Contextualizing the History of Yoga in Geoffrey Samuel's *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra*: A Review Symposium

Introduction

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Geoffrey Samuel's new book, *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra: Indic Religions to the Thirteenth Century* (2008, Cambridge University Press), aims to bring a richness of contextuality to the scholarly study of the traditions of Yoga and Tantra in South Asian religion. In pursuing this goal, Samuel brings his work on the Indian and Tibetan philosophical, religious and social worlds into conversation with a larger body of scholarship on these issues from recent decades. What emerges is a coherent and lucid narrative of the development of Yoga and Tantra within a richly contextualized social history of Indic religion, especially with respect to the traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism.

As such, Samuel's work might be thought of as a fruitful counterpoint to Mircea Eliade's landmark study, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom* (1958), in which Eliade examines and theorizes about the "inner logic" of Yoga philosophy and praxis, with little attention to social context. Samuel's work is, in contrast, centered upon the ways in which the practices of Yoga and Tantra can be understood as being products of particular historical moments, and that they were at least shaped, if not determined, in important ways by the changing political, economic and other social factors in Indic religious history. Samuel states his purpose quite clearly with respect to presenting a "balanced" account of the history of Yoga and Tantra:

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> The central concern of this book is to sketch the development of the techniques of mental and physical cultivation that came to form a key element of the religious traditions of the Indic world. This is, however, part of the wider story of the growth of Indic civilisation and of societies in South and Southeast Asia, and this story, like that of other civilisations and societies, contains its fair share of warfare, destruction, human exploitation and suffering. The lotus of spiritual enlightenment, as Indian traditions themselves often remind us, grows out of the mud of everyday life. I have tried to include both sides of this picture, the sophisticated spiritual culture and the solid ground of ordinary life out of which it grows (2008: 11).

The ambitious scope of Samuel's project—extending from the Śramaṇa and Brāhmaṇical ascetic traditions to late medieval traditions of Yoga and Tantra—parallels the scope of Eliade's work in important ways as well. The works of Eliade and Samuel might be read as complementary perspectives that emphasize, respectively, the "inner" and "outer" worlds of Yoga and Tantra during their formative periods of development in premodern Indic traditions.

The book is broken down into two parts. The first part is dedicated to the early Indian context, and especially Yoga, and the second is dedicated to the development of Tantric traditions in the "classical" and medieval periods. Samuel's work brings contextuality to the development of the traditions of Yoga and Tantra through the formative eras of the ancient periods (meditation and Yoga, chapters 3–8) and in the classical to medieval periods (Tantra, chapters 9–13), within what he refers to as the "Indic" traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. The first part, "Meditation and Yoga," focuses on the urbanization of South Asia, the origins of the Śramaṇa orders, Brāhmaṇical traditions of asceticism, and the practice of celibacy in Indic religion. The second part, "Tantra," focuses on the consolidation of Yoga and ritual in the "classical" era, the development of *yoginī* traditions in Hinduism and Buddhism, linkages between Tantra and political governance, and medieval traditions of Yoga and Tantra such as *haṭha-yoga*.

The goal of this set of review essays[1] is to provide a discussion of Samuel's work by scholars studying a range of Indic traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism and their different "eras" of develop-

ment, especially the ancient, classical and medieval periods. These perspectives are augmented by further elaboration on the nature of the work and responses to the reviewers by the author. This conversation illustrates the provocative and progressive nature of Samuel's work in inspiring further study across a range of fields and disciplines. It also highlights the manner in which contemporary studies of Yoga and Tantra are contributing to a more coherent contemporary perspective on Indic religious history.

The Writing of *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra*

Geoffrey Samuel

The writing of *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra* was largely driven by my personal curiosity. I did the research, initially in the context of the Wilde Lectures at Oxford in 2002,[2] because I wanted to understand more about how Yoga and particularly Tantra developed. People seemed to enjoy the lectures, so I trusted that there was enough interest in the questions I was asking to make it worthwhile developing the lectures into a book.

Rereading the book some years after the bulk of the writing, it seems to reflect in many ways the alarms and excursions of my own life during that period. I moved from Australia to the United Kingdom in 2004 in the middle of writing the book, I became entangled in a range of administrative positions at Cardiff, rather against my will, and by the end I was becoming engaged in a major new research project on Tibetan longevity practices. The result was that the book took longer to write than I intended, and perhaps could have been sharper in focus and tighter in construction, but also that it was able to include a considerably wider body of material than was covered by the original lectures.

The book retains one important feature of the original lectures. As in the Wilde Lectures, the main focus is on two periods, the early Śramaṇa movements in approximately the fifth to third century BCE and the growth of Tantra in the seventh to twelfth centuries CE. The periods before and in between are treated in considerably less detail. My narrative ends more or less at the end of the twelfth century, though there is a brief

sketch of later developments at the end of chapter 13 (Samuel 2008: 335–38).

I, of course, knew from the beginning that I was taking on a very ambitious project. When I wrote my book on religion in Tibetan societies, *Civilized Shamans* (Samuel 1993), in the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was some hope of providing a relatively comprehensive survey of existing work on the topic. It was clear to me that this was never going to be the case for the new book. There was just too much material over too long a period, and I was not at all surprised when I learned about a number of things at the Montréal session that I could certainly have incorporated more substantially into the book. That was simply the nature of the territory.

In addition, I was aware that I lacked a number of desirable qualifications for the job I had taken on. I am not a Sanskritist, I am not an archaeologist, and I am not really even a historian. To the extent that I have an academic status in relation to this field, it is in social anthropology and in Tibetan Studies. Nevertheless, I felt that it was worth going ahead. This was in part because my scholarly background, such as it was, did seem to me to have some relevance to what I wanted to understand and was at least likely to generate some new insights into the development of Yoga and Tantra. Mainly, though, I went ahead because nobody else had written a book that gave me the answers to the questions I was asking.

When I say that nobody else had written such a book, in fact at least two major works appeared while I was working on *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra* that took on substantial parts of my area. These were Ronald M. Davidson's *Indian Esoteric Buddhism* (2002) and David Gordon White's *Kiss of the Yoginī* (2003). Both of these were of very considerable help to me. In fact, much of White's approach had been presented in a 1998 article in *History of Religions*, so his three-stage model of the evolution of Hindu Tantra was in my frame from fairly early on. Many other valuable new studies dealing with parts of the area covered by the book appeared while I was working on it. One in particular that I might mention was Robert DeCaroli's *Haunting the Buddha* (2004), which helped me considerably in thinking through the relationship between the popular religion of North India and the Śramaṇa traditions. There was also one unpublished work, by Thomas J. Hopkins (1999), which was, as I hope I made clear in my book, a major influence on how I thought

about regional differences in early North India. I deeply appreciate Hopkins' generosity in allowing me to use his work in my book.

Other substantial works appeared somewhat too late for me to take them into account, most notably Johannes Bronkhorst's *Greater Magadha*, which appeared in 2007, while my own book was already in press. Bronkhorst's book also deals with regional differences in early North Indian religion, and in fact he arrives at similar conclusions to Hopkins' and to mine, though working for the most part from quite different material. I had made considerable use of Bronkhorst's earlier material (for example, 1993) in the book, and it was very encouraging to have this kind of convergence.

All this, and indeed much other recent work,[3] has already advanced our understanding quite considerably in comparison with where we were, or at least where I was, in 1999 when I first became seriously involved with this project. At the same time, providing an overall conspectus of this field from a primarily social anthropological point of view seems to be something that nobody but me has been foolhardy enough to attempt.

That said, I might move on to an issue that was raised in various ways by several speakers at the Montréal symposium: What is this book really about? Is it really a book about the history of the growth of Yoga and Tantra?[4] In fact, I considered a number of different titles. As Vesna Wallace suggested at the Montréal meeting, the one that the book finally bore was the publishers' choice as much as mine. But it was also, in the end, one that I felt was appropriate. While many different things went into the book, the development of Yoga and Tantra was the central problematic that I was trying to understand.

The question, "What is this book really about?," is in part stimulated by the relatively unconventional kind of history that it offers. Although the relationship between philosophy, on the one hand, and the theorization and systematization of Yogic and Tantric practice, on the other, means that at least one side of the history of Yoga and Tantra is necessarily closely tied up with the history of Indian philosophy, I clearly did not provide, and did not try to provide, a history of Indian philosophical thought in this book. This was a job that, as I said in the book, had been done elsewhere by people far better qualified than myself, and for the most part I had little to add to what they had written. This did not derive

from a lack of respect for this kind of history, but the areas in which I felt that I could make a useful and original contribution were not of that sort.

I was quite interested, however, in what one could establish about the practice side of Yoga and Tantra, about what people at the time were actually doing as practitioners. This was not least because, like many people in Buddhist and Hindu studies in Western academia, I have had some involvement in contemporary versions of these practices myself, particularly though not only in relation to Tibetan Buddhism. I wanted to know how these complex and fascinating practices had originated and developed.

I was also interested in the practice of Yoga and Tantra because it was this, I felt, that provided the real connection between Indian Tantra and Tibetan Vajrayāna Buddhism. One of the functions of the book is to serve as a kind of "prequel" to *Civilized Shamans*. That book had included three chapters on the Indian background to Tibetan Vajrayāna Buddhism (Samuel 1993: 367–435), but I felt even when writing it that there was much more to say on this topic. One purpose of *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra* was to answer some of the questions about the Indian antecedents of Tibetan religion that were raised in the earlier book, but which I was not then in a position to answer fully.

However, I found that the practice side of Yoga and Tantra was often elusive. This was not because there was a total absence of material, but because the relationship between text and practice in the material is often oblique. I am sure, for example, that much of the writing of the Mahāyāna *sūtra*s reflects visionary and meditative practices. This has become almost a *cliché* in writing about them in recent years. But it is often not easy to work out exactly what these practices might have been.

Consider, for example, the famous description of the *maṇḍala* of the four Buddhas in the *Suvarṇaprabhāsasūtra*, our first more or less datable example of a Buddhist Tantric *maṇḍala* in a textual source (Samuel 2008: 225–26). I am pretty sure myself that this passage reflects some kind of practice in which the four Buddhas were visualized and invoked, but precisely how and in what way remains obscure. Was this purely a visualized procedure? Were there images set up in the four directions? Was there some kind of mediumship involved, in which communication from the Buddhas was invited? What was the role of the meditator at the center? Was he or she taking on the role of the Buddha or of a fifth

Buddha as in later Indian and Tibetan versions of that structure? Was this an elaborately scripted and liturgically defined practice, as it might be with the Tibetans today? Or was it a largely internal process in which the practitioners opened themselves up to a visionary state of some kind without much structure? All of these are open questions, and in fact there might also have been a range of different ways in which these practices were performed—as again is the case with modern Tibetans. There are many further instances of the same kind. So I had this kind of problem with much of what had been written, in that although it hinted and alluded to what I wanted to know, it was rarely explicit enough to provide much certainty.

This is not just a problem for topics like meditation or Yoga. A similar situation arises with, for example, the Indian performing arts. Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*, the classic early Indian text on the performing arts, tells you quite a lot about music and dance, but you would have a hard time learning to dance or to play music on the basis of it and it is unlikely that the idea of anyone doing so would ever have occurred to its author. Teaching you how to perform is the role of the *guru*, or teacher; it is not the role of the text. The text represents a kind of systematic distillation of thought about what is going on in these performative practices. The function of a text such as the *Nāṭyaśāstra* was more to instruct readers on how to relate what they are doing to the wider intellectual framework of Indian thought, than actually to tell them how to do it. The readers would have known that already, or they would not have been reading the text.

Much the same is true in relation to Yoga and Tantra, though there are of course many different ways in which text and practice relate, and I would not want that particular generalization to be taken too far. However, it says something about why it is that it is often difficult to get a real sense of what is going on in many of these contexts. The early Tantras are fascinating texts, but to read something like the *Hevajratantra* in order to find out what people were actually doing in their religious practice is perhaps to misunderstand what such a text was for and how it related to the world of practice.

It is only quite late on in these traditions, most notably perhaps in the very detailed and elaborate material that one finds in modern Tibetan presentations that many things get written down. Even then, there is also much that is not written down or that is written down in ways that cannot

be understood without an explanation by someone knowledgeable in the tradition. In the main research project with which I have been engaged over the last three years, a study with Cathy Cantwell and Rob Mayer of a contemporary Tibetan tradition of Tantric longevity practice, the *'Chi med srog thig*, we have had to confront these issues in considerable detail. The *'Chi med srog thig* is a set of practices that is described in thirty or so texts taking up several hundred pages of the collected works of Dudjom Rinpoche and of the Fifteenth Gyalwa Karmapa, both of whom were involved with this particular tradition (Samuel and Cantwell, forthcoming). A number of these texts include quite detailed practice instructions for a variety of different ways in which the longevity practice could be performed. For all that, a casual reader who was not familiar with the ritual idiom involved would nevertheless often be unable to work out exactly what is intended, and even a skilled *lama* from a related tradition would probably need some guidance. These texts were not meant to be read in isolation from the associated practice lineage.

In the case of the *'Chi med srog thig* we have a very extensive and detailed textual record, much of it consisting of detailed instructions for practice, and a living practice tradition, with a large number of experienced practitioners, with some of whom we have been able to work directly. In the case of the practices I was dealing with in *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra*, the situation is very different. Sometimes, as for example with the major Buddhist Tantric cycles, the practices have been, or at least are claimed to have been, passed down to the present day through an unbroken series of teachers and students. Even in these cases, however, it would be very unwise to assume that Tibetans today are practicing these Tantras in the same way as they were practiced in the eleventh or twelfth centuries. The Tantras do not, on the whole, tell you *how* to practice Tantra, except in a very schematic and minimal way.[5]

It is clear that Indian authors were constantly reworking the writings of previous generations and also that they took material across the supposed boundaries between traditions, as Patañjali perhaps did from Buddhist or Jaina sources and as Buddhist Tantrics later did from Śaiva sources.[6] This too can complicate the interpretation of the material considerably, since the context in which one is reading a particular passage may not be that in which it was originally written.

This question of the relationship between text and practice is a constant

issue in working with Indic textual materials. It is most acute with something like the *Ṛg Veda*, where our knowledge of the original functions of the text is little more than guesswork. By the time that we have any real information about how the texts are being used, we are already probably in a radically different social and performative context to that in which they may have been composed. The situation is not so extreme in relation to early Buddhist or Jaina texts, but even these texts are often of limited usefulness in relation to how Yoga or Tantra was actually performed.

The texts themselves, and other contextual material, do often provide useful information about *why* the practices are being performed. This is one place where one can start to build up some mutually illuminating links between text and context. In doing so, it becomes clear that the contexts of Yogic and Tantric practice vary over time and that they are often quite different from those of the traditions in today's world. One of the things I was trying to do was to move away from stereotypes of solitary *yogin*s engaged in some kind of idealized spiritual endeavor in isolation from the external world. I have great respect for the spiritual traditions of the Indic religions, but I do not believe that this was ever a very meaningful picture or for that matter that it helps contemporary practitioners to see things in that way. These practices were always performed in a context, and somebody, whether a village community, a local ruler or a wealthy businessman, was usually providing economic support and expecting something in return.

If we want to understand what early Śaiva Tantrics were doing, for example, it is surely relevant that they were probably doing it, much of the time, in the context of being employed as official sorcerers, healers and magical practitioners by local rulers and "big men," as far as we can tell, and that they were being employed on a continuing basis for that purpose. It seems to me that a context of that kind—and we have to see similar contexts for much Buddhist and Jaina Tantric practice as well—helps to explain quite a lot about the various issues regarding dissimulation, secrecy, the use of dangerous and polluting substances, and the whole construction of Tantric identity in terms of a reversal of ordinary social life. This rather unsavory side of Tantra was not some kind of unfortunate accident. It was intrinsic to the whole enterprise that Tantrics were involved with politics, sorcery, polluting substances and the rest, and in the book I have tried to suggest why. If the context of Tantric

practice later changed in various ways—as it did in Tibet, in Nepal, in Japan, and in other places where versions of these practices have survived—then that also helps to explain why many of these problematic features became toned down, reworked, or transformed.

Thus, while the history in the book is in large part the history of the social contexts within which Yoga and Tantra were being practiced, as much as of the practices themselves, I would suggest that the two cannot actually be separated that neatly. One could also say that the book offers a kind of sketch of the scaffolding, within which any model of the development of Indic spiritual practices would need to be built.

Inevitably, this approach has meant that the book is often tentative and incomplete. That however seemed to me to be the nature of our knowledge, and I felt that to make this clear was itself a useful contribution. As I point out in various places in the book (for example, in chapter 2), the progress of knowledge often involves discovering that things that we thought we knew are far from certain. I tried in writing *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra* to acknowledge and respect the limits of our current knowledge and to assess what could reasonably be said about the matters with which the book deals. If the book helps to make clear some of the areas in which our knowledge is particularly incomplete and undeveloped, I hope that the effect is to stimulate further research. There is certainly much more to learn and to understand.

Thinking Anthropologically about the History of Indian Religions

Laurie L. Patton

Geoffrey Samuel has given us a way forward to think anthropologically about history, including particularly difficult questions about Yoga, which he defines as "disciplined and systematic techniques for the training and control of the human mind-body complex" (2008: 2). In his current work, which writes a history of that complex from 500 BCE to 1200 CE, he shows a variety of intellectual virtues that make the work eminently worth reading. He aims, as he puts it, at Western scholars,

Asian practitioners, and those Westerners who have become engaged in the practices of Yoga and Tantra about which he is writing (11).

In addition, Samuel wishes to be interpreted not in the narrow anthropological sense, say, of historical ethnography, but rather in the broader sense of concern with everyday life and one's larger relationship to the metaphysics and exigencies of that life. He also adopts an integrative approach where no one methodology can have a singular claim to truth, but rather all can be brought to bear on a particular issue or problem.

Samuel is faithful throughout the book to questions of evidence and the scholarly community's discussion of that evidence; such an approach is hard to achieve in a large book with a big story. For example, he places as an essential problematic the various ways in which the archaeological, numismatic, and iconographic evidence can and cannot be configured in relation to each other. He discusses the problems with dating and locating the Veda in a clear and accessible manner, as well as the challenges of assuming a single Indus Valley religious tradition from the archaeological evidence of the seals alone. Samuel's discussion of the dating of the Buddha's death (2008: 32–34) and his case study of Pāṇini (34–36) are wonderful examples of how to bring to a more general audience the accuracies and inaccuracies of recent thorny debates and of finding a solid chronology in early Indian materials. As he puts it, "I could have chosen any out of quite a long list of the significant dates of South Asian history and gone through a similar exercise" of tracing the ambiguities of dating in early India (36). Samuel's work is readable and accessible even as he wrestles with arcane issues.

Equally helpful are Samuel's overall characterizations of historical periods and trends. We can gain insights even from this larger story that he tells. For example, he places the crucial early history of Yoga in the period of a "second urbanization," a phrase that calls to our historical imaginations to begin to think about everyday life and the Yoga or Śramaṇa practitioner's relationship to that everyday quality. In addition, he persuasively makes a case for the Chandraketugarh terracottas showing a definitive tradition of a goddess, as distinct from the fact that we cannot conclude the same about the Indus Valley evidence, such as the dancing women and other seals. To take another example, in Samuel's integrative approach to the development and transformation of Vedic religion, he weaves many different theories, including that of Jan C. Heesterman,

Michael Witzel and others, to suggest a somewhat coherent whole. Again, his understanding of the relationship between the Śramaṇas and the dead suggests a way in which we can begin to think about the distinctions between the Buddhist and Jaina paths and the Brāhmaṇical one. And finally, Samuel is careful not to claim, as others have, that the Vrātya tradition of early Vedic India is the precursor to the Śramaṇa tradition. But he does still argue for a complex and delicate evaluation that would include the Vrātya tradition.

In each of these cases, Samuel's framing of the larger historical trend gives us some insight into the way we might fit the pieces together. I certainly will use his very cogent explanations of the relationship between early Buddhist teachings and the local spirit cults in my classes, for because of his emphasis on daily life we get a full understanding in chapter 6 of how these local deities were both attractive to and subsumed by early Buddhist practitioners.

For the reasons stated above, I am on the whole sympathetic to the larger story that Samuel attempts to tell in this very engaging work. If I understand it correctly, he wants to argue that techniques of mind-body processes grew from simple to more complex approaches, that pre-Buddhist Śramaṇa traditions relied on simple ascetic practices to achieve liberating insight, but had no essential system behind them, at least in the texts. The Buddha contributed a kind of systematic cultivation to simple mind- and body-stopping processes, particularly in the various stages of *dhyāna*, or meditative states. According to Samuel, the Vedic tradition eventually lost emphasis on induced visionary states in ritual contexts and rather adopted much of the terms of the Buddhist practices, as suggested by the *Yogasūtra*. Yogic traditions grew out of the concept of the "right death," which we see in the Upaniṣads and also perhaps in the body-entering Yogic practices of the *Mahābhārata*.

Samuel also suggests that there is a fundamental tension in the story of Yoga. The pastoral focus on the ideal young warrior found in the Vedic materials is later transformed into the celibate *brahmacārin* who is conducting a kind of inner spiritual war. The contrast to this focus is the agrarian couple that personify in their sexuality prosperity and good fortune. In Samuel's view, the two ideals were resolved initially because the ideal warrior became the basis of Indian renunciate traditions, yet these traditions coexisted with the agrarian world and became a counter-

balance to it. And, according to Samuel, we see a survival of this balancing system in places like Thailand. And yet, Samuel argues, the Brāhmaṇical tradition reasserted itself in royal courts and urban centers, in which decentered priestly ritual technologies (one shows the Brāhmaṇa as a teacher of ritual performance guiding the life of the householder) emerged with new and invigorated energy.

Thus, for Samuel, a tension emerged in the first millennium between the Brāhmaṇical priestly traditions of the householder and the Śramaṇa traditions. These were both in competition and intersection with each other, one decentered and flexible in its embeddedness within village structure, and the other, the Śramaṇic, at times so dependent on state support that it could not thrive in kingdoms where the royal wishes did not favor the tradition. This tension, he also argues, resulted in two technologies of the self. The Vedic had its origins as a hereditary form of understanding vision and wisdom with a stationary structure. The other, the Buddhist initiation, was entirely voluntary, not hereditary, and existed in a kind of interdependent relationship with householder society.

If this account has merit, and I believe that it generally does, there are two factors that might deserve more treatment than Samuel has given them here. The first is the question of the textual mediation of the Brāhmaṇical reassertion in response to the Śramaṇic tradition, and the second is the question of gender and the role of women in ancient India. In both these respects Samuel's argument could be fuller in order to tell his larger story a little bit better.

Let me begin with the Brāhmaṇical reassertion after the emergence of the Śramaṇic traditions. In his chapter discussing this (chapter 7), Samuel relies intriguingly on much anthropological writing and evidence, and he could rely a lot more on textual evidence, of which there is plenty. He (Samuel 2008: 168) uses Veena Das to turn to a discussion of caste in this period and also discusses the larger arguments over Louis Dumont's legacy. But a thorough discussion of the late Vedic texts (like the Vidhāna) and the Āgamic and early Purāṇic texts, both of which have been called early Tantra, might have been very helpful to the reader to get a richer sense of his overall story.

In addition, the domestic tradition of the *Gṛhyasūtra*s and the application of *mantra* in daily life in the Vidhāna texts could have shown a very clear picture of what the technology of self of the household priest actually

was. Intriguingly, the last book I published (Patton 2005), which is a very arcane study of the Vidhāna texts, has been picked up by many people in the contemporary Yoga community. As one psychologist working in India put it to me, the book presents a kind of pragmatic idea about the workings of the mind in mantric recitation and this emphasis would be interesting to Yoga practitioners. So there are some very interesting kinds of connections between the application in daily life of *mantra*s that you see in the late Vedic and early Purāṇic period and questions about everyday practice of Yoga.

So Yogic developments are a little bit more than simply a matter of caste and ritual specialty, as Samuel suggests in chapter 7, but also a matter of applying Vedic work and vision to all situations and thus transforming the world around one in a process of metonymic association based on religious canon. These texts are indeed the most anthropologically rich and would help him make further distinctions, as well as describe the interactions between the two worldviews. Likewise, the Āgamas are also important texts involving ritual imaginations and the beginnings of a Tantric self, and they show the ways in which the theological traditions evolved out of the Vedic tradition through ritual manipulation as well as visionary and theological technique. They are an important combination of priestly, Tantric and Vedic practices. So I would have liked to have read a little more about them.

The other issue I wish to raise is Samuel's representation and characterization of gender in this period. Again, he seems to turn to anthropological evidence to discuss the role of women in this period. He might have used a little bit more of the textual evidence that we have at hand. It is overstating the case to say that women's religious practice only involved as its proper aims the establishment and welfare of the family. Samuel might have beneficially included recent writings on representations of women ascetics in the early period or even the important symbolic role of householders in the Vedic *śākhā*s. While I fundamentally agree with his argument, the research and writing that we have all done in the last ten or fifteen years about the complex role of women in this period suggests that it is important to acknowledge and even meditate upon the ways in which the complexity of female agency might actually change his story a little bit. For example, might women ascetics such as Sulabhā in the *Mahābhārata* (*Śāntiparvan* 308) actually change the male warrior-

ascetic prototype, which is a significant component of Samuel's story about Yoga? Sulabhā's frank discussion of gender, bodily constructions, and transformations with her male ascetic counterpart suggests that there may have been opportunities to think outside the model of male celibacy in the Yogic tradition (*cf.* Vanita 2003; Black 2007; Dhand 2007). And even if this kind of story is the exception that proves the rule, it is an important exception that might be addressed.

So, too, we might think of the Gārgī-Yājñavalkya debate (*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 3.6, 3.8) with the Maitreyī-Kātyāyanī debate (2.4, 4.5) in the context of what male celibacy might mean in the face of female challenge. And relatedly, the role of women's rituals discussed in the *Gṛhyasūtra* texts mentioned above show the possibility of meditative and Yogic authority in certain cases held jointly by men and women in the context of the *mantra*-reciting late Vedic household. For instance, we know from the *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra* that women could go through the *nāmadheya* rituals, the *upanayana* and other ceremonies, even if *mantra*s are not enjoined.

Given that Samuel is so rightly sensitive to questions of where one can posit continuity and where one cannot, and he tells the story so well for both the general reader and the specialist, in the everyday history of early India, he might find more Yogic continuity in the later Brāhmaṇical texts and in an exploration of those texts than he did in chapter seven. So, too, he might have included more data about women in ascetic and ascetic-householder practices than his current account allows for. And I should add here that I am very much aware how hard it is to write a book that tells a big story and how annoying it can be when people want you to have included their little details in your big book. But since gender was so important to his argument, and the questions of the late Vedic period so central to his argument about consolidation, these little facts actually become a little more medium-sized and they should be mentioned. That being said, the book is a lovely and rich account of an extremely slippery set of traditions, and I will be delighted to use the book with all manner of readers in the years to come.

The Brāhmaṇical Contribution to Yoga

Johannes Bronkhorst

Geoffrey Samuel's book *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra* (2008) does not, in spite of its title, concentrate on the origin of practices that were called Yoga. Rather than attempting to define this term, Samuel proposes to "leave the scope and meaning of our investigation to emerge in the course of the book" (2). However, in the *Ṛg Veda* or *Atharva Veda* Samuel finds "nothing…to imply yogic practice, in the sense of a developed set of techniques for operating with the mind-body complex" (8). He concludes: "Our best evidence to date suggests that such practices developed in the same ascetic circles as the early *śramaṇa* movements (Buddhists, Jainas and Ājīvikas), probably in around the sixth and fifth centuries BCE" (8). Translating this in terms of the ideas I have proposed in my book *Greater Magadha* (Bronkhorst 2007), it would follow that practices of the kind that Samuel calls Yoga developed in the religious movements of Greater Magadha, that is, outside the Vedic tradition. Seen this way, the Brāhmaṇical contribution to the origins of Yoga is nil!

In a way, this seems to be Samuel's position. He dedicates chapter 7 to the "Brahmanical Alternative," which suggests by its very title the separate nature of Brāhmaṇical practices. Samuel discusses some Vedic passages that seem to deal with various forms of asceticism, but in the end he still distinguishes between "the two major directions in which the Indic religions were to develop, the Brahmanical and that represented by the *śramaṇa* movements, both Buddhist and Jain" (189). In other words, the Brāhmaṇical direction was not Yogic in its origins and did not become Yogic later on.

And yet, the word *yoga* referring to "a developed set of techniques for operating with the mind-body complex" is not used in the early Buddhist and Jaina sources, but appears presumably for the first time in certain Brāhmaṇical sources. The late—that is, postcanonical—appearance of the term *yoga* (in this sense) in Buddhist literature has been shown, most recently by Jonathan Silk (1997, 2000). The early Jaina sources use Yoga in an altogether different sense (see Williams 1963). But one of the early references to Buddhism in Brāhmaṇical literature (in the *Śāntiparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* 12.188) calls the Buddhist method *dhyāna-yoga*. The

word *dhyāna* is widely used in the early Buddhist texts, but *yoga* is not. It is yet clear from the context that Buddhist practices are referred to. The passage speaks of a fourfold *dhyāna-yoga*, and various features allow us to be sure that the four *dhyāna*s of Buddhism are meant. The goal to be reached by this method is called *nirvāṇa*, a term particularly popular in Buddhism. It appears that the author of this passage of the *Mahābhārata* thought that the practices of the Buddhists were of the kind that he would call Yoga.

The *Mahābhārata* does not only refer to Buddhism when it uses the term *yoga* and its cognates. Far more often the term refers to practices that are closer to those that we know from early Jainism. This is not only true of the *Mahābhārata*, but also of various other Brāhmaṇical texts, including the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* and the *Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad* (see Bronkhorst 1993: Chapter 4). This creates the impression that *yoga* is the term that the Brāhmaṇical tradition attached to physicospiritual practices that were originally not Brāhmaṇical, preferably to physicospiritual practices that had originated in Greater Magadha.

Was the term *yoga* itself borrowed from Greater Magadha? The absence of this term (at least in this sense) in the early texts of Buddhism and Jainism suggests the opposite. And indeed, David Gordon White has argued—most recently in his book *Sinister Yogis* (2009, *cf.* 2004)—that the word *yoga*, still in the *Mahābhārata*, continues a Vedic theme in which dying warriors prepare themselves for the final journey to the world of the gods. As he puts it:

> The image of the dying warrior who is "hitched to his rig" [*yogayukta*], or "ready to hitch up" in order to advance upward to the highest path, formed the basis for the earliest yoga paradigm, which privileged a dynamic of outward movement and conquest. Only later, in the period of the latest strata of the epics and of the "classical" Upaniṣads (i.e., the third to fourth centuries CE) would the goal of yogic practice be transferred to a place hidden within the body's deepest recesses….Yet, even after this inward turn has taken place, the yoga of the chariot warrior persists in the language of later visionary practice (White 2009: 73).

Whether or not we accept White's position as to the original use of the term *yoga*, it is noteworthy that this same term is rarely used in connection

with the most authentic form of Brāhmaṇical asceticism. Let us have a closer look.

A good point of departure is the following observation by Samuel: "If Brahmins responded to the *śramaṇa* challenge by asserting their own purity through a semi-ascetic lifestyle, the necessary corollary was that others must be less pure" (2008: 166). It seems indeed that Brāhmaṇas, especially during and following the political unification of northern India under the Mauryas (who were not interested in Brāhmaṇas), made a concerted effort to distinguish themselves from others, emphasizing their purity. This took rather extreme forms in the Brāhmaṇical depictions of themselves in the literature they created at that time, most notably the Sanskrit epics and texts on *dharma*. These texts are full of Brāhmaṇas who live holy lives, preferably in hermitages (*āśrama*). I have argued elsewhere that these hermitages are the literary counterparts of the gifts of land (including the services of its inhabitants) that were made to Brāhmaṇas from the same time onward and which are known by various names, prominent among these *agrahāra* and *brahmadeya*. These hermitages were also the literary expression of the growing competition with the religious mendicants from Greater Magadha, the Śramaṇas. Buddhists, Jainas, and Ājīvikas received shelters and later monasteries from their sympathizers; the Brāhmaṇas wanted the same, and the idyllic depiction of Brāhmaṇical hermitages was a means to encourage rich and powerful donors to open their purses (Bronkhorst, forthcoming).

However, there was an important difference between Brāhmaṇas and the religious mendicants from Greater Magadha. The latter felt free to beg, the former did not. Brāhmaṇas, unlike their competitors from Greater Magadha, presented themselves as entitled to all the best the earth can offer. Being in the last resort the owners of the earth and its products, begging did not fit them well. Significantly, their hermitages are never presented as resulting from a gift. Brāhmaṇical hermitages are simply there and supposedly owe nothing to anyone else than the pious Brāhmaṇa himself. The ideal Brāhmaṇa depends on no one, certainly not on gifts from his less pure compatriots.

This Brāhmaṇical ideal explains the way Brāhmaṇical hermitages are depicted in literature. It also explains the way of life of the ideal Brāhmaṇa who lives in one. The ideal Brāhmaṇa is completely independent of society at large. He does not beg, nor does he obtain food and other necessities,

whether directly or indirectly, from the village economy. He lives in the forest and manages to survive on what the forest offers, primarily roots and fruits. Besides gathering these foodstuffs, he finds time to maintain his sacred fire, to perform various rites, and even to entertain guests. And, of course, he practices "asceticism" (*tapas*). Historically speaking, I consider it improbable that there ever were many Brāhmaṇical ascetics of this kind (or who, if they tried, survived this lifestyle for long), just as I consider it not very probable that there ever were many Brāhmaṇical hermitages of the kind depicted in Brāhmaṇical literature. But historical probability is not what we are looking for. Or rather, the historical reality of the ideal that found expression in the literary depiction of hermitages and ascetics who survived completely on their own is beyond doubt.

These Brāhmaṇical ascetics, did they practice Yoga? A study of the narrative portions of the *Mahābhārata*, undertaken by Monika Shee (1986: 204), shows that it is often difficult to separate what is meant by *tapas* and by *yoga*, respectively. In spite of this, Shee agrees with earlier authors—she cites Klaus Rüping (1977: 88) and Joachim Friedrich Sprockhoff (1976: 1–2) in particular—that these two terms must be distinguished from each other and that they have different origins. As she puts it in the Summary: "As *tapas* originally lacks any religious aims, it is not primarily connected with ideas of renunciation or salvation—ideas found, for example, in *yoga* or *saṃnyāsa*. Though *tapas* practices may be called *yoga* in the epic and a *tapasvin* is called a *yogin* sometimes, it is the magical, power-desiring concept of *tapas* which matters to the authors of these texts" (Shee 1986: 405; my translation). *Yoga*, then, was not the term primarily used for what Brāhmaṇical ascetics practiced in their hermitages. As pointed out above, *yoga* was the term primarily used for practices that were associated with religious currents of Greater Magadha.

At this point we have to look somewhat more closely into the religious currents of Greater Magadha. As I have pointed out elsewhere (Bronkhorst 2007: 15–34), there were two main currents that were each centrally preoccupied with the question of rebirth and karmic retribution and of ways to put a stop to it. One of these currents started from the assumption that abstaining from all activity could prevent karmic retribution. Jainism belonged to this current, and not surprisingly the emphasis in its early texts is on forms of asceticism in which all forms of bodily and mental activity are suppressed; the accompanying suffering was more-

over believed to destroy the traces of earlier deeds. The second main current emphasized the inactive nature of the self, the core of our being. Knowledge of the true inactive nature of the self is a prerequisite for liberation from rebirth and karmic retribution. Buddhism, it must here be added, did not belong to either of these two currents. It preached a path of its own, different from the first path (immobility asceticism) and from the second one (knowledge of the self).

Brāhmaṇism slowly adopted the notion of rebirth and karmic retribution and felt increasingly attracted to the two main currents just specified; as a matter of fact, more to the second than to the first. Knowledge had been the business of Brāhmaṇas since time immemorial, so the idea that certain forms of knowledge lead to the highest goal seemed obvious. This facilitated the adoption within the Brāhmaṇical tradition of the path of knowledge. It finds expression in the fact that the *Dharmasūtra*s accepted four ways in which a Brāhmaṇa could live his life, the four so-called *āśrama*s, one of them concerned with finding the true nature of the self. The *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra* puts it this way: "Abandoning truth and falsehood, pleasure and pain, the Vedas, this world and the next, *he should seek the Self*" (2.21.13; Olivelle 1999: 65; emphasis added).[7] The *Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra* has: Let him "not keep a fixed residence, staying in the outskirts of a village, in a temple or an abandoned house, or at the foot of a tree. *He should apply his mind to the cultivation of knowledge*" (10.12–14; Olivelle 1999: 273; emphasis added). The *Dharmasūtra*s never use the word *yoga* in connection with this *āśrama*, the *āśrama* of the wanderer (*parivrāja*). It is only in the more recent *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (which distinguishes itself from the *Dharmasūtra*s also in that it puts the four *āśrama*s in a chronological sequence, where the *Dharmasūtra*s had presented them as four alternatives) that Yoga is presented as a method by which to "reflect on the subtle nature of the highest self" (6.65; Olivelle 2005: 151). The current of immobility asceticism did not find a place of its own in the scheme of four *āśrama*s. This no doubt explains why the term *yoga* is hardly ever used in the *Dharmasūtra*s and then typically in the context of expiatory ascetical practices.

It seems, then, that Samuel was right in looking upon the Brāhmaṇical contribution to Yoga as minimal. Indeed, its most important contribution would seem to be the term *yoga* itself, which Brāhmaṇical texts assigned to what were originally non-Brāhmaṇical practices.

Recovering Jainism's Contribution to Yoga Traditions

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When I first heard the title of *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra* I thought it would be laden with textual references across traditions. Rather, this book is an exploration in reconstructive history, taking a significant cue from the research and publications of David Gordon White (for example, 1996, 2003). This approach is admirable and is of course fraught with difficulty, due to the absence of consistent chronicles and histories that paint a complete picture of the subcontinent. I have no argument with the basic contours of the book: the northeast of India brought forth the renouncer faiths of Jainism and Buddhism, which eventually mingled with and influenced the emerging Brāhmaṇical tradition. At a later time Tantra emerged.

As a text-based theologian, I would have hoped to have seen a bit more attention paid to the classical sources for understanding Yoga—the *Bhagavad Gītā*, the *Yogasūtra*, the *Yoga Upaniṣad*s, and the sections from the *Mahābhārata* that discuss Yoga—and later discussions of Yoga in the Purāṇas and the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, as well as the extensive textual references to Yoga in Buddhism and Jainism. However, having accepted the author's methodology, we certainly have much to learn from the vast scope of history and geography that has been so artfully and carefully presented. In this review, I would like to make some suggestions that might deepen the discussion of Jainism's role in the development of Yoga within the timeframe given by Geoffrey Samuel, citing a number of textual resources.

First, I would like to point out the direct linkage between the tradition of classical Yoga and the Jaina faith, on two specific points. The first is the listing of the *yama*s in Patañjali, which are directly taken from the (presumably much) earlier *Ācārāṅgasūtra.* These five vows distinguish these traditions as fundamentally grounded in ethics. This brings us to the second specific point. The Yoga articulation of *karma*, replete with colors and categories of defilement (*kleśa*), again bear marked similarity with the descriptions found in early Jaina literature. Although this falls more on the methodological side of philosophy and theology, in terms of history and historical sociology as we can piece together from the practice

texts so ably summarized by Robert Williams (1965), this would help complete the picture of how Yoga was conceived and practiced in its early days.

Second, I would like to point out a glaring omission of a personage critically important during precisely the time period covered by the book. Haribhadra Sūri, mentioned in Surendranath Dasgupta's *History of Indian Philosophy* (1922–55) and Mircea Eliade's *Yoga: Immortality, and Freedom* (1958), created critically important texts that point to the ongoing relationship between pre-Śaṅkara Vedānta, Buddhism, and Jainism. Works attributed to Haribhadra also articulate the tension between the Kula/Kaula *yogī*s and the Jaina monks as early as the eighth century.

More than one Jaina scholar went by the name Haribhadra.[8] We will devote our remarks to two of them: Virahāṅka Haribhadra (*ca.* 550 CE), author of the *Yogabindu*, and Haribhadra Yākinī-Putra (*ca.* 750 CE), who wrote the *Yogadṛṣṭisamuccaya.* Both texts, as I have explained in *Reconciling Yogas: Haribhadra's Collection of Views on Yoga* (Chapple 2003), attempt to reinterpret the core ideas and purposes of Yoga through the prism of Jaina teachings. Several scholars have probed into the life-stories of Haribhadra, most notably Phyllis Granoff (1989). The biographies, combined with the many texts included in the Haribhadra corpus, paint a fascinating picture of the emergence of Yoga and its struggles with the nomenclatures and practices of Buddhists, Jainas, and Tāntrikas.

Yoga and Jainism are closely linked both in theory and practice. In its most expanded sense, Yoga refers to spiritual practice and has been found in one form or another in virtually all the religious traditions of India. The term *yoga* appears in three different usages within the broad tradition of Jainism. The first, and most general coinage of the term *yoga*, refers generically to the practice of meditation. The second refers to the collection of ascetic disciplines for which the Jaina tradition is famous, including the five great vows beginning with *ahiṃsā*. The third, and perhaps the most technical application of the word *yoga*, refers to the remnants of attachment or yoking that must be abandoned in the highest levels of spiritual ascent. The omniscient being at the thirteenth stage exhibits a connection with *karma* and hence retains a body; at the fourteenth and final spiritual stage (*guṇasthāna*), all *karma* is abandoned, resulting in the state of *ayoga*, which is considered to be the highest state of Yoga in Jainism. Three points of contact and conversation between

these traditions will be examined: the centrality of vows, the articulation of *karma*, and the two texts mentioned above that explicitly deal with the relationship between Jainism and Yoga.

(1) Vows: The earliest full account of the five precepts that govern and define the life of both practitioners of Yoga and of the Jaina faith can be found in the *Ācārāṅgasūtra*, the earliest surviving Jaina text, which was recorded three centuries before the common era. Though the vows are identical to those listed in the *Yogasūtra*, the *Ācārāṅgasūtra* employs fuller descriptions of how and why to practice these vows than does Patañjali. The *Ācārāṅgasūtra* articulates the five great vows as follows:

> I renounce all killing of living beings, whether subtle or gross, whether movable or immovable. Nor shall I myself kill living beings, nor cause others to do it, nor consent to it.
>
> I renounce all vices of lying speech arising from anger or greed or fear or mirth. I shall neither myself speak lies, nor cause others to speak lies, nor consent to the speaking of lies by others.
>
> I renounce all taking of anything not given, either in a village or a town or a wood, either of little or much, of small or great, of living or lifeless things. I shall neither take myself what is not given, nor cause others to take it, nor consent to their taking it.
>
> I renounce all sexual pleasures, either with gods or men or animals. This vow also includes the following: not to "continually discuss topics relating to women," not to "regard and contemplate the lovely forms of women," not to "recall to his mind the pleasures and amusements he formerly had with women." It also states that "a Nirgrantha does not eat and drink too much, or drink liquors or eat highly seasoned dishes" and that a "Nirgrantha does not occupy a bed or couch affected by women, animals, or eunuchs."
>
> I renounce all attachments, whether little or much, small or great, living or lifeless; neither shall I myself form such attachments, nor cause others to do so, nor consent to their doing so (Jacobi 1968: 202–8).

Each of these five vows helps to encourage the monk, nun, or layperson to work diligently for self-perfection.

Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* describes these vows in a series of six aphorisms. He states each of the five required practices and indicates a benefit to each one:

> When in the presence of one established in nonviolence, there is the abandonment of hostility. When established in truthfulness, [there is] correspondence between action and fruit. When established in non-stealing, [whatever is] present is all jewels. When established in sexual restraint, vigor is obtained. When steadfast in nonpossession, there is knowledge of "the how" of existence (2.35–39).

These vows occupy a large number of verses in Patañjali's *Yogasūtra*, indicating the centrality of their practice within Yoga.

(2) *Karma*: According to Patañjali, the author of the *Yogasūtra* (*ca.* 200 CE), *karma*s are suffused with the five afflictions of ignorance, egoism, attraction, repulsion, and clinging to life that taint each individual's perception of the world. However, although one may be caught within the morass of these karmic influences, Patañjali also states that one can master and control the process of worldly engagement, transforming it into creative endeavor through the application of yogic principles and practices. The ethical disciplines and observances (*yama* and *niyama*) hold the key to self-purification, allowing one to countermand the habits generated by the afflictions. The greatest accomplishment of Yoga is to move beyond the fetters of past afflicted *karma* and dwell in a place free of afflicted action: *tataḥ kleśa karma nivṛttiḥ* (*Yogasūtra* 4.30).

For this process of purification to take place, the Yoga aspirant must gain control and exert power over the tendency to slip back into afflicted behaviors. In two sections of the text Patañjali discusses *karma* theory in significant detail, referring to its states of affliction in the *Sādhana Pāda* 2.3–13 and to its colorful and constructive nature in the *Kaivalya Pāda* 4.7–17. Both sections seem to draw from the Jaina theory of *karma*.

A more complete view of *karma* can be found in the *Tattvārthasūtra* of Umāsvāti, a seminal Jaina philosopher who probably lived in the fifth century (Tatia 1994). Umāsvāti drew from canonical sources to describe the process through which activity (*yoga*) draws *karma*s of

various colors to adhere or bind to the soul (*jīva*). *Karma* appears in four harming forms and four nonharming forms. The ten chapters of the *Tattvārthasūtra* describe the structure of the cosmos including the nature and detailed manifestations of *karma* in 148 *prakṛti*s. The text also describes a fourteen-stage process of ascent leading to living liberation (*sayoga kevala*) and ultimately to total freedom (*ayoga kevala*), whereby one's soul separates eternally from all remnants of *karma* (specifically, lifespan, name, feeling, and family: *āyus*, *nāma*, *vedanīya*, and *gotra*). This text provides a greater specificity regarding the nature of *karma* than found in other Yoga texts and serves as an important foundation for understanding the unique Jaina articulation of Yoga by later thinkers.

(3) The Yoga Texts of Virahāṅka Haribhadra and Haribhadra Yākinī-Putra: Virahāṅka Haribhadra and Haribhadra Yākinī-Putra organized the Jaina path along the lines set forth by Umāsvāti but in a more simplified form. The simplification seems to have assumed the supremacy of Umāsvāti's ideas, and the Haribhadra texts acknowledge key terms from the *Tattvārthasūtra* such as *ayoga*. The texts on Yoga attributed to Haribhadra might be seen as didactic strategies designed to announce the universal appeal of Jaina spirituality. Specifically, the *Yogabindu*, which according to Williams (1965) was written in the sixth century by Virahāṅka Haribhadra, clearly outlines a fivefold Yoga path, beginning with introspection and leading to self-cultivation, meditation, equanimity and the elimination of thought (*adhyātma, bhāvanā, dhyāna, samatā,* and *vṛttisaṃkṣaya*). The *Yogadṛṣṭisamuccaya*, which was written in the eighth century by Haribhadra Yākinī-Putra, describes five different types of Yoga, each of which follows an eightfold scheme in the style of Patañjali. Additionally, this text lists four types of Yoga practitioners: family, clan, engaged, and authentic (*kula, gotravanta, pravṛttacakra,* and *avañcaka*). A major concern of this text seems to be competition from Tantra; Haribhadra provides a scathing critique of Tantra's seemingly indulgent philosophy. Hemacandra's *Yogaśāstra* (Quarnstrom 2002), however, as noted by Samuel (2008: 332–33), incorporates such Śaiva and Tantra practices as the recitation of seed *mantra*s into its descriptions of Jaina Yoga.

(*i*) The *Yogabindu:* Virahāṅka Haribhadra describes a fivefold Yoga in the *Yogabindu* (Dixit 1968): self-reflection (*adhyātma*), cultivation

(*bhāvanā*), meditation (*dhyāna*), equanimity (*samatā*), and elimination of thought (*vṛttisaṃkṣaya*). The initial glimpse of freedom is said to occur in a moment referred to as the "untying of the knot of *karma*" (*granthi-bheda*). This insight (*samyagdṛṣṭi*) inspires the individual to move toward the renunciation of all *karma*s. Hence, Virahāṅka Haribhadra describes the entry into the Yoga path as follows:

> 352. The one who relinquishes *karma*s
> one at a time or in bunches
> attains the state of pathgoer (*cāritrin*).

For those who have self-understanding and a willingness to be honest about their situation qualify to enter the first of the five paths, self-reflection:

> 357. The great souls identify these places of weakness
> and understand their various qualities.
> The Yoga referred to in ancient times is thus set in motion,
> beginning with self-reflection (*adhyātma*).

The second stage of Yoga is cultivation. This term, used by the Buddhists to denote meditation, indicates a link between ethical practice and spiritual advancement. Jainism emphasizes the application of the vows as the primary practice. Through this, one cultivates a mindfulness that releases one from the grip of *karma*.

> 360. Through repeated merit, one arrives at cultivation (*bhāvanā*).
> The mind is connected in *samādhi*.
> This connectivity is to be strengthened every day.
> This, indeed, is the practice to be known.

> 361. From this practice, there is a reduction of impurity
> and one is inclined toward the practice of purity.
> Therefore, the good mind increases.
> This is understood to be the benefit of cultivation.

The third stage of Yoga is called meditation:

362. A mind state singularly residing in purity
is called meditation (*dhyāna*) by the sages.
It resembles an unflickering lamp.
It endows a person with enjoyment of the subtle.

It leads to the fourth stage of equanimity:

364. Equanimity (*samatā*) is called equanimity
because it arises when, due to understanding,
one abandons one's likes and dislikes within the realm of things
which are manufactured by ignorance.

365. The fruit of this [equanimity] is declared
when one cuts the thread of expectation.
Thus, one destroys subtle *karma*
and strengthens the process of disengagement.

The meaning of the word equanimity (*samatā*) literally means "seeing things equally."

The fifth and final stage marks the truly Jaina character of Virahāṅkha Haribhadra's Yoga. It entails the quieting or destruction of all the fluctuations that arise due to *karma*.

366. The one who stops the fluctuations (*vṛtti*)
that result from involvement with *karma* (*anya*),
it is believed, destroys (*saṃkṣaya*) those *karma*s
and no longer reenters the form of existence.

367. This indeed is liberative knowledge.
Here one attains total freedom.
One obtains liberation from all obstacles.
One reaches (eternal) existence and bliss.

The accomplishment of this state places one in a state of liberation, free from all obstacles.

Emphasizing the practice aspects of achieving Yoga, Virahāṅka Haribhadra states that prayer or *mantra* recitation (*jāpa*) should be

practiced with *mālā*-beads in front of an image or in a grove of trees (*Yogabindu* 385). One's attention needs to be focused on the meaning of the *mantra* and on aspiring to take on the qualities of the intended object. The practice of *jāpa* is discussed in eight verses, far greater than its one *sūtra* mention in Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* (1.28). Haribhadra also recommends what appears to be taking an internal moral inventory. One takes a clear look (*ālocana*) at one's own thoughts and qualities (*svacitya*) and then takes appropriate remediative action (*Yogabindu* 389–393). If one is not able to discern the proper course of behavior, then one is urged to approach a teacher (*guru*) for advice.

Haribhadra also states that one should engage in the confession of sins (*pratikramaṇa*; *Yogabindu* 397–401) and take up the *brahma-vihāra* to actively develop the feelings of loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity (402–404). He further specifies that one should develop loving kindness (*maitrī*) toward all living beings, sympathetic joy (*pramoda*) for those who are superior to oneself, compassion (*karuṇā*) toward those who suffer, and equanimity or even-mindedness (*mādhyastha*) toward those who are incapable of being taught (*aprajñāpyagocaram*).

In regard to the stilling or elimination of thought, Virahāṅka Haribhadra invokes the image of the cutting of a tree at its roots (*Yogabindu* 408–409) to describe the stoppage of all *karma*. He reiterates the importance of meditation (*dhyāna*) and wisdom (*prajñā*) in this process (412), as well as restating yet again the need for untying the knot of *karma* (*granthibheda*) (416). In verses 421 and 422 he repeats his assertion that Yoga of any path will lead to deliverance, and names various appellations from different traditions for its accomplishment: *asaṃprajñāta samādhi* and *dharma-megha samādhi* from the Yoga system, Eternal Self (*amṛtātman*) of the Vedāntins, the Arising of the State of Strength in Śiva (*bhavasakraśivodaya*), the Purest Bliss (*sattvānanda*), and the Highest (*parā*). Invoking Vyāsa's commentary on the *Yogasūtra*, he proclaims that all seeds of *karma* have been burned (*vṛttibījam dagdhvā*) and that all great souls (*mahātma*) know that cutting off *karma* sets one free.

(*ii*) The *Yogadṛṣṭisamuccaya:* Whereas the *Yogabindu* discusses five successive stages of Yoga practice to be undertaken by practicing Jainas, the *Yogadṛṣṭisamuccaya* of Haribhadra Yākinī-Putra (Dixit 1970; Chapple 2003) sets forth several different eight-limbed styles of Yoga practice

with only passing reference to their correlation to traditional Jainism. In contrast to the *Yogabindu*, so few direct references are given to Jaina philosophy by the author of the *Yogadṛṣṭisamuccaya*, aside from the terms *ayoga*, *granthibheda* and *apūrva*, that the intent of the author seems more involved with non-Jaina traditions than with Jainism itself. In fact, the author states that he has written this text for the benefit of those who practice forms of Yoga other than Jainism, in the hope of creating interest in the Jaina view.

The *Yogadṛṣṭisamuccaya* sets forth and juxtaposes three eightfold paths structurally similar to the eightfold path of Patañjali. Of these, one is clearly Hindu and one clearly Buddhist. The first is attributed by Haribhadra to a Vedāntin thinker, Bandhu Bhagavaddatta. This system uses terms that resonate with key ideas from Śaṅkara and others within the Vedānta school: (*1*) No Aversion (*adveṣa*), (*2*) Desire for Knowledge (*jijñāsā*), (*3*) Desirous to Hear Truth (*śuśrūṣā*), (*4*) Hearing Truth (*śravaṇa*), (*5*) Subtle Awakening (*sūkṣmabodha*), (*6*) Reflection (*mīmāṃsā*), (*7*) Perception of Truth (*prattipatti*), and (*8*) Enactment of Absorption (*sātmī-kṛta-pravṛtti*). Haribhadra Yākinī-Putra also identifies a Buddhist school attributed to Bhādanta Bhāskara, who employs a sequence of negating terms before arriving at the state deemed "free of attachment." His list is as follows: (*1*) No Distress (*akheda*), (*2*) No Anxiety (*anudvega*), (*3*) No Distraction (*akṣepa*), (*4*) No Interruption (*anuttānavatī*), (*5*) Not Muddied (*abhrānti*), (*6*) Not Finding Pleasure in Externals (*ananyamud*), (*7*) No Pain (*arug*), and (*8*) Free from Attachment (*saṅgavivarjitā*).

An additional Yoga invented by Haribhadra himself recasts the tradition in light of eight goddesses: Mitrā, Tārā, Bala, Dīprā, Sthirā, Kāntā, Prabhā, and Parā. He sees the practice of ethics (*yama*/Mitrā) as enabling one to generate friendly behavior, reducing aversion and stress. With observances (*niyama*/Tārā), one becomes protected, sincerely interested in knowledge, and free from anxiety. Through the performance of postures (*āsana*/Bala), one gains power, a desire to hear truth, and becomes focused. Through control of breath (*prāṇāyāma*/Dīprā), one shines and is able to hear truth and to stay the course. Inwardness (*pratyāhāra*/Shtirā) brings firmness, subtle awakening, and purity. Concentration (*dhāraṇā*/Kāntā) makes one pleasant, reflective, and independent. Meditation (*dhyāna*/Prabhā) makes a person radiant, truth-perceiving, and without

pain. Through *samādhi* or Parā, one attains the highest state and becomes absorbed and free from attachment.

Haribhadra offers a scathing critique of Tantric practices in the *Yogadṛṣṭisamuccaya:*

> Stepping into licentiousness (*avedyasaṃvedyapadam*)
> is not stepping toward the highest goal.
> For, indeed, only stepping into sanctioned behavior
> is a step to be taken by the *yogin*s (72).
>
> They always see evil deeds as something to be done,
> and do things that ought not be done.
> They see pleasure in suffering,
> as if drawn to itch a scab (80).
>
> Like baited meat on a fishhook they are addicted
> to vanity, decadent pleasures, and cruel behavior.
> Cruel and lethargic, they renounce the true object of desire.
> What a pity! (84).
>
> Stepping into licentiousness
> is the blindness that makes one fall into unhappiness.
> This is to be overcome by the great souls
> through the Yoga of good company and sacred doctrine (85).

As I have stated elsewhere:

> Rather than emphasizing the particular (and stringent) aspects of Jaina purification practice, Haribhadra cloaks the Jaina *guṇasthāna* system in the combined guise of Patañjali's Aṣṭānga Yoga and a Tantric Aṣṭa Mātṛka system….Through this device…Haribhadra hopes to keep the faithful within the fold by demonstrating that the tantric movements offer nothing other than what already exists in the practice of his form of Jaina Yoga (Chapple 2003: 85).

By examining the categories set forth in the *Yogadṛṣṭisamuccaya* that in some ways hide Jainism more than illumine it, we can readily see a

contrast with the fivefold Yoga in the *Yogabindu* that teaches Jaina doctrine.

An historical analysis of the differences between the *Yogabindu* and the *Yogadṛṣṭisamuccaya* can help to advance the arguments of Samuel's book *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra*, adding to his portrait of a dynamic tradition in the midst of constant change and revision. Presumably, Virahāṅka Haribhadra wrote the *Yogabindu* in the sixth century. This would account for its interest in Buddhism and its neglect of Tantra. Buddhism was still vital in India in the sixth century, and as we know from the legendary biographical accounts, Haribhadra had perhaps been in dispute and even in conflict with Buddhists and would have been well-served by extending an olive branch to this competing tradition. Haribhadra Yākinī-Putra wrote the *Yogadṛṣṭisamuccaya* in the eighth century. This would account for the vituperative protests against the Tantric Kaula *yogī*s and the interest in engaging the Vedāntins in conversation. The author includes but places less emphasis on the Buddhists. Tantra was in its ascendancy and a direct competitor with Jainism in Gujarat, and Vedānta was in the process of revitalization and quickly gaining Buddhist converts.

Conclusion: The trope of Yoga has been invoked through the centuries to paint a picture of panspirituality in India. Themes and texts from Jainism confirm the powerful grip this tradition and its ideals held upon the Indian imagination, a position that Yoga to a degree still maintains. Samuel's admirable project of advancing an "understanding of the historical context within which these practices developed and out of which their imagery and language was born" (2008: 353) can only be enhanced by continued studies of Yoga as found in the Jaina tradition.

Mahāyāna Insights into the Origins of Yoga and Tantra

Vesna Wallace

Once our written word is sent into the world, it takes on multiple meanings, some of which we never intended it to have. Our first impressions and appraisal of any written work in part depend on what we initially

expected to find in it. Therefore, to appreciate Geoffrey Samuel's edifying book, in which he endeavors to elucidate the evolution of South Asian Yogic and Tantric traditions in relation to their social and religious contexts, one must set aside the initial expectation aroused by the title of this volume, that is, *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra.* The reader who expects to find here an exposition of a genesis of the doctrinal and philosophical foundations of Yoga and Tantra or an in-depth analysis of the original literary sources, scrutinizing the precursory ideas and contemplative practices of the Yogic and Tantric traditions, will be disappointed. But, as Samuel explicitly states in his introductory remarks and further demonstrates throughout the volume, this is not what he intended to do. Rather, he sought to shed light on the sociocultural, economical, and political reasons why certain forms of religious practices that were primarily designed for soteriological purposes became involved in the practical matters of mundane life and relevant to the concerns of royal courts. In pursuit of this goal, Samuel provides the reader with a broad overview of the external conditions in which the Yogic and Tantric traditions emerged and developed. He does not concern himself with the internal factors, embedded in the doctrinal and soteriological frameworks of these traditions, which also contributed to the structural proliferation of those practices, as they themselves were modified and reinterpreted through the ongoing process of philosophical inquiries and contemplative experiences. Samuel's interest in the techniques used for achieving what he calls the "liberating insight" is directed chiefly to their social values and not to the analysis of the ways in which they bring about that insight.

In his quest to comprehend the development of the Yogic and Tantric traditions in light of their external, social conditions, Samuel also does not examine the indigenous medical, astronomical or other scientific discoveries, ideas and practices that could have influenced these religious traditions and their modes of practice. Perhaps this would lead him to concentrate more on the development of the Indic theories of *prāṇa*s and their practical applications instead of suggesting the Taoist origins of the later Yogic and Tantric practices.

Samuel's approach to the given material consists of collating and assessing the information about the socioeconomic conditions and historical events, which he gathers primarily from secondary sources in order to structure his two main arguments: one being the fundamental

commonality of the Indic religious background, and the other being the inadequacy of the common portrayal of Indic traditions through reification of their sharp and clear-cut demarcations. Samuel seems to presuppose the existence of the shared conceptual structure between the ancient South Asian practices and those of its neighboring Buddhist cultures of today. Thus, in order to further substantiate his points, Samuel situates his arguments into a narrative furnished with interspersed examples from contemporary practices in Southeast Asia and Tibet. While this makes the reading interesting and engaging, verifying the modes of religious practices in ancient and classical India with current practices in different Buddhist societies is a risky endeavor.

One of the virtues of Samuel's book, which will be particularly useful to students and scholars of South Asia, lies in its synthesis of a considerable amount of recent secondary sources that have not been previously brought together into a single discourse and in his attempt to bridge the Hindu, Buddhist, and Jaina traditions. In most instances, Samuel cautiously utilizes the views presented in the secondary sources to make his point, but in a few instances he fails to problematize some of the assumptions presented in those sources. One of these assumptions is the hypothesis of the origin of Mahāyāna being linked to the forest-life of the earliest Mahāyāna practitioners, which is based on the examination of the very few early Mahāyāna texts—particularly, on two of a larger collection of Mahāyāna texts linked to Lokakṣema, namely, the *Pratyutpanna* and *Kāśyapaparivarta*, which are brought to our attention by Paul Harrison (1993); on a relatively early text, the *Ratnaguṇasaṃcayagāthā* cited by Reginald A. Ray (1999); and on the *Ugraparipṛcchā* studied by Jan Nattier (2005). Although the forest-life hypothesis is a sensible one, it should not be accepted as a straightforward fact. As David Drewes (2010) has already pointed out, the same passage from the *Ratnaguṇasaṃcaya-gāthā* that Ray cites in support of his thesis explicitly discourages the forest-life, and the *Ugraparipṛcchā* itself presents an inconsistent view on this issue. The emphasis on the forest-life, which Samuel seems to support, is only one among the diverse perspectives presented in the early Mahāyāna texts, some of which seem to be in sharp contrast to the propagating of life in wilderness, as they discourage and at times even deprecate the forest-life. The occasional praising and expressions of yearning for the forest-life that we encounter in the early Mahāyāna texts

can also be seen as articulations of the institutionalized, urban, and socially active monks longing for freedom of the life in wilderness that was once long ago enjoyed by their predecessors.

Furthermore, apart from very few instances, Samuel succeeds in avoiding the fault of overgeneralization to which he could have easily succumbed in aiming to demonstrate the commonalities in the development of diverse Indic traditions. Two of the instances in which he seems to make an overgeneralization pertain to the Mahāyāna in India. In the chapter on "The classical synthesis," Samuel (2008: 212) categorically asserts that Mahāyāna was never a distinct organizational entity within Indian Buddhism. Although this could be true of the early Mahāyāna, we do not have grounds to claim the same for the later Mahāyāna institutions, especially for the monastic Mahāyāna universities such as Nālanda and Vikramaśīla, which were internationally renowned for their Mahāyāna affiliation. In the same chapter, Samuel further states that in reality there is not a single clear defining feature that enables us to distinguish Mahāyānists from others. Again, while this could be said of the Nikāya affiliations, external appearances and religious activities of the early monks engaging in the Mahāyāna forms of meditation, the same argument is not applicable to the doctrinal and philosophical tenets that eventually became the distinguishing features of the Mahāyāna.

Similar to Davidson's (2002) social history of the Tantric movement, Samuel's book exhibits the merits of showing the fact that the sociopolitical environments of the Yogic and Tantric practices at some point became replicated in the structures of these practices and determined their social values. It also brings to light the ways in which certain social principles that guide religious practices can become transformed and in some cases even nullified in response to historical and sociopolitical contexts.

But, like every other single approach, this method has its own limitations. Samuel (2008: 342) indirectly points out one of its shortcomings by stating in the postlude that it is difficult to get a clear line on just what Yogic meditation and Tantra are about. In my view, this difficulty arises when an analysis excludes the investigation of the close connections between the forms and structures of the Yogic and Tantric practices and the types and forms of their distinct soteriological aims. In his analysis, Samuel does not take into account those aspects of Yogic and Tantric

practices that are not necessarily linked to any political-economic context and that do not involve visualizations of *maṇḍala*s, worship of fierce deities, recitations of *mantra*s, or consort practices. One of these aspects is a *ṣaḍaṅga-yoga*, which throughout its long history, dating back to the Upaniṣads, has appeared in its many variations corresponding to different soteriological goals set by both Hindu and Buddhist traditions.

Moreover, his analysis of the sociopolitical and economic contexts of Yogic and Tantric practices and their prototypes does not solve the difficulty of a historical reconstruction of the origins of different modes of Yoga and Tantra, which is due to the insufficient epigraphic evidence and the lack of evidence concerning the religious institutional structures in South Asia. Through the aforementioned approach, neither Samuel nor those before him have been able to answer these questions—namely, (*i*) how did these ideas and practices actually arrive from point A to the point B, and (*ii*) what eventually gave them so-called "Tantric" character. Perhaps a hindrance to answering these questions through this type of analysis lies in presupposing the existence of the cohesive, although diverse, systems of Yogic and Tantric traditions in which their antecedents became developed in the ongoing process of elaboration in the uninterrupted line of progress.

By pointing out these limitations, I by no means intend to diminish the useful contribution of Samuel's approach. I am merely emphasizing the need for implementing complementary approaches in our search for understanding the Yogic and Tantric traditions, which would enable us to tackle different sets of closely related issues and gain a more comprehensive understanding of the origins and developments of these traditions. But this is perhaps too much to expect from a single work. As someone once said, there is no such a thing as a completed book, there is only an abandoned book. In lieu of this, I will conclude admitting that it is easier to see omissions in another person's work than to right one's own.

Response

Geoffrey Samuel

It is a great pleasure to have my work discussed seriously, and in large part positively, by such a panel of senior scholars, and I would like both to thank the participants for their contributions and especially Stuart Ray Sarbacker for organizing the initial panel and coediting the present publication with me. Given that there seems general acceptance here of the usefulness of the project, I shall begin by commenting on the areas where Laurie L. Patton, Johannes Bronkhorst, Christopher Key Chapple, and Vesna Wallace have suggested that the account in my book might be extended or amended, before moving to a couple of more general issues.

Patton's suggestion that sources such as the *Gṛhyasūtra*s and the Vidhāna texts might provide useful material on early Brāhmaṇical technologies of the self is a very interesting one. Her book (Patton 2005) gives much more material to substantiate her point. At the same time, while I would accept that one can see elements of a "technology of the self" in late Vedic texts relating to matters such as the use of Vedic *mantra*s relating to journeys and to the attainment of heaven (Patton 2005: 152–81), I am also struck by the distance between this material and the early Śramaṇic discussion of such themes. (The Upaniṣads understandably have more connection, as does the later Tantric material.) In fact, while I was somewhat concerned in my own book not to construct too extreme an opposition between the Brāhmaṇical and the Northeast Indian Śramaṇa contexts, I am increasingly inclined to agree with Thomas J. Hopkins and Bronkhorst that we are dealing here with two very different worlds and traditions of spiritual practice, that were only gradually brought into effective relationship with each other. Work such as Patton's is important precisely because it helps in delineating the distinctive features of evolving Brāhmaṇical practice. I am sure that she is correct that a thorough study of Āgamic and early Purāṇic material would help provide a more detailed picture both of developing Brāhmaṇical culture and of the wider picture of which it is part.

Patton's comments about female figures in the Upaniṣads and the *Mahābhārata* are intriguing. The narratives of Gārgī and Maitreyī in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* and more recently that of Sulabhā in the *Śānti-*

parvan have provoked considerable scholarly comment (see Findly 1985 and Lindquist 2008 for Gārgī and Maitreyī; Vanita 2003, Black 2007, and Dhand 2007 for Sulabhā), but it is far from clear what conclusions may be drawn from them about real-life women or about gender relations at the time of their composition. Thus Steven E. Lindquist (2008) suggests that the inclusion of such "anomalous" characters as women is part of an internal critique within the Brāhmaṇical tradition rather than any indication of historical reality (417) and points to the ways in which both Gārgī and Maitreyī are constructed in the narrative as exceptional, "masculinised" women (419, 421–22). Yet the narrative provides both Gārgī and Maitreyī with plausible back-stories to explain their access to Vedic knowledge (410, 421), suggesting that their literary personae may not be totally divorced from social reality. It seems clear enough that, as Patton notes, women had a significant ritual role in the "context of the *mantra*-reciting late Vedic household," as indeed they continued to do in some contexts into modern times, but it is perhaps less clear what this meant in terms of their authority within the family.

Sulabhā too has a back-story to explain her access to knowledge and her lack of a husband (Black 2007: 72), as well as fitting into a female ascetic role in the Jaina and Buddhist context which would surely have been familiar to early audiences of the *Mahābhārata*. I find this narrative, like those in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka,* tantalizing, but I am uncertain what conclusions we can draw from it. For example, if Janaka represents a model of renunciate-king which the *Mahābhārata* is ultimately concerned to reject (Samuel 2008: 72), then his humiliation by this female ascetic, who successfully invades his mind and body and then demonstrates philosophically that he has no right to complain at her treatment of him, may be primarily intended to underline his complete failure as a Vedic warrior-king. In this case, the story may not have much to tell us about how its author viewed the validity of alternative gender models.

It is particularly good to have Bronkhorst's comment in the published version of this symposium, since his earlier work was of great assistance to me in formulating the argument of *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra*, while his *Greater Magadha* (Bronkhorst 2007) provided very welcome support for the general picture I presented in my opening chapters. Bronkhorst gives a virtuosic display of textual evidence in his comment, in order to demonstrate that the Brāhmaṇical sages called their own

technique of spiritual cultivation *tapas* and reserved the term *yoga* for the Śramaṇa tradition of Greater Magadha (which corresponds to the "Central Gangetic region" of my book). His position here fits well into the general argument of my own book.

Bronkhorst's suggestion of the idealized and largely fictional nature of the Brāhmaṇical hermitages is tempting, though it raises the question of why the Buddhist texts recognize a class of *jaṭila*, or matted-hair, Brāhmaṇa ascetics, distinguish them from the village-living Brāhmaṇas and imply that they are worthy of at least some degree of respect (Samuel 2008: 122, referring to Tsuchida 1991: 54–57). This may in part be a question of when the various texts we are dealing with were written. The Buddhist texts seem more up front about ascetic dependence on society, both in their own case and that of the Brāhmaṇical ascetics, but then, as Bronkhorst says, they have no ideological problems about accepting the relationship with their lay donors.

Chapple asks why I did not make more use of "classical sources" for understanding Yoga. There are several references in my book to the *Yogasūtra*s and to the passages on Yoga in the *Mahābhārata*, but undoubtedly I could have done more along these lines. I will make two points in my defense. One is that my main focus, both chronologically and in terms of subject matter, on the growth of the early ascetic movements (Part 1) and the creation of the Tantric synthesis (Part 2) meant that the period in between received somewhat summary treatment. What I call the "classical synthesis" in the book falls in between these two major topics and is dealt with relatively briefly in a single chapter (chapter 9). The subsequent four chapters are much more concerned with the development of Tantra than with the later growth of pre-Tantric forms of Yoga. That is an omission, and a significant one, but it was in part dictated by the nature of my project and the need to keep the book within reasonable dimensions.

The second point derives from problems I have already mentioned in other contexts: I often had trouble working out how much could really be deduced from the texts. Perhaps this is an anthropologist's hang-up, but I always wanted to get beyond the text and to know what was really going on among the people who wrote it, while a philologist might be more content to construct an argument on the basis of what the text contains. Put otherwise, is Yoga what the books say or is it what people did? Since

our access is mainly to the former for premodern times, the choice is not a straightforward one. This is an explicit point in the book, in relation to orthogenetic modes of explanation (Samuel 2008: 18–22). This difficulty came up again with the references to Yogic practices in the *Mahābhārata* and in Patañjali's *Yogasūtra*. Looking at this material, one certainly gets a sense of different kinds of practice, but even with texts as systematic as the *Yogasūtra,* or at a later period Hemacandra's *Yogaśāstra*, one would have trouble fully making sense of the practices without a *guru* or commentary to explain what the often relatively cryptic statements refer to.

One might consider, for example, Gerald J. Larson's (2009) references to elements in the *Yogasūtra* and its *bhāṣya* that might prefigure *haṭha-yoga* and even provide a basis for elements of the *cakra* theory (see also Lorenzen 2002: 27–28).[9] The references are fascinating, but they might mean any of a variety of things, and that is a problem with a lot of this textual material. At one extreme, they might mean that Patañjali had a set of *cakra*-type practices, but, for whatever reason, did not feel it appropriate to go into details about it in a condensed and aphoristic text probably intended for wide circulation. At the other, they might mean that a group of *siddha*-type practitioners in the seventh or eighth century who had learned about Chinese "internal alchemy" practices used hints from Patañjali to construct an Indianized version of their own practices. The fact that you can now go and find fifty or a hundred commentaries on the *Yogasūtra*, all of which interpret it in slightly different sense, and in fact make it talk about significantly different kinds of practices, makes the point at issue. We cannot simply read the present into the past, particularly with something as subtle as internal Yogic processes.

In relation to Chapple's detailed comments, I have no problems with the linkage he constructs between classical Yoga and the Jaina material, and in fact I commented on the occurrence of the five Jaina vows in the *Yogasūtra* in my book (Samuel 2008: 132n21). Chapple's discussion of the similarities of the associated *karma* theory is interesting and reinforces the picture that I tried to convey in the book of a common ascetic milieu in which people were working with closely related philosophical concepts (216). I might add that, while I still do not know the Jaina material at all well, I have repeatedly found what I have read of it extremely illuminating for the history of Indian religion. This is something I did not appreciate until I got fairly seriously engaged with this literature. It is true in relation

to the early period, where the Jaina texts provide a vital alternative perspective to the Buddhist accounts, opening up different and revealing perspectives on a history of the Śramaṇa tradition that too often overemphasizes the better-known Buddhist texts. It is also true for later periods, where Jaina scholars, perhaps because of their relatively marginal position, often seem more willing to think and reflect across traditions than their Brāhmaṇical or Buddhist contemporaries. From what Chapple says, the two Haribhadras, particularly the author of the *Yogadṛṣṭisamuccaya*, are cases in point. While the material from the *Yogabindu* provides a valuable picture of a mature version of the Jaina Yoga system, the *Yogadṛṣṭisamuccaya* seems rather to parallel the developing Vedāntic critiques of Tantric practice as licentious, immoral and impure (*cf.* 322). This whole area receives little discussion in my book, since I was primarily concerned with the origins and growth of Tantra, not with its critics, but it is undoubtedly true that a fuller picture would include both the Jaina and Vedāntic critiques, and practices such as *haṭha-yoga* that share some features with Tantra but appeared to have maintained a distance from the full-blown Tantric movements.

Vesna Wallace makes a number of significant and useful points in her account. In relation to her point about my failure to use "the indigenous medical, astronomical or other scientific discoveries, ideas and practices that could have influenced these religious traditions and their modes of practice," this is a fascinating suggestion, though I am not sure precisely what she is getting at beyond the issue of whether the *prāṇa* theory in Tantric material can be explained in orthogenetic terms or whether it is appropriate to look at connections elsewhere (for example, China). I will say a little about this below. Beyond that, though, the connection between ascetics and medicine clearly goes back a long way in South Asia, and there is real potential for mutual illumination (*cf.* Smith 2007; Wallace 2001, 2009).

Wallace disagrees with my comment that the Mahāyāna "was never a distinct organisational entity within Indian Buddhism" (Samuel 2008: 212). Perhaps this is in part a question of interpretation; much depends on what is meant by institutional distinctiveness. It is clear that there was an increasingly explicit discursive construction of the Mahāyāna in the later Indian textual tradition and doubtless a degree of specialization by particular monastic centers in the new trends, but does this imply the

Mahāyāna as a distinct organizational entity? It may well be true that monastic universities such as Nālanda and Vikramaśīla were known as places that specialized in Mahāyāna traditions, but I am not certain that if you had gone up to the gates of either institution in the tenth century and asked, "Is this a Mahāyāna monastery?," this would have been a meaningful question.[10] Even Tibetan Buddhism, which is traditionally described by Western scholars as Mahāyāna, very explicitly keeps all three levels (Hinayāna, Mahāyāna, and Vajrayāna) and treats them as valid components of the Buddhist path. It may not have been much different in the late Indian context. As with the Tibetans, these people were not engaged in defining themselves against Theravāda Buddhism.

On another of Wallace's points, the question of the forest origins of the Mahāyāna, I am probably guilty, as she suggests, of accepting this argument too uncritically. By now I would agree with her that the situation is more complex than provided for in Reginald A. Ray's model, although his general point that one needs to look at a variety of different contexts of monastic life remains important. Wallace's suggestion that some of the material in praise of the forest-life may have been a nostalgic expression of longing by urban monastics in the city "for freedom of the life in wilderness that was once long ago enjoyed by their predecessors" is an attractive one.

On the general question of how far we can assume that a continuity of terminology implies an identity or close similarity of practice, Wallace and I clearly differ. Indian traditions have a strong tendency, in my view, to keep on using the same categories even though they may not be talking about the same things. I would see the *ṣaḍaṅga-yoga* scheme, to which she refers, as an example. This is a scheme of six stages (for example, *pratyāhāra*, *dhyāna*, *prāṇāyāma*, *dhāraṇā*, *anusmṛti*, *samādhi*) that occurs, as Wallace notes, in many different contexts over many hundreds of years with only minor variations. These contexts include early Brāhmaṇical material, Jaina and Buddhist contexts, and even quite late Tantric material (Zigmund-Cerbu 1963). As I suggested in the book, where I refer to the *ṣaḍaṅga-yoga* scheme briefly (Samuel 2008: 222, 222n28), the recurrence of this scheme probably points to some of the shared body of ascetic knowledge held in common between these supposedly distinct traditions. However, it also suggests the constant reworking of the same categories within Indian tradition.

These and similar schemes (one might also think of the four-*dhyāna* scheme, partly shared by Buddhists and Jainas) seem to me to function mainly as classificatory devices or tropes that are used and reused by scholars in different periods, but which do not necessarily imply identity or continuity of practice. This is one of the difficulties of working with a tradition where respect for the past, and need to invoke the authority of the past, may often have led traditional scholars deliberately to create an appearance of more continuity than was actually there. I am not convinced that the mere presence of the *ṣaḍaṅga-yoga* scheme tells us much about how these terms were understood at any particular point and within any particular tradition.

In relation to Wallace's comment on my discussion of possible Chinese connections for Tantric internal Yogic practices, I should stress that this is not really a question of Daoist versus indigenous origins. There are clearly elements of an internal physiology within Indic tradition that go back to the Upaniṣads at least. However, there also appears to have been a reshaping and rethinking of the tradition in the seventh and eighth centuries in an apparently quite new direction (Samuel 2008: 255, 271–90). In particular, there is a whole new complex of ideas about longevity, immortality, a particular sort of understanding of *prāṇa*, which is different from what I can tell from what was there before.

Now it may be simple coincidence that a similar set of ideas had developed in China several centuries earlier. We can be reasonably sure of the chronology on the Chinese side because of the Han dynasty tombs, which contain datable manuscripts that describe this material in considerable detail. I find it hard to believe, however, that the Chinese and Indian practitioners had no significant contact with each other. We know that there were trade connections, since mercury is critical for Indian alchemy and so for the Tantrics more widely, and that mercury in the form of cinnabar was imported from China. The people dealing in cinnabar along that trade route had every reason to be interested in the kinds of ideas we are discussing.

As I have just suggested, there is a constant tendency in Indian tradition for new wine to be packaged in old bottles and presented as continuity rather than innovation. If Indians adopted something like the Daoist system of internal alchemical practices aimed at longevity and spiritual cultivation from the Chinese, one would expect them precisely to rethink

it and to present it in terms of *prāṇa* and of other established Indian terminology and imagery (Samuel 2008: 278–82). I agree that this argument is speculative and that the evidence for direct influence is weak, but in the absence of any other explanation for a remarkable series of innovations with strong similarity to the already existing body of Chinese practices, I do not think it should be dismissed out of hand. I would also say that if you do both Daoist practices and Indian Yogic practices today, the similarity is strong and unmistakable and unlikely to be coincidence. I would again not want to overstate that argument, since one could imagine a variety of historical sequences that could have led to that similarity, but for me at least it again adds to the plausibility of some connection.

Wallace and I also differ on our background assumptions about the nature of change in Indian religious systems. For her it seems axiomatic that religious practices were "primarily designed for soteriological purposes" and that they gradually became enmeshed in more mundane and practical concerns. This seems to me to be a variant of the Protestant heresy among Indologists that has rightly been critiqued by Gregory Schopen (1997), among others (Samuel 2008: 16–18). At any rate I disagree and assume that religion has always been enmeshed in practical concerns. Historically, soteriology was probably a rather late development in the history of religions; it is scarcely a major theme in the *Ṛg Veda*, if we wish to take that as our starting point for the Indian tradition. In the case of Tantra, I argue in the book that much of the movement has been in the other direction, in which what was in its early form mainly magic, sorcery and pragmatic religion gradually became given a more and more soteriological and transcendental reading. That again is only a part of the picture, but to look at the history of Indic religions in terms of soteriological teachings undergoing progressive entanglement in worldly concerns is unlikely to give an adequate account.

Wallace also raises the question of my use of contemporary ethnography in the book, and this is an issue which I shall discuss in a little more detail, since it may not have been clear to all readers what I was intending to do in these sections of the book. Certainly I did not mean to imply that we can read the present into the past in any simplistic way. The contemporary ethnography of South and Southeast Asia is in a sense part of the scaffolding on which my account is built up, in that our picture of the past in some sense has to be such as to lead to the present. There

has to be a plausible progression between how we reconstruct the past and what we know of what was to follow. This is not much different from requiring that our account has to make sense in terms of the archaeological record or that it has to be able to provide plausible contexts for the production of the textual and epigraphic material that survives. We need to balance and assess these various constraints, without giving any of them more weight than is appropriate.

My anthropological background also supplied me with a number of ethnographic parallels outside South and Southeast Asia that I found useful. Michael Witzel, Harry Falk, and others had already referred to East African age-set organization in their reconstruction of Vedic society (Samuel 2008: 115–16). I referred to the very different situation in parts of West Africa, where initiatory cult-associations were linked to the growth in recent times of trading networks and small-scale mercantile states, as a way of imagining the kind of religion one might have found in the trading societies of the early Central Gangetic region. Some of this ethnographic material provides a suggestive model for the history of this region and perhaps also of other parts of North India before the rise to power of Magadha and the Mauryan Empire (82, 126–27, 180). It provides a plausible context for the growth of lay involvement in the Śramaṇa traditions and also links up with the well-known arguments about the closeness of Buddhism with trade in later times (179).

However, in any number of ways, the past was clearly not like the present, and if, for example, I cited modern or premodern Chiang Mai, Madurai and the Kathmandu Valley as examples of three different kinds of involvement of religion with the state (Samuel 2008: 146–47, 171–72, 314–15), I took it for granted that readers were aware that the material I was citing was centuries further on in time and had inevitably been transformed in many ways through that period. Chiang Mai may still have a shrine to the patron deity of the city at the center of the old town (150–51), but that does not imply that the cult of that deity means the same to its contemporary inhabitants as it might have meant twenty centuries ago, and I had no intention of suggesting that it did.

The ethnographic material in the book was also intended to remind the reader of some of the critical issues that can easily be sidelined in accounts of Indic religions, above all questions of social hierarchy (perhaps a better general term here than "caste") and gender. Issues of hierarchy are

important in my account of early Tantra (for example, Samuel 2008: 86–88, 235–37, 239). In the closing sections of this response I will comment briefly on gender issues in the book and also on a couple of further matters that were alluded to by the comments here and in the discussion in Montréal and which link up with the specifically anthropological dimensions of the book.

In relation to the book's gender argument, there was a body of personal experience that I only occasionally referenced directly but which in reality had a strong influence on my thought when writing this work. This was my involvement, through my wife and academic colleague, Santi Rozario, in anthropological research on gender, health and related issues in contemporary Bangladesh. Not long before the Wilde Lectures, for example, we had been working together on an edited volume on childbirth, female healers and birth attendants in contemporary South and Southeast Asia entitled *The Daughters of Hāritī* (Rozario and Samuel 2002a), and there are significant links between our work on that book and the argument in *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra* (see, in particular, Rozario and Samuel 2002b; Samuel 2002). Making sense of what was going on in terms of gender in contemporary South and Southeast Asia was quite an important part of what went into *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra*. In this case too, I felt that the past had to be such as to make sense in relation to our knowledge of the present.

In any case, the gender argument in the book was quite important for me in writing the book. This was not just a question of the role of women in religion, but also of the construction of male and female gender roles as a whole and in relation to each other. This is an issue that recurs in various places throughout the book (for example, in the discussion of Khajuraho and Konarak; Samuel 2008: 299–303), and for me it was one of the key ways in which I tried to make sense of the material. I could not be sure how well the anthropological sections on gender, in particular the extended discussions in the interlude (chapter 8) and the postlude (chapter 14), would work for readers from nonanthropological backgrounds, but I know that as far as I was concerned this material was an important part of the argument and it needed to be there. While it is probably true that the contrasts drawn in the book in this connection, such as the structural opposition between the heroic male celibate figure of the *brahmacārin* and the male-female couple (*mithuna*), are too

simple, I still feel that the issues need to be raised and that these contrasts are worth making, if only as a starting point for a more complex analysis (343–44).

Another thing that came out of ethnographic and personal acquaintance with Bangladesh, and to a lesser extent with South India and Southeast Asia, was the whole question of regional variation and indeed of the construction of alternate geographies. Here some of Arjun Appadurai's work was a significant influence (for example, 1999).[11] India as we know it today is a very recent entity. It is all too easy to think of the development of "Hinduism" or at least of "Indian religions" as a process that took place within a territory called "India" and which corresponds roughly to present-day India or even to the rather problematic wider region called "South Asia" for purposes of Western academia. For different parts of the period I discuss in the book, this region was either much too large or much too small. What is now Bangladesh was only gradually, and never completely, incorporated into the Brāhmaṇical world. It is not entirely coincidental that it is Muslim rather than Hindu today. I deliberately worked Southeast Asia into the account throughout the book, in part to stress that the adoption of Brāhmaṇical religion was an ongoing process and that Cambodia was in much the same position in relation to this process, if at a slightly later date, than Bengal or South India. It is important to understand these processes within a common frame. The fact that we now have an India that is mainly Hindu and a Southeast Asia that is Buddhist, Muslim and so on is a much later development, and we need to think back to a quite different sort of geography to make sense of these earlier periods. This is not a dramatically new thing to say, but the consequences of working it into the account was to bring up some issues that had not been raised so clearly by many previous authors.

In any case, I wanted to keep the reader aware that this history is not just a history of Indian religion, and for this reason I deliberately used the word "Indic" rather than "Indian" in the subtitle and throughout the book. "Indic" was explicitly meant to include Indic religion in Southeast Asia. East Asian developments are included in the book (for example, Samuel 2008: 309–13) in part for similar reasons, though the East Asian history has its own specificity. Ideally, I would have included more on Central Asia and on the quite significant links to Iran and even further to the West, but I was limited both by the material and by my knowledge of it.[12]

I was and am aware that there are some sensitive issues here. Some readers may have come across Dilip K. Chakrabarti's recent Delhi lecture, "Who Owns the Indian Past?" (2009). Chakrabarti's lecture is in large part a plea for Indians to assert control over how the Indian past is understood. He ends with a comment that he attributes to William Dalrymple: "One should protect one's own history and fight for it by tooth and claw, as others will always try to change it." Chakrabarti is a fine scholar with a serious reputation for his archaeological work, and there is a natural tendency for those of us who have been engaged in the literature on postcolonial thought to sympathize with such attempts to repatriate Indian history. However, ultimately the history of Indic religions is not just the property of the modern Indian state or of the people who currently live there, and it would be to everyone's disadvantage were it to be subsumed into a particular nationalist project. For one thing, it is also the property of Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and many other places, and as such, it is a potential ground of connection between nations that are politically often in a state of tension and conflict. For another, the longer-range and longer-term connections to the growth of human consciousness and of the life of the spirit elsewhere in the world—in Europe and the Mediterranean, in the Islamic world, in China and East Asia, and perhaps elsewhere too—are real and significant, if often hard to trace in detail. If we write these connections out of our histories, we also write out much of the awareness of our common humanity. That is a theme that is stated quite clearly at various places in the book. I wanted to write a history that stressed the common ground (see, for example, the discussion on pages 13–14).

In conclusion, I thank the commentators again for their generous and constructive engagement with my book. In the nature of things, *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra* is a book of questions as much as of answers. I wanted to establish, as far as I could, what we knew and what the limits of our knowledge were, rather than to construct a smooth narrative that papered over the cracks. That leads to a certain unevenness perhaps in the story that the book tells, but it also makes it clear that the book is meant as an invitation and encouragement to future scholars to look at the gaps and try to enrich our knowledge further. The comments on the book provide a number of significant starting points for such additional work. I hope that the review symposium as a whole here will aid readers

in making sense of the book, but even more that it will stimulate them to go beyond it and to uncover more of the history of what remains for me one of the most fascinating of all adventures of the human spirit and one which retains genuine promise for our collective future.

Notes

1. This review symposium originated with a panel of the Yoga and Theory and Practice Consultation of the American Academy of Religion in Montréal in November 2009. Johannes Bronkhorst was unable to attend the Montréal meeting but provided his comment subsequently. Two other contributors to the panel are not represented here. Daniel Gold's (2011) comment has appeared as a book review in a recent issue of the *Journal of Hindu Studies*, while Gerald Larson's (2009) comment focused on issues described in more detail in a recent article.

2. I would again like to acknowledge Richard F. Gombrich's support in relation to this lecture series.

3. For example Davidson's (2008) study of early East Asian Tantric material.

4. David Gordon White, who read the book for Cambridge and was generally very positive about it, made a similar comment.

5. In fact, one might suggest that, given the highly personal and subjective nature of the internal components of these practices, there is a limit to what any book or even teacher could say. At any rate in the case of practices with a significant "inner" component (Samuel 2010), practitioners have to work out their own way of making sense of whatever instructions they have been given, in terms of the acquired habits of their own mind-body complex. We have no way of knowing whether any two Tantric practitioners were or are actually doing the same things in terms of their inner experience.

6. On the whole I accept Alexis G.J.S. Sanderson's line in relation to this, although the situation is somewhat more complex than he generally implies (*cf.* Samuel 2008: 232, 232n1).

7. The *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra* (1.22) recommends knowledge of the self even to householders.

8. In 1919, Muni Jinavijaya presented a well-documented case at the All-India Oriental Conference in Poona that the early dates for Haribhadra

Sūri (459 to 529) were incorrect, because some of the authors he quoted flourished after 529. Muni Kalyāṇavijaya added additional evidence shortly thereafter, and in 1926 Hermann Georg Jacobi agreed that Haribhadra must be dated to a later period (Williams 1963: 4). Consequently, new dates were put forward, 700 to 770. Williams has argued that "the revised dating of Haribhadra…introduced by Muni Jinavijaya should be assumed only for…[specific commentaries that bear the name Haribhadra Yākinī-Putra and that the] Jaina tradition that he died in 529 should be retained" for other texts that bear the name Virahāṅka Haribhadra (1963: 6–7). At a later time, Williams (1965) published an article whereby he divides Haribhadra's corpus on the basis of the name listed in the colophons of the various texts. He attributes Haribhadra's two major Sanskrit texts on Yoga to two different authors, stating that the *Yogabindu* was composed by Virahāṅka Haribhadra and that the *Yogadṛṣṭisamuccaya* was composed by Haribhadra Yākinī-Putra. Williams states, "There ought to be no denying that a difference of approach strikes the mind of a reader who makes a comparative study of the *Yogabindu* and the *Yogadṛṣṭisamuccaya*….For in the former the author shows much less hesitation than in the latter to espouse positions that are typically Jaina and this too in a terminology that is typically Jaina….In the former the non-Jaina positions have been criticized much more frequently than in the latter. The fact has been made the basis for inferring that the *Yogabindu* was written earlier than the *Yogadṛṣṭisamuccaya*" (1965: 106). Having translated part of the *Yogabindu* and all of the *Yogadṛṣṭi-samuccaya*, I affirm Williams' hypothesis.

9. Larson presented a version of this material in his comment at the Montréal panel, which is not included here.

10. The perhaps slightly frivolous example of postmodernism in modern academic life comes to mind. Postmodernism has undoubtedly been a highly distinctive set of intellectual trends, and some particular academic institutions have a close association with it, but the question, "Was Duke University" (or Warwick University in the UK context) "a Postmodernist University in the year 2005?," might, all the same, not be quite appropriate.

11. "Put more simply, the large regions that dominate our current maps for area studies are not permanent geographical facts. They are problematic heuristic devices for the study of global geographic and cultural

processes" (Appadurai 1999: 232).

12. By now the literature is more extensive, and it might be possible to go further in this direction. Compare, for example, Akasoy, Burnett and Yoeli-Tlalim (2010).

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