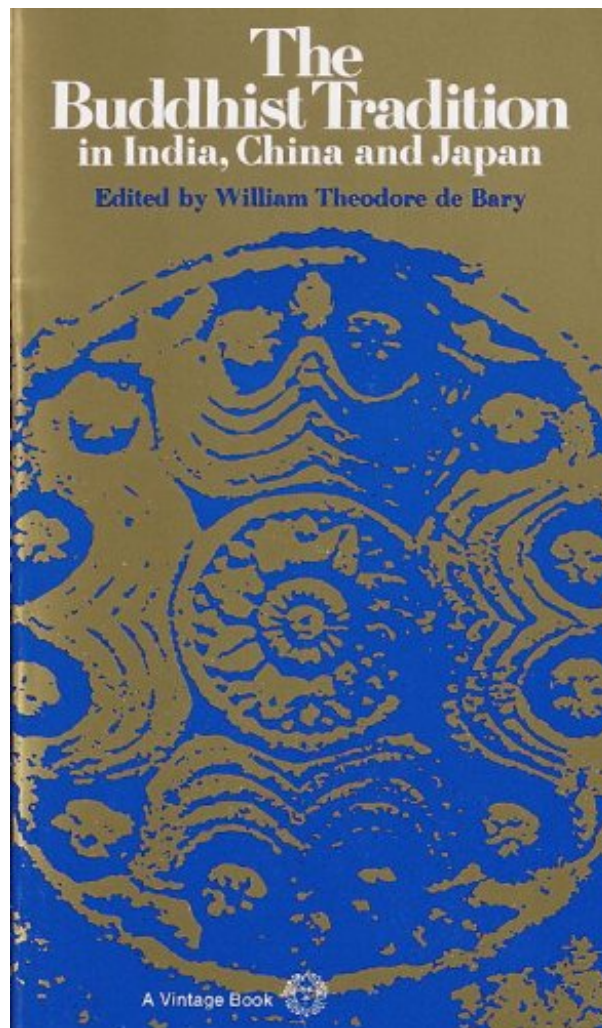


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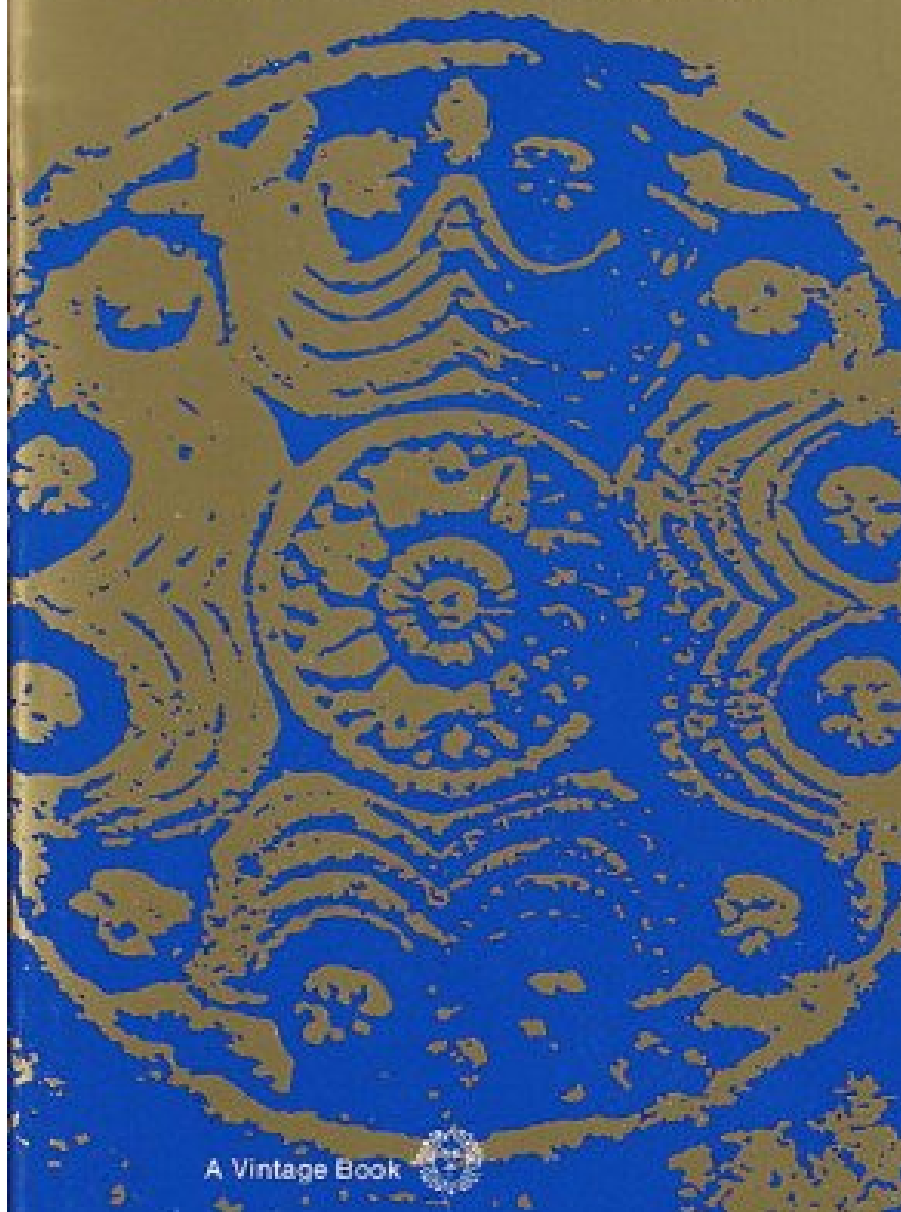


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Buddha, as the Awakened One, has exemplified to millions of followers throughout the ages a living Truth, a dynamic wisdom and an active compassion. It is these qualities that have inspired hope and courage in men who were asked to face to the stark reality of man's condition: the inevitable involvement in suffering which arises from his persistent egoism and refusal to recognize his finitude.

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- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.25" h x .94" w x 4.25" l, .55 pounds
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Excellent overview

By A Customer

This book is a very good introduction to the Buddhist tradition, historically and cross-culturally. The book incorporates excerpts from basic scriptures and major writings, in an effort to represent the mainstream of Buddhist thought. Although, as they state in the preface, there is "an enormous diversity within Buddhism and no fixed standard of orthodoxy" the editor and authors succeed in presenting the "common ground of discussion" they aim to reveal. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in beginning a study of Buddhist history, thought and culture.

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful.

Book is in fact a Reader

By William Nathan Alexander

This book is not an history of Buddhism in India, China and Japan. It is a reader broadly divided into 13 sections. These are briefly introduced by the editor. The editor's intrusions are minimal and it is rarely clear why certain "representative" passages have been chosen, and others left out. That said, I felt the book adequately covered the traditions it sought to represent. And, for a text book, it's quite inexpensive.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

The Bird's-Eye View of Buddhism

By Kieran Fox

This is a huge overview of the many sects and schools of Buddhism that developed in India, China, and then Japan. There is very little detail here, and the authors/editors don't dwell on anyone or any subject for long before moving on, but if you are looking for a survey, that is the book's great strength. Another thing to be aware of is that aside from introductions to each country's tradition at the start of the three major sections, the authors/editors prefer to say little and let Buddhist texts (in translation of course) speak for themselves. This might be a negative if you are looking for hand-holding and scholarly exegesis, but personally I found it very rewarding - no book on Buddhism I've ever read has made the various sutras and other texts so accessible, and in such manageable and well-chosen little chunks.

I take one star off because at times a book of this length, yet with no stylistic consistency (due to the enormous variety of sources translated here) and little thematic unity can drag. Reading excerpt after excerpt can get tiring at times when you are looking for the deeper or unitive meaning of what is being taught. Another thing is there's a slight and generally well-concealed, but still evident, bias toward the Mahayana evidenced here, and the occasional derogatory remark toward the selfish little Hinayana school. To be expected, of course, from scholars whose area of expertise is purely Mahayanist nations (China/Japan), but out of place in an otherwise so balanced and scholarly work.

All in all though this book will let you read a lot of the texts/sutras as they are in themselves, and introduce you to an enormous number of Buddhist thinkers, mystics, schools, traditions, lineages, and so on, while providing a decent picture of how Buddhism developed in India and then spread through China to Japan. Recommended for anyone interested in Buddhist history.

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