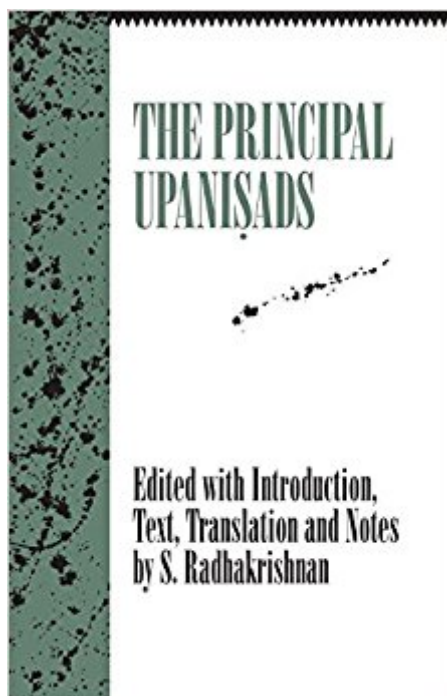


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The Principal Upanisads (Humanities Paperback Library)



Synopsis

The Upanisads, the basic philosophical texts of Hinduism, represent the height of Vedic philosophy. Many of the older Upanisads can be dated in the eighth and seventh centuries BCE. This newly reissued scholarly work by S. Radhakrishnan, first published in 1953 and long out of print, contains in full the classical Upanisads, those commented on or mentioned by the eighth-century Indian philosopher Shankara. The Sanskrit text, transliterated into Roman script, is followed, verse-by-verse, with an English translation. The volume also includes a commentary on the argument, notes on the vocabulary, and a very detailed introduction by Dr. Radhakrishnan.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Dr. Radhakrishnan is undoubtedly the greatest exponent of Hindu philosophy in the English language, and we should therefore be grateful for this edition of the Upanisads, authoritative and readable."

Text: English (translation) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

S. Radhakrishnan is a towering figure in the history of commentary on the religious literature, and his translation of the Upanishads (and the Gita and the Dhammapada) are among my bedside bibles. I am only writing this review in the hopes that it will be read by someone at Harper that will be able to see that a better-quality editing is printed. I certainly have not abused mine, and it is falling

apart (pages coming out). This is the second one I have bought. The first one also fell apart and the pages became yellow way before their time. I am sure that this has to do with the quality of the Indian printing and the effort to use inexpensive materials. This great book deserves to stay in print; the introduction by Mr. Radhakrishnan are truly inspired and extremely informative, not only on the content of the Upanishads but also for the references to other literature--Mr. Radhakrishnan was a brilliant, extremely well-read person. PLEASE. Print this book in a better-quality editing. I'll buy a dozen to give to my friends.

No complaints

The introduction to this translation provides a great deal toward an understanding of the text. There is an abundance of footnotes and comments throughout the work. Highly recommend this for anyone interested in the Upanishads.

Fantastic insight. Begin with the transcendent.

As advertised. Very pleased.

Excellent book. A must read on Upanishads.

I won't comment on this great great book in terms of content. It is the best of the best commentary on the Upanishads by a genius. I will say, however, that I got this book hoping that it would not fall apart like my other copy, a piece of printing junk made in India, with pages falling out, errors in the printing, faded paragraphs, etc. This edition is better, with clear print, although it is the same as the other edition in terms of the type: where there is a period missing in the Indian edition there is one missing in this one. All of this would be acceptable; however, the binding came apart after the first day, and I WAS NOT ROUGH ON IT. So you may consider that before buying. I wish someone would make a nice edition of this outstanding, world-class book. PLEASE. Look at the Nilgiri Press editions of Eknath Easwaran's classics, The Dhammapada, The Upanishads, and the Bhagavad Gita. They are beautiful. Why not make two books (volumes) out of Dr. Radhakrishnan's book? And they would deserve to be as nice as the Nilgiri Press books. Or make a nice hardback edition if we have to have it all in one volume. Just a thought. I wish I were rich. I'd buy the rights to the book and make an edition something like the Everyman collection for this.

THE PRINCIPAL UPANISHADS. Edited with Introduction, Text, Translation and Notes by S. Radhakrishnan. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1968 (1953). Paperback, 958 pages. SBN 042940478

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1888-1975), Indian philosopher and statesman, was the first Vice-President of India (1952-1962) and its second President (1962-1967). Coming as he did from a country wise enough to choose highly intelligent and accomplished men for its leaders, it's no surprise to find him treating the traditional wisdom of his country with artistry, insight, and an impressive and scholarly thoroughness, and giving us a book that still remains the best edition of the Upanishads ever published for English readers. After a 130-page Introduction, we are then given the complete texts of eighteen Upanishads, verse-by-verse, in Romanized Sanskrit and an English translation that reads very well indeed and in which one detects the author's desire to capture something of the poetic beauty of these texts. Many of the verses are followed by further explanations of the Sanskrit terms along with an abundance of extremely interesting and useful notes which throw light on the text from various angles and which are based mainly upon, and often quote passages in Sanskrit from, the commentarial literature (especially Shankara). The book is rounded out with a Bibliography and a General Index. Perhaps enough has been said to indicate that Radhakrishnan's 'The Principal Upanishads' is an edition for the serious student. Newcomers to the Upanishads who have no previous exposure to Sanskrit would probably be better off starting with a simpler treatment such as Swami Prabhavananda and Frederick Manchester's 'The Upanishads: Breath of the Eternal'. This too, in its own way, is an excellent edition and I think they would find it much more approachable. Another excellent edition that would require less of a commitment is Swami Nikhilananda's abridged translation 'The Principal Upanishads'. For other translations see my Listmania list on the Upanishads. Sadly, although Radhakrishnan's is the finest English edition of the Upanishads ever to appear, and the only one, so far as I know, that also gives us the Romanized Sanskrit of these extremely important texts, recent Indian reprints have generally been of very inferior quality. Apart from their obscenely inflated price, they are poorly printed on cheap paper with wretched glued spines that crack when opened and seem almost to have been deliberately designed to self-destruct after minimal use. The only solution to this problem is, of course, not to buy them but to search instead for a used copy of an earlier UK printing, perhaps at UK. These were well-printed on good quality paper, had stitched bindings that opened flat, and even as mere paperbacks were in sturdy enough paper covers to last, as mine has, for over forty years. I wish you luck in your search.

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