Dear Prof. Makley and Members of the Luce Foundation Grant Selection Committee,

As a religion student at Reed I am in constant contact with texts from a wide variety of religious traditions, including those of various Christian traditions, Wicca, and ancient China, and I have studied texts about the study of religion. After three years of analyzing these texts it is easy to forget that these texts represent only a small fraction of the many things that engender religious experience. Art, music and certainly architecture all contain as many layers of meaning as a text, but we rarely read them with the scrutiny that we read textual documents.

This complaint about the neglect of non-textual sources in the study of religion is one that is echoed by Lindsay Jones in his book *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture*, a major two-volume study of sacred architecture, the second volume of which functions as a 522-page guidebook to the analysis of any given sacred space. Jones says that texts are often used as the only sources of information with regard to religion while potent sources of information such as art or architecture are ignored or handled without the necessary sophistication. He suggests that his system can be used to analyze sacred architecture with appropriate depth and nuance.

Jones proposes a morphological framework to be used in the analysis of sacred architecture wherein architecture can function as a tool of orientation, commemoration, or ritual context. Each of these interpretations can be further broken down into subsections such as “Orientation: Homology” or “Commemoration: Sacred History.”

A rare example of Jones’ morphology applied to an Eastern tradition is a section on mandalas in Tibetan monastery architecture. Jones first gives a brief explanation of how the mandala is viewed as both a concretization of a mental state and a cosmological map. Jones discusses how the Tibetan monastery mimics this mandala structure, becoming a homology of the cosmos and possessing the same function as a mandala painting, an aid to meditation. Can similar statements be made of Chinese Buddhist architecture? Does the layout of a temple correspond to the layout of the cosmos or any other larger idea?

I propose to use Jones’ comparative system of architectural analysis to analyze a series of Chan Buddhist temples in Taiwan, R.O.C, specifically temples belonging to the Maha Vairocana Chan Institute. While these temples are all affiliated with this Chan

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1 Including introduction, bibliography, glossary, and an appendix.
3 Jones, pg. 3
4 Jones, pg. 216
5 Jones, pg. 217
network, each temple is in a different setting, some in urban areas, some in small towns, some in the countryside. I plan to use Jones’ mode of analysis to draw out the differences between these temples and discover how the people who frequent the temples interact with them. For example, do people in the primary temple interact differently with that temple as compared to a teaching hall in Taipei? What are the different functions of these various temples, and how do they differ depending on the location or type of the temple in question?

Another benefit of using Jones’ model is to test whether it generally gives valid results when applied to Chinese sacred architecture. Many Western theories of religion can be easily applied to Western religions but may not be easily applied to Eastern religions. I would like to test whether Jones’ theories on religious architecture are only suited to the West or if they are suitable to the East as well. This is important because if one is to study Chinese religions, one will need workable tools with which to study.

This project fascinates me because while I am interested in Chinese religions, specifically Chan Buddhism, and while I am knowledgeable about Chinese Buddhist history and texts, I have relatively little knowledge of current-day Chinese Buddhism. This project would be a good way for me to learn more.

Sincerely,

Dylan Madenski
Project Outline

The study of sacred architecture is a useful tool for the student of religion as it opens up a new field of “texts” with which to work, texts that have no words but instead tangible, physical forms. Further understanding of ritual spaces will also further my understanding of how rituals are performed, which would be invaluable for religious study.

The study of specifically Chinese Buddhist architecture would be valuable for many of these same reasons. In studies of Buddhism, much emphasis is put on textual analysis, but studies of how Buddhist practitioners interact with the temple environment are scarce.

As for benefits specific to me, the opportunity to take part in actual fieldwork would give me a valuable new perspective on religious study. It would furthermore help to keep my Chinese language ability in shape. I would also learn more about Chinese Buddhism, an area of study in which I am specifically interested.

As for the structure of the project itself, I plan to visit the ten temple branches of the Maha Vairocana Chan Institute and document the structure of each temple or teaching hall via photography, via my own observations and via interviewing people involved with the temple with regard to their interaction with the temple space and how they perceive that space. This will be done at each temple on the island, including the main temple complex at Jinshan. Interactions with people involved with the temple will be facilitated by my own Chinese language ability and by the aid of a translator if my abilities are inadequate.
The temple sites cover the island of Taiwan with at least one in every major city in addition to the primary temple complex/monastery in Jinshan near Jilong at the northern tip of the island. The names of the temples are Huiming Temple in Taipei, Maha Vairocana Temple in Taizhong, Benjue Temple in Yilan, among others. As these temples are in various cities throughout the island, it should take approximately two months to visit all of them. The time I visit each temple will depend on what times are most convenient for them. I have four contacts in Taiwan who are members of the Maha Vairocana Chan Institute. Their knowledge of both Chinese and English is extensive, and they would be willing to act as translators if need be. They include:

1.) Mr. Douglas Nelson
2.) Cixing Shifu
3.) Ms. Li Suzhen
4.) Mr. Liu Yongshang

I am very well prepared for this project. I can speak semi-fluent Mandarin Chinese. I have studied Chinese at the Mandarin Training Center at Taiwan National Normal University for nine months and at Reed for two semesters (Chinese 110 and 311). I have taken numerous classes on Chinese religions and/or history (Rel. 154, 158, 307, Hum. 230) as well as classes on religious theory and method (Rel. 201, 301, 399). I have

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9 Tel: +886-9-2933-2588
also lived in Taiwan for nine months (from Aug. ’01-June ’02) when I first visited some of the temples in the temple network that I propose to study. I also know many members of this Buddhist tradition. Furthermore, I have taken classes in photography that should improve the quality of my documentary photographs. By way of further preparation, I plan to read books on sacred architecture, including the standard *Buddhist Art and Architecture*\(^{10}\) and the recent *A Pictorial History of Chinese Architecture*.\(^{11}\)

In conclusion, I am interested in doing this because it will offer me a new way of looking at religious “texts,” but texts in the form of buildings rather than books. This project would be of great benefit to me because it would not only be a chance for me to learn more about Chinese Buddhism but it would also be a chance to study religions in the field rather than the classroom. I would be learning more about Chan Buddhism in Taiwan and I would be honing my Chinese language ability.

**Budget**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airfare from Portland, OR to Taipei</td>
<td>US$ 1000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent money with which to stay in hostel for 2 months</td>
<td>US$ 500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money for hotels when traveling</td>
<td>US$ 150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food for 2 months</td>
<td>US$ 650.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money for train tickets, bus tickets around island when visiting temples</td>
<td>US$ 120.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approx. 10 rolls film for documenting temples photographically</td>
<td>US$ 50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Expenses (visa application fees, immunizations, etc.)</td>
<td>US$ 150.00</td>
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</tbody>
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<pre><code>                                                                               | US$ 2620.00 |
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QUALIFICATIONS

I am able to speak Mandarin Chinese with some fluency.
I am able to speak basic Taiwanese.
I have lived in Taipei, Taiwan for nine months and have been involved with the Maha Vairocana Chan Institute for six of those months.
I have taken classes at Reed College on theory and method in the study of religions, Chinese language, Chinese humanities, and Chinese religions.
I have taken classes in Chinese Buddhist cosmology at Huiming Temple in Taipei, Taiwan.

EMPLOYMENT

Jun. '96-Aug. '96 Prep Cook, Dishwasher at Otis Café in Lincoln City, OR.
Jun. '97-Aug. '97 Short-Order Chef at Otis Café in Lincoln City, OR
Jun. '98-Aug.'98 Construction Worker for Emmerson-Morgan Construction in Neskowin, OR.
Jun. '99-Aug. '99 Short-Order Chef at Otis Café in Lincoln City, OR.
Jun. '01-Jul. '01 Waiter at Black Fish Café in Lincoln City, OR.
Jun. '01-Jul. '01 Baker at Red Fox Bakery in Lincoln City, OR.
Jun. '02-Aug. '02 Waiter at Black Fish Café in Lincoln City, OR.
Jun. '02-Aug. '02 Baker at Red Fox Bakery in Lincoln City, OR.
Nov. ‘01-Dec. '01 English Teacher at Little Miki English school in Taipei, Taiwan R.O.C.

Dec. '01-Jun. '02 Freelance English Teacher in Taiwan, R.O.C.

EDUCATION

1999-Present Currently enrolled at Reed College.
Aug. '01-Jun. '02 Enrolled in Mandarin Training Center at Taiwan National Normal University.

PREVIOUS AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS

I was granted a Freeman-ASIA Grant for study in Asia for the period of Aug. '01-Jun. '02.
I was granted the Douglas Graham Rives Memorial Scholarship for excellence in academics through Reed for the 2002-’03 academic year.