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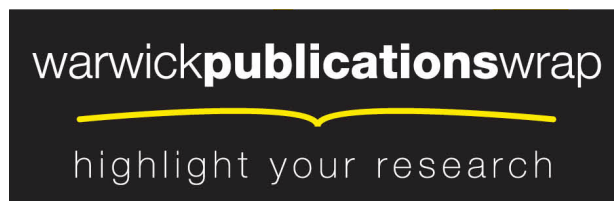
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New Kadampa Buddhists and Jungian psychological type

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Abstract

Building on previous studies on Canadian Anglicans and Catholics, this study examines and discusses the psychological type profile of 31 adherents to New Kadampa Buddhism. Like Anglicans and Catholics, Buddhists preferred introversion (I). Like Anglicans who preferred intuition (N) and unlike Catholics who preferred sensing (S), Buddhists displayed a preference for intuition (N). Unlike Anglicans and Catholics who both preferred feeling (F), Buddhists displayed a balance between feeling (F) and thinking (T). Like Anglicans and unlike Catholics, Buddhists preferred the Apollonian temperament (NF) over the Epimethean temperament (SJ). These data are discussed to interpret the psychological appeal of New Kadampa Buddhism.

Introduction

Jungian psychological type

Psychological type theory has its roots in the pioneering and creative work of Carl Jung (1971) and has been further developed and extended by a series of self-report psychometric instruments, including the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers & McCaulley, 1985), the Keirsey Temperament Sorter (Keirsey & Bates, 1978), and the Francis Psychological Type Scales (Francis, 2005). At its heart psychological type theory distinguishes between two orientations (introversion and extraversion), two perceiving functions (sensing and intuition), two judging functions (thinking and feeling) and two attitudes (judging and perceiving). Taken together these four binary choices lead to the generation of 16 complete types.

A key assumption in psychological type theory is that these key preferences between introversion and extraversion, between sensing and intuition, between thinking and feeling, and between judging and perceiving are innate, although for many contextual, environmental, or work-related reasons individuals may operate outside their innate psychological preferences. Since the late 1960s psychological type theory has had an increasingly visible part to play in the psychology of religion (for an overview see Francis, 2009). Different strands of empirical research within this tradition have concentrated on exploring the psychological type profile of religious professionals (see for example, Harbaugh, 1984; Holsworth, 1984; Francis, Payne, & Jones, 2001; Francis, Craig, Whinney, Tilley, & Slater, 2007), exploring the psychological type profile of religious adherents (see for example, Gerhardt, 1983; Delis-Bulhoes, 1990; Francis, Robbins, Williams, & Williams, 2007; Robbins & Francis, 2011), and exploring the connection between psychological type and different ways of expressing religious faith (see for example, Francis & Ross, 1997; Francis, Village, Robbins, & Ineson, 2007; Ross & Francis, 2010).

Most of the research conducted within these three strands has been undertaken within a Christian context. The aim of the present study, therefore, is to explore the application of psychological type theory with a different faith context, namely that of New Kadampa Buddhism.

New Kadampa Buddhism

Since the Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1949, Tibetan Buddhist teachers have moved to Western countries to escape religious persecution. This forced migration outside the Tibetan Diaspora has caused Tibetan Buddhism to establish itself in many Western countries such as Canada and the United States (Misra, 2003). Media attention of the Tibetan plight, coupled with the public dissemination of the charisma of the fourteenth Dalai Lama created global awareness not only of the Tibetan people but of Tibetan religion and culture (Lopez, 1999). As a result, more Westerners began exploring Tibetan Buddhism as a potential spiritual or religious home. Through rapidly gaining popularity, Buddhist religious leaders migrated or emerged in Europe and America forming offshoot Tibetan Buddhist groups. Some of these groups formed outside the authority of Tibetan Buddhist schools of thought (Seager, 1999). A particular new religious movement that derived from Tibetan Buddhism is New Kadampa Buddhism (NKT), a movement composed primarily of newly converted non-Tibetans typically from Western countries. We use the terms Western and Westerner here as a loosely inclusive term which excludes those of Asian origin and includes those who have been raised and educated within Europe, America, or Australia.

Initially founded in England, NKT is unique because its foundational doctrine is inherently Gelug-pa (the Tibetan Buddhist School typically identified with the Dalai Lama), but is not politically or religiously associated with either the Gelug-pa order or the Tibetan Government in Exile (Chryssides, 1999; Lopez, 1999). As a result, NKT has the freedom to create radically new ways to promote Buddhism as well as educate its own members. New

Kadampa Buddhism was chosen for this research for its attempt to Westernize advanced Tibetan Buddhist rituals. Their rituals were set to Western music, chants and theological discussions were conducted in English, and the organization is almost entirely non-Tibetan in membership particularly in the United States and Canada. While NKT makes for an excellent focus for research in Buddhism in North America, it is not without controversy.

The most controversial aspect of New Kadampa Buddhism is the Dorje Shugden practice which the Dalai Lama has outlawed in Tibetan Buddhist communities. This practice is central to NKT and is used to protect Buddhist Dharma from corruption and misinterpretation. Dorje Shugden is considered the Dharma protector of NKT as opposed to the more traditional wrathful deities of Mahakala and Dharmaraja, which are invoked by the Gelug-pa monastic order (The Yellow Hats); this difference becomes one of the central points of separation from the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism (Dreyfus, 1998; Lopez, 1999). From the Dalai Lama's perspective the practice of Dorje Shugden is worship of a malicious spirit coupled with a long history of sectarian tensions within the institution of Tibetan Buddhism. This coupled with a series of murders in Dharmasala India during the 1970s of monks, and the almost fundamentalist zeal followers of shugden creates a controversial perception (Dreyfus, 1998; Batchelor, 1998). Even the term cult has been used to describe NKT (Clifton, 1997).

The product of this controversy is a new and evolving religious tradition. By separating from Gelug-pa monastic school, NKT has the freedom to train lay members as Dharma teachers, and does not limit Western practitioners from becoming monks or nuns (Chryssides, 1999). It also provides the freedom to modify styles of religious practices outside of the cultural and traditional norms of Tibetan Buddhism. By giving lay members educational power to teach the Dharma, NKT is able to spread the NKT interpretation of Dharma more quickly and to wider audiences. According to the Kadampa website in 2011

NKT had over 800 Kadampa Buddhist centers and temples. Interestingly with such a wide international presence, little to no research has been conducted on NKT or its adherents.

Approaching our research with a specific temple of focus, we were surprised by the kindness and openness of the members and their willingness to participate. We did not foresee such openness in wake of Dorje Shugden controversy and the media attention it has received. We were delighted to participate in services at the temple, as well as observe members in their homes and at the NKT center engage in sharing the Dharma. Immediately we were fascinated by Western and Canadian-born lay members teaching Dharma on the raised cushion; we were also impressed by their dependence on Geshe Kelsang's books confirming some of Kay's (1997) findings. Many members of the temple consistently reminded us that they were an open group outside of the auspices of traditional religious and more specifically Christian religious authority structure.

Research question

Against this background, the specific research aim of the present study is to report on the psychological type profile of adherents to the New Kadampa Buddhism in Canada and the USA and to compare the profile of these adherents with what is known from previous research concerning the psychological type profile of adherents to Christian denominations in Canada. The key studies for such comparative purposes are provided by Ross (1993) who reported on 116 Anglicans and by Ross (1995), who reported on 175 Catholics

Table 1 presents the type distribution for Anglicans (Ross, 1993). These data show

- Insert table 1 here -

clear preferences for introversion (62%), for intuition (64%), for feeling (69%), and for judging (59%). In descending order, the dominant preferences are for feeling (33%), intuition (30%), sensing (25%), and thinking (12%). Here are a group of people for whom the NF temperament (48%) far outweighs the SJ temperament (30%). The most frequently occurring

complete type is INFP (18%). Myers (1998, p.7) provides the following profile of individuals who prefer INFP.

Quiet observers, idealistic, loyal. Important that outer life be congruent with inner values. Curious, quick to see possibilities, often serve as catalysts to implement ideas. Adaptable, flexible and accepting unless a value is threatened. Want to understand people and ways of fulfilling human potential. Little concern for possessions or surroundings.

Table 2 presents the type distribution for Catholics (Ross, 1995). Like the Anglicans,

- Insert table 2 here -

Catholics show preferences for introversion (54%), for feeling (63%) and for judging (61%). Unlike Anglicans, however, Catholics prefer sensing (53%). In descending order, the dominant preferences are for sensing (28%), intuition (27%), feeling (27%), and thinking (18%). Here are a group of people for whom the SJ temperament (39%) outweighs the NF temperament (31%). The most frequently occurring complete type is ISFJ (14%). Myers (1998, p.7) provides the following profile for individuals who prefer ISFJ.

Quiet, friendly, responsible and conscientious. Work devotedly to meet their obligations. Lend stability to any project or group. Thorough, painstaking, accurate. Their interests are usually not technical. Can be patient with necessary details. Loyal, considerate, perceptive, concerned with how other people feel.

The comparison between Anglicans and Catholics draws attention to three features of the connection between psychological type and religion reflected more widely in the literature (for a review, see Francis, 2009). First, both groups display a clear preference for feeling. It is this preference for feeling that seems to unite religious groups. Second, both group display a clear preference for introversion. It is this preference that characterises contemplative and liturgical religious traditions. Third, while one group prefers sensing, the

other group prefers intuition. It is the two functions of the perceiving process that seem to differentiate between different religious groups, with sensing types drawn to more highly defined (and more conservative) religious forms and intuitive types drawn to more flexible (and more liberal) religious forms. Fourth, the development type theory focusing on four temperament styles, introduced by Keirsey and Bates (1978) and applied within a religious context by Oswald and Kroeger (1988), emphasises the distinctive religious expressions favoured by Epimethean temperament (SJ) and by the Apollonian temperament (NF): the emphases distinguishing between order and creativity.

These observations lead to four hypotheses regarding the type profile of adherents to the New Kadampa Buddhism in Canada:

- the contemplative and meditative tradition will favour introversion;
- the religious ambience will favour feeling types;
- innovative aspects of Buddhist teaching and practice will favour intuitive types;
- the creative, innovative and unconventional appeal will favour the Apollonian temperament (NF).

Method

Procedure

Members of the New Kadampa Tradition (NKT) of Buddhism were approached individually at weekly events at two centers in southern Ontario, Canada, participating in the General Program, which is oriented toward (but not limited to) individuals with a beginning interest in NKT, in the Foundation Program for people motivated for sustained study of a Buddhist text, and in the Teacher Training Program for those interested in becoming teachers. A quarter of the participants were approached at an annual festival of NKT USA in April 2005 at Glen Spey, New York, where a national temple had just been opened. Of those approached, 70% agreed to participate, and were given a recruitment letter orienting them to

the study and a survey package with a return-addressed envelope. Of the packages taken, 75% were returned. There was a lower return rate from those more fleetingly contacted at the American festival. Of the 31 eventual participants, 25 lived in Canada and six in the USA. Six of those domiciled in Canada had been born outside North America.

Measure

Psychological type was assessed by the self-scoring version of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers & McCaulley, 1985).

Analysis

The scientific literature concerned with psychological type has developed a distinctive way of presenting type-related data. The conventional format of 'type tables' has been used in the present paper to allow the findings from this study to be compared with other relevant studies in the literature.

Results

Table 3 presents the type distribution for the 31 New Kadampa Buddhists. These data - insert table 3 - show clear preferences for introversion (68%), for intuition (68%), and for judging (71%). There is a balance between preferences for feeling (52%) and for thinking (48%). In descending order, the dominant preferences are intuition (45%), sensing (26%), thinking (16%), and feeling (13%). Here are a group of people for whom the NF temperament (42%) far outweighs the SJ temperament (29%). The most frequently occurring complete types are INFJ (19%) and ISTJ (19%). Myers (1998, p.7) provides the following profile of individuals who prefer these two types.

(INFJs) succeed by perseverance, originality and desire to do whatever is needed or wanted. Put their best efforts into their work. Quietly forceful, conscientious,

concerned for others. Respected for their firm principles. Likely to be honoured and followed for their clear visions as to how best to serve the common good.

(ISTJs are) serious, quiet, earn success by concentration and thoroughness. Practical, orderly, matter-of-fact, logical, realistic and dependable. See to it that everything is well organised. Take responsibility. Make up their own minds about what should be accomplished and work towards it steadily, regardless of protests or distractions.

Given the small number of Buddhists in the present study, differences between the Buddhists and the Anglicans or the Catholics need to be large to report statistical significance. Using the Selection Ratio Index (proposed by McCaulley, 1985) the two significant differences between the Buddhists and the Anglicans were these: Buddhists reported a lower proportion of INFPs (3% compared with 18% of Anglicans, $p < .05$); Buddhists reported a lower proportion of dominant feeling types (13% compared with 33% of Anglicans, $p < .05$). The three significant differences between the Buddhists and the Catholics were these: Buddhists reported a higher proportion of INFJs (19% compared with 7%, $p < .05$); Buddhists reported a higher proportion of dominant intuitive types (45% compared with 27%, $p < .05$); Buddhists reported a higher proportion of intuitive types (68%, compared with 47%, $p < .05$).

Discussion and conclusion

The present study set out to examine the psychological type preferences of New Kadampa Buddhists, set alongside existing data about Anglicans and Catholics. The examination was guided by four hypotheses generated by psychological type theory. The data are consistent with these three of these hypotheses, but not with the fourth.

First, like Anglicans and Catholics, individuals drawn to New Kadampa Buddhism tend to favour introversion. Here is a spiritual tradition that explores the inward path and promotes time of meditation, quiet contemplation, and solitude.

Second, like Anglicans, but unlike Catholics, individuals drawn to New Kadampa Buddhism tend to favour intuition. Here is a spiritual tradition that encourages a personal quest.

Third, more like Anglicans than Catholics, individuals drawn to New Kadampa Buddhists tend to favour the Apollonian temperament more than the Epimethean temperament. Here is a spiritual tradition that encourages creative individuals to find their own path and to engage in hermeneutical dialogue with spiritual beliefs and practices.

Fourth, New Kadampa Buddhism has drawn adherents equally from among feeling types and thinking types, unlike Anglicanism and Catholicism that favoured feeling types. Here is a spiritual tradition that offers more than one path to enlightenment, and engages both the heart and the mind.

The limitation with the present study is clearly the small sample. A sample of this size limits the confidence that can be placed in the findings. The findings, however, are sufficiently intriguing to encourage further replication and extension of the present study.

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Table 1

Type distribution for Anglicans from Ross (1993)

The Sixteen Complete Types				Dichotomous Preferences	
ISTJ <i>n</i> = 10 (8.6%) +++++	ISFJ <i>n</i> = 14 (12.1%) +++++	INFJ <i>n</i> = 12 (10.3%) +++++	INTJ <i>n</i> = 8 (6.9%) +++++	E <i>n</i> = 44 (37.9%)	I <i>n</i> = 72 (62.1%)
+++++	+++++	+++++	+++++	S <i>n</i> = 42 (36.2%)	N <i>n</i> = 74 (63.8%)
++++	+++++	+++++	++	T <i>n</i> = 36 (31.0%)	F <i>n</i> = 80 (69.0%)
	++			J <i>n</i> = 68 (58.6%)	P <i>n</i> = 48 (41.4%)
				Pairs and Temperaments	
ISTP <i>n</i> = 1 (0.9%) +	ISFP <i>n</i> = 1 (0.9%) +	INFP <i>n</i> = 21 (18.1%) +++++	INTP <i>n</i> = 5 (4.3%) ++++	IJ <i>n</i> = 44 (37.9%)	IP <i>n</i> = 28 (24.1%)
		+++++	++++	EP <i>n</i> = 20 (17.2%)	EJ <i>n</i> = 24 (20.7%)
		+++++		ST <i>n</i> = 18 (15.5%)	SF <i>n</i> = 24 (20.7%)
		+++++		NF <i>n</i> = 56 (48.3%)	NT <i>n</i> = 18 (15.5%)
		+++		SJ <i>n</i> = 35 (30.2%)	SP <i>n</i> = 7 (6.0%)
ESTP <i>n</i> = 1 (0.9%) +	ESFP <i>n</i> = 4 (3.4%) +++	ENFP <i>n</i> = 12 (10.3%) +++++	ENTP <i>n</i> = 3 (2.6%) +++	NP <i>n</i> = 41 (35.3%)	NJ <i>n</i> = 33 (28.4%)
		+++++		TJ <i>n</i> = 26 (22.4%)	TP <i>n</i> = 10 (8.6%)
				FP <i>n</i> = 38 (32.8%)	FJ <i>n</i> = 42 (36.2%)
ESTJ <i>n</i> = 6 (5.2%) +++++	ESFJ <i>n</i> = 5 (4.3%) ++++	ENFJ <i>n</i> = 11 (9.5%) +++++	ENTJ <i>n</i> = 2 (1.7%) ++	IN <i>n</i> = 46 (39.7%)	EN <i>n</i> = 28 (24.1%)
		+++++		IS <i>n</i> = 26 (22.4%)	ES <i>n</i> = 16 (13.8%)
				ET <i>n</i> = 12 (10.3%)	EF <i>n</i> = 32 (27.6%)
				IF <i>n</i> = 48 (41.4%)	IT <i>n</i> = 24 (20.7%)

Jungian Types (E)		Jungian Types (I)		Dominant Types				
<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%			
E-TJ	8	6.9	I-TP	6	5.2	Dt.T	14	12.1
E-FJ	16	13.8	I-FP	22	19.0	Dt.F	38	32.8
ES-P	5	4.3	IS-J	24	20.7	Dt.S	29	25.0
EN-P	15	12.9	IN-J	20	17.2	Dt.N	35	30.2

Note: N = 116

+ = 1% N

Table 2

Type distribution for Catholics from Ross (1995)

The Sixteen Complete Types				Dichotomous Preferences				
ISTJ <i>n</i> = 16 (9.1%) +++++	ISFJ <i>n</i> = 24 (13.7%) +++++	INFJ <i>n</i> = 13 (7.4%) +++++	INTJ <i>n</i> = 8 (4.6%) +++++	E <i>n</i> = 81 (46.3%)	I <i>n</i> = 94 (53.7%)			
				S <i>n</i> = 93 (53.1%)	N <i>n</i> = 82 (46.9%)			
				T <i>n</i> = 64 (36.6%)	F <i>n</i> = 111 (63.4%)			
				J <i>n</i> = 106 (60.6%)	P <i>n</i> = 69 (39.4%)			
The Sixteen Complete Types				Pairs and Temperaments				
ISTP <i>n</i> = 2 (1.1%) +	ISFP <i>n</i> = 13 (7.4%) +++++	INFP <i>n</i> = 12 (6.9%) +++++	INTP <i>n</i> = 6 (3.4%) +++	IJ <i>n</i> = 61 (34.9%)	IP <i>n</i> = 33 (18.9%)	EP <i>n</i> = 36 (20.6%)		
				EJ <i>n</i> = 45 (25.7%)				
				ST <i>n</i> = 36 (20.6%)	SF <i>n</i> = 57 (32.6%)	NF <i>n</i> = 54 (30.9%)		
				NT <i>n</i> = 28 (16.0%)				
				SJ <i>n</i> = 69 (39.4%)	SP <i>n</i> = 24 (13.7%)	NP <i>n</i> = 45 (25.7%)		
				NJ <i>n</i> = 37 (21.1%)				
				TJ <i>n</i> = 47 (26.9%)	TP <i>n</i> = 17 (9.7%)	FP <i>n</i> = 52 (29.7%)		
				FJ <i>n</i> = 59 (33.7%)				
				IN <i>n</i> = 39 (22.3%)	EN <i>n</i> = 43 (24.6%)	IS <i>n</i> = 55 (31.4%)		
				ES <i>n</i> = 38 (21.7%)				
				ET <i>n</i> = 32 (18.3%)	EF <i>n</i> = 49 (28.0%)	IF <i>n</i> = 62 (35.4%)		
				IT <i>n</i> = 32 (18.3%)				
Jungian Types (E)		Jungian Types (I)		Dominant Types				
<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%			
E-TJ	23	13.1	I-TP	8	4.6	Dt.T	31	17.7
E-FJ	22	12.6	I-FP	25	14.3	Dt.F	47	26.9
ES-P	9	5.1	IS-J	40	22.9	Dt.S	49	28.0
EN-P	27	15.4	IN-J	21	12.0	Dt.N	48	27.4

Note: N = 175

+ = 1% N

Table 3

Type distribution for Buddhists

The Sixteen Complete Types				Dichotomous Preferences	
ISTJ <i>n</i> = 6 (19.4%) +++++	ISFJ <i>n</i> = 2 (6.5%) +++++	INFJ <i>n</i> = 6 (19.4%) +++++	INTJ <i>n</i> = 3 (9.7%) +++++	E <i>n</i> = 10 (32.3%)	I <i>n</i> = 21 (67.7%)
+++++	+++++	+++++	+++++	S <i>n</i> = 10 (32.3%)	N <i>n</i> = 21 (67.7%)
+++++	++	+++++	+++++	T <i>n</i> = 15 (48.4%)	F <i>n</i> = 16 (51.6%)
+++++		+++++		J <i>n</i> = 22 (71.0%)	P <i>n</i> = 9 (29.0%)
		++++		Pairs and Temperaments	
ISTP <i>n</i> = 1 (3.2%) +++	ISFP <i>n</i> = 0 (0.0%)	INFP <i>n</i> = 1 (3.2%) +++	INTP <i>n</i> = 2 (6.5%) +++++	IJ <i>n</i> = 17 (54.8%)	IP <i>n</i> = 4 (12.9%)
			++	EP <i>n</i> = 5 (16.1%)	EJ <i>n</i> = 5 (16.1%)
				ST <i>n</i> = 7 (22.6%)	SF <i>n</i> = 3 (9.7%)
				NF <i>n</i> = 13 (41.9%)	NT <i>n</i> = 8 (25.8%)
ESTP <i>n</i> = 0 (0.0%)	ESFP <i>n</i> = 0 (0.0%)	ENFP <i>n</i> = 4 (12.9%) +++++	ENTP <i>n</i> = 1 (3.2%) +++	SJ <i>n</i> = 9 (29.0%)	SP <i>n</i> = 1 (3.2%)
		+++++		NP <i>n</i> = 8 (25.8%)	NJ <i>n</i> = 13 (41.9%)
		+++		TJ <i>n</i> = 11 (35.5%)	TP <i>n</i> = 4 (12.9%)
				FP <i>n</i> = 5 (16.1%)	FJ <i>n</i> = 11 (35.5%)
ESTJ <i>n</i> = 0 (0.0%)	ESFJ <i>n</i> = 1 (3.2%) +++	ENFJ <i>n</i> = 2 (6.5%) +++++	ENTJ <i>n</i> = 2 (6.5%) +++++	IN <i>n</i> = 12 (38.7%)	EN <i>n</i> = 9 (29.0%)
		++	++	IS <i>n</i> = 9 (29.0%)	ES <i>n</i> = 1 (3.2%)
				ET <i>n</i> = 3 (9.7%)	EF <i>n</i> = 7 (22.6%)
				IF <i>n</i> = 9 (29.0%)	IT <i>n</i> = 12 (38.7%)

	Jungian Types (E)		Jungian Types (I)		Dominant Types			
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%		
E-TJ	2	6.5	I-TP	3	9.7	Dt.T	5	16.1
E-FJ	3	9.7	I-FP	1	3.2	Dt.F	4	12.9
ES-P	0	0.0	IS-J	8	25.8	Dt.S	8	25.8
EN-P	5	16.1	IN-J	9	29.0	Dt.N	14	45.2

Note: N = 31

+ = 1% N