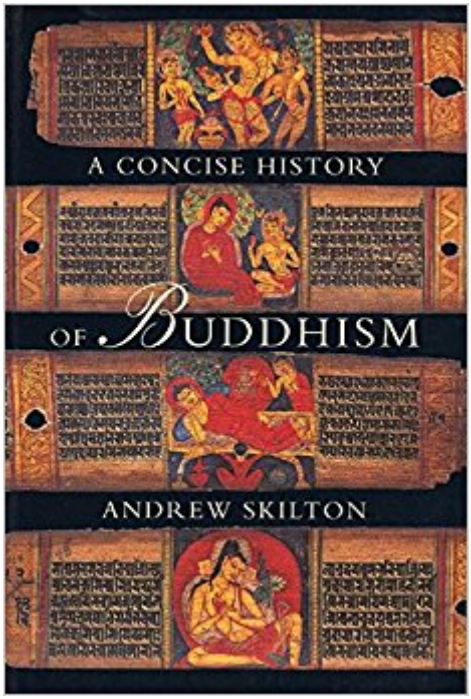
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A Concise History Of Buddhism



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Synopsis

An ideal introduction to the history of Buddhism. Andrew Skilton - a writer on and practitioner of Buddhism - explains the development of the basic concepts of Buddhism during its 2,500 years of history and describes its varied developments in India, BuddhismÃ¢â ¬â„¢s homeland, as well as its spread across Asia, from Mongolia to Sri Lanka and from Japan to the Middle East. A fascinating insight into the historical progress of one of the worldÃ¢â ¬â„¢s great religions."..an excellent synopsis of current scholarship..."Ã¢â ¬â •Alan Sponberg, Professor of Asian Philosophy and Religion, University of Montana

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Not something you'd read for entertainment unless you're a masochist, but an essential text if you want to understand the broad outlines of how and why buddhism arrived in various places and took/takes the shape that it does.

It is quite a challenge to write a history of Buddhism, given the complex doctrinal diversification and the wide geographical and timeline spread. Andrew Skilton recognized the difficulty and set out to write a very readable concise history. He succeeded admirably in putting the doctrinal historical development within its geo-political context. He sticks to basic concepts, within the context of its development, and give references for further study of complex points.if you are - like me - lost in the erudite scholarship of Ãƒâ tienne Lamotte's or Heinrich Dumoulin's books, this work is a lot more

enjoyable reading. It is concise, full of interesting facts, and very engaging. It’s the only History of Buddhism book that I can’t put down and have to read in almost one sitting! It is wonderful as an introductory History of Buddhism book. Thank you Dr. Skilton!

Informative, very interesting about early development, but bogs down in later chapters. Difficult to keep track of all the schools that developed. Had to purchase a Buddhist dictionary to negotiate through all the terms and schools.

Thorough, concise and well written. A must for any aspiring Buddhist. Up to date. Read this if you want to know about the history of Buddhism and want something accurate and substantial without being too academic.

Well written, interesting read.

Great book, delivered in great condition.

In Mr. Van Horn’s reader review, he uses a "quote" which is nowhere to be found in the book. This is what Skilton actually says (pgs 67-68) about the brahma-viharas in the Theravadin tradition:"The Theravadin School developed a rather austere orthodoxy, epitomized in the works of the 5th century scholastic Buddhagohosa, especially in his Visuddhi-magga, which on a theoretical level tends to exclude doctrines and practices incompatible with its preferred preoccupations. An example of this exclusion might be the meditational practices called the brahma-viharas, which in its Abhidamma and commentarial literature are relegated to an ancillary function only, whereas its own canon records instances which substantially refute this role. Canonical passages frequently contain editorial additions "demoting" the brahma-viharas but, where parallel texts survive from the Mahasanghika canon, it is interesting to note that the latter did not feel any need to qualify such practices in that way."As you can see, Mr. Van Horn’s characterization of this point is entirely incorrect, as is his assessment of the book on the whole. One wishes he would have asked himself why Skilton, a longtime Theravadin practitioner himself, would want to write a piece of "Mahayanist propaganda."In fact, Skilton’s book is a commendably thorough, superbly written, extensively footnoted overview of the subject, with a firm grasp of the issues at hand. I could not recommend it more highly.

If you want to own one concise book covering the history of the Buddhist lineages, this is the one. It is as accurate as it gets, even where other authors get it all wrong (covering Tibetan Buddhism for example). Beautiful work!

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