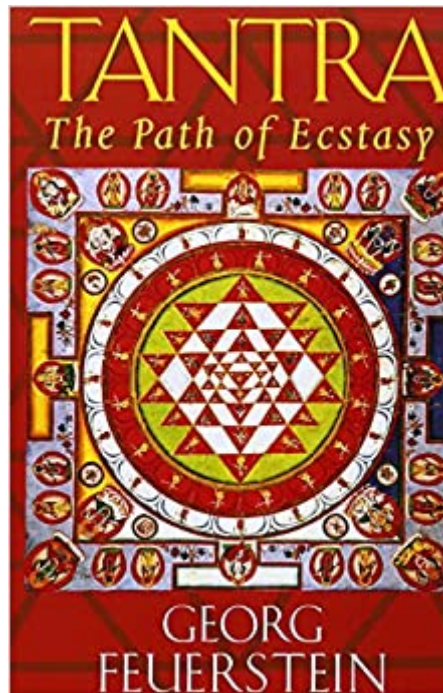




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Tantra: Path Of Ecstasy



Synopsis

Tantra—often associated with Kundalini Yoga—is a fundamental dimension of Hinduism, emphasizing the cultivation of "divine power" (shakti) as a path to infinite bliss. Tantra has been widely misunderstood in the West, however, where its practices are often confused with eroticism and licentious morality. *Tantra: The Path of Ecstasy* dispels many common misconceptions, providing an accessible introduction to the history, philosophy, and practice of this extraordinary spiritual tradition. The Tantric teachings are geared toward the attainment of enlightenment as well as spiritual power and are present not only in Hinduism but also Jainism and Vajrayana Buddhism. In this book, Georg Feuerstein offers readers a clear understanding of authentic Tantra, as well as appropriate guidance for spiritual practice and the attainment of higher consciousness.

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Customer Reviews

Consider for a moment that the Dalai Lama is a tantric adept, and those visions of sexual bliss that the word "tantra" conjures up quickly dissolve. Tantra is more than the sex play of popular articles and books. Georg Feuerstein, authority of the yogic traditions, conjures up a much richer world of Hindu cosmology, philosophy, and theology. Tantra is a form of devotionism, in which ritual sounds, gestures, and actions figure prominently. Reverence of the guru as god also plays a part, but Feuerstein tempers our suspicion by repeating the admonitions of tantric texts down through the ages to choose carefully. As much prudence must also go into reflection on the disciple's own person, who engages in strict yogic discipline designed to conquer the six enemies: desire, anger,

greed, delusion, pride, and envy. Feuerstein draws on the ancient texts to describe the tantric path in great detail, including realization of the subtle body, directing energy through the chakras, and, yes, sex. Taken together, tantra becomes a vivid, multifaceted path to self-realization. --Brian Bruya

Feuerstein has attempted a daunting task, defining Tantric Yoga drawn from Hindu and not Tibetan Buddhist sources. To do this, he has assembled a wide-ranging compendium of Hindu, Tantric and Shaivite texts almost impossible to find in one place elsewhere. To plunge into this book is to find yourself rushing down the sacred River Ganges through the heart of India. Like a sophisticated travelogue, it brings into sharp focus the rich tapestry of the Indian ecstatic life and the exotic practices of Tantric Yoga that take place, metaphorically, on the banks of this Queen of rivers. The inner eye is challenged with mystical beasts bathing in the waters; holy men daubed in ashes undertaking bizarre and often previously never-before-seen Tantric rituals; the inner ear is filled with the rhythmic, pulsating chant of Om, and all its associated Sanskrit sounds; the senses are awash with meditative visions. It is a passage through Indian spiritual life that may be too sophisticated for the casual tourist, although for those who have passed this way before, it is a comprehensive and provocative commentary on the basic and advanced precepts of Tantric yoga. Written with literate modesty and erudition, this book is an invaluable resource. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This is a great in-depth scholarly work on Tantra and how it fits in with Hindu beliefs. It was not intended to "teach" Tantra or to be a manual on how to practice it. Rather, it delves deeply into the history, mythology, imagery, and theology underlying this religious system. Anyone who wants to read this book should be aware that there is really no such thing as "tantra yoga" per se. Yoga is a system derived from the Vedas; Tantra is a system based on writings called "tantras". However, like all Hindu systems, they intersect and borrow heavily from one another. While the sexual aspect of Tantra does set it apart from other Hindu systems, many sects treat it metaphorically and not literally (although some do). Sadly, it is this aspect that has captured the Western imagination, resulting (in my opinion) a gross misrepresentation by charlatans wanting to capitalize on the salacious. That's sad.

This book gives a very broad look into spiritual practices, ranging from an overview of Indian archetypes through the ages, to a couple descriptions of occult ceremonies. Reading this prepared me for the depth of my 500-hour Yoga Teacher Training last winter. Understanding the Indian view

of time, the ages ("yugas"), samskara (repeating cycles), and more helped me understand where many Indians are coming from. Tantra differs from Hinduism in that it doesn't imply worship of gods or goddesses, but instead recognizes the divine in everything. Tantra moved India out of the caste system and elevated the status of women to equals. The writing is dense, but I highlighted every Sanskrit word and it helped me remember a lot more Sanskrit!

Excellent review and explication of the Tantra schools of India. Provides a bird's eye view of the terrain, not a deep dive into philosophy or technique, and proves itself worth the read and \$

Excellent book on the tantric path, providing the reader the framework of tantric/vedic thought in the first few chapters, which is absolutely needed for any new spiritual seeker on the tantric path. The book continues to explain other elements of tantra, but in theory not practice. If you want true practice, learn sanskrit to start, then learn mantras. Body is Asana, Mind is Mantra, Prana is Breathe. =)

This book is well thought, written and developed. If your interested in the origin of the Tantra philosophical system of India, this is your kind of author. From the cosmogony to the explanation of the forces that reing the physical, mental and universal planes, Feuerstein exposed the most fundamental concepts of Indic thought, all written on a clear and beautiful way. Five stars!

This is my second book by George Feuerstein. As a yoga instructor, I read and hear references to connections between yoga and tantra which heightened my curiosity. I have only started the book, but I find myself drawn in. Feuerstein does not sensationalize the topic. He brings to the subject an incredible breadth of knowledge which I find both scholarly and inspirational.

There are many Tantra schools or lineages and the subject is complex. Having thousands of years of re-visioning things can get complex. But Fuerstein is able to present in a rather straight forward manner the essence of the esoteric world of Tantra. To many it may be a surprise how much of this is already in the western pop culture. ie chakra, mantra, and mandala work. And for the neo Tantric looking for a sex manual this is not the book.

Great book for understanding the tantric culture and history.

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