Master Thesis

Comparing Tourists' Spiritual Experience Inside and Outside of Jokhang Temple in Tibet

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Comparing Tourists’ Spiritual Experience Inside and Outside of Jokhang Temple in Tibet

Abstract: There is a relative lack of research on the spiritual experience of secular tourists in Tibetan Buddhist heritage sites and the impact of spatial environment on spiritual experience. Taking Jokhang Temple as an example, this research uses the adapted code book of Schmidt et al. (2023) to analyze 697 international tourists' reviews on Tripadvisor and compare tourists’ spiritual experience inside and outside of Jokhang Temple. Through content analysis, the research findings verify the findings of Schmidt et al. (2023), that is, the physical environment of the sacred sites plays an important role in the process of tourists’ spiritual experience. This research also found that inside the temple, international tourists generated spiritual experiences of education and culture research by linking the physical environment with historical narratives. Outside the temple, international tourists generated spiritual experiences of self-growth and reflection through the social characteristics of the spatial environment, rather than the physical characteristics. And by observing religious rituals, generated spiritual experience of relaxation and meditation both inside and outside the Temple. Therefore, the managers of the Jokhang Temple should not only carefully preserves the historical narrative of the material environment inside, but also maintain the ritual space both inside and outside of the temple, to support the experience of tourists.

Keywords: Religious tourism; Spiritual experience; Tibetan Buddhism; User-generated content

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1. Introduction

Religious tourism is considered one of the oldest forms of human travel (Collins-Kreiner, 2020), as people began undertaking long-distance journeys to visit sacred sites centuries before the modern tourism industry emerged (Fleischer, 2000). Religious tourism not only boasts a long history, but it also remains a significant segment within the tourism industry today, becoming one of the fastest-growing types of tourism worldwide (Collins-Kreiner, 2020). It attracts not only visitors motivated by religious reasons but also those driven by secular motivations such as spiritual exploration, seeking new experiences and cultural interests (Amaro, Antunes & Henriques, 2018). Among these, cultural motivations for religious tourism are closely associated with cultural heritage tourism (Levi & Kocher, 2013). Religious sites and pilgrimage routes are considered important heritage sites, attracting visitors interested in understanding the history, religious beliefs, and culture of a particular location (Olsen & Timothy, 2006). Approximately 20% of the properties on the UNESCO World Heritage List are related to religion (UNESCO, 2023). These religious sites become renowned landmarks and UNESCO World Heritage Sites due to their legendary reputation, architectural or artistic wonders, and associations with historical figures (Nyaupane, Timothy & Poudel, 2015). Although the phenomenon of people of different faiths visiting each other's holy sites is increasing, research in this field often focuses on tourism characteristics and motivations (Huang & Chu, 2020). In terms of visitor experience, existing studies have predominantly focused on pilgrimage tourists' experiences at religious heritage sites, with less attention given to the experiences of ordinary secular tourists at religious heritage sites (Huang & Chu, 2020).

Tibet is sometimes referred to as the "Third Pole" of the world and has been considered a place to experience unique Tibetan Buddhism and culture. (Xie, Wei, Jia & Yang, 2020). Despite restrictions on entry due to its remote location and visa issues (Pu , Cheng , Samarathunga & Wall , 2023), Tibet continues to attract a large number of tourists. Tourism has also become a significant source of income for many Tibetan communities (Shui et al.,2022). Tibet not only attracts a large number of domestic tourists but also appeals to international visitors (Mercille, 2005). Currently, existing research on tourism in Tibet mainly focuses on topics such as Orientalism (Bovair, 2007) and contemporary tourism development and promotion in Lhasa (Murakami, 2007), with relatively less attention paid to the religious heritage aspects of tourism in Tibet.

The mysterious image of Tibet has long been perpetuated in Western media and academic discourse (Murakami, 2007), attracting many international tourists to embark on journeys to various sacred Tibetan Buddhist sites, some of which are UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Among them, the Jokhang Temple is considered the most sacred Tibetan Buddhist temple in Tibet (Warner, 2011), inscribed as a World Cultural Heritage Site in 2000 and serving as the spiritual center of Lhasa (UNESCO, 2001). Managers, however, face the challenge of balancing the needs of the Jokhang Temple as a World Heritage Site and tourist destination with its needs as a religious site. Understanding tourists' experiences at religious heritage sites can enable destination managers to improve their strategies for effective destination management (Gursoy, Akova & Atsız, 2022). When tourists are in a religious site like the Jokhang Temple and participate in or observe religious activities, what will their spiritual experiences be like? Especially for international tourists who embark on a journey of cultural exploration to visit religious sites that are not of their own faith, what is their spiritual experience like at Jokhang Temple? Based on research within the Buddhist temple tourism environment, Yanata (2021) summarized four spiritual experience categories: (1) self-growth and reflection; (2) relaxation and meditation; (3) communion with nature; and (4) education and culture study. Physical environment has an impact on the experience (Yanata, 2021). Due to the direct influence of Buddhism, not only the "Nangkuo" inside the Jokhang Temple is the ritual space of Tibetan Buddhism, but the "Barkhor" outside is also the ritual space of Tibetan Buddhism (Qian & Zhang, 2016). How do international tourists' spiritual experiences inside and outside the Jokhang Temple differ in the above four dimensions? This is exactly what this study wants to explore.

User-generated content (UGC) on a travel sharing website not only provides prospective clients and managers with important information about tourist experiences (Öz, 2015), but is also an important source of data for researchers exploring tourism experiences (Lu & Stepchenkova, 2015). Researchers often choose the TripAdvisor website to obtain data because it is the most commonly used social media platform where users can share their experiences, memories and feelings about a destination (Gursoy et al., 2022). At the same time, it shows the name and nationality of the tourists and consequently helps to identify the subject of this research, which are international tourists.

The aim of this master's thesis is to compare international tourists' spiritual experience inside and outside of the Jokhang Temple by analyzing the reviews of Jokhang Temple by international tourists on Tripadvisor. The research question is: What is the difference between international tourists' spiritual experience inside and outside of the Jokhang Temple?

To help answer the research question, the following three sub-questions were asked:

Sub-question 1: What are the dimensions of international tourists' spiritual experience inside the Jokhang Temple?

Schmidt, Bolderman, Stoffelen & Groote (2023) found that sacred site managers try to promote potential visitors' spiritual experiences by linking spatial environments to spiritual narratives. For example, by linking the Inari Okami (Japanese Kami) to the red color of architecture, which symbolizes the life force against evil spirits, visitors are made to feel the spiritual atmosphere of the Inari Okami protecting them, and to link it with the narrative that the path through the red Torii gate is set as a symbol of gratitude to the Inari Okami, thereby strengthening the emotional connection between visitors and the shrine. The physical features of sacred sites such as architecture and statues, as well as the symbolic features of rituals, create a strong atmosphere that connects individuals to the gods (Hadden, 1995), allowing many tourists to have a deep and rich personal experience (Straub, 2016). Therefore, this research attempts to better understand what dimensions of spiritual experience international tourists will gain inside the Jokhang Temple and the factors that affect their spiritual experience through this sub-question.

Sub-question 2: What are the dimensions of international tourists’ spiritual experience outside the Jokhang Temple?

In addition to the cultural symbols of religious sites, tourists are attracted by the surrounding natural environment. Natural features such as mountains, waterfalls and wildlife have a spiritual impact on tourists (Pomfret, 2006). Therefore, outside of religious sites, visitors can experience the power of nature and then pay great respect to the creator of such an impressive world (Pomfret, 2006). Yanata (2021) found the natural landscape and air of the Buddhist sacred site in Koyasan, Japan induce a peaceful spiritual experience in visitors. Therefore, this research attempts to understand what dimensions of spiritual experience international tourists might have outside the Jokhang Temple? Does the natural environment outside the Jokhang Temple have an impact on the spiritual experience of international tourists?

Sub-question 3: What are the differences and similarities between international tourists’ spiritual experience inside and outside the Jokhang Temple?

By comparing and contrasting the results of the first two sub-questions, we can understand the similarities and differences between international tourists' spiritual experiences inside and outside the Jokhang Temple, which will help us understand the impact of spatial environment on visitors’ spiritual experience and help local managers improve their destination management strategies in a more targeted manner.

2. Main Theories and Concepts

2.1 Religious tourism

Pilgrimage is considered to be the earliest origin of mass tourism (Collins-Kreiner, 2020), which is defined as “a journey externally to a holy place for religious reasons, internally for spiritual purposes and internal understanding” (Barber, 1991). Pilgrims hope to gain spiritual experiences through travel as an act of strengthening their faith (Shackley, 2001). Every year, a large number of Muslims, Catholics, and Hindus travel to places such as Mecca, Lourdes in France, and the Ganges River in India (Singh, 2006). For religious believers, travel is part of their mythology about God’s imprint on history and demands on life (Greenia, 2018). However, in the context of worries of the modern world (Abbate & Di Nuovo, 2013), people travel to religious places also for many non-religious motives: such as experiencing a strong religious atmosphere to find themselves (Vorzsak & Gut, 2009), enjoy the natural environment where religious temples are located to relax and unwind (Wang, Chen & Huang, 2016), and visit sacred temples or statues to experience cultural heritage (Lankford, Dieser & Walker, 2005).

There are basically two schools of thought when it comes to religious tourism: The first is that tourism is the opposite of pilgrimage. Smith (1992) proposed the travel continuum, where he viewed pilgrims and tourists as a continuum, where pilgrims are devout pilgrims strictly motivated by faith and tourists are strictly secular tourists. As shown in Figure 1, while religious tourism lies in the middle of these two classifications, tourists are differentiated based on the ratio of people's sacred or secular motivations and activities (Smith, 1992).

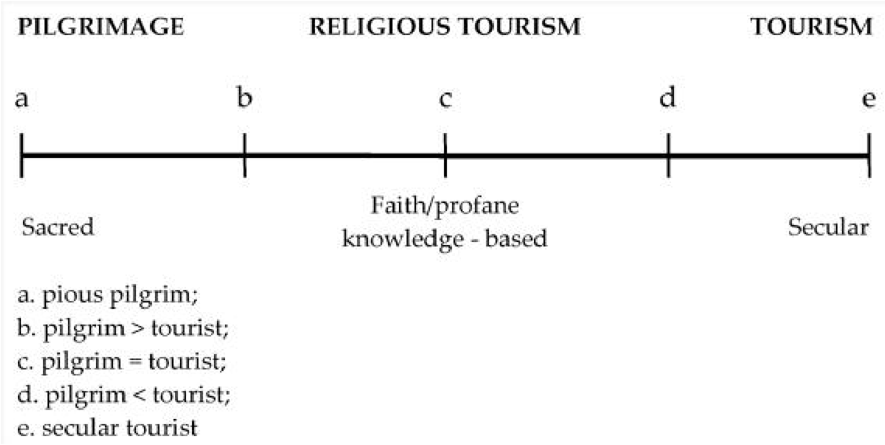
PILGRIMAGE
RELIGIOUS TOURISM
TOURISM
a
b
c
d
e
Sacred
Faith/profane knowledge - based
Secular
a. pious pilgrim;
b. pilgrim > tourist;
c. pilgrim = tourist;
d. pilgrim < tourist;
e. secular tourist

Figure 1: The Pilgrim-Tourist Path (Source: Smith(1992)).

The second school of thought believes that the boundary between pilgrimage and tourism is blurred, and regards tourism as a contemporary pilgrimage and a contemporary spiritual journey (Shapley, 2009). Turner and Turner (1978) argued that tourism and pilgrimage have similar structures, which are three stages (separation, a liminal stage of reaching the destination, and a rejuvenated reintegration stage), after these three stages, tourists are updated by tourism. And similar to pilgrims, tourists seek the meaning of existence, self-improvement and transformation through the ritual of tourism (Huang& Chu, 2020). On the other hand, from the perspective of holy sites, all aspects of holy sites are constantly subject to new interpretations (Bremer, 2014), as many holy site institutions must balance the interests of multiple stakeholders caused by commercialization and secularization (Huang& Chu, 2020). Therefore, scholars believe that the boundary between pilgrimage and tourism is blurred.

At present, existing research topics related to religious tourism mainly include: the difference between pilgrims and tourists; retreat journeys related to health tourism; the impact of the commercialization of religious sites on the sanctity and sustainability; the application of information technology in religious sites; motivations and experiences of religious tourism (Rashid, 2018). Among them, those studies that explore the experiences associated with religious tourism mainly focus on spiritual experiences and ignore other experiences, such as social, educational or restorative experiences (Bond, Packer & Ballantyne, 2015). But some studies include social and educational experiences within spiritual experiences, as they consider tourism to be a modern kind of religious pilgrimage (Yanata, 2021; Chun,Roh & Spralls, 2017).

This research follows Sharpley (2009) in that pilgrimage and tourism are not binary opposites. Tourism is contemporary pilgrimage, and even if visitors are not necessarily seeking religious spirituality, they may have a spiritual experience(Yanata, 2021). In fact, it is not uncommon for the number of visitors to religious sites to exceed the number of pilgrims (Aulet & Vidal, 2018). Increasingly, tourists visit religious sites based on the cultural and historical value of their heritage elements rather than their religious purposes (McGettigan, 2003). As a result, traditional religious sites that receive large numbers of visitors have become hybrid sites where sacred and secular activities occur simultaneously (Bremer, 2006). This poses a challenge to sustainable tourism that aims to balance cultural heritage asset protection, tourism experiences and local community needs (Levi & Kocher, 2013).

2.2 Tibetan Buddhism

Over the past 2,500 years, Buddhism has flourished in various regions of Asia, producing many different types of Buddhism. The main Buddhist systems include Theravada Buddhism popular in Southeast Asia, Mahayana Buddhism in East Asia, and Tibetan Buddhism (Berzin, 1996).

Tibetan Buddhism is practiced in Tibet, Bhutan and Mongolia mainly (Buddhism for beginners, 2021). In the seventh century, Songtsen Gampo, the Tibetan emperor, embraced Buddhism under the influence of his two wives, Princess Chizun of Nepal and Princess Wencheng of Tang Dynasty (Liang, 1986). Tibetan Buddhism, through centuries of development, has developed a series of practices with the goal of achieving a transcendent state of liberation (Murphy, Donovan & Taylor, 1997). Research has found that many techniques of Tibetan Buddhism produce psychological, physiological, and behavioral benefits (Murphy, Donovan & Taylor, 1997). For example, from a meditation perspective, Rapgay, Rinpoche & Jessum (2000) explored how the paths of Tibetan Buddhism spiritual practice can be realized through a series of meditations to heal the mind, body, and spirit.

The practice of Tibetan Buddhism is essentially embodied in ritualized and emotional connections between people, nature, and local gods (Yu, 2013). A characteristic of Tibetan culture is that the physical environment, both animate and inanimate, is believed to be occupied by numerous gods and spiritual forces. Humans can engage in a wide variety of conscious interactions with all of these creatures through various forms of religious practice (Huber, 1994).

Among them, the concept of bla-gnas believes that there is a certain degree of mutually determined relationship between people and places (Huber, 1994). Bla means "life force" (usually translated as "soul"), and bla has a close relationship with nature, which can be seen in the naming of lakes (bla-mtsho) and mountains (bla-ri) (Huber, 1994). Gnas carries the dual meaning of an actual physical location and the abode of a deity, entity, or creature (Huber, 1994). The concept of bla-gnas holds that if a family becomes extinct, the lake associated with it (bla-mtsho) will be depleted; or if soil is dug at someone's mountain range (bla-ri), they will become sick (Huber, 1994). The human-land relationship in Tibet is also reflected in the worship of nature, especially the worship of mountain gods. Tibetans believe that every mountain is inhabited by gods, and mountain gods are the basis of their entire belief system (Jisheng, 2001). In addition, Xu (2010) found that Buddhist model interweave landscape with architecture, religious significance and human activity, systematically constructed Tibetan temples and their surroundings, including pagodas, Buddhist halls, temple complexes, and sacred mountains.

Tibetan pilgrimages usually consist of a circular journey around the site (Huber, 1994). Tibetan pilgrimage primarily involves establishing different levels of relationship with and benefiting from a place through spiritual and physical actions. Their actions involve various practical categories such as visual, tactile, and auditory. For example: ‘reading’ the landscape; touching and tasting place materials; exchanging personal materials and properties with place materials; praying to the place, and even in some cases listening to the sounds produced by the place (Huber, 1994). Unless they are highly routinized in a particular location, or are queried by pilgrims, the many dimensions of pilgrimages and their frequency may be overlooked by ‘outside’ observers (Huber, 1994).

At the Jokhang Temple, the spiritual center of Tibet, the most common religious practices are prayer rotation and prostration (Qian & Zhang, 2016). Prayer rotation involves Tibetan Buddhist believers walking clockwise around the Jokhang Temple while circling prayer wheels. Prostration refers to a posture where all five parts of the body (hands, feet, and head) touch the ground,which is considered the most pious way of worship because when you bow your head, your entire body is connected to the sacred earth (Qian & Zhang, 2016).

Agrawal, Choudhary& Tripathi (2010) found that although Buddhism originated in India, neither foreigners nor Indians considered India to be a “Buddhist tourist destination” place. Instead, they all associated Tibet with “Buddhism”. Since the last century, Tibet has been regarded by the Western world as Shangri-La on earth, a utopia far away from the West where one can cure spiritual depression and spiritual emptiness caused by modernization (Qian & Zhang, 2016). Scholars call this “imagined Tibet: a projection of collective fantasies rather than Tibet itself” (Yü 2015, p. 3).

Neuhaus (2012) believes that the West's attitude towards Tibet has gone through three periods. The first period was one of high Western self-confidence (1853-1904). A large number of works describing Tibetan spirituality as superstitious and violent reflect Europeans' belief that the West is highly superior. In the second period, from 1904 to 1947, books emphasizing Tibetan spiritual values reflected the West's fascination with Tibet. In the third period, Westerners believed that Tibetan civilization had been lost (Shakya, 2013). Despite this, Tibet is still considered a "place of power" and people are attracted to the concept of spiritual experience in Tibet (Ivakhiv 2001, p. 228).

Overall, Tibetan Buddhism, which has a long history, has built Tibet. It has not only constructed spatial places and affected the Tibetan landscape, but also shaped practice rituals of people. Tibet has attracted many international tourists who are interested in "Imaginary Tibet" by virtue of concepts such as religious culture, historical heritage, and spiritual experience. However, according to the regulations of the China Tourism Administration, international tourists must participate in organized group tours through Tibet travel agencies. Currently, there is relatively little research examining international tourists' experiences of this type of officially sanctioned travel.

2.3 Spiritual experience

Spirituality refers to the meaning of personal life and the connection between oneself and the world, which is no longer just religious spirituality, but also includes subjective spirituality involving education, health, etc (Yanata, 2021). Norman (2004) believes that tourist motivation is a prerequisite for understanding tourists' spiritual experience. Wang, Chen & Huang (2016) found that the four main motivations for tourists to visit Buddhist holy sites are spiritual, entertainment, learning and socializing and the motivations vary depending on the faith. The travel motivations of non-Buddhist tourists include curiosity, pleasure and entertainment. However, Sharpley & Sundaram (2005) found that tourists can have spiritual experiences without spiritual motivation when traveling to sacred places, which shows that motivation alone cannot explain tourists' spiritual experiences.

Belhassen, Caton & Stewart (2008) proposed the concept of spiritual experience, which is that spiritual experience is based on the sense of meaning that tourists experience when visiting sacred sites, and it is influenced by the interaction of three factors: action, belief and the place visited. Similarly, Sharpley & Jepson (2011) argued that the spiritual experience of rural tourism is determined by a combination of the objective environment, socially constructed understandings of the countryside, and the interaction between tourists and the place. Among them, they found that the material environment of a place is the main factor in satisfying spiritual experience (Sharpley & Jepson, 2011) .

In the context of Buddhist sacred sites, Birch & Sinclair (2013) found that Buddhist buildings and spaces may evoke a sense of self-actualization and self-transcendence. Yanata (2021) found that the natural environment and air of the Buddhist Sacred Site in Koyasan, Japan provide visitors with a calming and healing spiritual experience. However, Schmidt et al. (2023) , from the perspective of sacred site managers, found that sacred site sites try to promote tourists' spiritual experiences by linking the material environment with spiritual narratives through references to gods and well-being. It can be seen that the material environment has an important influence on spiritual experience.

Similarly, many studies have found that tourists' spiritual experiences are inevitably influenced by the social and cultural construction of a place and the interaction between tourists and the environment (Sharpley & Jepson, 2011; Ross, Hur & Hoffman, 2019; Schmidt et al, 2023). For example, Ross et al. (2019) found that the social construction of a peaceful Buddhist lifestyle and participation in traditional rituals and meditation practices were key factors in generating transformative spiritual experiences for tourist during Korean temple stays.

Overall, tourism is seen as a modern pilgrimage (Sharpley, 2009), and even if tourists do not pursue religious spirituality, they can still have spiritual experiences in holy places (Yanata, 2021). Tourism motivation alone is not enough to explain tourists' spiritual experiences, because spiritual experiences are also affected by factors such as the material environment of the place, the socially constructed meaning of the place, the behavior of tourists, and the religious beliefs of tourists as discussed above. Because the research object is international tourists, this research adopts a social constructionist approach to analyze and interpret the spatial environment of the holy place.

3. Methodology

3.1 Study area

Many studies on spiritual experience of religious heritage sites published in academic journals focus on Christian sites, while research on Buddhist heritage sites is limited (Huang, Pearce, Wu, & Wang, 2019). There is also a relative lack of specific micro-level research on the tourism experience of Tibetan religious heritage sites (Cui, Xu, & Yang, 2014). The Jokhang Temple, the case site chosen in this research project, is one of the most sacred and important temples in Tibet and the spiritual center of Lhasa (Warner, 2011). It is also a world heritage site that attracts tourists. Therefore, taking the Jokhang Temple as a case site is both representative and helpful in filling the current research gaps.

At the same time, due to the direct influence of Buddhism, both the prayer path inside the Jokhang Temple (Nangkhor), and the prayer path around the outer wall of the Jokhang Temple (Barkhor) are ritual spaces (Qian & Zhang, 2016). Buddhist believers walk around Nangkhor and Barkhor to express their pious beliefs (Ding & Ren, 2021). Therefore, taking the Jokhang Temple as a case site, exploring the impact of the spatial environment on tourists' spiritual experience will help to understand spiritual experiences in different spaces, provide a richer and more detailed understanding of the dimensions of spiritual experiences, and may also contribute to the management of religious heritage sites.

3.2 Research design

This research chooses a qualitative research method to answer the research question 'What is the difference between international tourists' spiritual experience inside and outside of the Jokhang Temple? '

Larsen (2007) defines tourism experiences as "personal travel-related events of the past, whose intensity is sufficient to enter long-term memory." When these memories are retold and interpreted as narrative representations, greater meaning often emerges (Huang& Chu, 2020). Therefore, a qualitative approach was used to understand how tourists recalled, recounted, and explained their spiritual experiences at the Jokhang Temple. It can provide a deeper understanding and detailed description of tourists' spiritual experience, capturing richer and more nuanced information, including tourists' emotions, inner feelings and memories of the details of the Jokhang Temple's space environment. Therefore, employing qualitative research methods, considered one of the best approaches to understanding personal feelings and thoughts (Creswell, 2003), would contribute to addressing the research questions of this project.

In qualitative research methods, user-generated content (UGC) on tourism review websites is an important source for exploring tourist experiences because it contains a large number of narratives from tourists (Lu & Stepchenkova, 2015) . The content reported by tourists in UGC is not affected by the researcher's research questions and researcher intervention, and can be viewed as uncontaminated materials (Huang & Chu, 2020). Therefore, they are an important source for understanding international visitors' spiritual experiences at the Jokhang Temple and their connections to various elements of the place: the physical environment, socially and culturally constructed meanings of place, and the interactions between people and place.

Due to the reliability and feasibility of UGC (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014), many scholars utilize UGC to explore tourist experiences (Gursoy et al., 2022; Huang & Chu, 2020). Specifically, this research selects TripAdvisor to obtain data because it is the most commonly used social media platform where users can share their experiences, memories, feelings, and emotions about a destination (Gursoy et al., 2022). Additionally, it displays the nationalities of tourists, aiding in identifying the research subjects, i.e., international tourists.

3.3 Data collection and analysis

On April 1, 2024, 1361 reviews in all languages in total on Tripadvisor about the Jokhang Temple in Tibet were retrieved. Several languages were used in the reviews, such as English, Chinese, German and Spanish. Non-English reviews were excluded because the study subjects were international tourists and to avoid possible misunderstandings of non-English comments. In total, 697 English comments remained. Due to Tripadvisor's anti-scrape website settings, all reviews were downloaded manually. The only personal information in the data was the name of commenters, which was removed. Although Tripadvisor obtains users' consent to make their reviews public, this research cannot obtain direct consent from the review authors.

This research used content analysis to analyze the data. Content analysis is a research technique that draws valid inferences from a text (or other meaningful material) to the context in which it is used, which provides new insights and enhances the researcher's understanding of a specific phenomenon (Krippendorff 2018, p.18). It enables researchers to identify a concise summary of main themes within large amounts of textual data (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017). Camprubí & Coromina (2016) found that the use of content analysis methods in tourism research is very popular, and is also often used in tourism research to study online reviews (Barreda & Bilgihan, 2013; Gursoy et al., 2022).

The 697 comments were first entered into Microsoft Word and then analyzed using ATLAS.ti. To analyze the data, this research used a code book adapted from Schmidt et al. (2023). Schmidt et al. (2023) conducted a media content analysis on the websites of two sacred sites (Fushimi Inari Taisha and Kiyomizu-Dera) in Japan and found that management agencies in both places used spiritual narratives (e.g., deities) on their websites, linking spatial environments with place attachments (emotional, behavioral, cognitive) to promote spiritual experiences and well-being among potential visitors. This research used their code book because there is some similarity between the research question of their research question and this research, which is exploring the spiritual experience of tourists at sacred sites. However, Schmidt et al. (2023) looks from the perspective of sacred site managers who are cultural insiders, whereas this research is from the perspective of tourists, specifically international tourists who are cultural outsiders. Whereas sacred site managers have no direct control over how individuals experience sacred sites, they can design and manage their sites to promote the spiritual experience of visitors (Schmidt et al., 2023). This research can verify whether factors such as the physical environment and spiritual narratives created and maintained by sacred site managers actually promote tourists' spiritual experiences. At the same time, this research complements their theory by exploring the differences in the spiritual experiences that tourists receive both inside and outside of sacred sites whose sacredness is carefully maintained by the management agencies.

In terms of the specific coding process, this research combines an inductive and a deductive coding strategy. Specifically, I first performed attribute coding to understand which country the participants were from and who the tourists were visiting with or whether they were visiting alone. Second, I did elaborative coding to the 697 comment data based on code book of Schmidt et al. (2023), and did in-vivo coding and self-created descriptive codes for those comments that could not be elaboratively coded. In total, 58 codes were created for the interior of the Jokhang Temple, 44 codes for the exterior of the Jokhang Temple, and 31 codes for the overall spiritual experience of the Jokhang Temple.

Afterwards, I clustered the in-vivo codes and self-created descriptive codes into 11 themes created by Schmidt et al. (2023). Their theme ‘Association Structure and Aims’ was deleted, as this was not relevant to this research object and did not appear in data. At the same time, the Worship Etiquette Theme was changed to Ritual Theme, because the religious rituals in the Jokhang Temple are more oriented towards collective actions and rituals rather than individual codes of behavior in religious sites. In addition, based on Pomfret's (2006) finding that natural elements, such as mountains, waterfalls, streams, and wildlife, have a spiritual impact on spiritual experience of tourists, the theme of Nature was added, resulting in a total of 12 themes. And according to the four types of spiritual experiences that Yanata (2021) summarized, the themes historical and self-understanding of the site, spiritual responsibility, well-being and nature were changed into the themes education and cultural research, self-growth and reflection, relaxation and meditation, and being with nature.

To understand the potential relationships between codes, I used code co-occurrence analysis to derive the coefficient between the different codes. It indicates the strength of the relationship between two codes, in the form of a coefficient ranging from 0 to 1, with a larger value indicating a stronger relationship between two codes.

4. Result

For the division of the inside and outside of Jokhang Temple, I used the security checkpoint and ticket checkpoint mentioned by tourists in the comments as the boundary. The buildings and courtyards of the Jokhang Temple that can be entered after security checks are classified as indoors, and the Barkhor Street and square outside the Jokhang Temple complex are classified as outdoors.

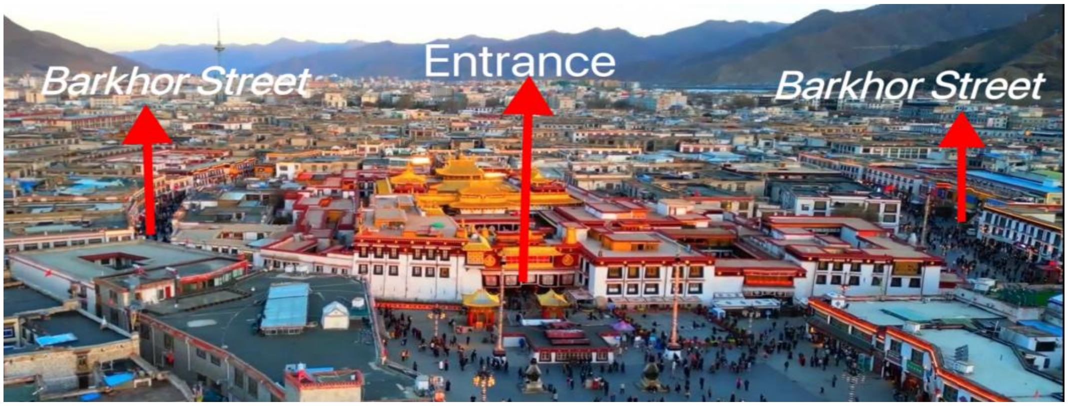
Barkhor Street
Entrance
Barkhor Street

Figure 2: Aerial View of Jokhang Temple (Bilibili.com, 2023)

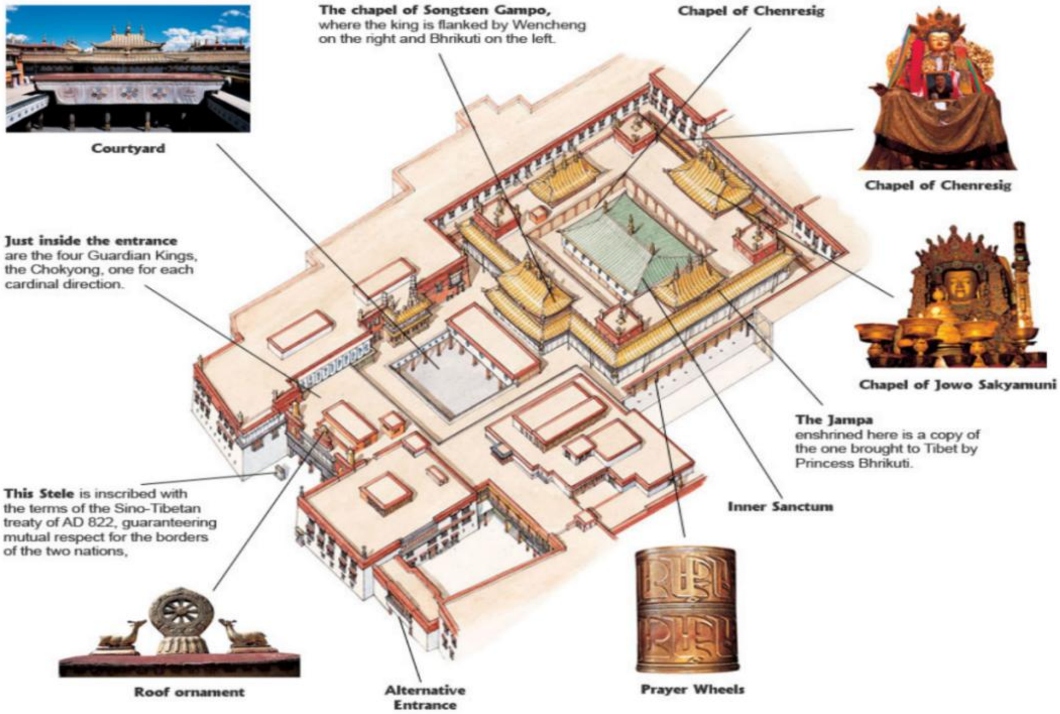
Courtyard
The chapel of Songtsen Gampo, where the king is flanked by Wencheng on the right and Bhrikuti on the left.
Chapel of Chenresig
Chapel of Chenresig
Just inside the entrance are the four Guardian Kings, the Chokyong, one for each cardinal direction.
Chapel of Jowo Sakyamuni
The Jampa enshrined here is a copy of the one brought to Tibet by Princess Bhrikuti.
This Stele is inscribed with the terms of the Sino-Tibetan treaty of AD 822, guaranteeing mutual respect for the borders of the two nations,
Inner Sanctum
Roof ornament
Alternative Entrance
Prayer Wheels

Figure 3: Jokhang Temple Interior Map (China Travel Guide, 2017)

Our study subjects came from 65 countries respectively. Among them, nearly one-third are from the United States. The next main group of participants from English-speaking countries were 69 Britons, 44 Australians, and 36 Canadians. There were also 49 participants from China（Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan）and Southeast Asia, such as Singapore (25) and Malaysia (23).

In terms of type of visit, 229 people visited with friends, 186 people as couples, 89 people in solo and 73 people as a family visit. There were 12 people who visit on a business trip.

4.1 Whole experience of Jokhang Temple

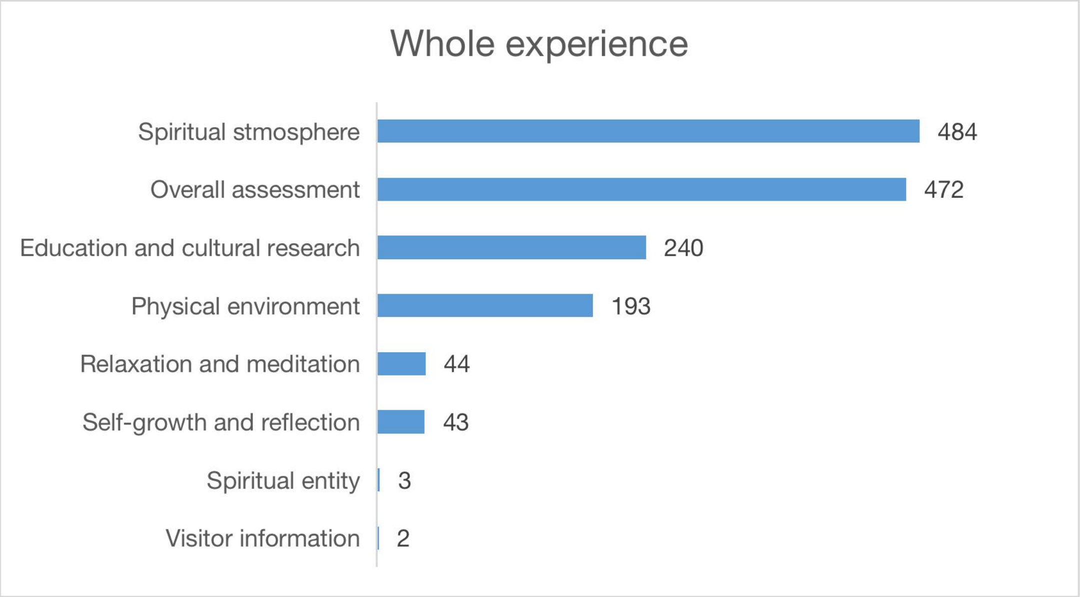

Figure 4: Frequency of the main themes appearing for the whole temple experience

The overall spiritual experience of the Jokhang Temple centers on eight themes (Figure 4), which are described here along three main lines: overall assessment, social and physical environment, and visitors' spiritual gain.

In general, international visitors had a positive experience of the temple as a “must visit” place, where they mainly learned and experienced religion, culture and history. Some visitors felt that the temple created another world for them, with a sense of having traveled through time and space. However, a few visitors felt that the overall experience of Jokhang Temple was rather underwhelming, mainly due to the fact that pilgrims, worshipper and tourists visited it at the same time, which created a negatively crowded experience for visitors.

"Visited hundreds of Buddhist / Hindu Temples / Mosques / Churches all over the world, this one.... can't even find words for it. You MUST see it for yourself!!!!!"---A tourist from United Arab Emirates

"Our visit consisted of a shuffle around through the crowds. Actually the least enjoyable temple visit of our trip as no opportunity to properly view or experience what was going on."---A tourist from United Kingdom

In terms of the social and physical environment, tourists perceived the Jokhang Temple as the most sacred temple, the spiritual center of Tibet and Lhasa, full of faithful and magical atmosphere, and an important pilgrimage destination. Some visitors said that the spiritual atmosphere created by the Tibetan people at the Jokhang Temple made them feel and immerse themselves in the spiritual power of the Jokhang Temple. Only a few visitors felt solemn aura.

"Deep and dreamy. Holy and heart warming. Inspired and insightful. Magical and (utterly) memorable."---A tourist (No nationality information)

International tourists generally perceived the Jokhang Temple as a historical site, an ancient structure built in the 7th century. Interestingly, only 2 people mentioned the location of the Jokhang Temple as being at the center of all Buddhist temple sites in ancient Tibet. It is believed that the evil power of the demon Rakshasa took over Tibet, and Songtsen Gampo built 12 temples in the 7th century to suppress the demon Rakshasa, among them Jokhang Temple was built in the most important location, the heart of the Rakshasa (Gyaltsen1996, p. 163).

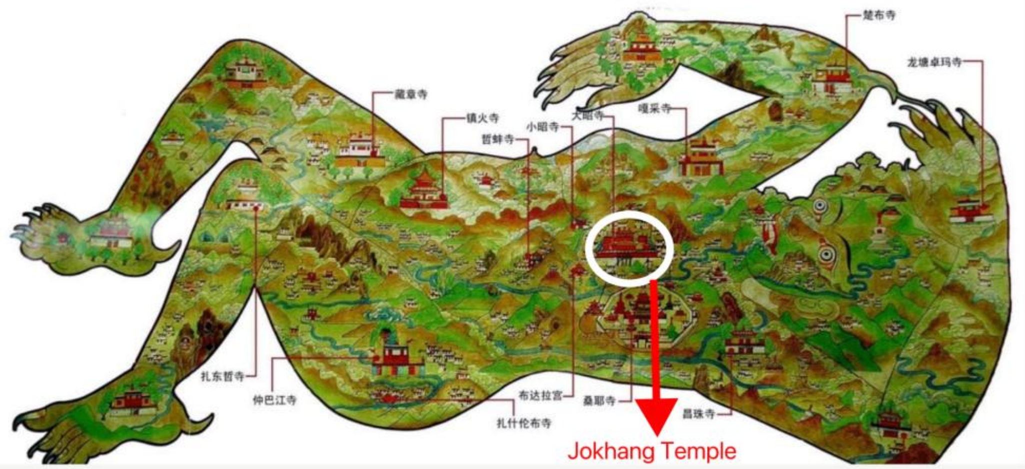

Figure 5: Locations of the 12 temples built by Songtsen Gamp (Highpeakspureearth.com, 2016)

Secondly, the Jokhang Temple is considered a tourist attraction. Its location in the center of Lhasa and relatively flat terrain that does not require climbing many stairs make the Jokhang Temple a tourist attraction that visitors find easy to reach. Some consider it a heritage site. Interestingly, some tourists compared it to the Potala Palace, arguing that the Jokhang Temple is not like the Potala Palace which has become a museum.

"This is one of the first places you should visit when you arrive in Lhasa because it is in the heart of the Old town and there are no daunting steps to climb."---A tourist from Philippines

"Another UNESCO World Heritage but this one is not a museum: is a truly and alive spiritual place."---A tourist from Portugal

In terms of tourists' spiritual acquisition, for international tourists, they consider Jokhang Temple as a historical site, and the overall spiritual experience at Jokhang Temple is mainly based on learning and cultural research. Only some tourists were moved and inspired by Tibetans' devotion to their religion, which led to spiritual experience of self-growth and reflection. Eighteen visitors found it to be a refreshing and transformative experience, they felt divine love and felt that a part of them was forever changed. A small number of visitors thought this visit brought well-being and happiness to them, and considered themselves lucky to be allowed to visit the spiritual home of Tibetans. They felt blessed, which led to spiritual experience of relaxation and meditation.

"Good experience in looking for the original place of the Buddhism site where everything started. It is quite refreshing to know many helpful information."---A tourist from Philippines

"This is such a different place to visit, words can't really explain it. You need to experience it yourself. The whole of Tibet and its history had me mesmerized and a small part of me will forever stay in this fantastic place"---A tourist from United Kingdom

4.2 Spiritual experience inside the Jokhang Temple

The spiritual experience inside the Jokhang Temple revolves around 12 themes (Figure 6), which is described from three aspects: physical environment, social environment, and visitor participation.

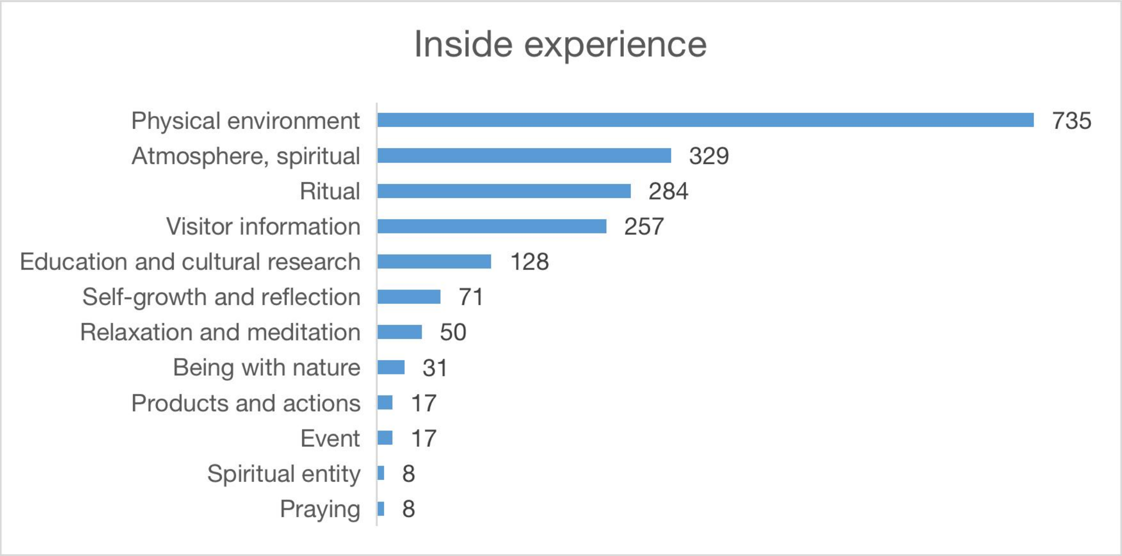

Figure 6: Frequency of the main themes appearing for the inside temple experience

In terms of the physical environment, the Jokhang Temple was built specifically to enshrine sacred Buddha statues. The various Buddha statues it enshrines were mentioned frequently by tourists, and the smell caused by incense, the dim environment illuminated only by butter lamps, created special moments and spiritual atmospheres for tourists when they saw these Buddha statues.

The golden roof of the Jokhang Temple, its colorful curtains, kneeling mats and other religious objects inside the Jokhang Temple provide tourists with a lot of beauty and visual stimulation. And the architecture, various rooms inside, Buddhist murals and carvings, and cultural relics allow international tourists to learn and understand the history of Tibetan Buddhism, which they are not familiar with, and gain a spiritual experience of education and cultural learning. Tourists believe that guides are very important because they need cultural insiders to explain the history of the temple, Buddhist decorations, and the history of the Buddha statues. In addition, it is interesting that the correlation coefficient of the analytic code ‘color of the building’ and analytic code ‘the spiritual entity of Buddhism’ is 0.04, indicates that there is a certain relationship between the two.

“The architecture of Jokhang Temple has 5 main colors, called pancha-varna in Sanskrit, meaning five pure lights, each of which represents a celestial Buddha and spiritual state.”---A tourist from India

The terrace was mentioned most by tourists. Tourists generally enjoyed looking at the Barkhor Street at their feet, the Potala Palace in the distance, and the mountains, clouds, sunshine and sky in the distance from the open terrace. Some tourists think this is a rewarding activity, because seeing these scenes makes them feel humble, and they also think this is a moment to reflect on themselves. It can be seen that the terrace creates a spiritual experience of self-growth and reflection for tourists. Only 24 tourists felt the spiritual experience of being with nature.

In terms of social environment, the Jokhang Temple was visited by many worshippers, which created an active spiritual atmosphere, allowing tourists to feel that the Jokhang Temple is respected by the Tibetan people, and also allowed a small number of tourists to feel the spiritual power and spirituality inside the Jokhang Temple. Although the interior was visited by many worshippers and even crowded, some tourists still felt peace, calm and strong energy inside the Jokhang Temple, gained the spiritual experience of relaxation and meditation.

“Although it is crowded with all the pilgrims offering inside but I was fascinated by its calmness and the smooth flow of people moving around.”---A tourist from Philippines

Tourists saw many pilgrims performing rituals inside the Jokhang Temple, such as offering cash or food to Buddha statues, and were inspired by their selfless dedication and piety. Interestingly, tourists mentioned less about the praying rituals performed by Tibetans inside the Jokhang Temple. They saw more rituals of ghee abhishekam (use yak butter to feed the lamp), as well as practical activities such as lamas preaching, monks debating and chanting.

In terms of tourist participation, only 8 tourists practiced prayer and meditation. They made wishes to the statues inside the Jokhang Temple and meditated with monks.

"I through[sic] in one of my white scarves with my wishes as tradition calls for. So much beauty, respect, quite overwhelming."--- A tourist from Canada

In addition, 8 tourists participated in shopping activities (buying prayer wheels blessed by monks) and interactive activities (talking with monks and being blessed by monks) inside the Jokhang Temple. But tourists do not gain spiritual experience from these participatory activities.

In general, tourists mainly gained spiritual experiences of education and cultural learning by visiting the architecture, ancient decorations, cultural relics and Buddha statues inside the Jokhang Temple. The active spiritual atmosphere created by the many believers making offering rituals to the Buddha statues made some tourists feel relaxed and meditative. Some tourists had spiritual experiences of self-growth and reflection and being with nature on the terrace.

4.3 Spiritual experience outside the Jokhang Temple

The spiritual experience outside the Jokhang Temple revolves around 11 themes (Figure 7), which is described from three aspects: social environment, physical environment and tourist participation.

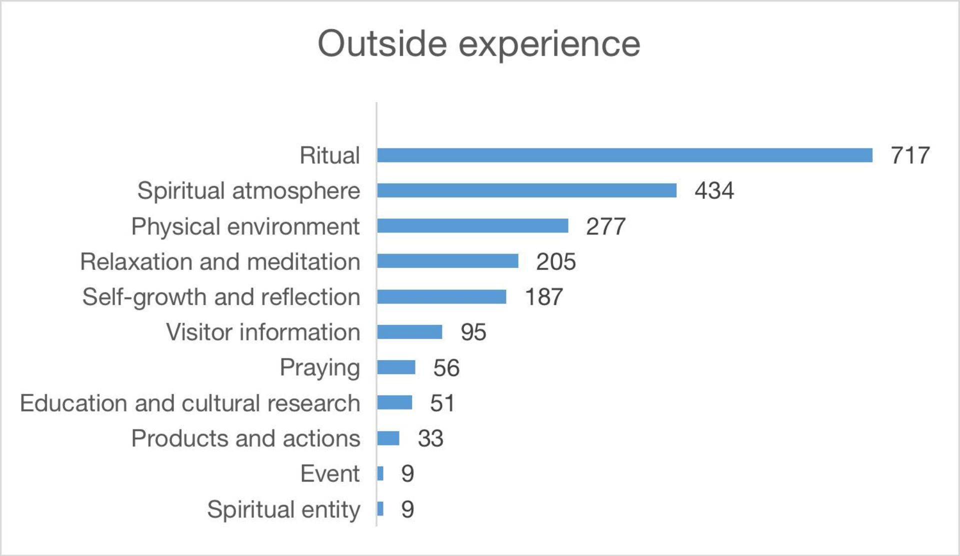

Figure 7: Frequency of the main themes appearing for the outside temple experience

In terms of the social environment, tourists believe that the exterior of the Jokhang Temple is an important part of the pilgrimage. Like the interior of the Jokhang Temple, Barkhor Street is also frequented by many worshippers. Tibetan worshippers and pilgrims circle the temple along Barkhor Street, many of whom crawl on their hands and knees, prostrate themselves, and pray with wheels and beads. These collective rituals on Barkhor Street create an active spiritual atmosphere.

"Allow it to encompass you as you experience the spirituality of the temple and pilgrims."---A tourist from Canada

This active spiritual atmosphere allows visitors to be inspired and humbled by the devotion and tenacity of believers and pilgrims, resulting in a spiritual experience of self-growth and reflection.

“The devotion of the pilgrims with so little material possessions put us to shame as we, in our society, value money, comfort, selfishness and pleasures of the senses. The place offers time for contemplation both esthetic and spiritual.”---A tourist from Australia

For the physical environment outside the Jokhang Temple, Barkhor Street and its various shops were mentioned most often. It can be seen that Barkhor Street is not only a ritual space full of spiritual atmosphere, but also a shopping center.

"We walked around the temple, on one side very faithful Tibetan people, on the other side Chinese commercialization." ---A tourist from Germany

In terms of tourist participation, many tourists participated Kora. Kora means "circling" or "rotating", which is part of pilgrimage and a form of meditation practice (Liu & Fu, 2019).

Surprisingly, tourists who performed kora did not get a spiritual experience of relaxation and meditation, only felt that Jokhang Temple was sacred and holy. However, they gained a spiritual experience of relaxation and meditation by observing these rituals.

“There were so many people around, but yet there was a feeling of peacefulness and the place was beautiful. Fascinating to see so many pilgrims in full prostration on their hands and knees in this sacred site.”---A tourist from Canada

"We could have spent days or even years there, just sitting around and watching the locals, which were giving us energy just with their presence. "---A tourist (No nationality information)

In general, the collective rituals of pilgrims outside the Jokhang Temple created an active spiritual atmosphere. International tourists gained a relaxing spiritual experience by observing these rituals and were inspired by the pilgrims' piety, which led to a spiritual experience of self-growth and reflection. Although tourists feel that Barkhor Street is highly commercialized, it still does not affect their spiritual experience. In addition, some tourists also had a spiritual experience of self-reflection at the entrance.

"They queue for hours with tiny children who behave very well even though they are stuck in huge queues. I don't think western children would behave so well."--- A tourist from *Ireland*

5. Discussion

5.1 Spiritual experience inside the Jokhang Temple

This research compared the themes derived from the analysis of international tourists' spiritual experience inside the Jokhang Temple with the main themes extracted by Schmidt et al. (2023) on the websites of two Japanese sacred sites. I found that similar to Fushimi Inari Taisha and Kiyomizu-Dera, the physical characteristics of the spatial environment are both what the site primarily describes to promote visitors' spiritual experience on websites and the main factor influencing international visitors' spiritual experience inside the Jokhang Temple.

The various Buddha statues enshrined in Jokhang Temple create a sacred atmosphere for tourists. This verifies the finding of Schmidt et al. (2023) that the Kiyomizu-Dera website links the physical characteristics of the spatial environment with the sacred spiritual atmosphere by referring to the sacred, such as by depicting its sacred Buddha statues and sacred paintings. This shows that the management bodies of Kiyomizu-Dera capture important physical characteristics which influence tourists' spiritual experience in the sacred site, namely the Buddha statues. The difference is that in addition to the Buddha statues, there are also the smells caused by incense inside the Jokhang Temple, as well as a dim environment lit only by butter lamps. These visual and olfactory stimuli together create special moments and spiritual atmospheres for tourists who see these Buddha statues. This is consistent with the findings of Yu (2020) that the interior of Tibetan temple buildings is dimly lit, and weak butter lamps make the backs of the Buddha statues appear dark, making the temples majestic and mysterious. It is also in line with the Buddhist concept of mindfulness: fuller and richer sensory experiences can make Buddhists consciously or subconsciously aware of their surroundings and move towards the path of awakening (Birch& Sinclair, 2013). Although international tourists did not move towards the path of enlightenment due to richer sensory experiences, they also had positive spiritual experiences to a certain extent.

The results of this research did not verify the findings of Schmidt et al. (2023) that holy site managers connect the spatial environment with tourists' spiritual experiences and well-being through spiritual narratives. The possible reason is that, as cultural outsiders, international tourists know little about Tibetan Buddhism and its various gods, and it is difficult for them to generate spiritual experience by linking the gods with the spatial environment of the Jokhang Temple. For example, Schmidt et al. (2023) found that the use of red in the architecture of Japan's Fushimi Inari Taisha represents the fight against evil spirits, symbolizes the power of life, and it is also described as a symbol of worshipper' gratitude to Inari Ōkami (Japanese Kami) for fulfilling their wishes, indicating that Inari Ōkami can protect and bring well-being to the worshipper. However, in this research, the red used in the architecture of the Jokhang Temple also represents the guardian of space, implying its boundless power, while the large area of white is the worship color of Tibetans, a symbol of gods, and has magical power (Yu, 2020). But for international tourists, they feel more about how colorful the architecture of the Jokhang Temple is, and most often do not feel the spiritual power and spiritual experience from it.

This research found that inside the Jokhang Temple, international tourists more often generate spiritual experiences by linking the physical characteristics of the spatial environment with historical narratives. Visiting the architecture, statues and Buddhist decorations of the Jokhang Temple enables international tourists to understand their historical stories. For example, the Jokhang Temple was built by Songtsen Gampo to enshrine the statue of Sakyamuni Buddha brought by Princess Trizun of Nepal; the statue of Sakyamuni Buddha in the Jokhang Temple, according to legend, was blessed by Sakyamuni Buddha himself when he was twelve years old; some murals inside the Jokhang Temple describe historical stories related to Princess Wencheng and Princess Trizun. Consequently, the sacredness of the Jokhang Temple can be understood from a historical perspective, and can generate spiritual experiences. Similar to Kiyomizu Temple, the image of the holy place inside the Jokhang Temple has been expanded, from a strictly spiritual image to a holy place image linked to the historical and cultural heritage of Tibet.

5.2 Spiritual experience outside the Jokhang Temple

Consistent with the findings of Schmidt et al. (2023) , the spatial environment is still both what the site primarily describes on websites to facilitate visitors' spiritual experience and the main factor influencing international visitors' spiritual experience outside the Jokhang Temple. However, unlike the interior of Jokhang Temple, Fushimi Inari Taisha and Kiyomizu-Dera, outside Jokhang Temple, international tourists are more likely to experience spirituality through the socially constructed characteristics of the spatial environment, rather than physical characteristics.

Outside Jokhang Temple, many pilgrims and worshippers perform collective rituals, which make even international tourists who are cultural outsiders feel the active spiritual atmosphere, even if they do not understand the essence of Tibetan Buddhist rituals. Tibetan rituals primarily involve establishing relationships with a place through spiritual and physical activities, thereby deriving benefits from it (Huber, 1994). Tibetans believe that the material environment is inhabited by numerous gods and spiritual forces (Huber, 1994). Through various religious practices, humans can consciously interact with these entities (Huber, 1994). Although tourists do not connect spatial environments to spiritual experiences through spiritual narratives like Buddhists, they still generate spiritual experiences through the socially constructed meanings of spatial environments. Theses collective rituals performed outside the temple makes international tourists aware that they are at the most sacred temple in Tibet and the spiritual center of Lhasa. And this socially constructed meaning of the Jokhang Temple allows international tourists to connect with the place on a social and values-based level, helping them understand their position within different social contexts, and reflecting on different worldviews, then leading to spiritual experiences of self-growth and reflection. This finding is consistent with the findings of Sharpley & Jepson (2011), which suggest that tourists' spiritual experiences are influenced by the social construction of the meaning of a place.

5.3 Internal and external comparison

Visitors gain spiritual experiences of self-growth and reflection on the terrace inside the Jokhang Temple because they overlook the ritual space of Barkhor Street from the terrace. Although visitors gain spiritual experiences of self-growth and reflection both outside and inside the Jokhang Temple, their overall spiritual experience of the Jokhang Temple is still education and cultural learning, which confirms the findings of Bond, Packer & Ballantyne (2015). They found that visitors who go to religious sites are more interested in the architecture, history and aesthetics of the site, they want to find historical or cultural significance. It is also found that tourists rate learning experiences higher than most other experiences (Bond, Packer & Ballantyne, 2015). Therefore, management agencies of the Jokhang Temple could pay more attention to tourists' learning experiences, improve tourism interpretation systems, and improve the effectiveness of tourism interpretation to enhance tourists' spiritual experiences.

Tourists experienced relaxation and meditation both inside and outside the Jokhang Temple by observing religious rituals. Packer & Bond (2010) state that relaxation and rest are the processes that produce restorative experiences, and that fascination (effortless participation), escape or distance (physical or mental distance from daily life), and sense of scope (environment has enough content and structure to occupy the mind for a long time) are important components of restorative experience. Outside the Jokhang Temple, the activity of observing religious rituals fully meets these three components. International tourists are physically away from daily life when they visit the Jokhang Temple. Various types of collective rituals (kora, prostration, prayer, etc.) are the sufficient content and are easy to be observed by cultural outsiders. However, inside the Jokhang Temple, because the space inside the building is small and international tourists are only allowed to visit the Jokhang Temple for one hour, this affects the tourists' sense of fascination, then their spiritual experience of relaxation and meditation.

6. Conclusion

This research uses the Jokhang Temple in China as a case study and uses the adapted code book of Schmidt et al. (2023) to analyze 697 international tourists' reviews on TripAdvisor to explore the spiritual experience of international tourists inside and outside the Jokhang Temple. The analysis results show that international tourists have spiritual experiences both inside and outside the Jokhang Temple. The results of this research also verify the findings of Schmidt et al. (2023), that the spatial environment of holy sites plays an important role in the process of tourists' spiritual experience. It is wise for holy site managers to convey information to potential tourists and promote their spiritual experience and well-being by linking the spatial environment with the concept of place attachment on their website.

This research also found that clear differences exist between the spiritual experience of international tourists inside and outside the Jokhang Temple. Inside the temple, international tourists perceive the sacredness of the Jokhang Temple as a social construction of the place's meaning by linking the material environment with historical narratives. This connection generates a spiritual experience of education and cultural learning. However, outside the Jokhang Temple, international tourists experience spiritual growth and reflection through the social characteristics of the spatial environment, rather than its physical characteristics. Furthermore, neither historical narratives nor spiritual narratives (which play an important role in the two Japanese sacred sites studied by Schmidt et al. (2023)) were found to influence tourists' spiritual experiences outside the temple. Additionally, this research demonstrated the findings of Bond, Packer & Ballantyne (2015) that educational experiences were rated higher than most other experiences. Therefore, the managers of the Jokhang Temple must not only carefully maintain and improve the material environment and historical narrative inside the Jokhang Temple, but also improve their knowledge interpretive system and maintain the ritual space outside the Jokhang Temple to enhance the experience of tourists.

This research also found that among the four types of spiritual experiences summarized by Yanata (2021), the spiritual experiences generated by international tourists inside Jokhang Temple are mainly of the education and cultural research type and of the relaxation type. Outside the Jokhang Temple, the spiritual experiences generated are mainly of the self-growth and reflection type and the relaxation type. Visitors have a relaxing spiritual experience both inside and outside the Jokhang Temple because observing religious ritual activities satisfies the three parts of the restorative experience: a sense of fascination, a sense of escape or distance, and a sense of scope （Packer & Bond, 2010). In addition, this research found that some tourists had transformative spiritual experiences at Jokhang Temple and felt that a part of them was forever changed. This is slightly different from the findings of Yanata (2021), who found that international tourists had transformative spiritual experiences mainly through interaction with monks and temple stays at the Buddhist site of Koyasan in Japan. Tourists had transformative spiritual experiences at Jokhang Temple simply by visiting it. Future research could investigate the nature and depth of different ways tourists interact with sacred sites, such as how and to what extent different forms of tourist participation affect transformative spiritual experiences.

Unlike Levi & Kocher (2013), who found that commercial activities were the main negative factor in tourists' experience and perception of sacredness, this research found that commercialization did not affect the spiritual experience of international tourists a lot. A possible reason is that many shops outside the Jokhang Temple sell religious items rather than tourist products. Therefore, the commercialization outside the Jokhang Temple does not affect international tourists' perception of the external space's social and cultural constructions, namely its status as the sacred spiritual center of Lhasa. Instead, it may heightens the perception of the spiritual center, thus not influencing their spiritual experience. Future research can explore the impact of different types of commercialization at sacred sites on tourists' spiritual experiences.

This research has some limitations. First, researchers have pointed out that the application of place attachment is problematic when studying short-term tourist experiences because some dimensions of place attachment may take a long time to develop (Dwyer, Chen & Lee, 2019). Therefore, this research did not analyze and discuss Schmidt's (2023) conclusions on place attachment. However, I found that many international tourists visited the Jokhang Temple during their stay in Lhasa frequently, and some went there almost every day. Future studies can explore the relationship between spiritual experience and place attachment in sacred places for tourists who visit these multiple times and tourists who are cultural insiders, that is, tourists who are more familiar with Buddhism or Tibetan Buddhism, to verify the research findings of Schmidt et al. (2023). Second, the subjects of this research were international tourists, which is a relatively wide range. Cultural backgrounds of international tourists may be quite diverse, and their views on spiritual experiences might be different. This research could not scrutinize the different cultural backgrounds of international tourists. Future research could consider the influence of cultural differences on spiritual experience in more detail.

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8. Appendix

8.1 Code tree for whole experience of Jokhang Temple

Theme	**Code**
Spiritual Atmosphere	iconic religious place
	solemn aura
	faithful, magic and spiritual heart
	experience religion
	sacred place
Education and cultural research	historical Site
	heritage site
	tourists attraction
	at the center of an ancient network of Buddhist temples
	museum
Physical environment	relatively flat and accessible
	center of Lhasa
	size of the temple
Self-growth and reflection	read more when back home
	touched
	sobering and meaningful experience
Spiritual entity	Palden Lhamo
	Buddhism is a complete way of life
Visitor information	visitor information
Relaxation and meditation	change something in me forever
	Divine Love
	refreshing
	well being and happiness
Retrospective assessment	enjoy history
	enjoy culture
	enjoy religion
	another world
	a must go
	underwhelming and bad
	negatively crowded
	enjoying the crowds

8.2 Code tree for spiritual experience inside the Jokhang Temple

Theme	**Code**
Spiritual Atmosphere	special moment

	spiritual atmosphere
	visited by many worshipper
	dignity of the sacred place
	experience
	prohibited areas
Events	events
	donation to help monks' life
Education and cultural research	history of Buddhist statues
	history items
	temple history
	temple as a part of Tibetan Buddhist history
Physical environment	smoke and smell
	terrace
	Statues of Buddhas are enshrined
	internal religious item
	interior Buddhist design and detail
	interior rooms
	color of the building
	architecture
	specific route
	courtyard
	shops inside the temple
	mandalas
	dark
	golden roof
	pagoda
Praying	meditation
	prayer
Products and actions	products
	interactive experience
Self-growth and reflection	inspired by devotion
	reflective moment
	touched
Spiritual entity	Sakyamuni Buddha
	rebirth
	relationship between the soul and material objects
Visitor information	importance of guide
	disappointed by guide
	no crowd control inside the temple
	can't take photo
	internal is crowded

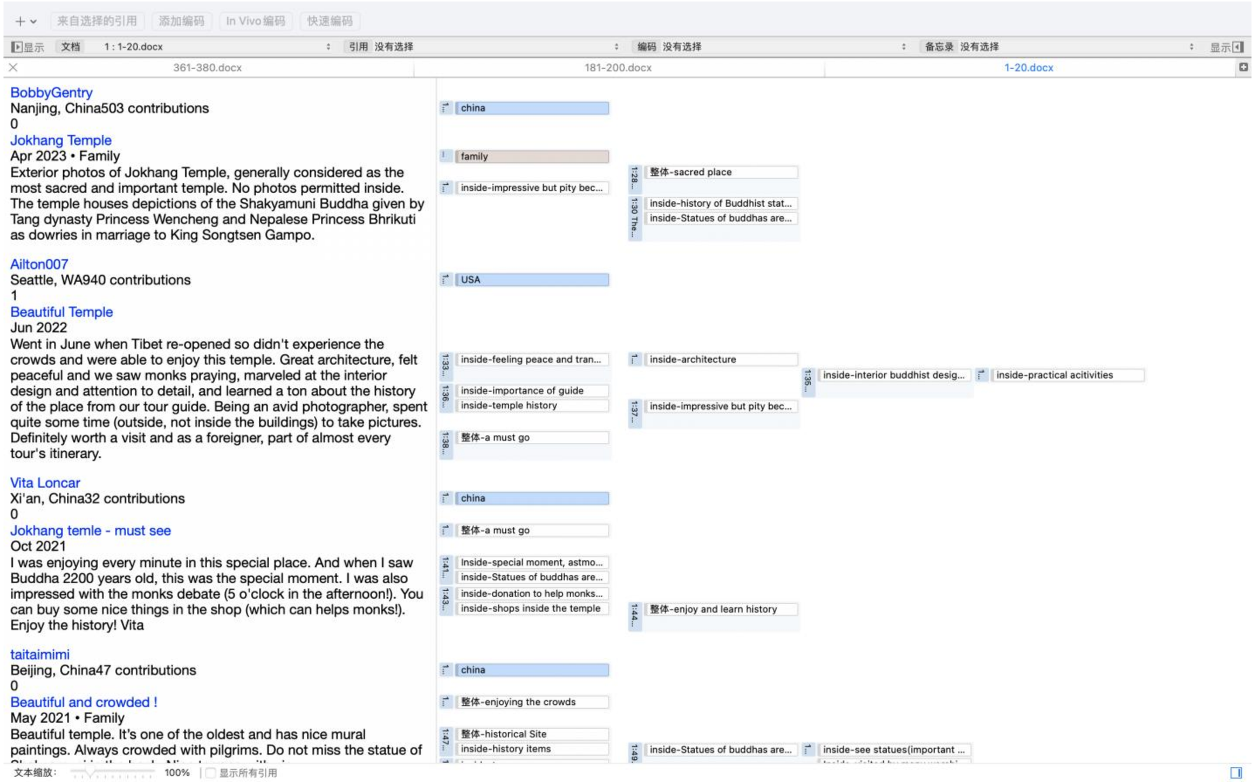
	other visitor information
Relaxation and meditation	well being and happiness
	humbling
	peaceful
	give energy
Ritual	ghee abhisheka
	body actions of pray
	pray quietly
	offerings
	purpose of visiting
	practical activities
	see statues
Being with nature	view of mountain
	other view
	nature
	animal

8.3 Code tree for spiritual experience outside the Jokhang Temple

Theme	Code
Spiritual Atmosphere	spiritual atmosphere
	visited by many worshipper
	sacred place
	dignity of the sacred place
	experience
	surreal experience
Events	events
Education and cultural research	naming of temple and old Lhasa
	history of temple's location
Physical environment	Religious items
	shops
	old Lhasa
	incense burners
	walkway for pilgrims
	smoke and smell
	Barkhor street
Praying	meditation
	prayer
Products and actions	amulet and talismans
	products

Self-growth and reflection	inspired by devotion
	reflective moment
	touched
	Tibet spirit
Spiritual entity	Sakyamuni Buddha
	rebirth
	relationship between the soul and material objects
Visitor information	distinguished queues for tourists and locals
	distinguished entering time for tourists and locals
	other visitor information
Relaxation and meditation	give energy
	emotionally equal
	humbling
	peaceful
	observe pilgrims ritual
	relax and calm down
Ritual	body actions of pray
	direction of pray
	Chanting
	circling the temple
	fuel incense burners
	outside is important part of pilgrimage
	pray with prayer wheels
	offerings

8.4 Examples of the database from Atlas.ti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inside-feeling peace and tran...
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china
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1:41...
Inside-special moment, astmo...
inside-Statues of buddhas are...
1:43...
inside-donation to help monks...
inside-shops inside the temple
1:44...
整体-enjoy and learn history
china
整体-enjoying the crowds
1:47...
整体-historical Site
inside-history items
1:49...
inside-Statues of buddhas are...
inside-see statues(important ...
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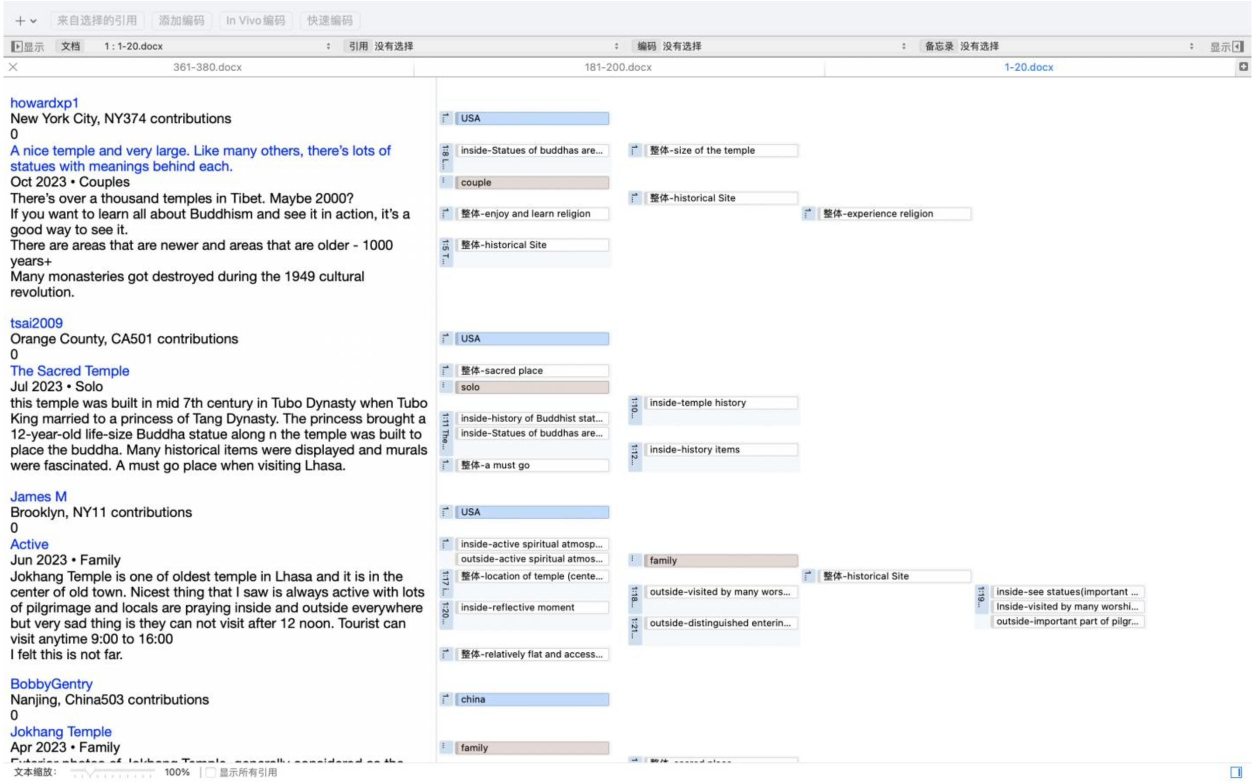
BobbyGentry
Nanjing, China503 contributions
0
Jokhang Temple
Apr 2023 • Family
Exterior photos of Jokhang Temple, generally considered as the most sacred and important temple. No photos permitted inside. The temple houses depictions of the Shakyamuni Buddha given by Tang dynasty Princess Wencheng and Nepalese Princess Bhrikuti as dowries in marriage to King Songtsen Gampo.

Ailton007
Seattle, WA940 contributions
1
Beautiful Temple
Jun 2022
Went in June when Tibet re-opened so didn't experience the crowds and were able to enjoy this temple. Great architecture, felt peaceful and we saw monks praying, marveled at the interior design and attention to detail, and learned a ton about the history of the place from our tour guide. Being an avid photographer, spent quite some time (outside, not inside the buildings) to take pictures. Definitely worth a visit and as a foreigner, part of almost every tour's itinerary.

Vita Loncar
Xi'an, China32 contributions
0
Jokhang temle - must see
Oct 2021
I was enjoying every minute in this special place. And when I saw Buddha 2200 years old, this was the special moment. I was also impressed with the monks debate (5 o'clock in the afternoon!). You can buy some nice things in the shop (which can helps monks!). Enjoy the history! Vita

taitaimimi
Beijing, China47 contributions
0
Beautiful and crowded !
May 2021 • Family
Beautiful temple. It's one of the oldest and has nice mural paintings. Always crowded with pilgrims. Do not miss the statue of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inside-Statues of buddhas are...
整体-size of the temple
couple
整体-historical Site
整体-enjoy and learn religion
整体-experience religion
1:5 T...
整体-historical Site
USA
整体-sacred place
solo
1:10...
inside-temple history
1:11 The...
inside-history of Buddhist stat...
inside-Statues of buddhas are...
1:12...
inside-history items
整体-a must go
USA
inside-active spiritual atmosp...
outside-active spiritual atmos...
family
1:17 i...
整体-location of temple (cente...
整体-historical Site
1:18...
outside-visited by many wors...
1:19...
inside-see statues(important ...
Inside-visited by many worshi...
outside-important part of pilgr...
1:20...
inside-reflective moment
1:21...
outside-distinguished enterin...
整体-relatively flat and access...
china
family
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howardxp1
New York City, NY374 contributions
0
A nice temple and very large. Like many others, there's lots of statues with meanings behind each.
Oct 2023 • Couples
There's over a thousand temples in Tibet. Maybe 2000?
If you want to learn all about Buddhism and see it in action, it's a good way to see it.
There are areas that are newer and areas that are older - 1000 years+
Many monasteries got destroyed during the 1949 cultural revolution.

tsai2009
Orange County, CA501 contributions
0
The Sacred Temple
Jul 2023 • Solo
this temple was built in mid 7th century in Tubo Dynasty when Tubo King married to a princess of Tang Dynasty. The princess brought a 12-year-old life-size Buddha statue along n the temple was built to place the buddha. Many historical items were displayed and murals were fascinated. A must go place when visiting Lhasa.

James M
Brooklyn, NY11 contributions
0
Active
Jun 2023 • Family
Jokhang Temple is one of oldest temple in Lhasa and it is in the center of old town. Nicest thing that I saw is always active with lots of pilgrimage and locals are praying inside and outside everywhere but very sad thing is they can not visit after 12 noon. Tourist can visit anytime 9:00 to 16:00
I felt this is not far.

BobbyGentry
Nanjing, China503 contributions
0
Jokhang Temple
Apr 2023 • Family