

ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF YOGA AND MEDITATION STUDIES

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Introduction

The study of yoga and meditation is not new. The techniques that we now associate with the terms 'meditation' and 'yoga' are documented over thousands of years in nuanced explorations by practitioners and theorists. However, the 'outsider' study of these practices is intimately connected with the knowledge construction projects of European modernity. As the Peruvian philosopher Anibal Quijano (amongst others) has pointed out, modernity was, for the majority of the world, an experience of coloniality; the conceptual frameworks of European modernity co-arise with the experiences, cultural oppressions and transformations of colonisation (Quijano 2000). In many ways our understandings of practices of meditation and yoga, and their popularised meanings, have been filtered and distorted through the epistemic frameworks that have become dominant and globalised during this period. By examining the study of meditation and yoga through a range of disciplines and in a number of specific cultural and historical contexts, we hope to begin a conversation that challenges assumptions created by cultural positioning, disciplinary training and the blind spots to which they almost inevitably give rise.

This volume is aimed at students and educators and aspires to showcase the range, depth and complexity of current, global academic research on yoga and meditation. As such, this volume mostly takes the stance of the 'outsider' perspective to the study of yoga and meditation, although it does include many insider, theological and blended viewpoints. In the past few decades and in line with the rapid expansion of globalised meditation and yoga, there has been a correlative increase in academic studies of yoga and meditation from a range of perspectives. Recent research has been published not only from within established disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, indology, religious studies and medical-based science, but also from newly emerging and interdisciplinary approaches, such as political theory (Kale and Novetzke forthcoming) or critical and cultural race studies (e.g. Gandhi forthcoming). The increased academic interest reflects that yoga and meditation studies is significantly shifting from a submerged sub-field within selected disciplines to a visible field of study in its own right, one that is both multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary and increasingly transregional.

The chapters in this volume not only consolidate the contemporary field of academic knowledge on yoga and meditation, but also push the boundaries of existing research and explore emerging and future directions of study. By investigating the meanings and assumptions behind practices associated with yoga and meditation in a variety of contexts, in specific historical

periods and through different theological and disciplinary lenses, the authors of this volume contribute to a breaking up of siloed knowledge and rigid conceptual frameworks.

Historically, the field of yoga and meditation studies has not developed evenly. By the end of the twentieth century, academic study of Buddhism and meditation was firmly established in university departments of area studies and in selected humanities disciplines such as religious studies – and was increasingly a subject of biomedical/psycho-physical studies. However, the academic study of yoga traditions has only just emerged as a distinct category of research in the twenty-first century. This handbook is one of the first attempts to bring into direct dialogue two closely related areas of academic research: meditation and yoga. At times this dialogue has been easier to initiate than at other times – since, for some of the scholars whom we invited, the disciplinary areas of expertise, the questions asked and the assumptions made about their objects of study made it hard to see how their particular scholarly agenda would benefit from being part of interdisciplinary reflections.

In an effort to promote interdisciplinary dialogue and awareness between contributors, we organised an authors' workshop in early 2019, held in London, UK, at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) with support from the Open University.¹ In this forum, scholars exchanged comments on the first-draft papers, with the intention of creating a more coherent volume. This workshop was closely informed and supported by two interdisciplinary European Research Council funded projects on the history of yoga in South Asia, namely AYURYOG and the Haṭha Yoga Project. Both of these projects sought to cultivate interdisciplinary methods to shine new light on their subjects through *longue durée* lenses. For AYURYOG, this was to examine the histories and entanglements of yoga, ayurveda and *rasaśāstra* (alchemy and iatro-chemistry) from the tenth century to the present, focusing on the disciplines' health, rejuvenation and longevity practices. For the Haṭha Yoga Project, the concern was how to identify the origins of both *haṭha* and modern yoga through multidisciplinary approaches of philology, ethnography and cultural history – and at times forging interdisciplinary approaches such as 'embodied philology', the interpretation of historical texts on *āsana* with the aid (and limits) of contemporary practitioner bodies. The diversity of the discussion over the course of these two days was inspiring. We hope that the new perspectives generated will have ripple effects on the framing of many of the participants' research beyond the scope of this particular volume.

Both of the editors of this volume work primarily in the field of yoga studies and, although we have aimed to include a broad range of approaches from the field of meditation and contemplative studies, we acknowledge that the content is slightly more weighted towards the topic of yoga. While some chapters are interdisciplinary (see, for instance, Li, Chapter 26, which integrates philology and digital humanities), other chapters are multidisciplinary (Bühnemann, Chapter 29, combines art history, material culture and religious studies) or cross-disciplinary (Gerety, Chapter 34, in part, employs sound studies to elucidate history of religions).² However, in the last section of the book, which focuses on 'disciplinary framings' we also see that the understanding of what yoga or meditation *is* and *does* can shift depending on the questions asked and methods of research. For example, a focus on measurable characteristics in psychophysiology yields a different understanding of yoga and meditation than exploring the social context of yoga with the tools of critical theory. The scope of this volume's essays from scholars around the world ensures that a considerable range of perspectives has been included from across the combined field of yoga and meditation studies and that there is ample opportunity for readers to think and analyse laterally across these complex and intertwined topics, regions, approaches and chronologies.

As editors, we also acknowledge that we are situated in the humanities and social sciences, primarily as scholars of religion. The hard sciences are not represented to the extent that we

would have liked, but we have two excellent dedicated science-based chapters, one on biomedicine (Chapter 30) and one on cognitive psychology (Chapter 31), as well as a range of scientific perspectives incorporated in other chapters. It is worth reflecting on the institutionalised structures of knowledge, reward and research finance in this area: many of the scientists that we reached out to were unwilling to commit to publishing in a cross-disciplinary forum and to a publishing format – an edited collection – which is singular to the humanities and social sciences. In the hard sciences, the outputs for hard-won research hours are standard science journal articles (usually by large teams of co-researchers). Often research into health interventions (which is a common focus for yoga and meditation studies in these disciplines) also need to demonstrate the potential to generate or at least to save money in the context of the healthcare market. The academic environment is therefore increasingly driven by constrained research outputs and specific research funding opportunities. An important challenge for social science and humanities researchers going forward is to impress upon both biomedical researchers and the general public the importance of understanding health interventions *in context* – that their healing and meaning-giving potential cannot be reduced to, or fully understood by, biomedical measurements. Conversely, it can also be helpful for humanities and ‘soft’ science scholars to have a better understanding of how the body is likely to react to certain psycho-physical techniques and what this might mean for the social construction of traditions and ontological understandings of reality.

Defining meditation and yoga: the challenges

Across this collection, scholars have grappled with central questions, themes and tensions inherent in studying these subjects in the contemporary world and from within the often Euro- and America-centric academic traditions. First and foremost among our projects has been the exploration and problematising of the very definitions of terms such as ‘yoga’, ‘meditation’, ‘contemplation’, and spiritual ‘discipline’ across chronology, region and religious categories. We have long since moved beyond the twentieth-century view of yoga and meditation as ‘timeless’ or ‘universal’ traditions of the ‘Mystic East’ (see King 1999). Rather, when we probe more deeply, we discover the many nuances of these somewhat general terms and that there are multiple definitions and accounts of yoga and meditation that are particular to specific contexts.

When a scholar sets out to formally define ‘yoga’ and/or ‘meditation’ there are many challenges to confront, not least at the basic level of language. For example, scholars encounter translation difficulties, such as which words may reasonably be translated as ‘meditation’ from different languages. While *dhyāna* in Sanskrit, *jìngzuò* (静坐) in Japanese, and *shouyi* (守一) in Chinese Daoist discourse are often translated into English with the word ‘meditation’, more technically they denote ‘absorption’ (*dhyāna*), ‘quiet sitting’ (*jìngzuò*), and ‘guarding the one’ (*shouyi*). It is equally possible to assert that these varied practices are entirely disparate and disconnected and should not be grouped under the umbrella term of ‘meditation.’ The scholar faces similarly challenging philological choices: e.g. did *yogācāra* mean ‘discipline of yoga’ for classical South Asian Buddhists or something generic such as ‘spiritual conduct’? What happens to an experiential categorisation of *samādhi* as a singular type of ‘meditative concentration’ when some Mahāyāna Buddhist texts note that types of *samādhis* run, numerically, into the millions? (See Deleanu, Chapter 7.) Furthermore, one has to negotiate semantic change and slippage across time and language: be it within a Sanskrit text or as a borrowed word, what does *yoga* denote in different cultures, languages and eras? Finally, contemporary definitions often eclipse historical definitions and can lead to anachronistic, misinformed or simply skewed understandings of the past discussions of yoga as recorded in textual sources. On the other hand,

contemporary definitions of yoga and identities within particular meditative traditions can be weighed down by the ideological anchor of historical 'authenticity' with no room for organic change and development in meaning or understanding.

Then there are the challenges of defining a *practice* of 'yoga' or 'meditation'. Is yoga a means to an end (a set of techniques) or the goal itself (the end state of liberation)? Where does ritual end and meditation begin? (Is lighting a candle a ritual act or a meditative act, or both?) How do we, as scholars, reconstruct past or present practices of yoga and meditation, taking into account the dilemmas of the etic/emic perspectives and the often thorny topic of insider and outsider identities and statuses? Furthermore, what are our presumptions about practice in relation to yoga and meditation? If yoga is understood as primarily characterised by 'visible' practices such as posture and breathing technique, then is meditation understood as an inner or 'invisible' set of techniques? Do the categories of 'meditation' and 'yoga' reproduce a Cartesian dualism of 'mind' and 'body' that is reductive and Eurocentric? Again, our survey of traditions and regions in this volume demonstrates that meditation practice may be just as bodily and demonstrative as any conception of yoga – e.g. Jain walking meditation with fixed gaze (see Pragya, Chapter 13). Indeed, the characterisation of meditation as an 'inner' and silent experience is, in part, a product of the European colonial privileging of Theravāda Buddhist meditation as *the* meditation technique *par excellence* (see Husgafvel, Chapter 3).

A further challenge awaits the scholar in dealing with the field of yoga or meditation studies itself. Since the term 'yoga' has been specifically limited in its application to South Asia and its derived contexts and transmissions, the field of yoga studies is, in many ways, more clearly demarcated. The term 'meditation', however, has a semantic provenance and currency far beyond South Asia, is more culturally neutral, and has been used to define spiritual practices in a range of religions, regions and time periods. As a consequence, the academic field of meditation studies is more difficult to delimit than yoga studies, because it is more disparate culturally. In the case of meditation, all roads do not lead back to South Asia, as they do for yoga. Distinct traditions of contemplation can be traced to ancient Greek concepts of self-care and meditation/contemplation, to the Chinese practices glossed as 'sitting', or to a range of other cultural contexts.

In this volume, we have dealt with a further valence in the definition of yoga in particular. One of the questions that arose was the way in which authors working on different time periods were using the same technical terms. For example, take the case of *haṭhayoga*. This term conveys a different meaning from its early Buddhist mention in South Asian *yogācāra* literature in the c. third century CE (as a 'forceful process' although its method is not explained) (Mallinson 2020: 5), to a medieval context in the fifteenth-century *Haṭhapradīpikā* (indicating the yoga of force, but now encompassing a specific set of techniques), to its popular twenty-first-century anglophone branding as 'gentle stretching in a traditional Indian style'.³ As editors, we therefore discussed how to differentiate the premodern from the modern referents using a stylistic device.⁴ In order to distinguish a modern *haṭhayoga* (indicating post-Vivekānanda, anglophone, asana-focused yoga) from its historical precedents, we opted for the anglicised Hatha Yoga (or more generically hatha yoga). Hatha Yoga is how the term is primarily written in early twentieth-century primary sources in English. In contrast to this borrowed 'Hatha Yoga' in English, we reserve italics and diacritics for the Sanskrit *haṭhayoga* as discussed in premodern South Asian sources, but also for contemporary traditional practices in India that use the term *haṭha*. This indicates a theoretical stance on the need to engage in a constant critical reflection on the meaning of the terms that we employ as scholars, rather than sliding into a comfort zone about what 'yoga' means. This editorial choice also asks the reader to maintain a critical enquiry into the questions of continuity and rupture in traditions of yoga, and it strongly challenges perennialist assumptions of a single yoga that is true for all times, places and people.

We wish to avoid, however, an elision of the entanglements between historical and modern practices of meditation and yoga with this stylistic distinction; it is certainly the case that many ‘traditional’ forms of yoga and meditation (i.e. historically continuous practices) continue to exist today. Indeed further discussion and deconstruction of the term *haṭha* shows it as unstable and polyvalent even before the *Haṭhapradīpikā* (see Singleton, Chapter 9). Finally, the stylistic intervention that we have applied in this volume to *haṭhayoga* and Hatha Yoga can equally be applied to other relevant terms that have potent cross-linguistic currency and a ‘brand value’ outside of their original historical contexts, such as *vipassanā* and Vipassana, *aṣṭāṅga yoga* and Ashtanga Yoga, or *āsana* and asana. This nuanced approach points to the unique historical context of South Asian yoga and meditation, and it also highlights singular developments and innovations in transnational yoga and meditation.

Contributors to this volume have also sought to clarify the extent to which concepts and practices of ‘meditation’ and ‘yoga’ can be regarded as distinct or overlapping in a particular tradition, context or time period. In some traditions, yoga and meditation have been used synonymously, while in others they are separate. For example, in early South Asia, Patañjali defines yoga as concentration (*samādhi*) (*Pātañjalayogaśāstra* 1.1),⁵ indicating that the primary understanding of yoga in this period was as meditative practice. In a contemporary context, Ville Husgafvel (Chapter 3) discusses the relationship between meditation and yoga from a meditation studies point of view, pointing to the many entanglements, such as the inclusion of yoga postures in various Mindfulness-Based Practices (MBPs). In other contexts, however, we see that a stricter demarcation has been maintained between the two disciplines. In Japan, the longstanding historical importance of meditation traditions – inclusive of Daoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Shinto and more modern interpretations – far outweighs the cultural contact with postural-based yoga in the later twentieth century. Furthermore, in many contexts, practices of yoga and meditation intersect with a broader category of ‘asceticism’, from which it can be difficult to differentiate discrete concepts of yoga and/or meditation.

Another key question has been the ways in which specific practices of ‘yoga’ or ‘meditation’ can lead to unique experiences, effects and understandings. For example, a particular practice of ‘meditation’ or ‘yoga’ in one context can look very different to other practices that carry the same label – e.g. *kuṇḍalinī yoga* in medieval Kashmir as explored by Olga Serbaeva Saraogi in Chapter 8, or in contemporary Assam and present-day USA as explored by Sravana Borkataky-Varma in Chapter 25. Equally, we encounter practices, habits and codes in historical traditions that may not be explicitly called yoga or meditation but which appear to entail similar traits and outcomes – e.g. the practices of early Buddhism in South Asia (Deleanu, Chapter 7) or the Sufi breathing techniques of medieval South Asia (D’Silva, Chapter 15). In grouping together various endeavours under an umbrella term such as ‘meditation’ for the purposes of scholarly analysis, one has to ask whether, in today’s world and at the level of experience, there are *any* connections between the contemporary mindfulness of Kabat-Zinn and mantra recitation (*mantra-jap*) in Sikhism, or between yogic jumping techniques (Beps) in Tibetan Buddhism and ‘Christian yoga’ in the USA, or between Daoist *qi* and yogic *prāṇa*. The artificiality of the analytical categories of ‘yoga’ and ‘meditation’ can unintentionally revive and reify the perennialist view all over again. However, this is emphatically not the intention of this volume. Rather than proposing an answer to the above question, the juxtaposition of perspectives here hopes to create more, better and new questions – and to begin to reframe the discussion.

Finally, there is the issue of what is to be regarded as ‘yoga’ and/or ‘meditation’: if a practitioner or community defines a particular practice or phenomenon as ‘yoga’ or ‘meditation’, even though it appears to be at radical odds with established and traditional forms – witness recent social media discussions about ‘goat yoga’ or ‘beer yoga’, for example – should it

be dismissed evaluatively as 'non-authentic'? This is a discussion that Andrea Jain takes up in Chapter 5. On the whole, this research handbook seeks to shift the contemporary framing of yoga beyond the limited binary debates of 'tradition' and 'authenticity' versus 'non-tradition' and 'non-authenticity.' Yes, tracing how orthogenetic developments have occurred within and without South Asia is still important (and well covered in section two of this volume), but there are also broader global questions to be asked: In what ways and contexts might yoga and meditation practices cause harm? Is there any yoga on the planet that is not today embroiled in neoliberal capitalism? In what ways are yoga and meditation being weaponised at an international scale as tools of political, religious, racial, economic and cultural hegemony?

Shifting discussions and emerging areas of research

As editors we are committed to the project of 'decolonising yoga' and have endeavoured to encompass a diversity of views that have the potential to decentre traditional or dominant narratives, be they epistemic, cultural or regional. For example, this volume includes chapters that, for the first time in English, explore developments of yoga and meditation traditions in Korea and in Latin America (see Park and Park, Chapter 22; Muñoz, Chapter 23) – as well as a chapter that introduces new research from Japan (see Kurita, Chapter 21). Additionally, through this collection of studies we are attempting to bring areas of established (but previously niche) research to wider audiences of yoga and meditation studies, such as the significance of yoga and meditation traditions in Insular Southeast Asia (see Acri, Chapter 19). We were able to include theological perspectives in the chapters on yoga and meditation in Jain and Sikh traditions (see Pragma, Chapter 13; Bhogal, Chapter 16). And we have asked all of our contributors to consider insider and outsider implications in their own research, including the complex category of the scholar-practitioner. Furthermore, we also explored how different agendas, questions and interest groups drive current research in our various disciplinary areas of study – a topic thoroughly discussed at the authors' workshop in March 2019. We have therefore aimed to engage in reflexive scholarship on the academic approaches and identities that inform the field. However, shifting the understandings created and maintained by academic power structures and methods of studying is a slow process, and proposing viable alternatives is not necessarily easy or straightforward.

The first step toward creating new assumptions for discussion is to draw attention to what is missing and to those perspectives that have yet to be represented at the table. We regret the limited extent to which we were able to include scholars of yoga and meditation trained at and holding positions at educational institutions in South Asia. Additionally, we were not able to include a chapter that could explore the recent exponential growth of yoga in China or a detailed analysis of the exchange of yogic and meditative practices between China and its neighbours in Asia from the Chinese perspective. Understandings about yoga and meditation in Eastern European and former communist cultures is also a topic that needs more sustained attention in global studies of these techniques and practices. Furthermore, the regional histories and contemporary contexts of yoga and meditation in Africa and the Middle East are vital areas for future, sustained research. Unfortunately, one volume cannot cover everything – but it can highlight and spearhead some important emerging areas for required focus.

One significant area of emerging research is the acknowledgement and analysis of how abuses of power and sexuality have been embedded in many contemporary (and historical) yoga and meditation movements. There are wide-ranging studies of abusive behaviour in many of the groups associated with practices that gained popularity after World War II. Such studies have been undertaken in the context of sociology of religion – particularly in research

on ‘new religious movements’ (NRMs) – and in psychological studies on ‘cultic abuse’ and (more recently) ‘coercive control.’⁶ But until the last decade, there was little public discussion of institutionalised abuse, particularly institutionalised sexual abuse. This culture change is facilitating a new framing of research into this important area. Central to future enquiry will be theorisations of race, gender, culture and power and the ways in which intersections of these factors have produced, facilitated and covered up abusive behaviour. This handbook is being produced at the start of a five-year Luce Foundation funded project into ‘Sexual Abuse and Religious Movements’ which is headed by Amanda Lucia at the University of California-Riverside – and its emerging research agenda promises to include in its publications and output a broad range of groups that have yoga and meditation as central practices. Although several of the contributions in this volume mention the issue of abuse in groups and movements (e.g. Jain, Chapter 5; Wong, Chapter 32), we regret that we were not able to include a substantive chapter on this issue as a stand-alone subject.

Early pioneering work on structural inequalities within both academic and practitioner communities interested in yoga and meditation has been undertaken by scholars working on the intersections of gender and capitalism and research groups such as Race and Yoga⁷ (see for example: Jain 2015, 2020; Black 2016; Lucia 2018; Godrej 2017; Gandhi forthcoming). In recent years, there have been key reflections on race, whiteness and Buddhism in the west (e.g. Yancy and McRae 2019; Gleig 2019). Yet critical race theory is still to be integrated and applied within mainstream research in yoga studies. The bulk of the work on race and yoga to date has been produced by women of colour working in the USA, and the burden of drawing attention to social and structural inequities has not yet been shouldered (or discussed reflexively) by significant numbers of white scholars. In line with developments in critical race theory and decolonial approaches, analysis of race in yoga and meditation communities will focus more on whiteness and its cultural manifestations globally. There may also be further scrutiny to ensure that broader demographic and institutional power structures are not automatically replicated in communities of academic scholar-practitioners. A pernicious consequence of colonialism, cultural appropriation and religious exoticism is evident in the fact that while aspects of South Asian culture are pick’n’mixed – from the fashion industry to commercialised yoga – citizens of South Asian heritage are still stereotyped and vilified as terrorists in the global north (see e.g. Bald 2015). Even as yoga reaches the farthest corners of small-town US culture, there are still fundamental misunderstandings of South Asian religion and culture so that Sikhs, for example, are attacked as ‘Muslim terrorists’ because of their turbans.⁸ In many cases, a romanticised and highly selective skimming-off of South Asian cultures has been carried out by white yoga practitioners, to the detriment of engaging with these cultures as integral, living traditions.

Further disciplinary developments in yoga studies will take place in South Asian textual studies related to yoga and meditation, where there has been a firm emphasis on translating Sanskrit texts for the past 200 years. However, there is growing recognition of the many texts yet to be translated and studied in other languages such as Hindi, Urdu and Bengali, and even more so the languages of southern India, such as Tamil, Malayālam and Telugu. Texts and archives in these languages, both premodern and modern, will offer up new information on the history and development of yoga and meditation in South Asia – and steer attention beyond the *Yogasūtra* and *Bhagavadgītā* towards non-elite sources such as songs, poems, tracts, manuals, letters, and popular and literary works. Considerable ground has been gained in acknowledging the diversity of South Asian religious traditions in the development of yoga – including Buddhism, Jainism and Islam – but further work remains to be done in order to develop this body of knowledge. Ongoing rapid developments in digital humanities will continue to alleviate the

painstaking burden of creating critical editions of original texts and analysing large corpuses, and such innovations will lead to new insights into old texts at a faster rate.

There is an increasing number of projects that are in various ways connected to the aims of social justice, be it the debates around 'engaged' or 'disengaged' Buddhism or those around 'on the mat/off the mat' activism in yoga. Also growing in number are projects seeking to instigate social change for underprivileged groups – from yoga and mindfulness in prisons, to yoga and meditation for refugees. These developments in political and social activism will also be instantiated in already complex scholar-practitioner identities, leading to new forms of embodied academic critiques, political dissent and socially-engaged knowledge modalities. Finally, an emergent area of interest, on which there is yet to be substantial published research, is the relationship between yoga and technology. The impacts of robot yoga teachers, robot monks chanting in Buddhist temples, digital gurus, meditation headsets and consciousness implants are among the many topics currently under investigation (see Singleton forthcoming).

Concluding remarks

Interdisciplinary research is vital to the development of yoga and meditation studies. This kind of knowledge exchange is essential to strengthen the field and to make sense of complex and fast-moving global developments. How can lab-based scientists measure the benefits (and potential detriments) of a meditation technique if they do not understand the social contexts in which these practices were developed historically and are presently taught? How can one decode the meaning of historical texts on *hathayoga* postures without the referent of embodied interpretation?

We hope that the sheer range of contributions in this volume will help to continue the widening of both academic and practitioner assumptions about the diversity and complexity of traditions of yoga and meditation. Moreover, it is our aim that this collaborative reframing will eventually transform lived understandings beyond the scholars and practitioners who are specifically interested in the techniques of yoga and meditation. The intention of this volume is to generate more nuanced insights into the depth of global traditions of meditation and yoga in order to contribute to a wider reframing of shared understandings of the categories of religion, science, spirituality, politics and culture.

Notes

- 1 The workshop 'Disciplines and Dialogue: The Future of Yoga and Meditation Studies' was attended by more than forty international scholars who shared their research; this two-day workshop was generously funded by the Strategic Research Investment Fund at the Open University's Faculty of Arts and Social Science and supported in kind by the Centre of Yoga Studies at SOAS University of London.
- 2 Interdisciplinarity involves integrating or synthesizing two or more disciplines in a single study to create a new approach; cross-disciplinarity entails using one discipline to examine another; multi-disciplinarity employs a range of disciplinary approaches in one study without attempting to synthesize them. For further discussion, especially on interdisciplinarity, see Graff 2015: 1–19.
- 3 As one yoga website states: 'Today, the term hatha is used in such a broad way that it is difficult to know what a particular hatha class will be like. In most cases, however, it will be relatively gentle, slow and great for beginners or students who prefer a more relaxed style where they hold poses longer.' www.doyogawithme.com/types-of-yoga. Accessed 11 March 2020.
- 4 On this subject, we wish to express our gratitude to Mark Singleton for his valuable insights and dialogue with us on the subject.

- 5 The commentary (*bhāṣya*) to *sūtra* 1.1 states, *yogaḥ samādhiḥ*, 'yoga is concentration'. It also states, *sa samprajñāto yoga ity ākhyāyate*, 'That cognitive form [of concentration; of *samādhi*] is called yoga.' (Maas 2006: 2–3; trans O'Brien-Kop).
- 6 The following references may help to further explore this topic: Caldwell 2001; Crovetto 2008 and 2011; Barker 1987 and 2009; Downing 2001; Jacobs 2007; Lewis 2011; Palmer 2018 and 1994; Palmer and Hardman 1999; Rochford 1998, 2007 and 2011; Masis 2007; Urban 2003 and 2011; van Eck Duymaer van Twist 2014 and 2015; Voix 2008.
- 7 https://escholarship.org/uc/crg_raceandyoga. Accessed 24 July 2020.
- 8 See, for example, this news story: <https://edition.cnn.com/2016/09/15/us/sikh-hate-crime-victims/index.html>. Accessed 11 March 2020.

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