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From the Editor

Paul Crowe

Simon Fraser University

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From the Editor

The tenth issue of the *Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies* was published in 2014 and was the final issue compiled under the editorial leadership of Professor Suwanda Sugunasiri. In his closing editorial many scholars were thanked for their support. Sadly, some of those individuals, Leslie Kawamura, Herbert V. Guenther, and Anthony K. Warder are no longer with us contributing their exemplary scholarship. We are fortunate that continuity is ensured due to the presence on the Editorial Board of Martin Adam (University of Victoria), Michael Berman (Brock University), and Victor Hori (McGill University), all of who were listed as members for several years commencing with the inaugural issue in 2005. With publication of the tenth issue, a drastic reduction in the number of editorial board members, and departure of its founding editor all on the immediate horizon there was an opportunity and a need for critical re-evaluation and reflection that have resulted in changes to the journal. What follows is a summary recounting of the nature of those changes and the process leading to their institution.

On December 10, 2014 a meeting was convened at the University of Victoria to consider the future of the journal. Martin Adam, Michael Berman, Paul Crowe (Simon Fraser University), John Harding (University of Lethbridge), Victor Hori, and Alec Soucy (St. Mary's University) gathered to discuss whether or not there was continued need for such a journal in Canada and, if so, then what new directions might it take? It was agreed that the journal continue but that three changes were needed.

Firstly, the tripartite division of the journal into *Pariyatti* (theory) *Paṭipatti* (praxis), and *Paṭivedha* (insight) is discontinued in the interest of allowing greater editorial flexibility.¹ Secondly, a decision was also taken to discontinue the paper version of the journal and to move entirely to an online format hosted through the Public Knowledge Project at Simon Fraser University Library. This change reduces cost and simplifies journal production. Thirdly, it was decided that the “News and Views” section, containing brief announcements collected from across the country, be completely transformed. It makes little sense in the present context of instant updates through social media channels to provide announcements once per year distributed through a paper journal and associated PDF documents. A somewhat hybrid news section has been created which combines the newly created *CJBS News Blog* with a journal section containing select blog postings. The postings, reproduced as edited reports in the journal, will serve as a valuable historical archive of significant research-related events hosted at Canadian universities throughout the year. A related benefit of the blog is that it provides an opening for robust participation by Canadian graduate students who will benefit from gaining a higher profile and from developing links internationally with senior scholars in the field. In an increasingly constrained humanities job market we hope the journal can actively support our graduate students in achieving professional success. Although the blog has existed for only a few months it is already becoming a key online resource, and the level of faculty and student support has been beyond our expectations.

Discussion notes describing the above-proposed changes were circulated widely in advance of a national survey conducted from January 22 through February 22, 2015. Eighty-five scholars were invited to

¹ The original rationale for this division is recounted in Suwanda Sugunisiriri, “Editorial,” *Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies* 1 (2005): 2-3.

participate and sixty-two percent took part. In response to the question, “Would it be useful for Canadian scholars to have a new *Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies* in the form proposed in the U. Vic meeting notes?” four abstained and the remaining responders (ninety-two percent) agreed such a journal would be useful. There was also strong support (ninety-four percent) for a Canadian society of Buddhist scholars and for biennial conference meetings with suggestions that they be held at larger meetings such as the IABS, AAR, or Congress. Both of these potential developments will take time to address. Among the notes appended to the survey there was support for ensuring the journal not be a “regional publication” but instead maintain a truly global outlook.

On April 28, 2015, at the close of a second meeting including those in attendance at the University of Victoria with the addition of Jessica Main and Jinhua Chen (University of British Columbia), and James Benn (McMaster University) a new editorial board was formed that included all of the meeting’s participants. In May invitations were sent out to all of the remaining individuals who had expressed interest in joining the Editorial Board and by the end of the summer we had confirmed eight additional members for three-year terms.²

While this process was unfolding a journal manager was hired to help with communications, production of the journal, and blog development. It was fortunate that Bao Ngoc Le, a student in the School of International Studies at Simon Fraser University, accepted the position. She has done an outstanding job and has been very proactive in recruiting graduate students to contribute to the blog and in developing our social media presence.

² A complete listing of Editorial Board members and their university affiliations is available on the *Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies* site at <http://journals.sfu.ca/cjbs>.

The David See Chai Lam Centre for International Communication (DLC) is our new publisher. This change was made while I was Director of the Centre. I have stepped down from that position after seven years of service but remain on the Steering Committee. The new interim DLC Director, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Associate Dean, Professor Lisa Shapiro, and the DLC Steering Committee have agreed to continue modest funding and some basic administrative support. Thus, we are now in a more secure position as we look to strengthening the journal and build on the hard work of Professor Sugunasiri and former members of the Editorial Board.

This brings us to the present issue. Our call for papers went out in December of 2015 and within slightly more than six months we have published the eleventh issue. We received expressions of interest from scholars in Canada, Nepal, Italy, and Hong Kong. Only four articles were accepted for the peer review process and each was subjected to two blind reviews. The reviewers rejected all of the submissions and so we are going forward with no peer-reviewed articles in the present issue. Certainly we consider this an anomalous situation. While this is unfortunate we are determined to maintain high publication standards for the *Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies* and look forward to receiving excellent examples of scholarship for review in the coming months.

Thanks are owed to to the many Buddhist scholars who responded to our 2015 survey, offered suggestions, and sent supportive email messages. Thank you also to colleagues who generously offered their expertise in preparing carefully considered, balanced, and detailed peer-review reports. In closing I would like to extend my gratitude to Professor Sugunisiri for his pioneering efforts in launching this publication and to my sixteen fellow members of our newly constituted Editorial Board, not only for their efforts but also for their enthusiasm and support through a very challenging process of transformation.