

Synopsis

This affordable, critical edition of the Shiva Samhita contains a new introduction, the original Sanskrit, a new English translation, nine full-page photographs, and an index. The first edition of this classic Yoga text to meet high academic, literary, and production standards, it's for people who practice Yoga or have an interest in health and fitness, philosophy, religion, spirituality, mysticism, or meditation. HEA025000; REL032000

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Customer Reviews

“James Mallinson has just produced the most reliable Sanskrit edition and English translation of the Shiva Samhita available. I praise his painstaking and learned work, which is well complemented by a crisp, informative, no-nonsense introduction. The accuracy and readability of this book make it of great interest to anyone working on Yoga and related disciplines.”

--Elizabeth De Michelis, Oxford University, Author of A History of Modern Yoga

From the Introduction
Composed over five centuries ago, the Shiva Samhita is one of the most celebrated root texts of Hatha Yoga. It includes beautiful teachings found nowhere else. This edition contains the original Sanskrit, properly edited and printed for the first time, and a new, accurate translation thereof. It also features photographs of the asanas and mudras described therein.
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About the Author
Residing in Oxford, England, James Mallinson is a graduate of Eton and Oxford, holds a master's from the School of

Oriental and African Studies, and returned to Oxford University for his doctorate. Review "James Mallinson has just produced the most reliable Sanskrit edition and English translation of the Shiva Samhita available."--Elizabeth De Michelis, Oxford University

A work of Yoga coming from a tantric tradition, the Shiva Samhita deals both with physical yoga and subtle yoga which deals with the Kundalini energy. The text makes mention of winds entering and doing things in several places, without stating it up front this yoga is making the body ready for the Kundalini energy to rise. It is interesting to see how the original author talked about this aspect of yoga, but line by line translation while helpful, is sometimes too literal which makes some subtle aspects hard to understand. In that respect it would have benefited from some annotation. Another spot where some annotation would have helped is towards the end where the text deals more directly with shakti/Kundalini/and goddesses related to them. I can see how a student not understanding clearly the relevance would glance over this most useful section. However, the author states that he set out to make a literal translation so I cannot fault him for that. The introduction is well written and helps place things in context as well as point out difficult points. The index is comprehensive which makes cross referencing easy. The pictures are clear and usefully placed and the book itself is well made. Over all I enjoyed the book and would recommend it to anyone with an interest in tantric yoga.

I've now purchased and enjoyed all three volumes of YogaVidya.com's series of classic Hatha Yoga texts. The preceding titles are "Hatha Yoga Pradipika" and "Gheranda Samhita", which I read in that order, and I concluded with the present volume (I've read the "Bhagavad Gita", but not the YogaVidya edition). I very much enjoyed this book, but am glad I read it after the other two volumes. I can't comment on the Sanskrit translation, but the translated English text contains many beautiful passages, and Chapters 1 ("Vital Principles") and 5 ("Meditation") add valuable perspectives to the Hatha literature. I did find, however, that more work/research was required of the reader of this book than for the prior two entries. In the other volumes, most potentially unknown terms were defined/explained in footnotes, but footnotes are relatively scarce here (granted, far more "exotic" terms are used in this book than in the others). Even though I have decent familiarity with yogic terminology, I found significant research required (e.g. for "vijñāna nadis" on p. 116 and "chyle" on p. 120). I concur with a previous reviewer that a glossary would be helpful. Notwithstanding, I strongly recommend this book, and the whole YogaVidya series, with the proviso that "Shiva Samhita" is best read last.

Yogavidya.com has hit it out of the park again, with this translation of the Shiva Samhita. I have never felt as though I have been able to gain an understanding of this text due to disjointed and and confusing translations of this compilation of scripture, being all I could find available prior to this edition. I've always felt it was a missing link in my acquisition of yogic knowledge and had given up on truly being able to study this text without first learning to translate Sanskrit, since my feeble American mind currently requires an English translation. This edition has allowed me access to this text in an understandable and accessible English translation. As always the production value of the yogavidya.com publication is top notch as well. English and Sanskrit are both printed beautifully; illustrations are concise and relevant; and the cover is understated and scholarly in appearance, in keeping with the other yogavidya.com paperback editions.

Well done! This book is very easy to read and provides a great synopsis of Yoga and how it benefits the body and mind. Furthermore, the book illustrates right living in a way that is understandable to the common reader. I am impressed with the authors ability to translate information that is ancient into a format that is palatable to the present time. I will certainly purchase the other two books in the series. I am also impressed with the publisher. Although this is a small company, the response time was very prompt, the books are affordable, and ship very quickly. I would recommend that other consumers check out the website- YogaVidya.com and explore the merchandise for sale.

Since receiving this book i have read most of it and it is the best book i have found on the deeper concepts of yoga, the part "Mahabandha" (half Lotus) on page 84 where it says "fill his belly with air and tap his buttocks," would be a little confusing if I had not already practiced the technique with Maya Fennes. She calls them body drops. So a student new to yoga would probably find the Shiva Samhita a little overwhelming. I have studied yoga for many years and i find this book has increased my understanding ten-fold. Thanks go to the publisher [...] for making this translation available. Cathy Sanders of Yoga in Lascassas, TN

This is the only version of The Shiva Samhita I have ever read. I found it to be fascinating, informative and practical. This edition has several clearly replicable photographs of asanas and very easy to understand descriptions of how to hold oneself in each posture. There are other interesting practices taught in relation to sexual and tantric methods but thought my frank description of these activities was obscene so you'll have to find out for yourself.

This is the best English translation of this essential yoga text. The clarity and precision of the English renderings of the original Sanskrit are outstanding. For understanding the historical context within which the text was composed and for deeper issues in the history of yoga since the medieval period serious students should consult Mallinson's articles on his page at academic.edu.

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