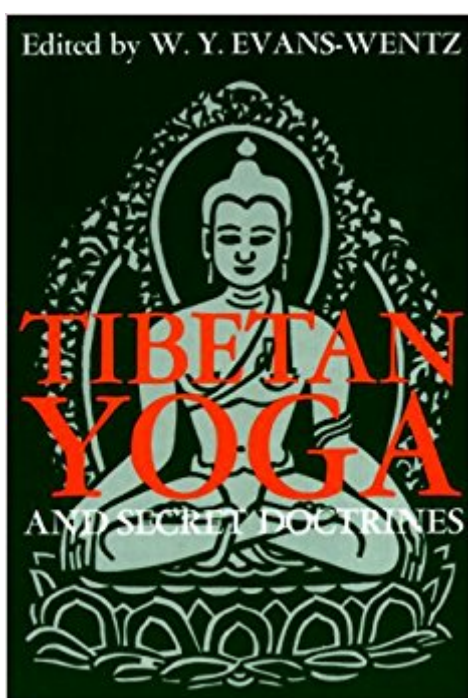


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Tibetan Yoga And Secret Doctrines: Or, Seven Books Of Wisdom Of The Great Path, According To The Late Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup's English Rendering (Galaxy Books)



Synopsis

First published in English in 1935, this volume of seven authentic Tibetan yoga texts serves as a companion to *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Illustrated with photographs and reproductions of yoga paintings and manuscripts, this edition contains some of the principal meditations used by illustrious Hindu and Tibetan gurus and philosophers through the ages in attaining Right Knowledge and Enlightenment. Special commentaries precede each carefully-rendered text, and a comprehensive preface contrasts the tenets of Buddhism with European concepts of religion, philosophy, and science.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

work in progress

Full of detailed descriptions of practices, that are hard to find elsewhere

Tons of wise little tidbits.

is great, pages were falling out of my old copy.

Actually I had the good fortune to spend some time with this book a number of years ago and it has been a resource ever since. It is for the serious and advanced practitioner. It is another measure of

insight and technique for endeavor. The book arrived in good condition and in good order. The content is of the very first order of metaphysics.

good

In some cases, I give a book five stars even though I find fault with some, or even many, of its statements and points of view. And this is the case with "Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines." Before I proceed with my praise for the book, I'll point out a few of its problems. The author, W.Y. Evans-Wentz (1878-1965), had grand illusions about the powers (or siddhis) available through the practice of yoga. For example, he writes: "The great yogin (or yogi), possessed of clairvoyant vision, is said to be able to observe the life of micro-organisms in a way impossible for a scientist with a microscope; or to study the nature of suns or planets or nebulae the most distant, which no telescope could ever reveal... He requires no mechanical devices in order to traverse air or water or land, for he tells us that he can quit his gross physical body and visit any part of the Earth or pass beyond the stratosphere to other worlds with a speed greater than that of light." Evans-Wentz was also guilty of contradictory statements. For example, he writes, "Likewise Shakti Yoga is part of Laya Yoga inasmuch as it implies the 'joining' by means of mentally concentrating on Divine Power (Skt. Shakti)..." So here he rightly defines Shakti as Divine Power, but elsewhere he wrongly conflates Shakti with Prakriti (which is nature-energy). He writes, "According to Patanjali, those whom subordinate or sacrifice their mental powers to nature (i.e. Prakriti or Shakti)..." Evans-Wentz rightly understood that Buddhism's Mind-only doctrine means that all phenomenal existents are manifestations of the One Mind. He writes, "All sangsaric things have no existence apart from the Supramundane Mind. The cosmos is but the materialization of the thoughts of the One Mind... The microcosmic mind is but a reflex of the Macrocosmic Mind." But elsewhere, he writes, "Worlds and universes are mind-made. Things, appearances, are what mind makes them to be. Apart from mind they have no existence." Things are either Mind-made or mind-made, but Evans-Wentz has it both ways. Now for the book's positives. Evans-Wentz, one of my favorite spiritual writers, is a joy to read. Although his prose is scholarly, it is hardly dry. Rather, it is rich and colorful, flavored with piquant mystical descriptions of Tibetan Yoga within a Perennial Philosophy framework. Unlike modern Tibetan Buddhism writers, Evans-Wentz, an uncircumscribed thinker, considers Tibetan mysticism within a broad scope that includes the Dharmas of Jesus, Patanjali, the Bhagavad Gita, et al. As Evans-Wentz repeatedly makes clear, "Buddhism is fundamentally a system of practically applied yoga." What I particularly like about this book is that it extols the very spiritual practice that I teach -

communion with the Clear Light. For example, Evans-Wentz writes: "By realizing that the so-called waking-state is as unreal as the so-called dream-state, the yogin attains to communion with the Clear Light within himself, and in virtue of its guidance, eventually attains the highest Boon... The highest samadhic trance is communion with the Clear Light." "The doorway, or portal, to the Clear Light is empty space, and this book describes the basic spiritual practice that I teach - gazing into empty space. Here's the book's description: "Do not permit the mind to analyze the track of the past; do not anticipate the future; give no shape to the present; and fix the gaze one-pointedly on the empty space of the sky." The book also, indirectly, alludes to the "isometric-like," or "dialectical," method of meditation that I teach, which involves alternating maximal conscious pressure (or intensity) with total relaxing, or letting go. Evans-Wentz writes: "This method of alternating the tensing with the relaxing process, which is employed in our School, hath now been considered. And the tensing and relaxing of the mind, being like the tensing and relaxing during the spinning of a Brahmanical thread, hath come to be called `Keeping the mind in condition like that of a Brahmanical thread.'" From the reviews of this book, it seems that some of the later editions of this book no longer include The Preface to the Second Edition Yogic Commentary by Translator-Professor Chen-Chi Chang. Be sure to get an edition that includes this Preface. Professor Chen-Chi Chang is none other than Garma C.C., who authored "The Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa" and "Teachings of Tibetan Yoga" (see my five-star review). Professor Chang, an expert in Zen as well as Tibetan Buddhism, offers some very insightful observations about Tibetan Mahamudra versus Zen meditation. Interestingly enough, in alignment with me, Professor Chang views Mahamudra as a low-energy spiritual practice. If Professor Chang were still alive, I'm sure he'd appreciate my Electrical Spiritual Paradigm, which explains exactly why Mahamudra, in and of itself, is a low-energy meditation practice. Because Mahamudra (The Yoga of the Great Symbol) is a low-energy spiritual practice, the legendary Naropa also taught, as supplementary practices, The Yoga of the Six Doctrines - the Doctrines of: the Psychic-Heat, the Illusory Body, the Dream-State, the Clear Light, the After-Death State, and the Consciousness-Transference. And this book details the practices of each of these yogas. Those seriously interested in these practices should also get a copy of Professor Chang's "Teachings of Tibetan Yoga" (later republished as "The Six Yogas of Naropa & Teachings of Mahamudra" and "Teachings and Practice of Tibetan Tantra.") which likewise elaborates these tantric yoga practices. In summary, "Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines" is a classic, uber-mystical, uber-esoteric text well worth reading by anyone interested in Tibetan Yoga.

This book is a great source of knowledge and anyone who reads this work will be a better person for their effort. I have had this book for many years and it is a great guide to becoming a better person. To participate in anything - a sport or a game- it is very helpful to know the rules and get a few hints on how to play from someone with experience. The same is true with life the most important game of all. So why not learn from those who have put so much thought into how to live life the best possible way. We might never be able to live life the way we should but it can't hurt to see the possibilities and learn the guidelines. EX. Signs of a superior man. To be faithful to one's engagements and obligations. To look with pity and without anger upon those who live evilly. To be able to keep alive friendships while one (at the same time) regardeth all beings with impartiality. To have but few desires and satisfaction with simple things. To be lacking in hypocrisy and deceit. To regulate one's conduct in accordance with the law of cause and effect as carefully as one guardeth the pupils of one's eyes. If we can not follow the knowledge we learn from this book we can show it to others to help them find the better way. I HAVE A BETTER WAY. Enjoy.

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