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The Yogasastra Of Hemacandra: A Twelfth Century Handbook On Svetambara Jainism (Harvard Oriental Series)



Synopsis

The Yogasastra and its voluminous auto-commentary, the Svopajnavrtti, is the most comprehensive treatise on Svetambara Jainism. Written in the twelfth century by the polymath Hemacandra, it was instrumental in the survival and growth of Jainism in India as well as in the spreading of Sanskrit culture within Jaina circles. Its influence extended far beyond confessional and geographical borders and it came to serve as a handbook for the Jain community in Gujarat and overseas. It is a systematic presentation of a set of ideas and practices originally belonging to the Svetambara canonical scriptures and traditions molded into a coherent whole with the help of a long row of scholastic thinkers. Hemacandra integrates innovations of his own as well as non-Jaina elements of pan-Indian and Saiva provenance, attesting to a strong Tantric influence on medieval Jainism. Some of these elements came to be perpetually included within Svetambara orthopraxy and orthodoxy due to the normative status acquired by the Yogasastra. The present translation is the first of its kind in a Western language.

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Customer Reviews

It is an excellent book on the Jain way. Even if you would not want to become a jaina, it helps to understand the common background of buddhism, jainism, yoga and tantra. The translation is very readable and the whole book is written and edited with utmost care.

This book is probably the best available in English in explaining the practice of Jainism, its a shame that so few people know of it or are interested in its teachings.

Not bad translation - as far as I know, the only Jain text currently translated into English

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