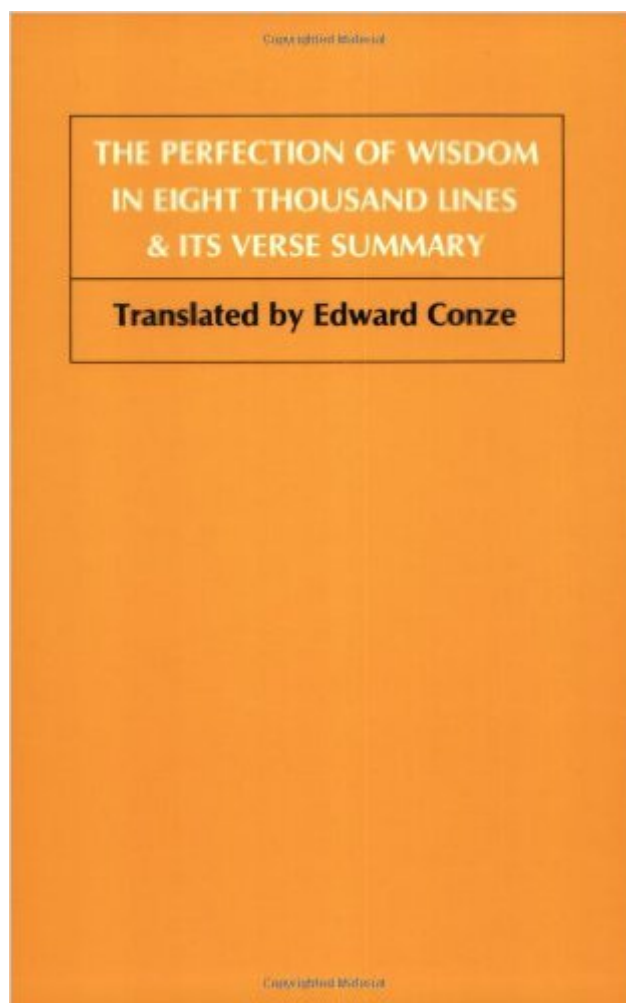


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The Perfection Of Wisdom (Wheel Series,)



Synopsis

The Buddhist Sutra "The Perfection of Wisdom in 8,000 Lines" and its verse summary. Translated and edited by Edward Conze.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Edward Conze has published at least 3 translations of the Prajnaparamita or Perfection of Wisdom texts. These are attributed to Gautama Siddhartha, the historical Buddha. Numerous versions of various lengths of these sutras exist. The first of Conze's translations that I read was a collection of the shorter versions of the sutra. The present volume is a single, middle length version. It is often referenced or quoted or included in Bibliographies of Tibetan Buddhist works--which utilize or build upon its wisdom (especially the "emptiness" or dependent-arising nature of perceived reality). While I value the shorter version book, I consider this one vastly superior. It seems to be the version most referenced too. Dr. Conze also published a much longer version (25,000 lines) entitled, "The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom" which I own but have yet to read. These texts are not simple, easy reading, but they are profound, high philosophy and/or metaphysics concerning the nature of reality and the universe and humanity's place therein or relation thereto. They tend to link the so-called Mahayana (Great Vehicle) of Northern Buddhism to Vajrayana (Tibetan Buddhism). They are also a wonderful (and, perhaps essential) precursor for ventures into Kagyu Mahamudra and/or Nyingma Dzogchen teachings as well as the Tantric Buddhism or all 4 schools (these 2 plus Sakya and Gelugpa). I plan to keep them in my library.

Edward Conze's translation of the Prajnaparamita Sutra in 8000 lines and of the even earlier verse form is still the only English translation of this beautiful and profound Buddhist text. It's a great gift that the scholar Conze devoted his life to the study of Prajnaparamita and made these texts available. For a more poetic and inspiring version of the Prajnaparamita Sutra I recommend Lex Hixon's "Mother of the Buddhas, Meditations on the Prajna Paramita Sutra."

For those interested in the Mahayana this is the book! Webinger's review and advice say it well, if you find this translation to be difficult take a look at the Hixon 'translation'. Also, for the independent minded (some of the reviewers were tepid in this regard,) there are two Sutras, that are considered 'condensed' versions of the Prajnaparamita doctrines, which are very interesting and helpful. For those take a look at Red Pine's excellent translations of the Diamond Sutra and the Heart Sutra, both of which include selections from the commentaries of the Ancients. Good stuff!

A beautiful and intricate sutra. Edward Conze was a prolific and skillful translator; I personally believe that he had a fine understanding of the meanings behind the sutras as well. The language is a little bit antiquated in some spots, dense in others, and those less well versed in Buddhist terms may need to look a few things up. That being said, it's still clear and accessible if a person puts in a bit of effort...and it is well worth it.

The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines and its Verse Summary is profound, and a treasure to study, there is so much Wisdom and good guidance in it, excellent too to read out loud in a group through turn taking. Nice to keep it wrapped in a silk cloth on an altar. Each time one reads it or repeats reading it, it's Wisdom deepens in the mind. It truly is a Blessing for mankind. May you enjoy it too, Ulrike

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