

Two Traditions, Two Teachers, One Dharma

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Abstract

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The Japanese and Sri Lankan Buddhist communities of Winnipeg are both small, and at different stages of adaptation to life in Canada. The Japanese Buddhist community, established in the 1950s, is aging and the observance of its cultural traditions by younger members is in a state of decline. As a result, Shin/Pure Land practice in Winnipeg is threatened with disappearance. In contrast, Sri Lankan Buddhists established themselves in Winnipeg in the 1980s and nearly all consider that it is necessary to learn and practice Theravada Buddhism as part of their cultural heritage. The consequence is that Dharma practice is undertaken by the majority of community members in all age groups.

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This paper looks at the kinds of challenges that these different circumstances present to community Dharma teachers and describes the approaches and strategies that Rev. Fredrich Ulrich of the Manitoba Buddhist Church (BCC), and Mrs. Radhika Abeysekera of the Manitoba Buddhist Vihara use to teach and preserve Buddhist tradition in their respective communities.

Preamble

When we survey the current state of Buddhism in Canada we see that all the major traditions are present and there is a thriving practice that grows stronger every day. Canada continues to receive new immigrants from Asia who are able to join

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established Buddhist communities of varying sizes across the country. And the number of Euro-Canadians becoming involved in Buddhist thought and practice is steadily increasing.

This study stems from research that I conducted in Saskatchewan and Manitoba in 2003 and 2004 on Buddhist community groups. That research was primarily concerned with documenting the number and variety of groups in those provinces, their organizational forms and the practices in which they engage. I made visits to Buddhist centers in Saskatoon, Regina and Winnipeg to interview their community leaders and members. In all, I documented 20 groups – 11 in Saskatchewan and 9 in Manitoba.

I was particularly impressed with three Buddhist community leaders whom I met in Winnipeg: Ven. Dakshong Rinpoche, a Tibetan lama who is training Euro-Canadian students in Vajrayana Buddhism; Ven. Sensei Fredrich Ulrich, minister of the Manitoba Buddhist Church that practices in the Japanese Pure Land tradition of the Buddhist Churches of Canada; and Radhika Abeysekera, head of the Sri Lankan Manitoba Buddhist Mahavira. All three are married teachers with years of commitment to developing their respective Buddhist communities in Winnipeg.

Though the activities of Euro-Canadian Buddhist groups occupied a considerable part of my research on the state of Buddhism in Manitoba, I was particularly struck by the sharp sociological contrast between the Manitoba Buddhist Church and the Manitoba Buddhist Vihara as Asian-ethnic Buddhist community groups.¹ This paper will focus on these markedly contrasting groups, their teachers and the challenges that they face in being Asian-ethnic Buddhist groups in Canada. By way of introduction, I will first provide an overview of the history and current status of Buddhism in Manitoba, focusing on the Asian-ethnic Buddhist community dimension.

Introduction

Manitoba (MB) is one of Canada's three prairie provinces, with a population of 1.2 million people who come from a predominantly European immigrant background.² Inherent economic and social conservatism, combined with a cold climate, have made MB less attractive to Asian immigrants than other parts of Canada where diverse employment opportunities and larger Asian populations make settlement and adaptation easier. Nevertheless, sufficient numbers of Asian immigrants have become established in the province to foster and support the development of Buddhist community groups there.

The Buddhist presence in Manitoba is relatively small when compared to more populated and cosmopolitan regions of Canada. Notwithstanding the numbers involved, the history and present state of Buddhist community development in MB offer useful insights into the way Buddhism is being

woven into the fabric of our national life.

Buddhism in Manitoba is concentrated in Winnipeg, which is by far the largest city, with a population nearing 700,000. Winnipeg is multi-ethnic, including a diverse aboriginal population, and an influential Jewish community. There are about 30,000 Asian-Canadians living in MB today, of which one third, or 10,000, are Buddhists.

Asian immigration to Winnipeg began with the arrival of Chinese entrepreneurs in the late 1870s, leading to the foundation of the first Chinese community association in the 1880s.³ There is an enduring Chinese presence in Winnipeg and Chinese-Canadians form the largest Asian immigrant group in the city, numbering just over 10,000. The Chinese community has a number of cultural and business institutions, as well as a Buddhist temple.

The other Asian-ethnic groups who have settled in Winnipeg and established a visible Buddhist profile are chronologically: the Japanese, who came in the 1940s and currently number about 1,400; several Tibetan families who arrived in the early 1970s and still remain few in number; Vietnamese immigrants, comprised of refugees who came in the 1970s and subsequent family reunification arrivals during the 1980s, who now number close to 5,000 in total; and Sinhalese Buddhist Sri Lankans who settled in Winnipeg from the 1980s through 1990s, who have a community of about 160. There are also small communities of Korean and Laotian Buddhists in Winnipeg that hold religious gatherings in family homes, but do not have sufficient numbers to establish centers that give them a public presence.

The history of Buddhist community development in Manitoba spans less than a century with much of it concentrated in the past three decades. It is remarkable that in this short period of time all the major forms of Buddhadharma have been transmitted to this region of Canada and are being authentically practiced by both Asian-ethnic and Euro-Canadian Buddhist groups.⁴

Let us now turn to the two Asian-ethnic Buddhist community groups in Winnipeg that are the focus of this paper: The Manitoba Buddhist Vihara and the Manitoba Buddhist Church, a member church of the BCC, the Buddhist Churches of Canada.

Theoretical Considerations

Sociologist of religion Mark R. Mullins – who is my class-mate and colleague, but not a family relation – has given the most considered attention to understanding the role and function of Asian ethnic-religious groups in Canada. In his article “The Life-Cycle of Ethnic Churches in Sociological Perspective,” Mullins offers a model that delineates the stages of establishment, development and transformation that ethnic religious groups

undergo over time.⁵ In a subsequent article, "The Organizational Dilemmas of Ethnic Churches: A Case Study of Japanese Buddhism in Canada," Mullins looks at issues that have impinged specifically on the BCC.⁶ Other sociologists have modified or added to Mullins' model, but for the present purposes his own work offers a basic theoretical orientation that is helpful to us.⁷

Mullins proposes that an ethnic-religious organization is founded primarily to assist an immigrant community in adapting to the social environment of a new country. The religious organization is crucial for the preservation and continuity of a traditional immigrant culture by mediating the forces of acculturation. As the ethnic community adapts over time and the original immigrants have children and grandchildren born in the new country, countervailing pressures are exerted on the religious establishment. On the one hand, there is pressure to preserve the founding tradition as an intact cultural entity, while on the other hand there is pressure to adapt it to the new social situation. These pressures are most apparent in the area of language, where the gradual loss of the original language gives rise to the need to present religious ideas and practices in the language of the dominant society.

These pressures are also apparent in sociological changes that come about through inter-marriage and gradual assimilation to new social circumstances and cultural norms.

Mullins describes a three-stage process that occurs over four generations, beginning with the period of establishment, leading through a period of gradual adaptation, and arriving at a point where the original purposes of the ethnic-religious organization have been served. In the final stage the immigrant community has, at one level, adapted successfully to the social environment around it and the primary purpose of the founding religious organization has been fulfilled. However, at another level, unless there has also been success in adapting the religious tradition to the new social setting, the religious ideas and practices that were instrumental in preserving the original ethno-cultural integrity are no longer relevant. As a result the religious organization is steadily weakened over time and may simply dissolve due to loss of adherents.

What is important to note when we look at our two examples in Winnipeg is that they are at different stages of the adaptation process Mullins outlines. The Sri Lankan Manitoba Buddhist Vihara is still at the first stage, in its first and second generations of immigrant life in the country. The Japanese Manitoba Buddhist Church has reached the third and final stage, the period of third and fourth generation membership. Let us now turn to an overview of these two groups.

The Manitoba Buddhist Vihara

The most recently founded Asian Buddhist community organization in Manitoba is the Manitoba Buddhist Vihara which was established by Mrs. Radhika Abeysekera, a lay Buddhist who came to Canada from Sri Lanka with her husband and two children in the 1980s. Finding no local Sri Lankan Buddhist *sangha* to provide religious instruction for her own family and other Sri Lankan Buddhists in Winnipeg, Radhika proceeded to create a Buddhist community organization in 1989. Beginning with only 10 members, the group grew quickly to a registered membership of 67 youth and 60 adults, representing virtually the entire Sri Lankan Theravadin community in Winnipeg.

The Manitoba Buddhist Vihara membership is predominantly Sri Lankan with a handful of Euro-Canadian members. The group meets weekly on Sunday at the Chanh Dao Vietnamese Buddhist Association Temple, which allows them its use from 3:30-5:30 p.m. Ceremonies are conducted in English with some chanting in Pali. The Vihara's classes include preschool, junior, intermediate and advanced Dharma. There is also youth and adult meditation instruction. The youth help maintain the website for the Vihara community, including its newsletters, schedules, photos and links.

The Vihara community meets regularly through the year starting after the first long weekend in September and goes to the end of June, with a break in July and August. The Vihara community began conducting *Vesak puja* in the late 1990s and its members observe the 8 lay precepts in conjunction with Vesak, Founding Day (when Buddhism came to Sri Lanka) and on the traditional date of the founding of the Bhikkhuni Order.

On May full moon there is a two-day Vesak celebration involving the whole community. On Mother's Day community members go to St. Norbert's nursing home in south Winnipeg to perform dances and share refreshments with the seniors' community there. There is also a day of ceremony, chanting and meditation at the Peace Pagoda at the St. Norbert's Arts Centre held as part of Vesak. Members of the community are also actively encouraged in the day-to-day practice of generosity, virtue and meditation.

One of the important features of the Vihara is the extent to which Radhika has involved herself in Dhamma transmission to her community and beyond. From shortly after the time of her arrival in Winnipeg, Radhika and her husband began hosting regular visits of Theravada monks to the city. Staying in her home, these learned visitors offered instruction in all aspects of the Dharma to the community. This practice continues to the present day, with frequent opportunities for the Winnipeg community to meet learned monastic exponents of the Dhamma.

Radhika Abeysekera's intense study of Buddhist tradition has equipped

her with a deep knowledge of the Dhamma, and through her teaching, inspiration and association with Buddhist monks in several Theravadin countries, three men and one woman from Canada have proceeded on to ordination after receiving her initial schooling. Radhika maintains contact with other Theravadin Buddhist Vihara centers in North America and Europe, as well, including Vancouver, Mississauga, Toronto, and Ottawa, as well as in New York, Houston, California and England.

Radhika Abeysekera has become a prolific writer and is the author of several highly acclaimed books on the fundamentals of Buddhaddhamma. Her works have been adopted in several other overseas Buddhist communities as the syllabus for their classes.⁸

We see from the foregoing description that the Manitoba Buddhist Vihara, though numerically small and a relatively new community group, has nevertheless actively engaged almost all the first and second generation Sinhalese Buddhists in Winnipeg in the study and practice of Theravada Dhamma.

Let us now proceed to an overview of the Manitoba Buddhist Church and its teacher, Sensei Fredrich Ulrich, to get a sense of an older ethnic-religious Buddhist organization whose situation is rather different.

The Manitoba Buddhist Church

The Manitoba Buddhist Church was established in 1946 as the religious and cultural center for over 1,000 first and second generation Japanese-Canadians who were re-settled in Manitoba from Western Canada during WWII and welcomed to remain in Winnipeg at war's end. The Manitoba Buddhist Church is one of eighteen members of the Buddhist Churches of Canada, the federation of Jodo Shinshu Hongpa Hongwanji institutions founded in 1905.⁹

There are presently about 1,400 Japanese in Winnipeg, mostly descendants of the original founding community. However, church membership has been declining due to out-migration, intermarriage, and assimilation. The Church presently has 200 members, 50 of whom are Caucasian. Twenty-two of the original founding elders of the Winnipeg community are still alive, while ninety-seven percent of the congregation is inter-married.

The Buddhist Churches of Canada adopted the Protestant 'church' model in terms of its organization structure, building design, and the manner of services. The spacious Manitoba Buddhist Church was constructed in the early 1950s and still stands today, having been renovated and extended twice. Rev. August. Hideo Nishimura was its first minister, instituting a Japanese language school, Sunday school and regular Sunday services for 600 active members in the early years of the church.¹⁰

The church building has a large congregational hall with bench seating and a beautiful, priceless carved rosewood altar that was originally in the Vancouver Buddhist Church and brought to Winnipeg after WWII. There is office space and classroom space, as well as a large kitchen and dining area in the basement.

There are weekly religious services attended by a small and devoted group of members, while the entire membership participates in a number of major celebrations held throughout the year. During services, chanting is done in the Japanese language while the dharma teachings and other aspects of the gathering are conducted in English.

Declining membership since the 1980s has presented a number of challenges to the membership, including finding new ways to keep the youth interested and involved, developing resources in English to foster the faith, and maintaining financial viability.

The Manitoba Buddhist Church is fortunate to have a minister who is able to address these issues.

Sensei Fredrich Ulrich is the fifth minister since the church's founding. Sensei Ulrich is an American-born naturalized Canadian of German and First Nations' family heritage. He became minister of the Manitoba Buddhist Church in February, 1999 and is one of a few non-Japanese clergy in the Buddhist Churches of Canada. Sensei is married to a Japanese-Canadian and they have two daughters. Prior to his appointment with the Manitoba Buddhist Church, Sensei Ulrich was a school teacher in Edmonton and pastor to the small Shin community there for a number of years.¹¹

Sensei Ulrich has a rich and varied background that has served him well in his ministry. In addition to his ordination in the Jodo Shinshu priesthood through the Institute of Buddhist Studies,¹² Sensei has completed Christian seminary studies and is a First Nations elder trained in traditional Native American spiritual disciplines. He holds graduate and post-graduate academic degrees and has a Second Degree Black Belt in Kempo Karate. Sensei is also an author and essayist who writes on a variety of topics ranging from Buddhist philosophy to responsible citizenship in a multi-ethnic society.

In addition to keeping contact with the larger BCC organization for its support in maintaining and fostering its own traditions, Sensei Ulrich looks to ways that the local church community can use its social resources and experience with interfaith marriages, inter-racial families and bi-lingual families to contribute to the wider Winnipeg society. He has brought the church community into the Manitoba Interfaith Council and offers meditation training in loving kindness (*mettā*) for anyone interested. As part of a wider outreach Sensei travels widely in Canada and the United States offering workshops based on Buddhism, Christianity and Black Elk's Vision; he conducts children's spiritual education seminars, gives talks and lectures, and

engages in traditional pastoral work.

Despite the talents of its minister and the involvement of a dedicated core of church members, the Manitoba Buddhist Church is in a precarious situation. The cost of maintaining a large church building through the cold prairie winters is high, and keeping third and fourth generation descents of the original church founders involved in the Buddhist faith in a multi-ethnic and secularizing social environment is presenting obstacles that are becoming increasingly insurmountable.

Discussion

These two brief portrayals of the Sri Lankan Manitoba Buddhist Vihara and the Japanese Manitoba Buddhist Church present several issues worthy of our consideration.

In proposing his model of ethnic-religious organizations and their life-cycles, Mark Mullins indicates that their primary role is to facilitate immigrant community adaptation to a new country. Once this role is fulfilled, the organization itself has essentially served its purpose. He suggests that these organizations have a limited life-span – three to four generations – and without the on-going recruitment of new members from the original home country, or significant retention of second and third generation members from the new country, these organizations are destined to disappear.

The only other possibility that Mullins sees for their survival is for these mono-ethnic religious organizations to become ‘multi-ethnic’ – that is, to bring in new members from other ethnic backgrounds – and to operate effectively in the language and broader social milieu of the new country. In so doing, the aging organizations must compete successfully for membership against other religious groups in the society around them. With the wide range of backgrounds from which Canadians come, as well as the extensive variety of choices that are possible for religious affiliation, the task of surviving the natural end of the organizational cycle is a formidable one.

We see that the Manitoba Buddhist Church has reached this third and final stage of the life-cycle and is struggling to find ways to adapt and survive. Sensei Ulrich is an excellent example of the kind of community leader needed to try to win the battle. At an institutional level, the Manitoba Buddhist Church is formally connected with the BCC, a long-established organization with a central administration and headquarters in Japan, the land of its native origin, and Sensei Ulrich is an appointed minister to one of its branches. At the same time, at a personal level, Sensei Ulrich is distinctive. He is non-traditional – or at least we must say that he is a multi-traditionalist. In addition, the Protestant ‘style’ of organization allows for leeway and personal discretion on the part of individual church ministers. The Buddhist Churches

of Canada have clearly put their faith in Sensei Ulrich and are showing a pragmatic approach to the situation of the Manitoba branch.

It is important to note that along with his training and knowledge, and primary affiliation with the Buddhist Churches of Canada, Sensei Ulrich is also equipped with the necessary tools to help connect his Buddhist community with the larger Winnipeg society. Being well-versed in both Christian and aboriginal traditions, he is able to develop relations and dialogue with the dominant religious and social groups in his immediate community. Becoming involved with the local multi-faith activities makes him a valuable asset at several levels. And reaching beyond the specific Buddhist tradition that he represents, to bring in *mettā bhāvanā* practice, for example, offers his group's members the opportunity to broaden their knowledge of the Buddhadharma.

The Manitoba Church and its minister, however, know that history is not on the side of ethnic-religious organizations in Canada. The fate of many Euro-ethnic Christian churches that were established by small settler populations on the prairies in the 20th century and have now disappeared tells us of that they have a struggle on their hands.

The Manitoba Buddhist Vihara, by contrast, is an ethnic-religious organization that is still in the formative stage of helping to maintain the Theravadin tradition of the first and second generations of Sri Lankan Buddhist Canadians in Winnipeg. Radhika Abeysekera as an independent founder/leader has been able to shape the activities of the Vihara without direct reference to any specific temple or headquarters beyond the community that has appointed her. Hers is a locally administered group that is voluntarily associated with religious authorities in the Theravadin tradition in several lands.

Radhika is a traditionalist, but at the same time a lay-woman who is making the Dhamma immediately accessible in English to her congregation. For the past decade, and into the foreseeable future, the Sri Lankan Buddhist group is taking advantage of a traditional ethnic-Asian Buddhist institutional physical setting to carry on its study and practice. Even though that setting is in another tradition than its own – a Vietnamese Mahayana Pure Land temple – it is nonetheless a supportive Buddhist environment.

There are also other features that may make the Manitoba Buddhist Vihara less vulnerable to the institutional decline evident in the case of the Manitoba Buddhist Church. The Vihara community comes from a country where English is a well-used second language and its members in Canada are not faced with a substantial change or loss of language over time. The Vihara is not concerned with the preservation of the Sinhalese language as a cultural tradition, and Pali is being studied as a scriptural language that embraces not only Sri Lanka Buddhism, but the Theravadin tradition of southeast Asia as a

larger religious domain.

These and other factors, then, contribute to some notable differences that emerge when we compare the two organizations. The Manitoba Buddhist Vihara, still in its founding period, is not as deeply concerned with ethnic retention as was the Manitoba Buddhist Church fifty years ago – the Vihara is more directly and specifically involved with Dharma teaching, and its adherents are oriented toward that goal in particular. Another difference is that Theravada Buddhism is the predominant Buddhist religious form in Sri Lanka and there is no school or sectarian affiliation that leaves members of the Manitoba Vihara community divided in terms of denominational choice. There is also a multi-ethnic Theravada world beyond Canada that gives the Vihara members a wider frame of reference as Buddhists, which helps to mitigate their immediate social reality as a small Sinhala cultural group in a new country.

The fact that there are monks in the Theravadin tradition from several Buddhist countries who visit the Vihara is also significant. The preservation of Dhamma by the lay-people of Winnipeg is substantially assisted by the frequent presence of monastic Sangha who exemplify this important social reality of Buddhist life in its most complete form. The sociological factor of monasticism which has dwindled in Western Christianity is being reintroduced in North America through Buddhism. The institution of monasticism itself is of increased interest and consideration for those in the larger society who are seeking religious and social alternatives.

Conclusion

Mark Mullins has emphasized that ethnic-religious organizations need to appeal to the wider society if they hope to survive. Given the diversity of choices open to Canadians in our broadest social context, we must eventually address the question as to which forms of Buddhism seem to be the most successful in attracting the adherence of the Euro-Canadian population. It is through this new and larger source of membership that the original ethnic-religious organizations have the potential for survival and continuity, albeit in a transformed and differently adapted manner.

My concluding observations in this connection are based on the research I have been conducting in Saskatchewan (SK) and Manitoba (MB). Due to the relatively small number of Euro-Canadian Buddhists in SK and MB one must be cautious when trying to estimate which Buddhist traditions are currently having success in attracting followings, and for what reasons. While no form of Buddhism can, or should be deemed superior to any other, there are some indicators that can give us a sense of relative strengths and weaknesses in Buddhism's appeal to the larger society, for the prairies area,

at least.

First of all, out of a population of just over two million people in SK and MB, it is estimated that there are no more than 1,000 Euro-Canadian Buddhists, and only a handful of aboriginal ancestry. Moreover, while the prairie region of Canada has a history of tolerance for religious sectarian diversity, this tolerance is a product of Euro-Canadian immigrant heritage and characterized by inherent Christian conservatism. There is an understandable reluctance to challenge or upset this locally established norm with overt displays of difference.

Though further research would be required to verify the full range of factors involved, this conservatism is likely a major reason why the practices that currently command the most interest among Euro-Canadians, who are new to Buddhism in SK and MB, are the Zen and Vipassana/Insight traditions.

This attraction may be because the teachings and practices involved in these traditions have fewer elements of ritual, worship and liturgy that require language proficiency and other culturally-specific knowledge or paraphernalia to be competent in their performance. It is also the case that even the most basic forms of sitting, walking and breath meditation, when coupled with the observance of Buddhism's fundamental moral principles, constitute a viable practice that does not openly conflict with other beliefs, practices, or views of religion that enquiring individuals might still hold while exploring Buddhist traditions.

At the same time, one cannot contest the fact that other traditions do attract new adherents. Ven. Dakshong Rinpoche in Winnipeg, for example, has created a stable group of fifty Vajrayana practitioners that continues to grow in numbers, albeit slowly, and there is considerable public interest in Tibetan tradition when its representatives come to visit. This suggests that more Euro-Canadians would possibly enter into this tradition if there were more teachers available to guide them in it. This is particularly true for SK where there is no resident master to cultivate those who do have an interest in Vajrayana.

The tradition that appears to hold the least overt appeal for Euro-Canadians in SK and MB is Pure Land Buddhism in its various forms, including the Manitoba Buddhist Church, as well as several Chinese and Vietnamese Pure Land religious groups. This may be because Pure Land practice in the prairies is still associated with Asian cultural traditions that require at least some language skill to enter into, thereby presenting some barriers and difficulty. It is also possible that the religious ideas and practices of Pure Land tradition may appear too similar to devotional Christianity for Euro-Canadians who are interested in some aspects of Buddhism, but who wish to experience types of religious practice that are demonstrably different

from those with which they already feel familiar.

These observations are admittedly tentative and inconclusive, as it will take several more generations before we see how this initial, early period of Dharma's establishment in Canada actually takes shape. The history of Buddhist community development in SK and MB, like the rest of the country, spans only a century and it is too early to predict which of the forms of Buddhism will survive over the long term. It is also impossible to know at this point whether distinctive modes of institutional organization founded on uniquely Canadian views and values will emerge as adaptation proceeds.

In any case, there is clearly an existing potential and arguably a growing need for Buddhist groups to begin to work more closely together for the protection and preservation of Buddhist tradition in its various forms. Fostering a sense of Buddhist ecumenism and forming organizations through which it can be exercised will develop ideas and skills that Buddhist groups can use to shape a collective future as each tradition continues to maintain and develop its particular aspect of Buddhist heritage.

In the case of the Manitoba Buddhist Church, one is tempted to suggest that it might seek to form alliances with the Japanese Zen tradition. This would help to maintain a cultural continuity, while bringing in a form of practice that is proving to be attractive to mainstream Canadians. The sharing of the facilities costs for a common home for an expanded Japanese Buddhist presence could have beneficial effects all round. There are of course challenges that would have to be met to achieve this new kind of arrangement, but as we see in the case of the Theravadin community finding a welcome and stable home in a Mahayana temple, it is possible for creative solutions to be worked out.

The difficulties that Asian-ethnic religious organizations face when seeking to become more broadly inclusive begins with the fact that they themselves are communities in transition. There are many languages and cultural traditions involved. This is coupled with the fact that collectively these communities practice Theravada, several forms of Mahayana, and Vajrayana Buddhism. There is little time and limited capacity in most organizations to reach out to each other, or to the larger Canadian society, in an effort to preserve their particular cultural traditions, and Buddhism as a central feature of them.

Nevertheless, creative new steps in this direction have to be considered and earnest attempts made to realize them. The experiences of others who have learned from their immigrant religious community lives in Canada can be of help in the process. And with the work of scholars and social scientists like ourselves, together with the guidance of community leaders and the support of memberships in the many Buddhist groups emerging across our country, we are now better equipped than ever to make our way into a future

that, on the whole, bodes well indeed for the survival and growth of Buddhadharma in Canada.

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NOTES

- ¹ Buddhism in Manitoba can be divided sociologically into Asian-ethnic community groups that primarily follow traditional Buddhist practices as part of their cultural lives, and Euro-Canadian Buddhist groups whose membership is comprised primarily of individuals who have taken up the study and practice of Buddhism out of personal religious enquiry. The terms 'Asian-ethnic' and 'Euro-Canadian' are used for convenience here to broadly delineate the geographic and ethno-cultural backgrounds that distinguish the major Buddhist constituencies in Canada. Ethno-cultural factors among the Asian-Canadian groups play a central role in the way their respective Buddhist traditions are practiced. This is not the case for Euro-Canadians whose ethno-cultural backgrounds have no particular bearing on the form of Buddhism taken up.
- ² General population figures and related statistics cited are based on the 2001 Census Canada and its associated provincial reports, with updates where available. See: <http://www.statcan.ca>
- ³ David Chuenyan Lai, *Chinatowns: Towns within Cities in Canada* (University of British Columbia Press, 1988), 75.
- ⁴ Euro-Canadians generally do not belong to Asian-ethnic Buddhist community groups unless they have married a member. This applies equally to groups where English is the language in which services and teachings are conducted, notably among the Sri Lankan Theravadin and the Japanese Pure Land groups in Winnipeg. Even in these cases, the number of non-Asians involved is small.
- ⁵ "The Life-Cycle of Ethnic Churches in Sociological Perspective," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 14, no. 4 (1987).
- ⁶ "The Organizational Dilemmas of Ethnic Churches: A Case Study of Japanese Buddhism in Canada," *Sociological Analysis* 49, no. 3 (1988).
- ⁷ "Spreading the Word: Religious Beliefs and the Evolution of Immigrant Congregations," *Sociology of Religion*, Summer 2004.
- ⁸ For information on Radhika's publications see <http://www.bodhileaves.com/>

⁹ Buddhist Churches of Canada website: <http://www.bcc.ca/>

¹⁰ Manitoba Buddhist Church website:

<http://www.manitobabuddhistchurch.org/>

¹¹ For a short biography see:

<http://www.manitobabuddhistchurch.org/about/personnel.htm>

¹² IBS site: <http://www.shin-ibs.edu/intro1.htm>