

(Mobile ebook) The New Buddhism: The Western Transformation of an Ancient Tradition

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Von James William Coleman
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JAMES WILLIAM COLEMAN

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before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The New Buddhism:
The Western Transformation of an Ancient Tradition:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. On contemporary American Zen, Tibetan, Vipassana BuddhismVon Kim BoykinThis is an interesting and readable exploration of the "new Buddhism" in the West--that is, the meditation-oriented Buddhism (Zen, Tibetan, and Vipassana) practiced mainly by "converts," as opposed to the Buddhism practiced mainly by Asian immigrants and their descendants. Coleman, a sociologist and a practicing Buddhist, takes a look at the history, practices, teachings, demographics, problems, and trajectory of this new Buddhism. Although the book is ostensibly about "Western" Buddhism, it's actually mainly about American Buddhism, with occasional mentions of British Buddhism.I think this book will especially be of interest to practitioners of the "new Buddhism" who want to learn more about our history and our fellow practitioners. It could also be used as a text in a college course on Buddhism or on American religion. (If you want to learn about all the major forms of Buddhism in the U.S., I would recommend Richard Hughes Seager's "Buddhism in America," which includes chapters on Jodo Shinshu and Soka Gakkai as well as Zen, Tibetan, and Theravada Buddhism.)After an introductory chapter, Chs. 2 and 3 provide an excellent overview of the history of Buddhism in Asia and in the West, including the main schools, practices, and teachings. Coleman does an impressive job of covering the important points in a small space while also keeping it interesting. Ch. 4 discusses in detail the practices and beliefs of Zen, Tibetan, and Vipassana Buddhism and their similarities and differences. Ch. 5, "Sex, Power, and Conflict," explores issues of gender, sexual passion, and homosexuality in the history of Buddhism and in the new Buddhism and examines the scandals revolving around sex and power in Buddhist centers in the 1980s. Ch. 6 includes a look at the demographics of the new Buddhists (very well educated and very liberal), describes the typical path that Westerners follow into Buddhism, and considers reasons for Buddhism's growing popularity. And Ch. 7 briefly considers the future of Buddhism in the West.

KurzbeschreibungIn our multicultural society, faiths formerly seen as exotic have become attractive alternatives for many people seeking more satisfying spiritual lives. This is especially true of Buddhism, which is the focus of constant media attention--thanks at least in part to celebrity converts, major motion pictures, and the popularity of the Dalai Lama. Following this recent trend in the West, author James Coleman argues that a new and radically different form of this ancient faith is emerging.The New Buddhism sheds new light on this recent evolution of Buddhist practice in the West. After briefly recounting the beginnings and spread of Buddhism in the East, Coleman chronicles its reinterpretation by key Western teachers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, ranging from the British poet Sir Edwin Arnold to the Beat writer Alan Watts. Turning to the contemporary scene, he finds that Western teachers have borrowed liberally from different Buddhist traditions that never intersect in their original contexts. Men and women practice together as equals; ceremonies and rituals are simpler, more direct, and not believed to have magical effects. Moreover, the new Buddhism has made the path of meditation and spiritual awakening available to everyone, not just an elite cadre of monks. Drawing on interviews with noted teachers and lay practitioners, as well as a survey completed by members of seven North American Buddhist centers, Coleman depicts the colorful variety of new Buddhists today, from dilettantes to devoted students and the dedicated teachers who guide their spiritual progress. He also details the problems that have arisen because of some Western influences--especially with regard to gender roles, sex, and power.Exploring the appeal of this exotic faith in postmodern society and questioning its future in a global consumer culture, The New Buddhism provides a thorough and fascinating guide to Western Buddhism today..deThe newcomer to Buddhism is often confused at the variety of forms it takes, from spare and strict Zen to flamboyant Tibetan Buddhism. Sociologist James William Coleman's The New Buddhism does us all a favor by breaking down Buddhism as practiced in the West. He begins with a concise but inclusive history of Buddhism's many faces in Asia. A summary of Buddhism's transplant to the West and subsequent growth there brings us right up to present-day teachers and movements. He then combines his 15 years of personal experience with wide reading, personal interviews, and hundreds of questionnaires to show us who Western Buddhists are--where they come from, why they are attracted to Buddhism, and what they do in their practice. Coleman also focuses his magnifying lens on specific groups, noting the dynamics of the different organizations as well as the pressures that they have faced, from succession controversies to sex scandals. Anyone interested in Buddhism should pick up a few titles on the how-tos of meditation and the wherefores of Buddhist philosophy, and at the same time, they should pick up The New Buddhism for a clear picture of the contemporary reality behind the ancient teachings. --Brian BruyaPressestimmen"An important contribution to the growing literature on American Buddhism."--Peter N. Gregory, Tricycle"A valuable contribution to our sociological understanding of Buddhism in the West and particularly in the United States. . . . essential reading for anyone with serious interest in the field. . . . With its intelligent method, approachable style, wealth of data, and educated insights, this bookremains an indispensable resource for and available addition to the study of the rapidly expanding practice of American Buddhism."--Journal of Religion "An important contribution to the growing literature on American Buddhism."--Peter N. Gregory, Tricycle "A valuable contribution to our sociological understanding of Buddhism in the West and particularly in the United States. . . . essential reading for

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