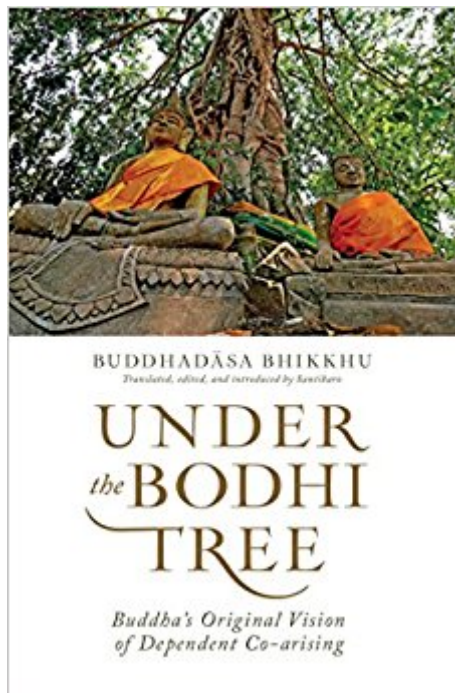




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Under The Bodhi Tree: Buddha's Original Vision Of Dependent Co-arising



Synopsis

A renowned Buddhist master digs into the idea of interdependency—the very core of the Buddha's teachings. Under the Bodhi Tree, Ajahn Buddhadasa takes us back to the principles at the heart of Buddha's teachings—conditionality and dependent co-arising. Ajahn Buddhadasa Bhikkhu makes the case for dependent co-arising as a natural law, and builds a compelling presentation from there of Buddhist philosophy, meditation, and practice. Basing himself squarely on the Buddha's own words as preserved in the Pali Canon, he brings clarity and simplicity to what is typically a thorny philosophical knot. By returning dependent co-arising to its central place in Buddhist theory and practice, Ajahn Buddhadasa provides perspective on the Buddha's own insights and awakening. Under the Bodhi Tree is another excellent entry from one of the most renowned Buddhist thinkers of modern times. For students who wish to study further, a companion guide is available from liberationpark.org.

Book Information

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: Wisdom Publications (May 16, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1614292191

ISBN-13: 978-1614292197

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.9 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 3 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #75,886 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #24 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Eastern > Buddhism > Theravada #115 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Eastern > Buddhism > Rituals & Practice #122 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Religious Studies > Philosophy

Customer Reviews

Ajahn Buddhadasa (1906–1993) is perhaps the most influential Buddhist teacher in the history of Thailand. In 1932 he founded Suan Mokkhabalarama, the first modern forest monastery in Thailand. During his lifetime he was given eight honorary doctorates by Thai universities. Since the 1960s his work helped inspire a new generation of socially concerned individuals both in Thailand and throughout the world. Buddhadasa is known for his "radically conservative" re-grounding of Theravada teaching in the suttas rather than commentaries. The story of his early

life is included in Ā Ā Sons of the Buddha.

Under the Bodhi Tree compiles eight retreat talks given by Buddhadasa Bhikkhu between 1988 and 1990 on the subject of paticcasamuppada, dependent co-arising. As is standard, these lectures begin with an overview of Buddhist theory. After that what is standard is up to interpretation. Born in 1906, Ajahn set out early to find what is true and original in Buddhist thought, going back to the sutras to study the words and contemplate them in meditation. What resulted was an unorthodox but "pure" reading of Buddha's ideas as he thought they were originally recorded and intended. Each lecture is prefaced by an excerpt from a sutra, which in themselves are rich. Ajahn Buddhadasa then gives his commentary to each. Chapter 14, Training Mindfulness through Mindfulness with Breathing, stood out IMHO to be the most sublime. Although it is not impossible to understand how someone could view Theravada Buddhism as dry and unpoetic, after reading this chapter there is no doubt that Ajahn's teaching on emptiness is alive with subtle and profound implications. Last year I read Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree which felt like a breath of fresh air. Theravada Buddhism is simple, direct and Buddhadasa Bhikkhu is extremely practical. His emphasis on the betterment of society dispels any doubt one might have about "compassion" within the Theravada school. Original in thinking and in teaching, Ajahn was truly a saint for our time.

I had the chance to experience the teachings of Santikaro in Suan Mokh during my stay there in 1997. Very clear and understandable. So is this book with the lectures of the Great Buddhadasa about Theravada Buddhism. Highly recommendable for anyone who wants to dig deeper into the essence of Buddhism. Thanks to Santikaro to go into the effort to make this wisdom available to a large public.

Very clear discussion of one of the Buddha's essential contributions to Buddhist thought and a core component in understanding emptiness.

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