

The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali As-It-Is Introduction, Commentaries, and Translation

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What are the Yoga Sutras and who is Patanjali?

At least fifty different English translations of the Sanskrit **Yoga Sutras** have been completed; which stands as a testament to this profound and inspiring compendium of yogic wisdom based on Universal Truth has stood the test of time. In contrast to the more common spheres of knowledge that arises from book knowledge, conceptual thought processes, and external authoritarian sources, Patanjali's work serves to turn the true seeker on to the inner universal teacher, within, the timeless transconceptual knowledge, and immutable laws that reside within our own HeartMind. This non-dual vision penetrates all of creation and is continuously present before birth and after death -- primordially. It illumines our life once recognized and taken to heart. It is The Commons that unites us all.

The following translation and commentary are a result of many years of yoga practice and study, which has profoundly transformed the translator's own personal life by helping him break through boundaries that allowed for a more fulfilling and creative life. Patanjali always points the yogi towards exploring their HeartMind's wholistic relationships establishing an inner and intimate familiarity based on direct experiential data. This translator has had the good fortune of studying with many teachers and within more than one authentic yoga tradition, while for the most part, also living in western culture, dealing with the western mindset, culture, and the English language.

Although I am very grateful to all my teachers, the best teachers have pointed me to the universal innate primordial teacher who lives inside all. This work is dedicated toward revealing the universal message of authentic yoga that the sage, Sri Patanjali, first composed approximately 2000 years ago.

Patanjali is not the inventor of yoga, but rather yoga's most well-known systematizer and compiler -- the authr of what has become known simply as the "**Yoga Sutras**" (sutra means thread and yoga means to connect). Hence, the Yoga Sutras connects loose threads, makes contacts and bridges, purifies and energizes broken or rusted links, and integrates fragmented thought forms back into its natural wholistic context prior to negative psychological conditioning.

The Yoga Sutras are also known as "Yoga Darshana" (the vision of Yoga), being a compendium of an ancient pre-existing oral yoga tradition consisting of practical advice on the yogic path. The most generally accepted format of the **Yoga Sutras** consists of [four chapters](#) (called padas) written in the Sanskrit language approximately 2000 years ago in Northern India, while utilizing the terminology of the times, i.e., Buddhist, samkhya, and proto-tantric trappings of the early Golden Age (Gupta period), which succeeded the Mauryan Empire.

The dates ascribed to the composition of the **Yoga Sutras** by historians vary widely, but it is fair to say that they were written somewhere between approximately 100 BCE to 300 CE. As any investigator knows, there is a large controversy regarding the accuracy of Indian historical dating systems, where events are often moved around to satisfy traditional ideological bias, prejudice, and belief, rather than as an attempt to ascertain historical accuracy. Since Patanjali is not an uncommon surname, a conflation with the yogi. Patanjali, and Patanjali, the famous Grammarian, is unfortunately not

uncommon. Regarding the most modern date, it is conjecture based on the lack of any extant references to preexisting commentaries on the **Yoga Sutras** before Vyasa's most famous commentary; which some would date approximately at the fourth century CE. However, dating Vyasa is controversial for the same reasons mentioned above; i.e., Patanjali is confounded with the Grammarian named Patanjali; Patanjali is said to have been born from a lotus flower; Vyasa is said to be the same person as Veda Vyasa; Vyasa is conflated as being one and the same person as Patanjali; and other hagiographic and contradictory assertions. None of these assertions can be proven; while many can be disproven given historical data, discrepancies in grammatical form, and logic. But to be fair, we can acknowledge the possibilities that all are true given the ability of a yogi to transcend time and space and be at one with intelligent universal energetic form body; which unites all -- an ability that this commentator does not claim.

Mostly, we find that the dating problem is confounded by those, who blindly take their provincial tradition, sect, religion, nationality, or guru as an unquestioned authority in doxographical matters, which often leads to varied absurd conclusions if not chauvinistic controversy. It is far more beneficial to simply analyze the context, content, style, principles, language, and techniques that Patanjali has utilized in determining his cultural and historical context, which was definitively post-Buddhist and proto-tantric. If one does indeed hypothesize that Patanjali's era and setting was proto-tantric Northern India, who drew from pre-existing pre-Brahmanic sources, as well as Buddhist, Jain, Hindu, and non-sectarian eclectic yogis, an unbiased and more accurate portrayal becomes possible. Because authentic yoga up until Patanjali's time had been an oral tradition (versus a written tradition), yoga practices and teachings obviously precede any written texts and therefore are not dependent on written words. However, the exact date in the ancient past is a question that is not yet possible to determine due to the lack of prior literature or testimony, and a unique characteristic of Indian culture to conflate historical/linear time and place with psychic history. Certainly, we know that yoga practices were well established before Buddha Shakyamuni's era (fifth century BCE); and there is excellent artistic evidence to suggest that similar forms of yoga was practiced even before the first millennium BCE.

Unfortunately, many scholars, sycophants, grammarians, and sectarian religionists believe that yoga practices, spirituality, or Ultimate Spirit (God) proceeded to humans via texts and/or words uttered by gods or god inspired men, and is thus accessible exclusively that way; i.e., that the texts or scriptures preceded the practices instead of the other way around. However, we will deconstruct that as a direct contradiction of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras -- as an absurd proposition, albeit still most common. To add to the confusion a new breed of Western sycophants have emerged who blindly follow whatever their guru says, without question. Although these gurus may have much scholarly knowledge to offer, Patanjali never taught methods based on blind belief. In fact, authentic yoga was seen as a threat to existing authoritarian patriarchal structures was because it was not dependent upon such. Through authentic yoga a timeless, living, and ongoing spiritual momentum as the all intelligent creative/evolutionary force is revealed and embodied by the dedicated yogi. It doesn't come to man through books written in language or metre, human traditions, or human institutions, albeit some may have tried to honestly mimic such. Rather, that connection is innate and intimate within all beings and things (known, recognized, and respected, or not. Yoga provides effective tools to enliven us to that reality. Yogic knowledge (as distinct from book knowledge) comes from practice; which is the subject of Pada Two of the Yoga Sutras. The entire Yoga Sutras sheds light on that path; which remains as an ever accessible inner/outer, subject/objective non-dual holographic transconceptual experience.

Thus, from the life story of the Buddha (who was a yoga practitioner circa fifth century BCE), other similar accounts, and archeological data we can make the assumption that yoga practices pre-existed considerably prior than 1000 BC. Regarding the Yoga Sutras specifically, a thorough historical analysis based on style, language, grammar, and literary techniques, can also be used to fairly accurately date Patanjali's **Yoga Sutras**, but such a discussion is beyond the scope of this presentation ([see](#)

[Accessing Patanjali for more on this subject](#)). To sum up, the authentic yoga *tradition* is ancient, and far precedes the compendium, known as Patanjali's ***Yoga Sutras***.

For our purpose we will accept the entire traditional four chapters consisting of 195 sutras (threads) of the "***Yoga Sutras***" as being authentic; while acknowledging the controversy as to the possibility of additional sutras being added post-humously. For example, it is not uncommon to find an additional sutra after III.22 to make the total 196 sutras.

In summary, although classical Indian traditionalists generally pay little detail to linear/sequential aspects of time, while remaining ignorant of the symbolic representations of places and people, suffice it to say that the ***Yoga Sutras*** (as a compendium) was most likely composed somewhere around the same time of Yeshua ben Yosef. Due to style, grammar, and content (especially because of chapter three), the more modern proto-tantric time period of the third century CE may be proposed as the time period of the Yoga Sutras. Such however is speculation.

Yet, we should keep in mind that Patanjali was addressing the entire tradition of yoga up to his present time. Regardless, we will assume that Patanjali was an educated man, well versed in Sanskrit, who received verbal instruction in the traditional mountain yogi oral transmissions common to his time, 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 practicing grounds of the time. There, Patanjali, the yogi, gained the siddha (perfection) of nirbija samadhi (seedless samadhi), the crown achievement of yoga.

As the remote meditative havens frequented by yogis were already receding in the third century CE due to growing urbanization tendencies and expansionism, and dedicated aspirants were dwindling because of the seduction of modern materialism, it is surmised that Patanjali decided to summarize in a written outline form a record of the most essential/basic Yoga teachings in the latter part of his life despite admonitions to the contrary. This also corresponds approximately to the same post-Mauryan period when the Buddhist Theravadin Sutras were first committed to written text (previously they were memorized and chanted). The reason the Theravadins gave (at the fourth Council) to write the sutras down was their fear that it might become forgotten, lost, or corrupted. A similar reasoning may have influenced Sri Patanjali's decision as well; although there was a risk that these writings would become subverted for partisan purposes, becoming too easily accessible to fakirs and pretenders who would act the part (a danger to which the non-corrupt guru-disciple tradition was immune; but recent events have proved that its immunity has been compromised).

So what is this ancient yogic path that Patanjali outlines? As a system, the type of yoga as put forth by Patanjali, is non-theistic, having not even the slightest suggestion of worshipping idols, deities, gurus, or sacred books; but at the same time it does not contain any atheistic doctrine either. Although this fact has been contested by self-stylized special interest groups, partisans, cults, gurus and their followers, a carefully unbiased study of the ***Yoga Sutras***, especially the discussion of what Patanjali means by the word, "isvara" (in short, innermost master), will support the aforesaid hypothesis incontestable. The ***Yoga Sutras*** are devoid of caste distinction, ceremony, ritual, academics, guru worship, or traditional methods of worship. One marvel of the ***Yoga Sutras*** is that it is not self-important or self-laudatory, claiming no exclusivity. Rather, yogic practice is the path and the field, while the ***Yoga Sutras*** are simply a guidebook to one's practice, not an exclusive necessity, a map to help get one to the vicinity, but not the territory.

So Why Another Translation and Commentary?

Most previous translations and commentaries of the ***Yoga Sutras*** have been based on traditional beliefs, cultural baggage, unexamined assumptions, and precedents set in a far different time, cultural, and religious limited assumptions. For the most part the ***Yoga Sutras*** have been interpreted within

the limited confines of either samkhya philosophy, Vedanta, and/or through the context of the other five Classical Darshanas; yet Patanjali does not mention nor does he advocate any of those systems. It is not very difficult to study in detail any one or all three of these systems and then create a "religiously correct" authoritarian and "approved" interpretation that conforms to that predilection. Such has already been accomplished many times by ambitious sycophants. However, very few interpretations have been made available from a non-religious viewpoint, but rather untainted universally spiritual light; as it does not carry with it ideological baggage.

Assuming the Yoga Sutras contain a tieless universal message that is relevant to human beings today, it is the goal of here to make these teachings available to the dedicated yoga practitioner. This translation and commentary will take the position of that Patanjali's yoga is psychological and spiritual -- timeless and supramundane, while not being based upon religious/ideological dictates. Yoga is based on understanding one's own true nature of mind and its interface with the true nature of all phenomena (the creative evolutionary intelligent energy -- Shakti) through the human energetic, emotional, and neurological pathways, circuitry, and aligned configurations. It is not dependent upon any one race, culture, religion, geology, or nationality. We will assume that Patanjali, as a mountain yogi practitioner living in the wilds outside the walls of academic institutions, practiced pure yoga within an integrated ecological framework (mother nature). For Patanjali, "life" was not only a part of a great continuity/integrity pre-existing before physical birth and after physical death, but yoga was LIFE, as the embodiment of a living spiritual integration/continuity -- as a completion of a great all-encompassing all-creative transgenerational Living Integrity; which after all, is the context of yoga wherein a yogi abides. Here we assume that the source of creativity and inspiration is timeless, and that Sri Patanjali tapped into this source, while expressing it. It is to this creative and inspiring source, which abides underneath all of creation that is being disclosed in functional yoga in steps through practice. Being expressed in all of creation/nature, herein nature and life are neither demeaned nor disrespected, where universal consciousness and evolutionary power are expressed non-dually as the marriage of shiva/shakti (cit and sat). Consequently, ecology, Mother Nature, and the feminine (right brain qualities) are no longer ignored nor demeaned; but are fully integrated in body, mind, and spirit. In this commentary and translation, yoga is thus much more than sycophancy... much more than political correctness or conformity. Rather, yoga should unleash one's innate but latent creative potential.

We will go into depth to support this type of interpretation in each sutra, all of which leads to all the others without contradiction or ambiguity. It should be recognized that in Patanjali's time book knowledge, memorization, and conformity to tradition was not a valid yogic path, rather the yoga tradition was based on oral transmission, practice, and guidance from the development of one's inner wisdom and intuitive abilities. In the ancient mountain tradition, in which Patanjali was a practitioner, Hindu, Jain, Buddhist, and eclectic non-sectarian yogis practiced in the mountains devoid of any religious trappings. We will go to lengths to show that the **Yoga Sutras** are bereft of such trappings, while any such religious connotations are being "read-in" by religious zealots and sycophants. We emphasize this point; because of the all too common penchant toward conformity to authority that is the bane of the twentyfirst century. Any "ism", conceptual system, external religious authority, or belief system was antithetical to Patanjali's teaching. A radical departure from institutionalized patriarchal entrenched tradition requires a lengthy commentary; however, Patanjali's simple words stand on their own. They should be read and re-read as they are written, through the insightful eyes of a yogic practitioner. The interpreter here has attempted to strike a balance, while noting that those who possess adequate insight will not need an extensive commentary. In that case, it is the author's hope that this translation may serve to confirm the yogi's insight and strengthen the yogis resolve.

The Practice of Vairagyabhyam (non-grasping) and Meditation (dhyana) are Pivotal Keys that Unlock Yoga's Potential

Today, the modern reader is confronted with many "types" of yoga. The ***Yoga Sutras*** represent the oldest written formulation. Placed within the present day, categorization of yoga, the ***Yoga Sutras*** are most closely associated with the school called Raj (Royal or Kingly) Yoga, which succinctly can be defined as yoga practices that are matured by the practice of meditation (dhyana). As such dhyana is the seventh limb (anga) in Patanjali's eight limb system (ashtanga) yoga system. A few cogent points to keep in mind is that yoga itself, defies categorization of any manmade system. Patanjali's ashtanga yoga system includes more than dhyana. Sadhana Pada with its presentation of the eight limb system is only called into play if one is not able to complete para-vairagya and move beyond asamprajnata. Please consider a careful study of Sutras 1.16, 1.17, 1.18, and 1.19 to understand the profundity of vairagya as defined by Patanjali, and what is meant by nirvikalpa, maha-videha, and asamprajnata. Sutra 1.20 follows, saying that if not realized then the sadhak must proceed using faith, monitoring one's energy, intuition, and auxiliary practices leading up to ashtanga yoga and samadhi. Keep these points in mind.

Vairagyam is the key to successful meditation. It is nothing less than opening up the pathways, clearing the channels (of the physical and psychic bodies), and emptying all one's obstructions (klehas), so that living spirit may be given a suitable home in the living temple of the body/mind and a fertile place on planet earth to co-create. Once the nadis (psychic channels) are purified from toxic psychic influence, the evolutionary energy (shakti) goes to work by building evolutionary circuitry that connects the yogi to possibilities previously unimagined. The yogi becomes a pure reflection and empty vessel for love and wisdom to flow forth in each instant of timeless presence.

A careful reading of the ***Yoga Sutras*** will speak to the mature meditator, a validation of this profound state of clarity and will help condition her as to how to recognize the arising of the hindrances to meditation (in the forms of kleshas, samskara, vasana, vrtti, and karma) as well as how to surrender to one's innate love-wisdom or buddhanature -- true nature of mind (swarupa sunyam). Practical methods (practices) are given to identify and then remediate the hindrances through various effective yogic practices, which liberate (mukti) and open up the channels. The main remedy is meditation (dhyana), and its auxiliary practices such as the practices found in ashtanga (eight limbed) yoga, kriya yoga, vairagya, isvara pranidhana, swadhyaya, tapas, the four boundless minds, and numerous proto-tantric practices, especially found in chapter three, vibhuti pada; which utilizes dharana and samyama while conscious vairagyabhyam (non-attachment) permeates all yogic practices.

Thus, it is accurate to say that the ***Yoga Sutras*** provide a most excellent companion for those who would use meditation (dhyana) and other adjunctive yoga practices as a practical spiritual path to awaken and self-liberate. Here one may use the ***Yoga Sutras*** like a lab book, cook book, or field manual making certain that the authentic teacher within (isvara) is to be awakened and consulted through one's practice, as distinct from mechanically following dictates from an ancient book. Read a little, then practice, read some more, practice, read, and so forth in that way. The lab book enhances the practice, but is not necessary. Here, the **practice** reveals, while the book may prove to accelerate the practice. Its study is like dharana, opening up latent yogic pathways that here-to-fore have been dormant. Its study is sattvic and auspicious.

In yoga it is the direct experience derived from practice, which reforms and edifies our beliefs, until we have the confidence that allows us to deconstruct all beliefs. Our beliefs must conform to experiential "reality", not the other way around (imposing our beliefs onto the world). When our extrinsic view of the world corresponds to how it truly is-as-it-is (swarupa-sunyam), then the view and reality are synched in a profound mutuality

acting as mutual synergists transcending belief constructs altogether. Intrinsic/extrinsic unification clicks and a palpable shift occurs. as a result one experiences experiential harmony, true happiness, and peace. Through body/mind integration, love, beauty, and wisdom manifest through the yogi as awakened activity.

At the outset of the Yoga Sutras Patanjali warns against domination of the citta-vrtti (the turnings, bias, spinning, and distractions that tilt, limit, and condition the mind-field) of which preconceived belief systems (BS), no matter how seemingly authoritative they may appear cease (nirodha). When the mind is empty of such obstruction, it is free to see clearly without fear, attachment, or delusion. The **Yoga Sutras** exhorts us to let the citta-vrtti go (vairagya), while encouraging us to be vitally present in each moment in all our relations as well as in each breath segment. At other times, awakening on the spiritual path may become obscured, hindered, or blocked because sacred presence appears absent, discontinuous, or disrupted. What is lacking is our open and empty recognition of it.

In short, the **Yoga Sutras** can be read as a lab book 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 by a non-meditator. Practice is the key -- pause for practice, breath awareness, energy awareness, integrative awareness ... and extend the practice into All Our Relations.

Sutra I.12 reads,

Abhyasa-vairagyabhyam tan-nirodhah meaning:

The various mental bias and modifications of the mind-field are completely dissolved, cancelled out, and cease (tan-nirodha) by sustained and continuous application (abhyasa) of vairagya (letting go, non-attachment, non-craving, non-grasping and non-expectation).

For most of us, the word, practice, connotes a future goal. But with vairagya, all that we do has integrity in that the fruit is contained in the path, and the path in the fruit. Just as love, awareness, and happiness can be recognized as ever-presence. It is everpresent when the fruit is integrated and revealed in a titrated path/practice. HERE we abide in an sustained openness. When the mind is very clear, lucid, and empty, and open, then the innate brilliance, peace, and transpersonal wisdom can shine forth naturally. The sacred sound is heard -- the ambrosial nectar sipped, the inner light illumines all.

"The Gyalwa Karmapa says that the best and the most profound action is the fully matured mastery of all that is meditated upon, that meditation on the ground, on that confidence of the view that arises from the confirmation of the ground, and the mastering of that in all situations—that is the profound action. No matter what we are doing—we can be just having a holiday, or we can be just resting at home or working at the office, or doing whatever we are doing—if we are always able to maintain this awareness of this ultimate essence, then that is the true, profound action. He ends these four sentences by saying, may one obtain this confidence and this depth of view, meditation and action. That is the general, overall version of this particular prayer."

(A Commentary By His Eminence Tai Situ Rinpoche on "The Aspiration Prayer of Mahamudra, the Definitive Meaning" Composed by The Lord Protector Rangjung Dorje, Third Gyalwa Karmapa ...Shenpen Osel, March 1998)

Thus, to reiterate, the **Yoga Sutras** is not a philosophy or religious book to be studied with the intellect or an overly objectified mindset; but rather it is an experiential workbook that is revealed by

an open (pure) heart. The entire universe, including the true nature of mind, as well as all-time and boundless space, since the unfabricated beginningless beginning is the laboratory. In authentic yoga it must be consulted continuously. Knowing the instrument of knowing/experiencing, and clarifying that, thus, reveals the field of knowing, nay the yogi merge as the field of knowing. Experiencing that is liberation in this very life. Wisdom, by its nature, is trans-rational and transconceptual -- broader than any manmade conception, technology, or constructed thought wave. The human being's five senses and the intellect are not capable tools by themselves of fully mapping the gyred spirals of the holographic universe; yet, Patanjali everywhere confirms that this Holographic Reality can be intimately experienced should we let go of our bias and preconceived dispositions and illusions and let the light shine through.

According to yoga, wisdom as well as the intellect (buddhi) comes from an innate sourceless and timeless intelligence of the universal boundless primordial mind (purusa). That is the ever accessible clear light (cit) residing behind the intellect waiting to reveal itself should the sadhak dare to look. The param-purusha, if we chose to look for it, is ever-present HERE and NOW. Patanjali tells us that when the ordinary linear thought processes cease and dissolve, meditation begins to bear its fruit; while the end of meditation itself is samadhi (total integration). This is the practice of yoga as integration, where yoga is the verb, practice, process, and fruit; while nirbij (seedless) samadhi in kaivalyam (absolute unconditional freedom) realizing our true natural unconditioned Self (swarupa) as purusa-sattva is the objectless ever present discernable goal. Success in Yoga is through applied yoga practice, practice, and practice. Through release, release, and complete release (non-attachment). It is not reached by reading about it, dissecting a book, quoting from it, nor discussing it; yet such books that remind the reader of the innermost teacher (sat guru) within all beings can be a valuable aid when used in conjunction with a personal yoga practice. This is a process oriented system, where the fruit is inside the path, the result is known in the practice/process, where the view, the path and the goal are integrated and that integration is kept in mind at all times (or at least most of the time).

The practice of yoga (sadhana) through astanga yoga and especially meditation (dhyana) shifts the practitioner (sadhak) into experiencing a far more aligned and connected reality, than what is capable via the ordinary mental machinations, such as conceptual thought processing, philosophical speculation, the study of semantics, grammar, memorization of rules or facts, ceremonies, ritual, prayer, worship of statutes or gods, mechanical recitation of prayers, and so forth. Indeed, Patanjali says that when yoga is accomplished through the cessation of the vrttis, then one abides in swarupa-sunyam, a recognition/revelation of our self-existing uncontrived true nature devoid of dualistic tendencies, the unconditioned, transpersonal, and sacred natural self. Prabhava is thus associated with pravrtti, while swabhava is associated with swarupa. All these terms will be explained in great detail in the **Yoga Sutras** proper. Unfortunately, they do not translate into English directly word for word.

Thus, Patanjali repeatedly warns against the futility of approaching meditation via the intellect, but rather to experience the fruits of yoga such as attaining transconceptual wisdom and liberation, by abandoning conceptual frameworks and belief systems (BS). The first sign of success in the experience of meditation is the letting go of such limitations (vairagyabhyam) by directly recognizing the vectors of mental formations as burdensome hindrances joyfully. "Whew, what a relief."

Thus, the sutras can be understood more deeply only after one has practiced some meditation, allowing one to reflect upon the sutras from the context of one's own direct meditative experience. Then, one can reflect on the more subtle fine points of Patanjali's unerring pointers by utilizing the deeper presence and living wisdom of the unbiased heart; and as such, then true and lasting benefit will accrue. The point here is to not study the **Yoga Sutras** as an end in itself (the goal of philosophy or academia) or as an external object that can be grasped, but the effective approach is use the sutras as a guidebook, as synergistic aid to the practices, which when combined in an profoundly balanced

manner, naturally invokes wisdom and liberation that will manifest in our daily lives -- in All Our Relations. It is an error to think that liberation is instantaneous; rather it is mostly a gradual awakening, step by step. As more openings occur, more light and juice flows directly through the channels (nadis) without overload, short circuits, or being overwhelmed. Ultimately, however it arises naturally, directly, and spontaneously when we set the "self" free. Such is the dance of Nataraja.

What the Yoga Sutras are Not

Perhaps the author belabors this subject, but I think an explanation is required; to wit, why this translation differs widely from conventional textbook translations. I may be accused of commercializing the **Yoga Sutras** by making the "**Yoga Sutras**" accessible to the burgeoning numbers of modern students of yoga, if one likes. However, it has become obvious that a new readable and accessible translation rooted in and true to the practical context (praxis) of yoga itself (versus traditional religious or academic orthodoxy) has long been needed. Even well intended Swamis and yoga practitioners have made the same error, reading-in and imposing orthodox religious ideology into the text, rather than recognizing that Patanjali is pointing to our own practice (sadhana) found within one's own core yogic experience, as the true guide, instructor, and authority, not books, manmade and artificial traditions, religious paraphernalia, ceremony, ritual, puja (prayer), priesthood, idols, gods, or gurus. That context may have been valuable in another context and time, but not today, no matter how romantic. Thus, both the original focus and context of the authentic yoga tradition too often has become co-opted, expropriated, colored, and/or corrupted by self-serving, hegemonic, institutionalized, and authoritarian forces. **Make no mistake. Patanjali is not saying that the innate intelligence is coming from the Yoga Sutras. No, it is wanting to come out in you, desiring expression/emergence, albeit often obstructed. It is within you and must be recognized and set free!**

Therefore, the **Yoga Sutras**, in order to be taken to heart, has to be read in the context of one's own yoga practice, experientially. Otherwise, it will appear as mere dead philosophy. There exists no other adequate way to evaluate it, because the varied and profound universal context, which it tries to elucidate, lies far outside of the confines of the human intellectual process, conceptual reality, dualistic assumptions of a separate self -- from any disconnection from anything else itself, from labeling, categorizing, or the process of identification itself. This, of course, may sound strange to those who are intellectually bent, but through meditation one understands this liberating truth with an absolute certainty.

The Sutras exist for one purpose, to help the practitioner (the sadhak) in their spiritual journey of re-connection/re-integration (yoga). Understanding and learning the **Yoga Sutras** in and for itself can be a vain intellectual diversion/distraction, while the true purpose of yogic practice is in understanding the Authentic Self which resides in All -- which shines forth through the fog of ignorance (avidya) that has grown up around the eyes of the aspirant (true seeker).

This interpretation of Patanjali will thus remain grounded in the non-dual (asamprajnata) context of yoga, rather than the assumptions of intellectuals, academicians, ideologists, religionists, grammarians, western dualistic thinking, modernity, and/or others whose interpretations often serve another purpose other than yogic realization -- from whence much confusion, needless complications, endless elaborate contrivances, lack of relevance, deadness, bias, prejudice, obtuseness, and perverse interpretations of these sutras can be attributed.

Almost anyone can learn Sanskrit, but that is not sufficient. Even a Sanskrit grammarian unless they are adept through the means of a personal yoga practice (especially dhyana) will not understand the **yogic** ideas that are central to understanding these sutras. Understanding Sanskrit, English, and yoga is still not enough, for one to translate this effectively into English, rather one also has to understand

the psyche of the modern Westerner as well as Patanjali's psychic cultural environment and times in order to make the translation relevant to the modern English speaking reader. Rather one has to practice yoga in order to understand yoga. It is self-explanatory through practice.

Here we make the assumption for the moment that the **Yoga Sutra** is neither a philosophy, a belief system, a religion, nor any other "ism"; rather it is bereft of ideology, dogma, propaganda or attachment to ideas. We will assume that the sutras do not have anything to do with rote memorization of facts nor to mechanical obedience to creed, moral activities, region, nation, race, sex, or pride. Then we are free to entertain the highest potential and deepest meaning therein, which is Patanjali's genius and source of his inspiration.

For within Patanjali's **Yoga Sutra** purport, philosophical speculation, conceptual thought, and belief systems as well as human language are not worthy instruments for the profound path of yoga. Such are mere superficial and symbolic abstractions/distractions which serve merely as neurotic substitutes for the intimate spiritual connection which functional yoga portends. Such limited interpretations are a result of being fixated, mired, and habituated in an unfortunate preexisting split, duality, separation, estrangement, lack, scarcity consciousness -- a programmed/conditioned rend from one's true purpose, an attempt to sublimate and compensate, a habit of thought, a disconnect from the embrace of eternal love, an error of a failed trans-consummation -- the result of an amnesiac, who has fallen into divine forgetfulness, or the raving of hypocrites and schizophrenics.

Such fundamentally neurotic ersatz compensations and reactive restructuring tends to solidify and superimpose the sticky glue of ignorance (avidya) especially in a fundamentalist religious viewpoint-- a specific structure and bias is superimposed upon that more primary and ultimately natural clear lucidity, which knows no bounds; and, hence, further fixates the ego's neurotic split, rather than its dissolution or ultimate trans-consummation.

Too often this estrangement becomes further fixated by the glue of further assumptions based on the primary false assumptions, further suppositions, and elaborated ideological frameworks, which form the hardened veil superimposed upon the intrinsic and profound clarity of "what-is-as-it-is-as-itself" (swarupa). These artificial (manmade) contrivances and fabrications together with like-minded biased peers further harden the glue of that veil (avarana) -- the veiling of ignorance (avidya), rather than its cessation and annihilation (nirodha) where Reality's bright light is revealed. Such words based on intellectual filtering or logic cannot adequately substitute or supplant a living oral instruction and/or consistent personal practice (sadhana) both of which are designed to produce direct experience and insight -- a requisite for inner realization. Again the recognition of the inner voice, the divine purusa as isvara (the inner master) is invoked. Through practice one learns how to let go (vairagya) of these neurotic mental attachments and habits (vasana). Authentic meditation (as any meditator knows) does not support mental such machinations (vrtti). Such is the sublime essential and authentic context of the **Yoga Sutras**. Without such a basic recognition of the **Yoga Sutras** being a lab guidebook, as an aid to the experiential, rather than as a replacement for actual yoga sadhana, no translator can be successful in the yogic sense.

While acknowledging the rich diversity, genius, and breadth of traditional Indian spiritual traditions, practices, and thought, at the same time we point out that the **institutionalized** corruptive factors of institutionalized Indian "traditional thought" that resist innovation is nowhere more obvious than in the example of the bias found in the copycat institutionalized **Yoga Sutra** interpretations, and hence translation. The stubbornness in which such a rigidly biased dogma and prejudice becomes attached to spiritual teachings such as yoga, occurs whenever any culture or tradition honors past traditions more than the evolutionary force, or mistrusts and fears it.

Such is the same mechanism that holds back progress in all spheres of life, over-emphasizing an extreme high regard for conformity and loyalty to the authority of the written word, written law, tradition, grammatical law, philosophy, left brain dominance, ritual, and other external forms of over objectification, to the marginalization of the living spirit and sacred presence. In such a milieu, the living spirit, creativity, creative expression, and the divine creatrix become stepped upon and demeaned. Such dynamics are all too common to be the province of religion, authoritarian political structures, selfish institutions, and academia, yet can find no repose in living presence.

A famous intellectual genius, Vyasa, is credited with the oldest "authoritative" commentary (approximately 4th-5th century CE), which was followed by a plethora of further commentators, all in turn building upon the previous commentators, until the commentator's analysis themselves were held as authorities (even when they contradicted Patanjali's original meaning). Due to Vyasa's brilliant intellect and philosophical genius, academia and institutionalized religion took Vyasa's interpretation, which was rooted in samkhya philosophy, as the "correct" interpretation. What subsequently occurred up to the present day is that a gradual and insidious huge corpus of self-serving institutionalized literature has been created, which takes Patanjali's **Yoga Sutras** in the specific samkhya ideological direction. This institution is self-serving, tenacious, defensive, and strongly resistive to change, not unlike other legal or religious institutions, churches, or ideologies.

Regarding Vyasa, and the subsequent samkhya tradition of interpretation, Georg Feuerstein wrote:

"Whatever the real name of the author of the Yoga-Bhasya may have been, it is improbable that he was a protagonist of Patanjali's school of Yoga. There is reason to believe that he in fact belonged to a particular Samkhya school. As one may expect, his knowledge of the Yoga system as outlined in the aphorisms is that of an empathetic outsider -- and this appears to be the case with all the other exegetes as well. None of the extant Sanskrit commentaries can be said to be said to be by a proponent of Patanjali's school ... There is always a slight possibility that somewhere in one of the Indian libraries, among literally thousands of hitherto unread manuscripts, there may still be a copy of a Sanskrit commentary which was written by a disciple of Patanjali."

~ Georg Feuerstein, p. 4, *"The Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali: A New Translation and Commentary"*, Inner Traditions, Rochester, VT., 1989.

In fact, it is assumed in academic circles that in order to study Patanjali's **Yoga Sutras** one also had to study Vyasa's commentary. Such is an abomination. More absurdly the two books became known as one entity, mutually indispensable. Worse, where Vyasa could be seen as contradicting Patanjali's own words, this tradition always took Vyasa's word over that of Patanjali. Even more astounding are modern scholars asserting that Vyasa's commentary was Patanjali's auto-commentary, the two men being the same. This is to warn the reader, that this translation and commentary does not follow the common academic tradition, but rather assumes that Patanjali was expounding the authentic limitless and primordial yoga tradition that was found in the caves, forest hermitages, and river banks throughout ancient India far before Vyasa, Patanjali's birth, or written Sanskrit texts, and grammar.

This translation is not for those, who are afraid to think outside the box; to engage in critical analytical thought processes, who do not question cookie cutter belief systems, or question everything, and are satisfied in following the leader.

This translator surmises that Vyasa, and those who followed him, actually created their own unique modified philosophical system based on their own philosophic proclivities and bias (which was samkhya), preconditioned preferences, and predilections that are dependent upon the assumptions and limitations of classical Brahmanism including samkhya philosophy, thus limiting the Universal

nature of the **Yoga Sutras**. Such interpretations attest only to their own dim glimpse into Patanjali from their isolated perspective (assuming that they were entirely sincere); but this translation will assume another approach. It will go in a different refreshing direction, which is not dependent upon Vyasa's critique. In fact, although breaking an old established mold might meet considerable resistance by those who have been diligently trained to think inside such a mold, that is ever the more reason to offer this translation and commentary as an opportunity, should they accept it.

This new translation and commentary will reveal that Patanjali's Yoga Sutras serves as an integral whole; as a non-contradicting integrity, quite capable of standing on its own devoid of any other book or instructor, other than one's own yoga practice. Yoga when taken by itself reflects a simple and profound truth that is clear to even a completely illiterate yogi cave dweller, if such be a dedicated yoga practitioner -- a genuine seeker. For a mountain yogi practitioner, there is no necessity to study language, philosophy, dialectics, debate, or grammar. Yoga practice, as outlined in the Yoga Sutras, intelligently applied with suitable devotion, aspiration, and compassion will bring beneficial results.

Admittedly, it is easy to identify, name, and label "the other" interpreters as being corrupt, incorrect, confused, or wrong; since they do not depend upon Patanjali's words as authority; but rather it seems clear that certain scholars have attempted to put words into his mouth in order to support their thesis. Perhaps it may seem like this "interpreter" is congratulating herself or perhaps elevating one's own prideful ego by condemning the academic schools such as samkhya.. No, rather, Vyasa and his ilk will be acknowledged as offering their erudite intellectual interpretation; but it will not be accepted as the yogic authority after itself is scrutinized and held critically accountable. This translation offers an alternative interpretation, which is decidedly not samkhya. This translation presents a new, refreshing, and unorthodox interpretation, as distinct from what has become a somewhat dry standard interpretation. Whether or not the academic orthodox interpretation was a perverse redirection that was created intentionally to lead people away from Patanjali's non-Brahmanical and non-orthodox Vedic exposition, or if it was done innocently by predisposed scholars and philosophers simply acting out of their own conditioned predilection of their own times and academic belief systems (time and place), such, cannot be determined in an absolute sense, other than to say that this translation avoids that tendency as counterproductive.

It remains only a speculative assumption that Yoga could have been perceived as a threat to the authority of the classical orthodox Brahmanic society, priesthood, traditional grammarians, scholars, caste system, and other invested self-interest status-quo groups, so that its adherents attempted to hijack/expropriate it through a heavy handed pro-samkhya direction because of a perceived threat. Such indeed only helped increase the obscurity, obtuseness, inaccessibility, and unavailability of the original yogic intent of the **Yoga Sutras** to those other than academics or scholars. In fact yoga once demystified is preeminently practical.

The legacy (be it intentional, innocent, or unconscious) of this shelving and censored sterilization of the **Yoga Sutras** is the main reason that the average modern translations have become needlessly obtuse and inaccessible (and may I say mainly of academic interest), because most translators are addressing the sutras through this severe and insidious filter (of past commentaries) at the detriment to the original meaning of the Sutras. They are translating the commentaries, not Patanjali's **Yoga Sutras**. This can happen because they do not practice yoga as described by Patanjali. The fault does not rest on Vyasa as such, but ultimately is the fault of the modern confused dualistic mind unable and unwilling to understand itself.

As time passed, these simple but profound straightforward **Yoga Sutras** aimed for yoga aspirants further became depreciated through darkened lenses and relegated as being classified variously as

scripture, sacred text, philosophical treatise, dharma, and/or even as a religion; where in fact it is for the most part a meditation guidebook/lab book aimed at provoking the samadhi experience. Therefore, this translation will prove to be innovative and refreshing if not revolutionary, attempting to cut through encrusted predilection and prejudice, wherever it can be identified, cutting to the yogic core of the ***Yoga Sutras***. After all, the ***Yoga Sutras*** is a guide for and by yogis, and is not intended to be the provincial property of academia, philosophers, grammarians, or religious priests.

Even the worship of Patanjali, himself, has become in vogue in the modern West. Mythic stories contrived long after his death have been written about his miraculous birth and life. In truth, nothing is truly known about the yogi, Patanjali, historically except that he was an accomplished (siddha) yogi who knew Sanskrit. Such hyperbolic tendencies are typical in religious circles, but clearly pervert the original spiritual yogic purport and context, that samadhi is accessible to every sincere practitioner if ardently practiced. Patanjali in the ***Yoga Sutras*** supports none of that -- nothing is mentioned about gurus, devotion, or invocation except in the section about the pranava (the sacred symbol, AUM). Also some suggest that chanting the ***Yoga Sutras*** are sufficient as the sounds are sacred. So many have memorized the sutras in Sanskrit and chant them, but many of these same people do not practice what the sutras say, nor can they even translate the words that they chant. Although the chanting may help one learn/memorize the sutras, it should not supplant its understanding and practice in **All Our Relations** as an integrative system -- as **Vasudev Kutumbhakam** (one big family).

This is not to say that the traditional commentaries and interpretations based on Vyasa's commentary are completely worthless as long as they are not considered as authoritative. Vyasa is a brilliant intellectual, and such may add some useful information; but be forewarned, such may distract us from the authentic yogic meaning. The traditional commentarial literature should be studied (if at all) within the historical and cultural context of their particular era, place, bias, and predilection; but foremost, **the *Yoga Sutras* should be studied within the Yogic Context.**

Except for the historian, scholar, or researcher, the traditional commentaries may add very little value to a practicing modern yogi and in many cases distract/obstruct the yogic meaning, heretical as this may seem to "conventional scholars". In other words, Vyasa, no matter how ingenuous himself, offers a specific direction of interpretation, which has subsequently become standard, amassing a vast corpus of interpreters, commentators, and glosses. Most subsequent translators or interpreters translate what the *commentators* have said, rather than what *Patanjali* has said. Such tactics have corrupted the original intent and created what is now an institutionalized academic/intellectual and religious non-yogic bias.

Thus this new interpretation goes back to the source, what Patanjali, himself has said, as the authoritative basis of the translation. This translation is based upon over fifty years of intense yogic practice, while using Patanjali's own words (not his commentators) as authority. Taken in this way the ***Yoga Sutras*** affords an intelligent and coherent integrity capable of standing by itself in a way that has not been presented in English previously. Simply read each sutra in context with preceding and proceeding sutras and ask/contemplate upon the question, "What does Patanjali mean by this"?

An Interpretation Based on Yoga Practice/Praxis

Patanjali's ***Yoga Sutras*** mention no sacred books, no book study at all, no Vedas, no external system of guru dependence, no castes, no ceremonial ritual, and no religious dogma. It is neither explicit nor implicit. You will not find any of these normal religious trappings in the ***Yoga Sutras***. Patanjali lived in a period where Buddhist, Jain, Hindu and non-sectarian eclectic yogis were practicing yoga as did the mountain yogis for over a thousand years; yet no book about yoga had yet been written. Safeguards to abuse occurred because the tradition was oral, being passed from yogi to yogi, master to disciple as a living tradition. Sri Patanjali says that the eternal teacher is inside each and everyone waiting to be

recognized, honored, and revered. That is the true traditional task of functional yoga. That is the correct context, in which to view the **Yoga Sutras**. Such a living and alive tradition defies further codification and systemization by non-yogis, who live outside of that tradition. The aim and purpose herein is not to demean the academic tradition, but rather to help sustain those who desire to practice the authentic tradition.

What appeared to be needed in the twenty first century is an independent and penetrating translation, which places more emphasis upon Patanjali's own words, as distinct from the institutionalized traditional authorities, such as Vyasa and other samkhya biased ideologues. Whether or not Vyasa's interpretation is correct or not is not the concern of this translation. Rather the purpose here is to stimulate an entirely fresh, open, creative, and thought provoking vector that takes off in a different direction from the conventional top-heavy and left brain dominant institutionalized academic tradition. Conditions, culture, and mindsets change; hence yogic practices inspired by the sublime all-creating mind, must also be taken into account.

At least five qualities must be present in order to qualify as a successful English translation of the **Yoga Sutras**. They are:

- Sanskrit knowledge,
- English knowledge,
- Yogic experience from a consistent yoga practice,
- Knowledge of the Western mind, institutional structures, and terminology, and
- Knowledge of the Indian era, cultural assumptions, language, style, and mindset when the **Yoga Sutras** were written.

The following translation of the **Yoga Sutras** will stay constant to the assumption that yoga is aimed at universal truth, beyond the exclusivity of any one religion, culture, era, philosophy, race, or nationality -- certainly beyond all concepts, ideology, belief system, or language. This is the Universal Truth by definition.

Here we make the assumption that the yogis of old were Munis and sages living a simple and meditative mostly in forest hermitages, caves, in nature, along rivers, living a simple and natural meditative life. We will associate this oral tradition of the ancient rishis and Munis of India, the mountain yogi tradition, hence differentiating that tradition from bookish institutionalized academia, intellectualization, philosophical traditions, external authoritative control factors, and the limitations of mechanical grammar as suitable vehicles for human spiritual awakening. The mountain yogi tradition teachings were strictly personalized, oral and energetic in nature; e.g., it was not knowledge gained through book study, words, or concepts. They were not ceremonialists, ritualists, did not go to temple to worship statutes or external gods, they did not memorize and recite the ancient texts, nor did they go to the caves and hermitages to train in grammar and philosophy. Rather, yogis lived a very simple way of life in accordance with yogic practices often appearing ascetic to the materialist, but happy in spirit. Patanjali summarized the teachings of this pre-existing mountain yogi oral tradition.

These yogis studied with teachers, who themselves were yogis living in caves or forests with no need of the accoutrements of human "civilization". They studied in what was a living oral tradition, which was passed down through a living energetic matrix composed of gestures, gazes, sounds, and subtle energy, as well as other methods incorporating non-verbal energetic wisdom transmission for those students who were so sensitive. There was however one prerequisite; i.e., the student (sadhak) had to be dedicated to practice (sadhana) yoga. In such living traditions, it is not the tradition, lineage, or the guru (the one who removes the darkness) who is important, but rather that this innate teaching/teacher is to be recognized and evoked from within the student. Then it awakes and matures from the inside out. When one's eyes opened -- all is seen as truth as-it-is without bias or distortion.

This primordial awareness and wisdom is approximated in the ancient idea of the gurukula, while the modern gurukula attempts to model it. If we take the guru to reside within, as the param purusa (the teacher of even the most ancient teachers) then one can glimpse the profundity and depth of the authentic yogic teachings and why it was considered such a threat to institutionalized Brahmanism, religionists, and academia. The teacher is within oneself; and that same teacher is within all beings and things, hence, non-dual.

Sadhaks actively sought out teachers; and teachers tested the sadhak as to their sincerity, capacity, aspiration, and worthiness. If a physical teacher was not available, then in many cases the energy body/subtle body teachers appeared to the sincere seeker in dreams, visions, and/or meditation. True sadhaks naturally took up such a life as a process of joyful liberation, rather than as a willful act of self-abnegation or sacrifice (we will discuss in more detail the difference between tapas and self-abnegation/self hatred in chapter two). The basic thrust is that the aspirant gives up those activities that are seen as extraneous and a distraction, and then repurposes/rededicates those energies toward sadhana. This is also called pratyahara and dharana (the fifth and sixth limbs of astanga yoga).

The practices consisted of a simple way of life embracing ahimsa, satya, aparigraha, tapas, vairagya, isvara pranidhana, (and the rest of the yam/niyams); which all worked synergistically and naturally toward mutually fulfilling the practice of asana, pranayama, pratyahara, concentration/contemplation (dharana), and especially meditation (dhyana). Here there was one aim only, not to master the techniques nor the practices themselves, not to own or identify with them, not to master the body or the lower self, but rather to gain ultimate unconditional liberation called kaivalyam in nirbija samadhi, which is nothing other than the dissolution of the egoic-self, and hence, duality itself.

Two Camps of Interpretation: Pure Yoga and Traditional Samkhya

Yoga sadhana has been practiced in the Indian subcontinent (India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tibet, Nepal, Ladakh, Bhutan, Sikkim, Mongolia, China, Ceylon, and parts of Russia) for many thousands of years. For example Buddha was a well known practitioner of this yoga, which he most likely learned from the yogis Alara (Arada) Kamala (Alar Kalam) and Udraka Râmaputra (Uddaka Ramaputta). This type of yoga was taught many years before Buddha's birth from an ancient oral tradition/transmission. Buddha's disciples were the first to write down some of these teachings in the sixth century BC, much of which were incorporated in what today is known as the Pali Canon. This is not say that Buddha did not make some significant contributions to yoga in his formulation of the middle way free from extremes, the elimination of caste distinction, the rejection of blood sacrifice, trans-theism, etc; which were creative innovations to his clime and time. However, the assumption that whether or not the Yogic tradition itself was rooted in Vedism or simply co-existed in its dominant milieu must be questioned. It will be the assumption of this study that the yoga as taught by Buddha and written down by Patanjali had the same roots with the munis and sages of the indigenous pre-Aryan India, albeit there always exist temporal cultural influences as well.

So to sum up, over five hundred years after the Buddha's paranirvana Patanjali practiced yoga. Then after realizing supreme siddha, he compiled and wrote the **Yoga Sutras**, which were threads (sutra means thread) of this same ancient oral teaching (weave), being entirely devoid of any sectarianism, religionism, authoritarianism, nationalism, racism, or theism, while containing much the same general universal principles and practices that Buddha and Mahavir practiced and taught.

Authentic universal spiritual teachings are teachings gleaned from direct experience devoid of prejudice, provincialism, language, or predilection. That is, by definition it is based on a primordial living tradition motivated and animated by a living truth. Compare that to dead teachings, rote memorization, conformity, and mechanical obedience to external authoritative systems; and one can easily understand human history and its discontents. The champions of institutionalized traditions

only create prisons, walls, fences, boundaries, and traps, because their own egos and prideful self-identifications abide in mental prisons. They become jealous and scornful of those who have escaped. They avoid the unpleasant fact that their life is a lie -- deluded.

Dead teachings, ideology, and rational speculation, when substituted for "truth", act as poison. Direct experience of a True living dharma liberates, because the practices are designed to defeat and go beyond ordinary ways of simple obsequiousness, conformity, unquestioning faith, memorization, and mere intellectual ways of knowing -- beyond words and definitions. They are deeper than mere technical, grammatical, and reductionist analysis; because such authentic yogic teachings recognize the corruptive nature of these latter modalities. Thus, the large differences in the terms "spiritual" and "religious" are pointed out, where "spiritual" refers to the universal ever present heart-felt spirit and teacher that is not bounded to any one place or time. The word, religion, often conjures up a concocted manmade, species dependent, chauvinistic, provincialism, whose identity is dependent upon temporal language, race, nationality, philosophical systems, blind belief, and other such non-universal bias and similar limited fixations that are imputed upon "reality-as-it-is. External ideological structures created by the ideologues, dogmatists, academicians, intellectuals, nationalists, racists, and religionists which runs the risk of leading to the expropriation, co-option, sequestering, and perversion of universal spirit. As such, religion as an institution, can serve as the antithesis of true self-inquiry (swadhyaya), which leads to "self" realization. So too any authoritarian based externalized system; which promises that conformity leads to freedom.

Patanjali was aware of this tendency to become seduced by words, symbols, neurotic objectified images, and the like -- he specifically warned people against it, albeit with less effect upon the human population than he may have liked. But once something that transcends words or concept is written down with words, the philosophers, intellectuals, and academicians take it as their own possession and then claim authority over it. That is the way that they may understand the Yoga Sutras, but yoga is much more than that. Surrender fully to its practice and then previously closed doors will open into a direct experience of living spirit. Surrender (as isvara pranidhana) is to be understood not as surrender to another; but rather as the surrender of egoic ignorance (asmita-klesha) leading to the inner universal teacher -- isvara, the innermost guide; which is innate in all -- as an affirmation of one's innate buddhanature. Nothing less will do. This requires a courageous dedication (virya); which yoga practice affords.

The integrity is unconditional and innate. that integrity, deep meaning in life, and implicate orderly context becomes corrupted, when the bias of the interpreter is added to the mix; hence, the overall harmony and integrity is split asunder and fragmented creating more confusion and angst. Rather than being reductionist, yoga is integrative. There exists a profound truth in understanding phenomena from the point of view of the whole, rather from individualized isolated parts. Authentic yoga teachings are not dependent upon words or concepts; but rather they are designed to eliminate such superficial and limited ways of living. The Yoga Sutras represent an integrity in itself, while reflecting the greater all-encompassing great integrity -- complete in itself.

"The way in which the manifold emerges from the One has been the special domain of enquiry of Yoga and Samkhya ontology. In the various schools of these two great traditions, a good many cosmogenic models have been elaborated, which are, on the whole, fairly similar to each other. Contrary to general opinion, I regard these models not so much as purely speculative constructions, but as a mixture of a priori theorising and a posteriori explanations of concrete yogic experiences. These models are used by the yogin to orient himself on his inward odyssey. They are primarily practical maps for the process of involution, and secondarily descriptive accounts of the gigantic process of cosmic evolution.

*Over a hundred years ago, H. T. Colerbrooke, who was one of the first orientalists to pay any attention to Yoga, argued that the philosophy of nature propounded in Yoga is that of the Classical Samkhya -- an infelicitous assumption, which even a whole century of research seems to have failed to amend. The fact is that Patanjali's cosmogonic model has not only *not* been adopted lock, stock, and barrel from the Samkhya of Isvara Krishna, but it is a quite self-reliant formulation, which, moreover, is more appealing theoretically than its Samkhya duplicate. The latter has lost much of the map character spoken of above, and has been turned into a rather formalistic structure. This difference is to be explained by the fact that has moved away from yogic experimentation which was still part and parcel of the epic Samkhya schools, and developed a strong rationalistic bias where speculation takes the place once assigned to experience."*

~ Georg Feuerstein , "The Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali", 1989, pp. 14-15.

In Truth, Truth Truly Exists as Reality in Perfect Vivid Vision (after disillusionment is complete)

What? In a culture that does not honor truth and reality, but favors fantasy and self-gratifying lies, the unsurprisingly result is unbridled cynicism, nihilism, paranoia, and scheming selfish materialism are often the results. Such delusional human beings will often claim that the truth or reality does not exist -- that its just one's opinion. All they can really say is that they have not found it. Others may search for order and meaning in found within external authoritative sources such as scriptures or guru lineages. All they know is that they have found a structure that appears to be the truth or a structure in which they can navigate. Their attachment to that structure occurs because they have been programmed to ignore the innermost eternal teacher (isvara), as the primordial teacher of all teachers, who abides in all. Hence they have lost all true self confidence and connection with their inner guide, prajna, jnana, and purusa as their innate potential becomes so restricted. They easily fall into the bi-polar extremes of cynicism or ideology. Both are the results of a pre-existing delusional state until that alienating mechanism is defeated.

The yogic context is revealed as swarupa-sunyam, the opposite of delusion and confusion (avidya and asmita-klesha); as it is designed to put the human being back in touch with their innate true nature -- with Reality as-it-is, removing the cloud of ignorance (avidya) forever. This dissolution/cessation of the citta-vrtti is how Patanjali defines yoga (I.2). Then all the pre-programming bias, prior conditioning, karmic propensities, habitual mental/emotional tendencies, delusions, illusory tendencies, and fabricated belief systems fade away and recede into emptiness. No barriers or boundaries are left to be undone!. Such is kaivalyam -- unconditional liberation.

Authentic yoga teachings thus cannot be based on external authority; albeit at first a beginner may get some clues from the wise and experienced, but the danger there is addiction -- dependence on external guidance. Yoga is experiential, being based on direct intimate experience. The teachings are designed to enable the practitioner to touch and access the heart of life directly, and thus live naturally from that non-dual omnipresent universal core consciousness resting at the heart of creativity.

In one sense, all translations will be limited and thus somewhat corrupt unless it points to the transconceptual (nirvikalpa) which is beyond words. Corruption is reinforced if we do not integrate and abide in a universal timeless context-- if we are not satisfied with separate and/or personal preference and prejudice. For example, if one possesses a Vedic and samkhya bias, then one would interpret the Sutras with this slant being predominant. That is very common, but it does not work well for a truly spiritual universalist yogic interpretation. In that same way all religions, beliefs, languages, cultural, and nationalistic contexts will frame the universal life giving creative intelligence in narrow

and limited terms, unless the yogi bounces back in constant recognition and fresh affirmation of the unified context underlying all phenomena.

Ordinarily a universal context is difficult to sustain because of negative conditioning; but in this context of yoga, we have a unique opportunity because the **Yoga Sutras** are rooted in non-dual universal ever-presence. Thus, the **Yoga Sutras** do not belong to any one ideology, belief system, religion, nation, geological location, race, manmade (artificial) system, boundary, or separation as the context is all-inclusive (non-exclusive). We will show in plain language that the yoga that Patanjali advocated aims at the universal, immeasurable, and unlimited -- the timeless and unbiased liberation as expressed. It is not a fear based avoidance or escape; but a non-dual love based creative embodiment.

One approach to understand the **Yoga Sutras**, is to study and practice yoga as described by Patanjali himself. But the authentic purpose is understand the field of yoga itself, and only secondarily the guidebook as a possible portal. The other camp attempts to interpret the **Yoga Sutras** through samkhya or other academic or religious predispositions such as theology, grammar, logic, tradition, and culturally derived means. Again there is nothing wrong with grammarians or logicians per se. Such pursuits serve specific purposes. However, when grammarians, theists, or intellectuals claim that the only way to understand the **Yoga Sutras** and gain spiritual knowledge is through technical grammatical analysis, religious filtering through scripture, or dialectics, it must be pointed out that such approaches directly contradicts Patanjali's own teachings. It is not the yogic path. Likewise, there is nothing wrong with religion per se, but when it claims that the **Yoga Sutras** can only be viewed through their eyes and their ancient texts, then that also contradicts Patanjali. There is nothing wrong with racial interpretation for oneself, but racism is a crime when values of superiority are imposed upon those of another race or creed. There is nothing wrong with nations, but nationalist identifications and pride have created much harm. The driving force there is pride and ownership (asmita), which is a klesha (an obstruction). It is based on ignorance, while producing nothing more than fear and hatred (dvesa), attachment (raga), and more dissatisfaction/discomfort (duhkha).

Similarly there is nothing wrong with academia and samkhya per se, unless they claim sole authority to interpret the **Yoga Sutras**. This will not be a thorough critique of samkhya philosophy, but rather to serve as a brief summary of the differences between samkhya and the Yoga Tradition. Samkhya in general is based on eternal dualism; i.e., that purusa (formless consciousness) and prakrti (nature) are independent and mutually exclusive. Samkhya also states that spiritual liberation is dependent upon an isolation from feelings, experience, and nature stands in sharp contrast to the integrative vision of yoga which is union as samadhi. Samkhya is most definitely anti-nature, anti-experience, anti-feeling, and indifferent to life, while that interpretation is best not read into Patanjali's **Yoga Sutras**. The first extant commentary on the **Yoga Sutras** is by Vyasa, who was an adherent of samkhya. That interpretation 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 Sutras** any other way. However if we do not follow Vyasa's direction, then a far different interpretation based on Patanjali's own words becomes evident. In fact, this translation and commentary demonstrates that Vyasa actually contradicts Patanjali, while the **Yoga Sutras** become alive and profound only when we no longer impose the samkhya framework upon the **Yoga Sutras**.

Regarding the various interpretations of Patanjali, it is elevating to entertain that Patanjali was a yogi (versus a scholar or grammarian), who wrote down threads that formed an integral fabric which when taken as a whole is yoga. The **Yoga Sutras** reveal a profound internal integrity sutra by sutra by themselves. They are not random fragments as proposed by those who do not see the integrity in front of them. To take Patanjali's words as they are, without the aid of Vyasa is not common; rather it may be of considerable value. Such a possibility can yield surprising rewards beyond trying to interpret

Patanjali through Vyasa's lens or through samkhya. In that way we honor Patanjali, ahead of the hegemonic organizations that have sprung up around him, claiming exclusive ownership.

After all, yoga is yoga and samkhya is samkhya. Even the traditional classification of the Six Darshanās recognize their differences. Yoga is integrative. Samkhya is reductionist. Isolation has its place; but only in a wholistic context. Patanjali does not expect one to be well versed in samkhya first. Such is not necessary in the authentic oral tradition devoid of intellectualization and academics. Such a view is especially relevant if we assume that the **Yoga Sutras** are a complete integral system on itself (its revelation coming through practice). It is more than refreshing not having to interpret every sutra in terms of a samkhya philosophical filter. Such leads to far reaching possibilities. Although Patanjali uses some terms that samkhya also uses, that doesn't mean that he uses them the same way.

For example, understanding samkhya is not essential to understanding the teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha; yet, Buddha used some terms that were common with samkhya. Such comparisons may be useful for those with a historical and/or intellectual/philosophical bent to study samkhya or the Vedic backdrop. Buddha was also influenced by Mahavir and Jainism, but also again it is not necessary to study Jainism in order to understand the Buddhist teachings (except in a historical or academic way). Rather, Buddha and Patanjali taught transconceptual knowledge and direct understanding, independent of such (so they state in their own words). Of course the reader is welcome to view these teachings according to "experts" claiming superior knowledge and touting the necessity of intermediaries. That contradicts Patanjali's own words, one must conclude that their "interpretation" is a critique of the Yoga Sutras, not a commentary. One can well expect that a hoax is being perpetuated. Both Buddha and Patanjali taught practice, such as astanga yoga and transconceptual meditation. Once the veil is lifted from in front of the EYE, then all becomes clear/revealed through practice.

There is no doubt that the **Yoga Sutras** have a similar connection to the yoga that the Buddha practiced prior to his enlightenment, then here we make the refreshing assumption that it was not a teaching that required a library, commentaries, glosses, book knowledge, and/or a heavy grammatical emphasis or mechanical analysis. Simply then, this translation assumes that Patanjali wrote down the basic outline of the yoga practice of his day with all the essential and basic teachings included, albeit lacking in detailed instruction wherein he believed that correct continued self-practice/self-discipline (sadhana) would be self-instructing.

Such a reading is more empowering, refreshing, vivid, alive, and practical than reading traditional commentaries and middlemen, who often seem to entirely miss the essential points of transconceptual meditation as taught by Patanjali. Most other interpreters (Swami Venkatesananda being a notable exception) do not give Patanjali the credit he deserves, while praising him, they contradict him. The academic majority, of course, take Patanjali as a philosopher, a scholar, or even a grammarian; but from his own words, such a reading does him an injustice and demotes astanga yoga. Some even worship and invoke him, while chanting his sutras, which appears to this author antithetical to the teachings taught in the Yoga Sutras. All of this nonsense serves as a spiritual by-pass.

In summary then, it is not necessary to limit Patanjali's Yoga Sutras through a religious, samkhya, or an orthodox religious filter, and most certainly not as a dualist reductionist belief system, nor even a philosophy. To do that would contradict Patanjali's own words. Of course, many do just that, and hence, wind up touting the well-known "classic" result as has been pointed out. If a seeker refrains from abandoning those tinted glasses, then one comes up with another natural (sahaj) result -- abundantly more rich, profound, deep, and uncontrived, which coincides with the oral mountain yogi tradition.

For example, if we understand that Patanjali lived during the eclectic tantric cusp (circa 300 CE), then it is easier to identify the influence of Mahayana Buddhist and proto-tantric interactions in the Yoga

Sutras. The tantric literature of hatha and kundalini yoga did not just appear all at once, but cooked for a while as proto-tantric soup. It is useful to entertain this possibility as a contextual basis in interpreting the **Yoga Sutras**; i.e., that such realization was reached by Patanjali, but not specifically elaborated upon in detail, nor was there prior written philosophical terminology in order to articulate it. Thus, this translation admits to a tantric, Buddhist, non-dual, and even Mahasandhi bias, but it is an honest bias, as this is what is being understood. So we will state our assumption out loud i.e., that Patanjali was intimately familiar in a direct way with such experiences, even though the philosophic terminology to fully express these non-dual views had not yet been formulated. This interpretation does not claim authority or superiority over the "other" interpretations, but it is rather the translator's sincere attempt to suggest that the **Yoga Sutras** is far deeper than traditional scholars have yet given it its due.

Patanjali's job thus was daring. It was to put these helpful sutras (threads) down as written words, while at the same time warning the reader of the limitations, danger, and folly of words, concepts, analytical thought processes, mere logic, theories, beliefs (pramana), symbolic representational reality, and the manifold artifices of the alienated/conditioned mind, thus not feeding those dualistic tendencies of the mind. From the yogic standpoint that was his clear intent -- an attempt to avoid misinterpretation and corruption built around the vrttis (pramana, vikalpa, viparyayo, smrti, and nidra), especially pramana by either religionists as adherents to authoritative scripture, by the academics as law, or by the samkhya philosophers as a samkhya restatement. Thus, he placed many warnings about this kind of possible corruptive extrinsic interpretation throughout the **Yoga Sutras** (as we have pointed out in the commentary).

Patanjali had scrupulously avoided the possibilities of interpretations that fed the religionist or academic expropriation of yoga. Despite this effort, history has shown that so far Patanjali has been widely misappropriated, and hence misunderstood (in my humble opinion). The religionists and intellectual orthodox tradition have studiously succeeded in institutionalizing their bias, while adding their tint to the sutras, because it can be surmised their position, reality, and sense of self-identity felt threatened by it.

That mold occurring in India, doesn't have to be repeated elsewhere. It is rather insidious in political systems, socio-economic assumptions, cultural and temporally programmed conditions. Such is the glue that holds the citta-vrtti together and distorts the mind's ability to function clearly. Yoga is a means to overcome delusion (avidya). It is both pragmatic and universal. All the more reason to offer this non-traditional indigenously/endogenous based translation, rescuing it from ideological trappings and chauvinistic sycophancy. This translation is literal, because we will not be reading-in through the colored filters of other traditions (such as Samkhya, Vedanta, Muslim, Christian, nationalistic, or reductionist philosophies); nor will we be reading through the eyes of the traditional authoritarian "experts" and commentators. However, we will attempt to post parallel quotes from the Vedas, Upanishads, the Yoga Tradition, Buddhism, poetry, deep ecology, transpersonal psychology, and holographic philosophy, where they tend to parallel the or amplify the universal authentic yogic meaning. Again we will let the sutras stand on its own primarily; i.e., that Patanjali is saying exactly what he means without putting words into Patanjali's mouth. Yoga brings clarity and bestows self-empowerment to the sadhak. Something that is greatly needed in today's fragmented and corrupt paradigms; which wreak unnecessary havoc and suffering upon sentient beings.

If there be any slant in the following translation, it is due to the prejudice of the translator which admits to an indigenous, tantric, and mother positive bias. One thing will be true, that this translation will be fresh. The objection by the orthodox that the sutras were intended to be commentated upon and placed into a philosophized context is a miscreant contention. Sutra does not mean terse, but rather thread. Sutras such as the Buddhist Sutras, Narada's Bhakti Sutras, or Brahma Sutras can be

long or short but can stand on their own. This translation is also inter-lineal because it addresses the silence, emptiness, stillness, and ineffableness of which Patanjali centered his compendium.

Although this translator has studied the **Yoga Sutras** in person at the feet of Hari Das Baba, Dr. Ramamurti Mishra (Sri Brahmananda Sarasvati), Swami Veda Bharati, Sri Pungaliya, Yogeshwar Muni, and at the California Institute of Asian Studies (forerunner of the California Institute of Integral Studies). This work does not claim their approval. Humble and sincere gratitude is due to my teachers Swami Muktananda, Swami Vishnudevananda, Sri Swami Satchidananda, Haridas Chaudhuri, Swami Kripalu, and numerous unnamed fearless yogis of the past. All errors are mine and mine alone. All credit for any insight or clarity goes to, as always, to Shakti, who is inextricably conjoined with Shiva, the founder of Yoga.

How to Read this Translation and Commentarial Literature

Since Yoga and Sanskrit assume a different contextual framework than that of English and the Western mindset, therefore, in order to make the **Yoga Sutras** accessible to Western students the need for an inter-lineal based literal translation and commentary based on its essential meaning has been attempted, especially if put into plain and understandable English. For the most part, there exists no word for word equivalents between Sanskrit and English, because the basic word meanings in Sanskrit often assume entirely contradictory and incompatible contexts from that of English. Rather an inter-lineal literal translation will lend its merit toward disclosing the universal context beyond race, nationality, ethnicity, religious persuasion, or time, which the **Yoga Sutras**, themselves, are designed to disclose.

Technically, the **Yoga Sutras** are devoid of verbs, but this translation is dedicated to placing the meaning of the words into understandable plain language and hence there has been no attempt to mimic the original technical style or structure found in the Sanskrit original. Indeed history has well shown that translations from one language to another which mechanically attempt to use the same word order, structure, and number of words of the original language, actually corrupts or distorts the meaning when translated into the other language. So much more so relevant here because of the vast differences between English sentence structure and grammatical rules when compared with that of Sanskrit. Hence no such attempt is attempted in this translation. In other words, this translation is geared toward explaining the yogic meaning of the original text, rather than in providing a hair splitting technically correct grammatical presentation.

This translation is written not to add to the plethora of existing commentaries, most of which add no meaningful new insights. Rather, this translation strikes off in many new refreshing directions with a conscious intent toward addressing yoga's application to the current context of the twentyfirst century. This translation and commentary gives many practical examples on how to practice yoga, which are not limited to any one nation, culture, race, institution, religion, or language group (albeit reading the Sutras in its original Sanskrit would point out more subtle finer points).

It would be simpleminded to follow in the footsteps of the earlier commentators to simply add a few nuances or elaborations. Therefore, this translation has chosen a very different course, going to the source material (the **Yoga Sutras** themselves) as the interpretive authority, while drawing upon a personal meditation and hatha yoga practice and sutra study of over the course of 50 years. In addition, the translator has studied with many masters of the tradition, and thus has had the opportunity to ask many questions. If the reader does not practice yoga, then they will never understand the **Yoga Sutras** as intended by Patanjali. Special instruction, insight, and knowledge come from yoga practice. One must be motivated to practice -- have passion for the practice, otherwise the study will merely be mechanical intellectual knowledge, dead and empty facts belonging to the

memory, and more than useless in the long run. It is not true that doing the practice mechanically will bear fruit in yoga.

Where the previous translations tend toward a samkhya, intellectual, isolationist, reductionist, left-brain dominant, nationalistic, political, hierarchical, cerebral or religious bias, this translation tends toward a yogic, proto-tantric, psychological interpretation, as in the study of one's own mind (swadhyaya). Buddhist, Jain, ecological, integrative, right brain, tantric heart centered holographic nondual bias (should one be said to exist) are presented as an adjunct. Granted Patanjali was not a full-bore tantric, yet many of the basic principles are most definitely proto-tantric and so are his practices (especially chapter three, Vibhuti pada). Patanjali can also be read as being in harmony with certain schools of Buddhism, Jainism, deep ecology, and living systems theory. In this sense if we strip the ideology and superstition from Buddhism and Jainism, then what comes through is yoga. Indeed, the **Yoga Sutras** are universal in nature. It can be easily gleamed that Patanjali's **Yoga Sutras** are a precursor to tantric and hatha yoga. In fact there is no conflict at all, thus Goraknath, who wrote the oldest extant hatha yoga text, is totally in accord with the Yoga **Sutras** (granted that his emphasis tends toward pranayama and asana).

It is my hope that this translation will serve as a segue to future more tantric (non-dual) interpretations. The author has chosen to leave the Sanskrit words in brackets or else has declined translating key words such as yoga, vritti, kleshas, samadhi, kaivalyam, samskara, and the like because there is no adequate English translation. Those terms however are well defined in English in the commentaries. The commentaries provided also describe much of why/how the present state of interpretive confusion has occurred acknowledging the presence of the institutionalized "standard" translations and pointing out how this particular interpretation differs and why. It is the author's hope that this will provide fertile ground for future translations in English that will have no need to justify its divergence from the mechanically intellectual mainstream tradition, and thus be allowed to eventually render the Patanjali's **Yoga Sutras** into a free flowing and more lyrical English.

This translation does not require the inclusion of my lengthy intellectual commentaries to grok its meaning. They are added only as supplements for the beginner -- to elicit fresh meanings, justify the unorthodox interpretation, defeat fragmented reductionist conclusions, and suggest new "right-brain" deeper meanings of what Sri Patanjali truly meant in a wholistic context. It is suggested that one first simply read through the translation the first time without undue objectification. Then sit with it. Only if more information is desired, then read the commentaries (which of course, are entirely optional, but may be helpful).

In afterthought, I realize that the translation is really a work of my youth and that I cannot do justice to Patanjali, nor to the art of yoga in mere English words. Indeed, the more I read the translation, the more I see my sorry coarseness -- a lacking of the profound subtlety, and the ineffable wisdom which is always present -- always available. As such, I am humbled by that Great Silence beyond mere words, which Sri Patanjali has succinctly pointed out. At the lotus feet of that eternal teacher, I dedicate these words as a humble offering. Entirely inadequate as it may be, it is none-the-less my hope that it will shed some new light upon the experiential art and genius that is known as yoga.

The four chapters of the **Yoga Sutras** are offered in a modern interlinear translation, attempting to reveal timeless primordial presence to us in daily life, rather than simply as an academic exercise belonging to intellectual skill or pride. Briefly, Pada One is mostly an outline of the basis of traditional yogic practices as practiced by Mountain yogis. Pada Two outlines the context and practice of astanga yoga, Pada Three outlines the advanced proto-tantric practices utilizing samyama. Pada Four is an attempt to convey non-dual natural liberation as an accomplished realization. Pada four manifests from that completion state throughout. That is the short version, while the commentaries support and

point the translation into **All Our Relations**. Click below to the various links and enjoy the beneficial wisdom of this valuable testament.

Translation of the *YOGA SUTRAS OF PATANJALI* in four chapters (padas) with commentary:

Table of Contents: Link to the index page to all four chapters, this introduction, a forward, a FAQ page, and other adjunctive material

I. **Samadhi Pada** - Absorption, Mergence, Linking, Getting in Touch, Union through realizing Harmony, Interconnectedness, Integrity, and Indigenous Belongingness -- the Reality of **ALL OUR RELATIONS**

II **Sadhana Pada** - Practice, Processes, Methods, and Technique

III **Vibhuti Pada** - Proficiency, Progress, Fruition, Success, and Ability

IV. **Kaivalya Pada** - Complete, Unconditional, and Absolute Liberation

Related Book List:

All books by Swami Sivananda, Swami Venkatesananda and Swami Rama.

"The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali with Commentary by Swami Venkatesananda", 389 pp. This book with commentary can be obtained at <http://www.swamivenkatesananda.org> or at the [Divine Life Bookstore of Maryland](#). In India it can be obtained at [Divine Life Society, India, 1998, 389 pp.](#) This is a most excellent insightful book by a great being who was educated in the oral tradition, practiced yoga diligently, mastered Sanskrit, and lived and taught in both the East and the West having penetrated the Western psyche. The translation is also found (without commentaries) on the web at http://dailyreadings.com/sutras_1.htm for download and also is available in a pocket edition (translation without commentary) as ["Enlightened Living" by Swami Venkatesananda published by Anahata Press](#) (Richard Miller).

"Yoga Sutras of Patanjali (Samadhi-Pada): Volume I", Pandit Usharbudh Arya (Swami Veda Bharati), Himalayan Institute Press; ISBN: 0893890928; (June 1986) Honesdale, PA. 510 pp. (Pandit Usharbudh Arya was later renamed, Swami Veda Bharati, by Swami Rama.) This is a translation and commentary of Pada One only and again it addresses in great detail Vyasa's commentary of Pada One.)

"Yoga Sutras of Patanjali with the exposition of Vyasa: Translation and Commentary, Volume II: Sadhana Pada, Swami Veda Bharati, Motilal Benarsidass, Delhi, 2001. 861 pp. (This is an in-depth translation and commentary of Pada Two spending more time on Vyasa's commentary than on Patanjali. Swami Veda Bharati exercises impeccable scholarship and intellectual ability without losing yogic insight -- a very rare and welcome combination also by an author who was educated in the oral tradition, practiced diligently, mastered Sanskrit, and taught and lived in both the West as well in India, and has penetrated to a certain degree the complexity of Western conditioning upon the psyche. The book can be obtained via the bookstore at www.bindu.org or swamiveda.org

"The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali", Christopher Chapple and Yogi Ananda Viraj, Sri Satguru Publications, Delhi, 1990, 133 pp. (An excellent literal translation).

"Kriya Yoga Sutras of Patanjali and the Siddhas", Marshall Govindan, Kriya Yoga Publications, 196 Mountain Rd., PO Box 90, Eastman, Quebec, Canada, J0E1P0, 2000. 283 pp. (A refreshing, creative, and insightful translation within the kriya yoga perspective.)

"The Integrity of the Yoga Darsana: A Reconsideration of Classical Yoga", Ian Whicher, Suny Series in Religious Studies, State Univ of New York Press; ISBN: 0791438163; 1998. 426 pp. This is a very excellent and insightful study exercising much integrity of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras (but not a translation) by a Western academician based on a non-dual (advaita) stance.

"Yoga: The Indian Tradition", by Ian Whicher, RoutledgeCurzon; March 2003, ISBN-10: 0700712887 ISBN-13: 978-0700712885

"A re-appraisal of Patanjali's Yoga-sutras in the light of the Buddha's teaching", by S. N. Tandon, Vipassana Research Institute, 1995, iISBN-10: 8174140247; ISBN-13: 978-8174140241

"Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali", BKS Iyengar, Aquarian Press, 1993. Although respectfully traditional to a great extent, this translation offers considerable integrity, personal insight, and boldness due to authentic experience.

Tim Miller Introduces Chapter One of the Yoga Sutras (Samadhi Pada). This is an excellent and very insightful MP3 audio production produced by iHanuman.com

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[Yogiraj Shyamacharan Lahiri's Translation of the Yoga Sutras](#) A more classic but inspired translation by the Grandson of Lahiri Mahasaya. This is very long download in PDF format.

[Yoga Sutra Translation by Chester Messenger](#) A refreshing, little known, and sincere work of a life-long meditator.

[Links to over 25 Different Web Based English Translations of the Yoga Sutras](#). at HRIH.NET. Most of these translations are unoriginal and offer little insight. They are mostly an exercise in grammar, semantics, and epistemology.

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