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The yoga sutras of patanjali pdf

Yoga is considered by some to be the oldest unbroken line of philosophical/spiritual thought. It has its origins in India at the time of the Rig Veda, perhaps the oldest book in the world. It spread to the north, to the east (where it is known as Chan and Zen) and eventually to the west. Yoga is one of the sad Darshanas of India, the six insights, or points of view. They are: 1. Nyaya, founded by Gatama, a system of logic concerned with the means of acquiring the right knowledge; 2. Vaisesika, founded by Kanada, classifies all knowledge of the objective world; 3. Samkhya, founded by Kapila, comprehends the universe as a sum total of twenty-five categories and shows that all derived things in this world are produced from Spirit and Matter; 4. Yoga as founded by Patanjali, concerned with the ways and means by which the individual can know Reality by direct experience; 5. Mimamsa, founded by Jaimini, concerned with the correct interpretation of Vedic ritual and texts; 6. Vedanta, founded by Badarayana, inquiry into the nature of Brahman. The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali, also known as Raja Yoga and Classical Yoga, was probably written around 200 A.D. The cosmology of Patanjali is very similar to that of Samkhya and historically, they are seen as very close to each other. Patanjali was not the founder of Yoga, but he compiled many known elements of Yoga and presented them in a dualistic manner. It is very much a practice of discernment, of distinguishing - Vi-Yoga. Before and after that, Yoga was for the most part seen as non-dualistic. It is also called Astanga Yoga for the eight limbs found in the second and third chapters. The entire text is like a comprehensive practice manual. Who is Patanjali? Patanjali is not the inventor of yoga, but rather yoga's most well-known systematizer and compiler. What has become known simply as the "Yoga Sutras" or the "Yoga Darshana" (the vision of Yoga), is actually a compendium of an ancient pre-existing oral yoga tradition consisting of practical advice on the yogic path, written in the Sanskrit language approximately 2000 years ago in Northern India while utilizing the terminology of the times. The dates ascribed to the composition of the Yoga Sutras vary widely from 250 BC to 250 AD, based on style, language, grammar, and literary technique. What can be said for sure however is that Patanjali's era and the setting were proto-tantric, Buddhist, Jain, Hindu, and eclectic. Because authentic yoga has been mainly an oral tradition (versus a written tradition), yoga practices and teachings precede any written texts, but how far in the ancient past, it is impossible to pin down. From the life story of the Buddha (who was a yoga practitioner circa fifth century BC) and other similar accounts, we will make the assumption that yoga practices pre-existed perhaps prior than 1000 BC. Patanjali seems to have been inspired by some of the Buddhist teachings, notably those belonging to the branch of Mahayama, which was very popular at the time of Classical Yoga. Patanjali was undoubtedly aware of Buddhist Yoga and it's conceivable that he modelled the eight-limb path after the Buddha's arya-asta-ngika-marga or the "noble eightfold path". Both 'astanga' systems make the moral disciplines the solid foundation of spiritual practice and both emphasize the need to discipline the mind through the cultivation of stringent meditation. We really know nothing about the historical Patanjali who compiled the Yoga Sutras, but we can assume that he was an educated man who received oral instruction in the traditional mountain yogi oral instructions and then took up the traditional practices of yoga in the remote areas of India such as caves, forests, or river banks which were the most frequent practising grounds of the time. There Patanjali, the yogi, gained the Siddha (perfection) of nirbija samadhi (seedless samadhi), the crown achievement of yoga. Then Patanjali decided to summarise and record the most essential Yoga teachings in a composition format in the latter part of his life. This also corresponds to the same late Mauryan period when the BuddhisTheravadin Sutras were first committed to written text (previously they were memorized and chanted). The reason the Theravadins gave to write the sutras down was their fear that it might become forgotten, lost, or corrupted. Similar reasoning may have influenced Sri Patanjali as well. In yogic mythology, Patanjali is identified as an incarnation of the cosmic serpent Shesha or Ananta, which is said to encircle the universe and serves as God Vishnu's couch. He is often considered a famous grammarian, also thought to have composed a work on medicine. In the Yoga Bhashya commentary of Vyasa, we read the following traditional invocation to Patanjali (the second paragraph being well known amongst Astangi's): "I bow with folded hands to sage Patanjali, who gave Yoga for the pacification of the mind, Grammar for clarity of speech, and Medicine for removing the flaws of the body. I salute Patanjali, the embodiment of spirit (purusha), whose hands hold a conch and a disc, and who is crowned by a white thousand-headed serpent" - G. Feuerstein translation As a system, the type of yoga as put forth by Patanjali, is non-theistic, being free of caste distinction, ceremony, ritual, book study, guru worship, or traditional methods of worship. And at the same time, it does not contain any atheistic doctrine either (Isvara). It is not self-important, rather yogic practice is the path, while the Yoga Sutras are simply a guidebook to one's practice, not a necessity. What is a Sutra? The word sutra, which is related to the Latin word sutura, means literally 'thread'. In Indian philosophy its widely used to denote a thread of thoughts and this is exactly the meaning behind the title Yoga Sutra. Patanjali's work is a compilation of his threads of thought on Yoga, which was to be memorized by his disciples. Sutra corresponds roughly to what we call aphorisms, except they are always very succinct. In fact, they often are so brief that without the traditional commentaries it would be virtually impossible to decipher them because words can have all kinds of meanings, and in order to make sense of a sentence, we need to know just what is being said and which of several connotations of a word is intended. It is also interesting to understand that the Sanskrit language does not have an equivalent word for "philosophy", which we derived from the Greek language where it literally means "the love (philia) of wisdom (sophos)". Instead, the Sanskrit scholars would often use the word Darshana, which literally means "viewing". Thus Patanjali's school of thought is known as yoga Darshana or the viewpoint of yoga. Commentaries Because a sutra must be as concise as possible, it is not unusual for the author to write also a commentary on it. However, no such commentary authored by Patanjali himself has existed or survived. The first and possibly the most well-known commentary to the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali is the Yoga- Bhashya, ascribed to Vyasa and possibly dated 450 AD. Because the Yoga Sutras is so incredibly concise, Vyasa's commentary has proven crucial to understanding Patanjali's statements and the philosophy of classical Yoga. However, no commentary, including the one of Vyasa, has preserved Patanjali's actual teachings with perfect fidelity. Vyasa's commentary, for example, seems to have inserted an extra sutra (between 3.21 and 3.22), which was supposedly not in the original work of Patanjali. Vyasa was an adherent of Samkhya's philosophy, whose legendary founder was sage Kapila. His commentary set the tone for the traditional institutionalized academic commentaries. Within this tradition, it is still believed that in order to understand the Yoga Sutras, one must study Vyasa's commentary (the two are studied as one work). In fact, this tradition maintains that it is impossible to understand the Yoga Sutrasany another way. Samkhya's philosophy, in general, is based on eternal dualism: i.e., that purusa (formless consciousness) and Prakriti (nature) are independent and mutually exclusive. Samkhya also states that spiritual liberation is dependent upon isolation from feelings, experience and nature, which is sometimes are seen in sharp contrast to the integrative vision of yoga which is union as samadhi. A far different interpretation is given by the followers of the earlier Vedanta schools, which are in favour of a nondualist interpretation of existence: there is only One, everything else is either a manifestation of that ultimate being or is purely illusory. Within this school of thought, Patanjali's translation will suggest that Vyasa actually contradicts Patanjaliand that the Yoga Sutras become alive and profound only when we no longer impose Samkhya's dualism upon the Yoga Sutras. Many other commentaries have been written since that time and new ones are still today published on a regular basis. Many translations are also freely available on the internet so that the best way to study the sutras would be to actually read as many translations as available in English or in one's own language unless of course, one is willing to learn Sanskrit with proficiency for the purpose of studying the original text of Patanjali. Bearing this in mind, it is useful to choose translations with commentaries that present the following: - Sanskrit version of the sutras - Transliteration of the sutras - Word by word meaning of the sutras - Translation of the sutras - Commentary to the translation of the sutras. It appears that at least five qualities must be present in order to be at least halfway successful in the translation of the Yoga Sutras into English or any other language, namely: - Sanskrit knowledge - English (or another language) knowledge - Yogic experience from a consistent yoga practice - Knowledge of the Western mind and terminology - Knowledge of the Indian era, cultural assumptions, language, style, and mindset when the Yoga Sutras were written. And for the rest, affinity with a certain interpretation, school of thoughts or language may also be a key element which directs you towards a specific translation of the sutra rather than another. Any translation of the Yoga Sutras, however, should reveal that yoga is aimed at universal truth, beyond any one religion, culture, era, philosophy, race, nationality, ideology or language. This is the Universal Truth that Patanjali (and authentic yoga) surely intended. An Experiential Workbook Today the modern yogi is confronted with many "types" of yoga. The Yoga Sutras represent the oldest written form, belonging most properly to the school of Raj (royal) Yoga, which in short can be defined as yoga practices which are culminated in meditation (dhyana) as a direct way to samadhi (the natural non-dual unitive state). The Yoga Sutras will reveal to the careful reader details of the obstacles and pitfalls to meditation, together with practical methods to identify and remediate these hindrances through various effective practices, such as meditation (dhyana), Astanga (eight-limbed) yoga, kriya yoga, etc. Thus we can say that the Yoga Sutra provides an excellent companion for those who would use meditation (dhyana) and other additional yoga practices as a practical spiritual path to awakening and self-liberation. You may use the Yoga Sutras like a 'lab book', cookbook or field manual making certain that the authentic teacher within you is to be awakened through practice. Read a little, then practice, read some more, practice, read, and so forth in that way. The lab book enhances the practice. Here it is the practice which reveals. In yoga, it is direct experience from practice which educates our beliefs. Our beliefs must conform to "reality", not the other way around. When our view of the world corresponds to how it truly is-as-it-is (view and reality), then something clicks, a clear shift occurs and one experiences harmony, true happiness, and peace. Through body/mind integration love, beauty, and wisdom manifests to the yogi in action. In other words, the Yoga Sutras can be read as a manual to successful meditation (dhyana) and samadhi (absorption) as long as the practice is process-oriented as distinct from goal-oriented (attachment to results). Without a doubt, the Yoga Sutras cannot be understood without experiential practice. The practice is the key - pause for practice, breath awareness, energy awareness, mindfulness ... and more practice. The Yoga Sutras is not a philosophy or religious book to be studied with the intellect or ordinary mind, but rather it is an experiential workbook that is revealed by an open heart. The entire universe including the true nature of mind is the laboratory. Knowing the instrument of experiencing, thus reveals the field of knowing. Experiencing that is liberation in this very life. Patanjali everywhere confirms that this Reality can be intimately experienced, should we let go of our preconceived belief systems and be present in each moment of our experiences - otherwise awakening on the spiritual path is obscured, hindered, or blocked. The Structure of The Yoga Sutras Most versions of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras comprise 195 aphorisms, distributed over four chapters or sections called padas in the following way: 1. Samadhi Pada (ecstasy): 51 sutras 2. Sadhana Pada (practice): 55 sutras 3. Vibhuti Pada (powers): 55 sutras (sometimes 56) 4. Kaivalya Pada (liberation): 34 sutras When we look at the overall organization of the Yoga Sutras, we find that Patanjali started out by providing a general introduction of the ecstatic path, which is at the cores of his system. Then he furnished important details of the path, notably the role and functions of what today would be called the unconscious. This he followed with a description of the paranormal powers, which are described as an inevitable by-product of yogic discipline. Finally, he mapped out the higher processes of yoga leading to the supreme goal of liberation. This is a breathtaking journey, which takes us from our average distracted mind (the so-called monkey mind) and its countless misconstructions about reality, directly into the spiritual dimension and true nature of the spirit (Purusha). the yoga sutras of patanjali by swami satchidananda. the yoga sutras of patanjali pdf. the yoga sutras of patanjali by alistair shearer. the yoga sutras of patanjali by swami satchidananda pdf. the yoga sutras of patanjali barnes and noble. the yoga sutras of patanjali audiobook. the yoga sutras of patanjali sri swami satchidananda. the yoga sutras of patanjali by swami satchidananda ebook

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