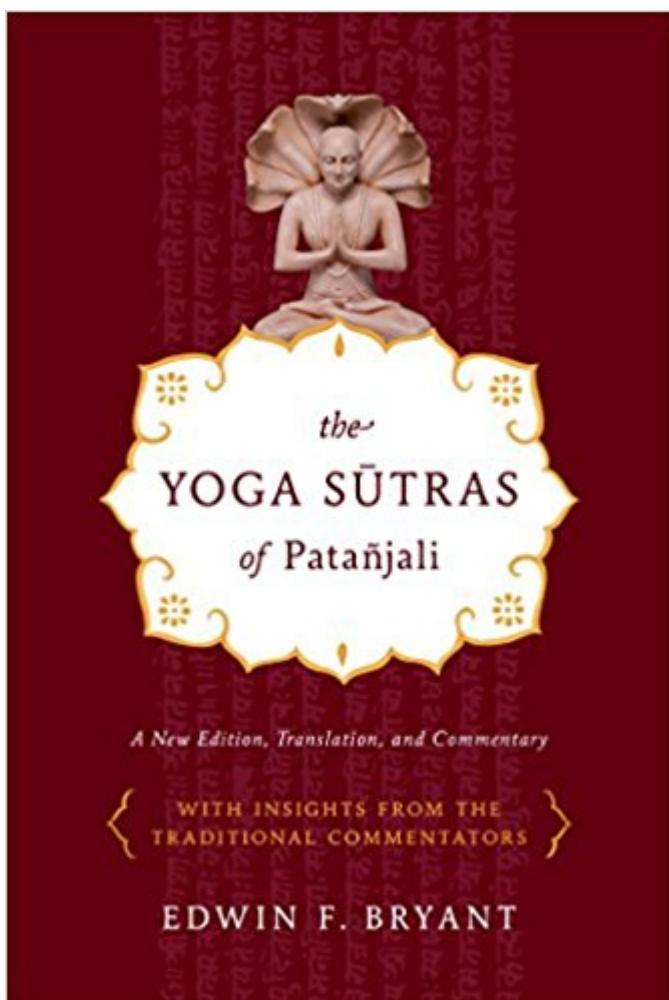


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The Yoga Sutras Of Patañjali: A New Edition, Translation, And Commentary



Synopsis

A landmark new translation and edition Written almost two millennia ago, Patañjali's work focuses on how to attain the direct experience and realization of the purusa: the innermost individual self, or soul. As the classical treatise on the Hindu understanding of mind and consciousness and on the technique of meditation, it has exerted immense influence over the religious practices of Hinduism in India and, more recently, in the West. Edwin F. Bryant's translation is clear, direct, and exact. Each sutra is presented as Sanskrit text, transliteration, and precise English translation, and is followed by Bryant's authoritative commentary, which is grounded in the classical understanding of yoga and conveys the meaning and depth of the su-tras in a user-friendly manner for a Western readership without compromising scholarly rigor or traditional authenticity. In addition, Bryant presents insights drawn from the primary traditional commentaries on the sutras written over the last millennium and a half.

Book Information

Paperback: 672 pages

Publisher: North Point Press; 1 edition (July 21, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0865477361

ISBN-13: 978-0865477360

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1.7 x 207.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 106 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #16,948 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Hinduism > Sutras #40 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Exercise & Fitness > Yoga #125 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Eastern

Customer Reviews

âœA superb contribution to the secondary literature on yoga. Critically grounded in the scholarship on yoga and the rich textual history of the tradition, Bryant nevertheless succeeds in transcending both the excessively technical approaches to yoga scholarship as well as much of the popular nonsense about yoga in the proliferating 'schools' in the New Age marketplace. Bryant impressively communicates the essentials of yoga philosophy and practice to the thoughtful but non-specialist general reader. His translations from the Sanskrit are precise and well-grounded, and his interpretations are provocative and persuasive. His book will surely be welcomed by both

serious scholars and responsible practitioners. • Gerald James Larson, Rabindranath Tagore Professor Emeritus of Indian Cultures and Civilizations, Indiana University, Bloomington, and Professor Emeritus of Religious Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara • Dr. Bryant's translation of and commentary on Patañjali's *Yoga Sutras* reveal the rich tapestry of schools and viewpoints that form the background for the yoga tradition. Dr. Bryant teaches us to delight in the diversity of ideas and commentaries that come along with the equally diverse practices of yoga. He helps us to look deeper into a universal pattern of all practices, taking us out of the fundamentalism and exclusivity of our own schools. Grounded in an unbiased sense of ancient history, he clears away any confusion about the meaning of and the connections between different yoga philosophies. His book is a well-rounded and inspiring course on the real connections between ideas, practices, and direct experience. I enthusiastically recommend it. • Richard Freeman, author of *The Yoga Matrix* • Edwin Bryant has provided us with a sweeping, kaleidoscopic overview of this essential yoga text. His clear and engaging prose brings Patañjali's aphorisms to life, taking his reader on an amazing journey through the history of yoga philosophy. • David Gordon White, Professor of Religious Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara, and author of *Sinister Yogis* • Edwin Bryant unpacks the layers of history and traditional commentaries that are in the suitcase of the *Yoga Sutras*. Through his depth of understanding and research rendered in this detailed map, we are able to travel a little closer to our soul. I will be reading and referring to his text for a lifetime. • Rodney Yee, author of *Moving Toward Balance* • The greatest strength of Edwin Bryant's work on the *Yoga Sutras* is that he has taken the most abstruse commentaries and made of them a fluidly readable work. He has made an academically serious study into a presentation of most symmetrical beauty. He has brought together the views of different schools of philosophy and made them rhyme as though in poetry. We need more of such works of serious and yet readable philosophy. • Swami Veda Bharati, D. Litt, Chancellor, HIHT University, Dehradun, India • Bryant's meticulous study of the *Yoga Sutras* examines its reception throughout the past fifteen hundred years by a variety of commentators. Understanding that all religious books operate in the context of lived communities, Bryant suggests that the worship of Vishnu as taught by Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita* has played an important role in how the practice of yoga has been understood and communicated, particularly for the past five hundred years. For practitioners of yoga, this book provides a fresh look at a complex philosophy of applied spirituality. • Christopher Key Chapple, Doshi Professor of Indic and Comparative Theology, Loyola Marymount University, and author of *Yoga and the Luminous* • What I like about Edwin Bryant's edition is that it serves as a concordance of commentaries, a commentary on the commentaries without which this text (or any

other compendium of sutras) is unintelligible. It is a pleasure to watch as Bryant uses the commentaries to show how thinking about the Yoga Sutras shifted and evolved over the years. •
•Dr. Robert Svoboda, Ayurvedacharya

EDWIN F. BRYANT received his PhD in Indology from Columbia University. He is a professor of Hindu religion and philosophy at Rutgers University, and also teaches workshops on the yoga sutras and other Hindu texts in yoga communities around the world.

The Yoga Sutras is the foundational text of the Vedic philosophy of yoga. It is hard to come by a translation of the Yoga Sutra that does justice to the depth and scope of the original work. Too often, nowadays, it seems that translators are more interested in promoting their interpretations of the text rather than representing the intentions of the original author. As a result, the translator often ends up obscuring the clarity of the original sutras with over-intellectualized or over-interpreted concepts. Enter Edwin Bryant, with his authoritative translation, complete with his own commentary as well as the most revered commentators of the Yoga Sutras, such as Vyasa and Hariharananda. Edwin Bryant is a consummate scholar with expertise in Sanskrit, vedic philosophy and Krishna devotion. Yet, he does not let his own commentary get in the way of the simple power of Patanjali's text. He provides the sutra in its original Sanskrit along with a romanized transliteration, and a word-by-word translation. His concise and simple translation remains close to the terseness of the original sutras, rather than flying off into poetic renditions as some modern translations would do. He then includes quite lengthy excerpts from a handful of major commentators from the tradition, ranging from the most ancient (Vyasa, whose Bhyasa is almost considered as canonical as the Sutra themselves) to the most recent (Swami Hariharananda). He also has a brilliant introduction which helps to provide context for the Yoga Sutras within Indian philosophy and history. Overall, I love this book. I have taken it on several international trips and the density of material, as well as the engaging writing style, continue to enrich my experience of the Yoga Sutras. As a yoga teacher, a studio owner, and a teacher trainer, I highly recommend Edwin Bryant's translation of the Yoga Sutras as the go-to version for the modern scholar-practitioner.

Having read many commentaries of Patanjali over the past 40 years I am thrilled to have Bryant's scholarly yet accessible version. I enjoy it so much I have it both as a kindle version and book form. It is enhancing my understanding in new ways.

I actually wrote to Dr. Bryant some years ago after reading his YSoP in print and begged him to have his publisher make this jewel available on Kindle. Finally, I have a portable copy on my iPad. This is genius - a contemporary presentation on the ancient wisdom of yoga. Much needed in this day and age where the yoga of the masses is nothing more than commercialized stretching and exercise. As a yoga teacher of some years, with a deep understanding of yogic and Tantric philosophy, I find that Bryant brings to the curious a magnificent presentation of what yoga really is: meditation on the nature of the self, beyond the mundane of the mind, body and emotions. With so many capitalizing on the new-age bs of what has become a multi-billion dollar business, Bryant masterfully brings yoga back to its origin - a science and practice devoted to the realization of the Immortal Self.

This book was amazing, My professor criticized Bryant a lot because he appears to give biased commentary (being a follower of Lord Vishnu). I actually this and resonated with it a lot.

I purchased this book a few years ago, and am just now reviewing it. It has been one that I have referred back to a number of times, and recommended. The author includes thought and commentary from many of the original commentators of the Yoga Sutras over the years, and assembles a lot of information in an extremely useful, and well-thought-out book. The only criticism I have is that the book is yellowing after only a few years, and I wish it were a larger book, hardcover even, as the print is small, and, because I have read and referenced it so much, it has worn out. But that's a compliment too!

I have it in both print and Kindle edition for the lookups on the road. It's easy enough for the novice and is full of commentary and history for those who want to dive in. I fluctuate between both of those on any given day. I keep going back to it and I probably will for the rest of my life. Thank you for making this so accessible. I can't thank you enough. On my bucket list is to take a Yoga Sutra course with Edwin Bryant! But a long one so we can actually dive and digest.

Bryant is a serious student of Indian Philosophy, and this is a serious, and highly comprehensive analysis of the Sutras. He draws not only on the seminal commentary of Vyasa, but several of the other important commentaries through the ages. The translations are generally quite good, and he briefly includes an important history of yoga, Sankhya philosophy and the treatment of the Sutras through time. The commentary can be long and involved, but for those dedicated to a more serious

study of the text, it is clear, balanced and digestible.

recommend it

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