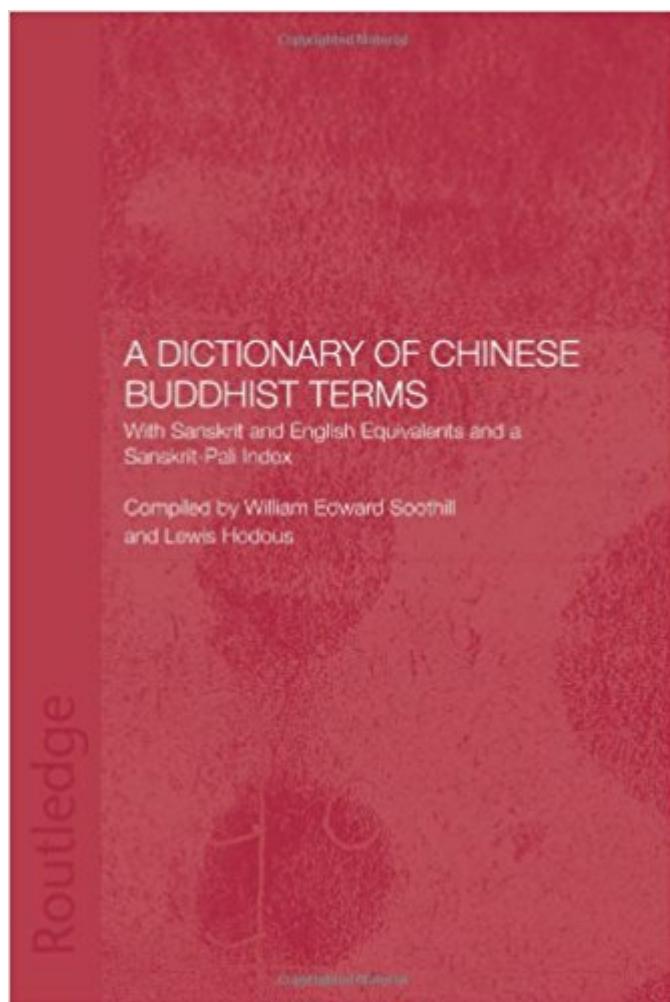


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A Dictionary Of Chinese Buddhist Terms: With Sanskrit And English Equivalents And A Sanskrit-Pali Index



Synopsis

This invaluable interpretive tool, first published in 1937, is now available for the first time in a paperback edition specially aimed at students of Chinese Buddhism. Those who have endeavoured to read Chinese texts apart from the apprehension of a Sanskrit background have generally made a fallacious interpretation, for the Buddhist canon is basically translation, or analogous to translation. In consequence, a large number of terms existing are employed approximately to connote imported ideas, as the various Chinese translators understood those ideas. Various translators invented different terms; and, even when the same term was finally adopted, its connotation varied, sometimes widely, from the Chinese term or phrase as normally used by the Chinese. For instance, *klāśa* undoubtedly has a meaning in Sanskrit similar to that of, i.e. affliction, distress, trouble. In Buddhism affliction (or, as it may be understood from Chinese, the afflicters, distressers, troublers) means passions and illusions; and consequently *fan-nao* in Buddhist phraseology has acquired this technical connotation of the passions and illusions. Many terms of a similar character are noted in the body of this work. Consequent partly on this use of ordinary terms, even a well-educated Chinese without a knowledge of the technical equivalents finds himself unable to understand their implications.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Since this book is out of copyright, you'll find lots of versions of this. Most just call it "Soothill's" (the main author's name) or "Soothill-Hodous" (the names of both men who spent a decade of their lives compiling the data for this dictionary). Some suggest that this dictionary is out of date. Work was

finished in 1934, so maybe that is their point. However Buddhism stretches back some 2500 years. How much can change in just 75 years? The more valid argument is that the dictionary may have some inaccuracies, omissions, or mistranslations. It's probably true that such issues exist, and the author warns of this possibility in his preface. If you ask seven different Buddhists from seven different sects of Buddhism, you will get seven different answers for what a certain title means. Therefore, it's impossible to create a completely accurate dictionary of such terms. While some criticize the minor shortcomings of this dictionary, you'll find a copy of Soothill-Hodous on the bookshelf of almost every professor of Easter Philosophy, Eastern Religion, or who teaches anything about Buddhism. This dictionary is worth having for anyone who is serious about the study of Chinese Buddhism (most of these terms also apply to sects of Japanese and Korean Buddhism as well). However, there is a free digitized version floating around the internet which is easier to search than the paper version.

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