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Buddhist Buildings in England: the construction of 'under-represented' faith heritage in a multicultural and post-Christian setting

Abstract

Until recently the 'heritage industry' in England overlooked buildings of minority faith traditions. Little has been written about this 'under-represented' heritage. Drawing on data from the first national survey of Buddhist buildings in England, we examine the ways in which Buddhist heritage is beginning to be incorporated into the state-funded 'heritage industry' as well how Buddhist communities in England construct heritage through these buildings. First, we draw upon spatial theory in the study of religion to examine three dimensions of minority faith buildings in England and what this tells us about the communities involved: 'location' (i.e. the geographical location of the buildings); 'space' (i.e. what the buildings are used for and their relationship to local, national and transnational scales); and 'place' (i.e. what types of buildings are selected by different communities and why). We then turn to theories of memory that have become popular within the study of religion as well as heritage studies. Religion understood as 'a chain of memory' plays an important role in heritage construction via faith buildings, and an analysis of faith buildings, their spatial dimensions and role in 'memorywork', helps us think through the dynamics of modern religious belief in a multicultural post-Christian setting.

Key Words

Buddhism, heritage industry, post-Christian, multicultural, memory, space, diaspora, faith

Introduction

Buddhism is a growing religion in Britain and Buddhist centres and temples are increasingly common, particularly in urban and suburban areas (Bluck 2006; Kay 2004). The 'heritage industry' (Hewison 1987) has, however, overlooked the buildings of minority faith traditions and little has been written in heritage studies, as well as other social science and humanities disciplines, about these 'under-represented heritages' (English Heritage 2012). Drawing on data from the first national survey of Buddhist buildings in England, research we were commissioned to undertake by English Heritage (now Historic England), we examine the incorporation of Buddhist heritage into the state-funded 'heritage industry' as well the ways in which Buddhist communities in England construct heritage through their religious buildings. We develop two lines of enquiry.

First, we examine the marginalisation of minority faith heritage as a feature of the dominance the so-called 'Authorised Heritage Discourse' (AHD) within the 'heritage industry' and broader heritage discourse (Smith 2006, 2012) and also as a feature of the side-lining of issues around religious identity in British public life, at least until recently (Davie 2015). Despite the fact that over the past decade or so, influenced by critical voices within heritage

studies since the 1980s (Smith 2012: 535), there have been initiatives that aim to broaden and democratise heritage interests and concerns, challenging what counts as 'heritage', a serious focus that discerns the buildings of minority faith traditions has yet to emerge, with our project for Historic England (HE) being one notable exception, reflecting a longer term programme of strategic work within HE in particular. We argue that this is a significant gap in heritage studies and practice in the UK which has become more salient with growth of diaspora communities in a multicultural and post-Christian Britain.

Our second line of enquiry involves examining the ways in which Buddhist communities in England use buildings, what this tells us about the role that buildings play in the process of minority faith traditions becoming established communities and what kind of Buddhist heritage has been constructed (McLoughlin and Zavos 2014: 161-164). We are interested in tangible and intangible heritage, where buildings are more than bricks and mortar but also provide an important site as living repositories of 'collective memories' (Halbwachs 1980[1950]) about migration, socio-economic status, religious diversity and integration, in the context of processes of secularisation and religious change, as well shifting policy agendas in the UK that have begun to take religious faith more seriously.

We bring these lines of enquiry together through two mutually supportive theoretical approaches (see also Casey 1993). First, we draw upon spatial theory in the study of religion to examine three dimensions of minority faith buildings in England and what this tells us about the communities involved: 'location' (i.e. the geographical location of the buildings); 'space' (i.e. what the buildings are used for and their relationship to local, national and transnational scales); and 'place' (i.e. what types of buildings are selected by different communities and why). The second body of social theory we turn to in order to support and deepen our reflections on the links between heritage and minority faith buildings in England, are theories of memory that have become popular within the study of religion as well as heritage studies (Hervieu-Léger 2000, Smith 2006, Sather-Wagstaff 2015).

We argue that Hervieu-Léger's (2000) definition of 'religion as a chain of memory' is particularly well suited to thinking about the role that faith buildings play in constructing the heritage of minority religious groups in a multicultural and post-Christian setting. Agreeing with Sather-Wagstaff's view that 'heritage' is to be 'understood as a social and discursive construction' that simply cannot exist 'without individual and collective memory and memorywork-in-action in the everyday world' (2015: 191), we argue that for converts to Buddhism in England as well as 'diaspora Buddhists'[1]faith buildings are a substantive embodiment of 'collective memories' and a vehicle for 'memorywork-in-action'. This is enabled through the capacity of religious ideologies, practices and rituals to root and authenticate communities in the present both 'temporally' (via representations of the past that give meaning to the present) and 'spatially' (via their construction of 'sacred places' that connect communities with local, national and transnational scales).

Thus, in this article we bring to the fore a new perspective on the pivotal role that minority faith buildings play in the construction of heritage for diaspora communities as well as for

those converting to traditions such as Buddhism. Our approach adds to existing theories about both heritage and religion. It draws attention to the role that religion as 'a chain of memory' plays in heritage construction via faith buildings, but also the importance of an analysis of faith buildings, their spatial dimensions and role in 'memorywork' as significant in thinking through the dynamics of modern religious belief in a multicultural and post-Christian setting.

Discerning minority faith heritage

Our first line of enquiry concerns the marginalisation of the built heritage of the places of worship of non-Abrahamic faiths within mainstream heritage priorities in the UK, comprising those pursued by state-funded heritage bodies (such as Historic England, Historic Scotland and the Welsh Government's historic environment service, Cadw) as well as charitable organisations (such as the English Heritage Trust, the National Trust or the Historic Religious Buildings Alliance). The buildings of minority faith traditions have received relatively little attention compared to those from the Christian traditions where churches and cathedrals are protected as significant for national identity and heritage tourism, not least because of the rarity and age of many of these buildings. The 'heritage industry' critique as offered, for instance, by Hewison (1987) views the rapid growth of interest in heritage in the UK from the late 1970s as a strategy by the then Conservative government to promote a particular version of the past as a 'backlash against post-war social and economic change' (Smith 2006: 39, 2012). As Duff argues 'there was a turn towards heritage as a new national industry that could invoke a sense of a shared national past' (2014: 24, Hall 1999) but in a way that was elitist and exclusive.

Under the influence of the emergence of a 'critical heritage studies' since the 1980s, questions about what counts as heritage in a multicultural and post-Christian setting such as the UK has also begun to develop within the 'heritage industry'. For instance, the consultations held by English Heritage in 2012 on 'under-represented heritages', driven by the Equality Act 2010, which 'makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with a "protected characteristic"', are paradigmatic.[2] Moreover, the debate about what counts as heritage also draws our attention to a distinction between heritage as located in visitor/tourist sites and heritage as embedded within the day-to-day places in which we live. Whereas traditionally the 'heritage industry' has focused on the former, today there is a far wider conception of the significance of a more mundane and lived heritage, which might not have a striking aesthetic value or be particularly old, but nonetheless tells us a great deal about different communities who have occupied and transformed those spaces over time. This way of thinking about heritage was at the centre of the important work undertaken by Historic England on 'under-represented heritages' and our project on Buddhist buildings.

With respect to HE, while some work had been carried out in this area before 2012, these consultations represented the coming to fruition of an interest in minority faith buildings as 'under-represented heritages' (English Heritage 2012) within mainstream heritage discourse and practice, rather than an emphasis on religious heritage per se, an area where HE has a long established interest. This shift in understanding of the heritage landscape has taken place

alongside a wider transformation in contemporary Britain where publically funded agencies are beginning to take religious affiliation more seriously and in particular to discuss and engage with minority groups via discourses about faith rather than ethnicity, a trend that has been emerging since the 1980s.

Until recently, UK public policy has tended to more or less ignore religious dynamics. For instance, the diverse religions of diaspora groups arriving in the UK since the 1950s, received little attention in policy circles or the academic diaspora literature dealing with race and ethnicity (between 1960s and 1980s) as being relevant for an understanding of how to deal with racism and discrimination (McLoughlin and Zavos 2014: 158). By the 1980s, scholarly discourse, particularly from within the sociology of religion, had begun to challenge predictions about secularisation (i.e. the idea that religiosity was necessarily destined to diminish in significance) alongside broader reconfigurations that considered identity as relevant to the decisions people make and the things that they value (Davie 1994, Beckford 2012). This was part of a 'cultural turn' in scholarship that drew attention to diverse forms of identity formation via processes of hybridity, with a focus on the contribution from culture (McLoughlin and Zavos 2014: 158, Gilroy 1993, Bhabha 1994).

Despite this 'cultural turn' the diaspora literature has generally not viewed 'religion as an object worthy of sophisticated theorization' (McLoughlin and Zavos 2014: 159) even when religion is increasingly relevant to the subject matter of those studies. Scholars in other academic areas, however, including the sociology of religion and geography have shaped theoretically informed understandings of religious dynamics in pluralistic and globalised societies, including within diasporas. Key directions within this 'theory of religion' literature incorporates important work since the 1980s on religion and globalisation (e.g. Beyer 1994), since the 1990s on religion and the body (e.g. McGuire 1990, Mellor and Shilling 1997) and more recent studies, influenced by geography on the importance of location, place and space for the study of religions (e.g. Tweed 2006, Knott 2005).

Mirroring the 'turn to religion' in scholarship, from the 1980s an increased focus on religious dynamics became a feature of the UK policy landscape. This reflected 'the growing public significance of "religion" and "faith" in terms of local and national debates about the politics of multiculturalism' (McLoughlin and Zavos 2014: 165), which incorporated the self-representation of many diaspora groups in terms of a faith-based identity rather than one rooted in race or ethnicity. At this time bodies began to be formed, representing different faith identities, including localised groups such as the Bradford Council of Mosques as well as national bodies, including the Network of Sikh Organisations, the Hindu Council UK, and the Network of Buddhist Organisations UK (NBO). The emergence of these bodies was a reflection of a growing public acceptance of religious identities as significant but also so that faith actors had a framework through which they could publically articulate their needs to policy makers as well as to engage in meaningful ways with each other, with local and national government, and the third sector.

This recognition of religion in the British public sphere was particularly promoted by a communitarian 'New Labour', following their election in 1997. A 'faith relations industry' (McLoughlin and Zavos 2014) emerged that emphasised the 'bridging' and 'linking' capital of faith groups (Putnam 2000) and in particular the contribution of faith to social cohesion as well as the delivery of social services (Chapman 2000, Lambie-Mumford and Jarvis 2012, Green, Barton and Johns 2012). Similarly, organisations with a remit to promote culture, the arts or heritage are today more likely to consider religious identities, alongside a move to be inclusive of minority communities and diverse styles of social, cultural and material production (Singh 2014). While the fact that the UK has become increasingly pluralistic was once viewed with fear and concern about the disintegration of a unified national narrative, and this was reflected in government policy, including that relating to heritage, today we find a somewhat different national discourse that also emphasises the importance of promoting diverse heritage as a means to achieve 'community cohesion' (Gould and Qureshi 2014: 150).

One example of this is the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), established in 1994 under New Labour. As Gould and Qureshi explain the HLF has been the 'main funder of oral history' in the UK driving many projects of this type within diaspora communities and its 'understanding of oral history, is framed very much in terms of enabling communities to record "their heritage" as a part of the promotion of "diversity" and broader equal opportunities" (2014: 150). Another example is the 'Diversity in Heritage Group', set up in 2009 as,

> a professional network…which champions practice in diversity and equality, audience development, social justice, community engagement, and participation.[3]

It grew out of the Mayor of London's 'Heritage Diversity Task Force' (HDTF, 2003-2009) (Mayor of London 2009; Arokiasamy 2012). The HDTF recognised that ethnic minorities were less likely to visit museums or heritage sites, and that initiatives to 'diversify heritage collections' were necessary (2009). Historic England was a Programme Partner and its own equality and diversity statement tells us that (2009),

> We aim to increase the number and diversity of people who [we] actively engage with, and to continually look for new ways to promote the past in a way that is inclusive to all and that celebrates the cultural diversity of England's heritage.[4]

These nascent shifts in heritage practice are also reflected in the academy in emergence of 'critical heritage studies', which challenges the 'Authorised Heritage Discourse' (AHD) (Smith 2012; Harrison 2013). In disciplines that focus on buildings– including heritage studies, architecture and planning – there has been some progress towards understanding minority faith buildings in Britain (particularly Islam and Judaism) although the extant literature is far from comprehensive. There have been some studies on synagogues (Kadish 1996, 2006, 2011; Krinsky 1996) and a growing literature on mosques (Saleem 2010, 2012, 2015), some of which has been commissioned by Historic England (see also Minnis and Mitchell (2007) for a HE publication on Religion and Place in Leeds). There is also a small, but instructive, literature on minority faith traditions and planning (Peach and Gale 2003;

Gale 2004, 2008; Gale and Naylor 2002; Naylor and Ryan 2010).

While there has been some recent research from geographers, examining faith buildings in non-Abrahamic traditions (Dwyer et al. 2013, Gilbert et al. 2012), scholarship from religious studies or sociology has focused far less in this area. Moreover, although there is a developed body of academic literature on Asian diasporas in the UK (e.g. Ballard 1994, Bhachu 198, Ali et al. 2006) and minority faith buildings are mentioned in this literature, the discussion of buildings has neither been systematic nor carried out with respect to issues of heritage protection or architectural styles. More specifically, the literature on Buddhism has tended to concentrate on the history of Buddhism in Britain, including reasons for its appeal (e.g. Almond 1998, Baumann 2002, Bell 2000, Oliver 1979), as well as how the British setting has shaped Buddhism (e.g. Mellor 1991). Other research has focused on case studies of particular Buddhist traditions (e.g. Bell 1998, 2000, Bluck 2006, Kay 2004). While mentioned in many of these texts, an analysis of the role of buildings has played a back seat to other considerations. Thus, minority faith buildings in the UK remain markedly under-represented in heritage practice as well as in academic research.

Consultations on 'under-represented heritages' (English Heritage 2012)

In 2012 English Heritage (now Historic England) held a series of consultations about 'under-represented heritages' as part of the new National Heritage Protection Plan (NHPP). This included the heritage of African-Caribbean communities, Asian communities, disabled people, faith groups (including Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Jain, Jewish, Sikh and Black Christian groups), LGBT people and women, '"ordinary" and working-class people – as opposed to the stories of the elite' (English Heritage 2012: 1) and 'transient migrant communities who would pass through/temporarily use historic sites' (2012: 1). These groups were selected as they represent 'groups with "protected characteristics" as defined in the Equality Act 2010 which EH as a public body has a duty to consider' (2012: 3). The consultations noted the lack of recognition of the tangible heritage sites relevant to these groups as well as of intangible heritage, the '"hidden stories" behind historic sites that might be relevant for the under-represented groups' (2012: 1). A series of 7 day-long seminars were held and we were invited to one of these to talk about Buddhist buildings.

It was made clear that Historic England had little knowledge about the heritage of the buildings used by non-Abrahamic faith groups. This is significant because, as HE has recognised

> As different faith groups establish themselves ever more firmly in England, the claims to the status of special interest of their places of worship become ever more valid. Early sites of a faith's worship may warrant special consideration, as well as examples manifesting high design values. This is an area in which our heritage of places of worship is set to expand (English Heritage 2011: 21).

It is also the case that 'to date, no purpose-built mandir, gurdwara, Buddhist or Jain temple has been listed, although buildings of all faiths occupy various recycled listed buildings' (2011: 18). This brings us to our second line of enquiry and involves examining the ways in which Buddhist communities in England use buildings.

Buddhism in England

Buddhism came to England in the nineteenth century as a product of the British colonial presence in Asia when Western 'orientalist' scholars began to collect and translate Buddhist texts, which then became accessible to British and wider European publics (Bluck 2006:5-6, Humphreys 1968:72; Oliver 1979:21, Waterhouse 2004:53). While at this time interest in Buddhism was primarily intellectual, focusing on the Theravāda tradition (mainly practiced in Thailand, Sri Lanka, Burma, Cambodia and Vietnam) and was driven by the translation of texts in the Pāḷi language, this soon shifted from an academic focus to personal practice and the period up until the first world war sowed the seeds for the emergence of both Asian and Western teachers of Buddhism in Britain (Bluck 2006: 7). In the post-war period interest in styles of Buddhism other than Theravada evolved and a variety of traditions had begun to appear, including Zen, Pure Land and Tibetan.[5]

The number of Buddhists in Britain has grown since the 1960s, partly due to 'converts' but also to the arrival of 'diaspora Buddhists', in the form of immigrants and refugees from Asia (Batchelor 1994: xii, Baumann 2002: 92, Bluck 2006:7-11, Kay 2004:5, Waterhouse 2004). In particular, the Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1950 led to thousands of Tibetans fleeing with the Dalai Lama in 1959, bringing many Lamas and other Tibetans to the West (Lopez 1999). According to the 2011 census there were 238,626 Buddhists living in England and Wales, compared to 144,453 recorded in the 2001 census (Bluck 2006: 16). Today the largest Buddhist demographic in Britain comprises 'diaspora Buddhists', but in contrast to other minority faiths, such as Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism, Buddhism has attracted a higher proportion of converts (see Table 1). Moreover, much of the research on Buddhism in the British Isles has tended to concentrate on 'converts' rather than the numerically larger Buddhist immigrant communities from Thailand, Burma, Sri Lanka or Vietnam. This would include the Buddhist groups that mainly attract converts in the UK, such as Triratna, the New Kadampa Tradition (NKT), Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT) and Soka Gakai International (SGI).

[insert here] Table 1: The relationship between religion and ethnicity (from 2011 census data)[6]

Theoretical approaches: understanding the relationship between Buddhist buildings and heritage construction

An important development in theories about religion over the past few decades has been a move away from a positivistic approach where religions are viewed as self-contained and distinct traditions of belief and practice, manifest in discrete world religions, codified in key

texts, mediated via charismatic individuals and existing in a separate realm to the secular (e.g. see Fitzgerald 2001). Today it is more common to take an interpretive approach, which examines religiosity in terms of the meanings attributed to it by individual faith actors and communities rather than the elite religious leaders alone, that critically views the 'world religions approach' as a colonialist lens through which to make sense of religious phenomena that over-privileges the textual and philosophical study of religion at the expense of 'lived religion', and that is more likely to examine religiosity in dynamic interaction with other social, economic, political and material forces rather than as a distinct realm in itself (e.g. see Asad 1993). This interpretive approach is manifest in the theories of religion that we employ in this paper relating to 'space' and 'memory' in order to better understand the relationship between Buddhist buildings and heritage construction.

Introducing spatial theories of religion first, as Knott writes,

> Religion, which is inherently social, must also exist and express itself in and through space. Moreover, it plays its part in the production and reproduction of social space. Transnational religious communities, for example, root themselves in national contexts and in a variety of local places. They express themselves through the mobility of their adherents, in the printed word and in cyberspace, and through their spatial acts, whether mundane, ritual, performative, or even terrorist. They also generate new spaces, for example, the diasporic space – at once real and imagined, physical and social.
>
> Space is not something other than or further to the physical, mental and social dimensions that constitute it. It is their dynamic summation (2005: 160).

The analysis and discussion of our findings (see next section) draws upon such a spatial approach to the study of religion. We examine how different Buddhist buildings in England are spatially oriented and how this relates to factors including the history and character of the groups involved, their ethnicity and socio-economic status, and how they perform their religious identities. Such an approach allows a view of the role of faith buildings in the construction of heritage as a dynamic and multilayered process, where buildings are more than physical structures. However, alongside spatial approaches to the study of Buddhist buildings in England, we also argue that theories of memory are useful to better understand the role of buildings in heritage construction for different Buddhist communities.

It might seem self-evident to think about heritage in terms of memory since 'heritage' is concerned with the past and making sure that we remember it. However, the so-called 'memory turn' in heritage studies only emerged since the 1980s alongside critical heritage studies. Just as critical heritage studies views heritage as political and as socially constructed, so too are the memories that frame it. As Smith argues, whereas the Authoritative Heritage Discourse (AHD) 'establishes and sanctions a top-down relationship between expert, heritage site and "visitor"' (2006: 34) this 'obscures the sense of memory work, performativity and acts of remembrance…occurring at heritage sites' (2006: 34). Thus, it is important not to view 'the highly complex and political machinery of memory and heritage-making…as

inherently auto-coded on the landscape or in objects' (Sather-Wagstaff 2015: 195). Instead, heritage sites - such as faith buildings - 'are modes for memorywork, a means of viewing places and objects as triggers or precipitants for memory and heritage-making rather than of memory and heritage as objects themselves' (2015: 195). While the scholars located within critical heritage studies cited in this paper tend to focus on heritage as located in visitor/tourist sites we argue in this paper that their theoretically informed critical perspectives are also relevant for our work here, which focuses on heritage as embedded within the day-to-day places in which we live.

By contrast, it might seem less self-evident to think about religion in terms of memory, where - as Hervieu-Léger remarks - theories of secularisation 'have tended to view the relations between religion and modernity from the perspective of rationalization [and] have seldom placed the question of memory at the centre of their analysis' (2000: 124). So what role does memory play in her thinking and how might we relate this to a spatial analysis of faith buildings and the role they play in heritage construction?

Underlying Hervieu-Léger's project is the aim to understand 'both the dimension by which modernity continually undermines the plausibility of all religious systems [i.e. for being 'irrational'] and that by which it gives rise to new forms of religious belief' (2000: 2). By 'new forms of religious belief' she is referring to the fact that there has been a religious 'revival' or 'explosion' in many parts of the Global North or, at the very least, religion continues to have an importance in people's lives that would appear to be at odds with the logic of modernity. She argues that while it is commonplace to explain such new forms of religious belief in terms of the failure of modernity – 'namely its inability to deliver what it promises' (2000:2) – we actually need a new theory to understand these 'religious products of modernity' (2000:2) where our analysis of

> the dynamics of modern religious belief…must include...not merely the beliefs, which are the supreme objects of individual and collective convictions, but the body of practices, behavior and institutions in which these beliefs find expression (2000:3).

Extending Hervieu-Léger then, our research also demonstrates the importance of an analysis of faith buildings and their spatial dimensions as a significant element in thinking through the dynamics of modern religious belief in a post-Christian and post-secular setting.

However, for Hervieu-Léger the dynamics of modern religious belief are not only to be understood as embodied within practices, behaviors and institutions (as well as their material structures) but a new theory of modern religious forms must also place memory at its centre. So what does she suggest? Hervieu-Léger argues that while religions are not destined to completely disappear under modernity, they no longer serve as the basis of collective memory in the way that they once did, providing an overarching meaning system. While the memories that once formed the basis of a collective memory still exist in society, 'the chain of memory' that bound them together becomes broken where 'the affirmation of the autonomous individual, the advance of rationalization breaking up the "sacred canopies", and the process

of institutional differentiation denote the end of societies based on memory' (2000: 127). We find that this is also the case with expressions of national memory and identity, which are today less totalising and more fragmentary that they were before modernity took hold.

This explains why 'modernity continually undermines the plausibility of all religious systems' (2000: 2) but how can it help us understand the rise of new forms of religious belief? And how does this relate to our interest in the relationship between minority faith buildings and heritage construction? In common with many sociologists Hervieu-Léger views modernity as being disastrous for people's sense of belonging and community and this can explain why some turn (back) to religious idioms and practices in order re-create collective memory. However, people not only look to religion for this integrative purpose, but passions for genealogy, historical novels, heritage days, antique collecting and traditional crafts also play a role in re-establishing 'an identity which modernity has placed under threat' (2000: 142). Indeed as Hewison (1987) and others have suggested this impulse likely drove the very development of the 'heritage industry' as part of a project of defining a shared national past - or 'collective memory' (Halbwachs 1980[1950]) - as a response to the sense of uprootedness accompanying late-modernity.

While meaningful, Hervieu-Léger argues that 'without there being an organised and integrated social memory' (2000: 142) these attempts to create collective memory tend to take place 'in an entirely fragmentary way' (2000: 142) and are only able to constitute 'an imaginative search for partial continuity' (2000: 142). In a late-modern or post-modern era, in a multicultural and post-Christian society such as the UK, different communities have their own fragile chains of memory, constructed by a bricolage of cultural ideas and forms, relating to different temporal and spatial scales.

From the point of view of contributing towards theories in the sociology of religion, what we have learnt from our research is the central role, although largely unrecognised, that buildings play in enabling religion to perform as a 'chain of memory'. It is hard to see how religions could suitably achieve this end without specific 'sacred spaces' – both built and natural – at which such 'memorywork' can unfold. This accounts for the very high levels of effort that faith communities put into securing and developing suitable properties.

From the point of view of heritage studies and management, and given the strong sympathy between processes of heritage construction and religiosity –where a drive towards memory-making in a era of social dislocation and globalisation plays a central role (although not necessarily the only role) - this commends the need for research to better understand the construction of minority faith heritage and how they can best be protected in a multicultural and post-Christian setting. Heritage management bodies enacting a 'salad bowl' or 'mosaic' approach to heritage management in a multicultural setting (Ashworth et al. 2007), are beginning to take this forward in adopting policy of promoting diverse heritage as an important means of social cohesion (Gould and Qureshi 2014).

The findings of the research: analysis and discussion

According to our research, there are a total of 190 Buddhist centres or temples in England. This does not include all 'Buddhist groups' since many of these use people's houses or rented rooms for meetings and religious practice rather than having a permanent base in a building. The research involved two main parts. First, we undertook a desk-based mapping of different Buddhist buildings across England, using the Internet, in order to produce a database of the total number of buildings. In addition to using the websites of different Buddhist centres or temples, we made use of 'google maps' and 'google street view' to find out more about geographical location and building types. Second, a more detailed study was undertaken involving qualitative research at a selection of Buddhist buildings comprising face-to-face interviews at 14 locations and an online questionnaire that received 24 responses.

[insert here] Table 2: Geographical location of building by tradition

As depicted in Table 2, the largest portion of the total 189 buildings encompasses 69 from Tibetan traditions. The spread of Tibetan Buddhism to England came about following the Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1959 when monks and teachers fled. All four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism are found in England: Kagyu, Gelug, Nyingma and Sakya. Tibetan Buddhism in the West mostly consists of converts, owing to a relatively small Tibetan diaspora. One Tibetan group dominates in terms of the number of properties, with 39 belonging to the Gelug New Kadampa Tradition (NKT), formed in 1991 (Kay 2004).

The next largest portion of buildings are the 58 belonging to communities affiliated to the Theravāda tradition, consisting mainly of 'diaspora Buddhists' from Thailand (17), Burma (11) and Sri Lanka (24), as well as 'convert Buddhists' who are mostly affiliated to the Thai Forest Sangha (4) (Bluck 2006: 25 ff). By 1965 there were enough Thai-born individuals living in London for the first Thai Buddhist temple, Wat Buddhapadipa, to be established in Wimbledon and opened by the King and Queen of Thailand (Wat Buddhapadipa 1982). For Thais in Britain, coming initially as economic migrants and students, the presence of this temple was 'a significant milestone…not only because it is a centre for spirituality but also a landmark of the community' (Sims 2008: 3). According to the 2011 Census there were 34,526 people identifying as of Thai ethnicity, the majority of whom are Buddhist and with a higher proportion being female due to the popular practice of Thai women marrying white British men (Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2014).

Most Burmese in the UK are also Buddhist, with a total population of around 8,263 in England, according the 2011 Census (Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2014:1). Burma is a former British colony, and some Burmese settled in the UK following independence, while others came later as economic migrants, students and refugees escaping from the civil war. It is significant that 'the UK's South-East Asia Diaspora has probably doubled in size since 2001', which includes Buddhists from Thai and Burmese ethnicities, as well as Vietnamese (Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2014:1). Even if these communities do not continue to grow at such a rate, those already in the UK are likely to develop additional places of worship as they become more established.

The final group of Theravāda 'diapsora Buddhists' in England are the Sri Lankan Sinhalese, one of two main groups making up the Sri Lankan diaspora. Sri Lankans came to England due to colonial links (between the 1950s and 1980s) or to escape the civil war since the 1980s, the majority of refugees being Tamil rather Sinhalese. It is difficult to get an accurate idea of the numbers of Sri Lankans in England, however, a 2006 Human Rights Watch report estimates around 110,000 Sri Lankan Tamils, with the majority in London, and a much smaller Sinhalese population (Zunzer 2004; Human Rights Watch 2006).

The next largest number of buildings belongs to 'non-sectarian' groups and, out of a total of 33, 25 of these are from Triratna (previously Friends of the Western Buddhist Order). Triratna was founded in London in 1967 by an English man, Sangharakshita (formerly Denis Lingwood). It is an ecumenical Buddhist organisation that was established to appeal to Westerners (Bluck 2006).

Finally, 29 of the Buddhist buildings are from East Asian traditions. The two largest groups here in terms of numbers of adherents are the Serene Reflection Meditation tradition (SRM), linked to the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives (OBC), a Sōtō Zen group, and Soka Gakkai International UK (SGI-UK), originating in Japan. Both attract more 'convert Buddhists' than 'diaspora Buddhists'. The group with the most number of buildings is the OBC (7) with the next largest (6) related to Vietnamese Mahayana Buddhism. At the time of the 2011 Census there were 28,998 people of Vietnamese ethnicity living in England (Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2014:1), with migration beginning after the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, and who mainly settled in urban centres around London, with the majority being Buddhist.

Table 2 also gives the geographical location of Buddhist buildings by tradition according to whether they are urban, suburban or rural, and whether they are in the North, South or Midlands. By suburban, we mean locations that are largely residential and are not situated within major shopping and business areas.

Our research indicated fairly distinct sociological groupings within the totality of Buddhists in England between convert and diaspora Buddhists, and that each tends to exhibit different relationships to geographical location, the use of space and the places/types of buildings selected. This underscores the need for policy makers, such as those working in heritage, to be aware of internal differences within what might otherwise be viewed as distinct and homogenous religious traditions.

Taking the Theravāda and East Asian traditions first, the higher number of suburban buildings is due to a tendency for 'diaspora Buddhists' from Thailand, Sri Lanka, Burma and Vietnam to establish centres in suburban residential locations. A good number of these are suburban semi-detached properties and are likely to be small, low-cost properties that are hidden from areas with a high footfall. It is sociologically relevant to note that the location of these Buddhist buildings in cheaper suburban areas is a reflection of the socio-economic status of

many diaspora groups in the UK, but that this may change over time as communities become established and fundraise to afford more substantial properties.

For instance, the Sri Lankan Sinhalese Theravāda Ketumati Buddhist Vihara began life in Crumpsall in a devotee's house, near the centre of Manchester in 1999, and later moved to a residential property in Oldham which provides monks' accommodation (vihara), offers meditation classes and has a Sunday dhamma school for children.[7] The centre caters to members of the Sri Lankan Sinhalese diaspora attracting people 'from a wide catchment of the North West of the UK and the North of UK'.[8] A fundraising initiative has been underway for over a decade and recently the community moved to a former youth centre in another suburban area of Manchester, Brooklands: 'with the support of the council's regeneration officers they had been offered the use of the former youth centre building that was dilapidated and otherwise redundant' (Manchester City Council 2013: 2).

By contrast, if we look at the non-sectarian and Tibetan traditions these have a higher proportion of their total buildings in urban locations (although the Tibetan still has a larger number of suburban properties than urban overall). This difference is mainly due to the emphasis within two groups, which tend to attract more convert Buddhists – Triratna (non-sectarian) and the New Kadampa Tradition (NKT, Tibetan) upon spreading Buddhist teachings and selecting central locations. Moreover, reflecting its ability to raise significant funds as well as a preference for a particular style of property, the suburban properties occupied by the NKT (in contrast to the predominance of smallish suburban semi-detached houses used by the immigrant communities of the Theravada and East Asian traditions) are mainly larger with an attractive aesthetic, and two of these are grade II listed. Its 5 rural properties are also impressive with a stately home, former priory and large rectory, with 4 of these being listed buildings. Many of the Theravada and East Asian traditions are more 'inward facing', catering for diaspora groups often living nearby, and a central urban location is not important. In comparison, 'outward facing' Buddhist groups prefer to reuse urban buildings in town or city centres that are accessible to people wanting to learn about Buddhism or meditation. Often they choose old municipal buildings such as libraries or schools that have large spaces for communal rituals, are relatively cheap to buy and are renovated with volunteer labour.

One exception to this pattern is the Thai-origin Dhammakaya movement, which has renovated a grade II listed former church in Newcastle, the former Brookwood Hospital chapel in Woking and the former Edgeley United Reform Church in Stockport. These are all suburban properties that have been impressively renovated and aim to appeal to potential Western converts to Buddhism as well as members of the Thai diaspora, reflecting a dedicated mission towards conversion of Westerners to Buddhism. The Dhammakaya movement therefore adapts and uses the built environment in a way that is more reminiscent of the convert-dominant NKT or Triratna, with the prevalence of sympathetic adaption of large buildings using a more 'Western' aesthetic, particularly externally.

Although the distinction between 'convert' and 'diaspora' Buddhist groups is porous, we suggest that the different spatial location of their buildings also relates to the role they play in generating 'social capital', with the 'inward facing' 'diaspora Buddhist' groups generating more 'bonding social capital' with the 'outward facing' 'convert Buddhist' groups generating more 'bridging social capital' (Putnam 2000). For instance, the NKT has expanded quickly in recent years, apparently facilitated by the availability of cheaper properties in Northern urban and suburban areas. The group has developed an ethical Buddhist café business, with most of the urban centres housing 'World Peace Cafés'. The urban location of many of these buildings and the running of local businesses is an important component of 'bridging social capital' generated by the NKT.

In terms of a spatial approach to the study of religion and the role that minority faith buildings play in heritage construction, however, we also notice that the groups that are more 'inward facing' at a local level are more 'outward facing' to a 'home' that is located in Asia, in terms of transnational links through language, culture, the lineage of the style of Buddhism practiced and the ethnicity of the majority of participants. For the groups that are more 'outward facing' at a local level (i.e. those more likely to be attractive to converts), the links at a transnational level are weaker although, given Buddhism is an Asian tradition, not entirely absent. Thinking also about the role that minority faith buildings play in 'memorywork', our research suggests that this reinforces these different spatial configurations, where different groups of Buddhists seek to develop memoires that link them to both the UK and Asia but with a differing intensity to each, and that this is reflected in and reflects factors such as building location, the use of space and the type of building selected. This underscores the importance of analysing space and memory together since, as Halbwachs argues,

> every collective memory unfolds within a spatial framework...since our impressions rush by, one after another, and leave nothing behind in the mind, we can understand how we recapture the past only by understanding how it is, in effect, preserved by our physical surroundings (1980[1950]: 140).

For 'diaspora Buddhists' memories about the development and establishment of faith buildings is a key way that histories of migration and settlement are kept alive, and this plays a role in sustaining a sense of identity and cohesion in a multicultural setting. Faith buildings provide a location where languages, cultural practices and Asian Buddhist iconography support 'memorywork in action' that reinforces strong transnational links, enabled by the role that 'religious products of modernity' play in creating 'chains of memory' (Hervieu-Léger 2000). As Sakaranaho emphasises,

> the reinforcement of an individual chain of religious memory in 'diaspora' requires work and effort, as does the establishment of a new religious community trying to create continuity of the institutional memory of a religious tradition' (2012: 152, italics added).

This latter point applies equally to 'convert Buddhists' who seek to create collective chains of memory that enable them to straddle East and West and to establish their faith tradition within a post-Christian setting in ways that reflect their sociological location. Convert communities had stories to tell about the role that their buildings played in the ancestry of their tradition in England, the ways in which they had combined heritage from Asia with those from the UK, and how they had physically achieved this legacy. One dominant theme relates to memories of the hardship involved in renovating buildings and how this had shaped individuals and the community, but also that this is imprinted on the building itself. For instance, the Triratna Manchester Buddhist Centre has been located in a former cotton warehouse since 1994. Not only does the building revive memories of an industrial past (e.g. the dips in the stairs 'worn out by the feet of hobnailed boots of people walking up and down them'), but this is overlaid with work undertaken by the community. According to one interviewee, 'the idea was to take this historic building, but also to imbue it with 'Buddhistness'' where

> upstairs in the shrine room, you can see in the wall all these little treasures that are stuck in the cement for the kids - little bits of tiger's eye and amber… And in one place, somebody has put an entire mala - a broken mala, broken into a line of beads under the window.

Thus, the role of Buddhist buildings in constructing collective memories is related to the spatial scales within which they function, from the local to the transnational, and to the spaces within them. Buddhist buildings have a range of functions including as spaces for: Buddhist practice and retreats; monasteries; schools (there are two in England); ethical businesses (including the teaching of mindfulness meditation); and the celebration of Buddhist festivals, as well as a location where cultural and community activities for Buddhists are carried out. The latter is important for the more 'inward looking' diaspora Buddhist communities and involve activities in Asian languages, reflecting local customs and traditions, whereas the ethical businesses are more common amongst the 'outward looking' convert groups, such as Triratna and the NKT.

To accommodate these activities and their use of space, Buddhists in England chose a range of properties or places, encompassing those that are borrowed or hired periodically for meetings, including houses of devotees and Buddhist teachers or hired church/community halls; buildings that may be rented (or even squatted) full-time solely for Buddhist purposes; properties that have been purchased to be reused and adapted – these can be residential properties or other buildings, including shops, municipal buildings (such as libraries, swimming pools or schools), industrial or business sites and other former places of worship; purpose built premises; and, finally, a combination of purpose built and reuse/adaptation.

These findings are broadly in line with the 'four stage cycle' proposed by Peach and Gale (2003) which maps the progression of the relationship between the British planning process and minority faith groups over time (and how this is manifested in changing building types) as the latter establish themselves in properties to enable practice and community building. The first of these is 'tacit change and planning denial' where places of worship are established in

residential houses, often without planning permission; the second involves 'the search for larger premises', and frequently involves the adaptive re-use of existing buildings; the third stage is 'purpose-built premises: hiding and displacement', involving 'hiding the buildings from public view of truncating their iconic features' (2003: 483); and finally we find 'purpose-built premises: embracing and celebration' where the full range of traditional architectural features are on show (2003: 484-5).

This shift through the different stages is not only due to diaspora communities themselves being more able to finance and purpose build places of worship in traditional styles but is also a result of the planning process becoming more welcoming to different styles of building. As Gale and Naylor (2002: 405) note it was increasingly the case that faith buildings demonstrating traditional architectural styles became part of local authorities' public statements about their embrace of multicultural space, not least we argue in the context of state discourses about the contribution of multiculturalism to social-cohesion. In fact as McLoughlin and Zavos write, 'grand, purpose-built places of worship which promote the 'multicultural' city image are now received more sympathetically than those which continue to seek 'change of use' for smaller, neighbourhood buildings such as terraces or de-consecrated churches (2014: 167, Gale 2008).

However, we found that some groups, especially the 'outward facing' NKT and Triratna, tend to dwell within each phase simultaneously as they seek to set up new centres and to establish themselves in new locations. Also, for Buddhists in England the first two phases are more prominent than the third and fourth. Peach and Gale's (2003) focus was upon Hindu, Sikh and Muslim places of worship. These religious traditions are larger than Buddhism in England and have access to a greater pool of donors and volunteers, which means that they can undertake more ambitious building projects. Another significant point is that Buddhism in England has a higher proportion of Western converts than these other traditions. This appears to have an impact on the choice of building and the associated 'memorywork' where many centres tend to reflect Western styles of architecture, both where buildings are reused and where new building has taken place.

For instance, our interviewee at a Diamond Way centre (a Tibetan group that attracts mainly 'convert Buddhists'), which since 2014 has been located in the grade II listed Beaufoy Institute (a former 'ragged' school built in 1907 by the philanthropic Beaufoy family in Lambeth), told us that,

> we're not going to turn the Beaufoy into a Tibetan looking temple, because it's not. We're not trying to recreate something. We do have centres that look like that because they lend themselves in their architectural design, or they were built to be that. But we don't try to convert something from what it is into something else so much. Our gompas [monastery] tend to be a lot more minimalist than Tibetan's.

Here he is expressing a sentiment often encountered amongst Buddhist convert groups where there is a weaker motivation to remember a home in Asia than for diaspora groups. Instead

the ‘chain of memory’ being forged, in terms of coming to feel at home as a Buddhist in England, involves working with aesthetic and architectural features of buildings and not completely mimicking Buddhist styles from Asia. While the preservation of the heritage of buildings was taken very seriously, and indeed to take on a significant and impressive building that may be listed – even if it needed a lot of work – was attractive, there was also a conscious process of adding to that heritage through a Buddhist presence, in terms of both ‘tangible’ and ‘intangible’ aspects. Thus, these Buddhist communities engage in a multi-faceted process of heritage building, deliberately constructing a ‘new’ Buddhist heritage for England but at the same time playing a role in conserving an English past, which has wider public benefit beyond the Buddhist groups themselves.

At Jamyang London (a Tibetan Buddhist centre, in the former Lambeth Magistrates’ Court) our interviewees emphasised that, ‘we’ve got some custodianship responsibilities to the building as a building.’ And one of the interviewees from the Triratna Manchester Buddhist Centre told us that,

> I like the fact that it’s an old building that’s been renovated. I like the idea of recycling the building. So this building’s been put to new use, and I like that. Aesthetically, I like this building. I think what is more important to me is that this building now has a history of Buddhist use. That’s what’s important.

There are, however, a number of Asian-style Buddhist temples in England. Some of these have been established by ‘diaspora Buddhists’ who engage in processes of memory making that aim to sustain strong transnational links back to Asia but also by Tibetan Buddhist groups, which although mainly comprised of converts, tend to exhibit a stronger identification with Asian aesthetics that other convert groups (e.g. Triratna). One of the best known Asian-style temples is Wat Buddhapadipa in Wimbledon, a Thai style temple opened in 1982, the temple had been located in a house in East Sheen. However,

> With the exception of a small signboard outside, there were no other external indications to show the existence of a Thai Buddhist Temple…[and]…Thai visitors to London calling at the Temple were somewhat disappointed (Wat Buddhapadipa 1982, 128).

Other examples of purpose build Asian style structures include at the NKT Tibetan Manjushri Centre in Cumbria, the Tibetan Stupa in the Himalayan Garden at Harewood House in North Yorkshire, the Burmese Birmingham Buddhist Vihara and the Burmese UK International Meditation Centre in Wiltshire.

Thus, in terms of a ‘tangible Buddhist heritage’ even if buildings are not clearly in an Asian style, either purpose built or adapted, the outsides of buildings are often decorated with Buddhist pictures or prayer flags, and inside adaptations have been made to rooms to accommodate the needs of Buddhist practice, including a shrine to the Buddha and room for people to sit and meditate. A number of the communities, the diaspora ones in particular,

brought experts to England to help design and build temples, stupas or pagodas in traditional styles, thereby contributing to carrying on these artistic traditions as well as reinforcing a transnational collective memory. Others spoke of the benefits of finding architects who had an understanding of Buddhism, and one Triratna centre had arranged for architects to attend a retreat to get an understanding of what a Buddhist centre should look and feel like.

Regarding, an 'intangible Buddhist heritage', many of the buildings may not look like Buddhist temples but have been 'blessed' in ways that make them fit for practice, often by senior figures in the tradition. A number of our informants were clear that a building becomes 'Buddhist' once people start practising, meditating and burning incense there – and that this changes the tangible fabric of the building into a 'sacred place'. This perceived capacity of ritual to 'sanctify' a space therefore marking it out from other sorts of social spaces has been an important topic within the study of religion (e.g. Durkheim 1912; Eliade 1957, Tweed 2006, 2011). Where Daly Metcalf, for instance, writes that 'Muslim space' is created by 'ritual and sanctified practice' (1996: 3), this appears to also be true for Buddhist sacred space. Moreover, also relating to intangible heritage, many of the communities we visited view human interaction with the building – including the process of looking for a suitable property, renovating it or contributing to the upkeep - to be a vehicle for Buddhist practice, cultivating virtues of patience and acceptance of impermanence. 'Heritage construction' is, in this context, a tangible material thing that can be observed and preserved, but is also an intangible living religious practice.

Conclusion

This article has demonstrated that Buddhists in England engage in a multi-faceted globalised and transnational process of heritage building that reflects - amongst other things - their socio-economic location and ethnicity, and where they adopt decorative styles and building functions imported from outside of England but where many also seek to preserve an 'English' aesthetic in their sympathetic adaptation and preservation of buildings. Building on Hervieu-Léger (2000), we have argued that an important dimension of religious expression and of heritage discourse is the way that each attempts to create and sustain collective memories as ways of counterbalancing the disruptive and destabilising effects of modernity and the particular uses of locality, space and place to achieve this. This paper brings together these two areas of mutually constitutive 'memorywork' through an examination of the place of minority faith buildings in the relatively recent shift towards a more inclusive and representative 'heritage industry' as well as with respect to the construction of heritage within faith communities themselves.

We have argued that the purpose of 'heritage' appears to have undergone a shift from a modern to a post-modern perspective, where it is no longer purely a vehicle to secure 'national cohesion' per se, via perceived shared, yet exclusive, nation-wide memories about the past, but also a means to 'community cohesion' via the promotion and preservation of diverse forms of heritage production, within which the role of minority faith heritage deserve greater attention. While the role of heritage practice and understandings of what heritage is

has begun to shift from a view of heritage as more-or-less monolithic and serving a unified national narrative, where cultural difference will eventually disappear through 'assimilation' (Ainsworth et al 2007), to one where diverse heritage are encouraged to flourish as a means to overall social cohesion, a focus on the role that religion plays has received little or no attention. This is a clear gap in our understanding of 'under-represented heritages' in a multicultural and post-Christian society, but one that Historic England in particular is taking a lead on filling (English Heritage 2012).

Notes

1 'Diaspora' will refer to those Buddhists who, either themselves, or their families, brought their religion to Britain from elsewhere. 'Convert' will be used to refer to those Buddhists who, either themselves or their parents, having been brought up with another religion or none, made the decision to affiliate with Buddhism, typically in adulthood.
2 http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/private-and-public-sector-guidance/guidance-all/protected-characteristics (accessed 5/10/16).
3 http://diversityheritage.org/about-us-2/ (accessed 5/10/16).
4 http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/about-us/our-people/equality-and-diversity/ (accessed 5/10/16).
5 Zen Buddhism has its roots in in Japan and China (where it is called Chan Buddhism). Pure Land Buddhism is widely practiced in East Asia. Zen and Pure Land are both classed as traditions within the broader category of Mahāyāna Buddhism and Tibetan forms of Buddhism are classed under the broader category of Vajrayāna Buddhism.
6 http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/LC2201EW/view/2092957703?rows=c_ethpuk11&cols=c_relpuk11 (accessed 5/10/16).
7 http://www.ketumati.org/history.php (accessed 5/10/16).
8 http://www.ketumati.org/newpro.php (accessed 5/10/16).

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