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Highlights from the Survey of Canadian Buddhist Organizations

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Highlights from the Survey of Canadian Buddhist Organizations

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Abstract

There are currently 483 Buddhist organizations operating in Canada in 2012. This article presents highlights from data gathered in the first-ever survey of community development in these organizations, with some preliminary observations. The survey was created by John Negru, publisher of Canada's largest online database of Canadian Buddhist organizations, www.canadianbuddhism.info, in association with the Department for the Study of Religion at the University of Toronto, in 2011. The survey contained twenty-six multi-part questions in two sections. The first section comprised directory information associated with specific organizations. The second section comprised sociological questions, the answers to which were supplied on condition of anonymity. Of 483 potential responses, 102 were received (21.1%). While not exhaustive, these responses are broadly spread over different locations, traditions, and institutional frameworks. Their distribution mirrors the geographical and lineage distribution of the full set. As such, they present a relatively accurate snapshot of current community development across Buddhist communities in Canada.

Introduction

There are currently 483 Buddhist organizations operating in Canada in 2012. This represents tremendous growth over the past fifty years, since in 1960 there were fewer than twenty-five Buddhist organizations operating here.[1] There has been considerable scholarly research into the development of North American Buddhism. There have also been a smaller range of studies into Canadian Buddhism as distinct from its counterpart in the United States[2] and some monographs on specific Buddhist communities in Canada[3], but no national survey has been undertaken to gather primary data from Canadian Buddhist organizations about their structures, members, and/or activities. The Canadian Buddhism Survey was initiated in the summer of 2011 to address this gap. Its goal was to gather sociological information about the state of community development amongst Buddhist organizations across the

[1] This is based on the personal experience of the author, who began Buddhist practice in Montreal, Canada in 1968. In 1972 he travelled across Canada visiting Buddhist organizations. In the 1980s, he was coordinator for the Toronto Buddhist Federation, and later a founder and Toronto coordinator for the Buddhist Council of Canada, in touch with a wide range of Buddhist organizations across the country. He was involved in the re-design of George Klima's buddhismcanada directory in 2009, and launched the www.canadianbuddhism.info directory in 2010, after Klima ceased operations.

[2] Notably, the work of John Harding, Victor Hori and Alexander Soucy (2010), Bruce Matthews (2006), and Jeff Wilson (2011, 2012).

[3] Notably, the work of Louis Cormier (2001), Janet McLellan (1999), and Terry Watada (1996).

country. The study was prepared by John Negru, Publisher at www.canadianbuddhism.info, in collaboration with Dr. Frances Garrett, Associate Chair, Department for the Study of Religion, University of Toronto. The project was formally approved by the Department for the Study of Religion and the Office of Ethics Research at the University of Toronto.

Methodology

In phase one, the survey[4] was sent digitally to more than 380 Buddhist organizations across Canada. Seventy-four responses were received (19.5%). In an effort to reach organizations that could not be contacted via the Internet, a Vietnamese-speaking research assistant telephoned all of the Vietnamese organizations (many of whom do not have websites or e-mail), requesting confirmation of their contact information and inviting their participation in the survey. The majority confirmed their information but declined to participate in the survey. In phase two, the survey was mailed to 426 organizations that did not respond to the first phase or were not included in it because of their lack of Internet presence. An additional twenty-eight surveys were received. In addition, we were able to ascertain that twenty-one of the 504 organizations we had identified had closed, leaving us with a total of 483 active organizations and 102 responses (21.1%).

Other contextual data in this report was gathered from monitoring activity on the www.canadianbuddhism.info online directory since its inception in 2010. In the interest of keeping this article easy to read, all tables of survey results have been grouped in Appendix A.

For the purpose of our study, we define Buddhist organization as a non-profit entity (incorporated or informal) whose primary purpose is related to the practice of Buddhism. The vast majority of Canadian Buddhist organizations are congregations at their core, in the sense that Mark Chavez uses the term.[5] However, some are harder to categorize in this way, since the leaders are not usually hired employees in the Western sense, the activities mostly do not follow a church model, the congregations are often very small and/or ethnically heterogeneous, and Buddhist organizations that fulfill community centre needs are not easily categorized by conventional metrics.[6]

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[4] A copy of the survey is included as appendix B to this article.

[5] "By 'congregation' I mean a social institution in which individuals who are not all religious specialists gather in physical proximity to one another, frequently and at regularly scheduled intervals, for activities with explicitly religious content and purpose, and in which there is continuity over time in the individuals who gather, the location of the gathering, and the nature of the activities and events at each gathering." (Chavez 2004: 1-2)

[6] For further analysis of how these variations affect identification of what constitutes a Buddhist organization, see the work of Wendy Cadge (2008).

Buddhism in Canada in 2012

A general overview of Canada's Buddhist communities can be constructed from www.canadianbuddhism.info. Information for the directory has been gathered over a period of years from a variety of sources including direct contact, observation of organizations' websites, and lists compiled by the now-defunct www.buddhismcanada.com directory and various other international Buddhist directories. In many instances, those earlier resources were not maintained and thus seriously out of date. A fairly rigorous process of vetting the information was conducted over a period of years.

The geographical distribution of Buddhist organizations across Canada is roughly congruent with population density (Table 1). The largest concentrations of activity are in Ontario, British Columbia, Quebec, and Alberta respectively. It should be noted that the disproportionately high number of Buddhist organizations in Nova Scotia, relative to general population, reflects the fact that Shambhala International is based there. Fifteen of the twenty-one Buddhist organizations in Nova Scotia are affiliated with Shambhala. No other lineage in Canada shows such geographical concentration.

The distribution of Buddhist organizations in Canada, organized according to tradition, lineage, and focus, reveals both representation from all backgrounds and considerable adaptation into new forms (Table 2). Organizations were given the opportunity to self-select these categories. In many cases, organizations chose multiple categories, which is why the numbers do not add up in simple arithmetical terms. For example, many (but not all) Shambhala centres described themselves as Kagyu and Nyingma too. Conversely, a number of Vipassana organizations in the Goenka tradition chose not to list themselves as Theravada. As seen in responses to a variety of questions throughout the survey, many centres identify most strongly with one particular tradition but have found linkages with multiple traditions and lineages, incorporating a broad spectrum of teachings and practices not usually associated with their own specific roots, and working to develop the most accessible vision of Buddhism for their eclectic congregations. There is also a significant group of organizations that have chosen an explicitly non-denominational approach. We believe these variant self-identifications are examples of hybridity, as defined by Jeff Wilson.[7]

Expanding the geographical data reveals the predominantly metropolitan nature of Buddhist organizations in Canada, aside from a few retreat centres (most of which are operated by their city founders). Combining that with the data on traditions, by

[7] He outlines the parameters on page 4 as follows: "Intersectarian contact among Buddhist groups in North America is not just about cooperation and exchange—diversity is always an opportunity for conflict and identity making as well. At the same time, however, groups and individuals at the temple are certainly influenced by their contact with each other and with forces beyond the temple, such that Ekoji's groups demonstrate noticeable hybridity, even in the face of their attempts to create themselves along specific sectarian lines. The result is a highly pluralistic Buddhism, which prizes commonality and contact among multiple Buddhist lineages, though not without instances of ambivalence." (Wilson, 2012: 4)

province and region, gives a detailed picture of who is doing what where (Table 3).[8]

In Jeff Wilson's article, "What is Canadian about Canadian Buddhism?" (2011), he notes that one of the five key places to look for Canadian Buddhist distinctiveness (and an area that has been especially neglected) is its history (Wilson, 2011: 538). This is relevant not merely in noting the birth of organizations, but also in records of their passing. In preparing the first edition of www.canadianbuddhism.info in 2010, it was discovered that a large number of organizations listed in previous directories, published in Canada or abroad, no longer had valid contact information. The directory was pruned again in 2012.[9] The key revelation of this list is that it shows a high degree of ferment. In countries where Buddhism has a long history, the development of new organizations usually happens in slow motion under the auspices of established institutions. That institutional support is largely lacking in Canada and, as a result, many centres are started by inspired individuals who quickly discover their intentions are not shared by enough people to make a go of it (Klima, 2006: 165). In other situations, centres that grew up around charismatic teachers, but that failed to establish solid roots and closed when that teacher moved on, was discredited in some way, or passed away. Even Jodo Shinshu churches with a long history of support from the Buddhist Churches of Canada have closed as the demographics of their congregations have changed. It is thus fair to say that the evolution of Buddhist communities in Canada over the past fifty years has illustrated the expression "two steps forward, one step back."

The Canadian Buddhism Survey

We received 102 completed surveys, representing slightly more than twenty-one percent of the total number of organizations. Distribution across the surveys mirrors the ratios revealed in the tables derived from information in the www.canadianbuddhism.info directory. Table 6 and Table 7 show the distribution of survey responses, organized by province and by tradition respectively. For this reason, we believe the survey responses represent a relatively accurate snapshot of the national Buddhist landscape.

With regard to the notion that "Western" organizations are culturally most likely to respond and may skew our vision of the Buddhism that actually gets practiced in Canada, some points are worth noting. Fewer than half of the survey respondents identified their organizations as being comprised of greater than fifty percent Westerners. First- and second-generation Canadians are well represented in many organizations. Furthermore, whatever one surmises about Buddhism in Canada should be based on empirical evidence.

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[8] The "Other" category in Table 3 includes associations, blogs, and charities whose main purpose is social action (as distinct from charitable foundations set up to administer temples).

[9] For the historical record, the complete list can be found at: http://www.sumeru-books.com/2012/10/impermanence-and-canadian-buddhist-organizations-redux

Use of the Internet

Most Buddhist organizations in Canada make use of the Internet for websites and e-mail. A few are starting to embrace social media as well. Table 4 shows use of Facebook and Twitter, organized by tradition. Our study did not examine each of those organizations' social media strategy, in relation to the type of people who comprise its current or prospective members. Given the intense focus on social media in Canadian youth culture and marketing, we expect usage to grow.

On the other hand, as seen in Table 5, some Buddhist organizations in Canada do not make use of the Internet. There may be a variety of reasons: perception that Internet activity is counter to the spirit of a Buddhist contemplative lifestyle; insular nature of the community an organization serves; and lack of familiarity with the application and benefits of Internet technology. The range of organizations in this category appears to fall more closely along ethnic lines than lineage lines. (Associations, blogs and charities are not included.) More than any other aspect of our research project, Table 5 highlights that the different perspectives on Buddhist practice in America, originally put forward by Charles Prebish as "two Buddhisms, two practices," (Prebish, 1978) are active in the composition of Vietnamese and Chinese congregations in Canada, as distinct from other groups here regardless of their specific lineages.

Victor Hori goes to some lengths in *Wild Geese* to advocate for a more nuanced approach in place of the "two Buddhisms" (Hori, 2011) dichotomy, providing shades of identity within various sub-groupings, such as Asians born in Canada. My own experience as coordinator for the Toronto Buddhist Federation, working amongst others with local Vietnamese Buddhist organizations in the 1980s, taught me that they should in no way be considered a monolithic group. Notwithstanding these recontextualizations, it would appear that at least in relation to the Internet, Vietnamese and Chinese Buddhist organizations in Canada have a very different perspective from most other Canadian Buddhist groups; their congregationalism is perhaps more experientially focused, tightly knit, hyper-local and/or parochial.

Teachers, governance, premises, and funding

It is of interest to note that a wide variety of organizations have lay leadership (Table 8). While representation by women is less than that of men, it is by no means absent. These findings, taken together, indicate that Buddhism in Canada has found alternative pathways to traditional ordination for those seeking a more committed practice and/or leadership roles, outside of traditional monastic structures. On the other hand, when we look at the gender composition of congregations (Table 20), we see that women outnumber men as congregants in most organizations, indicating there is still a gender bias in choosing community leaders. We also asked about retired teachers, but the vast majority of respondents gave no answer. We presume this means they do not have any retired teachers because they have not been in existence long enough. However, that cannot be the only reason. The fact that so many respondents did not answer the questions on teacher status at all indicates that there is still a need to clarify how

diverse Canadian Buddhist communities regard their aged community leaders.

Our intention in asking questions about governance was to understand how communities view the role of their teachers. Much ink has been spilled over the need for new forms of Sangha in the West. Some scholars point to Buddhism after patriarchy (Gross, 1993), others refer to increased democratization (Hori, 1998: 64-68), while others focus on transparency and accountability (hook, 1992). Scandals involving teachers behaving badly have heightened the urgency of these discussions. Our survey reveals this process is still in flux, insofar as there still seems to be a significant portion of centres that have no formalized leadership structure to articulate clear expectations for teachers (Tables 9 and 10). Even in organizations with formal boards of directors, teachers still take the lead authority. By the same token, most organizations presented themselves as not accountable to any other authority beyond themselves.

Buddhist organizations run the gamut from multi-million dollar complexes on Heaven's Highway in Richmond, BC, to temples with extensive land holdings (indicating donors with very deep pockets), to groups meeting in apartment living rooms and rented church basements. These are enormous disparities that may give the general impression that Buddhist temples are either very well off or marginal, but most are well established, small and local in scope (Table 11). Premises and modes of possession are indicators for the financial strength of various Sanghas. Communities that can afford to buy or build dedicated-use buildings are strong enough to finance long-term growth. A surprise finding from the survey is that the vast majority of organizations who responded have been in their premises for a relatively short period of time (Table 12). For those organizations that answered the question on where their funding comes from, most said it comes from small donations. Key benefactors and international support are minimal, although probably more prevalent in the extremely large temple complexes with extensive land holdings (Table 13).

Practice and meditation

The top five practices in Canadian Buddhist organizations are meditation, retreats, discussion groups, chanting sutras and sutra study (Table 14). This would indicate that Buddhist practice in Canada is still very much grounded in a direct experience of meditation and textual study. Most organizations are traditional in approach, insofar as they are not seeking to create an amalgam of Buddhism and other ideologies, however pluralistic they may be in terms of borrowing from other Buddhist traditions and lineages. Newer syncretic schools have established a small footprint, but have not captured the mainstream imagination. As we saw in the section on teachers, lay practice in Canada in most communities is focused more on personal development than on supporting ordained monks and nuns. Outside of the top five practices, the wide range of variations offered indicates diversity of approaches, with all forms of chanting being particularly strong when taken as a group.

There is a high degree of hybridity with regard to meditation practice (Table 15). Many forms of meditation are used outside of their traditional lineage context. For example,

many Theravada organizations listed "Just Sitting (Shikantaza)" as one of their practices; conversely, many Mahayana organizations listed "Insight (Vipassana)" as one of their practices. Similarly, there is a strong physical component to meditation insofar as walking is a part of practice in a wide variety of organizations, regardless of tradition. There is also a strong focus on compassion (altruism and loving kindness) that runs through all traditions.

Congregational Composition

Detailed responses from section one of the surveys have been uploaded to the directory listings on www.canadianbuddhism.info for the respective organizations. In this section, we summarize that data in conjunction with the further anonymous responses made to section two of the survey. A handful of organizations that responded to the survey declined to answer any questions in section two, so they are not included in what follows.

Languages: Given Canada's multicultural composition, it should be no surprise that a wide swath of languages is represented. The important point is that very few communities omitted English and/or French in their listings of languages used. Those organizations that did not include English or French were concentrated in the Vietnamese, Khmer, Lao, and Chinese communities. Their linguistic parochialism, seen in conjunction with the data around use of the Internet, is counter to the prevailing Canadian emphasis on multilingual organizations well integrated into mass culture.

Ethnicity: The responses in Table 16 run counter to what has been assumed previously about Buddhist communities in Canada. For example, Placzek and DeVries note: "For Vancouver, the 2001 Canada Census indicates that almost five times more Buddhists are foreign-born (59,153) as opposed to Canadian-born (13,220).[10] We wonder what cultural determinants predispose a group to be more inclined to respond to surveys they receive via e-mail. Regardless of how one wishes to categorize types of Buddhist practitioners (and there have been many variant schema) or to critique responses to our survey on the basis of a cultural bias skewing the pool of respondents, we can definitely say that citizens from many heritages have taken to Buddhism in Canada. The fact remains that Buddhist practice in Canada is not solely to be found in communities of recent Asian immigrants.

Social groupings: Considering the possible congregational drop-off among children of new Asian-Canadians who move away from their legacy culture and religion, we asked about the generational ratios in organizations (Table 17). It would appear that congregations are either serving new Canadians or established citizens, while the children of new Canadians are less likely to be members of a Buddhist community. For now, we can simply note that the above data is congruent with the answers given about

[10] James Placzek, and Larry DeVries, 2006. These numbers are disputed by Victor Hori, 2010. All of those calculations are based on Census data from individuals, as opposed to direct responses from organizations.

the family composition of congregations. Responding organizations indicated a preponderance of single members, with couples comprising less than twenty-five percent of congregations (Table 18). Families are represented in various percentages, but the vast majority of responses indicate congregations have very little to offer children. Looking specifically at the ages of congregants, children and youths are dramatically absent from congregations. Beyond that, most congregations seem to meet the needs of a wide range of ages (Table 19). Within those, we see heterogeneous congregations in which women generally outnumber men in varying degrees. Only three responding communities are focused on single-gender practice (Table 20).

Engaged Buddhism (Social Action)

Engaged Buddhism is a topic that is currently popular in discussions about Buddhism in the West. Inspired by Christopher Queen's work in this field (Queen, 1995), we wanted to see how many Canadian Buddhist organizations have taken on community initiatives, and it turns out that many have not. There are a variety of reasons why this may be the case.

In section one of the survey, we asked organizations about any affiliations they have with non-Buddhist entities such as community groups, environmental groups, civic improvement groups, and so on. Very few Buddhist organizations noted any such interaction. Indeed, looking back at the slim history of communication and cooperation between Buddhist organizations in Canada in the past, it would seem that individual communities have a very poor track record of working in any larger context. Looking at the family composition of congregations, we see a high concentration of individual practitioners. That means programs directed at families are not a priority. Yet families are often the focus of social action programs, at least as mainstream Canadian society defines them. Looking at the ethnic composition of congregations, it is possible to conclude that immigrant communities find their settlement needs better served by other institutions. However, reflecting on the composition of the congregations who responded to the survey, one can also wonder if there isn't some real disconnect between practices centering on altruism and loving kindness, with no concrete social expression for those intentions. The number of Buddhist organizations in Canada who cite social action as integral to their *raison d'être* is less than two percent of the total number of survey responses. Organizations in this category noted multiple social action initiatives, which indicates that it is even less so in the rest. For example, Buddhist outreach to prisoners is much more fully developed in the United States than it is in Canada. There is no chapter of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship in Canada. Buddhist hospice care is difficult to find in Canada and is often part of a larger ethnic initiative rather than something organized as specifically Buddhist. While these latter issues are not necessarily Buddhist, involvement in them by Buddhist organizations would indicate a level of community solidity sufficient to venture beyond a focus on exclusively ritual temple functions.

On the basis of these findings, we do not see widespread cultivation of the social capital, which would be demonstrated by Buddhist organizations working towards public

presence, representation, and overall inclusion in a variety of social spheres, as discussed by Janet McLellan (McLellan, 2000: 280-301 and 2006: 91-100).

On the positive side, there have been some recent campaigns worth noting. In 2011 many organizations raised funds for Japanese tsunami relief. Fund-raising in Chinese communities in Canada and abroad has resulted in significant endowments for Canadian Buddhist organizations to engage in charitable acts. For example, in 2010 the R.N. Ho Foundation and the Tung Lin Kok Yuen Canada Foundation jointly gave $10 million to the Lions Gate Hospital in Vancouver. In 2010, the Toronto Chapter of the Tzu Chi Merit Society Buddhist charitable foundation donated $100,000 to Bridgepoint Health in Toronto, for hospital beds. In 2011 and 2012, the Buddhist Education Foundation for Canada has operated a summer day camp for Buddhist youth in association with Fu Sien Tong Temple and the University of Toronto (where they have been engaged in long-term fundraising to endow a program in Buddhism, Mental Health, and Psychology). Lastly, a number of Canadian Buddhist humanitarian aid organizations provide funds and expertise for medical and educational development projects in Tibet, Mongolia, Nepal, and so on.

Several organizations noted that their social action initiatives were in "other" areas such as donations to the Cancer Society, the Heart and Stroke Foundation, a Christmas toy drive and an orphanage in Africa, in addition to blood donation drives, translation work, and agriculture.

Conclusions

Buddhism in Canada has evolved and expanded dramatically over the past fifty years, from a handful of Japanese and Chinese temples serving local immigrant communities, to a vibrant array of close to 500 organizations serving diverse practitioners and the common good in the very multi-cultural society of Canada. As part of that growth, organizations have experienced informal cross-pollination of ideas and practices, but most centres are either stand-alone operations or closely affiliated with their own lineage authority structures. Formal networking between different traditions (and the larger world through inter-faith dialogue) has been underdeveloped, as has social action. Congregations tend to be focused on individuals, with couples and families less evident. This is perhaps not the case in Asian communities, however, where a family focus is culturally central to temple activities. Unfortunately, those latter communities have experienced significant difficulties in maintaining Buddhist organizations to support their needs and the proliferation of those organizations has been dramatically less than that of groups rooted in other communities. Buddhist teachers in Canada are more likely to be lay practitioners or priests than monastics. Men still outnumber women as teachers, although women comprise a greater percentage of most congregations. Meditation, textual study, and personal experience remain the heart of Buddhist practice in Canada. Forest and rural retreat traditions are well represented across the country too, even though most organizations are urban.

Feedback and comments from scholars of Buddhism in Canada, scholar-practitioners,

and practitioners are more than welcome.

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Appendix A

Table 1: Geographical distribution of Buddhist organizations across Canada

BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	PEI	NS	NL	North
129	44	9	9	197	63	6	2	21	3	3

Table 2: Distribution of Buddhist organizations in Canada, organized by tradition, lineage and focus (self-selected, multiple entries allowed)

Theravada	**84**
Abhi-dhamma	6
Burmese	2
Burmese Mahasi	8
Dhamma-kaya	3
Indian	4
Indonesian	1
Khmer	11
Lao	10
Metta	1
Sri Lankan	13
Thai	11
Thai Forest	13
Vipassana	37

Mahayana	**186**
Chan	11
Chinese	64
Jogye	9
Chontae	1
Fulong	1
Hanmi	1
Huayen	1
Humanistic	8
Japanese	64
Jodo Shinshu	19
Korean	18
Nichiren	9
Order of Interbeing	4
Pure Land	75
Rinzai	15
Soka Gakkai	8
Soto	25
Tendai	3
Viet-namese	71

Vajrayana	**137**
Bhutanese	1
Bon	4
Chod	4
Drikung	3
Gelug	25
Kagyu	47
Nyingma	31
Rimay	6
Sakya	8
Shambhala	32
Shingon	1
Taklung Kagyu	2

Newer Schools	**26**
Canadian Forest	1
Forshang	2
NKT	3
Novayana	8
Triratna	2
True Buddha	12
Vo-Vi	3
Other	115
Non-denom.	62
Association	12
Blog	17
Charity	16
Social Action	8

Table 3: Distribution of organizations by province, region, and tradition

	Theravada	Mahayana	Vajrayana	Newer Schools	Hybrid/non-denominational	Other
BC						
Islands (excluding Victoria)	1	4	6	1		
Victoria	3	6	6		1	1
Vancouver	3	18	15	4	1	8
Vancouver Region	4	20	10			
Interior				1		
AB						
Edmonton	5	5	5	2	3	2
Calgary	3	8	3	2	2	1
Canadian Rockies		1				
Alberta Central		1				
Alberta South		2				
SK						
Regina	1	1				
Saskatoon	2	4			1	
MB						
Winnipeg	2	4	2			
Eastern			1			
ON						
Northwest	1	1	1			1
Southwest	5	8	1	1	2	
Niagara	1	2	1			
Muskoka, Parry Sound & Algonquin	2					
Bruce, Georgian Bay & Lake Simcoe	2	1	2	1	1	
Kawartha & Northumberland	1	4	1	3		
Haliburton Highlands to Ottawa Valley	3	3			1	
Ottawa Capital Region	6	12	4	1	1	2
Hamilton, Halton & Brant	1	5	2	1	1	1
Toronto	9	33	17	7	7	10
Toronto Region	6	9	2			4
Southeast	2	2	2			
QC						
Outaouais		2	1			
Laurentides	2					
Montréal	3	6	8	2	1	5
Montréal Region	4	4	5			2
Cantons de l'Est	1	2		1		

Quebec	4	5	1			1
Gaspesie		1				
NB						
North		1	1			
Fredericton			1			1
St. John			1			
PEI		1	1			
NS						
Yarmouth & Acadian Shores			1			
Fundy Shore & Annapolis Valley		1	4			
South Shore			3			
Halifax		2	4		1	
Northumberland Shore			2		1	
Cape Breton Island			2			
NL						
St. John's		1	2			
Yukon			2			
Nunavut			1			

Table 4: Use of social media by Canadian Buddhist organizations, by tradition

Tradition	Facebook	Twitter
Total	**22**	**13**
Theravada	3	1
Mahayana	5	1
Vajrayana	6	6
Newer Schools	3	1
Non-Denominational	4	4
Other		1

Table 5: Canadian Buddhist organizations not using Internet technology

Community	Website but no e-mail	No website, no e-mail
Total	**42**	**73**
Khmer	-	4
Lao	-	3
Vietnamese	3	30
Thai	3	1
Western	14	5
Tibetan	12	3
Burmese	1	1
Japanese	2	3
Chinese	5	21
Korean	2	2

A few notes about the above chart...

1. We had Vietnamese organizations contacted by telephone by a Vietnamese-speaking research assistant to ascertain if they did indeed have Vietnamese language web access.
2. There were about double the number of Khmer and Lao organizations listed earlier in our directory, which seem to have disappeared. Their phone numbers have been disconnected and re-assigned, leading us to believe that those communities have been economically unable to secure the necessities of setting up temples in a variety of cities. Other scholars have noted that the obligations in these communities of supporting monks sent from Cambodia and Laos are prohibitive. We would like to know what informal community arrangements these groups are making to continue their Buddhist practice in Canada.
3. Organizations that have websites but no e-mail typically have a contact form on the site, allowing people to get in touch with them, but avoiding mailbots and spam.
4. There are a small group of newer centres that have e-mail, but no websites.
5. There are a rapidly growing number of Vietnamese Zen groups in Canada who follow the teachings of Thich Nhat Hanh and the Order of Interbeing; those congregations are largely comprised of western-born converts. English is listed as the language their centres use, and they typically have web and e-mail access.

Table 6: Surveys received, organized by province

BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	PE	NS	NL
24	12	2	2	40	15	-	-	7	1

Table 7: Surveys received, organized by tradition

Theravada	Mahayana	Vajrayana	Newer Schools	Hybrid / Non-denominational	Other
19	33	31	4	9	7

Table 8: Status of Teachers

	Monk	Nun	Priest	Layman	Laywoman
Resident	23	6	8	24	10
Non-resident	14	4	3	23	9

Table 9: Incorporation and directorship

Incorporation	
Charitable	42
Non-profit	21
None	18
Other	4

Board of Directors	
Formal	54
Informal	9
None	17
Other	7

Table 10: Authority structure in organizations

Authority	
Teacher directs board	24
Board directs teacher	8
Board advises teacher	12
Other	20

Highest Authority	
Your organization	24
Another Canadian organization	1
International organization	6
Other	5

Table 11: Possession, location and use of premises by organizations

Own	Rent	Donated	Other
45	23	12	1

Urban	Rural	Other
54	20	3

House	Apartment	Commercial	Public building	Dedicated use
22	2	12	12	27

Residential only	Residential with programs	Programs only	Other
7	21	41	2

Table 12: Years at location

Years at:	< 5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-25	25-30	30-35	35-40	40-45	45-50	> 50
This address	21	17	16	7	2	2	5	1			2
Previous address	23	10	9	2	1	1		1			1

Table 13: Sources of funding

	Trusts and/or investment income	Key donors	Small donations	Funds from outside Canada	Donations connected to ritual acts
Yes	4	17	64	11	5
No	66	54	9	61	61

Table 14: Practices

Chanting Sutras	Chanting Prayers	Chanting Mantras	Circumambulation	Commentary Study	Dana to Sangha	Dance	Discussion Groups	Flower Arranging	Freeing Animals	Meditation	Music	Painting	Physical Labour	Precepts/Ordination	Prostrations	Retreats	Short-term Precepts	Singing Hymns	Sutra Study	Vegetarian	Other
51	37	41	22	31	28	6	55	11	12	84	20	13	23	29	34	67	22	11	44	19	23

Table 15: Meditation

Altruism	Breaths (Counting)	Breaths (Noticing)	Calming	Chi Kung	Deity Sadhana	Dzogchen	Insight	Just Sitting	Koan	Loving Kindness	Mudra	Tai Chi	Visualization	Yoga Postures	Walking	Zazen	Other
26	33	52	51	10	27	17	46	30	11	45	19	5	31	11	54	22	14

Table 16: Congregations where an ethnic group comprises more than fifty percent of the Sangha

Western	Chinese	Japanese	Tibetan	Vietnamese	Sri Lankan	Other
45	6	3	1	3	1	7

Table 17: Generational citizenship composition of congregations

%	0	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
3rd Gen CDN	8	2	2		3	2	1		5		1		3	1	1	5	7		8	2	3
2nd Gen CDN	11	4	6	1	12	3	3		2	1	2			1					1		
1ST Gen CDN	3	7	9	2	7	2	2	2	1	2		2	3				6	1	3		1

Table 18: Family composition of congregations

%	0	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
Indiv.		1	3		3	4	3	2	2	1	3		4	1	6	4	3	3	8	4	10
Couple	3	5	9	3	13	6	4	2	3		3		1	2	2						
Family	17	6	5		4	4	3			1	2		2		2		2				

Table 19: Age composition of congregations

%	0	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
>65	13	8	11	8	4	3	4	1	1		2										
50-65	4	1	2		11	3	12	8	7	2	6	2	1				2				
35-50	4	1	2	2	10	5	8	4	10	1	5	1	1		1	2					1
20-35	8	10	14	2	16	4	3	1	1			1									1
10-20	23	12	7														1				
<10	29	1			1																

Table 20: Gender composition of congregations

%	0	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
Male	1		2		7	5	6	4	13	5	10	2	4		3	1					2
Female	2					1	3		4	2	5	5	13	4	6	5	7		2		1

Table 21: Social action programs run by organizations

Human rights	9
War and conflict	5
Prisons	3
Race relations	2
Gender relations	2
Sexual orientation	2
Schools	11
Workplace	3
Skills training	7
Financial planning	-
Settlement assistance	2
Heritage language (adult)	1
Heritage language (youth)	3
Housing & employment	1
Homelessness	3

Health care clinic	2
Family counseling	6
Mental health & addiction	4
Consumerism	4
HIV/AIDS awareness	-
Environmental protection	11
Animal rights	4
Seniors	5
Youth	12
Young adult	5
Women	4
Space rental to community	10
Food bank	8
Other	12

Appendix B

The Survey of Canadian Buddhism questionnaire can be viewed at http://www.sumeru-books.com/2013/02/highlights-from-the-survey-of-canadian-buddhist-organizations