both natural and cultural heritage were viewed as primarily natural heritage locations as the there was a lack of tangible cultural heritage to warrant the inclusion of any cultural status (Baird, 2013). For many groups this may be problematic as often locations are imbued with intangible cultural values that may be ignored or silenced through any sort of official heritage deeming process (Baird, 2013). By sidelining these intangible cultural values, these deemed as natural heritage locations are framed for visitor consumption in an incomplete manner that often marginalizes minority groups' values of specific locations that are integral to that specific group.

Pointing out the deficits incurred through the cultural and natural divide is not the only dichotomous focal point of cultural heritage research. Cultural heritage researchers have also explored how both tangible and intangible cultural values have been problematic for articulating site importance and purpose. Previously, intangible was used by cultural heritage researchers to

differentiate it from tangible using a dichotomous lens (Harrison, 2013). Cultural heritage researchers now realize that tangible and intangible as well as cultural and natural landscapes are inherently connected. ICH often uses tangible objects that are symbolized through a cultural process that is continually being redefined from one generation to the next (Harrison, 2013). This separation of intangible cultural heritage from the tangible object deconstructs the symbolic relationship.

Besides dispelling dichotomous concepts, cultural heritage researchers also explore the concept of time and its implications it on safeguarding cultural heritage. The Western view of time is conceptualized as linear and reinforces the modernity concepts (Smith, 2006). Other cultures including ones in India view time cyclically (Ray, 2012). This difference in cyclical time has direct implications for linking social structures, space and time with local histories (Ray, 2012). In fact in India, life in general is viewed as cyclical (Birth, life, death and rebirth) (Chakravarthy, 2018), which further differentiates modernity from cyclical forms of time. By framing non- Western sites in a progressive or modernistic manner, essential cyclical time elements may be dropped from the overall framework, altering the very cultural hallmarks of the location.

Peleggi (2012) has exemplified that in Buddhism the concept of time has become even more problematic for this Western framework. In Buddhism one of the main focuses is on the present moment as it is the only time that is accessible as the past is already gone and the future has not yet come. This obviously poses a problem with the incorporation of nostalgia and yearning to return to a past forgone as this is the antithesis of Tibetan Buddhist beliefs as one can never return to a past already lived (Peleggi, 2012). According to Buddhism, the main source of suffering is the attachment of both physical and mental objects as permanently and inherently

existing (Peleggi, 2012). Attachment is considered as one of the main forms of suffering that Buddhists try to break free of through meditation and realization (Peleggi, 2012). The idea of nostalgia for a past, either real or imagined, is a hallmark of attachment. In the Buddhist world view engendering nostalgia for a previous time, even if it is conceptualized as more favorable compared to the present, causes suffering and is something to be avoided.

Besides focusing on the re-creation of cultural heritage, cultural heritage researchers explore political and economic power injustices or inequalities stemming from past events originating in either post-colonialism and/or violence (Sather-Wagstaff, 2015). Often times, minority groups are assimilated into the dominant culture through explicit and implicit means where cultural heritage is contested and or venerated (Waterton & Watson, 2015). All too often minority cultural heritage is pushed to the fringes and left unrepresented through the dominant cultural framework at cultural heritage sites. Cultural heritage researchers advocate for the inclusion of these minority cultural heritage threads to be intertwined with the dominant cultural heritage threads forming an inclusive cultural heritage tapestry where both contested and venerated aspects are acknowledged and represented (Harrison, 2013).

Historical research focusing on the Tibetan diasporic communities has focused on the political dynamics, revitalizing Tibetan culture, and protecting Tibetan cultural heritage from being erased due to the Chinese occupation and systematic cultural genocide (Whalen-Bridge, 2011). One area of research pertains to Tibetan Buddhism (Whalen-Bridge, 2011) while other research focuses on the importance of maintaining their medical knowledge for future generation (Craig, 1998, 2012; Kloos, 2013), and further research has explored the maintenance of Tibetan cultural heritage in diaspora (Lauer, 2015; Lewis, 2018; Whalen-Bridge, 2011). One common theme of this cultural heritage research has been the focus of Tibet as a legitimate country.

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The inclusion of diasporic identities and rebuilding cultural heritage in situ is becoming

an emphasis of cultural heritage research as more and more communities are being displaced for

climatic, political as well as numerous other reasons. One purpose for this research has been to

examine how diasporic communities establish legitimate claims of sovereign lands tied to a

specific culture (Kloos, 2013). Tibetans for example, have done this through the legitimizing of

their medical system as a form of cultural heritage. Tibetan medicine, or Sowa Rigpa underwent

a revolution through legal transformation from being considered a folk medicine by most

allopathic medical practitioners to being considered a formal medical system and intangible form

of cultural heritage (Craig, 2012; Kloos, 2013). The reasoning behind the establishment of Sowa

Rigpa as a formal medical system was to extrapolate to the international communities that having

medical traditions rooted in their culture should be considered synonymous with having one's

own culture and thus one's own nation (Kloos, 2013). In other words, Tibetans in exile have

used Sowa Rigpa as an indicator for legitimacy as a people and the right to govern themselves.

Legitimacy is not only to confirm the inalienable rights of the physical location as

a sovereign place, but also constructs the identity of cultural participants through the culturally

deemed acceptable identity formation. Lauer (2015) has focused on Tibetan identity in both the

first and second generations living in diaspora in Western countries.

Gaining political recognition and legitimacy does not only entail Tibetan medical

knowledge but also encompasses Tibetan Buddhism and cultural identity as well. Whalen-Bridge

(2011) explored how Tibetan Buddhists in diaspora navigated modernistic concepts and

positioned themselves within modernization at the juncture between tangible technologies and

intangible rights. Part of the argument in the introduction of this article noted that Tibetan culture

was seen by the Chinese and even some Tibetans as being premodern (Whalen-Bridge, 2011).

Some researchers had even equated the dynamics of Tibet before the occupation as being a feudal system where some people were enslaved by the aristocratic elites (Whalen-Bridge, 2011). Part of the narrative used by the Dalai Lama and other Tibetan Buddhist practitioners has been to situate themselves away from this feudal system as a modernistic society (Whalen-Bridge, 2011). What Tibetan Buddhist practitioners have claimed regarding modernism is that the technological advances are relatively unimportant whereas the intangible aspects of modernization including equal rights and human responsibilities are the truly important aspects of the modernistic framework for oppressed cultural groups (Whalen-Bridge, 2011). Whalen-Bridges (2011) article further demonstrated that the concept of modernism and modernization is not a process where modernization is fully accepted as a state of progression. For cultures like Tibetans in diaspora, they are able to pick and choose what they want while maintaining their cultural heritage values and beliefs.

The Dalai Lama has purposefully sent out Tibetan Buddhist masters known as Rinpoches to move to primarily Western countries to spread Buddhist knowledge (personal conversations, 2020). Part of this reason could be seen as the need to benefit Westerners in spiritual development. It could also be viewed similarly to Sowa Rigpa where the spread of the Tibetan's religion signified the legitimate government in exile thus acknowledging a legitimate claim of heritage and location. The legitimacy of their own nation has not gone unnoticed as many countries throughout the world have given support to the Tibetan government in exile. This concept is interesting as it accepts the connotation that if a group has its own culture, then it must have its own spatial location which they have a right to control. The Garden could be viewed in this manner whereby spreading cultural knowledge and Buddhism reaffirms legitimate claims of

a Tibetan homeland despite the Chinese occupation through the spread of cultural heritage in the West.

Diasporic cultures, including Tibetan ones, are somehow equated as being a monolithic culture where cultural heritage and identity are unanimously seen as representing every individual of the diasporic community despite the fact that it is well known that heritage is internally contested (Appadurai et al., 2008; Cocks et al., 2018; Harrison, 2008; Smith, 2006). Their heritage has been seen as both unified and self-evident. Lee (2008) has illustrated that this belief in a monolithic cultural framework in diaspora is nonexistent and has never occurred nor should the culture in diaspora been seen as exactly the same as the culture back home as diasporic cultures have had to reinvent themselves in their new cultural landscapes (Lee, 2008). New cultural homelands are not the same as the original ones, and must be adapted to culturally and often during this process divergence in cultural concepts, symbols, and cultural landscape have occurred (Lee, 2008). The importance of this divergence not only rests on differences in location but the need for continually redefining authenticity of the particular cultural values and traditions to maintain cultural survival and viability (Lee, 2008). Thus, cultural heritage is not only a process of passing tradition down from one generation to the next but also reinvention when the culture is forced to adapt to completely foreign environments and cultural landscapes.

Researchers implementing a cultural heritage research approach focus on countering the universal concepts that are imbedded into the modernistic framework. Cultural heritage research framework moves away from the concept that sites are intrinsic in nature to a one where visitors directly interact with and interpret and co-create the site (Harrison, 2013). The significance of co-creation of a site through direct visitor interaction further decenters the concept that site interpretation is mitigated solely by professionals through signage, and other interpretive

technologies, to one where visitor interactions that are rooted in personal histories, experiences and cultural backgrounds influence site interpretations (Smith, 2014).

The focus on the political and economic injustices is relevant to the Garden for two reasons. First, the Garden is a translocated cultural landscape that is an attempt to safeguard Tibetan Buddhist cultural heritage in it most authentic form free of Chinese governmental influence.

3.3 Cultural Heritage and Health

Understanding how access to and participating in cultural heritage activities impacts health and wellbeing has received exceedingly little attention. Orthel (2022), a public health researcher formulated a literature review demonstrating if and how cultural heritage impacts health and wellbeing. One of the immediate implications of his literature review was the fact that much of the information pertaining to heritage and health is anecdotal and is not supported through research (Orthel, 2022). His research focused on three areas concerning health, which are cognitive health, physiological health, and social concerns. He demonstrated what has been researched in each of these areas previously and found that only six articles have been published that are directly focusing on health and wellbeing and cultural heritage (Orthel, 2022). The most important outcome from his literature review is that he demonstrated that there is a rather large gap between cultural heritage, and health and wellbeing.

Of the three types of health Orthel (2022) explored in his literature review only two types seem to be significant to the current health-cultural heritage research nexus. These include cognitive health and social concerns. Of these two areas of research social concerns is a focal area as research has focused on the effects of participating in safeguarding certain types of

cultural heritage including archaeological sites, and prehistoric building preservation (Darvill et al., 2019; Heaslip et al., 2020; Power & Smyth, 2016). This research hinges on the importance of participants forming social connections with other participants, and the positive outcomes from those experiences (Darvill et al., 2019; Heaslip et al., 2020; Power & Smyth, 2016). What these type of articles tend to divulge was the fact that building social networks had positive outcomes in cognitive health and abilities including improved concentration and emotional stability (Darvill et al., 2019). The research fully demonstrated the importance of our social lives and how these impact our overall cognitive health.

Darvill (2019) expanded on this research as he focused not only on engaging local community participants with heritage locations, but he also focused on cognitive health outcomes directly by exploring cultural heritage archeological work its impacts on participants with mental health conditions (Darvill et al., 2019). While this type of research is groundbreaking, it is difficult to draw a definitive line that the work with likeminded participants was the main motivator for increased mental health outcomes as the research articulated around a government funded program that implemented mental health work services that included mindfulness, relaxation, and positive visualization (Darvill et al., 2019). These are important activities for mental health in general, but it would be impossible to determine if the positive mental health outcomes were due to either engaging in cultural heritage archeology or the mental health services, or participating in social dynamics, or a combination of these three. While this program undoubtedly was beneficial for the participants, the design of the program was not necessarily meant to assess the statistical importance of cultural heritage archeological work as a facilitator to improving mental health. More research focusing on mental health outcomes from

interacting at cultural heritage locations must continue to explore the impact cultural heritage has on health and wellbeing.

3.4 Landscapes and Cultural Landscapes

Research pertaining to landscapes spans many social science disciplines including anthropology, cultural heritage studies, geography, religious studies and tourism. The reason for such a diverse approach to studying landscapes is due to the fact that landscapes are integral to human lived experiences spanning all aspects of our life. Even with an increasing interest in research focusing on landscapes, the term landscape is difficult to define (Tilley & Cameron-Daum, 2017). Latour (1993) defines landscape as "quasi- object, something constructed and made; a cultural product, but having an independent existence with its own rhythms and purposes" (as cited in Tilley & Cameron-Daum, 2017). Natural landscapes are imbued with cultural qualities that differ from one culture to the next where even the same landscape may have varied and even potentially contradictory qualities between cultures. For the purposes of this research, natural, cultural, spiritual and therapeutic landscape qualities will be the focus of this landscape section.

Cultural landscapes incorporate the natural environment, but this incorporation does not go far enough and needs to be redefined as an extension of the culture itself. Cultural landscapes materialize out of landscapes when material objects, including structures, appear and these may be culturally bound to a specific group of people(s) (Byrne, 2008). Cultural landscapes are created over a period of time when 'cultural sedimentation' or physical indications on the landscape (houses, religious buildings, monuments, and etc.) begin to gather (Byrne, 2008). Cultural landscapes evolve over time and have been officially defined through UNESCO using three distinct categories:

(i)   The most easily identifiable is the clearly defined **landscape designed and created intentionally by man**. This embraces garden and parkland landscapes constructed for aesthetic reasons which are often (but not always) associated with religious or other monumental buildings and ensembles.

(ii)   (ii) The second category is the **organically evolved landscape**. This results from an initial social, economic, administrative, and/or religious imperative and has developed its present form by association with and in response to its natural environment. Such landscapes reflect that process of evolution in their form and component features. They fall into two sub-categories:

- a relict (or fossil) landscape is one in which an evolutionary process came to an end at some time in the past, either abruptly or over a period. Its significant distinguishing features are, however, still visible in material form.

- a continuing landscape is one which retains an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life, and in which the evolutionary process is still in progress. At the same time it exhibits significant material evidence of its evolution over time.

(iii)   The final category is the **associative cultural landscape**. The inscription of such landscapes on the World Heritage List is justifiable by virtue of the powerful religious, artistic or cultural associations of the natural element rather than material cultural evidence, which may be insignificant or even absent. (UNESCO, 2008)

As beneficial as these cultural landscapes are to cultural heritage research, these concepts still ignore aspects pertinent to local cultures. According to Cocks et al. (2018), cultural landscapes are also given meaning through local cultures' ability to fulfill their self-determining desires, as well as having social justice. Since cultural heritage is largely conceptualized through a Western framework and by the dominant cultures, self-determination and social justice were overlooked even though these elements are held as human rights. Part of the reason why sites like the Garden develop is due to the importance of self-determination to practice religion without any hinderance or censorship by dominant cultural groups. Tibetan Buddhist organizations in general could be seen in this light as these have been spreading to the west as both a way to safeguard Tibetan Buddhist culture as well as spread Buddhist teaching to Western students.

Unfortunately, groups forced to live in diaspora, including Tibetans in North America, no longer have access to their cultural landscapes which must be recreated in their new homeland. In effect, this not only effects cultural landscape creation but also influences the overall culture of the community in diaspora as it is recreated. This cultural re-creation occurs but it is not equivalent to the culture back home as current practices are unsuccessful at meeting the demands of the cultural diaspora in situ (Lee, 2008). The Garden is a case in point as it has been constructed using traditional Tibetan building techniques and iconography but overall, the Garden is unique as no other location like it exists either inside Tibetan ethnic regions in Asia or in diaspora. Through primary research at the Garden, it is evident that cultural landscapes are important to Tibetans in diaspora even if the Garden is a contemporary embodiment of Tibetan heritage.

3.5 Therapeutic Landscapes

Therapeutic landscapes are integral to this research as medical anthropology cultural heritage researchers often overlook health and healing benefits of cultural locations as the focus for cultural heritage research as focused more on cultural heritage as a process. Specific areas these researchers have focused on has been saving both tangible and intangible forms of cultural heritage, inclusion of cultural heritage from minority groups' perspectives, and important critical issues including biopiracy, contested cultural heritage, political influences, preformed negotiation of maintaining cultural sites and the reinvention of cultural heritage through relocation (M. Brown, 2003; Gentry & Smith, 2019; Harrison, 2008; Lee, 2008; Riordan & Schofield, 2015; Silverman & Ruggles, 2007; Smith, 2006; Whitt, 2014). What therapeutic landscape research adds to the dynamic is how these cultural spaces are healing through both a geographical and psychological lens. The importance of this literature review section focus is to explore the significant overlap of cultural heritage and therapeutic landscapes.

Therapeutic landscapes are pertinent framework to this research as previous fieldwork has determined that visitors to the Garden often use the location as a means for mental healing, is a special form of cultural landscape especially as a means for grieving the loss of a loved one. Therapeutic landscape researchers where healing has been shown to occur through direct interaction with the environment. This interaction led to visitors to obtain sense of health, healing and wellbeing though not passively but direct interaction (Gesler, 2003). Strangely, health and wellbeing are rarely defined in therapeutic landscape literature. The World Health Organization (WHO) health definition which may be useful in therapeutic landscapes defined it as *"a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity"* (Jacobsen, 2014, p. 1). This definition seems adequate in therapeutic landscape

literature as health in therapeutic landscape interactions entail all physical, mental and social dimensions of health that are the focus of health research today. Wellbeing definition in research also remains fairly elusive. Part of the reason why wellbeing has remained obscure is the fact that it has been defined very broadly across cultures (Izquierdo, 2005). One of the most general definitions of wellbeing has been offered by the CDC as "wellbeing includes the presence of positive emotions and moods, the absence of negative emotions, satisfaction with life, fulfillment and positive functioning" (*Well-Being Concepts*, 2018). A definition of this sort has been constructed probably with the intent that it could be used by any culture while still being adaptable to the specific cultural needs in relation to the therapeutic landscapes.

There are four environments that make up a therapeutic landscape which include the natural, built, symbolic and social aspects of environments (Gesler, 2003). The natural environment is particularly important in Gessler's (2003) research as nature is believed to heal by simply immersing oneself in a natural environment. Specifically, water is believed to have healing qualities as it cleanses both the body and the soul (Gesler, 2003). The belief that healing through access to nature is explored in the *biophilia hypothesis* which notes that through evolution, humans developed an attraction for nature and feel comforted through this natural interaction (Gesler, 2003). Natural environments are believed to reduce stress and mood disorders while engendering a sense of comfort and gratitude (Majeed & Ramkissoon, 2020).

Various studies including Boucher et al (2019), Piat et al (2017), Darvill et al., (2019) and Gesler (2003) have indicated that natural landscapes facilitate healing and positively impact mental health outcomes. These findings are incredibly important as some healing spaces including hospitals, clinics and nursing home administrators have attempted to integrate natural elements into these facilities or have built facilities in locations near green spaces to facilitate the

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healing process (Gesler, 2003). Furthermore, living near green spaces is incredibly beneficial for people with mental health illnesses in general (Piat et al., 2017).

Built environments are just as significant as natural environments to facilitate health, healing and wellbeing. These built environments directly affect the senses (Gesler, 2003). The premise is that the built environment affects people's moods and emotions and elicit a sense of trust and security (Gesler, 2003). Through this conceptualization, environmental psychologists have explored how different hospital building designs benefit patients health outcomes (Gesler, 2003). Built environments also provide a barrier between the sacred and the profane, which includes boundaries that separate spiritual locations from the secular world (Gesler, 2003).

Built environments are also considered cultural landscapes where traditional architecture is built onto the natural environment (Lehr & Cipko, 2015). These built environments extend into the symbolic environment. Symbolic environments are dynamic and are integral to the significance in both the natural and built environments. Symbolism play an exceptional role within healing modalities as these are pathways connecting and are mediated between biophysical and sociocultural worlds (Gesler, 2003). As Arthur Kleinman expresses, "Healing occurs along a symbolic pathway of words, feelings, values, expectations, beliefs, and the like which connect events and forms with affective and physiological processes" (Kleinman, 1973). Through a cultural lens, site visitors interpret the environment through culturally bound conceptions of health and healing and these interpretations are expressions of health and healing that are enacted within visitors. In some regards, health, healing, and wellbeing is a socialized process that lives on in each individual as an extension of the individual's culture. Often, these elements align with religious beliefs that expound miraculous and supernatural powers.

These concepts are not foreign to Buddhism in general. Many stories have indicated that the Buddha was able to stave off plagues (Granoff, 1998). It has even been proposed that his robe, a Buddhist relic, was carried throughout parts of India where it was worshipped to specifically ward off plagues after his death (Granoff, 1998). The Buddha's monastic robes were viewed as an object that could heal or prevent illness by simply being in the location. The robes were interpreted as a form of health, healing and protection from becoming inflicted with an illness. In this regard the healing environment was any physical location where the Buddha's robes were brought. Importantly, these objects do not only symbolize the Buddha but actually embody the Buddha (Peleggi, 2012).

In Tibetan Buddhism there are many healing symbols that make up therapeutic landscapes which are important to Tibetans and Tibetan Buddhist practitioners alike. There are even Buddhist practices that use deity architypes that are visualized and meditated on to instill health and healing. One such deity practice enlists the assistance of Menla, the blue Medicine Buddha to facilitate the healing process (Samuel, 2013). Deity images like Menla are frequently used in meditational practices, which are symbols in Tibetan Buddhism. What is interesting about these symbols is the fact that these are generated by the mind through step-by-step instructions that are given to Tibetan Buddhist students through initiations with an authentic teacher known as an empowerment, *rlung* or wang (Pistono, 2014). Through the mental manipulation of these deities to perform healing by visualizing pure cleansing substances entering the body and removing or destroying visualized diseases, usually in the form of black masses or some other mental concept of what the disease looks like to the practitioners. These practices are used and taught at the Garden to help practitioners heal from both physical and

mental diseases. These practices are used by practitioners to help other people around the world heal their afflictions as well even if they are not Buddhists.

The social environment is an important aspect of therapeutic landscapes. Healing is a social activity that often requires actors to play specific varying roles for healing to occur (Gesler, 2003). Many of these therapeutic environments are social gathering places where visitors are able to interact with one another (Gesler, 2003). In fact one study has demonstrated that 92% of participants benefited from the social dynamics where they believed the experience improved their health and wellbeing (Darvill et al., 2019). Furthermore, improved concentration and emotional stability is a direct benefit from socializing within these environments (Gesler, 2003). What has also proved important to social environments research within therapeutic landscapes is that respite and reflection are important dynamics for health and healing signifying that individuals need private spaces as much as they need social spaces (Piat et al., 2017).

The social environment is also integral to Buddhist philosophy in general. In Buddhist organizations, Sangha, both monastic and lay practitioners, is viewed as a means to support one another in spiritual practice as well as supporting one another through disease and illness (Nhat Hanh, 2012). The Buddha also initiated the monastic community to rely on the lay community for their livelihood and teach them Buddhas teachings in return.

Other therapeutic landscape literature based on Gessler's (2003) work have further refined how therapeutic landscapes were conceptualized. Williams (1998) noted that reframing therapeutic landscapes through an humanistic approach broadens the definition of health to a much more holistic approach. The problem with this approach is that humanism does not encapsulate any structural constraints (political, social, economic, and etc.) that would influence conceptualizations of this holistic approach. Importantly, symbolic meanings were included in

Willaim's (1998) approach. This included the acknowledgement that symbolic meaning played a key role in interpretation. Symbolic meanings have included health and medical information that focus on the interpretation, naming classification of illness as well as articulating the experience of illness and what is deemed appropriate for healing the illness (Kleinman, 1973; A. Williams, 1998). This concept within therapeutic landscapes is vital to understand as actions to alleviate illness, whether, physical, social or spiritual are culturally mitigated. This idea gets at the heart of why people visit therapeutic landscapes as there is a belief and understanding that those environments are considered to have had healing properties. Those locations are culturally defined and also have social histories. Furthermore, Williams (1998) pointed out that the locale molds human ideas where locations as healing as visitors often have a "positive sense of place" (1199). Williams (1998) demonstrated very important aspects of therapeutic landscapes through her epistemological thought experiment but never performed any substantial research to solidify her concepts. Through an epistemological stance, her reasoning is sound. Most of the additional information including humanistic approach, holistic medicine and symbolic landscapes that integrated cultural constructions of health and healing are rooted in previous research. What Williams has done was to incorporate more of a pluralistic approach compared to Gessler as Gessler's (2003) work was rooted in a modernistic framework.

It is evident that therapeutic landscape researchers are advancing the understanding of how therapeutic landscapes heal through the exploration of other approaches. Even with these advancements, therapeutic landscape researchers acknowledge the importance of expanding the theoretical framework to incorporate cultural ideas of what it means to be a therapeutic landscape, no current research explores the significance between culture, place and recovery (Boucher et al., 2019). Part of this reason may lie in the fact that much of therapeutic landscape

research focuses on applying qualities that are deemed as healing into hospitals intended for the general public (Gesler, 2003). Hospitals are intended for everyone despite cultural officiation, and country of origin, and therefore are generally devoid of any specific cultural hallmarks including religious iconography. This approach may unintendedly attempt to demonstrate a one size fits all approach, which is a key indicator of modernity so even when these professionals acknowledge how limited the modern framework is in therapeutic landscape research, they are still drawn to using similar concepts when focusing on an applied approach.

Boucher et al., (2019) Attempted to reframe how culture and location are both integral for healing that build on social relationship, are safe as well as foster a sense of belonging and allow for hope and belief of the individual. Boucher et al., (2019) implemented a study with French speaking and English-speaking Roman Catholics from Quebec, Canada. The findings of this research indicated that participants most intertwine cultural, familial and personal meaning into places in order to create individualized healing landscapes (Boucher et al., 2019). The significance of this research counters the applied approach of integrating the best aspects of therapeutic landscapes into a healing location. This is significant as research should now focus on how healing locations can implement personal aspects, including cultural and religious beliefs, into the location instead of sanitizing locations of any cultural significance.

Ever since Gesler coined the phrase 'therapeutic landscape' research has made strives to understand healing spaces and how these species facilitating the healing process. The applied approach is still in a modernistic framework that strips culture and religion from places to make these more palatable and acceptable to all visitors. As noted by Boucher et al., (2019) the importance of making personal connections with these spaces is vital and thus need to move away from this modernistic framework. Furthermore, it is important to note that a lack of

researcher where culture, place and recovery. Even Boucher et al.'s (2019) study focusing on Roman Catholics in Quebec Canada is very limited in this regard. There is still a great need to incorporate multiple ethnicities and backgrounds to explore differences in therapeutic landscape research.

3.5.1 Therapeutic Landscapes and Cultural Heritage

Therapeutic landscape and cultural heritage research may seem to diverge significantly in research perspectives and may be seen as incongruent between each of these research perspectives. While therapeutic landscape literature has focused mainly on the four environments (Darvill et al., 2019; Gesler, 2003; A. Williams, 1998) and cultural heritage research has focused on cultural significance, safeguarding cultural locations and cultural identities, political dynamics and It is how cultural information is maintained, contested and reformulated (Gentry & Smith, 2019; Harrison, 2013; Lloyd, 2012; Riordan & Schofield, 2015). Even though these social science encampments may have differences in research perspectives, there is significant overlap between each perspective.

In many regards, cultural heritage locations and therapeutic landscapes may be synonymous in many instances. In the case where therapeutic landscapes may also be cultural heritage locations especially if cultural aspects of disease etiology, health and healing patterns are performed to cure individuals, reinstate a sense of wellbeing, or to connect with one's cultural or religious background where location was seen as a prime factor (Boucher et al., 2019; Gesler, 2003). Furthermore, the simple act of visiting cultural heritage locations has been noted as having positive health impacts on visitors long after the visitation took place (Darvill et al., 2019). What this means is that cultural heritage locations and therapeutic landscapes both have

positive effects on health outcomes through direct interaction with the therapeutic or cultural location.

What both cultural heritage and therapeutic landscape research have both insinuated is the importance of direct interaction with the cultural landscape. What therapeutic landscape research adds to cultural heritage research is the how interaction with cultural spaces is therapeutic through built, physical, social and symbolic environments.

It is also important to note that locations like the Garden also encompass both areas of research. The Garden is considered a cultural heritage location as it emphasizes Tibetan Buddhist ideals, culture, and reinforces a sense of Tibetan identity counter to the Tibetan identity that Chinese subjugation has altered and repressed. This may be therapeutic to Tibetans in diaspora as they are able to connect with their culture and build social relationships who share those same values whether they are Tibetan or Tibetan Buddhist practitioners. It is also a therapeutic landscape as many visitors use the location as a memorial site while other visitors come to the Garden for pilgrimage activities.

3.6 Pilgrimage Studies

Pilgrimage locations are a special type of cultural heritage and/or therapeutic sites that is imbued with signs, symbols and religious connotations. The purpose of going on pilgrimage for many centuries was to reaffirm ones faith, to experience some sort of enlightenment, for miraculous cures and to meet god (Ostergaard & Refslund Christensen, 2010). The pilgrimage journey was a way to transform one's self to be a better religious practitioner and connect with others and the divine (Bilim & Duzguner, 2015; Østergaard & Refslund Christensen, 2010). What pilgrimage studies researchers have recognized was the fact that pilgrims were transformed

not by reaching the final pilgrimage destination but through the actual journey itself (Bilim & Duzguner, 2015; Nilsson & Tesfahuney, 2018; Østergaard & Refslund Christensen, 2010; Progano et al., 2020).

Various studies have explored the importance of this transformation and how it occurs. For example, Galbraith (2000) explored pilgrimage through an anthropological lens focusing on the pilgrimage process as a communal activity. According to Galbraith (2000), going on pilgrimage as a communal activity that structured daily activities as a group allowed participants to reflect on their own lives and their relation to others. In a sense pilgrimage has been seen as a means to strengthen communities (Galbraith, 2000). One area focused on in this research is the concept of communitas. During group gatherings such as pilgrimage, communitas represents the cohesion of the group for an activity or event which should not be seen as restrictive but rather as liberating individuals from conformity through this transient situation (Galbraith, 2000). An interesting dynamic regarding this concept in pilgrimage was that the religious community did instill social norms through the pilgrimage process where individualism was restricted leaving the individual navigating this process between conformity and individualism (Galbraith, 2000). Some of the many benefits to pilgrimage identified by Galbraith (2000), was social development where individuals would meet people outside their regular social circles. Even after the pilgrimage ended, these new friendships may be fostered and flourish for years to come.

More recently, pilgrimage researchers have shifted away from Galbraith's (2000) research to explore pilgrimage locations from a different viewpoint. This historic trend of taking up the cause of pilgrimage for strictly religious purposes has been in decline where pilgrimage sites are now often viewed as tourist locations (Bilim & Duzguner, 2015; Nilsson & Tesfahuney,

2018). Tourism has become one of the primary reasons for visiting pilgrimage sites as well as cultural heritage sites in general.

These studies have begun to explore how and why pilgrimage has transformed. Some of this research has focused on pilgrimage through a postmodern lens. This postmodern framework directly challenged various assumptions rooted in modernity which included conventional concepts of identity, objectivity, Truth and explanation (Devereux & Carnegie, 2006). Most of this research indicated that pilgrimage has become a personal journey focused on personal transformation replacing the old pious purpose of pilgrimage (Bilim & Duzguner, 2015; Nilsson & Tesfahuney, 2018; Østergaard & Refslund Christensen, 2010).

As enticing as the postmodern framework may be in describing this hyper individualistic pilgrimage experience, but there are some drawbacks. "Post modernism is a destabilizing force as it alters how society views the nature of reality, leading to unstable communicative practices (Aylesworth, 2015). This has led to a situation in which 'words, symbols, and signs are increasingly divorced from real-world experience' (Fox, 1996)" (Kenworthy et al., 2021, p. 1432). What these hint at is that shared experiences like what Galbraith (2000) have noted are no longer shared communally as the symbols used to signify no longer are applicable to the community but are instead redefined through an individualistic lens. Even though Osergaard & Refslunden Christensen (2010), Bilim & Duzguner (2015) and Nilsson & Tesfahuney (2018) have seen pilgrimage as being transformed into a personal journey, it is best to proceed with caution as this postmodern framework is a Western concept that may not represent the same perspective across other ethnic groups.

A case in point was well articulated by Carolina Izquierdo (2005) that has explored how health varies across different cultures. Even though this research does not focus on

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postmodernism specifically, it does point out the drawbacks of focusing on individualistic

concepts of health and wellbeing. According to Izquierdo (2005), an indigenous group in the

Amazon known as the Matsigenka have been introduced to biomedicine. Unfortunately, the

Matsigenka have seen their health declining even though they have fewer signs of disease

(Izquierdo, 2005). This in part is due to how the Matsigenka define health as not only as physical

and mental wellbeing but also social cohesion within the group itself (Izquierdo, 2005). The

importance regarding Izquierdo's (2005) research is evident as it combats the notion of personal

journeys and hyper individualism. Furthermore, it is also evident that various Asian communities

see commitment to family as being a priority (Mason, 2020). What this leads to is the fact that

postmodernism may not be the best conceptual framework for pilgrimage studies where the

cultures in question do not have a modernistic world view.

However, through initial research at the Garden, this concept of pilgrimage as a means

for personal transformation seems quite plausible. I had numerous conversations with Tibetans

who drove across country to stay at the Garden and a significant proportion of these pilgrims

were not extremely religious and in fact knew very little about their Tibetan Buddhist religion.

Even when they stayed for long periods of time, learning about religion seemed to be less

important than speaking with others in their Tibetan native dialects. In fact, various Tibetans

visited the Garden as the abbot is quite well known for hosting Tibetans and giving them free

lodgings for the night.

In general, research pertaining to Buddhist pilgrimage sites in the United States has not

occurred due to the fact that most Buddhist sites have historically been located throughout

Eastern Asian countries. For this reason focusing on Eastern Asian pilgrimage has become a part

of this literature review. One study performed by Progano et al. (2020) has embraced exploring

diverse visitors to pilgrimage sites in Japan which consisted of exploring differences between Japanese visitors and Australian visitors. This study illuminated differences mainly between what the primary goals of the visitation were. The main reason Japanese people visited these Buddhist sites was to explore spirituality and nature. Some of the important themes derived through Nature were Nostalgia, meaningful experiences, understanding and learning one's own heritage for the purposes of transmitting it to the next generation (Progano et al., 2020). The Australians on the other hand, visited these sites for recreational purposes including hiking and being in nature as well as learning about another culture (Progano et al., 2020). On the surface, this study seems like a great study but one cannot help but notice a lack of important information regarding the participants. For example, ethnicity was not included in any aspect of the study. It is well known that the Australian population mirrors other western countries and is as ethnically diverse as many parts of the world. It is vital to know if the visitors from Australia identified as ethnically Japanese, or other Asian culture that primarily follows Buddhism, or if they were mainly White, or some other ethnicity. What the study has led reviewers to believe was that Australia was and is still considered a homogeneous society. The study also pointed out the same about Japan even though Japan has various minority ethnic groups as well. Even with this flaw in not distinguishing ethnic groups, Progano et al.'s (2020) study was still important as it demonstrated that the reason for visiting cultural heritage sites has varied dependent upon citizenship affiliation.

3.6.1 Buddhist Pilgrimage, Health and Healing

One aspect of Buddhist pilgrimage has been articulated as a transnational experience where nation-state boundaries have little significance in the pilgrimage experience (Geary, 2014). In the Tibetan Buddhist realm, pilgrimage can be seen as a mandala, or a topographical

depiction that focuses the mind on a meditation object. According to Pitstono (2014) pilgrimage was seen as an inner pilgrimage that created a shift in perception where all environmental aspects were seen as a part of this mandala. Furthermore, the act of pilgrimage as a Tibetan was seen to reaffirm one's identity as a Tibetan and Buddhist (Klieger, 1992). In this regard, pilgrimage could be seen as countering the idea that pilgrimage was both a transnational activity but also as a means to identify oneself as a Tibetan Buddhist as well as a personal activity meant to change the pilgrim's inner perspective.

Part of the reason why Tibetans in diaspora may partake in pilgrimage activities may be due to the desire to make cultural connections. As Lauer noted (2015), Tibetans often partook in learning cultural dynamics including the Tibetan language to form the cultural connection these people had living in diaspora. While this may be a cause for many Tibetans to go on pilgrimages to contemporary translocated Tibetan Buddhist site, other significant reasons may be key factors as well.

An additional reason for engaging in pilgrimage activities could be to cure illnesses. Within the Tibetan medical framework, some illnesses cannot be cured with modern medicine as these illnesses have manifested due to negative karma ripening (*Buddhist Medicine and Healing*, 2021). In order to purify negative karma, Buddhist medicine must be used (*Buddhist Medicine and Healing*, 2021). What is meant by Buddhist medicine is practicing Buddhism to gain insight into the root causes of the illness so the individual can mitigate those cases. Through previous experience, individuals will go on pilgrimage to explore Buddhism and to speak with the Garden's abbot to receive teachings to learn how he/she/other can work with difficult illnesses.

Researching the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas as a pilgrimage site is of utmost importance as it is one of the only Buddhist sites in North America that continually draws tens of thousands of

visitors annually. Some of these people identify themselves as Tibetan, or one of the Sino-Tibetan groups that claim Tibetan Buddhism as part of their cultural heritage. Furthermore, Many White and/or Hispanic Americans have adopted Tibetan Buddhism as their religion have also come to the Garden for pilgrimage and to receive teachings from the Rinpoches.

3.7 Theoretical Framework for Heritage Sites

Exploring cultural heritage sites though an anthropological lens helps reframe cultural heritage that is mainly situated in a Western dominant framework. Both Symbolic Anthropology and using affective responses have benefits to understanding cultural heritage site experiences. Using these theoretical frameworks helps to understand how sites are accessed and interpreted from various cultural perspectives.

3.7.1 Symbolic Anthropology

Stemming from the Peircean semiotic tradition, a symbol is a sign which only becomes a symbol through cultural interpretation (Micheelsen & Geertz, 2002). A symbol is an "idea connected with the word [or tangible/intangible object]; it does not, in itself, identify those things…The symbol is connected with its object by virtue of the idea of the symbol-using mind, without which no such connection would exist" (Peirce, 1894, pp. §6-§7). Signs are different from symbols in that signs need no cultural interpretation and represent what they signify (Peirce, 1894). Without this cultural connection and communal understanding, symbols cease being symbols (Turner, 1967).

In Victor Turner's (1967) The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual Turner explained in depth symbols and their interpretation. According to Turner (1967, p19), symbols "… is the smallest unit of a ritual which still contained the specific properties of the ritual

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behavior; it is the ultimate unit of specific structure in a ritual context." Symbols are defined as an object, action, relation, or gesture that…is regarded by general consent as naturally typifying or representing or calling something by possession of analogous qualities or by association in fact or through" (Turner, 1967, p. 19). represents or recalls something by possession of analogous qualities or by association in fact or thought. Symbols can be multivocal and stand for many things, thus representing a plethora of meaning which are interconnected (Turner, 1967). A sign on the other hand is a symbol which has been mediated through culture and has been inscribed with one significant meaning (Peirce, 1894).

Symbols in the environment are an integral part of any culture whether interpreted consciously or innately known and are imbued with cultural meaning bound up in objects whether tangible or intangible (Geertz, 1973). Tibetan Buddhism is a perfect example of this as the religion/philosophy integrates symbolism in every aspect of religious practice conveying important ideals for people to live by. From the colors on the prayer flags to hand gestures each deity figure maintains; the symbolic representations are abundant. According to Turner (1967) the symbol is the smallest unit of a ritual context. During ritual proceedings, physical symbols are regularly enacted in a well-orchestrated manner in conjunction with the ritual chanting. These symbols tend to convey a very specific aspect of the ritual. In other words, Turner's belief that symbols are the smallest unit of ritual context seems applicable to symbols used in Tibetan Buddhism as each symbol is defined uniquely either by using other symbols or being a symbol in and of itself. The Garden follows suit where visitors are confronted with a plethora of symbols that influence everyday interactions within the Garden.

Peleggi (2012) has also demonstrated the importance of the diffusion of sacred objects, relics and esoteric knowledge needed for their manipulation. The importance of these objects

reminds devotees of Buddha's life and teachings as well as embodying the Buddha (Peleggi, 2012). This concept of a religious has been shown to extend further than just a symbol but as being synonymous with the Buddha himself.

Symbolic anthropology researchers brought forth the concept that it is important to understand the native's point of view (Micheelsen & Geertz, 2002). By working from the culture's point of view regarding symbols and cultural meanings, anthropologists can decern how cultures arrange their worldview and their beliefs. To facilitate this process, the researcher becomes the authority of the culture by living in that culture and using thick description to articulate signs, symbols, beliefs, and power differentials to understand a culture at even the most nuanced levels.

One of Geertz's symbolic anthropology critics, James Clifford, was critical of how Geertz and his proteges' implementation of the native point of view in research. James Clifford stated that symbolic anthropology ethnographers employed the method of implementing a colonial type of interpretation that only instills the ethnographers' interpretation (Clifford, 1983). This is an important juncture from the researcher being considered the sole authority on culture to one where the peoples whose culture it is should have a voice in how the culture is represented. James Clifford understood the importance of the critical studies approach that has implemented the voice of the culture itself instead of solely on the interpretation of that culture by the expert.

Clifford's (1983) articulation against symbolic anthropology was not the only critic of symbolic anthropology. Talal Asad (1983) was also critical of Geertz's loose definition of symbols that demonstrated key issues with how symbolic anthropology was framed. One of the primary critics was articulated around how Geertz defined a symbol as "'any object, act, event,

quality or relation which serves as a vehicle for a conception—the conception is the symbol's "meaning"' (1973:91)" (Asad, 1983). This is a very broad definition which has allowed Geertz to use symbols loosely without differentiating between its aspects and its representations as well as failing to differentiate between referential and indexical symbol functions (Asad, 1983). In Geertz's research, symbol definitions tended to be used differently depending on what he was articulating which has been problematic and potentially one reason why researchers have shifted away from using symbolic anthropology as a theoretical framework even though it has significantly added to anthropological theory and research over the last half of the 20th century. One potential avenue is to reframe symbolic anthropology using a postmodern perspective, while integrating affective responses to explore a continuum of responses.

3.7.2 Affective Responses

Affective responses are an important area of research in symbolic anthropology, cultural heritage, tourism and pilgrimage studies. Affective responses are one method used to explore site-visitor interactions aimed at exploring how personal histories, experiences and cultural backgrounds negotiate visitor interactions. Using affective responses has become a means for cultural heritage experts to explore the significance and complexity of visitor-site interactions and how these interactions illicit notable affective responses (Smith, 2014; Waterton & Watson, 2013).

There are various definitions of affect which are based on practical and philosophical differences. Part of the issue revolves around the Western dichotomous view of body and mind whereas other philosophical concepts integrate a more holistic body-mind dynamic where both body and mind overlap to such an extent that neither aspect can be completely excluded from the other. Philosophers on the other hand accept affect as pre-emotive as affect resides in the space

between the manifestation of the stimuli and registering the stimuli as a symbol(s) and is considered to be the intensity and not emotion (Newell, 2018). As Massumi (1995) notes, affect is the intensity of the response of the stimuli but is not quite emotion as emotions take place upon conscious acknowledgement of affect. In other words, affect is between the space of stimuli uptake and conscious understanding. Interestingly, affect is not presocial but is considered asocial as it includes social applications (Massumi, 1995). Even though affect is considered an unconscious process, it is still orchestrated through cultural worldviews.

What becomes evident is that there is a body/mind division between affect and emotions or feelings. In many regards this affect/emotion division is a hallmark of Western thought and understanding where mind and body are considered separate. Even though this dichotomous approach still exists, other researchers are more apt to view mind and body as being interconnected.

Other research hints at the fact that affect is unqualifiable. Newell (2018), explored the importance of recalling pertinent objects that were associated with people in our lives. Newell (2008) explored how objects associated with a loved ones brought up unqualifiable affects that resist being reduced to words. In other words, affective responses to lived experiences not only occur through direct interaction with symbols in their cultural heritage environment, but also live on in our minds and can be activated with the memory recall of objects and ideals that have symbolic meaning. One key aspect of Newell's argument is the fact that affect in many instances is unqualifiable. This seems to counter the responses that cultural heritage experts have received in studies pertaining to affect. For example, Smith (2014) notes that individuals visit sites to reinforce not only what they already know but what they also feel and believe. What Smith (2014) articulates is the fact that visitors experience symbols at sites to reaffirm precisely what

they already feel and this concept counters Newell's argument that affect is mainly unqualifiable. This is important as it reaffirms the belief that affect is not solely preconscious but also a conscious function that may include emotions and feelings.

This idea that affect contains both preconscious and conscious tends to be the point of view of cultural heritage researchers as it is viewed as being comprised of emotions, feelings, subjective responses and sensibilities (Crouch, 2019). This means that affect for cultural heritage specialists is not limited to the space between incoming stimuli and conscious acknowledgement, but from stimuli through conscious acknowledgement and possibly even reflection on the sensations, feelings, emotions that have arisen due to the interaction with symbols.

For the purposes of this research, the definition brought forth by cultural heritage experts will be the one used. The purpose for this is that affective responses and emotions are intertwined and in social research it is difficult to untangle affect from emotion based on participant observation or even interviewing alone. Besides, affective responses are often reinforced by emotions and memory that live on far after visiting cultural heritage locations.

Previous research has focused on the significance of how interactions with cultural heritage sites and symbols elicits affective responses on various levels. One of the primary reasons why it is important to explore affective responses is that many visitors explore cultural heritage sites is for the purpose of experiencing emotion and feelings generated from the site interactions (Smith, 2014). Smith (2014) finds that site visitors display an array of registers of engagement, that often reinforce personal beliefs visitors have regarding sites (Smith, 2014).

The theory behind using affective responses goes beyond only site-visitor interactions as these "flows of emotion coalesce to form a social phenomenon that is beyond the individual subjective responses, feeling and sensibilities" (Crouch, 2015, p. 181).

Understanding how affective responses that manifest through interactions with cultural heritage locations needs to also be expanded from a single point in time to potentially being atemporal. Affective responses not only revolve around visiting cultural heritage sites but also give meaning to our everyday life (Crouch, 2015). Thus, the significance of a site extends beyond the site itself by influencing how visitors embody various cultural heritage aspects after site visitation. These influential factors that originate from cultural heritage sites continue to engage visitors who identify with the cultural heritage of the site and help define what being human and being alive is through cultural tradition (Crouch, 2015; Waterton & Watson, 2013). Understanding how affective responses reinforce visitors' lived experiences beyond cultural heritage site visitation should be an integral aspect of official site messaging.

Newell stives to marry this important understanding of affective responses with symbolic anthropology. Newell brings add to affect theory and symbolic anthropology by eliminating the distinction between persons and things and instead think of personhood itself as an agglomeration of material traces and objects imbued with character"' (Newell, 2018, p. 8). This also follows very closely to Buddhist concepts that self and other, object and subject are an incorrect view of reality (Nhat Hanh, 1998). According to Buddhism, the perceived subject is not actually a subject, but rather an extension of the observer (Nhat Hanh, 1998). If this is the case, then there is no strict dichotomy between subject and object.

With the erosion of this subject/object dichotomy, affective responses can be seen as more of a feedback loop where the symbol and viewer are intertwined into an experience that are

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reinforced by cultural concepts, beliefs and ideals (Newell, 2018). Sites are attributed with cultural heritage discourses that can be thought as threads where threads signify themes that can be ethnically driven and framed as being a part of a race manifest in specific affective responses into what Couch (2015) calls silos. What couch alludes to is the idea that affect responses to site visitation may vary across people of different ethnic backgrounds.

The implications of this silo effect are intriguing, and various cultural heritage researchers who advocate the use of affective responses have indicated that exploring ethnic responses to cultural heritage sites should be a priority to advance cultural heritage research but to date little has been done. Because affect is informed by cultural background there is great potential to explore these siloed cultural understandings and interpretations and explore how different affective responses are to shared cultural heritage locations. To date, this research is lacking but is imperative to explore as understanding how people from varying backgrounds experience cultural heritage symbols. This research potentially shifts exploring affect theories from the dominant Western perspective to encompassing non-Western interpretations through the addition of affective responses. To date, no research has explored how affective responses may differ across different ethnic backgrounds.

3.7.3 Symbolic Anthropology and Affective Models through a Postmodern Lens

Symbolic anthropology and affective models could be viewed as rather simplistic when viewed separately. Both of these frameworks complement each other quite well especially when combined and reframed through a postmodern lens. Part of this is due to the fact that sites like the Garden are not only interpreted from the original meaning or purpose behind its construction but are also reimagined and reinterpreted through each and every visitor whether they be a retreatant, a tourist, or a volunteer.

Postmodernists tend to move away from unified concepts that modernistic frameworks have relied upon throughout the modernistic movements. One of the divisions between postmodernists and modernists is the belief in universal truths (Kellner, 1988). Postmodernists question if reality is concrete or discursively constructed. In other words, postmodernists are skeptical of a universal truth and believe that even if it does exist, it is presumed to be unknowable (Rosenau, 1991). Furthermore, the theoretical framework is used to disrupt current upheld truths and even their oppositions (J. Williams, 2005). Through discourse, meanings are no longer seen as static but rather shifting in society (Thomassen, 2017). One of the interesting aspects of the postmodern framework is the fact that media not only carries the original intent of the producer/artist/ writer but is interpreted by the audience/reader where multiple meanings begin to emerge (Rosenau, 1991). What these postmodern frameworks allow for is the questioning of the dominant discourses and beliefs. In some ways, these frameworks can be seen as a means to question our everyday assumptions and cultural norms that previously represented truth.

Agency is a critical dynamic of postmodernism where power is returned to the subject while still acknowledging how structures influence human belief and behavior. Agency is the ability of the individual to make one's own choices free from restriction and even at the expense of their own principals (Fontrodona & Sison, 2006).While it is certain that various monolithic entities may restrict agency through laws, policies and regulations, it is important to note that individuals still have agency to enact decisions even if these decisions counter societal expectations.

From the postmodern perspective human agency is vital for people to obtain health and wellbeing. Within this postmodernist framework health and wellbeing nexus, are choices

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individuals make based on agency, cultural/religious beliefs, preference, as well as socio-economic status. Various aspects of the postmodernists approach and its philosophical stance has also made a direct impact on medical anthropology.

Postmodern theorists not only focus on the overarching structures and discourses within postmodern theory but pick up where Geertz and Turner left off by reconceptualizing signs, symbols, and referents while reframing the symbolic as a process the reader/interpreter define through discourse and dialogue. Most modernists view symbols as representations that are equivalent to the sign of the real (Baudrillard, 1994). According to Baudrillard (1994) and some other postmodernists, this is a simulation – an attempt to represent the real but this is only a false representation (Baudrillard, 1994). Postmodernists have reconceptualized the symbol as not only a referent to be interpreted through a cultural lens, but through simulacra. Simulacra is when signs and sign referents become separate from their referent (P. Jones & Holmes, 2012). Reproduction is thus itself a simulacrum with four phases:

1. It is a reflection of a profound reality

2. It marks and denatures a profound reality.

3. It masks the absence of a profound reality.

4. It has no relation to any reality whatsoever: It is its own pure simulacrum. (Baudrillard, 1994)

A good example of this is exemplified in locations such as Lascaux Cave paintings in France. Because of the potential to introduce microbes which may degrade the pigments used to create ancient cave paintings, a replica has been set up to represent the original and allow tourists access to see this ancient artwork. At this point it is pertinent to ask, "which representation is considered authentic?". One viewpoint proposed by Baudrillard (1994) is that because of the

duplication of the location, both may be seen as artificial. In other words, the referent, is

conceptualized as not the same as the original, but becomes an inaccurate reflection of the

original, and thus both are misperceived.

At this point it is important to note that this misperceived sense of symbols and referents

should not be seen through a nihilistic viewpoint but rather a disconnected one that allows for a

myriad of possible interpretations and reimaginations. Because the symbol or referent is no

longer considered a reflection of profound reality as it is detached from reality, the symbol or

referent can be interpreted through a plethora of meanings that are equally valid.

With a reinterpretation of symbolic anthropology through a postmodern lens, it is obvious

the relationship between symbols, and affective responses is much more dynamic as it is no

longer solely based on how the author/culture/site management articulates the purpose or lived

experience. Sasha Newell (2018) has conceptualized the importance of symbolic anthropology

and affective responses through exploring the semiotic nature of symbols and how those

pertained to affective responses. This semiotic mediation of these symbols is important as it

provides groups abilities to organize their own efforts towards desirable ends (Westermeyer,

2021).

According to Newell (2018), symbols are not only tangible and intangible object

passively translated through a semiotic process guided by cultural interpretation but are also

"actants" as symbols are intertwined in our "social worlds" (Newell, 2018, p. 10). Symbols have

agency since they reaffirm or influence our beliefs, sentiments, and actions upon encountering or

remembering their significance and meaning. What he meant by symbols as "actants" was the

fact that symbols are a part of the environment and as such individuals who identify those

symbols culturally, have had no choice but to interact with them. Newell (2018) noted that part

of the problem rested in the distinction between person and object. What Newell has called for

was for this distinction to be dropped and "…instead think of personhood itself as an

agglomeration of material traces and objects imbued with character" (Newell, 2018, p. 8).

Symbols in the environment are directly influential on individual's behavior, thoughts and

understandings not only by being present but also being part of the entanglement of visitors,

social processes and imbued with personhood where affective forces are between people as well

as between symbolic objects (Newell, 2018). Newell takes this concept even further through the

belief that signs have affective force and are the primary mode in which affect is transmitted

between bodies (2018).

Newell (2018) has recognized the importance of what he called "infolding" which he

noted is similar to what Durkeim called *"mana"* as an important part of healing. What Newell

(2018) has argued for is that symbols in the environment not only elicited affective responses but

that these responses have physiological effects. These effects included healing responses from

rituals as well as negative effects of sorcery attacks (Newell, 2018). What Newell (2018) has

proposed is the identification of how and why therapeutic landscapes often heal people quicker

than hospital rooms devoid of cultural significance and/or natural vistas (Gesler, 2003). This

concept seemed to identify healing and illness through the internalization of symbols that illicit

affective responses that resonate with the individual through cultural connotations and

representations that hold cultural meaning. This has given the concept of symbolic healing even

more credibility as it demonstrated that affective processes are integral to the healing process.

3.8 Synthesis of Literature Review

This review has focused on literature pertaining to cultural heritage/cultural landscapes,

medical anthropology, pilgrimage, and therapeutic landscapes. This review has focused on

symbolic anthropology and affective responses theoretical frameworks that have been recast through a postmodern lens as visitors-site interactions are negotiated on a daily basis and vary from one visit to the next. The literature covers this breadth in order to integrate and draw connections between seemingly different research areas to explore how cultural heritage landscapes/sites and therapeutic landscapes in conversation with medical anthropology as a complementary practice to health geography. This research will also decenter the western viewpoint to include a more holistic approach as well as negate any universal truth concepts that come from that tradition. While this is generally the viewpoint of researchers today, it is important to note counter arguments. One counter argument brought to light by Newell (2018), has implied that others categorize just as much as moderns do. While this may be true, the fact that most research implementing this Western framework over the past 130 years in the social sciences has dominated the conversations. What most postmodern researchers stressed is that we live and interact in a pluralistic world where multiple modalities of existence should be recognized as being equal to as well as countering Western hegemony for the dominance of how sites are conceptualized, facilitated, and experienced.

For this reason, the exploration of cultural heritage from a non-Western point of view has rapidly taken shape. Many sites have finally been researched uses culturally sensitive techniques. Even with this advancement in cultural heritage and therapeutic landscape research, very little research has explored how exposure to cultural heritage sites impact visitor/participant health and wellbeing. Furthermore, there is little research to explore how new and contemporary translocated sites become imbued with therapeutic qualities through visitor interaction and if this is spread through some sort of diffusion process. It is also unknown what role affective responses have on visitors' and participants' health and wellbeing outcomes while visiting cultural heritage

and therapeutic landscape locations. Lastly, it is unknown how engaging in the social environment, which includes engaging with symbolic messaging through personal creation, donation, and visitor interaction impacts visitor health and wellbeing outcomes.

Given the focus of this cultural heritage and therapeutic landscape research through a postmodern perspective in all these research areas, various questions arise that should be explored in depth. The focus of this dissertation will advance the understanding in how contemporary and translocated sites impact health and wellbeing through the social environment, affective responses, and personal site interaction that is interpreted and reimagined through each and every experience.

Chapter Four:

Methodology

This chapter describes the qualitative methods research design and articulates the central question, three subquestions, and Garden participants in detail. This methodology chapter then defines the instrumentation (field notes, informal interviews/interactions, memoing, participant observations, photos, and semi-structured interviews) used to gather qualitative data which included offerings left onsite. The chapter will then focus on key methods concepts including transferability and verification procedures that are important for research findings and outcomes. This chapter then details how data was analyzed using NVIVO R.17 and defines the coding processes and procedures, which later led to theme development.

4.1 The Qualitative Approach

Most research involving cultural heritage, therapeutic landscape, and affective responses primarily enlists qualitative methods approaches for various reasons. First, a qualitative approach offers an inductive entry into the complexity of the situation and explores it in fine detail relying on individual and/or group experiences (Creswell, 2014). Second, subjective evidence is based on individual perspectives including background and lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Smith, 2014). One benefit of using qualitative methods is that the information gleaned through the research process not only explains findings but also contextualizes them in a comprehensive manner where rich and thick descriptions explain the findings through cultural lens (Micheelsen & Geertz, 2002). In essence, the qualitative approach is beneficial for capturing a myriad of experiences visitors have at a single location.

Most medical and applied anthropology research has relied upon qualitative methods to not only contextualize participant perceptions, but to also voice participants' point of view and perspective represented through research. By allowing for participants' voices to be interjected into the finished research product, whether that be a dissertation, documentary, or a monitoring and evaluation report, their perspective shapes the findings instead of solely using the professional researcher's interpretations and perspectives. The qualitative methods approach used explored how Garden visitors interpret, interact with, and explore the Garden as well as discovered how offerings become symbols. These symbols were mediated through social interaction and elicited participants' affective responses which enhanced the overall visitor experience.

4.1 The Ethnographic Lens

Qualitative methods were used to explore the research questions through an ethnographic approach. An ethnographic approach was appropriate as the Garden continually evolved culturally through visitor interactions. Preliminary Garden field research indicated that as a cultural heritage location the site was imbued with Tibetan Buddhist beliefs and values, and at the same time was imbued with significance through visitor interactions that significantly differed due to noncurated site experience of site meaning.

According to the ethnographic stance, human behavior and how humans derive meaning of their worlds is highly variable and specific to location (LeCompte, M & Schensul, J, 2010). LeCompte & Schensul's (2010) ethnographic stance requires seven characteristics:

- It occurs in a natural setting.

- It employs face-to-face interactions with participants.

- It represents an accurate reflection of participant perspectives and behaviors.

- It utilizes inductive, interactive, and recursive types of data for theory building.

- It sifts through various forms of qualitative and quantitative sources.

- It frames human behavior and belief within a sociopolitical and historical context.

- It implements cultural concepts to interpret research results.

Each characteristic reinforces the importance of observing cultures from within the culture itself. Furthermore, ethnography is being attentive while being open to exploring unanticipated events or cultural aspects calling our attention (Pigg, 2013).

According to Ingold (2014), there is no observation without participation. Participant observation is a time-tested method to gather data used in ethnography. Participant observation occurs when the observer integrates oneself into the community in which he/she/they are researching. Most researchers gather data through observing and interacting with community members using field notes, interviews, participating in group activities or gathering survey responses. In order for a researcher to partake in cultural activities, establishing rapport is an essential part of the process (Bernard, 2011). In a sense, participant observation is "becoming the phenomenon" which the researcher is studying (Bernard, 2011, p. 279).

Objectivity is central to participant observation and an integral to gathering reliable data. A great method to ensure objectivity in ethnographic research is reflexivity to our own perceptions, interactions, opinions, and values (Bernard, 2011). Being objective is important within field research as it allows findings to come through in the least biased manner. The implications of this are to not only acknowledge positive data/outcomes be explored in the data

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analysis process but also allows for negative data and outcomes (which should be considered as important and valid as positive data and outcomes) to be explored and contrasted as pertinent information.

4.2 Central Question

Most cultural heritage research pertaining to diasporic communities has explored how culture and heritage concepts have been maintained in diaspora (Kloos, 2013; Lauer, 2015; Lee, 2008; Lehr & Cipko, 2015). What has not been explored are the impacts these cultural spaces have on other non-affiliated cultures. Furthermore, cultural heritage research has not explored translocated contemporary cultural heritage locations conceptualized by cultural groups in diaspora. Previous preliminary research has indicated that visitors often interpret meaning and significance outside of the diasporic cultural connotations. This preliminary research indicated that the location spurred the interest of various visitor types to explore the location as it was viewed as an anomaly in the US. These visitors brought with them their own beliefs including ones that pertain to health and wellbeing. The location was an obvious facilitator of health and wellbeing, but it was unknown how these displays, which includes symbols offered and rituals performed at the Garden; it is unknown what impact these have on the initiators, nor is it known what impact they have on other visitors. Furthermore, there has been exceedingly little research focusing on how affective responses facilitate health and wellbeing. For this reason, the research will focus on answering this central question: How do affective responses, personal beliefs, and messaging symbols at the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas impact visitors' social and symbolic environments and are these integral in therapeutic landscape development?

4.21 Subquestion One

To answer the central question, three subquestions were developed to focus on specific central question dynamics. The first subquestion focused on affective responses to discover how cultural heritage site visits impact visitors (Crouch, 2015; Smith, 2014). The most basic affective response definition is the physical and emotional response a person has to a situation. According to psychological researchers, affective responses are preconscious body sensations that we only become aware of after the fact (Newell, 2018). For social science research exploring affective responses, which included the consciously processed bodily responses, was integral for this research as Smith (2014) noted, visitors go to cultural heritage sites to *feel*.

Like cultural heritage sites, therapeutic landscapes are important spaces for visitors to feel as well as heal. As Gesler (2003) noted, therapeutic landscapes healed through experiencing the natural, built, social, and symbolic environments, but how these environments influenced visitors' affective responses to promote health and wellbeing was not well understood. Gesler relies upon Kleinman's (1973) assessment that affective processes are important to health and healing, but Kleinman never articulated what these were and how they facilitated health and wellbeing. In fact, most therapeutic landscape research has only explored why visitors access therapeutic landscape locations; they have not explored visitor-therapeutic landscape dialogic processes through affective responses. Furthermore, it was not well known if affective responses at cultural heritage locations produced similar health and wellbeing outcomes. For this reason, this subquestion explores: How do affective responses emerging from interacting with a cultural heritage site influence the visitors' health and wellbeing at the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas?

4.22 Subquestion Two

Health and wellbeing activities have been used to prevent diseases and illnesses, cure them, or in the case of chronic illnesses to ensure manageability and control. Seeking health and wellbeing from areas outside of biomedicine has been labeled as alternative medicine (Green et al., 2009). It is well known that participants who use alternative healthcare means seek it out due to four primary reasons.

First, patients tend to disapprove of the doctor-patient relationship that tends to favor the doctor's opinion over that of the patient (Gesler, 2003; Sivén & Mishtal, 2012). This leaves the patient feeling that they do not have control over their own health and wellbeing and must seek it out from these professional doctors (Sivén & Mishtal, 2012). Second, some patients distrust biomedicine or have had dissatisfying experiences after using biomedical therapies and other interventions (Sivén & Mishtal, 2012). These people oppose the notion that biomedicine is the best form of medicine because of problems managing illnesses as well as other negative experiences and outcomes (Sivén & Mishtal, 2012). This includes when patients switch to alternative medicine when biomedicine fails to cure the illness. The third reason why patients tend to seek alternative means is because biomedicine does not align with their cultural beliefs, including the promotion of their cultural medicine nor does it represent their personal beliefs (Riordan & Schofield, 2015; Sivén & Mishtal, 2012). The last reason is biomedicine is incapable of curing certain illnesses and syndromes which prevent them from enjoying lives they had before diagnosis (Karasaki et al., 2017).

The Garden was a location where visitors enacted alternative medical practices to achieve or at least emulate a sense of health and wellbeing. Interestingly, the Garden metanarrative never envisioned the location as a therapeutic landscape. The abbot at the Garden has expressed the

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location as a peace garden meant for everyone regardless of cultural, ethnic or religious identity. The location is not advertised as a location for health, healing, and wellbeing, but various visitors use the location for that purpose. The Garden as a therapeutic landscape seems to be an iterative process that is not well understood. What is obvious is that visitors are actively participating in identifying the location as a therapeutic landscape. How this occurs and why this occurs is not well known. For this reason, the second subquestion focused on: How are visitors' personal health and wellbeing beliefs formative in the construction of a therapeutic landscape where no official health and wellbeing attributes are articulated by site management?

4.23 Subquestion Three

The last area of exploration focused on how the symbolic environment impacted the social environment. Medical anthropology researchers have explored the positive3 and negative impacts symbols have on patients' health and wellbeing in depth. An example of this was explained in Blumhagen's (2010) article focusing on the doctor's white coat and what it represented. Blumhagen (2010) explored the symbolic meaning behind the white coat and has determined that it represents authority, purity, and even safety. Most symbolic significance in medical anthropological research focused on the meaning of symbols as a means to either initiate or confirm the healing process.

Even though medical anthropological researchers have an intimate knowledge of the role symbols have in health and healing, exploring the symbolic environment pertaining to therapeutic landscapes is still in its infancy (Winchester & McGrath, 2017). Exploring therapeutic landscapes from a medical anthropological perspective has focused on clinical care spatial dynamics in poverty stricken areas (Cooper, 2017), transforming homes into care facilities (Karasaki et al., 2017), exploring contested therapeutic locations (Mokos, 2017), and

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exploring how social dynamics impact the physical location (Grayman, 2020). One area which

has not yet been explored is how individuals are able to impact the social and symbolic

environments. With the potential for visitors to inscribe plaques with personalized messages

through financial donations and the ability to leave personal objects and messages throughout

this site, the symbolic nature of these endeavors has the potential to impact the social

environment, and therefore co-create the therapeutic landscape. For this reason, the following

subquestion was explored: How does visitor placement of health and wellbeing messaging

symbols throughout the site impact the social environment of the therapeutic landscape at the

Garden of 1,000 Buddhas?

4.3 Participants

Participants were purposefully selected from visitors who came to experience the Garden.

Preliminary data gathered during the previous two field seasons (Summer 2020 and Summer

2021) helped define the types of participants pertinent for this ethnographic study. Participants

were categorized into five categories which included:

- Visitors who accessed the Garden to facilitate positive health and wellbeing outcomes.

- Tibetans and other Himalayan peoples who identify Tibetan Buddhism as a part of their
  cultural heritage.

- Retreatants who came to the Garden for Tibetan Buddhist retreats.

- Garden employees and volunteers who worked at the Garden.

- Tourists who visited the Garden as a tourist activity.

Visitors who sought out positive health and wellbeing outcomes from interacting with the Garden were people suffering from mental health issues, the death of a loved one, or an illness. Another subgroup of health and wellbeing visitors were new age practitioners who came to perform some sort of ritual at the Garden which included signing bowl sound baths, smudging for purification purposes, or leaving offerings as some sort of ritual to benefits their lives in some way.

Tibetan and other Himalayan peoples who visited the Garden were defined as people who were ethnically from the Himalayan region and viewed Tibetan Buddhism as an integral part of their cultural heritage. These visitors mainly came as pilgrims to the Garden who wanted to connect with Rinpoche or Khen Rinpoche to receive teachings, and/or their blessings. This group may not have been active Tibetan Buddhist practitioners but considered themselves Tibetan Buddhist through cultural affiliation.

Retreatants were Tibetan Buddhist practitioners who came to the Garden to receive teachings from Rinpoche and Khen Rinpoche. Retreatants were from various ethnic backgrounds excluding Tibetans and Himalayan peoples, which were added to their own category (listed in the paragraph above).

Garden employees and volunteers were people who worked at the Garden and usually lived on sight. These employees and volunteers often partook in retreats with the teachers but were mainly at the Garden to facilitate Rinpoche's and Khen Rinpoche's vision of the Garden. These participants were not added to the retreatant category as their main focus was working at the Garden. Additionally, transients and locals volunteered at the Garden throughout the summer months.

The last group of visitors was tourists. Tourists were visitors who saw the Garden as a novelty where they could learn about Tibetan Buddhism and enjoy the cultural landscape. They were often perplexed by its location on the Flathead Indian Reservation. In essence, tourists represented a spectrum of Buddhist knowledge which went from none to monastics who lived the Buddhist path every day. Some of these visitors had an in-depth knowledge of Buddhism and even practiced it but were not a part of any retreat nor were they a part of the organization as a volunteer nor an employee.

Some of these visitors were easily categorized. Retreatants for example were categorized as such through their participation in retreats and were temporarily living on site. Employees and volunteer staff were also easily categorized as they were regularly onsite performing tasks assigned by one of the teachers. Tibetans and other Himalayan peoples were a little more difficult to identify with some exceptions. Almost every Tibetan/Himalayan person wanted to speak with one of the teachers to receive blessings. On various occasions, these visitors found me working in the Garden and asked me to arrange a meeting with one of the teachers. They usually indicated how important the location was to them culturally and usually spoke with the teacher in Tibetan or Bhutanese. The most difficult group of participants to identify were visitors seeking health and wellbeing from their visit at the Garden. Participant observation working on site, acting like a tourist, and engaging in Tibetan Buddhist rituals as the Chöpön, or shrine master, helped me connect with these participants as well as having the store attendant act as an informant.

4.4 Institutional Review Board

The Institutional Review Board (IRB hereafter) application and approval process went through the IRB office at the Salish and Kootenai College as data were gathered onsite at the

Garden which was located on the Flathead Reservation. The IRB was classified as exempt from full review and granted on April 4, 2022. This IRB application was cataloged as IRB Protocol # 2022_1_Ranck. No data were collected before receiving IRB approval from Salish and Kootenai College. For more information regarding this IRB application and approval, please see Appendix C: Exempt IRB.

4.5 Data Collection

To gather appropriate qualitative data, I implemented seven strategies which included participant observation, semi structured interviews, informal interview, field notes, memoing, and photographs of offerings. Other pertinent data collection strategies included use of an informant and a stratified purposeful sampling strategy to gather sufficient data to reach saturation for each participant type. Saturation in qualitative data occurs around 12 participants per category (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Stratified purposeful sampling is used to capture significant variation instead of a common finding amongst a group. It is, however, possible to still identify a common core in the analysis process even if it is not expected. (Creswell & Poth, 2018).The strata I identified was based on the types of participants noted in the participant section (above). While this worked for Employees and Volunteers, Retreatants and tourists; it was not possible to interview enough people seeking health and wellbeing visitors nor was I able to interview enough Tibetan and other Himalayan visitors during the 2022 field research season. This was because there were less Tibetans visiting the Garden that year as many could no longer work remotely like they could the previous two years due to COVID-19. Health and wellbeing visitors were also difficult to find.

The store attendant was the best informant who connected me with a few visitors seeking health and wellbeing. She was a great informant because, visitors seeking some sort of health

and wellbeing outcome from visiting the Garden often confided in her about personal life

traumas, or hardships they were currently experiencing in their lives. This person was often the

most visible Garden personnel on the property and was easily accessible. This Store Attendant

arranged five interviews for me that turned out to be invaluable for this research.

Participant observation was the hallmark for data collection for this ethnographic

research. Researchers implement participant observation strategy to gather information from

research participants in natural settings through audio recordings, informal interviews, field

notes, open-ended interviews and photographs (Bernard, 2011). I engaged in participant

observation to explore on site social interactions, health and wellbeing activities, including yoga,

medication, and prayer; and observe visitors leaving tangible offerings at various site locations.

Participant observation was used to also find other purposeful participants. I engaged in

participant observation through maintaining a constant presence on location and engaged in

Garden activities from May 2022 through October 2022, and included periodic visits from

November 2022 to March 2023. While in the field, I communicated with various visitors who

left notes, pictures, or were performing health and healing rituals at the Garden. This tactic

helped identify anyone who visited the Garden for obvious health and wellbeing purposes.

Visitors engaging in health and wellbeing activities as well as leaving offerings on location were

asked to participate in open-ended interviews. This included visitors meditating on location,

cleansing with sage or sweetgrass, or even performing some sort of divination activity including

tarot card readings. Other purposeful participants were visitors who performed prostrations on

location or were tourists who decided to occupy one of the numerous benches on property.

Participant observation was also important to gather insider information which usually

occurred while attending Garden parties and festivities which included employee and volunteer

appreciation dinners, National holiday gatherings such as Independence Day (aka 4th of July), the commemoration of finishing important Buddhist retreats, and dinner parties hosted by Tibetan Buddhist pilgrims that were intended for all Garden residents. In the case where Tibetan Buddhist pilgrims hosted a dinner party, the entire Garden personnel was invited which included the teachers, Garden staff, volunteers, local Sangha members, and retreatants. Data from these events was usually informal which included information pertaining to the Garden as a cultural heritage location, community coming together, and social interactions. This information was recorded as field notes immediately after each event ended.

I also reprised my role as a "volunteer" performing general garden tasks which was an important cover to observe and interact with visitors. Visitors were inquisitive and eagerly questioned volunteers about the site, its purpose, and how it came be on the Flathead Indian Reservation. While conversing with these visitors, I inquired why they came to the location. This was beneficial for two reasons: first, to explore why they came to the Garden; and second, to determine if they would be a good fit as an interviewee for this research. Furthermore, I was able to observe visitors leave offerings, pray or meditate, and even watched a few ritual activities engage in other ritual activities performed on site.

Other Interview and participant observation opportunities occurred during retreats. Retreatants visiting the Garden to receive teachings and/or partake in ceremonial practices. Retreats finally resumed during the summer of 2022 after a two-year hiatus brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Each retreatant was asked to participate in the semi-structured interview. Being a part of the Sangha community as an insider allowed me to interact with retreatants, observe them during retreats, informal events, which included get-togethers at the Garden.

Field notes were another participant observation tool used in field data collection. I wrote Field notes daily regarding events, perceptions of interactions, and ritual actions in which visitors enacted. There are four types of field notes that ethnographers generally use for research purposes. These include jottings, a diary, a log, and field notes proper. Jottings are notes that the researcher jots down during informative events and interactions (Bernard, 2011). A diary is important for the researcher to maintain for personal reasons and is valuable tool used to uncover potential biases the researcher may unknowingly have (Bernard, 2011). A log is a detailed plan regarding time management to keep the researcher on track to do systematic research (Bernard, 2011). Feld notes proper, is a means to document detailed daily information (Bernard, 2011). Writing field notes regarding interviews and other encounters immediately afterwards will be crucial to prevent the researcher from forgetting vital details.

Field notes complemented participant observation and were useful in various ways which included documenting general visitor-site interactions and observing visitors engaging in ritual activities or leaving offerings. I often occupied a bench around Yumchenmo as visitors were drawn to her for her magnificently colored appearance and the Tibetan symbolism that ornately decorated her and her thrown. Field notes were taken recording visitor activities in the field of view. Field notes were important to record any epiphanies I had while on site. These were memos that focused on how data was combined and how data were relevant to the data analysis process.

Quite frequently, I jotted down field notes after interactions with visitors. These were important for field research as I would normally ask why visitors came to the Garden. Occasionally, I would ask what they thought about the offerings other visitors left and why to get a general understanding of what visitors thought. I included these responses in the field notes.

Field notes were also important to document formal engagements which included retreat teachings and speeches given during the Peace Festival. These were important as the information specified often overlapped with my research questions. This information will be discussed in the subsequent chapters.

Observing visitors engaging in health and wellbeing activities was important for this research as well. These activities included meditation, ritual, prayer, and yoga. Because these activities pertained to health and wellbeing, I asked each visitor engaging in those activities to participate in the semi-structured interview. The semi-structured interview included 13 questions open-ended questions pertaining to health and wellbeing and the perception of the Garden and how it impacted them as a visitor. For more information pertaining to the interview, please see appendix D.

Most semi-structured interviews were conducted one on one to safeguard each participant's responses and to maintain their anonymity. I rarely interviewed participants in a group. Only on four occasions did this occur. Most of the time these occurred because the couples wanted to interview together. In the case where multiple participants interviewed jointly, each participant's responses were kept separate. Interviews last between 15-95 minutes. Each open-ended interview will be recorded using a cellphone or digital recorder. The open-ended interview questions will focus on gathering data to answer the qualitative subquestions.

Semi-structured interviews were integral in gathering data pertaining to each visitor type (individuals seeking health and wellbeing, retreatants, Tibetans and/or Himalayan peoples, retreatants, and tourists). It was important to gather interview data from each visitor type to determine if visitor type played a significant role in the visitor-Garden outcome. The semi-structured interview consisted of 13 questions that focused on participant-site interactions, health

and wellbeing, perception of offerings, and their impact on the social environment. Interview questions were open-ended and derived from the literature focusing on the landscape (natural/built environments), psychosocial (affective responses, interpretation, social interaction, and cultural connections), and health and wellbeing (therapeutic qualities, personal transformation, and life transition) from interacting with a cultural/therapeutic landscape.

Before data analysis began, Interviews were recorded on Zoom, digital recorder, or cellphone using the Otter application. Zoom and digitally recorded interviews were transcribed word for word and then reviewed again to ensure transcription accuracy. The responses recorded via Otter application were automatically transcribed. Because the transcription software often inaccurately transcribed interviews containing religious jargon, I replayed each interview following along with the automatic transcription and corrected any inaccuracies whenever needed.

Besides observing visitor-site interactions at the Garden, I documented personal items visitors offered at the site which included letters, images, pictures, and any other personal object to which they may derive significance. Furthermore, many of these objects were not only intended not only as offerings to the Garden or Buddhas, but as commemorative offerings intended for the donor's friends and family. This included objects intended as memorial type offerings for deceased friends or family members or may have symbolized a visitor's experience interacting with the Garden.

The placed object location in the Garden was also documented. Recording documented offering locations was important for this project as object type corresponded with intent on a few occasions. This was important to determine as this is clearly beyond only a mental engagement with the cultural and therapeutic landscape itself and may establish a possible link between

regulated Tibetan cultural norms and beliefs, and external cultural norms and beliefs that non-Tibetan's project onto the Garden landscape. During the interview process, it was beneficial to ask visitors if they left any objects and the purpose behind offering as a means of triangulation to multitude of perspectives.

Informal interviews were completely unstructured where interviewees and I discussed topics related to the Garden, their experiences and my research to further shed light on research problem for data analysis or to refine questions asked to visitors. Occasionally, these were interactions with visitors who mentioned something important related to health and wellbeing or their perception of the Garden so I included it in my field notes. During informal interviewing, field notes were written immediately afterwards (Bernard, 2011). Informal interviews helped articulate volunteer and worker perceptions of visitor – site engagement. Informal interviewing data was valuable information regarding cultural heritage/cultural landscapes and therapeutic landscapes as the researcher's purposefully selected participants. Furthermore, I occasionally asked visitors the purpose for their visit or what they thought about the offerings others left behind. Most of these visitors whom the researcher will interact with directly in the field will be transient visitors who have come to the Garden for their personal benefit and will not have coordinated efforts with the Garden administration directly. Most of these visitors were tourists.

Pictures will also play a critical role in this research. Pictures of the plaques, offerings, and visitors engaging in health and wellbeing activities will further contextualize the findings of this research. Pictures were important to catalog offering types and location information. While performing preliminary field research I noticed that certain types of offerings were left on specific statues around the Garden, and therefore knew that taking photos of the offerings and where these were left on the premises may lead to uncovering specific beliefs and patterns. To

document the item and location I usually took a picture of the item followed by the location which often was a Buddhist statue. If I could tell where the item was left based on the object's photo, I would simply use that image for both offering type and location. <mark>These pictures will be a valuable means for triangulation during data analysis.</mark>

The purpose to collect these multiple forms of data was not only to answer the central and subquestions but also contextualized visitor experiences and perceptions of the Garden as a therapeutic location. These data collection techniques were useful in analyzing the Garden through a multitude of perspectives. Furthermore, using three or more forms of data provided triangulation, which will be discussed in (<mark>SECT 4…</mark>)

4.6 Validity and Reliability

Qualitative methods rely on trustworthiness of the data through its potential for transferability. Transferability requires accuracy and verification. Accuracy in qualitative methods occurs through the precise transcription of interviews, field notes, and any other qualitative data used for analysis. Transcriptions must be transcribed word-for-word. Verification is using various forms of data to corroborate the findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Verification includes triangulation, spending prolonged periods of time at field site, integrating negative case data into the analysis process, noting researcher bias, member checking through participant feedback, collaborating with participants, using rich thick descriptions, external audits, and using peer review in debriefing (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

4.6.1 Transferability

Some qualitative researchers argue for generalizability especially in case study research but in general, qualitative research is not generalizable (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative researchers

must establish trustworthiness of their findings in order to determine transferability of findings to other similar populations or situations. Trustworthiness is derived of terms "…such as *credibility, authenticity, transferability, dependability, and confirmability* as "the naturalist's equivalents" for *internal validation, external validation, reliability,* and *objectivity* (Lincoln & Gruba, 1985, p. 300, as cited in Creswell, & Poth, 2018, p. 255). For any sort of transferability, there must be trustworthiness in the data. Even though these terms seem to be synonymous with quantitative terminology, it is important to define each term.

<u>Authenticity</u>: The research accurately portraying the meanings and experiences of the participants (Whittemore et al., 2001).

<u>Credibility</u>: Is how believable the results are from the participant's perspective.

<u>Dependability</u>: Is how likely the same results will occur if the study were to be completed twice on the same population.

<u>Confirmability</u>: Is the ability of the results from the research could be confirmed by other researchers.

For any qualitative research, trustworthiness is a vital part of the research findings to articulate. Establishing trustworthiness from numerous perspectives visitors exemplify and enact which include wide spectrums of belief and backgrounds, may at times, vary enough to register conflictive connotations. With visitors from differing ethnic backgrounds, religious beliefs and other personal ideals, these conflictive connotations should be expected.

4.6.2 Accuracy

Accuracy is integral to truthfulness of qualitative research findings for various reasons. First, accuracy is established through the methods employed in data collection and in data transformation. Second, to ensure accuracy in research, it is important to maintain objectivity while interviewing, during participant observation sessions, and in field note depictions. Objectivity as noted previously, focuses on the researcher's reflexivity. Third, data transformation is an integral aspect of accuracy as well. Data transformation is accurate when for example, interviews are transcribed word for word with extremely few transcription errors as well as being fully transcribed. It is also important to accurately portray the field site and individuals being interviewed. When accuracy occurs through appropriate data collection techniques, maintaining objectivity in each of these formats as well as accurate data transformation, the verification of the research outcomes becomes much more dependable.

4.6.3 Verification

It is important to note that verification is synonymous with qualitative validity. I used various verification strategies to check for accuracy of the data and subsequent findings. These strategies included triangulation, member checking, use of thick description in research findings, clarify researcher bias, explore negative or discrepant information, and I spent prolonged period of time at the research site.

Triangulation is a very important concept used in qualitative research (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Triangulation occurs when the researcher implements various sources, methods and theoretical frameworks to determine the verifiability to authenticate the accuracy of

the findings (Bryman, 2008; Creswell, 2014). Using various sources of data will allow for findings using one source to be cross referenced with other sources of data.

Member checking was implemented to determine accuracy. Member checking occurs when the researcher checks the initial findings from research with participants to determine their accuracy (Creswell, 2014). Member checking occurs after some initial analysis of the raw data when initial findings are extrapolated (Creswell, 2014). While it was difficult to maintain contact with transient visitors who live in other areas of the country, member checking will take place with the Garden abbot, Garden staff members, retreatants (as the researcher personally knows many of these individuals), and local community members who were previously interviewed for this research.

Use of thick description is not only an ethnographic tactic to describe situations, themes, and participants but also as a method to verify research findings. By offering various perspectives pertaining to the research along with providing detailed descriptions of the research site, the results are far richer and more realistic (Creswell, 2014). In many ways, a thick and rich description is a means to generalize within the research study itself (Micheelsen & Geertz, 2002).

One aspect of verification that is important for qualitative research is the positionality of the researcher. For this research, it is important to divulge my affiliation with the Garden as a longstanding Tibetan Buddhist practitioner, Sangha member, and volunteer. It is important for this researcher to be objective as possible and explore visitor responses for their significance, not what I as the researcher wanted to find. Visitor experiences and interpretations must remain prime and forefront whereas my experiences as a researcher should be muted as much as possible. Personal background personal which includes gender, culture, history and socioeconomic standing always plays a significant role in how the researcher perceive the world

(Creswell, 2014). As a researcher, I identify as a white male who has been a Tibetan Buddhist practitioner for 15 years and I view the Garden through a Tibetan Buddhist perspective. As a researcher, I endeavor to see the landscape through visitors' perspectives which included those who generally lack potentially even the basic knowledge of Tibetan Buddhism or even Buddhism in general. While my background shapes my findings, being reflexive allows me to be aware of other visitors' positionalities and can focus on reframing the findings to the visitors' perspectives simply with awareness.

Another verification strategy is to present negative or discrepant information that may conflict are important to illuminate as a part of the process. To not represent discrepant information and analyzing like all other data, it would be a disservice to research. Part of this is due to most organizations, including cultural heritage and therapeutic landscapes, do have conflicting points of view from participants inside as well as outside the cultural framework. Including contrasting views, makes the research more credible and thus increases the validity of the research (Creswell, 2014).

Spending prolonged period of time at the research site also assists in understanding the phenomena taking place at the location (Creswell, 2014). This is one of the hallmarks of ethnographic research. It is also a primary strategy to gathering enough data to develop a rich and thick description. To date, the researcher has spent the last two summers exploring the site and communicating with visitors from all backgrounds. By spending more time interacting with participants, the more accurate the findings will be as more data is gathered (Creswell, 2014).

Verification is a critical aspect of qualitative research. The importance of gathering different types of data is quite evident as it allows for triangulation and the inclusion of differing

points of view to be integrated into the research findings. Verification also allows the researcher to disclose his/her/other position and beliefs that may shape the synthesis process.

4.7 Potential Researcher Bias and Outcomes

As a researcher it is important to list how my own participation and perspective may have influenced interview outcomes. I actively practice Tibetan Buddhism with the main teachers at the Garden. Over the years, I have attended numerous retreats and have partaken in various ceremonies on a regular basis. I see the Garden through a Tibetan Buddhist lens and understand the symbolism on a deeper level than most tourists. As a volunteer working on location while performing field research, visitors generally interacted with me as a representative of the organization. These interactions potentially influenced visitor responses.

Additionally, many participants I interviewed were also members of the organization that I have known for many years. Because they knew me as a Tibetan Buddhist practitioner, there responses were potentially focused on our shared interest instead of other important aspects of the Garden. The data I accumulated from retreatants was also beneficial because of our shared backgrounds. The data was rich and represented perspective regarding the Garden and the location that never occurred to me. For that reason, I am thankful for our shared background, but I am cautious that it led to findings dominated by the Tibetan Buddhist perspective.

As previously noted, reflexivity was important for me to check the assumptions I made on a frequent basis. While I am sure these consistent reflections helped me distance my personal interests from the data collection and data analysis process, it should be noted that my perspective was the lens used to carry out this research. The data, data analysis and the

discussion potentially favor the Tibetan Buddhist worldview despite my efforts to maintain objectivity.

4.8 Data Analysis

Data were obtained while performing field visits approximately five days per week from May 2022 until October 2022. During these visits to the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas (Garden hereafter) I interviewed retreatants, pilgrims, Tibetan Buddhist teachers, and tourists as well as visitors searching for healing by visiting the Garden and working with the Tibetan Buddhist Rinpoches. 50 Participants responded to the semi-structured interview. Three teachers were also informally interviewed.

Semi Structured Interview Participant List	
Participant Type	Number of Participants per Category
Health Seeking Visitors	4
Retreatants	14
Tourists	13
Volunteers or Volunteer Residents	17

Himalayan Visitors/Pilgrims	**2**
Total Interviewed participants	**50**

Other means of gathering data occurred through taking photos of objects people left behind which included toys, rocks, semi-precious stones, letters, photos, traditional Tibetan offerings, and potentially dangerous offerings including tobacco, knives, and bullets. Another significant portion of data collection was through observing visitors. Field notes regarding interaction with visitors, reactions to site interactions or social interactions, important events related to my field research, and epiphanies regarding research were recorded for data analysis.

I used NVIVO R1.7 to analyze all data. A total of three cycles in NVIVO was necessary to develop well defined themes that were unveiled through the coding process. Memoing was used start the coding process during the first cycle. I read and reread interview transcriptions various times and often critiqued similarities and differences between interview types and responses. Through this process certain phrases and sentiments began to emerge as consistent ideas which then became my initial codes. I purposefully began coding with only a few codes which is known as lean coding and then added to the coding list only when necessary (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The first cycle was used to develop codes. To ensure intercoder reliability, which is the ability to maintain coding consistency over time (Creswell & Poth, 2018), I developed a definition scheme that I implemented when coding. I was also very reflexive in the process, often personally noting any changes in how I coded from one week to the next and overtime in general. With any change to the definition, or a deviation over time to the coding process, I went back through and recoded all previously coded passages to ensure consistency.

During the second NVIVO cycle, I decontextualized the data by reviewing responses question by question instead of reviewing it as standalone interviews. During this second cycle through, I began combining codes when it became apparent that certain codes were inherently linked. These overarching codes often became themes used for data description.

The third cycle was a review of emergent themes and to categorize any remaining codes into bounded themes used in Chapter five: Results. These themes were implemented to answer the three subquestions, which were then applied to answer the central question. Themes that were generated encompassed all data including interview transcripts, field notes, memos, and pictures.

4.9 Summary

This methodology chapter essentially outlined the type of research strategy I employed to articulate and answer the three subquestions and central question through a qualitative ethnographic lens. Using an informant to assist in locating potential interview participants was an important part of the process. Conveying the target population and the purposeful sampling strategy was important as it helped define who should be interviewed. While interviewing was an important part of the overall process, participant observations at the Garden was an important dynamic which often confirmed participants' ideas and concepts. Pictures were used to categorize objects left on location as well as identified statues integral to donor activities. Field notes and informal interviews were important to document visitor-site interactions as well as register research epiphanies and potential areas of data exploration. Data were analyzed using NVIVO R1.7. All data were open coded during the first data cycle. The second data cycle was decontextualized where instead of focusing on one interview at a time, I reviewed data question by question for each interview to revise codes and develop themes. The third cycle focused on combining any remaining codes into themes.

Chapter Five:

Results

This results chapter reviews the findings obtained from the initial qualitative analysis process. The focus of this chapter is to disseminate the findings organized by the three subquestions. Then these findings are applied to the central question.

5.1 Subquestion One Results

The first subquestion focused on affective responses generated through visitor-site interactions and if these were integral to health and wellbeing outcomes. This subquestion posited: How do affective responses emerging from interacting with a cultural heritage site influence the visitors' health and wellbeing at the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas? To adequately address this subquestion this section reviews how participants defined health and wellbeing, the cause and types of affective responses generated through visitor-site interactions, and visitors' perceived health and wellbeing outcomes.

5.1.1 Health and Wellbeing Definition

To answer this subquestion, I analyzed interview responses, informal interviews and interactions, participant observation, and fieldnotes. A foundational part of this analysis used a health and wellbeing definition provided by interview participants. Health and wellbeing were perceived as an integrative process where mind, body, and spirit were important. Some participants used the term "balanced," but in most instances what I gathered was that they were describing each part of health (physical, mental, social, and spiritual) as being as important as the others, and therefore, appeared to be an integrative approach rather than one based on balance.

On occasion, participants indicated, "it is a balance within yourself and if things are out of balance that's why you can become sick" (Health Visitor 2).

Two participants mentioned that it entailed the ability to carry out activities in life without any physical, mental, or spiritual hindrance. One person mentioned being fully functioning in life's endeavors was considered healthy. There were a few participants that mentioned mental health was considered the most important part of health as an individual's mental state could mitigate any physical hindrance that cropped into their lives. These participants mentioned that our physical nature is impermanent, and our physical health will degrade sooner or later anyway. Having a positive mental health outlook helped them navigate this issue if it arose. Each definition far exceeded the antiquated concept of health which was simply the absence of disease (Brown & Barrett, 2010). Most participants did not differentiate wellbeing from health except on a few occasions where participants listed wellbeing as a sense of peace and calm. Each definition articulated did not negate any other personal definition of health and wellbeing, at times some participants prioritized certain types of health and wellbeing over others. While only a few participants mentioned the importance of social health, it should be included as this research has demonstrated its importance in health and wellbeing outcomes (this is described later in this 5.1 Subquestion One Results). The general health and wellbeing definition offered by participants was defined as the person's ability to perform physically, mentally, and spiritually with optimal outcomes while maintaining a sense of calm and ease.

While nearly all participants would agree with this definition of health and wellbeing, many participants believed agency, or the ability to purposefully engage in activities within his/her/other position in a culture and society, was a key component for health and wellbeing outcomes. Agency, in terms of health and wellbeing, was the participant's ability to carry out

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specific actions that contributed to his/her/their health and wellbeing. These actions included eating healthy, physical exercise, maintaining a positive mental attitude, and avoiding anything that negatively impacted health and wellbeing.

5.1.2 Natural Environment

A significant theme found through this research was the Natural Environment (Gesler, 2003). The Natural Environment was considered a significant component attributing to the overall therapeutic qualities of the therapeutic landscape. 52% of participants noted that the scenic area surrounding the Garden, especially the ring of mountains surrounding the valley, felt therapeutic, while others noted the pond area (10%), and the surrounding farmland (4%). As Retreatant 1 noted, "I find the structure of the Garden therapeutic, the Yumchenmo statue and the spoked wheel with the 1,000 Buddhas on it…I find that therapeutic in the way that it's nestled in the valley and the surrounding hills. I find that moving."

5.1.3 Built Environment

The Built Environment was perceived positively by the majority of visitors (Gesler, 2003). 56% of participants indicated the importance of the built landscape was a key aspect of the therapeutic landscape. Some responses indicated the symmetrical nature of the main eight-spoked wheel on which the Buddhas and stupas reside (also known as the mandala area) was perceived as beautiful and organized.

Other visitors believed that being in the presence of these Buddhas and stupas, constructed using traditional techniques, including Tsogchings that activated or given life to the statues, was beneficial. As Volunteer 8 expressed, "we actually get to sit there and listen to Rinpoche talk about what's inside all of these statues. And I think it's just knowing there's relics

from all these different times [from] great practitioners that existed…I feel their energy." At one

extreme, visitors believed statues had agency and blessed visitors strolling along the Garden

paths. Most visitors noted the statues were therapeutic because of the repetition, brilliant white

color (a symbol for purity), and because the Buddha statues were smiling.
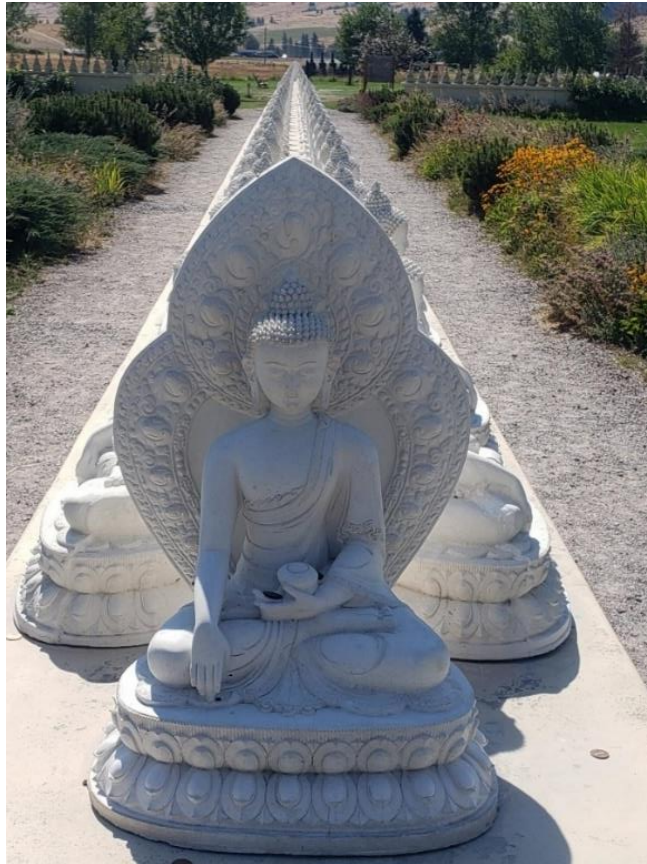
Figure 5-0-1 Spoke of Repeating Buddhas back-to-back in two rows.

Health Visitor 3 noted, "There is something about the way it is designed. I am sure there is

symbolism, but I think that a lot of people…find that going in a big circle and the repeated

themes like the stupas and so on and the symmetry and the directions. The way it's placed, it is

kind of [like] looking at art. You know it immediately transforms you." Another visitor noted

that the structure of the Garden influenced the mind by the way it was constructed. From this

participant's perspective, the structure itself helped for visitors confront their underlying

assumptions through exploring the Garden directly. Volunteer 12 noted:

> I think it opens people up to larger aspects of themselves. In other words, I think it's sort
> of almost ego crushing, you know, just because it doesn't invite it out. So I think most
> people will go through a period of really peace, you know, as they just their mind tries to
> grasp the structures and the space and the shapes. Yeah, I think, definitely let them get
> out of their own way for a little while. I think that's part of the beauty of the whole thing.

This participant viewed the Garden from a Tibetan Buddhist philosophical lens where the main

point of the religion was to confront the ego and transform the mind.

5.1.2 Positive Affective Responses

The next theme included codes and subcodes organized as Positive Affective Responses

(50 interviews, 277 references). Most affective responses were indicative of a positive overall

garden experience, and even promoted overall health and wellbeing in some patients. I defined

Positive Affective Responses as a feeling or sensation that enhanced the participants' overall

Garden experience and which may have had direct positive mental health, physical health, and/or

spiritual health outcomes.

Five types of positive responses were identified including: 1) Calming/Grounding

Affective Responses (49 interviews, 155 references), 2) Uplifting or Magnetizing Affective

Responses (45, interviews, 83 references), and 3) Affective Responses Facilitating Positive

Health (26 interviews, 39 references), and Supernatural or Liminal Space Sensations (26 interviews, 46 references).

Supernatural or Liminal Space Sensations contained an important code called Positive Garden Energy influence (20 interviews, 30 references), Positive Energy Influence was defined as the belief the Garden has its own energy that visitors sensed or interacted with that facilitated a positive visitor experience. Participant Health Visitor 2 expressed the Garden energy sensation as "I just feel…this place has definitely…a lot of…very positive energy. [It has] a lot of healing energy. I want to say like it has, just kind of helps you like look internally." This concept demonstrated the belief that the Garden has energy which was accessed through direct site interaction.

Calming and Grounding Affective Responses were defined as responses that indicated a calming, grounding experience and even a break from stressful work/family responsibilities. 95% of participants interviewed indicated that the garden has some sort of calming effect induced through site interaction. As Retreatant 6 noted, "I just feel the location alone does something you know, to your mind and your nervous system and just allows everything to really calm down…This is…what I know, of this area, but I just think it's very special." Over half of participants indicated that this affective response or sense of calm, and peaceful sensation was attributed with facilitating health and wellbeing. As Retreatant 2 noted, "[I] feel much better like in my head. My anxiety levels are way less. I do feel like I can breathe a lot better and that was huge for me." One key component of this health and wellbeing facilitation was participants became introspective of the environment around them. Through this process, participants felt a health and wellbeing outcome.

Participants frequently mentioned having positive feelings and sensations from their Garden experience in general. Some included an energetic sensation (40%), joyfulness seeing others exploring the Garden (12%), and being inspired (22%). Retreatants indicated they were happy or joyful to partake in a retreat to deepen their spiritual practice. For example, Retreatant 11 commented, "I usually feel really inspired, really tired, really connected…connected to the practice. Yeah, inspired to practice more." Other participants who indicated happy and joyful sensations were due to the enjoyment seeing other visitors experiencing the Garden. Visitor 3 explained, "It makes my little soul happy...Making your soul happy. And yeah, I don't know it just it just lights me up inside."

Another Positive Affective Response discovered through data analysis was Positive Affect or Magnetizing Energy. This affective response was the most positive where participants demonstrated pure enjoyment or felt a burst of energy. Retreatant 12 expressed:

> I just feel like it's been one of the biggest boons to my life as far as value that…cannot possibly be measured or put into words. Okay, transformative…One of those things like falling in love and then having somebody for 50 years in your life or, you know, winning the lottery or whatever it is that people think are these big life changing things. Having a baby. Finishing your PhD life [type of life] changing things. I think being involved with the garden is one of those things.

Retreatant 12 has volunteered at the Garden for many years, because the Garden had significantly contributed to her life in a positively transformative way. While most other participants did not declare having such an awesome affective response and history with the Garden, as Retreatant 12's experience, they expressed feeling gratitude and enjoyment. For example, Volunteer 5 reflected, "I just felt like it's really grounding and…your heart just feels good when you are there, your heart and your soul feels good."

A different type of Positive Affective Response called Supernatural or Liminal Space Sensations were an important part of the affective-health dynamic. An interesting aspect of this affective response was based on the authenticity of the location. When a group of Tibetans visited, they questioned the authenticity of the statues and whether they were prepared in accordance with Tibetan Buddhist rituals. When they discovered the Buddhas and stupas were consecrated, thus given life through implanting Tsogchings and performing the appropriate rituals, they accepted the site as authentic and sacred.

Participants expressed they felt the sacredness emanating from the entire area. Feeling the sacred energy strongly impacted the participants to elicit positive affective sensations. This emanating energy seemed to restore health and wellbeing through the radiation of spiritual energy. Participants noted was the fact that the Garden seemed to radiate peace and divine energy with which they were in tune. As one participant noted, "I just feel like this place…definitely has a lot of like very positive energy. A lot of healing energy" (Participant Health Visitor 2). From this perspective, various participants felt the Garden had a healing energy that was accessible and positively impactful. Some participants felt they could even capture this spiritual energy. One visitor brought Buddhist statues (see figure 5-2) and placed them alongside Shakyamuni Buddha for an entire weekend. These statues were supposed to absorb the Garden energy so he could take it home with him.

Figure 5-0-2 Guan Yin and Amitabha Buddha statues absorbing energy from the Garden.

Other participants felt the Supernatural or Liminal Space Sensations were profound. Volunteer 11 expressed, "my health and wellbeing is essentially what I feel right. And so the impact that the activation of the Garden gives me is positive and clear…it kind of brings a soft reminder to be diligent about taking care of myself." The importance of Volunteer 6's response not only demonstrated how Supernatural or Liminal Space impacted him so much that he internalized these responses to actively pursue his own health and wellbeing.

Visitors also noted the social environment triggered important and profound affective responses that impacted health and wellbeing. Connecting with Sangha members, the teachers, or a random Garden visitor was impactful for various reasons. Participants dealing with traumatic life events, including the death of a loved one, often desired to connect socially with someone from the Garden was extremely important. I have had many encounters where visitors mentioned

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that they lost a loved one, or that they requested help from one of the teachers. All these people were purposefully seeking some sort of help. When they felt that we were helping them address their needs by either putting up prayer flags for their deceased relative or working with them to address their depression, they usually exhibited a sense of relief which was categorized into the Calming and Grounding Affective Responses. This type of scene played out over and over on a semi-frequent basis.

Working with and partaking in practices and retreats with retreatants, local practitioners, or with residential/seasonal volunteers were incredible experiences that illuminated many ideas an beliefs relevant to this dissertation topic. Retreats lasted from one week to a month, Because of consistent interaction with other retreatants during this time period, it was common to form social connections. These relationships developed and became strong friendships. Part of this was due to sharing a religious philosophy. This also occurred because they understood the practices and felt a shared connection through this commonality.

This concept was accentuated during onsite ritual practices. Inevitably, a few visitors entered the pavilion during practice to observe a Tibetan Buddhist ritual in person. These rituals consisted of prayer recitations and food offerings that incorporate the Chöd practice. This practice required practitioners to visualize their body being sloughed off and forcing the mind-stream (a somewhat similar to a human spirit in the Judeo-Christian religions) that then transformed into a semi-wrathful deity. We then chop off the top part of the skull and use it as an offering bowl. The imagined sluffed off corpse was then finely chopped up and put into the skull offering bowl which then turned into divine nectar. The divine nectar was offered to all the Buddhas, the local deities, and even demons in whom we were karmically indebted. This practice's purpose was to free practitioners from being attached to their own bodies. When

visitors read through texts with us, they often look very puzzled and usually leave before the practice is over. It was possible visitors perceived the practice as a deranged body mutilation to appease celestial beings and even demons, but they lack the understanding of its purpose: to free practitioners from attachment to their bodies. Because practitioners engaged in practices together with a coherent understanding of their significance, an unspoken sense of comradery amongst developed themselves.

Sangha members were specifically instructed about the practice significance and application as a remedy to combat ignorance. Because of this shared understanding, practices were inclusive amongst Buddhist practitioners. This shared understanding formed very powerful social connections which were inclusive through practicing together on a regular basis. These connections encouraged practitioners to maintain their practices even after the retreat ended and they returned home.

Participant affective responses followed similar patterns regarding the symbolic environment as the social environment. The importance of the symbolic environment was largely dependent on participants' beliefs and understanding of their representations. With a lack of signage detailing pertinent information such as the symbolism engendered by each statue (this included clothing, expression, jewelry, and hand mudras) participants decided for themselves the significance of the statues.

Various visitors used the site for specific health and wellbeing exercises. Visitors performed cleansing rituals using both sage and sweetgrass. I believed these practices used at the Garden have Native American origins. While some online Tibetan Buddhist shops do claim the use of sage as a part of Tibetan Buddhist tradition, it may have been adopted from Native American religious ceremonies that regularly use sage as a cleansing agent. The Garden shop

also sold white sage which may have reinforced its use. The implementation of health and healing rituals based on cleansing has become a regular Garden experience enacted as a personal ceremony. For these visitors, the Garden was a location to heal through cleansing.

Other visitors identified the location as a memorial space for deceased family members or friends. This became a regular occurrence through official means such as donating a Buddha or stupa in the deceased person's name, or unofficially through random offerings which included obituaries, memorial programs, or letters written to the deceased. Both impacted subsequent visitors. Overall, upon seeing these messages, most participants felt Positive Affective Responses.

Safety as an occasionally discussed Positive Affective Response subtheme was a significant factor for visitors-site outcomes and the ability to perform personal rituals on site. 10% of participants expressed that they felt safe while at the Garden. As Volunteer 10 explained, "safe and completely at peace in the world…just felt like it's really grounding and just your heart just feels good when you are there, your heart and your soul feels good." Safety was a precursor for the establishment of a therapeutic landscape. While only a few participants mentioned the importance of safety in their response, it was a safe location where participants felt that they could be themselves without any negative connotations from other visitors. By feeling safe visitors were able to explore the Garden without feeling guarded.

5.1.3 Negative and Neutral Affective Responses

Like Positive Affective Responses, Negative and Neutral Affective Responses also occurred; however, these were the exception, not the norm. There were six negative affective responses. Negative Affective Responses were negative feelings or sensations that detracted from participant's overall Garden experience. Most Negative Affective Responses regarded

offerings perceived as inappropriate. Another Negative Affective Response type was stress related and only reported by two long-term volunteers. The last Negative Affective Response type listed were reactions to how other visitors were engaging with the site.

Offerings left by other often induced a Negative Affective Response. One example included official Garden signage requesting visitors to refrain from leaving rocks on any Garden statues. Even with these signs strategically placed throughout the Garden, visitors still offered rocks and semi-precious stones on practically every statue onsite. Some visitors even offered gravel from the walking paths. Participants expressed disappointment at their touring counterparts thinking it was disrespectful given the obvious prohibitive Garden signage. Participants knew the gravel and other rocks had to be cleared off by staff. Participants felt it was an additional and avoidable burden on staff. Furthermore, some visitors felt that the offered plastic trinkets were poor decisions as plastic never degraded like natural materials but rather break down into microplastic particles. These participants were concerned about potential negative environmental impacts.

Some long-term volunteers also indicated a type of Negative Affective Response that impacted them to the point where they now visit the Garden infrequently. As Retreatant 12, explained, "my stress level goes up quite a bit…from day one I felt overwhelmingly compelled to help the progress and work of the garden. Even at the expense of my own health." Her reaction perfectly explained how a few other long-term volunteers felt (myself included). They stressed about the necessary work getting done and the location in general.

These latter Negative Affective Response I discovered through participant observation while working as a volunteer. Visitors quite frequently broke Garden rules which were occasionally observed by volunteer staff. Frequently, volunteers felt compelled to confront rule

breakers, but often felt awkward or embarrassed in these encounters. Even though they felt that way, volunteers occasionally confronted visitor engaging in three inappropriate activities including visitors walking their dogs inside the Mandala space, smoking cigarettes or marijuana and stealing offerings.

Most visitors tour the Garden from May through September. Because temperatures occasionally exceeded 100°F, it could spell potential danger for animals left in the cars even with windows cracked open. Some visitors pretended to miss signs indicating dogs were prohibited and walked dogs around the area anyway. Since the excessive heat could prove to be lethal for animals left in cars, volunteers gave visitors permission to walk their dog on property but reiterated the desire to keep their dog outside of the central mandala area around Yumchenmo. Most visitors were thankful and gladly followed the volunteer's instructions. Unfortunately, some visitors treated the Garden as a public park and disregarded the volunteer's requests.

Another Negative Affective Response regularly observed was smoking on the premises. Apparently, a few teens in the area wanted to come to the Garden to smoke marijuana as a mood enhancer for their Garden experience. Both Khen Rinpoche and Rinpoche have voiced their concerns regarding Marijuana and tobacco use on the property. According to them, smoke from either substance blocked the channels in the body which created an imbalance. For this reason, they erected signs indicating no smoking. Even with these signs, various tourists smoked joints on the property. This annoyed most volunteers as signs clearly indicated no smoking on the premises.

The last categorized Negative Affective Response regarded the theft of offerings and donations. Various parties stole donations from donation boxes by cutting off locks or taking money left on one of the Buddhas or stupas. Volunteers attempted to combat theft but it proved

to be emotionally taxing leaving them in a hypervigilant state. Sadly, the volunteers were

stressed as they felt the theft incidents were increasing. The Garden Administration finally

purchased theft resistant donation boxes and security cameras, which inhibited theft activity and

provided us with a sense of relief.

Besides Negative Affective Responses, there were Neutral Affective Responses that were

not considered negative or positive. These responses were unlikely to have any negative or

positive health and wellbeing outcomes. Each Neutral Affective Responses were in relation to

donated plaque messages inscribed with mainly messages for family, friends, and important

Buddhist teachers elicited no Positive, nor Negative Affective Responses from other visitors.

One participant noted, "I don't have any feeling against it. It's just that it's sort of Yeah, I just

kind of just don't, think that having my name on anything is gonna…or a name on anything is

going to change much of anything" (Volunteer 12). While both the Negative and Neutral

Affective Responses did occur from time to time, most participants viewed the garden positively.

5.2 Subquestion Two Results

Subquestion two analyzed data from interviews, participant observations, photos of

offerings, and memoing. The second subquestion inquiry stated: How are visitors' personal

health and wellbeing beliefs formative in the construction of a therapeutic landscape where no

official health and wellbeing attributes are articulated by site management? The findings specify

themes associated with these beliefs and their influence on subsequent visitors.

5.2.1 Authenticity

While informally interviewing Khen Rinpoche, about my research, we discussed

authenticity and how this was important for Tibetans and other Himalayan peoples who practiced

Tibetan Buddhism. Authenticity was important for Tibetans and other Himalayan peoples coming to the Garden for pilgrimage. Authenticity was not based on the antiquity of the Garden, as it was a relatively new pilgrimage site. It occurred through the consecration of Tibetan Buddhist statues with appropriate written mantras, relics, and substances in the form of tsogching and because Rinpoche consecrated the Garden grounds. To Himalayan pilgrims Rinpoche engendered the same enlightened qualities as both Guru Rinpoche and the historical Buddha (Himalayan Participant 1). The perceived it as authentic because Rinpoche constructed the Garden, and considered just as important as all the historical pilgrimage locations in Asia. In fact, Rinpoche brought some exceptionally rare relics from Asia that he placed inside Yumchenmo, which some rinpoches (rinpoche means precious teacher and so many teachers were also called rinpoche) thought was inappropriate as only a finite number of exceptional relics exist in Asian countries. Rinpoche had the foresight to know the Garden would become a cultural heritage site and pilgrimage location not only for Tibetans and other Himalayan peoples, but for Buddhists from every corner of the world. Since that time, the teachers who rebuked him later understood his intuition as the Garden has become a pilgrimage for Buddhists (personal conversations with Tibetan Buddhist Translator, 2022) Perceiving the Garden as authentic has allowed Tibetans and other Himalayan peoples to experience the location as a pilgrimage location that is just as important as the ones in Asia.

5.2.2 Life Transitions

An important personal belief frequently enacted at the Garden was what I called Life Transitions. Life Transitions were purposeful actions visitors initiated to rid themselves of a negative habit or to transform a negative circumstance in his/her/their life into something more positive. Some participants indicated they were facing major crossroads in their lives and were

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actively improving their lives through visiting the Garden. Some participants became volunteers who took up residency at the Garden because of the challenges they were facing changes in their lives. When I first began performing research at the Garden two of the five resident volunteers living onsite had been laid off from their professional positions. They came to the Garden to explore spirituality and to mentally regroup after their significant life-changing complication.

Other visitors came for similar reasons. During the COVID-19 pandemic, I ran across one woman with three children who stated visiting the Garden on a daily basis. I regularly ran into her while she was sitting near the pond or near Yumchenmo. Each evening she stayed until closing and was always one of the last ones to leave. After a few days, she began opening up to me about how she desperately wanted to start practicing Buddhism and kept mentioning the Garden provided a nice break away from home. I was under the impression that she was avoiding some sort of situation, whether that was a relationship that went sour, a death of a loved one, or some other reason was not clear to me[1]. She had a formal interview with the Abbot and even came to a few potluck dinners. In the end, he suggested she start practicing with a group we knew of in her community of residence. Visiting the Garden during these life-challenging events was a means to access the spiritual qualities of the location and transform their lives through creating a new personal liminality or rebirth.

One perception participants had regarding the Garden was its importance in transforming negative outcomes in their lives into something more positive. One of the first Dharma talks I

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[1] I had not received the IRB approval to conduct interviews yet, so I was unable to find out the exact reason why she was out there.

partook in with Khen Rinpoche was a talk on transforming negativities into joy and happiness. These teachings used the symbol of a peacock to illustrate the capacity of transformation because they consume poisonous plants and turn them into brilliant plumage. The basis of the talk rested upon the belief that peacocks that ate a certain type of poisonous plants would transform the poisons into colorful plumage. This became an analogy for the Buddha's teachings that with a positive mental mind frame we could endure difficult circumstances and use them as a meditative focus to help progress along the Buddhist path. Various participants, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist alike, mentioned the importance of dealing with difficulties in their lives and working through them as a process. As Health Visitor 2 believed:

> I think it helps us release things that no longer serve us, and in doing so I think it opens you up more for like the good in life the good energy and just like a lot of positive thinking and one of the quotes that also said something like "when you hold grudges against people…or the holding the coal" for instance. Like holding that negativity in only hurts you. That's something I did a while ago where I cleansed a lot of that, but I do think that you know a lot of people might get that here as well where it is just kind of letting go, and I think that allows your body and the energy within your body to flow more naturally and therefore you'll be healthier.

Another Life Transition example indicated by Health Visitor 1 who was both depressed and had nerve damage that negatively impacted her ability to perform daily tasks. From her perspective, she was trying to find health and healing remedies, including actively visiting the Garden, to find relief from her life's maladies. She wanted to learn how to deal with these issues so she could not only benefit her own life but also benefit other people who had similar circumstances. It was important for her to transform her suffering into a sense of healing.

Some Life Transitions were ritual activities aimed at relinquishing negative lifestyle choices including addiction. While I did not personally interview anyone dealing with addiction, participants mentioned that the "negative offerings" were often symbols of dealing with addition

issues and would fit in this category. These offerings included alcohol, bullets, and even syringes. Participa thought that these visitors were offering their sadness. Visitors would offer many of these items as a type of ritual indicating that they were in the process of transforming their lives. The belief that the Garden was an appropriate location where visitors took the object of their pain and suffering into a more positive outcome.

Various offerings left on sight were also indicators of Life Transitions and were confirmed through a long-term volunteer. These offerings were what I deemed negative offerings and were mainly addictive substances including alcohol and drug paraphernalia. Volunteer 12 explained, "I've seen syringes, and cigarette butts as well as you know, sage and money hairbows whatever. So I think that people offer their sadness they offer their whatever they have on them, they often want to make a connection. So they're making it off. And I feel that it doesn't really matter. And that's really…it's a beautiful thing." Negative offerings seemed to reaffirm the location was for Life Transitions where visitors suffering from addictive behaviors occasionally

left offerings in the form of the addiction to symbolize their addictive dissatisfaction and their attempt to at its cessation.

Figure 5-0-3 Seltzer Alcohol Offering

Besides visitors using the Garden as a liminal space, they used it as a for deceased loved ones. A significant portion of stupas were dedicated to the dead. Most dedications listed the name of the person with a phrase such as "In Memory of…", or "…We will love you forever." Other plaques memorializing friends and family members stated the person's name with the birth and death dates. Other visitors brought obituaries, photos of the deceased, and even cards with touching epitaphs. Some visitors brought objects which have found a permanent home at the

Garden. Some of these objects are obviously not meant as offerings in remembrance of the

deceased. Volunteer 14 explained some visitors purchased tiny Buddha statues or malas from the

Garden gift store as offerings for the deceased. With the intent to place it somewhere in the

Figure 5-0-4 Small plastic memorial epitaph

Garden. By offering an object that is not easily discernible as an offering for the deceased, the

intention remained private for the visitor making the offering.

Figure 5-0-5 Prayer flags used to send prayers into the world.

On occasion, visitors came to the Garden wanting to do something in memory of a family member or friend who died, but they did not know what, how, or even if it was Possible. During those occurrences, visitors inevitably communicated with Khen Rinpoche, or one of the volunteers. Most of the time, Garden staff suggested that they purchase prayer flags or sponsor a stupa in their loved one's name. The Garden administration started to officially market hanging prayer flags for the deceased. This was partly due to the cost to replace them annually. People donated prayer flags in honor of their friend or family members. It was to market prayer flags based on cultural beliefs in their benefit for the deceased. As Khen Rinpoche explained prayer

flags were traditionally offered for the deceased in Tibet. Most family members offered prayer flags to someone who they knew was traveling to a sacred area. They asked them to take and hang prayer flags for a deceased family member. This was clearly a cultural tradition adaptation that they hoped to continue in diaspora. It also helped them generate some income to replace old worn-out prayer flags.

5.2.3 New Age Spiritualism and Interspiritual Practice

New age spiritual visitors were an interesting visitor subgroup that consistently came to the Garden for their own spiritual practices. New age spiritual visitors were people who embrace a shared core of social and religious values and have broken away from the capitalistic and Judeo-Christian values (*New Age Spirituality*, 2019). New age practitioners' main goals were attempts to induce positive psychological states (Charlton, 2006). New age visitors who came to the Garden for their own spirituality which mainly consisted of blending multiple religious rituals together including crystal energies, Native American rituals, Reiki, singing bowl baths, and shamanism.

Crystals were frequently offered throughout the Garden. I asked on visitor what importance crystals held and why they were offered. Her response indicated that these were offered for their beauty to share with others. A participant further expounded why crystals are offered:

> crystals and stones are like bones of the Earth, right rocks…across cultures…there's this beauty there's this purity gems. You know…I feel like there's this implicit honorific quality of crystals, gems, and beautiful rocks and things like that, you know. It's like this way to give when you might not have anything [else]. (Retreatant 5)

For Visitor 9 Crystals were used for health and healing specifically. He stated:

I think it has to do with a lot of the resurgence of like people finding…Faith in different crystal energies…I don't know if you've noticed that, but it's…putting your emotional and like spiritual thoughts…baggage into a physical object and releasing [it. It's] very symbolic and very therapeutic for a lot of people who may not be able to cope with their feelings in any other way.

In other words, there was a potential for visitors used crystals as a symbolic representation of their suffering which some offered to achieve some sort of health and wellbeing.

Some retreatants were also practicing Reiki masters and regularly offered their energy healing services to other retreatants. Reiki One visitor I interviewed practiced reiki as well. He expressed interesting concepts related to Tibetan Buddhism. According to this visitor, Reiki was a medical form that shared the same Buddhist lineage, so he celebrated the Buddha and his teachings.

An additional tradition retreatants and visitors engaged in was using Tibetan singing bowls to align patient's chakras which promoted health and wellbeing. One retreatant brough a singing bowl set used for healing sound baths to the Garden while he was on retreat. He offered to perform the healing sound baths on retreatants free of charge. It was his way of making an offering to fellow retreatants.

Many new age visitors dabbled in shamanism. One of the best examples I witnessed occurred right in front of Yumchenmo. A couple started burning sage and all I could see at first was the smoke and I even mentioned to them that there was no smoking on the property as I initially thought it came from a lit cigarette. As soon as I saw they were burning sage, I decided to quietly observe the practice. The male shaman started smudging the woman from head to toe going all around her body. A crowd began to materialize, probably due to curiosity of the practice in which shaman and his patient were engaging. They moved to the back side of

Yumchenmo to conceal themselves from the formed crowd. Still able to observe and hear them from a distance, I sat quietly paying attention to their every move and listening to what was audible. The male shaman instructed his patient to picture herself as a condor to see the world above. It seemed like he was helping her see life from a larger angle. They soon walked away to the north of the location to again find some solitude. At that point I stayed back as I did not want to hinder their practice. They kept smudging for about 10 more minutes before another group of people met them to explore the Garden together. These two visitors seemed like tourist shamans traveling from one cultural or spiritual site to another practicing along the way. Part of this perception was formed since they were driving in a sprinter van full of camping gear and other daily provisions for a long road trip.

Another new age practice that became a prominent part of the Garden was the integration of Native American spiritualism. Part of this was due to visitors showing their appreciation for the Native American tribal communities residing on the Flathead Reservation. Tobacco including cigarettes, was a common offering. The day Health Visitor 2 came to the Garden another visitor saw her crying and decided to help her by giving her tobacco so she could pay respects to Native Americans and their land by offering it. It was what he thought was appropriate for the situation.

Other Native American offerings typically included beads, Native American belt buckles, braided sweetgrass, chert, eagle feathers, kokopelli jewelry emblems, obsidian, sage, and even a medicinal bundle were found on site. It was quite possible that some visitors left these Native American items because of a reverence for their culture. There was also a possibility that visitors who left Native American offerings practiced one of their religions. Part of the reason why I believed this was the case was because some of the materials looked homemade. Some homemade examples included beaded work in the shape of a triangle or possibly a tipi (figure 5-

13) and a medicinal pouch with feathers sticking out (Figure 5-14). The beautiful beaded pouch

(figure 5-12) and tipi (figure 5-13) have significant value for Native Americans and other

indigenous communities have seen beading as a means to translate cultural knowledge as the

practice is intergenerational which may promote intergenerational healing and wellness (Ansloos

et al., 2022). The medicinal pouch with feathers (figure 5-14) and sage (figure 5-13) were used

for various Native American practices. Sage was used for centering and purifying oneself

(Lunham, n.d.).

Figure 5-0-6 Cigarette packs left at the Garden

Figure 5-0-7 Native American Beed Work

Figure 5-0-8 Sage Surrounding the King of Sages

Figure 5-0-9 Stamped NAC Tipi

Figure 5-0-10 Native American Bead Work form of a Star or Tipi

Figure 5-0-12 Native American Bundle, Feather, &

Flowers

Figure 5-0-11 Smoked Salmon and Starbucks Offering

While their offerings were considered typical Native American offerings, I have had various conversations with visitors, and volunteers who not only followed a the Tibetan Buddhist path, but also integrated Native American spiritual paths like the Native American Church. This was a common occurrence not only with Native American spiritualism but with various religions. The idea that religions could be practiced together was a common theme elicited from various interview participants. Various visitors combined Buddhism with Native American practices, as well as with Christianity, Judaism, and Hinduism. These Participants and visitors equated religions as equal or even interchangeable and were seen as signifying the same basic concepts. These concepts were broad categories including peace and compassion. While most religions shared significant overlapping concepts that focused on benefiting other people, other religious dynamics differed drastically. In fact, some participants and visitors seemed to combine incommensurable religious beliefs together despite their differences.

Visitors offered various religious symbols on a frequent basis at the Garden. According to participants, these offerings showed appreciation for the Garden even though the symbols were from another religion. They believed that visitors had so much devotion to their religion that they left those symbols to demonstrate their appreciation for the Garden even if they did not follow Buddhism themselves. While this seemed plausible, I often wondered if at least a handful of offerings belonging to other religious traditions were purposefully left as a symbol to invoke other visitors to believe that the represented religion was somehow more important than Tibetan Buddhism or to save the souls of people who are on the "wrong" religious path.

Some new age visitors anthropomorphized the supernatural or potentially even the paranormal world as they believed they had purposeful agency over their lives. While Health Visitor 3 visitor was at the extreme end of the new age continuum she was not alone in these

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beliefs. Health Visitor 2 had similar perspectives that were on the fringe of the continuum. She came to the Garden because of a sense of loss due to her sister moving from their home community to a city far away. During our interview she mentioned she was able to see energies emanating from animals, plants, and trees. She also anthropomorphized the universe stating that it would send messages, and "if you don't listen to the universe, she's going to keep sending you messages and the more and more you ignore her, the harder things get, and at some point, she will intervene." She felt she was guided to the Garden to contemplate her relationship with her sister and its inevitable change once she moved. She and many other people indicated similar beliefs that the universe and Mother Earth or Gaia was sentient and even dictated various aspects of our lives.

Some extreme new age visitors were even on the fringe of new age beliefs as they incorporated conspiracy theories and maintained beliefs that were scientifically disproven. One visitor came during a tsog practice[2] and expressed her desire to safeguard another sacred site. She believed she discovered a significant spiritual location that the United States government wanted covered up and potentially even destroyed. She stated adamantly that the site was purposefully constructed and adorned with megaliths, pictographs, and an eroded Buddha statue 60,000 years old. She believed the site probably has significance to Buddhists and other groups because of the perceived spiritual symbols strewn throughout the site. After the tsog she attempted to convince Rinpoche to claim the site has religious significance for Tibetan

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[2] Tsog, also known as ganachakra practice are practices that are held 2-3 times per month used to repair a practitioner's broken samaya through supplicating the guru, offering blessed food substances to the main teacher or lineage holder, and reaffirming our commitment to benefit all beings.

Buddhists. Her main goal was to have the site protected from potential destruction and to disseminate the religious significance of the supposed spiritual nexus.

Besides new age beliefs, many participants believed the Garden was the perfect location to enact their agency in pursuit of better health and wellbeing as they believed the Garden emanated positive energies throughout the entire Jocko Valley. Some participants believed the energy emanated from the relics of Tibetan Buddhist masters that Rinpoche put into various statues around the property. Some participants believed the Garden being situated on the Flathead Reservation and near some sacred Native American locations, also emanated positive energy. The energies emitted from the Garden and from the surrounding Native American cultural landscape were believed to culminate together creating substantial amount of energy that visitors felt and even healed.

Visitors believed the energy had calming qualities helping them relax and enjoy their Garden experience. Some participants anthropomorphized the Garden through its energetic activities. These participants believed the Garden sent energies to visitors and would manifested as whatever type of energy the visitor needed most. The belief that the Garden had these positive energies was one of the reasons why visitors chose to come to the location for health and wellbeing.

Many visitors engaged in these health and wellbeing activities at the Garden because of the perception that the location emanated positive energies. Many activities pertained to visitors' new age beliefs that they engaged in at the Garden as these actions helped align their chakras, cleansed negative energies, and transformed their lives through ritual. Some activities were healing bowl sound baths, shamanistic rituals, smudging, and yoga. The energy was believed capable of amplifying these activities and benefiting their overall health and wellbeing more than

if they engaged in these practices at home or in a park. The inclusive nature of the Garden also allowed visitors who did not follow mainstream religious beliefs or biomedical practices a safe space to engage in these activities without any judgment. Part of this perception was because they perceived other visitors as having similar world views.

5.2.4 Buddhist Education, Heritage, and Ritual

Another important personal belief theme was Tibetan Buddhist heritage, Education, and Ritual. This was an exceptionally common theme illustrated through the data analysis process. Tibetan Buddhist Heritage, Education and Ritual theme demonstrated that visitors, especially retreatants and Tibetans living in the United States, wanted to connect with authentic Tibetan Buddhist teachers, receive Tibetan Buddhist teachings, and learn about the rituals associated with the religion and culture.

Figure 5-0-13 Lavender Bouquet offered on a Buddha.

Figure 5-0-14 Katags Offered at Yumchenmo.

82% of Retreatants expressed the importance of practicing under authentic Tibetan Buddhist teachers and forming a student-teacher relationship. Retreatants came to the Garden to learn new practices and receive meditational instructions. The philosophy on which the Garden was constructed was through the Tibetan Buddhist lens. Whether correct or incorrect, visitors had preconceived notions about Tibetan Buddhism that permeated through the Garden experience. Some visitors and retreatants keenly understand the fundamental truth, according to Buddhist philosophy, that suffering was a prerequisite to achieve enlightenment. It was a critical prerequisite precisely because suffering led these to-be practitioners down the Buddhist path to eradicate suffering in theirs and others' lives. As Thich Nhat Hanh (1998, p. 3) emphasized, "for forty-five years, the Buddha said, over and over again, "I teach only suffering and the transformation of suffering."' Retreatants and visitors often identified the Garden as a location to transform their suffering. This was reinforced by Retreatant 9's response, "we are discovering this suffering and how can we actually get liberated…from the path. There's the Buddha's

teaching the past to get liberated from what is the cause of the suffering. We must know the suffering, the cause of suffering, and the past."

Various Tibetans and other Himalayan peoples have visited the location not as retreatants but as visitors connecting to their religion and even as pilgrims on a religious journey deepening or rekindling their spirituality. These pilgrims brought traditional offerings which included Buddhist statues incense, candles, flowers, food, other offerings that have symbolic Tibetan Buddhist meaning katags (white silk scarf that is traditionally offered to Tibetan Buddhist teachers or are left as offerings at holy sites).

Some participant tourists noted that they came to the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas to learn about Buddhism in general. They had a passing interest in Eastern religions and viewed the Garden as a facilitator to explore it further. Interestingly, one visitor decided to quit his summer job and became a Garden resident volunteer because of his onsite experiences. This person entered the Buddhist path through taking Buddhist refuge vows, a commitment to follow the ethical guiding principles[3] required to became a Buddhist. He entered this Buddhist because he felt a connection to the Buddhist teachings, retreats, and spending time with the Tibetan Buddhist teachers who guided him along the Buddhist path.

Some visitors perceived Buddhism as a peaceful religion, and through this perception, they experienced the Garden with a sense of gentleness. One encounter I had at the Garden was during an early morning in June. I found some dollar bills rolled up and placed in the crux of a Buddhas' hands. I gathered these bills up as they were likely to blow away as soon as the next

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[3] Buddhist lay refuge vows are the refraining from killing, stealing, ingesting intoxicants such as alcohol, sexual misconduct, and wrong speech (Rinpoche, 1999).

strong gust of wind coursed through the valley. I walked to the donation box near Yumchenmo where three visitors were taking in the sights. A man in the group was using the Donation box base as a footrest to tie his undone shoelaces. Upon seeing me walk up behind him, two women accompanying him were compelled to warn him that I wanted access to the donation box. As I was in no hurry, I waived my hand indicating no need to rush him. One of them said, "oh you're so peaceful and calm." From this experience, I gathered that there was an underlying preconceived notion that the site itself was calming, and everyone should act that way while in this location. These sorts of perceptions regarding how to act at the location seemed to be based on these preconceived notions of Buddhism.

5.3 Subquestion Three Results

The last subquestion focused on messaging symbols and whether these have any impact on the social environment. An integral part of the subquestion explored if these messaging symbols played a purposive role in the construction of a therapeutic landscape. This subquestion asked: How does visitor placement of health and wellbeing messaging symbols throughout the site impact the social environment of the therapeutic landscape at the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas?

5.3.1 Offering Location

Visitors were able to interpret the Garden's significance for themselves and in a sense were one of its many authors through offerings and messages left at the location perhaps because the Garden administration maintained an accepting narrative allowing participants from all ethnic and religious backgrounds to determine its significance through their own means. Subsequent visitors who happened upon these offerings were able to interpret their meaning and

significance. Location, type of offering, and intent were all deemed important parts of the offering process that could impact the social nature of the therapeutic landscape.

Offerings were regularly left on the main pathways throughout the Garden. Almost every large statue accumulated various types of offerings. Some statues accumulated more offerings than others and these included the large black stupas, the Zambhala mandala, Shakyamuni Buddha, Yumchenmo, and Nubchen Sangye. Each of these locations may have been significant locations for visitors to leave offerings for various reasons.

The eight great stupas lining the first part of the walkway represented important parts of the Buddha's life. These included 1) the Buddha's birth, 2) Buddha's enlightenment, 3) turning the wheel of the Dharma (teaching the Dharma), 4) the great miracle stupa, 5) descent from Tushita heaven[4], 6) reconciliation, 7) All-victorious stupa, and 8) Parinirvana (passing into Nirvana). Many visitors left offerings on each of these stupas. One offering seemed to correspond with a stupa which was the Parinirvana stupa. An obituary of a very young man the age of 21 was sitting on that stupa. Interestingly, this was not where the obituary resided originally. I first noticed it on the descent from Tushita heaven stupa. Both locations seemed to indicate a desire or hope that the imaged person to achieve peace or enlightenment at death.

The Zambhala mandala was the location that accumulated the most offerings when compared to all other locations on the property. This made sense as Zambhala is a deity that attracts spiritual and material wealth to devoted practitioners. In essence, this mandala is the

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[4] Tushita heaven is the heaven where all Buddhas are believed reside before taking their final rebirth as a human to achieve complete enlightenment (Bodhi, 2005).

Tibetan form of a wishing well where visitors left offerings at the location to accumulate some

sort of monetary or spiritual wealth in their lives. Interestingly, the Garden did not advertise that

the mandala was specifically for the attraction of wealth. Undoubtedly, various visitors who

made offerings at the Zambhala mandala knew its purpose leaving a wide variety of offerings

there including health and wellbeing iconography including crystals, lighters, notes, painted

rocks, pictures with epitaphs, sage, tobacco, and tobacco rolling papers.

Some offering locations appeared to indicate offering type or purpose were connected.

Some examples indicated accessing feminine and masculine energies was a prime intent for the

offering process. Yumchenmo, the second most popular offering location, was a prime example.

Over the course of the 2022 field season, a few letters written by women were left on

Yumchenmo's throne base. While I was able to only document a few of these letters, the authors'

intents were noticeable. Two letters specifically noted the authors' desire to embody feminine

enlightened qualities. One exemplified the reverence of a female divine energy:

> Divine mother, I come to you in deep humility and reverence. I want to express my pure
> gratitude and appreciation for all that you unconditionally give. Open my heart to receive
> and be all that you are. Make yourself known in all my senses and guide my action. Open
> me to receive and honor all that you are and need. I love you sweet mother, and I am so
> grateful and humbled that you love me. Help me and guide me to honor you by
> teaching/showing me how to honor and love myself and others. Open my heart. Nurture
> my heart, help me receive it. I love you. I love you. I love you. Your faithful daughter.

Yumchenmo represented the enlightened female form and hence was a probable reason why

these women left these letters in her care. These could be seen as attempts to access

Yumchenmo's feminine enlightened qualities. Accessing feminine enlightened qualities was also

portrayed during some retreats. Rinpoche occasionally referenced women retreatants with

dakini[5] or goddess qualities. Visitors wanted to connect with this feminine energy.

More masculine type offerings seemed to materialize around the pond area. The statues

around the pond were Buddhist masters in the Namchak lineage, which was purported to stem

directly from Guru Rinpoche, the Buddhist maser who brought Buddhism to Tibet (Pistono,

2014). The Nubchen Sangye Yeshe statue, one of Guru Rinpoche's heart disciples, accumulated

the majority of offerings left in the area. One participant was drawn to this large statue. He felt

the statue resonate with energy and even claimed it was alive in some sense. He thought this may

have been the reason why the statue received more donations than most other statues around the

pond. Another participant claimed he was the "badass with a dagger" (Health Visitor 2). His

resemblance as a warrior might have been part of the reason why visitors often left offerings

under his protection. Notably Nubchen Sangye Yeshe statue accumulated obsidian and a bullet

every now and then. Both could be seen as an important facet in the use of weapons.

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[5] "A *dakini* is a female *yogini* who has attained supreme accomplishments (*siddhi)*, and who may manifest as aa

guardian of the teachings, or as a fully enlightened wisdom goddess" (beer, 2003, p. 246).

Figure 5-0-15 Obsidian Donation Left on king Trisong Detsen

Shakyamuni Buddha was another area where many visitors would leave offerings. Part of the reason why Shakyamuni Buddha may have been seen as so important was the fact that he was the historical Buddha that taught the significance of the Buddhist path. At times there were piles of coins situated in his lap and on the base of his throne. On some of these occasions, the sheer number of offerings at Shakyamuni Buddha significantly outnumbered the rest of the offerings left on any of the other statues or Garden features. This indicated that visitors stopped there more frequently and had the intent to make offerings to him specifically.

The other area that seemed to receive offerings was around the prayer flag mound and the Sun and Moon Disc feature just beyond the prayer flag mound. The space around the prayer

flags and Sun and Moon Disc Garden were situated above the rest of the Garden which gave visitors periods of complete seclusion. This was also an area where remnants of rituals or personal practice were often found. Once I saw burnt sweetgrass, and in a different instance I came across the remnants of a plate of smoked salmon and a bottled Starbucks mocha drink (SEE Figure 5-11). The point here was that the location was secluded, which allowed visitors to leave offerings and/or perform some sort of ritual in privacy.

5.3.2 Social Environment

To better answer the third subquestion, a description of the social dynamics must be illustrated before focusing on the Symbolic Environment (Gesler, 2003). Like the other two environments, the social environment was an important for therapeutic landscape development for two reasons. The first was the importance of social diffusion and its impact on visitors; and the second was the importance of connecting socially at the garden whether the visitors were retreatants, tourists, people seeking health and wellbeing, or volunteers. The term social diffusion was borrowed from the diffusion of innovations model and was defined as the uncontrolled natural spread of concepts and ideas (Green et al., 2009). Social diffusion was a common occurrence at the Garden. It was the prime motivator for visitors to leave offerings throughout the location. As Volunteer 12 noted, "you know, people run across that [leaving offerings at] other places...That's what's done where you leave something like the locks on bridges, things like that. Okay, so I think people see that and they go, "Oh, okay. This is where I can contribute something.'"

Social diffusion was an important mechanism for visitors as it demonstrated they could offer whatever they wanted. This was illustrated when first-time visitors learned offering behavior through this process. A few participants interviewed mentioned that when visitors first

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came and saw offerings left at the Garden, they suddenly felt inspired to contribute something as

well. Quite often they had nothing to offer so their opportunity during their first visit went

unfulfilled. With the offering seed sown in visitors' minds, they purposefully bring something

meaningful to provide the next time they make the journey to the Garden. As one participant

observed this type of delayed social diffusion at work:

> He would come back, and he'd bring different special things…he brought a whole case of smart water [to] put it in different places…You know he brought candles, place[d] candles at the big stupas and you know. That kind of thing too, and people would do that. It's really yeah, so yeah initially some people might not have a lot of time and they didn't know what to expect…but if they come back again, they really come back with a lot more time and devotion to what's going on there. (Volunteer 4)

Social diffusion did not end with visitors placing offerings throughout the Garden, but it

became an iterative process. Some offerings became a magnet for visitor modification where

subsequent visitors added their own offering to the original offering. Figure 5-3 demonstrated

this perfectly. Two visitors offered these lotuses at the base of Yumchenmo and immediately left.

Within a day, subsequent visitors modified these original offerings by adding coins between the

Figure 5-0-16 Plastic lotuses offered by visitors

plastic lotus petals. Besides this sort of modification to visitors' offerings, some visitors moved

offerings to other parts of the Garden for various reasons. On occasion, visitors moved offerings

from one statue to another or even across the Garden. I asked various staff members and

volunteers why someone would move another person's offerings. They always answered the

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same way: Subsequent visitors must have thought the offerings were better suited for other statues. Some migrations I witnessed. Most occurred due to wind knocking over letters, or flags, or some other small object susceptible to being blown away. When visitors came across offerings that were blown to the middle of the path, they picked them up and placed them back on one of the statues. Other times, I witnessed visitors remove offerings from statues. On one occasion, I saw a visitor remove a jelly packet from Yumchenmo's throne base and placed it on the ground. I immediately surmised that he was following Garden rules that were indicated by signage erected throughout the location. These Garden signs discouraged any food offerings left on statues. It was clearly important for him to follow the Garden rules.

Social diffusion was an important trigger enabling the proliferation of offerings, from traditional Buddhist offerings to toys, and even to potentially dangerous objects including bear spray, bullets, and knives. Many times, these offerings left in the Garden were meant to commemorate something or someone important in their lives (The impact this had on visitors will be discussed in the subsequent chapter).

Figure 5-0-17 Bullets offered on a stupa

Figure 5-0-18 Nubchen Sangye Yeshe statue

Forming social connections was also a critical part of the social environment. These connections often facilitated improvements in visitors' health, and wellbeing during or immediately after their visit to the Garden. Many groups connected to the social environment including retreatants, health and wellbeing seekers, and even a few tourists expressed its importance. Visitor 11, a tourist visiting the location for the first time, expressed a deeply powerful experience he had during the 2023 Peace Festival:

> …The experience I had with a group of people that had gathered yesterday and I really felt unlike many, many different experiences, interactions with just the general public. People who look at me and glance at me, would accept me, acknowledge me, and I felt really validated by my company. And in other words, they were looking to me as a fellow traveler on Earth, and I've not had such a strong feeling of that type of validation. Even sometimes with my own group, I mean, they're more friendly and I'm bonded with them because I personally know them but here, perfect strangers and I look them in the eye and see their smile. It's just a level of acceptance that is very rare.

This was an exceptional sentiment that exceeded the common response in most social instances, but it demonstrated how connecting socially facilitated Positive Affective Responses even amongst strangers.

A few retreatants mentioned the importance of social diffusion when observing other visitors enjoying their free time at the Garden. Retreatants were so preoccupied with helping the teachers, or studying for one of the tests that they regularly overlooked the location in which they were studying and practicing. On a few occasions, retreatants observed visitors leisurely strolling through the Garden or picnicking near the pond. Upon seeing visitors enjoy the beautiful setting they were reminded of the importance of slowing down and enjoying their short time at the Garden as before too long, they would return to their regular lives.

The social environment was not only impacted by social diffusion, but also by the physical parameters of the space including the location size. The Garden was so large that even

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with 100-200 visitors milling about the location, there was enough room for visitors to explore the location semi-privately. While conducting my explorative study during the 2020 and 2021 tourist seasons the COVID-19 pandemic was in full swing. Most visitors maintained social distance from others while exploring the Garden grounds. Even Tibetans who drove across country to visit this pilgrimage site and to personally connect with the teachers maintained social distancing and only conversed outdoors. Part of this was due to the belief that if they infected the teachers with COVID-19, they would accumulate negative Karma. Interestingly, during the 2022 field season, Visitors still maintained social distance from others onsite, but this was most likely not due to the pandemic but rather to give other tourists space to explore the location. This demonstrated a type of respect for others sharing the space at the same time.

Another way visitors engaged in the social environment was through offering thier assistance. It was common to observe families taking pictures in front of Yumchenmo where inevitably one family member had to operate the camera. Tourists in the immediate vicinity offered their services to take the entire family's photo to include all family members in the shot. While this does occur in other tourist locations, it seemed to occur at the Garden multiple times a day and demonstrated respect and trust for their counterparts.

The social environment was not only important for tourists but also for retreatants coming to receive new practices and new teachings. Retreatants normally participated in retreats with Sangha members, or like-minded Buddhists. Retreatant 11 stated, "this…beautiful sense of community and this sense of belonging and this sense of…being a part of something." In Buddhism, the Sangha or Buddhist community, is one of the three main parts of the religion. Sangha is an important social aspect, which individual practitioners rely on to help maintain Buddhist vows, to encourage continued daily practice, and to help him/her/they progress along

the Buddhist path by keeping them from falling into negative habit patterns (Hanh, 1998). 15 retreatants felt the social connections formed at the Garden were very important to their practice. Three retreatants mentioned they were inspired by seeing other people practice and even influenced them to maintain their Tibetan Buddhist practices after returning home from retreat.

The social environment was a foundational part of the student-teacher relationship. The student-teacher relationship was considered important for the development of spiritual practice and critical for spiritual attainment. Retreatant 5 noted, "I'm really so grateful that I come here, and so beneficial for my heart, my mind, my body, and being in relationship to our teachers to know this perspective. [It] Might be different than a visitor, you know…I'm a practitioner receiving teachings from them and empowerment and doing Guru Yoga." By being in a sacred space with their root gurus, these retreatants were able reaffirmed their devotion to their teachers supplicating them for their knowledge and guidance as a true spiritual friend[6]. Most retreatants considered these relationships as critical factors for mental health and spiritual wellbeing.

The Garden facilitated the social environment not only on location but created lasting bonds for retreatants. The conclusion of retreats was an especially important time for retreatants where every retreat over the past few years ended in a celebration. These celebrations were often potlucks, dinners, or an afternoon soak at one of the hot springs near Hot Springs, MT, or potentially an excursion to Glacier National Park. These events were important as they marked the culmination and end of the group retreat. The comradery formed by Sangha members was important. Most of the time, they were exceptionally happy to partake in practices with their

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[6] A spiritual friend is someone who supports a Buddhist practice and development (CITE)

counterparts. Coming together and practicing over the course of a week, or longer depending on the practice, helped form social comradery even amongst strangers. These concluding events were a celebration of the hard work they put into practice and devotion towards Rinpoche and Khen Rinpoche.

Besides these events, informal volunteer get-togethers regularly occurred. These events were mainly to help them relax and enjoy each other's company. Rinpoche and Khen Rinpoche regularly organized social events, which was their way to demonstrate their appreciation for the volunteers' hard work. Interestingly, these events required hours of additional labor to prepare food for 10-12 people. Besides the added work, these events allowed volunteers to interact with their counterparts in a relaxed setting.

These events were especially important during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic as there were no other social outlets. Everyone living onsite during the 2020 tourist season was especially cautious not to expose themselves to the virus to avoid accidentally spreading it to Khen Rinpoche or another onsite volunteer. Volunteers lived a secluded life and depended on each other as social outlets. These interactions promoted positive mental health benefits by preventing volunteers from feeling completely socially isolated.

Part of the social environment also integrated Tibetan Buddhist ideals including the Bodhisattva ideal. A bodhisattva is a person who has made it his/her/their mission to benefit all other beings, leading them to enlightenment (Hanh, 1998; Rinpoche, 1999). This ideal was emulated by retreatants and teachers as it was a philosophical and ethical part of Tibetan Buddhist practice. Occasionally, non-Buddhists expressed the desire to help others. Health Visitor 1 expressed:

Coming here I thought this is going to make me even stronger. So I can heal and then help heal my family and then share whatever I learned on my journey with whomever wants to hear. That's kinda what I do. I'm a storyteller so I take my experiences and share them. Turn them into positives by showing what steps I have taken even though you don't have to take them but at least you are aware that there are these tools out there that have helped me so they can possibly help you.

Visitors intentionally left messages as offerings intended for other visitors. These messages were incredibly uplifting. A prime example of this was a message found on one of the large statues around the Sun and Moon Disc Garden. The Message was a picture of a lotus flower with the inscription, "You are loved more than you will ever know." Messages like these were impactful as visitors felt a sense of gratitude and self-worth.

Figure 5-0-19 Lotus flower card with inscription: You are loved more than you will ever know.

In many ways, prayers, personal affirmations, and messages were meant to positively impacted other visitors as they felt a connection or understanding to the anonymous donor. Participants reflected on the anonymous donor and wanted to know what prompted the donor to leave the offering in its current location and why.

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The Bodhisattva ideal did not end with offerings but also extended into more official means including through the sponsorship of a Buddha or stupa. There was a belief that dedicating a Buddha or stupa for a loved one would somehow benefit them even if they have already died. For example, Volunteer 9 said, "Well, I had a friend [who] committed suicide, so I dedicated [it] to her and…that was the first one that I did. And for people who died I dedicated one for them as well." In essence, these were dedicated to benefit people in their lives and even benefiting completely strangers as well. 64% of participants indicated the wish to benefit others. This included 16 % of non-Buddhist participants who expressed this Bodhisattva ideal.

Other social activities were important for retreatants and visitors alike. The Garden administration had a few annual events that drew visitors from the surrounding area. One such event was the Peace Festival. This festival was developed and intended to bring people with different backgrounds together to share food, music, and spiritual messages of inclusion and solidarity. This 2022 Peace Festival was the first one since the COVID-19 began. This particular Peace Festival was symbolic of reuniting with friends for the first time in three seasons. The Peace festival symbolically represented continuation of the Garden mission to benefit all beings through social inclusion. These inclusive events were important for many visitors who had not participated in many large-scale events since the COVID 19 lockdown. Visitors 10 and 11 both felt a social connection to other visitors while partaking in the Peace Festival that was extremely therapeutic. Visitor 10 stated, "Being in community is healthy." What he meant by that was that the social connections and relationships he had fostered in his life were what brought him happiness and he felt healthy because of these connections. He made this connection with the Peace Festival as he was making new connections and sharing this event with other visitors.

The Bodhisattva ideal was also integrated into reoccurring retreats and practices. Retreatants and Tibetan Buddhist practitioners engaged in ritual practices with Rinpoche and Khen Rinpoche. These rituals offered a form of social connection for not only the practitioners and the teachers Sangha who have come together in person but also for deceased loved ones as well. This ritual was advertised as the Ritual for Deceased Beings, which took place during the last two Sangwa Yeshe Drupchöd retreats which has been regularly held in June. These practices memorialized Tibetan Buddhist masters, friends, and family members through Buddhist ritual. Ashes of the deceased were a necessary part of the ritual.

This ritual was meant to bless the deceased person or animal with the intent to purify their negative karma, and to form a karmic connection with both Rinpoche and Khen Rinpoche to plant the teacher-student relationship into the deceased being's mind-stream in order to receive their teachings in future lives. During the ceremony, the ashes of the deceased were mixed with herbal substances, while the teachers and Sangha members recited prayers and mantras. A mirror was used as a part of the ritual where Rinpoche poured water over it to represent the spiritual cleansing of the deceased person or animal (Beer, 2003). This practice incorporated a fire puja focused on either enriching, magnetizing, pacifying, or subjugating to benefit the deceased as a blessing which was believed to help them achieve enlightenment in future lives. Because of the potential benefit to the deceased, Sangha members readily offered a small portion of the deceased person's or animal's ashes for this ceremony to help their loved ones achieve enlightenment in death or in subsequent rebirths.

Besides emulating the Bodhisattva ideal, visitors expressed the desire to support the Garden in some way, which usually occurred through volunteering. Two participants started volunteering at the Garden as a productive means to invest in the Garden. Visitors also

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volunteered. One Tibetan woman visited the Garden a few years ago and was so enamored by the location and the teachers that she had her partner come to the Garden to volunteer together for six months. Other visitors, including non-Buddhists, occasionally volunteered, or were even employed as Garden staff. This desire to support to the Garden was a significant contribution to its overall maintenance, which would not have been possible otherwise.

The social environment proved to be an interesting variable within the therapeutic landscape dynamics. Part of the reason was because some visitors felt they had a positive overall Garden experience that facilitated health and wellbeing, while others did not. In general, most participants appreciated the social environment. When Health Visitor 1 came to the Garden initially she was distraught and unable to improve her mental health, physical health, was she able to improve her work environment, which at the time had deteriorated significantly. The Garden store clerk helped Health Visitor 1 by actively listening to her as she described her current life problems. The store clerk also taught her how to play the singing bowl. This social interaction over various days positively impacted her mental and physical health.

While the social environment was an important dynamic of health and wellbeing for a significant portion of the population, a few visitors noted the exact opposite. Health Visitor 4 said, "I do admit that I do want, I kind of want to be by myself when I am there. And so um really there is no attraction. Really, I will kind of walk different paths to avoid interacting with people." Health Visitor 4 had a life changing event when a family member suddenly died in an accident and for him finding solitude in this environment benefited his mental wellbeing. He was not alone in this sentiment.

One informant explained similar isolation attempts that retreatants regularly used to focus on their spiritual development. This informant explained to me those certain retreatants wore

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traditional Tibetan Buddhist clothing while attending retreats. When visitors saw them, they assumed, albeit correctly, that they were somehow involved with the Garden. Visitors often bothered these traditionally dressed retreatants with questions pertaining to the Garden. Most retreatants wanted to focus on their studies, practices, and recite mantras while circumambulating the path around the mandala. To avoid awkward conversations with visitors, retreatants generally toured the Garden after closing each evening.

Social isolation was also important for a few visitors I attempted to interview. One example occurred while I was looking for a potential interview participant. I noticed this young man, probably in his early 30's, meditating near the pond. And decided to ask him if he would be willing to participate in an interview. The first time I asked I received no response, so I asked him again. This time I noticed him shaking his head "no," so I left him alone. It was clear to me that he wanted to enjoy the space through his meditation practice and solitude. I was impressed that he was not even willing to break his silence to communicate with me. For visitors like him, the meditative space had greater importance than the social environment.

5.3.3 Symbolic Environment

The Garden was filled with symbolism in practically every corner. From the main mandala containing the 1002 Buddhas, 1002 stupas, Yumchenmo, the 8-spoked path, to the pond with the main lineage teacher statues surrounding it, and to the prayer flag structure on the hill with the sun and moon disk mandala, symbolism was built into each Tibetan statue or structure and was considered impactful for various reasons.

First, for many visitors, the Garden symbolized inclusivity. This was partly due to Rinpoche's concept of the Garden as an international peace garden made for all people

regardless of religious affiliation, ethnicity, sex, or even caste. Rinpoche and Khen Rinpoche started the Peace Festival in honor of this idea and always included speakers from other religions, the local tribal elders, and musicians from varying ethnic backgrounds to celebrate peace together. The Garden imbued with the idea of inclusivity was further reaffirmed through consistent messaging from the Garden administration and main teachers.

Second, the statues adorning the Garden grounds manifested the symbolic nature of the location. While most visitors unfamiliar with Buddhism were completely oblivious, about their symbolic nature, pilgrims, retreatants, and volunteers were keenly aware of its symbolism. Yumchenmo was a prime example. The central statue represented wisdom and compassion, or emptiness. The stupas around the outer perimeter of the mandala represented the enlightened mind of the Buddha. The heart sutra written in 8 different languages represents the Buddha's speech. Because retreatants and other Tibetan Buddhist practitioners understood the significance of the location, they also believed these statues containing holy relics emanated positive energy saturating the location and believed that they were received blessings just being at the Garden.

Buddhist practitioners left traditional offerings (Buddhist statues, candles, incense, flowers, food, money, and other Tibetan Buddhist iconography) to demonstrate their devotion to the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, and Guru (Rinpoche and Khen Rinpoche). To Tibetan Buddhist practitioners' offerings and donations signified the practice of generosity, the first of six paramitas necessary to perfect in order to become a Bodhisattva. Other times, Tibetan practitioners donated offerings and dedicated them to people in their lives. Making offerings in the name of their family members and friends was a means to karmically connect them to Rinpoche, Khen Rinpoche, and the Garden itself.

It was important to note that the symbolic nature of the Garden seems to be an iterative process whereby visitors inscribed the location with personal meaning and significance mainly through physical offerings left for other visitors to observe and contemplate their meaning. Most of the time, visitors left foreign coins, jewelry, painted rocks, and toys. To understand the symbolic nature of these offerings, I asked visitors who left the items about their significance, or I randomly asked visitors what they thought was the purpose behind those offerings. The most common responses I received from participants was that those offerings were manifestations or representations of the person making the offering.

Participants equated specific meanings to specific types of offerings, for example, earrings or a ring left as an offering signified the visitor enjoyed their Garden experience so much that they wanted to leave something. The premise was that those visitors who left earrings or other jewelry did so in an impromptu fashion where they had nothing else to offer as the Garden was foreign to them. Jewelry was seen as an acceptable offering that they had access to at the time so they removed the piece of jewelry and placed it in a location of their choosing. Foreign coins were seen similarly as jewelry. Visitors from foreign countries frequently offered a their foreign currency. They left these as offerings because they were accessible. Both of these types of offerings were symbolic of the positive visitor experience and were a means to demonstrate their appreciation.

Offered painted rocks were an interesting part of the landscape because they were purposefully brought and created as a Garden offering. Most painted rocks had written inscriptions incorporated into the image. Most signified peace, compassion, love, or some other nurturing message. Other painted rocks depicted the environment, or Buddhism in general. Painted rocks seemed to represent the overwhelming affective responses participants felt during their visit to the Garden, which included symbolic meaning and representations for peace, happiness, joy, and Buddhism.

Toys were another common offering. Participants who commented on donated toys believed children were responsible for their onsite dissemination. In a sense, these toys were seen similarly to other objects left by everyone else to demonstrate appreciation of the Garden. Behind coins and beads, plastic toys were probably the next abundant type of offering.

Witnessing children offering coins was not uncommon. Some gave their children coins and instructed them to, "please place this [coin] on the red ledge" as they point to the step right under Yumchenmo. In at least a few instances, children were a part of the offering process. On other occasions, some children attempted to take coins, but parents usually intervened before they were able to even think about pocketing the change.

Figure 5-0-21 Heart with "2 be together again" inscription (left) Pocket hug

(Right)

Additionally, heart shaped offerings were very common at the Garden. These heart

shaped offerings had various meanings. Some of these meanings were inscribed. One noted, "2

be together again!" and was placed on one of the large stupas. This message indicated the wish to

be reunited with a loved one. Other heart messages seem to be uplifting and even empowering.

Empowerment was an interesting part of these hearts and even other messages left at the

Garden. One example was inscribed on a plastic heart and read, "I am worth it." The person who

left this quite possibly had a poor self-perception and wanted to empower some sort of self-

compassion. These beautiful messages were not only meant for the person leaving it, but also for

Figure 5-0-22 Plastic heart inscribe with "I am worth it."

any subsequent visitor. As one participant mentioned, "how can these messages not have an

impact on me?" He mentally put himself in other people's shoes to understand these messages

which also elicited an affective response in him. He noted that he felt empathy towards people

leaving these sorts of messages as some were obviously left because of the mental anguish the donor must have felt.

Besides these more official avenues used to inscribe plaque messages throughout the Garden, visitors also left offerings. Participants believed that leaving offerings occurred through social diffusion where visitors coming for the first time saw these offerings left by other visitors and felt urged to leave something as well. Interpreting what offerings meant for these donors was not necessarily an easy task. One thing became clear: visitors who saw offerings left by others were able to define the significance of those offerings. Participant C explained, "it shows me the drive in the dedication that people feel [for the Garden]…I can kind of pick up on that and interpret in my own way." Other participants interpreted the object's significance as a manifestation of the donor's ideas and beliefs. Visitors often felt they could interpret the significance of these objects through a shared experience albeit at different times. The interpretation was always positive and beneficial for the donor. In a sense, these objects reflected how the donor felt at the time of the offering and how they believed the site should be used.

5.4 Central Question Results

Answering the central question required a detailed synthesis from the subquestion responses. The central question explored: How do affective responses, personal beliefs, and messaging symbols at the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas impact visitors' social and symbolic environments and are these integral in therapeutic landscape development? The central question results are concisely presented below.

Affective responses were an important dynamic for the social and symbolic environments. Affective responses were an important facilitator for health and wellbeing which

included 1) Positive Garden Energy Influence, 2) Calming and Grounding Affective Responses, 3) Uplifting or Magnetizing Affective Responses, and 4) Affective Responses Facilitating Positive Health. Affective responses were both social and symbolic through the manifestation of offerings which impacted subsequent visitors. Offerings left or plaque messages inscribed by visitors were affective response triggers which either fed into their personal beliefs or countered them to some extent.

Personal beliefs were important for visitor-site interactions. Often visitors brought with them ideas about health and wellbeing or religion which they enacted through experience, offering, practice, or ritual. Visitors experienced the Garden through their personal beliefs and molded their experience. Offerings were often left because individuals often associated the Garden with some sort of energetic nexus where leaving offerings could improve one's karma as a sort of transaction. Offerings were also important as an establishment of a memorial site for loved ones who have died. These offerings became a part of the Symbolic Environment.

Messaging Symbols were offerings and the interpretation visitors had regarding their significance. One belief that was noted in this research was that offerings were a sort of physical manifestation of the donor's beliefs. Visitors always adding new items changed potentially changed the interpretation through their addition and deletion when the Garden management would clean off the statues.

Affective Responses, personal beliefs, and messaging symbols were very beneficial in the construction of a therapeutic landscape. Affective Responses, and messaging symbols were necessary for the development of the therapeutic landscape as intermediaries between the visitor and the four environments. Personal beliefs were not necessarily necessary as belief was not required to feel and interact with the site. Calming/Grounding occurred in every participant

except potentially one. Some of these participants did not know much about Buddhism or the significance of the site. In general, personal beliefs are not required but are potentially very helpful.

Personal beliefs were a main driver for activities and offerings left at the Garden. These actions and symbols were the basis for both affective responses and messaging symbols. Personal beliefs as actions were symbols of rituals used to facilitate health and wellbeing, or spiritual outcome for the actor and/or others. These displays, whether rituals enacted or placed offerings, were engaged in at a location where actors should not assume were completely isolated and were therefore social.

Personal beliefs were dynamic, differing from one visitor to another. These beliefs were grounded in health and wellbeing beliefs, organized religion, new age religious practices, and spiritualism just to name a few. Personal beliefs enacted at the Garden were preplanned activities and rituals to usually facilitate a healing, religious, and/or spiritual outcome the actor desired. Thus, these enacted personal beliefs were also symbols that represented their belief that could be interpreted in a myriad of ways when viewed externally. Personal beliefs were important for the facilitation and contribution to the social environment. This was primarily facilitated through social diffusion where visitors seeing practices or rituals on site or offerings left behind would at the bare minimum arouse curiosity in others. These practices and rituals became a spectacle for other visitors especially when performed inside the Mandala near Yumchenmo where most visitors seemed to coalesce. While I originally thought visitors may be interested to try out new fascinating activities to determine if it resonated with them, it turned out that most only appreciated these engagements as curiosities that did not fundamentally impact other visitors' world views. Most indicated that they did not see activities people performed on location. The

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ones who did observe activities were not interested in undertaking them as these potentially new endeavors. Only two or three participants considered attempting these new endeavors. Instead, most visitors saw other visitors engaging in their personal activity was a symbol that performing their own rituals or activities was acceptable. The reason they did not bring, for example their yoga mat, was because they did not know it was acceptable to practice yoga on location. The only endeavors other visitors saw and would consider partaking in were mundane activities such as spending time with the family or picnicking. While these activities were very beneficial for family, social connections, and relaxing, these activities could be engaged in at other locations like a park.

5.5 Helpful Garden Hints

Throughout my time at the Garden, volunteers and visitors have consistently indicated that there were good ideas that could improve the overall visitor-Garden experience. These ideas focused on some sort of educational outreach or digital self-guided tour to help disseminate the information. A few focused on how to improve the Garden itself.

Some participants thought the Garden messaging was too technical for a general visitor with practically no knowledge about Buddhism. Many visitors do not know much about Tibetan Buddhism in general. They did not understand the differences between it and other Buddhist traditions and may not even know some of the main tenants of Buddhism. One participant mentioned it would be great to have one large sign erected near the entrance parking lot to describe some of the main tenants of Buddhism (HS4 Visitor, 2022). Visitors would then be able to understand the signs that explain in detail each feature around the Garden.

Other visitors wanted to incorporate digital technology as accessible information on self-guided tours. One visitor mentioned that using videos uploaded to Youtube could be downloadable using a QR code. These short video clips could explain in detail specific features around the Garden (HS Visitor 3, 2022). Digital technology could also be incorporated as something like a podcast or blog that not only described the features of the location, but also included some general information about Buddhism and the practices performed at the Garden (L Participant, 2022). Participant L (2022) suggested a social media account where visitors could write down their experiences. Participant L (2022) explained that it would be much more interactive than a review of the Garden. Part of the reason she thought this was a good idea was the fact that many visitors came during Covid-19 who needed an emotional outlet. This would be a location where people could feel that their experiences are openly heard and not judged. This was an intriguing idea as visitors on occasion came up to me to express either how beautiful the Garden is or wanted to speak about some negative aspect of their lives. By expressing some of the issues in their lives, they often indicated that they felt better afterwards. Having some sort of social media able to capture their information may give them an outlet even when there is no one working in the Garden or gift shop.

The other ideas participants expressed was improving the Garden setting. Participant T (2022) thought adding more shade trees would be a vast improvement to the grounds. There are currently 1,000 plus plants on the grounds and a significant portion of them are trees. A good portion of these trees are conifers and according to Participant T (2022) these trees did not provide adequate shade. When Participant T visited the temperatures were hovering around 95°F. The only location that provided adequate shade in the entire Garden was near the pond because of a small cluster of aspen trees.

One of the easiest and potentially most impactful ideas a participant had was to allow participants to make tsa tsas[7]. From personal experience, having visitors engaging in some sort of hands-on activity greatly adds to their overall Garden experience. Previously, visitors helped make the 1,002 Buddha statues that adorn the Garden grounds. Everyone who partook in molding these Buddhas enjoyed it immensely and realized that their contribution would be visible for years to come. The idea to make tsa tsas is great because it allows visitors to participate and create something that they could either donate to the Garden or they could take it home with them to remind them of their experience at the garden.

Figure 5-23 Tsa tsa in the form of a stupa left as an offering at the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas

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[7] Tsa tsa is a molded clay figure made from a metal stamp. These figures are usually in the form of a Buddhist deity, mantra, or stupa. Sometimes these clay figures are made of clay and ashes from the deceased friend, relative, or spiritual teacher. Making tsa tsas is one method practitioners use to accumulate merit.

5.10 Summary

Some of the themes were obvious as I specifically questioned visitors' perceptions of affective responses, health and wellbeing, and the social dynamics of the location. The rest of the themes derived from what participants described in the interview. The analysis was a lengthy process of combining codes into these themes.

Affective responses were formulated into three themes including positive affective responses, supernatural or liminal space, and negative or neutral affective responses. The positive responses were dominant, exactly in line with my preliminary field research at the Garden during the 2020 and 2021 tourist seasons. While the supernatural or liminal space was expected, I did not realize how many people perceived the Garden as a spiritual location even if they were not Buddhist. The negative and neutral affective responses were an interesting dynamic as no one ever mentioned anything negative regarding the Garden during my two previous years exploring the Garden. The negative affective responses were mainly against offerings that ignored the general guidelines that were distributed throughout the Garden or were concerned about plastic offerings breaking down into microplastics and harming the environment. The concerns highlighted good points and could potentially impact the overall perception of the location.

Buddhist Education, Heritage and Ritual was a common theme expressed in most interviews. When I first started exploring the Garden, I never thought that so many Tibetans and other Himalayan peoples would consider this location a pilgrimage location. Because of the remote work lifestyle brought about by COVID-19, many Tibetans came to the Garden to learn more about Tibetan Buddhism and spend time with Authentic Tibetan Buddhist masters.

Tibetan Buddhist practitioners also expressed the wish to learn more about Tibetan Buddhism and engage in various rituals during retreats or one of the regular practices. This process was vital for their spiritual growth. Even non-Buddhists wanted to learn more. Some visitors sat in on various practices to experience these rituals.

The environments were an evident theme because of the natural and built beauty of the location. What I was surprised to learn was that the social environment was a critical aspect for visitors seeking health and wellbeing. Many visitors experiencing mental anguish wanted to express their hardships to one of the volunteers, usually with the store attendant, or one of the teachers if they were on site at the time.

Solitude was also another important part of the social environment. The contradictory nature of solitude and social is evident but nonetheless, this continuum was necessary for health and wellbeing. This concept will be explored in detail in the concluding chapter.

Life transitions was an unforeseen theme that was expressed quite frequently. The need to rejuvenate or have a spiritual rebirth seemed to be a critical component for visitors who came to the Garden specifically to focus on their health and wellbeing. The important dynamic here was the visitor's agency to change their lives for the positive.

New Age Spiritualism was also a common social and spiritual expression that occurred at the Garden. Many new age practitioners came to the Garden to experience the location's energy of the location. Practicing in this environment seemed to enhance these visitors' spiritual experience. Furthermore, the combination of religious values seemed to be the most common theme provided by many of these visitors. These new age practitioners seemed to believe all religions contained the same basic values and were therefore, interchangeable.

Participants expressed helpful Garden Hints to enhance the visitor-Garden experience for future visitors. This was an interesting dynamic that came out in these interviews even though it was on the periphery of this research. What this clearly indicated was the fact that visitors are a little confused about the Garden in general. Using technology to disseminate information about the Garden and Buddhism was a common idea articulated in this theme.

Each of these themes will be important in answering the three subquestions and central question. Not only do these themes help formulate new understandings of how therapeutic landscapes are constructed, but they also hint at their importance within medical anthropology. Analyzing data through detailed synthesis in and in between these themes will be critical to answering these subquestions which will then be used to answer the main central question.

Chapter Six:

Discussion and Conclusion

Chapter six focuses on the discussion of the results and their significance on current and future research. To situate this research, it is important to restate the purpose statement and problem that triggered this entire research endeavor. This chapter synthesizes the results with previous research findings per each subquestion and applies these findings to the central question. The implications of the findings are listed in detail and demonstrate their significance to cultural heritage and therapeutic landscape theory and practice. The implications for future research are then discussed.

6.1 Purpose of this Research

The purpose of this ethnographic study was to discover how translocated contemporary cultural heritage sites become imbued with and maintain therapeutic qualities through visitor experience and interaction with the site. This research explored links between affective responses, health and wellbeing, and determined how personal beliefs were constitutive in the formation of a therapeutic landscape. Furthermore, this study explored how visitors contributed symbolic messages through dedicating plaques and leaving offerings impacted the Social and Symbolic Environments for subsequent visitors.

6.2 Problem

One aspect that was largely overlooked was the intersection of symbolic space and social relations and how these impacted health and wellbeing (Winchester & McGrath, 2017). This was an imperative juncture to explore as health and healing occurred in a social space. Affective

responses and personal beliefs were critical dynamics of site visitation, but it was unknown if and how these facilitated health and wellbeing outcomes and what role they have in the creation and maintenance of a therapeutic landscape. Furthermore, it was not well understood what social influences including personal beliefs promoted therapeutic landscape develop from engaging with a cultural heritage landscape where health and wellbeing are emergent through site interaction. The importance of this research was paramount as these findings determine if public health messaging should not only endorse the benefit of accessing green and blue spaces, but potentially include cultural heritage locations.

6.3 Subquestion One: Affective Response and their Signifiers

Results from section 5.1-5.1.13 are used to discuss, compare, and contrast previous research results, and synthesize a response posed by subquestion: How do affective responses emerging from interacting with a cultural heritage site influence the visitors' health and wellbeing at the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas?

A brief results description is provided before discussion and synthesis. These are as follows:

- Participants defined health and wellbeing as defined as *the person's ability to perform physically, mentally, and spiritually with optimal outcomes while maintaining a sense of calm and ease*. Participants also noted the importance of social relations in health and wellbeing outcomes and should therefore also be included in the definition. Furthermore, agency was an important aspect of health and wellbeing facilitation.

- Participant responses focused on Natural and Built Environments (Gesler, 2003). Both the natural and built environments added considerably to visitor health and wellbeing outcomes while interacting with the Garden.

- Positive Affective Responses influenced positive health and wellbeing outcomes, which included: 1) Calming and Grounding Affective Responses, 2) Uplifting or Magnetizing Affective Responses, 3) Affective Responses Facilitating Positive Health, and 4) Supernatural or Liminal Space Sensations, which contained a code called Positive Garden Energy Influence. Positive Garden Energy Influence was important for various visitor-site outcomes.

- Negative Affective Responses and their impacts on visitors and volunteers were also mentioned.

6.3.1 Health and Wellbeing

Allowing participants to define health and wellbeing was an important first part of the interview process because the definition synthesized through combining each participant's perceived meaning reflected visitor's perception of health and wellbeing. This was important to define as health and wellbeing concepts were not stagnant but vary from culture to culture (Napier et al., 2014). Through this understanding, health and wellbeing took on a multivocal perspective and it was necessary to incorporate their perspectives within the health and wellbeing definition.

Agency was another important part of health and wellbeing. This point of view echoed Sivén and Mishtal's (2012) findings that, the maintenance of health and wellbeing has become decentered from the professional healthcare provider, and repositioning the patient, and in this case the visitor, as in control over his/her/their own health and wellbeing. Visitors accessing the

Garden for health and wellbeing were instituting individual agency (agency will be explored further in section 6.4.2).

According to Darvill et al. (2019) it was believed that interacting with therapeutic landscapes positively influenced individual outcomes but was never considered a cure for any type of ailment that the visitor may have had. This may hold true for visitors infected with some bacteria or virus, or even a chronic illness. Furthermore, Darvill et al.'s (2019) stance was to combine therapeutic landscape use with proven treatments especially for ailments such as mental health disorders. While actively seeking mental healthcare from licensed healthcare professionals is essential, I believe Darvill et al. (2019) understated the health and wellbeing benefits of accessing therapeutic landscapes or cultural heritage locations. This may be partly due to a too narrow health and wellbeing definition used in their research endeavors as their main focus pertained to mental health and mental health outcomes (Darvill et al., 2019; Heaslip et al., 2020). The data analysis from the Garden research indicated that accessing the location for things like social and spiritual health was extremely important. For retreatants, their social lives changed completely where they could rely on Sangha members and a practice and philosophy by which they could live and structure their lives. In essence, this was a cure for social, and spiritual isolation.

Using the health and wellbeing definition developed by interview participants, certain types of health and wellbeing may be enhanced through accessing cultural heritage and therapeutic landscape locations. These included mental, social, and spiritual health outcomes by allowing participants and visitors to relax/destress, communicate with Garden staff and volunteers, and engage in personal spiritual endeavors such as meditation, yoga, or attend a Buddhist teaching whenever these are available.

6.3.2 Natural Environment

The Natural Environment was associated with peace and quiet, which was seen as a pleasant contradiction to some participants' busy and congested urban lifestyles. These results add to the plethora of other therapeutic landscape research that has indicated accessing the Natural Environment facilitated positive health and wellbeing outcomes (Boucher et al., 2019; Gesler, 2003; A. Williams, 1998). Part of this was believed because humans evolved interacting with the natural landscape and were comforted through direct interaction. This was known as the *biophilia hypothesis* (Gesler, 2003), which seemed quite possible as 82% of participants indicated that the Natural environment was an important part of the cultural heritage site/therapeutic landscape.

6.3.3 Built Environment

The built environment was an important factor in the perception of the location as therapeutic. The architecture entering the Garden formed a liminal space in the form of a gate which represented a divide between the sacred and the profane (Gesler, 2003). The built environment held special value for all visitor types. Through the implementation of the cultural iconography which included all the statues and structures, the environment became a cultural landscape (Lehr & Cipko, 2015). The built environment was an interesting dynamic as the Tibetan Buddhist cultural landscape was unique as no other Tibetan Buddhist location has been constructed in a similar layout. Despite this fact, Tibetan Buddhists, and Tibetan and Himalayan pilgrims perceived the built environment as authentic (this will be explored in depth in 6.4). One part of the built environment that deemed important by a few participants was the symmetry of the mandala, the eight spokes, and the symmetry and repetition of Buddhas facing back indicated the importance of these architectural designs. Despite symmetry and repetition being a common

visual que used in various design implementations, no previous research has focused on its importance within the built environment. From what cultural heritage or therapeutic landscape participants stated, symmetry was important and had a calming effect.

The Buddha statues were an additional important part of the built environment which were physical representations of the historical Buddha. These statues spread joy and happiness to various visitors upon seeing them most likely due to the fact that the statues were all smiling. Previous research has also demonstrated that the built environment has been attributed with a sense of happiness (Majeed & Ramkissoon, 2020).

6.3.4 Positive Affective Responses

Focusing on affective responses elicited from a cultural heritage site and their impact on health and wellbeing was an important dynamic that has not been previously explored. As Smith (2014) noted, visitors go to cultural heritage locations to *feel*. While this was certainly the case for visitors who went to the Garden, affective responses facilitated health and wellbeing for a wide range of visitors. Previously, the link between cultural heritage and the improvement in human lives was regarded as anecdotal (Orthel, 2022). The findings in this research indicated that interacting with cultural heritage locations like the Garden improved visitors' lives through facilitating health and wellbeing, and should therefore, be seen as at least personal truths.

These affective responses elicited through interacting with a cultural heritage location positively impacted participants' health and wellbeing through various avenues. Calming and Grounding Affective Responses were felt by practically every visitor experiencing the Garden. These bodily sensations were known to reduce stress and anxiety, which were two dominant problems people with mental health issues tend to face. This reaffirmed Boucher et al.'s (2019)

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findings that peace and calm allowed participants a break from work/life stresses and allowed a space for the participant to focus on other aspects of their lives.

Magnetizing or Energizing health affective responses demonstrated pure enjoyment from their experiences at the Garden. Participants felt rejuvenated or energized from their experiences. At times, these experiences changed participant's lives for the positive. This was partly due to the internalization of these affective responses and consciously changing certain aspects of their lives. Experiencing affective responses that directly impacted health and wellbeing was also noted to positively impact mental health directly. Supernatural or Liminal Space Sensations was a sentiment that the location had accessible energy that could positively impact participants spiritually and could even influence participants to change their lives in some way.

This research has added to the understanding that affective responses elicited from visiting a cultural heritage location played a significant role in health and wellbeing outcomes both during and after the visitor's visit. These affective responses facilitated a sense of health and wellbeing in participants and visitors alike. Affective responses elicited through the Garden environments facilitated mental, social, spiritual, and perhaps even physical health. These affective responses impacted these overlapping health areas in some way and to some extent in most participants.

The importance of this research for therapeutic landscape theories was also evident. Most therapeutic landscape literature focused on visitors' feelings and how those contributed to a sense of health and wellbeing (Gesler, 2003; Williams, 1998; Majeed & Ramkissoon, 2020). Focusing on affective responses seemed to be advantageous and complemented previous research that demonstrated how feelings influenced health and wellbeing outcomes. One reason

why this was the case was because affective responses that encompassed bodily sensations were a broad category that could be articulated as both a feeling or sensation.

The other reason focusing on affective responses may be more encompassing than feelings is that feelings alone was because affective responses encompassed body sensations that manifested directly from the interaction with the location (Newell, 2018). Examples of this in the Garden research were stated by various participants who felt energized or activated. When I asked them the impact it had on their health and wellbeing almost every participant who initially responded indicated that it made them feel positively which included joyousness, happiness, relaxation, and a sensation that everything was going to be alright. These responses showed a cognizant mind-body connection that potentially has been overlooked in previous research focused on feelings alone.

Additionally, it seemed that affective response amplitude was an important factor for health and wellbeing outcomes. Some visitors were depressed or suffered some ill-fated trauma in their lives. While I only interviewed four participants who came to the Garden specifically for health and healing, I also had various informal interactions with visitors seeking refuge from their sufferings. These visitors needed help more than the standard tourist and they also seemed significantly benefited by their Garden visit. The intent to use the Garden to facilitate health and wellbeing indicated strong affective responses that translated into positive feelings such as relief. Tourists who came to explore the Garden did not seem to have as great of an affective response but they even felt positive during and after their Garden tour. From these responses, it became evident that the purpose for the visit was linked to affective response outcomes. The more important the visitor felt they needed to visit the Garden for health and wellbeing, the more relieved they seemed to feel during and post visit.

When asked how these feelings and sensations impacted health and wellbeing, most indicated feelings ranging from contentment to joyousness. It was interesting that participants generally noted positive emotions as health and wellbeing outcomes. Generating affective responses from experiencing the Garden allowed visitors to enter a positive mental state which facilitated health and healing.

This research also uncovered the importance of safety and security as an integral part of therapeutic landscapes. Most therapeutic landscape researchers associated safety and security with the home environment (Gesler, 2003; Karasaki et al., 2017; A. Williams, 1998). Gesler (2003) noted safety and security was important for the built environment because the facility was structurally sound. In some regards this was what made a house a home. Just like the home environment, safety and security were important for visitors but it manifested completely different. Safety and security were social and spiritual dynamics that played out in social spaces. A hallmark to identifying that visitor felt safe at the Garden was through their interactions with over visitors and especially staff. When visitors walk up to Garden personnel, especially the store attendant, they would divulge their struggles and sorrows. These visitors were only able to express their difficulties because they felt safe doing it. As previously noted, these interactions seemed to be therapeutic for the visitor.

The sense of safety and security not only was a vital component to visitors' health and wellbeing outcomes. Feeling safe allowed visitors to engage in the ritual space enacting their own ritualistic activities without hinderance or detraction. This was possible because they did not feel judged and possibly even encouraged as there may have been the perception that other visitors positively embraced those types of activities. Furthermore, the space was large enough that they could perform these activities in semi-isolation.

6.3.5 Negative Affective Responses

Besides focusing on positive outcomes this study incorporated negative ones as well to depict participants and visitors' experiences more accurately. Negative Affective Responses were an interesting dynamic that had minimal impact on health and wellbeing outcomes from interacting with the cultural heritage and therapeutic landscape location. Two types of Negative Affective Responses which included reactions to offerings left by other visitors, and volunteer perception that visitors were not following the rules, were unusual and had a negligible or no impact on participants and volunteers' health and wellbeing outcomes. With the potential to ascribe these Negative Affective Responses to actions that only a few visitors carried out, the impacts seemed to be minimized.

Participants who had a Negative Affective Response to seeing plastic offerings were also very understanding of their counterpart's intention. Intent has been shown to be an important part of visiting cultural heritage and therapeutic landscape research. Some researchers have gone as far as to express, "Intent is what activates the healing potential in each of us" (Broughton, 1999 as cited in Bowman, 2008). Because the participant understood the donor's intent, usually as being beneficial, the participant's Negative Affective Responses diminished to the point where their overall experience of the Garden was still positively framed. In essence, the negative responses were uneventful and did not contribute much to the outcomes of this study.

6.4 Subquestion Two: Constructing a Therapeutic Landscape

Results from section 5.2-5.2.4 are used to discuss, compare, and contrast previous research results, and synthesize a response to the posed question: How are visitors' personal

health and wellbeing beliefs formative in the construction of a therapeutic landscape where no official health and wellbeing attributes are articulated by site management?

A brief results description is provided before discussion and synthesis. These are as follows:

- Authenticity was explored through the implementation of traditional building techniques and the insertion of what was called a tsogching which was herbs, mantra, and other blessed substances placed inside the Buddha or stupa to give the statue life. These techniques were required for Himalayan peoples to consider the Garden authentically constructed.

- Life transitions were explored which indicated liminal spaces or transformations visitors were attempting to implement in their lives. Life transitions were usually seen as some sort of life improvement.

- New Age Spiritualism and Interspiritual Practice was defined by visitors enacting their own new age practices on the Garden grounds. This also included the purposeful combination of religion concepts to benefit their own needs. Some of these concepts were Native American by tradition but were potentially practiced by non-Native Americans.

- Buddhist Education, Heritage, and Ritual explored the importance of Buddhist philosophy was enacted at the Garden and how this pertained to health and wellbeing.

6.4.1 Authenticity, Legitimacy, and Tradition

Authenticity was an especially important requirement for Tibetan and Himalayan pilgrims and Tibetan Buddhists alike. Perceived authenticity at the Garden was completely different than both Western and even Asian conceptions. According to Western cultural heritage framework, authenticity was considered synonymous with original as the "real" (Smith, 2006;

Su, 2018). For various Asian cultural heritage traditions, authenticity was rooted in purpose which meant that even if the structure, was rebuilt it was still authentic if the purpose remained the same. The Garden was perceived as authentic even though it did not manifest as a traditional Tibetan Buddhist location in the form of a temple, meditation cave, or stupa but rather a physical manifestation of a mandala. This one-of-a-kind Tibetan Buddhist landscape has been considered authentic not because of originally built structures or their purpose but was considered authentic because of who constructed it and how it was constructed. The Garden achieved Authentic status through the belief in Gochen Tulku Sang-ngag Rinpoche (Rinpoche hereafter) as a Boddhisatva with enlightened qualities that were considered the same as Guru Rinpoche's or the historical Buddha's. He also consecrated each statue with the appropriate mantras, relics and other substances necessary for activating or giving life to the statues.

Authenticity in this sense should be seen as a cultural concept that changed and adapted over time due to necessity and to recreate culture in diasporic communities (Lee, 2008). The unfortunate reality has been that these recreations have not been viewed as authentic as the ones in home countries in general (Lee, 2008). The Garden could be an anomaly as Tibetan and other Himalayan peoples considered it as authentic as locations in Tibet and India. This was partly due to the intangible cultural heritage in the form of Tibetan Buddhist practices perceived to originate from Guru Rinpoche and his predecessors. These teachings were perceived as a continuation of the historical Buddha's teachings and stemmed from in an unbroken lineage (Khen Rinpoche, Personal Communications, 2021).

Authenticity for tourists and health seeking visitors was perceived differently. Authenticity was based on what Harrison (2013) deemed as forming emotional satisfaction. For tourists, Harrison's (2013) assessment seemed accurate as most tourists' perception of

authenticity was skewed due to their limited Tibetan Buddhist knowledge and even their limited knowledge regarding the Garden in general. Through this lack of cultural and religious knowledge, tourists were only able to judge the location based on their perceptions of the location and immediate affective response outcomes.

For health seeking visitors, authenticity was not only based on emotional satisfaction but was also based on the perceived health and wellbeing benefits achieved through site interaction. Achieved health and wellbeing benefits may have manifested as satisfaction after the fact but the importance in deeming the location as authentic was the perceived health and wellbeing benefits they felt from their Garden experience. Harrison (2013) was correct that emotional satisfaction was deemed through emotional satisfaction, but his perception did not account for the development of authenticity for health seeking behavior at sites.

Like authenticity, legitimacy was important to establish to reinforce the cultural identity of the Garden as Tibetan. Establishing legitimization through culturally deemed identity formation was normally considered part of the process (Lauer, 2015). Legitimacy for the Garden could be viewed as sidestepping culturally deemed processes as various rinpoches were critical of the initial garden concept and thought constructing a monastery on the site would be more appropriate. Over time, the Garden became an important Tibetan Buddhist location through the dedication of persistent work creating the location as well as building a Sangha who were dedicated to Rinpoche's teachings. Only after the Garden was mainly built did other rinpoches understood its importance: The dissemination of Tibetan Buddhist concepts through the built landscape accessible to all people. Viewed through the Bodhisattva ideal, a foundational tenant in Tibetan Buddhism to benefit all beings (Pistono, 2014), the Garden was viewed as benefitting a significant amount of visitors instead of only a handful of monastics if the Garden were

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constructed as a traditional temple. Legitimacy for the Garden was mitigated through healthy skepticism and was only deemed legitimate because it impacted significant amount of visitors.

6.4.2 Life Transitions

Life Transitions were a very impactful purpose visitors enacted at the Garden. These transitions have implications for authenticity through ritualization (Østergaard & Refslund Christensen, 2010). In essence, visitors who wanted to change their lives through quitting addictive habits or adopt spirituality into their lives created a liminal space or a boundary in time which reflected personal changes the visitor enforced through ritualization. Importantly, life transitions noted at the Garden were through an individual accord where their pilgrimage was unconnected to religion but rather a personalized endeavor which affirmed Østergaard & Refslund Christensen's (2010) research. Pilgrimage and visiting sacred sites has become an individualized endeavor for self-help and personal spirituality rather than a communal goal to strengthen religious beliefs amongst like-minded faithful trekkers (Nilsson & Tesfahuney, 2018; Østergaard & Refslund Christensen, 2010).

Life Transitions must also be seen as a form of agency the Garden visitor enacted through their own means (Fontrodona & Sison, 2006). Agency in this regard was the catalyst to activate or define liminal space through personal intention and while at the same time creating a personal therapeutic landscape. Thus through agency, visitors were able to create personal and alternative therapeutic landscapes at the same location (Winchester & King, 2017). This creation of alternative therapeutic landscapes within the same space through agency also reaffirmed Harrison's (2013) concept of authenticity driven through individual visitor's perceptions vs. only culturally driven.

6.4.3 New Age Spiritualism and Interspiritual Practice

New Age Spiritualism and Interspiritual Practices were fascinating practices to both observe as these unfolded in real time and to document offerings or ritual remnants, after their conclusion. The purpose behind these practices was multi-vocal and based on beliefs regarding Buddhism, the Garden as a vortex, and a shift away from Judeo-Christian ideology.

Healing using Tibetan signing bowl sound baths and some Reiki practitioners came to the Garden out of the belief that these healing traditions originated from Buddhism and were even attributed to the historical Buddha himself. Through this belief these health practitioners came to the Garden to connect with their tradition.

Reiki practitioners also believed in healing energies. Reiki practitioners use their hands to lightly touch or hover above the body to move these energies around (Joyce & Herbison, 2015). While various Reiki practitioners suggested that Reiki originated from Tibet, there has been very little evidence to indicate that that was ever the case (Miles & True, 2003). Even with a lack of proven association with Buddhism, various retreatants trained in Reiki practices and have offered their healing services at the Garden during retreats.

Like Reiki, singing bowls were believed to be a Tibetan Buddhist invention. Unfortunately, this was never the case and it has been believed that singing bowls originated in Mesopotamia 5000 years ago or were invented in India and were not originally associated with Tibet (Grimes, 2020). This pervading belief that singing bowls were Tibetan Buddhist led to increased use in the West (Grimes, 2020). Some visitors believed using singing bowls that resonated various frequencies were capable of unblocking all seven chakras and to restore the

person's natural energy flow. This was a common conception and some of the retreatants performed singing bowl therapies for their retreatant companions.

What occurred to me was the need for new age practitioners to identify with the location as a part of their tradition even if there was no evidence to support those claims facilitating a sense of belonging. Previous research has explored belonging within therapeutic landscape research but have mainly focused on a sense of belonging in a community (Karasaki et al., 2017; Power & Smyth, 2016). The sense of belonging these new age Practitioners exemplified was the belief that their new age practices were a part of the Buddhist tradition. By paying tribute to the revered Tibetan Buddhist location, these health practitioners connected with the origin of their healing tradition. This was a connection not through community, but through belief.

6.5 Subquestion Three: Health and Wellbeing, Symbolism, and Socialization

The last subquestion focused on messaging symbols and their potential impacts on the social environment. The question asked: How does visitor placement of health and wellbeing messaging symbols throughout the site impact the social environment of the therapeutic landscape at the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas?

A brief results description is provided before discussion and synthesis. These are as follows:

- This subquestion focused on location and messaging symbols and the impact these have on the social environment. Location was important as visitors mainly offered at the Zhambala Mandala, Yumchenmo, Shakyamuni Buddha, the statues at the pond, and around the payer flag structure.

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- The social environment was explored in this question and indicated how messaging symbols proliferated through social diffusion.

- The symbolic environment focused on the items visitors left behind and the social interactions they had as according to Turner (1967), these could be considered symbolic.

6.5.1 Symbolic Environment

As a part of the construction of the Symbolic Environment, Messaging symbols impacted the Social Environment in a variety of ways. The offering location was an important part of the overall messaging symbol process which impacted the Social Environment. As previously noted in chapter 5.3.1, offerings left at Zambhala Mandala, Yumchenmo, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe or King Detsen Trisong, and the prayer flag mound manifested in abundance and type. Offerings left at these locations indicated specific intentions and the importance of privacy.

Some offerings were Native American in origin and placed at Yumchenmo, a female enlightened being, and at Nubchen Sangye Yeshe or King Detsen Trisong. Based on offering type and the resemblance of a tin stamped tipi (Figure 5-0-10, Page 143), these were most likely Native American Church (NAC) symbols. The purpose behind the NAC was to revitalize Native American beliefs through combining Christianity with the Peyote religion based out of the American southwest (Stewart, 1987). The NAC originated in Oklahoma and has spread across the country and Canada over the past 100 years. One NAC belief that seemed to correspond with the offering location was the depiction of the male-female universe (Quintero, 1995). According to the NAC, male and female energy pervade the entire universe. The offerings also corresponded with the assumed statues' genders. The stamped tipis found at Yumchenmo represented female nature as it was seen as representing the women's womb where all life originated (Quintero, 1995). Obsidian, chert and arrow heads found on Nubchen Sangye Yeshe

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and King Detsen Trisong were warrior and hunter symbols and as such, were considered masculine (Quintero, 1995).

Tibetan Buddhism also implemented male and female energy through meditational practices. Male and female deities rest in yab-yum which represented the coming together of wisdom and compassion. The unity of wisdom and compassion was the representation of emptiness, a necessary realization on the path to enlightenment (Wallace, 2011).

Other Native American symbols found throughout the location represented important aspects to Native American culture. One example was the beautifully beaded pouch (figure 5-12) and tipi (figure 5-13) offered to two Buddhas on separate spokes behind the Yumchenmo statue. Beaded work was significant for Native Americans and other indigenous communities. Beading was used to transmit cultural knowledge intergenerationally, which may have promoted intergenerational healing and wellness (Ansloos et al., 2022).

Other common Native American symbols were found onsite were sage and sweetgrass which were commonly used for purification practices (Lunham, n.d.). The use of both sage and sweetgrass probably originated from Native American traditions and have been commodified by spiritual industries. The Garden shop even sold sage for use in purification which further reified its commodification.

The dissemination of Native American religious symbols around parts of the Garden may be due to a few key reasons. First, Tibetans and Native Americans share similar recent histories. Both Native Americans and Tibetans have suffered from colonization, oppression, and even the inability to govern one's own heritage (Brown, 2003; Whalen-Bridge, 2011). Furthermore, there has been an ongoing narrative focusing similarities between Native Americans and Tibetans

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including colonization, the desire to return to a pre-colonized lifestyle, and romanticization of religious values (Jacobson, 2004).

The second reason was due to the location itself. As it turned out the entire Jocko Valley was considered a cultural and spiritual location for Native Americans living in the area. Most land around the valley was privately owned, and most areas were inaccessible. The Garden as a location intended for all visitors was a location local Native Americans could access with ease and perform their own religious ceremonies in very close proximity to important sites.

The third potential reason was through the new age practitioners who brought Native American spiritual accoutrements to the Garden for their own spiritual practice. As Jacobson (2004) noted, some Westerners both romanticized Native Americans and Tibetans for their religious and spiritual beliefs. This was also evident in the interviews which reaffirmed Jacobson's (2004) findings. The last reason was similar to the third reason why these offerings were left on location. Some visitors offered Native American religious offerings including tobacco to show their reverence for their culture and religion.

Native American symbols were not the only type of symbols that pertained to a specific group. One sign commonly offered at the Garden was the Christian cross. These crosses indicated that Christians visit the location somewhat frequently. Discussions surrounding these Christian signs came up a few times in my interviews with participants. These crosses were always viewed positively. I asked Health Visitor 2 if she thought that the Christian iconography would be considered beneficial or in conflict with Buddhism in general. She thought that the Christin crosses represented appreciation of the Tibetan Buddhist landscape. She was not the only person who had the perception that Christians who visited tended to appreciate the Garden. In fact, some Christians came to learn about the Buddhist religion for their personal

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understanding. The Garden regularly invited different religious groups to participate in the annual Peace Festival. Sharing religious ideologies has been an important part of the Garden's philosophy and understanding. These crosses impacted the social environment by reinforcing the idea that the Garden was meant for every individual regardless of their religious affiliation or ethnic background. These crosses and any other religious iconography offered at the Garden were generally seen as sharing ideas and concepts amongst religious groups.

The social events were seen as powerful symbols connecting visitors with a community. This was seen as healthy especially because visitors were coming out of isolation stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions. Activities visitors and participants engaged in at the Garden were also symbols that could have tremendous positive health and wellbeing benefits. Most of these activities were symbols to relax, slow down, and even enjoy time with the family.

Not all health and wellbeing offerings had positive impacts on the social environment. A few participants mentioned that visitors leaving offerings should be more mindful of the types of offerings they leave at the Garden. These participants were concerned about maintaining the environment. Each person who mentioned this understood that donors who left objects around the Garden held significant meaning to them but at times these offerings were either plastic or potentially even trash that would eventually be thrown out. For these participants, being mindful of the types of offerings left behind was important for a few reasons. One reason was to reduce the amount of plastic visitors brought to the Garden would prevent them from breaking down into microplastics and potentially contaminating the soil. The other reason was to be more mindful about the types of offerings left regarding a Garden personnel problem. The Garden mainly had volunteers and a few residential staff working in the Garden and cleaning up

hundreds of offerings and even trash took a lot of time and effort that could have been spent on other Garden maintenance.

Some offerings I coded as negative were offerings that could be dangerous to children. These offerings may have been left with the intent to achieve some sort of health and wellbeing. An example of this was unopened alcohol bottles and cans left as offerings. Some may have been offerings intended as symbols to quit drinking. Being mindful of the potential danger these offerings could have on children was important. While working primarily on the Garden volunteers and I removed alcohol, knives, lighters, and bullets to ensure that they were kept out of children's hands. Again, there was the understanding that these offerings may be considered important and even indicated life changing events, but it was important to remove dangerous offerings immediately because of potential negative consequences if children ended up consuming or using one of them.

Another offering I saw as dangerous for children was tobacco. Tobacco was a very common offering for potentially three reasons which was why I treated it separately from other dangerous offerings. Tobacco has been used in Native American ceremonies and because the Garden was situated on the Flathead Reservation, offered tobacco was a symbol meant to honor the Native American land on which the Garden was located. The second reason was visitors who wanted to quit smoking may have left a cigarette or chew packets at the Garden. They may have used the Garden as a ritualistic space to demonstrate their conviction to break their tobacco addiction. Lastly, cigarettes and chew packets may have been used as offerings because donors had no other objects to offer. Either way, we cleaned these tobacco products up to keep them out of children's hands.

6.5.2 Social Environment

Personal beliefs were an important part of the social environment. Focusing on the social environment revealed various intriguing findings that considerably added to Gesler's (2003) social environment. This was partly due to the findings in this research not conforming perfectly with Gesler's (2003) social environment. An important factor in his vision of the social environment t was a healthier-patient relationship which manifested similarly to our conception of the biomedical doctor-patient relationship but much more egalitarian (Gesler, 2003). This relationship was pivotal in his research but was not the only important social environmental relationship. From this research, it appeared that playing certain roles was vital at times. This showed up as visitors asking how to memorialize deceased friends or family members, or visitors working directly with the abbot to work through a negative situation in their lives. The virtual roles in those cases were obvious. Other relationships were seen just as therapeutic as the healer-patient relationship, and at times the importance of solitude was just as important for health and wellbeing outcomes.

One noticeable type of social interaction at the Garden that seemed to be fundamental to facilitating a positive social environment was comradery. Comradery between retreatants, visitors, and Garden personnel was important for the facilitation of the therapeutic landscape's social environment. This was different than Gesler's (2003) definition which entailed the healer-patient relationship but actually occurred through shared experiences (Galbraith, 2000). Most of social interactions that fell into this category were retreatants attending a retreat or teaching together. Retreatants worked together and trusted each other which promoted long lasting bonds that often continued long after the retreat ended. The social environment created from these

comradely interactions were through shared experiences (Galbraith, 2000), which differed from Gesler's (2003) focus on the healer-patient relationship.

Another difference between Gesler's (2003) social environment and my research findings was the importance of solitude. Solitude was an interesting and yet seemingly paradoxical outcome from exploring the social environment. Solitude was important in the establishment of the therapeutic landscape for visitors engaging in the memorializing loved ones, ritual performances, and for some who were seeking some sort of health and wellbeing from their Garden visit. In a sense these findings were analogous to Mokos (2017) findings regarding the importance of privacy for homeless people performing very personal activities. As Mokos (2017) pointed out privacy was important when performing personal activities in public spaces. The importance of solitude in this research reaffirmed Mokos (2017) findings and must be considered a part of the overall social environment dynamics.

Seclusion also seemed to play an important role regarding offerings or more likely, the remnants of rituals that took place the preceding evening. The location where visitors performed their ritual in seclusion was around the prayer flag mound. The obvious reason for this was due to the prayer flag mound residing on a small hill that overlooked the valley. From a distance, the hill obstructed other visitors from observing ritual activities. Furthermore, the actual prayer flags provided additional seclusion through cover. Rituals performed on the prayer flag structure often used sweetgrass or sage, and on one occasion smoked salmon as a food offering. Mokos (2017) pointed out the importance of privacy in public spaces when performing personal activities. It was likely that visitors who performed rituals around the prayer flags felt compelled to find a private area on location to avoid questions prompted by other visitors or to avoid feeling awkward or embarrassed.

The social environment did not only pertain to interactions onsite but also encompassed the symbolization of important relationships through sponsoring Buddhas and stupas and dedicating them to important people in the sponsor's lives. Most of the time these were sponsored to family members, friends, and pets. A good portion of the 1,002 stupas designated were for deceased loved ones. These messages should be viewed as therapeutic even though the engravings were inscribed for the deceased as these held significance to the donor. Dedicated Buddhas, prayer flags, and stupas to a deceased loved ones were symbolic actions visitors enacted to facilitate the grieving process and at the same time designated a memorial location to which they could return whenever it felt necessary. This reaffirmed previous research indicating the dead remain an important part of friends' and family members' lives and an important means to remember and maintain some semblance of connection (Oyebode & Owens, 2016).

Dedicating Buddhas, prayer flags, and/or stupas to a loved was an individual process that was amplified through a few thousand inscriptions forming a plaque bricolage pieced together one message at a time echoing and amplifying previously inscribed dedications and the Garden's universal message of compassion, peace, and remembrance. It was quite possible that subsequent plaque messages dedicated to deceased family members were in part due to social diffusion (Green et al., 2009). The donor saw previous memorial messages and orchestrated similar messages that reified the location as a therapeutic landscape.

While many of these memorials were not orchestrated by the Garden administration originally, they have more recently focused attention to dedicate to deceased loved ones. With a new prayer flag structure with a carrying capacity of hundreds of prayer flags, the Garden began asking visitors for prayer flag financial donations. The Garden administration organized donation lists where lists were for the deceased or the living. A plaque board was constructed to house

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these names and a color-coding system was used to differentiate type of donated prayer flags by dividing it into two categories: 1) for the deceased and 2) for the living. Institutionalizing this practice, demonstrated the influence previous donors had in sponsoring and dedicating Buddhas and stupas to loved ones on the Garden administration focusing on the types of dedications that were previously important.

The official creation of prayer flag plaque donation system for the deceased may have been influenced by Sangha members, retreatants, and visitors designating Buddhas, and stupas to deceased loved ones. If this were the case, and it most likely may have been, then it demonstrated that social diffusion not only occurred between Sangha members, retreatants, and visitors, but it also influenced the perception of Garden administrators from the ground up. This would mean that Garden culture and official programs were not solely top-down oriented but bidirectional where information flowed in both directions.

The concept of benefiting not only one's self but other beings, which included humans, animals, and various types of other beings (earthly or spiritual) was a core belief in Tibetan Buddhism known as being a Boddhisatva (Pistono, 2014). Even though this is a Mahayana concept, which includes Tibetan Buddhism, it is important to note that Health Visitor 2 was not Buddhist, but she understood the importance of helping others in her community.

Various retreatants and volunteers conveyed that helping other beings was an important part of their practice. Participants believed that dedicating a Buddha, prayer flag, or stupa in the name of a loved one, whether living or dead, would relieve some of their negative karma, help

them have a beneficial rebirth[8], and would karmically connect the loved one with Rinpoche. Having a karmic connection with Rinpoche symbolized the potential for enlightenment as he was considered a qualified Tibetan Buddhist master who could guide practitioners along the path (Wallace, 2011). Furthermore, by generously offering these dedications for a loved one, it was also believed that the donor would karmically benefit as generosity is one of the six paramitas which Tibetan Buddhists must undertake to advance along the spiritual path towards enlightenment.[9] Dedicating Buddhas, prayer flags, and/or stupas was a two-fold process important to Tibetan Buddhists. First, dedicating in the name of a loved one benefited that person by reducing their negative karma, helping them achieve a beneficial rebirth, karmic connections to Rinpoche as a future personal Buddhist teacher. Second, it benefited the donor practice generosity. The spiritual health and wellbeing attributed to the act of dedicating in the name of loved ones was viewed as an exceptionally powerful means to achieve health and wellbeing.

6.6 Central Question Discussion

The central question is answered using all responses from the three subquestions. The central question posits: How do affective responses, personal beliefs, and messaging symbols at the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas impact visitors' social and symbolic environments and are these integral in therapeutic landscape development?

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[8] Beneficial rebirth occurs when a being dies and has been reborn as either a human, demigod, or god. These rebirths are considered important as there is more likelihood, they will practice the Dharma than those beings who have been reborn as a demon, hungry ghost, or animal. The beings born in the lower realms are tormented based on their particular realm and are less likely to practice the Dharma. Human beings are viewed as having the most fortunate rebirth as they are between the extremes and have enough drive to practice the Dharma (Patrul, 2010).

[9] The Six Paramitas include Generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, concentration, and wisdom (Patrul, 2010).

6.6.1 Social Environment Implications

Affective responses, personal beliefs, and messaging symbols were corollary in their ability to impact the social and symbolic environment. Quite frequently affective responses, personal beliefs, and messaging symbols were demonstrative of their interconnected nature fully illuminating their detailed impact on both the social and symbolic environments. For the most part, these dynamics were synergistic, functioned wholistically, and reified their dynamic counterpart.

Positive Affective Responses contributed to the social environment and were fundamental in the development of the Garden as a therapeutic landscape. As previously demonstrated in other research, positive affective responses were instrumental in fostering a sense of belonging (Power & Smyth, 2016). This sense of belonging was an important contributor to the social environment as it spurred interest in the organization as a whole and for retreatants it was an introduction to other like-minded individuals focusing on spiritual development. Sangha member relationships, which included student-teacher relationships, facilitated the desire to progress spiritually. A sense of belonging was instrumental to maintain one's spiritual practice even post-retreat ended and facilitated not only social health but also spiritual wellbeing.

A sense of belonging was further implicated in the social environment development through social interactions on location. Visitors who came for special events like the Peace Festival often noted how important the social dynamics were, which included this positive sense of belonging. Affective responses stemming from social interactions created a feedback loop where continual interactions reinforced the visitors' perception to the point where they identified other visitors and Garden personnel as spiritual companions or even friends despite the fact they

just met. Feedback loops were indicative of the body-mind-environment semiotic process (Newell, 2018). In this sense the site and the perception with which the visitors imbue the space acted as an intermediary for social interactions. Affective responses were important in these outcomes as the perception of safety and authentic social interactions led visitors to positively view social interactions. What this meant was that affective responses were central in the importance of building the social environment of the therapeutic landscape.

While the previous Positive Affective Response outcomes were based off experience, other Positive Affective Responses were more likely mediated through personal beliefs and through experiencing the social environment. These included Affective Responses Facilitating Positive Health, and Supernatural or Liminal Space Sensations. Visitors who perceived the site as healing due to the location's energies had a perception of the environment and the Positive Affective Responses manifested in accordance with those beliefs. As previously noted, intent was an important facilitator for health and wellbeing outcomes (Bowman, 2008). From this perspective, personal beliefs reinforced or became the lens for which all affective responses were mediated and interpreted, thus framing these experiences into preconceived notations and potential site-visitor outcomes. This was the primary purpose for visitors seeking beneficial health and wellbeing outcomes. Their intent was potentially the reason why they felt health and wellbeing benefits, almost like a placebo where they expected positive outcomes and felt they acquired them through their Garden visit. Unfortunately, with only four participants who accessed the Garden specifically for health and wellbeing purposes was impossible to infer this affective response-health dynamic as based solely on intent. More health-seeking visitors would be necessary to come to an appropriate conclusion.

Affective responses and personal beliefs formed a synergistic relationship to initiate certain outcomes. Affective responses were at times mediated through personal beliefs which also reinforced the overall therapeutic landscape. A prime example was the sense of safety amongst visitors. Feeling safe facilitated visitors to engage with the site uninhibited and authentically. As previously noted, this sense of safety differed from Gesler's (2003) concept as he focused on the built environment as structurally sound. The sense of safety elicited through interaction with the Garden pertained to the social environment where visitors felt comfortable exploring the Garden and even engaging in rituals with other visitors in close proximity.

Affective responses and messaging symbols also had a synergistic relationship that regularly impacted other social environment dynamics. Occasionally, visitors were so moved by their Garden experience that they left offerings they had on their person including jewelry, money, or other personal items. These items became messaging symbols and a part of the social environment where other visitors could determine their meaning. In a sense, this reflected the idea that Rosenau (1991) introduced in her book that illustrated the author is no longer in complete control of the book's meaning and significance. The reader, being able to construe his/her/other's own interpretations, gave them the authority to dictate meaning; they were the author through interpretation (Rosenau, 1991). In this sense, subsequent visitors became the author of the offering intention where their interpretations were just as important as initial donor's (Rosenau, 1991). Offerings not only impacted other visitors through their curiosity, but became symbols for social diffusion (Green et al., 2009). Offerings became symbols to subsequent visitors who comprehended the act of offering was a cultural norm at the Garden, which may have been perceived as almost a requirement through their abundance. Social diffusion has changed the overall Garden culture to include offering as a part of the visitation

process which was highly observable and transmissible from the donor to subsequent visitors over countless interactions at the Garden. This form of social diffusion was different than the dissemination of technology or some other helpful community-based implementation strategy (Green et al., 2009). Social Diffusion at the Garden was a natural process where visitors opted to offer objects that represented them or their spiritual needs. In a sense, offerings were symbols reflecting the idea that spirituality was about personal transformation instead of a community oriented one (Nilsson & Tesfahuney, 2018; Østergaard & Refslund Christensen, 2010).

Personal beliefs also had the same impact on the social environment through messaging symbols. The only difference between affective responses and personal beliefs was the fact that messaging symbols were preselected and brought to offer on location. As messaging symbols these preselected offerings were also important in the social diffusion process and maybe even more so than impromptu offerings elicited through affective responses as this included creativity which intentionally piqued subsequent visitors' curiosity. As previously noted in chapter five, some offerings were beautifully painted rocks, or even obituaries, representing a myriad of ideas and beliefs. The intentionality behind these offerings was ambiguous and thought-provoking as these contributions had personal stories interwoven into their unknown significance. Intentionality was bound up as a symbol for others to observe and interpret of their own accord. As Newell (2018) noted, intentionality may not be translated but was interpreted by the observer giving them personal meaning.

6.6.2 Symbolic Environment Impacts

Like the social environment, affective responses, personal beliefs, and messaging symbols impacted the symbolic environment. Part of the overall symbolic environment was constructed intentionally. The Garden symbolization was bound up in concepts which included a

location for health and wellbeing, ancient Tibetan Buddhist knowledge, and a spiritual location for all. Others have attributed the Garden with other symbolic qualities which included even a vortex where the spiritual and physical worlds were separated by a very thin veil which at times ruptured or was porous enough for "sensitive" people to access the spiritual energy. Nevertheless, the symbolic environment has been consistently mediated through the visitor interaction with the site.

Out of all relationships researched the most obvious and directly connected to the symbolic environment were messaging symbols. Messaging symbols were smaller parts of the symbolic environment that represented slivers of its significance. Unofficial offerings were offerings intentionally or unintentionally offered at the Garden. These pieces contributed to the overall symbolic environment through a bricolage approach where offerings were multi-vocal containing a myriad of meanings (Turner, 1967). Through the occasional process of removing offerings (to prevent too many offerings from building up), the location was prepped for the next wave of offerings to commence. This process occurred every few weeks throughout the summer where offerings were continually introduced, removed, introduced, and removed once again. Thus, forming iterations of the Garden, which unlikely differed from one iteration to the next. This process has been ongoing for at least the past 12 years.

Personal beliefs directly impacted the symbolic environment as these manifested as messaging symbols. First and foremost, both unofficial and official messages were creative endeavors that the Garden administration allowed to occur. Official messages were plaques intended to endure for the foreseeable future and the Garden included pertinent information related to Tibetan Buddhism and its philosophy. The Buddha statues always included a name of one of the 1,002 Buddhas and a description of how that Buddha was introduced to the Dharma.

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All Stupas were inscribed with the Bodhisattva message, "May All Beings Benefit." These plaques disseminated Tibetan Buddhist information but allowed for personalized messages.

If plaque messages were considered official, then offerings visitors left at innumerable locations on site would be considered the unofficial messages. The only difference was the fact that official messages contained the Bodhisattva messages, which were cultural Tibetan Buddhist symbols of peace and compassion towards every sentient being, while the integration of the personal message was more rooted in the individual's intent.

Previous research interpreted similar messages as a subunit of the cultural ideology, which considered small scale universes to be reflective of supernatural ideology (Geertz, 1973). However, these multivariate messages were more akin to bricolage demonstrating individual compassionate messages interwoven into the Garden's overall peace and compassion message not to reinforce it but to create a rich tapestry of symbols meant for the donor and subsequent visitors alike. These personalized messages reflected spiritual values and personal connections. This bricolage assemblage of personal messages and Garden messaging were intertwined forming a co-constructed symbolic environment. Each personal message was not a microcosm of the whole Garden symbolic environment, but rather an individual message amplifying, changing, and influencing the entire symbolic environment. This was evident in the types of personal messages that reflected a wide array of themes from memorials to family members, animals, or even as a prayer to benefit people with mental health illnesses.

Through the process of personalizing plaque messages and the ability to leave offerings, visitors co-constructed the symbolic environment. With approximately 120 stupas still awaiting sponsorship, these messages will also add harmoniously to the overall symbolic message for generations to come. Leaving offerings will continue for as long as the Garden administration

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allows it to happen. Both official and unofficial messaging will continue to be a part of the

Garden and interpreted in a myriad of ways. Offerings were a powerful way to show appreciation

for the location and add to its intrinsic nature all at the same time.

From the postmodern viewpoint interpretations were personal and individualized where

even visitors with the same belief system might have interpreted the symbolic environment

differently (Rosenau, 1991). Viewed through this concept, the symbolic environment changed

with every personal interaction. Messaging symbols varied based on individual interactions and

were influenced by personal beliefs. These offerings were a form of simulacra where visitors

copied the offering habits of others to a point where no original referent could be identified

(Baudrillard, 1994). Visitors further added to the offering process through not only copying the

offering process, but they also personalized it based on the donor's conception, or at the very

minimum, what they had in their pockets at the time of their visit. This simulacra process

demonstrated the force of social diffusion, but through the spiritualistic lens of satisfying one's

own spiritual outcomes (Green et al., 2009; Østergaard & Refslund Christensen, 2010). These

messaging symbols that were interpreted by subsequent visitors impacted their perceptions of the

symbolic environment based on offerings. This process was a dialogic between visitor, the four

environments, and interpretations of other visitor interactions that manifested in offerings.

According to Newell (2018), affective force was found in signs and accessed through the

dialogic process. This seemed plausible as visitors often reacted to offerings left onsite even if

they did not know their exact purpose. What became clear was offerings and plaque messages

had agency in the visitor-offering dialogic process. These offerings influenced perceptions and

emotions.

Messaging symbols were symbols of investment and even at times ownership of the Garden. Through creatively interacting with the Garden through offering and sponsoring Buddha and/or stupa plaques, visitors indicated they felt ownership in the Garden. This was a sense of belonging for these visitors who identified with the Garden as an important part of their lives. Other research has indicated this sense of belonging was important for reported wellbeing, which this research reaffirmed (Orthel, 2022). Leaving offerings and sponsoring Buddhas and stupas was a means to facilitate health and wellbeing through building a sense of belonging.

Visitors interacted with the symbolic environment, through symbolic messages, and personal beliefs. These visitors invariably felt affective responses which they interpreted as bodily sensations and feelings in connection to the symbolic environment. This occurred due to the dialogic process between the visitor and the Garden. As previously discussed, visitors left impromptu offerings at the Garden based on how they felt about their interaction with the Garden and what offerings they had immediately available during their Garden visit. These symbolic messages became intertwined with the symbolic environment as subsequent visitors interacted with the Garden that contained them.

6.6.3 Critical for Therapeutic Landscape Development

After answering how affective responses, personal beliefs, and messaging symbols impacted the social and symbolic environments, it was important to explore their necessity in the development of a therapeutic landscape. Through this research, each area of focus seemed important to the development of the therapeutic landscape. The exploration of each area determined how vital these are to the development of a therapeutic landscape.

Affective responses were integral and potentially the most critical in therapeutic landscape development. Based on this research, affective responses were important for the

dialectical process that occurred between the person and the external environment. Previous research has indicated that spaces like the Garden help visitors destress from their hectic daily lives (Progano et al., 2020). The research at the Garden indicated that Calming and Grounding Responses encouraged stressed visitors to relax while visiting this cultural heritage location embedded in a natural environment. Findings from other studies also corroborated these outcomes. For example, Cho et al.'s (2015) study indicated the importance of cultural locations that promote the sensation of leaving stress behind which further benefited visitors to begin emotional healing.

The affective response findings seemed to agree with other research outcomes including Power and Smyth's (2016) that indicated Positive Affective Responses enabled a sense of belonging and social wellbeing. This fact was echoed in this research through the indication that social connection fostered a sense of wellbeing.

Personal beliefs were an important part of the Garden as they determined to what extent the location was therapeutic and how to enact or empower those qualities. Personal beliefs formed a feedback loop with affective responses as personal beliefs were reified through how visitors felt about their experience at the Garden. Personal beliefs seemed to enhance from the location but did not seem necessary.

Part of this rested on the fact that almost every participant felt Calming and Grounding Affective Responses from their Garden experience. This occurred despite the variation within personal beliefs, and further reaffirmed the biophilia hypothesis Gesler (2003) mentioned in his book. The basis for the hypothesis indicated humans evolved in natural spaces and were comforted when situated within those locations (Gesler, 2003). 95% of participants perceived calming and grounding type sensations from exploring the Garden, and over 60% of participants

specified the importance of the natural environment and potentially indicated the Biophilia

Hypothesis may be correct. Furthermore, many tourists were curious about the Garden had no

noticeable perceived beliefs regarding the location (some treated it like a tourist destination) felt

Calming and Grounding Affective Response type sensations. Based on these percentages, it

appeared that personal beliefs were inconsequential in Calming and Grounding affective

response outcomes.

Even though affective responses occurred from direct visitor-site experiences, personal

beliefs still seemed important for the therapeutic landscape development outcomes. These beliefs

seemed to enhance personal experiences and reported outcomes. Personal beliefs were also

complicit in how visitors interacted with the site including the performance of their own rituals

and practices they deemed important for their overall health and wellbeing which included

spiritual health.

Like personal beliefs, messaging symbols were an important part of the research findings

but should be considered as fundamental for therapeutic landscape development. Messaging

symbols necessary for the development of a therapeutic landscape would include potentially

natural elements such as water, which has been associated with healing (Gesler, 2003). Visitors

naturally gathered around the pond for various reasons, one of which was to meditate. There was

a sense the pond was calming and therefore the perfect place to engage in these mental and

spiritual practices. Other messaging symbols could be religious symbols and potentially social

interactions (Turner, 1967). These messaging symbols contextualized and became a part of the

symbolic environment. These symbols and interactive nature influences health and wellbeing and

could have applications in cultural heritage, medical anthropology and therapeutic landscape

research and applied implementation.

The distinction between other locations and the Garden was that this site allowed visitors to offer objects for their own desires and wishes. The Garden was special in this aspect as personalization was encouraged through official messaging symbols and did not discourage the placement of offerings throughout the site. Chatterjee and Noble (2009) noted similar research outcomes from patients handling natural and archaeological artifacts, known as object therapy. Their research unveiled the connection between object therapy and a post-experiment sense of wellbeing (Chatterjee & Noble, 2009). Placing objects as a ritual or as demonstration of appreciation was akin to object therapy in which visitors engaged for personal benefit. The only difference between Chatterjee and Noble's (2009) research and this research were the types of offerings. Chatterjee and Noble (2009) used objects from a museum collection whereas visitors who came to the Garden brought their own objects which held significant personal value.

6.7 Contributions and Implications of the Findings

This research has contributed to the fields of cultural heritage and therapeutic landscapes through an anthropological lens which has interwoven cultural heritage research theories into the therapeutic landscape theoretical framework. These two theoretical frameworks share significant overlap through landscape space and use. This research has also contributed towards the understanding of how therapeutic landscapes develop organically where affective responses, symbols, signs, and social diffusion were a part of the dialogic process between the visitor and the environment. It also demonstrated the significance of cultural heritage landscapes as therapeutic landscapes where visitors can connect with their culture and personal beliefs. This final section specifies the research contributions, the implications of this research, recommendations, and future research as concluding thoughts.

The first contribution of this research indicated that affective responses were an important facilitator for the health and wellbeing outcomes through direct site interaction at the Garden. Previous research has not focused on affective responses and their connections to health and wellbeing, so these findings seem to be novel and have significant implications to the field and for future research.

The implication of this first contribution is the fact that affective responses are facilitators of health and wellbeing and are elicited through site interaction. The implications of this research suggest that accessing spaces that elicit bodily responses are important for health and wellbeing and are potentially the mechanism for health and wellbeing outcomes through therapeutic landscape interactions. In effect, this research demonstrates a direct relationship between affective responses and their role in health and wellbeing outcomes from site interaction. It is important to note that health and wellbeing outcomes pertained to a reduction in stress, social inclusivity, and a sense of spiritual wellness or wholeness.

The second contribution also pertained to affective responses and health and wellbeing outcomes in the form of safety and security. Most research noted the importance of the home environment or living facility was important (Gesler, 2003; Karasaki et al., 2017) but often neglected the importance of safety and security as an integral component of the social environment. The second implication of this research indicates that safety and security are also a critical component of the social and potentially even the natural environment and necessitates the expansion of safety and security as a prerequisite for health and wellbeing facilitation from interaction with a therapeutic site.

The third contribution of this research demonstrates that personal health and wellbeing beliefs are formative in the construction of a therapeutic landscape because of social dynamics

that are currently changing the way visitors access and perceive these cultural and therapeutic landscapes. Part of the change might be from shifts in our society which no longer values social cohesion like in the past because visitors perceive their personal spiritual values as primary for site interaction (Nilsson & Tesfahuney, 2018; Østergaard & Refslund Christensen, 2010). Through agency, visitors have instituted their own means to determine the significance of the site and how the location is healing. This move towards personal spirituality has become a means to define locations on the individual level.

These changes have also had an impact on the social environment where visitors seek out their own health and wellbeing outcomes that now seldom rely on the healer-visitor relationship. This healer-visitor relationship is an integral part of the social environment's definition Gessler (2003) previously proposed. The implications require the reframing of Gesler's (2003) social environment based on two key points. First, Gesler's (2003) assessment of the social environment seemed to focus on roles participants played. While this was occasionally crucial in my research, the participant's roles were not as important as the quality of the interaction which proved significant. Genuine interactions were seen as healing through simple social connection which was practically impossible to orchestrate during the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of the time, no social roles were necessary to facilitate health and wellbeing.

Second, the research has indicated that healing occurs through a continuum from immersed social interactions to complete solitude. Various participants noted that they preferred solitude as a part of their healing process. Through these interactions and interviews, the social environment should be viewed as a continuum where sometimes interacting with the social environment is necessary while for other situations isolation might be best. For others it was important to know that other visitors were walking around the Garden grounds but far enough

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away that privacy was maintained. Because of this shift in social priorities, a significant recommendation regarding the social environment must occur and is outlined in the recommendation section.

The fourth contribution demonstrated the importance of personalization through the placement of health and wellbeing messaging symbols throughout the Garden. Personalization has some similarities to object therapy where personal interaction with objects elicits a positive sense of wellbeing (Chatterjee & Noble, 2009). Personalization is not only impactful for the person initiating the personalization but is a type of social diffusion.

The implication for personalization is that it facilitates the co-construction of the therapeutic landscape through social diffusion. While social diffusion is a theoretical concept borrowed from applied anthropology to describe the Theory of Innovation, it was practical in its application. Social diffusion helped formulate how participants engaged with the landscape and how their activities are at times interpreted as symbols. In this case, there were symbols other visitors are allowed to perform their own rituals or leave their own offerings. Through this process offerings become social and are interpreted by subsequent visitors forming a type of social connection between visitors but with an offering as intermediary. Interestingly, some offerings were moved or modified by subsequent visitors for a plethora of reasons. These additions, changes, and deletions subtly changed the overall social environment thus allowing visitors to partially compose its meaning at the individual level.

The general contributions of this research indicate the importance of cultural heritage sites like the Garden are therapeutic benefiting a wide array of visitors alike. This revelation is important not only for cultural heritage, therapeutic landscape, medical anthropology research, but also public health. What this research demonstrates is that accessing a cultural landscape has

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many potential benefits which include the reduction of stress, the facilitation of social, and spiritual wellbeing.

The general findings in this research are important for the fields of cultural heritage and therapeutic landscapes through a medical anthropological lens aimed at using an applied approach to address health and wellbeing needs of communities. The implications of the findings indicated that cultural heritage use of affective response theory and therapeutic landscape theories can be merged to further advance both fields of knowledge. Focusing on affective responses used in cultural heritage to explore the benefits from visiting cultural sites are applicable to therapeutic landscape research. This is also an implication for cultural heritage locations to serve as alternatives to blue and green spaces which exemplify similar health and wellbeing outcomes (Gesler, 2003; A. Williams, 1998).

6.7.3 Recommendations

The first recommendation is to explore therapeutic landscape outcomes through affective responses. A benefit to using affective responses is more than just feelings alone. Affective responses include bodily sensations which have the potential to contextualize visitor-site experiences more than feelings alone. Focusing on affective responses is important because fo the mind-body connection. This connection is important but seems to be overlooked in research focusing on cultural heritage and therapeutic landscape research.

The second recommendation regards the definition of Gesler's (2023) social environment. Through this research it has been indicated that safety is an integral part of the social environment. For this purpose, as requires safety as definition used in therapeutic landscape research to be expanded to include social dynamics. Feeling socially safe in a

therapeutic landscape to engage with the landscape in an authentic manner is critical for the facilitation of health and wellbeing outcomes. This safety requires a level of trust between visitors onsite where all visitors respect and potentially even help others wishing to engage with the site in culturally appropriate manner.

The third recommendation is the redefinition of the social environment. Due to these observations, the social environment should be defined as follows:

- A social space on a continuum spanning from complete solitude to continual social interactions where people socially construct interactions organically.

- These interactions are generally informal but for the most part positively impact the parties involved in the social interaction.

- For people who rather not have direct contact with others, the social environment is recognizing other people in the same space and adjusting your behavior based on your needs and the perceived needs of other people.

- The social environment may allow space for various parties to play social roles, which may include a health practitioner or spiritual guide, but this is not necessary in all cases.

The second recommendation focuses on the implementation of personalization as a therapeutic tool to help facilitate the healing process of the individual. Cultural heritage sites could research possible personalization avenues that could benefit visitors similarly to sponsoring Buddhas and stupas to inscribe messages for themselves and others. Sponsoring plaques was healing to donors and this process could easily be modified at other cultural heritage locations.

6.7.3 For Practitioners and Others

One recommendation implicit through this research that became evident, and directly linked to the last general implication, is the necessity to list cultural heritage locations as potential therapeutic landscapes that may facilitate health and wellbeing outcomes as effectively as both blue and green zones. Most researchers in health-related fields already recognize the importance of blue and green zones to facilitate health and wellbeing (Gesler, 2003). The addition of cultural heritage locations to these listed beneficial zones could increase the general public's awareness of the benefit each of these locations promotes. By adding cultural heritage as a healing zone, these may prove more accessible to visitors who have restricted access to blue or green zones due to living location.

Exploring the Garden as a cultural heritage location that has been actively accessed for health and wellbeing qualities was beneficial through a medical anthropological lens, or more broadly, an applied anthropological lens. The field of anthropology in general has an immense tool chest of different approaches used to extract the appropriate information where visitors engage with a site in a semi-private manner. Keeping detailed field notes, documenting offerings, participant observation techniques, and performing formal and informal interviews with various participants was beneficial to explore visitor-site interactions in the fullest possible detail. While anthropological methods are slowly being adopted in social science research areas, I think research like this demonstrates its beneficial use in adjacent fields. Researchers in areas like health geography, which includes therapeutic landscapes, could easily integrate these techniques into current field research that would contextualize survey outcomes amongst other regular data collecting strategies with the hopes of illuminating intriguing findings to come.

6.7.2 For Future Study

One potential future research study could focus on confirming the transferability of these findings to other sites where visitors interact with the location similarly. Bear Butte in South Dakota is an area which various participants referred me to as a potential research area as the location is very similar to the Garden, which also allows visitors to leave offerings around the location. According to participants, the dynamics are similar enough to potentially draw comparisons between these research findings and locations if a similar study were executed.

The other potential avenue to advance this research would be to re-explore the Garden but this time focus on affective responses changes pre and post visit to demonstrate their change through exposure to a cultural heritage and therapeutic landscape. This could help indicate the magnitude of the change in response to the participant's visit. This would allow for a statistical analysis to determine if changes in affective responses were significant and by how much.

Additionally, researching how Native Americans regard the Garden space would be important research as the Garden is on a Native American reservation. The valley itself is considered a spiritual location and cultural landscape for Native Americans living in the area. Researching how these liminal spaces interact and how Native Americans view this intersection would prove valuable as many locations are significant to multiple cultures.

An interesting development with the potential to completely disrupt and negatively impact the Garden as a therapeutic landscape occurred while I was in the middle of field research. One of the neighbors decided to bid on an asphalt road construction project to widen the 93 Highway north of the Garden. The owner of the property wants to turn 150 acres into a gravel pit and asphalt plant to reduce material costs. This opencut mine and asphalt plant on this

property that is approximately a 1/2 mile away would completely disrupt the spiritual nature as well as the peace and calm experiences that visitors want from their Garden experience. The constant noise from machinery and fully loaded trucks would, without a doubt, increase air and noise pollution, and potentially contaminate nearby streams. Friends of the Jocko is a grassroots non-profit organization that is fighting this permit as landowners living close to the proposed site would be negatively impacted by air, noise, and water pollution. Researching the impact of the asphalt plant and gravel pit has on the Garden experience would be needed as the permitting process thus far has lacked rigor and has only implemented superficial archeological and environmental assessments that are outdated. Researching how these relaxed environmental laws, policies, and impact neighbors endure could inform policy makers and politicians of potential necessary changes.

Appendix A:

Glossary of Terms

Affective responses.

A state of being that may or may not be registered and interpreted as an emotion. Affective responses are elicited from direct interaction with the environment and are unconscious, or subconscious which are eventually mentally interpreted to bodily sensations, feelings, and emotions (Crouch, 2015; Newell, 2018)

Authenticity.

A term used to define the authentic nature of the tangible, material object or intangible cultural aspect. Authenticity varies from one culture to the next. For the purposes of this research Authenticity will be defined as a culturally defined sense of genuine tangible material object and or intangible cultural aspect that the culture accepts as being rooted in cultural representation, tradition and values.

Boddhisattva.

A person who intentionally refrains from entering nirvana in the pursuit of helping other sentient beings achieve enlightenment (Nhat Hanh, 1998).

Buddha.

An enlightened being and knower (Nhat Hanh, 1998). The historical taught the way to gain enlightenment and through this process created the Buddhist religion.

Cultural Landscape.

The manifestation of information flows that penetrates into a culture where the landscape has taken on characteristics of a culture through built objects that represent the culture (Lehr & Cipko, 2015).

Noncurated.

A term used to indicate that a cultural heritage location lacks curated means to help visitors decipher the location's purpose.

Social Diffusion.

Defined as the uncontrolled natural spread of concepts and ideas (Green et al., 2009).

Stupa.

Stupas are mounds that house the cremated remains of the Buddha, Bodhisattvas, monks, and nuns. Stupas in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition have symbolism built into their design to represent the levels of accomplishment towards enlightenment amongst various other attributes.

Therapeutic Landscape.

An area that is deemed therapeutic through build, natural, social and symbolic environments (Gesler, 2003).

Vajrakilaya.

A being who was known as the black rudra, or powerful demon that was subjugated to various Buddhas (Namdrol, 1995). After the black rudra's subjugation, he became a protector of the Dharma to help practitioners ward off hinderances that Tibetan Buddhist practitioners face as well as preventing other harmful beings from causing obscurations to authentic Tibetan Buddhist practitioners (Namdrol, 1995).

Vajrasattva.

A meditational deity used in Tibetan Buddhism to confess one's negative actions and used as a meditational method to purify these transgressions.

Yumchenmo.

Is the central figure at the Garden that represents primordial wisdom and skillful compassionate means.

Zambhala.

A meditational deity used to attract good luck and wealth to individuals, and to a location. Zambhala may be seen as being synonymous with Ganesh or Ganesha, a Hindu deity.

Appendix B:

Open-Ended Interview Questions

1. Why did you come to the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas today?

2. What aspects of this location do you find therapeutic?

3. How do you personally define health and wellbeing?

4. How do you feel when you come to the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas?

5. What impact do these feelings and sensations have on your health and wellbeing?

6. What are your personal health and wellbeing beliefs has led you to visit the garden for health and healing?

7. When you visit this location, what impact does seeing visitors engaging in ritual activities, leisure, yoga, or meditation have on you?

8. What health and wellbeing activities do you see people engage in at the Garden that you may consider personally adopting?

9. How do you feel about the plaques dedicated to Tibetan Buddhist teachers, friends, family, pets and loved ones who have died?

(**Possible Prob:** Do you have a plaque? If so, what significance does purchasing this plaque have for you?)

10. How do offerings visitors bring to this location impact the therapeutic qualities of this location?

(**Possible Prob:** Did you leave any offerings? If so, what significance does purchasing this plaque have for you?)

11. How do you think visitors experience personal messages of endearment and personal offerings left by other visitors? (Sub-question 3)

12. What sort of health and wellbeing aspects do you think other visitors gain from visiting the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas (Sub-question 2)?

13. How important would privacy be to you if you were to make an offering while visiting the Garden?

Appendix C:

IRB Exemption

Salish Kootenai College
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1/25/2022

Mr. Andrew Ranck

Anthropology Department, University of Montana
432 Bannack CT S

Missoula, MT 59802

Cc: Dr. Gregory Campbell IRB

Protocol # 2022_1_Ranck

Title of Project: The Cultivation of Affective Responses: A Multiethnic Approach to understanding Visitor Responses and Experiences at the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas

Dear Mr. Ranck:

Thank you for responding with requested additional information and changes to your proposed research project. This letter serves as official notification of the results of the review of your project by the Salish Kootenai College Institutional Review Board. Your project was reviewed in accordance with Salish Kootenai College's Institutional Review Board policies, this institution's Federal Wide Assurance FWA00010681 and the DHHS Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46). The IRB notes that an email from the Garden of 1,000 Buddhas providing site permission.

The SKC IRB has determined that your project is EXEMPT from review under 45 CFR 46.104, Exempt Category 2. Therefore, there is no expiration date for this project and a final report is not required.

If there is a change in the approved research plan, you must notify the SKC IRB. A change in the research subjects or research methods may trigger a change in review status. If there are

changes in the procedures outlined in your application, you may amend your protocol by submitting the Request for Amendment form available on the SKC IRB website. You must also notify the Salish Kootenai College Institutional Review Board of any adverse events occurring during the study, if there is an unanticipated increased risk to participants, or if there are complaints about the study.

If you have any questions, please contact Stacey Sherwin, IRB Chair, at (406) 275-4931 or stacey_sherwin@skc.edu.

Stacey Sherwin, Ph.D., via electronic signature

Stacey Sherwin, Ph.D.

Chair, Salish Kootenai College Institutional Review Board

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