

# The Paramarthasara of Abhinavagupta with the Commentary of Yogaraja by Routledge: A Comprehensive Critique

The Paramarthasara of Abhinavagupta, with the commentary of Yogaraja, stands as a seminal work in the tradition of Kashmir Shaivism. Published by Routledge, this text presents the core teachings of Abhinavagupta, a renowned Kashmiri philosopher who lived in the 10th and 11th centuries CE. This article aims to provide a comprehensive critique of this book, evaluating its strengths and weaknesses while highlighting its significance as a foundational text in Kashmir Shaivism.



## An Introduction to Tantric Philosophy: The Paramarthasara of Abhinavagupta with the Commentary of Yogaraja (Routledge Studies in Tantric Traditions) by Lyne Bansat-Boudon

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 8357 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Print length : 668 pages



## Critical Analysis

### 1. Comprehensive Coverage of Kashmir Shaivism

One of the primary strengths of this book is its comprehensive coverage of the philosophical system of Kashmir Shaivism. The Paramarthasara, meaning "the essence of supreme reality," is a concise treatise that encapsulates the core principles of this tradition. Abhinavagupta's teachings emphasize the immanence of God, the unity of consciousness, and the importance of experiential knowledge. The commentary of Yogaraja elucidates Abhinavagupta's ideas, providing additional insights and clarifying complex concepts.

## **2. Accurate Translation and Annotation**

The translation of the Paramarthasara presented in this book is generally accurate and reliable. The translators have endeavored to convey the nuances and subtleties of Abhinavagupta's Sanskrit text while rendering it accessible to English readers. The annotations accompanying the translation are informative and helpful, providing necessary context and explanations for unfamiliar terms and concepts.

## **3. Insightful Commentary**

The commentary by Yogaraja is a valuable addition to the text. Yogaraja, a renowned scholar in his own right, offers insightful explanations of Abhinavagupta's teachings. He draws upon his extensive knowledge of Kashmir Shaivism to clarify intricate concepts, provide alternative perspectives, and address potential objections. The inclusion of Yogaraja's commentary enriches the reader's understanding of the Paramarthasara and the broader philosophical tradition it represents.

## **4. Accessible to Students and Scholars**

The Paramarthasara of Abhinavagupta with the Commentary of Yogaraja is accessible to both students and seasoned scholars of Kashmir Shaivism. The clear and concise translation makes the text approachable for those new to the tradition, while the in-depth commentary provides ample material for further exploration and research. The book is a valuable resource for anyone interested in delving into the intricacies of this ancient philosophical system.

## **Areas of Improvement**

While the Paramarthasara of Abhinavagupta with the Commentary of Yogaraja is a highly valuable text, there are areas where it could be improved.

### **1. Lack of Contextualization**

The book does not provide sufficient contextualization for the Paramarthasara. A brief historical overview of Kashmir Shaivism and Abhinavagupta's life and philosophy would have helped readers better understand the significance of this work and its place within the tradition.

### **2. Inadequate Glossary**

The glossary provided in the book is somewhat limited and does not include all the important terms and concepts discussed in the text. A more comprehensive glossary would have been beneficial for readers, especially those unfamiliar with Sanskrit terminology or the technical vocabulary of Kashmir Shaivism.

### **3. Absence of Comparative Analysis**

The book does not engage in comparative analysis with other texts and traditions. Comparing Abhinavagupta's ideas with those of other philosophers or spiritual masters would have provided a broader perspective and highlighted the unique contributions of Kashmir Shaivism.

The Paramarthasara of Abhinavagupta with the Commentary of Yogaraja by Routledge is an invaluable resource for students and scholars of Kashmir Shaivism. It provides a comprehensive and reliable translation of a foundational text, accompanied by an insightful commentary that elucidates the intricate teachings of Abhinavagupta. While the book could benefit from additional context, a more comprehensive glossary, and comparative analysis, it remains a highly recommended work for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of this ancient and profound tradition.



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