

Review

The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism, by Robert E. Buswell, Jr and Donald S. Lopez, Jr. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014. xxxii + 1265 pp. \$65.00. ISBN 978-0-69115-786-3 (hardback).

Reviewed by: Thomas A. Forsthoefel, Mercyhurst University, Atlanta, GA.
tforsthoefel@mercyhurst.edu

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This superb collection is a major resource for teachers and scholars. With over five thousand entries ranging from classic Buddhist doctrines to esoteric beliefs and diverse communities in Buddhist history, the volume will be a valuable addition to the library not only of specialists but, perhaps more importantly, non-specialists, that is, those whose focus and training in religions of South or East Asia may include some training in areas of Buddhist thought or sects, but perhaps not comprehensively or not as a primary area of focus. There is no shortage of departments of religious studies in colleges and universities which will ask or require non-specialists to teach introductory courses in Buddhism, world religions or survey courses in Mahayana thought. Buswell and Lopez's book will be a major resource for such professors, and will certainly be a useful reference for any professor or scholar of Buddhist thought and practice.

The book includes helpful prefatory material that contextualizes developments in Buddhism. Among these are a timeline of Buddhism beginning with its origins in India and extending to other areas critical to the history of Buddhism: Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, East Asia, Tibet and Central Asia. The introductory material also includes charts of Asian historical periods, including those of India, China, Korea and Japan. Eight maps conclude the prefatory material, including two 'metaphysical' maps of the Mount Sumeru world system. The dictionary then commences with over one thousand pages of entries; this in turn is followed by a roster, a 'List of Lists'. As new students of Buddhism soon learn, Buddhism is replete with an array of lists that help consolidate information, both as pedagogical devices and instruments for meditation. The most basic of these are well known: the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path, the Twelve-Fold Chain of Dependent Origination. The authors here consolidate classic lists in nearly fifty pages, arranged numerically,

beginning with one ('one vehicle') and terminating in 'hundreds', in this case, the one hundred dharmas of the Yogacara School.

The entries themselves—English renderings of terms that are linguistically cross-referenced with Sanskrit, Pali or other appropriate Asian languages—are substantive and thorough, both taken singly and as a whole. The book does not follow the model of some terminological dictionaries which might briefly—and only—offer a short definition. Instead, the entries here substantially unpack each term in short essays ranging between two hundred and six hundred words, and occasionally much longer. The book thus serves, in the words of the authors, as an 'encyclopedic dictionary'. Drawing on their own expertise as well as on the support and collaboration of prominent scholars in the field—not to mention also that of a talented cohort of graduate students—the dictionary is a trenchant selection of Buddhist terms, effectively but not reductively condensing a staggering amount of content gathered in Buddhist traditions for two and a half millennia. It is a remarkable achievement and outstanding contribution, supporting the work of teachers and scholars, but, happily, not limited to professionals in Buddhist studies.