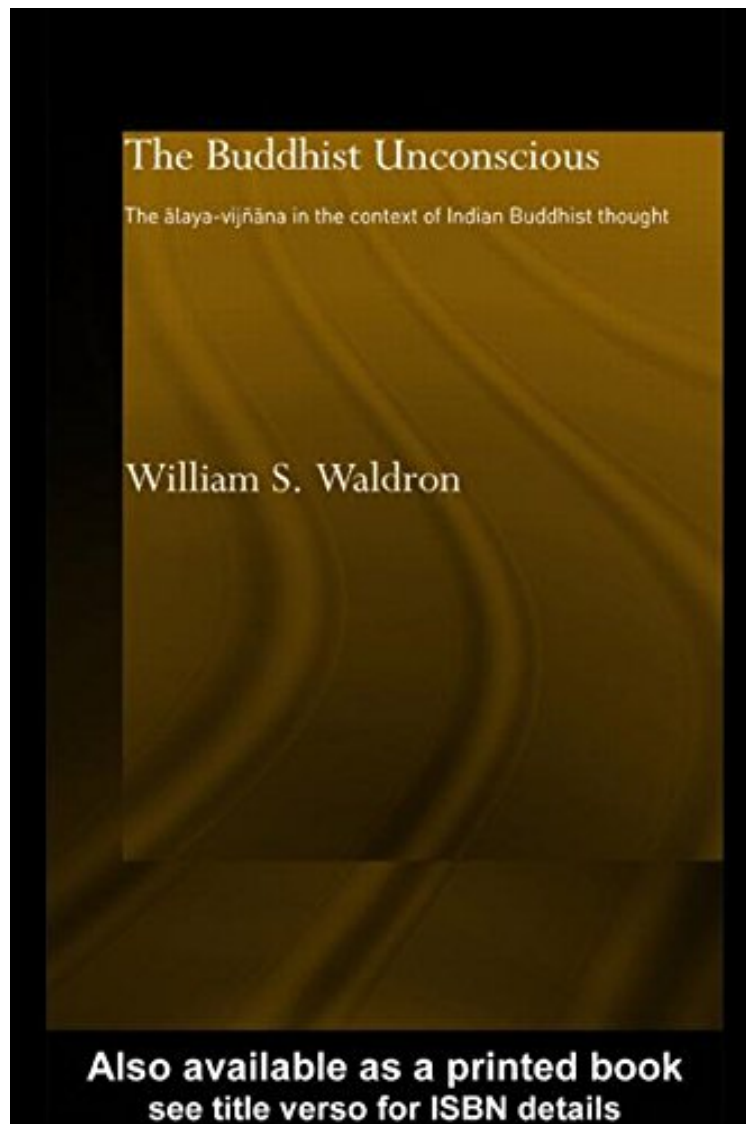


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The Buddhist Unconscious: The Alaya-vijana in the context of Indian Buddhist Thought (Routledge Critical Studies in Buddhism)

William S. Waldron

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William S. Waldron : The Buddhist Unconscious: The Alaya-vijana in the context of Indian Buddhist Thought (Routledge Critical Studies in Buddhism) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Buddhist Unconscious: The Alaya-vijana in the context of Indian Buddhist Thought (Routledge Critical Studies in Buddhism):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. If you want depthBy Ronald Greenexcellent in depth overview with detail on the Yogacara. For those who want detail4 of 6 people found the following review helpful. The Storehouse ConsciousnessBy Frank 7SFGGreat book, as described. Well written; sheds light on the Yogacara school of "conscious only". Prompt shipping. I would do business with this seller again!50 of 51 people found the following review helpful. An Historical Exploration of The Evolution of Early BuddhistBy Seth Zuih SegallIn this volume, William Waldron explores the tension that existed in early Buddhist thought between a phenomenological psychology that took synchronic moments of mind as their point of focus, and a view of karma and liberation that was diachronic in nature. The early Buddhist psychology of the Pali Nikayas did not provide for nonconscious mental mechanisms that could provide continuity to both karma and the afflictive tendencies when they were momentarily out of consciousness. The Yogacara school of Buddhism developed the concept of the alaya-vijnana to remedy that problem, but then reached back to find justification for these novel ideas in the earliest strata of Buddhist texts. William Waldron carefully explores the development of these ideas from the Pali Nikayas, through the early abhidharmic writings, to the Yogacara writings of Asanga and Vasubandhu as these ideas gradually took on broader resonance and served new roles within Mahayana Buddhism, and as they developed against the broader background of Gupta-era Indian philosophizing. His prose is clear, his analogies helpful, and his scholarship seems careful and thorough. I am not a Buddhist scholar, but am a psychologist who has an interest in Buddhism. I think this book will be of great interest, not only to scholars, but also to readers who are interested in learning more about the psychology that is implicit in Buddhist writings. It certainly helped me to clarify some understandings of Buddhist terms which were still overly vague in my own mind, as well as to better understand the historical context in which they developed.

This is the story of fifth century CE India, when the Yogacarin Buddhists tested the awareness of unawareness, and became aware of human unawareness to an extraordinary degree. They not only explicitly differentiated this dimension of mental processes from conscious cognitive processes, but also offered reasoned arguments on behalf of this dimension of mind. This is the concept of the 'Buddhist unconscious', which arose just as philosophical discourse in other circles was fiercely debating the limits of conscious awareness, and these ideas in turn had developed as a systematisation of teachings from the Buddha himself. For us in the twenty-first century, these teachings connect in fascinating ways to the Western conceptions of the 'cognitive unconscious' which have been elaborated in the work of Jung and Freud. This important study reveals how the Buddhist unconscious illuminates and draws out aspects of current western thinking on the unconscious mind. One of the most intriguing connections is the idea that there is in fact no substantial 'self' underlying all mental activity; 'the thoughts themselves are the thinker'. William S. Waldron considers the implications of this radical notion, which, despite only recently gaining plausibility, was in fact first posited 2,500 years ago.

'This work weaves together into one fabric yards spanning some one thousand years of Indian Buddhist thought, and will prove to be an invaluable source of information for scholars of Buddhist literature.' - East and West SeriesAbout the AuthorWilliam S. Waldron received his PhD in Buddhist Studies from the University of Wisconsin after studying extensively in India, Nepal and Japan. He currently teaches South Asian religions and Buddhist philosophy at Middlebury College, Vermont. His research areas include the Yogacara school of Indian Buddhism, and comparative psychologies and philosophies of mind.