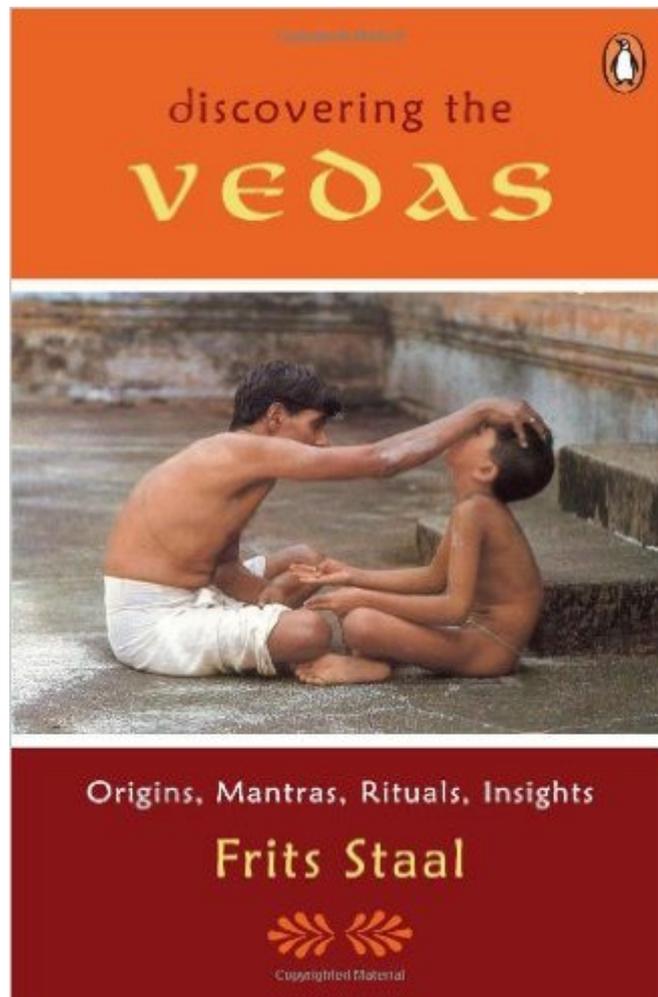


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# Discovering The Vedas: Origins, Mantras, Rituals, Insights



# Synopsis

BOOKS

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book begins very well and no doubt the author is a scholar of immense learning and integrity, but eventually the book flounders in poorly explained speculations. The opening is very well done, featuring a concise and insightful history of early India, speculation on who exactly were the famed 'Aryans' who allegedly wrote the Vedas, including state of the art linguistic techniques for tracing the historical movements of peoples which I found really fascinating. He then summarizes, in a chapter each, the four Vedas traditionally recognized as genuine (which I take to mean: considered "revealed" or of divine origin in some capacity, anyway). Up to this point the book is a great introduction to ancient India in general and the Vedas in particular. From here it starts to get more and more scattered, and the bizarre language used becomes more and more apparent. Staal boasts early on in the book of being fluent in 5 or 6 languages (if memory serves me the author is Dutch), and while generally grammatically correct, the English is intensely bizarre at times - I read voluminously, but I found that over and over again I had to re-read sentences - not because of their lofty thoughts or complexity, but simply because the phrasing was so alien and unlike anything a native English speaker would write. Don't get me wrong, his English is still great, but if you read the book you will probably discover this for yourself and it can be frustrating at times. But this is a minor criticism. The major thing that keeps this a 'good' book when it could have been great is, perhaps ironically, Staal's overabundance of enthusiasm for his subject.

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