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The Tibetan Book Of The Dead: The Great Book Of Natural Liberation Through Understanding In The Between



Synopsis

The most accessible and informative version of the Buddhist classic available in English, with instruction in meditation, illuminating commentary, and guidance in the practical use of the prayers

The so-called “Tibetan Book of the Dead” has been renowned for centuries as a cornerstone of Buddhist wisdom and religious thought. More recently, it has become highly influential in the Western world for its psychological insights into the processes of death and dying and what they can teach us about the ways we live our lives. It has also been found to be helpful in the grieving process by people who have recently lost their loved ones.

Composed in the eighth century C.E., it is intended to prepare the soul for the trials and transformations of the afterworld. Its profound message is that the art of dying is as important as the art of living. Drawing on Tibetan spiritual traditions, it shows us the workings of the mind in its various manifestations—terrifying and comforting, wrathful and beautiful—which appear more clearly after death in the consciousness of the deceased. By recognizing these manifestations, we can attain a state of enlightenment, both in this existence and in the existence to come.

This authoritative translation preserves the form and spirit of the original and was prepared especially for Western readers by Robert A. F. Thurman, one of the most prominent Tibetan scholars in America and a close associate of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, cs.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Imagine that as you leave your body at death, you hear the voice of a loved one whispering in your

ear explanations of everything you see in the world beyond. Unlike other translations of Bar do thos grol (or The Tibetan Book of the Dead), Robert Thurman's takes literally the entire gamut of metaphysical assumptions. Thurman translates Bar do thos grol as The Great Book of Natural Liberation through Understanding in the Between. It is one of many mortuary texts of the Nyingma sect of Tibetan Buddhism and is commonly recited to or by a person facing imminent death. Thurman reproduces it for this purpose, explaining in some depth the Tibetan conception of postmortem existence. Over as many as 12 days, the deceased person is given explanations of what he or she sees and experiences and is guided through innumerable visions of the realms beyond to reach eventual liberation, or, failing that, a safe rebirth. Like a backpacker's guide to a foreign land, Thurman's version is clear, detailed, and sympathetic to the inexperienced voyager. It includes background and supplementary information, and even illustrations (sorry, no maps). Don't wait until the journey has begun. Every page should be read and memorized well ahead of time.

--Brian Bruya

The Dalai Lama's blessing attends Thurman's translation of the Book of Natural Liberation Through Understanding in the Between. Composed by Padma Sambhava in the late eighth century, this text minutely describes the "betweens" (Bardos) or after-death transition states. Thurman, who opens this work with a new section of preliminary prayers, gives a helpful commentary in terms Westerners can understand and boldface portions to be read aloud in the presence of the dead. He closes by appending Nyingma tradition works to the main text. This text has already been translated in 1927 and 1975, and some of Thurman's new translation choices are questionable. For instance, the West has adopted the term karma , which expresses the original meaning better than evolution --an alternative that obscures the personal responsibility emphasized in Buddhism. In addition, since Tibetan pronouns are sexually neutral, alternating his with her from verse to verse confuses. Still, Westerners will find this a colorful, awesome journey. For informed readers.- Dara Eklund, Los Angeles P.L.Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I have the incomplete, first translation of this work; I jumped at the chance to get the first complete translation. Let me state this for the sake of clarity: in terms to profundity, this book is, in my opinion, unparalleled. We, here in the west, assume that we are among the most advanced nation(s) on the planet; that materialism, capitalism, even religious thought - are the acme of civilization. Then there's this book. I have been a voracious reader all my life, and have been exposed to thousands of pages of literature from countless brilliant minds; my advice to those of my ilk: read this book and be

amazed at the complexity of it. Read the foreword by the Dalai Lama; you will come away shaking your head. The philosophy expressed by His Holiness is akin to one perfect thought honoring a process of liberation of the soul. And this: you would be in error to classify this book as religious; Buddhism? Buddhism is Science of Mind.

robert thurman is amazing and this book is so well written. a must have for anyone on the path... very 'readable' and dr. thurman is so good at making the esoteric easy to understand.

I'm going to read this many times over as it is too hard to understand the importance of it the first reading.

Best and clearest translation I have read. An excellent text with annotations and a glossary for anyone who wants to actually practice these teachings.

Essential reading, beautifully translated.

Complete!

Good translation. Well bound.

Good read for a buddhist

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