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Theos-Talk Email List

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RE: Theos-World: SD original versus Boris de Zirkoff edition of THE SECRET DOCTRINE

May 21, 2001 06:59 AM
by [Eldon B Tucker](#)

Yes, it looks like a correction to the text, rather than a spelling correction or a correction of inaccurate quotes. We see "subhava" defined as being composed of two words, "su" and "bhava". The extra third word, "sva," is not part of that definition.

In this passage, there is no second guessing of some deeply esoteric truth, with the potential loss of actual meaning if the guess is incorrect. The meaning is fairly plain and obvious. The change seems of benefit to the reader, since it represents one less bit of extraneous noise to deal with.

The purpose of the book is to facilitate the transfer of knowledge, and on a deeper level to put the student in touch with teachings that are not subject to being captured in specific, concrete words.

It's important to keep the best interests of the theosophical student in mind when presenting these materials.

In balance, I still the many improvements -- including spelling corrections, corrections to quotations, typographical changes making quotes stand apart from the body text, etc. -- make the book much more suitable for study by all but the most exacting scholar, more interested in the history of the book than what is being said in it.

If a careful review of changes reveals an error, it would be the same as if other errors are found in the text. They can be corrected in a future edition of the book, which makes it still better than earlier editions.

The real issue, as I see it, with the Boris edition of THE SECRET DOCTRINE, concerns its copyright. The original edition of the book is in the public domain, and can be freely distributed in print

and electronic form. The de Zirkoff edition is copyrighted by the Theosophical Publishing House, and permission needs to be obtained, and possible royalties paid, for reprinting passages from it.

Although it may be the best edition for theosophical students, because it cannot be freely distributed, it's still preferable to cite the original edition. This will remain so until or unless the Theosophical Publishing House might chose to put the book in the public domain.

-- Eldon

At 12:21 PM 5/21/01 +0100, you wrote:

Dear Dallas

A friend was having a look at the de Zirkoff edition, and the book fell open at page 61 (vol. I):

Original edition:

"Subhava, from which Svabhavat, is composed of two words: Su "fair," "handsome," good;" Sva, "self;" and bhava, "being" or "states of being."

Boris de Zirkoff's edition:

Subhava, from which Svabhavat, is composed of two words: Su "fair," "handsome," "good;" and bhava, "being" or "states of being."

It is not a spelling or quote change: '"Sva, "self;"' is simply eliminated in the de Zirkoff edition.

Tony

-----Original Message-----

From: dalval14@earthlink.net [<mailto:dalval14@earthlink.net>]

Sent: 20 May 2001 9:41 am

To: theos-talk@yahoogroups.com

Subject: RE: Theos-World: SD original versus Boris de Zirkoff edition of THE SECRET DOCTRINE

Sunday, May 20, 2001

Dear Tony:

I did not realize there were all those changes. Thanks for letting us know.

If you find more will you share ?

Dallas

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- [RE: Theos-World: SD original versus Boris de Zirkoff edition of THE SECRET DOCTRINE](#)

- *From:* dalval14@earthlink.net
- [RE: Theos-World: SD original versus Boris de Zirkoff edition of THE SECRET DOCTRINE](#)
 - *From:* "Tony" <alpha@dircon.co.uk>
- [RE: Theos-World: SD original versus Boris de Zirkoff edition of THE SECRET DOCTRINE](#)
 - *From:* "Peter Merriott" <nous@btinternet.com>
- **References:**
 - [RE: Theos-World: SD original versus Boris de Zirkoff edition of THE SECRET DOCTRINE](#)
 - *From:* dalval14@earthlink.net
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