

Special Issue

Engaged Buddhism for an Engulfed World: New Perspectives on Humanistic Buddhism

Message from the Guest Editors

Engaged Buddhism advocates the application of Buddhist philosophy in everyday life and the use of Buddhist practices for the sake of the betterment of oneself and society. It promotes a sense of engagement and responsibility for the world and has led more and more Chinese Buddhists to care about the welfare of society and to contribute to charity, education, environment protection, and public health, among other social causes. Buddhism itself promotes multiculturalism. Since its origin in India, it has taken up abode in many cultural and geographical areas in Central, East, and Southeast Asia, and today, its influences continue reaching all around the world. If we say Engaged Buddhism was birthed passively by the socio-historical circumstances at the time, then we must ask whether it could play a more active role in today's world that is threatened by a reverse trend of globalization and increasing hostility between some major cultures and states. It is thus worthwhile for scholars to study whether and how Engaged Buddhism could wield its cross-cultural capacity to contribute to world peace and cooperation.

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Fresh developments in the disciplines that consistently make significant contributions to our understanding of religious personality, authority, devotion, and community – disciplines ranging from psychology, sociology, and anthropology to history, art history, philosophy, literary criticism, and political science – fuel general, as well as scholarly, interest in the world's religions.

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