

For this week's homework, we'll share perspectives "about how buddhism has been dominated by the monastic ethos of the east, and needs to be re-conceptualized from the ground up for our own cultures." We can open up the discussion to include all religious views, and consider ways we have (or have not) been able to accomodate these.

A couple resources from Stephen Batchelor to get the wheels turning:

http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/gg_1...hen_batchelor/

<http://www.stephenbatchelor.org/creating.html>

<http://www.tricycle.com/feature/crossroads?page=0,0>

http://waysofknowing.kira.org/4Transcripts/2009.02.12_-_Workshop_01

I'd like to see different approaches are appreciated and valued, whether with a focus on monastic or lay practices. These two are in a more of a complementary relationship in my mind.

Some temples in Korea serve the community while some reserved for monastic life. It's common for people to stay in temples not just for practice but even for 'worldly' reasons, i.e. educational or professional self studies. Whether Buddhist, Christian etc., spiritual practices are generally considered as important and respected.

Buddhism is very new for the 'west' and it certainly is an interesting time for people here who are interested in contemplative traditions. I find myself in somewhat peculiar position too, seeing various sides so to speak. Whenever I go to churches in UK, it is sad to see how small and old congregations are. I feel that there is a vacuum of a sort that cannot be easily filled.

Spiritual practices can be applied in many ways. Terms like lay practice or monasticism shouldn't limit how one understand teachings. And having a freedom to explore a diverse options for oneself is positive.