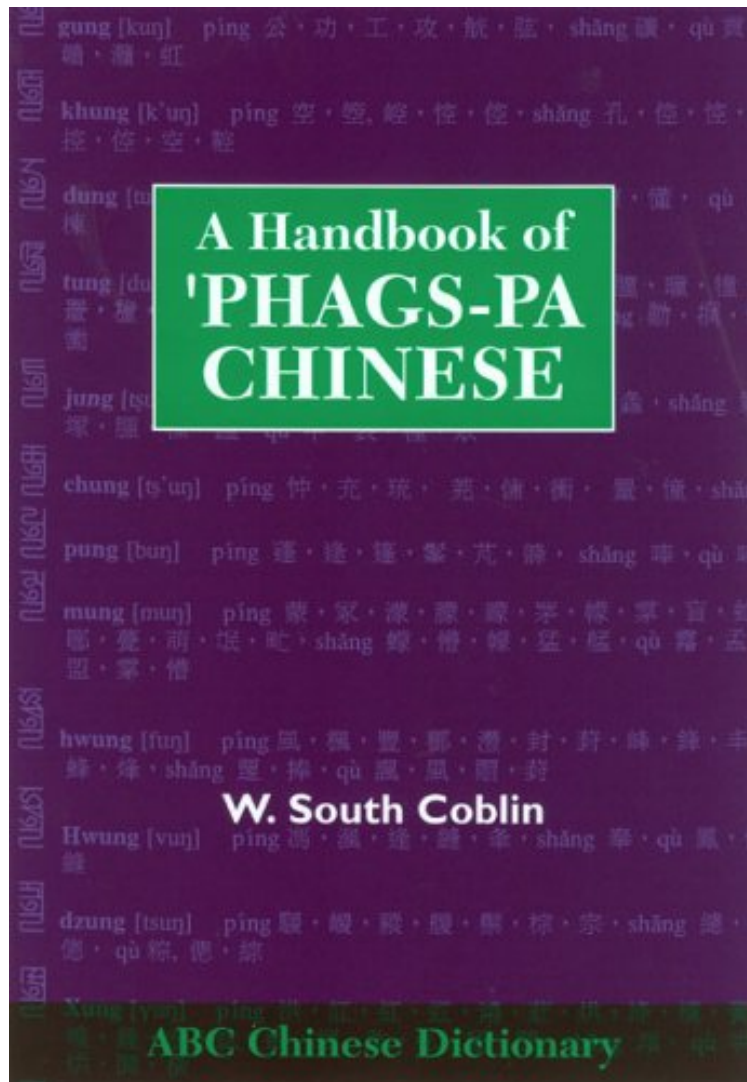


[Mobile book] A Handbook of 'Phags-Pa Chinese (ABC Chinese Dictionary Series)

A Handbook of 'Phags-Pa Chinese (ABC Chinese Dictionary Series)

W. South Coblin

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W. South Coblin : A Handbook of 'Phags-Pa Chinese (ABC Chinese Dictionary Series) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Handbook of 'Phags-Pa Chinese (ABC Chinese Dictionary Series):

Phags-pa Chinese is the earliest form of the Chinese language to be written in a systematically devised alphabetic script. It is named after its creator, a brilliant thirteenth-century Tibetan scholar-monk who also served as political adviser to Kublai Khan. 'Phags-pa's invention of an alphabet for the Mongolian language remains an extraordinarily

important accomplishment, both conceptually and practically. With it he achieved nothing less than the creation of a unified script for all of the numerous peoples in the Mongolian empire, including the Central Asian Turks and Sinitic-speaking Chinese. 'Phags-pa is of immense importance for the study of premodern Chinese phonology. However, the script is difficult to read and interpret, and secondary materials on it are scattered and not easily obtained. The present book is intended as a practical introduction to 'Phags-pa Chinese studies and a guide for reading and interpreting the script. It consists of two parts. The first part is an introductory section comprising four chapters. This is followed by a glossary of 'Phags-pa Chinese forms and their corresponding Chinese characters, together with pinyin and stroke order indexes to those characters. The first introductory chapter outlines the invention of the 'Phags-pa writing system, summarizes the major types of material preserved in it, and describes the historical and linguistic contexts in which this invention occurred. Following chapters detail the history of 'Phags-pa studies, the alphabet and its interpretation, and the salient features of the underlying sound system represented by the script, comparing it with those of various later forms of Chinese that have been recorded in alphabetic sources. A Handbook of 'Phags-pa Chinese will be of special interest to Chinese historical phonologists and scholars concerned with the history and culture of China and Central Asia during the Yuan period (A.D. 1279-1368).