



Adaptation and Developments in Western Buddhism: Socially Engaged Buddhism in the UK

Phil Henry

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In recent years, there has been a growing academic acknowledgment around the world of a contemporary Buddhist phenomenon described as Engaged, or Socially Engaged Buddhism (SEB). It is a contested phenomenon variously associated with finding Buddhist solutions for social, political and ecological problems. The debate about its origins, practice and legitimacy has stirred academics and practitioners alike.

Firstly, does such an approach to Buddhist practice constitute a departure with the past, in which case a new expression of an ancient practice is being experienced all around us? Or is this really a continuity of practice, adapted to inform current understanding given that some would describe Buddhism as always having been engaged? *Adaptation and Developments in Western Buddhism* examines the UK Socially Engaged Buddhist experience captured through a series of five case studies of Buddhist groups and a survey undertaken over two years in the field.

The volume is a ground-breaking and benchmark analysis of Socially Engaged Buddhism in the UK, drawing for the first time on evidence from practitioner's experiences with which to characterise the previously dichotomous academic debate. Ultimately, the volume locates Socially Engaged Buddhism in the UK and places it within the broader and global context of an emerging "Western Buddhism", characterising the phenomenon and its relationships to the wider Buddhist world.

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