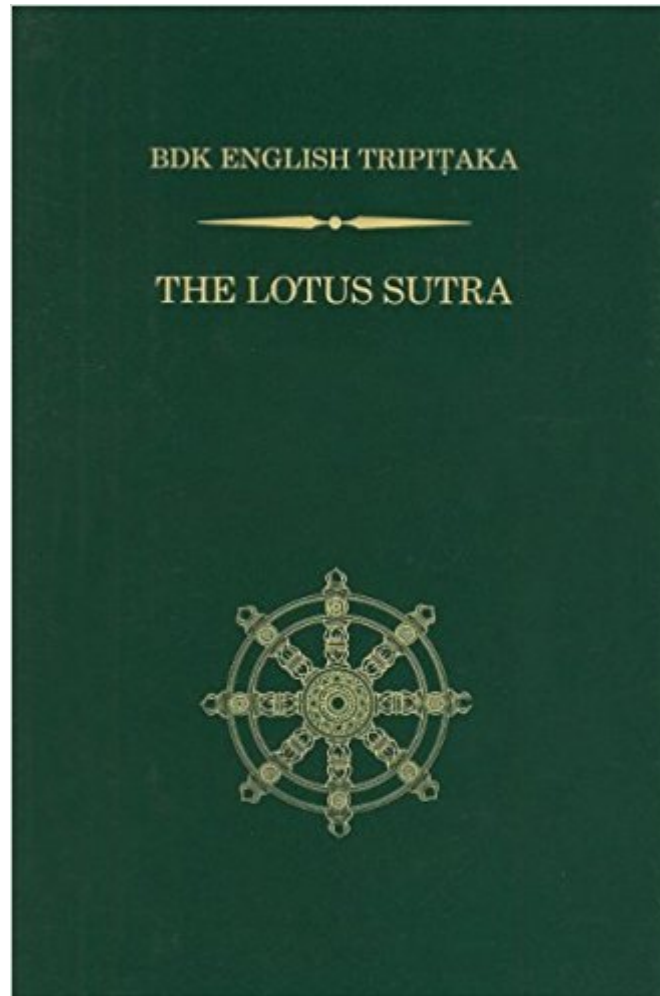




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The Lotus Sutra: Revised Edition (Bdk English Tripitaka)



Synopsis

The "Lotus Sutra," as it is generally known in the West, is one of the most important of all the Mahayana sutras, and especially in Japan, where it is popularly known as the Ho-ke-kyou, it has been held in high regard ever since Prince Shoutoku included a commentary on it in his set of commentaries on three Mahayana sutras (San-gyou-gi-sho). It is a work of great literary merit, including as it does many sections of verse and various parables, but at the same time it has earned a lasting place in the history of Buddhism owing to the superior quality of its philosophical content. The concept of "One Vehicle," especially, which permeates the whole work, has had immeasurable influence upon Japanese Buddhism. It is divided into 28 chapters, of which Chapter 16, "The Life Span of the Tathagata" (Skt.: *Uparipavisa-sutta* XV), is especially important for its eulogy of sakyamuni as the embodiment of the eternal life and as having attained enlightenment in the inconceivably remote past. Among the numerous parables those of the three carts and the burning house, the wealthy man and his poor son, the three kinds of medicinal herbs and two kinds of trees, and the phantom city and the treasure land are especially famous. In addition Chapter 25, "The Universal Gate of the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara" (Skt.: *Samantamukha-parivarta* XXIV), which describes the blessings of the bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, was circulated in China and Japan as an independent sutra and is still recited today. It is also a well-known fact that the chant, or daimoku, of the Nichiren School of Japan and related sects consists of the invocation na-mu added to the Japanese title of this sutra, resulting in Na-mu-myō-hō-ren-ge-kyō.

Book Information

Series: Bdk English Tripitaka

Hardcover: 362 pages

Publisher: BDK America; 2nd edition (April 30, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1886439397

ISBN-13: 978-1886439399

Product Dimensions: 1 x 6.2 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.7 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 11 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #195,036 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #89 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Eastern > Buddhism > Sacred Writings #41694 in Books > Religion &

Customer Reviews

The BDK English Tripitaka Series was started by the late Dr. Rev. Yehan Numata, founder of the Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK) [Society for the Promotion of Buddhism.] The goal of this series is to make available in the English language the Buddhist scriptures and commentaries of the Sino-Japanese edition of the "Taisho Tripitaka." Scholars and specialists from throughout the world have been enlisted to translate the selected texts into English. When completed, the one-hundred eight volumes will comprise the First Series of the BDK English Tripitaka.

One thing is definitely clear right from the start...this version of the Lotus Sutra contains many Sanskrit words. The author and translators of this version chose to leave certain Sanskrit words in Sanskrit, without translating them. Also the names of the different Buddhas are in Sanskrit, they are not translated into English. While attempting to casually read this version, you will come across many different Sanskrit words and phrases, for example....Nayutas of Kotis, Kalpas, Bhagavat, Srvakas, devas, nagas, 60 yojanas in height, 40 yojanas in width and so on...so unless your an expert in Sanskrit language or you have some kind of background in Sanskrit, I think it is difficult to casually read this version. But the Sanskrit words are no problem with this version. Thankfully, in this version in the back is a very nice glossary which is very comprehensive and it very well defines the various Sanskrit words the book contains. Also near the back is a very nice bibliography which lists different versions of the Lotus Sutra by different authors which are available here on this website as well as other websites. In April 1982, Dr. Numata Yehan of (BDK) Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai, formed and put together a special preparatory committee to translate the entire 84,000 writings of the Chinese Tripitaka (Buddhist Canon) into English., This version of the Lotus Sutra is just one of the many books that the Translation Committee has translated into English over the years. The Translation Committee of (BDK) currently consists of 11 people. The initial translating and editing of this volume was overseen and done under the direction of the Editorial Committee in Tokyo. There is a Publishing Committee which is headquartered in Berkley California, so these 2 committees work in cooperation with each other to produce and bring this version to you. As far as this version is concerned, since it was translated and edited and published by different committees, that has its advantages and disadvantages. The committees have produced a very reliable and good strong version. On the other hand sometimes committees can be like overstuffing the cookie jar and you might end up with some broken and fragmented cookies. I have several different

versions of the Lotus Sutra. I find it useful to have several different versions when reading and studying. I recommend acquiring yourself several different versions of the Lotus Sutra. Another nice thing about this version is it is a non sectarian version. The BDK (Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai) Society for the Promotion of Buddhism is a non sectarian organization who are dedicated to translating various Buddhist texts into English. They do not promote any sect or any particular school of Buddhism. As for different sects or schools of Buddhism, the BDK is completely neutral. One of my other versions, was translated by a single author who is a very well known author and translator of Chinese classical texts into English, A lot of people don't trust his version and are leary of it because he was hired by a very well known lay buddhist organization, and that organization used to be part of another organization and there was a huge fight and argument and the 2 organizations broke up and divided from each other (I am sure by now you know which organization I am referring to and I am sure you know which author they hired to translate the lotus sutra for them) and another version I have is very nice, but the problem with that version is.....it is too westernized the original feel and flavour and nuances and shades of meanings of the lotus sutra are all gone and have been literally translated right out of that version. That particular version makes it look like the Lotus Sutra is a piece of American Literature. It is highly readable and most understandable, but just too much has been lost in the translation and the original feel and flavour, nuances have all been sacrificed. anyway, enough about those other versions....lets get back to this version shall we? The authors and translators of this version have been very careful to keep the original flavour and the feel and the nuances and shades of meanings in the native Sanskrit language as they translated it. They were careful not to lose or to remove those aspects of the Lotus Sutra. Before I got this version, I didn't really care about those aspects...but now, I have grown to like and to cherish those aspects and I see how keeping the flavour and the feel of the text, as well as the nuances and shades of meanings helps to add value to the text..., this makes quite a big difference and overall feeling of the text, compared to an too westernized version of all the version which I have, this version is my favourite one. I am sure, that you will cherish this version and find it to be an invaluable version of the Lotus Sutra to have on your bookshelf at home. In the very front of this book in the Translators' Introduction, it is very thoroughly explained in great depth and detail exactly how they translated this version, this version was translated from the Chinese version by Kumarajiva. as you read it everyday, perhaps, like me, you will find and discover a new nugget of wisdom everytime you read it.

This translation is both very scholarly and very smooth. It is definitely of better quality overall than

the other Lotus Sutra translations I have seen over the years. If I had to recommend just one, it would be this one, because it is so readable and accurate. For example, some other Lotus Sutra translations translate classes of spiritual beings into western equivalents, such as dragons, gryphons, etc. To me, this is totally unacceptable, and a Buddhist sutra should retain its special Indian character while being accessible to English readers. This translation is so skillful and takes everything in stride, translating what should be translated and keeping a few Sanskrit terms where necessary to convey the actual meaning. I wholeheartedly recommend this translation because it truly preserves the authenticity and the meaning of the original text. This version is really of high quality in every way, and its layout, construction, and binding are all beautiful as well.

Very clean translation and easy to read, even to a non-native english speaker like me. In my opinion the glossary could be more complete, some terms (not essential for the understanding) I had to search in other sources. But apart from that it has all you need to study this wonderful sutra!

excellence book condition

The book is readable and thoughtful. It is well bound and will last for a long time. I am very glad I purchased it.

I was both pleased and excited to find this book :o)

A lovely book. The print makes it easy to read, and the translation is what I've been searching for.

I'm only on the first few pages, but it is very interesting. It is my first time reading the Lotus Sutra.

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