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Reading the *Yoga Sūtra* in Colonial India

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Abstract

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By Peter Valdina

This dissertation examines a group of nineteenth-century English and Bengali translators of Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtra* (c. 200 C.E.), a classical Sanskrit text on yoga philosophy and practice. These translators, based in and around colonial Calcutta (contemporary Kolkata, India), were the first to publish English and Indian vernacular-language editions of the text. The study examines the context in which this community of translators worked and analyzes how local and cosmopolitan contexts influenced the reception of the *Yoga Sūtra* before Swami Vivekananda's interpretation of it as a central and universal scripture of Hinduism (1896). The community of translators I analyze consisted of British scholars of Sanskrit associated with the formation of colonial India, British missionaries who were at times in tension with those scholars, and indigenous Sanskrit intellectuals who sought new audiences by translating the *Yoga Sūtra* into vernacular languages (principally Bengali, although also Hindi) as well as English. The process of translating the *Yoga Sūtra* when viewed in the context of colonial Calcutta represents of a diversification of the interpretation of Patañjali's increasingly canonical text to engage a set of vernacular concerns. In this respect, translation served as a kind of continuation of precolonial practices that localized the Sanskritic in various contexts. Through an examination of the reception of the text by this translation community, I argue that the work of these translators expanded the semantic range of interpretation for subsequent commentary on yoga. The study shows how a community of translators in a colonial context interpreted a precolonial text, using translation as a means of commentary to address processes of religious transformation.

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A Note on Transliteration

It is difficult to find a single convention for rendering the variety of South Asian sources that appear in this study. I generally use the most prevalent or appropriate form of words common to both Hindi and Sanskrit (thus, for example, I use *dharma*, retaining the final inherent *a*, but *paṇḍit*, omitting it). I also tend to refer to proper names using it as it appears in the original source, leaving compounds combined or divided as found. In the case of proper names that have a prevalent form in English, or in the case of words or names whose original form is unclear, I generally use the English form. Thus, for I example, I refer to Bankim Chatterji without diacritics, but use them for Maheścandra Pāl. Terms that have been accepted into the English lexicon are used without italicization or diacritics, e.g., *yoga*, Sanskrit, and common place-names, such as Calcutta. Words in quoted material are left unchanged, and I have retained the outdated diacritical markers used in early translations. The plural of nouns from South Asian languages generally are made according to English grammar.

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Chapter 1.

Introduction: Translation, Commentary, and Yoga Traditions

In the late 1890s, the Bengali religious reformer Svāmī Vivekānanda (hereafter referred to as Swami Vivekananda) was making headlines across the world as he presented yoga to audiences in America and England as the essence of a kind of universal religion. His compatriots also closely watched his fame and success. Back in Calcutta, his hometown, an English-language journal that described itself as “A Hindu Magazine Devoted to Aryan Philosophy, Religions, and Occultism”¹ reprinted an interview with him from a British newspaper.² The article, “An Indian Yogi in London,”³ was now published alongside headlines like “Curiosities of Mesmerism,” “Ancient Sāṅkhya System,” and “A Plea for Pantheism.” The interview introduces Vivekananda by citing the fashion for Indian philosophy that developed among *fin de siècle* intellectuals:

Indian philosophy has in recent years had a deep and growing fascination for many minds, though up to the present time its exponents in this country have been entirely Western in their thought and training, with the result very little is really known of the deeper mysteries of Vedānta wisdom and that little only by a select few. Not many have the courage or the intuition to seek in heavy translation made greatly in the interest of philologists for that sublime knowledge which they really reveal to an able exponent brought up in all the traditions of the East.

What follows is a dialogue between Vivekananda and his interviewer that establishes some of the basics of Vivekananda’s universalistic vision, a “philosophy which can serve as a basis to every possible religious system in the world,” and a teaching he describes as “antagonistic to none.”⁴ Vivekananda begins the interview by translating

1 S.C. Mukhopadhyaya, ed., *The Light of the East: A Hindu Magazine Devoted to Aryan Philosophy, Religions and Occultism*, vol. 1, 1892.

2 The original interview appeared in *The Westminster Gazette*, October 23, 1895. In the original publication it is written, “to seek in heavy translations”.

3 S.C. Mukhopadhyaya, ed., *The Light of the East: A Hindu Monthly Review*, vol. 4, 1895, 167.

4 *Ibid.*, 4:169.

himself both figuratively and literally:

On my inquiring as to the significance, if any, of his name, the Swami said: —“Of the names by which I am now known (Swami Vivekananda), the first is descriptive of a *Sannyasin* or one who formally renounces the world, and the second is the title I assumed—as is customary with all *Sannyasins*—on my renunciation of the world; it signifies, literally, ‘the bliss of discrimination.’”

In important ways, Vivekananda’s interpretation of yoga was itself a practice of translation that found its sources in a set of writers who discussed and translated Patañjali in colonial Calcutta, a practice made possible in part by the very ponderousness of the “heavy translation made greatly in the interest of philologists” that here is contrasted with a universalistic ideal.

Indeed, translation has played a central role in the historical development of yoga practices. Patañjali’s Sanskrit text on yoga, the *Yoga Sūtra* (hereafter referred to as YS), has a long history of translation dating back at least to an eleventh-century Arabic edition attributed to al- Bīrūnī (973-1051 CE).⁵ The first published English translation of the YS appears in an 1818 edition of a survey of Hinduism by William Ward.⁶ Today practitioners of yoga worldwide accord Patañjali’s YS with the status of a foundational text on yoga.⁷

Those who practice yoga today encounter it through translation in both its textual and cultural connotations. The fact of yoga’s translation leads to the question

5 See Shlomo Pines et al., “Al-Bīrūnī’s Arabic Version of Patañjali’s ‘Yogasūtra’: A Translation of the Fourth Chapter and a Comparison with Related Texts,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 52, no. 2 (1989): 265–305.

6 William Ward, “Section XXI: The Doctrines of the Patñjñlū Philosophy; Translated from a Comment on the Original Patñjñlū, by Bhojñ-dévñ,” in *A View of the History, Literature and Mythology of the Hindoos; Including a Minute Description of Their Manners and Customs*, vol. 1, 2 vols., 2nd ed. (Serampore: Serampore Mission Press, 1818), 377–394.

7 See Edwin Bryant, *The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali: A New Edition, Translation, and Commentary with Insights from the Traditional Commentators*, 1st ed. (New York: North Point Press, 2009).

of its putative status as an invented tradition,⁸ a question that has been asked more generally of Hinduism during colonialism by scholars including Ronald Inden,⁹ Richard King,¹⁰ Brian Pennington, and Andrew J. Nicholson.¹¹ “Yoga,” like “Hinduism,” is the name for a religious phenomenon that has its own long history, one that can be presented as either a transhistorical essence or a quite recent construct. Pennington concludes that the “very articulation of the colonial-era concept ‘Hindu’ was already a collaborative undertaking; discursive interactions between Britons and Indians contributed to the dialogic and heteroglot production known as ‘Hinduism.’”¹² The same could be said of “Yoga”¹³: the name produced through similar means during the same period, drawn from a set of disparate Indic traditions including Sanskrit and vernacular sources. The recent work of Elizabeth de Michelis,¹⁴ Mark Singleton,¹⁵ Joseph Alter,¹⁶ and David Gordon White¹⁷ have all pointed to the blending of cultures that made yoga what it is today.

I ask a different question, however: what were the sources for the construction of this concept of “Yoga,” particularly in the transnational articulation of

-
- 8 Cf. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
- 9 Ronald Inden, *Imagining India* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1999).
- 10 Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and “The Mystic East”*, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 1999).
- 11 Andrew J. Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).
- 12 Brian K. Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?: Britons, Indians, and Colonial Construction of Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 171.
- 13 I use Yoga to designate the universalistic, essentialist construction that is most identified with Swami Vivekananda’s formulation of *Rāja Yoga*, discussed below.
- 14 Elizabeth De Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga: Patañjali and Western Esotericism* (New York: Continuum, 2004).
- 15 Mark Singleton, *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).
- 16 Joseph S. Alter, *Yoga in Modern India: The Body Between Science and Philosophy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004).
- 17 David Gordon White, *Sinister Yogis*, 1st ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

Vivekananda? Contextualizing these sources helps to elucidate what is continuous and what is discontinuous between precolonial and postcolonial forms of yoga.¹⁸ The question of discontinuity is raised, in part, because in the contemporary world, “Yoga” is as well known as it multivalent. A recent typology of modern yoga divides it into three umbrella categories: early modern psychosomatic yoga, neo-Hindu yoga, and postural and meditational forms of modern yoga.¹⁹ The present study examines the intellectual genealogy of the first two forms of yoga, while pointing to possible links to the development of the latter.

The question of the construction of yoga requires special attention to the social history of the interpretation of the *YS*, a text that today is often referred to as a foundational text of yoga but may not have always occupied that privileged position. Today, for instance, we can turn to the foreword of B.K.S. Iyengar’s *Light on the Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali*²⁰ and find the violinist Yehudi Menuhin giving a sense of the universality of modern Yoga: “Anyone can practice yoga”.²¹ Later in the same book, Iyengar, probably the most famous and influential guru of yoga in the twentieth century, defines the Sanskrit word “yoga” as the “Union of body, mind, and soul with God.”²² Both of these statements are a kind of commentary appended to a translation of the *YS*, and without such commentaries and translations the global practice of yoga might not exist. Both statements, however, raise the question: Why would one of the

18 Elizabeth de Michelis has called for a study of premodern yoga in order to address the question of continuity of tradition. “We need to find out as much as we can about premodern yoga to be able to see lines of continuity or discontinuity between these older practices and the more recently emerged forms of Modern Yoga...” See “Modern Yoga: History and Forms,” Elizabeth De Michelis, in *Yoga in the Modern World: Contemporary Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2008), 19.

19 “Modern Yoga: History and Forms,” Elizabeth De Michelis, in *ibid.*, 21–22.

20 B.K.S. Iyengar, *Light on the Yoga Sūtras of Patanjali* (San Francisco: Thorsons, 1996).

21 *Ibid.*, foreword.

22 *Ibid.*, xvii.

most influential exponents of transnational, postural yoga translate a Sanskrit text that one-hundred fifty years ago may not have been as central to yoga as it appears to be today? What is missing from the recent attempt to situate yoga in its historical context is a fuller examination of the work of the first translators of yoga, those scholars who laid the groundwork for the sorts of claims made by Iyengar and Menuhin in that bestselling work.

The first translators of yoga, as this study shows, were principally a group of European and Indian scholars, scholars who worked in a context where yoga appeared to signify associations it rarely does today. By the nineteenth century, yogis, practitioners of yoga often referred to as *jogīs* in North Indian vernacular languages, had been in a contest of authority with British colonial officials for nearly a century. This contest included struggles for cultural capital as well as instances of conflict between ascetics or *sadhus* and British officials, conflicts referred to collectively as the “sannyasi and fakir” rebellions in the colonial literature. As William Pinch has noted in his recent history of warrior ascetics in colonial India,

...the phenomenon of armed monasticism certainly posed more than simply a “law and order” challenge for newly ascendant Company officials. Armed sadhus were the very antithesis of the world the company-state was endeavoring to create in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, namely, a settled peasant society that would render forth vast agrarian revenues on a regular basis with as little resistance as possible. The modern state in India could not countenance recalcitrant sadhus wandering about the countryside armed, dangerous, often naked, and claiming to represent an alternate locus of authority. The Company needed a modern sadhu: a priestly monk unconcerned with worldly power and given over completely to religious contemplation and prayer.²³

The threat of these rebellious *jogīs* resulted in colonial interdiction, such as Warren

23 William Pinch, *Peasants and Monks in British India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 25; partially quoted in White, *Sinister Yogis*, 241.

Hasting's 1773 ruling that criminalized religious orders that crossed company-controlled territory.²⁴

In addition to the way that legal prohibitions and contests of authority affected the practice of *jogīs*, colonial representations of yoga were themselves rooted in larger epistemic tensions. These tensions in the politics of knowledge during the colonial period, as is shown below in detail, fluctuated between orality and textuality, science and spirituality, and domination and resistance. Against the backdrop of these tensions, translators in nineteenth-century India established the sources for a narrative of yoga's universality through a set of engagements with Patañjali's text and its contexts. Importantly, translation offered a way of negotiating the universal and particular aspects of yoga as it circulated through different groups in colonial Calcutta. In nineteenth-century Calcutta translation served as the primary site where the process of establishing the particular in order to argue the universal first took place.²⁵

The story of the development of yoga in the nineteenth century through translation is the story of the growth of a new narrative of modern yoga, part of the process of its becoming what Joseph Alter has called "the functional equivalent of a distinct religion."²⁶ From a field of practices and approaches to yoga, the yoga translators at the center of this study drew particular elements from a variety of

24 White, *Sinister Yogis*, 240; Building on William Pinch, *Warrior Ascetics and Indian Empires* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

25 Vivekananda's concept of Rāja Yoga is akin to Patton's provisional and general definition of myth as "the process by which a cultural form can be argued as transcendental, thus guiding and regularizing human behavior." In this respect, a "practice of reading" the YS, and particularly the sources for Vivekananda's interpretation, requires awareness of how "mythic forms may remove the historical contingency of a religious tradition" while also creating "'counter-transcendencies,' forms which resist and relativize the claims to transcendence that a religious tradition may make." See Laurie L. Patton, *Myth as Argument: The Bṛhaddevatā as Canonical Commentary* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1996), 40–41.

26 Alter, *Yoga in Modern India*, 13.

contextual sources and argued for their universal applicability. The narrative of yoga could have achieved this universality through different formulations, but it was ultimately Swami Vivekananda's presentation of yoga that succeeded in becoming what Peter van der Veer has called "the unifying sign of the Indian nation—and not only for national consumption but for consumption by the entire world."²⁷

Vivekananda was the name taken by Narendranath Datta (1863-1902) after finding spiritual awakening on the banks of the Ganges in Calcutta. As a young man, Vivekananda was attracted to the reformist movements of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj and the Brahmo Samaj, which he joined in his college years.²⁸ Eventually he was drawn to Ramakrishna, the charismatic priest of a Kālī temple in Dakshineshwar, north of Calcutta. Ramakrishna's proximity to Tantric traditions has been cited by Urban²⁹ and Kripal,³⁰ while Sil has disputed "attempts to classify" Ramakrishna as either a proponent of Tantra or Vedānta, characterizing him instead more generally as "an enthusiastic *bhakta*".³¹ As is discussed in Chapter Five in relation to the work of Kṣetrapāl Cakravartī, and in Chapter Four in the context of the Age of Consent Bill, there is ample evidence³² to suggest deep discomfort among the emerging *bhadralok* or

27 Peter van der Veer, *Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), 73.

28 Elizabeth de Michelis argues that Vivekananda's interpretation of yoga owes much more to the intellectual tradition of the Brahmo Samaj than to the teachings of his guru Ramakrishna. She writes, "If we look at historical and textual evidence, rather than at conventional narratives and hagiographies, we will see that, notwithstanding his reliance on Ramakrishna as ultimate spiritual exemplar, Vivekananda was inheritor to the intellectual tradition of the Brahmo Samaj." De Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga*, 12, and *passim*.

29 Hugh B. Urban, "Deodorized Tantra: Sex, Scandal, Secrecy, and Censorship in the Works of John Woodroffe and Swami Vivekananda," in *Tantra Sex, Secrecy Politics, and Power in the Study of Religions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 134–164.

30 Jeffrey J Kripal, *Kali's Child: The Mystical and the Erotic in the Life and Teachings of Ramakrishna* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

31 Narasingha P. Sil, "Is Ramakrishna a Vedantin, a Tantrika or a Vaishnava? An Examination," *Asian Studies Review* 21, no. 2–3 (1997): 212, 223.

32 See, for instance, John Rosselli, "The Self-Image of Effeteness: Physical Education and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Bengal," *Past & Present* no. 86 (February 1, 1980): 121–148; Joseph S. Alter,

genteel classes of Calcutta with colonial and Orientalist portrayals of indigenous culture as licentious and effete. Vivekananda echoed these views in advocating the cultivation of physical strength and adopting a critical regard toward aspects of asceticism and devotionism. He admonished in memorable fashion, for instance, that “[f]irst of all, our young men must be strong. Religion will come afterwards.... You will be nearer to Heaven through football than through the study of the Gita.... You will understand Gita better with your biceps, your muscles, a little stronger.”³³

Vivekananda’s presentation of yoga, importantly, negatively characterized and downplayed the use of physical postures (*āsana*),³⁴ and his presentations of yoga at and after the World’s Parliament of Religion emphasized a universalistic interpretation of Hinduism. It also, as Elizabeth De Michelis has shown, relied very little on Ramakrishna’s own notions, despite the received narrative.³⁵

The notion of yoga as a discipline that could channel an expression of masculinity in the context of colonial domination is important to understanding the social history of Vivekananda’s interpretation. Vivekananda’s translation of yoga oscillated between condensation and expansion: Vivekananda used Patañjali’s text a foundational scripture to exclude bodily practices, thus restricting the field of yoga, while simultaneously evoking the notion of “Rāja yoga” (itself a post-Patañjali concept) to include diverse beliefs (formulated through his adaption of *karma*, *bhakti*, and *jñāna* yoga) under the rubric of a universal yoga. In this way, and perhaps in a fashion that

“Celibacy, Sexuality, and the Transformation of Gender into Nationalism in North India,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 53, no. 1 (February 1994): 45–66.

33 Vivekananda, “Vedanta and its Application to Indian Life,” in *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda: Mayavati Memorial Edition.*, vol. 3 (Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas: Advaita Ashrama, 1945), 242; See discussion in Narasingha P. Sil, “Vivekānanda’s Rāmākṛṣṇa: An Untold Story of Mythmaking and Propaganda,” *Numen* 40, no. 1 (January 1, 1993): 48.

34 See Singleton, *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice*, 70–77.

35 De Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga*, 11ff.

was related to the conflicted image of the yogi among the emergent *bhadralok*, Vivekananda's translation of yogic concepts functioned, perhaps paradoxically, as both a metaphor that selectively condensed a larger semantic field, and as a sort of textual metonym for a much broader set of belief.

Vivekananda took his message of "Rāja Yoga" to the West and to the world, giving a much-publicized and mythologized account at the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago. The impression he made there, and moreover the Vedanta Society and the Ramakrishna Mission that he founded in its wake, were instrumental in propagating Hinduism in the United States. As Vivekananda wrote in describing *Rāja Yoga*,

All the orthodox systems of Indian philosophy have one goal in view, the liberation of the soul through perfection. The method is by *Yoga*. The word *Yoga* covers an immense ground, but both the *Sāṅkhya* and the *Vedāntist* Schools point to *Yoga* in some form or another... The aphorisms of *Patanjali* [sic] are the highest authority and text on *Rāja Yoga*.³⁶

The means of covering and unifying the "immense ground" of yoga for Vivekananda, and subsequently for teachers and practitioners of yoga around the world today, was through the *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali, the text that is the center of this study.

Remarkably, the scholars in the early nineteenth century who first worked to translate the *YS* into English wrote that traditional scholars of Sanskrit who specialized in yoga were hard to find, and evaluating the implications of this claim is a central concern of this dissertation.

Swami Vivekananda has been referred to as "America's first Hindu,"³⁷ and his

36 Vivekananda, *Vedānta Philosophy; Lectures*, New ed (New York: The Baker & Taylor Company, 1899), xi.

37 Diana Eck, *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Now Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation*, 1st ed. (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001), 96.

*Rāja Yoga*³⁸ is a milestone in the development of modern yoga and he was instrumental in defining yoga to a western audience. The contribution of his work was more specifically to the development of what De Michelis calls “modern psychosomatic yoga”,³⁹ in contrast with modern postural yoga. In crafting a philosophical framework for modern yoga, Vivekananda referred to a variety of texts and practices, in effect expanding the repertoire of yoga knowledge to a field far broader than Patañjali’s text. Vivekananda’s *Yoga*, in this way, becomes a sort of transcendent symbol that elides its own contextual circumstances.⁴⁰

Vivekananda’s *Rāja Yoga* includes an introductory essay followed by verse-by-verse commentary on the *YS*. Nonetheless, Vivekananda’s work is less a commentary in the traditional Sanskrit sense than it is a personal account of his own understanding of the significance of yoga. This departure from the relative anonymity of the traditional Sanskrit commentator to the authorial presence associated with print publication is a significant interpretive development in the context of Sanskrit philosophical literature. Furthermore, it is one that was presaged by the scholars of Sanskrit, *paṇḍits*, working in Calcutta in the decades leading up to the publication of Vivekananda’s work, scholars who are addressed in detail in the Fourth and Fifth Chapters of this study. Analysis of the work of these *paṇḍits* as the sources of Vivekananda’s interpretation contributes to a contextualization of the practice of translation as a kind of commentary, as understood here as a dialogic and

38 Swami Vivekananda, *Yoga Philosophy: Lectures Delivered in New York, Winter of 1895-6* (Longmans, Green, 1896); For a discussion of Vivekananda’s text, see chapter five, De Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga*.

39 “Modern Yoga: History and Forms,” Elizabeth De Michelis, in *Yoga in the Modern World*, 19.

40 Here Vivekananda’s *Yoga* may share in “philosophy’s impetus... toward universalization and transcendentalization,” and a “philosophy of yoga,” like “a philosophy of myth risks rendering symbols empty containers in which object reside because they represent, through shared characteristics, a certain aspect of the world.” See Patton, *Myth as Argument*, 36.

interlinguistic practice.

A theory of translation that accounts for the transformation of yoga in the context of nineteenth-century, therefore, must do more than move beyond the notion of epistemological rupture that is discussed in Chapter Two. My emphasis here on translation as a kind of commentarial activity highlights the social context in which these translators worked, and helps to account for rhetorical choices they made in translating. If Vivekananda represents more of the intellectual heritage of the Brahmo Samaj than he does the complex religiosity of Ramakrishna,⁴¹ than the translators analyzed here constitute something of a resistant narrative, and that many of them were openly critical of the Brahmo project. Paṇḍit Śāśadhara, examined in Chapter Four, for instance, rhetorically presents his formulation of Hinduism as a direct rejection of Brahmo ideology. Translation, I argue, provides a horizon for interpretation that can illuminate the process of commentary as it is practiced in a multi-linguistic environment.

In theorizing translation, therefore, I want to emphasize that the process of reinterpretation that characterizes it as a kind of commentarial practice shares much with the Sanskritic past, rather than constituting a kind of “discontinuity” or “rupture” as has been argued by Paul Hacker and Wilhelm Halbfass in relation to Vivekananda’s Neo-Hinduism. Sanskrit’s putative death by epistemological rupture in the colonial period can be read as another instance of its resiliency: in dying, it gained new life, and perhaps that is just as it always was. Yoga is reinvented in the colonial period, but then Patañjali has already reinvented in the YS. The point here is that an

41 De Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga*.

over-emphasis on a unilineal notion of modernity sets “Neo-Hinduism” off as a special case, whereas there is good evidence that intellectual boundaries of key terms such as “yoga” and “dharma” have long been fluid.⁴² Translation theory, in bringing to like the social-historical context of interpretation, can in this light be seen as an extension of the project of commentary.

As this study will demonstrate, Vivekananda represents a fluid transition between the intellectual world of the *paṇḍits* and the global gurus of yoga in the twentieth century, but his work as a translator of yoga to broader audiences is indebted to the cultural climate of colonial Calcutta. In this sense, Vivekananda’s work is a means of making universal the particular conversations and exchanges that characterized the translation of yoga in the nineteenth century. As Vivekananda wrote to his fellow monk Abhedānanda⁴³ on the challenges of propagating his religious message in the West, “You should know that religion of the type that obtains in our country does not go here. You must suit it to the taste of the people.”⁴⁴ Suiting yoga to the taste of the people in the West involved a translation of Patañjali that was itself a translation of religion, a translation that drew on the engagements between the *paṇḍits* and Orientalists who had inherited the modes and authority of the Sanskrit commentarial tradition.

The Sources of Modern Philosophical Yoga

Vivekananda could claim Patañjali and comment on the YS through translation because the tradition of yoga during the nineteenth century was available for multiple

42 On Hacker and dharma, see Amiya P. Sen, *Explorations In Modern Bengal, C. 1800-1900: Essays On Religion, History And Culture* (Delhi: Primus Books, 2010), 123ff.

43 Abhedānanda is discussed in Chapter Four.

44 De Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga*, 118.

interpretations. But in the pre-Vivekananda period of the translators in this study, there is evidence to suggest it was difficult to find teachers willing to impart knowledge about yoga in this traditional manner. Rājendralāl Mitra, for instance, a Bengali translator who was in close contact with a number of Sanskrit intellectuals in Calcutta, wrote that

I could find no Paṇḍit in Bengal who had made Yoga the special subject of his study, and the only person I met at Benares who could help me was most exorbitant in his demands. He cared not for the world and its wealth, and the only condition under which he would teach me was strict pupillage under Hindu rules—living in his hut and ever following his footsteps—to which I could not submit. I had, therefore, to depend on my knowledge of the Sanskrit language to arrive at the meaning of Patanjali [sic]...⁴⁵

There is something rhetorical in this claim: it justifies Mitra’s authority in translating, and it indicates that Mitra intentionally distanced himself from the requirements of the “Hindu rules” to which he would not abide. The apparent lack of traditional authorities on yoga is again mentioned by James Robert Ballantyne, another translator who worked closely with Sanskrit intellectuals as principal of the Benares Sanskrit College. Ballantyne wrote that,

The translation of... the *Yoga Aphorisms* has been attended with peculiar difficulties, among which it may suffice here to mention that no pandit in these days professes to teach this system.⁴⁶

I will return to these particular passages in their context below, but both indicate claims by translators that they were writing in the absence of a clear and authoritative sense of the tradition. The degree to which this was a rhetorical⁴⁷ claim remains open,

45 Rājendralāl Mitra, tran., *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali with the Commentary of Bhoja Rājā*, Bibliotheca Indica (Calcutta: The Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1883), xc.

46 J.R. Ballantyne, tran., *Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali with Illustrative Extracts from the Commentary of Bhoja Rājā* (Allahabad: Presbyterian Mission Press, 1852), ii.

47 Rhetorical claims such as Mitra’s are historical claims as well. In a discussion of the link between politics and grammar in the context of Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya*, Sheldon Pollock argues that “Rhetoric is no less historical, real, and factual than the ‘real’ facts of history....” See Sheldon

but it does demonstrate that individual interpretations of yoga based on the translation of the *YS* took place before Vivekananda's attempt to suit the Sanskrit text to the needs of new audiences.

In addition to the claim that Patañjali's work was not widely studied or taught at the onset of the development of yoga in the nineteenth century, there is also clear evidence that yoga was associated with disparate traditions before Vivekananda's formulation. David Gordon White has analyzed Yoga's indebtedness to traditions of alchemical transformations that are in turn associated with the body,⁴⁸ and Geoffrey Samuel has shown complex interactions between yogic and tantric traditions in South Asia until 1200 C.E.⁴⁹ The mysterious nature of the practices associated with yoga lent something of a subterranean flavor to accounts of yoga, particularly in Orientalist depictions. Some of the earliest accounts of yoga in western languages highlight the special powers of *yogīs*, describing them as magicians, charlatans, and other types of liminal characters.⁵⁰ H.H. Wilson, one of the translators examined in this study who himself drew on Persian and Braj Bhāṣa sources,⁵¹ describes a *yogī* who could hover in air, a magical act akin to the rope trick. Wilson's description of yoga⁵² includes reference to an article from 1829 in the *Asiatic Monthly Journal* describing an "exhibition at Madras" where we find the prototypical Orientalist vision of the *yogī*:

Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 173.

48 David Gordon White, *The Alchemical Body: Siddha Traditions in Medieval India* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

49 Geoffrey Samuel, *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra: Indic Religions to the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

50 White, *Sinister Yogis*.

51 The authors of the Persian two works that form the groundwork of Wilson's account were Shital Singh and Mathura Nath, a *munshi* of the Raja of Benares and the librarian of the Hindu College of Benares, respectively. Wilson also made reference to Nabhaji's *Bhaktamal*. See Horace Hayman Wilson, *Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus* (Calcutta: Bishop's College Press, 1846), 6.

52 See Chapter Three.

A Brahmin, old and slightly made, represented to be of high caste, contrives to poise himself in the most extraordinary manner in the air... 'The servants of the house hold a blanket before him, and when it is withdrawn, he is discovered poised in the air, about four feet from the ground, in a sitting attitude [sic], the outer edge of one hand merely touching the crutch, the fingers of that hand deliberately counting beads: the other hand and arm held up in an erect posture.... The same man has the power of staying under water for several hours.⁵³

The portrayal of the *yogī* here is a practitioner capable of miraculous acts, not primarily a meditative recluse. As is shown in this study, characterizations of the *yogī* and of yoga during the nineteenth century varied, and they varied in significant ways from the global image of yoga today.

The yoga writers at the center of this study used the translation of the *YS* to respond to a set of local debates just as the narrative of “Yoga” as universal and historical was developing. During the nineteenth century, English translators of the *YS* chose it as another example of a wide-range of *śāstric* texts that pertained to Hinduism. The translator William Ward included a short treatment of the *YS* in a much broader study of Hindu culture and customs in a textbook aimed at missionaries. James Robert Ballantyne offered a partial translation as part of a broader effort to formulate an educational system based on European norms but transplantable to Indian soil. But for Indian translators in the 1880s and later, the *YS* became a central text and a central way of talking about Hinduism. For Bengali translators, in particular, the *YS* was a way of countering the historical method of the Orientalists. According to one translator, through translation into vernacular languages the *YS* began to speak again: it described evolution before Darwin existed. To another, the *YS* presented a refined understanding of the body and mind in ways superior to Western medicine. To a third, its universal

53 Wilson, *Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus*, 133, n. *.

message countered the myopic obsession with dating. Finally, the YS provided a platform for commentary that opened the door to remolding the Sanskrit tradition at a time when Sanskrit learning was being driven to the margins. In the form of Anglophone translation by polyglot Indian translators, Yoga was a cosmopolitan universalism that still resonated with vernacular desires. The translators before Vivekananda planted the YS in a new semantic field, providing the environment for its reinterpretation. Through translation, Yoga writers in the nineteenth century provided the sources for new interpretations and created new vehicles for the transmission yoga traditions.⁵⁴

Among the most concrete examples of the changes that occurred in the nineteenth century before Vivekananda's speech is the fact of printed editions in English and vernacular languages of Patañjali's text. The printing press changed the transmission of knowledge, offering an alternative to compete with the oral system that preceded it, and it also resulted in the elevation of specific texts as authoritative sources for understanding yoga. Among the most frequently translated Sanskrit texts, the *Bhagavad Gītā* (hereafter referred to as *Bhagavad Gita*) and the YS both developed a set of notions of "yoga" and were used by interpreters to privilege certain practices and beliefs above others. Much was at stake in the process of elevating texts: As has

54 As discussed in detail in Chapter Two, the process of translation is a kind of commentary, and like traditional Sanskrit commentary it was often an intertextual practice. Here Patton's discussion of the theoretical perspective of *Listenwissenschaft* is particularly helpful, as for the *paṇḍits* and yoga writers "the perspective of commentary is historically productive; it shows—both directly and indirectly—the ways in which commentators perceive social circumstances to have changed and how they create new forms to address that change. Relatedly, the lens of commentary also brings into focus the investments of the practitioner—the commentator—who refashions and relocates the text in such a way as to maintain authority in the midst of shifting circumstances." Patton, *Myth as Argument*, 29–30.

now been amply demonstrated by Bernard Cohn,⁵⁵ Partha Chatterjee,⁵⁶ Ronald Inden,⁵⁷ Nicholas Dirks,⁵⁸ and others, missionaries and Orientalists had a set of agendas in selecting certain texts for emphasis, a point that I will return below. Through published translations, scholars and aspiring yogis could now purchase printed editions of translated yoga texts, and the knowledge contained in these books offered another way to approach the tradition, without necessarily having first to approach a guru, thus changing how yogic knowledge could be transmitted.

The case of the *Bhagavad Gita* is in many ways parallel to history of the YS during this period.⁵⁹ Translatability, as Javed Majeed has argued in the case of Gandhi's appropriation of the *Gita*, provided evidence for the universality of the "Truth" contained in this pair of Sanskrit texts as they gained ascendancy in the nineteenth century.⁶⁰ Another aspect of the prestige that was accorded to the YS may, like the *Gita*, may be traced to its circulation via translation to new linguistic environs. Indeed, the translators examined in this study shared awareness of each other's work, across linguistic boundaries.

The translators examined in this study worked within various social institutions in colonial Calcutta, and their translations were affected by alliances they made within these social institutions. In the context of these translators, translation can be interpreted as the dialogic transmission of knowledge across cultural-linguistic

55 Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, Princeton Studies in Culture/power/history (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996).

56 Partha Chatterjee, *Texts of Power: Emerging Disciplines in Colonial Bengal* (University of Minnesota Press, 1995).

57 Inden, *Imagining India*.

58 Nicholas Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001).

59 Amiya Sen's recent history of the translation of the *Gita* into Bengali during the nineteenth century is an important resource here. Sen, *Explorations In Modern Bengal, C. 1800-1900*.

60 Javed Majeed, "Gandhi, and Translatability," *Modern Asian Studies* 40, no. 02 (2006): 303-332.

boundaries.⁶¹ In terms of the methodology for this study, the emphasis on translation means an analytic focus on the social-rhetorical conventions by which modern yoga was constructed, that is, the social construction of authority through institutions and alliances, as well as the models of authority and authenticity that are constituted by translation.⁶² The nature of the authority of the translated text was constituted in different ways due in part to these alliances. Depending on the institutions in which they worked, translators relied on different rationales to substantiate the authenticity of their texts, ranging from the quasi-ethnographic, to the Indological, to commentarial modes. As we shall see, these modes were both oral and written in nature.

The Yoga Sūtra as Text

The *Yoga Sūtra*, as a classical Sanskrit text of a particular genre of writing, is an account of the essential characteristics of yoga according to its tradition. It consists of 195 short lines of Sanskrit divided into four chapters, or *pāda*-s. A sense of the overall flavor of the text is captured by the Christopher Key Chapple, who describes the movement of the YS as a “process of inverse evolution leading to increasing levels of luminosity.”⁶³ In the first chapter, the *samādhipāda*, yoga is defined as “*citta-vṛtti-nirodha*.” The opening chapter analyses the different types of *vṛttis*, and defines *nirodha* in relation to the two practices that make it possible: *abhyāsa* (practice) and *vairāgya*

61 Gavin Flood, adapting the model of Bakhtin to the theory of religion, writes, “Put simply, a dialogical understanding of cultural transmission is that we are changed by the contexts we inhabit and linguistically identify with different roles and social forms within which we find ourselves.” Gavin Flood, *Beyond Phenomenology: Rethinking the Study of Religion* (New York: Cassell, 1999), 180.

62 Cf. Brian A. Hatcher, *Idioms of Improvement: Vidyāsāgar and Cultural Encounter in Bengal* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996).

63 Christopher Key Chapple, “Yoga and the Luminous,” in *Yoga: the Indian tradition*, ed. Ian Whicher and David Carpenter (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 91.

(dispassion). Patañjali then gives an analytic overview of the different levels of *samādhi*, or concentration, and along the way he makes distinctions, for instance, between types of concentration in which a distinction remains between the meditator and the object of meditation, and those in which even that distinction is overcome. The second *pāda* is devoted to *sādhana*, or the means of attaining *samādhi*. It is in the 29th *sūtra* of the *sādhana-pāda* that Patañjali lists the familiar eight limbs of yoga: *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi*. Interestingly, Patañjali makes no reference to the long list of *āsanas* found in most contemporary yoga treatises, though Vyāsa's commentary does make reference to a few. The third *pāda* is devoted to *vibhūti*, the supernatural powers obtained through yoga practice. The final *pāda* describes *kaivalya*, the state of radical isolation that is the aim of yogic metaphysics.

The genre of the *sūtra* was designed for memorization and oral transmission. Importantly, *sūtra* genre literature is concise, because concision aids in memorization. Concision, however, is in constant battle with ambiguity. Ludo Rocher has noted that the concision of the *sūtra* lends itself to divergent interpretations,⁶⁴ interpretations that were developed through chains of oral (and eventually written) commentary. Each line of a *sūtra* represents a condensed account of an important step in an oral argument, a “signpost”⁶⁵ that was accompanied by oral explication by a teacher. Like many Sanskrit texts, *sūtras* were principally *oral* texts until relatively recent times, and traditionally there was secrecy surrounding their import and transmission. That is to

64 Lindsay Jones, Mircea Eliade, and Charles J. Adams, *Encyclopedia of Religion* (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005), 8884.

65 Gary A. Tubb and Emery R. Boose, *Scholastic Sanskrit: A Handbook for Students* (Columbia University Press, 2007), 1.

say that the *YS* is a text reflective of a private language: access to the text depended on traditions of initiation, and its meaning was explained through controlled channels of commentary and oral communication.

As a text written in an aphoristic style, the *YS* presents the sort of complications to translation that poetry does. Here I am not suggesting a Romanticist notion that *sūtra*, like poetry, cannot be translated; but instead arguing that attention must be given to the differences in the connotative and denotative effects of translation. Ricoeur is helpful here:

The non-translatability of poetic language is not just a pretension of romanticism, but an essential trait of the poetic. It is true that one can save the thesis by saying... that the figure is translatable with respect to meaning, and not translatable with respect to signification, that is, with respect to the 'more' that the figure entails; and one assigns the study of this increase to another theory, not now of denotation but of connotation.

66

In translating the *YS*, Context matters above all: the style of the text is terse; it is a summation of the key terms and concepts critical to understanding yoga, but it was designed to be explicated through commentary. Without commentary, the *YS* is a sort of hermetic poem, almost untranslatable. While the expressive power of poetry is often achieved through figuration and metaphoric processes, the *YS* is largely devoid of complex grammatical features that would enable the multivalent layers found in Sanskrit genre that employ figures of speech, or *śabdālaṅkāra*. Instead, it is the extreme concision, coupled with the expectation of accompanying commentarial expansion, that creates challenges for translators. George Steiner, in his classic text on

66 Paul. Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: The Creation of Meaning in Language*, Routledge Classics (London: Routledge, 2006), 163.

translation *After Babel*,⁶⁷ uses road signs as an example of a symbolic language that requires no translation. The risk of translation, for the YS, was its decontextualization: without accompanying commentary, without the local glosses that made it interpretable, it could become too public a language, one that risks being evacuated of content and expressibility, as it becomes universally understood.⁶⁸ The signposts of the *sūtra*, therefore, are pointers that require elaboration of commentaries, and sub-commentaries.

Translation made the YS into a “migrant” text: in its published form in modern Indian and European languages, it became a text capable of moving between and through the boundaries that had previously contained it.⁶⁹ The text was still being transacted through elite circles of cultural production, but it was being used to discuss and theorize vernacular encounters. Its rigidity was not a mere limitation: the fixed character of the text in this sense was instead an element that allowed for the plasticity of its relevance and application through translation. In this way, the status of the YS in the nineteenth century raises questions about what constitutes a text: is a “text” synonymous with printed matter, with “high” traditions, with elites? In the context of translation, the YS was not, if it ever was, a text in a vacuum. Translation and the print publication medium that made its dissemination possible allowed the bare text of the *sūtra* to be used as a framework for a variety of commentaries, and in these commentaries we find attention to social context. When, for instance, Rājendralāl Mitra’s writes in his preface about the possible similarities between

67 George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

68 *Ibid.*, 215.

69 Laurie L. Patton, “Fire, the Kali Yuga, and Textual Reading,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 68, no. 4 (December 1, 2000): 808.

Patañjali's philosophy and Greek pre-Socratic thought, he notes that

the summary... given above will show to the unbiased enquirer that [the tenets of Patañjali]... are closely similar to those enunciated by some of the greatest metaphysicians of ancient Greece. The similitude is in some cases so close that I would not be surprised to see some enterprising dialectician, intent on proving everything good in India to be of European origin, demonstrate that the whole system has been nefariously copied from the Greek philosophers.⁷⁰

Here it seems likely that Mitra is alluding to the debates he had with James Fergusson over the origins of stone sculpture in India,⁷¹ and by broaching the topic of cultural chauvinism and its corrosive effect on interpretation, Mitra uses the space of the preface as a place for a digression to the politics of his context. While Mitra goes on to speak of a sanitized Patañjali, one who composed tenets that are “not such philosophic desperadoes as to commit outrages on the chastity of our thoughts,”⁷² his argument here is about the continued philosophical relevance of Sanskrit texts. Sumanta Banerjee⁷³ has shown how complex the interaction of popular and elite culture was in the construction of the *bhadralok* of Bengal, and that tension was negotiated in the translation of the *YS* in ways that complicate a simple opposition between elite and vernacular. Yoga writers like Mitra may not have been directly addressing an economic structure that allowed a few elites the leisure to write while simultaneously exploiting others, but the translation of Patañjali did call into question interpretive hegemonies that were supporting colonialism, such as any notion of an inherent supremacy of one culture over another.

What, in fact, did the *YS* stand for in the pre-Vivekananda period? A

70 Rājendralāl Mitra, *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali with the Commentary of Bhoja Rájá*, lvii.

71 Discussed in Chapter Five.

72 Rājendralāl Mitra, *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali with the Commentary of Bhoja Rájá*, lvii.

73 Sumanta Banerjee, *The Parlour and the Streets: Elite and Popular Culture in Nineteenth Century Calcutta* (Calcutta: Seagull Books, 1989).

reconsideration of translation in the history of yoga calls for a reconsideration of the role of the YS as a tool for the assertion of brahmanical and Orientalist hegemony over vernacular and popular practice, an argument found, for instance, in Mark Singleton's recent work on yoga. Singleton argues that the YS was essentially an icon for brahmanical purity that Orientalists and their complicit Indian corollaries used to decry the present through an appeal to an idealized (and constructed) past.⁷⁴ He writes that his argument is based on an assumption:

subtending my argument throughout is the assumption that the modern elevation of the YS as the (imagined) quintessential text of yoga entailed the exclusion of unseemly, heterodox elements within India's yoga traditions, such as tantric-oriented haṭha yoga.

This trend toward cleansing the unseemly from Yoga is certainly attested in translations, but my research locates it principally in English translations, and by no means in all of them. Singleton also relies on an image of the *paṇḍit* as the complicit "assistant" to the Orientalist expurgation:

The notion of the Classical, endorsed and reinforced by the European intelligentsia, was used as a foundation, alibi, and authority for those seeking to establish a clear identity, and a sense of dignity, for India's cultural productions. Nowhere is this more apparent than in popular yoga. European Orientalists and anglicized Indian Pandits were wont to run down yoga's popular, practical manifestations, and the reappropriation of the Classical, via the YS, by late nineteenth-century exponents of practical yoga was a means to legitimize and elevate their own formulations in the face of such attitudes.⁷⁵

But Singleton may not be completely correct. My own research indicates that in large measure, the vernacular translation of the YS was not simply a disavowal of the popular for the sake of a derivative discourse of the classical; the *paṇḍits* in this study

74 Cf. Mark Singleton, "The Classical Reveries of Modern Yoga: Patañjali and Constructive Orientalism," in *Yoga in the Modern World: Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Jean Byrne and Singleton, Mark (London: Routledge, 2008).

75 *Ibid.*, 87.

incorporated their own vernacular understandings into the process of translation, and in weaving together the vernacular and the Sanskritic they created the possibility for Yoga's multiple trajectories.

The character of the *YS* as a text that allowed for yoga knowledge to be transmitted through translation was also constituted in part by the context of colonial India. Furthermore, in some cases text critical questions concerning the *YS* appear unresolved. Scholars of the extant Sanskrit manuscripts of the *YS* have noted that it is not always clear which, if any, manuscripts have been referred to in modern editions, translations, and interpretations of the *YS*. Published editions of the text of the *YS* and Vyāsa's *bhāṣya*, the main Sanskrit commentary on the *YS*, give the appearance of agreement and uniformity, but this lack of variants may well be because published texts rely on earlier published editions, creating a self-reinforcing unity based on a limited selection of manuscripts.⁷⁶ For the contemporary interpreter, the result is that commentaries may in fact be commenting on versions of the *YS* and the *bhāṣya* that vary from the currently published versions.⁷⁷ While attempts at critical edition of the *YS* have been made⁷⁸ and are discussed below, as recently as the 2004 a scholar lamented that “[w]e do not have a critical edition of the *YS/YBh*.”⁷⁹

76 Kengo Harimoto, “Review: Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivarāṇa of Śaṅkara: Vivaraṇa Text with English Translation and Critical Notes Along with Text and English Translation of Patañjali's Yogasūtras and Vyāsabhāṣya by T. S. Rukmani,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 124, no. 1 (March 2004): 177.

77 *Ibid.*, 177. Harimoto writes, “There has not even been an attempt to examine what readings of the *YS* and the *YBh* Vācaspati had. I am not certain whether he commented on the same texts of the *YS* and the *YBh* that are usually printed together with his commentary. This, in turn, again requires establishing the text of Vācaspati's commentary.”

78 Vimalā Karṇāṭaka, ed., *Pātañjala-Yoga-Darśanam: Tattvavaiśārādī-Yogavārttiketi-Tīkādvayopetam Vyāsabhāṣyam (Sapāthabheda-Bālapriyākhyā-Hindīvyākhyayā Vibhūṣitam)*, 4 vols., 1st ed. (Vārāṇasī: Banaras Hindu University and Ratna Publication, 1992).

79 Harimoto, “Review,” 177. Harimoto notes that “A graduate student from the University of Bonn, Mr. Phillip Maas, is now preparing an edition of them using twenty or so manuscripts.”

Beyond the questions of the reliability and uniformity of the manuscript tradition, the questions at the heart of this study involve the character of textuality itself and the role of commentary and translations—additions or transformations of text that I want to consider as constitutive of the original itself—as means of transmitting religious tradition. In relation to the study of religion in South Asia, problems with notions of texts, textuality, and scripture began to appear as a conceptions based on the Bible’s role in Christianity were applied to the study of Hinduism. As Jeffrey Timm has observed, “[t]he fact is that the practitioners of South Asian traditions did not, by and large, understand their holy books in a manner analogous to the Christian West, so it is not surprising that this approach to scripture failed to do justice to the text traditions it claimed to reveal.”⁸⁰

The notion of “text traditions” also signals a theoretical position in relation to the study of religion that is implicit throughout this study. Gavin Flood has argued for the importance of examining the ways that texts are transmitted, internalized, and function within religious traditions.⁸¹ The theoretical implications of Flood’s emphasis on transmission is to reposition the focus of scholarship away from phenomenological approaches to “transcendental subjectivity” toward a “view of the self constructed in social interaction and through language... and so to an epistemic subject who is in a dialogical relation with the objects of inquiry.”⁸² In this sense, the first publications of printed translations of Patañjali’s *YS* represent more than the installation of a textual foundation to yoga; they are a primary location for understanding “the way in which

80 Jeffrey Richard Timm, *Texts in Context: Traditional Hermeneutics in South Asia* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 2.

81 Flood, *Beyond Phenomenology*, 191.

82 Ibid.

language functions in the transmission of tradition and the replication of culture,” and they reveal a dynamic process of transmission of religious knowledge.⁸³

If there was, as theorists like Timm have suggested, an over-emphasis on textual traditions in the early study of religion in South Asia, the corrective response was to focus on the “so-called primitive or archaic forms of religious expression.”⁸⁴ Mircea Eliade’s work on yoga, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*,⁸⁵ is representative of that post-war trend in religious scholarship; while he devotes a significant part of the text to the study of Patañjali, his main emphasis is on the shamanistic elements present in the tradition. Timm’s conclusion, that “[a]lthough distancing itself from the false essentialism of earlier understandings of scripture, this history-of-religions approach often led to a different problem: the procrustean marginalization of scripture and commentary traditions.”⁸⁶ The *YS* as translated in the nineteenth century indicates that this split between the “so-called primitive or archaic forms of religious expression” and the “scripture and commentary traditions”⁸⁷ was not necessarily complete.

What kind of a text, then, is the *YS*? The opening line, “*atha yogānuśāsanam*,” “Now [begins] the treatise on yoga,” suggests that Patañjali’s text is a continuation of a pre-existing tradition or traditions, as the *upasarga* or verbal prefix “*anu*” in the noun “*anuśāsanam*” suggests a teaching or exposition that comes after or alongside of others.⁸⁸ The relation of the text to other, earlier traditions raises the interpretive

83 Ibid., 192.

84 Timm, *Texts in Context: Traditional Hermeneutics in South Asia*, 2.

85 Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958).

86 Timm, *Texts in Context: Traditional Hermeneutics in South Asia*, 2.

87 Ibid.

88 The connotation of *anu* is glossed briefly by Vyāsa: *yogānuśāsanam śāstramadhikṛtam veditavyam*, which has the implication that the teaching of yoga being commenced should be understood as

question of how it should be regarded, for instance as an encyclopedic text, a collation, or a systematic treatise. Today, the global audience of the YS could be explained by arguing that it resembles a miscellany and avoids any sectarian claims or overtly exclusionary premises. Extending the logic of this argument, it is a text that can mean almost anything to anyone. According to this interpretation its authority would have less to do with its specific content than with the sort of role it plays in establishing the authority of traditions that are associated with it. Other interpreters⁸⁹ have drawn attention to the tensions within the text and a few quirks that suggest later interpolation, a move that has in turn been criticized for undermining the integrity of the text's philosophical and religious import. Ian Whicher has summarized an aspect of the debate over the status of the YS as text by observing:

Scholars have, for some time now, questioned the unity of the work, viewing the above division of chapters as somewhat arbitrary and as appearing to be the result of an inadequate reediting of the text. The conclusion reached by some is that in its present form the *Yoga-Sūtra* cannot possibly be considered as unitary.⁹⁰

The notion that the text is “fragmentary,” furthermore, has its origins in the Orientalist examinations of it in the nineteenth century.

Whicher argues conversely that the internal links within the text demonstrate its unity: “the *Yoga-Sūtra* is a coherent text and... it need not warrant the supposition of

authoritative (*adhikṛtam*) *śāstra*. A later commentary, the *Yogavārttika* of *Vijñānabhikṣu* expands by tracing the history of yoga to the ancient figure of Hiraṇyagarbha. For a translation, see T. S. Rukmani, *Yogavārttika of Vijñānabhikṣu* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1980), vol. 1, p 23. Vācaspati Mīśra glosses the term *anuśāsanam* to denote “further teaching.” See Bryant, *The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali*, 6, and n. 16,.

89 Ian Whicher lists Paul Deussen (1920), S. Dasgupta (1922) and Otto Strauss (1925), along with Georg Feuerstein (1979) and Hauer (1958) as raising the question of the unity of the YS. Ian Whicher, *The Integrity of the Yoga Darsana: a Reconsideration of Classical Yoga* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998), 44, n. 25.

90 *Ibid.*, 44.

multiple authorship or composition over several segments of time.”⁹¹ Whicher’s consideration of the integrity of the *YS* draws attention to the agency of the *YS* as text with its own theoretical preferences and motivations. The emphasis on the social transmission of knowledge about yoga through translation in this study, however, requires a different approach to experiential knowledge than the one used by Whicher in establishing the coherency of the *YS*.

Nonetheless, there is a complex way in which the theoretical concerns raised by the nature of the *YS* as a text mirror a set of concerns in the theory of religious studies. Whicher’s interpretation of the *YS* seeks to recover and make explicit its claims about the nature of being and salvation, that is, ontology and soteriology. In contrast to this position, Yohanan Grinshpon⁹² argues that text and its claims are so discontinuous with the nature of everyday existence that for the sake of interpretation there is little that can be productively recovered. The *YS* discloses, in this view, a reality so removed from the world that it requires a transmutation of the terms of existence in order to be understood.

Yoga and the History of Religions

For a variety of reasons, Yoga has been at the center of a debate about whether religions should be understood according to a phenomenological approach that to varying degrees relies on an ahistorical subject, or approached through a redescription of religious phenomenon in social and historical terms. The *YS* is an important text for reflection on this debate within religious studies because the text and its contextual

91 Ibid., 45.

92 Yohanan Grinshpon, *Silence Unheard: Deathly Otherness in Pātañjala-Yoga*, SUNY Series in Hindu Studies (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002).

usage present particular interpretative conflicts. Stuart Sarbacker, however, makes a case for integrating two approaches to studying yoga, specifically those of I.M. Lewis⁹³ and Mircea Eliade. Lewis, for Sarbacker,⁹⁴ presents as a theoretical model that situates the religious experience of yoga in a social and historical context. Eliade, in contrast, indexed a variety of cultural and religious expression to a trans-historical notion of yoga, which he linked to shamanism. Combining the two, as Sarbacker attempts, involves, in other words, an attempt modulate the phenomenological with the historical. This approach, he contends, “allows for the recognition of the dynamic relationship between autonomy and contextuality in religious experience, thereby mediating empathetic and critical approaches, and the issue of mediated and unmediated experience.”⁹⁵ In the present study, I seek to contextualize epistemological claims about yoga within the social history of individual translators who made them through public and rhetorical expressions.

The empathetic and critical approaches that Sarbacker discusses are themselves related to more general questions of how theoretical approaches or pre-theoretical assumptions in the study of religion result in differences in emphasizing the universal or the particular. Russell McCutcheon has written that “if we take seriously Montaigne’s observation that ‘we do nothing but write glosses on one another’..., then group cohesion is made possible not only by such devices as texts and such techniques as comparison but also shared, public rhetorical conventions”.⁹⁶ In interpreting

93 I.M. Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion: An Anthropological Study of Spirit Possession and Shamanism* (Harmondsworth Eng.: Penguin Books, 1971).

94 “Following the work of I. M. Lewis, we will argue that the types of ecstatic states engendered through meditation have an intimate relationship with the social and cultural realities of the environment in which they occur.” Stuart Ray Sarbacker, *Samādhi: The Numinous and Cessative in Indo-Tibetan Yoga* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 9–10.

95 *Ibid.*, 10.

96 Russell T. McCutcheon, *The Discipline of Religion: Structure, Meaning, Rhetoric*, 1st ed. (New York:

translation through the contexts and social locations of translators, then, it is necessary to trace a history of public rhetorical devices that are used to transmit knowledge of yoga. The translation of yoga overlaps and is entangled with nineteenth-century debates over the definitions of the terms Hinduism⁹⁷ and *dharmā*,⁹⁸ and the translators in this study claimed authority through knowledge of Sanskrit as well as vernacular interpreters of Patañjali. Toward the end of the nineteenth-century, the use of concepts drawn from contemporary discourses of science and psychology gradually became dominant vehicles for the translation of yoga.⁹⁹ Translation, therefore, must be placed in the context of how translators, individually as well as collectively, claimed authority.

As I have suggested above, yoga and the text of Patañjali have proven to be powerful resources for universalist narratives of Hinduism. Nile Green, for instance, traces this capacity of yoga to its notion of the control of breathing, or *prāṇāyāma*. Green argues that *prāṇāyāma* allows for the global mobility of yoga because breathing “appears to have withstood the assault of relativism over the past century,” making it “one of the last bastions of the universal”.¹⁰⁰ In Green’s analysis, “breathing has seemed neither to require nor to reflect a context,”¹⁰¹ a state of decontextualization in the historical study of yoga that he attributes to the influence of works such as Eliade’s *Yoga, Immortality, and Freedom*.¹⁰² In a manner distinct from the approach of this study

Routledge, 2003), 219.

97 Cf. Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?* and discussion below.

98 Cf. Sen, *Explorations In Modern Bengal, C. 1800-1900*.

99 For a recent study of the Cartesian implications of this translational trope, see Jeremy R. Carrette and Richard King, *Selling Spirituality: The Silent Takeover of Religion* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 114ff.

100 Nile Green, “Breathing in India, C. 1890,” *Modern Asian Studies* 42, no. 2-3 (2007): 283.

101 *Ibid.*, 284.

102 Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*.

but in many ways cognate with its approach, Green seeks to historicize the development of yoga in the context of social and political developments. He is particularly suspicious that the universality of breathing provides a sort of ideological Trojan horse within which hosts of contingencies can be hidden. In deconstructing the universalist image of yoga, Green compares yoga practices to what he calls “Indo-Muslim traditions of meditation from the same period.”¹⁰³ The postcolonial implications of this move are apparent in Green’s work:

...Yogis and Sufis articulated rival forms of physical culture and religious identity in response to the wider crisis facing precolonial Indian lifeworlds. The promotion of these distinctly Hindu and Muslim body practices is seen to represent a shared movement towards the indigenisation of physical culture in the face of colonial British modes of personal conditioning, from table manners to military service and cricket. ... In deportment as in appearance, the Yogi and Sufi symbolised an Indian authenticity at the very moment that they absorbed elements of a colonial discourse on the essentially traditional character of the ‘authentic’ Indian.¹⁰⁴

In keeping with Green’s emphasis on the way that historical particulars inform how universal and timeless narratives are constructed, Flood argues that we should think about religion in terms of language and culture:

...The rejection of the Husserlian transcendental subjectivity is replaced by a view of the self constructed in social interaction and through language—as is shown by Urban’s work on indexicality—and so to an epistemic subject who is in a dialogical relation with the objects of inquiry¹⁰⁵... rather than an emphasis on ‘religious experience’, on ‘belief’, or on ‘phenomena’ understood as material expressions of tradition, there is an emphasis on the way in which language functions in the transmission of tradition and the replication of culture, and a more dynamic understanding of the processes of both transmission and understanding.¹⁰⁶

Thinking through, and theorizing, the transformation of yoga in colonial India requires

103 Green, “Breathing in India, C. 1890,” 285.

104 Ibid.

105 Flood, *Beyond Phenomenology*, 191.

106 Ibid., 192.

a model for religion that draws on theorization of linguistic translation. The emphasis on Patañjali's text in translation was not a hegemonic process, just as the indigenization of English in India has led to literary productions that complicate English's foreignness and cultural inauthenticity. It may be more fruitful to view these translations in the way the Susham Bedi describes her own writing in Hindi and R.K. Narayan's writing in English, as "a translation of Indianness."¹⁰⁷

In his wide-ranging analysis of literary production in colonial and post-colonial India, Srinivas Aravamudan has drawn attention to the development of a specific register of language that signifies a new religious vocabulary created in the cosmopolitan contexts of colonialism. For the purposes of analyzing the Anglophone translations of the YS written by Mitra and Cakravārtī, analyzed in Chapter Five, Aravamudan's analysis of Bankimcandra Chatterji's *Ānandamaṭh* is especially relevant. Aravamudan has drawn attention to multiplicity of possible readings contained in Bankim's story, and the themes that frame these multiple readings resonate with the interpretative atmosphere in which the YS was contemporaneously translated and interpreted. *Ānandamaṭh*'s narrative focuses on a family displaced in Bengal famine. A series of events lead the central character of the story to believe his wife and infant child to be dead, and the family is separated from each other in a ravaged landscape where the only semblance of society that remains is an order of militant ascetics. The ascetics are depicted in various skirmishes that culminate in a massive battle, and a number of miraculous events punctuate the story. The nature of the struggle fought by

107 Susham Bedi, "Looking in from the Outside: Writing and Teaching in the Diasporic Setting," in *India in Translation Through Hindi Literature: A Plurality of Voices*, ed. Maya Burger and Nicola Pozza (New York: Peter Lang, 2010), 264.

the *santāns*, the “Children of the Mother,”¹⁰⁸ may be interpreted as fervently nationalistic, as suggested by an important scene in which the image of India is presented in the context of an array of images of the Goddess. The nature of the *maṭh* as a group of high-caste male¹⁰⁹ Hindus, whose religious order is exclusionary if not inimical toward Muslims, adds a valence of revivalist Hindu identity to the nationalism of the tale.

Bankim’s relation to nationalism, however, is complex: “Bankim as baboo, indeed ‘Bankim Babu,’ as he was called honorifically, fulfilled the expected tasks of a competent bureaucrat in the Bengal administrative hierarchy in a number of towns”.¹¹⁰ Various editions and translations of *Ānandamaṭh*, furthermore, present the nature of the enemy differently: is it a struggle for Bengali nationalism against the (mainly Muslim, north Indian) sepoy armies, or does the struggle articulate a sense of pan-Indian revolt against colonialism?¹¹¹ In any case, the readers of Bankim’s novel in late nineteenth-century India would have been aware of the historical events on which *Ānandamaṭh* is in part loosely based, the so-called *sannyāsī* rebellion. In the third edition of the text, Bankim included “an excerpt from an English book on the true history of the *sannyasi* rebellion of Bengal,” noting that the “reader will see it was a

108 Julius J. Lipner, “Introduction,” in *Ānandamaṭh, or, The Sacred Brotherhood*, by Bankimcandra Chatterji, trans. Julius J. Lipner (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005), 13.

109 Though the wife of the protagonist is able to become a *santān* by disguising herself.

110 Srinivas Aravamudan, *Guru English: South Asian Religion in a Cosmopolitan Language*, Translation/transnation (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006), 68–69.

111 “When *Anandamaṭh* identifies the British as the enemy, it also singles out the feudal Muslims rulers of Bengal as collaborators of the British, and, therefore, oppressors of the populace. Bankim’s substitution of terms, edition by edition, partly to escape censorship by British colonial authorities has raised speculation (and there is evidence that his promotion was denied in response to one of the serialized episodes). However, the fact that Muslims and British are substitutable for each other indicates the author’s focalization on a militant Hindu nationalist subject. After the novel was first serialized in the monthly *Bangadarshan* in 1881–82, *rājā* in the first edition was replaced by *musalmān* in the fourth; *ingrez* (English) was replaced by *sepoy* in the second; and *sepoy* was replaced by *yabaṇ* (a pejorative term for a Muslim as a foreigner) in the fourth.” *Ibid.*, 70.

very serious business.”¹¹² Noting discrepancies in the novel and that of the historical account, Bankim distinguishes the nature of his art: “I do not consider these to be fatal discrepancies, for a novel is a novel, and not history.”¹¹³

I will not here undertake a reconsideration of the “rebellion” and the nature of its historical record. Instead, I would like to suggest an element of the climate of reception in which Mitra’s translation of *YS* would have been received: the possibly subversive nature of yogic practices in a broader popular imagination. As David Gordon White’s *Sinister Yogis* demonstrates, nineteenth-century audiences were more likely to associate yoga with the practices of liminal figures with ulterior and possibly dangerous motives. Bankim’s story of brahmans practicing ascetic acts as a form of resistance is a novel and not history, as he is careful to maintain, but it demonstrates that elements of a Sanskritic tradition were being refashioned in a popular narrative.

Precisely because of the ambiguity in the nature of the *santān*’s resistance in the novel, Bankim’s work presents a complicated notion of Hinduism, asceticism, and politics. His story references the sort of Sanskrit schools—*ṭols*—that were challenged by the English educational system. Aravamudan has argued that the “charming references to the *tol*” demonstrate aspects of Bankim’s social philosophy:

the conviction that it was not possible to come to terms with Western progress and conceptions of culture and polity, that is, to develop an appropriate Indian identity in the context of an emerging nation-state, without being rooted in ancestral, hegemonic values—the Sanskritic tradition.¹¹⁴

Among the values to be highlighted as central to Sanskritic tradition that forms a

112 Bankimcandra Chatterji, *Ānandamaṭh, or, The Sacred Brotherhood*, trans. Julius J. Lipner (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005), 128.

113 *Ibid.*, 129.

114 *Ibid.*, 11–12.

central aspect of both the religious outlook of the renouncers in *Ānandamaṭh* and in contemporaneous interpretations of the *YS* is the notion of *tapas* and the related concept of *brahmacarya*. Translations of the *YS*, therefore, were emerging in a period where renunciation and agitation were linked through the grammar of asceticism. As Julius Lipner has observed,

... in the context of the nationalist (and protonationalist) agitation in nineteenth-century Bengal, this theme of the transformative use of *tapas* acquired by a celibate lifestyle was adapted to bringing about nationalist/patriotic goals. As I have noted elsewhere, “By affirming his masculinity physically [that is, by discharging semen as a married man], the householder so to speak lost his masculinity spiritually, with its potentially transforming powers. The celibate, by foregoing the exercise of his masculinity physically had the capacity to assert it spiritually, in more far-reaching ways.... Celibacy, therefore, was a crucial factor in the ‘masculine’ psychology of a Hindu youth in tune with the traditional spirituality of his faith and pursuing a visionary goal in life” (Lipner, 1999, 53-54).

If yoga was transformed in the nineteenth century from a renouncer ethic to a middle class pursuit for householders, it also remained a viable category for cultural resistance, and a respectable way of opting out from certain societal expectations. One could trace a trajectory from domestication via translation into banalization, but in the late nineteenth century a variety of possible yogas remained open to the future.

One way to conceptualize a fundamental difference among the various interpretations of yoga has been identified by Joseph Alter as distinction between “Orientalist studies of Yoga as philosophy, as distinct from indigenous commentaries on Yoga as Truth.”¹¹⁵ Building on this distinction between yoga as truth and yoga as philosophy. Mark Singleton views Mitra’s translation in keeping with J.R. Ballantyne’s mid-nineteenth-century translation of the first two sections of the *YS*, that is, involved

115 Alter, *Yoga in Modern India*, 6.

in a process of decoupling a textual, philosophical text from a “living, oral tradition of Patañjali”¹¹⁶ Finding evidence of a specific approach to the *YS* in Mitra’s introductory references to continental philosophers such as Schopenhauer and Hartmann, Singleton positions Mitra’s work as essentially a textbook of comparative philosophy. Mitra’s work, however, when read in the context of arguments of what defined *sanātanatā*, to which he contributed directly, demonstrate that he was neither simply reifying traditions into discrete objects defined by the categories of Western thought, nor was he using Sanskrit sources as a means to debunk any and every intrusion of the “West.” Like the *Baṅgabāsī* writers who argued for Patañjali’s *YS* as a central articulation of Hinduism, Mitra too was involved in debates among a set of groups (missionaries, Orientalists, reformists, and champions of *sanātanatā*) over the question of translation.

Dialogic Translation

To view these translations, it is essential to emphasize the dialogic process by which they were constructed. This requires a study of a translated text of Patañjali not as a fixed form, a concretized cultural production, but as an indicator of the process of translation. In this respect, the performative dimension of translation must be emphasized in order to grasp the cultural negotiation that surrounded a textual tradition. As such, this study is informed by, but in its methodology departs from, interpretive histories of the religious experience of yoga.¹¹⁷ Languages, and linguistic artifacts, when looked at in the long view, are constantly in flux, and accounting for translation means more than looking through it transparently; it means theorizing its

116 Singleton, “The Classical Reveries of Modern Yoga: Patañjali and Constructive Orientalism,” 81.

117 Here I am referring specifically to Eliade.

form. In this sense, the notion of *anūsāsanam*, a term connoting a continuing process of commentary and elaboration, is arguably a Sanskrit parallel to the notion of translation, in its etymological sense of transportation or transference (of something preexisting). By theorizing translation, I seek to recover the uncanniness of a text now treated as foundational that describes itself in its opening a continuation of something prior.

In keeping with the argument that it is a misreading to interpret *anūsāsanam* as a fixed starting point when it announces itself by alluding to an already existing tradition, trends in Sāṃkhya itself can be interpreted to argue against strict foundationalism. Sheldon Pollock writes:

A dominant form of Indian thought known as Sāṃkhya (no less than certain strands of Western scholastic philosophy) holds that a beginning is, ontologically speaking, unthinkable. According to the “doctrine of preexistent effects” (*satkāryavāda*), nothing can be produced that does not already exist latently in its cause (as the European schoolmen put it, *ex nihilo nihil fit*). Beginnings start to fade to infinity.¹¹⁸

Anūsāsanam, as a way of characterizing the YS, invites an expansion of the notion of commentary into a theory of dialogic translation. In Pollock’s analysis, the problem of beginnings is related to historiographic quandaries found in “some brands of” Orientalism and postcolonialism, where “beginnings are conceptually permissible only in colonialism.”¹¹⁹

Instead, that is, of an analysis of Patañjali’s text based on the frameworks of phenomenology or comparative ontology, this study will employ the method of intellectual history to describe the historical transmission of knowledge about yoga.

118 Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men*, 284.

119 Sheldon Pollock, *Literary Cultures in History: Reconstructions from South Asia* (University of California Press, 2003), 285.

Paul Ricoeur provides a methodological starting point: in developing a notion of “semantic innovation,” Ricoeur places emphasis on the roles of conversation and mediation in the generation of new knowledge.¹²⁰ Translation in the nineteenth century provided something like a “life-story” for the text of the *YS*, and the encounter between

At the same time, I am not arguing for the complete reduction of the text and the meaning of yoga to the level of social and political concerns. This study contributes to the ongoing reassessment of the history of yoga by examining the use of the *YS* by *paṇḍits* in negotiating the Sanskritic tradition in the context of vernacularization, but it also contends that the way interpreters could use the *YS* was in part constrained by the text’s own parameters. The *YS* portrays a tension between what Stuart Sarbacker has called the cessative and the numinous, and this tension in the text between practices of withdrawal and attainment made it a particularly apt site for translation during the nineteenth century.

Citation Practices and Translation

As has already been suggested, a discussion of yoga in the nineteenth century invites the familiar debates over the meanings of modernity, tradition, and the invention of tradition. This study rejects an uncritical assumption that colonialism resulted in a rupturing of society that cuts off any possibility of continuity between the precolonial world and the present. In the context of this debate, the history of yoga in the nineteenth century suggests that translation represents neither a “new” or “modern” form of yoga split radically from the past or traditional, nor quite a continuity

120 Paul Ricoeur, *On Translation*, trans. Eileen Brennan (New York: Routledge, 2006), ix–x.

extending from precolonial forms of yoga. The language of yoga that develops from translation is in akin to what Walter Benjamin called citation,

Since absolute forgetting is as impossible as total recall, the need is to bring elements of the past into contact with the present in a dynamic constellation. Benjamin called this *citation*, but it could as validly be termed *translation*, for what is suggested is neither a break with the past nor an abject repetition of it, but a re-writing.”¹²¹

Translation of the YS represents a re-writing of Hinduism’s past in just this way.

My approach to theorizing translation is in part influenced by postcolonial analyses that build on Benjamin’s work, including Tejaswini Niranjana¹²² and Homi Bhabha.¹²³ Niranjana is critical of accounts of translation that are overly reductive, and in doing so opens space for thinking about the *paṇḍit* in relation to the history of translation. In reference to Talal Asad’s account of translation, for instance, Niranjana notes that the emphasis placed on the institutional relations of power in which the translator is situated can obscure the possibility of “translation as an act of resistance.”¹²⁴ Bilingual translators who “challenge earlier Western versions through retranslation”¹²⁵ exemplify this possibility, and the work of such bilingual Orientalists as Rājendralāl Mitra can be fruitfully examined from this perspective. More recently, Srinivas Aravamudan has examined the development of what he calls “Guru English” from the encounter between English and Indian languages in the context of colonialism.¹²⁶ Aravamudan develops a notion of transidiomaticity from the work of

121 Declan Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995), 629.

122 Tejaswini Niranjana, *Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism, and the Colonial Context* (Berkeley: University of Berkeley, 1992), 5.

123 Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

124 Niranjana, *Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism, and the Colonial Context*, 84.

125 *Ibid.*

126 Aravamudan, *Guru English*.

the linguist Marco Jacquemet, a concept that I develop in the context of cosmopolitan vernacular translators in Chapter Five.

The re-writing of yoga tradition, to adapt Benjamin’s phrase, was made possible through translation because it involved a mixing of the social worlds that the different languages at the center of this study were being argued to represent. Sanskrit, English, and Bengali, that is to say, were more than just languages in colonial Calcutta. A word such as “yoga” was a shibboleth even in this earlier period, and the way translators dealt with it revealed what could be called their “discourse accent”¹²⁷—the alliances they made, the relationship to authority they held, and the notion of authenticity that sought to construct. To make visible the histories contained in these discourse accents, it is necessary to uncover the subtle textures in meaning that translators pursue.

Overview of the Chapters

Translation is an activity that occurs in specific social contexts and is made possible by links across cultural and linguistic boundaries. As such, this study is structured around the social context of colonial Calcutta and analyzes three types of translations:

Orientalist, vernacular, and vernacular cosmopolitan. These three analytic categories structure the three central chapters of this study, and are linked to linguistic fields.

The Orientalist translations I examine here are principally composed in English by Europeans, although German Orientalism informed some of the English project even as it departed from it in significant ways. Vernacular translation here refers to the

translation of Patañjali into Bengali, although some attention is given to Hindi

¹²⁷ See Udaya Narayana Singh, “Social Aspects of Language,” in *The Oxford India Companion to Sociology and Social Anthropology*, ed. Veena Das, vol. 1 (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), 706.

translation activity related to Calcutta-based publishing. Finally, vernacular cosmopolitan translations addressed the most general audiences of the three groups. These were translations and interpretations by authors who wrote in English as well as Bengali. Importantly, each of these dimensions offered unexpected points of mobility even as they foreclosed on others.

In Chapter Two, “Interpretive Foundations,” I provide a genealogy and general overview of recent studies of the *YS* and its relation to the history of modern yoga. In doing so, I examine the question of whether or not Vivekananda’s interpretation of yoga represents another instance of the modern invention of tradition. My argument here relies on a synthesis of two analytic points: first, translation is itself a form of commentary; and second, the process of translating the *YS* needs to be contextualized in terms the vernacular contact zone¹²⁸ of colonial Calcutta. I argue that the concept of “classical yoga” as formulated around Patañjali’s text is neither timeless nor invented, but instead a category derived from translation that reflects continuities in the commentarial tradition even as it appeals to forms of religious practice seemingly at odds with that tradition. “Classical yoga,” as a translational category, discloses a capacity of the original text that had not been visible before: its ability to include of varying approaches under the umbrella category of yoga.

In Chapter Three, “Orientalist translations of the *Yoga Sūtra*,” I examine the first translations of the *YS* into English, providing a background to the development of vernacular translations. The *paṇḍit* begins this chapter as an unnamed collaborator. In the first English translation of the *YS*, found in William Ward’s 1818 edition, *A View of*

128 See Hatcher, *Idioms of Improvement: Vidyāsāgar and Cultural Encounter in Bengal*.

the History, Literature and Mythology of the Hindoos, we find the YS presented as just one small aspect of Hinduism. Ward wrote with missionary purposes in mind, and comparatively little time is spent on yoga. The translation that Ward published is akin to a written form of an oral commentary on the YS. I argue in this chapter that Ward rendered an oral interpretation of the YS by a *paṇḍit* as an English translation. The traces of the vernacular commentary are still visible in the translation, while Ward's choice to employ words like "secularism" in his translation creates a tension between the indigenous tradition and the aspects of European religious history that such terms connote.

Following Ward's translation, I examine the treatment of yoga in H.H. Wilson's *Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus* (1846). Wilson does not provide a translation of Patañjali, but provides a broad account of the history of yoga, including Patañjali among what Wilson refers to as a variety of "sects." Wilson's treatment of Gorakhnāth and disparate traditions of *haṭha yoga* show that by 1846, yoga was situated in a wide semantic field. The narratives of yogis and the emphasis on types of yogic practice found in Wilson's sketch of yoga show that these popular practices were well attested at the time. By analyzing Wilson's own relation to the *paṇḍits* he employed, I argue that Wilson (and his predecessor H.T. Colebrooke) used their own authority as scholars of Sanskrit to distance the production of Orientalist knowledge from the work of missionaries like Ward, who is criticized for a lack of attention to the language. Wilson and Ward share a descriptive approach to the history of Hinduism, but increasingly Sanskrit texts are being positioned by European scholars as superior to the contemporaneous interpretations of "native researchers."

James Robert Ballantyne's translation of the first two sections of the *YS*, with the commentary of Bhoja Rāja, was published in 1852 and 1853. Ballantyne represents something of a rapprochement between the Orientalist and the *paṇḍit*, at least from his own perspective. He writes in the preface to his translation that he actively seeks the knowledge of the *paṇḍits* in improving the quality of his translation. The collaborative rhetoric of the preface is born out more literally when Ballantyne's translation is posthumously completed by a *paṇḍit*, published serially in the Benares-based¹²⁹ journal *The Pandit*. Subsequently a combined edition was published by Tukaram Tatya, a Bombay-based publisher with links to the Theosophical Society in 1882. Ballantyne's translation, with its complicated publication history and its hybrid completed form, is a template for the next wave of translation activity, all based in Calcutta. Rather than reinforcing the nineteenth-century claim that the commentarial tradition relating to Patañjali was moribund, these works suggest that English translation itself owed much to an ongoing commentarial tradition, both in Sanskrit and in vernacular languages. Moreover, the landscape of yoga interpretation before Vivekananda appears significantly configured by nineteenth-century rhetorical battles between missionaries, Orientalists, and the indigenous intellectuals examined in the next chapter.

In Chapter Four, "Vernacular Yogas: The *Paṇḍits* of Bengal," I examine a set of Bengali translations of the *YS* that represent something of an indigenous response to the earlier Orientalist translation. These translators wrote in the vernacular and were familiar with the English translations, often citing the work of previous translators in the prefaces and notes to their Bengali editions. It is in the context of these sometimes

129 Contemporary Vārāṇasī.

literally marginal references that debates between English and vernacular translators took shape. In order to make visible the contributions made by these translators, I critically examine the historiography of the figure of the *paṇḍit* as it is redefined in the context of the public intellectual spaces of the colonial Calcutta. One of these *paṇḍits*, Śāśadhar Tarkacūḍāmaṇi was a traditional *paṇḍit* who read Patañjali in untraditional ways and who reached a wide and diverse audience. With Śāśadhar, the study turns to a set of local Bengali concerns that were increasingly being argued as broadly relevant to India's future. Śāśadhar galvanized the religiously conservative elements of Bengali society, arguing that Patañjali had invented natural selection centuries before Darwin. He was met with great fame at the beginning of his career, but was marginalized in his later years for his retrograde views by the intellectual elites of his period, including Bankim Chatterji. Śāśadhar makes an appearance in the biography of Ramakrishna, but today it is difficult to reconstruct many of the specifics of his life. His presence is felt in the complex chain of social relations between the Bengali translators of the *YS*: he inspires some, and is associated with divisive cultural campaigns during the period.

One of Śāśadhar's disciples, Kālīvar Vedāntavāgīś, published a Bengali translation of the *YS* that is still in print today. Kṣetrapāl Cakravārtī, an Anglophone translator discussed in Chapter Five, cites Vedāntavāgīś's translation as authoritative. Kālīvar was something of a preceptor to a middle-class Bengali student of Patañjali, who first heard of yoga through Śāśadhar's public talks. That student went on to become one of Ramakrishna's monks, providing a direct link between these Bengali interpreters and the formulation of *Rāja Yoga* by Swami Vivekananda. Śāśadhar appears to have been related to a vernacular newspaper and social organization at the

time, *Baṅgabāsī*, and the third *paṇḍit* examined in Chapter Three was likely its editor during a well-publicized libel case.

That *paṇḍit*, Maheścandra Pāl, was known during the period for his prolific translations of Sanskrit works into Bengali, principally Upaniṣads. Pāl's translation of the YS is notable for its preface, which Pāl used as a platform to criticize the dating attempts by Orientalists and to include narrative and devotional stories about Patañjali. As a group, these Bengali *paṇḍits* indicate that interpretation of *śāstric* material, notably Patañjali, provided a means for joining the debate with Orientalists. I argue in this chapter that these *paṇḍits* translated themselves¹³⁰ by translating Patañjali: no longer the fading representatives of a moribund intellectual tradition that was being supplanted by British educational reform, the *paṇḍits* were increasingly taking new form: scholars, public intellectuals, and figure akin to the nascent yoga guru.

The resulting dialogic relation between the *paṇḍit* and the Orientalist is exemplified by the vernacular cosmopolitan translations of the YS I examine in Chapter Five. I look at two specific interpreters whose work is neither strictly a part of European Orientalism nor entirely an indigenous affair. Rājendralāl Mitra, the first Indian to become president of the Asiatic Society, published an important English translation of the *Yoga Sutra* serially between 1881 and 1883. This translation appears to have been something of a source text: it is referenced by many of the translators, Bengali and English, who follow. It also contains an interpretive essay that recounts

130 Thanks to Prof. Amy Allocco for drawing my attention to this point in the context of her responses to a paper I presented at Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion, March 6, 2011.

the translation history of the text. Mitra was a figure linked directly to the project of European Orientalism, even as he found himself in public debates with some of its proponents. At the same time, he appears to have been an inspiration to the Bengali vernacular translators, as a translation of Pāl's is dedicated to him. Beyond Calcutta, Mitra was linked to north Indian intellectual life and the politics of language and nation that were gaining momentum, as Vasudha Dalmia has shown.¹³¹

While Mitra wrote in the mien of an Indologist, another vernacular cosmopolitan, Kṣetrapāl Cakravārtī read the works of the vernacular translators and addressed the sort of audience that would have subscribed to *The Light of the East*. Indeed, in the issue that contains the presentation of Vivekananda as “An Indian Yogi in London,” there appears an advertisement for works by “K. Chakravarti Yogi Sastri.” Cakravārtī was a co-founder of the Baṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣad (Bengali Literature Academy) in Calcutta, and published a series of lectures on yoga in 1893 as well as a collection of narratives about the life of a yogi. He also started society for yoga in Calcutta, and his work incorporates attention to the “unseemly” practices associated with yoga even as he was instrumental in devising a chaste register of literary Bengali to distance it from its popular expressions.

As is shown in the Chapter Six, during the 1890's the translation activity continued in and expanded out from its original hubs in Calcutta and Benares. M.N. Divedi's 1890 translation was published in Bombay, and Gaṅgānātha Jhā translated the commentary of Vijñānabhikṣu in an English edition published in Bombay in 1894. Jhā is credited with introducing Patañjali to the father of modern postural yoga, T.

131 Vasudha Dalmia, *The Nationalization of Hindu Traditions: Bharatendu Harishchandra and Nineteenth-century Banaras* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999).

Krishnamacarya (1888-1989),¹³² the teacher of the major exponents of transnational yoga in the twentieth century including B.K.S. Iyengar, K. Pattabhi Jois, and his own son T.K.V. Desikachar. Tukaram Tatya, associated with the Theosophical Society in Bombay, made possible the majority of these translations published outside of Calcutta and his work warrants further research. Taken together, it was nineteenth-century Calcutta in its institutions including the Asiatic Society, the Baṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣad, and the vernacular popular press associated with the Baṅgabāsī that formed the hub of activity for nineteenth century translations of *Yoga Sūtra*,

This study is the result of twelve months of fieldwork in Kolkata, where I examined published translations of the *YS* and related materials found in the collections of the National Library of India, the Asiatic Society, the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, and the Baṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣad. The larger implications of this research relate to a set of five contributions to the study of yoga in colonial India. First, there is little contemporary scholarship on the Bengali scholars and *paṇḍits* who made the translation of Patañjali into a broader social phenomenon, as they also contributed to the consolidation of linguistic identity during this period and in the development of scholarship on textual sources of Hindu religion. Rājendralāl Mitra founded a number of magazines and his contributions to the Asiatic Society have been well researched; Maheścandra Pāl and Kālīvar Vedāntavāgīś translated a substantial number of Sanskrit texts into Bengali; Kṣetrapāl Cakravartī, as mentioned above, was central to the formation of a canon of Bengali language and literature in his other work with the Baṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣad. In addition to making a contribution to

132 See Singleton, *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice*, 177. For further discussion, see Chapter Six.

the ongoing study of the history of modern yoga, my work will contribute to the historical understanding of these four translators and their work in cognate fields.

Another main argument of this study is that translation created a new language for the transmission of yoga. Such language can be analyzed on three levels that correlate to the three body chapters I have outlined above. To bring out the argument more fully: Orientalist translations by William Ward, H.H. Wilson, H.T. Colebrooke, and J.R. Ballantyne did not simply use the translation of the *YS* to institute their own authority as the authentic arbiters of Hinduism. Rather, they were themselves reliant on, and through their engagement with translation partially subsumed by, the Sanskrit commentarial tradition they attempted to master. This dialectic is partially due to their complicated dependence on indigenous authorities as teachers and consultants, and partially due to the *YS*'s own ability as a text to resist the establishment of a hegemonic reading. The Orientalists also contributed to the future of yoga in essential ways: they inaugurated a decoupling of information about yoga from its previous channels of exchange, that is, the traditional transmission of teachings through the guru to the initiated disciple; they, along with missionaries, were also instrumental in the development of vernacular print culture.

Third, there was also an indigenous intellectual response to Orientalist challenges through the work of vernacular translators of the *YS*. These include Śaśadhar, the traditional scholar of Sanskrit whose work remains something of a shadow text: he is credited by others as inspiring their interest in yoga, and he was well-regarded enough in his time to meet with the luminaries of colonial Calcutta, but few copies of his original work survive. These traditional scholars of Sanskrit, or

paṇḍits, I argue, are transitional figures writing at a hinge moment in history, but this hinge moment, and the translation activity of these writers, was not, to quote Matthew Arnold's roughly contemporaneous poem, a "wandering between two worlds, one dead, the other powerless to be born";¹³³ it was instead the creation of divergent possible futures through the citation of the living past.

Fourth, the vernacular cosmopolitan yoga writers represent something of a synthesis in the dialectical process of translating yoga. In these writers, Rājendralāl Mitra and Kṣetrapāl Cakravārtī, we see how the mixing of socio-linguistic registers in the process of Orientalist and indigenous translation created an expanded language for the transmission of yoga. In these writers, yoga becomes a type of what Roland Barthes has called "mythical speech": a speech that "is made of material which has *already* been worked on so as to make it suitable for communication: it is because all the materials of myth... presuppose a signifying consciousness".¹³⁴

Finally, I propose a theory of yoga, and relatedly, religion, based on a theory of translation. In order to understand the history of yoga, three analytic concepts are derived from translation. I argue that translation is collaborative, in both its sense as a social practice and its connotations with regard to working in a colonial context. Translation, furthermore, is citational: it involves a textual hybridity that is recombinant and productive, even as it complicates notions of pure origins and derivative invention. Modern Yoga, in this way, may be akin to polyglot registers of language, discourses such as "Hinglish" that I argue represent a productive

133 Matthew Arnold, "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse," in *New Poems* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1867), 180.

134 Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972), 110.

indigenization of the cosmopolitan. This is not, however, to argue that it is unrelated to its Sanskritic origins; it is rather the afterlife of the Sanskritic tradition through translation. If the translation practices of the pre-Vivekananda writers on yoga are any indication, the *YS* and its commentarial tradition have always involved a productive recombination of traditions and interpretations. In this respect, the *YS* has continuity with the larger Sanskritic tradition and its own rich history of debate and dialogic translation.

Chapter 2.

Interpretive Foundations

Thinking involves not only the flow of thoughts, but their arrest as well.

Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p. 262.

Framing the Debates

An anecdote from my fieldwork can illustrate some of the pertinent theoretical reflections to the study of yoga. While researching translations of the YS in Kolkata, a particular conversation I had with an Indian researcher at the library of the Asiatic Society that is emblematic both of differences in interpretation and of the response many practitioners of yoga might have to this textual study of the YS. The researcher had grown familiar with my presence at the library and asked about the nature of my studies. I described my work as an examination of Bengali, Hindi, and English translations of the YS from the nineteenth century. I added that I was searching to understand how the Sanskrit text of Patañjali might have been altered and renewed by the social conditions of its translation. My interlocutor replied that if I wanted to understand anything about yoga, I should not use translations but the Sanskrit text alone, and I should study the text and its practices under the guidance of a guru.¹ The YS, she suggested, should not be approached through its most universal sense (in translation), but through its own context, its own history and interpretation. Here the frames of universality and context-sensitivity are held in a productive tension through

¹ My own study of yoga included work with Sanskrit scholars, including Dr. Minati Kar, who has special expertise in the YS and its commentarial tradition. While in Kolkata, I also engaged in a practice of yoga at the Yoga Therapy Institute, a branch of the Yoga Cure Institute under the direction of Rooma De and Shibnath De. The Institute traces its lineage in part to yoga guru Buddha Bose. Bose himself was a student of Bishnu Charan Ghosh, brother of Paramahansa Yogananda. For the lineage of the Yoga Cure Institute, see <http://yogacure-institute.org/lineage.html>. For more on Bose, see Buddha Bose, *Key to the Kingdom of Health* (The Statesman Press, 1939).

the figure of the translator.

As a study of translations of yoga in the colonial era, this study is situated in the intersection of three related historiographic concerns that are subtly present in this anecdote. First, this study argues that a theorization of interlingual and cultural translation² can contribute to an ongoing reassessment of how colonial epistemic rupture should be characterized. Second, it argues that the YS was a productive site for colonial translation because of significant features in its content and structure.³ Third, it argues that the role of the *paṇḍit* in translating yoga seems to challenge the binaries in colonial historiography that delineate a putative rupture between the pre- and post-colonial worlds through the terms such as tradition and modernity, reform and revival. In doing so, this study contributes to rethinking some lacunae in the historical development of modern yoga. In order to build an account of how the *paṇḍit* contributed to the transformation of yoga in the colonial period, this study will first outline the ongoing deconstruction of some of the historiographic binaries that occlude that contribution.⁴

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- 2 In describing translation as “interlingual” here I am referring to translations from Sanskrit into English and Bengali, primarily. As Tony Stewart has noted, Mikhail Bakhtin employed subtle distinctions in analyzing linguistic usage, and here his terms “diglossia as the complex interaction of a language and its parent, ... heteroglossia as the interaction of two or more contributing parents when these are in conflict with each other... [and] polyphony to describe the conflict-free use of multiple parent contributors.” The term “interlingual” can be traced to Roman Jakobson, and his term “intersemiotic” to refer to translation “between different cultural signification systems” is apt here as well. See Tony K. Stewart, “In Search of Equivalence: Conceiving Muslim-Hindu Encounter Through Translation Theory,” *History of Religions* 40, no. 3 (February 2001): 275, n. 20; 282, n. 30; referring to Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, Slavic Series 1 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981); and Roman Jakobson, “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation,” in *On Translation*, ed. Reuben Brower (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 232–39.
- 3 Here I attempt to synthesize a set of interpretive accounts of the YS to suggest that it contains a productive tension between the “cessative” and the “numinous” because as a text it represents a dual discourse of experience and philosophy. Secondly, the ambiguity inherent in the laconic genre of *sūtra* lends itself especially well to commentary.
- 4 Here this work is inspired in part by the methodology of Patton’s *Bringing the Gods to Mind*. She writes that “we are concerned not only with a question of deconstructing but of rebuilding: scholars of religion can and should develop other terms that suggest, and even restore, the

Colonial Translation and Orientalist Historiography

The history of translation in South Asia has obscured the voice of the *paṇḍit* in two particularly relevant ways: first, in terms of the translations themselves, the contributions of *paṇḍits* were often maligned or disavowed by the European translators they assisted.⁵ Second, aspects of historiography have cast the *paṇḍit* in a conflicted role, first romanticized and later marginalized,⁶ and perhaps even delegitimized as complicit in an Orientalist, and essentialized, construction of Hinduism.⁷ As Michael Dodson has observed, while historiographic reassessment has helped to make it increasingly tenable to argue that *paṇḍits* themselves, and particularly, “the ideas Indian *paṇḍits* had about Sanskrit[,] had important impacts upon British thinking about their translational project,”⁸ what remains less clear, and what this study in part seeks to analyze, is “how Indians drew upon, altered, or contested these ideas in the furtherance of their own distinct educational, cultural, or nationalist projects.”⁹ The

linkages between textual traditions that have been sundered...”. See Laurie L. Patton, *Bringing the Gods to Mind : Mantra and Ritual in Early Indian Sacrifice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 18.

5 Rosane Rocher, for example, provides a compelling instance of such marginalization of the *paṇḍit*. See Rosane Rocher, “Henry Thomas Colebrooke and the Marginalization of Indian Pandits,” in *Pramāṇakīrtiḥ : Papers Dedicated to Ernst Steinkellner on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday*, ed. Ernst Steinkellner (Wien: Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2007), 735–756.

6 For an assessment of the history and historiography of the *paṇḍit*, see Brian A. Hatcher, “What’s Become of the Pandit? Rethinking the History of Sanskrit Scholars in Colonial Bengal,” *Modern Asian Studies* 39, no. 03 (2005): 685. Hatcher refers to a comment by Vasudha Dalmia that I reference here: “Vasudha Dalmia has commented broadly on the shift in western attitudes about South Asian knowledge systems from a kind of romanticizing mystification to an outright marginalization of the bearers of that knowledge—a shift which had begun to set in as early as the end of the eighteenth century.” Vasudha Dalmia, “Sanskrit Scholars and Pandits of the Old School: The Benares Sanskrit College and the Constitution of Authority in the Late Nineteenth Century,” in *Orientalism, Empire, and National Culture: India, 1770-1880* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 143.

7 See Brian K. Smith, “Questioning Authority: Constructions and Deconstructions of Hinduism,” *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 2, no. 3 (December 1, 1998): 322–324.

8 Michael S. Dodson, *Orientalism, Empire, and National Culture: India, 1770-1880* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 143.

9 Ibid.

paṇḍit's own agency in the construction of knowledge about yoga in the nineteenth-century, as is shown in detail below, demonstrates some of limitations of a model of religious transformation based on the notion of epistemic rupture. Continued analysis of the *paṇḍit*'s relation to translation, particularly through an examination of social and intellectual history, is necessary in order to establish how best to characterize the epistemic rupture that colonialism effected in the context of Sanskritic commentary. As "custodians of... śāstric knowledge,"¹⁰ *paṇḍits* were central in the bicultural debates over knowledge that characterized the project of Orientalism, even if their own contributions have been partially obscured.

These two points about the *paṇḍit*'s voice reflect a subtle and ongoing theoretical reflection on the intersection between the historiography of Orientalism and colonial translation. This study, while indebted to the postcolonial theorization of translation, seeks to contribute to rethinking some of that theorization in the light of the ongoing reassessment of Orientalism. In colonial South Asia, translation was not, as Tejaswini Niranjana persuasively argues,¹¹ a neutral empirical science. From the perspective of the colonizer, Niranjana contends, it was a technology of colonial ideology and control. At the same time, an emphasis on the unidirectionality of colonial discourse has had the effect of mis-characterizing or overstating in kind and degree the rupture inaugurated by colonialism. Richard Eaton has identified some of the theoretical pitfalls:

by extending the logic of 'imagined communities' and 'the invention of tradition' to its ultimate conclusion, post-modernist and postcolonialist

10 Hatcher, "What's Become of the Pandit?," 720.

11 Tejaswini Niranjana, *Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism, and the Colonial Context* (Berkeley: University of Berkeley, 1992).

critiques effectively annihilated all history and all historical process that preceded the advent of those who did the imagining and inventing, or anyway, of those whose imaginings or inventions were politically significant—the British and their native collaborators.... A binary temporal division that... had opposed ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’ was now replaced by, and effectively identified with, a binary division opposing the ‘precolonial’ and the ‘colonial’.¹²

Similar tensions appear in presenting modern yoga as something of an “invented tradition.” Doing so may contribute to a historicization of yoga, demonstrating how early twentieth-century interpreters and yoga gurus derived a global idiom of yoga from the colonial and postcolonial environment. At the same time, such an account risks being overly schematic in insufficiently examining the role of the *paṇḍit* in the development of this narrative, precisely because the *paṇḍit* is difficult to situate in the binaries in the historiography that, ironically, sought to give voice to the voiceless.¹³ In particular, more attention is needed to *paṇḍits* engaged in Indian vernacular, as opposed to or in addition to English, translations. The transformation of yoga in the nineteenth century is characteristic of the process of translation between competing knowledge systems (Orientalist, nationalist, Sanskritic, for example) by agents claiming authority, agents whose own identities were often less neatly defined than these sphere of thought suggest. A translator such as Rājendralāl Mitra, for instance,

12 Richard M. Eaton, “(Re)imag(in)ing Other²ness: A Postmortem for the Postmodern in India,” *Journal of World History* 11, no. 1 (April 1, 2000): 71–72.

13 Cf. David Gordon White, “Digging Wells While Houses Burn? Writing Histories of Hinduism in a Time of Identity Politics,” *History and Theory* 45, no. 4 (December 1, 2006): 109. White writes that, “This failure to actually write ‘minority histories’ of India’s subalterns stems from a fundamental axiom of postcolonial studies in general: that is, that India’s experience of the colonial adventure of the European powers was so *unusual* that the deconstruction of the latter’s discourse of power (through the writing of history, for example), which continues to colonize the Indian mind, is more urgent than the retrieval of India’s precolonial past, or the linking of that past to the postcolonial present through historical methods, however flawed they may be. To be sure, certain colonial and postcolonial historians have succeeded in laying bare the asymmetries of power with regard to religion that obtain between colonial elites (and their Indian collaborators) and the subaltern masses. But such deconstructive post-mortems, of which there have been an abundance in recent decades, require a complementary move on the part of historians, and that move is to reconstruct, to recover, the precolonial history of South Asian religions.”

contributed to each of those three fields. Translation provides a model here for analyzing how individuals claimed competing local forms of knowledge (British, Bengali, Sanskritic) in the service of arguing for their universal authority.¹⁴

In Translation, a Troubling Equivalence: Epistemic Rupture

One could conclude from the continued use and usefulness of translated texts from the colonial period that while bad translation may have assisted in domination, good translation transcended it. As evaluative categories, good and bad translations may be established according to a variety of criteria, and the social history of how these criteria gain and lose authority is a central question of this study. For example, the notion of fidelity to the original was the presupposition of much European translation theory at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but the complex role of Sanskrit commentary in the history of the interpretation of the YS complicated the philological pursuit of an *Ur* or original text. A descriptive evaluation of the success of translation, that is, one based on the acceptance of a translation measured either in terms of its publication history (the number of print editions, for instance), is difficult because of a lack of such data for the colonial period.¹⁵ In terms of an evaluative description of “good translation,” I will here employ Walter Benjamin’s notion of a successful translation, a translation that “acknowledges its own role by means of commentary

14 Cf., Tony Ballantyne, “Orientalism, Empire and National Culture: India, 1770–1880 (review),” *Victorian Studies* 51, no. 2 (2009): 332 I draw the phrasing “universal authority” and its theoretical contrast with local forms of knowledge from Ballantyne’s analysis.

15 I have been unable to find data relating to the publication history of the translations examined here. James Long produced a series of studies on vernacular publication in the first half of the nineteenth century, but I have not accessed his important study that describes the number of editions published of various works. Another work by James Long provides no evidence of translations of the YS before the 1850s. See James Long, *Returns Relating to Native Printing Presses and Publications in Bengal* (Calcutta: T. Jones, 1855); James Long, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Bengali Works* (Calcutta: Sanders, Cones and Co., 1855).

and makes the fact of different linguistic situations one of its themes.”¹⁶ This definition of successful translation emphasizes the social context of translator and audience through the notion of “the fact of differing linguistic situations,” and in doing so critically redefines the analysis of translation away from strictly epistemological considerations to those of social and rhetorical context.

Through this study I argue that in studying the translation of the YS in the colonial era a shift away from an epistemological focus to is necessary to uncover the other uses of translation, those that are made evident through analysis of social and intellectual history. An overemphasis on epistemology in the characterizing the history of colonial translation, as I shall attempt to show here, reinforces an interpretive chasm between the precolonial and colonial. Because of that chasm, the choices translators made in transmitting knowledge across cultural-linguistic boundaries have been deemphasized. Here, I provide a social history of the YS in the nineteenth-century through the lens of translation. In doing so, the specific aims of individual translators regarding what they considered to be successful translation will be explored, with awareness of the audiences, some mutually shared, that each translator addressed.

The social history of a text like the YS, furthermore, complicates prescriptive definitions of “good” and “bad” translation. John Nemecek alludes to virtues of translations even by compromised translators when he writes that

the fact that a number of Orientalist translations have stood the test of time, even though the early Orientalists harbored reviling opinions of India and Indians, signals the capacity of translation to withstand and perhaps

16 Walter Benjamin, *Selected Writings*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), 250.

sometimes transcend the biases of the scholar who produces them.¹⁷

From this standpoint, the practical usefulness of particular translations might be said to outweigh the troublesome genealogy of colonial translation more generally. Yet as Nemec goes on to indicate, powerful critical appraisals¹⁸ of the epistemological linkages between colonialism and translation call for continued theoretical self-reflection. Translation has been taken to be a central means by which colonialism asserted its hegemonic control over the production of knowledge in South Asia.¹⁹ This criticism is twofold: colonial administrators sponsored translation for the sake of gathering information necessary for rule, and the production of knowledge through translation was used to sustain an asymmetrical relationship of power between the colonizer and the colonized. Drawing out the implications of these debates in scholarship, Dodson provides a good summation of the implications:

It has been argued that translation was utilised to make available legal-cultural information for the administration and rule of the non-West, but perhaps more importantly, translation has also been identified as important for the resources it provided in the construction of representations of the colonised as Europe's 'civilisational other'.²⁰

Translation and its relation to domination, conquest, and coercion in South Asia have been exposed by the work of Bernard Cohn²¹ and Ronald Inden,²² among others. The

17 John Nemec, "Translation and the Study of Indian Religions," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 77, no. 4 (December 1, 2009): 774.

18 See, for instance, Sheldon Pollock, "Deep Orientalism? Notes on Sanskrit and Power Beyond the Raj," in *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament: Perspectives on South Asia*, ed. Carol Breckenridge and Peter van der Veer (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 76–133; For an overview of Pollock's recommendations, see Nemec, "Translation and the Study of Indian Religions," 775.

19 See, for example, Dodson, *Orientalism, Empire, and National Culture: India, 1770-1880*, chap. 5 and passim; Dodson cites, among others, Eric Cheyfitz, *The Poetics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from the Tempest to Tarzan*, Expanded ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997).

20 Dodson, *Orientalism, Empire, and National Culture: India, 1770-1880*, 118.

21 See, for example, Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, Princeton Studies in Culture/power/history (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996).

22 Ronald Inden, "Orientalist Constructions of India," *Modern Asian Studies* 20, no. 3 (January 1, 1986):

effort to deconstruct the ideological power of colonial translation introduced vital ethical considerations, linking translation to the ‘episteme’ of Indological discourse as the assumption that “the essence of Indian civilization is just the opposite of the West’s.”²³ In Niranjana’s analysis, translation, like some forms of ethnography, threatens to efface alterity: “[t]he gesture that claims to grant difference actually denies it.”²⁴ By creating a timeless, essentialized vision of the Orient, translation served to support a monolithic and fictive binary between “East” and “West” which supported the dominance of the latter over the former. Nonetheless, Niranjana also draws attention to the complexity of bilingual translations and the possibility of translation as a form of resistance.²⁵

For Inden, the problem of Indology is a problem with its episteme, a Foucauldian term that Inden defines as “a way of knowing that implies a particular view of existence.”²⁶ Translation, in this context, involves not just the passage of words across linguistic boundaries, but also the passage of concepts into an entire discourse (that of Orientalism) that changes the subject without itself being changed. Inden seeks to trace the genealogy of the episteme in Indology:

presupposes a representational view of knowledge. It assumes that true knowledge merely represents or mirrors a separate reality which the knower somehow transcends. Adherence to this position has allowed the scholar to claim that his (rarely her) knowledge is natural and objective and not a matter for political debate. It has also operated to produce a hierarchic relationship between knower and known, privileging the knowledge of the scientists and other experts and leaders who make up the former while subjugating the knowledges of the people who comprise the

401–446; Ronald Inden, *Imagining India* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1999).

23 Inden, “Orientalist Constructions of India,” 402.

24 Niranjana, *Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism, and the Colonial Context*, 83.

25 *Ibid.*, 84.

26 Inden, “Orientalist Constructions of India,” 401.

latter.²⁷

In its indebtedness to Hegelian presuppositions about the teleological nature of historical progress, Inden identifies a series of dichotomous and asymmetrical binaries that course through “Orientalist discourse” and its more recent corollaries, such as the oppositions between tradition and modernity, and revival and reform. These binaries, I argue here, in large measure obscure the social history of the YS in the colonial era, for it relegates the process of translating yoga to an instantiation of the invention of tradition.

A way of addressing the epistemological root of the problem, *i.e.* a representational theory of knowledge, may be suggested in Rosane Rocher’s call for a nonfoundational theory of knowledge,²⁸ a point I will return to below, that involves contextualizes the use and interpretation of the YS in its social context. In providing the social and intellectual history of the YS in the nineteenth-century, I seek here to bridge what Andrew Nicholson has called a “disciplinary chasm between scholars of premodern and modern India.”²⁹ Nicholson relates this chasm directly to the notion of an epistemic rupture:

If the Indian encounter with European colonialism was truly a rupture in which all traditional institutions for the transmission of knowledge were uprooted, replaced with new regimes of knowledge and power by the British, then the study of precolonial India has little or no significance for understanding the current postcolonial situation.³⁰

Nicholson’s recent work is an important example of scholarship that seeks to critically

27 Ibid., 401–2.

28 Rosane Rocher, “Weaving Knowledge: Sir William Jones and Indian Pandits,” in *Objects of Enquiry: The Life, Contributions, and Influences of Sir William Jones, 1746-1794*, ed. Garland Hampton Cannon and Kevin R. Brine (NYU Press, 1995), 51.

29 Andrew J. Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 15.

30 Ibid.

rethink the implication of historiographic binaries that separate the pre- and post-colonial periods. Here I argue for a theory of translation as a commentarial activity performed in a social context, one that can help to span the colonial divide by accounting for the interpretative choices of individual translators, and the heterogeneous nature of the translated texts, texts that rather being derivative instead produced their own originality.

Taken collectively or more specifically in the context of Niranjana's analysis, translation is implicated as central to the epistemic rupture wrought by colonialism, in the sense that Sanskrit knowledge was transformed as it was brought into "the entire discourse on the Orient, with its own set of conventions."³¹ The "ontological status" of the term "Hinduism" itself has been criticized by constructionists³² as precisely an artifact of this process: an English term, used to assert a systematicity and uniformity to a polycentric and diverse set of traditions, with the concomitant aim of negatively contrasting it with another cultural or religious abstraction, such as "the West" or Christendom. As Pennington has argued, however, such a unidirectional explanation ignores the evidence that although the term "Hinduism" is of recent origin, the concept it describes has a longer history:

A gaping absence of indigenous critique of the category "Hindu" itself must suggest, at the very least, a ready acceptance of the label among many Hindus and that the concept itself corresponded to some elements of Indian self-understanding. It seems even more likely that the idea, if not the label, was already common Indian currency. The British did not mint this coin; they traded in it because Hindus handed it to them. The historical role of the colonizer was not to invent Hinduism either by blunder or by design, but to introduce an economy of concepts and power relations that

31 Niranjana, *Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism, and the Colonial Context*, 84.

32 For a trenchant analysis of the limits of the constructionist position, see Brian K. Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?: Britons, Indians, and Colonial Construction of Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 168–172.

dramatically enhanced the value of such identity markers.³³

In order to recover a theory of translation as mode of resistance, the sort of binaries implicit in the representational view of knowledge that Inden cites as the episteme of colonialism must be deconstructed. Niranjana builds on Inden by highlighting what she sees as translation's hegemonic power in the colonial period:

Translations form an intertextual web: Orientalist translations from the Sanskrit—Charles Wilkin's *Bhagavad Gītā*, William Jones's *Śākuntala*, Jones and Wilkin's *Manu's Institutes*, H.H. Wilson's *Kālidāsa*—form a canon, interpellate a colonial subject, construct a Hindu character, a Hindu psyche, a Hindu way of life. The 'empirical science' of translation comes into being through the repression of the asymmetrical relations of power that inform the relations between languages.... Translation theory's obsession with the humanistic nature of translation seems to blind writers to their own insights into the complicitous relationship of translation and the imperialistic vision.³⁴

For Niranjana, there is a Hegelian, teleological vision of history that propels translation in its colonial context. Such a narrative of history, she argues, is a technology of colonial power that constitutes the Western subject in opposition to its non-Western other, with the asymmetrical binaries that resonate with Edward Said's³⁵ critique. In keeping with Eaton's insight about overstating the rupturing effects of colonialism, however, the degree to which translation interpellated a subject and constructed "a Hindu character, a Hindu psyche, a Hindu way of life" must be reassessed.

Niranjana, furthermore, argues that translation as practiced by colonial administrators, Orientalists, and missionaries served to "'gather in' and 'rope off' the Orient,"³⁶ linking it explicitly to domination. Translation, she writes,

33 Ibid., 172.

34 Niranjana, *Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism, and the Colonial Context*, 60–61.

35 For instance and most obviously, cf. Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 1st ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

36 Niranjana, *Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism, and the Colonial Context*, 11.

comes into being overdetermined by religious, racial, sexual, and economic discourses. It is overdetermined not only because multiple forces act on it, but because it gives rise to multiple practices. The strategies of containment initiated by translation are therefore deployed across a range of discourses, allowing us to name translation as a significant technology of colonial domination.³⁷

In addition to the linkage between translation and epistemic rupture found in the works of Niranjana and Inden, the notion of relatively coercion-free collaboration between Orientalists and Indian scholars during the nineteenth century has been criticized forcefully in the works of Nicholas Dirks and Bernard Cohn. In the foreword to Cohn's *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge*, for example, Dirks writes that in Cohn's later writings "[w]e read that the painstaking efforts by British Orientalists to study Indian languages was not part of a collaborative enterprise responsible for a new renaissance, but rather was an important part of the colonial project of control and command."³⁸ Here, the possibility of translation as a heterogeneous process—one capable of producing resources for resistance as well as domination—is foreclosed by a unidirectional flow of power from colonizer to the object of study.

Cohn includes *paṇḍits* in a list of colonial functionaries that he describes as "multilingual... [with] command of specialized languages necessary for the various levels of communication between foreigners and Indians."³⁹ Tracing the advent of interest in Indian languages to emerging patterns of trade and control, Cohn cites the years 1770 to 1785 "as the formative period" of Orientalism, which he links directly to the "construction of the system of rule."⁴⁰ Cohn's self-professed argument in the essay

37 Ibid., 21.

38 Nicholas Dirks, "Foreword," in *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, by Bernard S. Cohn, Princeton Studies in Culture/power/history (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), x.

39 Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, 17.

40 Ibid., 21.

“The Command of Language and the Language of Command”⁴¹ is that the production of apparatus related to the learning of Indian languages (“grammars, dictionaries, treatises, class books, and translations about and from the languages of India”⁴²) led to “the establishment of discursive formation, defined an epistemological space, created a discourse (Orientalism), and had the effect of converting Indian forms of knowledge in European objects.”⁴³

Cohn’s criticism of British Orientalism extends to the theory of translation, in that translation was central to the program of exploration and conquest. Here translation’s power to efface difference is criticized in Cohn’s description of it as a method of “establishing correspondences [that] could make the unknown and the strange knowable.”⁴⁴ Against this discursive field of domination, however, Cohn concludes that the “Indians who increasingly became drawn into the process of transformation of their own traditions and modes of thought were... far from passive.”⁴⁵ But Cohn provides comparatively little attention to how, and through what social institutions, *paṇḍits* were able to actively participate in the process of transformation. For the purposes of this study, Cohn’s analysis does not offer sufficient critical resources for recovering how “social and material technologies”⁴⁶ developed by the Orientalists were “taken over by Indians and put to purposes which led to the ultimate erosion of British authority,”⁴⁷ and describing what that process involved. Here, by

41 Bernard S. Cohn, “The Command of Language and the Language of Command,” in *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, Princeton Studies in Culture/power/history (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 16–56.

42 Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, 21.

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid., 53.

45 Ibid., 56.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid.

offering a social history of the interpretation of the YS through the methodological lens of translation, I argue for a genealogy of the dialectic construction of colonial knowledge that moves beyond historiographic binaries.

Rethinking Rupture through Translation

For at least two decades, it has been increasingly clear that while Said's *Orientalism* has achieved the status of a touchstone text for South Asian studies, its assessment of Orientalism in South Asia has had a variegated critical reception. Srinivas Aravamudan expresses it well: "Edward Said's dressing-down of Orientalism as a malevolent teleology still remains a tenacious point of reference among a variety of cultural scholars focusing on the politics of knowledge."⁴⁸ The postcolonial critique of translation introduces crucial ethical considerations and exposes some of the ideological operations linked to empire that are cloaked by translation. Nonetheless, it appears that often the secondary outcome of their analysis is that the *paṇḍit* is related to the position of colonial collaborator or indigenous corollary to colonial epistemic rupture and the unification of disparate traditions under the newly minted category of "Hinduism."

Here for instance, one could draw on the work of Ernst to highlight the ways scholars familiar with South Asian yogic practices have ascribed an Indian origin to Muslim Sufi practices that bear ultimately have independent genealogies.⁴⁹ Drawing on the work of Jan Assmann who has argued that easy translation between two religious worldviews undermines the need for conversion,⁵⁰ Ernst calls attention to the

48 Srinivas Aravamudan, "Guru English," *Social Text* 19, no. 1 (2001): 27.

49 See Carl W. Ernst, "The Islamization of Yoga in the 'Amrtakunda' Translations," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 13, no. 2, Third Series (July 2003): 199–226.

50 *Ibid.*, 222–3.

cosmopolitan perspective of the translators of *The Pool of Nectar*, a work that blends Sanskrit *mantras* with Islamic practices that resemble yoga. From the perspective of nineteenth-century translators who would have been aware of the fluidity between what retroactively can be delineated as Hindu and Muslim yogic practices, there may have been some impetus in using Patañjali to do effect the “Hinduization” of yoga, as opposed to the Islamicization that Ernst describes. Tony Stewart in a similar fashion has drawn attention to the limits of the usefulness of the term “syncretism” to describe works such that do not fit neatly into prescriptive definitions of Hinduism or Islam because they blur the boundaries between these definitions. Here, Stewart proposes a model of translation that can attend to the localization of practices without reverting to a notion of “borrowing” from a monolithic original source.⁵¹ Taken together and applied to the context of the translation of the YS, these insights could contribute to an argument that the nineteenth-century translation of Patañjali represents an attempt of elites (Orientalists and *paṇḍits*) to unify and domesticate a disparate set of vernacular practices, some that threatened the newly developing colonial order, under a conception of a “Hindu,” Sanskritic yoga that until the nineteenth century had little popular currency. The sort of Sufi yogic vernacular practices that one could associate with Āli Rājā’s *Jñānasāgara*,⁵² in other words, were perhaps refracted through an image of Patañjali⁵³ and indexed into newly bifurcated

51 Stewart, “In Search of Equivalence,” 273.

52 See Stewart, “In Search of Equivalence” and below. Stewart analyzes the ca. eighteenth-century writer Āli Rājā’s *Āgama* and *Jñānasāgara*, two works that do not easily fit into demarcations of “Hindu” and “Islamic” religious literature. Stewart refers to Aḥmad Sharīf, *Bānlāra Suphī Sāhitya: Alocanā o Nayakhāni Grantha Sambalita*. (Dhākā: Bāmlā Ekāḍemī, 1969); For an English translation, see Āli Rājā, *The Ocean of Love : Ali Raja’s Agama Jnana Sagara*, trans. Cashin, 1st ed. (Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 1993).

53 Here the YS might function as an “absent text” along the lines that Dorothy Figueira has explored in relation to the Vedas and European thought. See Dorothy Matilda Figueira, “The Authority of an Absent Text: The Veda, Upangas, Upavedas, and Upnekhata in European Thought,” in *Authority, Anxiety, and Canon: Essays in Vedic Interpretation*, ed. Laurie L. Patton (Albany: State

religious categories as part of coordinated practice of the production of colonial knowledge. Vernacular practices, that is, that did not fit into the developing conceptions of Hinduism could be rewritten through translation of Patañjali. In this context, the amalgamation of *haṭha yogic* practices with Patañjali found in the translations of the scholars examined in Chapter Four can be understood as an effort to make Hindu that which before may have also been Islamic. Vivekananda’s own “anti-*haṭha*” sentiment, as analyzed by Singleton,⁵⁴ seemed predicated on a *bhadralok* discomfort with non-normative practices, as well as Vivekananda’s own awareness of the negative connotations that bodily practices such as *āsana* might have had in the Western imaginaire. In contrast to Vivekananda’s sanitization of yoga, then, the vernacular-language translators of the YS may have attempted to subsume those same practices into a more Sanskritic interpretation of yoga. This difference—between sanitization for a Western audience, and “Hinduization” for a domestic audience, is suggestive of both the power of translation and the contextual differences in its use. Further research in eighteenth century practices of yoga appears necessary to substantiate such an argument, but in the case of the present study it appears that a Sanskrit text like Patañjali’s YS may have been a source for such arguments about what constitutes Hinduism, even as other interpreters sought to counter-transcendentalize⁵⁵ such claims.

In order to account for the *paṇḍit*’s contributions in a manner that moves beyond a schematic opposition of authentic and derivative, however, the *paṇḍit*’s role in

University of New York Press, 1994), 201–234.

54 Mark Singleton, *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

55 Cf. Laurie L. Patton, *Myth as Argument: The Bṛhaddevatā as Canonical Commentary* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1996), 40–41.

translation must be re-theorized. Colonialism involved rupture, but in characterizing the kind and degree of rupture it brought this study seeks to describe local interpretive practices that complicate the notion of a unified “tradition” as created by colonial discourse. Eaton, citing Sumit Sarkar, is especially astute on some of the ironies in this historiographic debate:

if Orientalist scholars had interpreted the intellectual history of early nineteenth century Bengal positively in terms of an awakening to the fruits of Western knowledge, a colonial discourse analysis would interpret the same topic negatively in terms of an awakening to enslavement; yet both versions, as Sumit Sarkar has argued, *assumed a one-way flow of inspiration or power* and viewed the modern history of India in terms ‘of total rupture or tabula rasa, with colonialism completely remoulding such indigenous structures [as caste, gender, or class], making them dependent or derivative.’⁵⁶

Here Eaton highlights what could be called a state of chiasmus⁵⁷ between the binary oppositions that appear in the historiography of the era, where opposing concepts are reversed and exchanged. In the historiography of colonial South Asia, there appears to be some degree of instability or inappropriateness in dichotomies such as derivative and authentic, modern and traditional, elite and subaltern, indigenous and foreign.⁵⁸

56 Eaton, “(Re)imag(in)ing Other²ness,” 71 Emphasis mine; Citing Sumit Sarkar, “Orientalism Revisited: Saidian Frameworks in the Writing of Modern Indian History,” *The Oxford Literary Review* 16 (1994): 208, 217.

57 Paul de Man, whose reading of Walter Benjamin is discussed below, employs the term chiasmus. De Man provides resources for this study in his questioning of the inside/outside metaphor that supported the Formalist preference for intrinsic, as opposed to extrinsic, criticism. De Man writes, “Metaphors are much more tenacious than facts, and I certainly don’t expect to dislodge this age-old model in one short try. I merely wish to speculate on a different set of terms, perhaps less simple in their differential relationships than the strictly polar, binary opposition between inside and outside and therefore less likely to enter into the easy play of chiasmic reversals.” For the purposes of this study, de Man’s insights suggest that an overly schematic opposition between emic and etic perspectives in the study of religion may itself attempt to master interpretively rich moments where they are in fact mutually constitutive. See Paul de Man, “Semiology and Rhetoric,” in *Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 5.

58 Cf. Gyanendra Pandey, “In Defense of the Fragment: Writing About Hindu-Muslim Riots in India Today,” *Representations* no. 37 (January 1, 1992): 29. Pandey writes that nationalist historiography in India has “created for us the neat binary categories with which we have all had to work: secular/communal; national/local (all to often read as ‘antinational’); progressive (‘economic’)/reactionary (‘cultural’)—categories that historians have only recently begun to

Often the terms themselves are exchanged and replaced for one another, sometimes valorized, sometimes critiqued. As Eaton's analysis of shifts in the historiography of South Asia shows, "polarities have been reversed... but they are still the same polarities at play."⁵⁹ These polarities or binaries in the historiography of the colonial period are challenged by the *paṇḍit's* role in translation.

Indeed, without a theoretical reassessment, the intersection of the postmodern and subaltern critique can foreclose the very possibility of translation. In discussing the representation of otherness in the context of "non-Western difference", Dipesh Chakrabarty has criticized the homogenizing effects of theories of translation that rely on universal categories.⁶⁰ The alterity of the life-world of the source-language context can be preserved better, in Chakrabarty's analysis, through a barter-like theoretical economy of translation "based on very local, particular, one-for-one exchanges."⁶¹ In this respect, the theorization of translation can never attain the transparency of a universal method. More importantly for the context of this study, the implications of Chakrabarty's analysis mean that the Orientalist and Anglophone translations of the *YS* do not create a set of "third terms" through which the exchange of local knowledge about yoga must be transacted. As this dissertation contends, however, Anglophone translation of the *YS* in the nineteenth century was itself another context for "local, particular, one-for-one exchanges" with vernacular translators.

To realign the discussion here with the broader work of rethinking historiographic and interpretive binaries, I am attempting here to work between two

seriously question."

59 De Man, "Semiology and Rhetoric," 4.

60 Dipesh. Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe : Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton Studies in Culture/power/history (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), 83–85.

61 *Ibid.*, 85.

uncritical notions: the idea of a hyper-contextualism associated with post-structuralism, and the notion that all trans-contextual accounts are somehow implicitly or explicitly reproducing the logic and hegemony of imperialism. Niranjana's criticism of the translation choices of A.K. Ramanujan, for instance, seem to imply that the impossibility, or near impossibility, of translating poetry. Here Vinay Dharwadker's analysis adds light: "From Ramanujan's perspective, Derrida and his deconstructionist followers (including his translator and interpreter Gayatri Spivak) push the discussion of translation to a contextualist, theoretical and ideological extreme from which there is no conceivable return to poems, poetry or actual poetic translations."⁶² In a similar fashion, David Gordon White has criticized the notion of "untranslatability" in interpretations of the Santal rebellion of 1855:

The Santals, a tribal people living in the Jharkhand region of northeastern India, stated that the power of their god Thakur—who was for them the sole true warrior in their insurgency—rendered them invulnerable to the bullets of the British military. On the grounds of such statements, Chakrabarty, invoking the 'radical untranslatability' of subaltern lifeworlds, posits of 'wholly other' subaltern consciousness whose expressions are untranslatable into the secular code of history writing.⁶³

White's analysis draws on Vijay Pinch's examination of the lives of Sītārāmśaran Bhagvān Prasād, a provincial civil servant who later in life attracted a following of devotees under his initiated name *Rūpkalā*, and George Abraham Grierson, the Irish philologist who pioneered the *Linguistic Survey of India*. Pinch "argue[s] that the lives and thoughts of these two men encourage a rethinking of recent post-colonial depictions of British India as a site of unidirectional mental colonization inflicted by a

62 Vinay Dharwadker, "A.K. Ramanujan's Theory and Practice of Translation," in *Postcolonial Translation Theory: Theory and Practice*, ed. Susan Bassnet and Harish Trivedi, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 1999), 128.

63 White, "Digging Wells While Houses Burn?"; Citing Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 76.

rationalizing, scientific Europe on a pliable, pre-modern Orient.”⁶⁴ One could extend this counter appraisal of the “deconstruction” of Hinduism further, as Brian K. Smith has done, to question whether the ethical impulse that motivated the deconstruction turns itself into an ethical violation, a sort of postcolonial mirroring of Orientalism.⁶⁵ If, that is, “contesting and deconstructing (or at the very least pluralizing) the concept and label ‘Hinduism’ can be understood as an attempt to right injustices inflicted on India and Indians as well as an intellectual move designed to return a recognition of pluralism and diversity,”⁶⁶ does it also risk becoming “a Neo-Orientalism, whereby indigenous discourse is once again silenced or ignored as the product of false consciousness delivered to it by outside forces”?⁶⁷

In continuing to reassess the place of translation in colonialism, the primary binary opposition that must be addressed with theoretical awareness is identified succinctly by Rosane Rocher: “it is to be hoped that postcolonial scholarship will not resort to yet another Procrustean dichotomy that would treat the study of colonial India, including Orientalist scholarship during that period, as reducible to the binary opposition of rulers and rule.”⁶⁸ By examining the translation of the YS from the perspective of the *paṇḍit*, this study attempts to reevaluate translation in a manner that avoids splitting off the “critique... of received knowledge” from the critique of

64 Vijay Pinch, “Bhakti and the British Empire,” *Past & Present* 179, no. 1 (May 1, 2003): 160.; As examples of works that do so, Pinch cites Nicholas Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001); Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*. Here the work of Katherine Pratt Ewing is also helpful. In her work on Sufism in Pakistan, Ewing uses a Lacanian psychoanalytic notion of “decentering” to argue against the notion that modernity constitutes a radically new form of consciousness. See Katherine Ewing, *Arguing Sainthood: Modernity, Psychoanalysis, and Islam* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997).

65 Smith, “Questioning Authority,” 333.

66 *Ibid.*, 318.

67 *Ibid.*, 333.

68 Rosane Rocher, “British Orientalism in the Eighteenth Century: The Dialectics of Knowledge and Government,” in *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament: Perspectives on South Asia*, ed. Carol Breckenridge and Peter van der Veer (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 249.

“revisionist correctives”.⁶⁹ In doing so, it draws recent reappraisals of translation after its postcolonial critique. For instance, Christi Merrill has noted a turn among some of the most forceful critics of translation, including Judith Butler, toward a reevaluation of translation as a form of resistance. Merrill, through a reading of Homi Bhabha’s⁷⁰ work on translation, also draws attention to the productive uses of universality, or of the effort, which Butler rejected as impossible, “to establish universality as transcendent of cultural norms.”⁷¹ In spite of the risks of translation, Butler turns to advocate its strategic use:

In the [first printing of the] book, I tend to conceive of the claim of “universality” in exclusive negative and exclusionary terms. However, I came to see the term has important strategic use precisely as a non-substantial and open-ended category as I worked with an extraordinary group of activists [... in] an organization that represents sexual minorities on a broad range of human rights issues. There I came to understand how the assertion of universality can be proleptic and performative, conjuring a reality that does not yet exist, and holding out the possibility for a convergence of cultural horizons that have not yet met. Thus, I arrived at a second view of universality in which it is defined as a future-oriented labor of cultural translation.⁷²

The possibility of universality through cultural translation, that is, can act as a strategic form of resistance. The translation of the YS leading up to Vivekananda, as this study in part argues, was in important respects a historically situated argument for universality. Here, in analyzing nineteenth-century translations of the YS, I will

69 Rocher, “Weaving Knowledge: Sir William Jones and Indian Pandits,” 52; Quoted in Hatcher, “What’s Become of the Pandit?,” 687; Misattributed to Rocher, “British Orientalism in the Eighteenth Century: The Dialectics of Knowledge and Government.”

70 Cf. Homi K. Bhabha, “How Newness Enters the World: Postmodern Space, Postcolonial Times and the Trials of Cultural Translation,” in *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge Classics, 2004).

71 Christi A. Merrill, “Real-Life Transfers: Reading Literature Through Translation,” in *Other Tongues: Rethinking the Language Debates in India*, ed. Nalini Iyer and Bonnie Zare, Cross/Cultures 99 (New York: Rodopi, 2009), 183, quoting; Judith Butler, “Restaging the Universal,” in *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality: Contemporary Dialogues on the Left*, ed. Judith Butler, Ernesto Laclau, and Slavoj Žižek (London: Verso, 2000), 20.

72 Judith Butler, *Gender trouble*. (New York: Routledge, 1999), xvii–xviii; as quoted in Merrill, “Real-Life Transfers: Reading Literature Through Translation,” 181–182.

attend to both the arguments for the transcendence of Patañjali's text as well as the "counter-transcendencies" that accompanied the creation of those arguments.⁷³

Merrill argues anew for the possibility of translation, drawing on the work of G.N. Devy⁷⁴ to theorize translation in a multilingual environment such as South Asia.

In the wake of Niranjana's important work, which calls for a new practice of translation that questions the Hegelian, teleological foundations of which she is critical, Merrill sensitive to both the problems of power asymmetries as well as the promise of translation. She writes describes the "unequal application of the logic of 'equivalence' that so many scholars of colonial translation point to when alerting us to the inherent asymmetry of such promises of universality," noting that such claims obviated the possibility of universality and translation for "not just scholars of colonial translation but also many scholars of conscience."⁷⁵ Nonetheless, she continues, many of the critics of translation have reassessed their position, finding that "there might be a strategic interest in recuperating it, revising it."⁷⁶ This is especially relevant to the nineteenth-century translation history of the *YS* because in that context the *YS* is a text that "cross[es] any conventionally understood lines distinguishing the transnational and the vernacular"⁷⁷ as it is rendered into English and Indian vernacular languages. Translation, therefore, in addition to being the mode of the primary sources of this study, serves metadiscursively⁷⁸ as a means for theorizing these sets of interpretive tensions between the universal or transnational, and the contextual or

73 Patton, *Myth as Argument*, 40–41.

74 See discussion below.

75 Merrill, "Real-Life Transfers: Reading Literature Through Translation," 181.

76 Ibid.

77 Ibid., 170.

78 Stewart, "In Search of Equivalence," 277, n. 22. Stewart writes, "To deploy translation as a model of religious encounter (i.e., to use it metaphorically) is really to use it on the metadiscursive level, not on the primary level as metaphor is used by the constructions of syncretism,"

vernacular.

Just as it would be theoretically naive after the insightful postcolonial analyses to posit colonial translation as a purely neutral, humanistic enterprise, so too is it ahistorical to posit the *paṇḍit*, a central figure in colonial translation, monolithically as an elite collaborator or victim of epistemological rupture. As Nita Kumar,⁷⁹ Brian Hatcher, and Michael Dodson have demonstrated, the *paṇḍits* were a heterogeneous group whose complex relationship to British patronage and colonial education was by no means one-directional.⁸⁰ For example, the translators in this study were not all *brāhmaṇas* (Rājendralāl Mitra, for example, was of a *kāyasth* background) even as they publicly spoke about and published translation of Sanskrit. Others, like Paṇḍit Śāśadhar, gained attention for interpretations of yoga rooted in *mufassal* concerns that were at odds with proponents in the colonial metropole of Calcutta. They addressed diverse sets of audience: Mitra wrote in English as well as Bengali, and was in contact with Hindi-language writers in North India; Pāl addressed a Bengali audience, but made reference to Orientalist studies; Śāśadhar seems to have retreated from the context of Calcutta after he was disparaged by intelligentsia. Moreover, if one accepts the *paṇḍit's* ability to resist even in collaboration, then the translated text can be read for traces of this tension.

As such, there is a need for a bidirectional investigation of linguistic encounters that is sensitive to the asymmetry of power relations in colonial and post-colonial contexts. My approach here is to pursue this kind of analysis through examination of

79 Nita Kumar, "Sanskrit Pandits and the Modernisation of Sanskrit Education in the Nineteenth to Twentieth Centuries," in *Swami Vivekananda and the Modernization of Hinduism*, ed. William Radice (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

80 Dodson, *Orientalism, Empire, and National Culture: India, 1770-1880*, 151–153, and *passim*.

translations of the YS by analyzing both the fluid, often unstable relationship between the distortions introduced by power and the contextual interpretations that resist hegemony.⁸¹ Interpretation of reading of YS in its social context contributes to theorizing translation through the process of its creation, one that is more performative than constative.⁸² Here a subtle point can provisionally be made by connecting the historiographic debate over epistemic rupture to the content and structure of the YS itself. It is no accident that the YS became an apt site for translation during the colonial period: as its own textual and interpretive history suggests, it is a text that seems to place the practices of withdrawal and union into an ambiguous and unstable relation.

Interpretive Chasms in Reading the YS

In order to provide a history of yoga in the nineteenth century, we need to reconstruct how the *paṇḍit*'s practiced translation, but also how the practice of translation functioned as a kind of interpretive "glue"⁸³ that bound together through

81 See Udaya Narayana Singh, "Social Aspects of Language," in *The Oxford India Companion to Sociology and Social Anthropology*, ed. Veena Das, vol. 1 (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), 706. Singh writes, "interactional sociolinguists... must not ignore the distortions introduced by power. They must be guided by a theory that understands communication not as understanding, in a static way, but as a *creation of new understanding (meaning) that transcends and hence potentially/actually involves immediate and perhaps intuitive self-reflection on the speaker's cultural context*, out of which the process of communication was first initiated." Emphasis mine.

82 This distinction, of course, is derived from J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962); See also Stewart, "In Search of Equivalence," 287. Stewart writes, "Once the translation process can be shown to have moved from the simplistic modes of seeking equivalence to the complex realms of conceptual sharing that we have designated as metaphoric in nature, the analysis must, of necessity, shift. Because this current analysis seeks to describe the nature of the discourse within which new (and old) ideas are expressed through translation, the focus is deliberately shifted away from the ontological nature of the conceptual entity or end product that results from all models of syncretism, to an analysis of the conditions, both creative and constraining, within which that production, that experimentation, is possible, that is, to the way such encounter can take place. *It is a shift from preoccupation with the final form to a greater understanding of the process of its creation...*" Emphasis mine.

83 Smith, "Questioning Authority," 323. Drawing on the work of Jacob Neusner, Smith observes that "one could argue that it is precisely the theologians of a tradition who construct (and continually reconstruct) the principles that allow for a category of self-identification like 'Hindu.' Jacob

commentarial practice a number of disparate sources. The disparate status of these sources is conveyed by a survey of contemporary scholarship on yoga and its unresolved questions, including the status of Patañjali's text, the role of commentary, and the linkages between the YS and Sāṃkhya, Buddhism, and other forms of yoga, including its global manifestations. Here I suggest that the translation of the Sanskrit YS into vernacular languages is in some cases an extension of commentarial activity. On a more provisional level, I suggest that Patañjali's text while ambiguous, laconic, and yet almost encyclopedic,⁸⁴ did not gain currency in colonial translation because it is a blank screen for various ideological projections or a "patchwork" of disparate textual excerpts. Instead, I contend, the tension it frames between the cessative and the numinous, in Stuart Sarbacker's terms, or *nirodha* (the conception of "cessation" that is part of the soteriological aim of the YS) and *samāpatti* ("attainment"⁸⁵) offers insight into the colonial condition, in that they reflect competing social claims toward either withdrawal or engagement. Just as it may be necessary to think through the binary that is implicit in the postcolonial critique of translation to uncover the role of the *paṇḍit*, so too can we think through the binary of the enstatic and the ecstatic that has split off the YS's interpretive tradition from currents that may remain synthesized in readings of Patañjali before Vivekananda.

Neusner has recently argued that 'the issue of theology bears consequence because upon the result, in the end, rests the question of whether we may speak of a religion, or only of various documents that intersect here and there'.... The theologians of a tradition provide the 'glue' to an otherwise disparate set of data, 'facts,' sectarian differences, and all other particularities..."

84 By "encyclopedic" here I refer to the apparent combination of varying approaches to yoga within the YS. As a corrective to the privileging of the "meditative" aspect of yoga as an outgrowth of Vivekananda's reading of *Rāja Yoga*, recent scholars including Yohanan Grinshpon, Stuart Sarbacker, and David Gordon White have drawn attention to the often-overlooked *Vibhūtipāda* of the YS, which describes the attainment of superhuman abilities.

85 Stuart Ray Sarbacker, *Samādhi: The Numinous and Cessative in Indo-Tibetan Yoga* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 21.

Apart from the historiographic context in which the translation of the YS took place, there is a theoretical perspective relating to Benjamin's notion of translation that must be critically analyzed. For Benjamin, translation makes apparent something inherent in the original: its translatability. Within this claim are some of the tensions between Benjamin's identity as, according to Vinay Dharwadker, "a Marxist and Frankfurt School critic, but also, contradictorily enough, a practising modernist and formalist with a strong interest in Jewish mysticism".⁸⁶ In the context of the YS, the process of translation was neither completely contingent on factors relating to social context, nor a transparent rendering of the original. Translation was figured by the mutually constitutive aspects of text and context, and here I will trace how a particularly unstable relationship between experience and philosophy that is frame in the YS has had a lasting effect on its interpretive history, one that gained critical traction in the social context of colonial Calcutta.

Contemporary interpreters of the YS have explored that tension, between experience and philosophy, in various ways. Gerald Larson, for instance, in reviewing the historiography of yoga, has identified two critical binaries that run throughout it. The first is related to an ongoing interpretive pursuit, "namely determining whether one can separate the experimental and/or experiential claims of Yoga from the philosophical claims."⁸⁷ The former claims, Larson contends, are largely the domain of "social anthropological treatments of yoga... primarily from the history of religions, religious studies, social anthropological studies and those who are interested in the

86 Dharwadker, "A.K. Ramanujan's Theory and Practice of Translation," 126.

87 Gerald James Larson, "Introduction to the Philosophy of Yoga," in *Yoga: India's Philosophy of Meditation*, ed. Ram Bhattacharya and Gerald James Larson, vol. XII, *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2008), 26.

practice of yoga.”⁸⁸ The latter claims are related to philological treatments of Patañjali’s text and have been found more prominently in traditional Indology. Alongside the tension between philosophical and experiential readings, Larson’s correlates a tension between those who argue that “Yoga is nowhere” versus those who find that “Yoga is everywhere.”⁸⁹ Few interpreters have been able to combine both approaches, with the result that the modern interpretation of yoga has been bifurcated, in the process losing the important synthesis that Patañjali may represent between the experiential and the philosophical.⁹⁰ As an intellectual genealogy of the interpretation of the *YS* in the nineteenth century, this study suggests that by examining the role of the *paṇḍit* as translator, the nature of these binaries in the historiography of yoga can be related to the broader binary produced by the colonialism as an epistemic rupture.

*Indological Accounts of Patañjali: Patchwork & “Excessive Dissection”*⁹¹

Complicating the practice of translating the *YS* is the fact that there is not yet an academic consensus on a critical edition of the *YS*, although there is an ongoing effort to produce one. Vimala Karnatak completed a critical edition of the *YS* based on manuscripts in archives primary in India.⁹² Karnatak’s critical edition and Hindi exposition of Vācaspati Miśra’s *Tattvavaiśāradī* and Vijñānabhikṣu’s *Yogavārttika* is an important work of contemporary Hindi scholarship on the topic of yoga and an

88 Ibid.

89 Ibid., 31.

90 Larson, interesting, takes Bhojadeva’s story of Patañjali as the author of the text on language, on medicine, and on yogas, seriously, to argue that the insight of yoga is its linkages between body, mind, and language. See *ibid.*, 68–69.

91 *Ibid.*, 62.

92 Vimalā Karnāṭaka, ed., *Pātañjala-Yoga-Darśanam: Tattvavaiśāradī-Yogavārttiketi-Tīkādvyayopetam Vyāsabhāṣyam (Sapāthabheda-Bālapriyākhyā-Hindīvyākhyayā Vibhūṣitam)*, 4 vols., 1st ed. (Vārāṇasī: Banaras Hindu University and Ratna Publication, 1992).

application of text-critical techniques to the multiple variants of the texts, including the commentaries. It also represents a continuation of the tradition begun during the colonial period of translation of the Patañjali into the vernacular languages of South Asia.⁹³ In addition, Philipp Maas has published what he calls the first critically edited of the first section of the *YS*, the *Samādhipāda*.⁹⁴ The work of Maas and Karnatak, taken together, suggest discernible and regional variations in manuscript traditions, particularly in the commentarial tradition.

These variations appear to some extent to have been consolidated during the production of nineteenth century printed editions. The important implication here is that contemporary scholars cannot always be certain that earlier commentators were referring to the same version of the text that is commonly accepted as authoritative today. For example, Albrecht Wezler has compared a single *sūtra* (*YS* 2.22) as it appears in multiple printed editions from 1867 to 1996, and asked whether this “total mutual agreement” is based on “the dependence of the latter... editions on the former ones.”⁹⁵

Summarizing the text-historical lacunae, Wezler observes:

there is little likelihood that a different reading of this *sūtra* is attested anywhere in the manuscripts preserved, and in the ‘version’ of the *YS* edited, i.e. known since approximately the middle of the 19th century and,

93 Karnatak writes in her introduction that “[t]he present work contains a translation with copious annotations in Hindi, our national language. For the first time the *Vyāśabhāṣya* along with its two commentaries, namely *Tattvavaiśārādī* and *Yogavārttika* have been explained here.

94 Philipp Maas, *Samādhipāda : Das Erste Kapitel Des Pātañjalayogaśāstra Zum Ersten Mal Kritisch Ediert* (Aachen: Shaker, 2006). Maas has also provided a study of the manuscript tradition of the *YS* based on a survey of thirty-seven printed editions of the text published from 1874 to 1992, as well as eighty-two manuscripts in public libraries of South Asian, Europe, and the United States. See Philipp Maas, “On the Written Transmission of the Pātañjalayogaśāstra,” in *From Vasubandhu to Caitanya: Studies in Indian Philosophy and Its Textual History*, ed. Johannes Bronkhorst and Karin Preisendanz (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2010), 157–172. I remain unsure why Maas apparently rejects the work of Karnatak in establishing the first critical edition.

95 Albrecht Wezler, “Letting a Text Speak: Some Remarks on the Sādhanapāda of the Yogasūtra and the Yogabhāṣya I. The Wording of Yogasūtra 2.22,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 29, no. 1 (April 1, 2001): 294.

as far as I can see, generally accepted and regarded as reliable, authentic and authoritative in Sanskrit philology and Yoga studies.⁹⁶

Nonetheless, in his careful analysis of the commentary *Pātañjalayogaśāstravivarāṇa*, Wezler suggests the commentator's interpretation of YS 2.22 can be taken as "clearly testifying to an older, if not the older and/or original, wording."⁹⁷ As such, there is an apparent discrepancy between the version of the YS that is accepted today and versions that may have been in circulation previously. A critical edition could provide a sense of the range of available variants in the manuscript traditions of the YS, which ultimately could help to correlate commentary to the text.

Translation, it should be emphasized, often accompanied the establishment through print publication of the version of the YS now taken to be authoritative. The earliest, albeit partial, printed edition of the Sanskrit text appears to have been published in J.R. Ballantyne's 1852 English translation, examined in Chapter Three. Subsequently, the publication of the Sanskrit text was often accompanied by either English or vernacular translations and commentaries in the nineteenth century. There are a few notable exceptions: the earliest complete printed edition of the Sanskrit text with the commentaries of Vyāsa and Vijñānabhiṣṭu was published in Calcutta under the editorship of Jīvananda Vidyāsāgara Bhaṭṭācāryya⁹⁸ in 1867. The Ānandāśrama Press published an important edition of the YS with Bhojadeva's *Rājamārtaṇḍa* and Vācaspati Miśra's *Tattvavaiśārādī*, under the editorship of Kāśīnātha Śāstrī Āgāśe in 1904.⁹⁹ Nonetheless, except for typographic inconsistencies, these versions of the YS

96 Ibid.

97 Ibid., 297.

98 Patañjali and Jīvananda Vidyāsāgara Bhaṭṭācāryya, *Pātañjaladarśanam. Maharsivedvyāsakṛtaḥśāstrasahitam. Vijñānabhiṣṭukṛtayogavārttikavyākhyā Samalanghatam.* (Kalikātānagarattam: Siddhesvarayantre, 1897).

99 Patañjali, *Yogasūtra, with Bhojadeva's Rājamārtaṇḍa and Vācaspati Miśra's Tattvavaiśārādī*, ed. Kāśīnātha Śāstrī Āgāśe, Ānandāśrama (Poona, 1904).

and its commentaries from the nineteenth century onwards appear to be generally in agreement.

There is, therefore, reason to question whether the authoritative version of the *YS* and its principal commentaries developed in the nineteenth century represent something of a homogenization of the textual tradition, even if the evidence for variant readings is difficult to assess. Two earlier translations may support this point. The first translation of the *YS* into any language appears to have been Al-Bīrūnī's (973-1050) Arabic version. Al-Bīrūnī's version, while incomplete, contains an independent and otherwise unattested commentary,¹⁰⁰ suggesting even more richness and diversity in the commentarial tradition before the period of this study. There is evidence, furthermore, that the version of the *YS* used by Al-Bīrūnī may be based on a separate textual tradition of the *sūtras* than the one that survives today.¹⁰¹ As mentioned above, the first English translation appears to be the version published by William Ward.¹⁰² Analysis of Ward's translation chapter three demonstrates that Ward's published translation of the *YS* departs in fundamental ways from the order and structure of the authoritatively accepted version of *YS*. Ongoing reassessment of the text critical history of the *YS* may complicate current assumptions about the *YS* and its interpretive history before the colonial period. Ward's translation, as I suggest in Chapter Three, might be based on an oral commentary, rather than on the text of the *YS* itself, and

100 Cf., Al-Bīrūnī, "Book of Patañjali," Summary by Tuvia Gelblum, in Gerald James Larson and Ram Shankar Bhattacharya, eds., *Yoga: India's Philosophy of Meditation*, vol. XII, Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2008), 261–266.

101 Cf. Shlomo Pines et al., "Al-Bīrūnī's Arabic Version of Patañjali's 'Yogasūtra': A Translation of the Fourth Chapter and a Comparison with Related Texts," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 52, no. 2 (1989): 265–305.

102 William Ward, "Section XXI: The Doctrines of the Patñjñlũ Philosophy; Translated from a Comment on the Original Patñjñlũ, by Bhojũ-dẽvũ," in *A View of the History, Literature and Mythology of the Hindoos; Including a Minute Description of Their Manners and Customs*, vol. 1, 2 vols., 2nd ed. (Serampore: Serampore Mission Press, 1818), 377–394.

indeed the line between commentary and authoritative or *mūla* text is itself a topic of scholarly debate.

The Integrity of the Text and the Question of Authorship

The genre of the *sūtra* presents a challenge to translators not only because of its condensed style and its implicit assumption that the reader is intimately familiar with a host of specialized and polysemic vocabulary,¹⁰³ but also because of the technical questions that must be addressed in the process of evaluating the text and its import. In the context of the *YS*, the question of text's integrity and relation to commentary has generated much debate. While the *YS* is often portrayed as being composed a few centuries before its first and principal commentary, Johannes Bronkhorst and Philipp Maas have argued that the composer of the commentary may have "authored" the *YS* itself, possibly by drawing it together from disparate sources. Bronkhorst has examined particular *sūtras* in the earliest and generally regarded as the most important commentary on the *YS*, the *Yogabhāṣya* attributed to Vyāsa. Based on an analysis of irregularities in the commentarial voice, Bronkhorst concludes that the *bhāṣyakāra*, or

103 For an apt description of these problems, see Nemeč, "Translation and the Study of Indian Religions," 772–773. Nemeč writes, "texts are often written in what I have often heard George Cardona describe as the 'telegraphic style:' the work will assume the reader—or hearer—knows the nature of the subject matter, and the text will omit words with frequency, assuming one knows, via the standard rules of anaphora, what has been dropped out. Textual passages often allude to authors, arguments, and philosophical schools with explanation and normally quote other works without attribution; polysemic terms are used in ambiguous or idiomatic ways, requiring the uninitiated reader to obtain the meaning of these terms only over time and through exposure to a great number of textual passages. In some textual genres, *hapax legomena* can leave even the most widely read scholar perplexed... Add to these problems those associated with textual criticism—the presence of variant or erroneous readings, missing text, interpolations, etc.—and one can see that merely rendering a text in translation can require a great deal of scholarly work, be it the cross-referencing of passages within a text with parallel passages found in other works, studying opposing schools of thought, or the like. Even if the translator refuses to bring the reader 'through the kitchen,' so to speak, with extensive annotations, front matter, and the like, the absence, or paucity, of such materials, when it is not a testament to imprecise—or simply bad—translation, may serve to disguise the amount of scholarly work involved in producing the translation."

commentator, appears to have rearranged a previous ordering of the *sūtras* for the purpose of explaining a philosophical position that may have been at variance with some of its own sources. As Bronkhorst demonstrates, the rearrangement sometimes results in an interpretation that diverges from the apparent intent of the *sūtra*.

Moreover, the analyses of Bronkhorst and Maas reintroduce the question of the text's own integrity. Building on and referring to the work of Indologists including Paul Deussen,¹⁰⁴ J.W. Hauer,¹⁰⁵ Erich Frauwallner¹⁰⁶ and Frits Staal,¹⁰⁷ Bronkhorst argues "the Yoga *sūtras* did not all originally belong together."¹⁰⁸ In Bronkhorst's analysis, the commentator Vyāsa seems to take on the etymological origins of the name as collator. The commentator, in this sense, is the creator of the YS if not its author:

...no one seems to have noticed that the *Yogabhāṣya* has preserved the scars of the operation in which the *sūtras* were brought together. These scars allow us to hypothesize that the *sūtras* were brought together by the author of the *Yogabhāṣya*. This person, it appears, was no expert in practical yogic matters. His skills were primarily theoretical.¹⁰⁹

Philipp Maas's text critical work supports and extends Bronkhorst's point.¹¹⁰ Taken

104 Paul Deussen, *Allgemeine Geschichte Der Philosophie: Die Nachvedische Philosophie Der Inder*, I 3 (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1920), 508ff.

105 J.W. Hauer, *Der Yoga: Ein Indischer Weg Zum Selbst*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1958), 224ff.

106 Erich Frauwallner, *Geschichte Der Indischen Philosophie* (Salzburg: O. Müller, 1953), 427ff.

107 Cf. Frits Staal, *Exploring Mysticism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), 91ff.

108 Johannes Bronkhorst, "Patañjali and the Yoga *Sūtras*," *Studien Zur Indologie Und Iranistik* 10 (1985): 208.

109 *Ibid.*, 208.

110 For a summary of his findings, see Philipp Maas, "The So-called Yoga of Suppression in the Pātañjala *Yogaśāstra*," in *Yogic Perception, Meditation and Altered States of Consciousness*, ed. Eli Franco (Wien: Verlag der Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 263–282. Maas writes that his critical edition of the "first chapter of the YS together with the Ybh, [is] based on 21 printed editions and 25 manuscripts (Maas 2006). According to manuscript colophons and secondary evidence, both texts taken collectively bear the common title Pātañjala *Yogaśāstra* and, as I argue in the introduction to my edition, probably have one single, common 'author' named Patañjali. This author would have collected the *sūtras* from different sources and furnished them with explanations, which in later times came to be regarded as the YBh. The date of the work is still uncertain, but a time span reaching from 325 to 425 A.D. seems to be most likely."

together, their work suggests that the compiler of the *YS*, as a non-practitioner,¹¹¹ may be attempting to unify a text collected from various sources. As a result, divergences between the *YS* and Vyāsa's *Yogabhāṣya* are argued to be reflections of the commentator's suturing of the *YS* together, possibly from different sources that did not always agree with the commentator's philosophical position.¹¹²

The possibility that the *YS* is itself a composite text complicates the notion of an *Ur-text*, that there is a clear point of origin for the text in the form that we have it today. In contrast to Indological text-critical analysis, however, many scholars trained in the history of religion have argued for accepting the text's integrity as a unitary¹¹³ whole, at least as a departure point for interpretation. Edwin Bryant, for instance, is more cautious about the tensions between the Indological dissection of the text's critical history, and Sanskrit accounts of the text's preservation through indigenous tradition. The *YS*, according to this reading, was preserved in more or less its current form by a process of memorization that characterizes the transmission of sacred texts in South Asia. Bryant observes that the

oral traditions of India and their embodiment in the shape of written primary texts have proved to be remarkably resilient, stemming from the Indian reverence and respect for sacred tradition. While this certainly does not grant them immunity from text-critical scholarship, in a work such as

111 Much of the argument about the possible identity of Patañjali and the author of the *Vyāśabhāṣya* is speculative, including the notion that the author of the *YS* did not practice yoga. The evidence cited here relates to the possibility that the author of the *YS* and the *Vyāśabhāṣya* may have been the Sāṃkhya philosopher Vindhyavāsin, who according to this theory composed the texts in the context of polemical debate with the Buddhist intellectual Buddhāmītra, who is cited as a teacher of Vasubandhu. From this perspective, the *YS* is a type of Sāṃkhyapravacana, or explanation of Sāṃkhya, rather than (or perhaps in addition to) being a document resulting from ascetic practices and experiences. For a review of the debate, see Larson and Bhattacharya, *Yoga: India's Philosophy of Meditation*, XII:33–52 and chapter three.

112 Cf. Bronkhorst, "Patañjali and the Yoga Sūtras," 209. "And indeed, the available evidence points to two persons, Patañjali and Vindhyavāsin, both of whom are known as Sāṃkhya teachers primarily from the *Yuktidīpikā*."

113 For a clear and brief review of the text historical questions, see also Sarbacker, *Samādhi*, 15.

the *Yoga Sūtras*, one is best advised to look very carefully for internal structural, semantic, or logical coherency and rationale before assuming that an apparent sudden break in (modern linear notions of) the sequencing of subject matter indicates a later insertion.¹¹⁴

It is important to stress here that the debate about the unitary or composite nature of the YS is linked in a complicated manner to interpretation.

Many interpreters of the YS have argued that the text should be viewed as a “homogeneous textual entity,” against the argument first made by the pioneering German Indologist Paul Deussen that the text betrays evidence of its heterogeneity.¹¹⁵ For instance, Yohanan Grinshpon¹¹⁶ and Ian Whicher¹¹⁷ are both in agreement on taking the holistic integrity of the YS seriously in their interpretations, yet their conclusions about the meaning of the YS are quite different. Georg Feuerstein, who has analyzed the text from the starting assumption of homogeneity, argues that the text is a largely holistic treatise. In Feuerstein’s interpretation, the YS focuses primarily on a kind of meditation practice (*kriyāyoga*), except for a small interpolation of the “*āṣṭāṅga*” or eight-limbs of yoga (YS II.28-III.4) that focus on ethical as well as meditational practices and share much with Jain and early Buddhist texts.¹¹⁸ The important point here is that the YS is semantically complex enough to span a wide range of interpretive perspectives, while retaining its integrity. The semantic expressibility of the YS, however, is reliant on commentary, due to its extremely condensed style.

The translation of the YS in the nineteenth century, it should be clearly stated,

114 Edwin Bryant, *The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali: A New Edition, Translation, and Commentary with Insights from the Traditional Commentators*, 1st ed. (New York: North Point Press, 2009), xxxvi.

115 Larson and Bhattacharya, *Yoga: India’s Philosophy of Meditation*, XII:64.

116 Yohanan Grinshpon, *Silence Unheard: Deathly Otherness in Pātañjala-Yoga*, SUNY Series in Hindu Studies (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002).

117 Ian Whicher, *The Integrity of the Yoga Darsana: a Reconsideration of Classical Yoga* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998).

118 Larson and Bhattacharya, *Yoga: India’s Philosophy of Meditation*, XII:63–65.

directly linked to the practice of commentary. I am in agreement with Larson who argues that “the *sūtras* themselves... are simply impossible to interpret without the commentaries.”¹¹⁹ Larson identifies what he refers to as a “text-complex” that extends from the YS through the *Vyāsabhāṣya* to Vācaspatimiśra’s commentary, the *Tattvavaiśārādī*. It is worth quoting Larson’s conclusions here at length:

If the YS, the *Vyāsa Bhāṣya* and Vācaspatimiśra’s *Tattvavaiśārādī* make up the obvious core textual base for understanding Yoga, why has so much scholarly effort been expended in interpreting the YS solely in terms of the *sūtras* alone? The only plausible answer appears to be the reluctance of the scholarly tradition, both in India and Europe, to accept the claim of both Vyāsa and Vācaspatimiśra that Pātañjalayogaśāstra has a clear foundation in Sāṃkhya philosophy. The claim that Sāṃkhya has been “foisted upon” or “wrongly attributed” to Yoga or the claim that Vyāsa and Vācaspatimiśra were not “really” practicing *yogins* appear to be based upon no evidence whatever and, I would suggest, should finally now be put to rest. Likewise, the claim that Yoga has no philosophical basis and can be utilized by any system of thought is, again, totally inaccurate in view of the core textual evidence of Vyāsa and Vācaspatimiśra.¹²⁰

The various concerns over the nature of the YS as a text highlight how translation and interpretation of the YS is a process that works alongside Sanskrit commentarial activity. The advocates of returning to the *sūtras* alone in translation are themselves performing a kind of commentary through translation by which the “text-complex” identified by Larson is dissected according to interpretive perspectives, rather than according to some unambiguous textual evidence. Translation of the YS, therefore, must be read as an act that functions as commentary.

Grinshpon reintroduces the question of the relation between the text and commentary, but his aim in doing so is more hermeneutic than text-historical. He extends the notion that the author of Vyāsa’s commentary, and perhaps the author of

119 Ibid., XII:65.

120 Ibid., XII:67.

the YS itself, may have had a theoretical, rather than direct, understanding of yoga. He imagines a myth of Patañjali as a philosopher who encounters an emaciated, dying *yogin* and attempts to describe in human language the post-speech silence that the *yogin* embodies. According to Grinshpon's myth, Patañjali

is no practicing *yogin* but a Sāṅkhya philosopher deeply moved by the spectacle of the silent *yogin*, making this lonely figure the embodiment of liberation, *kaivalya*, or pre-*kaivalya* condition. This dramatic description of the *Yogasūtra* as generated by an encounter between an as-it-were dumb *yogin* and a curious, verbal Sāṅkhya philosopher differs from others, but it does not contradict them.¹²¹

While Grinshpon extends some of the interpretive repercussions of the author of the YS being a non-practitioner, he is less convinced of the explanatory value of determining the text's origins. Instead he argues for a holistic approach that proceeds from the level of the text as we have it.¹²² Bracketing the text-historical concerns, Grinshpon introduces an important interpretive question: how the YS itself reveals existential questions about the very nature of a speech acts, and here his notion of commentary resonates with the colonial context of the *paṇḍit* as translator. Grinshpon stresses that the YS represents the attempt to put into words that which is beyond human communication:

our myth of “the philosopher and the dying *yogin*” reflects on the existential nature of the very speech-act, which is the *Yogasūtra*. In his very first sutra (YS 1.1; *atha yogānuśāsanam*), Patañjali defines himself as a *speaker* on yoga, outside the ken of “beyond-speech” *yogins*. References to speech and verbalization in the *Yogasūtra* clarify the meaning of speech as possible demarcation and boundary between *yogin* and *nonyogin*. The author of the *Yogasūtra* gives full and self-reflexive expression to such

121 Grinshpon, *Silence Unheard*, 7.

122 Grinshpon writes, “We know nothing of the ‘historical Patañjali’ (if he existed). It may well be that the author of the *Yogasūtra* collected information available in various sources. He was thus a ‘mere compiler’ whose contact was with texts (rather than with, say, the reality of *yogins* immersed in meditation).” *Ibid.*

boundaries.¹²³

There is an important interpretive challenge here. If we take seriously the claims by linguistic constructivists that thought is determined by what is linguistically expressible,¹²⁴ then claims to experiences outside of human language are to be regarded with skepticism, to be reducible to social-historical description or explanation. If, however, we take seriously the apparent claim of a text like the YS that appeals to experiences beyond language, how do we offer an account without reverting to one or another form of *philosophia perennis*?¹²⁵ The tension here in the interpretive tradition of the YS shares important linkages to the tension between scholars of religious experience who “postulat[e]... that experience as being beyond language, unmediated, and free of cultural constraint,” and theorists who see language as constitutive of experience, consciousness, and even the unconscious.¹²⁶

In framing the interpretive of the YS, Grinshpon seems to display a deconstructive reticence about the possibility of epistemological decidability. For Grinshpon, the language of the YS, as a type of religious language, is a kind of

123 Ibid., 7.

124 Stewart, drawing on the well-known work of Benjamin Lee Whorf, writes that “Language of course is not religion, but the two rely heavily on each other in this process of articulating what is of value, because language itself structures the conceptual world of any culture to a point where certain thoughts cannot be entertained in a given language, and those structures that prevail in a language will reflect what is significant to its host culture.” Stewart, “In Search of Equivalence,” 267, n. 14.

125 See chapter 2, Sarbacker, *Samādhi*; For a discussion of a similar tension in the work of Walter Benjamin, see Laurie L. Patton, “Dis-solving a Debate: Toward a Practical Theory of Myth with a Case Study in Vedic Mythology,” in *Religion and Practical Reason: New Essays in the Comparative Philosophy of Religions*, ed. Frank Reynolds (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 225–226; For a discussion and critique of Sarbacker’s use of Robert Forman’s notion of “incomplete constructivism” as a means of navigating the apparent methodological binarism between “perennialist” and “constructivist” approaches to the study of mystical experiences, see Andrew J. Nicholson, “Review: Samādhi: The Numinous and Cessative in Indo-Tibetan Yoga, Stuart Ray Sarbacker,” *Philosophy East and West* 58, no. 1 (2008); See also Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and “The Mystic East”*, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 1999), 136 ff.

126 Sarbacker, *Samādhi*, 36 Sarbacker cites Lacan, Kant, and Foucault as indicative of constructivist approaches to language.

commentary that seeks to frame an extra-linguistic experience in human language. The effort to do so can be more or less successful and radical, it seems, and an earlier essay Grinshpon argued that Vyāsa’s commentary represented an attempt to “rope-off” some of the more radical insights of the YS. For Grinshpon, there is conservatism in the Sanskrit commentarial tradition of Vyāsa that routinized some of the more revolutionary claims found in Patañjali’s text according to the philosophical perspective of the commentator.¹²⁷

Against the Indological contention that Vyāsa’s *Yogabhāṣya* is perhaps a *svopajñabhāṣya*¹²⁸ or auto-commentary, Grinshpon is indicative of scholars of religion who view the apparent tensions between the YS and its principal commentary as evidence of historical debates that informed the commentarial tradition. Extending the logic of Grinshpon’s critical reading of Vyāsa’s *Yogabhāṣya*, Christopher Key Chapple has suggested a sort of *sola scriptura* return to Patañjali’s text through a method of “rational criticism.”¹²⁹ Chapple likewise accepts the text as unitary:

Several scholars have claimed that Patañjali compiled his *Yoga Sūtra* from a number of different texts.... I suggest that we leave aside the notion that he pieced together existing texts and agree to the premise that Patañjali presents a concatenation of summaries based on earlier and extant contemporaneous systems. The issues I address in the present study hinges on an investigation of consistent units within Patañjali that seem to have been overlooked by Vyāsa and hence ignored by later commentators and translators, who seemingly without exception rely heavily upon Vyāsa for guidance.¹³⁰

127 Yohanan Grinshpon, “Yogic Revolution and Tokens of Conservatism in Vyasa-Yoga,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 25, no. 2 (April 1997): 129.

128 Cf. Larson, “Introduction to the Philosophy of Yoga,” 40.

129 Christopher Key Chapple, “Reading Patañjali Without Vyāsa: A Critique of Four Yoga Sūtra Passages,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 62, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 88; A version of this article was also published in Christopher Key Chapple, *Yoga and the Luminous: Patañjali’s Spiritual Path to Freedom* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008), 219–235.

130 Chapple, “Reading Patañjali Without Vyāsa,” 88.

Chapple and Grinshpon's readings of the YS, while both introducing the question of commentarial interpolation, diverge in how they each regard the ultimate meaning of Patañjali's text. Grinshpon exemplifies a reading of the cessative darkness at the heart of the text: "Pātañjala-Yoga cannot satisfy the integrative mood underlying the mood of our time" as it stresses the "stuff of disintegration [that] is real nothing and icy silence."¹³¹ Chapple, instead, sees yoga as technology for *jīvan-mukta*, a "living liberation."¹³²

While Chapple cites the early twentieth-century translator Hariharānanda Āraṇya¹³³ in describing yoga liberation as *jīvan-mukta*, the term itself is likely of a later origin and does not appear in the YS.¹³⁴ In substantive agreement with Chapple but *pace* Grinshpon, Ian Whicher has argued that the intention of the YS, recovered through a textual and historical investigation, "does not advocate the abandonment of the world for the successful yogin, but supports a stance that enables the yogin to live more fully in the world without being enslaved by worldly identification."¹³⁵ Whicher's interpretation of the YS, however, has been criticized by Patrick Olivelle for conflating history and theology and for anachronistic terminology including the use of the term *jīvan-mukta*.¹³⁶

131 Grinshpon, *Silence Unheard*, 4.

132 Chapple, *Yoga and the Luminous*, 2008, 100.

133 Patañjali and Hariharānanda Āraṇya, *Yoga Philosophy of Patañjali : Containing His Yoga Aphorisms with Vyāsa's Commentary in Sanskrit and a Translation with Annotations Including Many Suggestions for the Practice of Yoga*, trans. Paresh Nath Mukerji (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), 119.

134 See Andrew Fort, *Jīvanmukti in Transformation: Embodied Liberation in Advaita and Neo-Vedanta* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1998); Cited in Patrick Olivelle, "Review: The Integrity of Yogadarshana, by Ian Whicher," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 121, no. 4 (December 2001): 679–680.

135 Whicher, *The Integrity of the Yoga Darsana: a Reconsideration of Classical Yoga*, 2; also quoted in Olivelle, "Review."

136 See Olivelle, "Review."

Whicher, importantly for this study, traces the source of the cessative reading of the YS to Vivekananda. Somewhat counter-intuitively, Vivekananda's Vedāntic interpretation of the YS results in the equation of "nirvikalpa-samādhi—understood by Vivekananda to be the spiritual goal of Vedānta—... with the goal of liberation as experienced in Patañjali's yoga."¹³⁷ The state that Vivekananda describes, according to Whicher, is a "complete cessation of mental modifications,"¹³⁸ a kind of abolishment of consciousness which Whicher sees as opposite to the "intention" of the YS. The emaciated, silent *yogin* that Grinshpon uses in his myth of Patañjali is replaced in Whicher's reading with what Chapple has called a "living liberation."

Vivekananda's interpretation of yoga, Anantanand Rambachan has argued,¹³⁹ was a significant component of his larger privileging of direct perception (*pratyakṣa* in the terms of the valid means of cognition or *pramāṇas* accepted by the YS) and experience (*anubhāva*) over scriptural authority (*śruti*, or *āgama* in the YS).¹⁴⁰ While some have found in Vivekananda a refracted mirroring¹⁴¹ of the Orientalist notion of India as an essentially mystical civilization whereby "colonial stereotypes... became transformed and used in the fight against colonialism,"¹⁴² the effect of Vivekananda's vision of yoga on the *paṇḍit*'s authority is less clear. Vivekananda's demotion of scripture may also find basis in the text of the YS itself. As Bryant writes in his

137 Whicher, *The Integrity of the Yoga Darsana: a Reconsideration of Classical Yoga*, 160.

138 Ibid.

139 Anantanand Rambachan, *The Limits of Scripture: Vivekananda's Reinterpretation of the Vedas* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994).

140 YS I.7: *pratyakṣa-anumāna-āgamāḥ pramāṇāni*. The valid means of cognition are perception, inference, and scriptural authority.

141 Here I draw on Tony Stewart's notion of refracted equivalence, which itself extends André Lefevre's notion of mirroring in translation. Stewart examines four strategies employed in translation: "(1) formal literary equivalence, (2) refracted equivalence, (3) dynamic equivalence, and (4) metaphoric equivalence." See Stewart, "In Search of Equivalence," 277–279.

142 King, *Orientalism and Religion*, 93.

commentary on YS I.7,

The very fact that he [Patañjali] categorizes *āgama* as a *vṛtti* and thus comparable in one sense with other *vṛttis* such as *viparyaya*, error, the subject of the next *sūtra*, points to correspondences with aspects of post-Enlightenment thought, namely, that verifiable (in this case *yogic*) experience trumps scripture. This had been termed a “radical mystico-yogic orientation,” since, certainly, as with the Enlightenment, such claims would have challenged the mainstream Vedic authority of the day.¹⁴³

One might conjecture, at this point, that another part of the reason the nineteenth-century translation of the *YS* by *paṇḍits* has not been properly accommodated in histories of yoga is because they, as representatives of the *śāstric* tradition that Vivekananda is arguably trying to supplant through an emphasis on “*samādhi* as direct perception of objective knowledge,”¹⁴⁴ were rhetorically elided. The success of Vivekananda’s *Rāja Yoga* may have come with the cost of a split with tradition and its contemporaneous custodians, the *paṇḍits*.

The argument that Vivekananda emphasized *anubhāva* and *pratyakṣa* at the expense of *śruti*¹⁴⁵ may not extend to the translators leading up to him, for whom the *YS*’s synthesis of the experiential and the philosophical often appears intact. In important respects, reading the *YS* in colonial India involves a contextual awareness of the sorts of debates for the meaning of the text that have been partially elided by other narratives, such as that of Vivekananda’s *Rāja Yoga*. The point of this reconstruction, however, is not to attempt to retrieve from the pre-Vivekananda translators a history of what might have been, in the sense of explaining the counterfactual or employing a “hermeneutics of nostalgia”¹⁴⁶ predicated on the sort of assumption of epistemic

143 Bryant, *The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali*, 37; Quoting Grinshpon, “Yogic Revolution and Tokens of Conservatism in Vyasa-Yoga,” 136.

144 Cf. Rambachan, *The Limits of Scripture: Vivekananda’s Reinterpretation of the Vedas*, 104 f.

145 See *ibid.*, 104.

146 In rethinking about the larger ramifications of the interpretive chasms in the history of

rupture that here is being reconsidered. The Indological debates over the status of Patañjali's text and its relation to commentary demonstrate that a number of significant questions that frame the colonial debate themselves have a longer, and evidently precolonial, genealogy.¹⁴⁷

“Classical Yoga” and its Relation to Buddhism, Sāṃkhya, and Modern Postural Yoga

In addition to bringing to bear on the project of nineteenth-century translation some of the implications of the messiness of the text-critical history, it is also important to critically examine what Andrew Nicholson in another context has referred to as the “doxographical” concerns of the premodern Sanskritic interpreters.¹⁴⁸ In doing so it may be possible to uncover important linkages between Pātañjala-yoga, tantra, Buddhism, and Sufi practices¹⁴⁹ that are obscured both by the construction of *Rāja Yoga* and the Sanskrit doxographies¹⁵⁰ that provided contextual material for many colonial

scholarship about yoga, I am partially drawing on the analysis of rifts between philosophers and historians of myth as discussed by Laurie Patton. See, for instance, Patton, “Dis-solving a Debate: Toward a Practical Theory of Myth with a Case Study in Vedic Mythology,” 232; Referencing Fredric Jameson, *Marxism and Form: Twentieth-Century Dialectical Theories of Literature*. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971), 60 ff. The discussion below owes much to Patton's analysis of Benjamin.

147 Cf. Patton, “Dis-solving a Debate: Toward a Practical Theory of Myth with a Case Study in Vedic Mythology,” 233.

148 Nicholson criticizes the way in which “[b]ooks titled ‘The History of Indian Philosophy’ rarely deal with history. The ‘historical’ portion of such books is generally limited to a few sentences at the beginning of each section listing the philosopher's dates and (optionally) in which part of India he lived. The theory of history presupposed in these books typically conforms to a perennial philosophy/great books model.... [Such studies] generally avoid the messy complexities of textual analysis and rely on the Davidsonian premise that any linguistic differences can be readily bridged with a good translation, so knowledge of primary languages is unnecessary.... The lingering effects of this discourse have had disastrous effects on the discipline of the history of Indian philosophy. Modern histories of Indian philosophy generally offer depictions quite similar to their premodern Indian doxographic counterparts, including discussions of a fixed number of philosophical schools. ... Like Daya Krishna, I believe that we must overcome the facile overreliance on ‘schools’ that still informs much writing on Indian philosophy.” See Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism*, 11–13.

149 For an examination of parallel traditions of Islamic yoga, see Ernst, “The Islamization of Yoga in the ‘Amrtakunda’ Translations”; See also Stewart, “In Search of Equivalence.”

150 Here an important reference is Mādhava, *The Sarva-darśana-saṃgraha, or, Review of the Different Systems of Hindu Philosophy*, trans. Edward Byles Cowell and A.E. Gough (London: Trübner, 1882).

translators. While Pātañjala-yoga has often been characterized as one of the *ṣaḍ-darśana* or six orthodox schools of classical Indian philosophy, and likewise contrasted with *nāstika* positions including Buddhism, recent scholarship has increasingly viewed the solidity of these doxographical demarcations with some skepticism.¹⁵¹

While Indological attempts at dating the *YS* often relied on an assertion of the historical precedence of Buddhism,¹⁵² for instance, recent scholarship points to distinctions between types of yoga that appear already visible at the time of the Buddha and of Patañjali. David Gordon White has presented a far messier picture of the history of yoga than the notion of “classical yoga” than what can be gleaned from works such as *Rāja Yoga*. In White’s analysis, there has been too much of a preference for “yoga” as a kind of meditative or contemplative philosophy, at the expense of the practices of “yogis.” This split in the interpretive tradition, which he finds in both Hindu and cognate Buddhist commentarial traditions, is indexed to tensions between the “cessative” and the “numinous” aspects of yoga as identified by Sarbacker. White argues that the overemphasis on the cessative at the expense of the numinous has “has been most responsible for the skewed interpretations that have dominated the historiography of yoga for much of the past one hundred years.”¹⁵³

151 Cf. Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism*.

152 For an important example, see Jwala Prasad, “The Date of the Yoga-Sūtras,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* no. 2 (April 1930): 365–375.

153 David Gordon White, *Sinister Yogis*, 1st ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 40. White writes that “the ‘Cessative’ refers directly to the concept of *nirodha*, already mentioned, in *YS* 1.2 (‘Yoga is the cessation [*nirodha*] of the changing states of mind’), as well as to allied concepts in Buddhist and Jain meditative traditions. The great bulk of Hindu and Buddhist commentarial literature and, accordingly, of modern-day scholarship on yoga has focused on the cessative aspect of these traditions, that is, on the suppression of the mind and senses as a means to ending one’s this-worldly existence, and with it, suffering. However, the ‘numinous’ mode of this-worldly self-deification—which comprises the ‘attainments’ (*samāpattis*) of Buddhist and patañjalian traditions, as well as the ‘supernatural enjoyments’ (*rddhis*, *siddhis*) or ‘omnipresencings’ (*vibhūtis*) of Buddhist, Jain, and Hindu traditions, and the practice of visionary ascent and the enhanced powers of perception common to all three—corresponds neatly to the practices of figures often identified, from the earliest times, as yoga practitioners” (45).

White’s careful reconstruction of narrative accounts of yogis expands on earlier analyses of the conservative force of the Sanskrit commentarial tradition.¹⁵⁴ As I understand the import of White’s analysis, however, the YS remains something of an enigma: while it is substantially devoted to the descriptions of “attainments” and “supernatural enjoyments,” it is also blamed for a “hermeneutical strategy... to elide yoga practice with meditation.”¹⁵⁵ Even as White highlights the presence of the numinous alongside the cessative in the YS, he seems to reinstate the commentarial and interpretive tendency to reduce the dual discourse of the YS to an emphasis on the cessative.

In addition to reasons possibly related to commentarial conservatism, the emphasis on the cessative readings of Patañjali may be in part due to arguments for its historical and philosophical linkages to Sāṃkhya,¹⁵⁶ the dualistic metaphysics that is variously associated with Patañjali or the author of the *Yogabhāṣya*.¹⁵⁷ In its classical

154 For instance, White traces the origin of defining “yoga” as “contemplation” at the expense of “practice” to the commentator Vācaspati Miśra: “In many respects, the hermeneutical strategy of the YS and its principal commentators was also to elide yoga practice with meditation... In the case of the YS, it has been a commentarial convention since the time of the 350–450 CE *Yogabhāṣya* of Vedavyāsa (YBh) to maintain that the term ‘yoga’ denotes the culminating meditative state of *samādhi* (‘pure contemplation,’ ‘com-position’) rather than physical yoking or union. This reading was canonized, as it were, by the great tenth- to eleventh-century commentator Vācaspatimiśra. Noting the fact that the renowned grammarian Pāṇini had proposed two separate etymologies for the verb root *yuj*—the one meaning “to yoke” and the other “to contemplate” (*sam-ā-*dhā*, from which the term *samādhi* is generated)—Vācaspatimiśra opted for the latter. A number of later commentators took the next logical step, arguing that the meditative separation (*vīyoga*) of the mind-stuff (*citta*) or intellect (*buddhi*) from materiality (*prakṛti*) was the goal of the practice of yoga.” Ibid., 41.

155 Ibid., 41.

156 Larson describes a possible periodization of Sāṃkhya’s ancient roots in speculations found in the Vedas and the early Upaniṣads; the development of proto-Sāṃkhya in “middle” period Upaniṣads, epic literature, and roughly contemporaneous texts including the *Carakaśaṃhitā* and the *Buddhacarita*; classical texts including the *Yoga Sūtra*, the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* and their related texts; and finally a set of later texts ranging from about the fifteenth century to the seventeenth century C.E. See Gerald James Larson, *Classical Sāṃkhya: An Interpretation of Its History and Meaning* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1969), 75.

157 In addition to the possibility that Patañjali composed the *Yogabhāṣya*, which introduces itself as an “exposition of Sāṃkhya (*sāṃkhyapravacana*),” Bronkhorst speculates about the VBh being authored by Vindhyavāsin, who may have revised Sāṃkhya after contact with Buddhist polemics. Bronkhorst, “Patañjali and the Yoga Sūtras,” 205; Larson, “Introduction to the Philosophy of

formulation, Sāṃkhya according to Larson undergoes a process of “differentiating itself from other yogic traditions,” eventually becoming “the authoritative interpretation for many centuries,” although the reasons for the normative status of the classical form are uncertain.¹⁵⁸ Hints of the interpretive legacy of distinguishing Sāṃkhya from yoga will be examined in more depth in the treatment of Colebrooke’s analysis in Chapter Three. But here it is important to note that Sāṃkhya appears to have had particular influence in colonial Bengal. Knut Jacobsen cites a “larger fascination with Sāṃkhya-Yoga in the late 19th, early 20th century Bengal,” which extended to a “striking number of the leading religious figures of the late 19th and early 20th century Bengal” as well as scholars such as Surendranath Dasgupta.¹⁵⁹ In his own portrayal of Patañjali, Eliade, as a student of Dasgupta, may have been influenced by the larger interest in Sāṃkhya-yoga in employing the terms of enstasis (“standing within”) as opposed to ecstasis (“standing without”).¹⁶⁰ These terms highlight differences in Eliade’s interpretation, between yoga as an ascetic practice possibly linked to indigenous pre-Aryan shamanism, and yoga as meditative practice (including *samādhi*) as described in the YS and Buddhist sources. But here, too, the interpretive tradition is variegated: Kṣetrapāl Cakravārtī, examined in Chapter Five, might represent a counter trend in Bengali interpretation of Patañjali that emphasized the numinous in the yoga tradition, against the more cessative, Sāṃkhya-inflected reading.

The *Yoga Sūtra* itself, furthermore, as has already been discussed, introduces

Yoga,” 38–42.

158 Larson, *Classical Sāṃkhya: An Interpretation of Its History and Meaning*, 134.

159 See Knut A. Jacobsen, “In Kaplia’s Cave: A Sāṃkhya-Yoga Renaissance in Bengal,” in *Theory And Practice of Yoga: Essays in Honour of Gerald James Larson*, ed. Knut A. Jacobsen (Boston: Brill, 2005), 338.

160 Sarbacker, *Samādhi*, 53.

itself as a teaching that draws on other, pre-existing traditions.¹⁶¹ In part because of these uncertainties, dating became a primary site for debate and conversation in the process of translating the YS in the nineteenth century. Continuing debates pertaining to yoga's religious and sectarian boundaries correlate to the broader implications of dating, as indicated in the recent work of White and Geoffrey Samuel.¹⁶² What remains missing from a historiographic approach to Patañjali's text is evidence of how this debate was framed by the Bengali translators who are the subject of this study. Hints at the continuing relevance of these translators can be found in a return to Rājendralāl Mitra's exploration of Sanskrit traditions of Patañjali's birth in an article by Ashok Aklujkar, a topic examined in depth in Chapters Four and Five.¹⁶³

The textual and social historical examination of the interpretation of yoga by *paṇḍits* in nineteenth century Bengal that is the center of this study complicates how we might interpret the *paṇḍit* as a representative of the commentarial tradition. Mark Singleton has questioned whether

161 See Chapter One.

162 For a recent appraisal of arguments for yoga before Patañjali, see Geoffrey Samuel, *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra: Indic Religions to the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 3–8, and *passim*. Samuel's analysis of the debate around the 'Proto-Śiva' Seal (M-304), depicting what some had interpreted to be a god, perhaps a form of Śiva as Paśupati seated in a yoga-like *āsana*, reveals the ambiguity of the evidence. Samuel also finds scant evidence for yogic traditions in Vedic texts: "I find myself equally unpersuaded by attempts to see yogic or 'Tantric' practices in their developed forms in the Ṛgveda or Atharvaveda. There are certainly indications both of magical ritual for pragmatic purposes, and of ecstatic religious practices, 'shamanic' if the reader wishes to use to the term.... There is nothing, however, to imply yogic practice, in the sense of a developed set of techniques for operating with the mind-body complex. Our best evidence to date suggest that such practices developed in the same ascetic circles as the early *śramaṇa* movements (Buddhist, Jainas and Ājīvikas), probably in around the sixth and fifth centuries BCE." *Ibid.*, 8. David Gordon White reviews the debate on the seal (which he refers to as clay seal no. 420, citing John Henry MacKay's 1937-38 numbering sequence and reflecting on more recent Indian associations with that number) to caution against "the temptation of projecting modernist constructions of this [yogic] body of practice and its practitioners onto the past."

163 See Ashok Aklujkar and Mrinal Kaul, eds., *Linguistic Traditions of Kashmir: Essays in Memory of Paṇḍit Dīnānātha Yakṣa* (New Delhi: D.K. Printworld, 2008).

...the vision of the YS as the source of a timeless tradition of Classical Indian Yoga is in fact an *idée reçue* [sic] of the modern era, and that the “mistake” of popular yoga was inbuilt from its very inception? ... it seems clear at the very least that from the mid–nineteenth century the YS was accorded a status and context within Indian intellectual life that it did not have before. However, whether we conceive of this as a disjunction from an authentic, extant, living tradition at the heart of Hinduism (the position of some Western practitioners and modern Hindus), a revival of a substantially defunct one, or an invention of a new one, this remains secondary to the fact that in the modern period, we are dealing with an altered Patañjali—reinterpreted to fit the aspirations and constraints of the age.¹⁶⁴

Singleton leaves open the possibility that the elevation of Patañjali functioned along the lines of a cultural chauvinistic nationalism that was derivative of Orientalist assumptions, more specifically the Orientalist emphasis on texts over practices, an interpretive option that seems to fall back on the schematic of epistemic rupture. The study of these *paṇḍits* and their Anglophone interlocutors provides new direction for the debate, because their own interpretations diverge in important ways from the Orientalists readings (Pāl, the *paṇḍit* discussed in Chapter Three, rejects the Orientalist practice of dating in favor of indigenous narratives of Patañjali’s life, for instance), and perhaps too from the tendency to expurgate and essentialize that White finds in Vivekananda’s construction of *Rāja Yoga* (the Indian Anglophone interpreter Kṣetrapāl Cakravārtī, examined in Chapter Five, incorporates the sort of stories of supernatural wonders and bodily possessions that White finds in narratives of yogis). The status of the author Patañjali may provide a means for the *paṇḍits* to translate between these varying registers of philosophy, practice, and experience that are central to the interpretive history of yoga. Yoga is not an ahistorical form passed down untouched through the ages; the Sanskrit commentarial tradition itself is evidence of the changes in interpretation that mark its history.

164 *Yoga in the Modern World: Contemporary Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2008), 80.

The present study builds on recent studies of modern postural yoga in assessing the complex cultural backdrop of late nineteenth-century and twentieth century portrayals of yoga, but departs from them in more specifically addressing the role of the translation of the *YS*. In analyzing the relationship between the text and the context of nineteenth century India, Elizabeth de Michelis's work has provided a detailed history of the development of modern yoga,¹⁶⁵ examining how early Bengali reformers such as Keshub Chunder Sen attempted to create a rational, monotheistic, and universal religion of Hinduism by drawing on elements from the Sanskritic tradition including Patañjali. After a set of increasingly hostile encounters with Christian proselytizers and colonial agents, the reformers of Hinduism were drawn to the sympathetic quarters of Western occultist and Theosophical movements. It was this unlikely combination of cross-cultural influences and arguments that, in De Michelis's account, explains the innovative formulation of yoga put forth by its most important nineteenth-century proponent, Swami Vivekananda. De Michelis's account follows the development of yoga into its twentieth-century manifestation as an international, often secular practice that is primarily focused on the physical exercises associates with *āsanas*.

A complementary study to De Michelis's is N.E. Sjoman's work on the yoga tradition of the Mysore palace.¹⁶⁶ Sjoman places particular emphasis on the notion of yoga as a performance tradition and the patronage of yoga by the ruling family of Mysore. In contrast to the textual tradition of Patañjali, Sjoman's work focuses on a text likely from the nineteenth century, the *Śrītattvanidhi*, an iconographic text that

165 Elizabeth De Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga: Patañjali and Western Esotericism* (New York: Continuum, 2004).

166 N. E. Sjoman, *The Yoga Tradition of the Mysore Palace*, 2nd ed. (Abhinav Pubns, 1999).

covers diverse topics including yoga *āsanas*. Linkages between yoga and other disciplines of the body are evident in this text, and Sjomán concludes that “a process of amalgamation and borrowing has been a constant feature in the yoga tradition corresponding with the ‘reformation’ that went on the short period we are able to examine historically and which has enabled us to question our sense of tradition.”¹⁶⁷

The relations between yoga, globalization, and body practices have been further explored by Sarah Strauss who provides a valuable ethnography of yoga in its practice in contemporary yoga centers in India, that of the Divine Life Society founded by Swami Sivananda, who himself was influenced by Swami Vivekananda’s formulation of *Rāja Yoga*. The trend in yoga studies to examine the hybrid routes that make up the contemporary postural practice of yoga has been further developed by the work of Mark Singleton, who has recently provided a recent excellent history.¹⁶⁸ In Singleton’s account, too, modern yoga has little continuity with medieval Sanskrit texts on *haṭha yoga* and even less to do with Patañjali; it is an hybrid outcome of the colonial encounter that draws a variety of ideologies and practices.

In pursuit of “multiple modernities” in relation to yoga, Joseph Alter’s study *Yoga in Modern India: the body between science and philosophy*¹⁶⁹ (2004) is an important theoretical contribution. A main distinction Alter makes at the outset of his study is that of a difference in interests between audience: “Even though yogic literature is concerned with the body, it is clear the Orientalist scholars were almost exclusively

167 Ibid., 59; See also A. L. Dallapiccola, “Review: The Yoga Tradition of the Mysore Palace, by N.E. Sjomán,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 8, no. 1, Third Series (April 1998): 120–121.

168 Singleton, *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice*.

169 Joseph S. Alter, *Yoga in Modern India: The Body Between Science and Philosophy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004).

concerned with philosophy, mysticism, magic, and metaphysics.”¹⁷⁰ Here one might question whether philosophy, and certainly “magic” and “mysticism” does not have something to do with the body, even in Orientalist constructions. Ultimately, however, Alter’s work is more concerned with the development of transnational yoga, or more precisely, various practices involving the perfectibility of the body that can be more or less subsumed under the umbrella term “yoga.”¹⁷¹ Discourses of science and the body do mix with the project of translating Patañjali in the nineteenth century; Alter analyzes a mid-nineteenth century English text by a N.C. Paul,¹⁷² a Bengali author who was one of the first to associate yogic practices with bodily transformation. While Alter’s work is primarily concerned with the twentieth-century manifestations of yoga that are most removed from the classical text of Patañjali, the present study provides a new examples of *paṇḍits* who saw science in the YS and searched, through translation, to make equivalences between science and Sanskrit.

This study, as a history of yoga *before* Swami Vivekananda, differs from these works in that it follows a single source, Patañjali’s YS, as it is transformed by, and itself transforms, the process of colonial translation. At the same time, many of the translators I investigate search for equivalences in fields cognate to those identified in the collective work of De Michelis, Singleton, Alter, Strauss, and Sjoman. Discourses of science, occultism, and bodily disciplines are often cited in prefaces and used to explain aspects of Patañjali. Here, however, the crucial difference is that this study seeks to account for how the exegetical and commentarial mode of Sanskrit interacted

170 Ibid., 7.

171 See Frederick M. Smith, “Review: Yoga in Modern India: The Body Between Science and Philosophy,” *American Anthropologist* 108, no. 3 (September 2006): 554.

172 N. C. Paul, *A Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy* (Benares: The Recorder Press, 1851).

with the new field of translation in the nineteenth century.

Translation as Commentary

The premise of this chapter is that we need to work beyond two interpretive chasms in order to make sense out of the colonial translation of the *YS*. The first chasm was that created by the notion that colonialism introduced an epistemic rupture that has made much of the precolonial irretrievable to the postcolonial. The second chasm is more specific to the interpretive history of the *YS*: that between the philosophical and the experiential. There appears to be a recurring tendency in the interpretive tradition to reduce yoga either to a purely experiential practice, or a purely contemplative philosophy, even as the *YS* appears to describe both without necessarily positing a difference.¹⁷³ In its more recent interpretive history, the split between experience and philosophy has sometimes been reduced to a more simplistic distinction between text and practice, where Patañjali represents a purely elite philosophical vision, completely separate from the vernacular practices of *yogins*.

These sets of binaries in colonial historiography (the precolonial and postcolonial split by the colonial) and the interpretive history of yoga (yoga is “cessative,” yoga is “numinous”) are in fact related by the fact that *paṇḍits*, whom I have suggested complicate the colonial binaries, translated the *YS*, a text whose interpretive history likewise complicates the binaries in the interpretation of yoga. Here it is crucial to stress that *paṇḍits* in the nineteenth century would have been

173 For instance, *YS* I.12 expands on the first definition of yoga (*yogaś-citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ*, “yoga is the cessation of the turnings of the mind”) by expanding on how cessation (*nirodha*) is achieved: *abhyāsa-vairāgyabhyāṃ tan-nirodhaḥ* ([the *vṛttis*] cease through practice (*abhyāsa*) and dispassion). My translations, adapted partially from Edwin Bryant’s translation and commentary. Cf. Bryant, *The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali*.

unlikely to approach the YS using the sort of “rational criticism” approach described by Chapple. They would, more likely, have been in agreement with Larson¹⁷⁴ that the YS cannot be read without commentary. This is exemplified by the fact that nineteenth-century writers including William Ward, J.R. Ballantyne, Rājendralāl Mitra, and Maheścandra Pāl translated Patañjali with the eleventh-century direct commentary *Rājamārtaṇḍavṛtti*. That commentary, attributed to Bhoja Rāja, the king of Dhar, is perhaps most notable because it links the Patañjali of the YS to the author of commentaries on grammar and medicine, suggesting that the YS represents a dual discourse that synthesizes mind and body.¹⁷⁵

Translation and the Afterlife of Sanskrit

In order to reconstruct how the YS was read in colonial India, therefore, it is necessary to trace how translation involved contact between the vernacular and Sanskritic notions such as *paramparā*¹⁷⁶ and *saṃpradāya*.¹⁷⁷ As I have argued throughout this chapter, doing so involves a rethinking the nature of epistemic rupture in the colonial period. For example, if as Sudipta Kaviraj writes the “colonial transformation of knowledges was an epistemic rupture on the vastest possible scale—one of the

174 Larson, “Introduction to the Philosophy of Yoga,” 65. Larson argues that the “*sūtras* themselves... are simply impossible to interpret without the commentaries” (65).

175 Bhoja’s commentary is discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

176 Kaviraj defines *paramparā* in a manner that seems in tension with his larger point regarding the epistemic break of colonialism: “Texts lack an ordinal sense of pastness. The meaning of something becoming a classic is precisely its rising above the indexing specificity of local culture and taste, thereby conquering the localizing and decaying effects of time—a meaning that still subsists in the English use of the term ‘classic.’ The concept of tradition, *paramparā* (one after another)—a sense of things, texts, tastes being handed down in an unbroken chain of reception (not necessarily repetition)—therefore, contains an implicit theoretical understanding of the pastness of literary texts. In this way of thinking linear succession is not progress, which makes it impossible to change order, but is turned into formal difference, which can be endlessly emulated and played upon as a repertoire.” See Sudipta Kaviraj, “The Two Histories of Literary Culture in Bengal,” in *Literary Cultures in History: Reconstructions from South Asia*, ed. Sheldon Pollock (University of California Press, 2003), 510.

177 Julius J. Lipner, “Introduction,” in *Ānandamaṭh, or, The Sacred Brotherhood*, by Bankimcandra Chatterji, trans. Julius J. Lipner (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005), 114.

greatest known in history... a comprehensive disqualification of an entire cognitive universe—in the most literal sense, an *epistemological break*,”¹⁷⁸ then the cultural translation of yoga in the nineteenth century does not appear to have any particular value. It is only visible as a trace, another of the rare survivals of the precolonial that Kaviraj describes:

Many of the traditional ideas retreated into a more sheltered space in colonial culture as ‘religious’ ideas, and continued to be held not as cognitive truths, but as ideas of cultural self-definition. Ayurvedic and Yunani medicine remained popular with ordinary people, outside modernist elites. Some segments of traditional knowledge in fact did not quite die, but continued an underground existence.¹⁷⁹

The implication here seems that we are left with a past that cannot be recovered, and the critique of colonialism renders the precolonial as irretrievable.¹⁸⁰ Thus, in order to account for the translation of yoga, a way of thinking about Sanskrit knowledge in the time of colonialism needs to be recast. The recurring metaphor of death needs to be dislodged, and its linkage to afterlife in Walter Benjamin’s writings on translation must be read critically against a teleology of history. Sanskrit commentary remained an active source of knowledge in the nineteenth-century translation of the YS, as all of the Anglophone translators, and the Bengali translator Maheścandra Pāl, all drew on the *Rājamārtaṇḍa* commentary in translating the YS.

In his appraisal of Sheldon Pollock’s article, “The Death of Sanskrit,”¹⁸¹ J.

Hanneder argues for modifying “the ‘death’ metaphor into a description of ‘change.’”¹⁸²

178 Sudipta Kaviraj, “The Sudden Death of Sanskrit Knowledge,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 33, no. 1 (February 2005): 132–133. Emphasis in original. Kaviraj traces the term “epistemological break” to Gaston Bachelard and Louis Althusser.

179 *Ibid.*, 137–138.

180 See White, “Digging Wells While Houses Burn?,” 109.

181 Sheldon Pollock, “The Death of Sanskrit,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 43, no. 02 (2001): 392–426.

182 J. Hanneder, “On ‘The Death of Sanskrit,’” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 45 (2002): 298.

To build his case, Hanneder cites a study by Christopher Minkowski¹⁸³ of a public exchange over “cosmological models of Indian astronomy, of that of the Purāṇas and the Western model.”¹⁸⁴ Hanneder foregrounds a key point for this study from Minkowski’s analysis: “From his detailed description we do not get the impression that Sanskrit had just died, or was about to die, rather that profound changes had to find adequate expression in Sanskrit, as it was *finding expressions in other languages*.”¹⁸⁵ Hanneder, furthermore, connects Pollock’s notion of the death of Sanskrit to a privileging of ancient Sanskrit literature.¹⁸⁶

Building on Hanneder’s criticism of Pollock, Brian Hatcher has argued for dispensing with metaphors of death in favor of analysis of the “life of Sanskrit during the colonial, and even postcolonial, era.”¹⁸⁷ Hatcher, furthermore, has questioned whether

Pollock’s simple distinction between Sanskrit and vernacular (e.g. Sanskrit cosmopolitans are rootless, the vernacular is local), doesn’t threaten to disguise any number of quotidian forms of convergence, inter-relationship, cross-fertilisation, and hybridity. Likewise, one struggles to keep in view less dramatic patterns of historical continuity. Certainly by the time one arrives at the colonial period, it helps little to state categorically that Sanskrit intellectual culture is dead when one can identify any number of Sanskrit intellectuals carrying on, albeit often under dramatically new conditions of training, patronage, material production (e.g. the printing

183 Christopher Z. Minkowski, “The Pandit as Public Intellectual,” in *The Pandit : Traditional Scholarship in India*, ed. Axel Michaels (New Delhi: Manohar, 2001), 79–96.

184 Hanneder, “On ‘The Death of Sanskrit,’” 298–299.

185 Ibid., 299 Emphasis mine.

186 Ibid. Hanneder writes, “...soon after the supposed death of Sanskrit, namely in 1835, Indians were by law allowed to own machines for printing and this produced an enormous boost in literary activity in perhaps all Indian languages including Sanskrit.... This phase in the production of Sanskrit works remains until to day [sic] one of the blank spots in Indology: Owing to a widespread opinion that only ‘real’, that is, ancient Sanskrit literature is worth studying, these works are regrettably, with very few exceptions, not made the object of academic research, not (re)printed and not even systematically collected in libraries.”

187 Brian A. Hatcher, “Sanskrit and the Morning After: The Metaphorics and Theory of Intellectual Change,” *Indian Economic & Social History Review* 44, no. 3 (2007): cited from draft copy.

press), and cultural expression.¹⁸⁸

Translation is a productive term for characterizing the changes in the life of Sanskrit knowledge during the colonial period when theorized not according to a representational episteme, as has rightly been criticized in the work of Inden and Niranjana, but its etymological sense of “a transporting” or carrying across is interpreted in terms of transformational transport across the colonial divide. As such translation may provide a means investigating both the continuities and breaks that have characterized colonialism, without foreclosing or totalizing either. On a theoretical level, this brings us back to Rosane Rocher’s argument for a nonfoundational view of knowledge:

Reflecting on past scholarship challenges us to develop a principled approach to its historiography and to its continuing practice. I wish to propose a nonfoundational view of knowledge. Knowledge is more than cognition, more than the binary relation between a scholar... and an object.... We must take a nonfoundational and dynamic view of knowledge if we are to learn from, and progress beyond, simple revisionism....¹⁸⁹

The important implication here is that the translator, like the scholar, is not in a unidirectional, binary relationship with the object of study, a sort of mortician in the death of Sanskrit, but is in a dynamic relation with it.¹⁹⁰ The motif of breakage that recurs in the theoretical literature concerning colonialism and yoga (epistemological breaks, breaks in the textual integrity of the YS, breaks between philosophy and experience), resonates with a figure central to the study of translation, that of the

188 Ibid., cited from draft copy; In a footnote, Hatcher cites Sudipta Kaviraj’s claim that “talk of hybridity in colonial Bengal is ‘totally illegitimate and thoughtless.’” See Kaviraj, “The Two Histories of Literary Culture in Bengal,” 543, n. 56.

189 Rocher, “Weaving Knowledge: Sir William Jones and Indian Pandits,” 51.

190 Here David Haberman’s reading of George Steiner’s fourfold model of translation may be helpful in bringing out some of the implications of how translation effects a kind of bodily transformation. See David L. Haberman, “Textual Intimacy: Benefits and Techniques of Academic Translation,” in *Notes from a Maṇḍala: Essays in the History of Indian Religions in Honor of Wendy Doniger*, ed. Laurie L. Patton (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2010), 97–112.

fragment.

Benjamin and the Fragment

The problem of the fragment as it has been explored by Walter Benjamin and theorists after, is useful in helping to theorize translation as a kind of commentarial activity. The YS itself can be understood as a kind of fragment, as it is one part of the “text-complex” that includes the commentaries attributed to Vyāsa and later interpreters. The figure of the fragment, I suggest, contributes to moving beyond the binaries of the universality and the contextual in the history of translation theory that have split, for instance, the translation work of A.K. Ramanujan from the post-structuralist reading of Benjamin. In summarizing some of the theoretical differences between Ramanujan and some aspect of Benjamin, Vinay Dharwadker sheds light:

both the ideal of transparency and the possibility of a literal rendering of the syntax are imaginable only within the Judaeo-Christian myth of Babel that Benjamin resurrects in his essay, and the ghost of an original *Ur-Sprache* that he mystically intuits within it. As a descriptive and comparative linguist, Ramanujan did not believe that there was such a lost transcendental, universal language underlying the differences between the Germanic, Romance, Indo-Aryan and Dravidian languages.¹⁹¹

Walter Benjamin, as is well known, introduces the problem of the fragment in his complex image of the amphora in “The Task of the Translator.”¹⁹² At stake in the debate is the question of whether the original and the translation are in a synecdochal relationship, where the fragment can reconstitute the whole, or whether translation reveals a more thorough-going fragmentation, and here I seek to read the figure of the fragment in relation to the question of text and context. De Man,¹⁹³ for instance, makes

191 Dharwadker, “A.K. Ramanujan’s Theory and Practice of Translation,” 128.

192 Walter Benjamin, “The Task of the Translator,” in *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 78.

193 Paul de Man, “‘Conclusions’ Walter Benjamin’s ‘The Task of the Translator’ Messenger Lecture,

an important contribution by emphasizing the manner in which Benjamin seems to refuse the notion that the fragments can ever match together to form the totality. Rather than “a synecdochal view of the problem of fragments,” de Man argues that translation is an infinite regression of fragments in relation to the original. Translation makes the relationship between the original and the copy into a sort of *mise en abyme*, through which the original is unrecoverable and ostensibly non-existent.¹⁹⁴

While de Man’s reading of Benjamin could lead to the conclusion that translation in effect creates the original, and thereby reinstates the binaries of epistemic rupture, it is instead the “errancy of language which never reaches the mark, which is always displaced in relation to what it meant to reach,”¹⁹⁵ that de Man is highlighting. Here we have what I take to be the most complexly subtle relationship between the topics at hand: the YS addresses the problem of language to express the non-linguistic, just as translation does,¹⁹⁶ and in doing so, translation raises an ethical

Cornell University, March 4, 1983,” *Yale French Studies* no. 69 (January 1, 1985): 25–46; De Man draws on Carol Jacobs, “The Monstrosity of Translation,” *MLN* 90, no. 6 (December 1, 1975): 755–766.

194 De Man, “‘Conclusions’ Walter Benjamin’s ‘The Task of the Translator’ Messenger Lecture, Cornell University, March 4, 1983,” 44. De Man writes: “I’m reminded of an example I heard given by the French philosopher Michel Serres—that you find out about fragments by doing the dishes: if you break a dish it breaks into fragments, but you can’t break the fragments any more. That’s an optimistic, a positive synecdochal view of the problem of fragments, because there the fragments can make up a whole, and you cannot break up the fragments. What we have here is an initial fragmentation; any work is totally fragmented in relation to this *reine Sprache*, with which it has nothing in common, and ever translation is totally fragmented in relation to the original. The translation is the fragment of a fragment, is breaking the fragment—so the vessel keeps breaking, constantly—and never reconstitutes it; there was no vessel in the first place, or we have no knowledge of this vessel, or no awareness, no access to it, so for all intents and purposes there has never been one.”

195 Ibid.

196 Ibid. De Man writes, “Benjamin, who is talking about the inability of trope to be adequate to meaning, constantly uses the very tropes which seem to postulate the adequation between meaning and trope; but he prevents them in a way, displaces them in such a way as to put the original in motion, to de-canonize the original, giving it a movement which is a movement of disintegration, of fragmentation.”

consideration of the representation of alterity. Benjamin's writings on translation¹⁹⁷ introduce a number of key terms: translatability, the afterlife of a text, and the notion of the "innermost relationship of languages,"¹⁹⁸ as well connecting the practice of translation to the work of commentary.¹⁹⁹ Benjamin, throughout these writings, places the original and the translation in an unsteady relationship. It is this instability, I suggest, that makes translation into a kind of commentarial activity through which alterity is encountered in asymmetrical terms. While this asymmetry is often framed unilinearly in the language of domination, the traces of alterity that perdure in translated texts echo Emmanuel Levinas's figure of the stranger, whose face "involves a calling into question of oneself, a critical attitude which is itself produced in face of the other and under his authority."²⁰⁰

Translation, in Benjamin's account, is not simply a matter of fidelity, as in some source texts the misuse of language can achieve brilliant ends.²⁰¹ Here it is important to return to Benjamin's definition of a successful translation as a kind of commentary:

The successful form of translation... acknowledges its own role by means of commentary and makes the fact of the different linguistic situations one of its themes.... And just because the difference in linguistic situation was acknowledged, the translation could become effective, a component of its own world.²⁰²

197 A central text here, of course, is Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator"; Harry Zohn's translation has been criticized by Paul de Man, cf. Paul de Man, *The Resistance to Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986); Originally published in Walter Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire: Tableaux Parisiens* (Heidelberg: Richard Weissbach, 1923).

198 Benjamin, *Selected Writings*, 1:255.

199 Walter Benjamin, "Translation—For and Against," in *Selected Writings*, vol. 3, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), 249–252.

200 Emmanuel Lévinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*. (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 80.

201 On encountering Nietzsche in French, Benjamin reflects on Nietzsche's own expansion of the expressibility of German: "Nietzsche brilliantly misuses the German language;" "He took double the liberties allowed by language, to rebuke it for permitting them." Benjamin, "Translation—For and Against," 250.

202 Benjamin, *Selected Writings*, vol. 1, vol. 3, p. 250.

The *paṇḍit* used translation to comment on a classical text in a contemporary context, a kind of language *in actu* in Homi Bhabha's terms.²⁰³ Here I seek to supplement Benjamin's theorization of translation with an emphasis its social reception, as well as its production. A theory of translation that can contribute to a theorization of the transformation of yoga in colonial India must also examine the choices translators make in a context like South Asia, where the boundaries between linguistic identities are often entangled.

There may be something at stake here with what Ganesh Devy has referred to as the "translating consciousness," the notion that the multilingual environment of South Asia is characterized by linguistically fluid boundaries, an open semantic system.²⁰⁴ In manner that resonates with Devy's analysis, Sukanta Chaudhuri has reflected on the quotation from Rudolph Pannwitz at the end of Benjamin's essay on translation²⁰⁵ to highlight how "[s]uch penetration of the source language into the host language is a

203 In Bhabha's rendering, which owes much to de Man, translation is most productive when it functions on the margins of cultural production. In this sense, translation is an act, and an act that runs counter to the narratives of the nation: "With the concept of 'foreignness' Benjamin comes closest to describing the performativity of translation as the staging of cultural difference.... Translation is the performative nature of cultural communication. It is language *in actu* (enunciation, positionality) rather than language *in situ* (*énoncé*, or propositionality). And the sign of translation continually tells, or 'tolls' the different times and spaces between cultural authority and its performative practices. The 'time' of translation consists in that movement of meaning, the principle and practice of a communication that, in the words of de Man 'puts the original in motion to decanonise it, giving it the movement of fragmentation, a wandering of errance, a kind of permanent exile'" Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 325–326 Emphases in original.

204 See Ganesh Devy, "Translation and Literary History: An Indian View," in *Postcolonial Translation Theory: Theory and Practice*, ed. Susan Bassnet and Harish Trivedi, Translation Studies (New York: Routledge, 1999), 185. "The concept of a 'translating consciousness' and communities of people possessing it are no mere notions... In India several languages are simultaneously used by language communities as if these languages formed a continuous spectrum of signs and significance. The use of two or more different languages in translation activity cannot be understood properly through studies of foreign-language acquisition. Such theories work round the premise that there inevitably is a chronological gap and an order or a priority of scale in language learning situations."

205 Benjamin, *Selected Writings*, 1:262. "Our translations," Pannwitz writes, "even the best ones, proceed from a mistaken premise. They want to turn Hindi, Greek, English into German instead of turning German into Hindi, Greek, and English."

new feature of radical implications in post-war, post-colonial translation.” Chaudhuri uses a specific example to make the point, and it is one that again brings to mind Benjamin’s reflection on translation as a type of commentary. In the example, Chaudhuri compares the effects when a translator incorporates a term from the source language in the target language of translation, against the case when translation is attempted.²⁰⁶ The example given is that of the word “*makara*” as it appears in two English translations of Rabindranath Tagore’s story “Sagarika.” William Radice keeps the word “*makara*” intact, whereas Humayun Kabir in a 1966 translation translates it as “dragon crown.”²⁰⁷ Chaudhuri is astute about the power differentials involved:

clearly, this breaking of moulds can be salutary only where the host language outranks the source in the hierarchy of cultures. In the opposite instance, where a dominant source language invades the native practices of the host, the result will be to confirm the hegemony. There is or was a principle in historical philology known as Windisch’s Law. In its basic formulation, it states simply that ‘It is not the foreign language a nation learns that runs into a mixed language, but its own native language becomes mixed under the influence of a foreign language.’ ... What I am considering here is a conscious reversal of the process, whereby the subaltern language penetrates the dominant one.²⁰⁸

The Sanskrit word “yoga,” of course, is a fragment of Sanskrit that entered the English lexicon through translation. Rājendralāl Mitra, as I discuss in Chapter Five, decided on leaving the term “yoga” untranslated in his English translation of the YS, and although he was not the first translator to do so, his reasons for preserving the Sanskrit and incorporating it into English resonate with Chaudhuri’s observation.²⁰⁹ In the context

206 Brian Hatcher has noted that perhaps *anuvāda* as it approached “‘translation’ proper... was understood as something more like a *calque* than a restatement or interpretation,” revealing “tension between ‘compiling in the vernacular’ and ‘translating.’” Brian A. Hatcher, “Writing Sanskrit in the Vernacular” (presented at the The Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, 2010), 18.

207 Sukanta Chaudhuri, *Translation and Understanding* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), 37.

208 *Ibid.*, 38–39.

209 Here too Stewart’s analysis of translation is helpful: “Religious encounter seen as translation... ultimately reveals a movement of accommodation by the receiving or target language and the

of Mitra's own life and work, as argue below, the preference for leaving the term untranslated is both an example of a conscious reversal of Windisch's Law, as it is a kind of successful translation, in Benjamin's terms, for it "makes the fact of different linguistic situations one of its themes."²¹⁰

In addition to a theorization of translation in the context of colonial India that is sensitive to both the asymmetrical power relationship between the *paṇḍit* and the Orientalist, as well as the possible ways that Sanskrit commentary was being performed in the vernacular, there is also a need for a concrete sense of how the *paṇḍits* themselves conceptualized the practice of translation. In an unpublished conference paper on the *Vidhavā-vivāha* (1855), two books in Bengali on widow remarriage by the *paṇḍit* and reformer Īśvaracandra Vidyāsāgar, Hatcher has examined the complex ways that commentary and translation intersected in the practice of writing, and publishing, Sanskrit in the vernacular.²¹¹ Hatcher notes that Vidyāsāgar neither uses the word "translation" or its north Indian cognate (*anuvāda*) in this text.²¹² Moreover, Vidyāsāgar in this text "never explicitly address the goals of challenges of translation."²¹³ Elsewhere, however, such as in his work on the *Mahābhārata*, Vidyāsāgar does use the term "*anuvāda*." Hatcher here raises a question fundamental to this study: "how are we to understand the relationship between translation and commentarial activity?"²¹⁴

culture it represents, which when sufficiently pursued eventually becomes an act of incorporation... When the 'translation' is successful, the new term becomes a part of the target culture's extended religious vocabulary, and carries with it, or at least points to, another conceptual world." Stewart, "In Search of Equivalence," 277.

210 Benjamin, *Selected Writings*, vol. 1, vol. 3, p. 250.

211 See Hatcher, "Writing Sanskrit in the Vernacular."

212 Ibid., 9.

213 Hatcher, "Writing Sanskrit in the Vernacular," 9.

214 Ibid., 11.

Anuvāda and Commentary

In providing some provisional claims toward answering this question, Hatcher again draws our attention to the competing idioms at play in the first half of the nineteenth century in Bengal. He also asserts that the “context of print-based reform in the colonial public sphere should be kept in mind, since we must understand that Vidyāsāgar’s overarching goal was to help non-Sanskrit educated Bengalis appreciate the *śāstric*, or ‘scriptural,’ sources upon which his proposal... rested.”²¹⁵ Finally, and most importantly for this study, Hatcher emphasizes that despite “this modern social and technological moment, the intellectual framework for Vidyāsāgar’s argument and (I would say) his handling of Sanskrit sources owes a great deal to premodern traditions of exegesis and commentary.”²¹⁶

The tension between Vidyāsāgar’s use of and omission of the word *anuvāda*, and more specifically *avikala* (unfragmented) *anuvāda*, Hatcher argues, suggests on

lingering tension at the heart of what we associate with ‘translation’ during this period. Some authors... thought they were simply restating the meaning and purport of Sanskrit passages in the Bengali language, while at other times they thought they were accurately and completely ‘translating’ Sanskrit passages in Bengali.²¹⁷

Importantly, *anuvāda* meaning in Sanskrit is often linked to repetition in the sense of “restatement” or “recapitulation,” connotations that Hatcher traces to Jaimini’s use of *anuvāda* to express “repeating what is already known.”²¹⁸

A history of reading the YS in colonial India must also be a history of

215 Ibid.

216 Ibid., 12.

217 Ibid., 19.

218 Ibid., 20; Quoting Pāṇḍuraṅga Kāṇḍe, *History of Dharmasāstra : Ancient and Mediaeval Religious and Civil Law* (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental research Institute, 1930) commenting on Mīmāṃsā Sūtra 6.7.30.

translation, triangulated through the linguistic registers of Sanskrit, English, and the vernacular (here, primarily Bengali). A *paṇḍit* in translating the *YS* may view his own work as a kind of *anuvāda* in the sense of the term before its more recent connotation of translation. That is, as a kind of commentarial restatement that Hatcher argues gradually shifts into a kind of *calque*. For this reason, perhaps, a number of the earliest translations of the *YS* into Bengali are classified as “editions,” rather than “translations,” in comprehensive bibliographies of Indic materials.²¹⁹

One of the most concrete ways to see the interaction between the commentarial mode of *bhāṣya* with English, and the vernacular, is in the nineteenth-century print editions of the translations examined in this study. In these translations, English, Sanskrit, and Bengali are juxtaposed. For a *paṇḍit* like Kālīvar Vedāntavāgīś, examined in Chapter Four, Bengali translation of the *YS* appears to be a kind of *anuvāda* in the sense of restatement. Nonetheless, in his introduction he performs cultural as well as linguistic translation, including English words and references to contemporaneous science.

The inclusion of Sanskrit commentarial method into *anuvāda* needs to be inspected. In some case, the contrast between *anuvāda* as translation may be physically separated from *anuvāda* in its commentarial sense of repetition or restatement. We see this, perhaps, in the essay-like tone to the prefaces of some vernacular translations of the *YS*, which are followed by a restatement in Bengali of the *YS* and a Sanskrit commentary. Sanskrit, vernacular, and often English, are interposed,

219 Cf., e.g., Karl Potter, *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies, Bibliography* (Seattle: University of Washington, Center for Advanced Research Technology in the Arts and Humanities, 1999); Hatcher notes a similar avoidance of the word “translation” in the British Library catalog entry for Mṛtyuñjaya Vidyālaṅkāra’s *Hitopadeśa*. See Hatcher, “Writing Sanskrit in the Vernacular,” 14.

often on the same page, usually within the same binding. To read this mixing of idioms and the recombinatory, polyphonic texts that are created through it, one needs to historicize the practice of reading the YS through translation. It is also necessary to contextualize the varying discursive spaces of the intended audiences of translation, keeping in mind Katherine Ewing’s criticism of the notion that colonialism created in its subjects a “a public side and a secret ‘traditional’ side.”²²⁰ In agreement with Ewing, “[i]t is more useful to think of different discursive spaces, defined largely by whom the speaker imagines his or her interlocutor to be. It is more accurate to say that there are different audiences, different discourses.”²²¹

To attend to the productive tensions between the subtle meanings of *anuvāda*, translation, and *bhāṣya*, therefore, we must be careful not to employ a monolithic definition of translation. Here a subtle theoretical point will be put forth. Sanskrit commentary, as Laurie Patton has shown, functions in a kind of accordion-like fashion as it moves between, or juxtaposes, the general and the particular.²²² This accordion-like movement brings up greater complications when we examine the production of Sanskrit knowledge, and its translation, in the colonial period. That is because the historiography of nineteenth-century India, and the place of Sanskrit within it, has often been described in terms of a contrast between the classical and the new, or in Pollock’s evocative terms, “the death of Sanskrit.” We must rethink, as Patton has done carefully in her reading of the work of Walter Benjamin, the relation between the past and the present. Patton writes,

220 Ewing, *Arguing Sainthood*, 126.

221 Ibid.

222 Patton, *Myth as Argument*, 34.

...a modification of Benjamin's approach to myth is necessary. The relationship between past and present needs to be reconfigured. The present is not the only time which must be criticized for forgetting; the past too consists of a number of former presents, themselves the agents of forgetting and erasure. Those worlds of the past—traditional societies—must not be privileged because of their remoteness. Like the present, they must be “read” with critical perspective. One must discern those forms of knowledge which claim transcendence; one must read for the mythologizations of language and imagery.²²³

Benjamin's own work on translation is a critical resource here. At the same time, Benjamin must be read critically against his own occasional uncritical positing of the remoteness of the past. Benjamin's reliance on a notion of an *Ur-Sprache* “pure language”²²⁴ invokes a “hermeneutics of nostalgia” poorly suited to assess the how *paṇḍits* and nineteenth-century yoga writers used commentary in writing Sanskrit in the vernacular.

Here Brian Hatcher's reading of Sudipta Kaviraj is helpful. Kaviraj's term “generative extension” denotes the complex interplay between text and commentary where the latter makes new the former, as the former provides boundaries for the innovation of the latter.²²⁵ Most challengingly from a hermeneutic standpoint, this constant movement between expansion and contraction, the extrinsic movement of commentary, appears also to be intrinsic to the text in the figures of the cessative and

223 Patton, “Dis-solving a Debate: Toward a Practical Theory of Myth with a Case Study in Vedic Mythology,” 233.

224 Cf., e.g., Benjamin, “The Task of the Translator,” 78–80.

225 Brian A. Hatcher, “Sastric Modernity: Mediating Sanskrit Knowledge in Colonial Bengal,” in *Modernities in Asian Perspective*, ed. Kausik Bandyopadhyay (Kolkata: Setu Prakashani, 2010), 131; Quoting Kaviraj, “The Sudden Death of Sanskrit Knowledge,” 128. Hatcher writes, “More recently, Sudipto Kaviraj has discussed how *sāstric* hermeneutics were able to achieve newness when applied to scriptural texts that otherwise appear to be transcendent and unchanging. Put simply, Kaviraj demonstrates the possibility for change within Sanskrit knowledge systems. Most helpfully, he sketches a dialectic between root text (or *sastra*) and commentary. The central act of commentary is in fact the making new of a pre-existing text. This does not mean, however, that the original text is done away with. If the commentarial supplement calls the original text into question by means of a particular interpretation, the original text also acts as a kind of counterforce to pure innovation. In the end, the interplay of text and commentary leads to what Kaviraj refers to as a ‘generative extension.’”

the numinous. Stewart alludes to a paradox inherent to translation that might be helpful in thinking through the manner in which the text seems to anticipate and frame its own interpretation:

this process of seeking equivalence invariable leaves out some of the original idea, while introducing new ideas into the equation. Ortega y Gasset captured something of the paradox inherent in the effort to express the thoughts of one language and its culture in those of another: “Two apparently contradictory laws are involved in all uttering. One says, ‘Every utterance is deficient’—it says less than it wishes to say. The other law, the opposite, declares, ‘Every utterance is exuberant’—it conveys more than it plans and includes not a few things we should wish left silent.”²²⁶

In order to read the *YS* in colonial India, the work of the *paṇḍit* needs to be put back into the history of yoga. The encounter between the *paṇḍit* and the Orientalist in the context of nineteenth-century yoga is best understood through translation.

Translation, that is, as a metadiscursive²²⁷ theory for thinking about the transport of concepts across temporal and linguistic boundaries,²²⁸ and also a literal product that can be read with sensitivity to both the colonial asymmetry of power and the bidirectional nature of the project. Through translation, Sanskritic knowledge remained an active force. Finally, and most speculatively, we must see how the features of the text—its generic ambiguity as *sūtra*, its dependence on commentary, and its

226 Stewart, “In Search of Equivalence,” 276–277.

227 Ibid., 277, n. 22.

228 Cf. Lipner, “Introduction,” 114. Lipner writes, “So long as there is a continual rerooting in the literary culture of the past, a careful exploration of the way literary history speaks to the present, the reformulation of traditional “units” of thematic content (Steiner) is possible. No doubt this reformulation can produce no more than authentic resonances of, lines of continuity with, the original. In Hindu culture this has traditionally been attempted by a chain of ongoing commentary on foundational texts. The Ur-text is continually revisited, inserted into the present, by commentarial retranslation, often on the basis of a gloss, word by word. This retranslation takes place within the framework of a *sampradāya* or teaching tradition, so that recognisable boundaries for the recovery of meaning are established. When it is adjudged that semantic content has been overattenuated with the passage of time, the original is retranslated to that “pristine” if not virginal meaning may be recovered (though often enough this distinction is either conflated or overlooked). One way or the other, in the process of translation of semantic content across temporal (and linguistic) boundaries, it is necessary to construct a viable bridge between the literary heritage of the past and the formulations of the present.”

thematic oscillations between cessation and the numinous, of presence and absence in the simultaneity of arrest and attainment, has acted as counter-balance to innovation in interpretation.

Chapter Conclusions

The process of translating the *YS* in nineteenth-century Calcutta involved the complex interaction of individual scholars, themselves representative of diverse social backgrounds, through institutions linked in various ways to the development of colonial power and resistance to it. As such, the process of translation is emblematic of larger attitudes and anxieties. In order to account for the interpretive life of the *YS* in this context, it is necessary to move beyond a purely epistemological evaluation of translation. It is necessary, in other words, to situate the translation of the *YS* within a social context, and to examine how translation constituted various ways of claiming authority.

This chapter has attempted to hold two methods of analysis in creative tension: the notion found in Benjamin that translation reveals a quality inherent in the original, against the theoretical necessity to account for both the individual choices of translators and the expectations of their audience(s) in a specific social context. I argue that it was not purely a matter of historical contingency that the *YS* became such a central site for translation. To do so would suggest that the translators of the *YS*, and by extension those who today turn to the *YS* now as a kind of foundational text for “classical yoga,” are uncritically engaging in a kind of invented tradition that is itself a derivative mimesis of monolithic Orientalism. In order to account for the way the *YS* as a text *mattered* to its translators and their audiences, the approach of this study is to

pursue a theoretical model of translation that moves beyond the notion of epistemic rupture between the pre- and post-colonial worlds.

In tension with this argument for the distinctive features of the *YS* that account for some of its centrality as source for interpretation, I place the process of claiming knowledge of the text within social context. The close linkage between the *YS* and the commentarial tradition provided a structure for translators to use translation as a means of social engagement. The *YS* provided a similar vocabulary to the other prominent nineteenth-century Sanskrit text subject to translation, the *Bhagavad Gita*, for negotiating a set of critical tensions that characterized the colonial period. Like the *Gita*, it concerned the tensions between praxis and renunciation, conceived in the nineteenth-century context of debates between the value of religious asceticism and rationalistic, scientific pursuits of the material world. Closer examination of the social worlds in which the *YS* was translated will disclose how translators transformed, and were transformed by, their reading of the *YS*.

Chapter 3.

“Of What Avail are the Books of the Pandit?”:¹ Orientalist Translations of the YS

Translation contributes to a reassessment of the notion of colonial epistemic rupture discussed in the previous chapter not only because it moves beyond the historiographic binaries between the pre- and post-colonial, but also because a theorization of translation does not merely “theorize purely epistemological processes”.² That is to say, theorizing the translation of the YS in colonial India is not strictly a matter of intellectual history; it also requires an account of social history. The translators of the YS to be investigated in this chapter were the first to translate the text into English, and can collectively be characterized as Orientalists. Too often, as Dodson has argued persuasively, theorizations of the production of knowledge by Orientalism have relied on the tropes of exchange and dialogue, resulting in theoretical metaphors that “set up an interface for two distinct and nearly static bodies of knowledge, one ‘Western’ and one ‘native,’ and a process of adaptation on their margins.”³ Dodson has recently attempted to move beyond epistemological questions, asking “whether knowledge should any longer even be the principal object of analysis,”⁴ and attempting to downplay

lexical focus upon valuation, whether a superfluous negative or an imagined positive one... to substantiate the various ways in which orientalism worked within the context of the Indian empire, the goals and strategies which propelled it, the evolution of its practices; and the extent of its consequences, intended and unintended.⁵

1 The title comes from H.H. Wilson’s translation of Kabir. See Horace Hayman Wilson, *Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus* (Calcutta: Bishop’s College Press, 1846), 55.

2 Michael S. Dodson, *Orientalism, Empire, and National Culture: India, 1770-1880* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 13.

3 *Ibid.*, 12.

4 *Ibid.*, 14.

5 *Ibid.*, 5.

Rather than assessing nineteenth-century Anglophone translation of the *YS* as a type of exchange of information, therefore, it is necessary to read translation as a process by which “specific instance of knowledge”—in this case, knowledge of yoga—“are characterized by the historical actors of a local context, and the rhetorical work which such characterizations perform in the construction of socio-cultural authority.”⁶ To do so, translation can be profitably read through a reconstruction of the claims made by particular translators through the act of translation.

The argument of this chapter is based on close readings of the first two translations of the *YS* into English: William Ward’s c. 1818 translation,⁷ and James Robert Ballantyne’s unfinished 1852 translation.⁸ To provide context for the changing interpretations of yoga in the intervening years, I additionally examine two essays on yoga composed between these two translations: Henry Thomas Colebrooke’s treatment of Patañjali and yoga in his 1823 essay “On the Philosophy of the Hindus,”⁹ and Horace Hayman Wilson’s 1846 treatment of yoga in *Sketch of the Religious Sections of the Hindus*.¹⁰ Finally, in pursuit of the afterlife of the text, I examine the completion of Ballantyne’s unfinished manuscript by a *paṇḍit* toward the close of the nineteenth century.

6 Ibid., 15.

7 William Ward, “Section XXI: The Doctrines of the Patñjñlũ Philosophy; Translated from a Comment on the Original Patñjñlũ, by Bhojũ-dévũ,” in *A View of the History, Literature and Mythology of the Hindoos; Including a Minute Description of Their Manners and Customs*, vol. 1, 2 vols., 2nd ed. (Serampore: Serampore Mission Press, 1818), 377–394. The publication history of Ward’s multi-volume study of Hinduism is complex and reviewed below. I consulted the 1818 edition in the manuscript archive of the Asiatic Society of West Bengal, Kolkata, in 2006–2007.

8 J.R. Ballantyne, tran., *Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali with Illustrative Extracts from the Commentary of Bhoja Rájá* (Allahabad: Presbyterian Mission Press, 1852).

9 The essay was presented in parts at public meetings of the Royal Asiatic Society. The first part, which includes the treatment of Patañjali, was first read June 21, 1823. It was subsequently published as Henry Thomas Colebrooke, “On the Philosophy of the Hindus. Part I,” *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 1 (1827): 19–43. Here I follow the pagination of the version published as Henry Thomas Colebrooke, *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus* (Williams and Norgate, 1858), 143–164.

10 Wilson, *Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus*.

The broad trajectory I wish to trace along the history of the first English publications on Pātañjala-yoga concerns the status of commentary. Two discoveries based on close textual analysis anchor my argument. First: Ward’s translation, while claiming to be based on Bhojadeva’s (Bhoja Rāja) c. 1050 C.E. commentary, *Rājamārtaṇḍa*, departs significantly from the Sanskrit. As is shown below, Ward’s translation of the Sanskrit original appears instead to be an English rendering of a Bengali gloss. While an assessment of the linguistic accuracy of Ward’s translation is important, here I do not focus on the evaluating the translation as a movement of information across linguistic boundaries. Instead, this chapter will highlight how Ward used reference to Sanskrit sources, without the concern for philological accuracy found in the pioneers of Indology such as H.T. Colebrooke, to claim rhetorical mastery over what were posited as authoritative sources. Here I will highlight the traces of Sanskrit authority in Ward’s translation of the *YS*. While Ward did not credit the *paṇḍit(s)* who assisted him, these traces demonstrate the influence of Sanskrit authority even in the absence of credited authorship. Contrary to the notion that *paṇḍits* had little agency in their own ability to claim Sanskritic tradition to counter the authority of Orientalists,¹¹ the traces of commentarial Sanskrit in Ward’s translation demonstrate the ability of *paṇḍits* to influence the construction of colonial knowledge.

Second: Ballantyne’s more philologically grounded 1852 translation, which is published with what is referred to as “Bhoja Raja’s commentary,” the *Rājamārtaṇḍa*, is

11 Cf. Dodson, *Orientalism, Empire, and National Culture: India, 1770-1880*, 7: “Similarly, Lata Mani argues that representations of *satī* were developed within a context of colonial domination, and by a particular, European, understanding of the place of Hindu scripture within the Indian normative world. Indeed, her epistemology ultimately rejects the ability of Indian informants to mould or influence colonial knowledge, for they instead become simply conduits of information which is then interpreted according to a European framework.”

in fact not based strictly on that commentary, but on what appears to be a version of Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa's eighteenth-century *vṛtti* or commentary, and includes allusions to the seventh-century *Pradīpikā* of Bhāvāgaṇeṣa. The implications here are significant when indexed against the common nineteenth-century claim that the commentarial tradition relating to Patañjali was moribund. Instead, nineteenth-century English translation drew on an ongoing commentarial tradition, including vernacular glosses, that these translators sought to disavow as they portrayed a widening gap between contemporaneous Hindu practices and what was posited as the "authentic" scriptural foundation. As such, the claims of the death of Sanskrit thought relating to yoga, and the increasingly textual readings of yoga, can best be understood as configured by nineteenth-century rhetorical battles between missionaries, Orientalists, and the indigenous intellectuals examined in the Chapter Four. Thus the translator's lament, made both by Ballantyne and Mitra, that no *paṇḍit* could teach them the yoga of Patañjali, suggests more about how writers could claim the authority of commentary in the act of translation, than it may about the ethnographic reality of the practice of yoga in the nineteenth century. The fact that eighteenth-century Sanskrit commentary was influencing nineteenth-century Orientalist translation is evidence that "the dynamicism of Sanskrit scholarship 1550-1750,"¹² as explored by the Sanskrit Knowledge Systems on the Eve of Colonialism Project,¹³ remained a source to be used by Indian intellectuals into the colonial period. In contrast, the collaborative scholarly undertaking that constitutes the Sanskrit Knowledge Systems project investigates "a flowering of [Sanskrit] scholarship lasting until the coming of colonialism, when a

12 See *ibid.*, 225, n. 3. "Dynamicism" used in the original.

13 See <http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pollock/sks/>

decline set in that ended the age-old power of Sanskrit thought to Indian intellectual history.”¹⁴ Here, the lens of translation reveals the continuing power of Sanskrit thought in a period of its putative decline.

William Ward and the first English translation of the YS

William Ward (1769-1823) traveled from England to India in 1799 to work as a missionary with the evangelical Baptist Missionary Society. The British East India Company did not officially permit missionary work until 1813,¹⁵ and as a result Ward was forced to work outside of Calcutta and settled at the Baptist Mission associated with a Danish settlement in nearby Serampore. Facing daily hardships as he struggled to gain a foothold in India and some understanding of the religion of those he sought to convert, Ward acquired a degree of fluency in the languages and cultures of India through the converts and *paṇḍits* associated with the mission. Among the materials published in his multi-volume account of Hinduism was the first English translation of the YS.

Ward omitted any reference to *paṇḍits* who assisted him with the translation, and the quality of his work was soon criticized by H.T. Colebrooke and H.H. Wilson, two Orientalist scholars publishing similarly synoptic accounts of India’s religions in the nineteenth century. According to Colebrooke,¹⁶ as is discussed below, Ward was insufficiently trained in Sanskrit and placed too much trust in the authority of

14 See <http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pollock/sks/>

15 Charles Grant (1746-1823), as director of the East India Company and member of the Clapham Sect, was instrumental in lobbying for Evangelical causes. His lobbying resulted in the so-called “pious clause” in the 1813 Charter Act of the East India Company that allowed for missionary activity in India. See discussion of the historiographic debate concerning the effects of the pious clause below.

16 Colebrooke, *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus*, 215.

indigenous intellectuals. As a result, in Colebrooke's appraisal, at least one of Ward's translations was not from the original Sanskrit, but instead based on vernacular oral commentaries. In contrast to Ward's methodology, which combined elements of what has been called proto-ethnography¹⁷ in his detailed descriptions of religious life and practices in Bengal with textual analysis of what he took to be the primary scriptural sources of Hinduism, Colebrooke sought to distinguish between the status of Patañjali's original text and the subsequent commentarial layers that he saw as accretions masking the original. Wilson described various yoga-informed traditions, drawing a distinction between popular practices and Patañjali's text.

In the previous chapter, I made two claims: first, following the work of Brian Hatcher and others, that there needs to be a continued rethinking of the notion that colonialism caused an epistemic rupture that conclusively ended the vitality of the Sanskrit commentarial tradition; and second, following the work of Gerald Larson, that the *YS* represents an attempt to synthesize philosophical and experiential approaches to yoga. Further, following Tony Stewart, I argued that translation must be examined on two levels: as a concrete product that involves finding equivalences across linguistic boundaries, and also metadiscursively as a way of theorizing religious encounter. Taking these claims together, I argue the translation of the *YS* is a kind of commentarial activity occurring in a multi-linguistic context, where competing local claims vie for universal authority. In this chapter I apply this theoretical approach to translation to a close reading of the first English translations of the *YS*, revealing the contours of the changing landscape of the interpretation of yoga in the first half of the

17 Pennington writes that "Ward is one of Europe's earliest and best proto-ethnographers." See Brian K. Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?: Britons, Indians, and Colonial Construction of Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 80.

nineteenth century. A closer look at the way in which these translators relied on the Sanskrit commentarial tradition demonstrates that it remained active, as did the YS's own attempted synthesis of tension between experience and philosophy.

The nineteenth century Orientalist and missionary interpretations of yoga that are examined in this chapter are excerpts of larger works or bodies of work. None of the scholars examined here—Ward, Colebrooke, Wilson, and J.R. Ballantyne—were scholars primarily of yoga. Instead, they were among the first English scholars to grapple with definitional questions surrounding the religions of India. Indeed, as Geoffrey Oddie¹⁸ has shown and is discussed below, Ward was likely the first Protestant missionary to use the term “Hinduism” to refer to a unified religion. In describing and delineating “Hinduism,” these scholars surveyed a wide breadth of practices and texts. As was discussed in the previous chapter, much scholarship has been devoted to the analysis of this project, particularly in light of the complicity between power, knowledge, and representation made evident in the work of Michel Foucault and Antonio Gramsci.

Here I first want to highlight two of the most important aspects of post-colonial analyses of Orientalist and missionary discourses. First, the translators and interpreters in this chapter, collectively, elevate the status of the Sanskrit text as a philosophical system over contemporary practices that are criticized as degraded, although there are some exceptions to this generalization. Secondly, the status of the *paṇḍit* as custodian of the Sanskrit commentarial tradition comes under strain and critique. Taken together in broad relief, the nature and practice of nineteenth-century

18 Geoffrey A. Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism : British Protestant Missionary Constructions of Hinduism, 1793-1900* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2006).

translation of yoga appears to support the broader conclusions about the epistemic rupture found in the works of Inden and Niranjana, and perhaps also the notion of the death of Sanskrit as has been described in the work of Pollock.

In contrast to these arguments about the broad changes in nineteenth-century intellectual discourses, in this chapter I argue that the specifics and contexts of the practice of translating the *YS*, apart of the interpretation of yoga, present a more complex picture. In excavating the translation practices involved in the production of translated texts, we find traces of the continue vitality of the Sanskrit commentarial tradition, even as it is disavowed in the interpretations of yoga made in light of these translations. Moreover, even as the authority of the Sanskrit *YS* is used to criticize contemporary practices, and while translators routinely claimed that there was no living tradition associated with Patañjali, *paṇḍits* who assisted in these early translations demonstrated a vital link to precolonial commentarial activity. The social history of the translation of the *YS* in the nineteenth century supplements the picture we have of Orientalist interpretation, and suggests that the rhetoric of interpretation may have masked the reality of the practice of translation, a practice that shares much continuity with precolonial Sanskrit commentarial activity, even as it was taking place in an interlingual context.

A brief anecdote concerning Ward provides a concrete example that will be analyzed in depth below. At the beginning of a century during which Patañjali's text was generally treated as an important remnant of a dead tradition, and at the same time that missionaries and Orientalists used their command of Sanskrit as a way of exposing gulfs between the practices of the *śāstras* and the religious and ritual actions

of Hindus, an unnamed *paṇḍit* provided an oral gloss of a commentary on the YS that formed the basis of Ward's translation.¹⁹ The apparent ironies and reversals here are subtle and to some degree conjectural. It is as if Ward, seeking to use a text to criticize practices,²⁰ commissioned a translation of a text that was supposedly an ancient artifact of a dead tradition, but published instead a rendering of a contemporary oral tradition. In order to produce the translation, a *paṇḍit* provided an oral commentary—the kind of practice that is at the heart of the notion of *paraṃparā* and the preservation of oral traditions in South Asia. Ward's presentation of the “doctrines of the Patūnjūlū philosophy, translated from a comment on the original Patūnjūlū,”²¹ may be neither a translation in the strict sense, nor made from the original, or even quite the statement of the doctrines some remote philosophy.

In spite of the author's intent, Ward's published text appears to move between two linguistic registers that extends it to a third sphere. That is to say, to take a specific example from the translation, the juxtaposition of the word “secular,” against the traces of a Bengali oral glosses, produces a dissonance between two separate accents of discourse, and one that exceeds reduction to its parts. There is something semantically recombinant²² in the dissonant juxtaposition of these discourse accents

19 Apart from the traces of oral commentary found in the translation, I have not been able to determine any other specifics regarding who this *paṇḍit* may have been, or what the process of translation entailed.

20 Ward, for instance, was known to quote *śāstras* during his street preaching to expose how the practices of brahmans had no basis in scripture, even as he apparently lacked the rigor or resources to compare the Sanskrit text with the translation he published. For analysis, see Lata Mani, *Contentious Traditions : the Debate on Sati in Colonial India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 93–100; Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism*, 170–175.

21 Ward, *View of the History, Literature and Mythology of the Hindoos; Including a Minute Description of Their Manners and Customs.*, vol. 2, vol. I, 377.

22 Here I find it productive to read Ward's translation in a manner similar to the heteroglot literary productions analyzed by Srinivas Aravamudan. Cf. Srinivas Aravamudan, *Guru English: South Asian Religion in a Cosmopolitan Language*, Translation/transnation (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006).

that produces new semantic possibilities, where Patañjali becomes a site for a much broader set of rhetorical claims about the nature of yoga. The important point, however, is that Ward's translation represents neither the decisive end of Sanskrit commentarial activity pertaining to yoga, nor a strictly "textual" artifact, despite Ward's polemical intentions.²³

The first English translation of the *YS* thus appears to be a translation of an oral commentary on the *sūtras*, likely from a vernacular source. The quality of Ward's translations was subsequently criticized by Orientalist scholars for being insufficiently philological and Ward's method of scholarship for being prone to over-reliance on native informants, whose authority and interpretive practices were increasingly challenged. By the time of the second English translation of the *YS*, James Ballantyne sought a more collaborative process whereby *paṇḍits* would contribute to improving the translation. Here, however, we must ask about the nature of the collaboration and how it might be compared to, or distinguished from, a notion of agency.²⁴ Resistance may be better read through fragments²⁵ and traces in the writing of these translators, particular the vernacular writers examined later in this study who were in many

23 In reference to Ward's knowledge of Sanskrit, Oddie quotes Marshman's assessment that he was "but imperfectly acquainted with Sanskrit." See Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism*, 169; citing John Clark Marshman, *The Life and Times of Carey, Marshman, and Ward* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, & Roberts, 1859), vols. 2, 443.

24 The distinction between cooperation and agency is one that Tony Ballantyne draws attention to in his critical review of recent literature on British Imperial History, including that of Andrew Porter. He writes that "[much] recent work on religious encounters on colonial frontiers stresses the ability of non-European peoples to exercise their agency, even within the uneven power relations of colonialism. That agency might have been expressed in any number of other ways, ranging from outright hostility to a zeal that unsettled missionaries. ... Unfortunately, Porter's work provides little insight into these kinds of encounters." See Tony Ballantyne, "Review: Religion, Difference, and the Limits of British Imperial History," *Victorian Studies* 47, no. 3 (April 1, 2005): 441–2; Reviewing Andrew Porter, *Religion Versus Empire? : British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700-1914* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2004).

25 Compare Judith Okely, "Defiant Moments: Gender, Resistance and Individuals," *Man* 26, no. 1 (March 1, 1991): 3–22.

respects idiosyncratic. Translation, as an activity that occurs between linguistic and cultural boundaries, creates a richly undetermined semantic field in which fragmentary gestures of resistance can be read. Bilingual translation complicates the binary between cooperation and resistance, making evident the possibility of “resistance-in-collaboration.”²⁶ The translated text, particularly the translation that makes the context of multiple linguistic registers evident, is fragmented, rather than mastered. In the context of the *YS*, itself a fragment of a larger text-complex that requires commentary, the process of translation magnified the resistant possibilities of the text, even in contexts that appear transected with the asymmetrical power relations evoked by the terms “collaboration” and “cooperation.”

The previous chapter dealt in some detail with the historiographic questions surrounding Orientalism, particularly in the context of whether the relationship between knowledge and power that arguably characterized Orientalism is adequately described in the case of South Asia through a conception of epistemic rupture. The role of *paṇḍits*, often referred to as “native informants” in the colonial literature, is central to how the nature of rupture can be re-theorized through translation, as a process that involved both continuities as well as change.

The role of missionaries in the development of the British Empire raises similar questions. Were missionaries simply agents of empire and its attendant economic exploitation, or did they represent a voice of protest? Was the missionary project of introducing Christianity in colonies such as India unidirectional, or to what degree did indigenous groups play a constructive role in defining the process? Without getting

26 Lou Ratté, *The Uncolonised Heart* (Calcutta: Orient Longman, 1995), 277.

detained in a detailed review of the literature, it is necessary to frame the present reading of Ward's translation within the important body of research that surrounds missiology and empire. My point here is not to resolve the historiographic tension that exists between postcolonial readings such as those of Talal Asad and Gauri Viswanathan, that view missionary efforts and the development of empire as mutually constitutive or at least mutually supportive, against revisionist accounts of historians such as Brian Stanley and Andrew Porter, who dispute the thesis that mission and empire always acted in concert.²⁷

Instead, I argue here that the translated text of the YS as published by Ward reveals a set of plot twists and reversals in the historical narrative of the nineteenth-century interpretation of yoga that warrant closer examination. The linkages between text and commentary in the case of the YS remained active even as European translator's increasingly placed emphasis on establishing a "correct text" that could putatively be used to contrast popular practice with classical prestige. These transitions accompanied changing attitudes toward the position of the *paṇḍit* as a source of authority. The reading of the first English translation of the YS demonstrates that in the first half of the nineteenth century, Sanskritic commentary and exegesis remained an active force in how yoga was interpreted.

While Ward attempted to be descriptive and in some respects utilized a proto-ethnographic manner of research,²⁸ his interest in texts as arbiters of (Hindu) religious

27 For an overview of the debate in light of recent publications, see Ballantyne, "Review."

28 While this study examines Ward's translation of the YS, that translation is a part of a much longer survey of religious beliefs in practices, much of which was based on Ward's long stay in India and first-hand observation of Hindu practices. For this reason his work is not strictly an analysis of sacred texts; indeed, by far the majority of Ward's *Account* is occupied with description of religious customs, practices, and beliefs. As Brian Pennington has argued, "Ward attempted to paint the actual deeds, convictions, and moods of those Bengali Hindus he studied aside from the

practices, and his polemical motivations for ignoring popular Bengali religious, set the stage for a textualization of yoga that shrank the wide array of yogas and yogic practices to a single textual instantiation, i.e., the YS. However, it is precisely here that the linkages between commentary and text remain active even as they are transformed by translation: In as much as Ward sought a “correct text” for yoga, he nonetheless published an oral interpretation of Patañjali that hints at the preservation of indigenous modes of commentary that remained evident in the Orientalist translators who followed in Ward’s path. The Sanskrit text and its commentary were fused together in Ward’s translation as a hybrid text that complicates a binary opposition between these two approaches.²⁹

Ward’s Background

William Ward (1769–1823), born in Derby, England. His profession was originally that of an apprentice printer in Derby, and he toward the end of the eighteenth century he worked as an editor at various British newspapers.³⁰ During his youth Ward’s political sensibilities had been influenced by the French revolution, lending a liberal outlook that involved him in occasional controversy.³¹ Such liberal sentiments appear to have influenced his missionary work in complex ways, such as his advocating for women’s education in India even as he published writings that have been described as

idealized versions of religious practice available in Sanskrit texts. For this last reason, Ward is one of Europe’s earliest and best proto-ethnographers.” Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 79–80.

29 This is something like an echo of what Larson identifies as the split between philological (textual) interpretations of the YS and experiential (ethnographic) interpretations, two approaches that split from the tension between practice and philosophy that the YS attempts to synthesize.

30 Marshman, *The Life and Times of Carey, Marshman, and Ward*, vols. 1, 96.; See also Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism*, 159.

31 Marshman, *The Life and Times of Carey, Marshman, and Ward*, vols. 1, 94. In one incident cited by Marshman, Ward invited a political radical he invited to speak at his church without the consent of his superiors. Objecting to the event, an angry mob is said to have forcibly ejected the speaker and the audience from the church.

propagandistic attempt to create an “aversion to Hinduism” among his intended audience of British readers.³² Ward sought to counter the trend of European fascination with India, what Thomas Trautmann has referred to as “Indomania,”³³ by criticizing religious practices and advocating for reform. The spirit of Ward’s criticism, as Geoffrey Oddie argues, is based on “his basic assumptions especially about the brahmanical, unified and closely integrated nature of the ‘Hindu religion.’”³⁴

Ward became a Baptist in August, 1796,³⁵ and in 1799 he traveled to India to be a missionary with the evangelical Baptist Missionary Society. Together with William Carey (1761-1834) and Joshua Marshman (1768-1837), Ward worked at the Baptist missionary associated with the Danish settlement at Serampore, near Calcutta, where he helped to oversee the printing press that published editions of the New Testament translated into various Indian languages.³⁶ The quality of these translations, and the purport of the evangelical mission to distribute Bibles, was called into question by contemporaneous writers including the French missionary Abbé Jean Antoine Dubois, who criticized Ward in an 1823 publication,³⁷ but Ward’s work put him in close contact with a number of *paṇḍits* associated with the Serampore mission. Ward drew on these

32 Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism*, 178, 180; See also Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 76–77; Pennington refers also to Copley characterization of British Protestant missionary discourse as “bigoted ideology,” see A Copley, *Religions in Conflict : Ideology, Cultural Contact, and Conversion in Late-colonial India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 13.

33 See Thomas Trautmann, *Aryans and British India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 62–98.

34 Geoffrey A. Oddie, “Review, Was Hinduism Invented?, By Brian Pennington,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 66, no. 03 (2007): 170.

35 According to Oddie, Ward was originally Anglican although his mother was influenced by “the teachings of the Wesleyan Methodists.” Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism*, 161. Pennington describes him as “[r]aised by a pious Methodist widow.” Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 78. Cf. Marshman, *The Life and Times of Carey, Marshman, and Ward*, vols. 1, 93.

36 E. I. Carlyle, ‘Ward, William (1769–1823)’, rev. Brian Stanley, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004.

37 Jean Dubois, *Letters on the State of Christianity in India* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1823); For discussion, see Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 69–72.

contacts as he began a long project of studying the practices and religious texts of those he sought to convert.

Ward is particularly notable in the history of religion for being among the first to employ the term “Hinduism” as a systematically unified religion.³⁸ In describing Hinduism, Ward relied on both a proto-ethnographic³⁹ approach and a privileging of textual authority,⁴⁰ two divergent approaches that create a contradictory image of Ward’s work. The blending of two approaches that would increasingly be seen at odds with one another⁴¹ made possible Ward’s peculiar translation of the *YS*, which was in fact a rendering of an oral commentary, as is shown below. Although the text of the *YS* is a small part of Ward’s larger examination of Hinduism, he alludes to yoga as a kind of essential feature to that system. In the preface to his 1820 edition Ward describes his work as

a rapid view of the Hindoo sacred code, as a grand system, regular in all its parts, and proposing a defined and magnificent object, nothing less than the yogee absorption into the divine nature, and, to the common people, a

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- 38 Geoffrey Oddie links Ward’s use of the term to the work of Thomas Maurice (1754-1824) and Bengal-based Orientalists, as well as that of the East India Company director and evangelical supporter Charles Grant (1746-1823). Oddie writes that Ward adopted “the idea of Hindu religion being ‘the one unified pan-Indian system,’” and that “Ward was one of the first Protestant missionaries, if not the first, to use the term ‘Hindooism’ in his writing when it appeared in his diary in December 1800.” See Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism*, 170.
- 39 Pennington argues that “Ward attempted to paint the actual deeds, convictions, and modes of those Bengali Hindus he studied aside from the idealized versions of religious practice available in Sanskrit texts. For this last reason, Ward is one of Europe’s earliest and best proto-ethnographers.” See Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 79–80.
- 40 In contrast with Pennington’s argument, Oddie contends that “Ward was given to prioritizing textual and brahmanical literature at the expense of non-brahmanical writings and oral tradition. In other words, for him, as for so many other missionaries, the sacred Brahmanical texts were ‘the real’ Hinduism. Baptists including Ward, though in some ways socially radical, remained elitists in their views of the qualifications and expertise required in religious leadership.” See Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism*, 173.
- 41 For an account of the “paradigm shift” between philological and anthropological approaches to religious material and myth in the nineteenth century, see Bruce Lincoln, “The History of Myth from the Renaissance to the Second World War,” in *Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology, and Scholarship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 70–71.

gradual advance towards the same state.⁴²

In seeking to define Hinduism “as a grand system,” Ward, like the Orientalists, privileged texts as authoritative sources of religion. Geoffrey Oddie notes this predilection in the work of the Serampore missionaries around Ward who placed

an emphasis on the long-held Protestant tradition, that ‘real religion’ was scriptural and that usage or custom by itself, without a sanction or basis in scripture, did not constitute the essence of ‘real’ religion.⁴³

Ward, according to Oddie, “more than any of the other Serampore Baptists, influenced Protestant thinking and consolidated what became the predominant paradigm or overriding idea of Hinduism.”⁴⁴ Unlike Carey, who wrote that he found it “time lost to translate” Sanskrit scriptures,⁴⁵ Ward included a selection of translation from Sanskrit in his series of books on Hinduism first published in 1811, of which the translation of the *YS* was a part.

Ward’s work on the Serampore edition of the New Testament linked him to the process of translation, and as such Ward began learning Indic languages, primarily Bengali, from teachers associated with the Baptist mission.⁴⁶ Ward relied on a number of *paṇḍits* for making translations of Sanskrit, including Rāmnāth Vidyāvācaspati and Mr̥tyuñjay Vidyālaṅkāṛ.⁴⁷ Lata Mani cites an entry from 1806 in which Ward describes meeting with Vidyālaṅkāṛ, from whom Ward was “anxious to get... an intelligible and genuine account of the Hindoo Philosophy.”⁴⁸ Vidyālaṅkāṛ became the head *paṇḍit* for

42 Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism*, 173 Quoting Ward 1817-20, Vol. 1: xxxiv; Vol. 3: lxx.

43 *Ibid.*, 151.

44 *Ibid.*, 159.

45 Quoted in *ibid.*, 156.

46 The project of translating the Bible into South Asian languages was begun by William Carey and was assisted also by the British Orientalist and missionary, Joshua Marshman.

47 Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism*, 169.

48 Mani, *Contentious Traditions*, 124, citing Ward’s journal from the BMS archive, February 9, 1806.

Bengali at the College of Fort William and an associate of William Carey, who considered him one of the best Sanskrit scholars.⁴⁹ Vidyālaṅkāra also published a Bengali edition of the *Sāṃkhyapravacana*,⁵⁰ and it is possible that he assisted with the translation of the YS that appears in Ward's *Account*. Indeed, as Mani shows, Ward's journals make frequent reference to traveling to Calcutta to work with the head *paṇḍit* at the College of Fort William, who at the time was Vidyālaṅkāra.⁵¹ In learning Bengali, Ward appears to have primarily been trained by the *paṇḍit* Rām Rām Basu (1759-1813).⁵² Basu, who had been Carey's first teacher, was a *kāyasthā* and was often critical of brahmins,⁵³ a sentiment that appears to have reinforced Ward's own suspicion of what he saw as the priestly authority afforded to brahmins.⁵⁴ Recent converts to Christianity were another source of knowledge for Ward: Mani has also noted that in a journal entry that Ward made reference to learning "Hindoostanee" from a convert.⁵⁵

In his published writings, Ward makes few references to the *paṇḍits* who

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- 49 Rosane Rocher, "Henry Thomas Colebrooke and the Marginalization of Indian Pandits," in *Pramāṇakīrtiḥ : Papers Dedicated to Ernst Steinkellner on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday*, ed. Ernst Steinkellner (Wien: Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2007), 746.
- 50 Brajendranāth Bandyopādhyāya, *Mr̥tyuñjaya Vidyālaṅkāra, Sāhitya-sādhak-carit-mālā*. (Calcutta: Baṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣad, 1958), 25. This is the *Sāṃkhyā* text, not the *Yogabhāṣya* attributed to Vyāsa that is also referred as *Sāṃkhyapravacana*.
- 51 Mani, *Contentious Traditions*, 124.
- 52 For an analysis of Ramram Basu's contributions to historiography, see Ranajit. Guha, *History at the Limit of World-history*, Italian Academy Lectures (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).
- 53 See Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism*, 129. Oddie notes that "[t]hroughout the period 1793-1900 British missionaries were not therefore entirely dependent on brahman teachers as linguistic consultants" (129). Oddie also cites David Kopf, *British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance; the Dynamics of Indian Modernization, 1773-1835*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 125; and Sisir Das, *Sahibs and Munshis : an Account of the College of Fort William* (Calcutta: Orion Publications, 1978), 21, 74-5.
- 54 Oddie writes that "so exaggerated was Ward's view of the influence and the extent of brahman control that he seems to have believed that they had successfully stifled all opposition. See Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism*, 172.
- 55 Mani, *Contentious Traditions*, 124.

assisted him in translation,⁵⁶ and in these instances the *paṇḍits* remain unnamed. Ward's antipathy toward brahmanical Hinduism is often expressed as caricatures of *paṇḍits*, even as the *paṇḍits* such as Basu were also critical to Ward's own work. *Paṇḍits* played a conflicted role in the narrative that Ward sought to develop in describing Hinduism as a system. As Michael Dodson has argued more broadly,

[t]he continuing dilemma for nineteenth-century European educators and missionaries in India was, therefore, that the cultural authority of *brahmins* represented the key to the greater success of their respective projects, while they also posed a principal impediment by virtue of the perception of their moral and civilisational shortcomings. As such, this elite group had to be courted and simultaneously disavowed.⁵⁷

In some instances, Ward uses the figure of the *paṇḍit* to illustrate nonessential points or to make implicitly derogatory comments about Hinduism. For example, Ward mentions a conversation with a *paṇḍit* in the context of a section in his *Accounts* on superstition: "When I asked a learned pundit why the Hindoos had been so often subdued by other nations seeing they were in possession of incantations so potent, he said that those for destroying enemies were difficult to be procured."⁵⁸ In addition to serving the rhetorical function of exposing supposed shortcomings and hypocrisies implicit in Hinduism, such statements are in keeping with Ward's general suspicion of priestly authority.

Ward's Publications

Apart from a few references, including a note on January 8, 1811, in which Ward states that "the permission of Government to publish my book was received,"⁵⁹ as Mani

56 See, for example, William Ward, *Account of the Writings, Religion, and Manners, of the Hindoos* (Serampore: Printed at the Mission-Press, 1811), 212, 474.

57 Dodson, *Orientalism, Empire, and National Culture: India, 1770-1880*, 60.

58 Ward, *Account of the Writings, Religion, and Manners, of the Hindoos*, 156.

59 Mani, *Contentious Traditions*, 124.

observes, there are few clues in Ward's own words about the nature of producing his work. The main source for biographical understanding of Ward is from his unpublished journal and several unpublished letters.⁶⁰ Important differences in Ward's appraisal of Hinduism emerge between his polemical published writings and the less propagandistic tone of his personal journals. The publication history of his encyclopedic account of Hindu practices and beliefs in which the translation of the YS appears is complex: the first edition was published as *Account of the Writings, Religion and Manners of the Hindoos*, and later editions are generally titled *A View of the History, Literature and Mythology of the Hindoos*. Both were printed at the Serampore Press, and later in British, American, and other Indian editions. The first edition was in four volumes, and later editions were published as two and three volume sets. Pennington, citing a journal entry by Ward, dates the printing of the first volume of the first edition to 1807.⁶¹ The last edition published during Ward's lifetime was published in London in 1822.⁶²

Lata Mani has investigated changes made in the text between the 1811 and 1822 editions, arguing that the legalization of missionary activity in 1813 affected Ward's presentation of Hinduism, as did evangelical debates in Britain. The tone of the editions published after 1813 are more propagandistic and polemical than those published before the ban was lifted. Mani argues that the differences in the two editions "exemplify the discursive and political moments of their production and

60 I have not consulted directly these materials, which are located at the Baptist Missionary Society archive in London. Recently a microfilm version of the BMS archive has been made available by the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives in Nashville, Tennessee.

61 Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 204, n. 76. Pennington notes that "[m]ost historians date the publication of Ward's first volume to 1806."

62 Mani, *Contentious Traditions*, 122. Cf. also p. 215, n. 2.

which may be summarized as expressing the shift of the text from one resembling a miscellany to one approximating an ethnography.”⁶³ Similar to Mani, Oddie has identified important tensions between Ward’s published presentations and his discussions in his unpublished journals. For example, Oddie shows a striking discrepancy between the attention given to the Bengali popular religious movement of the Kartābhajās and similar movements in Ward’s journals, and the scant mention made in his volumes on Hinduism.⁶⁴ The differences between the representations of Hinduism in Ward’s public and private writings demonstrate his rhetorical motivations: the devotional, egalitarian traditions of the Kartābhajās appear to be intentionally disregarded in his public accounts of Hinduism as an essentially “priestly” and mediated religion, points that were linked to Baptist criticism of Roman Catholicism.

If one accepts that the change in the 1813 charter of the East India Company aligned colonial and missionary interests, then the differences in tone and content between the editions published before and after that date appear to demonstrate a self-consciously polemical rhetoric. This point, made by Lata Mani, is strengthened by Oddie’s assessment of the differences in how Ward portrays Hinduism in his published writings compared to his private journals. The power and centrality of “Brahmanism” is stressed in Ward’s publications for rhetorical and polemical reasons, even as he demonstrates his familiarity with anti-hierarchical popular movements in his personal writings.⁶⁵ For this reason, Oddie describes Ward as employing a selective,

63 Ibid., 122.

64 Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism*, 175.

65 On this point, see Oddie. “In spite of their increasing power and popularity, references to the Kartabhajas in the 1822 edition of his book are, for example, restricted to just one in over 1,400 pages of text. Indeed, reflection on the reasons for this discrepancy suggests a great deal about

propagandistic approach to the material:

As with so many propagandists, his technique was to select, leaving out of account or playing down the better features while dwelling on the very worst teachings and practices he could possibly find.⁶⁶

While Ward's interpretation of Hinduism is constrained by the motivations of polemics, his encounter with the translation of the YS is more complex.

Ward and Translation

Translation played an important role in Ward's understanding of his missionary work. In a letter, Ward describes the rationale for translating the Bible into Sanskrit⁶⁷ as a means of making the scripture available to all through a trans-regional language:

We have begun to print the Shanscrit Testament, the publication of which is of great importance, as a faithful translation into this language will render translations into other Eastern languages easy and certain. Every eastern Pundit knows the Shanscrit, and could make from it a good translation into his own vernacular tongue. By translating the scriptures therefore into this language we, in effect, translate them into all the languages of Asia.⁶⁸

Other references to the process of translation exist within the text of the various editions of his work. In the beginning to the 1818 edition, for instance, Ward describes

the objectives of Ward's book. ... Clearly the Kartabhajas and other low-caste religious movements did not fit easily into Ward's model of what Hinduism was supposed to be. Too much attention to this group would throw doubt on the idea that it was a unified theological and religious system controlled by brahmans who kept 'nine-tenths of the population' in a condition of slavery. The Kartabhaja and other egalitarian religious movements (quite common in Bengal in the early nineteenth century) tended to contradict the long-held European assumption that the brahmans were the key to what was increasingly seen as the one overriding pan-Indian religion. But the other fact about the Kartabhajas, which was for Ward best left unsaid, was the deep commitment of so many of their followers to a moral and egalitarian lifestyle. As we have noted, Ward's basic purpose was to *contrast* Hinduism with Christianity, not to point to parallels and similarities. If he did too much of this, what was the purpose of mission?" Ibid., 177 Italics in original.

66 Ibid., 178.

67 The Serampore Mission Press printed the New Testament in Sanskrit translation in 1808. For details on the publication history of the translation of the Bible into Sanskrit and vernacular languages, see Robert A. Yelle, *The Language of Disenchantment: Protestant Literalism and Colonial Discourse in British India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 254.

68 From a letter dated 6 June. Samuel Stennett, *Memoirs of the Life of the Rev. William Ward* (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1825), 170.

the low regard for the Bengali language among many of his Western contemporaries: “Many Europeans despise the Bengalee as a poor sterile language, incapable of being the vehicle of communication except on the most common and trifling subjects.”⁶⁹ He contrasts this disdain with the appreciation afforded to Hindustani, which he criticizes as a language “entirely without a character,” one that is regarded by these same unnamed European scholars as “as a universal language, though it is not the language of even one Hindoo village throughout India, nor does a single Hindoo in any part of the country speak it as his mother tongue.”⁷⁰ The dismissal of Bengali, Ward continues, is due to a “want of information.”⁷¹ It is a language—especially “with the help of its parent the Sanskrit”⁷²—that is capable of expressing anything, even metaphysics. The main evidence Ward uses to persuade his reader is based on the project of translating the Bible at Serampore: “the whole Bible has been translated and printed in Bengalee; and every one must confess, that to give a faithful translation of some parts of the Scriptures, especially the epistles of the apostles Paul and Peter, a language must be very copious.”⁷³ Building on the classical reference and the understanding of Orientalists, Ward notes that the construction of Bengali is “somewhat similar to the Greek.”⁷⁴

Ward’s appreciation for the expressive power of an Indian language appears at odds with his rhetoric in describing Hinduism. The tension here may reflect some of the contingencies of translation. Oddie, drawing on the work of Peter Marshall, argues

69 William Ward, *A View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindoos: Including a Minute Description of Their Manners and Customs, and Translations from Their Principal Works*, vol. 1 (Serampore: Serampore Mission Press, 1818), vols. 1, xxi.

70 Ibid.

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid.

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.

that:

The pressure was on editors, as well as on missionaries communicating with a European audience, to Christianize Hinduism... Then, as now, the problem was how to find the best *equivalents* in English without losing too much of the original meaning. Often, however, something was lost in translation, and when [Rev. Josiah] Pratt [the founder and editor of the *Missionary Register*] or other editors referred to Hindu ideas of God, incarnation, salvation and so on, this sometimes suggested closer parallels between Hindu and Christian thought than was actually the case.⁷⁵

Here we see how the purposes of translation were embedded in a social context: Ward actively selected not only the terms in which he would render his translation, as he does with the word “secularism,” but also in the cultural translations that he refrains from making (such as a comparison between the Kartābhajā and Christianity).

Proto-Ethnography, Elevation of Texts, and Missionary Strategies

The polemical tone of Ward’s account, as Susan Bayly has noted, had resonances beyond the specific context of Hinduism, for Ward’s vision of the centrality of the *brahman* to the “system” was linked to larger debates within the history of Christianity:

The influential four-volume polemic by the Rev. William Ward (publ. 1817-20) characterized Hindu faith as a ‘fabric of superstitions’ concocted by Brahmans, ‘the most complete system of absolute oppression that perhaps ever existed’. Christian polemics like Ward’s were clearly a major if unacknowledged source for later academic theorists, including those modern anthropologists who came to regard the Brahman as arbiter and moral center of the Hindu social order.... This vision of immoral Brahman despotism clearly drew on popular English Protestant mythology of a priest-ridden, tyrannized papist Europe awaiting liberation by the triumph of the Reformation spirit. Beneficent British rule, said Ward, had already been inducing some ‘degraded’ lower-caste Hindus to throw off their ‘bramhinal fetters’ [sic].⁷⁶

It is important to note here how’s Ward’s translation related both to the local context

75 Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism*, 221.

76 Susan Bayly, *Caste, Society and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age*, 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2001), 110–111. References to Ward, 1817–20, III:69, 65.

of his own missionary work in Serampore, but also to articulating a Baptist criticism of competing Catholic missionaries. In this sense, as Brian Pennington has written, Ward's missionary in India circulated back to Britain and Europe, with different ramifications.⁷⁷ Ward, for instance, was often quoted in publications such as *Missionary Papers* that "portrayed missionary life through the details of exotic encounter that would call forth the readers' desire to spread British religion and civilization."⁷⁸ In the early years of writing and publication, as has already been noted, missionary activity was not yet legalized by the East India Company, and the work of missionaries was not formerly allowed until 1813.⁷⁹ The rationale here is complex, as there were ongoing debates between Orientalists, who were generally supportive of British patronage of Indian religious institutions, and the Anglicists, who favored the replacement of these institutions with British, putatively secular, educational systems.

By 1835, the time of Thomas Babington Macaulay's *Minute on Indian Education* that dismissed the value of "Oriental" knowledge wholesale, the debate had largely been one by the Anglicists and the evangelical groups that aided in their campaign, including the influential William Wilberforce of the Clapham sect, a group that made a moral case for the abolition of slavery. One of the larger implications of the victory of the Anglicist argument was that British national identity, while describing itself as secular, drew on specifically Christian resources in developing a notion of a "moral state," with its civilizing mission, to support colonialism. Thus, as Peter van der Veer has shown, the disagreements between Utilitarians, evangelicals, Orientalists, and Anglicists in fact disguised a shared "moral universe" that was rooted in a historically

77 Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*

78 *Ibid.*, 50.

79 Mani, *Contentious Traditions*, 121.

contingent understanding of religious identity.⁸⁰ Because the East India Company did not embrace missionary activity and at times actively discouraged it during the period when Ward was working on the first edition of *Account of the Writings, Religion, and Manners, of the Hindoos*, Ward's tone toward Indian religions may have thus been tempered in awareness of the attitudes of the Company officials who had some leverage on missionary activity.

Ward's writing, furthermore, raises questions about representation and ethics, and here implications remain for later scholarship. Brian Pennington has noted that “[r]elying on the findings of Sanskrit scholar Henry Colebrooke, Ward conducted very long discussions of the Vedic texts, the six Hindu schools of philosophy (the *darśanas*)”.⁸¹ As far as I have been able to determine, Ward's general treatment of Patañjali may be based on Colebrooke's analyses, but I have found no translation of the commentary of Bhoja Deva by Colebrooke that is found in Ward's account.

Colebrooke, whose treatment of yoga is discussed below, was critical of Ward's effort. Colebrooke thought that the translation of the *Vedāntasūtra* found in the same collection of Ward's scarcely deserved to be termed a translation at all:

80 “Whatever the debates between evangelicals and Utilitarians—and they were considerable—none of them would have denied that civil society and the forms of knowledge on which it was based were ultimately part and parcel of Christian civilization. Gauri Viswanathan has argued forcefully that the teaching of ‘secular’ English literature, as recommended in Macaulay's *Minute*, amounts to a relocation of cultural value from belief and dogma to language, experience, and history. This relocation can be detected in the intellectual differences that simultaneously divide and connect Matthew Arnold with his father, Thomas, as well as Thomas Babington Macaulay with his father, Zachary. Despite their differences, these people are in the same moral universe. ... However much the British tried to hide the Christian roots of their colonial policies behind the mask of religious neutrality, the colonized ‘natives’ were not to be fooled. It is often rightly observed that there were great differences between the operations of the missionary societies in India and those of the state, but these were differences within a shared colonizing project.” Peter van der Veer, *Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), 42–3.; Referencing Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of conquest: literary study and British rule in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 117.

81 Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 81.

[I]t is no version of the original text and seems to have been made from an oral exposition through the medium of a different language, probably the Bengalese. This will be evident to the oriental scholar on the slightest comparison: for example, the introduction, which does not correspond with the original in so much as a single word, the name of the author's preceptor alone excepted; nor is there a word of the translated introduction countenanced by any of the commentaries.... The meaning of the original is certainly not to be gathered from such translations of this and (as Mr. Ward terms them) of other principal works of the Hindus which, he has presented to the public.⁸²

Here the theory of translation employed by Colebrooke to criticize Ward rests on a heightened awareness of differences between oral expositions, commentarial Sanskrit, and the original meaning, a set of difference that will contribute to distinguishing the method of Indology from the aims of missionary work, but one that also instituted a sharper distinction between textuality and orality.

At the same time, Ward situated his translation of the YS within a selection of what he took to be a canonical selection of Hindu philosophical texts. The motivations for this may have been implicitly critical, as Jacqueline Suthren Hirst has observed, when she writes “elaborated on these in the second edition of 1822, including translations of primary sources for each school. By taking each *shastra* in turn, his intention seems to have been to show the comprehensive incoherence of the various Hindoo texts and doctrines.”⁸³

Analysis of Ward's Patañjali: Translation and Oral Exposition

Due to the length and complexity of the translations to be investigated in this dissertation, it is impossible to provide complete analyses of each text. Instead, I will use representative samples to give a sense of each style of translation. The analysis of

82 Colebrooke, *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus*, 215.

83 Nile Green, *Religion, Language, and Power* (London: Routledge, 2008), 111.

Ward's translation is based on the version published in 1818 in the edition found in the manuscript archives of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta. It is referred as a "Comment on the original Patañjali, by Bhoja Deva" and it is twenty-five pages long in the printed 1818 edition. Most likely the "comment" referred to in the title is the eleventh-century⁸⁴ *Rājamārtaṇḍa*, which is also known to as the *Bhojavṛtti*,⁸⁵ the commentary or gloss (*vṛtti*) of Bhoja. It could also be based on an abstract of Bhoja's *vṛtti*,⁸⁶ such as the *Yoga-vṛtti-saṅgraha* of Udayaṅkara.⁸⁷ Rājendralāl Mitra's translation, examined in Chapter Five, appears to be the only complete translation of Bhoja's *vṛtti*.⁸⁸ Bhoja's *vṛtti* figures prominently in the nineteenth-century translations of the YS with commentary, perhaps because it is the first text to associate the Patañjali of the YS with two other texts (the *Mahābhāṣya*, a prominent commentary on the grammarian Pāṇini, and a text on medicine that is no longer extant), and therefore was a source for attempts to date the YS.⁸⁹

Ward's translation does not follow closely either Patañjali's *sūtra* or Bhoja's *vṛtti*.

As will be demonstrated in the textual analysis, the translation appears instead to be a

84 Edwin Bryant, *The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali: A New Edition, Translation, and Commentary with Insights from the Traditional Commentators*, 1st ed. (New York: North Point Press, 2009), xxxiv.

85 Cf. Asoke Chatterjee Sastri's introduction to James Ballantyne, *The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali: With Bhojavṛtti Called Rājamārtaṇḍa*, Rev. ed. (Delhi: Parimal, 1990).

86 There are two separate meanings for the term *vṛtti* that are relevant to the discussion at hand: it is a general term for a type of commentary on a Sanskrit text (particularly, in this case, a *sūtra* genre text); that is the meaning in the context discussed here. The term *vṛtti* it is also a technical term in Pātañjala-yoga that refers the turnings or fluctuations of the *citta*, or "mind stuff." The *vṛtti*, in the second meaning, are said to be of five distinct types, and it is the goal of the YS to bring these fluctuations to a state of cessation. This sense of the term is discussed in relation to the YS below.

87 cf. Rājendralāl Mitra, tran., *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali with the Commentary of Bhoja Rājā*, Bibliotheca Indica (Calcutta: The Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1883), 227.

88 Gerald James Larson and Ram Shankar Bhattacharya, eds., *Yoga: India's Philosophy of Meditation*, vol. XII, Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2008); A partial translation is found in, Wolfgang Theilkuhl, "Die Yogasutran Des Patanjali Mit Dem Kommentar Rajamartanda Des Bhojadeva" (1927); Rājendralāl Mitra, *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali with the Commentary of Bhoja Rājā*.

89 Bryant, *The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali*, xxxiv.

rendering of the oral commentary on Bhoja's gloss by an unattributed *paṇḍit*. The beginning of the translation appears to follow Patañjali's text, but it soon departs from the Sanskrit. Sections are summarized, and apparently extraneous concepts are introduced. It concludes with a restating of the basic premises of the YS.

Ward's translation skips over the first line of the YS, as well as the commentary on it found in Bhoja's *vṛtti*. The first line of the YS acts as an introduction to the topic :

athayogānuśāsanam
Now the discipline of yoga.

In a fashion typical of the *vṛtti* genre, Bhoja's Sanskrit commentary explains the use of the word “*atha*” as an auspicious gesture to commence the work:

*anena sūtreṇa śāstrasya saṃbandha-abhidheya-prayojana-anya-ākhyāyante,
atha-śabda-adhikāra-dyotakaḥ maṅgala-arthakaḥ ca*⁹⁰

*This sūtra communicates the connection, meaning, and purpose of the śāstra, the word “atha” mainly making manifest authority and for the sense of auspiciousness.*⁹¹

The *vṛtti* continues in this fashion, providing word-for-word explanations of the *sūtras*.

J.R. Ballantyne's translation,⁹² which is discussed below, also included a translation of Bhoja's *vṛtti*, but in that case the translation's relation to the Sanskrit text is clearer.

Ballantyne glosses each of the Sanskrit words in the fashion of the *vṛtti*. “The expression ‘Now, then,’ intimates [that] a [distinct] topic [here commences]; and it serves as a benediction [—the particle *atha* being regarded as an auspicious one].”⁹³

90 Patañjali, *Yogasūtra*, with Bhojadeva's *Rājamārtaṇḍa* and Vācaspati Miśra's *Tattvavaiśārādī*, ed. Kāśīnātha Śāstri Āgāśe, Ānandāśrama (Poona, 1904), 2.

91 Unless otherwise indicated, the translations accompanying the Sanskrit from the YS and the *vṛtti* in this chapter are my own. There is no complete English translation of the *Rājamārtaṇḍa*. For reference here I made use of Ram Shankar Bhattacharya's lucid summary, found in Larson and Bhattacharya, *Yoga: India's Philosophy of Meditation*, XII:266–282.

92 Ballantyne, *Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali with Illustrative Extracts from the Commentary of Bhoja Rājā*.

93 *Ibid.*, 2.

Ward’s translation begins, “The restraining of the mind, and confining it to internal meditations, is called yogü.”⁹⁴ This is a fairly straightforward rendition of the Sanskrit of the second *sūtra* of the YS:

yogaścittavṛttinirodhaḥ

Yoga is the cessation of the turnings of the *citta*, or “mind”.

Bhoja’s *vṛtti*, or commentary, proceeds at this point to gloss each of the terms found in the *sūtra* with more detailed explanation. In the *Rājamārtaṇḍa* edition published by the Ānandāśrama press, the gloss of YS 1.2 begins:

*Cittasya nirmala-sattva-pariṇāma-rūpasya yā vṛttayaḥ aṅga-aṅgi-bhāva-pariṇāma-rūpās-tāsāṃ nirodhaḥ vahir-mukha-pariṇati-vicchedād-antar-mukhatayā pratiloma-pariṇāmena svakāraṇe layaḥ yoga iti ākhyāyate*⁹⁵

This technical passage in Sanskrit describes the extinction of the transformations of (*pariṇāma*) of the *citta*, and the extinction of the changes of the modifications (*vṛttis*) of the *citta* because of the separation of the inner and outer causes of those modifications. Rājendralāl Mitra is perhaps closest to the Sanskrit in his translation, which will be examine in further detail in Chapter Six:

“Thinking principle” (*chitta*) [*sic*] if of the form of goodness without a taint [*nirmala-sattva-pariṇāma-rūpasya*]. “Functions” (*vṛtti*) [*sic*] are modifications of the relation between each other of them [*vṛttayaḥ aṅga-aṅgi-bhāva-pariṇāma-rūpās-tāsāṃ*]. “Yoga” or meditation is described to be the “suppression” (*nirodha*), or dissolution in their primary causes, through the direction inward on the suppression of the tendency outward, of the functions in question. This suppression is a cross-grained ascent of the “functions” of the thinking principle [*nirodhaḥ vahir-mukha-pariṇati-vicchedād-antar-mukhatayā pratiloma-pariṇāmena svakāraṇe layaḥ yoga iti ākhyāyate*].⁹⁶

94 Ward, *A View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindoos: Including a Minute Description of Their Manners and Customs, and Translations from Their Principal Works*, 1:377.

95 Patañjali, *Yogasūtra*, with Bhojadeva’s *Rājamārtaṇḍa* and Vācaspati Miśra’s *Tattvavaiśāradī*, 2.

96 Rājendralāl Mitra, *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali with the Commentary of Bhoja Rájá*, 4. I have included the Sanskrit passages from Bhoja that correlate to Mitra’s translation; these are not included in the original text.

Rather than following Bhoja’s gloss, Ward’s translation appears to return to the *sūtras* of the YS. The next *sūtras* of the Sanskrit are:

tadā draṣṭuḥ svarūpe 'avasthānam [YS 1.3] and *vṛttisārūpyam itaratra* [YS 1.4]
The observer (*draṣṭṛ*) is then situated (*avasthānam*) in its true form (through cessation of the *vṛttis*). Conformity with the *vṛttis* (the turnings of the *citta*) is elsewhere.

In Ward’s translation, we find: “When the mind is thus confined within, it becomes assimilated to the Being whom it seeks to know; but when the mind is secularized, this Being takes the form of secularity.”⁹⁷ Ward’s translation may be based on the opposition in the Sanskrit between *vahir* (outer) and *antar* (inner), to posit the “mind... confined within” against the “mind... secularized,” or turned to the outer world.

Nonetheless, the departure from the Sanskrit is already evident, both in terms of the content of Ward’s translation, and in the use of the terms “secularized” and “secularity,” which have obvious analogue in the Sanskrit. Ward’s translation can be compared to two other translators in this study who included a version of Bhoja’s *vṛtti*, Rājendralāl Mitra and J.R. Ballantyne. In Ballantyne, the first to translate Bhoja after Ward, following the translation of YS 1.2 the commentary provided is:

That is to say,—Concentration is the hindering, or the preventing, of the modifications—to be described hereafter—of the Mind or internal organ (—to which modifications the internal organ is liable when allowed to come into contact with objects, as will be explained further on—); and this ‘hindering’ is a super-sensual species of effort which is the cause of the destruction of these modifications.⁹⁸

Ballantyne includes a Sanskrit reference, one of the “illustrative extracts from the commentary by Bhoja Rājā,” with his translation:

97 Ward, *A View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindoos: Including a Minute Description of Their Manners and Customs, and Translations from Their Principal Works*, 1:377.

98 Ballantyne, *Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali with Illustrative Extracts from the Commentary of Bhoja Rājā*, 3.

*cittasyāntaḥkaraṇasya vakṣyamāṇā yā vṛttayastāsāṃ nirodhā nivarttanam yoga ityarthah. nivarttanañcātindriyah prayatnaviśeṣo vṛttivilayaheturiti.*⁹⁹

Mitra, in the introduction to his translation of Patañjali with the *vṛtti*, criticizes Ballantyne’s translation: “his parenthetical style was not desirable for a proper and easy understanding of the text.”¹⁰⁰ Mitra’s translation of the commentary follows more closely the edition published by the Ānandāśrama press:

“Thinking principle” (*chitta*) [*sic*] is of the form of goodness without a taint. “Functions” (*vṛtti*) [*sic*] are modifications of the relation between each other of them. “Yoga” or meditation is described to be the “suppression” (*nirodha*), or dissolution in their primary causes, through the direction inward on the suppression of the tendency outward, of the functions in question.¹⁰¹

Colebrooke’s conclusion regarding another of Ward’s translations, that it was in fact “an oral exposition through the medium of a different language,”¹⁰² appears accurate in the case of the YS translation. Instead of a translation, Ward has published something of the “gist” of the text, itself an indigenous mode of translation as commentary.¹⁰³

The resemblance is close enough, I believe, to view Ward’s text as a rough translation of the YS, or a text that remained quite close to summarizing the original Sanskrit. If it

99 Ibid., 3. The Sanskrit text published by Ballantyne does not appear to be the *vṛtti* of Bhoja, although Govind Deva’s publication of the final two *pādas* in *The Pandit* does include the Sanskrit text of Bhoja. See Govindadeva Shastri, “Yogasūtra, Translated, with Extracts from Bhojadeva’s Rājamārtaṇḍa (Part 2), in Continuation of J.R. Ballantyne’s 1852 Publication.,” *The Pandit, A Monthly Journal of the Benares College, Devoted to Sanskrit Literature* 6 (December 1871): 22–24; 50–51; 74; 96–97; 125–126; 151–152; 175–176. In Ballantyne’s edition, quotations from the *vṛtti* of Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa (also known as Nāgeśa), c. 1700–1750, are also included. For the Sanskrit, see Shastri, Dhundiraja, ed., *Pātañjalayogadarśana, with the Rājamārtaṇḍa of Bhojarāja, Pradīpikā of Bhāvāgaṇeśa, Vṛtti of Nāgojībhaṭṭa, Maṇiprabhā of Rāmānanda Yati, Padacandrikā of Anantadeva Pandit, and Yogasudhākara of Sadāśivendra Sarasvatī* (Varanasi: Chowkhamba, 1930).

100 Rājendralāl Mitra, *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali with the Commentary of Bhoja Rājā*, lxxxix. “When the Asiatic Society of Bengal first proposed to publish an edition of the Yoga-sūtra with the commentary of Bhojadeva, I undertook to reprint Dr. Ballantyne’s translation with such additions as would complete the work. I soon found, however, that my work placed beside his produced a very patchy appearance, and his parenthetical style was not desirable for a proper and easy understanding of the text. I preferred, therefore, to translate the whole in my own way.”

101 Ibid., 4–5.

102 Colebrooke, *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus*, 215.

103 Thanks to Laurie Patton for this insight.

is taken from Bhoja's commentary, then it is a restating of the original Sanskrit, rather than a fulfillment of the other duties of traditional commentary discussed above. After the apparent departure, the first paragraph of Ward's translation ends with a clear reference to YS 1.6, which lists the *vṛttis* (in the sense of fluctuations or modifications of the *citta*) as

pramāṇa-viparyaya-vikalpa-nidrā-smṛtayaḥ
[The *vṛttis* are] valid means of cognition, error, reification, sleep, and memory.

Ward's interpretation of the names of the categories of *vṛttis* in the *sūtra* can be gleaned from his translation: "[T]here are five kinds of sorrow, seeking proofs from the reality of things, from error, from the pursuit of shadows, from heavy sleep, and from recollection."¹⁰⁴ While the translation appears to follow the basic structure of the YS, it soon departs.

After YS 1.6, Ward's translation begins a new paragraph with a line whose Sanskrit corollary is not immediately obvious: "The three evils, restlessness, injuriousness, and voluptuousness, may be prevented by fixing God in the mind and by destroying desire."¹⁰⁵ This passage is an apparent reference to the three *guṇas*, *rajas*, *tamas*, and *sattva*. The means of prevention—fixing God in the mind and destroying desire—appear to be translations of *abhyāsa* and *vairāgya*, which are the means of suspending the *vṛttis* alluded to in YS 1.12,

abhyāsa-vairāgyābhyāṃ tan-nirodhaḥ
Through practice and dispassion they [the *vṛttis*] are restrained.

In choosing to describe the *guṇas* as evils, Ward makes a theological imposition. Later

104 Ward, *A View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindoos: Including a Minute Description of Their Manners and Customs, and Translations from Their Principal Works*, 1:377.

105 Ibid.

in Ward’s translation an even more significant decision is made in translation. “Yogū and its blessings are to be secured by relinquishing all hope of happiness in secular things, and by that meditation which identifies every religious formula, every sacred utensil, and every offering, with the object of worship.”¹⁰⁶ In this and other instances in Ward’s translation, “secularism” and the “secular” are used to translate apparent references to worldliness, but it is difficult to ascertain the Sanskrit term he is translating because of the numerous departures from the text and the absence of the Sanskrit original in the published translation.

Another reference to the secular occurs in a passage where Ward’s translation describes a change in consciousness that results from withdrawal from the world. In this instance, the secular person and the *yogī* are contrasted:

To the *yogē*, who has received the impressions of the evils of birth, subjection to the fruits of birth is peculiarly irksome; for he sees that every earthly thing is unstable, and is therefore connected with sorrow: hence he renounces the effects which arise from the three *gunas*, and regards the effects of actions as poisoned food. These consequences, in secular persons, do not produce sorrow: they resemble those members of the body which remain at ease while the visual faculty, from some accident, suffers excruciating pain: the *yogē* is the eye of the body.¹⁰⁷

The contrast between the “*yogē*” and the “secular person” here is difficult to understand. The reference to the *yogin* as the “eye of the body” appears to be an illusion to the device first used in the *Vyāsabhāṣya* commentary to YS 2.15. The Sanskrit referring to the eyeball,

*akṣipātrakalpo hi vidvāniti. yathoṅārtanturakṣipātre nyastaḥ sparśena duḥkḥayati
nānyeṣu gātrātrayaveṣu evametāni duḥkhānyakṣipātrakalpaṃ yoginameva
kliśnanti netaraṃ pratipattāram*

106 Ibid., 1:379.

107 Ibid., 1:383.

evokes an image of the sensitivity of the organ of sight. The *yogin* is said to be as sensitive as the eyeball, which feels irritation at the brushing of a mere thread that would go unnoticed by other parts of the body. The connotations of the analogy are lost in Ward's rendering. This is perhaps a result of confusions due to the multiple layers of interpretation that contributed to Ward's translation, such as the text of the YS itself, commentaries including the Sanskrit *Vyāśabhāṣya* and the *Rājamārtaṇḍa*, and oral expositions, possibly in Bengali. The notion of the secular person, in this instance, is contrasted in such a way with the *yogin* that it is unclear which is to be lauded. For the secular person, the "fruits of birth" do not produce sorrow; but for the "yogēē," "every earthly thing is unstable, and is therefore connected with sorrow." The profound sensitivity of the *yogin* in Ward's translation is evocative of a quietist passivity. Part of the confusion in this and other passages is caused by the ambiguity of the word "secular" and the difficulty in relating the English word to a specific concept in the Sanskrit texts. Is Ward contrasting the *yogin* with the worldly person and using "secularity" pejoratively? Or is he contrasting the hypersensitivity of the *yogin* with the robustness of a non-religious person?

Ward's translation of the YS section on the role of a supreme god, *īśvara*, in yogic practice begins, "He is called God [Eshwūrū], because to his will all creatures owe their preservation. That he presides over all events, is proved from his being the fountain of knowledge; and his infinite power is proved from his eternity and his being the guide of all."¹⁰⁸ Ward's translation of the section that appears to correlate to YS 1.23-31 describes how the *yogin*, by repeating the name of god, can take on god-like characteristics: "By thus looking constantly inward, he [the *yogin*] loses his worldly

108 Ibid., 1:379.

attachment, the sūtwū [sattva] goonū obtains a clearer manifestation, and he is brought to resemble God; by which he obtains deliverance from the effects of birth.”¹⁰⁹ These effects of birth—“sickness, incapacity, hesitation, languor, want of fervour, [sic] heaviness of body and mind, fickleness, mistake, the want of a suitable place for his yogū”¹¹⁰ are referred to in YS I.30 as the obstacles (*antarāyāḥ*) of the scattered (*vikṣepa*) mind (*citta*). Ward continues that the correct repetition of *īśvara*’s name (referred to in YS I.27 as the “designation” (*vācakaḥ*) *praṇavaḥ*, i.e., the syllable *om*)¹¹¹ also delivers the *yogin* “from the evils that arise during the practice of yogū, that is, from pain, grief, trembling, asthma, and sighing.”¹¹² The Sanskrit of YS 1.31, to which the translation refers, is:

duḥkha daurmanasyāṅgamejayatva śvāsa praśvāsā vikṣepa sahabhavaḥ

Ward’s translation here, as elsewhere, moves between English renderings of the Sanskrit of Patañjali, occasionally in vernacular terms (*asthma* for *śvāsa-praśvāsā*, rapid inhalations and exhalations). The presence of commentarial glosses in Ward’s translation, such as in his discussion of the *sattva-guṇa* above, demonstrate a close proximity to Sanskritic interpretations of the YS that informed Ward’s own work.

Ward’s Style of Translation

Ward’s translation is an example of a hybrid text, mixing the idioms of Sanskrit, commentarial glosses, and English. Ward’s text follows precisely neither the *sūtras* of Patañjali nor the *Rājamārtaṇḍavṛtti* of Bhoja, as is demonstrated by the departures from

109 Ibid.

110 Ibid.

111 Bryant, *The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali*, 105.

112 Ward, *A View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindoos: Including a Minute Description of Their Manners and Customs, and Translations from Their Principal Works*, 1:380.

the Sanskrit of either text. Here I make a more specific claim about the influence of Sanskrit commentary on English translation that is limited in respect to placing Ward's translation in the context of the larger work in which it resides. Apart from the considerations of Ward's cultural chauvinism¹¹³ against his own thick description of Hindu practice, Ward's textual approach raises a critical question in the study of commentary: Where he claims to offer "the doctrines of the Patñjñlũ philosophy translated from a comment on the original Patñjñlũ by Bhojũ-dẽvũ," he in fact offers a text that bears the traces of oral commentary, as Colebrooke suggests in his criticism of another of Ward's translations an "oral exposition" in the place of a critical translation.

It is necessary to be careful here to not make monolithic the work of missionaries in India. As Timothy Dobe notes in reference to the work of Richard Fox Young, there is a tension between the historical fact that missionaries in India reflect "denominational, regional, and historical diversities," and the perception (in some contexts rightly) that they were working in concert.¹¹⁴ Here the more specific point is that Ward's translation can be interpreted in ways that complicate the assumptions about how a text produced in that context might reflect the objectives or intentions of the its author. Geoffrey Oddie has drawn attention to the conflicted role that *pañðits* played in Ward's own work: on one level, "Ward's adoption of... [a] pantheistic model of

113 As a kind of indigenous companion to Ward's work, see the work of Shib Chunder Bose. Bose's criticism of Hinduism extends beyond Hindus; he refers to Ward's lament that William Jones placed an "image of Hindoo god on his table" as he composed Sanskrit translations. Shib Chunder Bose, *The Hindoos as They Are: A Description of the Manners, Customs, and Inner Life of Hindoo Society in Bengal* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink and co. W. Thacker & co., 1883), 315.

114 Timothy Stephen Dobe, "Flaunting the Secret: Lineage Tales of Christian Sannyasis and Missionaries," *History of Religions* 49, no. 3 (February 1, 2010): 255, n. 3. ; Referring to Richard Fox Young, "Some Hindu Perspectives on Christian Missionaries in the Indic World of the Mid-Nineteenth Century," in *Christians, Cultural Interactions, and India's Religious Traditions*, ed. Judith Brown and Robert Eric Frykenberg (Grand Rapids Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 2002), 38–39.

Hinduism was almost certainly influenced by his pundits,” particularly “Mrtyunjay Vidyalkar... and Ramnath Vidyavachaspati”; “[b]oth were brahmans.”¹¹⁵ Conversely, Ward’s own critical attitude toward brahmans, according to Oddie, was influenced by non-brahman *paṇḍits* include Rām Rām Basu,¹¹⁶ who was of a *kāyasth* background. One might contend, further, that based on the assumptions of Protestant Christian missionaries, the intervention of the *paṇḍits* through commentary may have resembled the intermediation of the Roman Catholic clergy in the interpretation of the Bible. If an attitude of *sola scriptura* can be adduced as an axiomatic guide to scriptural interpretation for a Protestant missionary such as Ward, then the commentarial tradition of Sanskrit may have been viewed as analogous to the accretions of post-Biblical theological tracts. Ward’s rejection of the Sanskrit commentarial tradition on the grounds of returning the laity to a direct encounter with scriptural authority might be read as a naturalization of Christian theological disputes in the foreign terrain of Hinduism. This interpretive approach echoes the type of theological proxy battles that have been identified by, among others, Brian Pennington. Javed Majeed has made exactly this point in relation to colonial translations of the *Bhagavad Gita*.¹¹⁷

115 Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism*, 173.

116 Ibid., 129. See discussion above. Oddie refers to a biographical sketch of Basu in Sisir Kumar Das’s *Sahib and Munshis*. Das writes that “Ramram Basu (1757-1813) worked in the College [of Fort William] during its height of glory. Basu is one of the most fascinating characters in the literary history of Bengal. He knew Persian and some Sanskrit and learnt [sic] English through his associations with the Christian missionaries. He was one of the first Bengalis to be attracted to Christianity and wrote the first poem in the Bengali language praising Jesus Christ. His religious views, however, remained a mystery. [sic] He criticized Hinduism and helped the missionaries in translating the Bible into Bengali though he never accepted Christianity.” Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 21. Basu’s own caste, like Mitra’s, was *kāyasth*. See Brajendra Banerjee, “Rāmram Basu,” in *Sāhitya-sādhak-caritmālā*, vol. I, vi (Calcutta: Baṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣad, 1962), 10. Banerjee quotes a missionary periodical regarding Basu’s caste background: “Boshoo [Basu]... often disputes with and confounds the Bramins, [sic] both learned and unlearned, though he is not a Bramin [sic] himself, but of the writer *Cast*; and this is not in small degree extraordinary, for the Bramins [sic] think it a very great condescension to hold an argument with any person whose *Cast* is inferior to that of a Bramin. [sic]”

117 Majeed, in describing some of the assumptions that may have gone into various colonial translations of the *Gita*, writes that “Not only is the category of scripture drawn from a

In spite of all these plausible assumptions regarding the role of clerical mediation and commentary in Christian theological disputes and its family relationship to the *paṇḍits* and the Sanskrit commentarial tradition, however, Ward appears to have taken an indigenously Sanskritic mode of commentary and presented it as translation of the original text. The implications of this, furthermore, do not appear quite obvious until Colebrooke stridently rejects the quality of Ward's "translation," criticizing it as a mere "oral exposition," and proceeding to institute philological practices (themselves derived from Biblical studies via Greek and Latin) as a means of offering a correct and authentic translation. Ward, that is, wrote at a point when a *paṇḍit's* commentarial description of a Sanskrit text could be reproduced at face value (as much as an English translation can be considered face value) as an approximate translation.

The translation "from a comment on the original Patñnjũľ, by Bhojũ-dėvũ" published by Ward exemplifies a style of translation that was superseded by the philological method of the Orientalists. From this analysis of the translation alongside its Sanskrit counterparts, it appears to have been a translation made along oral lines. Ward was not concerned with provenance, recension, or commentarial superimpositions. He did not look for or attempt to reconstruct an *Ur* text that would serve as the original by which other versions of the *YS* could be judged. He seems to

monotheistic conception of religion in order to classify the *Gita* as a text, there is also an implicit Protestant narrative here in which the *pandits* behave in a similar way to the Roman catholic clergy. Producing the text of the *Gita* in translation without any commentary, so that 'the most difficult passages [are left] for the exercise of the reader's own judgement,' reflects a Protestant notion of the self-evident nature of scriptural truth in translation which can be grasped by the reader's own judgement. In this way, the 'Unitarian' conception of the deity held by the Brahmins will be revealed to 'the vulgar' as well, so that the 'superstition' which supports this powerful priesthood will also be dispelled and the position of the Brahmins as 'divines' who monopolise the interpretations of key texts will no longer be tenable." Cf. Javed Majeed, "Gandhi, and Translatability," *Modern Asian Studies* 40, no. 02 (2006): 313.

have inserted a theological tenor into the translation of the YS that cannot be reconciled with the Sanskrit, and in doing so he may have been attempting, as Suthren Hirst argues, to show the incoherency of the Sanskrit “scriptures” as an aid to missionary work.

Colebrooke: Original Yoga as Sāṃkhya-Yoga

Colebrooke’s Background

While Ward’s interest in the Sanskrit text of the YS was part of his project to create a systematic overview of the Hindu religion, Henry Thomas Colebrooke (1765–1837) first came to the study of Sanskrit texts because of his interest in mathematics and astronomy.¹¹⁸ Colebrooke arrived in Calcutta in 1783, a son of Sir George Colebrooke, former chairman of the East India Company (1769–73). Sir George fell into personal and professional financial ruin after losing substantial investments in speculation related to a commodity.¹¹⁹ His son Henry was gifted in the fields of mathematics and linguistics, although being largely self-taught,¹²⁰ and initially worked for the East India Company in the fields of agriculture and commerce. Colebrooke eventually took over the task of completing a digest of Hindu law that was initiated by the Orientalist, judge, and founder of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Sir William Jones (1746–1794), and served as a judge and magistrate in the town of Mirzapur, near to

118 Rocher, “Henry Thomas Colebrooke and the Marginalization of Indian Pandits,” 737.

119 H. V. Bowen and Anita McConnell, “Colebrooke, Sir George, Second Baronet (1729–1809),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Rosane Rocher and Ludo Rocher, *The Making of Western Indology: Henry Thomas Colebrooke and the East India Company* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 8–12.

120 Richard F. Gombrich, “Colebrooke, Henry Thomas (1765–1837),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Rocher and Rocher, *The making of western Indology*.

Calcutta;¹²¹ later he became president of the Asiatic Society (1806). An Orientalist, not a missionary like Ward, Colebrooke worked with *paṇḍits* in various capacities. He was appointed as Professor of Sanskrit and of Hindu Law at the College of Fort William in Calcutta.¹²² There is more documentation of Colebrooke's work with *paṇḍits* from Benares than there is of his work with Bengali *paṇḍits*,¹²³ but many of his working relationships with the *paṇḍits* became strained.

In 1797, for instance, Colebrooke received governmental support to hire a number of *paṇḍits* to assist him in creating a supplementary digest of criminal laws derived from Hindu sources.¹²⁴ The interaction he had with *paṇḍits* in this case proved to be a disappointment to Colebrooke, and he rejected the work of the *paṇḍit* Bāla Śarman Pāyaguṇḍa as plagiarized; Pāyaguṇḍa, in return, requested a land grant from Colebrooke to remain in his employ, which Colebrooke was unable to secure.¹²⁵ The event isolated Colebrooke from the *paṇḍits* who assisted him, and led Colebrooke to become increasingly dissatisfied with their work. He wrote to his father that, "After the experiences I have had... no Pandit is capable (or adapted by his habits of thinking) to compile a digest in the form I require, I must now seriously set about compiling it myself."¹²⁶

This frustration with the inability of *paṇḍits* to be sufficiently authoritative in their work, and the resulting necessity to conduct translation oneself, is a claim that recurs in similar wording in the introductions to the translations of the YS published

121 Rocher, "Henry Thomas Colebrooke and the Marginalization of Indian Pandits," 736,738.

122 Ibid., 744.

123 Ibid.

124 Ibid., 741.

125 Ibid.

126 Quoted in *ibid.*, 741–42.

by Ballantyne and Mitra, discussed below. It marks the decline in the authority of the *paṇḍit* that commences the nineteenth century, and Colebrooke's criticism of Ward and his articulation of a method of translation are indicative of a this decline and rejection. Colebrooke's theory of translation, in a sense, is a means of asserting the superiority of Orientalist translation methodology, and simultaneously it is a rejection of the *paṇḍit* as an inheritor of the Sanskrit commentarial tradition.

Colebrooke's Treatment of Yoga

Colebrooke, along with William Jones (1746-1794), Charles Wilkins (1749-1836, discussed below), and the founding of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, have been associated with the beginning of modern Indological research.¹²⁷ While Wilkins, as the first to translate the *Bhagavad Gita* into English (1785), is responsible for the first appearance of the word "yoga" in an English text, Colebrooke's talk at Royal Asiatic Society in 1823 on the *YS* (which he refers to as *Sāṃkhya-pravacana*) might be read as the first modern Indological examination of Patañjali.¹²⁸ The talk was later published in the *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society* and in a collection of essays on the religion and philosophy of Hinduism (1858).¹²⁹

Colebrooke's researches, as has already been indicated, have been cited as informing Ward's own account of Hinduism.¹³⁰ While it may have been indebted to

127 Wilhelm Halbfass, *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding* (Albany N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1988), 45.

128 Colebrooke, *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus*, 148.

129 I am not aware of any alterations that may have been made between the lecture and its subsequent publication.

130 Wilhelm Halbfass, in an essay describing the contributions of various missionaries to the development of Indological studies, notes that "Despite the intolerant attitude which often prevailed among the missionaries, their goals of teaching and of translating the Bible into the languages of India resulted in an ever more systematic and thorough inquiry into the contexts of Indian thought which was carried out with the cooperation of native pandits. Thus the work of W. Ward includes a remarkable presentation of Indian philosophy (which is admittedly indebted to

Colebrooke's research, it is clear from Colebrooke's writings that he saw the translation published by Ward as inadequate as a rendering of an oral exposition. Part of Colebrooke's aim in the lecture is to demonstrate that his method of textual analysis, along with the theory of translation that accompanies it, is superior to the "active hermeneutics,"¹³¹ as Wilhelm Halbfass has called it, of the missionaries.

Colebrooke's dismissal of Ward, which comes in the context of a separate lecture on Vedānta, is worth quoting at length. He begins by referring to a translation of the text *Vedānta-sāra* published in the third edition of Ward's *A View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindus*: "I wish to speak as gently as I can of Mr. Ward's performance," Colebrooke begins, "but having collated this, I am bound to say it is no version of the original text, and seems to have been made from an oral exposition through the medium of a different language, probably the Bengalese."¹³² Making a sharp contrast between Ward's method and that of the Orientalist scholar, Colebrooke writes that the deficits of the translation "will be evident to the oriental scholar on the slightest comparison"; he proceeds to give examples of sections that do not "not correspond with the original in so much as a single word".¹³³ He isolates a particular word in Ward's translation—"heir"—and argues that

There is no term in the text, nor in the commentaries, which could suggest the notion of heir; unless Mr. Ward has so translated *adhicāri* (a competent or qualified person), which in Bengalese signifies proprietor, or, with the epithet *uttara* (*uttarādhicāri*) heir or successor.¹³⁴

This criticism, in particular, indicates that Colebrooke saw in Ward a confusion of

Colebrooke's research)." Halbfass, *India and Europe*, 50.

131 Ibid., 49.

132 Colebrooke, *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus*, 215.

133 Ibid.

134 Ibid., 215.

linguistic registers in translation. Colebrooke's words, in calling attention to the traces of heteroglossia in Ward's translation, reminiscent of criticisms of the competency of the *paṇḍits*, are evidence of increasing authority of the Orientalist. Colebrooke concludes that "[t]he meaning of the original is certainly not to be gathered from such translations of this and (as Mr. Ward terms them) of other principal works of the Hindus, which he has presented to public."¹³⁵

While the version of Colebrooke's lecture on Patañjali that I have consulted does not make explicit reference to Ward's translation of the same text, it is reasonable to infer that Colebrooke found similar failing in that text as well. Colebrooke's lecture analyzes Patañjali in the context of Sāṃkhya. Distinguishing between Kapila and Patañjali as representing two different schools of Sāṃkhya, Colebrooke writes that "The tenets of the two schools... are on many, not to say on most, points, that are treated in both, the same; differing however upon one, which is the most important of all: the proof of existence of supreme God."¹³⁶ Colebrooke also lists a third position, which he refers to as Pauraṇika Sāṃkhya; he describes it as considering nature (presumably *prakṛti*) as illusion. Claiming the main difference between the schools as resting on their differing views on the existence of God, Colebrooke positions the review of Hindu philosophy (which he begins with Sāṃkhya) as a theological debate.

In the introduction to the section, Colebrooke refers to the YS as the "collection of *Yóga-sútras*, bearing the common title of *Sánc'hya pravachana*."¹³⁷ That title is, however, more aptly applied to *Vyāsa's Pātañjala-bhāṣya* (c. 350-400), which Colebrooke

135 Ibid.

136 Ibid., 149.

137 Ibid., 148.

identifies as “an ancient commentary”.¹³⁸ The other major commentaries Colebrooke alludes to are the *Tattvavaiśārādī* of Vācaspati Mīśra (c. 950) and the *Yogavārttika* of Vijñānabhikṣu (c. 1550).¹³⁹ Colebrooke did not have access to this last work, noting that “[i]t probably is extant; for quotations from it occur in modern compilations.”¹⁴⁰ He describes Bhoja’s commentary as the *Rājamārtaṇḍa*, which he ascribes to “Raña-Rangamalla, surnamed *Bhója-Rája* or *Bhója-Pati*, sovereign of *Dhára*, and therefore called *Dhárésvara*.... It is a succinct and lucid exposition of the text.”¹⁴¹ Finally, he refers to a “very copious and clear” commentary “by a modern *Maháráshtriya Brahman*, named *Nágójí-Bhaṭṭa Upád’hyáya*.” This is likely the *Bṛhatī* or *Laghvī vṛtti* of Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa, also referred to as Nāgeśa (c. 1700-1750). These early eighteenth-century commentaries are described in recent scholarship as following closely the commentary of Vijñānabhikṣu.¹⁴²

Colebrooke places the YS in the context of Sāṃkhya, the closely related philosophical school. In contrast to Sāṃkhya, which he describes in positive terms as “founded in the exercise of judgment: for the word from which it is derived signifies reasoning or deliberation”,¹⁴³ Colebrooke characterizes the philosophy of the YS as “fanatical” in its extreme rigor.¹⁴⁴ Placing it within the context of the historical development of philosophy in India, and approaching the *sūtras* through the commentarial apparatus, Colebrooke establishes a philologically grounded, textual

138 Ibid.

139 For dates, see Larson and Bhattacharya, *Yoga: India’s Philosophy of Meditation*.

140 Colebrooke, *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus*, 149.

141 Ibid.

142 Larson and Bhattacharya, *Yoga: India’s Philosophy of Meditation*, XII:355.

143 Colebrooke, *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus*, 144. For a brief assessment of Colebrooke’s negative evaluation of Yoga in comparison to Sāṃkhya, see Rocher and Rocher, *The making of western Indology*, 169–170.

144 Colebrooke, *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus*, 148.

approach to yoga. He established the doctrine of Sāṃkhya-yoga; the heart of Patañjali's philosophy is translated as declaring that "[f]uture pain... is to be avoided. A clear knowledge of discriminate truth is the way of its prevention."¹⁴⁵ Colebrooke compares the philosophical doctrines of Patañjali to Pythagoras and Plato. At times, he distinguishes the philosophy of the YS from that of the Sāṃkhya in terms of the tenor of their ascetic approaches:

In less momentous matters they differ, not upon points of doctrine, but in the degree in which the exterior exercises, or abstruse reasoning and study, are weighed upon, as requisite preparations of absorbed contemplation. Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtra* is occupied with devotional exercise and mental abstraction, subduing body and mind: Kapila is more engaged with investigation of principles and reasoning upon them. One [the YS] is more mystic and fanatical. The other makes a nearer approach to philosophical disquisition, however mistaken in its conclusions.¹⁴⁶

The "mystic and fanatical" nature of the YS is evident according to Colebrooke particularly in third section of the YS, where the magical powers (*vibhūti*s or *siddhi*s) that can be mastered through the practice of yoga are described. These *vibhūti*s are described, in the YS and in Colebrooke's recounting, as ultimately falling short of the higher goals of yoga. One can achieve great powers, but that is to give in to the temptations. Colebrooke writes that the notion

that such transcendent power is attainable by man in this life, is not peculiar to the *Sāṃkhya* sect: it is generally prevalent among the Hindus, and amounts to a belief in magic. A *Yógi*, imagined to have acquired such faculties, is, to vulgar apprehension, a sorcerer, and is so represented in many a drama and popular tale.¹⁴⁷

The comparison between magic, sorcery, and the *yogin* is prevalent in the nineteenth century translation of Patañjali, as will be shown again below in the discussion of H.H.

145 Ibid., 150.

146 Ibid., 160.

147 Ibid., 158.

Wilson, and in the subsequent chapters. “But neither power, however transcendent, nor dispassion, nor virtue, however meritorious,” Colebrooke continues, “suffices for the attainment of beatitude. It serves but to prepare the soul for that absorbed contemplation, by which the great purposes of deliverance is to be accomplished.”¹⁴⁸

Colebrooke’s Style of Translation

The deep association between Sāṃkhya and Yoga identified by Colebrooke became influential. In the Bibliotheca Indica edition of the *Sāṃkhya-pravacana-bhāṣya*, translated by Fitz-Edward Hall and published in Calcutta (1856),¹⁴⁹ the similarity between Pātañjala-yoga and Sāṃkhya is reinforced: “It may... not unreasonably be concluded that the Sāṃkhya and the Yoga, whatever their era, or the age of their supposed earliest text-books, were of nearly contemporaneous origin.”¹⁵⁰ Colebrooke was also influential in continuing in the tradition of William Jones and Charles Wilkins to establish that relevance of philological method to the study of the YS, among other Sanskrit texts.

Horace Hayman Wilson: Practice and Patañjali

Wilson’s Background

Colebrooke’s rejection of Ward’s translation on the basis of its use of oral commentary and departure from the Sanskrit text reflects the growth of Indology in the nineteenth century, but the relationship between the text of Patañjali and the myriad practices of yoga was left unresolved. The differences between the yoga found

148 Ibid., 159.

149 Fitz-Edward Hall, ed., *The Sāṃkhya-Pravachana-Bhāṣya: A Commentary on the Aphorisms of the Hindu Atheistic Philosophy* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1856).

150 Ibid., 26.

in the text of the *YS* and the practices of various yogis was central question for Colebrooke's successor, Horace Hayman Wilson (1786-1860). Wilson was a medical doctor by training to who arrived in Calcutta in March 1809 as an assistant surgeon to the East India Company.¹⁵¹ He remained in India until 1833, working from 1816 until his departure as assay master for the Calcutta mint. In 1819 he spent a year in Benares, improving his proficiency in Sanskrit and collecting manuscripts, some of which he later translated into English and published.¹⁵² Wilson became secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1811, the year that the first edition of Ward's *Account* was in print.¹⁵³

Scholars of Wilson have shown that his translation activity brought him in close contact with *paṇḍits*. Rosanne Rocher presents Wilson's relation to the *paṇḍits* as sometimes exploitative and antagonistic. Referring to the preface of Wilson's *Dictionary, Sanscrit and English* (1819), Rocher writes that Wilson "went to great lengths to denigrate" the Bengali *paṇḍit* Raghumaṇi Bhaṭṭācārya who had been hired by Colebrooke to continue work on the dictionary of Sanskrit that formed the basis of Wilson's edition. In the preface to the dictionary, Wilson writes that

[t]o those who are acquainted with the character of these assistants it is needless to expatiate upon the necessity of vigilantly superintending and revising whatever they do, and I would be difficult to convey to a person not acquainted with them any conception of their carelessness and indolence, and of the limited dependance [*sic*] to be place upon native research, when not sedulously and unremittingly controlled.¹⁵⁴

151 Paul B. Courtright, "Wilson, Horace Hayman (1786-1860).," ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2004).

152 Harish Trivedi, "Literatures of the Indian Subcontinent," in *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English*, ed. Peter France and Kenneth Haynes, vol. 4 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 346.

153 Courtright, "Wilson, Horace Hayman (1786-1860)."

154 Rocher, "Henry Thomas Colebrooke and the Marginalization of Indian Pandits," 747.

Brian Hatcher, on the other hand, has noted that Wilson brought scholars from diverse geographical locations to work in Calcutta, including Gujarat and Benares.¹⁵⁵ Hatcher has described Wilson as “ardent in seeking out and applauding the knowledge and expertise of the pandits,” forming “close, long-term relationships with particular pandits.”¹⁵⁶

If Wilson was critical of the *paṇḍits* on occasion, he was likewise critical of the work of specific missionaries; and as a supervisor to the Hindu College in Calcutta, he “opposed any required Christian religious instruction.”¹⁵⁷ Wilson criticized the work of William Ward, whose *Account* was a precursor to Wilson’s synoptic volume on Hinduism, *Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus* (1846). Wilson wrote that,

Mr. Ward... is neither an experienced nor an admirable witness; his experience was limited to Bengal, in which the best specimens of the Hindu character are comparatively rare, and his station and circumstances brought him into contact chiefly with bad specimens even of Bengalis. Although an intelligent man, he was not a man of comprehensive views, and his views were necessarily still more narrowed by his feelings as a missionary; his testimony, therefore, although not without value, must be received with considerable distrust, and admitted only with constant qualification and correction.¹⁵⁸

Wilson portrayed his *Sketch* as a more variegated and careful analysis of Hinduism, writing that “the Hindu religion is a term, that has been hitherto employed in a collective sense, to designate a faith and worship of an almost endlessly diversified description,” a description that Julius Lipner has taken to indicate an early,

155 Brian A. Hatcher, “Sanskrit Pandits Recall Their Youth: Two Autobiographies from Nineteenth-Century Bengal,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 121, no. 4 (December 2001): 580.

156 Brian A. Hatcher, “What’s Become of the Pandit? Rethinking the History of Sanskrit Scholars in Colonial Bengal,” *Modern Asian Studies* 39, no. 03 (2005): 694–95.

157 Courtright, “Wilson, Horace Hayman (1786–1860).”

158 James Mill, *The History of British India*, vol. 1, 5th ed. (London: James Madden, 1858), 301, n.85 ; Quoted in part in Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 79.

“methodologically sensitive approach to the study of Hindu religion.”¹⁵⁹ Richard King has previously pointed to the complexities and contradictions Wilson’s Orientalism and its legacy, writing of the Orientalists more generally that “even when they appeared to be promoting the vernacular and the indigenous, their methods, goals and underlying values presupposed the supremacy of European culture.”¹⁶⁰

Wilson’s Treatment of Yoga

Along with a treatment of yoga in his *Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus* (1846), Wilson also authored a translation of the commentary on the *Sāṃkhya-kārikā* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa by Gauḍapada (published together with H.T. Colebrooke’s translation of the primary text).¹⁶¹ Wilson’s contribution to the translation of yoga is a good example of the tensions between the promotion of the vernacular and the presupposition of European method identified by King, and more specifically it represents an important milestone for the interpretation of yoga in the nineteenth century. It is, in other words, a translation of yoga that is caught between what Bruce Lincoln has identified as the anthropological model and the philological model.¹⁶² Following what Pennington has characterized as Ward’s proto-ethnographic¹⁶³ approach, Wilson articulates some of the indigenous traditions of yoga and vernacular accounts of yoga practice; at the same time, he points to the philosophy of Patañjali and Sāṃkhya by

159 Wilson, *Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus*, 1; See also Julius Lipner’s introduction to Sushil Mittal and Gene R. Thursby, *The Hindu World*, The Routledge Worlds (New York: Routledge, 2004), 14–15.

160 Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and “The Mystic East”*, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 1999), 87–88.

161 Īśvarakṛṣṇa et al., *The Sāṃkhya Kārikā* (London: Oriental translation fund of Great Britain and Ireland, 1837).

162 Bruce Lincoln, *Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology, and Scholarship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 69–73.

163 Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 79ff.

citing Colebrooke.

Wilson's thematic account (1846) of yoga does not offer a translation of the YS itself, but it is a critical document in understanding the textual history of the translations that occur in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Wilson's *Sketches* fits into the same genre of the longer texts of Ward and Colebrooke, studies that seek to delineate Hinduism in a synoptic fashion. Unlike Ward, who included a translation of Patañjali's text, and Colebrooke, who carefully analyzed the YS in the context of Sāṃkhya, Wilson in this lecture is more interested in the distinctive features of the yogis as a sect of Hinduism and he does not include textual references to the YS itself. He begins by referring the reader to the work of Colebrooke and Ward, attesting to their importance in mid-century interpretations of yoga.¹⁶⁴ He also defines the yogī descriptively rather than philologically:

The term *Jogi*, or *Yogi* is properly applicable to the followers of Yoga, or Pātanjala school of philosophy, which, amongst other tenets, maintained the practicability of acquiring, even in life, entire command over elementary matter, by means of certain ascetic practices. The details of these it is unnecessary to particularize, and accounts of them and of the Yoga philosophy, will be best derived from the translation of Bhoja Deva's Comment on the *Pātanjala Sūtras*, in Ward's Account of the Hindus, and Mr. Colebrooke's Essay on the Sāṅkhya and Pātanjala doctrines...¹⁶⁵

In his general comments on yoga practice, Wilson describes familiar elements described in more detail in *haṭha yoga* texts than in the YS itself: “the practices consist chiefly of long continued suppressions of respiration; of inhaling and exhaling the breath in a particular manner; of sitting in eighty-four different attitudes; [and] of fixing the eyes on the top of the noses”.¹⁶⁶ Wilson's reading of the text also includes a

164 Wilson's subsequent criticism of Ward in the notes to Mill's *History of British India* did not appear in print until later (1858).

165 Wilson, *Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus*, 131.

166 Ibid.

sectarian element, in that he views it as emphasizing the goal of “a union between the portion of vital spirit residing in the body and that which prevades [sic] all nature,” which Wilson cites as being “identical with Siva, considered as the supreme being, and source and essence of all creation.”¹⁶⁷ The notion here is not to be found in the YS itself, which avoids any explicit sectarian identification in speaking of *īśvara*.¹⁶⁸

The post-Patañjali attribution of Śiva to yoga’s *īśvara* appears in keeping with the other yogic texts that Wilson refers to, and in a discussion of *siddhas*, the accomplishment of magical powers associated with yoga practice, Wilson quotes not from the YS but from the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa*¹⁶⁹ of the *Skanda Purāṇa* and the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā*.¹⁷⁰ Interestingly, Wilson does not present the *siddhis* so much as an obstacle of enlightenment, but as a result of the accomplishment of divine union: “When this mystic union is effect, the *Yogi* is liberated in his living body, from the clog of material incumbrance [sic], and acquires an entire command over all worldly substance.”¹⁷¹

Wilson’s main concern, however, is not the philosophical school of Patañjali, but rather he itemizes sects of yoga. He justifies his emphasis by describing a sizable gulf between the philosophical school of Patañjali and the contemporary practice of the *Jogi*. While he does not say so explicitly, there is a sense from the description that the

167 Ibid., 131.

168 On the ambiguity of sectarian identifications of *īśvara* in the YS, see Bryant, *The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali*, 94–96.

169 As section of the *Skanda Purāṇa* that describes Śiva’s relation to Kāśī, the pilgrimage site associated with modern-day Vārāṇasī.

170 The *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* is a c. 14th century text attributed to Svātmarāma Yogin. The term Rāja Yoga, which Vivekananda famously associates with Patañjali, is discussed in the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* in terms of detailed descriptions of bodily practices not found in the YS. For a translation of the text, see Larson and Bhattacharya, *Yoga: India’s Philosophy of Meditation*, XII:489–501.

171 Wilson, *Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus*, 131.

philosophical background of yoga underwent a series of transformations. He writes that “the philosophical tenets of *Patanjali* [sic] are as ancient perhaps as most of the other philosophical systems, and are prior to the *Puránas*, by which they are inculcated in a popular form.”¹⁷² Wilson is most concerned with the “popular form” and much of the description is of the “sect of *Kánphata Jogis*,” founded by “Gorakhna’th,” that Wilson views as constituting “the principal mode in which the *Yoga* takes a popular shape in upper India.”¹⁷³

In Wilson’s interpretation, the perfect accomplishment of yoga requires continued effort through many lives and rebirths, and on the authority of the *Kāśíkhaṇḍa*, is furthermore “unattainable in the present or Kali, age.”¹⁷⁴ Wilson’s account of yoga also supports the thesis that there was, in terms of popular practice, evidence that yogic practices were shared across what retrospectively are religious boundaries. On the topic of the “term *Jogi*, in popular acceptance,” Wilson writes, for instance, that “Musselman Jogis are not uncommon.”¹⁷⁵ But, at the same time, the popular practice of yoga is associated by Wilson with charlatanry. Undaunted by the prohibitions against the realization of yogic perfections in this fallen age, Wilson goes on, there are nonetheless “*Jogis*... who lay claim to perfection.... These are evidenced in the performance of low mummeries, or juggling tricks, which cheat the vulgar into a belief of their powers.”¹⁷⁶

172 Ibid., 134.

173 Ibid.

174 Ibid., 132.

175 Ibid., 138.

176 Ibid., 133.

Wilson as Summarizer of Yoga

Wilson’s account includes some inaccuracies that intimate significant problems in the broader interpretative schema in which he operated. Without citing a reference, Wilson notes that “Siva, it is said, appeared in the beginning of the *Kali* age as Sweta, for the purpose of benefiting the Brahmans. He had four chief disciples, one also termed Sweta, and the others Swetasikha, Swetaswa, and Swetalohita.” Seeming to conflate color with racial identity, Wilson postulates that “Siva... is always painted white, and the names may be contrived accordingly; but we are still at a loss to understand why the god himself should have a European complexion.”¹⁷⁷ Wilson thus attempts to give a sense of the practical as well as the philosophical side of yoga.

Wilson provides intriguing links between different forms of what he considered to be popular practice at the time: along with showing the relation between Islamic and Hindu forms of yoga, he gives an overview of different sects of yoga and the sites of pilgrimage associated with them. Importantly, he speaks at some length of Gorakhnāth (Gorakṣanātha), a central figure at the boundary between *haṭha* yoga and the Sanskritic foundation of Patañjali. In speaking of the *Kānpḥaṭa* or Nāth yogīs—of whom a fuller treatment would be attempted in the early nineteenth century by George Weston Briggs¹⁷⁸ and more recently by David Gordon White¹⁷⁹—Wilson cites “a *Ghoshti*, or controversial dialogue between Kabi’r and Gorakhna’tḥ,” from which “it would seem that they were personally known to each other”.¹⁸⁰ Comparing this bit of textual evidence toward dating the life of Gorakhnāth, Wilson notes that the verse

177 Ibid., 134.

178 George Briggs, *Gorakhnāth and the Kānpḥaṭa Yogīs*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1938).

179 David Gordon White, *Sinister Yogis*, 1st ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

180 Wilson, *Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus*, 135.

attributed to Kabir alludes to the teacher of yoga as deceased.

Wilson's approach to yoga brings the questions raised by Ward's initial treatment into better focus. In a sense, Wilson's questioning or querying of the links between Patañjali and the practices of yoga (that he identifies chiefly with Gorakhnāth) is a way of asking about the links between Sanskritic or "classical" yoga and the folk practices that may or may not be associated with it.

James Robert Ballantyne and the Second Translation of Patañjali's Text

Ballantyne's Background

Ward's translation, which was criticized by Colebrooke for its lack of rigor and its conflation of oral commentary with text, did, however, preserve the traces of an indigenous gloss of the text, a means by which the Sanskritic past could be contextually linked to the present. Colebrooke's textual rigor came with the cost of unlinking textual description with contemporary practice, a kind of rupture that Wilson addressed through his turn to Indologically-informed descriptions of the practices of various yogis. Wilson's text is important in the history of the interpretation of yoga because it demonstrates linkages between philology and ethnography, approaches that were increasingly diverging in the nineteenth century, as Bruce Lincoln has shown.¹⁸¹

Following the interpretations of Colebrooke and Wilson, the second English translation of the YS was published James Robert Ballantyne (1813-1864), although it comprised only the first two *pādas* or sections of the text. Ballantyne's translation is

181 See Lincoln, "The History of Myth from the Renaissance to the Second World War" and discussion above.

notable for a number of reasons: it marks a turn toward philological translation, one that views commentary as essential or understanding the text of the *YS*, and includes the *paṇḍits* among its intended audiences. This translation also posits the *YS* as the essential text of one of the six schools of Hindu philosophy, through which one may arrive at a sense of differences between “the philosophical terminology of the East as regards that of the West.”¹⁸² The fluid boundaries in the translation work of Ward, between practice and text, between oral exposition and Sanskrit commentary, are increasingly fixed by the time of Ballantyne’s translation. Ballantyne’s translation, therefore, is indicative of the sort of doxographies of the six schools of classical Indian philosophy (*śaḍ-darśana*) that informed both pre-modern Sanskrit studies and more recent presentations of classical Indian philosophy. In both such studies, as Nicholson¹⁸³ has argued, there is a reification of the notion of “schools,” and here the results of this reification can be seen in how yoga is increasingly posited as distant from a set of vernacular practices. In Ballantyne’s translation, we see the enshrinement of the *YS* as a standard by which contemporary practices can be judged, and it is this scripturalization of yoga that in large measure frames how the *YS* is read by translations from the middle to the end of the nineteenth century.

Ballantyne was educated in South Asian languages at Edinburgh College and at the East India College in Haileybury, England. He eventually taught Hindi and Sanskrit at the Scottish Naval and Military Academy in Edinburgh, and it was through the recommendation of H.H. Wilson that Ballantyne in 1845 was appointed principal of the

182 Ballantyne, *Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali with Illustrative Extracts from the Commentary of Bhoja Rájá*, i.

183 Andrew J. Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010) See discussion in Chapter Two.

Government College in Benares, where the Sanskrit syllabus was to be reorganized.¹⁸⁴ C.A. Bayly has drawn attention to Ballantyne as more “representative of the later stages of constructive orientalism” than “Anglicists such as T.B. Macaulay and C.E. Trevelyan” for his understanding and respect for Indian knowledge.¹⁸⁵ Michael Dodson, in part drawing on the work of Bayly, has analyzed Ballantyne’s relationship with *paṇḍits* at the Sanskrit College, drawing attention to how “Ballantyne’s textual output was largely facilitated by the knowledge and expertise of the pandits of Benares College.”¹⁸⁶ A close reading of Ballantyne’s partial translation of the *YS* demonstrates the influence of the Sanskrit commentarial tradition on his practice of translation. As will be discussed, Ballantyne’s translation, which purports to include “Illustrative Extracts from the Commentary by Bhoja Rájá,”¹⁸⁷ in fact includes Sanskrit excerpts and English translations of not only the *Rājamārtaṇḍa* of Bhojadeva (c. 1050), but also the eighteenth-century *vṛtti* by Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa (or Nāgeśa, c. 1700-1750).¹⁸⁸ As Ballantyne makes clear in the preface to the 1852 edition of his work, his translation is aimed directly at an audience that includes *paṇḍits*, who he hopes will further assist improving the text. Taken together, Ballantyne’s reliance on an eighteenth-century commentary and the assistance of contemporary *paṇḍits* suggest the continuing vitality of Sanskrit knowledge pertaining to yoga in the early to mid nineteenth-

184 Important studies of Ballantyne’s work at Benares Sanskrit College include C. A. Bayly, “Orientalists, Informants, and Critics in Banaras, 1790-1860,” in *Perspectives of Mutual Encounters in South Asian History, 1760-1860*, ed. Jamal Malik (Boston: Brill, 2000), 97–127; Dodson, *Orientalism, Empire, and National Culture: India, 1770-1880*; Michael S. Dodson, “Re-Presented for the Pandits: James Ballantyne, ‘Useful Knowledge,’ and Sanskrit Scholarship in Benares College During the Mid-Nineteenth Century,” *Modern Asian Studies* 36, no. 2 (2002): 257–298; For a brief biographical overview, see R.S. Simpson, “Ballantyne, James Robert (1813–1864),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1229>.

185 Bayly, *Caste, Society and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age*, 115–116.

186 Dodson, “Re-Presented for the Pandits: James Ballantyne, ‘Useful Knowledge,’ and Sanskrit Scholarship in Benares College During the Mid-Nineteenth Century,” 295.

187 Ballantyne, *Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali with Illustrative Extracts from the Commentary of Bhoja Rájá*.

188 For summaries of these works, see Larson and Bhattacharya, *Yoga: India’s Philosophy of Meditation*.

century, even as Ballantyne laments that “no pandit these days professes to teach this system.”¹⁸⁹

The first edition of Ballantyne’s unfinished translation appears to be the 1852 version published in Allahabad by the Presbyterian Mission Press. This edition contains a brief preface that is discussed below. After the 1852 edition published in Allahabad, Ballantyne’s unfinished translation was completed, as mentioned above, by Govind Deva and possibly also by Paṇḍit Gaya Datta. The remaining two *pādas* were published serially in *The Pandit*, the magazine of the Sanskrit College of Benares.¹⁹⁰ Gaya Datta’s contribution to the translation has generally been overlooked, perhaps because the serialized translations in *The Pandit* bear only the ambiguous initials “G.D.” after each published portion of the text. The contribution by Gaya Datta is identified in *Report on the Progress of Education in the North-Western Provinces, for 1869-70*,¹⁹¹ though it is also possible that that report is in error. It is difficult to determine whether Gaya Datta’s additions were appended to the work of Govind Deva or published separately.

The important point here is that the completed translation represents collaboration

189 Ballantyne, *Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali with Illustrative Extracts from the Commentary of Bhoja Rájá*, ii. Shastri, “Yogasūtra, Translated, with Extracts from Bhojadeva’s Rājamārtaṇḍa (Part 2), in Continuation of J.R. Ballantyne’s 1852 Publication.” [Volume III, No. 26-68]

191 M. Kempson, *Report on the Progress of Education in the North-Western Provinces, for 1869-70*, vol. 1 (Allahabad: The Government Press, North-Western Provinces, 1870), Section III, “Benares College,” No. 20, 4th March 1871. “Pundits Bala Sastri, Becharama Tiwari, and Vamancharya have given me the benefit of their labour in our Sanskrit journal *The Pandit*, and I am much obliged to them for their very valuable aid. Pundit Gaya Datta is continuing in the same journal an English translation of the Yoga aphorisms of Patanjáli, to which Pundit Govind Deva Sastri was devoting his leisure time.” Becharama Tiwari, incidentally, was the Professor of Sāṃkhya at the Benares Sanskrit College. A useful biography of Govind Deva is published in the same report: “Pundit Govind Deva Shastri, nephew of our distinguished Professor of Mathematics, after finishing his course in the Sanskrit College, entered the newly formed Anglo-Sanskrit Department in the year 1849, where, in addition to his very creditable acquirements in Sanskrit and Mathematics, he obtained a fair knowledge of the English language and literature. He was appointed Assistant Professor of Mathematics in the Sanskrit College in 1856, became Professor of Hindoo Astronomy in 1868, and obtained the post of Assistant Professor in the Anglo Sanskrit Department at the beginning of 1870. He discharged satisfactorily the duties of the posts which he successively held and increased his reputation as a Sanskrit scholar by editing two dramas with very commendable care and accuracy.” [4A]

between Ballantyne and specific *paṇḍits*. Ballantyne’s translation was published together with the translation of the two remaining *pādas* a complete version of the *YS* in 1885. The 1885 edition was printed Tookaram Tatya in an edition “Revised, Edited, and Reprinted for the Bombay Theosophical Publication Fund,”¹⁹² with a lengthy introduction by H.S. Olcott, the prominent Theosophist.

Ballantyne’s Translation as Commentary

The Allahabad edition of Ballantyne’s translation includes a preface by Ballantyne, and the purpose of the publication is said to be “for the use of the Benares College.”¹⁹³ An assertion of the character of the history of philosophy begins the preface: “The great body of Hindú Philosophy is based upon six sets of very concise Aphorisms. Without a commentary the Aphorisms are scarcely intelligible...”¹⁹⁴ Acknowledging the importance of glosses and commentarial tradition, Ballantyne notes that a “class of pandits, in the Benares Sanskrit College... [has] been induced to learn English.”¹⁹⁵ Ballantyne hoped that through consultation with these *paṇḍits*, “and, through them, of other learned Bráhmans,” the quality of the translation would be improved, “so that any errors in the version may have the best chance of being discovered and rectified.”¹⁹⁶ The rationale for translation is also part of a much larger agenda, “the attempt to determine accurately the aspect of the philosophical terminology of the East as regards that of the West.”¹⁹⁷ Providing an early instance of

192 Henry Steel Olcott, “Introduction,” in *The Yoga Philosophy: Being the Text of Patanjali, with Bhoja Raja’s Commentary*, by J.R. Ballantyne and Govind Shastri Deva, 2nd ed (Bombay: Theosophical Society, 1885).

193 Ballantyne, *Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali with Illustrative Extracts from the Commentary of Bhoja Rájá*, frontispiece.

194 *Ibid.*, i.

195 *Ibid.*, i.

196 *Ibid.*

197 *Ibid.*

the same claim made by Rājendralāl Mitra in the preface to his 1882 translation, Ballantyne laments that the “translation of this first portion of the *Yoga Aphorisms* has been attended with peculiar difficulties, among which it may suffice here to mention that no pandit in these days professes to teach this system.”¹⁹⁸ Ballantyne, like Ward, includes the commentary of Bhoja, as well as unattributed excerpts from the *vṛtti* by Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa. Although he translated only half of the *YS*, Ballantyne’s version appears to have been the first to include the Sanskrit along with the translation.

Ballantyne translates the definitional *sūtra* on yoga (*YS* 1.2) as follows:

“Concentration (*yoga*) is the hindering of the modifications of the thinking principle.”¹⁹⁹ With the expansion of Bhoja’s commentary, the “thinking principle” is equated with “the Mind or internal organ”.²⁰⁰ The hindering associated with the notion of “preventing” the modifications; it is furthermore said to be “a super-sensual species of effort which is the cause of the destruction of these modifications.”²⁰¹ The method of translation is far more transparent than Ward’s in the sense that the appropriate Sanskrit passages of both the *YS* and in Bhoja’s commentary are included; one can assume from the presence of the Sanskrit and from Ballantyne’s prefatory remarks that he intended an audience with knowledge of both Sanskrit and English. At the same time, the translation of Bhoja’s commentary becomes the main site of Ballantyne’s commentarial interpretation. In continuing with Bhoja’s text, Ballantyne notes a doubt that is raised in the commentary: Making reference to the *Nyāyasūtra*, the questioner petitions that if the “soul just consists of the knowledge which has as its

198 Ibid., ii.

199 Ibid., 3.

200 Ibid.

201 Ibid.

objects the modifications... on the destruction of the modifications, then, the Soul too should be annihilated... and therefore, at the time of Concentration, what is the soul concerned about?”²⁰²

The editorial nature of Ballantyne’s translation is visible, for instance, in his treatment of the complex concept of *vikalpa*. *Vikalpa* is introduced as one of the five modifications of the mind (*cittavṛtti*), along with *pramāṇa*, *vipāryaya*, *nidrā*, and *smṛti*. Ballantyne translates *vikalpa* as “fancy,”²⁰³ providing for the definitional statement of this *vṛtti* the recondite translation,

A fancy is [a notion] devoid of thing [in reality corresponding thereto], following upon knowledge [conveyed] by words²⁰⁴

śabdajñānānupātī vastuśunyo vikalpaḥ [YS 1.9]

The conception—specifically, the linguistic image—of something to which nothing corresponds in reality is the problem addressed in this important *sūtra*. In the gloss, Ballantyne provides some of the usual examples that are found in philosophical texts to refer to *vikalpa*, such as the notion of a hare’s horn.²⁰⁵ Adding a contemporary spin, Ballantyne suggests that another example is the found in the tendency of “people in Europe [to] continue to speak of the sun’s rising and setting, though, holding the heliocentric theory, they do not really fancy that the sun either rises or sets.”²⁰⁶

There are also moments of comparative philosophy: the *vṛttis*, translated as “modifications,” are compared to Locke’s notion of ideas.²⁰⁷ The distinction between

202 Ibid.

203 Ibid., 6.

204 Ibid., 9, added text in original.

205 Ibid., 9.

206 Ibid., 10.

207 Ibid., 8.

Bhoja's commentary and Ballantyne's additions are not always clear in these instances.

The text first discusses the *citta* by means of an analogy to water found in the *Vedānta*

Paribhāṣā.²⁰⁸ Glossing the allusion further, Ballantyne adds:

To a considerable extent this theory of the Understanding is analogous to the theory of vision entertained by those who regard the retina as reflecting to the intelligent principle those forms of which the retina itself is uncognisant; whilst the intelligent principle itself is cognisant of things visible only inasmuch as they are reflected to it by the retina. 'The modifications' are akin to Locke's 'ideas'.²⁰⁹

Apart from its merits as an instance of comparative philosophy, the reference to Locke signals the intellectual style of Ballantyne's translation, and gives a sense of the erudition he expected in his audience. In addition to cross-cultural reference such as this, Ballantyne displays a close awareness of the Sanskrit commentaries on the YS, and includes them as well as counterpoints to Bhoja's gloss, such as his in his use of *Bhāvāgaṇeśā*.²¹⁰

Perhaps the easiest way to gauge the change in tenor that comes in the latter part of the century is to turn briefly to the combined translation published in Bombay in conjunction with the Theosophical Society in Bombay by Tookaram Tatya.

Ballantyne's preface was careful to defend the *sūtra* genre, whose brevity for the sake of mnemonic ease he describes as a virtue: "they are admirably adapted... the obscurity... in the eyes of the uninstructed, is not chargeable upon them as a fault."²¹¹

In the same preface, Ballantyne, who also asserted the importance of commentaries in understanding the YS, expressed hopes for a collaborative translation of the YS with the assistance of the *paṇḍits*. The preface to Tatya's second edition of the combined YS

208 A text on Vedānta attributed to Dharmarāja.

209 Ballantyne, *Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali with Illustrative Extracts from the Commentary of Bhoja Rájá*, 8.

210 *Ibid.*, 28.

211 *Ibid.*, i.

of Ballantyne and Govind Deva begins by describing the publication history of the text, with a new emphasis on the role of the Theosophical Society:

Patanjali's work on the philosophy of Yoga, having been written in Sanskrit, is generally inaccessible to the public who are not conversant with that learned language. With a view to remedy this want, the work was some years ago translated into English, partly by the late Dr. Ballantyne and partly by Govind Shastri Deva. But these translations were not collated and, consequently, the whole work was not easily accessible. Their reprint there, in one complete volume, has become necessary at the present day, when interest has been revived in the study of the Yoga philosophy throughout India by the Theosophical Society.²¹²

The last line is particularly revealing. By 1885, the year of the second printing²¹³ of Theosophical Society's printing, a writer could refer to a yoga revival throughout India. Although the Theosophical Society is given credit for the revival, the author of the preface alludes to the translation discussed below by Rājendralāl Mitra, showing its status a new authoritative version.

Care has been taken to ensure accuracy in the text by comparing it with the Bhoja Vriti [sic] in Sanskrit, and in some places the translation into English by Dr. Rajendralala Mitra has been consulted. But the original text of Dr. Ballantyne has been principally followed.²¹⁴

Finally, the publication of the translation is charged with a cause: "The Edition now offered is calculated to help counteract the materialistic tendencies of the present age, and to re-open the path of the true spiritual philosophy and science of the ancient Aryans."²¹⁵ Here we see a significant change of tone from the first edition, with its concern for philological accuracy in assessing the philosophies of classical Hinduism, to an argument for the applicability of the YS as a text to address and critique the

212 J.R. Ballantyne and Govind Shastri Deva, *The Yoga Philosophy: Being the Text of Patanjali, with Bhoja Raja's Commentary*, 2nd ed (Bombay: Theosophical Society, 1885), preface.

213 The unattributed preface notes that a first printing sold out within four months of its publication.

214 Ballantyne and Shastri Deva, *The Yoga Philosophy*, preface.

215 Olcott, "Introduction," preface.

contemporary moment. Whereas Ward's translation, with its intimations of "secularism" and "quietism" was a subtle indictment of the "system" of Hinduism even as it preserved elements of the commentarial tradition's internal diversity, Ballantyne's translation takes on a new life as a source-text for an positing a "materialist" West against a "spiritual" East, terms of exchange that figure prominently in Vivekananda's presentation of yoga in the next decade.

Following the preface, a long introduction by Henry Steel Olcott (1832-1907) continues the tone of spiritual criticism of the materialist West. Olcott, a founding member of the Theosophical Society and convert to Buddhism,²¹⁶ refers to the translations by William Ward and Rājendralāl Mitra in describing Patañjali's yoga in terms familiar to occultists and Theosophists at the end of the nineteenth century.²¹⁷ Franz Mesmer, whose method of hypnosis was being practiced by a young Sigmund Freud in his clinical work in Paris the same year Tatyā's second edition was published, had captured the public imagination at the end of the nineteenth century.²¹⁸ Olcott compares yoga to Mesmer's hypnosis, an allusion that will return in Bengali translations examined in the next chapter.²¹⁹

216 For a recent study of Olcott, see Stephen Prothero, *The White Buddhist the Asian Odyssey of Henry Steel Olcott* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996); and Thomas Tweed, *The American Encounter with Buddhism, 1844-1912: Victorian Culture and the Limits of Dissent* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).

217 De Michelis examines the connections between Theosophy and modern yoga but does not specifically analyze Olcott. Elizabeth De Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga: Patañjali and Western Esotericism* (New York: Continuum, 2004), See .

218 See, for instance, Harold P. Bloom, "From Suggestion to Insight, from Hypnosis to Psychoanalysis," in *Freud: Conflict and Culture*, ed. Michael Roth, 1st ed. (New York: Knopf, 1998).

219 "The student should very clearly notice that the modern Mesmeric science if exhaustively and experimentally studied is the key to an understanding of ancient Yoga, however practiced and by whatever school. Yoga, in its psychological aspect, is self mesmerization. It differs from the practices of the ordinary mesmeric operator, in that the 'subject' in this case is the mystic's own body, instead of another's person. In both cases, there is the development of a current of a psychic aura—if the word be permissible—and its direction by an operative will upon a selected receptive object. The Western Mesmeriser throws out his current upon a passive subject, and in that organization provokes the result his mind had conceived and his will commanded. The Yogi

In Olcott's introduction, we see evidence that knowledge about yoga is beginning to be transacted in new ways by new types of authority. The translation process, begun on the level of the Sanskrit text by Ward and Ballantyne and on the level of cultural history by Colebrooke and Wilson, created new ways of being knowledgeable. Ballantyne regretted that he could not find a *paṇḍit* willing to teach him about Patañjali and hoped that his translation would facilitate, with the help of other *paṇḍits*, the production of more accurate translations of Sanskrit primary sources. Echoing perhaps Ballantyne's search for "*nayā vidyā*" or "new knowledge,"²²⁰ what follows Olcott's introduction is a longer essay entitled "Yoga Vidya" that is credited to an unknown member of the Theosophical Society.²²¹

220 develops the same potential aura, but turns it upon himself." Olcott, "Introduction," v. Dodson, "Re-Presented for the Pandits: James Ballantyne, 'Useful Knowledge,' and Sanskrit Scholarship in Benares College During the Mid-Nineteenth Century," 259.

221 The author is referred to only as "a F.T.S."

Conclusions

In the English translation history of the *YS*, we see the transformation role of the *paṇḍit* from unnamed assistant to published collaborator: The *paṇḍit* who assisted, if not produced, William Ward's translation remains unnamed, but Ballantyne's unfinished translation is completed by Govind Shastri and published under his (albeit ambiguous) initials in *The Pandit*.²²² In the intervening time, the critical assessment of Ward's work by Colebrooke and Wilson helped to distinguish Indological research from the missionary context of Serampore. In doing so, the authority of Sanskrit commentary appears to move in two directions: it is projected into the past, where *vṛttis* such as that attributed to Bhoja Deva can serve as a source for establishing chronology and meaning; and into the new prestige language of English, where translation offers access to the *YS* as a means of defining Hinduism.

Ballantyne's inclusion of the commentary of the eighteenth-century commentary of Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa in his selection of textual excerpts reinforces the complexity of the claims about Sanskritic authority in the nineteenth-century. While Ballantyne could lament the absence of *paṇḍits* with expertise in yoga, he simultaneously relied on a quite recent commentary, a fact lost in the details of publication that only make reference to Bhoja Deva. Like the unnamed *paṇḍit* whose traces remain visible in Ward's translation, Sanskrit commentary was informing the process of translating, and was closely, if not nearly inextricably, linked to the text of the *YS* itself.

Collectively, the translators and interpreters of yoga analyzed in this chapter

222 Shastri, "Yogasūtra, Translated, with Extracts from Bhojadeva's Rājamārtaṇḍa (Part 2), in Continuation of J.R. Ballantyne's 1852 Publication."

represent the first to interpret Patañjali's text in the English language. The institutions with which they were associated, from Ward's settlement at Serampore to Ballantyne's involvement in the Sanskrit College in Benares, put them in close contact with indigenous intellectuals who contributed to, and helped frame, the process of translation. The disagreements on the nature of translation between Ward and Colebrooke, furthermore, are determined by local considerations, as well as more transnational concerns related to the creation and maintenance of the developing empire.

The ambiguities and paradoxes in this early period of translation demonstrate some of the dynamic tensions at work in the creation of knowledge through translation during the first half of the nineteenth-century. With the completion and publication of Ballantyne's translation, and its transformed life as a first "proof-sheets" for the education of *paṇḍit* and later as the basis of Theosophical speculation, the *YS* had become a central site of interpretation for diverse sets of intellectual communities. A vivid example is given by comparing two prefaces to the same translation: The preface of Ballantyne's 1852 translation refers to the modest aim of providing "proof-sheets awaiting correction" for the education of *paṇḍits*. The preface to the 1885 second edition of the completed translation calls the same text "the path to the true spiritual philosophy and science of the ancient Aryans."²²³ The intervening thirty-three years saw the prolific expansion of attention to the text. In this context of expanded interest, vernacular translators in the latter half of the nineteenth century turned to the *YS*, foregrounding the voice of the *paṇḍit* in the production of Bengali translations and in the context of public debate.

²²³ Ballantyne and Shastri Deva, *The Yoga Philosophy*, preface.

Chapter 4.

Vernacular Yogas: The Paṇḍits of Bengal

Paṇḍits, when called upon to explain, frequently, if not invariably, mix up the tenets of Patañjali's Yoga with those of the Tantras, the Purāṇas, the Tantric Saṁhitās, the Pañcharātras, and the Bhagavadgītā—works which have very dissimilar and discordant tenets to inculcate.

Rājendralāl Mitra, *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali*, lvi.

Introduction: Writing Yoga in Colonial Bengal

In the colonial metropolis of Calcutta, Bengali *paṇḍits* were communicating the teachings of Patañjali to a new generation, many of whom were educated in English but searching to find continuity for a world of Sanskrit learning that had been supplanted by the new English-based educational system in the cities. The tone of the time is reflected in the memoirs of Swami Abhedānanda, a contemporary of the more well-known Swami Vivekananda:

In 1882-83 A.D., Pandit Sasadhar Tarka-Chudamani attracted the admiration of Hindus by delivering a series of lectures in simple Bengali language on the scientific bases of Hinduism in Albert Hall under the Presidentship of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay... The gist of his lectures used to be published in the daily newspaper named *Bangabasi*.¹

In these lectures, Śaśadhar Tarkacūḍāmaṇi,² a *paṇḍit* who became famous during his time and has been called an exemplar of a movement of religious chauvinism at the time,³ spoke about Patañjali's *YS*, in which he is said to have had a particular interest.⁴

1 Abhedānanda, *Complete Works of Swami Abhedananda*, vol. 10 (Calcutta: Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, 1970), Vol. X, 610.

2 Śaśadhar Tarkacūḍāmaṇi's most well-known work is probably his 1885 *Dharma Vyākhyā* (Bengali). Colonel H.S. Olcott of the Theosophical Society also visited Calcutta in 1882, delivering his well-received lecture "Theosophy: The Scientific Basis of Religion" on 5 April. Cf. Nemaī Sadhan Bose, *The Indian Awakening and Bengal* (Kolkata: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1960), 147.

3 Rakhāl Nath, *The New Hindu Movement, 1886-1911* (Calcutta: Minerva, 1982), 10.

4 As is discussed below, there is comparatively little written on Śaśadhar. A description and evaluation of the content of his speeches is found in Nath: "Just as Krishnaprasanna, in his Albert Hall lecture had sought to find the most prodigious scientific achievements amongst the Hindus of the Ramayanic Age, so did Sasadhar discover Darwinism in an aphorism of Patanjali. This was plain chauvinism, but Sasadhar phrased his argument in a form which seemed to involve much

It was through his lectures a young Abhedānanda became interested in yoga. Too busy to teach him, Paṇḍit Śāśadhara advised Abhedānanda to study with Paṇḍit Kālīvar Vedāntavāgīś, who at the time was still busy with his Bengali translation of the YS.⁵ Abhedānanda recalls Paṇḍit Kālīvar's response:

At present I have been translating *Patanjali-darshan* into Bengali and so I have not the leisure. If, however, you come to me just before my bath when my servant massages my body with oil, then I can explain the meaning of the Yoga aphorisms to you.⁶

Abhedānanda—born Kali Prasad Chandra in Calcutta, 1866—was drawn to yoga through his interest in Patañjali. It was the lectures on Patañjali that led him to the practice of yoga, as he later he sought out a yogi in the Sundarbans, the mangrove islands in the alluvial flood plain of the Ganges river in the Bay of Bengal. Eventually he, like Swami Vivekananda, found his way to Ramakrishna, the charismatic religious figure in Bengal who inspired a religious movement that is now international. This brief glimpse into the status of yoga in the 1880s in Calcutta is revealing: Abhedānanda came to yoga initially not through exposure to yogis or through practices in their families, but through public talks by important *paṇḍits* who described the philosophy of Patañjali. The vernacular presentation of yoga through print editions and public talks extended the audience of yoga and created a set of personal connections between intellectuals.

The three important elements of the context of the Bengali translation of yoga are evident in this anecdote: the importance of *paṇḍits*,⁷ their involvement in the public

philosophic reasoning and proceed from an acutely logical intellect. The nature of Sasadhara's 'pseudo-rationalism' will be clear from an analysis of his proposition that 'the complete man can be born in India alone'. Ibid., 39.

5 See note below.

6 Abhedānanda, *Complete Works of Swami Abhedananda*, 10:Vol. X, 610.

7 It is helpful here to note the 1895 essay by Bireshwar Pare published in the *Sahitya Parishad Patrika*, where the appropriate title of *pandit*. Pare's "contribution in the essay was to designate members of the Parishad as pandits. As with the term Babu, pandit had been liberally

representation of Hinduism associated with the Baṅgabāsī group, and the burgeoning interest in yoga catalyzed by the positive evaluation of Patañjali's text in vernacular translation.⁸ Making the *YS* accessible to a larger segment of the Bengali population through translation, and reevaluating a work that had been negatively criticized by Orientalist readings, these *paṇḍits* created a new set of possibilities for interpreting yoga. This chapter will examine the contribution of three Bengali interpreters of the *YS* who contributed to the development of modern yoga.

The *paṇḍits* described in this chapter have been largely marginalized in histories of the period because of their association with culturally chauvinistic accounts of the superiority of Hinduism, but it was in this context that new interpretations of Patañjali's text were being forged. These *paṇḍits* are chiefly remembered for their antagonistic relationships between luminaries in the history of religious transformation in nineteenth-century Bengal, including Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-1884) and Ramakrishna (1836-1886). Sen, who joined the Brahmo Samaj in 1858, advocated a universalistic view of Hinduism that he called the New Dispensation that

used by writers in ways that expanded upon inherited or customary usage. While as a title of respect the term honours Brahmins who interpret Sanskrit texts, writers used it freely to refer to anyone claiming to possess knowledge." See Lou Ratté, *The Uncolonised Heart* (Calcutta: Orient Longman, 1995), 208.

- 8 It is useful here to compare Abhedānanda's narrative to Shamita Basu's analysis of an 1895 vernacular pamphlet making similar claims: "In the preface to one such pamphlet *Jnanadeepika*, written by Srinath Bholanath Jnanananda and published by the Arya Dharma Pracharini Sabha in 1885, the author introduced himself as a spiritual man who neither knew Sanskrit nor was familiar with the scholarly discourses but who was inspired to spread the message of God through Bhagabat Path (reciting from the Bhagabat Gita) and Kirtan.... and spent his time in the company of holy men in pilgrimages and mountain retreats, and through these practices attained self-purification. He hoped that God willing his message of religion would spread through the publication.... The late nineteenth century abounded in such popular literature on Hindu religion. The feature that is common to this genre of writings is the desire to make folk practices an integral part of the Hindu religion by relating them, on the one hand, to the devotional cult of bhakti, and, on the other, to the ascetic institutions of sannyasa." Shamita Basu, *Religious Revivalism as Nationalist Discourse: Swami Vivekananda and New Hinduism in Nineteenth Century Bengal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 138.

was critical of religious sectarianism as well as aspects of ritual that were posited as outmoded or divisive.⁹ By 1876, Sen was implementing a set of universalized yogic practices at the *Sadhan Karan*, a community he established near Calcutta. He divided the practitioners there into four groups, including *Yogi*, *Bhakta*, *Jnani*, and *Shebak*, reflecting what were seen as essential mode of religious orientation, and instituting what De Michelis has called “the prototypical form of what will later become a core teaching of Modern Yoga, i.e., Vivekananda’s model of the ‘4 yogas’ (*Rāja*-, *Bhakti*, *Jñāna*- and *Karma*-yoga).”¹⁰ In contrast to the Brahmo version of a rationalistic and universal discourse of Hinduism, recent studies of Ramakrishna have characterized his work as “a critique of Western-rationalism through the medium of Hindu religious philosophy,”¹¹ and he has been credited alongside Vivekananda, his most influential disciple, as one of the “pioneers of the new Hinduism.”¹² The contrasts between Sen and Ramakrishna have helped to establish a historiographic binary along the axis of “tradition” and “reform,” and this binary has relegated the *paṇḍits* in this chapter to a

9 For analysis of Sen in the context of religious revivalism, see *ibid.*, 22–23.

10 Elizabeth De Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga: Patañjali and Western Esotericism* (New York: Continuum, 2004), 87.

11 See Basu’s reading of Partha Chatterjee’s essay on Ramakrishna, in Basu, *Religious Revivalism as Nationalist Discourse*, 145; Referring to Partha Chatterjee, “A Religion of Urban Domesticity: Sri Ramakrishna and the Calcutta Middle Class,” in *Subaltern Studies 7: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, ed. Partha Chatterjee and Gyanendra Pandey (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993), 51.

12 See De Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga*, 11–12; Quoting Ninian Smart, “Asian Cultures and the Impact of the West: India and China,” in *New Religious Movements: A Perspective for Understanding Society*, ed. Eileen Barker (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1982), 144. De Michelis criticizes Smart’s characterization of Ramakrishna as “imprecise,” contending that “While Vivekananda was indeed such a ‘pioneer’, Ramakrishna was not - even though the official version of facts propagated by the Ramakrishna movement does represent him as such.... the teachings made so popular by Vivekananda (including Modern Yoga) draw only superficially from Ramakrishna’s own. If we look at historical and textual evidence, rather than at conventional narratives and hagiographies, we will see that, notwithstanding his reliance on Ramakrishna as ultimate spiritual exemplar, Vivekananda was inheritor to the intellectual tradition of the Brahmo Samaj.

The type of construct proposed by Smart, in which Ramakrishna is said to be a ‘pioneer’ along with Vivekananda, highlights a confusion that is very widespread at both etic and emic levels of discourse East and West, i.e. the confusion between ‘traditional’ (or ‘classical’, see Chapter 1) and ‘modern’ forms of Hinduism.”

role of retrograde antagonists. Amiya Sen depicts the *Baṅgabāsi* movement that connected many of the writers analyzed in this chapter in just such a role, representing the opposite front against the Brahma approach: “It is not difficult to appreciate how, in the period under review, [viz. the 1880s] the Brahma Samaj was clearly under attack from two various sources; one, the more gentle but fairly effective persuasion of a figure like Ramakrishna and the other, distinctly aggressive intentions of the *Baṅgabasi* writers.”¹³

The themes of vernacular culture and the process of Sanskritization have been central to historical analyses of these monumental religious figures in nineteenth century colonial Bengal (cf. Kripal, 1995; Raychaudhuri, 1988), and more recent scholarship (cf. Hatcher, 2001, 2005) has examined the role of the less-studied figures who worked at the confluence of Sankritic and vernacular culture. These figures—classically trained scholars of Sanskrit known as *paṇḍits*—were elites who at the same time worked often on the margins of history. The *paṇḍits* are today not as acclaimed as Ramakrishna or Vivekananda, but they helped to create the conditions for the possibility of translating, both culturally and linguistically, texts such as the *YS* and the *Bhagavad Gita*, and as emergent public intellectuals, they contributed to debates over the nature religious transformations during the colonial period. It was not until translations of the *YS* were undertaken by *paṇḍits* in Bengal, furthermore, that the text began to be viewed in a positive light. As was shown in Chapter Three, Orientalist scholars including H.T. Colebrooke and H.H. Wilson viewed Patañjali’s text as a “fanatical” remnant that was disassociated from popular practice. The words of Fitz-

13 Amiya P. Sen, *Hindu Revivalism in Bengal, 1872-1905: Some Essays in Interpretation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 207.

Edward Hall express the negative regard in which yoga texts were often regarded by Western scholars in the first half of the nineteenth-century: “As few of the twenty-eight Yoga works which have fallen under my inspection are at present read, so, one may hope, few will ever again be read, either in this country or by curious enquirers in Europe.”¹⁴ Patañjali’s text, whatever its prestige before the nineteenth-century, was interpreted more positively in the translations following Ballantyne’s 1852 incomplete attempt.

The texts of yoga soon became read in India, Europe, and as far away as America. The *paṇḍits*, by arguing for the importance of what was seen as an obscure, fanatical, and quietist text, were the earliest promoters of yoga’s internationalization. Moreover, the *paṇḍits* were central figures in the inter-cultural transmission of Sanskrit knowledge. During the early phases of western Orientalism in India, the *paṇḍits* taught languages such as Sanskrit and Bengali to western scholars, translated sources, and contributed to the production of dictionaries and grammars. The earliest translation of the *YS* with a Sanskrit commentary that appears in William Ward’s account of Hindu religious and philosophical writings (second edition, 1818), for instance, was the result of intensive collaboration on the part of traditionally-trained Sanskrit *paṇḍits*. Then names of the *paṇḍits* are not referenced in the text, but their trace can be found in the Bengali renderings of Sanskrit terms. By the 1880s *paṇḍits* were publishing their own translations of the *YS* with critical introductions and other interpretive apparatus. The *paṇḍits* contributed to contemporaneous interpretations of Hindu religion in these interpretative acts, and the *paṇḍits* who wrote on yoga made evident a diversity of

14 Quoted in Rājendralāl Mitra, tran., *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali with the Commentary of Bhoja Rájá*, Bibliotheca Indica (Calcutta: The Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1883), lv.

opinion.

Such agency found in their writing goes against the portrayal of the *paṇḍit* in literature of the colonial period. There was, as Brian Hatcher (2001) and Vasudha Dalmia (1999) have demonstrated, a tendency to construct the figure of the *paṇḍit* in various ways according to various needs (for instance, as stock character reflecting obscurantism, or embodying the putative deceitfulness of the indigenous intellectual, etc.). In more recent histories they have often been grouped monolithically together in as elites, despite the often complexly marginal positions they held.

While being at the margins of historical recognition, the *paṇḍit* was conversely at the center of a reevaluation of the protocols and prestige of knowledge. Or more precisely, the cultural place of the *paṇḍit* was moving from the center to the margins as Sanskritic knowledge became eclipsed. Referring to an article by F. Max Mueller's in the 1871 *Contemporary Review*, Dalmia has noted that the "pandits had suffered a general loss of prestige. With the historicization of knowledge, the final source of authority could only be western orientalists."¹⁵ The textual-historical approach to Hinduism by the Orientalists, in Dalmia's account, not only undermined the prestige and authority of the *paṇḍits*, but also created a body of texts that were the most "often cited as the final authority by nationalists in support of one argument proffered in the cause of Hindu religion and culture."¹⁶

In terms of the history of yoga, interest in Patañjali's *YS* among *paṇḍits* writing

15 Vasudha Dalmia, *The Nationalization of Hindu Traditions: Bharatendu Harishchandra and Nineteenth-century Banaras* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), 105.

16 Ibid., 105; See also Vasudha Dalmia, "Sanskrit Scholars and Pandits of the Old School: The Benares Sanskrit College and the Constitution of Authority in the Late Nineteenth Century," in *Oriental India: European Knowledge Formation in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Delhi: Three Essays Collective, 2003), 48.

in English or Indian vernacular languages did not occur until comparatively late, toward the close of the nineteenth century. At that same time, some *paṇḍits* began to redefine their traditional role as scholars in the context of Sanskrit learning and extend their scholarly voices into public arenas and debates. Studies of particular *paṇḍits* in recent academic scholarship have tended to focus on those who worked either in areas of law, or less frequently in the philosophical system of *nyāya*.¹⁷ In the context of philosophy, a different set of texts was produced by a group of *paṇḍits* in colonial Calcutta who wrote translations of Patañjali's *YS*. These translations were an extension of the Sanskrit commentarial tradition, but were produced by the print industry in Calcutta. They were cheap editions of the Sanskrit text intended for a wide audience, and many editions included an innovation borrowed from Western print culture: the preface or introduction. In the public arenas of debate specific to the colonial city of Calcutta, the *paṇḍits* of yoga actively participated in the public dissemination of yoga as a central and constitutive element of Hinduism. An important example of public political engagement is discussed below in the case of Paṇḍit Śāśadhara.

These *paṇḍits*, though largely obscured by the binary of tradition and reform in the historiography of colonialism, are responsible for three aspects of the development of modern yoga. First, they created alternate versions of Pātājāñla-yoga that were hybrid discourses incorporating aspects of western science and Orientalism alongside indigenous traditions of yoga practice. Secondly, they adapted Sanskrit commentarial

17 Cf. Rosane Rocher, "Henry Thomas Colebrooke and the Marginalization of Indian Pandits," in *Pramāṇakīrtiḥ : Papers Dedicated to Ernst Steinkellner on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday*, ed. Ernst Steinkellner (Wien: Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2007), 735–756.

techniques to the format of new print culture and to the language of Bengali, creating vernacular translations of the *YS* with commentary in the form of introductions and (less frequently) intra-textual redaction. Finally, they provided the source of the sources for the next interpreters of yoga—including those who helped to make yoga a global phenomenon such as Swami Vivekananda. In translating between Sanskrit and Bengali, they worked with closely linked languages with considerable semantic and rhetorical overlap. Nonetheless, in the process of translating the *YS* these translators cited and referred to English translation, and used the conventions of the printed book, such as the preface, to debate with, or criticize, their Anglophone interlocutors. This chapter will examine the intellectual history of the *YS* during the period leading up to Vivekananda, through the lens of a group of *paṇḍits* whose work falls into a less-examined category, where the definitions of terms like tradition, orthodoxy, reform, and revivalism are blurred. As well as complicating a latently teleological narrative of religious transformation, the case of these *paṇḍits* cannot be satisfactorily understood without continuing, and synthesizing, the reinvestigation of Orientalism undertaken most recently by Brian Hatcher (2007) and Michael Dodson (2007).¹⁸

Paṇḍit Śāśadhar's refashioning of Patañjali was part of his broader project to synthesize a notion of *dharma* from his reading of *śāstric* materials. In his depiction of a scientific essence to Hinduism, Śāśadhar work can be reduced to a citation in the revivalist protest against modernity. This putative split between revivalism and

18 As Michael Dodson has recently written, "Characterisations of the *paṇḍits* as 'traditional', 'conservative', and 'disingenuous', as well as the comfortable stereotypes of 'orthodoxy' and 'reform', 'tradition' and 'modernity', and indeed, 'defensiveness' and 'innovation', with which we delineate so much of the intellectual encounters of nineteenth-century India, are clearly insufficient to account for the range of these Sanskrit scholars' activities." Michael S. Dodson, *Orientalism, Empire, and National Culture: India, 1770-1880* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 183.

modernity appears in the Rakhhal Chandra Nath's work, discussed below, and in Sumit Sarkar's analysis of nineteenth-century Bengal. To assess some of the Hegelian assumptions in this historiography of modernism, Shamita Basu's analysis is helpful here:

It is striking that from well-known works of history like Sumit Sarkar's *Modern India 1885-1947* to relatively minor studies like *The Neo Hindu Movement 1886-1911* by Rakhhal Chandra Nath there is a consensus that the revivalist movement was antithetical to the emerging modern consciousness in Bengal. 'At a more obscurantist level', writes Sumit Sarkar, 'revivalism was represented by Sasadhar Tarkachudamani and Krishnaprasanna Sen, who claimed shastric precedence for all the discoveries of modern western sciences.' [Quoting Sarkar, *Modern India: 1885-1947*, New Delhi, 1983, p. 72] What is implicit in such statements is a theory that there were certain progressive trends within Hinduism which, unlike revivalism, did not seek to claim the superiority of the Shastras over modern science, a position which may be easily denied by the evidence of the existing texts.¹⁹

The evaluation of *paṇḍits* along the teleology of modernity is predicated on the sort of historiographic binaries between pre- and post-colonial that are discussed in Chapter Two, and they result, as Dodson has indicated, "a lexical focus on valuation, whether a superfluous negative or an imagined positive one," and obscure the practices by which *paṇḍits* claimed and produced knowledge. The prefaces to Bengali translations of the *YS* by the *paṇḍit* analyzed in this chapter add to the source material that can make it possible, as Dodson argues,

to write elements of the history of *paṇḍits*' scholarly activities which takes into account the engagements, adaptations, and critiques of the political and intellectual worlds of the coloniser: a history which details forms of interaction between Britons and Indians, highlighting the agency of the latter, and testifying to their distinct set of priorities.... Crude stereotypes of *paṇḍits* as 'collaborators' or 'unworldly' and naïve are simply insufficient to account for the range of activities and engagements which an examination of the available source material demonstrates *paṇḍits*

19 Basu, *Religious Revivalism as Nationalist Discourse*, 1.

undertook in the nineteenth century, including particularly the ability of *paṇḍits* in government employ to express distinct and diverse points of view about the Indian past in the course of a reconstruction of a ‘modern’ Hindu identity.²⁰

Here I argue that translation worked as a way of modulating between different social and rhetorical spheres, and expanded the use of language to include the commentarial mode. Translation, furthermore, performed a phatic function, creating a new sociability between linguistic groups and registers that echoed the fluid and overlapping social spheres of colonial Calcutta. The intermixing of argots, ranging from vernacular expressions to commentary Sanskrit, in Calcutta was emblematic of the cosmopolitan audiences being addressed. In this local context, we find an emerging audience for publications that combined elements of the linguistic registers and cultural contexts of English, Sanskrit, and Bengali. Translators could draw from diverse sets of loanwords and linguistic contexts without creating obscurity,²¹ creating a context-sensitive mode of translation.

“In the absence of a practical teacher”:²² Bengali Translation as Commentary

The broader question to be asked in the process of translating yoga is how to understand vernacular commentary on the *YS*, itself a Sanskrit text. Against the notion of the death of Sanskrit, these yoga writers were demonstrating that the

20 Dodson, *Orientalism, Empire, and National Culture: India, 1770-1880*, 147.

21 Cf. Anthony Burgess’s analysis of the difficulties of writers in exile, for whom the landscapes of “foreign” and “home” are mingled: “It is this sense of division between an author’s own linguistic knowledge and that of his audience that will force him to restrict his use of loanwords or not to rely too much on the power of exotic communication.” The specificity of translation in nineteenth-century Calcutta was grounded in the polyglot nature of the audience for these translations, an audience that could move between previously separate or foreign registers of expression that were increasingly overlapping. Mitra’s ascension as the first Indian president of the Asiatic Society is emblematic of this process. Anthony Burgess, *Joysprick: An Introduction to the Language of James Joyce* (London: Deutsch, 1973), 177.

22 Quoted from Kṣetrapāl Cakravārtī, *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga* (Calcutta: The New Britannia press, 1893), 114.

original text contained possibilities that became visible through translation. Each of these writers demonstrate that the “perceptibly different shades of meaning” that arose “within what is loosely called the ‘Hindu awakening’”²³ found their way directly into the early modern understanding of Patañjali’s YS. To borrow from Walter Benjamin’s well-known essay, “The Task of the Translator,” the translation is not, in fact, an attempt at a likeness of the original. Translatability, in Benjamin’s sense, is “an essential quality of certain works,” by which “a specific significance inherent in the original manifests itself in translatability.”²⁴ In this way, texts such as Patañjali’s YS have an afterlife, and translation is a process that transforms and renews the life of the text.²⁵ It is in the work of these early modern *paṇḍits* of yoga that the afterlife of Patañjali’s *sūtras* becomes most visible in the creation of new yoga discourses.

Just as the Anglophone commentaries on yoga by Nabin Chandra Paul²⁶ and Keshab Chandra Sen²⁷ were important to the development of Vivekananda’s *Rāja Yoga*,²⁸ so too were the early Bengali translations of Patañjali critical for the understanding of yoga leading up to Vivekananda. These *paṇḍits* argued in their commentaries for various localizations of yoga, many of which complicate the narrative of yoga’s development after Vivekananda. For instance, Maheścandra Pāl, who is discussed below, published not only a Bengali version of the YS, but also an edition of the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* of Svātmarāma²⁹ (c. 1350-1400),³⁰ demonstrating a nineteenth-

23 Sen, *Hindu Revivalism in Bengal, 1872-1905*, 4.

24 Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 1st Schocken pbk. ed (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 71.

25 *Ibid.*, 73.

26 N. C. Paul, *A Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy* (Benares: The Recorder Press, 1851).

27 Keshub Chunder Sen, *The New Dispensation. Yoga: Or, Communion with God* (Calcutta: Brahma Tract Society, 1884).

28 Vivekananda, *Vedānta Philosophy; Lectures*, New ed (New York: The Baker & Taylor Company, 1899).

29 Maheścandra Pāl, *Haṭhayogapradīpikā*, trans. Maheścandra Pāl (Kolkata: Nabakumār Basu, 1890).

30 For dating, see Gerald James Larson and Ram Shankar Bhattacharya, eds., *Yoga: India’s Philosophy of Meditation*, vol. XII, *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2008), 489–

century interest in the sources of *haṭha yoga* alongside those of Pātañjala-yoga. Singleton has highlighted what he calls “the *anti-haṭha* sentiment that initially kept *āsana* out of the yoga revival and which gave rise to the conditions under which *haṭha yoga* came to be remodeled as physical culture”; it appears that such a sentiment did not preclude interest in variegated forms of yoga alongside the translation of Patañjali. In doing so, nonetheless, these *paṇḍits* helped to solidify the canonical status of the *YS*. It became the touchstone text by which debate on a variety of yogic topics was instituted. The commentaries of the *paṇḍits* were a central contribution to the blending of yoga and nationalism that is found in later adaptations,³¹ including Vivekananda’s, and later still the resolutely vernacular commentary of modern Indian gurus of yoga such as Swami (Svāmī) Rāmdev, a televised teacher of yoga who reaches wide audiences in contemporary India and elsewhere almost exclusively through Hindi.

The Baṅgabāsī Environment

One of the primary sites of the blending of emergent nationalist discourse with the translation of yoga was in the context that surrounded a prominent nineteenth-century Bengali-language magazine. The magazine, *Baṅgabāsī*, which Abhedānanda cites as publishing the speeches of Paṇḍit Śāśadhar, was a mouthpiece of what has been variously called conservative or revivalist Hinduism. R.C. Majumdar has called *Baṅgabāsī* “the most popular Bengali weekly in the last quarter of the 19th Century.”³² It was owned by Jogendra Chandra Basu and its editor from 1883-1895 was

501.

31 See, e.g., Joseph S. Alter, “Yoga and Physical Education: Swami Kuvalayananda’s Nationalist Project,” *Asian Medicine* 3, no. 1 (January 2007): 20–36; Joseph S. Alter, “Yoga at the Fin De Siècle: Muscular Christianity with a ‘Hindu’ Twist,” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 23, no. 5 (2006): 759–776.

32 “Forward,” in *National Awakening and the Bangabasi*. (Calcutta: Amitava-Kalyan Publishers, 1968), i.

Krishnachandra Banerji.³³ Indeed, it was so widely circulated and cheaply priced that its name became a term in some dialects of Bengali for a genre of newspapers.³⁴ The lack of a historical archive³⁵ for the newspaper has been explained by one of its modern historians as a result of the scandalous nature of its original content, and subsequent neglect:

The Bangabasi being anti-imperialistic and incorrigibly disloyal, according to the ruling power, its preservation in the libraries by private or public bodies, was viewed with a lurking fear and consequently disfavored. This might account for its absence in the libraries of Bengal. Further, during the long lapse of more than a generation whatever stray papers might have been preserved here and there, have also been decayed or destroyed for want of proper care and research.³⁶

The newspaper had a greater sales in the *mufassal* or province regions than it did inside Calcutta itself, suggesting that its content appealed less to the classes of the city.³⁷

In spite of the popular circulation of the *Baṅgabāsi*, scholarship has ignored the connection between the writers associated with it and the translation of yoga. Tapan Raychaudhuri, for instance, who provides an in-depth analysis of the movement associated with the *Baṅgabāsi*, describes it in caricature as a kind of conduit for what he terms the “ludicrous claims” of Śāśadhar and those who “abjured agnosticism and the westernized lifestyle to rejoice in Hindu rituals and the unrestrained emotionalism of

33 R. C. Majumdar, *History of Modern Bengal* (Calcutta: G. Bharadwaj, 1978), vols. I, 462.

34 Ibid.

35 Selections from the *Baṅgabāsi* appear to be preserved in *Reports on the Bengal Native Press*, part of the Imperial Record Department, which appear to be collected at the India Office Library of the British Library and the National Archives of India in Delhi. Selections from the *Baṅgabāsi* have been translated. See Nandalal Ghosh, *Glory unto Loyalty. O Empress! Pray do not interfere with religion. Open letter. Articles on the Age of Consent bill. Translated from the “Bangabasi” newspaper by Nandalal Ghosh.* (Calcutta: S.C. Bysack & Co., 1891). The South Asia Microform Project (SAMP) has included the reports, and another microform version is available under the title *Indian Newspaper Reports*.

36 Shyamananda Banerjee, *National Awakening and the Bangabasi* (Calcutta: Amitava-Kalyan Publishers, 1968), 5.

37 Sen, *Hindu Revivalism in Bengal, 1872-1905*, 207.

guru cults.”³⁸ Raychaudhuri adds:

[T]he power of this [Hindu revivalism] movement should not be underestimated. One of its important organs, *Bangabasi*, had 50,000 subscribers, a record number in those days. Its editor, Jogindranath Basu, and his friend, Indranath Bandyopadhyaya, a highly talented satirist, reduced Brahmoism to an object of ridicule through their often scurrilous writings. No writer of the period could ignore the phenomenon. Its bizarre and often extremely tasteless manifestations soon had a sobering effect on the enthusiasts. All major thinkers and publicists distanced themselves from it. Yet, some of them, Bhudev [Mukhopadhyay] and Bankim, [Bankimcandra Chatterjee] had tenuous and short-lived links with Sasadhar. Vivekananda had no patience with the pandit’s inanities, but his infinitely tolerant guru expressed an interest in the latter’s preaching.³⁹

Where Ramakrishna articulated a devotional alternative to the Brahmo message of reform, Śasādhār would reject the notion of reform through his scientific reading of Patañjali. The range of adaptations of Patañjali extend to Abhedānanda’s account of his own encounter with yoga through Patañjali, and at first glance the centrality of Patañjali’s text to this range of interest in yoga might be surprising given the technical nature of the *YS*. William Butler Yeats, frustrated by the philological translation of the *YS* by James Haughton Woods,⁴⁰ wrote:

Certainly before the Ajantā Caverns were painted, almost certainly before the ribbed dome and bell columns of Kārli were carved, naked ascetics had put what they believed an ancient wisdom into short aphorisms for their pupils to get by heart and put in practice. I come in my turn, no grammarian, but a man engaged in that endless research into life, death, God, that is every man’s reverie. [*sic*] I want to hear the talk of those naked men, and I am certain they never said ‘The subliminal impression produced this (super repetitive balanced state)’ nor talked of ‘predicate relations’.⁴¹

38 Tapan Raychaudhuri, *Europe Reconsidered: Perceptions of the West in Nineteenth-Century Bengal*, 2nd ed (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002), 9–11.

39 *Ibid.*, 11.

40 James Haughton Woods, *The Yoga-system of Patañjali*, trans. James Haughton Woods (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1914).

41 Patañjali, Purohit, and W. B Yeats, *Aphorisms of Yôga* (London: Faber and Faber, 1938), 11–12; This quotation, and Yeats’ relationship to yoga, is analyzed in Yohanan Grinshpon, *Silence Unheard: Deathly Otherness in Pātañjala-Yoga*, SUNY Series in Hindu Studies (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 5, 23.

Abhedānanda, hearing the lectures of Paṇḍit Śāśadhara, was exposed to a different translation of Patañjali, one that apparently was able to appeal to householders, living in an urbanizing environment where English education offered the promise of material wealth.

In understanding what was at stake for late-nineteenth-century interpreters of Patañjali, it is helpful to return to the figures that are nearly literary in their representation, and the allegorical role they are often called to play in telling of the history of the colonial era: the *paṇḍit* and the Babu.⁴² Where the *paṇḍit* had erudition that was recognized by the old order of society, and social prestige that was built on that increasingly fragile social order, the Babu had a new social mobility, a new social location that was being created in literature and new institutions of association. In a sense, the *paṇḍit*'s world had been Sanskrit, as the Babu's world was English and Bengali. In this context, the use of translation by the *paṇḍits* reflects an appeal to the Sanskritic past in the vernacular present, a way of giving definition to a new set of social conditions by highlighting the power of renunciation and withdrawal to paradoxically shape the future.⁴³ The rhetorical power of *paṇḍits* like those described

42 For an analytic contrast of the socio-rhetorical dimensions of these two figures, see, e.g., Ratté, *The Uncolonised Heart* Chapters Five and Six. Ratté contrasts the role of the *Calcutta Review* with that of the *Sahitya Parishad Patrika* to argue that “In the *Patrika*'s construction, Bengalis concerned with literature had discovered the social role that criticism was to play and that, through criticism, literature itself was to play. They were asserting a command over the present justified by the assumption of command over the past. One writer legitimised this new role by identifying the members of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad as pandits. As with the figures of the Babu and the Bengali Saheb, the pandit of the *Sahitya Patrika* is a literary figure of speech, rich in association, employed as a rhetorical device to make important points about the present.” Ibid., 207.

43 Brajendranath Beal, who is discussed below, accounts for the figure of the *saṁnyāsī* as a sort of impotent historical character through the lens of Rabindranath Tagore's story “Prakritira Pratisodha,” which he translates as “Nature's Revenge”: “In the Bengali tragedy, the Sannyasi struggles with a feeling of tenderness for a lovely child of Nature, the stir of fatherly instinct, the inner workings of the heart for an outlet to its pent-up affections. Hence the conflict is between an individualistic search after truth, in the fashion of the Indian ascetic idealism, and the necessity of individualistic affection, and does not rise to the high platform of a representative struggle of the race between the ideal goals of infinite knowledge and infinite love.” In the face of

in this chapter has been ascribed to the challenges of reform and tradition from the period of 1870 to the turn of the century:

In Bengal, the intellectual mood had been changing under a variety of influences from the 1870s. Defence of Hindu traditions became more respectable as scholars like Max Müller rediscovered the glories of ancient Aryans, and as a romantic cult of the exotic Orient developed in the West, bearing strange and more than a little dubious fruit in the Theosophical movement of Olcott and Blavatsky.... Sophisticated and intellectualized revivalism was best represented by the Bankimchandra of the 1880s, reinterpreting Krishna as ideal man, culture-hero, and nation builder. At a more obscurantist level revivalism was represented by Sasadhar Tarkachudamani and Krishnaprasanna Sen, who claimed *shastric* precedents for all the discoveries of modern western science. But revivalism was most effective when it sought to appeal to emotions rather than to the intellect: through the neo-Vaishnavism of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, seeking inspiration in Chaitanya rather than the Krishna of the epics whom Bankim had sought to idealize, and above all through Ramakrishna Paramhansa, the saintly Dakshineswar priest who cast a spell over Calcutta's sophisticated intellectuals precisely through his eclecticism and rustic simplicity.⁴⁴

In this way, *paṇḍits* like Śāśadhar are analyzed in most accounts of colonial India as a sort of third-way between forms of “intellectual” versus “emotional” revivalism. The appropriation of the title *paṇḍit* by figures like those of the Baṅgīya Sahitya Pariṣad reflects how the term was used, and transformed, by its rhetorical value in the context of the nineteenth century, and the *paṇḍits* described in this chapter were among the most outspoken critics of the kind of transformations epitomized by the figure of the *Babu*.

A main nexus of those who have been called “the more bitter critics of social reform”⁴⁵ the *Baṅgabāsi* was a printing venture responsible for a daily and weekly

such literary dismissal, the figure of the *sannyāsi*, may served a rhetorical role as a figure of protest for writers like Abhedānanda and the *paṇḍits* of this chapter.

44 Henry Schwarz and Sangeeta Ray, *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 257.

45 Sen, *Hindu Revivalism in Bengal, 1872-1905*, 107.

newspaper beginning in 1881, which appeared both in Bengali and Hindi for a period, as well as for at least one journal⁴⁶ and cheap editions of Sanskrit texts. The *Baṅgabāsi* served as a counterpoint to various organizations and causes that positioned themselves as reformist, and it is a significant site for understanding the role of *paṇḍits* in the creation of Bengali translations of the *YS*. Tanika Sarkar, for instance, has used the term “revivalist-nationalist” to refer to a political formation in late nineteenth-century Bengal “which defended unreformed Hindu custom as perfect and inviolable and portrayed this defense as a struggle against colonial encroachments into Hindu domestic practices.”⁴⁷ According to her analysis groups like the *Baṅgabāsi* writers gained particular prominence in this respect “during the agitation against the Age of Consent Bill in 1891.”⁴⁸

While an analysis of the Age of Consent Bill exceeds the scope of this study, the proximity of the yoga translators examined in this chapter to the *Baṅgabāsi* suggests how the translation of the *YS* alongside other Sanskrit sources suggest how these writers were engaging in political activity and polemics simultaneously to their translation activity. Although writers like Śāśadhar and Maheścandra Pāl do not, in the excerpts of their translations of the *YS* that I have examined, connect these two activities directly together, the two avenues of their work can be read as an effort to redefine the *paṇḍit* in terms of a custodian of Sanskrit intellectual heritage. The Age of Consent Bill was introduced in 1890 by Sir A.F. Scoble and Viceroy Lord Landsdowne in response to the violent death of Phulmani, the ten or eleven-year-old wife of Hari

46 *Janmabhūmi*, which began publication in 1890 and was printed at the *Baṅgabāsi* Steam Machine Press in Calcutta.

47 Tanika Sarkar, *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation, Community, Religion, and Cultural Nationalism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 140, n. 14.

48 *Ibid.*

Maiti who “died as the result of sexual intercourse with her husband,”⁴⁹ or rape.

The bill, which passed on March 19, 1891, initiated a polarizing time in colonial Bengal, and figures including Rājendralāl Mitra delivered public lectures for and against it, and *paṇḍits* were asked to provide expert testimony on whether it represented an injunction against religious practice. The *Baṅgabāsī*, in particular, “took the lead in mobilising protest, organizing mass rallies, and provoking official persecution.”⁵⁰ Sarkar gives an example of the invective style of the writing in translation:

The Englishman now stands before us in all his grim and naked hideousness. What a grim appearance. How dreadful the attitude. The demons of cremation ground are laughing a wild, weird laugh. Is this the form of our Ruling power? Brahmaraksharh, Terror of the Universe; Englishmen.... do you gnash your teeth, frown with your red eyes, laugh and yell, flinging aside your matted locks... and keeping time to the clang of the sword and bayonet... do you engage yourself in a wild dance... and we.. the twenty crores of Indian shall lose our fear and open our forty crores of eyes.⁵¹

The writers associated with the *Baṅgabāsī* extended the caustic criticism to those who would support the cause of the Age of Consent Bill, and it represented a battleground for fashioning of the rhetorical figure of the *paṇḍit*, here along “revivalist-nationalist” lines. Sarkar quotes Śāśadhar as published in the *Baṅgabāsī*:

Pandit Sasadhar Tarkachuramani, the doyen of Hindu orthodoxy, argued that a higher form of love distinguished Western from Hindu marriages. While the former seeks social stability and order through control over sexual morality, the latter apparently aspires only towards ‘the unification of two souls.’ ‘Mere temporal happiness, and the begetting of children are very minor and subordinate considerations in Hindu marriage.’ The

49 Dagmar Engels, “The Age of Consent Act of 1891: Colonial Ideology in Bengal,” *South Asia Research* 3, no. 2 (November 1, 1983): 108.

50 Sarkar, *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation, Community, Religion, and Cultural Nationalism*, 191.

51 Tanika Sarkar, “Rhetoric Against Age of Consent: Resisting Colonial Reason and Death of a Child-Wife,” *Economic and Political Weekly* 28, no. 36 (1993): 1877. Quoting from *Baṅgabāsī*, March 28, 1891.

revivalist-nationalist segment of the vernacular press, polemical tracts and manuals translated the notion of the marriage of souls as mutual love lasting practically from the cradle to funeral pyre. This uniquely Hindu way of loving supposedly anchored the women's absolute and lifelong chastity.⁵²

The proximity of *paṇḍit* Śaśadhar to the agitation associated with the Age of Consent Bill provides a social context for his use of translation and the scientific claims he made for texts like Patañjali's *YS*, as will be shown below. In order to see how the use of Patañjali functioned rhetorically in this context, we must, as Timothy Dobe has recently suggested of similar claims made by Dayānanda Sarasvatī, examine how Śaśadhar's claims functioned as a "kind of weapon... by throwing the lines that separate the modern from tradition into what can only be called chaos."⁵³

An example of how the agitation affected the role of the *paṇḍit* in late-nineteenth-century Calcutta is found in the case of *paṇḍit* Rāmnāth Tarkaratna, who agreed to speak publicly in favor of the bill's passage. Francis Skrine's introduction to letter by Sambhu C. Mookerjee, editor of the paper *Reis and Rayyet*, describes the outcome. The letter, written to Kisari Mohan Ganguli in 1892,

refers to the removal of Pandit Ramnath Tarkaranta, after nineteen years of approved service, from his appointment as Travelling Pandit under the Asiatic Society of Bengal. He is one of the soundest of living Sanskrit scholars, but he had incurred the ill-will of many influential Hindus by a disquisition which he had delivered, at the request of Sir A. Croft, K.C.I.E., Director of Public Instruction, in favour of the "Age of Consent Bill." It was a very well reasoned piece of work and completely disposed of the foolish cry that the Hindu religion was at stake when the age of consent was raised from ten to twelve years. The Pandits on the opposition side were all convicted not only of ignorance but of having mutilated texts, Professor Mahes Chandra Nayaratna and Raja Rajendralala Mitra, both of whom were among the adversaries of the Bill, had the magnanimity to forgive his

52 Sarkar, *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation, Community, Religion, and Cultural Nationalism*, 204. Quoting Baṅgabāsī, 9 July 1887.

53 Timothy S. Dobe, "Dayānanda Sarasvatī as Irascible Ṛṣi: The Personal and Performed Authority of a Text," *The Journal of Hindu Studies* 4, no. 1 (May 1, 2011): 94.

onslaught on their cause. Not so others whose learning should have forbidden them to wreak a cowardly revenge on their staunchest opponent.⁵⁴

Tarkaratna was tried twice for negligence of duty, and convicted the second time. Mitra, who is examined in the next chapter, is presented here as a vocal critic of the bill, even as he distanced himself from the calls against Tarkaratna. The bill, moreover, constituted sharp point of fracture between the Brahmo Samaj⁵⁵ and “revivalist-nationalist” groups represented by the *Baṅgabāsi* writers.

While “in its early days neither the Bangabasi nor its founder-Editor were excessively orthodox,” counting among its early contributors members of the Brahmo Samaj including “Dwarkanath Gangopadhyaya,”⁵⁶ the Age of Consent Bill polarized the debate over what constituted “reform” and “tradition,” and here the translation of YS became a site, from the 1880s on, for writers to rhetorically claim and reject definitions for those terms. Through prefaces that disputed the dating practices of Indology and turned to Sanskrit commentarial sources to establish the historicity of yoga, to the claiming of Patañjali as a pre-modern source of science, these Bengali translators of the YS resisted and complicated the binaries that split “reform” from “tradition.” Despite its moderate beginnings, revivalist writers found the *Baṅgabāsi* to be a hospitable venue for articulating a notion of Hindu orthodoxy. Taking often controversial

54 Sambhu Chandra Mookerjee and Francis Henry Bennet Skrine, *An Indian Journalist: Being the Life, Letters and Correspondence of Dr. Sambhu C. Mookerjee, Late Editor of “reis and Rayyet” Calcutta* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink & Co., 1895), 384–85.

55 Dagma Engles notes that “There were... very few among the ‘famous Bengalis’ who fully supported the law. Members of the Adi Brahmo Samaj and even various Sadharan Brahmos, splitting from the majority of their organisation, objected to legal interference as being inappropriate for the purpose of improving social customs.” Engles, “The Age of Consent Act of 1891,” 111.

56 Cf. Sen, *Hindu revivalism in Bengal, 1872-1905*, 255. Alternate spellings include Dwarkanath Ganguly. Ganguly was lampooned along with his wife in an issue of newspaper, reflecting the animus against those who supported the Age of Consent Bill, and the satire itself result in new calls for censorship of the vernacular press.

positions, *Baṅgabāsī* writers were soon associated with a number of legal cases. A charge of sedition against the *Baṅgabāsī* was ultimately resolved through the intervention of Pāl's patron, "Maharaja Jotindro Mohan Tagore," (discussed below) and "other prominent members of the British Indian Association."⁵⁷

The *Baṅgabāsī* was a nexus for writers who sought to defend an account of their own tradition from the Brahmo reformist movement and the work of Christian missionaries. In the case of yoga, it is important that the writers associated with the *Baṅgabāsī* sought to accord prestige to the practice of yoga by making available in vernacular editions translations of the *YS*. From the standpoint of the history of Hinduism, the nineteenth century can be understood as a time when the definition of Hinduism was fluid and in the process of being defined, and to an extent, constructed. Given this fluidity, it is not always clear what the utility was of describing the group of writers associated with the *Baṅgabāsī* as defending Hindu orthodoxy. Was there a sense of orthodoxy—or orthopraxy—associated with yoga and Patañjali among these paṇḍits? In the years that follow, the trajectory becomes more clear: religious identity and political agency were increasingly tied to one another after the second decennial census in 1881,⁵⁸ a social trend that is reflected in the history of the *Baṅgabāsī*. By the early twentieth century the conservatism of the early *Baṅgabāsī* writers was replaced by more explicit communalism, and by 1908, the *Baṅgabāsī* was calling for political parties to be formed on religious lines.⁵⁹

57 Ibid., 251.

58 Cf. Nicholas Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), 207.

59 Cf. Partha Chatterjee, "Agrarian Relations and Communalism in Bengal, 1926-1935," in *Subaltern Studies*, ed. Ranajit. Guha, vol. I (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982), 18, n. 15; and Sumit Sarkar, *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal, 1903-1908*. (New Delhi: People's Pub. House, 1973).

The Vanishing Paṇḍit: Śāśadhara

...when a history of the revival of the Hindu religion will be written, the name of Pandit Sasadhara Tarkachuramani will be written in letters of gold.⁶⁰

Śāśadhara's Background

The *paṇḍit* who connects the social worlds of the Bengali-language translators of the YS was Śāśadhara Tarkacūḍāmaṇi. The passage quoted above from Abhedānanda's autobiography makes evident that Paṇḍit Śāśadhara attracted public interest to the philosophical background of yoga, and through his involvement in the *Baṅgabāsi* he was connected with the yoga translator Kālīvar, and likely Maheścandra Pāl, both analyzed below. Śāśadhara (1851-1928) was born in the Faridpur district in a village named Mukhḍoba, with his ancestry apparently tracing itself to the former center of Sanskrit learning at Koṭālipāḍā.⁶¹ His father died in 1873, and Śāśadhara sought patronage to complete his studies. Serving as the family *paṇḍit* to the *zamindār* Annadāprasād Rāy,⁶² Śāśadhara had access to a large collection of religious texts, and also benefited from traveling with the family, on one occasion meeting the orthodox revivalist Kṛṣṇaprasanna Sen. Sen later became an associate of Śāśadhara in the conservative *Bhāratavarṣīyā Ārya Dharma Pracāriṇī Sabhā* in 1883, and through this association the two were central to the development of what has been called the Hindu

60 Jateendra Mohan Sinha Rai Bahadur, "A Short Life of the Author," in *Cūṛamaṇidarśanam*, by Śāśadhara Tarkacūḍāmaṇi, vol. 1 (Vārāṇasī, 1940), 26.

61 Cintāharaṇ Cakrabartī, *Bāṅglā Sāhityer Sebāy Saṃskṛt Paṇḍitasamāj*, Sāhitya-Sādhak-Caritmālā 107 (Kolkata: Baṅgīya-Sāhitya-Pariṣad, 1371), 4. Amiya Sen provides a similar outline of Śāśadhara's life; the version here is adapted from my own translation from the Sāhitya-Sādhak-Caritmālā. Cf. Sen, *Hindu Revivalism in Bengal, 1872-1905*, 225.

62 Rāy is included in "A Random List of Contributors to the Bharatavarshiya Arya Dharma Procharini Sabha (including donors to the Ved Vidyalaya and Sanskrit Studies" reproduced from an issue of *Dharmaprocharak* in Sen, *Hindu Revivalism in Bengal, 1872-1905*, Appendix C (Part III), 434-35.

revivalism movement.⁶³ Sen founded the *Sabhā* in 1880 as a “national adaptation” of the *Sabhā* in Monghyr, founded in 1875, which was a local body that campaigned against perceived vices such as alcohol use and drew membership from Hindi- as well as Bengali-speakers.⁶⁴

Śāśadhara came to Calcutta between 1875 and 1884⁶⁵ as a relatively unknown *paṇḍit* after traveling and giving speeches in Bengal after the death of his patron Annadāprasād.⁶⁶ While Paṇḍit Śāśadhara is the most well known of the three yoga translators analyzed in this chapter, even in his case there is very little historical information that is readily available to elucidate his life and works. Amiya P. Sen, who offers one of the most detailed scholarly accounts of the *paṇḍit*'s work, has written that “[i]t has been extremely difficult sometimes to reconstruct the history of certain personalities and the institutions they ran given the rather limited source material available.... there exists... practically very little information on the life and exploits of Pundit Sasadhara.”⁶⁷

We know, however, that Śāśadhara lived for some time in Benares, and toward the end of his life worked on a text, translated into Sanskrit, called *Cūḍāmaṇidarśanam*.⁶⁸ The text includes a biographical essay by “Jateendra Mohan Sinha Rai Bahadur,” “Retired Magistrate-Collector, [sic] Bengal,” that in part restates an article of

63 Ibid., 225.

64 Ibid., 220–21. Basu, *Religious Revivalism as Nationalist Discourse*, 3; Nath, *The New Hindu Movement, 1886-1911*, 36–37.

65 Abhedānanda refers to Paṇḍit Śāśadhara lecturing in Calcutta in 1882-1883, but Amiya Sen dates his appearance in Calcutta to 1884. Rakhal Chandra Nath writes that “We can put the date of Sasadhara’s work in Calcutta with some confidence between the years 1875 and 1885. See Nath, *The New Hindu Movement, 1886-1911*, 37.

66 Sen, *Hindu Revivalism in Bengal, 1872-1905*, 226.

67 Ibid., 7. A brief biographical sketch is given in Subodhchandra Sengupta, *Śaṁsad Bāṅgālī Caritābhidhān* (Calcutta: Sāhitya Śaṁsad, 1976), 505.

68 Śāśadhara Tarkacūḍāmaṇi, *Cūḍāmaṇidarśanam*, vol. 1 (Vārāṅasī, n.d.).

appreciation that was published shortly after Śaśadhar death in the Bengali journal *Mānasī o Marmabāñī* by Dīnanāth Sānyāl.⁶⁹ A helpful overview of Śaśadhar's publications is provided in this essay:

Pandit Churamani wrote a book named *Dharma byakhya*, a wholly original work on Hindu philosophy and religion. He wrote another book named *Bhaboushadh* in which he lucidly explained the process of [*bhakti sādhana*]. He also wrote *Sadhan-Pradip* in which he dealt with many abstruse principles of worship. Besides these he wrote some other smaller treatises. For about half a century, he produced a mass of literature, which were published in the weekly *Bangabasi*, the monthly magazine *Veda Vyas*, and other papers and which if collected would form a heap of books. He translated into Bengali the *Sankar Bhasya* of *Srimat Bhagabat Gita* which was published with other commentaries by Pandit Prasanna Kumar Shastri.⁷⁰

Sinha's biographical sketch fills out some of the details of Śaśadhar life, but the text of *Cūḍāmañidarśanam* was composed in Berhampur, after Śaśadhar left Calcutta. In characterizing the speeches Śaśadhar made there, that captivated Abhedānanda in his youth, Amiya Sen describes them as “drawing strange analogies between matter and spirit.”⁷¹ Śaśadhar's speeches initially drew audiences large enough to attract the attention of the luminaries of the time.⁷² Finding an audience outside the circles of Brahma progressivism and those receptive to Christian missionary work, Śaśadhar's “version of orthodox Hinduism with its rich borrowing from Puraṇic folklore and garbled scientific principles made him a widely known figure.”⁷³ Whether it was his

69 Dīnanāth Sānyāl, “Paṇḍitaprabar Śaśadhar Tarkacūḍāmañi,” *Mānasī o Marmabāñī* 20, no. 1 (1928): 290–294.

70 Jateendra Mohan Sinha Rai Bahadur, “A Short Life of the Author,” 23.

71 Sen, *Hindu Revivalism in Bengal, 1872-1905*, 226.

72 Raychaudhuri is more dismissive: “...an intellectually aberrant form of Hindu chauvinism became highly popular among the Bengali Hindu middle class. Its protagonists, notably Sasadhar Tarkachudamani, claimed that all the discoveries of modern science were known to the ancient Hindus and that the apparently superstitious practices of popular Hinduism derived from profound scientific principles. Bankim attended a few of his lectures and denounced the ignorance stupidity of such assertions. A religion based on superstitious practices, he declared, was unacceptable to the western-educated Indian who need a more elevated faith.” See Raychaudhuri, *Europe Reconsidered*, 148.

73 Sen, *Hindu Revivalism in Bengal, 1872-1905*, 226.

own personal charisma or the content of his speeches, Śāśadhār was at first influential, but quickly became the subject of satire⁷⁴ and criticism by prominent figures including Bankim Chatterji, Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore.⁷⁵ Indeed, satire seemed to supplant the didactic speeches of Śāśadhār for the purposes of furthering the claims of orthodoxy, at least from the standpoint of educated Bengali audiences. A review of the satirical Bengali play *Tarubālā* by Amṛta Lāl Basu in the *Calcutta Review*⁷⁶ makes exactly this point:

Amrita [Lāl Bose] Babu's sympathies are with the old world, and he paints that world, where he does paint it, with emotion. Ridicule is one of the most potent instruments for correcting social abuses, and therefore Amrita Babu's ridicule has done more for orthodox Hindu society than all the speeches, learned as they are, of Pandit Shashadhār Tarkachūrāmani, Pandit Krishna Prasanna Sen, &c., &c., put together.⁷⁷

The educated class in Calcutta roundly condemned Śāśadhār's approach, but his own rhetorical method remained forcefully persuasive.⁷⁸

74 An important satirist of colonial Calcutta was Kaliprasanna Sinha, whose work warrants further investigation to see if Śāśadhār or paṇḍits like him were parodied. Thanks to Prof. Paul Courtright in suggesting Sinha work. Kaliprasanna Sinha and Brajendra Nath Banerjee, *Hūtom Pyāncār Nakṣā* (Calcutta, 1938); Kaliprasanna Sinha and Swarup Roy, *The Observant Owl: Hootum's Vignettes of Nineteenth-Century Calcutta* (New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2008); A recent graphic novel depicting Calcutta takes Sinha's satire as part of its inspiration. Sarnath Banerjee, *The barn owl's wondrous capers* (New York: Penguin Books, 2007).

75 Cf. Sen, *Hindu Revivalism in Bengal, 1872-1905*, 226–227. See also Ratté, *The Uncolonised Heart*, 183. “The enthusiasm of English educated and literary Bengalis for the Hindu Dharma movement, introduced into Calcutta by Pandit Shashadhār Tarkachuramani and Srikrishnaprasanna Sen (later known as Krishnananda Swami), was indirectly brought to the attention of *Calcutta Review* readers in ambiguous fashion, in a review of a book about the movement. The critic summarised Shashadhār's views as an attempt to assert that the Hindu Shastras were based on science. Leaders of literary society had courted Sasadhār and Krishnananda Swami when they arrived in Calcutta in 1886 after the successful spread of the ideas in rural Bengal, and Bankim welcomed the paṇḍit at a public meeting held in the city. The story is something of a sad one, though, for at subsequent meetings Pandit Shashadhār was publicly mocked by writers, and he eventually retreated back into the village community.”

76 For an overview of the publication history of this journal, see Krishna Sen and Debapriya Paul, “Archival Press Project: ‘The Calcutta Review,’” *Victorian Periodicals Review* 37, no. 2 (July 1, 2004): 233–247.

77 “Critical Notices, Vernacular Literature: Tarubālā,” *Calcutta Review* 100 (April 1895): lxxx–lxxxi.

78 See, for instance, the account of Śāśadhār's debate with the Brahma Samaji Nagendranath Chattopadhyay, discussed in Sen, *Hindu Revivalism in Bengal, 1872-1905*, 61; For a discussion of the encounter, see Basu, *Religious Revivalism as Nationalist Discourse*, 134–135.

A brief excerpt of a speech given by Śāśadhara at the Albert Hall in 1875 is provided in translation in Rakhal Chandra Nath's account of the "New Hindu Movement" at the turn of the century.⁷⁹ Nath, seeming to dismiss Śāśadhara as a historical aberration who spearheaded a movement that constituted "an apology for Hindu orthodoxy, clothed in a pseudo-religious, pseudo-historical garb," offers the extract as indicative of Śāśadhara's approach:

Many people believe... that the ancient Indian heroes appeared in the battlefields with bows and arrows, swords and clubs and other devices of a primitive sort. They presume that the science of warfare in which our forefathers were instructed is to put to shame when judged by the standard of modern artillery and the sophisticated arms employed in modern wars. But readers of the Ramayana know better.⁸⁰

Nath's translation is derived from a collection of Śāśadhara's speeches compiled by Kṛṣṇaprasanna Sen, who later took on the title Kṛṣṇānanda Svāmī.⁸¹

Possibly because of the combination of his proximity to traditional notions of Sanskrit erudition and his oratory style that included references to the new knowledge practices that threatened it, Paṇḍit Śāśadhara acquired a cultural capital that made him something of an early modern guru whose views could be disseminated through textual production. "Jogendra Chandra Basu, quick to realize the immense business potential of Pundit Sasadhara's work, appointed him a member of the *Bangabasi* Shastric publications board, entrusted with the production of cheap reprints of major Hindu religious texts."⁸² These popular editions appear to have been similar to the Bengali translations of the YS made by Maheścandra Pāl and Paṇḍit Kālīvar Vedāntavāgīśa.

79 Nath, *The New Hindu Movement, 1886-1911*, 35.

80 Ibid.

81 Nath provides the following bibliographic information: *Paribrajaker Patrika: Compilation of lectures by Krishnananda Swami*, 3rd edition, 1894.

82 Sen, *Hindu Revivalism in Bengal, 1872-1905*, 226.

Paṇḍit Śāśadhara became widely known for his agitation against reformist movements, such as in his work of activism against the Age of Consent Bill.⁸³ Soon after his lectures that inspired a young Kali Prasad Chandra to become Swami (Svāmī) Abhedānanda, Paṇḍit Śāśadhara met with Ramakrishna, and two chapters of the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* are devoted to their exchange. Śāśadhara, despite his different interpretation of Hinduism, is presented in positive terms: “He was one of the renowned Sanskrit scholars of his time—a pillar of orthodox Hinduism, which had reasserted itself after the first wave of Christianity and Western culture had passed over Hindu society.”⁸⁴ In this role, the *paṇḍit* is said to have “brought back a large number of educated young Hindus of Bengal to the religion of their forefathers.”⁸⁵ Paṇḍit Śāśadhara’s encounter with Ramakrishna is depicted in the *Gospel* as illustrating something of the gulf that exists between the path of knowledge and the path of devotion. “You are preaching the path of knowledge,” Ramakrishna says to the *paṇḍit*, “But that creates a very difficult situation: there the guru and the disciple do not see each other.”⁸⁶ The point here may be that Śāśadhara’s approach is portrayed as out of step with the times and overly intellectualized.

The revivalist movement criticized Ramakrishna’s own disciple, Vivekananda, and a particular encounter between Vivekananda and one of Śāśadhara’s disciples illustrates the tensions between the movements associated with these two leaders. As Shamita Basu recounts:

83 Sarkar, *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation, Community, Religion, and Cultural Nationalism*, 138.

84 Ramakrishna, *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Abridged ed (New York: Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, 1984), 464.

85 Ramakrishna, *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. There are inconsistencies between the abridged English version of the text and the original Bengali, and more research is necessary to determine a contextually sensitive translation of this quotation.

86 *Ibid.*, 485.

The revivalists, who for the most part staunchly defended all the meticulous details of Brahmanic orthodoxy, had bitterly clashed with Vivekananda; so much so that Trailakynath Biswas, one of the principal trustees of the Dakshineswar temple, where Ramakrishna had been the priest, debarred Vivekananda from entering the temple precinct on the ground that he had violated the injunctions of the Hindu Shastras and crossed the oceans. They were however astute enough to note that all the Swami sought to do was to preach politics through the medium of religion. This was clearly declared by Pandit Padmanath, one of the cohorts of the famous revivalist leader Sasadhar Tarkachudamani.⁸⁷

The records of this encounter also demonstrate, as Shamita Basu has shown, building on the work of Sumit Sarkar, how during the nineteenth century textual knowledge about Hinduism itself remained an oral tradition, enabling the acquisition of “textual knowledge of Hindu doctrines by the illiterate priest” through encounters with *paṇḍits* and other religious figures who visited Ramakrishna in Dakshineswar.⁸⁸

Text and Translation

Śasādhār’s best-known work is *Dharma Vyākhyā*,⁸⁹ and a number of his speeches were compiled by Kālīvar Vedāntavāgīś⁹⁰ and Kṛṣṇaprasanna Sen.⁹¹ By all estimates he was a polemical voice of conservatism, and his influence on history was far outshone by the lights of moderates such as Bankim Chatterji and Rabindranath Tagore. At the same time, one of the main insights that can be gained through an examination of these Bengali translations of the YS is that there a set of interpretative possibilities available at the historical moment around 1880 that have been subsequently overlooked in the historical narrative that has developed around the Bengali

Renaissance and its aftermath.

87 Basu, *Religious Revivalism as Nationalist Discourse*, 161.

88 *Ibid.*, 161ff.

89 See discussion below.

90 Kālīvar Vedāntavāgīś, *Sri Sasadhar Tarkachudamani Mohasoyer Bakritar Samalochana* (Calcutta, 1884).

91 See discussion below.

Dharma Vyākhyā was to be published in two volumes, but the second volume appears never to have been completed. It was printed at the Baṅgabāsī Steam Machine Press by Bihārīlāl Sarkār.⁹² It is dated 1809 according to the Saka calendar, which is 1886 C.E. The first volume itself is divided in five sections, and the last section is entitled *Samādhi Prakaraṇ* (Chapter on *Samādhi*). In that section, Śāśadhar reviews the eight-limbed yoga of Patañjali, weaving in accounts of various *āsanas* from the *Gheraṇḍasaṃhitā* (c. 16750-1700)⁹³ a *haṭha* yoga text. Śāśadhar linking of *Pātañjala-yoga* and *haṭha āsanās* in the 1880s is significant because it represents an alternative interpretation of the role of the YS in the formation of modern yoga. Śāśadhar begins the section by quoting directly from the YS:

Patañjalider bolen, ‘sthira[-]sukhamāsanam’ (3 Pā, 46 Sū).⁹⁴ Ye bhābe basile deher kono aṅga pratyāṅga ba maner konorup cāncalyādi nā hay, athaca tattadviśay cintā karār viśeṣ ānukūlya hay, evaṃ atība sukhābaha bhāv mane hay, tāhāri nām ‘āsana’. Ei āsana vā basibār praṇālī viśey anek prakār āche...⁹⁵

Patañjali said, “posture is steady and agreeable” (YS 2.46). Sitting in such a way that the limbs and appendages of the body or mind are in no way restless, but are a special assistance to thought, and a feeling of extreme comfort occurs, that is called “*āsana*.” There are many different special forms of this *āsana* or method of sitting...

Following this introduction to the concept of posture, Śāśadhar quotes from the *Gheraṇḍasaṃhitā*, and notes that from eighty-four traditional *āsanas*, 1600 more have arisen. In the next pages, he describes *siddhāsana*, *padmāsana*, *vīrāsana*, *bhadrāsana*, *svastikāsana*⁹⁶ through references to the *Gheraṇḍasaṃhitā*, and then weaves the

92 The frontispiece also notes that it was published, presumably in the sense of made available for sale, on College Street by Bhudhor Chaṭṭopādhyāy

93 For dating and a brief overview, see Larson and Bhattacharya, *Yoga: India’s Philosophy of Meditation*, XII:502–506.

94 Śāśadhar refers to *pāda* three of the YS, but this *sūtra* is in *pāda* two in standard editions of the YS.

95 Śāśadhar Tarkacūḍāmaṇi, *Dharma Vyākhyā*, vol. 1 (Kalikātā: Baṅgabāsī Steam Machine Press, 1886), 316.

96 *Ibid.*, 1:316–318.

interpretation back to Patañjali. In a concluding section entitled “*Āsana siddhir upāy*” (“The Method of Performing the *Āsanas*”), Śāśadhar recounts a dialogue between a teacher and a disciple, quoting again from Patañjali (YS 2:47; 2:48) to illustrate his points.

Śāśadhar’s Sanskrit text, *Cūḍāmaṇidarśanam*, provides a primary source for examples of the rhetorical linkages he created between science and his interpretation of *śāstric* material. Scattered throughout the text are references to material science, with Sanskrit⁹⁷ used to explicate, for instance, the properties of various substances. In a section apparently detailing the formation of blood cells, Śāśadhar includes references to “lisithin glāikojen” (lecithin, glycogen) and “māyosin kaleṣṭrīn” (myosin, cholesterin).⁹⁸ Subsequent to being ostracized by the very educated classes in Calcutta that he had initially impressed, Śāśadhar retired to a less public role, drafting a Sanskrit text to establish his influence with scholars outside of Bengal.

Paṇḍit Śāśadhar was a vocal critic and a central proponent of an attempt to assert a vision of Hinduism untouched by foreign influence. He sought a past in which

97 James Robert Ballantyne and Rājendralāl Mitra both actively engaged in the question of how best to incorporate scientific terms into India languages, whether via transliteration or translation. Cf. Michael S. Dodson, “Translating Science, Translating Empire: The Power of Language in Colonial North India,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 47, no. 04 (2005): 809–835. Dodson writes that “In 1877, Rajendralal Mitra, a prominent Bengali orientalist and antiquarian, outlined in an English-language pamphlet his own translational scheme for the rendering of European scientific terms into Indian vernacular languages. Mitra agreed partially with Ballantyne’s methodology in that he advocated the retention of attested Indian terminology for common substances such as sulfur and gold, and the translation into Indian languages of chemical processes, such as precipitation or crystallization. Yet he also recommended the direct transliteration of ‘scientific crude names,’ such as ‘oxygen’” (833).

98 Tarkacūḍāmaṇi, *Cūḍāmaṇidarśanam*, 1:259. The Sanskrit accompanying these reference to chemicals appears to be discussing hemoglobin and other cell structures: “*dvitīyah snehalavane ṭṭīyo’nyau pṛthagvidhau (lisithin glāikojen) caturbhiṣca cathurthaḥ syāt salilañcātra vidyate (māyosin kaleṣṭrin).*” For a discussion of the interplay between scientific discourse and nationalistic conceptions of Hinduism from the nineteenth-century to the present, see Meera Nanda, *Prophets facing backward postmodern critiques of science and Hindu nationalism in India* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2003); Gyan Prakash, *Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999).

the ancient was what was to be held with reverence, and resisted any attempt to integrate into Hinduism the insights offered by inter-cultural and inter-religious encounter. At the same moment that a notion of timeless Hinduism was being asserted, that very notion was being constructed, and prone to contradiction, reformulation, and reassertion. As Brian Pennington and others have demonstrated, the notions of Hinduism espoused in the colonial period by indigenous intellectuals were recognizably consonant with practices and beliefs that had existed prior to attempts to define Hinduism, even as a degree of cross-cultural contact helped to constitute that definition. To speak of a revival, furthermore, asserts that there was a more or less concrete notion of Hinduism in the past that could be reasserted in the colonial present. It is also to miss the heterogeneous nature of Paṇḍit Śāśadhara's own discourse, one that apparently combined appeals to western science alongside an assertion of a normative form of Hinduism.

Brajendranath Seal (1864-1938), who has been credited by Wilhelm Halbfass as one of the progenitors of the term “comparative philosophy,”⁹⁹ interpreted Patañjali as an example of an early Hindu scientist in his well-known work *The Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindus*¹⁰⁰ Seal, in a three-part article¹⁰¹ on literature published in *The Calcutta Review*, provides a compelling contemporary analysis of how Śāśadhara was rejected by the learned classes, even as his model of a scientific Hinduism, explored through the figure of Patañjali, was gaining currency, albeit in a form that moderated Śāśadhara's

99 Wilhelm Halbfass, *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding* (Albany N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1988), 422ff.

100 Brajendranath Seal, *The positive sciences of the ancient Hindus* (New York: Longmans, Green and co., 1915).

101 Brajendranath Seal, “The Neo-Romantic Movement in Literature, Section III,” *The Calcutta Review* 92, no. 183 (January 1891): 164–195.

more caustic and chauvinistic nationalism. It is worth quoting here at length:

The successive waves of revival and transfiguration of the old *regime* in Europe... will prepare us for a study of the parallel movement in Bengal known as neo-Hinduism, or the Hindu revival. To slightly alter a figure from the philosophic biographer of Burke, the scriptural description of the symbolical image, with the head of gold, the breast of silver, the body and thighs of brass, and the legs and feet of iron and clay, well applies to this composite movement of revival. Babu Bankima Chandra Chatterji is its head of gold, Babus Chandra Natha Bose and Akshaya Chandra Sarcar are the silver breast and arms, a Bengali journalist furnishes the brass, and the rank and file of the great army of indolent slaves to routine form the feet of clay. One of the two branches of this movement, that headed by Pundit Sasadhar Tarkachuramani and Kumara Srikrishna Prasanna Sen, being what may be termed illumination-proof, is devoid of the neo-romantic element of reconstructive transfiguration which is the child of illumination, and does not therefore come within our purview. Neo-Hinduism, properly speaking, only applies to the other movement, led by Babu Bankima Chandra Chatterji...¹⁰²

Seal's own writings, particular his account of "The Sāṅkhya-Pātañjala System" as "embodying the earliest clear and comprehensive account of the process of cosmic evolution, viewed not as a mere metaphysical speculation but as a positive principle based on the conservation, the transformation, and the dissipation of Energy,"¹⁰³ make claims similar in substance to those found in the dismissals of Śaśadhar's pseudo-scientific rendering of Patañjali.¹⁰⁴

Śaśadhar's proximity to the *Baṅgabāsi* and the fallout from the polarizing debates over the Age of Consent Bill may have contributed to his retreat from prominence. His life work, which consisted of a reinterpretation of *śāstric* materials

102 Ibid., 186.

103 Seal, *The positive sciences of the ancient Hindus*, 2ff.

104 For a review of Vivekananda's use of the theory of evolution in interpreting the YS, see D. H. Killingley, "Yoga-sūtra IV, 2-3 and Vivekānanda's Interpretation of Evolution," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 18, no. 2 (1990): 151-179; See also the discussion of W. Hanegraaff's definition of occultism and its relationship to "evolutionary spirituality" in De Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga*, 25-28, as well as her analysis of the term "New Age" in Chapter One.

and took the form of his Bengali treatise *Dharma Vyākhyā*¹⁰⁵ and his Sanskrit philosophical statement, *Cūḍāmaṇidaśanam*,¹⁰⁶ however, were a concerted effort by the *paṇḍit* to marshal Sanskritic sources against the reformist spirit of the Brahma Samaj. The sketch of Śāśadhara's life at the beginning of *Cūḍāmaṇidaśanam* makes this explicit: "There were three or four chief planks on which the Brahma Samaj was built, and Pandit Churamani by his criticism knocked the bottom out of them."¹⁰⁷ Śāśadhara, in his later work, moved away from his earlier focus on Patañjali and science, but his speeches injected the translation of the YS into the debate regarding the nature of Hinduism toward the end of the nineteenth century.

Śāśadhara's interpretation of Patañjali helped to support his definition of *dharma* in his later work, *Dharma Vyākhyā*, one that places emphasis on otherworldly purity, "devoted almost exclusively to the brahminical insistence on social conformity and ritual correctness."¹⁰⁸ In his insistence on *nirodhaḥ*, or cessation, as the heart of Patañjali's message, Śāśadhara sought to counter the *nirguṇa* conception of divinity with an emphasis on control and correct practice: "For Pandit Sashadhara, the term *Nirodh* is not so much the yogic emptying of the mind and mental processes as the rigorous control of passions. Dharma was obtainable only upon freeing the mind of its embroilment in material desire."¹⁰⁹ In the public disputations over the definition of *dharma*, Śāśadhara was to alienate the scholar who had, at Śāśadhara's recommendation, taught the young Abhedānanda the text of Patañjali.

105 Tarkacūḍāmaṇi, *Dharma Vyākhyā*.

106 Tarkacūḍāmaṇi, *Cūḍāmaṇidaśanam*.

107 Jateendra Mohan Sinha Rai Bahadur, "A Short Life of the Author," 15.

108 Amiya P. Sen, *Explorations In Modern Bengal, C. 1800-1900: Essays On Religion, History And Culture* (Delhi: Primus Books, 2010), 134.

109 Ibid.

Paṇḍit Kālīvar: Śāstra as Progress

Kālīvar's Background

That scholar, Kālīvar Bhāṭṭachārya (1842-1911), came into conflict with Śāśadhara over the latter's criticism of the utility of a god without qualities for the construction of a notion of *dharma* on which a nation could be based.¹¹⁰ Kālīvar instead argued for the active cultivation of *dharma*: "If *dharma* was as endemic to human life as heat was to fire, asked Pandit Kalibar, this would leave no scope for any human improvement using its ideals as the guide."¹¹¹ Kālīvar, who was born in in Puṇḍāgrām and moved in Benares after completing primary education in his village,¹¹² was like Śāśadhara a *paṇḍit* trained in Sanskrit. His education in Benares is said to have included Sāṃkhya, Pātañjala-yoga, Mīmāṃsā, and Vedānta, and he was conferred the title Vedāntavāgīśa¹¹³ (a proponent of Vedānta). After Benares, Kālīvar returned to Murshidabad, which had been the Mughal capital of Bengal, and there he appears to have received the patronage of Rāmrām Sen to continue his studies. Following this, he started a *catuṣpāthī*, a school of traditional Vedic study, in Serampore where he taught.

Paṇḍit Kālīvar published extensively during his lifetime, including an edition of the *Sabhāparva* of the *Mahābhārata* printed by Harischandra Devachaudhuri in Serampore, which is now difficult to find. Paṇḍit Kālīvar was a *paṇḍit* of the Vedānta and Sāṃkhya *darśana* and edited the Bengali periodical *Aṅkur*,¹¹⁴ a vernacular paper

110 Ibid., 133.

111 Ibid.

112 This biographical information is culled from Hemchandra Bhattacharya's edited volume. I am indebted to Hena Basu for providing me a copy of the Bengali original. Cf. Hemchandra Bhattacharya, ed., *Bāṅgīya Saṃskṛta-adhyāpaka-jīvanī* (Kolkata: Siddhanta Vidyalay, 1976), 39–40.

113 Ibid.

114 Sengupta, *Saṃsad Bāṅgālī Caritābhidhān*, 84. In an 1907 edition of *Aṅkur*, a Bengali newspaper edited by *paṇḍit* Kālīvar, there are a number of articles attributed to Śāśadhara Rāy, including one on evolutionary theory called "Yogyatamer Jay," which is described in the article as "survival of the

that covered diverse topics. His other works include *Gūrūsāstra*, *Pātañjaladarśana*, *Vedāntadarśana* (in four parts), *Sāṅkhyasūtram*, *Paralok Rahasya*, *Nyāyadarśana*, and *Vedāntasār*.¹¹⁵ His relationship to Paṇḍit Tarkacūḍāmaṇi appears to have been close, at least at first, as made evident by Swami Abhedānanda's reflections earlier and by a review of the Tarkacūḍāmaṇi's speeches he published.¹¹⁶ Rakhal Chandra Nath, however, draws attention to the tensions between their individual interpretations of orthodoxy.¹¹⁷ Paṇḍit Kālīvar's translation of the *YS* into Bengali seems to have been well appreciated; Kṣetrapāl Cakravartī, whose work will be considered later, expressed indebtedness to "Pundit Kalibur Vedantabagish's vernacular edition of *Patanjal Durshan*"¹¹⁸ in his 1893 collection of essays, *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga*.¹¹⁹ Paṇḍit Kālīvar had published a Bengali work on the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy by 1877. His work on yoga appears to have been first published in 1884¹²⁰ was in its sixth

fittest." The author appears to link pseudo-Darwinist thought to Eugenics. Śāśadhara Rāy, "Yogyatamer Jay," ed. Kālīvar Vedāntavāgīś, *Aṅkur* 2, no. 8 (August 1314): 277–282.

115 Sengupta, *Samsad Bāṅgālī Caritābhidhān*, 84.

116 Vedāntavāgīś, *Sri Sasadhara Tarkachudamani Mohasoyar Baktritar Samalochana*.

117 "We have said that Sasadhara's orthodoxy appealed to the English-educated generation of the Seventies by its rationalistic pretensions. Contrariwise, it did not receive unqualified approbation from any an every member of the orthodox school despite its fight for the cause of orthodoxy. Kalibara Vedantabagish was a scholar of the orthodox school and he was skeptical enough of Sasadhara's 'method' to give expression to his doubts by bringing out a rejoinder to Sasadhara's *Dharma Byakhya*—namely the treatise which contained such precious gems as the proposition about the completeness of the Indian man. He applied the resources of his superior scholarship to demolish the theory of the supposed Darwinism of Patanjali. He opposed the naturalistic definition of religion as given by Sasadhara on the ground that religion was religion only because its authority derived from extra-human sources—else it would be conditional on the subjective whims of every individual man. He poured ridicule on the hygienic interpretation of Ekadasi, and asserted that the custom was useless apart from its religious sanction. Besides Sasadhara's prolix exercise in pseudo-rationalism Kalibar's short work stands out as a monument of scholarship and good sense. But at the same time it represents orthodoxy in its determined stand against the rationalistic temper of the times." Nath does not provide any other description of the work of Kālīvar that is alluded to here. Nath, *The New Hindu Movement, 1886-1911*, 41.

118 Cakravartī, *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga*, 29.

119 Cakravartī, *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga*.

120 According to the biographical sketch given in *Baṅgīya Saṃskṛta-adhyāpaka-jīvanī*, Kālīvar's *Pātañjala Yogadarśana* was published in 1291 B.E., which is 1884 in the Gregorian calendar. Cf. Bhattacharya, *Baṅgīya Saṃskṛta-adhyāpaka-jīvanī*.

printing by 1933,¹²¹ and it remains available and in print today.

Text and Translation

As is the case with many *paṇḍits* of the colonial period, Kālīvar's work has not been meticulously preserved, and much of his published writing is difficult to access. A recently published edition (2004) of his translation of the YS includes two prefaces; one by Aśok Kumār Bandyopādhyāya, and the second almost certainly by Paṇḍit Kālīvar, though there is insufficient bibliographical information included to determine with which edition the introduction was originally published. Despite these inconsistencies, the preface offers a rare insight into the motivations of a nineteenth century *paṇḍit* who chose to translate Patañjali's text for a wider audience.

Like the strange science in N.C. Paul's quite early account of yoga,¹²² where the lengths of inhalation and exhalation of air by yogis is presented to the ten-thousandth of a second, and the hibernation activities of various animals are compared to the release of "carbonic acid" by ascetics in different states, Paṇḍit Kālīvar's introduction provides charts of the breathing processes of various animals. There are also scattered references to terms pertaining to science, pseudo-science and technology. The English words "self-mesmarism" [*sic*], telegraph, and gravitation, appear in Roman script in the midst of his analysis of the practice of yoga. His gestures are a link to a burgeoning discourse combining science and yoga that was to greatly affect the future history of yoga. Western medicine is portrayed as reaffirming the ancient insights of yoga, but yoga is said to offer deeper insights than the superficial approach of science yields.

121 Kālīvar Vedāntavāgīś, *Pātañjaladarśana*, 6th ed. (Calcutta, 1933). A foreword, dated 2003, to a recently published edition notes that the original text was published over a hundred years ago.

122 Paul, *A Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy*.

Kālīvar writes, for instance, that the deep state of concentration accomplished by yoga is similarly powerful to the mental states created by other means in the West:

Doctors mesmerize, that is to say using craft or causing one to sniff chloroform, they are able to amputate a diseased person's limbs, etc., but they don't know that we accomplish the same for our sick by means of yoga.¹²³

But, he notes, there is a difference between the meanings of the word yoga, and the root of yoga.¹²⁴ Enumerating seventeen definitions, Kālīvar describes the meaning of term yoga as ranging from the “adjoining of some external object to another external object” (“*kono ek bāhyavastute anya ek bāhyavastu saṃlagna karār nām yoga*”) to the name of the one-pointedness or equanimity of the mind (“*cittake ekatān vā ekāgrakaraṇer nām*”).¹²⁵

Kālīvar describes yoga as consisting of four limbs, *mantrayoga*, *layayoga*, and *haṭhayoga*,¹²⁶ linking these diverse forms of yoga to Patañjali's text. Recent historians of yoga make a sharp distinction between Patañjali's yoga and that of *haṭha yoga*.¹²⁷ M.R. Yardi, for instance, describes the methods of *abhyāsa* and *vairāgya* in *Pātañjalayoga* as practical methods of contemplation and non-attachment, respectively. Yardi posits that this “practical Yoga differs fundamentally from Haṭhayoga, which is mainly a course in physical postures and breathing exercises.”¹²⁸ In terms of the Sanskrit

123 My interpretive translation. “*Ḍāktārerā Mismērāiz Kariyā, arthāt kauśale athavā kloropharam āghrāṇ karāiyā vyādhita vyaktir aṅgakarttanādi kariyā thāken; parantu tāmhārā o jānen nā je, āmrā rogīke yogīr tulya kariyā ei kāryya samādhā karitechi.*” Vedāntavāgīś, *Pātañjaladarśana*, 1.

124 “*eirūp, anekānek laukik kārya nirbbācher janya sarbbadāi yoger vividha praticchāyā anuṣṭhita haiteche, tathāpi lok tāhār mūl anusandhān kariteche nā, evaṃ mūl yoga ki?*” *Ibid.*

125 *Ibid.*, 2.

126 *Ibid.*, 3.

127 See Chapter Two, and discussion of scholarship on yoga. David Gordon White has critically responded to the historiographic focus on yoga “with modifiers” by attending to the narratives of yogis. See David Gordon White, *Sinister Yogis*, 1st ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), xii, and *passim*.

128 M.R. Yardi, *The Yoga of Patañjali: With an Introduction, Sanskrit Text of the Yogasūtras, English Translation, and Notes* (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1979), 11.

commentarial tradition following Patañjali, Yardi notes that in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* (c. 1600-1700), Nārāyaṇa Tīrtha “makes a far-fetched attempt to bring [the *haṭha* yoga practices of *ṣaṭkarmas* and *mudrās*] within the scope of Patañjali’s Yoga.”¹²⁹

In his introduction, Kālīvar also displays an interest in merging the yoga practices prevalent during his own time with the philosophical structure elaborated by Patañjali. A key question that texts like Kālīvar’s introduction can address is to ascertain the relationship between Patañjali’s *YS* and the practices of *haṭha* yoga in the early period of modern yoga. Given the preponderance of yogic paths and teachers, the author counsels the reader that all types of yoga are concerned with *laya*, that is, the practice of bringing under control.¹³⁰ Contrasting yoga from the attitudes of the West (referred to as *imrāja*), Kālīvar writes that the austerity of controlling thoughts advocated by Patañjali offers no worldly gain, and is there not seen as beneficial to the West, while the *yogin* realize that it offers supramundane (*lokātīta*) benefits.¹³¹

Interspersed throughout Kālīvar’s introduction are twelve quotations from Sanskrit sources which help to position the writing as a sort of bridge between the modern essay or preface and the duties of traditional Sanskrit commentary, traditionally understood as *padaccheda* (the division of words), *padārthoki* (paraphrasing), *vigraha* (grammatical analysis), *vākyayojanā* (explaining sentence syntax), and *ākṣepasamādhāna* (answering objections).¹³² Prefaces to vernacular editions

129 Ibid.

130 “Lāya chāḍā yoga haṃ nā,” *Vedāntavāgīś, Pātañjaladarśana*, 3.

131 “e sambandhe dvītiya kathā ye, imrājidiger udbhābita parādhīna caitanyaharaṇer ched bhed (kāṭā chemḍā) bhinna anya kon suphala nāi, kintu āmādigē yoginer udbhābita lajāyogē anekānek suphala āche; parantu se samasta phal lokātīta” Ibid., 4.

132 As Gary Tubb has explained, these terms are quote in the *Nyāyakośa* from the *Parāśarapurāṇa*. Cf. Gary A. Tubb and Emery R Boose, *Scholastic Sanskrit: A Handbook for Students* (Columbia University

of Sanskrit texts rarely attempt any of these traditional duties, leaving them instead to the classical Sanskrit commentaries included with the text of the *YS*. The Sanskrit quotes in the introduction are from a variety of sources, including *haṭha yoga* texts. They refer to aspects of yoga not mentioned by Patañjali, such as *trāṭakam*,¹³³ the practice of gazing “steadily without winking at any small object”.¹³⁴

In distancing himself from Śāśadhara’s criticism of a formless god, Kālīvar may have been attempting to read the *YS* as a non-sectarian text, one that could point the way to commonalities between the Sanskritic tradition and the prestige increasingly associated with science, an interpretation that presages Vivekananda’s notion of *Rāja Yoga*. Here, however, we find that universality coupled with an emphasis on the sort of *haṭha yoga* practices that are evaluated negatively by Vivekananda. Kālīvar’s yoga, then, draws combines Patañjali with the practices of yogis who are able to achieve through indigenous means powers that were attributing to modern science. Śāśadhara, who had lost favor with his active denunciations of the messages of the Brahmo Samaj, had lost prestige in colonial Calcutta and sought to reestablish his message by constructing a Sanskrit work on the nature of *dharma*. Kālīvar, in contrast, attempted to link Patañjali with a universalism without completely decoupling it from its connection to the practices of *haṭha yogis*.

Press, 2007), 4.

133 Cf. “*nirikṣenniścaladṛśā sūkṣmalakṣyaṃ samāhitaḥ, aśruprapātaparyantamāryyaistaṃ trāṭakam smṛtam; trāṭanam netrarogāṇāṃ tandrādīnāṃ kavāṭakam, tratacca trāṭakam gopyam yathā hāṭakapeṭakam.*” I have not determined the original source of this quote, though it appears similar to the *Gheranda Samhita*, 1.53, etc.

134 Pancham Sinh et al., *The Forceful Yoga: Being the Translation of Haṭhayoga-Pradīpikā, Gheraṇḍa-Samhitā and Śiva-Samhitā* (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publ., 2004), 87.

Maheścandra Pāl: Commentary and Social Criticism

Pāl's Background

Although Śāśadhara was one of the most vocal critics in the debate over the Age of Consent Bill in 1891, Kālīvar, as Amiya Sen has recently shown, rejected his interpretation of *dharma*, accusing him of “pandering to the tastes of the neo-educated, and teaching ‘Anglo-Vernacular religion.’”¹³⁵ In this context of vituperative exchanges, Maheścandra Pāl, a prolific editor Bengali editions of Sanskrit religious texts, would translate Patañjali as part of a broader project of social criticism. Pāl's editions of Sanskrit texts were published in Calcutta beginning in the 1880s, and though his work is not widely known it is still possible to find recently printed editions of at least one of his works for sale in Kolkata. His publications include editions of several Upaniṣads: *Garbhopaniṣat* (1887), *Kaṭhōpaniṣat* (1883), *Māṅdukyopaniṣat* (1884), *Praśnopaniṣat* (1884), *Rāmtāpaniyopaniṣat* (1888), and *Rgvedīya Upaniṣad* (1911). He also published at least two works on Vedānta: *Vedānta Darśanam* (1910) and *Vedānta Ratnābalī* (1883). Other works include *Pūrṇa Prajña Darśanam* (1886, dedicated to Rājendralāl Mitra) and *Śāṅdilyo Sūtram* (1885). Pāl was also a satirist, publishing *Behadda-Behāyā*, “Completely Shameless,” a burlesque farce with characters including a “dancing girl” and a *paṇḍit*, among others.¹³⁶ Pāl's Bengali translation of Patañjali's *YS* was printed in at least two editions, the first in 1886 and the second in 1911. Pāl wrote introductory passages for a number of these works that provide a glimpse into his motivations and objectives for writing and publishing.

135 Sen, *Explorations In Modern Bengal, C. 1800-1900*, 133; Quoting Vedāntavāgīś, *Sri Sasadhara Tarkachudamoni Mohasoyer Baktritar Samalochana*, 4, 34.

136 Maheścandra Pāl, *Behadda-Behāyā, Raṅg Tāmāsā*, Second edition, Sāmājik Nakṣā 1 (Kalikātā: Nityānand Press, 1912).

From the extant early editions of his writing that I have found, two names feature prominently as publishers: Navakumār Basu and Gopālcandra Ghoṣāl. Basu published at least six of Pāl's books, including his translation of Patañjali, and Ghoṣāl three. Those published in the twentieth century were printed by an organization in Calcutta called the Veda Mandir,¹³⁷ as well as by "Upendra Natha Chakravarti" and Sri Avināścandra Basu. The 1911 edition of Pāl's translation of the YS was published by Upendra Natha Chakravarti at the Sanskrit Press, one of the "respectable" publishers in the Jorasanko and College Street area, as opposed to Battala, where more mass-market printers were based.¹³⁸

Another dedication is found in Pāl's translation of the YS,¹³⁹ where he honors the patronage of Jyotīndramohan Ṭhākur. Pāl's dedication is as follows:

*āpni svadeśhitaiṣī o āryyasamājer mukhya-pātra, āpnār mātrbhaktir pratibhā
bhāratmātāro aparisīm aujjlyā sādhan kariteche. āpanādiger puruṣānukrame
saṃskṛtaśāstrer carccā o saṃskṛtagrantha pracārer viśeṣ yatna o ūtsāha
dekhitechī. parantu āpni āmādigke yatheṣṭa sneha kariyā thāken, āmi āpnār śeī
akṛtrim sneher kṛtajñatār cihnasvarūp 'pātañjaladarśan' khāni āpnār karakmale
arpan karilām. āpni sasnehe grahaṇ karileī āmi caritārthatā lābh kariba. alamati
pallabiten.*

You are the chief vessel of those who desire to benefit India and Aryan society, the glow of your devotion to the mother and also to mother India is a boundless splendor attained. I have seen the enthusiasm in your heritage for the special labor of the practice of the Sanskrit śāstras and the propagation of Sanskrit texts. But because you continue to extend so much affection to me, for that sincere love of yours I offer this authentic token of gratefulness to you, the Pātañjaladarśana. If you only receive it with affection I will obtain the fulfillment of my wishes.¹⁴⁰

137 I am as yet unable to determine if this organization was linked to the Veda Mandir started by Ram Mohan Roy.

138 Cf. Anindita N. Ghosh, "An Uncertain 'Coming of the Book': Early Print Cultures in Colonial India," *Book History* 6 (2003): 28.

139 Maheścandra Pāl, *Pātañjala Darśanam* (Calcutta: Sri Navakumar Basu, 1886).

140 Ibid. (my translation)

Jyotīndramohan was one of the wealthier members¹⁴¹ of the Tagore family, brother to Maharaja Sourendra Mohan Tagore.¹⁴² Jogendra Nath Bhattacharya, in his *Hindu Castes and Sects*,¹⁴³ ties Jyotīndramohan's patronage of *paṇḍits* to an attempt to reclaim lost caste status. Bhattacharya, in a section on "The Degraded Brahmans," relates a story of in which "Raja Krishna Chundra of Nadiya" was offered one hundred thousand rupees by a member of the Pirāli *jāti* associated with the Tagore family, to grace the family with the visit, but refused.¹⁴⁴ Patronage of the *paṇḍits*, however, seemed to have rectified the situation somewhat by the time of Bhattacharya's writing. "Tagores are now fast rising in the scale of caste... and Sir J.M. Tagore is on the way towards acquiring an influence on the *paṇḍits* which may one day enable him to re-establish his family completely in caste."¹⁴⁵ J.M. Tagore's stature is reflected by the fact that Gandhi met him in Calcutta in November 1896, in a meeting with Surendranath Banerji and

141 F. B Bradley-Birt, *Eminent Bengalis in the Nineteenth Century* (New Delhi: Inter-India Publications, 1985).

142 Jogendranatha Bhattacharya, *Hindu Castes and Sects. An Exposition of the Origin of the Hindu Caste System and the Bearing of the Sects Towards Each Other and Towards Other Religious Systems* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink and Co., 1896), 124.

143 For an analysis of *Hindu Castes and Sects* and its affect on the perception of caste in nineteenth-century India, see Sekhara Bandyopadhyaya, *Caste, Culture, and Hegemony: Social Domination in Colonial Bengal* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 2004), 55–56. "The most powerful intervention in this area came in 1896 when Jogendra Nath Bhattacharya, a Sanskrit scholar from Nadia and the President of the Bengal Brahman Sabha, published his book *Hindu Castes and Sects*. In the very opening sentence of the book Bhattacharya located the cultural salience of India and of Hinduism in the caste system. 'The institution of caste', he writes, 'is a unique feature of Hindu society, and as nothing exactly like it is to be found in any other part of the world...'

144 Bhattacharya, *Hindu Castes and Sects. An Exposition of the Origin of the Hindu Caste System and the Bearing of the Sects Towards Each Other and Towards Other Religious Systems*, 124.

145 *Ibid.*, 124. The loss of caste status is described by Bhattacharya as resulting from a distant relative's interaction with Muslims (the term is derived from the name *Pir Āli*). Brian Hatcher has summarized the story of the Tagore's status: "They belonged to the socially stigmatized class of *Pirali* Brahmins, who had lost the prerogatives and prestige of Brahmin status by virtue of a breach of caste rules committed by a distant ancestor." Brian A. Hatcher, "Father, Son and Holy Text: Rabindranath Tagore and the Upaniṣads," *The Journal of Hindu Studies* 4, no. 2 (July 1, 2011): 119–143.

others.¹⁴⁶ J.M. Tagore also worked closely with Rājendralāl Mitra.¹⁴⁷

Contemporary mention of Pāl's work in Anglophone literature is sparse, and I have been unable to find any major study of his contribution to Indology. He is mentioned briefly in a review of Bengali literature, *The Literature of Bengal*,¹⁴⁸ by Romesh Chunder Dutt. Dutt describes¹⁴⁹ Pāl along with other contemporaries translating Sanskrit religious material into Bengali. Dutt's estimate of this collective body of work is low:

Much of this work is perhaps superficial and even narrow in its scope and object, and is not therefore likely to last. But in spite of all that is sectarian and hollow, the increased attention now bestowed on ancient Hindu scriptures is likely to be attended with the best results, and will have the ultimate effect of drawing the people closer to the nourishing and life-giving faith of the *Upanishads* and the Vedanta and the *Bhagavatgita*, which has been, and ever will be, the true faith of the Hindus.¹⁵⁰

Dutt, in characterizing Pāl's work under the rubric of "sectarian and hollow," may in fact be expressing some of the rejection of the *Bāṅgabāsi* writers by those who viewed themselves as more socially progressive. An 1894 edition of the *Calcutta Review* lists Pāl's works alongside another group of writers including the *Bāṅgabāsi*, furthering strengthening the likelihood of Pāl's close collaboration with them:

Among those who have published translations of the religious books of the

146 "From Madras I went to Calcutta, where I saw Surendranath Banerji, Maharaja Jyotindra Mohan Tagore, the late Mr Saunders, the editor of the *Englishman*, and others. While a meeting was being arranged in Calcutta, I received a cable-gram from Natal asking me to return at once. This was in November 1896." M.K. Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa* (Stanford, Calif: Academic Reprints, 1954), 52.

147 Warren Martin Gunderson, "The Worlds of the Babu Rajendralal Mitra and Social and Cultural Change in Nineteenth Century Calcutta (unpublished Dissertation)" (The University of Chicago, 1969), 194, n. 1.

148 Romesh Chunder Dutt, *The Literature of Bengal* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink & Co., 1895).

149 Dutt groups Pāl's work along side those of his Bengali contemporaries Pandit Satyavrata Samasrami (who worked on vernacular translations of Vedic material), Ram Das Sen and Kailas Chandra Sinha (Indian antiquities), Prafulla Chandra Banerjea (on the Hindus and the Greeks), and Sita Nath Datta (*Upanishads*), and Sisir Kumar Ghosh (the life of Chaitanya).

150 Dutt, *The Literature of Bengal*, 233–4.

Hindus, Protap Chunder Roy, C.I.E., the translator of the Mahabharat and the Ramayana, Mohesh Chunder Pal, the translator of the Upanishads, and the proprietors of the *Bungobashi*, the translators of the Smritis, Pooranas and Tantras, deserve special mention.¹⁵¹

In this same passage, Paṇḍit Śāśadhar's *Dharma Vyākhyā* is mentioned, and the *Baṅgabāsī* is described as representing the orthodox class.¹⁵² It is notable, however, that an 1894 edition of *The Calcutta Review*, with its Anglophone (and largely British) audience, would present these writers in a neutral light:

Besides translations, some original works on religion have been published. Among them, Dharma Bakhya, or Explanations about Religion, by Pundit Shoshodhara Turko Chooramoni, and Dharma Bijnan Beeja, The Roots of Religious Knowledge, deserve notice.

Prominent mention should be made of the religious reformers who, by their sermons and lectures, have done not a little to enrich the Bengali language. Among them, the names of Sreekrishna Prosonno Sen, Nogendranath Chatterjee, Pundit Shivanath Shastri, Pundit Ramkumar Vidya Rutna, Pundit Shashadhar Turko Chooramoni, Keshub Chunder Sen and Protap Chunder Mozoomdar are conspicuous.¹⁵³

The revivalist writers quickly propelled the journal toward the “orthodox” direction, and it soon became associated with a number of legal cases surrounding the Age of Consent Bill and British attempts at controlling the vernacular press. One of these cases was a sedition case that was ultimately resolved through the intervention of Pāl's patron, “Maharaja Jotindro Mohan Tagore,” and “other prominent members of the British Indian Association.”¹⁵⁴

Maheścandra Pāl himself was said to be the editor of the journal during 1891, when the magazine was involved in a scandal case for which he appears to have been imprisoned. The wife of prominent Brahmo member Dwarkanath Ganguli was

151 Denonath Ganguli, “The Bengali Language,” *The Calcutta Review* (1894): 129.

152 Ibid., 130–131.

153 Denonath Ganguli, “The Bengali Language,” *The Calcutta Review* (1894): 129–130.

154 Sen, *Hindu Revivalism in Bengal, 1872–1905*, 251.

slanderosly depicted in the *Baṅgabāsī* in 1891, resulting in a court case that has received critical attention.¹⁵⁵ Bipincandra Pal provides a brief discussion of the case and how it led to an increasingly nationalistic tone in the *Baṅgabāsī*:

An exceedingly offensive attack on educated Brahmo ladies appeared one day in the “Bangabasee.” Babu Dwarka Nath Ganguly immediately demanded a public recantation and apology for it from the “Bangabasee.” This was refused with the result that the Brahmo contributors of the “Bengabasee” [*sic*] boycotted it at once, and in a few days started a Bengalee weekly of their own, the “Sanjibanee,” with a view to counter the pernicious influence, from their point of view, of the “Bangabasee.” This open breach with the Brahmo Samaj instead of weakening the growing popularity of the “Bangabasee” helped materially to increase it and soon converted it into the organ of the most hide bound conservatism, both theological and social, of the Bengalee Hindu society.¹⁵⁶

The journal was issued a lawsuit by Ganguli and others, the result of which was that “Mohesh Chandra Pal, the Bangabasi editor, was sentenced to six months’ imprisonment and made to pay a fine of one hundred rupees.”¹⁵⁷ Unfortunately, what appears to be the only sustained account of the paper’s history does not analyze this legal case, and refers only to Krishnachandra Banerjee as the paper’s main editor from 1883 until 1895.¹⁵⁸

155 Cf. Malavika Karlekar, *Voices from Within: Early Personal Narratives of Bengali Women* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1991); Geraldine Hancock Forbes, *Women in Colonial India: Essays on Politics, Medicine, and Historiography* (New Delhi: Chronicle Books, 2005).

156 *Ibid.*, 433.

157 David Kopf, *The Brahmo Samaj and the Shaping of the Modern Indian Mind* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1979), 125. Pāl is referred to as the “erstwhile proprietor and editor of *Baṅganibāsī* (“*Baṅgabāsīr bhūtapūrbba svatvādhikāri o sampādak*”) on the frontispiece of *Behadda-Behāyā*. I have not yet been able to determine the exact relationship between the *Baṅgabāsī* and the *Baṅganibāsī*, although they were linked. Sambhu Mookerjee notes in a letter from July 14, 1891, that “At Calcutta, Mr. Handley has sentenced to imprisonment both the proprietor and the publisher of the *Banganibashi*,” which seems to correlate the various piece of data, but I am unable to confirm it otherwise. Mookerjee and Skrine, *An Indian journalist*, 393.

158 That history of the *Baṅgabāsī* (Banerjee, *National Awakening and the Bangabasi*), however, quite stridently emphasizes the positive contribution the newspaper made to Indian nationalism, and as a result the author may avoid some of the journal’s less renowned episodes.

Text and Translation

Pāl's relation to the *Baṅgabāsi* writers is important because it provides the historical context in which he wrote and published his translation of the *YS*. The second edition (1911) of that translation includes an expanded introduction that presents a detailed argument for the Patañjali of the *YS* being the same as the Patañjali of the *Vyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya* and another tract on medicine that no longer exists, a claim found in some commentarial sources. Pāl was particularly concerned with historical dating, and in the introduction he presented counter arguments to a number of prominent Indologists of the period. The evidence Pāl marshals for his case consists of an intricate reading of a variety of Sanskrit sources, and he rejects contrary findings based on Western historiographic practices. Pāl writes that

yadi o praphesar piṭārsan sāheb bambe brancer royal esiyātik sosāitir 16 bhalumer 189 patre baliyācen khrīṣṭīya 5 pañcam śatābdīr lok patañjali; yadi o ḍāktār oyebār [Weber] sāheber mote maharṣi patañjali khrīṣṭīya 1m [i.e., pratham] śatābdīr lok; yadi o ḍāktār goldṣṭukār o ḍāktār gopālkrṣṇabhāṇḍākarer mote ukta maharṣi khri. pūrbbā 2y [i.e., dvitīya] śatābdīr lok, tathāpi seguli tāṃhādiger sarbbatomukhī gabeṣaṇār phal boliyā āmrā svikār korite pāri nā; kāraṇ—patañjali āpnāke gaunarddīya o goṇikāputra boliyā paricay diyācen.

Even if Professor Peterson of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society has said that... Patañjali was of the fifth century A.D., even if in the opinion of Dr. Weber Maharshi Patañjali was of the first century A.D., and even if according Dr. Goldstücker and Dr. Gopal Krishna Bhandarkar Patañjali was two centuries before Christ, the results of their research cannot be accepted from any perspective. That is because Patañjali introduced himself as Gonardīya and a Goṇikāputra.¹⁵⁹

Those mentioned here—apparently the Sanskritists Peter Peterson (1847–1899), Albrecht Weber (1825–1901),¹⁶⁰ Theodore Goldstücker (1821–1872), and likely Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar (1837–1925)—were among the most well-known

159 Pāl, *Pātañjala Darśanam*, 9, 1911 edition. My translation.

160 G. Schlegel, "Albrecht Weber," *T'oung Pao* 2, no. 5, Second Series (January 1, 1901): 388.

scholars of the nineteenth and early twentieth century to investigate, among other topics, the provenance of Sanskrit texts. The rhetorical move here by Pāl is interesting, as he writes to an audience that apparently possessed familiarity with Indology, but Pāl rejects the methods of Indology in favor of the opinion of the Sanskrit commentarial sources. Pāl draws attention to the appellations associated with Patañjali from a variety of Sanskrit sources, including Vātsyāyana in the *Kāma Sūtra*, as well as an unspecified Puraṇic source. These sources refer to Patañjali's mother as Goṇikādevī, herself an educated woman born into an educated family, thus the tradition of referring to Patañjali as Goṇikāputra.¹⁶¹ Pāl writes, "Vātsyāyana in the *Kāma Sūtra* has described the mother of Patanjali as Goṇikā, as living in the Gonarda. He takes pride in describing himself as a Gonardīya. Patañjali's mother's name was Goṇikādevī. She was famous and a matter and pride. His mother was educated and born into an educated family."¹⁶² The implication here is, against the consensus of the Orientalists, that the Patañjali of the *YS* and the *Mahābhāṣya* are the same; furthermore, the association of Patañjali with these appellations pushes the date of his existence back by centuries. In more general terms, it also obviates the likelihood that there different sections of the *YS* were composed a different times and by different authors.

The debate over how to interpret the terms *Gonardīya*¹⁶³ and *Goṇikā-putra* had been addressed earlier by Rājendralāl Mitra, who became the first Indian-born president of the Asiatic Society.¹⁶⁴ Mitra, who wrote on a variety of topics, is discussed below in relation to the production of English translations of the *YS*. The general

161 Pāl, *Pātañjala Darśanam*, 9, 1911 edition.

162 Ibid., 9. My translation.

163 Cf. Richard Garbe, *Sāṃkhya Und Yoga* (Strassburg: K.J. Trübner, 1896), 37.

164 Rājendralāl Mitra, "On Goṇikāputra and Gonardīya as Names of Patañjali," ed. The Philological Secretary, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* LII (1883): 261.

consensus in Indology today is that the Patañjali of the *Mahābhāṣya* and the Patañjali of the YS are distinct individuals separated historically by several centuries. In reference to *Gonardīya* and *Goṇikā-putra*, it is generally agreed that these terms should not be understood as epithets of Patañjali, but were possibly references to the names of authors quoted by the Patañjali of the *Mahābhāṣya*.¹⁶⁵ But Pāl and Mitra's questions about what counts for sources in historiography have retained their importance. Ashok Aklujkar has recently reinvigorated the debate, arguing that the possibility that these may in fact be epithets of Patañjali should be left open given what is currently known.¹⁶⁶ Aklujkar's argument, which posits that the Patañjali of the *Mahābhāṣya* is likely from Kashmir, is itself a detailed response to Mitra's 1883 article (as well as to arguments made by Franz Kielhorn and others). Pāl's references to Sanskritic commentary are an instance of Indological method being used to different ends than Indologists may have first envisioned. As Chandrani Chatterjee has observed, "...early printing in Bengal was not a mere triumph of technology but was a way of carrying forward the oral tradition into that of the printed."¹⁶⁷

Along with the philological considerations and decisions that run throughout Mitra's article, there is an explicit attention to the question of how knowledge pertaining to Sanskrit was itself located within a context of reading that was informed by deeper cultural considerations, and it is along this avenue of thought that a

165 Aklujkar argues that *Gonardīya* is a corrupt form of *Gonandīya* and posts that Patañjali was born in the region associated today with Kashmir. "Gonardiya, Goṇika-putra, Patañjali and Gonandīya," in *Linguistic Traditions of Kashmir: Essays in Memory of Paṇḍit Dīnānātha Yakṣa* (New Delhi: D.K. Printworld, 2008), 88–172.

166 Ashok Aklujkar and Mrinal Kaul, eds., *Linguistic Traditions of Kashmir: Essays in Memory of Paṇḍit Dīnānātha Yakṣa* (New Delhi: D.K. Printworld, 2008), 89.

167 Chandrani Chatterjee, "Translation and Culture: An Instance of Early Printing in Bengal," *New Quest* 175–176 (2009): 55–60; I have not yet been able to access her recent work, Chandrani Chatterjee, *Translation Reconsidered: Culture, Genre and the "Colonial Encounter" in Nineteenth Century Bengal*, New edition (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010).

productive reading of Pāl and Mitra’s reading of Patañjali can be made. Mitra concludes his analysis by writing that the “last issue in this case is a purely personal one, and it is just what an Indian like me cannot approach without the greatest difference.”¹⁶⁸ He goes on to praise the work of the Sanskrit grammarians, and notes that it “is extremely hazardous, therefore, for people in the present day to call their opinions into question, even when a very strong array of arguments may be brought forth against them.”¹⁶⁹ Mitra then couches his criticism of the tradition of associating Patañjali with *Gonardīya* and *Goṇikā-putra* by making a distinction between grammatical and historical issues. “The question at issue, however, is not a grammatical, but an historical, one, and, however great they may have been as grammarians, they certainly were not very careful and critical in historical matters.”¹⁷⁰

Whereas Mitra makes a careful separation between grammatical expertise and historical expertise in order to criticize the accounts of the traditional grammarians, Pāl rejects that separation and argues that Patañjali must be understood according to the commentarial tradition. Pāl’s use of Indological method, even as he distances himself from the conclusions of the Indologists, demonstrate some of the interpretive shifts that can be ascribed to the innovation of print publication and the new audience for Bengali translations of *śāstric* sources. As Anindita Ghosh observes:

What needs to be appreciated is that the collisions and negotiations on the borders between orality and print resulted in a productive and volatile mix, which found powerful and prominent expression in the world of Indian commercial vernacular publishing. The rapid spread of literacy and the availability of cheap print technology bred enormous popular markets for ephemeral genres that encapsulated the desires of a reading public still

168 Mitra, “On Goṇikāputra and Gonardīya as Names of Patañjali,” 268.

169 Ibid., 269.

170 Ibid.

geared to pre-print tastes.¹⁷¹

That is, the antiquity and integrity of Patañjali's work must be understood according to the tradition of Sanskrit commentarial work that Pāl claims rhetorically in his introduction. Pāl spends little time in his introduction attending to the meaning of the YS or in describing the practice of yoga as he understands it, beyond praising its efficacy as a medicine against the tribulations of life. Here Pāl references the methods and researches of Indologists to challenge their chronology, finding in the Sanskrit commentarial tradition ample sources for establishing the historicity of tradition.

What remains after an analysis of this forgotten chapter in the history of the YS is that the translations and interpretations of the *paṇḍits* in colonial Calcutta were critically important to the development of a positive estimation of Patañjali's text, both as a representation of a philosophical viewpoint, and as a foundation for a set of practices that lacked the imprimatur of Sanskritic authority. Their arguments for the importance of Patañjali differed: Patañjali stood as an icon of the antiquity and systematic consistency of Sanskritic thought, or as a synoptic thinker who created the foundation for all yoga practices to come. Regardless of the diversity of opinions, Patañjali was viewed by a new generation as a vital part of heritage with contemporary relevance, not the forgotten textual artifact dismissed in the same century by Fitz-Edward Hall.

Conclusions

Paṇḍit Śāśadhar's contribution to historiography in India has been called part of an "extreme school" of nationalist writing. As noted in a modern day text book of

171 Ghosh, "An Uncertain 'Coming of the Book': Early Print Cultures in Colonial India," 25.

historiography published in India, “men like Rajnarian Bose, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Sasadhar Tarkarchudamani and others defended Hinduism in all its forms—including religious superstitions and social evils—claiming that, taken in all the aspects of its development, it formed a highly spiritual force, superior to other faiths.” Between an off-handed dismissal of Patañjali’s yoga and an uncritical chauvinism for all things “Hindu,” the work of Rājendralāl Mitra and Kṣetrapāl Cakravārtī represent complex negotiations of increasing polarized interpretations of history.

One of the most concrete ways to see how the commentarial mode of *bhāṣya* interacts with English and the vernacular in the nineteenth century is in the print editions of the translations examined in this study, where English, Sanskrit, and Bengali are juxtaposed. For a *paṇḍit* like Maheśandra Pāl, Bengali translation of the *YS* appears to be a kind of *anuvāda* in the sense of restatement. Nonetheless, in his introduction he performs cultural as well as linguistic translation, including English words and references to contemporaneous science. The inclusion of Sanskrit commentarial method into *anuvāda* needs to be inspected. In some case, the contrast between *anuvāda* as translation may be physically separated from *anuvāda* in its commentarial sense of repetition or restatement. We see this in the essay-like tone to the prefaces of some vernacular translations of the *YS*, which are followed by a restatement in Bengali of the *YS* and a Sanskrit commentary. Sanskrit, vernacular, and often English, are interposed, often on the same page, usually within the same binding. To read this mixing of idioms and the recombinatory, polyphonic texts that are created through it, one needs to historicize the practice of reading the *YS* through translation.¹⁷² It is also necessary to contextualize the varying discursive spaces of the

172 Bengali translation of the *YS*, while in one sense a product of a kind of elite culture, complicate

intended audiences of translation.¹⁷³

Anindita Ghosh, in an essay examining “print cultures in colonial India,” has written, “Even though the fate of the vernacular in the nineteenth century would ultimately draw it along completely different lines, residues of the preprint era were to continue to impinge on the world of Bengali print well into the earlier twentieth century.”¹⁷⁴ These “residues of the preprint era” persist as they pertained to the translation of Patañjali’s *Yoga Sūtra* from Sanskrit into Bengali during the nineteenth century. Oral traditions of commentary, influenced by the pre-print conventions and expectations of a Bengali audience, demonstrates that vernacular print editions of translations of the *YS* configured Bengali-language colonial print culture in a manner that was consonant with Sanskritic commentarial traditions.

the unidirectionality of the production of knowledge that has been the presupposition of much scholarship that embraces a “renaissance” analogy for nineteenth-century Bengal. See *ibid.* “But print languages do not merely represent languages of power, nor is literature a one-way means of control imposed by an elite on other groups... Despite some substantial theoretical critiques of the ‘renaissance’ model in recent times, most studies have continued to focus exclusively on a dominant print culture shaped by the educated elite in Bengal. They usually assume a linear causal link between Western education, control over print technology, and dissemination of occidental knowledge. A notable exception emerges in isolated studies by Sumit and Tanaka Sarkar, which emphasize the historical importance of commercial vernacular publications in rethinking the impact of print on identity formation in nineteenth-century Bengal. However, even while hinting at the presence of large writer-reader groups surviving on the edges of ‘decent’ literary tastes, they fail to make much of it, their work remaining circumscribed by their more immediate pursuits.”

173 Katherine Ewing, *Arguing Sainthood: Modernity, Psychoanalysis, and Islam* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997), 126.

174 Ghosh, “An Uncertain ‘Coming of the Book’: Early Print Cultures in Colonial India,” 23–25.

Chapter 5.

Vernacular Cosmopolitan Translation

“A translation has to be true to the translator no less than to the originals. He cannot jump off his own shadow. Translation is choice, interpretation, an assertion of taste, a betrayal of what answers to one’s needs, one’s envies.”

A.K. Ramanujan, *Speaking of Siva*, pp. 12–13.

Chapter Background: Cosmopolitan Vernacular Translations of the YS

The *paṇḍits* of nineteenth century Calcutta offered translations of Patañjali that connected the Sanskrit text to a set of contemporary practices and argued for the contemporary relevance of the Sanskrit *sūtras*. Another set of Bengali writers contributed to the internationalization of yoga by representing Patañjali in English to a broader audience. The translators at the center of this chapter complicate a polarization of the past and present in that they represent a position in between the revivalist vernacular discourses of the Bengali *paṇḍits* examined above, and the Orientalist “scholarly” translations also examined previously. Both of these writers—Rājendralāl Mitra and Kṣetrapāl Cakravārtī—were connected to important institutions of knowledge exchange in Calcutta (the Asiatic Society and the Baṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣad, respectively). Mitra, as the first Indian president of the Asiatic Society, had close links to Orientalists even as he addressed vernacular Bengali and North-Indian audiences, and Kṣetrapāl shared with the Bengali *paṇḍits* something of the quest for a vernacular identity. If the translation of the YS represents a domestication of a practice of renunciation, a point I will examine below, then these translators occupy a social location that cannot be easily defined as Orientalist, *paṇḍit*, or the categories of the emerging middle class in colonial Calcutta.

Anglophone translation of Patañjali's text, as has been shown in the previous chapters, sought to situate the analysis of yoga within the doxographic categories of the six schools of philosophy, a notion developed in late Vedāntic treatises such as Mādhavācārya's *Sarvadarśanasamgraha* that were simultaneously being translated.¹ Placing the YS within neatly delineated and abstracted notions of classical Hindu philosophical schools worked to split the contemporary practices of renunciation that were increasingly being linked to notions of resistance and criminality from a distant and comparatively pristine Sanskrit past. The fact that Patañjali's text includes descriptions of ascetic practices (in its elaboration of the eight-limbs of yoga, for instance, in books two and three), as well as its descriptions of supernatural powers available to advanced practitioners (in book three), demonstrates the fluidity that exists in the text between meditative practices, renunciation, or the cessative and luminous forms of yoga discussed in Chapter Two.

The fluidity that exists in the text of the YS is representative of the process by which Sanskrit thought is elaborated. In this respect, Johannes Bronkhorst has written of the need to take seriously the systematic nature of Indian philosophy in history. As Bronkhorst writes, the "history of Indian philosophy... is the history of the elaboration of the different systems conditioned by the ongoing critical questioning by their rivals, and by the confrontation with other issues that threaten their internal coherence."² Commentary is a response to philosophical debate, and the result of classical philosophical debates was an elaboration and systematization of philosophical positions. The point here is that while the notion of the six orthodox schools of Hindu

1 Mādhava, *The Sarva-darśana-samgraha, or, Review of the Different Systems of Hindu Philosophy*, trans. Edward Byles Cowell and A.E. Gough (London: Trübner, 1882).

2 Axel Michaels, ed., *The Pandit: Traditional Scholarship in India* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2001), 172.

philosophy may itself be a construct,³ to treat the philosophical background of yoga as a mere conceit is to avoid parsing through substantive philosophical debates in the tradition of commentary that may have informed the practice of translation in the nineteenth century. I will return to this point in the discussion below of Rājendralāl Mitra's translation, but here as in the previous chapters, the debates about the nature of yoga and Patañjali during the colonial period are an example of commentarial elaboration that helped to make yoga a "summary expression of [a] culture."⁴ I argue here that the commentarial traditions of interpreting Patañjali continued to influence the writing of two translators whose work I characterize as vernacular cosmopolitan, to use the term of Homi Bhabha.⁵

Rājendralāl Mitra and Kṣetrapāl Cakravārtī reached a degree of international attention by describing the *YS* in separate ways that resonated with different groups. Mitra wrote from within the discourse of Orientalism, but rejected the negative characterization of the *YS* that is found in Colebrooke. Kṣetrapāl, writing a decade later and closer to the time of Vivekananda's formulation of yoga, addressed an audience attracted to the supernatural powers and abilities conferred by yoga, and provided anecdotal evidence to attest to the reality of these powers in characterizing Patañjali as an icon of spiritual authority. A central question of this chapter will be to ask, following Dodson, what it means to be "knowledgeable" in the colonial period, particularly as that "knowledgeability" is transacted through the institutional contexts with which Kṣetrapāl and Mitra were associated, which enabled them to both engage

3 See discussion of Andrew Nicholson's work in chapter two. Cf. Andrew J. Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

4 Michaels, *The Pandit*, 172, quoting Ben-Ami Scharfstein.

5 Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

the vernacular world of the *paṇḍits* of Chapter Four, and the “cosmopolitan” contexts of institutions associated with the Orientalist endeavor.

A brief spatial metaphor may be useful in thinking about this type of cosmopolitan vernacular translation. Colonial Calcutta was divided into two main sections, the so-called “white” town, a hub of the British administrative authorities and their families, and the “black” town, where those excluded from the “white” town resided. This geography reflects how the mercantile interests of Europe and Britain helped to shape the city. Recent studies of Calcutta’s urban history, however, have shown how this narrative was constructed from the sources and perspective of British administrative records. Simply put, as Swati Chattopadhyay has written, “By emphasizing the duality of the ‘black’ and ‘white’ towns one misses the idea that the critical aspects of colonial cities lie not in the clarity of this duality, but in the tension of blurring boundaries between the two.”⁶ There were various segments of populations in each of the two towns, and circulations of culture, labor, and commerce between them. Mitra’s translation of a Sanskrit text on yoga circulated through this blurry boundary in manner that complicates dichotomous distinctions between stark notions of “co-operation” and “resistance” in the production of knowledge in the colonial period.⁷

Translation is an activity that blurs the boundaries between the two towns, as it was a means of circulating ideas and concepts from the cultural rivers of English, Sanskrit, and Bengali. Indeed, the notion of circulation is critical to understanding

6 Swati Chattopadhyay, *Representing Calcutta: Modernity, Nationalism, and the Colonial Uncanny*, *Asia’s Great Cities* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 10.

7 Michael S. Dodson, “Re-Presented for the Pandits: James Ballantyne, ‘Useful Knowledge,’ and Sanskrit Scholarship in Benares College During the Mid-Nineteenth Century,” *Modern Asian Studies* 36, no. 2 (2002): 295–296.

translation in the colonial period, and this Chapter is part of a larger argument that the development of modern yoga was made possible through the process of colonial translation. As Mark Singleton has concluded in his recent study of yoga and Patañjali, “it seems clear that the widespread acceptance of the YS as the origin and fountainhead of transnational yoga practice today was made possible by the installation of Patañjali as the logos of yoga during the heyday of European Orientalism.”⁸ I will return to Singleton’s point below, to which I would like to add a sense of the ways that Bengali translations contributed to the afterlife of Patañjali’s classical text.

First, it is useful to say a few words about the project of English translation more generally in nineteenth century India, a period of religious transformation. New social and religious movements formed partly in response to, and due to the influence of, the pressures of colonialism and Christian missionary activity. Central to this transformation was the production of knowledge about India’s religions. Among the forms of religion that were transformed by this process of translation in the colonial period was yoga.⁹ It is important to note that the nature of the transformation in this case has much in common with concerns that originate in the *Yoga Sūtra* itself. That is, the question of the relationship between text and practice, as alluded to by Singleton above, is a central question in understanding Sanskrit commentary on the YS. The YS itself, as Yohanan Grinshpon has shown, is already always a translation, as it is an attempt to systematize and translate the experience of yoga into a philosophical

8 *Yoga in the Modern World: Contemporary Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2008), 92.

9 The first Sanskrit text that pertained to religion to be translated into English was the *Bhagavad Gita* by Charles Wilkins in 1785; the descriptions of “Yog” and the “Yogee” contained therein had influence as far away as Massachusetts, where Henry David Thoreau read Wilkin’s translation from 1845-1847. Cf. Paul Friedrich, *The Gita Within Walden* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 2008), 13.

language.¹⁰ The specific point here is that Rājendralāl Mitra’s translation re-introduced some of the commentarial concerns to the translation of yoga, and in doing so provided a link to the cultural world of Sanskrit in the context of the nineteenth century. The YS, furthermore, became a canonical source by which varying interpretations of yoga could be indexed. A decade before Swami Vivekananda’s formulation of a modern yoga in his speeches at the World Parliament of Religions (1893) and in his *Rāja Yoga* (1896), Mitra published what appears to be the first complete English translation of the *Yoga Sūtra* (YS) with the commentary of an Indian writer (1883). It appears to remain the only published English translation of Bhoja Rāja’s commentary, *Rājamārtaṇḍa* (c. 1050, see Chapter One). Mitra’s translation, and the process by which he translated, is indicative of a new language of yoga that drew upon the linguistic registers of Bengali, Sanskrit, and English.

Singleton cites Mitra’s translation of the YS as “an important landmark” representative of the “desire to rescue Patañjali from irrational Tantric zealots such as the haṭha yogis and to ‘restore’ it to its perceived status as (neo-classical) philosophy”.¹¹ Yoga, that is, appears to have been associated with marginal groups in the popular imagination, and appeals to Patañjali as the classical progenitor of yoga were part of a broader Orientalist attempt to construct a notion of India’s classical golden age, with its attendant image of decay. The Orientalist use of texts is often cited as a means of creating a radically new definition of Hinduism that separated a reified

10 Cf. Yohanán Grinshpon, *Silence Unheard: Deathly Otherness in Pātañjala-Yoga*, SUNY Series in Hindu Studies (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002).

11 Mark Singleton, “The Classical Reveries of Modern Yoga: Patañjali and Constructive Orientalism,” in *Yoga in the Modern World: Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Jean Byrne and Singleton, Mark (London: Routledge, 2008), 81.

textual tradition from the experience of “lived practice.”¹² For Mitra, however, Patañjali seems to serve more as a means of imparting an aura of respectability to contemporary practices that were seen as marginal, rather than a means of celebrating the past at the expense of the present. This concern is not new to the commentarial tradition on yoga—it was there from the beginning. In this sense, an examination of precolonial sources on yoga demonstrates some of the historical continuity in the development of Hinduism that has already been identified in the work of Brian Pennington (2005). Moreover, as well as being the first Indian born president of the Asiatic Society, Mitra has been called an “ardent Vaishnava,”¹³ and his own religious identity influenced the types of conversations in which he was able to participate.

I would like to suggest an element of the climate of reception in which Mitra’s translation of *YS* would have been received: the possibly subversive nature of yogic practices in a broader popular imagination. A substantiation of this can be found, for instance, in a Hindi translation of the *YS* published in Calcutta in the 1889,¹⁴ where the author acknowledges that the audience is more likely to associate yoga with the practices of liminal figures with ulterior and possibly dangerous motives. Rudradatta Śarmā, who appears to be associated with the Ārya Samāj in Calcutta, wrote in the preface to his Hindi translation, for example,

parantu ājkal logoñ ne yog śabd ko eśā burā samajh rakkhtā hai ki jo
bhikṣuk geru ke vastra pahan kar kisī vidyā ke na jāñne ke kāraṇ binā ucit
pariśram kiye ālasya grast hokar udar pūr̥ti ke liye ghar ghar bhikṣa māñgte
phirte haiñ.

12 For a discussion of the dichotomization of “practice” from “philosophy” in the history of the interpretation of the *YS*, see Chapter Two.

13 Vasudha Dalmia and Heinrich von Stietencron, *The Oxford India Hinduism Reader* (New Delhi: Oxford Univ. Press, 2007), 92, 107.

14 Śarmā, Rudradatta, *Pātañjala: Darśan Tathā Maharṣi Vyāsa Deva Praṇīt Bhāṣya*, trans. Rudradatta Śarmā (Calcutta: Āryyāvartta Yantrālay, 1889).

But today people think badly of the word ‘yoga’ because beggars wearing the ochre garb of a *sannyāsi*, but without knowledge and proper effort, without doing any appropriate hard work, having become afflicted by laziness, in order fill their stomachs they go to every house asking for alms.¹⁵

There is some complexity to interpreting the way in which yoga may have operated on “popular” and “elite” levels during the period of translation, and the fluid nature of caste and *jāti*, particular in colonial Bengal, adds a political register to some representations.

One way to conceptualize a fundamental difference among the various interpretations of yoga has been identified by Joseph Alter as distinction between “Orientalist studies of Yoga as philosophy, as distinct from indigenous commentaries on Yoga as Truth.”¹⁶ Building on this distinction between yoga as truth and yoga as philosophy. Mark Singleton views Mitra’s translation in keeping with J.R. Ballantyne’s mid-nineteenth-century translation of the first two sections of the *YS*. In Singleton’s view, Mitra was involved in a process of decoupling a textual, philosophical text from a “living, oral tradition of Patañjali”¹⁷ Finding evidence of a specific approach to the *YS* in Mitra’s introductory references to continental philosophers such as Schopenhauer and Hartmann, Singleton positions Mitra’s work as essentially a textbook of comparative philosophy.

Mitra’s work, however, when read in the context of arguments of what defined *sanātanatā*, to which he contributed directly, demonstrate that he was neither simply reifying traditions into discrete objects defined by the categories of Western thought,

15 Śarmā, Rudradatta, “Upod Ghāṭaḥ (Preface),” in *Pātañjala: darśan tathā Maharṣi Vyāsa Deva praṇīt bhāṣya*, trans. Rudradatta Śarmā (Calcutta: Āryyāvartta Yantrālay, 1889), 3.

16 Joseph S. Alter, *Yoga in Modern India: The Body Between Science and Philosophy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004), 6.

17 Singleton, “The Classical Reveries of Modern Yoga: Patañjali and Constructive Orientalism,” 81.

nor was he using Sanskritic sources as a means to debunk any and every intrusion of the “West.” Like the *Baṅgabāsi* writers who argued for Patañjali’s *YS* as a central articulation of Hinduism, Mitra too was involved in a set of contestations amongst a set of groups (missionaries, Orientalists, reformists, and champions of *santātanatā*) with a common ground. Mitra’s work represents an attempt to synchronize aspects of the traditional commentarial view of yoga with the historiographic method of Orientalism. That is, the mode of Mitra’s writing oscillates between yoga as philosophy and yoga as truth.

A preference for texts certainly marked even the most “Indophilic” modes of Orientalist scholarship, but a decoupling of text and practice can be understood as a socially repressive administrative technique. Contemporary practices could be evaluated according to a notion of a golden age as represented by the translation of the Sanskritic past.¹⁸ What audiences were being appealed to? Clearly Mitra and Cakravartī each had a conception of their intended audiences, and may have, in fact, been appealing to certain tastes and expectations. Compare, for instance, the presentation of Buddhism “as being uniquely concerned with meditative experience” in the work of modern day proponents. As Stuart Sarbacker has observed:

This argument hinges upon the idea that South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Japanese authors and religious leaders have adapted to orientalist discourses by presenting the Hindu and Buddhist traditions as uniquely experiential and meditative. Thus Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, D. T. Suzuki, and others are understood to have reified and essentially created conceptions of Hinduism and Buddhism that catered to European and American audiences that were captivated by ideas about religion that meshed with their own ideas of empiricism, philosophy, and psychology.¹⁹

18 Orientalist knowledge of the Vedas, as Mani has described, could be used to demonstrate the supposed scriptural ignorance of some brahmans. See Chapter Three.

19 Stuart Ray Sarbacker, *Samādhi: The Numinous and Cessative in Indo-Tibetan Yoga* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 40.

From a descriptive standpoint, however, in order to understand the place of Patañjali in the development of yoga in the nineteenth century onward, it necessary to delineate with as much detail as possible interaction that took place between the different groups who were interested in translating the *YS*.

Rājendralāl Mitra

Mitra's Background

Rājendralāl Mitra occupied social and institutional positions that allowed him to engage with the different translators in this study, and his own career is emblematic of the changing status of the *paṇḍit* and contemporaneous claims for the authority of Sanskrit knowledge. Holding several positions at the Asiatic Society of Bengal in the course of his life, Rājendralāl Mitra had institutional links to both the world of *paṇḍits* and to the Orientalists. Mitra descended from a *kāyasth* family that had long been associated with the preservation of Persian knowledge during the Mughal period.²⁰ He was born near Calcutta in 1822, and was sent to the city for education as a young man.²¹ It was clear from an early incident that he would follow his own idiosyncratic path. He started medical school, but refused to testify against a fellow student accused of some violation, and for his silence Mitra was expelled. But Mitra went on to be one of the most prolific and influential intellectuals in nineteenth-century Bengal. His work was diverse: he edited two Bengali monthly magazines in the 1850s, wrote a number of books and articles in English, and conversed regularly with Hindi-speaking

20 See Rajesh Kochhar, "Seductive Orientalism: English Education and Modern Science in Colonial India," *Social Scientist* 36, no. 3/4 (March 1, 2008): 48. "Mitra's ancestors... had served the Nawab of Murshidabad...".

21 Cf., e.g., Upinder. Singh, *The Discovery of Ancient India: Early Archaeologists and the Beginnings of Archaeology* (Delhi: Permanent Black ; Distributed by Orient Longman, 2004), 322.

intellectuals in north India. Mitra was given three titles by the British government, including that of Raja in 1888. He was the first Indian-born secretary of the Asiatic Society, the premier institute of Orientalist scholarship in Calcutta, and he became its first Indian-born president in 1885.

Mitra's translation of the YS was completed during a period of intense change in how Bengali's relationship to Sanskrit was understood. As Lou Ratté shows in her analysis of Haraprasad Shastri (1861-1930), scholar and student of Mitra's,²² according to Haraprasad, "people in the 1870s thought that Bengali was a new language.... Bengali literature emerged by 1900 as a literature that could be dated as far back as the tenth century, and the language, as Haraprasad put it, was better understood not as the daughter of Sanskrit, nor even the granddaughter, but a very distant relative".²³ Trained in manuscript collection and cataloging by Mitra, Haraprasad applied these methods to the study of Bengali.²⁴

As an Orientalist, Mitra is perhaps the first highly visible Indian intellectual who was viewed as simultaneously a representative of European scholarship and as a voice from within Hinduism. He was described during his times as at once an authoritative and authentic translator, but there is also a sense from the historical record that Mitra's authority was a sort of social capital that could be used by others toward different ends. In this light, Mitra was often portrayed as a transitional figure, someone who

22 Haraprasad published a portrait of Mitra in Bengali. See Haraprasad Shastri, "Rajendralal Mitra," *Narayan*, July-March 1916-17. Lou Ratté, *The Uncolonised Heart* (Calcutta: Orient Longman, 1995) Chapter Six; See also Tapati. Guha-Thakurta, *Monuments, Objects, Histories : Institutions of Art in Colonial and Postcolonial India*, Cultures of History (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 113-115.

23 Ratté, *The Uncolonised Heart*, 211. Quoting from her translation of Haraprasad Shastri, "Astam Bangiya Sahitya Sammelaner Sahitya Sabhay Sabhapatir Sambodhan," *Haraprasad Shastri Rachana Sangraha*, vol. 2, p. 366-67.

24 *Ibid.*

represented, in the words of F. Max Mueller, “*pandit* by profession... but... at the same time a scholar and critic in our sense of the word.”²⁵ The description brings to mind Salman Rushdie’s notion of the “translated man,” which Srinivas Aravamudan has described as one “fully cognizant of the orientalist stereotype as an option that can be refused or chosen, and yet imposed without choice at other moments.”²⁶

As a textual scholar Mitra edited and annotated a large collection of Sanskrit manuscripts, but his work also included sizable contributions to the study of antiquities and architecture. Mitra also expressed some controversial opinions. He wrote a defense of meat eating in an essay entitled “Beef in Ancient India” (1872), and he criticized the work of the British antiquarian scholar James Fergusson in an often-cited episode. On the surface, the debate between Mitra and Fergusson was about the history of stone carving in India,²⁷ but it took on much deeper resonances concerning the originality of Indian cultural achievements and the cultural relativity of aesthetic judgments. Andrew Sartori describes Mitra’s scholarly nationalism:

While Bengalis had been working to reconceptualize their past in terms of a specifically “historical” conception of temporality and causality since the early nineteenth century, it was Mitra who first adopted the detailed evidentiary norms of serious antiquarianism, and thus was able to enter into direct engagement with his European scholarly contemporaries. ... The central polemic that drove Mitra’s works was the systematic rejection

25 Guha-Thakurta, *Monuments, Objects, Histories*, 96.

26 Srinivas Aravamudan, *Guru English: South Asian Religion in a Cosmopolitan Language*, Translation/transnation (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006), 256–7.

27 Geoffrey Samuel’s recent study of the origins of yoga demonstrates how Fergusson’s claim—that Greek sculpture is the source of Indian stone carving—has largely been accepted, even at is still raises concerns: “The influence of Greek sculpture on Indian sculpture is also obvious and has long been recognised,” an assertion he qualifies with a footnote: “I should note that I have no interest here in trying to claim that everything valuable in South Asia came from outside. However it is pointless to exclude the possibility of external borrowing on *a priori* grounds and as noted there will be further examples in later chapters. I do not see that it lessens the achievements of the people of South Asia throughout history to recognise that there was sharing and interaction between cultures.” Geoffrey Samuel, *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra: Indic Religions to the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 81; p. 81, n. 21.

of widely accepted arguments that ancient Indian art or architecture had been derived from Greek models made available initially by Alexander's empire and then by the Greco-Bactrian kingdom established in the northwest of the subcontinent in the second century BCE.²⁸

Sartori provides an excerpt of Mitra's 1872 criticism of "Albrecht Weber's thesis that the plot of the Ramayana may have been based on that of the Iliad":²⁹

Alexander during his three weeks' stay in the Punjab taught the Indians, according to different authors, the art of preparing made dresses, the mode of piling bricks and stones for buildings, the principles of architecture, the plan of harnessing horses, writing, drama, astronomy, philosophy, and all and everything that convert a race of naked savages into civilized men, and it would be preposterous to suppose that he would not leave behind him a copy of old Homer for the edification of the Indians.³⁰

Fergusson, for his part, did not rely wholly on scholarly methods for disputing Mitra's claims. As Thomas Metcalf observes:

Mitra was a distinguished Indian scholar; during the 1870s he had, with the support of the Indian government, undertaken the first detailed archaeological survey of Orissa. Such pretension threatened those like James Fergusson, who in such works as the *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* (1876) had long claimed the right authoritatively to define the nature of India's past. Hence Fergusson set out to put the upstart Mitra in his proper place. He did so not simply by a scholarly critique of Mitra's evidence and interpretations, but by disparaging his ability, as an Indian, to undertake such a study at all. ... For Fergusson, Mitra was a 'typical specimen' of that educated class whom the Ilbert Bill sought to empower as 'governors' of the country. The 'real interest' of his scholarly work, therefore, Fergusson continued, 'in these days of discussions of Ilbert Bills', lay in the evidence it supplied 'as to whether the natives of India are to be treated as equals to Europeans in all respects'. The answer was decisively negative. 'If, after reading the following pages', Fergusson wrote, with a bold leap, in the introduction to his critique of Mitra's scholarship, 'any European feels that he would like to be subjected to his [Mitra's] jurisdiction, in criminal cases, he must have a courage possessed by few.'³¹

28 Andrew Sartori, "Beyond Culture-Contact and Colonial Discourse: 'Germanism' in Colonial Bengal," *Modern Intellectual History* 4, no. 1 (2007): 80.

29 *Ibid.*, 81.

30 Rājendralāl Mitra, "The Homer of India," *Mookerjee's Magazine* 1 (1872): 53; Quoted in Sartori, "Beyond Culture-Contact and Colonial Discourse: 'Germanism' in Colonial Bengal," 81.

31 Thomas R. Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 212; Quoting James Fergusson, *Archæology in India, with Especial Reference to the Works of Rajendralala*

Mitra has been the focus of recent scholarly attention, due to his contributions to a variety of fields related to Indology. As a textual scholar he edited and translated a number of Sanskrit manuscripts. He also contributed works on art, architecture, and numismatics, reflecting an approach to the history of Hinduism that encompassed more than strictly textual approaches. He has also been described as a believing Vaiṣṇava, a scholar whose complex relations to tradition and modernity made possible an appraisal of Hinduism quite apart from the concerns of both the Orientalists and the more resolutely orthodox critics associated with the *Baṅgabāsi*. As Vasudha Dalmia has shown, Mitra was in conversation with Hariścandra Bhāratendu, and was linked to the “wide section of public voices and instances” involved in “the process of articulating and formulating the new amalgamation of Vaiṣṇavatā into a Hinduism of subcontinental dimension”.³² Dalmia connects this process—an apparent argument for the transcendent status of a particular, i.e., an understanding of Vaiṣṇavatā—to the development of the notion of *sanātana dharma*.

At a time when Bengali intellectuals were converting to Christianity or reformist movements within Hinduism, Mitra remained what has been described as an “a believing Vaishnava, [whose] information and interests were differently constituted”³³ than his Western interlocutors. Vasudha Dalmia has investigated Mitra’s links to the North Indian self-representation of Vaiṣṇava religion, concluding that Mitra’s support, as a representative of Orientalism, gave a “structure of authority”—and broader visibility—to local claims. By distancing his work from that of the *paṇḍits*,

Mitra (London: Trübner and Co., 1884), vi–vii, 4.

32 Vasudha Dalmia, “‘The Only Real Religion of the Hindus’: Vaisnava Self-representation in the Late Nineteenth Century,” in *The Oxford India Hinduism Reader*, ed. Heinrich von Stietencron and Vasudha Dalmia (New Delhi: Oxford Univ. Press, 2007), 92.

33 *Ibid.*

Mitra could translate the authority of Orientalist scholarship into a sort of social prestige that helped to elevate regional religious developments, and made possible new emic claims about Hinduism. In terms of his translation of Patañjali, Mitra sought to use the Sanskrit commentarial tradition as a living tradition of interpretation that could inform the historiographic method of the Orientalists.

Indicative of the complexities of his identity, Mitra received a number of honors from the British colonial administration. At the same time, he voiced a number of controversial opinions that were critical of the cultural chauvinism of Orientalism. The Sanskritist Charles Rockwell Lanman characterized Mitra as a singular thinker in his ability to navigate vernacular and cosmopolitan streams of culture:

Rājendra-lāla Mitra, in the preface to his *Yoga aphorisms of Patanjali*, says: “I had hopes of reading the work with the assistance of a professional Yogī; but I have been disappointed. I could find no Pandit in Bengal who had made Yoga the special subject of his study, and the only person I met at Benares who could help me was most exorbitant in his demands. He cared not for the world and its wealth, and the only condition under which he would teach me was strict pupillage under Hindu rules—to which I could not submit.” That was five and thirty years ago. A real command of both Sanskrit and English by the same person is a combination rare enough. Still rarer, the combination of those two elements with a knowledge of one of the great vernaculars of India, such as R. Mitra had. Rarest of all, this triple combination plus the chance (which a foreigner is not likely to get) for a thorough acquaintance with the actual procedure and habit of mind of a genuine Yogin of high character. What fruit might that now perhaps almost impossible combination have borne!³⁴

Mitra, who had previously been attacked by Fergusson by fear-mongering appeals based on real and imagined British objections to the Ilbert Bill, is here presented positively, as a kind of hybrid character who could navigate Orientalist and vernacular streams of thought with equal facility.

34 Charles Rockwell Lanman, “The Hindu Yoga-System,” *The Harvard Theological Review* 11, no. 4 (October 1918): 360.

Mitra's Translation

Mitra's translation of Patañjali's *Yoga Sutra* was published in 1883, and it became a touchstone text for subsequent interpreters of yoga. Mitra's translation was written in a context where the definition of yoga was being debated from various sides: was it to be found in Patañjali's text, in the *Bhagavad Gita*, in *haṭha* yoga texts; did it involve extreme forms renunciation, was it a form of magical trickery, and could yogic practices be incorporated into the daily life of a householder? In his introduction, for instance, Mitra addresses the outlandish occult claims attributed to yogis, writing that "the extravagance of some of their pretensions should not make us spurn the Yogis as all knaves and charlatans, and their psychical system wholly false and fatuous."³⁵ This skeptical attitude toward yoga that we see presumed in Mitra's audience, and the association of yogis with criminality, is quite common in the nineteenth-century translations, as has been noted above and demonstrated in detail in the recent work of Singleton³⁶ and White.³⁷

As noted in Chapter One, Mitra wrote that he was unable to find a paṇḍit adequately schooled in yoga *darśana* to assist him in his project, and thus he endeavored to translate the text based on what he described as his own limited knowledge of Sanskrit. Mitra notes in his introduction that he conferred with two professors at Calcutta Sanskrit College, but despite their traditional training he does not describe them as paṇḍits. The distinction indicates Mitra's respect for European historiographic practices: indeed, he writes, "[P]aṇḍits, when called upon to explain,

35 Rājendralāl Mitra, tran., *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali with the Commentary of Bhoja Rājā*, Bibliotheca Indica (Calcutta: The Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1883), lxii.

36 Mark Singleton, *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

37 David Gordon White, *Sinister Yogis*, 1st ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

frequently, if not invariably, mix up the tents of Patañjali's Yoga with those of ... works which have very dissimilar and discordant tenets to inculcate.”³⁸

His style of translation and intellectual practice shows that he was involved in finding an afterlife for Sanskrit commentary in the realm of English. In translating the opening line of the *YS* (*atha yogānuśāsanam*), for instance, Mitra includes the Sanskrit term: “Now, an exposition of the Yoga (is to be made).”³⁹ Mitra notes that in J.R. Ballantyne's unfinished translation,⁴⁰ “Ballantyne has rendered the word Yoga into ‘concentration.’”⁴¹ Unsatisfied with that translation, and finding the word “meditation” to be likewise insufficient, Mitra writes that a “perfect English equivalent is not to be had, and I prefer, therefore, to use the original term”.⁴² Addressing the definition of yoga offered in the *YS* (*yogaścittavṛttinirodhaḥ*), Mitra analyzes the linguistic choices of earlier Orientalists such as H.H. Wilson and H.T. Colebrooke, as well as the commentarial sources in Sanskrit such as that of Vijñānabhikṣu. These appeals to Sanskrit writers create a sense of continuity between the classical commentarial sources and the more recent translation efforts. Mitra, drawing on these various sources, retains the term “yoga” but translates *citta-vṛtti-nirodha*: “Yoga is the suppression of the functions of the thinking principle.”⁴³

Mitra, like Maheścandra Pāl, engages the question of Patañjali's identity. He engages directly with the Orientalists referred to in Pāl's introduction. In particular, Mitra examines a reference given by William Ward (to whom he refers as “The Rev. J.

38 Rājendralāl Mitra, *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali with the Commentary of Bhoja Rájá*, lvi.

39 Ibid., 3.

40 J.R. Ballantyne and Govind Shastri, *Patañjali; with English Translation of Bhojavṛtti or Rajamartanda*, ed. Asoke Chatterjee (Delhi: Parimal Publication, 1882).

41 Rājendralāl Mitra, *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali with the Commentary of Bhoja Rájá*, 3.

42 Ibid., 4.

43 Ibid.

Ward”)⁴⁴ that is drawn from two Purāṇic sources and a text called the *Rudrayāmala Tantra*, describing Patañjali in mythical terms (“immediately on his birth, he made known things past, present, and future”)⁴⁵ and offers specifics regarding Patañjali’s birthplace. As Mitra argues,

the references given of Patañjali in his *Mahābhāṣya* entirely upsets the statements made in Mr. Ward’s notice. The sage describes himself as the son of one Goṇikā, not Satī [as in Ward’s reference], and his place of birth was the eastern country, whereas Ilāvṛata is said in the Purāṇas to lie to the north of the Himālaya.⁴⁶

Mitra goes through several other references and theories of Patañjali’s life, but it is his concluding portrait that perhaps was most rhetorically aimed at his audience.

Departing from the details of texts and citations, Mitra writes that Patañjali was a “son of a Brāhmaṇ priest... we have no account left of his career”.⁴⁷ He was “doubtless married and probably the father of a family,”⁴⁸ not a yogī far removed from society. The *Mahābhāṣya*, the commentary on Pāṇini attributed to Patañjali, is called “the noblest monument of profound erudition, of keen critical acumen... which has been left to us by any ancient scholar in any part of the ancient world, and well may the Hindus be proud of the heritage.”⁴⁹ For Mitra, the narratives of Patañjali’s life, suggesting an ongoing devotional tradition, are a source of authority that complicate or refute the claims of Ward. Mitra and his work, however, served what Dalmia has called a “vital intermediary function, connecting as he did the researches of the western Orientalists

44 Ibid., lxvi.

45 Ibid., lxvi, quoting. William Ward, *A View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindoos: Including a Minute Description of Their Manners and Customs, and Translations from Their Principal Works*, vol. 1 (Serampore: Serampore Mission Press, 1818), 228.

46 Rājendralāl Mitra, *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali with the Commentary of Bhoja Rájá*, lxviii.

47 Ibid., lxxii.

48 Ibid., lxxiii.

49 Ibid.

with the mainstream of intellectual/nationalist thinking in India.”⁵⁰

Mitra as Intermediary

K.S. Macdonald, a reviewer for an American theological journal writing from Calcutta, used an appeal to Mitra’s translation to criticize Swami Vivekananda’s 1897 *Rāja Yoga*. Macdonald objected to Vivekananda’s translation of YS 2:10 (*te pratiprasavaheyāḥ sūkṣmāḥ*) as “They, to-be-rejected-by-opposite-modifications, are fine.” Vivekananda interpreted the Sanskrit to mean that those inclined toward yoga can control emotions such as anger by bringing to mind an opposing emotion. “For instance, when a big wave of anger has come to mind, how are we to control that? Just by raising a big opposing wave. Think of love.... Love is the opposite to anger. So we find that by raising the opposite waves we can conquer those which we want to reject.”⁵¹ Macdonald, who disparages the work of Vivekananda throughout his review, finds a Christian message in Vivekananda’s gloss, and summarily rejects the possibility that Sanskrit *śāstras* could articulate such an idea. The sentiment of using a good thought to counteract a negative thought, Macdonald writes, is “a very good Christian teaching and not a bad illustration; but there could scarcely be any teaching or illustration more alien to the true Yoga.”⁵² To justify his point, Macdonald writes approvingly of Mitra, whom he describes as “the most distinguished Brahman Sanskritist of modern Bengal”.⁵³ Macdonald then concludes that he finds the translation given by Mitra (“These, the subtle [sic] ones, should be avoided by an

50 Vasudha Dalmia, *The Nationalization of Hindu Traditions: Bharatendu Harishchandra and Nineteenth-century Banaras* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), 400.

51 Vivekananda, *Vedānta Philosophy; Lectures*, New ed (New York: The Baker & Taylor Company, 1899), 156.

52 K. S Macdonald, “Review: Yoga Philosophy: Lectures Delivered in New York,” *The American Journal of Theology* 2, no. 2 (April 1898): 403.

53 *Ibid.*, 403.

adverse course”) superior to that of Vivekananda.⁵⁴

The global development of yoga was made possible through the process of translation, in that a new language of yoga developed from three tongues, those that A.K. Ramanujan referred to as the “mother tongue” (vernacular language), the “father tongue” (Sanskrit), and what has been called the “other tongue,” (English).⁵⁵ It is in this sense that I want to characterize the process of translating yoga to which Mitra and the other translators examined in this study contributed as *transidiomatic*. This term, which was coined by the linguist Marco Jacquemet and applied to the context of South Asia by Srinivas Aravamudan,⁵⁶ is critical for understanding the context in which yoga in the nineteenth century developed.

If we step back to think of Ramanujan’s distinctions, Sanskrit and English are unlikely containers for the transmission of vernacular concepts about yoga. What I want to emphasize is not the dominance of Sanskrit and English, however, but instead the language of yoga that develops through translation is precisely a blending of these three registers. The transidiomatic environment of colonial Calcutta was a site of linguistic flow, a flow that can be characterized as productively recombinant. It is this environment that created the possibility for expressions like “the science of yoga” and all of the contemporary permutations one finds in twentieth-century, global yoga practice. A linguistic model of yoga’s transformation, furthermore, allows for interpretation to move beyond the valuations implicit in attempts to differentiate authentic from fraudulent yoga. It also hints at the linguistic afterlife of Sanskrit

54 Ibid., 403.

55 Rita Kothari, *Translating India: The Cultural Politics of English*, Rev. ed. (New Delhi: Foundation Books, 2006), 26–34.

56 Aravamudan, *Guru English*, 2006.

achieved through the blending of linguistic registers in the process of translation. It was precisely in the transidiomatic environment that concepts from science, Sanskrit, and vernacular practices could cross-fertilize to create a hybrid language for the global dissemination of yoga.

This is because translation, especially in the context of nineteenth-century Calcutta, involved exchange: a search for equivalences between the three registers that never became static but always remained a process. This search for equivalence, to use Tony Stewart's phrase, takes place "on the level of a cultural metalanguage, ... a conceptual idiom that brings different cultures together, while acknowledging and even justifying their own independent conceptual—and in this case religious—worlds."⁵⁷ The ability of Mitra to decontextualize and recontextualize the idiom of the Sanskrit register through translation into English indicates his power as a constructor of yoga.

Kṣetrapāl Cakravārtī: The Myth of Patañjali in the Public Sphere

Background

While Mitra's translation and commentary represents a blending of the philosophical and historical approach to yoga with that of the commentarial assumption of yoga's "Truth," Kṣetrapāl Cakravārtī's published lectures on yoga philosophy and Patañjali are a further departure from the mode of Sanskrit commentary. Cakravārtī moved beyond the traditional duties of commentary toward a modern assertion of yoga as "Truth," a sort of missionary Hinduism concurrent with

⁵⁷ Tony K. Stewart, "In Search of Equivalence: Conceiving Muslim-Hindu Encounter Through Translation Theory," *History of Religions* 40, no. 3 (February 2001): 286.

the beginnings of the Ramakrishna movement. Kṣetrapāl's work typifies some of the paradoxes one encounters when sorting through the bibliographic minutiae of the history of yoga. In a number of libraries, his work is erroneously associated with another Bengali author, Kshitish Chandra Chakravarti. The collection of essays on Hindu religion, philosophy, and yoga, is published under the name "K. Chakravarti, Yoga-Sastri," contributing to the ambiguity (though the author does refer to himself as "Kshetra" in the text).⁵⁸ An introduction to the work reasons that the "author of the following lectures is well known to the public, and this fact renders any introduction from the Publisher unnecessary."⁵⁹ Despite this disclaimer, the publisher continues with a brief profile of the writer, who is today so forgotten that his work has been ascribed to another author. Kṣetrapāl, however, was one of the first Indian English-language fiction writers, and his novellas *Sarala and Hingana*⁶⁰ (1895) are occasionally referenced in histories of English literature in India as examples of early English literature⁶¹ in India.⁶²

Kṣetrapāl (d. 1903)⁶³ attended Calcutta Presidency College, where he began writing novels in Bengali. According to the publisher's introduction by Pramatha Nath Mookerjee, "Ass. Secretary, Bagbazar Hari-Sava," to the *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga*, Kṣetrapāl "earned... the reputation of being 'one of the best writers

58 Kṣetrapāl Cakravārtī, *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga* (Calcutta: The New Britannia press, 1893), 43.

59 Ibid., introduction.

60 Kṣetrapāl Cakravārtī, *Sarala and Hingana; tales descriptive of Indian life* (Calcutta: Basu, Mitra, 1895).

61 Kṣetrapāl's writing has been briefly addressed in the context of the early Indian novel in English, alongside that of B. Rajam Iyer (apparently a contemporaneous writer from nineteenth-century Madras). See Subhendu Mund, "Towards the Horizon," *Wasafiri* 9, no. 18 (1993): 45–48.

62 See, e.g., Kamal Mehta, "The Emergence of the Short Story in Indian English Writing," in *Critical Essays On Indian Writing In English*, ed. Jaydipsinh Dodiya (New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 2006), 157–158.

63 Kṣetrapāl's birth date is not listed in any sources, English or Bengali, that I have been able to locate. For a brief biographical sketch, see Subodhchandra Sengupta, *Samsad Bāṅgālī Caritābhidhān* (Calcutta: Sāhitya Samsad, 1976), 113.

of the day.”⁶⁴ There is no doubt Kṣetrapāl was once an influential figure: he is credited with helping to establish one of the most enduring literary academies in Bengal, the Baṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣad (BSP). The idea for a Bengali Academy of Literature, as it was known in English, was first proposed by John Beames (1837-1902),⁶⁵ author of a comparative grammar of Indian languages and other works, for the purpose of “consolidating the [Bengali] language and giving it a certain uniformity, or in short, for creating a literary language.”⁶⁶ The effort to caste a prestige register of Bengali as a literary language was an activity bound closely to the print production in colonial Calcutta:

The canons of polite speech and literature that came to dictate the cultural life of the educated classes in Bengal led to an intense drive to cleanse and standardize and untidy colloquial, and to stamp it with ‘authenticity’ and ‘respectability.’ Borrowing from a classical Sanskrit vocabulary, purging the naturalized Perso-Arabic element in Bengali, and casting a net of Victorian Puritanism to rid the vernacular of its earthy rusticity would, it was hoped, achieve just that.⁶⁷

Kṣetrapāl spoke at an initial planning meeting of the BSP, and presented a selective list of what qualified, in his estimation, as work of literary Bengali, but it was not until two decades later until he addressed the Academy as an organization.⁶⁸ Interestingly, as

64 Cakravārtī, *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga*, preface.

65 For a discussion of Beames and nineteenth-century negative attitudes toward vernacular literatures of India, see Ulrike Stark, “Translation, Book History, and the Afterlife of a Text: Growse’s *The Rāmāyana* of Tulsi Dās,” in *India in translation through Hindi literature: a plurality of voices*, ed. Maya Burger and Nicola Pozza (New York: Peter Lang, 2010), 158–159; For a critical assessment of Beames’s views, see also Ratté, *The Uncolonised Heart*; Beames’s memoir was published as John Beames, *Memoirs of a Bengal civilian*. (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961).

66 Sengupta, *Samsad Bāṅgālī Caritābhidhān*, 1976, 113.

67 Anindita N. Ghosh, “An Uncertain ‘Coming of the Book’: Early Print Cultures in Colonial India,” *Book History* 6 (2003): 25.

68 Ratté, *The Uncolonised Heart*, 231. “Liotard... presided as Chairman at the first meeting, held in July 1893, and there listened to a speech which must have encouraged him in the belief that by his presence he would be performing a useful service. The speaker, Kshetrapal Chakrabarti, was the man who had responded enthusiastically to Beames’ proposal in 1872, although nothing had come of it at that time. Now, two decades later, Kshetrapal presented his version of the Bengali literary canon. The language was old, he admitted, dating back before the Muslim conquest to the time of the Hindu kings of Gour, but ‘even so recently as forty years ago’ there were no more than

closely connected as he was to the project of creating a chaste form of the vernacular, his own literary work in English do not condemn aspects of religious practice that might have been scandalous to the educated classes, even as they present them in an expurgated form, as will be discussed below.

The project was ultimately taken up by “an otherwise elusive government clerk named L. Liotard,”⁶⁹ and Kṣetrapāl delivered a number of addresses that were later published in the minutes of *The Bengal Academy of Literature*. The minutes detail papers presented by “Babu K. Chakravarti (Secretary)” including “Drama Among the Bengalis,” where he mentions that “Maharaja Sir Jotendra Mohan Thakur (as well as the Sovabazar Rajas and Thakurs of Jorashanká) had several dramatic performances in their palatial residences for which invitations used to be sent to the public.”⁷⁰ As was discussed in Chapter Four, Maheścandra Pāl dedicates his Bengali translation of the *YS* to Jyotīndramohan Ṭhākur, and Kṣetrapāl’s reference helps to connect patronage to the development of the literary arts and performance in colonial Calcutta.

Kṣetrapāl’s other entries into the “Minutes” of the BSP provide tantalizing glimpses of his role in directing its early development. He responds to a letter “from Babu Rajnarain Bose, of Deoghar, in which that gentleman, as a member of the Academy, submitted that the proceedings should be conducted in Bengali.”⁷¹

Rajnarayan Basu’s protest came at a time when the very nature of the Bengal Academy

a dozen readable books and periodicals in it. Kshetrapal’s list included *Chandimangal* of Kabikankan (Mukundaram Chakrabarti), *Anandamangal* of Bharatchandra, *Ramayana* of Krittibas and *Mahābhārata* of Kashiramdas, and some nineteenth century writers: Akshaykumar Datta, Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, Michael Madhusudan Dutt and Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay. He gave no indication of how he had formed this comparatively impoverished canon, but called particular attention to that part of Beames’ proposal aimed at eliminating vulgarity from the language.”

69 Ibid., 132.

70 “Minutes,” *The Bengal Academy of Literature* 1, no. 3 (September 17, 1893): 8.

71 “Minutes,” *The Bengal Academy of Literature* 1, no. 7 (December 24, 1893): 5.

of Literature was being challenged, and Basu questioned, as Haraprasad Shastri was to write later, whether it was “absurd to call an institution devoted exclusively to the cultivation of vernacular literature by a European name.”⁷²

In another issue, the minutes relate that “Babu K. Chakravarti then read two short poems by himself: one being an ode to *Sleep and Dream*, the other a *Universal morning prayer*. The meet-ting [sic] heard both poems with much pleasure: they were instances of the versatile abilities of the worthy Secretary, and it was a matter of satisfaction to know that the two pieces would be published.”⁷³ The “Minutes” establish Kṣetrapāl’s contributions to English as well as vernacular literature.

After the BSP was established, the writers associated with the institution influenced Bengali letters through publications including its journal, and the production of historical documents such as the widely cited biographies of prominent scholars and writers published in the *Sāhitya-Sādhak-Caritmālā* series. It was, and continues to be, an institution that sought to forge links between a notion of the past and a possible future. These writers presented themselves as updated versions of the *paṇḍit*:

The members of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad appropriated the title of ‘Pandit’ for themselves, thus hoping to present themselves as the present embodiments of past tradition in scholarship and the interpretation of Sanskrit culture. It was a metaphoric appropriation that enabled them to posit continuity with the supposed originators of Hindu society, by moving backward through the past and then forward into the present, where to the traditional category of the *paṇḍit* were added the present day degree holders from the English language university.⁷⁴

72 See Ratté, *The Uncolonised Heart*, 233 Ratté quotes Haraprasad Shastri, “A Souvenir from the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad,” “a pamphlet distributed at the Oriental Conference held on the premises of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Jan. 28, 1922.”

73 “Minutes,” *The Bengal Academy of Literature* 1, no. 8 (March 17, 1894): 3.

74 Ratté, *The Uncolonised Heart*, 21.

Here the *paṇḍit* takes on broader connotations, reminiscent of the notion of the *paṇḍit* as “someone who works with Western scholars.”⁷⁵

Kṣetrapāl’s commentary on yoga is far removed from Patañjali’s text, and his references to Sanskrit terminology is rendered according to Bengali phonetics, not the protocols of diacritics found in Mitra’s more formal text. If Mitra represented a cosmopolitan merger of the vernacular traditions of commentary with European historiographic method, then Kṣetrapāl’s commentary was an attempt to connect Sanskrit with yoga practices and yoga “truth.”⁷⁶ While the comparative allusions to European philosophers found in Mitra’s work also abound here, in Kṣetrapāl’s text we find more allusions to supernatural abilities and occult powers. Kṣetrapāl’s audience was the English-educated classes in Calcutta, but also the public hungry for secret knowledge of mystical powers that groups such as the Theosophists were packaging and marketing abroad. He also founded the “Calcutta Psycho-Religious Society,” which was renamed as “Sri Chaitanya Yoga Sadhan Somaj.”⁷⁷

The published works of Kṣetrapāl included three works in English: *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga; Sarala and Hingana: Tales Descriptive of India Life* (Calcutta: Basu, Mitra, 1895); and *The Life of Sri Chaitanya* (Calcutta, 1897). At least four of his works in Bengali were published: *Aśāṅkanī; Candranāth, A Social Tale on the mis-use of Money* (1884); *Madhūyāminī o Kṛṣṇā bā Kalikātā Śatābdi Pūrve* (1885); and *Hīraka Aṅgūrīyaka: A Farce exposing the Vices of Bengali Youths* (1874). An advertisement for Kṣetrapāl’s lectures on yoga and Patañjali appeared in a journal published in Calcutta,

75 Attributed to G.U. Thite by Laurie Patton in a verbal communication, 2008.

76 Cf. Alter, *Yoga in Modern India*, 6.

77 Cakravartī, *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga*, preface.

The Light of the East. The journal started in 1892, calling itself “A Hindu Magazine Devoted to Aryan Philosophy, Religions, and Occultism.” Its editor, S.C.

Mukhopadhyaya, also edited another journal called *New Age*, signaling a rhetorical awareness of the sorts of themes associated with the Theosophical Society’s work.

Indeed, there is evident crossover here between the revivalist tone of Śāśadhar and the Theosophical interest in constructing an essentialist “science” of Hinduism. The nationalist leader Bipincandra Pal (1858–1932), for instance, recounts Śāśadhar’s scientific construction of Hinduism along side that of the Theosophists:

...the new revival movement that openly declared war upon all the fundamental progressive ideals of the Brahmo Samaj, whether consciously or unconsciously, practically took up the cause of modern religious and social reconstruction in Bengal at the point where the Brahmo Samaj had already brought it. Religious ritualism, though sought to be defended by psuedo [sic] science, such as was found in the exegeses and apologetics of Pandit Shashadhar Tarkachudamani and the Theosophists, practically initiated a new movement of inner spiritual and religious culture which was distinct from all outer rituals and formularies.⁷⁸

Mukhopadhyaya also wrote a book entitled *Imitation of Sree Krishna*, apparently a translation of sayings of “Sree Krishna for each day of the year,”⁷⁹ and was the editor of a popular edition of the *Mahābhārata* and the author of an English translation of the *Bhagavad Gita*. *The Light of the East* ran articles on topics ranging from “Psychic Experiments,” “Spiritualism,” and “The Yoga Philosophy.”⁸⁰ The journal also covered the proceedings of the World Parliament of Religions in 1893. A sense of the reception of Kṣetrapāl’s lectures can be gathered from the ad in the 1895 edition of *The Light of the East*: “It is the first thing I have seen which gives me any interest in Hindu

78 Bipin Chandra Pal, *Memories of My Life and Times* (Calcutta: Modern Book Agency, 1932), 428.

79 S.C. Mukhopadhyaya, ed., *The Light of the East: A Hindu Monthly Review*, vol. 2, Unknown vols., 1893, advertisement on an unnumbered page.

80 S.C. Mukhopadhyaya, ed., *The Light of the East: A Hindu Magazine Devoted to Aryan Philosophy, Religions and Occultism*, vol. 1, 1892, 52–60.

literature,” says J.R. Buchanan, M.D., of San Francisco. “I consider it a very important contribution to my oriental library. I hope to review it favorably when the occasion presents itself. I am especially glad to note your defence and exposition of the *Tantras*,” wrote Merwin Maria Snell, “President of Scientific Section of the World’s Parliament of Religions, Chicago.”

Sarala and Hingana (1895), which is described in an 1896 advertisement as a book detailing “Tales descriptive of Indian Life, one of which deals with the higher aspect of the life of a Yogi,”⁸¹ is a book comprised of two novellas that touch on themes of Tantric practices.⁸² It bears passing resemblance to a later work, *The Secrets of the Kaula Circle* by Elizabeth Sharpe, which purports to contain with it a translation of a manuscript on breath control.⁸³ As a literary work, *Sarala* “demonstrate[s] the Indian English novelist’s ability to develop his own idiom”.⁸⁴ The story is the tale of Hem Chandra, a young man whose life aspirations are frustrated by poverty as he works a low-paying job as a “weighing *sircar*,” or steward, and a tutor. Hem Chandra works fruitlessly for a better life for his young wife, Sarala.⁸⁵ The story takes place during the festival of Durgā Pūjā, and hinges on a vision his wife has of a holy man in a cave who will shower Hem Chandra with gold. Hem Chandra leaves his wife in search of the cave, and has an

81 See Figure 1.3.

82 Kṣetrapāl’s promulgation of Chaitanya and his positive portrayal of tantra distinguishes him from the “aversion to Tantra [that] became particularly acute among the educated élites who came under the influence of Victorian values.” See Shamita Basu, *Religious Revivalism as Nationalist Discourse: Swami Vivekananda and New Hinduism in Nineteenth Century Bengal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 139.

83 Elizabeth Sharpe, *The Secrets of the Kaula Circle: A Tale of Fictitious People Faithfully Recounting Strange Rites Still Practised by This Cult Followed by a Transl. of a Very Old Ms on the Science of Breath* (London: Luzac & Co., 1936); For a discussion of Sharpe’s work, see Hugh B. Urban, *Tantra Sex, Secrecy Politics, and Power in the Study of Religions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 111–113; 220.

84 Mund, “Towards the Horizon,” 47.

85 Cakravārtī, *Sarala and Hingana; tales descriptive of Indian life*, 6–9.

encounter with a group of *tantrikas* described as *Kapaliks*⁸⁶ at a place called *Pareshnath Hill*.⁸⁷

The description of the rituals of the *Kapaliks* is significant for its presentation. Hem Chandra, who is described as “perfectly ignorant of any form of *Tantrik* worship,” learns about the ritual offerings of the *Kapaliks*, which are said to have

generally consisted of newly prepared wine, sweet-scented flowers of the hill, water drawn fresh from stream and well-dressed meat, which were given to youth *Bhojrabis* who received them vicariously for the *Devi* worshipped [*sic*] in spirit, and that their ultimate aim was to become *Siddhas*, i.e., successful in attaining supernatural powers.⁸⁸

Following this description, Hem Chandra witnesses the ritual, which involves presentation of the meat and wine to a young woman as a form of *Devi*, ending in song and meditation.⁸⁹ The story ends with Hem Chandra receiving a large amount of gold and precious stones from the “*Siddhapurusha*” who heads the order of *Kapaliks*, which Hem Chandra uses to establish his wife and mother with him in Calcutta. He builds a temple and propagates “*Chaitanya dharma*,” the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇāva *bhakti* movement associated with Bengal. After some time Indumati, the young woman who had served as *Devi* appears at his temple, wearing “an orange-color *Sari*” and holding a trident. She asks to spend her life in the temple, and Hem Chandra assents, saying, “*Indumati*, I know not how related we were in our previous life—the *Siddhapurusha* did not tell me all; there seems to have existed some bond of affinity between us, and that bond let us

86 See David N. Lorenzen, *The Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas: Two Lost Śaivite Sects* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972).

87 Cakravārtī, *Sarala and Hingana; tales descriptive of Indian life*, 37–38.

88 *Ibid.*, 38.

89 For a consideration of less bowdlerized version of the *pañcamakāra*, see David Gordon White, *Kiss of the Yogini: “Tantric Sex” in Its South Asian Contexts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 83, and *passim*.

develop spiritually here.”⁹⁰

In a conversation between Hem Chandra and his friends, the topic of the presentation of Hinduism by Christian missionaries arises in a debate over the nature of superstition. The conversation occurs before the annual *Puja* season begins, and one of the friends asks, “How does the *Devi* (Goddess) come this year?” Learning from an almanac that she will ride an elephant, someone responds, “O, that is good! Had she come on a mare we would have less crops and more taxes to pay.”⁹¹ After a discussion of whether or not one should place faith in such beliefs, Hem Chandra counsels against going to a missionary to resolve the debate, stating:

certainly we should not go to a Christian Missionary to settle our doubts on any question connected with our own religion, any more than they should come to us for explanations touching their own faith. The Hindu religion is now little understood by the Hindus themselves; how can, therefore, a foreigner, who is dependent on the Hindus for information and explanation, be expected to understand it?... A foreign Missionary understands little or nothing of it, and sees the religion as a homogeneous whole from its lowest side.⁹²

The notion that the sources of Hinduism have been lost to “Hindus themselves,” a claim that supported the Orientalist reconstruction of textual history, is now claimed by a Hindu writer who seeks to revive Hinduism on its own terms, presumably with more diversity than the homogeneity found in the “system” promulgated in missionary works such as that of Ward.

In addition to the *Baṅgabāṣī*, the British Indian Association provides a link between the vernacular translator Pāl and Kṣetrapāl. Both of these yoga translators in colonial Calcutta as both were associated with Jyotīndramohan Ṭhākur through this

90 Cakravārtī, *Sarala and Hingana; tales descriptive of Indian life*, 49–50.

91 *Ibid.*, 11–12.

92 *Ibid.*, 12–14.

association. Maheścandra Pāl, as has already been noted, dedicated his 1886 edition of his Bengali translation of the *YS* to Jyotīndramohan Ṭhākur. Kṣetrapāl Cakravārtī dedicated his 1893⁹³ edition of lectures on Patañjali, yoga, and Hindu philosophy to “Maharaj Kumar Benoy Krishna Dev Bahadur, Patron of Yoga Somaj,” the yoga society founded by Kṣetrapāl described above. From the *Memoirs of Moti Lal Ghose* it is noted that both “Maharaja Jatrindra Mohan Tagore of Pathuriaghata” and the secretary of the “British Indian Association under the Presidentship of Raja Rajendra Narayan Deb Bahadur,” namely, “Maharaj-Kumar Benoy Krishna Dev of Shovabazar,” were both active in the protest against the Age of Consent Bill.⁹⁴ Rājendralāl Mitra has also been shown to be associated with Jatindra Mohan Tagore⁹⁵ as he was also active in the British Indian Association, serving as its president four⁹⁶ times. Moti Lal Ghose’s brother-in-law was Kishori Lal Sarkar,⁹⁷ who wrote a book on yoga that was published in 1902.⁹⁸

Treatment of Patañjali

Kṣetrapāl’s *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy, and Yoga* is divided into seven lectures: “Spirit Worship of Ancient India,” “Patanjal [*sic*] Yoga Philosophy,” “Early Tantras of the Hindus, The Religious Aspects of the Tantras, The Medical Aspects of the Tantras,” “Some Thoughts on the Gita,” “Raj Yoga,” “Chandī,” and “Tatwas: what they may be.” These lectures were originally delivered to the Yoga Somaj, and were later

93 Cakravārtī, *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga*.

94 Paramananda Dutt, *Memoirs of Moti Lal Ghose*, 1935, 74.

95 Warren Martin Gunderson, “The Worlds of the Babu Rajendralal Mitra and Social and Cultural Change in Nineteenth Century Calcutta (unpublished Dissertation)” (The University of Chicago, 1969), 185.

96 *Ibid.*, 188.

97 Dutt, *Memoirs of Moti Lal Ghose*, 10.

98 Kishori Lal Sarkar, *The Hindu System of Self-culture; or, the Patanjala Yoga Shastra* (Calcutta: Sarasi Lal Sarkar, 1902).

printed in journals including *The Statesman*, *The Indian Mirror*, *The Indian Public Opinion*, and *The Theosophist*.⁹⁹

In the first essay, Kṣetrapāl frames a discussion of “spirit-worship” with a presentation of yoga as a stand-in term for Hinduism generally:

The way in which the Hindus of the Vedic times used to invoke God or an inferior spirit, is both unique and admirable, for we see in it distinct traces of profound thought, clear understanding of the subject, wise discovery of means, and systematic arrangement of methods to attain the wished for object. The whole is known by one happy term, called *Yoga*’ or union from the Sanskrit verb *yoja*, to unite.¹⁰⁰

Following this description Kṣetrapāl uses yoga as an umbrella term for a variety of practices that are suited for different disposition.¹⁰¹ He uses the term “Durshana” to describe philosophy, and makes the familiar six-fold distinction between schools.¹⁰² Kṣetrapāl puts special emphasis on Sāṃkhya,¹⁰³ as Kapilā is presented the first to identify a philosophy of nature that posits the notion that without pain, the questions of science would never have been asked.¹⁰⁴ The articles portrays the “Tantras” as a means of making the “customs, laws, and even religious rites of a country” suitable to different times and places.¹⁰⁵

The first lecture is essentially a short discourse on occultism. Kṣetrapāl invokes revivalist portrayals of Hindu beliefs (and to some extent practices) as secret keys that unlock mysterious powers. The notion of a golden age of spiritual perfection that is

99 Cakravārtī, *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga*, preface.

100 *Ibid.*, 5.

101 *Ibid.*

102 *Ibid.*, 7.

103 *Ibid.*, 10.

104 Shamita Basu identifies such a hermeneutics that highlights the metaphorical implications of *śāstric* material in order to demonstrate their purported scientific nature as the root of the organic unity of revivalist discussion in a discussion of Loknath Basu’s 1857 work *Hindudharmamarma*. Basu, *Religious Revivalism as Nationalist Discourse*, 142.

105 Cakravārtī, *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga*, 15.

present now only in a degraded form supports much of the socially normative assumptions sprinkled throughout his text. He appeals in a general way to a common humanity, invoking a notion of “Spiritualism,” which he describes as “a growth of the 19th century,” associated with the Enlightenment and the growth of “civilization,” but a notion that is apparently vilified from all angles. “But amidst public denouncings and private upbraidings, amidst the general contempt of the press and the scientists, the magic car moves on.”¹⁰⁶ Invoking the atmospherics of colonialism in a manner perhaps unintentional, Kṣetrapāl ends his lecture with a dream of a “spiritual Columbus [who] will explore the hitherto unexplored land, and amidst tears and *Tedeums* of joy, land his trusty, weak and weather-beaten comrades to proclaim the glories of the far-off region...”¹⁰⁷ In its vision of a messianic figure dispelling darkness in the new world, the cultural nationalism of Vivekananda’s voyage to America is invoked (the lecture was delivered in 1889, though the printed edition of the book not until 1893).

Kṣetrapāl links Patañjali’s text to a wide set of “treatises on Yoga philosophy in the Sanskrit language, which are more or less alike,” but cites the *YS* as exceptional for its quality. Yoga, in Kṣetrapāl’s telling, is a philosophical system and there are set of more or less identical texts on this topic to be studied, among which Patañjali’s work is paradigmatic of the genre. Patañjali is treated as a discrete historical character, one whose authorship of the *YS* and other texts is not at all at question, and Kṣetrapāl describes the life of the sage in terms of a life familiar to his audience. “Having usefully and successfully spent his youth in the study of grammar, literature and science, as appears from his learned dissertations on *Panini* and *Charaka*, he seemed to

106 Ibid., 22.

107 Ibid., 23.

have commenced at a somewhat mature age, the study of the Yoga philosophy, briefly enunciated by his venerable predecessors, Kapila and others, and of nature directly to complete a self-imposed task for himself and posterity.”¹⁰⁸ The basic tasks that Patañjali sets for himself, in Kṣetrapāl’s reading, are to determine how to prolong life (“for the attainment of higher knowledge and devotion to God”), how “to preserve the body from disease, and how to develop the mind to perform supernatural powers. “It is not my purpose to give a translation of the *sūtras*,” Kṣetrapāl writes, “but to put prominently before you those only which answer my purpose.”¹⁰⁹ From this opening, it appears that Kṣetrapāl is more interested in the *vibhūtipāda*—the section of the *YS* that concerns the acquisition of supernatural powers—than in wondering about possible translations of “*yogaścittavṛttinirodhaḥ*.” It is also clear that a selective reading such as what is being offered is a departure from the roles of traditional commentary. Kṣetrapāl warns that “considering my own incompetency I can only say, that my attempt is to be taken in the light of a venture and not a promise to do that justice which the subject deserves.”¹¹⁰

Kṣetrapāl sought to expand the interest in yoga practice to an English-speaking audience. His approach to yoga material stresses the miraculous powers attained by those who practice, and his audience’s distance from the realm of the *Baṅgabāsi* is evident. Kṣetrapāl portrays the *paṇḍits* as distant and exotic:

There are at present in our society no more miserable intelligent beings than those known by the term—“Brahman Pundits.” These men live in huts that admit sun, rain, fog and cold throughout the year. They live on food which they cannot previously wish for, or anticipate. They have no fixed

108 Ibid., 25.

109 Ibid.

110 Ibid., 26.

income and know not what to-day's sun may bring them; then added to these misfortunes they are continually subject to the buffetings of Mill and Huxley-reading men. Yet these men are, according to the proverb, like crows, never known to die and keep up good health, and why? because they do not in the first place touch unpermitted and undigestible food, such as mutton, beef and whiskey; and, in the second place, they govern their passions and are required to govern their breath at least during the times of their three prayers in the course of a day. The stability of a society depends very much on religion.¹¹¹

Kṣetrapāl here rhetorically distances himself from the *paṇḍits*, even as he leans on the scholarly work of writers like Kālīvar. At another place in his text, for instance, Kṣetrapāl reproduces a chart taken from the introduction to Kālīvar's introduction to his Bengali translation of the *YS*. The origins of the that chart may be traced back to a similar chart from in N.C. Paul's *Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy*.¹¹² The table collates the breathing rates of various animals to their average life span, with the premise being the fewer the "number of respirations per minute," the longer the average life span. The conclusion is that breath control leads to long life. Here the conflation of yoga with notions of scientific observation, as seen also in the work of Śaśadhar, serves to make Patañjali's yoga into a means of extending one's life.¹¹³

In Chapter Two, the tension between *kaivalya* and the promise of the *siddhis* was explored in relation to the work of Sarbacker and Grinshpon to demonstrate some creative tension in the text of the *YS*. As Yohanan Grinshpon observed:

Among the various dimensions of Pātañjala-Yoga, "supranormal attainments" have been consensually denigrated and rejected by the majority of commentators and scholars. Not incidentally, in the context of his presentation of the *siddhis*, M. Müller raises the hypothesis of a second Patañjali, one who inserted the *vibhūti*s into yoga, a Patañjali different from

111 Ibid., 47.

112 N. C. Paul, *A Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy* (Benares: The Recorder Press, 1851).

113 For further analysis of how the connection between scientific discourse and yoga cross-pollinate in the early twentieth century, see Mark Singleton, "Suggestive Therapeutics: New Thought's Relationship to Modern Yoga," *Asian Medicine* 3, no. 1 (January 2007): 64–84.

the sublime philosopher.¹¹⁴

Kṣetrapāl, in keeping with N.C. Paul's early analysis, embraces these "supranormal attainments" and advances the notion that Patañjali's text offers the secret knowledge that enables the reader to attain them, at least in part.

Kṣetrapāl also makes some prescient observations. "All knowledge is power," he observes in a critical passage on colonialism, "and power wealth. If, for instance, we say, the British nation is at present the most wealthy nation, we cannot but simultaneously think, that that it is the most powerful and at the same time most intelligent."¹¹⁵ There is knowledge that exceeds the power and control of the British Empire, he seems to be saying, and this knowledge (such as the knowledge offered in his version of yoga) is a resource beyond wealth. To step back into the broader frame of nineteenth-century debates in colonial India, a closer examination of the translations of the *YS* into English by Mitra and Kṣetrapāl introduces the question of the function of texts in the telling of colonial history. In Chapter Three, in which the production of Orientalist translations of the *YS* were analyzed, a broader theoretical framework for interpretation was proposed to suggest how a theory of translation can support an analysis of the nineteenth-century transformation of yoga as it draws on Sanskrit commentarial practice in the new registers of vernacular language and English. Here it is important to emphasize, as Dorothy Figueira has criticized in overly structural readings of the meaning of texts in the colonial period, that reading the *YS* becomes legible when set in the social history of its interpretation. The deficit of an overly structuralist approach, she argues, is that it "does not necessarily bring us any

114 Grinshpon, *Silence Unheard*, 2002, 10.

115 Cakravārtī, *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga*, 38.

closer to engaging cultural complexities as mediated through language and other cultural translations.”¹¹⁶ A theory of translation as a model for understanding the transformations in interpreting the *YS* in the colonial period, likewise, must move beyond purely epistemic questions to examine how interpreters claimed authority in specific social contexts.

The breadth of interpretive range that a translator of the *YS* could claim is further demonstrated as Kṣetrapāl’s analysis veers into discussions of the normativity of gender. Kṣetrapāl quotes a physician, “William Halcombe,” who drew upon the mythic world to describe human sexuality: “Every human being man or woman, is like the lord Himself, in a certain sense bi-sexual, having both masculine and feminine qualities.”¹¹⁷ The reference is taken from *The Sexes Here and Hereafter*, a work by the Swedenborgian author William Henry Holcombe (1825-1893).¹¹⁸ Kṣetrapāl weaves the late nineteenth-century interest in establishing a transnational spirituality into his interpretation of what is ostensibly Hindu religion.

This transnational interest returns in a later lecture that refers to a religious movement in nineteenth century upstate New York, the “Pauline spiritualists [who] advocated ‘free love’ and ‘seraphic kisses’ among all men and women.”¹¹⁹ This appears to be a reference to the Oneida Community of Oneida, New York, founded by John Humphrey Noyes.¹²⁰ The community, which was founded on a notion of “Bible Communism,” advocated practices including complex marriage arrangements

116 Dorothy Matilda Figueira, *Aryans, Jews, Brahmins : Theorizing Authority Through Myths of Identity*, SUNY Series, the Margins of Literature (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 91.

117 Cakravārtī, *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga*, 59.

118 William H Holcombe, *The sexes here and hereafter* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & co., 1869), 21.

119 Cakravārtī, *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga*, 105.

120 For more on Noyes, cf. e.g., Lawrence Foster, “Free Love and Feminism: John Humphrey Noyes and the Oneida Community,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 1, no. 2 (July 1, 1981): 165–183.

involving multiple partners, sexual continence¹²¹ for men, and a form of eugenics. The term “seraphic kisses” may be a reference taken from *Spiritual Wives*, a journalistic expose of the Oneida Community, the early Mormon church, and other religious movements in nineteenth-century upstate New York by William Hepworth Dixon.¹²² From the standpoint of a writer like Kṣetrapāl in nineteenth-century Calcutta, the resonance between religious practices that criticize normative sexual practices¹²³ in the New World and those closer to home must have been apparent. Mark Singleton has examined the cross-pollination between early twentieth-century appropriations of yoga by American New Thought pioneers¹²⁴ including William Atkinson,¹²⁵ but Kṣetrapāl’s brief mention suggests how such ideas were circulating to transnational sites including nineteenth-century Calcutta.¹²⁶

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- 121 For primary sources that detail the practices of the Oneida Community, cf. William T. La Moy, “Two Documents Detailing the Oneida Community’s Practice of Complex Marriage,” *The New England Quarterly* 85, no. 1 (2012): 119–137; La Moy includes attention to an address by 1915 Dr. George E. Cragin entitled, “Male Continence or Self Control in Sexual Intercourse: Its History and Its Practice.” The author, a lifelong member of the Oneida Community, delivered it as a presentation to a medical club. Joseph Alter has written on the links between tantric ideals of the “immobilization of semen” and the development of medicalized yoga in the twentieth century. See Joseph S. Alter, “Modern Medical Yoga: Struggling with a History of Magic, Alchemy and Sex,” *Asian Medicine* 1, no. 1 (January 2005): 119–146; See also Joseph S. Alter, “Celibacy, Sexuality, and the Transformation of Gender into Nationalism in North India,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 53, no. 1 (February 1994): 45–66; See also Joseph S. Alter, “Indian Clubs and Colonialism: Hindu Masculinity and Muscular Christianity,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 46, no. 3 (July 1, 2004): 497–534.
- 122 William Hepworth Dixon and Ludwig Wilhelm Sachs, *Spiritual Wives* (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1868).
- 123 The question of “dual identity” in the representation of Tantra has been addressed by Hugh Urban in his work on the Kartābhajās, and it may be a useful interpretive lens in accounting for some of the ambiguity in Kṣetrapāl’s discussion of yoga. See, for instance, Urban’s account of Vaiṣṇavacaraṇ, a guru of Rāmakṛṣṇa. Hugh B. Urban, *The Economics of Ecstasy: Tantra, Secrecy, and Power in Colonial Bengal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 76–77.
- 124 Singleton, *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice*, see chapter six.
- 125 Atkinson published a number of texts on yoga, and is discussed in the conclusion. For more on Atkinson, see *Ibid.*, 130. A biographical sketch of Atkinson is included in William Walker Atkinson, *The Kybalion*, ed. Philip Deslippe (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2011).
- 126 Hugh Urban’s discussion of tantra in relation to the work of John Woodroffe and Vivekananda is useful here, and his analysis includes a brief reference to the work of Kṣetrapāl in the context of a quotation (mis-attributed to Kshitish Chandra Chakravarti): “Unfortunately... [the Tantras’] intentions have been so grossly misrepresented in our days that the very name of Tantra shocks our nerves; yet two thirds of our religious rites are Tantrik, and almost half our medicine is Tantrik.” See especially Chapter Four, “Deodorized Tantra Sex, Scandal, Secrecy, and Censorship

Patañjali, Postures, and the Quest for Pure Language

Kṣetrapāl's lectures show some of the historical development of ideas about yoga at the end of the nineteenth century in Calcutta. His first lecture on Patañjali (April 6, 1890)¹²⁷ supplemented by a later speech (March 28, 1892) given at the "Sri Chaitanya Yoga Sadhan Samaj," another title for the yoga society founded by Kṣetrapāl. The later lecture, "The Raj or Spiritual Yoga of the Hindus," makes mention of a leaflet published by Kṣetrapāl on *haṭha yoga*, "showing some of the exercises of body and breath, which a young Yogi has to perform before aspiring to Raj or the highest spiritual *yoga*."¹²⁸ Kṣetrapāl notes that the "the paper was variously commented on by the Press in England under the impression that the *yoga* system of the Hindus consisted principally of certain exercises only."¹²⁹ This confusion about the nature of yoga is linked explicitly to the project of translation. Kṣetrapāl's merging of Patañjali with the traditions of *haṭha yoga* demonstrates a complexity in commentarial activity that cannot adequately be understood as an attempt to "restore"¹³⁰ yoga to a putative philosophical status. Here we find an alternative trajectory to the sort of anti-*haṭha* sentiment Singleton identifies in Vivekananda's construction of *Rāja Yoga*,¹³¹ where the

in the Works of John Woodroffe and Swami Vivekananda," in Urban, *Tantra Sex, Secrecy Politics, and Power in the Study of Religions*. Compare: "Unfortunately, however, their intentions have been so grossly misrepresented in our days that the very name of Tantra sometimes shocks our nerves; yet the two-thirds of our religious rites are Tantrik, and almost one half of our medicines [*sic*] is Tantrik." Cakravartī, *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga*, 65.

127 There is a bit of confusion about the date. The lecture itself is dated as 6 April 1890, but in the second lecture Kṣetrapāl says he delivered the "lecture on 'Patanjal Yoga Philosophy'... at a meaning of the Calcutta Psycho-Religious Society in 1889" Cakravartī, *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga*, 113.

128 *Ibid.*

129 *Ibid.*

130 *Yoga in the Modern World*, 81.

131 Singleton writes, "What is important for our purposes is that in *Rāja Yoga* Vivekananda uncompromisingly rejects the 'entirely' physical practices of *haṭha yoga*: 'we have nothing to do with it here, because its practices are very difficult, and cannot be learned in a day, and, after all, do not lead to much spiritual growth' (1992 [1896]: 20). He concedes that while 'one or two ordinary lessons of the Hatha-Yogis are very useful' (*viz. neti krīya*, or nasal douche, for headaches), the chief aim and result of *haṭha yoga*— 'to make men live long' and endow them with

links between the “physical” and the “spiritual” are said to be dichotomously split.

Indeed, Kṣetrapāl differentiates between textual knowledge and the knowledge of yoga that Kṣetrapāl suggests may elude any linguistic representation:

It is necessary for me to state here, without the risk of either presumption or egotism, that although there had been, previous to the publication of my lecture on “Patanjal Yoga Philosophy,” many excellent translations of the original work, both in Bengali and English, by eminent men, yet neither the text nor its translation could give any clear idea of the subject. The reason was that so practical and scientific a subject as *yoga* could hardly be expected to be made clear by simple explanations of the constructions of sentences of the text, and that the experiences of a Yogi could be conceived and described by an inexperienced translator or annotator, specially at a time as the present, when all vestiges of *yoga* spiritual have almost vanished, even from the land of birth.¹³²

Contained in this brief passage are the recurring themes of contemporary yoga practice, including a rhetorical claim that text and translation cannot offer the insights associated with the experiential domain of yoga, which nonetheless is claimed to have “vanished” from the context of nineteenth-century India. Kṣetrapāl and Mitra, however, both claim the *YS* as a text for making claims and participating in debates specific to their context. Their translations are partly of the world of the Bengali translators examined in the previous chapter, and partly of the Orientalist translations examined in the third chapter. Kṣetrapāl, in his work as a pioneer of the *Baṅgīya Sahitya Pariṣad*, inherited the Orientalist quest to distinguish from a *calita*, or vernacular form of Bengali, from a literary language of refinement, or *sādhubhāṣa*. As Tithi

perfect health—is an inferior goal for the seeker after *spiritual* attainment (20). Vivekananda makes an emphatic distinction between the *merely physical* exercises of *haṭha* yoga, and the *spiritual* ones of ‘*raja yoga*,’ a dichotomy that obtains in modern yoga up to the present day. As we shall see, this is in no way due to a dislike of physical culture per se on his part but to an antipathy toward *haṭha* yogins. Moreover, he declares that these practices, such as ‘placing the body in different postures,’ can be found in ‘Delsarte and other teachers’ (1896: 20) and are thus mere secular exercise.” Singleton, *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice*, 70–71.

132 Cakravartī, *Lectures on Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga*, 114.

Battarcharya has shown, the rhetorical use of Sanskritic sources, to which we can include the translation of the *YS*, itself was tied to an attempt to make the Bengali language a broader part of the nation *imaginaire*, as Bengali scholars claimed Bengali's relevance by asserting its autonomy from Sanskrit:

The status of language as a *social* tool, as opposed to a concern for the grammarian or linguist, was established in his [viz., Rammohan Roy's] translation of the Vedantas, and further developed in his grammar. The socialization of language in general, and Bengali in particular, was not sufficient to make the associative conjunction with either the nation or the idea of the collective. There, in what we have called the second stage, from the 1850s, simplicity of the linguistic medium became one of the important registers of change within the language. ... Simplification as a strategy was organized around the principle of autonomy from Sanskrit. Sanskrit derivations, it was argued, made Bengali unnecessarily dense and difficult to understand. Nayaratna's history anecdotally recounted an incident where one school teacher was asked to translate a Shastric injunction into Bengali. The Sanskrit pundits upon reading the text remarked 'What is this? It seems to be *Vidyasagari* Bengali, one can easily make sense of it'. The *Baṅgabasi*, in 1889, printed a strongly-worded editorial, protesting against the refusal of Calcutta University to include Bengali as a subject in its higher examinations. It said that the University should not 'nurture or cherish the error' that the study of Sanskrit formed 'an indirect encouragement to the cultivation of the Bengali language', but that learning Sanskrit was, in fact, 'a disqualification for good Bengali composition.'¹³³

In Nayaratna's example, a Bengali translation of Sanskrit should demonstrate the difference between the two languages, for if the Sanskritic could too easily be represented in the vernacular, something important was believed to have been lost. The claim, in particular, made by an unattributed author in the *Baṅgabāsī* at nearly the same time that Śaśadhar, Kālīvar, and Maheścandra were translating Sanskritic material into Bengali, but just before the Age of Consent Bill controversy would polarize "reformers" and "revivalists," demonstrates the complex ways Sanskrit and

133 Tithi Bhattacharya, *The Sentinels of Culture: Class, Education, and the Colonial Intellectual in Bengal (1848-85)* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 214.

Bengali writing could provide a basis for authority in the context of colonial translation.

Conclusions

In discussing the how the English language “colonizes its linguistic others,”¹³⁴ Srinivas Aravamudan suggests that “all translational situations—like all transnational situations—simultaneously involve homogeneity and heterogeneity, transidiomaticity and commensurability. The partial nature of context, audience, and subject matter under translation makes for the simultaneous possibilities of communication and its failure.”¹³⁵ The translators in this chapter each demonstrate how writing in English could serve as a mean of resisting a broader type of linguistic colonization, even if at face value it represents an extension of it. Both Mitra and Kṣetrapāl used English as a medium for local concerns: Mitra in drawing attention to the ethnocentric claims of fellow Orientalists like Fergusson, and Kṣetrapāl in linking Patañjali to alternative narratives of Hindu identity.

Both of these writers are engaged in a complex process of decontextualizing and recontextualizing the interpretation of the *YS*. For Mitra, that involved a new approach to the Orientalism concern for chronology: By investigated the implications of the Sanskrit commentarial tradition through Bhoja Deva’s *vṛtti*, Mitra attempted to establish the historicity for Sanskrit sources that were posited as existing outside of the West’s historical narrative. Sanskrit, rather than being opposed to history, could be a source for it. Kṣetrapāl decontextualized the polemical link between yoga and criminality that appeared both in Orientalist depictions and in the anxieties of the

134 Aravamudan, *Guru English*, 2006, 10.

135 Ibid.

emerging *bhadralok* culture. By recontextualizing *haṭha* yogic practices alongside a reading of Patañjali, he brought Kālīvar's engagement with the *vibhūti*s or "powers" of yogic practice into conversation with nineteenth-century transnational discourses on spirituality. Rather than constituting a synthesis of the Orientalist thesis of Patañjali's "scripture" with the antithesis of vernacular resistance, Mitra and Kṣetrapāl are emblematic again of the fluidity between what appear from contemporary perspective to be fixed boundaries.

Chapter 6.

Conclusions: From Ward to Vivekananda, through Serampore and Calcutta

Local contexts influenced the interpretation of the YS in nineteenth-century Calcutta in the period of time leading up to Vivekananda's interpretation of it as a kind of universal scripture. Moreover, the vernacular translators of the YS examined in this study used translation of an increasingly canonical text to negotiate local concerns. In this way, the history of the nineteenth-century translation of the YS is a history of the reception of this text by what could be called a translation community.¹ I have argued that a more three-dimensional account of the reception of the text in the context of the social worlds of this translation community provides a way to move beyond the historiographical binaries that might otherwise split a precolonial tradition of yoga from its more recent postcolonial manifestations. Translation into English and vernacular languages served as a kind of continuation of precolonial practices that localized the Sanskritic in various contexts. Moreover, the process of translation of the YS when viewed in the context of colonial Calcutta represents a diversification of the interpretation of Patañjali, rather than a homogenization of yoga. No particular vernacular translation achieved its own canonical status, but instead the collective work of this community of translators expanded the semantic range for subsequent commentary on yoga.

Colonial Calcutta, as a site of trade and communication between different classes and groups of people, was the context in which this community of translators wrote. Because the process of translating the YS took place alongside a broader set of

1 Thanks to Laurie Patton for suggesting this term.

contemporary debates, Patañjali's text has served as a kind of tracking device for interpreting the social institutions and contexts of the transformation of yoga. In nearby Serampore, as was shown in Chapter Three, the missionary William Ward published the earliest English translation of the YS. At the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, as shown in Chapter Five, Swami Vivekananda drew upon the cultural sources of Calcutta—the translational works of the *paṇḍits* and Orientalists at the heart of this study—to create a vision of yoga that could be newly ecumenical and simultaneously cloaked in tradition.

The story of Calcutta's contribution to the development of modern yoga in the twentieth century continues: in addition to Vivekananda, Swami Yogananda, whose *Autobiography of a Yogi* is a classic narrative of modern yoga, circulated through these same channels in the early decades of the twentieth century. Born Mukunda Lal Ghosh (1893-1952), Yogananda was educated at Calcutta University and took initiation from his guru, Swami Sri Yukteswar (1855-1936) at the guru's yoga ashram in Serampore.² Serampore's proximity to Calcutta meant that Yogananda's interpretation of yoga, like Ward's survey of Hinduism, could find its way to bigger audiences and bigger markets. Aurobindo Ghose (1872-1950), another Bengali exponent of yoga, relocated to the south of India at the beginning of the twentieth century after an arrest and wrote an extended reflection on the meaning of yoga, a tradition whose relation to the translators discussed here warrants further study.

Away from Calcutta, other central figures in the development of yoga were linked through social and intellectual webs to the Calcutta-based translators of

2 See Timothy Miller, *America's Alternative Religions* (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1995), 177-179.

Patañjali. Also in the twentieth century, the writer and practitioner Tirumalai Krishnamacharya created a system of yoga that has had a great influence on the development of “contemporary athletic yoga”³. According to Singleton, Krishnamacharya studied with, and was influenced in his understanding of Patañjali by, the great Allahabad- and Benares-based Sanskritist Gaṅgānātha Jhā.⁴ Jhā’s own translation of Patañjali was not published until 1907, although it existed as a manuscript as early as 1895. As a translator, Jhā included the sort of intratextual and citational practices that characterize the translations initiated in Calcutta. An important Sanskritist whose work remains a valuable resource to scholars today, Jhā prefaced his own translation with humility toward his topic and toward the always open-ended practice of translation. He writes:

[The] chief fault of the present translation lies in the fact that it is not readable by itself. This has been due to the extremely obscure character of the original, a character which is inseparable from all works dealing with subjects, the whole truth with regard to which cannot be given out to the ‘public.’⁵

To attend to that failure, Jhā provides an overview of what he calls “a readable *resume* of the teachings of the Yogasutras.”⁶ Following the excursus, Jhā’s translation continues in the collaborative mode of what has come before: he begins by referring to Rājendralāl Mitra’s translation of YS 1:1, finding a discrepancy between Mitra’s reading of a Sanskrit commentary and his own: “Dr. Rajendra Lal Mitra had been apparently

3 Mark Singleton, *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 177.

4 Singleton writes that Krishnamacharya’s “preceptor in Benares” recommended him to study Patañjali with Rammohan Brahmachari. That preceptor, according to Singleton citing M. Srivatsan’s *Sri Krishnamacharya, the Punarcarya*, was Jhā. Ibid.

5 Gaṅgānātha Jhā, *The Yoga-Darśana: The Sutras of Patañjali with the Bhāṣya of Vyāsa Translated into English, with Note from Vāchaspati Miśrās Tattvavaiśāradī, Vijnāna Bhikṣu’s Yogavārtika and Bhoja’s Rājamārtaṇḍa* (Bombay: The Bombay Theosophical Publication Fund and Rajaram Tukaram Tatya, 1907), i.

6 Ibid.

misled by a wrong reading of the Bhâshya—having apparently read it as ‘yoganus’âsanam nam sâstram,’ he makes the commentator explain the word...as being the specific name of the work.”⁷ Jhâ quotes the commentary of Vâcaspati Miśra to discount Mitra’s reading, noting that it “is remarkable that Dr. Mirta [sic] should have overlooked this fact when quoting from the *Tattwa-vais’âradi*.”⁸ Sanskrit commentary and the ability to rhetorically claim its insights remains a potent force in the construction of translation into the twentieth century.

Together, these later developments in the history of yoga indicate the Calcutta-roots of the ongoing translational work in the expansion of yoga, and the writers analyzed in this study demonstrate how a theory of the translation of the YS is also a theory of religion. This is true in the most obvious sense that a student studying yoga in America encounters Patañjali through translation, and the form of yoga practiced is itself a product of translational encounters between cultures.⁹ Translation brought figures unfamiliar with Patañjali’s *sûtras* into contact with yoga as never before, whether they were Bengali students of yoga such as Swami Abhedânanda or figures like William Atkinson, a Chicago lawyer who published a number of texts on yoga in America shortly after Swami Vivekananda’s visit to the World’s Parliament of Religions. But beyond facilitating contact, beyond making a sacred text available to someone for whom it was not intended, translation brings three particular stances toward sacred texts that can be theorized: First, it is a fundamentally collaborative enterprise; second, it reveals the multivocality of textual origins; and third, in the

7 Ibid., 2.

8 Gaṅgānātha Jhâ and Vijñānabhikṣu, *The Yogasara-sangraha an English Translation with Sanskrit Text* (Bombay: Bombay Theosophical Publication Fund, 1894), 2.

9 Among recent studies of modern yoga’s cross-cultural roots, see Singleton, *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice*.

implicit failure of translation to ever be authentic or complete or mastered, it introduces an ethical consideration of alterity.

To begin with the first point, the translators in this study, when viewed collectively through the social contexts and institutions that allowed for their interaction, demonstrate how translation is reflective of scholarly consensus and debate, rather than the work of an individual mind. Ballantyne's description of his translation as "proof sheets awaiting correction" that "merely *moot* the subject, on which they invite discussion"¹⁰ is an example of translation in its self-consciously collaborative mode. A translation in this light is reflective of a form of social behavior that involves dialogue,¹¹ rather than an attempt to create of a static monument that concretizes cultural content. These textual traces of the collaboration necessary for translation bring to light the social processes by which knowledge is constituted. When a translator like Maheścandra Pāl references philological debates in the introduction to his Bengali translation of the YS, as shown in Chapter Four, or Rājendralāl Mitra discusses previous examples of how the word "yoga" was rendered into English, as shown in Chapter Five, the activity of translation is contextualized as a social process embedded within intellectual history. Recently, theories of religion of have also suggested that religion is embedded in social formations.¹²

The notion that translation is always inadequate, always a failure, creates an

10 J.R. Ballantyne, tran., *Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali with Illustrative Extracts from the Commentary of Bhoja Rājā* (Allahabad: Presbyterian Mission Press, 1852), ii.

11 Cf. Eugene Irschick, *Dialogue and History: Constructing South India, 1795-1895* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

12 For a discussion of some of the tensions between a history of religions approach and sociological theorization of religion in the context of Bengal, see Hugh B. Urban, "Sacred Capital: Pierre Bourdieu and the Study of Religion," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 15, no. 4 (2003): 354–389.

opening for a relationship to narratives of identity that are unitary and cemented.¹³ Translated texts reveal aspects of the original that may have not been visible in previous contexts, and as Benjamin has shown they become originals in their own right. Translation, that is, reveals the heterogeneity of the original, resisting the consolidation of “origins” that is required for hegemony to appear nature. The writers in this study demonstrate that the translation can be understood as critical methodology for relating to a religious text: a translation is never complete, never exhaustive, never disinterested. Rather than demonstrating the impossibility of translation, the supposed failures of translations work against an absolutist notion of the putative purity of cultural origins. The provisional nature of translation is a critical means for undoing the naturalization of historical contingency that is the work of cultural myths, in the sense that Roland Barthes uses in his analysis in “Myth Today.”¹⁴ A completed, perfected translation is itself a myth—it is a narrative to suggest that cultural and linguistic difference can be overcome without residue. Translation as a theory of religion suggests, along the lines that Michael Dodson provocatively argues, that “intellectual histories of imperialism in South Asia might do well to leave behind understandings of knowledge as a ‘noun’, to incorporate analyses of knowledge as an ‘adjective’ and an ‘adverb’ (if you will), in order to write histories of the knowledgeable, and those who act knowingly.”¹⁵ A theory of religious change in the colonial era that is a theory of translation is fundamentally about the means by which knowledge is authorized and constructed in these adjectival and adverbial senses.

13 Vasudha Dalmia, *The Nationalization of Hindu Traditions: Bharatendu Harishchandra and Nineteenth-century Banaras* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), 143.

14 Cf. Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972) and Chapter One.

15 Michael S. Dodson, *Orientalism, Empire, and National Culture: India, 1770-1880* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 14.

The *paṇḍits* who participated in the translation of the *YS* used Sanskrit commentarial tradition as a means of rhetorically claiming their authority as interpreters. Rājendralāl Mitra, for instance, could point to the cultural assumptions that led to inadequacies in previous translations of the *YS* by citing the history of Sanskritic commentarial interpretation. Ward's attempt to define a monolithic essence of Hinduism through direct encounters with an extremely selective quantity of Sanskrit texts was undermined by the texture and argumentation of the commentarial tradition he attempted to sidestep, even as he so obviously relied on it. Śāśadhar's claims of the scientific basis of Patañjali provided a rhetorical ground for contesting the arguments of British cultural superiority, even as they had the effect of defining Hindu revivalism "itself as the realm of unfreedom."¹⁶ Paṇḍit Kālīvar, in adopting a method of textual analysis closer to the methods of Orientalists and Indologists, could distance himself from the overt cultural chauvinism of Śāśadhar while connecting Patañjali to broader nineteenth-century concerns, such as the debates about the status of Bengali as language through his contact, at least textually, with Kṣetrapāl Cakravārtī and the writers at the Baṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣad. The matrix of competing claims about the significance of Patañjali to a diverse set of nineteenth-century concerns created a polysemic field that was extended to transnational contexts in the twentieth century. Translation, and the social context in which it occurred, enabled the cross-pollination between Bengali, Sanskrit, and English linguistic and cultural registers that gave new life to Patañjali's text, despite the often-cited claims of its obscurity at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

16 Tanika Sarkar, *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation, Community, Religion, and Cultural Nationalism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 225.

Second, the changes that accompanied the advent of translation as central means of negotiating religious identity included new textual practices, including a cultural shift to silent reading from oral performances such as chanting and singing,¹⁷ but most importantly through the implementation of new technologies. The advent of the printing press affected the manuscript tradition that resulted, to some extent, in the decoupling of knowledge from traditional channels of dissemination. Jhā's description in his preface of the task of the translator of the *YS* seems to oscillate between two poles: the obscure and the public. The original is obscure: it was meant not for public consumption, but for use by a select group of initiates. Jhā's distinction, in the context of these new technologies of dissemination and new habits of reading, indicates his own awareness as a translator of the costs and benefits of translating a Sanskrit text, as well as what remains fundamentally untranslatable in the text. For Jhā, translating the *YS* involved grappling with a truth whose meaning could not be revealed publicly.

This dissertation has shown that the *YS* begins as a text reflective of a private language—restricted in its transmission, reliant on initiatory traditions for access, explicated through controlled channels of commentary and oral communication. Here, translation may be said to function in different ways in different contexts, and the permeability or solidity of a translation may differ, as Flueckiger has suggested in a different context of religious identities.¹⁸ But at the end of the nineteenth century,

17 Sisir Kumar Das, *A History of Indian Literature* (Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1991).

18 Joyce Flueckiger, *In Amma's Healing Room: Gender and Vernacular Islam in South India* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 171. "I want to make room for the possibility that one basis for shared identity might also be *religious*, at the same time acknowledging the contemporary use and meanings of the terms Hindu and Muslim that mark important distinctions outside the healing room. At the healing table itself, narratives, ritual, and cosmology include what are often identified as Hindu and Muslim traditions and motifs, but Amma emphasizes what is shared across traditions and does not consider particular narratives or rituals that she performs to be

“yoga” was part of a public, international language, a trajectory it continues on with increasing velocity in the twentieth-first century.

This contrast also tells the story of the *YS*. The risk of translation that Jhā alludes to is that the *YS*, in translation, would be evacuated of its untranslatable content and stripped to a bare framework of meaning accessible to all. It is a question, quite simply, of the cheapening of meaning that might come with increased legibility and dissemination. In spite of these risks, Jhā, like the others investigated here, chose to translate. The continuing power of the *YS* to suggest new meanings and ways of negotiating these tensions between the obscure and the public worlds owes much, as I have suggested in Chapter Two, to its ability as a text to anticipate and frame its own critical reception.

Third, the translator, in addressing a particular language-speaking group, is writing not from a standpoint of disinterest, but is instead making explicit the theoretical standpoint from which the translation originates. Translators select from a target language to represent words from a source language, and to do so is to make a decision based on the ever-changing nature of language and its systems of meaning. What is at stake, in this respect, is that the work of translation be understood as fundamentally an attempt at description, rather than a prescription of correlate meanings outside of context. If a translator looks for a one-to-one correlation between words, they continue to think in their own language while adopting the shell of the target language, a phonetic cloak for the untranslated thoughts of the language

either Muslim or Hindu. However, these fluid boundaries of identity are specific to the context of this (and other *caurāstā*) sites; as axes of identity move out from the healing room, identities might solidify.”

of origin.

The early stages of acquiring a new language are filled with humorous mistakes that result from such literalness. A letter to the editor of *The Pandit* magazine in 1871 signed “A. Hindu” takes up this issue in reference to a letter written in Sanskrit apparently by a German soldier. Unhappy with praise for the German’s mastery by another letter writer named Śivaprasāda, “A. Hindu” writes:

if Śivaprasāda thought it worth his while to do so much, he ought as well to have pointed out the glaring marks of the exceedingly insufficient knowledge of Sanskrit evinced by the German in his very small Sanskrit letter. The phrase, *sakuśalo’smi, mahadbhayam, gataḥ, kṣetre, supārvvate*, are but a scanty installment of the inaccuracies to which Europeans when attempting Sanskrit composition are necessarily liable. Though it will not be palatable to the Europeans, it had better be set down as an inevitable fact that, unless a long residence among the Pandits of this country should unwontedly ripen their knowledge of Sanskrit, the Europeans pretty often fall into egregious mistakes that would elicit the smile of a simple-minded indigenous pandit.¹⁹

The observation that “a long residence among the Pandits” should be necessary for an indigenous understanding of Sanskrit underscores the culturally-situated aspect of language: even a language with a classical tenor, and the translators at the heart of this study were engaged with the lived practice of language in a manner at contrast with the Orientalists who studied Sanskrit but never saw it necessary to do so in India.

The translation of Sanskrit into English represents a crossing of considerable cultural distance, and to speak generally of translation is to beg the important question addressed in Chapter Four: is a Bengali translation of a Sanskrit text really a translation? In his analysis of the *Kavirājamārgam*, a Kannada text on vernacular poetics, Sheldon Pollock analyzes how the *Mārgam* adapts verses from Sanskrit

19 Vijaya Miśra, *The Paṇḍit Revisited*, 1st ed. (Varanasi: Sampurnanand Sanskrit University, 1991), 182–3. The Sanskrit terms are in Devanāgarī in the original.

antecedents. He notes that “[t]he work is not a translation of the Sanskrit, however, though it is sometimes erroneously described as such. Translation as we normally conceive of it—rendering a text from a language the unintended reader does not understand into a language he does—makes no cultural sense in this world.”²⁰ Pollock highlights the role of language as a marker of culture and an element of history, but with a difference from European history: “Language was never the ‘indispensable pole of identification’ in South Asia before modernity made it such.”²¹ He continues:

Neither Weber’s “‘ethnic’ connotation... created by the language group,’ nor vernacular attachment and anxiety, nor the fear of language diversity, nor even self-conscious ethnogenesis, along with ethnolinguistic competition, ethnic boundaries, and all the rest, seem to constitute the indispensable, ineluctable features of the human condition they are too often and too facily assumed to be. Vernacularization in South Asia, and its cosmopolitan antecedents, while structurally similar to their European analogues, seem to have followed some entirely different logic of culture-power.”²²

The polyglot nature of the translations examined in this work demonstrates continuity with the precolonial, for in both cases the borders between linguistic groups are more of a spectrum of gradual difference than a stark line that divides region. Kṣetrapāl cites Sanskrit words in English as they would appear phonetically when spoken in Bengali; Kālīvar mixes English words in Roman typeset alongside his Bengali commentary; Śaśadhar ends his life composing Sanskrit prose to explain chemicals like glycogen. Translation neither broke open a semiotic field that had been previously closed, nor should it be discounted through a romanticized vision of the past. That is to say, more explicitly, that the translation of the YS, as a heterogeneous process that

20 Sheldon Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 344–5.

21 *Ibid.*, 511.

22 *Ibid.*

drew upon the linguistic registers and the social contexts of Sanskrit, English, and Bengali, did not institute an epistemic rupture that broke the present from the past, but was part of a longer historical process of dynamic intellectual history. K.M. Banerjea's discourse on "The Transition-State of the Hindu Mind," published in the *Calcutta Review*, is example of the sort of myth-making of "reform" that constructs an imagined past.²³ The overcoming of the "antipathy to foreigners and foreign language,"²⁴ as the teleological frame in which Banerjea sets his account, provides a sense of the rhetorical power that translation held for these writers, but the complexity of that rhetorical power that is leveled by the narrative of "tradition" and "reform" that is invoked.

A number of studies have examined the way that the politics of language in the colonial period led to a new identification between linguistic groups and national identity, fixing a relationship that had been more fluid in pre-modernity,²⁵ and the nationalistic and transnational history of twentieth-century yoga is complicated by its translation history. How, then, do we gauge the effect of colonialism on the politics of language, and what was the role of translation in this process? As these translators have shown, translation also offers a way of rethinking the relationship between hegemony and narrative, and crucially between the dichotomy of "tradition" and "reform." The translations accomplished something: in creating a clearing for collaboration, translation provided a cultural form for bidirectional exchange. Yoga, like "science" as Gyan Prakash has described it, was the result of boundary-crossings

23 Krishna Mohan Banerjea, "The Transition-States of the Hindu Mind," *The Calcutta Review* 3, no. 5 (1845): 131–32.

24 *Ibid.*, 132.

25 Cf. Dalmia, *The Nationalization of Hindu Traditions*.

between discourses,²⁶ and in the context of the translators examined in this study, the historiographical binaries of “reform” and “tradition” obscure how the text of the YS was called upon as a source of authority by these writers.

To speculate about the theoretical implications of translation to a theory of religion is to draw attention to the life of the YS in terms of its social history of interpretation: is it a text that was used “to break its public linguistic mould and become idiolect,” to seek “untranslatability”?²⁷ In going from an “obscure” text, to again use Jhā’s characterization, to become a canonical text for the global practice of yoga, Patañjali’s *sūtras* seem to have been transported from the genre of extreme concision and concealment to that of a publicly shared clarity. The YS became a cultural resource that could negotiate this semiotic antinomy through translation because the collaborative work of translation related the text to a variety of cultural positions, including science, nationalism, and religious ecumenicism. The tension that results from that negotiation is the question of what, then, does the YS mean today to various audiences, after so much expansion and translation. Such anxieties are in part related to the expansion of English as a language in South Asia.

The process of translating the YS, when analyzed in the context of the community of translators in colonial Calcutta, sheds light on how the English term “translation” does not always translate seamlessly into South Asian linguistic contexts, where permeability between linguistic boundaries is evident. Here, however, it is the analysis of the individual interpretive choices of these translators that helps to move

26 See Gyan Prakash, *Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), 82.

27 George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 192.

beyond the mechanistic implications of the term “permeability.”²⁸ In this respect, as Ward’s inclusion of a vernacular gloss in his translation demonstrates, the European conception of translation was challenged and remodeled through contact with South Asian languages.

The translators in this study were writing about a “Hindu” text, although there were indications that the popular practice of yoga, perhaps especially in Bengal, drew upon and integrated Sufi sources as well. The translations—in their citational practices that marked the collaborative necessities of translating—are representative of the sort of linguistic fluidity that Pollock describes in history of Sanskrit and its relationship to vernacularization.²⁹ Translation, in this light, provides a critical way of rethinking the relationship between Orientalism and postcolonialism by reading these texts for their articulation of citational, heteroglossic, dialogic translation. The fluidity that exists between different linguistic registers in these texts represents an indigenous category that is distinct from the European notion that language and national identity are entwined. Translation was unable to succeed as a hegemonic fixing of ethnic, religious, and linguistic identity, even as these texts were themselves embedded in a colonial discourse of power that used, to cite Bernard Cohn, the command of language as a means of the language of command.³⁰

The sources for the translation of Patañjali—Sanskrit, Hindi, Bengali, and English—when examined together as a contextual field—expose a break in the chain of

28 Cf. Finbarr B. Flood, *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval “Hindu/Muslim” Encounter* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2009).

29 Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men*.

30 Bernard S. Cohn, “The Command of Language and the Language of Command,” in *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, Princeton Studies in Culture/power/history (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 16–56.

meaning that would link language to nation in an unproblematic way. A countervailing trend, however, was that the development of an authoritative version of the YS as an edited Sanskrit text dates from the middle of the nineteenth century. As translation can be understood as an argument for the fact that all relations to language are themselves conditional, the search for an authoritative version of the Sanskrit text is itself a counter-argument for the possibility of making textual origins fixed and concrete. The continued growth of published translations of the text, at the same time, indicates both an international interest in yoga, and the multivocality of the Sanskrit original that is revealed in translation.

Translation was a methodological interface between philology and anthropology in the nineteenth century. Where philology sought universal forms that transcended the differences between languages and cultures, anthropology sought to highlight the context-specific articulation of meaning. The translator always worked between these two approaches: in order for a translation to be successful, it had to transport a meaning from one linguistic context to another. The translation of Sanskrit texts also involved risks: translation was the transportation of previously restricted knowledge across new boundaries. George Steiner highlights the transgressive power of translation when he writes that “there is in every act of translation—and specially where it succeeds—a touch of treason. Horded dreams, patents of life are being taken across the frontier.”³¹ Language itself, Steiner argues, is human when it is involved in fabrication, in the creation of fiction and lies, and here translation can productively theorized not as an attempt at fidelity to an original, but as a creative, or transcreative process. If language were capable of describing the

31 Steiner, *After Babel*, 232–3.

material world with complete accuracy and transparency, then it would be nothing but a tautology of the material world. The moment that language offers a dissimulation is the moment that it becomes creative, capable of engendering infinite possible worlds.

The larger story that can be drawn from the individual stories of these translators is this: how did a group of indigenous specialists, the *paṇḍits*, transform their specialized role into something that could survive the societal changes they experienced? While there has increasingly been attention to the role *paṇḍits* played in the construction of colonial knowledge, more work is needed to connect the translation work of these *paṇḍits* to the interpretation of specific texts. The difficulties in accounting for the role of *paṇḍits* such as Śaśadhar, Kālīvar, and Maheścandra Pāl is in part because they represent a mode of intellectual practice that has been at odds with historiographical binaries that pertain to this period. They do not fit so easily into the historical narrative of the Bengali renaissance, nor do they represent the sort of indigenous intellectual that would fit into a model of resistance to colonialism. They do not represent, taken together, a liberalization or modernization of a monolithic “Hinduism” through a synthetic encounter with Europe and Christianity; nor are they representatives of the oppressed whose voices remain unheard. They collaborated, they spoke, and they rallied behind a set of issues that is idiosyncratic from contemporary perspective. Śaśadhar, for instance, rallied against the Age of Consent Bill as a colonialist intrusion against a perceived core of Hinduism, while at the same time attempting to align Patañjali with a conception of modern science. At once revivalist and orthodox, he was criticized by Kālīvar, who used the mode of Sanskrit commentary to make broad analogies between the supernatural powers described by

Patañjali and the practices of *haṭha* yoga, two types of yoga that were largely separated by Vivekananda. Maheścandra Pāl praised the Orientalist Mitra even as he jettisoned Mitra's careful Indology for his own polemical claims about the antiquity of Hindu civilization. In order to see these points of entanglement and fluidity, colonial translation must move past the epistemology of rupture and attend to its social and rhetorical contexts.

The different historiographical stances present a set of orthodoxies, in a sense, about good *paṇḍits* and bad *paṇḍits*: either a Ram Mohan Roy reformer, say, or a representative of a retrograde, elite, brahmanical group that colluded with the colonial enterprise. This is where their translational capacity becomes clear: they worked in the margins, or perhaps in the footnotes, if their contributions were recognized in the archive of colonial sources. But these *paṇḍits* spoke also in public places, published introductions, addressed Orientalists, colonial administrators, and those who sought independence from British rule. They are hard to categorize because they do not fit into any of the convenient categories of mainstream histories of the period. The work to contextualize these particular *paṇḍits* in their dialogic relationship to Orientalism and translations, as endeavored in the work of Hatcher, Rocher, Dodson and others, is to account for the ways these *paṇḍits* challenge the historiographical binaries implicit in these models.

Against the notion of translation as it has often been characterized as “‘central act’ of European imperialism”,³² the traces of collaboration, transliteration, and

32 Dodson, *Orientalism, Empire, and National Culture: India, 1770-1880*, 118; Quoting Eric Cheyfitz, *The Poetics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from the Tempest to Tarzan*, Expanded ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997).

linguistic embedding that are found in the translation of the YS provide a way of seeing how translation reshaped both the object and the subject. By looking at religion through the lens of translation, we see how we constitute relationships to others, and to ourselves, through a reflection of the other that is contained even in the gesture of erasure. That is to say, the process of translation of the YS demonstrates the complexity and ambiguity of religious authority in the colonial period. The layers of meaning expressed in the fragmented nature of these texts, where English words appear in Bengali font or Roman letters capture a Sanskritic sound, suggest something of the fragmentary experience of colonialism; furthermore, the centrality of the YS, itself something of a text-fragment that depends on an interpretive community and commentary for its completeness, found new life in the context of this interpretive community. By looking at religion through the lens of translation, we see how we constitute relationships to others, and to ourselves, and how the traces of cultural interaction that remain in translated texts preserve evidence that otherwise might not be visible.

Translations that attempt to assimilate all difference into a final transparency never succeed in erasing all traces of that difference. As this study has demonstrated, no single translation can completely succeed in its task. By taking at its theme the reality of linguistic and cultural differences, however, a translation can point to the social context in which it is created, and make visible the institutions, individuals, and points of contact and resistance that produce it. In this respect, translation is embedded in networks of intellectual communities, even as it moves from local into broader contexts. The social history of the translation of the YS in colonial Calcutta

makes visible the blurred boundaries between our contemporary categories, disclosing some of fluidity that existed in complex the lives and work of the translators examined. Ultimately, translation can never be isolated from the intellectual communities in which it is produced, and the failure or inability of translation to ever assimilate all difference returns it to its ethical obligation to recognize the other.

Appendix: Chronological List of Selected Translations of the YS

- Ward, William. "Section XXI: The Doctrines of the Patñjñľľ Philosophy; Translated from a Comment on the Original Patñjñľľ, by Bhojñ-dėvñ." *In View of the History, Literature and Mythology of the Hindoos; Including a Minute Description of Their Manners and Customs*, Volume I of II, pp. 377–394. Second edition. Serampore: Serampore Mission Press, 1818.
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