

## Preface

At more than one million words, this is the largest dictionary of Buddhism ever produced in the English language. Yet even at this length, it only begins to represent the full breadth and depth of the Buddhist tradition. Many great dictionaries and glossaries have been produced in Asia over the long history of Buddhism and Buddhist Studies. One thinks immediately of works like the *Mahāvīyutpatti*, the ninth-century Tibetan-Sanskrit lexicon said to have been commissioned by the king of Tibet to serve as a guide for translators of the dharma. It contains 9,565 entries in 283 categories. One of the great achievements of twentieth-century Buddhology was the *Bukkyō Daijiten* (“Encyclopedia of Buddhism”), published in ten massive volumes between 1932 and 1964 by the distinguished Japanese scholar Mochizuki Shinkō. Among English-language works, there is William Soothill and Lewis Hodous’s *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, published in 1937, and, from the same year, G. P. Malalasekera’s invaluable *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*. In preparing the present dictionary, we have sought to build upon these classic works in substantial ways.

Apart from the remarkable learning that these earlier works display, two things are noteworthy about them. The first is that they are principally based on a single source language or Buddhist tradition. The second is that they are all at least a half-century old. Many things have changed in the field of Buddhist Studies over the past fifty years, some for the worse, some very much for the better. One looks back in awe at figures like Louis de la Vallée Poussin and his student Msgr. Étienne Lamotte, who were able to use sources in Sanskrit, Pāli, Chinese, Japanese, and Tibetan with a high level of skill. Today, few scholars have the luxury of time to develop such expertise. Yet this change is not necessarily a sign of the decline of the dharma predicted by the Buddha; from several perspectives, we are now in the golden age of Buddhist Studies. A century ago, scholarship on Buddhism focused on the classical texts of India and, to a much lesser extent, China. Tibetan and Chinese sources were valued largely for the access they provided to Indian texts lost in the original Sanskrit. The Buddhism of Korea was seen as an appendage to the Buddhism of China or as a largely unacknowledged source of the Buddhism of Japan. Beyond the works of “the Pāli canon,” relatively little was known of the practice of Buddhism in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia. All of this has changed for the better over the past half century. There are now many more scholars of Buddhism, there is a much

higher level of specialization, and there is a larger body of important scholarship on each of the many Buddhist cultures of Asia. In addition, the number of adherents of Buddhism in the West has grown significantly, with many developing an extensive knowledge of a particular Buddhist tradition, whether or not they hold the academic credentials of a professional Buddhologist. It has been our good fortune to be able to draw upon this expanding body of scholarship in preparing *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*.

This new dictionary seeks to address the needs of this present age. For the great majority of scholars of Buddhism, who do not command all of the major Buddhist languages, this reference book provides a repository of many of the most important terms used across the traditions, and their rendering in several Buddhist languages. For the college professor who teaches “Introduction to Buddhism” every year, requiring one to venture beyond one’s particular area of geographical and doctrinal expertise, it provides descriptions of many of the important figures and texts in the major traditions. For the student of Buddhism, whether inside or outside the classroom, it offers information on many fundamental doctrines and practices of the various traditions of the religion. This dictionary is based primarily on six Buddhist languages and their traditions: Sanskrit, Pāli, Tibetan, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. Also included, although appearing much less frequently, are terms and proper names in vernacular Burmese, Lao, Mongolian, Sinhalese, Thai, and Vietnamese. The majority of entries fall into three categories: the terminology of Buddhist doctrine and practice, the texts in which those teachings are set forth, and the persons (both human and divine) who wrote those texts or appear in their pages. In addition, there are entries on important places—including monasteries and sacred mountains—as well as on the major schools and sects of the various Buddhist traditions. The vast majority of the main entries are in their original language, although cross-references are sometimes provided to a common English rendering. Unlike many terminological dictionaries, which merely provide a brief listing of meanings with perhaps some of the equivalencies in various Buddhist languages, this work seeks to function as an encyclopedic dictionary. The main entries offer a short essay on the extended meaning and significance of the terms covered, typically in the range of two hundred to six hundred words, but sometimes substantially longer. To offer further assistance in

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understanding a term or tracing related concepts, an extensive set of internal cross-references (marked in small capital letters) guides the reader to related entries throughout the dictionary. But even with over a million words and five thousand entries, we constantly had to make difficult choices about what to include and how much to say. Given the long history and vast geographical scope of the Buddhist traditions, it is difficult to imagine any dictionary ever being truly comprehensive. Authors also write about what they know (or would like to know); so inevitably the dictionary reflects our own areas of scholarly expertise, academic interests, and judgments about what readers need to learn about the various Buddhist traditions.

Despite the best efforts of the king of Tibet more than a thousand years ago, it has always been difficult for scholars of Buddhism to agree on translations. That difficulty persists in the present work for a variety of reasons, including the different ways that Buddhist scholiasts chose to translate technical terms into their various languages over the centuries, the preferences of the many modern scholars whose works we consulted, and the relative stubbornness of the authors. As a result, there will inevitably be some variation in the renderings of specific Buddhist terminology in the pages that follow. In our main entries, however, we have tried to guide users to the range of possible English translations that have been used to render a term. In addition, a significant effort has been made to provide the original language equivalencies in parentheses so that specialists in those languages can draw their own conclusions as to the appropriate rendering.

This book represents more than twelve years of effort. Donald Lopez initiated the project with the assistance of several of his graduate students at the University of Michigan, many of whom have now gone on to receive their degrees and be appointed to university positions. Around that time, Robert Buswell asked Lopez to serve as one of the editors of his two-volume *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* (New York: Macmillan Reference, 2004). When that project was completed, Lopez invited Buswell to join him as coauthor of the dictionary project, an offer he enthusiastically accepted, bringing with him his own team of graduate students from UCLA. In dividing up responsibilities for the dictionary, Buswell took principal charge

of entries on mainstream Buddhist concepts, Indian abhidharma, and East Asian Buddhism; Lopez took principal charge of entries on Mahāyāna Buddhism in India, Buddhist tantra, and Tibetan Buddhism. Once drafts of the respective sections were complete, we exchanged files to review each other's sections. Over the last seven years, we were in touch almost daily on one or another aspect of the project as we expanded upon and edited each other's drafts, making this a collaborative project in the best sense of the term. Graduate students at both the University of Michigan and UCLA assisted in gathering materials for the dictionary, preparing initial drafts, and tracing the multiple cross-references to Asian language terms. This project would have been impossible without their unstinting assistance and extraordinary commitment; we are grateful to each of them. Those graduate students and colleagues who made particularly extensive contributions to the dictionary are listed on the title page.

In addition to its more than five thousand main entries, this volume also contains a number of reference tools. Because the various historical periods and dynasties of India, China, Korea, and Japan appear repeatedly in the entries, historical chronologies of the Buddhist periods of those four countries have been provided. In order to compare what events were occurring across the Buddhist world at any given time, we have provided a timeline of Buddhism. Eight maps are provided, showing regions of the Buddhist world and of the traditional Buddhist cosmology. We have also included a List of Lists. Anyone with the slightest familiarity with Buddhism has been struck by the Buddhist propensity for making lists of almost anything. The *Mahāvvyutpatti* is in fact organized not alphabetically but by list, including such familiar lists as the four noble truths, the twelve links of dependent origination, and the thirty-two major marks of the Buddha, as well as less familiar lists, such as various kinds of grain (twenty items) and types of ornaments (sixty-four items). Here we have endeavored to include several of the most important lists, beginning with the one vehicle and ending with the one hundred dharmas of the Yogācāra school. After some discussion, we decided to forgo listing the 84,000 afflictions and their 84,000 antidotes.