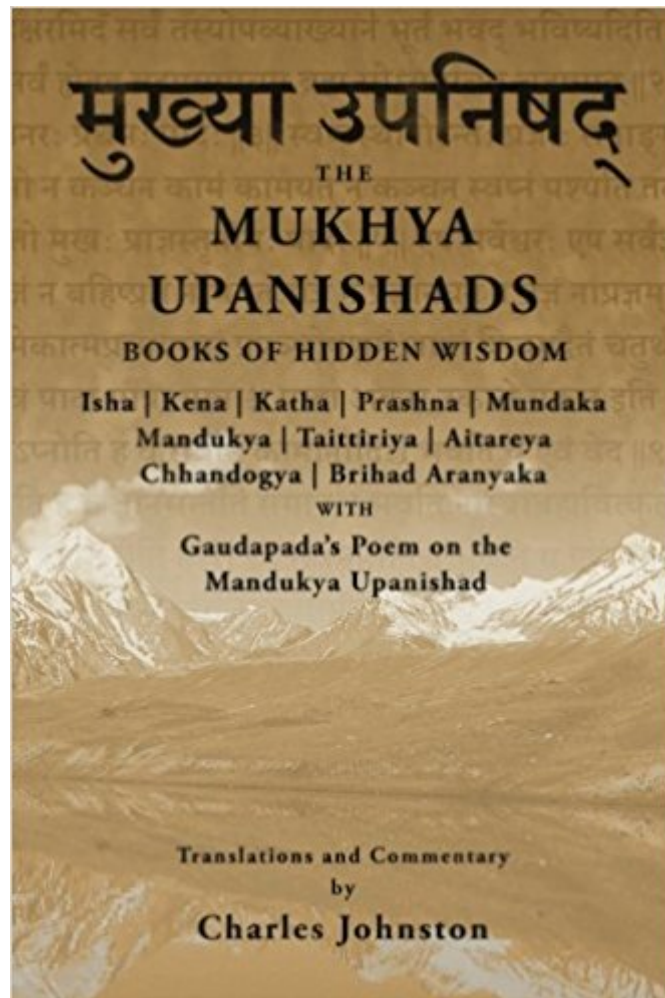




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# The Mukhya Upanishads: Books Of Hidden Wisdom



## Synopsis

"The Upanishads ... are among the noblest and most inspired books in the world; in them, the whole of the Indian wisdom is already contained; later teachers could but expand and comment on them, but in no way departed from this original treasure of wisdom." ... "The Upanishads teach the wisdom of Atma, the Supreme Self of all beings; the same divine Life which Philo of Alexandria later called the Logos, the Divine Mind, the collective spiritual consciousness of our universe. They tell us that, while each of us may seem to be a wanderer and exile, lonely, desolate in our world of shadow and of sorrow, we are in reality neither alone nor desolate, but undivided, unseparated rays of the Universal Self, the Logos. What is needed to secure our immortality – an immortality which is still conditional, until this victory is won – is the realization of our oneness with the Supreme Self. The Upanishads show how, step by step, we may mount the golden stairs; they tell us what we must leave behind; what we must gain, as we tread the small, old path; what we must achieve; with the promise that we shall in the fullness of time be initiated into the fullness of that eternal, universal Supreme Self of all beings. "The whole aim of their teachings is this: to point the path by which the personal self may win immortality and divinity, by becoming united with the Higher Self, which always possessed immortality and divinity." – Charles Johnston

The Upanishads are the ultimate classic of Indian Spirituality. In this volume the reader will find the heart and soul of India, the foundations of the Vedanta philosophy, the source-wisdom that was later embodied in the teachings of such exalted sages as Krishna, Badarayana, Gaudapada and Sankaracharya. Johnston has here translated and comments upon the complete text of the 10 principal (mukhya) Upanishads, the oldest and most profound of all Upanishadic texts. Originally printed in two theosophical magazines – The Oriental Department Papers & The Theosophical Quarterly – between the years 1892 and 1931, these translations and commentaries have finally been collected and organized into a single volume. In addition to these, several articles on the Indian wisdom Tradition are included, both to introduce the translations and to supplement them. The student will find Johnston's commentaries drawing comparisons and correspondences between the hidden wisdom of the Upanishads and the wisdom embodied by the world's religious traditions as well as the modern philosophies of Kant, Schopenhauer and others, and even to the modern sciences of physics and astronomy. These commentaries provide a bridge for students and researchers that will enhance their understanding of the deep and timeless wisdom of the sages of old. "Traces of the teachings which have become known to us as Theosophy are found in the records of all ancient religions in both hemispheres, but nowhere are these teachings so fully, lucidly and profoundly recorded as in the oldest Upanishads and this is true not only of large

generalizations, like the doctrines of rebirth and liberation, but also of those more particular and recondite doctrines which come gradually to the knowledge of students who follow a special line of study and work. So that, in the Upanishads, we have an invaluable proof of the antiquity and authenticity of both general and particular doctrines, a guarantee at least three thousand years old, and, in all probability, very much older. And if the Upanishads lend this invaluable support to our modern teachings, it is, on the other hand, true, that without these modern teachings, much that is most profound and of greatest value in the Upanishads is hardly intelligible, so that one may read the ordinary translations without gaining any idea of the meaning, or even the presence, of those particular teachings which we have spoken of. It was, therefore, necessary to read and translate, the Upanishads, in the light of Theosophy." — Charles Johnston

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Charles Johnston (1867-1931), was steeped in the wisdom of eastern traditions, having translated the ten Principal (Mukhya) Upanishads of the Vedanta, the Bhagavad Gita, the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, the Crest-Jewel of Wisdom and other works of Sankaracharya, the Tao Teh King of Lao Tze, along with a running translation/commentary on a series of Buddhist suttas. He also wrote at length on the religious traditions of both east and west, focusing largely on the Vedanta of India and the Christian texts of the New Testament. These writings have been collated posthumously under the title "Hidden Wisdom: Collected Writings of Charles Johnston," a four volume set of over 2500 pages! In addition to this is a further 1600 pages in his five principal works (see below). His writings are not only impressive in quantity, but also in quality. He elucidates the worlds spiritual philosophies, from east to west, as one united whole, demonstrating the oneness of their core

tenets and the high value of their essential teachings. Books by Charles Johnston: The Tao Teh King: Lao Tse's Book of the Way and of Righteousness, 1st Edition (2014). ISBN: 978-1484869161. The Bhagavad Gita: Songs of the Master, 2nd (Expanded) Edition (2014). ISBN: 978-1490451404. The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali: The Book of the Spiritual Man, 3rd (Expanded) Edition (2014). ISBN: 978-1484926635. The Vedanta Philosophy of Sankaracharya, 1st Edition (2014). ISBN: 978-1495946691. The Mukhya Upanishads: Books of Hidden Wisdom, 1st Edition (2014). ISBN: 978-1495946530. Hidden Wisdom: Collected Writings of Charles Johnston (2014). Volume I ISBN: 978-1502711229 Volume II ISBN: 978-1502711380 Volume III ISBN: 978-1502711595 Volume IV ISBN: 978-1502711953 The System of the Vedanta, Dr. Paul Deussen, tr. Charles Johnston, 1st Edition (1912). Essays and Article Collections by Johnston: Karma: Works and Wisdom The Memory of Past Births The Theosophy of the Upanishads Wisdom Traditions of East and West The Noble Teachings of Lord Buddha Unveiling the Wisdom of the Bible Emanation & States of Consciousness The Beginning of Real Life On Initiation and the Mysteries The Logos Doctrine A Study of Ancient Speech and Writing

Charles Johnston is an illusive man. His name is impossible to Google because of how common it is. Imagine being called 'John Smith'? What I have found out is that Johnson translated Paul Deussen into English, so he was fluent in both German and Sanskrit. His Vivekachudamani is superb and even if his writings can seem quaint and Victorian, it is the man's qualifications that count in my book. However, from the vantage point of a jnani, or a buddha, advaita is only a retirement plan from our point of view. From the point of view of the jnani, who resides in Eternity, it is you and me who are in bondage but we don't notice. It's like when we watch African documentaries and the tribes people don't notice the flies landing on their lips, well, according to the jnani, that's us in this world of bondage. We don't notice the bars and so we are shocked when realizers like Adi Shankara tell us to throw off the disgusting body, food for worms, and to see the world as poison! Unless we are jnani's, then that word, 'faith' comes into the equation, like Kurt Godel's discovery of a pest in the equation that we'll never box-in. Even the grandest system of them all is based on some sort of faith. We have to have faith that the jnani is really there. In our world, only the super rich, like Wei Wu Wei, living in his palace in the South of France, can wax philosophical on this subject and love advaita like a baby to the tit. Wei Wu Wei, or to use his proper name, Terence Gray, wrote about Eternity and his writings are the pinnacle in English, but Terence Gray lounged in his sumptuous gardens all day long writing about Eternity. There is the old criticism that only middle class people are into Buddhism! Look at Alan Watts? Super wealthy, well

published, with a host of fans. Watts can talk Eternity all day long. What of the wage slave? Does the wage slave accept that he is not the doer because he is told that letting go of doership will dissolve the candle of the ego to reveal the burning atman? What a gamble! The wage slave works to save for a holiday, only for the gas bill to come through the post! If the wage slave shakes his fist, then that's egoism! The jnani's teach that only sadhana can lead to Self, everything else is bondage. In the modern world, the meaning is clear. The slave must have faith and accept 'what is' because acceptance will lead to Eternity. We are inside the Matrix after all, and the jnani is Neo, a being who had seen the truth. This is true, but try telling that to the slave. If you've seen The Matrix, there is a character who eats the delicious steak when the film viewers know full well that the steak is illusion and that the man has chosen slavery. Well, in our reality, the jnani is the viewer and we are the characters and this is why advaita looks life denying from our point of view. This still doesn't dispel my anger at the universe, but the faith is that I am not the universe, which is conditioned by space, time and causation. Even quantum physics is a-space, a-time and a-causal, and, in some interpretations, a-logical, a-dvaita. Johnson translates 'Brahman' as 'Eternity'. Any translation will do for That, the thing with zero attributes. The quantum place has no attributes and This is what I am! This is why I am unborn.

This is an outstanding accomplishment. All 10 of the "principle" or "great" (mukhya) upanishads, translated and commented upon from a quite expansive perspective of the teachings. Johnston really helps bridge the gap between this ancient wisdom and our modern knowledge. Very helpful for students of eastern spirituality, as these upanishads are the fountain-source of nearly all that came after them!

A pioneer translator of Sanskrit texts and ideas from the Indian tradition. Highly recommended!

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