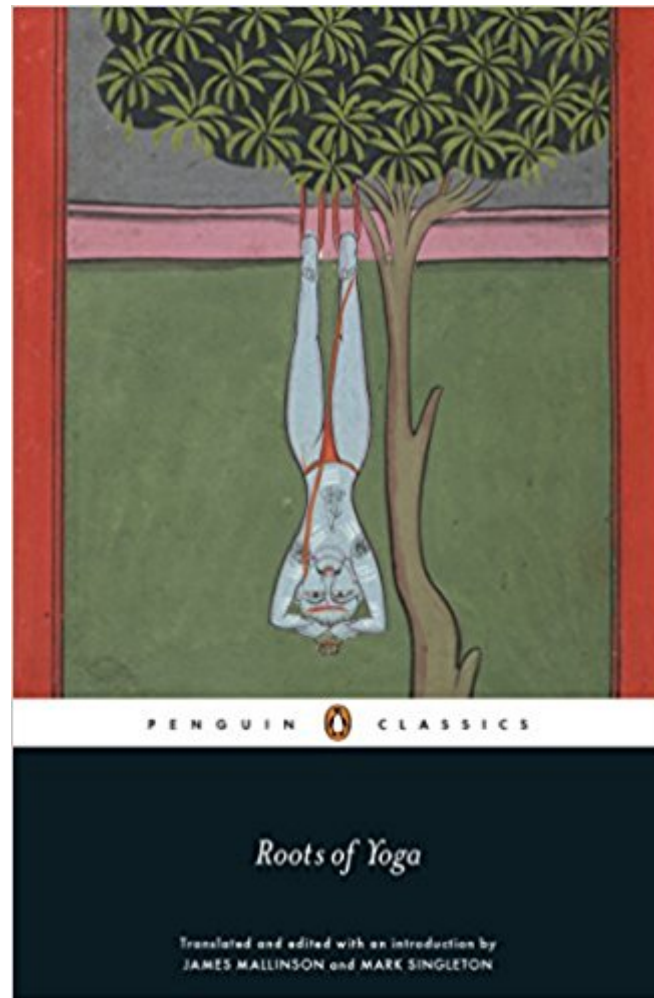




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# Roots Of Yoga (Penguin Classics)



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## Synopsis

The first single, reliable collection of primary material from the source traditions of yoga. Despite the immense popularity of yoga today, there is surprisingly little knowledge of its roots among practitioners. This book brings together, for the first time, the core teachings of yoga in the words of their authors, rather than in the secondary versions of modern interpreters. Including key passages from the Upanishads, the Buddhist and Jaina traditions, the yoga sections of the Indian Tantras, and many texts that are being critically translated for the first time, *Roots of Yoga* provides a comprehensive and immediate insight into the essential texts of the Indian traditions of yoga. This book is a first stop for anyone wishing to learn more than they are told at their yoga class, and an indispensable resource for serious yoga practitioners and teachers.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Forget everything you thought you knew about yoga history . . . With new critical translations of over 100 little-known yoga texts dating from 1000 BCE to the 19th century, threaded together with clear and steady-as-she-goes commentary, these authors have charted the deep. Their endlessly diverse sources—translated from Sanskrit (of course) but also Tibetan, Arabic, Persian, Bengali, Tamil, Pali, Kashmiri, and early forms of Marathi and Hindi—explode the available resources for everyday practitioners. • Yoga Journal “Momentous . . . we can expect original ideas and substantial insights. •

•Georg Feuerstein, author of *The Yoga Tradition* “With all the myth and misinformation in the Yogasphere, this research and the resulting book will be a much needed resource for yogis, practitioners, teachers, and scholars.”

•Ganga White, author of *Yoga Beyond Belief* “Assembling in translation an unprecedented array of sources, many of which have been unknown or neglected, this anthology will be an indispensable companion for all interested in yoga, both scholars and practitioners.”

•Alexis G. J. S. Sanderson, University of Oxford

Mark Singleton is a long-term research fellow at the American Institute of Indian Studies and teaches at St. John’s College in Santa Fe, New Mexico. His publications include *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice*.

James Mallinson is a lecturer in Sanskrit and Classical and Indian Studies at SOAS, University of London. He has published eight books, all of which are editions and translations of Sanskrit yoga texts, epic tales, and poetry. His recent work has used philological study of Sanskrit texts, ethnography, and art history to explore the history of yoga and yogis.

Awesome collection of excerpts from classical yoga works by many schools. Commentaries help guide the reader through the selection of texts by outlining the main points and differences. For any serious yoga student this is invaluable help. Well done, Jim and Marc !

This book is very thorough. Somewhat above my head and the print is TINY. Definitely not for newbies to the sacred practice of yoga, but extremely in depth for those lookin to delve deep !

Fascinating and very informative.

I love it

My first reaction when I saw this new publication was, “Oh no, not another yoga book.” Once I received it and saw what was inside I realized I was very wrong. This may not be the best collection of yogic writings, but it is certainly one of the best. It is a worth-while piece in any collection, and a very good introduction into Yoga in all its many facets. Most of the translations in this book are from sources already found in English translation. Mallinson and Singleton however offer their own fresh, clear translations. Some of source material, even though

other English translations exist, are either from obscure, hard-to-find, or out of print publications. Some of the translations appear to be from sources translated into English for the first time. All of the translations are expertly translated in clear modern English, yet faithful to key yogic concepts. Yoga is an expansive topic not limited to the approach in Ashtanga Yoga. Nor is yoga limited to the yoga of Patanjali in the Yoga Sutras. With this in mind, this collection of writings is grouped with reference to the yoga found in the Mahabharata, and in Buddhist, tantric, and Nath writings, traditions and samhitas. The approach of yoga is different in each of these traditions; Mallinson and Singleton do a good job in showing the nuances between schools of yoga. The chapters follow the general approach taken in the Yoga Sutras, but also include chapters on bandha (yogic locks) and the yogic body. The inclusion of writings by the Nath Siddhas are especially welcomed. The Nathas were the spiritual ancestors to modern Hatha Yoga, a direct line leading to modern yoga as we now know it. The source material from this school of yoga is hard to find in English translation, let alone in any sort of publication. The translators have supplied an introduction and glossary. The introduction contains an enlightening history of yoga. There are copious notes and a bibliography. This collection in other words contains something for any type of reader, whether this is your first time in studying yoga, a general reader, or a specialist. All in all, a highly recommended collection.

While looking at reviews of my new book on , I ran across this one-star rating of Roots of Yoga, and I felt compelled to respond even though it was past my bedtime. The book presented here is a treasure, make no mistake, though it is, again no mistake, a challenge to read. Nowadays that is usually a death-knell for a yoga book, most of our 36 million practitioners not especially interested in yoga philosophy to begin with...and if it is, like, too academic, well. But hey, you do understand, you yogins and yoginis out there, that it wouldn't be any fun if it was easy, that self-transformation at a level other than the mere cosmetic involves what Krishnamurti called the "only revolution, that of consciousness itself. And that can be a problem, a big one if you're lucky. There is an important practice in classical yoga called svadhyaya, "going into oneself," is how it can be rendered, but must carry the addendum, through the medium of certain texts. Such texts are potentially mirrors, for those who have eyes to see, that reflect back to you in their words the truth about yourself, the one you've been just missing but needing the most all these years. These texts are, in essence, a crystallization of the infinite wisdom that permeates the universe. You just might have to

stretch yourself a teeny bit if you want to join in with the fun. As an amateur Sanskritist meeself (ÑfÂçÃ â ÑÃ Â“see Patanjali runÑfÂçÃ â ÑÃ Â•), the translations here are most sublime. ThatÑfÂçÃ â ÑÃ â„çs because youÑfÂçÃ â ÑÃ â„çve got here something really out of the ordinary in Yoga Land: two brilliant scholars who are also dedicated practitioners. The scholars understand the nuts and bolts of the Sanskrit, no small accomplishment, and the practitioners then bring the ancient tongue to vivid life betterÑfÂçÃ â ÑÃ â„çn your average Sanskritist. One-star rating? Sorry, Charlie. Hey, all my yoga friends out there, just write in briefly and plaster a 5-star on this baby, letÑfÂçÃ â ÑÃ â„çs git that average back up to 4.99 where it belongs.

This is a major anthology and history that will bring the most cutting-edge research on yoga to a wide audience, along with new translations of some little-known yoga texts such as the DattÑfÂçÃ Â•treayogaÑfÂçÃ |Ã â °ÑfÂçÃ Â•stra and the AmÑfÂçÃ Â•ÑfÂçÃ Â•tasiddhi. It is especially useful for its charting the development of HaÑfÂçÃ Â•ÑfÂçÃ Â•ha Yogic practices (e.g., the conservation of bindu and kuÑfÂçÃ Â•ÑfÂçÃ Â•ÑfÂçÃ Â•alinÑfÂçÃ Â•ÑfÂçÃ Â•« yoga) in the 10th-18th centuries. No doubt some readers will also find it controversial. Mallinson and Singleton show that some yoga techniques and texts are more recent than they have been presented by other scholars, such as Eliade and Feuerstein.

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