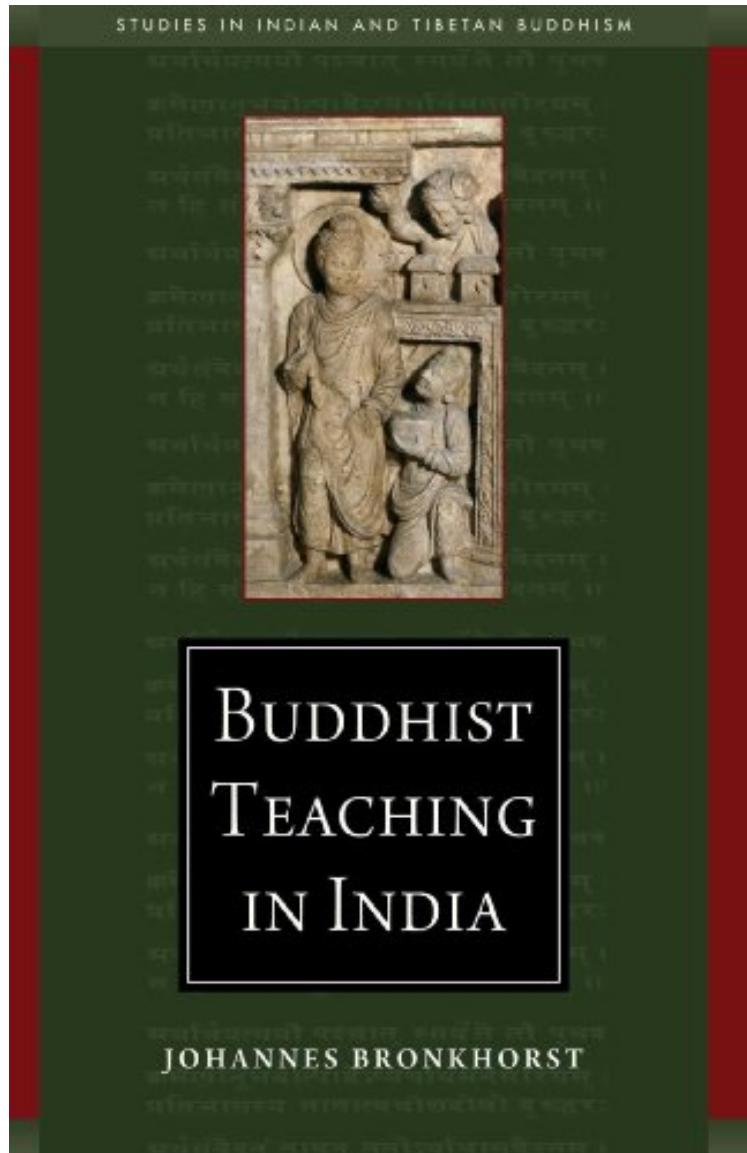


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## **Buddhist Teaching in India (Studies in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism)**

*Johannes Bronkhorst*

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**Johannes Bronkhorst : Buddhist Teaching in India (Studies in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Buddhist Teaching in India (Studies in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Becoming More Familiar with the Building Blocks of Buddhism By

**Book Drawn**This book is a first rate study of the earliest structuring of the Buddha's teachings. This is a foundational book, but a scholarly work best approached with a basic understanding of Buddhism and Buddhist terminology. It discusses dharmas, the building blocks of Buddhism, the stages of meditation, the Jhanas as higher mental consciousness, the four noble truths, the importance of the concept of anatta or not self, and emptiness as developed through Theravadin and Mahayana teachings. It gives the reader the basic goals of understanding necessary along the path. And where does this path begin and end? "It is without origin and end, uncreated and unchanging, and has not entered existence at all. It is unthinkable, imponderable, immeasurable, unaccountable, and without equal....." at page 131. Reading this book over a period of a month, there were points where it was necessary to stop and re-read, reflect and meditate. When you decide you're serious and want to go beyond the many popular books now available on Buddhism you're ready to read and savor this book.15 of 20 people found the following review helpful. Vital context for Buddha's teachingBy S. C. TalbottWhile much of the Buddha's teaching transcends specific cultures, there is a lot to be gained by the serious student through understanding the cultural context that nurtured the teachings we have received. It takes nothing away from the value of these teachings to know that complex cultural and philosophical currents have shaped the texts that have come down to us. In seeking the gnosis, or wordless knowing, that lies at the heart of these texts, understanding the philosophical history of India is crucial. Bronkhorst's book provides an excellent and reasonably concise primer on these subjects.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Clear and insightfulBy jonnosPerhaps the best introduction to Buddhist teachings. Bronkhorst is a great scholar and writes with great clarity. He really has a knack for presenting the most important parts of the teachings in a very insightful way. In only 60 pages he presents the Buddhas original teachings with many excerpts from the suttas that makes the text really come alive. He is clear that the central teachings of the Buddha are the four noble truths (though this title may be late) and the practices culminating in the four Jhanas. (Though sometimes he seems to forget this and states that the Buddha searched for liberation from rebirth, instead of from suffering.) He is also clear that the 12-link chain of Dependent Origination was not a part of the Buddhas teaching, but is a later effort to unite the belief in some kind of liberating insight with the original teaching. The next part is a good overview of how the Abhidhamma came to be and how influential it became, especially the Sarvastavadins so-called dharma theory. The last chapter is a short overview of the ideas of early Mahayana.

The earliest records we have today of what the Buddha said were written down several centuries after his death, and the body of teachings attributed to him continued to evolve in India for centuries afterward across a shifting cultural and political landscape. As one tradition within a diverse religious milieu that included even the Greek kingdoms of northwestern India, Buddhism had many opportunities to both influence and be influenced by competing schools of thought. Even within Buddhism, a proliferation of interpretive traditions produced a dynamic intellectual climate. Johannes Bronkhorst here tracks the development of Buddhist teachings both within the larger Indian context and among Buddhism's many schools, shedding light on the sources and trajectory of such ideas as dharma theory, emptiness, the bodhisattva ideal, buddha nature, formal logic, and idealism. In these pages, we discover the roots of the doctrinal debates that have animated the Buddhist tradition up until the present day.

"Johannes Bronkhorst's *Buddhist Teaching in India* is a most welcome addition to the growing literature on early Indian Buddhism. Its structure is clear and precise, and the text is thorough, highly readable, and accurate. It will have useful application for both scholars and students and can easily be incorporated into classroom use." (Charles Prebish, Redd Chair in Religious Studies, Utah State University, and co-author of *Introducing Buddhism*) "In this wonderful contribution to the field of Buddhist studies, Johannes Bronkhorst provides a historical context for the earliest centuries of the Buddha's teachings in India. He delineates what the Buddha inherited, transformed, and originated, and the ways that scholars, both American and European, have struggled to make sense of Buddhist doctrine and its place in Indian history. Bronkhorst explains the central ideas of Indian Buddhism with great dexterity, placing them in conversation with the teachings of other traditions, such as Jainism and Brahmanism. With abundant examples from canonical materials, Bronkhorst makes the subtleties of scholarly debates come alive for both laymen and scholars." (Andy Rotman, Professor of Religion, Smith College, and translator of *Divine Stories: Divyavadana*) About the Author After initial studies of Mathematics and Physics with Astronomy at the Free University in Amsterdam (Kandidaats/B.Sc. in 1968), Johannes Bronkhorst took up the study of Sanskrit and Pali, first at the University of Rajasthan (Jaipur, India), then at the University of Pune (India). In Pune he obtained an M.A. in 1976 and a Ph.D. in 1979. After his return to the Netherlands he obtained a second doctorate from the University of Leiden in 1980 (with the highest distinction). He remained attached to the University of Leiden as a researcher until 1987, in which year he was appointed full professor of Sanskrit and Indian Studies at the University of Lausanne (Switzerland). He remained at the University of Lausanne until his (mandatory) retirement in 2011. He has published more than one hundred and sixty research papers, all in specialized journals, more than fifteen books, besides numerous reviews. His most recent books are: *Greater Magadha* (2007), *Aux origines de la philosophie indienne* (2008), *Buddhist Teaching in India*

(2009), *Language and Reality* (2011), *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism* (2011), *Karma* (2011).