Buddhist Scriptures
86320e74e683b330c89f682efae2c

Understanding Our Mind is an accessible guide for anyone who is curious about the inner workings of the mind. Originally released as Transformation at the Base, a finalist for the 2001 Nautilus Award, this seminal work on Buddhist applied psychology features a new introduction by Dharma teacher Reb Anderson. Understanding Our Mind is based on fifty verses on the nature of consciousness taken from the great fifth-century Buddhist master Vasubandhu. With compassion and insight, Nhat Hanh reveals how these ancient teachings can be applied to the modern world. Nhat Hanh focuses on the direct experience of recognizing and embracing the nature of our feelings and perceptions. The quality of our lives, he says, depends on the quality of the seeds in our minds. Buddhism teaches us how to nourish the seeds of joy and transform the seeds of suffering so that our understanding, love, and compassion can flower.

This new dictionary, now available in paperback as part of the best-selling Oxford Paperback Reference series, covers both historical and contemporary issues in Buddhism, and includes all Buddhist schools and cultures. Over 2,000 broad-ranging entries cover beliefs, doctrines, major teachers and scholars, place names, and artefacts, in a clear and concise style. The text is illustrated with line drawings of religious structures, iconographic forms and gestures, and ritual objects. Appendices include a chronology and a guide to canonical scriptures as well as a pronunciation guide for difficult names and terms.

Here is the core of the Buddha’s teaching in his own words, as it was memorized word-for-word by his disciples and written down two hundred years after his death. These selections from the Buddhist scriptures deal with the search for truth, the way of contemplation, life and death, living in community, and many other topics, serving as an excellent small introduction to the Buddha’s teaching. Whether addressed to monks and nuns, householders, outcastes, or thieves, the Buddha’s teachings are characterized by one main concern: conveying the reality of our bondage to suffering—and the supremely good news that liberation is possible. It is a concern as relevant for people today as it was for the people of north India a millennium and a half ago.

This clearly organized, well-researched book on the medieval catalogs of Buddhist writings in China illuminates the shaky foundations of modern Buddhist research. Storch exposes how the Chinese Buddhist corpus was shaped—and even censored—by generations of catalogers, the guardians of the canon. At the same time, Storch probes the catalogs for what they reveal about standards of authenticity; the assignment of value to some scriptures over others; and the history of books, libraries, and learning in pre-modern China.
Moreover, Storch argues convincingly that the history of Chinese Buddhist catalogs should be incorporated into comparative discussions of scripture and canon in world history. As the first general study of Chinese Buddhist bibliography in English by an author who demonstrates a thorough command of the material, this book is the first place scholars should turn to for information about the structure and formation of the Chinese Buddhist canon. This book deserves a place on the bookshelf of every specialist in pre-modern Chinese, Korean, and Japanese Buddhism. - John Kieschnick, Stanford University

This volume brings forward the importance of the cataloging of the many versions of the Chinese Buddhist canon. Given that these compilations are the source for much of the written history of Buddhism in East Asia, they deserve the careful study that has been given to them by Tanya Storch in this book. Her research advances the understanding and provides much new data about this genre of literature and its impact on Chinese religion and culture. - Lewis Lancaster, University of California, Berkeley

Offers insight into wide-ranging issues of how religious ideas are transmitted between cultures. Although the focus here is on the ways in which Buddhism, in both oral and written forms, was assimilated into Chinese literary society, Storch's comparative approach will also be of interest to scholars specializing in the comparative analysis of sacred scriptures. - E. Ann Matter, University of Pennsylvania

Cataloging is an essential step toward canon formation in East Asian Buddhism. However, current scholarship has not yet revealed the mysteries behind the collection of the enormous corpus of Buddhist texts, which is called the Buddhist canon, let alone the process of catalog making. Dr. Storch's work is pioneering in this direction and touches the core of the rich textual tradition in East Asian Buddhism. In addition, her meaningful contribution will be of interest to researchers of a global history of scriptural catalogs because she brings in a comparative perspective to the subject matter and puts the Chinese Buddhist catalogs on a par with the Confucian textual tradition and Western cataloging practices. This book is highly recommended for scholars and students studying Buddhism, history of the Chinese book, and comparative religion. - Jiang Wu, University of Arizona

While Buddhism has no central text such as the Bible or the Koran, there is a powerful body of scripture from across Asia that encompasses the dharma, or the teachings of Buddha. This rich anthology brings together works from a broad historical and geographical range, and from languages such as Pali, Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese and Japanese. There are tales of the Buddha's past lives, a discussion of the qualities and qualifications of a monk, and an exploration of the many meanings of Enlightenment. Together they provide a vivid picture of the Buddha and of the vast nature of the Buddhist tradition.

Visions of the Buddha offers a ground-breaking approach to the nature of the early discourses of the Buddha, the most foundational scriptures of Buddhist religion. Although the early discourses are commonly considered to be attempts to preserve the Buddha's teachings, Shulman demonstrates that these texts are full of creativity, and that their main aim is to beautify the image of the wonderous Buddha. While the texts surely care for the early teachings and for the Buddha's philosophy or his guidelines for meditation, and while at times they may relate real historical events, they are no less interested in telling good stories, in re-working folkloric materials, and in the visionary contemplation of the Buddha in order to sense his unique presence. The texts can thus be, at times, a type of meditation. Eviatar Shulman frames the early discourses as literary masterpieces that helped Buddhism achieve the wonderful success it has obtained. Much of the discourses' masterful storytelling was achieved through a technique of composition defined here as the play of
In the oral literature of early Buddhism, texts were composed of formulas, which are repeated within and between texts. Shulman argues that the formulas are the real texts of Buddhism, and are primary to full discourses. Shaping texts through the play of formulas balances conservative and innovative tendencies within the tradition, making room for creativity within accepted forms and patterns. The texts we find today are thus versions--remnants--chosen by history of a much more vibrant and dynamic creative process.

Buddhist Scriptures A Short Collection of Buddhist Scripture Wisdom of the East Buddhist Scriptures A short collection of Buddhist scripture, a Selection Translated from the Pali. Buddhist texts can be categorized in a number of ways. The Western terms "scripture" and "canonical" are applied to Buddhism in inconsistent ways by Western scholars: for example, one authority refers to "scriptures and other canonical texts", while another says that scriptures can be categorized into canonical, commentarial and pseudo-canonical. Another division is that between buddhavacana "word of the Buddha" and other texts. These religious texts were written in many different languages and scripts but memorizing and reciting the texts were of high value. Even after the development of printing, Buddhists preferred to keep to their original practices with these texts.

This book offers an engrossing account both of the origin and development of the sutras and of the monks who braved perilous journeys and mastered unfamiliar languages in order to carry the sutras to new lands.

A Los Angeles Times Bestseller “Raises timely and important questions about what religious freedom in America truly means.” —Ruth Ozeki “A must-read for anyone interested in the implacable quest for civil liberties, social and racial justice, religious freedom, and American belonging.” —George Takei On December 7, 1941, as the bombs fell on Pearl Harbor, the first person detained was the leader of the Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist sect in Hawai‘i. Nearly all Japanese Americans were subject to accusations of disloyalty, but Buddhists aroused particular suspicion. From the White House to the local town council, many believed that Buddhism was incompatible with American values. Intelligence agencies targeted the Buddhist community, and Buddhist priests were deemed a threat to national security. In this pathbreaking account, based on personal accounts and extensive research in untapped archives, Duncan Ryūken Williams reveals how, even as they were stripped of their homes and imprisoned in camps, Japanese American Buddhists launched one of the most inspiring defenses of religious freedom in our nation’s history, insisting that they could be both Buddhist and American. “A searingly instructive story from which all Americans might learn.” —Smithsonian “Williams’ moving account shows how Japanese Americans transformed Buddhism into an American religion, and, through that struggle, changed the United States for the better.” —Viet Thanh Nguyen, author of The Sympathizer “Reading this book, one cannot help but think of the current racial and religious tensions that have gripped this nation—and shudder.” —Reza Aslan, author of Zealot

This is the extended and annotated edition including * an extensive annotation of more than 10,000 words about the history and basics of Buddhism, written by Thomas William Rhys Davids * an interactive table-of-contents * perfect formatting for electronic reading devices

This book contains the essential Buddhist scriptures, as preserved by the Buddhists of Ceylon and Further India and which are in the Pali language, a language related to Sanskrit much as Italian is related to Latin; and for several centuries before and after Christ it was spoken in varying dialects over most of Northern India. Buddha, according to the Ceylon tradition, died 543 B.C., but it is generally agreed that this date is too early. The latest calculation by an Indian scholar, Mr. V. Gopala Aiyer, makes the date fifty-six years later, 487 B.C. Immediately after Buddha’s death the first council is said to have been held at Rajagaha (now Rajgir in Behar on the borders of Bengal), where the Vinaya (discipline) and Dhamma (doctrine) were recited and fixed. The historical evidence for this council is much disputed, but it is extremely probable that some such collection was made about this time. Nothing was written down. It was preserved, as the Vedas had already been preserved for
centuries, by memory. It is this very fact which strengthens the view that we possess a faithful picture of the preaching of Buddha, a preaching which extended over more than forty years. To determine to what extent the discourses have been worked up into other forms and added to, and especially how the rules of the Order have been gradually elaborated, is a work for future scholars. Contents: Introduction The Buddhist Scriptures Christian Parallels The Dream Of Queen Maya The Birth Of Gotama The Four Signs The Great Renunciation The Chain Of Causation The Beginning Of Buddha's Preaching The Ordination Of Yasa The Ten Commandments The Fire Discourse The Weaver's Daughter The Questions Of Malunyaputta The Questions Of Utiya The Questions Of Vacchagotta Birth-Story Of The Blessings Of The Commandments Birth-Story Of King Mahasilava Birth-Story Of The City With Four Gates The Pig-Faced Ghost The Jewel Discourse. A Spell Dhaniya The Herdsman Buddha's Visit To Chunda The Death Of Buddha The Non-Existence Of Individuality Non-Individuality And Moral Responsibility

This book exemplifies the best sort of work being done on Chinese religions today. Christine Mollier expertly draws not only on published canonical sources but also on manuscript and visual material, as well as worldwide modern scholarship, to give us the most sophisticated book-length study yet produced on the textual relations between the Buddhist and Taoist traditions. She pushes past the tired, vague, and rather innocent-sounding trope of ‘influence’ to pinpoint much more complex—and fascinating—processes of textual repackaging, hybridization, adaptation, appropriation, reframing, pirating, remodeling, and transposing. Throughout, the urgent concerns of medieval Chinese people—life, health, protection, salvation—are sensitively and elegantly evoked. Anyone interested in Chinese religions, in the ways in which religious texts are formed, and in cross-religious interactions should want to read this book.—Robert Ford Campany, University of Southern California

"Since the inception of Taoism and the transplantation of Buddhism in China in the first few centuries of the common era, proponents of Taoism and Buddhism have engaged in shrill debate and sly mimesis. In the 1950s modern scholars began to insist that the two 'higher' religions of China could not be understood except in relation to each other. With Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face, Christine Mollier advances the debate and effectively proposes new methods, new sources, and new conclusions. Mollier demonstrates that mutual self-fashioning in the history of religion ought best be understood through the sustained study of the concrete and practical aspects of religious life. Utilizing a dazzling array of sources—including medieval manuscripts, liturgies, canonical texts, statues, and hagiography—this eloquent intervention sets the standard for many decades to come. Her book alerts us to the existence and sophistication of a third tradition, one plying the shifting boundaries between Taoism and Buddhism."—Stephen F. Teiser, Princeton University

Christine Mollier reveals in this volume previously unexplored dimensions of the interaction between Buddhism and Taoism in medieval China. While scholars of Chinese religions have long recognized the mutual influences linking the two traditions, Mollier here brings to light their intense contest for hegemony in the domains of scripture and ritual. Drawing on a far-reaching investigation of canonical texts, together with manuscript sources from Dunhuang and the monastic libraries of Japan—many of them studied here for the first time—she demonstrates the competition and complementarity of the two great Chinese religions in their quest to address personal and collective fears of diverse ills, including sorcery, famine, and untimely death. In this context, Buddhist apocrypha and Taoist scriptures were composed through a process of mutual borrowing, yielding parallel texts, Mollier argues, that closely mirrored one another. Life-extending techniques, astrological observances, talismans, spells, and the use of effigies and icons to resolve the fundamental preoccupations of medieval society were similarly incorporated in both religions. In many cases, as a result, one and the same body of material can be found in both Buddhist and Taoist guises. Among the exorcistic, prophylactic, and therapeutic ritual methods explored here in detail are the "Heavenly Kitchens" that grant divine nutrition to their adepts, incantations that were promoted to counteract bewitchment, as well as talismans for attaining longevity and the protection of stellar deities. The destiny of the Jiuku Tianzun, the Taoist bodhisattva whose salvific mission and iconography were modeled on Guanyin (Avalokitesvara), is examined at length. Through the case-studies set forth here, the patterns whereby medieval Buddhists and Taoists each appropriated and transformed for
their own use the rites and scriptures of their rivals are revealed with unprecedented precision. Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face is abundantly illustrated with drawings and diagrams from canonical and manuscript sources, together with art and artifacts photographed by the author in the course of her field research in China. Sophisticated in its analysis, broad in its synthesis of a variety of difficult material, and original in its interpretations, it will be required reading for those interested in East Asian religions and in the history of the medieval Chinese sciences, including astrology, medicine and divination.

Looks at a variety of Buddhist sacred writings as literature and includes insights from literary theory.

A short collection of Buddhist scripture, from the Wisdom of the East series- a selection translated from the pali with introduction

This rich anthology brings together works from languages such as Pali, Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese and Japanese


As a contribution to the science of death and dying - not to mention the belief in life after death, or the belief in texts of the world, for its socio-cultural influence in this regard is without comparison."--BOOK JACKET.

A collection of the most prominent sutras given by Buddha Gautama from the Mahayana tradition. VOLUME I includes the following sutras: 1. AMITAYUS SUTRA(Sanskrit: Amitāyurbuddhānusmṛti-sūtra) is often called the Meditation Sutra and revered as canonical by all Pure Land Buddhists, being one of the Three Sutras of Pure Land Buddhism. This Mahayana Buddhist text focuses mainly on meditations involving complex visualizations. 2. SUTRA OF COMPLETE ENLIGHTENMENT(sanskrit: Mahāvajrapuṇṇa pūrṇabuddha-sūtra) is a Buddhist text highly esteemed by both the Huayan and Zen schools. The earliest records of this sutra are in Chinese and the teachings are dealing with issues such as the meaning and origin of ignorance, sudden and gradual enlightenment, and Buddhahood. 3. THE LANKAVATARA SUTRA(sanskrit: Lankāvatāra-sūtra) is a prominent Mahayana Buddhist text that recounts a teaching primarily between Buddha Gautama and a bodhisattva Mahamati. The name of this sutra roughly translates as 'scripture of the Descent into Lanka' and takes place in Lanka, the island fortress capital of Ravana (the king of rakshas demons). This text asserts that objects of the material world are merely manifestations of the mind through contemplation on the topics of consciousness, reality and individual awareness. 4. THE COMPASSIONATE LOTUS SUTRA(sanskrit: Karuṇā-pūṇḍarīka-sūtra) is a Mahayana Buddhist text describing how Buddha Gautama first became bodhisattva in his previous life as the brahmana. 5. SUTRA OF TRANSCENDENTAL WISDOM(sanskrit: Mahā-prajñāpāramitā-hridaya-sūtra) is one of the shortest of all Mahayana Buddhist sutras. It is often is memorized and recited by Buddhist monks and nuns as part of the daily ritual.

This book examines the sacred textso the Buddhist religion in the world today. Practicing members give authentic insight into the deveopment of the scriptures and their relevance today.

The book sheds light on the fascinating evolution of contact-induced grammatical features in Chinese syntax. For more than two thousand years, Chinese has been in large scale language contact with languages such as Sanskrit, Mongolian, and Manchurian. Originally published in Chinese in renowned academic journals, the contributions are made available
for the first time to the English speaking world.

Looks at a variety of Buddhist sacred writings as literature and includes insights from literary theory.

A volume of key writings on the Buddha, collected from a variety of languages and traditions
While Buddhism has no central text comparable to the Bible or Koran, there is a powerful body of scripture from across Asia that encompasses the dharma, or the teachings of the Buddha. In this rich anthology, eminent scholar Donald S. Lopez, Jr. brings together works from a broad historical and geographical range, and from such languages as Pali, Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese, and Japanese. There are tales of the Buddha's past lives, a discussion of qualities and qualifications for a monk, and an exploration of the many meanings of enlightenment. Together they provide a vivid picture of the Buddha and of the vast and profound nature of the Buddhist tradition. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

An Ancient Collection Reimagined Composed around the Buddha’s lifetime, the original Therigatha ("Verses of the Elder Nuns") contains the poems of the first Buddhist women: princesses and courtesans, tired wives of arranged marriages and the desperately in love, those born into limitless wealth and those born with nothing at all. The authors of the Therigatha were women from every kind of background, but they all shared a deep-seated desire for awakening and liberation. In The First Free Women, Matty Weingast has reimagined this ancient collection and created an original work that takes his experience of the essence of each poem and brings forth in his own words the struggles and doubts, as well as the strength, perseverance, and profound compassion, embodied by these courageous women.

An important new book unlocking the words of the Buddha contained in the vast Tibetan canon, one of the main scriptural resources of Buddhism. In the forty-five years the Buddha spent traversing northern India, he shared his wisdom with everyone from beggar women to kings. Hundreds of his discourses, or sutras, were preserved by his followers, first orally and later in written form. Around thirteen hundred years after the Buddha’s enlightenment, the sutras were translated into the Tibetan language, where they have been preserved ever since. To date, only a fraction of these have been made available in English. Questioning the Buddha brings the reader directly into the literary treasure of the Tibetan canon with thoroughly annotated translations of twenty-five different sutras. Often these texts, many translated here in full for the first time, begin with an encounter in which someone poses a question to the Buddha. Peter Skilling, an authority on early Buddhist epigraphy, archaeology, and textual traditions, has been immersed in the Buddhist scriptures of diverse traditions for nearly half a century. In this volume, he draws on his deep and extensive research to render these ancient teachings in a fresh and precise language. His introduction is a fascinating history of the Buddhist sutras, including the transition from oral to written form, the rise of Mahayana literature, the transmission to Tibet, the development of canons, and a look at some of the pioneers of sutra study in the West.

Striving to understand the truth of the human condition and determining the path to spiritual enlightenment is the fundamental nature of Buddhism. Lighting this path is the Buddha, committed to guiding human beings to pure and happy lives. Buddhist Scriptures presents a collection of various teachings inspired by canonical Buddhist texts.

Miracles of Book and Body is the first book to explore the intersection of two key genres of sacred literature in medieval Japan: sutras, or sacred Buddhist texts, and setsuwa, or "explanatory tales," used in sermons and collected in written compilations. For most of East
Asia, Buddhist sutras were written in Classical Chinese and inaccessible to many devotees. How, then, did such devotees access these texts? Charlotte Eubanks argues that the medieval genre of "explanatory tales" illuminates the link between human body (devotee) and sacred text (sutra). She focuses on the sensual aspects of religious experience and on the act of reading, understood as the literal incorporation of sutra texts into the body and thus a bridge between text and flesh. Eubanks's highly original approach to understanding Buddhist textuality also looks beyond Japan to explore pre-modern book history, practices of preaching, miracles of reading, and the Mahāyāna Buddhist "cult of the book."

Buddhist intellectual discourse owes its development to a dynamic interplay between primary source materials and subsequent interpretation, yet scholarship on Indian Buddhism has long neglected to privilege one crucial series of texts. Commentaries on Buddhist scriptures, particularly the sutras, offer rich insights into the complex relationship between Buddhist intellectual practices and the norms that inform—and are informed by—them. Evaluating these commentaries in detail for the first time, Richard F. Nance revisits—and rewrites—the critical history of Buddhist thought, including its unique conception of doctrinal transmission. Attributed to such luminaries as Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu, Dignaga, and Santideva, scriptural commentaries have long played an important role in the monastic and philosophical life of Indian Buddhism. Nance reads these texts against the social and cultural conditions of their making, establishing a solid historical basis for the interpretation of key beliefs and doctrines. He also underscores areas of contention, in which scholars debate what it means to speak for, and as, a Buddha. Throughout these texts, Buddhist commentators struggle to deduce and characterize the speech of Buddhas and teach others how to convey and interpret its meaning. At the same time, they demonstrate the fundamental dilemma of trying to speak on behalf of Buddhas. Nance also investigates the notion of "right speech" as articulated by Buddhist texts and follows ideas about teaching as imagined through the common figure of a Buddhist preacher. He notes the use of epistemological concepts in scriptural interpretation and the protocols guiding the composition of scriptural commentary, and provides translations of three commentarial guides to better clarify the normative assumptions organizing these works.

This indispensable volume is a lucid and faithful account of the Buddha's teachings. "For years," says the Journal of the Buddhist Society, "the newcomer to Buddhism has lacked a simple and reliable introduction to the complexities of the subject. Dr. Rahula's What the Buddha Taught fills the need as only could be done by one having a firm grasp of the vast material to be sifted. It is a model of what a book should be that is addressed first of all to 'the educated and intelligent reader.' Authoritative and clear, logical and sober, this study is as comprehensive as it is masterly." This edition contains a selection of illustrative texts from the Suttas and the Dhammapada (specially translated by the author), sixteen illustrations, and a bibliography, glossary, and index.

This is a study of the earliest and finest collated inscription in the history of Chinese calligraphy, the Ji Wang shengjiao xu 集王聖教序 (Preface to the Sacred Teaching Scriptures Translated by Xuanzang in Wang Xizhi's Collated Characters), which was erected on January 1, 673. The stele records the two texts written by the Tang emperors Taizong (599–649) and Gaozong (628–683) in honor of the monk Xuanzang (d. 664) and the Buddhist scripture Xin jing (Heart Sutra), collated in the semi-cursive characters of the great master of Chinese calligraphy, Wang Xizhi (303-361). It is thus a Buddhist inscription that combines Buddhist authority, political power, and artistic charm in one single monument. The present book reconstructs the multifaceted context in which the stele was devised, aiming at highlighting the specific role calligraphy played in the propagation and protection of Buddhism in medieval China.

Awakening of the Heart is a comprehensive, single volume collection of the Buddha's key sutras, translated with contemporary commentary by Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh. It is an
essential complement to Happiness, the bestselling collection of meditation and mindful practices released in 2009. Awakening of the Heart captures the heart of Buddhist wisdom and Thich Nhat Hanh’s unique talent to make the Buddha’s teachings accessible and applicable to our daily lives and times. This is a wonderful gift for anyone looking to deepen their practice and understanding of the teachings, as well as a unique resource to understand the fundamentals of Buddhism from its source. With a new introduction and updated commentary, Awakening of the Heart contains the following sutras: Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra, Diamond Sutra, Sutra On Full Awareness Of Breathing, Sutra On The Four Establishments Of Mindfulness, Sutra On The Better Way To Catch A Snake, Sutra On The Better Way To Live Alone, Sutra On The Eight Realizations Of The Great Beings, Discourse On Happiness, Teachings On the Middle Way.

The discovery of Buddhist scriptures in India closes a gap in the history of Buddhism. The scriptures reprinted herein make it possible to show the growth of the religion in India and the spread of Buddhist doctrine throughout East Asia.

A finalist for the 2001 Nautilus Award, Understanding Our Mind, is Thich Nhat Hanh’s profound look at Buddhist psychology with insights into how these ancient teachings apply to the modern world. Based on the fifty verses on the nature of consciousness taken from the great fifth-century Buddhist master Vasubandhu and the teachings of the Avatamsaka Sutra, Thich Nhat Hanh focuses on the direct experience of recognizing, embracing, and looking deeply into the nature of our feelings and perceptions. Presenting the basic teachings of Buddhist applied psychology, Understanding Our Mind shows us how our mind is like a field, where every kind of seed is planted—seeds of suffering, anger, happiness, and peace. The quality of our life depends on the quality of the seeds in our mind. If we know how to water seeds of joy and transform seeds of suffering, then understanding, love, and compassion will flower. Vietnamese Zen Master Thuong Chieu said, "When we understand how our mind works, the practice becomes easy."

Ritualized Writing takes readers into the fascinating world of Japanese Buddhist manuscript cultures. Using archival sources that have received scant attention in English, primarily documents from an eighth-century Japanese scriptorium and colophons from sutra manuscripts, Bryan D. Lowe uncovers the ways in which the transcription of Buddhist scripture was a highly ritualized endeavor. He takes a ground-level approach by emphasizing the activities and beliefs of a wide range of individuals, including scribes, provincial patrons, and royals, to reassess the meaning of scripture and reevaluate scholarly narratives of Japanese Buddhist history. Copying scripture is a central Buddhist practice and one that thrived in East Asia. Despite this, there are no other books dedicated to the topic. This work demonstrates that patrons and scribes treated sutras differently from other modes of writing. Scribes purified their bodies prior to transcription. Patrons held dedicatory ceremonies on days of abstinence, when prayers were pronounced and sutras were recited. Transcribing sutras helped scribes and patrons alike realize this- and other-worldly ambitions and cultivate themselves in accord with Buddhist norms. Sutra copying thus functioned as a form of ritualized writing, a strategic practice that set apart scripture as uniquely efficacious and venerable. Lowe employs this notion of ritualized writing to challenge historical narratives about ancient Japan (late seventh through early ninth centuries), a period when sutra copying flourished. He contends that Buddhist practice fulfilled a variety of social, political, and spiritual roles beyond ideological justification. Moreover, he demonstrates the inadequacy of state-folk dichotomies for understanding the social groups, institutions, and individual beliefs and practices of ancient Japanese Buddhism, highlighting instead common organizations across social class and using models that reveal shared concerns among believers from diverse social backgrounds. Ritualized Writing makes broader contributions to the study of ritual and scripture by introducing the notion of scriptural cultures, an analytic tool that denotes a series of dynamic relationships and practices involving texts that have been strategically set apart or ritualized. Scripture, Lowe concludes, is at once a category created by humans and a body of texts that transforms individuals and social organizations who come into contact with it.
Shantideva's Bodhisattvacharyavatara (A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life) holds a unique place in Mahayana Buddhism akin to that of the Dhammapada in Hinayana Buddhism and the Bhagavadgita in Hinduism. In combining those rare qualities of scholastic precision, spiritual depth and poetical beauty, its appeal extends to a wide audience of Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike. Composed in India during the 8th century of the Christian era, it has since been an inspiration to millions of people throughout the world. This present translation by Stephen Batchelor is based upon a 12th century Tibetan commentary as orally explained by Ven. Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey. The ninth chapter on wisdom has been expanded for this edition with relevant commentarial passages.

Copyright code: 86320e74e683b330930c89f682efae2c