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人間佛教在澳洲本土化研究 - 以南天寺為例
Localization of Humanistic Buddhism in Australia:
Nan Tien Temple as example

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ABSTRACT

When Humanistic Buddhism is being brought to a new country, inevitably, it will change and adapt to the needs of the local people. For Australia, it all began in 1989 when the first venerable was sent to Australia with a mission to build a temple at Wollongong. Master Hsing Yun has the vision that within twenty to thirty years, the overseas FGS branch temples will be in charge by the local people of that country. As NTT is approaching its twentieth next year, it seems there is a gap between reality and Master Hsing Yun's vision.

This thesis research hopes to achieve three purposes. One is to discuss the challenges for the 'Western Australians' that are currently volunteering and working at NTT. Two is to find out how will 'Western Australians' stay on to become 'Long-term Devotees'. Three is to provide guidelines to localize Humanistic Buddhism for FGS branch temples in Australia with a focus on 'Western Australians.' In conclusion, I will make reference to Master Hsing Yun's 'Thirty-year plan' of localization to evaluate NTT.

Keywords: Localization, Humanistic Buddhism in Australia, Nan Tien Temple, Fo Guang Shan, Master Hsing Yun

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to the people at Nan Tien Temple, as well as members of BLIA, Sydney and BLIAYAD, Sydney. For I will not be the person I am if I never met you.

I would also like to dedicate it to my parents for bringing me to Australia, as life would be unimaginable had we stayed in Malaysia.



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My deepest gratitude to Venerable Master Hsing Yun for your wisdom in creating opportunities of learning, setting the platform for many young people to find their purpose in life, encouraging us to extend our horizons, making history with what we do and discover our innate boundless potential.

My sincere thanks to my supervisor Prof. Yung Dong for your quick responses and valuable feedback, without you, I would not be able to finish my thesis on time.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BLIA	Buddha's Light International Association
FGS	Fo Guang Shan
NTT	Nan Tien Temple
NTI	Nan Tien Institute



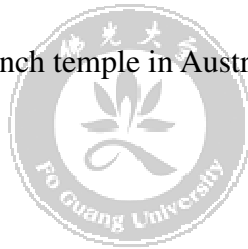
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

With an intention to provide some useful information, this chapter will begin with a brief historical background, and define some terms used in the context of this thesis. Next, moving onto the research motivation, purpose, and problem statements including reviews on selected literatures. Ending with the research scope and limitation.

1.1. BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

This section will give short historical backgrounds on Fo Guang Shan (FGS), the founder of FGS Master Hsing Yun and FGS's branch temple in Australia Nan Tien Temple (NTT).

1.1.1. About Fo Guang Shan



In 1967, Master Hsing Yun founded FGS. However, the now FGS used to be a wasteland that no one wanted.¹ FGS is a temple made up of five peaks arranged in the lotus petals shape, located in Dashu District of Kaohsiung City, southern part of Taiwan.

FGS has four objectives: Promoting Dharma (Buddha's teachings) through culture; Fostering talent through education; Benefiting society through charity; and Purifying people's

¹ Fu, Zhiying. *Bright Star Luminous Cloud: The Life of a Simple Monk*, Buddha's Light Publishing, Hacienda Heights, 2008, p. 110

minds through cultivation.²

After forty years since its founding, the temple complex of FGS has developed into a magnificent place that has won the hearts of lay and monastic communities. FGS also incorporates many innovative principles and ideas in the areas of Dharma propagation and education.³

1.1.2. About Master Hsing Yun

Master Hsing Yun, born in 1927 at Yangzhou of Jiangsu Province in China, and became a novice monk in 1938 under Master Zhi Kai at Qixia Temple in Nanjing, China. In 1947, he graduated from Jiaoshan Buddhist College. In 1949, he came to Taiwan. In 1953, he taught at the Buddhist Chanting Association in Yilan. In 1957, Master Hsing Yun set up a Buddhist cultural center, which became the Foguang Cultural Enterprise Co., Ltd today.⁴ In 1967, both Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Order and Fo Guang Shan Monastery were founded.

Recognizing Buddhism progressively growing out of touch with society, Master Hsing Yun wanted to change the roles and functions of Buddhism in society. He proactively

² From the booklet of 2012 International Youth Seminar on Life and Ch'an

³ Fu, Zhiying. *Bright Star Luminous Cloud: The Life of a Simple Monk*, Buddha's Light Publishing, Hacienda Heights, 2008, p. 106

⁴ Master Hsing Yun. *The Buddha's Light Philosophy*, Buddha's Light Publishing, Los Angeles, 2010, p. ix

promoted Humanistic Buddhism. To Master Hsing Yun, Humanistic Buddhism is “whatever was spoken by the Buddha, and needed by the people; all that is pure, good and beautiful; any teachings that can help in increasing human happiness.”⁵

He has devoted his whole life to promote the principles of Humanistic Buddhism, establishing branch temples around the world, free medical clinic, universities, high schools, primary schools, kindergarten, Buddhist research institutes, Buddhist colleges, art galleries, and so on.⁶ Quote Fu’s book:

“His discussions of the Dharma are intended to give everyone a clear understanding of it; his books and articles are intended to give everyone a sense of experience; his building of temples is meant for everyone’s use; his organizing of activities is meant for everyone’s participation; and his holding of Dharma assemblies offers everyone a sense of Dharma joy. Whenever he gives teachings abroad, he always provides a translation, for he is always concerned about the needs of all at anytime and in anyplace.”⁷

In 1992, the Buddha’s Light International Association (BLIA) World Headquarters was founded in the United States. Since then, BLIA has become internationalized and began Dharma propagation in the world. It also has laid a new milestone for Buddhism, as well as

⁵ Fu, Zhiying. *Bright Star Luminous Cloud: The Life of a Simple Monk*, Buddha’s Light Publishing, Hacienda Heights, 2008, p. 287

⁶ From the booklet of 2012 International Youth Seminar on Life and Ch’an

⁷ Fu, Zhiying. *Bright Star Luminous Cloud: The Life of a Simple Monk*, Buddha’s Light Publishing, Hacienda Heights, 2008, p. 288

opening up causes and conditions to learn the Dharma for many lay devotees.⁸ Until today, over a million people practice and follow the Buddha's teachings under Master Hsing Yun, and he also tonsured over about two thousand monastics worldwide.⁹

1.1.3. About Nan Tien Temple

Nan Tien Temple (NTT) is one of the branch temples of FGS, located at Berkeley in Wollongong of New South Wales, Australia. The words "Nan Tien" in Chinese literally mean "Paradise of the South".¹⁰

Completed in 1995 and officially opened on 8th October, NTT claimed to be the largest Buddhist temple in the southern hemisphere at that time. In order for 'the light of the Buddha will shine everywhere and that the waters of the Dharma will flow forever', the complex of NTT has been constructed to promote cultural exchange between the East and West, the North and South.¹¹

Since the opening, NTT has become a place for local and international tourists acting as

⁸ From the handbook of 2012 BLIA World Headquarters General Conference

⁹ Master Hsing Yun. *The Buddha's Light Philosophy*, Buddha's Light Publishing, Los Angeles, 2010, p. x

¹⁰ From the booklet of 2012 International Youth Seminar on Life and Ch'an

¹¹ Edited by Smith, Barry. *Nan Tien Temple – Paradise of the Southern Hemisphere*, Rala International Pty Ltd, 1995

an important cultural center for bringing together different cultures.¹² The NTT has embraced the Buddhist tradition with a garden filled with trees, shrubs and plants. This is to represent the living quarters of the Buddha and his disciples. Most were set in a quiet peaceful environment, encircled by trees, shrubs and flowers. Adjacent to the temple, more than 10,000 Australian native trees and shrubs have been planted extensively in the garden area.¹³

1.2. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

There are a few terms that I will be using in the context of this thesis research. The first term is 'Localization'. According to Collins online dictionary, the word 'localize' means, "To make or become local in attitude, behavior, etc."¹⁴ Therefore, for this thesis, 'Localization' means, "the becoming of local in attitude, behavior and so on."

The second term is 'Local People'. The Oxford online dictionary defines 'local' as "relating or restricted to a particular area or one's neighborhood."¹⁵ Hence, 'Local People' means "the people that live in the neighboring areas of Nan Tien Temple" for this thesis.

¹² <http://www.nantien.org.au/en/about/about-us.asp> [Retrieved on 16th November 2012]

¹³ Edited by Smith, Barry. *Nan Tien Temple – Paradise of the Southern Hemisphere*, Rala International Pty Ltd, 1995

¹⁴ <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/localize?showCookiePolicy=true> [Retrieved on 6th May 2013]

¹⁵ <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/local?q=local> [Retrieved on 6th May 2013]

The third term is 'Western Australian.' According to the Oxford online dictionary, the word 'Western' means, "living in or originating from the West, in particular Europe or the United States."¹⁶ The second word is 'Australian'. Collins online dictionary defines it as "a native or inhabitant of Australia."¹⁷ In this thesis, 'Western Australian' means "a person who is a native Australian whose ancestors are originally from the West." In other words, 'Western Australian' to me is someone who does not speak or understand Chinese and is not from an Asian ethnic.

The fourth term is 'Long-term Devotee'. According to Collins online dictionary, 'long-term' means, "lasting, staying, or extending over a long time."¹⁸ The Oxford online dictionary defines 'devotee' as "a strong believer in a particular religion or god."¹⁹ When used in the context of this thesis, it means "a person who has a lasting belief in the teachings of the Buddha." Hence, 'Long-term Devotee' is a devotee of FGS in the context of this thesis.

¹⁶ <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/western?q=western> [Retrieved on 6th May 2013]

¹⁷ <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/australian?showCookiePolicy=true> [Retrieved on 6th May 2013]

¹⁸ <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/long-term?showCookiePolicy=true> [Retrieved on 6th May 2013]

¹⁹ <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/devotee?q=devotee> [Retrieved on 6th May 2013]

1.3. MOTIVATION

During Christmas the end of 1995, I volunteered at NTT. It was then that I was introduced to the Buddha's Light International Association, Young Adult Division of Sydney (BLIAYAD, SYD). Ever since, I have actively participated in the events organized by NTT, as well as taking part in the organizing of many activities by BLIAYAD, SYD. In many ways, I have grown and benefited in my experience with NTT and BLIAYAD, SYD. Hence, I hope more people would be given the opportunity to learn and grow like I have.

NTT has always been keen on localizing Humanistic Buddhism. In order to 'localize', it has to appeal to the local people in its surrounding areas, which consist of mostly 'Western Australians'. In the years of my involvement I have encountered many 'Western Australians' who are interested in and keen to learn about Buddhism. Others come to volunteer and contribute. Unfortunately, many of them come and go, but never stay until they become 'Long-term Devotees'. I have always wondered why they do not stay on.

If these 'Western Australians' were to stay on, what would be the reasons or contributing factors? To me, if NTT would like to successfully localize then it would need to appeal to 'Local People'. I think it is important for 'Western Australians' to become 'Long-term Devotees' because, in my opinion, the number of 'Western Australians' that become

‘Long-term Devotees’ could be one of the success indicators for localization of Humanistic Buddhism. To the very least, I think it is a step forward.

1.4. PURPOSE

For this thesis research, the focus is on ‘Western Australians’ and there are three purposes. First purpose is to discuss the challenges for the ‘Western Australians’ that are currently volunteering and working at NTT. Second purpose is to find out how will ‘Western Australians’ stay on to become ‘Long-term Devotees’. Third purpose is to provide guidelines to localize Humanistic Buddhism for FGS branch temples in Australia with a focus on ‘Western Australians’. This is with the assumption that whatever speaks for NTT, it would be the same or similar for other FGS branch temples in Australia.

1.5. PROBLEM STATEMENT

If we look at how well NTT localizes and the number of ‘Long-term Devotees’ as an indication, then NTT still has a long way to go. At NTT, the current ‘Long-term Devotees’ we find are either devotees from Sydney branch temples or they are mostly of Chinese ethnic. Having said that, there are some ‘Western Australians’ that come to volunteer on regular basis, and those that work at NTT. Question is how many of them are currently the ‘Long-term Devotees’ of NTT? These two groups are the focus of my thesis research. I want to find out

what do ‘Western Australians’ find challenging and why are they struggling to become ‘Long-term Devotees’? Given that some of these ‘Western Australians’ have stuck around for a long time now, I want to look at what has worked and what needs improvement from the perspectives of these ‘Western Australians’. Hence find the links in becoming ‘Long-term Devotees’ for ‘Western Australians’.

1.6. LITERATURE REVIEW

With a topic that is about “Localization of Humanistic Buddhism in Australia”, let us begin with literature on Buddhism in Australia first.

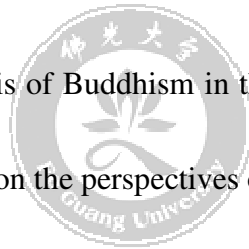
Buddhism is the fastest growing religion in Australia. “The number of Buddhists in Australia has grown rapidly through the influx of immigrants from predominantly Buddhist countries such as Vietnam”, quoted from the book *The Buddhists in Australia*.²⁰ Nelson also wrote an article explaining why this is so.²¹ He concluded that at first glance Buddhism seems to have a strong influence on the world stage, and one is only seeing the tip of the iceberg even though the issues have been examined thoroughly. In my opinion, seeing the tip of the iceberg

²⁰ Enid, Adam and Philip J., Hughes. *The Buddhists in Australia*, Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research/Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1996, p. 65
http://www.multiculturalaustralia.edu.au/doc/bimprbuddhist_1.pdf [Retrieved on 13th November 2012]

²¹ Nelson, Darren. “Why is Buddhism the fastest growing religion in Australia?”
<http://enlight.lib.ntu.edu.tw/FULLTEXT/JR-AN/an141696.pdf> [Retrieved on 13th November 2012]

is still a milestone. My thesis research will mostly likely to be a start of milestones as it is an area rather 'new' in the academic field.

In relation to Buddhism in Australia, Halafoff, Fitzpatrick and Lam offered an analysis of scholarly publications on the different manifestations of Buddhism in Australia thus far, and of developments in the field of Buddhist Studies as well as studies of religion.²² They also mentioned there had yet to conduct a thorough analysis of Buddhism in the context of Australia, and develop it as a distinct field of study given its geographical proximity to Asia. Not to mention the fears and prejudices toward Asian immigrants from mainstream Australians. I agreed that there is a lack of analysis of Buddhism in the context of Australia, this is why I am keen to do a research study based on the perspectives of 'Western Australians'.



On a similar note, Spuler²³ said research is yet to be undertaken on Buddhism in Australia in order to conclude if Australian Buddhism also shares the characteristics of American and European Buddhism. Further, she mentioned to increase understanding of Australian Buddhism at organizational, individual, and societal levels, there are at least three

²² Halafoff, Anna, Fitzpatrick, Ruth, and Lam, Kim. "Buddhism in Australia: An Emerging Field of Study", *Journal of Global Buddhism* 13, (2012): 9-25. <http://www.globalbuddhism.org/13/halafoff12.pdf> [Retrieved on 18th November 2012]

²³ Spuler, Michelle. "Characteristics of Buddhism in Australia", *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 15:1, 2000, 9-44. http://www.thezensite.com/ZenEssays/Miscellaneous/Characteristics_of_Buddhism.pdf [Retrieved on 13th Nov 2012 23:44]

types of study that are useful. One is to interview Buddhist practitioners regarding religiosity and conversion issues. Two is to contact Australian Buddhist groups directly to get information about group history, lineage, and so on. Three is to study the relationship between the wider Australian society and culture and Buddhism for now and in the past. Hence, in her PhD thesis, she studied the process in adaptation of Buddhist practices and beliefs to the environments of new cultures.

Spuler's thesis critically looks into models for the adjustment of Buddhism to the West through a contrast of the adaptation process that takes place in Diamond Sangha Zen Buddhist groups in Australia. In my thesis research, I am looking at how 'Western Australians' will become 'Long-term Devotees' through semi-structured in-depth interviews, which is the first useful type of study mentioned by Spuler. The reason for my focus on becoming 'Long-term Devotees' is because I personally believe that once a person has a lasting belief in the Buddha's teachings, they will devote their time for practice. And once they feel the benefit of their practice, they will commit their life to continue that practice.

With regard to the second type of study Spuler mentioned, even though that is not entirely my research focus, I am getting my information directly from NTT and writing about the groups of people that are currently running the temple. As for the third type, my research will not study Buddhism in the context of the wider Australian society and culture, however it

will be exploring from the perspectives of 'Western Australians' to see Humanistic Buddhism.

Barker and Rocha²⁴ also wrote about Buddhism in Australia with two objectives. First is to collect scholarly papers that analyze the inception of Buddhism in Australia. Second is to present analyzes of the challenges of spreading Buddhism in Australia by both monastics and teachers. Barker and Rocha take it a step further and also address some aspects of the localization of Buddhism in Australia, for instance the ordination of women, changes to the landscape of rural areas and cities, the role of temple, and the contribution of engaged Buddhism. For each of those aspects, literature has been written on them individually.

Taking the first aspect about the ordination of women. It has always been a topic of discussion for most scholars. However, this is not an issue that needs to be discussed in my thesis research as NTT is managed entirely by female venerables. In fact, all of the branch temples of FGS in Australia are managed by female venerables. One would ask why is that so? There are two different reasons for that as I have been explained. One is that Australia is a relatively safe country so FGS assigned female venerables to Australia whereas male venerables are posted at more unsafe countries. From that, ordination of women is not an issue

²⁴ Barker, Michelle and Rocha, Cristina. *Buddhism in Australia: Traditions in Change*, Routledge, London and New York, 2011

under FGS monastic system. Two is that there are more female venerables in the FGS monastic order than male venerables, hence there is a limit on number to go around.

With regard to changes to the landscape of rural areas, McAra problematized the expression “indigenization of Buddhism”. An Aboriginal descendent made complaint about the project of constructing a forty-five meter high stupa, while other local Aboriginal groups supported it. McAra suggested to find other terms than “indigenization” because for indigenous people in settler-colonial societies, Buddhist cultural imports can have unexpected implications when it comes to marking the land.²⁵ Being aware of the land of where the temple is being built, NTT portrayed itself as an exotic Oriental object worthy of tourist visitation. This was done to lessen the threat to local Christian residents. Waitt looks into the place-making process that allowed NTT to be situated in an Anglo-Celtic suburb of Wollongong.²⁶ My thesis research might touch on how local people feel about NTT. However, it is not in the scope to look at how Aborigines see NTT.

In terms of the role of the temple, most people would consider temple as a place of

²⁵ McAra, Sally. “Indigenizing or Adapting? Importing Buddhism into a Settler-colonial Society”, *Journal of Global Buddhism* 8, 2007, pp. 132-156
<http://evols.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/bitstream/handle/10524/1521/mcara07.pdf?sequence=1> [Retrieved on 18th November 2012]

²⁶ Waitt, Gordon. “A Place for Buddha in Wollongong, New South Wales?”, *Australian Geographer* 34:2, 2003, pp. 223-238 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00049180301733> [Retrieved on 12th November 2012]

Buddhist practice. However, for others it is a place to maintain their cultural identity. Chandler mentioned in his book, “As the number of Chinese living elsewhere in the world...Each Foguang temple, as a center of Chinese culture, is home.”²⁷ Furthermore, Chandler made a claim that probably 99.9 percent of BLIA members are ethnically Chinese. Quote:

“The Foguang network is geographically international but remains almost completely associated with one cultural group and highly focused on that group’s concerns with the notion of homeland...organizations such as Foguangshan have served a very important function in maintaining for their members a sense of Chinese identity.”²⁸

On Thai Buddhism, Cadge also wrote, “Many view the temple largely as a cultural center where they can spend time with Thai people and make merit for themselves and their families by participating in religious ceremonies.”²⁹ The role of the temple mentioned by both Chandler and Cadge also applies to NTT. Even though my thesis research will not be focusing specifically on how culture is maintained instead, I intend to find out how culture plays a part in whether or not a person becomes a ‘Long-term Devotee’ at a temple like NTT.

Let us now shift the focus to localization of Humanistic Buddhism. Without any doubt, there is much literature written on Humanistic Buddhism. However, the topic localization of

²⁷ Chandler, Stuart. *Establishing a Pure Land on Earth – The Foguang Buddhist Perspective on Modernization and Globalization*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2004, pp. 271-2

²⁸ Ibid, p. 271

²⁹ Cadge, Wendy. *Heartwood – The First Generation of Theravada Buddhism in America*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 2005, p. 75

Humanistic Buddhism is still rather rare, especially research that is written in English.

Two Master theses that touched on issues relating to localization of Humanistic Buddhism, both are written in Chinese. First one is written by Shih Miao Shang (釋妙上)³⁰ based on Zu Lai Temple, a FGS branch temple in Brazil. She discussed the current situation and efforts to promote Buddhism with respect to the five objectives of FGS, their localization methods and further discussed objective improvements to provide a guide for future actions. Second one is written by Lim Uei Tyng³¹, he discussed the developments on the propagation of Humanistic Buddhism by FGS in Malaysia, in particular focusing on the branch in Johor Bahru. These two theses will not be in conflict with mine, as my research focuses on the challenges from the perspectives of ‘Western Australians’ and looking at how they can become ‘Long-term Devotees’.

Finally, we come to focus literatures on localization of Humanistic Buddhism in Australia, I dare to say to date, there are not many (if any at all) literatures written on this topic as yet. However, in Chandler’s book³², he spoke about how FGS has gone from globalization to

³⁰ Shih, Miao Shang. “Analysis of Buddhism in South-America – Development of Fo Guang Shan’s Humanistic Buddhism in Brazil”, Nan Hua University, 2008

³¹ Lim, Uei Tyng. “Development of Fo Guang Shan in Malaysia’s Chinese Community – Research study on Fo Guang Shan Monastery in Johor Bahru”, Fo Guang University, 2011

³² Chandler, Stuart. *Establishing a Pure Land on Earth – The Foguang Buddhist Perspective on Modernization*

localization. In the case of NTT, quote Chandler:

“What is being practiced at Nan Tien Temple is Chinese Australian Buddhism...a person need not necessarily be ethnically Chinese to be a Chinese Australian Buddhist; the vast majority of those participating in the meditation classes at Nan Tien Temple certainly are not. Such individuals practice the Buddhist teachings as they have developed in and been meditated through Chinese culture. To the degree that Chinese elements come to the fore in the manner in which a person experiences the Buddhist teachings, that individual becomes, not only Buddhist, but Chinese as well, regardless of his or her ethnic background.”³³

This is a very good point. Whether or not this is true for the ‘Western Australians’ in my thesis research, we do not yet know. But it does raise the question, for those that have managed to stay on, how have they managed to cope with an organization that is supposedly so ‘Chinese’? It is definitely an important question to keep in mind for my thesis research.

A possibility might be that, because of their commitment and self-transformation, they stay on. According to Eddy, commitment process begins with a phase of intensifying involvement with principles and practices. It is not one turning point but a series of events or decision-points. Self-transformation is seen to be more-or-less incremental during the period. He wrote, “There were no reports of sudden, dramatic change in self-concept or identity, but rather an awareness that a more subtle type of change had occurred to habitual mental and

³³ *and Globalization*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2004
Ibid, pp. 290-1

emotional states.”³⁴

1.7. RESEARCH SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

First of all, this thesis research, taking NTT as an example to discuss localization of Humanistic Buddhism in Australia, is itself a limitation. Secondly, the sample group is rather exclusive. For active volunteer and permanent staff, only the ‘Western Australians’ were chosen for sample. And the venerables were selected based on availability and only those that are in key roles. Thirdly, the BLIA members of Sydney have not been included in the thesis research for the reasons that I wanted to focus on NTT specifically.

One special note to mention about translation, as English language was difficult for some venerables to express therefore translation was done for what had been said. There are inevitably limitations in this thesis research and the scope had to be made small. Hopefully this will spark future researches, and for now this thesis research could only serve as a starting point.

³⁴ Eddy, Glenys. *Becoming Buddhist – Experiences of Socialization and Self-Transformation in Two Australian Buddhist Centres*, Continuum International Publishing, London & NY, 2012, pp. 204-5

CHAPTER 2: LOCALIZING HUMANISTIC BUDDHISM IN AUSTRALIA

In this chapter, I shall begin discussing Buddhism in Australia, followed by the localization of Humanistic Buddhism and localizing Humanistic Buddhism in Australia.

2.1. BUDDHISM IN AUSTRALIA

In many Asian countries, Buddhism has long history whereas its development in Australia has barely begun.³⁵ In this section, the history of Buddhism in Australia will be described, followed by a discussion on how multiculturalism affect the development of Buddhism today.

2.1.1. History

Croucher wrote a thorough historical account of Buddhism in Australia from 1848 to 1988. He said claims were made that certain Aboriginal rock-paintings portrayed the Buddha. Thus there is a possibility that the history of Buddhism dates back further for Australia.³⁶

It might be best to use Spuler's analysis and Abeyagunawardena's overview to talk about Buddhism in Australia. Quoted from Barker and Rocha's introduction of their book, the

³⁵ Spuler, Michelle. *Developments in Australian Buddhism – Facets of the diamond*, Routledge Curzon, London, 2003

³⁶ Croucher, Paul. *Buddhism in Australia 1848-1988*, New South Wales, University Press, Australia, 1989

key periods of Buddhism in Australia can be divided into six.³⁷ The first period is called 'Immigrant origins', where Chinese and Sri Lankan immigrants began to arrive in 1848 bringing Buddhism with them to Australia. The second period is called 'The first organizations', where the first Anglo-Australian organizations were formed in 1925. The third period is called 'The first visits by teachers'. The first Buddhist teacher arrived in 1952 was an American-born nun, then other visits followed and more organizations were set up. The fourth period is called 'The first residential teachers and establishment of monasteries', where the first Buddhist monastery with a Sri Lankan monk as its resident was formed in Katoomba, New South Wales in 1971. Soon after followed by other monasteries. The fifth period is called 'Rapid Asian immigration and increasing diversification of traditions', where refugees from Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam arrived in huge numbers after the phasing out of the White Australia Policy in the 1970s and with the end of Vietnam War around 1974-5. The sixth period is 'The emergence of ecumenical Buddhist societies'. Starting with the initiation of the Buddhist Council of Brisbane in 1982, non-sectarian societies were formed to achieve common objectives and to create a visible and active appearance in the community.³⁸

³⁷ Barker, Michelle and Rocha, Cristina. *Buddhism in Australia: Traditions in Change*, Routledge, London and New York, 2011

³⁸ Ibid, pp. 2-3

2.1.2. Multiculturalism and Buddhism Today

Australia is now known to be a multicultural country. The question is what does it mean to be Australian? In the introduction of Barker and Rocha's book, they mentioned Elder pointed out two different stories. The first is Australia is a white nation. The second is Australia is a nation of immigrants. Elder argued both stories have always existed and will continue to exist together.³⁹

Further, Barker and Rocha wrote that in the 1970s before the emphasis on multiculturalism, migrants were expected to integrate into the wider culture, which is the Anglo-Australian culture.⁴⁰ On the other hand, Modood summarized in his book that multiculturalism or the accommodation of minorities is not the same as integration. He explained,

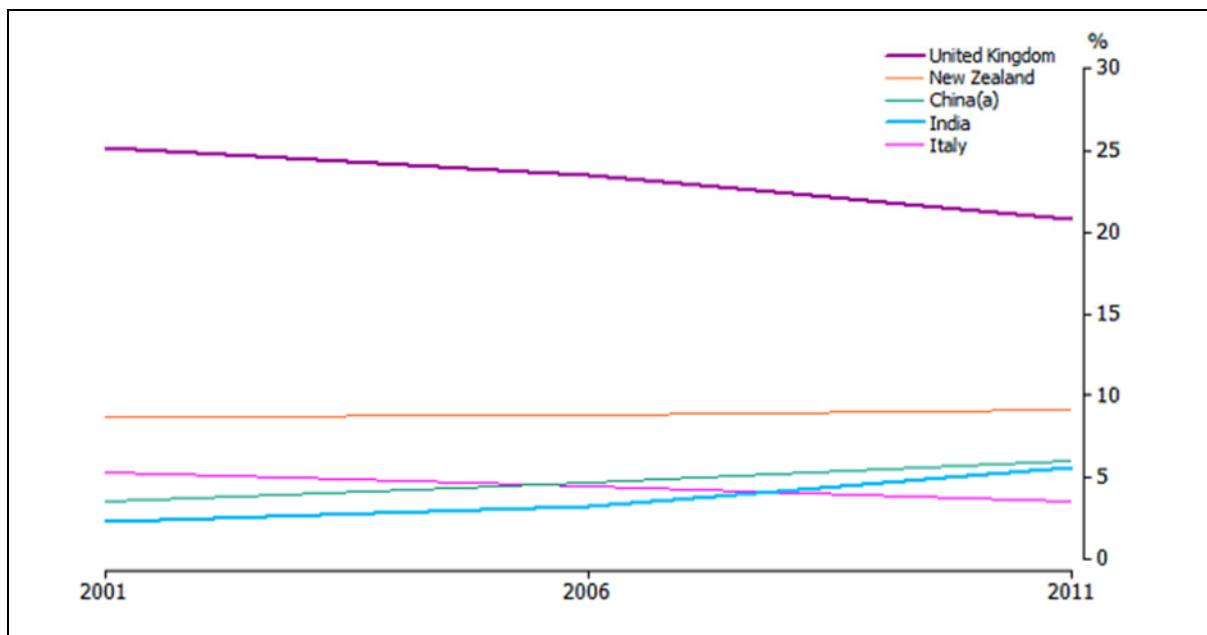
“It recognizes groups, not just individuals, at the level of: identities, associations, belonging, including diasporic connexions; behavior, culture, religious practice, etc.; and political mobilization. It appreciates that groups vary in all kinds of ways and so will become part of the social landscape in different ways. This means that they cannot necessarily be accommodated according to a single plan and will in different ways change the society into which they are integrated.”⁴¹

³⁹ Barker, Michelle and Rocha, Cristina. *Buddhism in Australia: Traditions in Change*, Routledge, London and New York, 2011, p. 6

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Modood, Tariq. *Multiculturalism: A Civic Idea*, Polity Press, UK, 2007, p. 50

In reference to the stories from the 2011 census,⁴² it shows that what it means to be Australian has changed over the years. For overseas-born population, United Kingdom (21%) was the leading country of birth, followed by New Zealand (9.1%), China (6.0%), India (5.6%) and Italy (3.5%).⁴³



Graph 2-1: Top 5 countries of birth as a proportion of total overseas-born population, 2001-2011

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

From Graph 2-1, we can see with regard to country of birth, there is a decrease for United Kingdom and Italy since 2006 whereas there is an increase for China, India and slightly for

⁴² <http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/census?opendocument&navpos=10> [Retrieved on 13th May 2013]

⁴³ Cultural Diversity in Australia – Reflecting a Nation: Stories from the 2011 Census
<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/2071.0main+features902012-2013>
 [Retrieved on 13th May 2013]

New Zealand.⁴⁴ As a result from this, one might wonder what will eventually happen if there is a continued increase for China and India. Would this change the definition of ‘wider culture’, the Anglo-culture in the future?

Table 2-1: 2011 Census showing Religious Affiliations

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS			
		Population	Proportion born overseas (a)
Religion	'000	%	%
Christian	13 150.6	61.1	22.9
Catholic	5 439.2	25.3	24.0
Anglican	3 680.0	17.1	17.5
Uniting Church	1 065.8	5.0	11.4
Presbyterian and Reformed	599.5	2.8	26.3
Eastern Orthodox	563.1	2.6	43.6
Baptist	352.5	1.6	28.8
Lutheran	251.9	1.2	24.5
Pentecostal	238.0	1.1	32.6
Other Christian	960.7	4.5	31.0
Non-Christian	1 546.3	7.2	67.0
Buddhism	529.0	2.5	69.4
Islam	476.3	2.2	61.5
Hinduism	275.5	1.3	84.3
Judaism	97.3	0.5	48.9
Other non-Christian	168.2	0.8	57.2
No Religion	4 796.8	22.3	22.5
Total(b)	21 507.7	100.0	26.1

⁴⁴ Cultural Diversity in Australia – Reflecting a Nation: Stories from the 2011 Census
<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/2071.0main+features902012-2013>
 [Retrieved on 13th May 2013]

- (a) Proportion of people reporting this religion who were born overseas.
- (b) Total includes inadequately described (supplementary codes) religious and people who did not state a religion.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

Looking at the statistics shown on Table 2-1, for 2011 the most common non-Christian religions were Buddhism (2.5%), followed by Islam (2.2%) and Hinduism (1.3%). However, Hinduism (189% increase) had the fastest growth since 2001, followed by Islam (69% increase) and then Buddhism (48% increase).

What does this mean for Buddhism today? If the population of Australia continues to grow increasingly with those born overseas, then the question would be how many of them are bringing Buddhism along with them? And how many are not? As we can see out of the 2.5% of 'Buddhists', and 69.4% of them were born overseas. This tells us that Buddhism today is not yet being practiced commonly among the people of 'wider culture'. Even those that are born locally may be from immigrant parents.

2.2. LOCALIZATION OF HUMANISTIC BUDDHISM

This section will begin with defining what Humanistic Buddhism is and its ideals, followed by describing the ideals and methods of localization. Localizing around the globe will be discussed in the last part of this section.

2.2.1. Definitions and Ideals of Humanistic Buddhism

FGS did not create Humanistic Buddhism, nor did Venerable Master Hsing Yun. Master Taixu, the most prominent of the Buddhist modernizers during the era of Republic, was the first to engage the concept, but he usually mentioned it as “Rensheng Fojiao” (人生佛教 – Buddhism of Human Life). To Master Taixu, Buddhism of Human Life has one purpose which is to focus on practice not just on theory.⁴⁵

In other words, Master Taixu wanted to remind people that, quote:

“It is the living (*rensheng*) who are in the best position to cultivate the necessary merit and wisdom to attain enlightenment, Buddhists should devote their energies to maximizing this opportunity, both for themselves and for others.”⁴⁶

It was Venerable Yinshun, Master Taixu’s famous disciple, who emphasized on participating actively in human society (*renjian* which means “in the human domain”, or “in the midst of people”) not just focusing on the living.⁴⁷

The rationale of Humanistic Buddhism originated from the Buddha because the Buddha

⁴⁵ Wei, Daoru. “Buddhism in China and Modern Society: An Introduction Centering Around the Teachings of Taixu and Yinshun”, *The Journal of Oriental Studies* Vol.20-2010, The Institute of Oriental Philosophy, Japan, 2010, p.173

⁴⁶ Chandler, Stuart. *Establishing a Pure Land on Earth – The Foguang Buddhist Perspective on Modernization and Globalization*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2004, p.43

⁴⁷ Ibid.

was born, practiced the path, attained enlightenment, and aspired to liberate all beings in this human world. The Buddha lived in the company of people, and Humanistic Buddhism is what he transmitted. Humanistic Buddhism is concerned with the enlightenment of human race.⁴⁸ In other words, Venerable Jue Ji wrote in her dissertation that, the only purpose of the Buddha is to solve the problems and liberate all beings from suffering. Furthermore, she concluded that the origin of Humanistic Buddhism was from the Buddha.⁴⁹

To Master Hsing Yun, Humanistic Buddhism is “Whatever was spoken by the Buddha, and needed by the people; all that is pure, good and beautiful; any teachings that can help in increasing human happiness.”⁵⁰ Furthermore, Master Hsing Yun declared in his preface to the *Special Edition Commemorating the Thirtieth Anniversary of Fo Guang Shan*:

“Not until Buddhism becomes more humanistic and life-oriented, will it be able to penetrate into the family, society, and the human heart; and be able to form a oneness with life; becoming the Buddhism that people need.”⁵¹

⁴⁸ Master Hsing Yun. *Humanistic Buddhism: A Blueprint for Life*, Buddha’s Light Publishing, Hacienda Heights, 2008

⁴⁹ Venerable Jue Ji. “The Nature of Humanistic Buddhism: Ideal and Practice as Reflected in Xingyun’s Mode”, University of Hong Kong, 2008. <http://hdl.handle.net/10722/53109> [Retrieved on 11th May 2013]

⁵⁰ Fu, Zhiying. *Bright Star Luminous Cloud: The Life of a Simple Monk*, Buddha’s Light Publishing, Hacienda Heights, 2008, p. 287

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 288

2.2.2. Ideals and Methods of Localization

During the “First Meeting of the 3rd Board of Directors of the Buddha’s Light International Association” in 2001, Master Hsing Yun proposed the “Four Transformations” for localization of Buddhism. One is “Humanize Buddhism” (佛法人間化). That means, the Buddha’s teachings are being practiced in our daily living. Two is “Culturally improve our lives” (生活書香化). Three is “To install equality in monastic and lay societies” (僧信平等化). Four is “To promote localization of monastic establishments” (寺院本土化), which means all of the temples and Dharma centers have come from joint effort of followers from FGS and BLIA members, they do not belong to a single person, instead it constitutes the shared wealth of all involved. A wish for all the branch temples of FGS around the world will be “localized” within twenty to thirty years.⁵²

With regards to localization, Master Hsing Yun formulated a thirty-year long-term plan according to Fu.⁵³ However, in a report written by Venerable Miao Yi (妙益) on localization in Hsi Lai Temple, in her conclusion she wrote that the thirty-year plan was proposed from the

⁵² Fu, Zhiying. *Bright Star Luminous Cloud: The Life of a Simple Monk*, Buddha’s Light Publishing, Hacienda Heights, 2008, pp. 153-4

⁵³ Ibid, p. 156

concepts of “Four Transformations.”⁵⁴ Therefore, there seems to be a discrepancy. However, it would be fair to say that even though it was not formulated specifically from Master Hsing Yun, any “global” type of plan instigated would need to be approved by him. Hence, it is not conflicting to say that the thirty-year plan is brought forward by Master Hsing Yun.

The thirty-year plan is divided into three ten-year periods. First ten-year period is about course study and training, which involves training local people in the study of the essential knowledge about temple affairs, for instance the administration of Dharma functions and how to welcome and converse with guests. Also they are to be given constructive criticism for their practical training, this will sow the seeds for training a monastic or lay staff in the next ten years. Second ten-year period is about on-the-job training. Having done the practical training, the local staff (monastics and lay members) will be able to take on their duties, including the work of administration and Dharma propagation. Third ten-year period is the choice of candidates for the role of abbot/abbess and manager. By then, it is hoped that local monastics or lay members will step out of their basic jobs and staff positions to take on the

⁵⁴ 妙益法師《從佛光山美國西來寺看佛教本土化》，普門學報，第24期，2004年11月。(Venerable Miao Yi, “From Fo Guang Shan Hsi Lai Temple in view of localization of Buddhism”, *Universal Gate Buddhist Journal* 24 (November 2004))

responsibilities of abbot/abbess and director.⁵⁵

Looking ahead into the future, Master Hsing Yun knows that there is much to go between the vision and practicality. There is maybe another one hundred years of steady cultivation that lie ahead if Buddhism were to integrate into every country's mainstream culture, and further establish its own sense of presence. The first priority for this undertaking is going from Buddhism's internationalization to "Buddhism's localization."⁵⁶

During the 10th BLIA General Conference in 2004, Master Hsing Yun gave guidance on localization. He said, "The local adaptation that I am advocating is benevolent, friendly, harmonious and enhancing. It does not involve rejection or denial." Also, he suggested that all BLIA members that migrate and reside overseas to be prepared to settle down, embrace wholeheartedly, and recognize that they are part of the new country. Furthermore, Master Hsing Yun stressed the importance of respecting local cultures. It might be acceptable to introduce Chinese culture but never try to subjugate or replace other's cultures. Successful propagation of Buddhism depends on how well we adapt to local needs and cultures. The goal of Buddhism is to encourage unity, co-existence, co-operation, mutual survival and

⁵⁵ Fu, Zhiying. *Bright Star Luminous Cloud: The Life of a Simple Monk*, Buddha's Light Publishing, Hacienda Heights, 2008, pp. 156-7

⁵⁶ Ibid, pp. 152-3

achievement.⁵⁷

In order to make sure that the seeds of Buddhism are deeply planted, and bringing happiness to the whole world with all beings of differing language, culture and skin colors, we need to apply a capacity of unselfishness to transcend the boundaries of races and nations. Hence, it is about “giving” not “taking”. Master Hsing Yun hoped that when every member of FGS arrives at any of the Dharma centers around the world it will be like coming back to one’s own home.⁵⁸

2.2.3. Localizing around the Globe

The first FGS branch temple to set foot in the West is Baita Temple. A formerly Christian church made into a Buddhist temple, the Baita Temple, located in Maywood (a small city in southeast Los Angeles County.) That was the beginning of limitless hope for Chinese Buddhism. Master Hsing Yun felt purchasing a building which already has religious purpose would make things easier.⁵⁹ Besides, Protestant and Catholic organizations often have taken

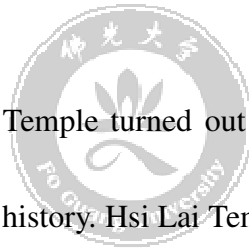
⁵⁷ 星雲大師《自覺與行佛》，普門學報，第24期，2004年9月。(Master Hsing Yun, “Self-awareness and Practicing the Buddha’s Way”, *Universal Gate Buddhist Journal* 23 (September 2004))

⁵⁸ Fu, Zhiying. *Bright Star Luminous Cloud: The Life of a Simple Monk*, Buddha’s Light Publishing, Hacienda Heights, 2008, p. 157

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 143

temple lands to build churches in Taiwan.⁶⁰

Not long after Baita Temple was built, there were too many people that a bigger temple was needed. Hence Hsi Lai Temple, located in Hacienda Heights of Los Angeles, was built. Hsi Lai Temple officially opened on 26th November 1988. It is the largest temple in the Western Hemisphere. Hsi Lai Temple has three roles in carrying on the tradition of FGS. The first is to provide America with a center for spiritual culture. The second is to set up a Dharma center of Buddhist studies for Westerners. The third is to foster cultural exchanges between the East and the West.⁶¹



From the small step of Hsi Lai Temple turned out to be a huge step of internationally oriented development in the Buddhist history. Hsi Lai Temple set the precedent for many other branch temples such as Hsi Fang Temple in San Diego; Three Buddhas Hall in Boston; Nan Tien Temple and Chung Tian Temple in Australia; Nan Hua Temple in South Africa; Zu Lai Temple in Brazil; Paris Vihara in France; FGS of Berlin in Germany; FGS of London in Great Britain; and so on.

⁶⁰ Chandler, Stuart. *Establishing a Pure Land on Earth – The Foguang Buddhist Perspective on Modernization and Globalization*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2004, p.268

⁶¹ Fu, Zhiying. *Bright Star Luminous Cloud: The Life of a Simple Monk*, Buddha's Light Publishing, Hacienda Heights, 2008, pp. 141-3

It is worthwhile to talk a little bit about Nan Hua Temple in South Africa. The founding story of the temple is similar to NTT in the sense that the local government approached FGS to build a facility. The Bronkhorstspuit government officials hoped not only to spark tourism, but also to develop a whole Chinese community spurring industry into the area.⁶² In 1994, the first time when Master Hsing Yun visited South Africa, the most significant moment was when ten of the Congolese youth were tonsured. That was the moment we see localizing Buddhism in action. A native sangha in South Africa making history right then and there.⁶³

2.3. LOCALIZING IN AUSTRALIA

This section describes the causes and conditions for Master Hsing Yun's decision to establish Humanistic Buddhism in Australia, and the journey it took for the completion of NTT.

2.3.1. Stepping into Australia

Master Hsing Yun says that Australia is “the last pure land on earth”. Indeed, it is an environmentally friendly country. The Australian government will preserve the best land for parks. Furthermore, the interaction between humans and animals is also friendly. At the

⁶² Chandler, Stuart. *Establishing a Pure Land on Earth – The Foguang Buddhist Perspective on Modernization and Globalization*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2004, p.294

⁶³ Translated from Master Hsing Yun's book on *Buddhist Affinities Across 100 Years*, published by Fo Guang Shan Board of Directors in 2013, p. 267

beaches, we often see that large fish would swim close to the shore to play with people; birds would fly to rest on people's shoulders, and the people would feed them.⁶⁴

However, they were not the impressions Master Hsing Yun had when he first heard about Australia. Due to the 'White Australia Policy' under the British rulings, as well as his lack of knowledge about Australia, even though many devotees had requested Master Hsing Yun to build a temple in Australia, he never agreed. It was not until, after the 'White Australia Policy' was removed and people of different nationalities began to migrate to Australia, and multiculturalism started to form. Also for the first time when Master Hsing Yun visited Australia, he completely changed his perception.⁶⁵

It was after his visit that Master Hsing Yun decided to establish Buddhism in Australia. During the developmental stage, with the support of the government as well as the acceptance of Buddhism among the people, Humanistic Buddhism was able to quickly set its roots in Australia.⁶⁶

Establishing a new temple is not easy, let alone being the first to set foot in Australia on

⁶⁴ Translated from Master Hsing Yun's book on *Buddhist Affinities Across 100 Years*, published by Fo Guang Shan Board of Directors in 2013, p. 221

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 220

⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 222

behalf of Humanistic Buddhism, Venerable Yung Quan was assigned to take on such a task. Not long after her arrival in 1989, Venerable Yung Quan settled at Brighton Le Sands in Sydney suburb setting up the 'first FGS temple' in Australia. Not long after, the so-called 'first FGS temple' was moved to Chinatown on Sussex St in the Council's Building, and later named "IBAA Sydney". In 1990, Nan Tien Vihara was established during the construction of NTT, and served as a residential place. Venerable Hsin Ding told Master Hsing Yun that there is a need for another place for devotees to cultivate. Therefore, IBAA Parramatta (located in the west of Sydney) was established in 1991. When Master Hsing Yun visited Sydney in 1989, a devotee from Brisbane also requested for a temple to be built. As a result, Chung Tian Temple was established in 1993. As the devotees of FGS grew, there needed to be branch temples in different parts of Sydney. Hence, IBAA Chatswood (located in the north of Sydney) was established in 1994, and eventually IBAA Hurstville (located in the south of Sydney) was also founded in 1999. In the same year, IBAA Parramatta was rebuilt and reopened in 2000.

Apart from New South Wales and Queensland, Western Australia soon caught up with the trend. IBAWA was founded in 1995, the same year as the opening of NTT. That trend continued to spread to Victoria. In 1994 Fo Guang Shan Melbourne was established in Yarraville. In the same year, Fo Guang Yuan Art Gallery was founded in the Melbourne City. In order to initiate Buddhist cultural activities, the Fo Guang Yuan Box Hill was established in

2001. Moving up north to Gold Coast World Buddhist Studies Centre, it used to be a Meditation Center that served as a resting place for BLIA members. Gold Coast is a place with great sceneries, its environment is fresh and relaxing, hence it is very suitable for artists and scholars. Therefore, in 2005 Master Hsing Yun decided to turn this 'resting place' into the Gold Coast World Buddhist Studies Centre. Coming back down to Victoria, in 2011, the Fo Guang Yuan Box Hill was rebuilt and reopened on 10th November 2012. It was then renamed as 'Fo Guang Shan Er You Temple'. The most up to date news is that IBAA Sydney will be moving to a three-storey building in September this year after staying at its current place since 1998.

Table 2-1: Opening of FGS Branch Temples in Australia

Year of Opening	Branch Temple	State	Location
1990	IBAA Sydney 雪梨佛光緣	New South Wales	Sydney
1990	Nan Tien Vihara 南天精舍		Berkeley
1991	IBAA Parramatta 南天講堂		Parramatta
1993	Chung Tian Temple 中天寺	Queensland	Priestdale
1994	IBAA Chatswood 北雪梨佛光緣	New South Wales	Chatswood
1994	Fo Guang Shan Melbourne 墨爾本佛光山	Victoria	Yarraville
1995	Nan Tien Temple 南天寺	New South Wales	Berkeley
1995	IBAWA 西澳道場	Western Australia	Maylands
1996	Fo Guang Yuan Art Gallery 墨爾本佛光緣	Victoria	Melbourne
1999	IBAA Hurstville 南雪梨佛光緣	New South Wales	Hurstville
2001	Fo Guang Yuan Box Hill 博士佛光緣	Victoria	Box Hill
2005	Gold Coast World Buddhist Studies Centre 黃金海岸世界佛學研究中心	Queensland	Gold Coast
2011	Fo Guang Shan Er You Temple 尔有寺 (Formerly Fo Guang Yuan Box Hill)	Victoria	Box Hill

Table 2-1 shows the year of opening for each FGS branch temple in Australia.

2.3.2. The Establishment of NTT and its Roles Today

How did Master Hsing Yun decide to propagate the Dharma in Australia? It began in 1989 with a Chinese permanent resident of Australia that lives in Wollongong. She visited Taiwan and invited FGS to build a temple back in Wollongong. A year later, there was a conference initiated by China Steel Corporation (CSC) held at FGS. Frank Arkell, being the president of BHP and lord mayor of Wollongong, attended that conference. After the tour and knowing about the propagation works of FGS, Frank Arkell was delighted.⁶⁷ He heard about the multimillion-dollar temple being built in the United States by FGS, and he saw the potential boost in tourism if such a temple is built in Wollongong.⁶⁸ Hence he too suggested that a temple is built in Australia to develop Buddhism.⁶⁹

With such a good opportunity, Master Hsing Yun sent Venerable Tzu Jung (President of the monastery's Supervisory Council at that time), together with Venerable Yung Miao, to observe and look into Wollongong. Master Hsing Yun was concerned with their safety but

⁶⁷ Translated from Master Hsing Yun's book on *Buddhist Affinities Across 100 Years*, published by Fo Guang Shan Board of Directors, 2013, pp. 222-3

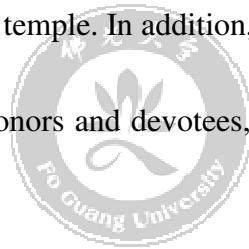
⁶⁸ Chandler, Stuart. *Establishing a Pure Land on Earth – The Foguang Buddhist Perspective on Modernization and Globalization*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2004, p. 287

⁶⁹ Translated from Master Hsing Yun's book on *Buddhist Affinities Across 100 Years*, published by Fo Guang Shan Board of Directors, 2013, p. 223

what they came back to report was 'it is safe society, down to earth citizens, a very environmentally friendly place.' That was nothing like how Master Hsing Yun had imagined.⁷⁰

Being part of the team at that time, Venerable Yung Dong remembers writing the proposal for submission to the Council. She shares that one of the purposes of NTT was to create employment in the local areas. This is truly the case, as we can see today, at NTT there are local people being employed there.

It did not take too long for the Wollongong City Council to approve the proposal, and giving fully support to FGS to build a temple. In addition, Frank Arkell donated the twenty-six acres. Together with the support of donors and devotees, they helped to realize Master Hsing Yun's wish.⁷¹



In 1992, the groundbreaking ceremony was witnessed by four thousand people, those present included Master Hsing Yun, David Campbell (Wollongong Lord Mayor), Henry (Deputy Mayor of Sydney City Council), Graeme Lyall (President of Buddhist Council of

⁷⁰ Translated from Master Hsing Yun's book on *Buddhist Affinities Across 100 Years*, published by Fo Guang Shan Board of Directors, 2013, p. 223

⁷¹ Ibid.

New South Wales), Frank Arkell, and many other donors and devotees.⁷²

In order to ensure that NTT has a serene and peaceful environment, the hill at the back of NTT, even though unused, the government has agreed to rent it to NTT for one Australian dollar a year. The term of lease is for one hundred years. Master Hsing Yun jokingly asked the Lord Mayor, “What happened after ninety-nine years?” The Lord Mayor, humorously answered, “By then we shall vow to come back again!”⁷³

NTT was completed in 1995, and on 8th October marked its official opening ceremony. On that day, on behalf of Paul Keating (Prime Minister of Australia), Nick Bolkus (Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs) came to congratulate. The Minister donated one hundred Australian dollars on the spot for the one hundred year rent of the hill at the back of NTT. From this, it shows the support and acceptance of Buddhism from the Australian government.⁷⁴ Whether or not the Australian government really supports and accepts Buddhism is questionable, because their initial interest to approve the construction of NTT was to increase revenue through tourism.

⁷² Translated from Master Hsing Yun’s book on *Buddhist Affinities Across 100 Years*, published by Fo Guang Shan Board of Directors, 2013, p. 224

⁷³ Ibid, p. 225

⁷⁴ Ibid, pp. 226-7

Nonetheless, after nineteen years, NTT has taken on different roles in the community. Although it might be difficult to say for sure how many roles NTT has, at least there are six that appear to be more obvious. One is the role of a tourist attraction. Many people have visited NTT, not only those in the local areas but those from around the world. Two is a place where they can learn. Many of them have come to join the classes or retreats. Not only do they learn about Buddhism, but Tai Chi classes have become popular too. Three is the role of an educator. The venerables at NTT have been going to primary schools to teach Buddhism since 2007. Five is the role of a counselor. Many people are having difficult times in life or going through some personal issues have come to NTT to seek help and support. Six is a place where they come to contribute. The volunteers that come are not necessarily Buddhists, they are happy to provide their service regardless of difference in beliefs.

Apart from those that have been mentioned, school excursions are rather popular at NTT. Many primary or high schools have organized one-day tours or overnight excursions. The more favorable activities that the students like are Origami, Meditation, Tai Chi, Calligraphy and Blessings.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Source: Feedback reports of 2011 and 2012 from NTT

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter will firstly describe the research structure, sampling group, as well as survey and interview designs. Secondly, details of data collection for surveys and interviews will be described. Thirdly, the procedures for data processes will be presented.

3.1. STRUCTURE

This thesis research is a qualitative research. Qualitative research entails the studied use and gathering different types of first-hand materials such as case study, life story, personal experience, interview, and so on.⁷⁶ In this research, written surveys and in-depth semi-structured interviews have been used for data collection. Other methods and approaches involved are participant observation and interpretative analysis.

3.1.1. Details of Sample Groups

There are three sample groups chosen for this research. The first group is the current active volunteers. Second group is long-term permanent staff. Third group is venerables (Buddhist nuns). In total, thirteen people have been included in the sample group: three of

⁷⁶ Denzin, Norman K. and Lincoln, Yvonna S. *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2005

them are volunteers; four of them are staff; and six venerables. The characteristics of these groups are presented in Table 3, Table 4 and Table 5.

There is no special filtering or criteria for the candidate selection of each sample group. However, the only criterion for both volunteer and staff group is that they are ‘Western Australians’. This is intended as my thesis research is focusing on the perspectives of ‘Western Australians’. There is no special selection for venerables apart from that they are in key roles.

Table 3-1: Characteristics of Active Volunteers

Participant	Gender	Age	Ethnic Race	Volunteer Period	Marital Status	BLIA Member	Religious Affiliation	Highest Level of School
VO1	F	60	Australian	6 years	Divorced	Yes	Buddhist	High School Graduate
VO2	M	58	Australian	4 years	Married	No	Protestant Christian	High School Graduate
VO3	F	25	Australian	13-18 months	Never Married	Yes	Buddhist	Bachelor's Degree

Table 3-1 shows characteristics of the three active volunteers being surveyed. One interesting note is that, VO2's religious affiliation is Protestant Christian. This is not surprising for NTT as it is open to anyone regardless of their religious background. As intended, all of them are ‘Western Australians.’

Two of the three volunteers are females. It is difficult to generalize with such a small number in this sample group. Nonetheless, it is rather common to see more females than males in the temple. One possible reason is that most of the males are breadwinners for the family and so they have less time at the temple. Looking at the range of age, we can see that NTT is attractive to all ages. Even though it may seem likely to appeal more to those of matured age. However, it will probably be fairer to make such a definite statement with another study.

Table 3-2: Characteristics of Permanent Staff

Participant	Gender	Age	Ethnic Race	Working Period	BLIA Member	Buddhist?	Work Position
S1	F	50	Australian	16 years	No	Yes	Receptionist & Housekeeping Supervisor
S2	M	61	English	17 years	Yes	Yes	Maintenance Manager
S3	F	60	Australian	14 years	Yes	Yes	Catering Manager
S4	F	50	Australian	> 5 years	Yes	Yes	Dining Hall Supervisor

Table 3-2 shows characteristics of the permanent staff being surveyed and interviewed. All of them are ‘Western Australians’ as intended. For S1, S2, and S3, they have been working at NTT for more than 10 years. Even though age was not specifically required in the selection of candidates, we can see that all of the staff is around 50 or 60 years of age. Given the number of years that they have been working at NTT, they would have started in their late

thirties and forties.

It might be useful to know that, most of these staff did not apply through advertisement or employment agent to get their job at NTT. For S1, she was contacted by one of the venerables because her friend referred her. For S2, his wife has been volunteering at NTT, and when he got injured at work and stopped working. He came to NTT for a visit, and he felt at home and peaceful at the Main Shrine. Then he decided to stay and work for NTT. For S3, she found out about NTT through friends and relatives, and for S4 she came to visit on her own.

Similarly to volunteers, there are more female staff than male staff. Looking at their work positions, we can see that they are involved in the running of the temple, from food and accommodation to maintenance. These positions are necessary for the functioning of the temple everyday.

When asked if they consider themselves as Buddhist, all of them answered yes. They are also BLIA members except for S1. Even though I did not ask S1 why she is not a member of BLIA, she told me that it was 'assumed' that all staff of NTT are BLIA members too.

Table 3-3: Characteristics of Venerables

Participant	Gender	Ethnic Race	Been in Australia	Trained in Taiwan FGS	English Level	Current Role/ Department in Charge
V1	F	Taiwanese	16 years	Yes	6	Reception & Social Education
V2	F	Australian Born Chinese	< 6 months	Yes	9	Academy of Buddhist College
V3	F	Chinese	35 years	Yes	10	Social Education & Nan Tien Institute
V4	F	Chinese	5 years	No	7	Social Education
V5	F	Vietnamese Chinese	33 years	Yes	3	General Manager
V6	F	Malaysian Chinese	> 5 years	Yes	3	Abbess

Table 3-3 shows characteristics of the venerables that were surveyed and interviewed.

There are in total twelve venerables currently at NTT. There were only six venerables being surveyed and interviewed partly because they were available at the time for my interview.

Also I asked for those in key roles that most interactions in leading the ‘Western Australians’.

It might be useful to explain a couple of their current ‘Role/Department in Charge’.

Social Education is a department that is in charge of all the events and educational programs of NTT. Buddhist College is for those who are interested in learning about Buddhism and

willing to live the monastic lifestyle at NTT.

All of the venerables in the sampling are in positions that make decisions and plan for NTT. We can see that all of the venerables are of Chinese ethnic even though some have lived in Australia for a long time. Also, all the venerables at Nan Tien Temple are all females, and trained in Taiwan Fo Guang Shan except V4 who trained in Australia.

One note about V2, she was born in Australia but moved and lived overseas, and recently being posted at NTT. Another point I would like to make is, V5 and V6 have both rated their English level as “3”. From my interaction with them, their English level is more than “3” in my opinion because they are clear and easily understood. I am guessing this is a humility act on their part. From this, it would be more effective to conduct an objective evaluation as opposed to self-evaluation.

Communication is extremely important for the work of localization. Hence, the English level of the venerables is an important factor to consider. Even though language plays a big part of communication, it is not the means of all because there are things like body language, gestures, and so on. A smile might be enough to make someone feel warm and welcome. On the other hand, it can become an issue for things that require exchanging of thoughts and discussions on Buddhist concepts. Not to mention having to teach the principles of Humanistic

Buddhism in English. All of these are important for localization work.

3.1.2. Survey Design

The purpose of written survey forms is to gather background information about the sample groups, and so three different forms have been designed.

The forms for active volunteer and staff ask similar questions such as are you currently a member of BLIA; how many months have you been volunteering/working at Nan Tien Temple (NTT); what events have you attended/assisted in organizing; how did you find out about NTT; what was your first impression of NTT; and from your own understanding, can you tell me what is Humanistic Buddhism. Additionally, personal information and other questions have been included for the active volunteers. The other questions include why have you chosen NTT to be your volunteering place; can you tell me what has been your experience like coming in contact with NTT; what attracts you the most about NTT; and so far, what has been your challenge (if any) while volunteering at NTT. Other questions for the staff are would you consider yourself a Buddhist; and why have you chosen NTT to work at.

The form for venerables include questions such as were you trained in Taiwan Fo Guang Shan; what is your current role at NTT; what roles have you been assigned in the past at NTT; how long have you been in Australia; and how would you rate your English level.

All three forms ask for their ethnic race, however, only the staff and venerables are asked to rate how well do you think NTT is doing in terms of its localization of Humanistic Buddhism.

3.1.3. Interview Design

The purpose of in-depth semi-structured interviews is to explore and understand the experiences from the perspectives of interviewees. Semi-structured interview style has been chosen to deepen investigation for insights.

For the in-depth semi-structured interviews, both permanent staff and venerables are chosen for the interview because they are the ones that are managing and running the NTT on a daily basis.



Table 3-4: Questions for Permanent Staff

Interview Questions	Intention to explore
1. What did you find challenging when you first begun working at Nan Tien Temple?	Challenges
2. What are your challenges right now?	Comparing challenges
3. Have you thought of quitting your job at Nan Tien Temple? If yes, what would be your reasons for leaving?	What does not work
4. What has been your motivation for continuing to work at Nan Tien Temple?	What works
5. If I were new to Nan Tien Temple, what sort of attitudes do you think I need to have?	What to expect
6. Are you a long-term devotee of Fo Guang Shan Nan Tien Temple?	Staff = Devotee?
7. Why do you think are the reasons that we still do not see many local people becoming long-term devotees?	Challenges and reasons that people leave
8. In terms of localization of Humanistic Buddhism, what would be your suggestions?	Possible suggestions

Table 3-4 shows interview questions for the permanent staff and the intention behind those questions.

Table 3-5: Questions for Venerables

Interview Questions	Intention to explore
a) What have been your personal challenges in propagating Humanistic Buddhism at Nan Tien Temple?	Challenges
b) From what you know, what are some of the changes Nan Tien Temple has made over the years in order to attract more local people?	Localization process
c) If I were new to Nan Tien Temple, what sort of attitudes do you think I need to have?	What to expect
d) Why do you think are the reasons that we still do not see many local people becoming long-term devotees?	Reasons for what does not work
e) In your opinion, what needs to happen in order for the local people to become long-term devotees?	Possible suggestions

Table 3-5 shows interview questions for the venerables and the intention behind those questions.

3.2. DATA COLLECTION

In this section, procedures on how the data are collected will be discussed. It is worthwhile to mention that due to my association with NTT in the past, the venerables and staff are very helpful in assisting me in the process of data collection.

3.2.1. Conducting Surveys

Survey forms were conducted for all sample groups. For active volunteers, the form was forwarded via email by the venerable that is in charge of volunteers. The completed forms were then returned via email directly to me only. This was done so to ensure confidentiality.

For the permanent staff and venerables, their forms were filled out before the in-depth semi-structured interview. And the current role was added to the staff survey form on the day of the interview.

3.2.2. Conducting Interviews

The semi-structured interviews were conducted for permanent staff and venerables. Before starting the interviews, the topic and problem statement of this research were explained to the interviewees. Then the interviewees were asked to sign a consent form to give me

permission to use the information provided. Also informing them that all data collected are kept in confidential, and showing them my signed promise statement declaring that I would only use the information for the purpose of this thesis. Confidentiality and anonymity mean different things according to King.⁷⁷ He pointed out that confidentiality means that whatever has been said will not be repeated, but this would be difficult with qualitative interviews. Therefore, to assure confidentiality means that anonymity is offered whereby identities of the interviewees are concealed. Kvale⁷⁸ also shares a similar view on confidentiality that private information identifying the interviewees will not be disclosed. However, this has been difficult to keep for this thesis research. One of the reasons being, the sample group is small.

Before my visit for conducting in-depth interviews, I checked with NTT that most of the permanent staff and venerables would be available for interviews. However, the staff and venerables were only made known after my arrival. Fortunately, everyone was co-operative and happy to be interviewed.

The interviews were conducted individually in a private space and voice recorded. There

⁷⁷ King, Nigel and Horrocks, Christine. *Interviews in Qualitative Research*, SAGE Publications Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA, 2010

⁷⁸ Kvale, Stainar, *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*, SAGE Publications Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA, 2009

was no time restriction for each interview to ensure a free flowing sharing. Because I already know all of the interviewees, the interviews did not require icebreaker at the beginning to establish rapport. Rapport is a requirement for good qualitative research, and building rapport is important in the first five minutes according to Keegan.⁷⁹ He mentions, until rapport is established, interviewer will not be able to go beyond superficial level and have trust from research participants.

Most of the interviews were done relatively smoothly. There were two unexpected incidents. First was, the voice recording of the first interview stopped halfway and a second interview was arranged the next day to repeat the questions. Second was, an interview with one venerable was not done over lunch, therefore, I could not ensure privacy as another venerable was also present. I only found out minutes before the appointment with this venerable, and time was tight. I explained to the venerable that supposedly we were meant to be at a private space, but she did not mind and so the interview was done. And it was this particular interview that needed to be translated into English.

⁷⁹ Keegan, Sheila. *Qualitative Research: Good decision making through understanding people, cultures and markets*, Kogan Page, Great Britain and United States, 2009

3.3. DATA PROCESSES

This section describes the procedures for coding, categorizing and analyzing of the collected data. In terms of sensitivity to the meaning in data, Strauss and Corbin mention two important things:

“The first is to always compare what one thinks one sees to what one sees at the property or dimensional level because this enables the analysts to use experience without putting the experience itself into the data. The second is that it is not the researcher’s perception or perspective that matters but rather how research participants see events or happenings.”⁸⁰

3.3.1. Procedures for Data Analysis and Interpretation

Coding, categorizing and analyzing are important steps in the process of data interpretation. According to Kvale, coding means associating one or more keywords with a text section so that identification of a statement can be identified later, whereas categorization involves a more organized conceptualization of a statement, allowing for quantification.⁸¹

Furthermore, Kvale points out:

⁸⁰ Strauss, Anselm and Corbin, Juliet. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*, SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, 1998, p.47

⁸¹ Kvale, Stinar, *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*, SAGE Publications Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA, 2009

“When coding takes the form of categorization, the meaning of long interview statements is reduced to a few simple categories.”⁸²

The purposes of qualitative coding are specified by Richards,⁸³ one of them is to think about what the coded sections tell you about the category, as well as its meanings in the research. Richards also notes the ways of coding, that is, through descriptive, topic and analytical. Descriptive means to store information about the cases being researched, such as gender, age and job of the interviewees. Topic involves the tedious work of the qualitative researcher, tagging text corresponding to its subject, for example what themes are being brought up in this passage? Analytical is central to qualitative enquiry as it leads to theory affirmation and theory ‘emergence’, for instance, what is happening in the comment about the school teacher?

Furthermore, King and Horrocks describe the stages in the process of thematic analysis, which is similar to Richards in that descriptive coding is the first stage, followed by interpretive coding and then overarching themes being the last. Descriptive coding involves

⁸² Kvale, Stainar, *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*, SAGE Publications Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA, 2009, p.203

⁸³ Richards, Lyn, *Handling Qualitative Data: A Practical Guide*, SAGE Publications Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA, 2005

going through transcript, then highlight relevant material and assign brief comments. After defining descriptive codes, then repeat for every transcript and revising descriptive codes as you proceed. Interpretive coding is about cluster descriptive codes; interpret meaning of clusters relating to research question, and implement interpretive codes to entire data set. Overarching themes means as a whole obtain key themes for data set, and construct diagram to correspond relationships between stages of coding in the analysis.⁸⁴

Kvale also summarizes the analysis of an interview into five steps. Firstly, read through the whole interview to get a sense of it. Secondly, determine the natural “meaning units” of the text. Thirdly, restate themes that dominate natural meaning units, and thematizing the statements as understood by the researcher. Fourthly, examine the meaning units with regard to the specific purpose of the research. Lastly, tie together the key, non-redundant themes of the complete interview into descriptive statement.

It seems data interpretation requires certain procedures and considerations, all that have been mentioned above will be considered to ensure the procedures carried out in this research are valid and credible. As Denzin and Lincoln state, qualitative researchers utilize a

⁸⁴ King, Nigel and Horrocks, Christine. *Interviews in Qualitative Research*, SAGE Publications Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA, 2009, pp.152-3

comprehensive range of interconnected interpretative practices so that a preferable understanding of the available subject matter could be achieved.⁸⁵

3.3.2. Coding

In completion of data collection, three volunteers are included in the data collection. For both staff and venerables, survey forms and in-depth interviews are carried out as intended. In total, there are four staff and six venerables.

Open coding is done to protect the privacy of the interviewees and for the purpose of a neat analysis. Each code will provide information about the interviewee.

Table 3-6: Coding List for Volunteer and Staff

Code for Interviewees		Gender	
VO1	Volunteer #1	F	Female
VO2	Volunteer #2	M	Male
VO3	Volunteer #3	Other	
S1	Staff #1	BU	Buddhist
S2	Staff #2	PC	Protestant Christian
S3	Staff #3	BL	BLIA Member
S4	Staff #4	NB	Non BLIA Member

Table 3-6 is a coding list of the categorization for Volunteer and Staff. For each category

⁸⁵ Denzin, Norman K. and Lincoln, Yvonna S. *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2005

that applies to that interviewee it is separated with underscore “_”. For example,

VO2_M_PC_NB means Volunteer #2 is a Male, religious affiliation is with Protestant

Christian and non-member of BLIA.

Table 3-7: Coding List for Venerable

Code for Interviewees		Ethnic Race	
V1	Venerable #1	TW	Taiwanese
V2	Venerable #2	AC	Australian Born Chinese
V3	Venerable #3	CH	Chinese
V4	Venerable #4	VC	Vietnamese Chinese
V5	Venerable #5	MC	Malaysian Chinese
V6	Venerable #6	[Number]	English Level

Table 3-7 is a coding list of the categorization for Venerable. There are two things that need to be clarified. Firstly, all the venerables are female. Secondly, English level scale was self-evaluated.

For each category that applies to that interviewee it is separated with underscore “_”. For example, **V2_AC[9]** means Venerable #2 is Australian born Chinese and her self-evaluated English level is at a ‘9’.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

In this chapter, results of the data collection will be presented. All in-depth interviews were transcribed. Please see Appendix for full transcript.

4.1. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

As mentioned in the last chapter, coding and categorizing are important steps in data analysis and interpretation that require certain procedures. From raw data to report, it has been a long process to go through all the transcripts and collate the answers for each question. The results and interpretations for each question are presented below.

4.1.1. Survey Results for Volunteers

Question 1 - How did you come to know Nan Tien Temple?

Responses

VO1: Through my son.

VO2: Local knowledge.

VO3: In my local are, often saw the temple driving past and really wanted to visit but was unable to until I was an independent adult.

Interpretation: Local knowledge, word of mouth and driving past the highway are ways people have come to know Nan Tien Temple. Questions being raised here are: How does NTT promote itself to those that still never visited? Which is the most effective form of promotion?

Question 2 - What was your first impression of Nan Tien Temple?

Responses

VO1: Holy hell! [In a good way].

VO2: Interesting books in the reading room at Reception.

VO3: I found the temple to be a very peaceful and relaxing place to visit.

Interpretation: Often, people do find the temple very peaceful and relaxing place. For others, it could be breathtaking. First impression of the temple is important because if they enjoy it the first time, they will be more likely to come back to the temple. Even better, bringing their friends and family along too. But the question will be, how can we ensure that they have a good experience when they first visit?

Question 3 - Why have you chosen Nan Tien Temple to be your volunteering place?

Responses

VO1: Because it's the only temple close to me.

VO2: I have an interest in Buddhism, so can add to it at the same time as helping out.

VO3: Nan Tien is special to me because it is like a family to me now. Mostly I love learning and being around like-minded people who truly care about others and want to make the world a better place the same way as I do.

Interpretation: For all three volunteers, having an interest in Buddhism is the common reason for choosing Nan Tien Temple as their volunteering place. What is NTT offering the volunteers in terms of learning Buddhism?

Question 4 - Can you tell me what has been your experience like coming in contact with Nan Tien Temple?

Responses

VO1: I feel like I belong there sometimes. Spiritually I belong there. Physically sometimes it's a bit hard, mainly with the Chinese English.

VO2: Generally enjoyable. Sometimes the Reverends appear overworked.

VO3: When I'm at Nan Tien, I feel very safe and loved. I've come to really appreciate the wisdom of the Dharma. I cannot imagine what life would be like if I never came to NanTien to learn.

Interpretation: Feeling a sense of belonging is important for volunteers, although language can make it difficult. Once there is a sense of belonging, the volunteers will stay longer and also it increases their commitment.

Question 5 - From your understanding, can you tell me what is Humanistic Buddhism?

Responses

VO1: To be kind to yourself first, love yourself. Because if you don't then you will never be able to help other beings, and to me this is what I want most in this world. The helping without asking for anything in return. Looking after the planet we live in because everything is connected. Helping other people to find happiness, to help them change their life for the better. To be there for all beings and not to judge people accepted things for what they are not what you want things to be. Putting others before yourself. Teaching and talk to others about the Buddha's teachings.

VO2: It is the role of the bodhisattva to delay their own Buddhahood to bring others along the path. In terms of my own understanding, I see it as propagating the dharma to Westerners where appropriate.

VO3: Humanistic Buddhism is recognizing that you are the world, and the world is you. There is no difference, everyone and everything is connected. Everyone has Buddha nature. For me, Humanistic Buddhism is something that I feel I was practicing before I even knew there was name for it. Being mindful in everyday life, being a considerate and thoughtful person, wanting to help others not for personal gain, but because you really care about people's wellbeing. I guess Humanistic Buddhism involves integrating Buddhist wisdom into every day life by living a virtuous and compassionate life. Striving to be your best and encouraging others to be their best too.

Interpretation: Even though their answers share the commonality of helping others. None of them mentioned the common saying by Master Hsing Yun on Humanistic Buddhism, that is, "Whatever was spoken by the Buddha, and needed by the people; all that is pure, good and beautiful."

Question 6 - What attracts you the most about Nan Tien Temple?

Responses

VO1: I think of Nan Tien Temple as my home. I have found a new way of life there, through the help of everyone at Nan Tien Temple. I feel very comfortable and at peace there. I meet people from all walks of life and they all teach me something. I love talking to people and helping them in whatever way I can. This I can do at Nan Tien Temple.

VO2: Close to home, and a calm retreat from the busy outside world.

VO3: The Dharma. My wonderful friends and teachers...The atmosphere.

Interpretation: Nan Tien Temple has an atmosphere that is calm and peaceful. The

people that the volunteers come in contact with are also very important. Hence, it will be important that those at the frontline have the right understanding of Buddhism.

Question 7 - So far, what has been your challenge (if any) while volunteering at Nan Tien Temple?

Responses

VO1: I guess the language, culture and being accepted. The hardest part is getting over the feeling of not really being wanted there, not by the Reverends but the lay people. But these are my feelings, and I had to face these feeling before I could move on. I was there to learn Buddhism for me and no matter what happened I was staying. The culture is so much different from ours and to learn to mix the two is a great challenge in itself.

VO2: ---

VO3: The language barrier can be difficult at times because I don't speak Mandarin – but it hasn't deterred me. I just go with the flow and I figure if I need to know anything someone will translate for me...I have started learning Chinese so I can communicate better with others at the temple and also so I can participate more fully in activities and be less confused.

Interpretation: Language and culture differences are probably the most common challenges for the volunteers. Other challenges are feeling excluded by the lay people and unable to fully participate due to confusion are also mentioned. If the volunteers are willing to learn Chinese in order to ensure a better communication, then the same applies to those who do not speak English at NTT. Hence, how about offering English classes at NTT?

4.1.2. In-depth Semi-interview Results for Staff

Question 1 - What did you find challenging when you first begun working at Nan Tien Temple?

Responses

S1: Communication.

S2: Getting used to the way the reverends wanted things, and the demands of the reverends...

S3: Getting the work done.

S4: The language...they would say one thing that meant something else.

Interpretation: Communication and language are challenging for the staff. This is understandable as people at the temple are from different cultures and background, and

there is a way of how things are done. The question is, how are the staff being trained to do their jobs? Are there training programs for staff?

Question 2 - What are your challenges right now?

Responses

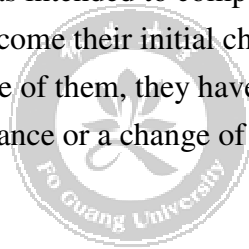
S1: Still communication on how the Reverends want things.

S2: They realized now that you ask for it and they know that you will get it, they have patience.

S3: Thinking more of stepping to the side more so than improving anything I do.

S4: I understand the job very well. I just observe now. When I first started working here, I didn't exactly know what they wanted because everyone's work is different. But now, I don't need them to speak to me, because I know by their actions what they're doing what I need to do. There's always challenges in the temple but I look forward to that actually because it helps me grow too. That's the beauty of it is that you're constantly seeing something different and it's great!

Interpretation: This question was intended to compare whether their challenges would change. Many of them have overcome their initial challenges through establishing common understanding. For some of them, they have made changes within through those challenges, either through acceptance or a change of mindset. For instance, seeing the challenges as ways to develop.



Question 3 - Have you thought of quitting your job at Nan Tien Temple? If yes, what would be your reasons for leaving?

Responses

S1: Yes I have. Personality clash with one of the managers.

S2: Sometimes. Just the pressure really...you get all organized and then the last second everything's changed and then you gotta re-organize and try and do things...They asked me for my advice and that I'd give them my advice but then it's driving in the moment what they really want, we do it their way first and then do it my way second.

S3: Never really. I enjoy coming here...being part of...

S4: Yes I did. I don't like other people blaming other people for something that's not their control especially they know that the communication wasn't past on...

Interpretation: Even though majority of them say they have thought of quitting, their reasons for wanting to quit could apply to any job not just in their current job at NTT.

Question 4 - What has been your motivation for continuing to work at Nan Tien Temple?

Responses

S1: The love of the temple

S2: Just the day-to-day challenges...it's not like a job where you're sitting in the office. With this, you're working with everything...It's always something different to trying to achieve. It's made me more aware of what I can achieve if I want to achieve it. So the temple has taught me in that way.

S3: I just enjoy the environment. I enjoy the people that work here because there's always a solution to a problem without frustration or hysteria. Everyday when I come to the temple gate. I'm happy to be here. It's like a clock. You pull up at the gates and you just clock off of the outside world and come inside. And then you clock on when you go out the gate.

S4: I really enjoy Nan Tien Temple. It's my temple. I feel part of it. I love the temple. I love the Reverends, that's what keeps me going here. I love the place, there's good and bad in every workplace.

Interpretation: For these staff, they love the temple and that love is their motivation for continuing to stay. More importantly, working for the temple has somewhat enriched their lives.

Question 5 - If I were new to Nan Tien Temple, as a staff, what sort of attitudes do you think I need to have?

Responses

S1: You'll have to be able to throw your ideas out how you think they should be and accept how the Reverends want them to be.

S2: You've gotta have open mind.

S3: An accepting attitude, and respectful. I would ask a staff member how do they feel about working under reverends? Because it's not just an employer, we also have to respect that they have a religion that's behind them.

S4: It will take time before they learn, but have to be broad minded. A lot of people coming to work for us here think, "That's not my duty. It's not part of what was given to me on the sheet." I don't think like that. I feel that if there's a job to be done, just get in there and do the job and then everything's fine.

Interpretation: The kind of attitudes a person has can greatly affect their experiences in life. Being open minded and able to accept different things will definitely be useful working for NTT.

Question 6 - Are you a long-term devotee of Fo Guang Shan Nan Tien Temple?

Responses

S1: Yes.

S2: Oh yeah.

S3: Well I am.

S4: Yes I have been.

Interpretation: All of the staff considers themselves as devotees of the temple. On second thought, this question could be further explored by asking what it means to them to be a devotee of the temple?

Question 7 - Why do you think are the reasons that we still do not see many local people becoming long-term devotees?

Responses

S1: Most Western people follow the Tibetan Buddhism...they don't know a lot about our Fo Guang Shan Buddhism.

S2: It might be outside pressure...people outside think what are you doing there for...You shouldn't be there. You're supposed to be a Christian...a lot of the people who come here are actually breaking that pressure. When people do come but then they only come for certain length of time and then they seem to go out the door. [HOME could be what's lacking for other people?] Yes I think so. Reverends made me feel part of family, we all worked together and as a family. It's always been like home to me.

S3: The Chinese culture, there is a way that they welcome you but there's also a way that they ignore you. But now because I know that's how they are I accept it and it doesn't bother me. The most important thing is...not to overwork a volunteer. Some of the BLIA members have actually said that, they feel they're not trusted enough. Basically, it's still the culture thing. They just say that we'll never fit in. And that's the end of the story. So they leave.

S4: A lot of people like to come here and do volunteer, maybe once or twice...they're not really committed to the temple...it has a lot to do with the language barrier...it will be difficult if you don't understand the language.

Interpretation: It is easy to think that after 19 years since the opening, everyone "should" know about Nan Tien Temple and Humanistic Buddhism. The truth is, there are still many people that do not know. When people come to the temple, they are faced with the Chinese culture and very quickly there is language barrier. Why do people leave after a period of time? Sometimes it is due to culture differences, and other times it is the feeling

of being excluded. A crucial question is how can we overcome the cultural differences and reach a common ground where we can exchange our ideas in learning Buddhism.

Question 8 - In terms of localization of Humanistic Buddhism, what would be your suggestions?

Responses

S1: I disagree with having the Buddha's Birthday festival in the mall...should have it celebrated in the temple, and invite everybody into the temple. Because there are a lot of people in Wollongong that don't know that we exist...Having more classes...we used to have meditation classes and Tai Chi classes on Saturday morning, Chinese cooking demonstration classes, Eastern Awareness Program. The reverends need to practice what they preach.

S2: Show the people around what the Chinese customs are then they might accept the temple more. We've gotta educate a bit more. Advertise in the local paper (The Advertiser is a free paper delivered every Wednesday)...like the functions that are coming on and put them in the paper. People who are visiting, they sort of getting involved in it because like they go to the Main Shrine the only thing is, there's no one to explain...

S3: We're doing our best to encourage people to come here and keep it as a social thing not so much turn it into you must study or you must participate in. Australians will back off if someone pressures them. They like to walk in the door free...without obligation. All the entertainment we offer now is getting more exciting and a lot of Western culture like the idea of lots of things that the Asian cultures do. It's really breaking a barrier that's been there for many years.

S4: I don't think it's been advertised enough...they need more Australians to get actually involved and promote it. I would listen whatever a Reverend has to say. If I have to go to anything with Buddhism and it was just a volunteer there, I wouldn't really go back again. There should be people in every section...to tell them...there should be more courses on... courses going through the day. I'm not talking about the night time...a lot of people would want to come through the day too.

Interpretation: Buddha's Birthday is one of the big yearly events for the temple. The celebration is a chance for local people to get to know the Buddha. There are still many local people who do not know much about the Buddha. There is still much need for education, not only about who the Buddha is, but why NTT is here, the functions and purpose. Programs such as Eastern Awareness and Cooking demonstrations used to be popular among the local people, maybe consider bringing them back. In addition, possibly having activities that foster exchange of cultures. Not just for them to get to know the Chinese cultures, NTT needs to learn about Australian cultures too.

4.1.3. In-depth Semi-interview Results for Venerables

Question 1 - What have been your personal challenges in propagating Humanistic Buddhism at Nan Tien Temple?

Responses

V1: Teach the school kids...English not good enough sometimes communicate problems...

V2: System is different from headquarters...one of my major challenges is adapting to the new here and adapting to this new way of how they do things...

V3: Don't have enough time to spend with devotees.

V4: How you can propagate Humanistic Buddhism through expedient means...you will need to be equipped with different kinds of knowledge being good at different things.

V5: Managing people...people they have their own way to do things...if you want to achieve a goal you have to make people work together towards that goal. You have to know how to bring them back without hurting them. And that is difficult.

Interpretation: For all the venerables, having come from a different culture, language is one of the most challenging when it comes to propagation of Humanistic Buddhism. This raises the question, what are the criteria for venerables that are being assigned at overseas branch temples? If the venerable does not speak English well, then she will need to be prepared to learn.

Question 2 - From what you know, what are some of the changes Nan Tien Temple has made over the years in order to attract more local people?

Responses

V1: The future plan for us is building the Nan Tien Institute...great help for Nan Tien Temple to improve. We have more professors and more high level people come to the temple not just the tourists. The activities we design will be more important. Buddha's Birthday at Wollongong. That's one more step to the local people, they can understand how Buddhists celebrate Buddha's Birthday.

V2: I would say Nan Tien Temple is not bad in localization, we have workers who are local...Really how much do they understand about Humanistic Buddhism? How much they know about the Dharma? When you chat with them, when you work with them, they don't know much they only know how to support this Nan Tien Temple, that's it. They don't know what's the greater beyond that. And there's a lot more to that than just Nan Tien Temple, Humanistic Buddhism. They only know the term but not much.

V3: When I first started here, we have Meditation Retreat, and the participants cannot have

coffee...now you can. The new Abbess that can speak English...I think it's a good sign.

V4: Since I was here...they try to encourage the staff or venerables to speak English more...because language is a tool...We're also looking at the needs of local people. In order to attract those people to the temple, we need to start from their needs. You need to cater for their needs. We need to give them what they need so that they can come. But how can we find out their needs? We need to communicate, the problem is we stay in the office most of the time.

V5: We emphasize a lot on education programs such as school excursions, retreats and also we go out to the community to offer our service to government organizations to the school...whenever we are required then we will go there. And this is also chance for people to get to know ourselves.

V6: So the beginning of Nan Tien Temple is a very good beginning because it has tourism. Of course in the beginning, they only understand superficially but slowly they will feel the underlying rich culture. That is, the philosophy referred by Humanistic Buddhism brings forth spiritual serenity. Since the establishment of Nan Tien Temple, tourism had brought in people. Affected by the environment, slowly people participate in our meditation and Buddhism classes. And then, we also go out to interact with the community. The local people feel that our temple is very important in Wollongong...We feel that only through culture and education can bring about change in the future and one's life...we hope to build Nan Tien Institute in Australia to provide higher education for society.

Interpretation: No doubt, changes are being made continuously at Nan Tien Temple. For instance, the types of events being organized, modifications made to the rules for retreats in order to accommodate for the needs of the participants, more emphasis on speaking English and educational programs. I think it is not enough to just know how to speak the language, but also about being interested and willing to embrace the Australian culture.

Question 3 - If I were new to Nan Tien Temple, as a Venerable, what sort of attitudes do you think I need to have?

Responses

V1: Enthusiastic, positive thinking and more open minded to be willing to learn to help, you'll be easy to get along with others.

V2: Open and respectful...respect those who have been here

V3: Adaptability, flexibility, accepting and embracing all the different cultures

V4: Initiative

V5: They have to find out what is the role of this temple? Why is this temple here? What are we going to fulfill? What are we going to offer to public? Because the temple is multi-functioning. We have a lot of mission to achieve.

Interpretation: As a venerable, new to the temple, the attitudes mentioned above is a very long list indeed. I think the most important is to have respect, acceptance and ability to embrace the cultural differences.

Question 4 - Why do you think are the reasons that we still do not see many local people becoming long-term devotees?

Responses

V1: We need to give more chance for local people to involve, to join. And once they can settle, they know things belong to them they will come more regularly and take responsibility for that. And they feel part of the temple. Some people I ask them to take refuge to be our devotee, I think it is a belief. Sometimes they're not Buddhists. In their background they're Christian but they're still willing to help.

V2: Because we don't give them anything that they need. I've been teaching Buddhism classes and I noticed that they only come here for Buddhism classes but there's nothing that connects them back to Nan Tien Temple. They only come here because of they really want to learn about Buddhism. How can I encourage people to come back? Not only for the classes but also to come and attend these events, coming to participate and coming to get involved. You'll learn more about Buddhism because Buddhism is not just in the books.

V3: If you don't give them the Dharma, if you just, if they volunteers and devotees come and you just give them work and you don't give them Humanistic Buddhism, that's not what they come here for. So you'll find that we're not able to keep them. I think what we have a problem is that we impose our values on others. We expect them to do what we do. And I don't think the Australians like it.

I think we still lack local knowledge.

Firstly, when they come here, they don't see everybody speaking English. Secondly, they don't get people that interact with them all the time. If they come to the temple they get what they want then they will remain here. The personal interaction is very important. Our major downfall is that there aren't enough English speaking Reverends around at the frontline.

V4: I think they're not getting what they want so they don't have a sense of belonging. Some people come back regularly but we never really pay attention to them. If they come back every week, that means they like here and there's a potential for them to become long term devotees. But I think at the moment we're not really paying too much emphasis on attracting those local people and on localizing. I think we don't have enough venerables and we're really busy with those office works.

V5: The Western volunteers, we don't give them enough care. Sometimes we neglect them. We let them just sit there, and also we don't have enough work for them. Say for example, when we

have big Dharma Functions, and all our volunteers from Sydney they come to help and they're busy running around. We can see there are Western volunteers they come as well but they don't know what to do. Because we don't give them enough training and also they don't attend our BLIA meeting and their participation is not enough. There are many reasons, and mainly because some of the Reverends they don't speak English well enough.

V6: When someone comes to help, we don't expect him or her to help for a long period of time. If it's for very long, then he or she must give up their own religion or culture. You don't need to be one hundred percent involved to be considered a practitioner of Humanistic Buddhism. So I don't think it's an issue of long or short period of time. Right now, he or she may not feel the need to serve for Buddhism, but when he needs it, he will appear. Some people are behind the scenes implementing the concepts of Humanistic Buddhism.

Interpretation: One major issue is people are not given what they need so they lack a sense of belonging. Then the question is what do they need? There are many different things. Some of them come to NTT because they really want to learn about Buddhism. If they come and just get work without learning Buddhism, then they will leave because it is not what they come for. The local people might need to be given more chances to get involved so that they feel part of the temple. Trouble is, sometimes there is not enough work for them. Maybe the question is how come there is not enough work for volunteers? On the other hand, the venerables are too busy with their work, to the extent that they do not have enough time for devotees. One major downfall is that there are not enough English speaking venerables at the frontline. This proves the importance of localization. If the local people can become more involved, then there will be less workload on the venerables.

Question 5 - In your opinion, what needs to happen in order for the local people to become long-term devotees?

Responses

V1: Australian people, their mind is quite simple, once they got a permanent volunteer job, they keep going...They commit, and they never change very easily. That's why we are now doing localization work...Now we can only plant the seeds. An amazing thing is Baby Blessings...we can see some results.

V2: Let them think that I've got a purpose. I've got to do something I want to improve. They need a purpose. It's important for a person to feel like they have something here, here for me that I need to get or I need to do. It's almost like a mission or something...letting them know that this is also your second home.

V3: We need a bigger influx of English speaking people to come here...it's easier for the

Australians to invite the Australians to come in. Ambassador for the Nan Tien Temple...we need to have more people like that.

V4: You need to really start from their perspective, and put yourself in their shoes. It's not just asking for their help, I think it's what kind of Dharma we can give to them? I think BLIA Wollongong sub-chapter needs to play a more active role...they play a very important role and part in the localization.

V5: We have to develop volunteers training program for Westerners. To let them know more about Fo Guang Shan because a lot of them they come in, they know nothing. There's no orientation...no training at all. We just put them straight to the job. After they finish their work, finish, go home. I don't think that is the correct way to keep volunteers. Except if the person coming, he or she is the one who are really searching for something which can fulfill that inner needs. Then they can find it here. Without teaching from the Reverends. Those kind of a person would be able to stay long without Reverend caring too much. But a lot of times, volunteers, they are not like that. Especially young people, you need to guide them, give them a lot of guidance. I think we need to do more localization. But one thing is if we want to have financial support then we need to raise funds from the Chinese community. It is difficult to raise funds from the local Western community because they don't know much about us. They think why do I give money to a temple? And we have to develop programs which cater for Westerners. We have Buddhism class but Buddhism is not enough, just Buddhism classes is not enough. Meditation class, we have a lot of students, lots of participation coming to join the retreats but after the retreat finished. How many come back? We don't have follow up actions. Every time we have activities then we should keep them informed or we can encourage them to go to Sydney branches. But Reverends in our Sydney branches don't talk much English. You have to really learn about Western culture in order to be able to lead them to guide them.

V6: In order for Humanistic Buddhism to develop in Australia, we need to firstly overcome the differences in Eastern and Western languages and culture. Secondly, understanding both cultures can enhance between Eastern and Western cultures. All the events need to blend in with Western thinking, understand what they want, and what they feel is good...find a way that is beneficial, acceptable and recognized by Australians.

Interpretation: Firstly, overcoming the differences in language and culture between Eastern and Western. After that, the events of Nan Tien Temple will need to be beneficial and acceptable to the Australians. Those events need to be what they want and that they feel it is good. The venerables recognize the importance of stepping into their shoes and seeing things from their perspectives. Instead of just asking them to help, the venerables need to give them the Dharma. To let them know that the temple can become their second home. If they can establish a sense of purpose at the temple, and that they have a

permanent volunteer job, they will stay and commit to it. There needs to be a training program for Westerners because right now they are put to the job straight away without orientation. Also follow up actions are important to keep the participants that come for retreats and classes. For example, encouraging them to visit the Sydney branches. However, most of the venerables in Sydney branches do not speak much English too. That is why we need to have more Australians that serve like Ambassadors for the temple. This is also why the BLIA Wollongong sub-chapter is important especially in the localization work.

4.2. DISCUSSIONS

Master Hsing Yun once said, “Whatever was spoken by the Buddha, and needed by the people; all that is pure, good and beautiful; any teachings that can help in increasing human happiness; these are what constitute Humanistic Buddhism.”⁸⁶ This may sound simple and easy to understand. However, to implement the principles behind them has not been easy. Particularly, when Humanistic Buddhism is being brought to a western country. Hence, this thesis research focuses on Humanistic Buddhism being localized in Australia, particularly at a place like NTT.

Master Hsing Yun’s vision is that within twenty to thirty years starting from its official opening, the overseas FGS branch temples will be in charge by the local people of that country.⁸⁷ As NTT is approaching its twenty-year mark next year, it seems there is still a gap

⁸⁶ Zhiying, F., *Bright Star Luminous Cloud: The Life of a Simple Monk*, Buddha’s Light Publishing, Hacienda Heights, 2008, p. 287

⁸⁷ 滿義法師. 《星雲模式的人間佛教》，天下文化，臺北市，2005, (Venerable Man Yi. *Humanistic Buddhism of the Pattern Hsing Yun*, Tian Xia Cultural, Taipei, 2005) p. 294

between reality and Master's vision.

As a reminder, the questions that this thesis research intended to address are as follows.

One is to find out what do 'Western Australians' find challenging. From that, it will indicate to us the reasons why they are struggling to become 'Long-term Devotees'? Two is what has worked and what needs improvements? Three is to find the links for 'Western Australians' in becoming 'Long-term Devotees'. In the following sections, I will discuss these three questions as well as the progress of localizing.

4.2.1. Challenges

NTT promotes Humanistic Buddhism, which is seen to be more of a Chinese type of Buddhism as most of the texts on the topic are written in Chinese. Even though, there is many translations of Master Hsing Yun's writings done so far and will continue, and yet not many scholars have written on this topic. This might also indicate that not many people in the West know about Humanistic Buddhism. One reason could be that they need to rely on translation if they do not read Chinese, and inevitably there would be lost in translation. Hence, one biggest challenge is language.

Language is especially important in localizing Buddhism in a new country. At the beginning, when Buddhism arrived in China, much of the texts were first translated into

Chinese. Progressively, it developed and blended into the culture. It was not until after many centuries that we have what we now call ‘Chinese Buddhism’. Similarly, this process will also take place for Australia as Buddhism slowly spread. It might also take many centuries before we can have a so-called ‘Australian Buddhism’. Meanwhile, we can try to find out what are the challenges faced and lessen those challenges.

Apart from the challenge of language, for staff that are working at NTT, they find how the venerables want things to be done challenging when they first started working. However, once they established common understanding and as they got to know their jobs well, this is no longer much of an issue. Hence, communication is also important at the beginning to develop understanding. As V6_MC[3] said, “We need to firstly overcome differences in eastern and western languages and culture. This is the most basic requirement. Once we have a common language, we can communicate effectively. Secondly, understanding both cultures can enhance exchanges between eastern and western cultures.”

Another challenge is “outside pressure” that people who are not part of the temple put on the ‘Western Australians’ that come to work or volunteer. As S2_M_BU_BL mentioned, when people found out that he works at the temple, they asked him why does he want to work there for? He said it is because he enjoys working at the temple. But they are confronted with “You shouldn’t be there. You’re supposed to be a Christian.” As S2_M_BU_BL added that “a lot of

the people who come here are actually breaking that pressure.”

A similar confrontation is also faced by VO1_F_BU_BL, she was asked “What are you doing here?” They said to her that, “This temple is for Chinese people, how come you’re here?” Some people think the temple is only for Chinese people, “because all that you see is only Chinese people” VO1_F_BU_BL explained.

From those two stories, it shows that more education about NTT is required, particularly on what does NTT do, why is there? And who can come? These very basic information still need to be publicized. Some even goes as far to think that it will take away their beliefs if they visit the temple. As S1_F_BU_NB said that her stepfather thinks that if he comes to the temple, then it will do something to his personal religion. However, to S1_F_BU_NB, it actually enhances it but many are scared of that.

Another perception is the temple is rich. Both S1_F_BU_NB and S2_M_BU_BL mentioned this. The truth is, the temple has been a joint effort of many sponsors and donors who have worked hard for the completion of NTT. To Master Hsing Yun, he has always made use of the money where it is needed instead of saving it in the bank. And more importantly he said the temples he built are for everyone to use.

In other words, breaking through language barrier and cultural differences are

challenging for localization. As mentioned, the perceptions of the ‘Local People’ are also a challenge for the temple. Hence, educational work still need to be done to let them know what NTT is doing and why is it there? Hopefully with understanding, they will be able to accept the temple. Acceptance is a start, and eventually more people will come to the temple.

4.2.2. What has worked for ‘Western Australians’?

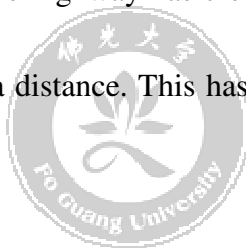
One question that was asked by almost all of the venerables that I interviewed is, “What do the local people need and want?” As V6_MC[3] said, “All the events we organize needs to blend in with western thinking, understand what they want, and what feels good to them.”

A couple of the events that NTT organizes have worked well for ‘Western Australians’. One is the Weekend Meditation Retreat, and the other is Baby Blessing Ceremony. The Weekend Meditation Retreat runs every month. The program begins on Saturday and ends on Sunday. They are popular and appeal to many Australians. As V1_TW[6] mentioned, sometimes it is fully booked two or three months in advance.

The other event, Baby Blessing Ceremony, began before 2004. The idea came from a venerable, she raised the concept of baptism in other religions. Recognizing that many Australians do not wish for their children to be baptized, hence the idea of Baby Blessings for children. In 2004, this event started to boom. Later on in 2006, NTT set Baby Blessing

Ceremony as fixed events throughout the year. They are held four times a year. Each time, there would be about thirty children registered to be blessed. That means, about one hundred family members would gather on the day, and most of them are ‘Western Australians’. V1_TW[6] also shared that it is an event that will keep going, because once the parents have Baby Blessing for their first child, then they would come back for their second, third, and on. Also they would tell their family and friends about it too. Therefore, this is a very successful event in terms of localization.

The temple being right next to the highway has created much curiosity. Many that drive past the highway will notice it from a distance. This has brought many people to come for a visit.

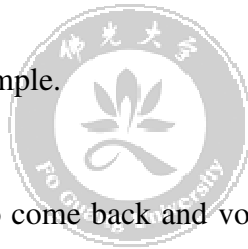


What you find once you step into the grounds of NTT is a sense of tranquility that is unexplained, even though you could hear the endless traffic of the highway. Somehow, the atmosphere of NTT is not affected. It is calming, peaceful, and even bringing the sense of “HOME” to some people. This is the case for S2_M_BU_BL, VO1_F_BU_BL and VO3_F_BU_BL. All three of them recalled the first time they visited they felt at peace as if they have come “HOME”, especially in the main shrine. When VO1_F_BU_BL was asked to explain what “HOME” means, she described it as “a spiritual home...where I had to be to learn things” but she added it is difficult to explain.

4.2.3. Becoming ‘Long-term Devotees’

As I have said in chapter 1, from the number of ‘Western Australians’ and how they become ‘Long-term Devotees’ can serve as indications for localization. Therefore, it is important to look at what constitutes for them to become ‘Long-term Devotee’?

First of all, when someone comes to participate an event at NTT, after the event they might be invited to come back for voluntary work. For example, VO1_F_BU_BL was asked by one of the venerables to help with the Nan Tien Institute. Even though we cannot say for sure, sometimes a personal invitation does make a difference. VO1_F_BU_BL is now a BLIA member as well as a devotee of the temple.



What if she never was invited to come back and volunteer, what would have happened? V5_VC[3] saw the importance of follow up actions after the participants finished the retreats or classes. She suggested, “Every time we have activities then we should keep them informed or we can encourage them to go to Sydney branches. But Reverends in our Sydney branches don’t talk much English.” From what she shared, we can see that there needs to be a continued communication with the participants. Also, it will be difficult for those that live in Sydney to have a continuation.

Speaking from experience, V1_TW[6] said that ‘Western Australians’ need to be given

more opportunities to get involved, and they need to feel included. For some ‘Western Australians’ that come to volunteer regularly have a ‘job’ that belongs to them. For these volunteers, whenever they come, they would do that ‘job’. I think this is important for ‘Western Australians’ volunteers. They would feel a sense of belonging and self-worth, and this may constitute for them to stay and eventually become ‘Long-term Devotees’. As V2_AC[9] pointed out, it is also important to have a sense of purpose, doing something and being part of something that they feel is of value.

In addition, feeling that they are part of the NTT family, the inclusion is important. As S2_M_BU_BL said, “Everyone was together. We all worked together and even just going out to the gardens and they’d just go out there and work as a family...it’s always been like home to me.” From that, we can say that working for the same goal is also important. Just as what VO3_F_BU_BL said, “Mostly I love learning and being around like-minded people who truly care about others and want to make the world a better place the same way as I do.”

Another important factor for ‘Western Australians’ to become ‘Long-term Devotees’ is the changes that occur after being in contact with NTT. Whether it is in them or their lives, they learn and apply the Dharma (the Buddha’s teachings). More importantly, they have benefited from the teachings. VO3_F_BU_BL reported that, “Coming to Nan Tien more regularly over the past year or so has been one of the best decisions I have ever made...I’ve

changed and grown so much and in doing so I've discovered a deeper level of purpose and understanding. Most importantly, I've come to really appreciate the wisdom of the Dharma. I cannot imagine what life would be like if I never came to Nan Tien to learn.” The change within oneself is echoed in S2_M_BU_BL experience of working at NTT, he said, “It's made me more aware of what I can achieve if I want to achieve it. So the temple has taught me in that way. So I can reach a goal if I want to reach it.” Similarly, S4_F_BU_BL looks forward to the daily challenges working at NTT because they make her grow.

The journey of becoming ‘Long-term Devotee’ can be difficult, especially if the challenge is between volunteers. VO1_F_BU_BL shared her story that once she was asked by a venerable to clean an area in Main Shrine. While cleaning, another volunteer came up to her and told her that she can leave and go home. Feeling taken aback and upset from what that volunteer said, she also got discouraged altogether. Even though she felt intentionally excluded, she was able to remind herself the reason why she came to volunteer at NTT and see the picture of her own purpose. She continued on and is still around today. However, not everyone is like her. For those that are not like VO1_F_BU_BL, they might need a virtuous friend to help them. In Sanskrit, a virtuous friend is called a ‘kalyānamitra’. It means “a friend

of virtue, a religious counselor,” or “a friend in the good life, or one who stimulates to goodness.”⁸⁸

A ‘kalyānamitra’ could be a venerable or an Ambassador (propagator of NTT) mentioned by V3_CH[10]. I would say that when S2_M_BU_BL shared that he admired two of the ex-Abesses because they made him feel part of the family, hence the venerables are his ‘kalyānamitra’. For VO1_F_BU_BL, her ‘kalyānamitra’ was someone in the Buddhist College that helped her during chanting service whenever she got lost. The same person helped VO1_F_BU_BL in the process of getting to the head temple (FGS) to volunteer for a year.

4.2.4. Localizing issues

One difficulty for localization is the lack of venerables who can speak English at the frontline. V3_CH[10] said, “Even better if we would have one or two Australian white skin blue eyes kind of Reverends, which I don’t know why we still haven’t been able to.” In fact, one of the volunteer in my sample group shared that she has asked to become a venerable, quote VO1_F_BU_BL:

“I’ve been asking to become a Reverend for the last 5 years, all I was told was I’m too old. I wanted to join the Buddhist College for two years to learn things, I was told no I couldn’t

⁸⁸ Compiled by Soothill, William Edward and Hodous, Lewis. *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co, Ltd, London, 1937, p. 368

because it was all done in Chinese...If we want to go to the Buddhist College why can't we? Because that means, none Australians can go to the Buddhist College because it's all in Chinese. So how are they going to get Australian people to come to the temple if they don't provide the services for them as well? I know I was too old but it doesn't matter the fact that if I can't go because there's no English spoken there then nobody else can go either. No young ones can go if they can't speak Chinese they can't go."

From what VO1_F_BU_BL shared, we can see that it is difficult for a 'Western Australian' to become a venerable due to language issues. However, this directly affects the localization progress because even though we work hard at attracting 'Local People' to come to learn Buddhism but we are not ready to train them to finally take the path of renunciation. Possibly, there needs to be a Buddhist College which uses English for western people.



CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In this last chapter, I will begin with conclusion for this thesis research, followed by suggestions for localization gathered from the perspectives of the ‘Western Australians’ volunteers and staff as well as the venerables. Lastly, there will be a section on future research.

5.1. CONCLUSION

In concluding for localization of Humanistic Buddhism, I will firstly make reference to Master Hsing Yun’s ‘Thirty-year plan’ of localization to evaluate NTT. And then recap on the purposes of this thesis research.



As a reminder, Master Hsing Yun said the first ten-year period is ‘course study and training’; second ten-year period is ‘on-the-job training’; and third ten-year period is ‘the selection of candidates for the position of abbot/abbess and manager.’ Let us now look at how NTT is doing in terms of this plan.

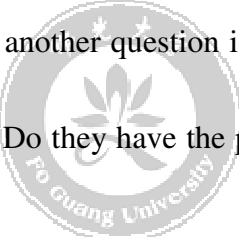
In the first ten-year, ‘course study and training’ involves training local people with the essential knowledge of temple affairs, for example administration of Dharma functions and welcoming of guests. First of all, the words “local people” need to be clarified. As I have defined ‘Local People’ at the beginning as “the people that live in the neighboring areas of

NTT.” Since the opening of NTT, there would have been countless volunteers that come and go. We can say the turnover is pretty high for volunteers. To date, NTT still has many ‘Local People’ that come to volunteer regularly. Some of them take on the role of tour guides or receptionists, which are roles of welcoming guests. However, in terms of administration of Dharma functions, it is still not in the hands of ‘Local People’ yet. This raises the question of why not. First of all, majority of the administration work is still done in Chinese, including the forms and explanation of each Dharma function. There is not much information in English about these Dharma functions and what they mean. Second of all, administration work is seen to be exclusive and only can be done by internal staff, that is, the venerables (mostly). I think if the ‘Western Australians’ can become involved in the administration work, then it will bring in other ‘Western Australians’ willing to participate.

The second ten-year period is about on-the-job training, where the local staff (monastics and lay members) take on duties, including the work of administration and Dharma propagation. As NTT is currently in its second ten-year period, we shall now look at NTT in terms of its local monastics and staff.

First of all, let’s talk about the staff at NTT, many of them (possibly all), are from the neighboring areas. Some of them are overseas students that live around the area that are studying at the University of Wollongong. This already raises the question, why does the

temple employ overseas student and not “local” students that study at the university? Could it be that most (if not all) of the “local” students do not know about the job opportunities at NTT? If this were so, then the temple could reach out to the “local” students for job opportunities. Currently, the staff at NTT take on roles in the Pilgrim Lodge, Dining Hall and Tea House. Other areas of work include gardening, tour guides and administration of Nan Tien Institute. As we can see, these are roles not in Dharma propagation. Even though some staff are involved with the administration work of Nan Tien Institute, many are not. Again, we ask the question of why not. It might be true to say that whatever your role is at the temple you are part of the Dharma propagation. Then another question is do the staff at NTT see themselves as Dharma propagators in their work? Do they have the passion to spread the Dharma or is it just a job that they do?

The logo of Fo Guang University is a circular seal. It features a stylized lotus flower in the center, with three leaves pointing upwards and three pointing downwards. The words "Fo Guang University" are written in a circular path around the lotus. There are small stars at the top of the circle.

Second of all, the venerables at NTT are of Asian ethnic background. The number of years that they have been in Australia varied for every venerable. In Master Hsing Yun’s plan, he mentioned local monastics. What does this mean? For the sake of discussion here, we shall classify the venerables at NTT into two groups. The first group is those who are citizens of Australia before they became a venerable. The second group is those who are sent from overseas branch temples to NTT and then later take on the citizenship of Australia. The question is, in terms of Master Hsing Yun’s plan for the second ten-year period, what

difference is there for the first and second group? Currently, there are six (out of the fourteen) venerables that fall under the first group. The rest are in the second group. If Master Hsing Yun were referring to the first group then we would say NTT is on its way. On the other hand, if the second group is what Master Hsing Yun referring to then NTT is doing very well as majority of the venerables fall in the second group. However, supposedly Master Hsing Yun is referring to ‘Western Australians’ as monastics, definitely we can say NTT has a very long way to go, especially when there is still struggle to keep the ‘Western Australians’.

The third ten-year period is about local monastics or lay members stepping up to the roles of abbot/abbess or director, and this is the period NTT is approaching next year. At the 10th BLIA General Conference in 2004, Master Hsing Yun asked the audience to visualize what a great achievement for Buddhism if the abbots or abbesses of overseas temples are of native origin. That is, imagine having an Australian Abbess at Nan Tien Temple. In addition, Master Hsing Yun wishes to assist and guide the native monastics to take on management and administration of the overseas temples. So far, NTT has only had abbesses that have been assigned from overseas. Sadly, it is still a very long way until NTT will have a ‘Western Australian’ abbess. To date, there is not even a junior monastic that is Australian native (‘Western Australians’) as yet. Hence, there will be no Australian abbess. Maybe the question being raised here is what needs to happen so that we would have Australian monastics? For

one, the Buddhist College needs to be conducted in English. The rules and regulations will need to be clearly explained and accommodated to suit the Australian cultures. What will not work well is to run the Buddhist College in Chinese and have a person to translate what has been said. This is not effective as so much is lost in translation.

In summary, with regards to Master Hsing Yun's thirty-year plan, NTT needs to review what is lacking in the first and second ten-year periods of the plan. Even though it is approaching the third period, it is obvious that the first builds on the second, and the second builds on the third.

For where NTT is heading in the future, it is worthwhile to mention, recently there is a localization movement as Venerable Jue Wei⁸⁹ calls it. She initiated a project called the Buddha's Birthday Education Project, which hopes to bring awareness on the tradition of Buddha's Birthday celebration. It is a way to adapt Buddhism in the West. This project was implemented in Hsi Lai Temple of Los Angeles, and is now being implemented in NTT. Venerable Jue Wei calls upon the local artists, sculptors and photographers for a special seminar where they are presented with the stories of the Buddha. After which, those artists,

⁸⁹ Venerable Jue Wei wrote a book called "Parading the Buddha". <http://blpusa.com/parading-the-buddha>

sculptors and photographers take what they have heard as inspirations for their artwork. Venerable Jue Wei explains, “It’s not about just showing art exhibit. Through this process we hope to get people to understand who the Buddha is and then to express that understanding in art form.” The chosen artworks are then exhibited at NTT as well as during the Buddha’s Birthday Celebration at Darling Harbor. This project has already gathered seventy volunteers that are mainly locals (those familiar with the local environment). Not only that, it has also brought back volunteers that have been “long lost”. This project has been co-organized by NTT and Nan Tien Institute (NTI), in the hope to promote the institute. NTI was inaugurated in 2011, with the purpose to foster more talented people with the correct mindset and attitudes to become Humanistic Buddhism promoters. However, the institute is not only for promoters of Humanistic Buddhism, it aims to reach out to more people as education is for everyone.

In this last part of conclusion, I would like to recap on the three purposes of this thesis research. One is to discuss the challenges for the ‘Western Australians’ that are currently volunteering and working at NTT. Two is to find out how will ‘Western Australians’ stay on to become ‘Long-term Devotees’. Three is to provide guidelines to localize Humanistic Buddhism for FGS branch temples in Australia with a focus on ‘Western Australians.’ The first and second purposes have been addressed in Chapter 4 under “Discussions.” It might be important to remind why it is important for ‘Western Australians’ to become ‘Long-term

Devotees’? In my opinion, the number of ‘Western Australians’ becoming ‘Long-term Devotees’ is a successful indication of localization. Hence, there it is important to look at how we can increase the number of ‘Western Australians’ to become ‘Long-term Devotees’. Hence, some suggestions and guidelines will be presented in the next section.

5.2. SUGGESTIONS

The guidelines have been gathered from perspectives of the volunteers and staff that are ‘Western Australians’, as well as venerables in my sample group. Then followed by further research.

5.2.1. Guidelines for localization




In the process of localizing Humanistic Buddhism, guidelines will serve as our pointers for what to do and what not to do. First of all, Australia is a country with many different cultures. Therefore, it is inevitable that we might encounter cultural clashes. However if these cultural differences can be made known to each other then it will reduce misunderstandings. Otherwise, we may seem to be imposing our values onto others without even realizing that we are doing it.

From what I have gathered from my sample group, here are some things they mentioned about Australians. One is, Australians like to walk in the door free without obligations hence

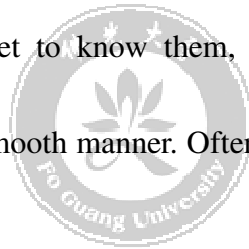
they do not like to be pressured into anything. Two is, for Australians it is a lead by example so if you ask them to do something then you have to do it too. Three is, Australians want to see that the venerables do what they preach.

NTT has done well in many ways to attract different types of people. However, NTT alone is not enough. It has to be a collection of team efforts, for instance, cooperation and support from all the Sydney branch temples as well as BLIA. Particularly, the BLIA Wollongong is very important for NTT. Let me use an example to show it is a collection of team efforts and why it is important.



Imagine a 'Western Australian' comes to NTT for the first time. Let's say the first place she arrives at is the Main Shrine [signage in Chinese that she cannot read]. As she enters, she sees the "Five Directional Buddhas" [does not know the name or what those statues mean] and she sees people making "prostrations" [does not know why people are bowing to the statues]. She walks around [unnoticed by anyone, and there is no one she could ask any questions] and comes out of Main Shrine. She continues down the corridor and arrives outside of the Reception [the person behind the window greets with a smile]. She sees the Notice Board and finds out that there are events she's interested in. She decides to join one the Weekend Meditation Retreat. So she participates in the retreat.

In the story, you can see there are a lot of questions and many unknown. If there were someone who is approachable and available to answer questions about anything inside the Main Shrine, then it will definitely help. Of course, not only in the Main Shrine but at every key spot of the temple. Another important point is that there needs to be some sort of follow-up actions after they join classes or retreats at NTT. If they live in Sydney, they can be referred to the Sydney branch temples. However, not all the venerables at Sydney branch temples can speak English well. That is where the members of BLIA can step up and look after this person who is new to the temple. But bearing in mind not to pressure them into anything. It is more important to get to know them, introduce them to different people. However, this never works out in a smooth manner. Often the continuation from NTT to other branch temples is difficult.



Therefore, it might be a long journey for someone to become a 'Long-term Devotee'. Imagine having to go from a visitor to participant to volunteer to becoming a member of BLIA (not necessary) and then slowly becoming a devotee. In that process, inevitably they might be all sorts of challenges, not just challenges within themselves but between those that they come across too.

First of all, being a newcomer at the temple, there are many questions and not knowing how to be. If they decide to become a volunteer, then there needs to be training programs for

them. Here are some things to be included in the training program: about FGS; about Master Hsing Yun and his visions; principles of Humanistic Buddhism; why NTT was built; purpose and functions of NTT; meanings of prostrations, chanting; the Buddhists way of life; rules and protocols of the temple; and so on.

I think it is also very important to have people who are ‘kalyānamitra’ (a friend of virtue) on the journey of becoming ‘Long-term Devotee’. Sometimes having someone who can help us along the way can make all the difference. More importantly, not only do we need ‘kalyānamitra’ in our lives, but we need to become a ‘kalyānamitra’ for someone else too. In the Meghiya Sutta, it tells us the benefits in meeting with a ‘kalyānamitra’. Quote:

"Meghiya, when a monk has admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues, it is to be expected that he will be virtuous, will dwell restrained in accordance with the Pāṭimokkha, consummate in his behavior & range of activity, and will train himself, having undertaken the training rules, seeing danger in the slightest faults.

"When a monk has admirable people as friends & colleagues, it is to be expected that he will get to hear at will, easily and without difficulty, talk that is truly sobering and conducive to the opening of awareness, i.e., talk on modesty, contentment, seclusion, non-entanglement, arousing persistence, virtue, concentration, discernment, release, and the knowledge & vision of release.

"When a monk has admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues, it is to be expected that he will keep his persistence aroused for abandoning unskillful qualities and for taking on skillful qualities — steadfast, solid in his effort, not shirking his duties with regard to skillful qualities.

"When a monk has admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues, it is to be expected that he will be discerning, endowed with the discernment relating to arising & passing away — noble, penetrating, leading to the right ending of stress."⁹⁰

5.2.2. Future Research

There are many areas to explore for future research. Humanistic Buddhism in Australia may seem to be a topic that is new in the academic field, however Engaged Buddhism is not. In the future, researchers may dig deeper into the influences of NTT have on Australian Buddhism. Another possible area is to look at are the importance of 'kalyānamitra' on our Buddhist path.



⁹⁰ The Meghiya Sutta: About the Meghiya translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu, Ud 4.1 PTS: Ud 34 <http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/kn/ud/ud.4.01.than.html> [Retrieved on 17th May 2013]

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APPENDIX A

LETTER TO NAN TIEN TEMPLE

Letter to Nan Tien Temple

RE: Conducting Qualitative Surveys and Semi-Structured Interviews

Dear Abbess of Nan Tien Temple,

I am writing to you regarding my Master thesis. My topic is "Localization of Humanistic Buddhism in Australia: Nan Tien Temple as example."

I would like to conduct some surveys and interviews during my visit at the end of October and beginning of November. My target audience for the surveys will be volunteers currently active at Nan Tien Temple. In addition, I also would like to interview permanent staffs and Venerables currently at Nan Tien Temple.

Please let me know if my request would be granted.

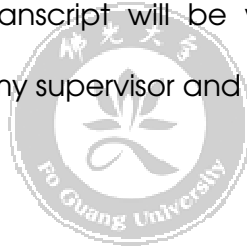
Thank you.

APPENDIX B

MY PROMISE STATEMENT

My Promise

I give you my integrity that I will only use the information you provide to me for the purpose of my Master Thesis on the topic "Localization of Humanistic Buddhism in Australia: Nan Tien Temple as example." All information will be processed by me and reviewed by my supervisor. A transcript will be written up for the semi-structured interview but will only be seen by my supervisor and I.



Signature: _____

Date and Time: _____



APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM

Consent Form

Localization of Humanistic Buddhism in Australia: Nan Tien Temple as Example

I, _____, have agreed to participate in this survey/interview for the Master thesis of Wei Wei Wai. I am aware that whatever information I provide in oral or writing will be kept in confidential by the interviewer herself. I also understand that the process of analysis will be made afterwards for the purpose of the thesis.



Signature: _____

Date and Time: _____



APPENDIX D

SURVEY FORM FOR VOLUNTEER

Ethnic Race	Gender [] F [] M	Age
Are you currently a member of BLIA? [] Yes [] No		
How many months have you been volunteering at Nan Tien Temple? [] 0 - 6 months [] 7 - 12 months [] 13 - 18 months [] More than 2 years - <i>Please specify</i>		
What events have you attended before? <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="width: 50%;">[] Nan Tien Cultural Festival</div> <div style="width: 50%;">[] Neighbourhood Day</div> <div style="width: 50%;">[] One Day Retreat</div> <div style="width: 50%;">[] Eight Precept Retreat</div> <div style="width: 50%;">[] Nan Tien Cultivation Retreat</div> <div style="width: 50%;">[] Offering to Celestial Beings</div> <div style="width: 50%;">[] Offering to Sangha</div> <div style="width: 50%;">[] Weekend Meditation Retreat</div> <div style="width: 50%;">[] Light Offering Ceremony</div> <div style="width: 50%;">[] Guan Yin Dharma Function</div> <div style="width: 50%;">[] Talks / Seminars</div> <div style="width: 50%;">[] Other - <i>Please specify</i></div> </div>		
How did you find out about Nan Tien Temple? <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="width: 33%;">[] Friends & Relatives</div> <div style="width: 33%;">[] Internet Website</div> <div style="width: 33%;">[] Newspaper - <i>Please specify</i> _____</div> <div style="width: 33%;">[] Magazine - <i>Please specify</i> _____</div> <div style="width: 33%;">[] Other - <i>Please specify</i> _____</div> </div>		
What was your first impression of Nan Tien Temple?		
Why have you chosen Nan Tien Temple to be your volunteering place?		
Can you tell me what has been your experience like coming in contact with Nan Tien Temple?		
From your own understanding, can you tell me what is Humanistic Buddhism?		
What attracts you the most about Nan Tien Temple?		
So far, what has been your challenge (if any) while volunteering at Nan Tien Temple?		

PERSONAL INFORMATION

What is your marital status?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Now married	<input type="checkbox"/> Widowed	<input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Separated <input type="checkbox"/> Never married
What is your religious affiliation?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Protestant Christian	<input type="checkbox"/> Roman Catholic	<input type="checkbox"/> Evangelical Christian
<input type="checkbox"/> Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/> Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/> Hindu
<input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist	<input type="checkbox"/> Other - <i>Please specify</i>	
What is highest degree or level of school you have completed? If currently enrolled, mark the previous grade or highest degree received.		
<input type="checkbox"/> No schooling completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Nursery school to Year 6	<input type="checkbox"/> Year 7 - Year 9
<input type="checkbox"/> Year 10 - Year 12, no diploma	<input type="checkbox"/> High school graduate	<input type="checkbox"/> College graduate
<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Master's degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctorate degree
<input type="checkbox"/> Other - <i>Please specify</i>		
Are you currently...?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-employed	<input type="checkbox"/> Out of work but not currently looking for work	
<input type="checkbox"/> Employed for wages	<input type="checkbox"/> Out of work and looking for work	<input type="checkbox"/> A homemaker
<input type="checkbox"/> A student	<input type="checkbox"/> Retired	<input type="checkbox"/> Unable to work
Please describe your work		
<input type="checkbox"/> Employee of a for-profit company or business or of an individual, for wages, salary, or commissions		
<input type="checkbox"/> Employee of a not-for-profit, tax-exempt, or charitable organization		
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-employed in own not-incorporated business, professional practice, or farm		
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-employed in own incorporated business, professional practice, or farm		
<input type="checkbox"/> Government employee <input type="checkbox"/> Working without pay in family business or farm		
What is your total household income?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$20,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000 to \$49,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 to \$79,999
<input type="checkbox"/> \$80,000 to \$99,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000 to \$149,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150,000 or more

APPENDIX E

SURVEY FORM FOR STAFF

Ethnic Race	Gender [] F [] M	Age
Are you currently a member of BLIA? [] Yes [] No	Would you consider yourself a Buddhist? [] Yes [] No	
How many months have you been working at Nan Tien Temple? [] 0 - 6 months [] 7 - 12 months [] 13 - 18 months [] 19 - 24 months [] More than 5 years - <i>Please specify</i>		
Which events have you assisted in organising before? <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Nan Tien Cultural Festival <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbourhood Day <input type="checkbox"/> Baby Blessings Ceremony </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> One Day Retreat <input type="checkbox"/> Eight Precept Retreat <input type="checkbox"/> Nan Tien Cultivation Retreat </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Offering to Celestial Beings <input type="checkbox"/> Offering to Sangha <input type="checkbox"/> Taking Refuge, 5&Bodhisattva Precepts Retreat </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Weekend Meditation Retreat <input type="checkbox"/> Light Offering Ceremony </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Guan Yin Dharma Function <input type="checkbox"/> Talks / Seminars <input type="checkbox"/> Qing Ming Dharma Function </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Other - <i>Please specify</i> </div>		
How did you find out about Nan Tien Temple? <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Friends & Relatives <input type="checkbox"/> Internet Website <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper-<i>Please specify</i> _____ </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine - <i>Please specify</i> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other - <i>Please specify</i> _____ </div>		
What was your first impression of Nan Tien Temple?		
Why have you chosen Nan Tien Temple to work at?		
From your own understanding, can you tell me what is Humanistic Buddhism?		
How well do you think Nan Tien Temple is doing in terms of its localisation of Humanistic Buddhism? (10 being the best) <div> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 </div>		

APPENDIX F

SURVEY FORM FOR VENERABLE

Ethnic Race	Were you trained in Taiwan Fo Guang Shan? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If No, please specify _____
What is your current role at Nan Tien Temple?	
What roles had you been assigned in the past at Nan Tien Temple?	
How long have you been in Australia? <input type="checkbox"/> 0 - 6 months <input type="checkbox"/> 7 - 12 months <input type="checkbox"/> 13 - 18 months <input type="checkbox"/> 19 - 24 months <input type="checkbox"/> More than 5 years - <i>Please specify</i>	
How would you rate your English level? (10 being excellent) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
How long have you been staying at Nan Tien Temple? <input type="checkbox"/> 0 - 6 months <input type="checkbox"/> 7 - 12 months <input type="checkbox"/> 13 - 18 months <input type="checkbox"/> 19 - 24 months <input type="checkbox"/> More than 5 years - <i>Please specify</i>	
How well do you think Nan Tien Temple is doing in terms of its localisation of Humanistic Buddhism? (10 being the best) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	

APPENDIX G

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STAFF

1. What did you find challenging when you first begun working at Nan Tien Temple?
2. What are your challenges right now?
3. Have you thought of quitting your job at Nan Tien Temple? If yes, what would be your reasons for leaving?
4. What has been your motivation for continuing to work at Nan Tien Temple?
5. If I were new to Nan Tien Temple, what sort of attitudes do you think I need to have?
6. Are you a long-term devotee of Fo Guang Shan Nan Tien Temple?
7. Why do you think are the reasons that we still do not see many local people becoming long-term devotees?
8. In terms of localization of Humanistic Buddhism, what would be your suggestions?

APPENDIX H

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR VENERABLE

1. What have been your personal challenges in propagating Humanistic Buddhism at Nan Tien Temple?
Tien Temple?
2. From what you know, what are some of the changes Nan Tien Temple has made over the years in order to attract more local people?
3. If I were new to Nan Tien Temple, what sort of attitudes do you think I need to have?
4. Why do you think are the reasons that we still do not see many local people becoming long-term devotees?
5. In your opinion, what needs to happen in order for the local people to become long-term devotees?

