



Digital Commons@

Loyola Marymount University
LMU Loyola Law School

LMU/LLS Theses and Dissertations

5-1-2023

The Nature of Compassion in Yoga: Illuminating its Modern Role through an Examination of Historical Texts

Keren Eshed

Loyola Marymount University, eshedk@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/etd>

Recommended Citation

Eshed, Keren, "The Nature of Compassion in Yoga: Illuminating its Modern Role through an Examination of Historical Texts" (2023). *LMU/LLS Theses and Dissertations*. 1240.

<https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/etd/1240>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. It has been accepted for inclusion in LMU/LLS Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@lmu.edu.

The Nature of Compassion in Yoga:
Illuminating its Modern Role through an Examination of Historical Texts

by

Keren Eshed

A thesis presented to the

Faculty of the Department of
Yoga Studies
Loyola Marymount University

In partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Yoga Studies

May 1, 2023

**The Nature of Compassion in Yoga: Illuminating its Modern Role through an
Examination of Historical Texts**

Contents

Introduction	3
Chapter 1 - Ethics and Compassion in the <i>Upaniṣads</i>	8
Chapter 2 - The <i>Yogasūtra</i> and Compassion	17
Chapter 3 - Compassion as a Core Element in the <i>Mahābhārata</i>	28
Chapter 4 - The <i>Yogavāsiṣṭha</i>'s Morality and Compassion	44
Chapter 5 - Compassion in <i>Haṭhayoga</i>.....	51
Chapter 6 - Conclusions	57
Appendix 1 – <i>Mahābhārata</i> Book 13, Chapter 5 Translation	69
Appendix 2 – <i>Bhagavadgītā</i> Translations	84
Appendix 3 – <i>Yogavāsiṣṭha</i> Translations	87
Bibliography	93

Introduction

Compassion is a key element within many spiritual traditions and religions. Yet in modern mainstream culture, it is often linked with Buddhist thought and tends to highlight the role of compassion in personal and collective healing. This could be attributed to how some aspects of Buddhism have been transmitted to the West through a Western lens that repackaged the tradition. Modern yoga often highlights compassion as a core element with little or no reference to the traditional literature of yoga.¹ While compassion is an integral part of Buddhist literature,² at first glance it seems to be less prominent within the historical literature of yoga. As will be explored throughout this paper, Buddhism and Yoga have been intermingling and exchanging ideas and practices for centuries. Yet, these days the fast cross-cultural exchange and assimilation have further blurred the lines between the two traditions. While historical philosophical schools often debated and distinguished themselves from one another, in the modern era, there is more of a hybrid synthesis of these traditions, without specific acknowledgment.

In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of research into the benefits of self-compassion for health and well-being, suggesting that people who are self-compassionate tend to be happier and demonstrate better psychological strength.³ Even though Buddhism is often acknowledged as the source, little is mentioned about the nature of compassion in Buddhism. Medical terminology and goals are widely embedded within Buddhist literature, yet it seems that these Buddhist principles have extended far beyond their origins. For example, Mindful Self-

¹ Marlysa B. Sullivan and Laurie C. Hyland Robertson, *Understanding Yoga Therapy: Applied philosophy and science for health and well-being* (Routledge, 2020), 50; Andrea Jain, *Selling Yoga: From Counterculture to Pop Culture*, (New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2014), 90.

² It should be noted that there is no single or authoritative account for the concept of compassion within Buddhism, yet it is still a continuous and central theme.

³ Kristin D. Neff and Christopher K Germer, "A pilot study and randomized controlled trial of the mindful self-compassion program," *Journal of clinical psychology* 69, no. 1 (2013): 1-2.

Compassion (MSC) is a mindfulness-based program that states self-compassion stems from Buddhist psychology. Nonetheless, it does not mention Buddhist sources and defines self-compassion as “being touched by one’s own suffering, generating the desire to alleviate one’s suffering and treat oneself with understanding and concern,”⁴ or simply, “treating yourself the way you would treat a friend who is having a hard time.”⁵ While essentially self-compassion is an inherent part of compassion, Buddhist ontology and texts accentuate benefiting others and this in return benefits the self.⁶ Mindfulness and self-compassion programs have made their way into hospitals, therapies, the military, corporate spaces, as well as yoga classes, consequently, impacting the understanding and role of compassion within modern yoga.

Beyond the role of compassion in individual healing, modern yoga also highlights the importance of turning compassion into action in the social domain. Recent years have seen a growing movement of using yoga practices and concepts as tools for social change, often referred to as “yoga off the mat.” This movement can be anchored in the traditional teachings of yoga and has historical roots in transformative figures such as M.K. Gandhi. Nonetheless, the movement also draws from modern Western ideas such as human rights and reflects the ongoing interaction between yoga, modernity, and transnationalism. It should be noted that this movement is not unique to yoga; it reflects a wider phenomenon within spiritual communities and parallels the “Engaged Buddhism” movement.⁷

⁴MSC was developed by Christopher K. Germer, PhD, a clinical psychologist and lecturer on psychiatry (part-time) at Harvard Medical School, and Kristin Neff, PhD, a researcher in the field of self-compassion. See: Kristin D. Neff and Christopher K Germer, *The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook: A Proven Way to Accept Yourself, Build Inner Strength, and Thrive* (New York: Guilford Publications, 2018), 1-2.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Stephen L. Jenkins, “Benefit of Self and Other: The Importance of Persons and their Self-Interest in Buddhist Ethics,” *法鼓佛學學報* 16 (2015): 25.

⁷ Jay L. Garfield, *Buddhist ethics: A philosophical exploration* (Oxford University Press, 2021), 180.

The movement views the purpose of yoga as stretching beyond personal liberation to include social justice, thus, utilizing yoga as a force for social change. The practices of yoga which are often internal become interpersonal tools to undo societal harms and confront systems of oppression. Consequently, the capacity for compassion in modern yoga is often seen as a remedy for the collective by recognizing suffering and taking action to make amends. Both the self-compassion emphasis and the social justice movement highlight the role of compassion in modern yoga as a tool for personal and collective healing.

While the synthesis of ideas and new forms of practice are a natural unfoldment of spiritual and religious traditions, it is valuable to be clear about what the traditional texts have said about compassion. Through textual analysis, the importance of context and philosophy is emphasized, and modern practices can be thoroughly comprehended. Hence, my intention is to bridge this gap and highlight the nature of compassion in the traditional literature of yoga.

The word compassion in English originates from the Latin root “passio,” to suffer, and “com,” together, thus meaning to suffer together. This points to a relationship between suffering, compassion, and the existence of others. Yet, Charles Goodman and Sonam Thakchoe suggest that the Latin root is cognate with English words such as “passive,” and therefore expresses the inactive nature of compassion and the conception of emotions as negative things that happen to us.⁸ There are many Sanskrit words that can translate as compassion, such as *karuṇā*, *kṛpā*, *dayā*, *anukrośa*, *anukampa*, and *ānṛśaṃsya*. As will be explored throughout this paper, in yoga traditions, the terms for compassion have different connotations varying according to the tradition, specific text, socio-cultural background, and audience. Therefore, this paper will

⁸ Cowherds (Authors), *Moonpaths: Ethics and emptiness* (UK: Oxford University Press, 2016), 17.

use examples to demonstrate the subtle nuances in various terms and shed light on the nature of compassion.

It is noteworthy that early Buddhist literature mainly uses the term *anukampa*, which is derived from the prefix *anu* (alongside) and *kamp* (to tremble). This resembles the English origin of the term, both capturing an unpleasant experience, or suffering with another, as the foundation for compassion. Later Buddhist texts mainly use the term *karuṇā*. The etymology of the word *karuṇā* is ambiguous and thus it is open to interpretation. Some possible roots for *karuṇā* are *kṛ* (to make, act) *kṛt* (to cut, break), or *kṛ* (to spread, disperse).⁹ Buddhaghosa, an important early commentator in the Buddhist Theravada tradition presented a philosophical interpretation of the word *karuṇā*: “When others suffer it makes the heart of good people tremble (*kampa*), thus it is *karuṇā*; it demolishes others' suffering, attacks and banishes it, thus it is *karuṇā*; or it is dispersed over the suffering, is spread out through pervasion, thus it is *karuṇā*.”¹⁰ This suggests an active component to the word compassion that requires an action to relieve the suffering of others in early Buddhism. With the emergence of the bodhisattva ideal in the *Mahāyāna* tradition, compassion became even more primary.

This paper will explore the nature of compassion within various yoga traditions and clarify its role through historical and textual examination. In doing so, I will discuss relevant Buddhist notions of compassion as they apply. As mentioned, the notion of compassion is spread across vast Buddhist literature; therefore, the methodology of this paper will be qualitative and will focus on collecting and analyzing principal narratives within early Buddhism. Consequently,

⁹ Stephen L. Jenkins, “Do bodhisattvas relieve poverty?,” in *Action dharma*, eds. Keown, Damien, Christopher Queen, and Charles S. Prebish (UK: Routledge, 2003), 41.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

this is not an exhaustive list of the role of compassion within Buddhism. It should also be noted that yoga is a principal component within many South Asian traditions and thus this paper will be limited to *Brāhmaṇa* traditions of yoga.

I will explore key texts within the yoga traditions that address compassion and highlight the qualities attributed to compassion. As will be demonstrated, while compassion is commonly present within the texts, it varies in meaning and significance within these texts and often is not perceived as central to the text's teachings. I will begin this exploration by examining teachings from the Upaniṣads that address moral conduct and the nature of transformative knowledge. Second, I will examine verses from the *Yogasūtra*. In doing so, I will discuss the *brahmavihāras* and their understanding in Buddhist literature. Third, I will examine verses and concepts from the *Mahābhārata*, in which compassion can be seen as an important theme. Then, I will turn to the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, a narrative text based upon the tales of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and explore its view on ethics and compassion. These texts clearly present a correlation and exchange between Buddhism and yoga. *Haṭhayoga* texts present a shift within the conception of compassion and address compassion as part of the *yamas* within the *aṣṭāṅgayoga* framework, a representation that carries through to the Yoga Upaniṣads. Lastly, I will elaborate on the implications and significance of compassion within yoga, discuss the main Sanskrit terms, and address possible threads that demonstrate the evolution of compassion within yoga's literature. I will argue that there is a correlation between the importance of compassion within a text to the text's target audience as ascetics or householders. I will further demonstrate that the prominence of compassion within a text signifies the accessibility of the text, its teachings, and the practice of yoga to a wider audience.

Chapter 1 - Ethics and Compassion in the Upaniṣads

The Upaniṣads provide a wide framework to inquire into the nature of the self, the nature of existence, and human existence within the cosmos. The Upaniṣadic corpus is considered the foundation of many of the South Asian philosophies including the six systematic philosophical schools (*darśanas*). The corpus is considered pivotal in the emergence of South Asian traditions and these texts often indicate a shift in the sociopolitical and religious landscape; from the nomadic toward the urban, from the external toward the internal, and from the ritual toward the philosophical and ascetic.¹¹ The Upaniṣads are linked to the Vedas and are traditionally referred to as *Vedānta* (the culmination of knowledge). The principal Upaniṣads include thirteen to fifteen texts, dated roughly between the seventh century BCE to the second century BCE.¹² *Upaniṣad* literally means “to sit down nearby,” traditionally referring to a student sitting at the feet of the teacher to receive the teachings. Another meaning of the term when it is used within the texts refers to the means to show an esoteric, obscure, and hidden connection. The texts do not reveal their authorship; they have different authors at different times, and some may be compilations; consequently, they are not necessarily chronological.¹³

The Upaniṣads emphasize the transformative nature of knowledge and introduce themes that are later developed in various yoga traditions, including the essential concept of *Ātman* and *Brahman*. *Ātman* usually refers to the Self or spiritual essence of the human being; nevertheless, it can also indicate the physical body.¹⁴ *Brahman* means the formulation of truth and usually refers to the ultimate essence of the cosmos; however, the meaning can vary according to context. The

¹¹ Steven E. Lindquist, “Narrating the Upaniṣads,” in *Religion: Narrating Religion* (2017): 303.

¹² Lindquist, “Narrating the Upaniṣads,” 303.

¹³ Patrick Olivelle, *The early Upanishads: Annotated text and translation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 12.

¹⁴ Olivelle, *The early Upanishads*, 22.

Upaniṣads equate these terms - *Ātman* the essential Self is *Brahman* the ultimate truth. The great sayings of the Upaniṣads or *Mahāvākyas* express this intimate relationship as in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, *tat tvam asi* (“You are that”).¹⁵ This unity is described in terms of macrocosmic and microcosmic symbolism and the equation of the human body to the cosmos has shifted from external ritual practice in the Vedic period to an internalized contemplative practice. Truth is reached by going within.

Knowledge is central to the Upaniṣads and is understood as a tool for transformation. As suggested by the term *Upaniṣad* itself, the knowledge in the texts is often obscured or hidden. When one knows the hidden relationships between the human as the microcosm and the macrocosm, then he reaches transformation both externally (one attains prosperity and wealth) and internally (one is calm and collected). This transformation can be described as a reorientation or modification of being.¹⁶ The *Praśna Upaniṣad* states that “they who seek the *Ātman* by austerity, chastity, faith, and knowledge...they do not return” [to the cycle of *saṃsāra*].¹⁷

Thus, knowledge means to understand ultimate or metaphysical truths. The search for knowledge and unity within has affected all realms of life and as such had ethical implications.¹⁸ The Upaniṣads do not discuss ethic or morality in a systematic manner. Accordingly, compassion is not discussed in the texts. However, in this part I will introduce explicit and implicit eclectic

¹⁵ Lindquist, “Narrating the Upaniṣads,” 312-313.

¹⁶ Steven E Lindquist, “Transcending the World in World Literature: The Upanishads,” *A Companion to World Literature* (2020): 9.

¹⁷ Robert E. Hume, *The thirteen principal Upanishads: translated from the Sanskrit, with an outline of the philosophy of the Upanishads and an annotated bibliography* (Delhi; New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 57.

¹⁸ Hume, *The thirteen principal Upanishads*, 61.

teachings that might offer guidance and shed light on ethics in the Upaniṣads and are valuable to understanding the development of notions of ethics and compassion in later traditions.

There are several verses in the early Upaniṣads that seems to express that one who has knowledge is freed from all evil deeds as well as from the karmic results of his deeds. In a verse from the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* it is said that one who knows *Ātman*, “by no deed whatsoever of his is his world injured, not by stealing, not by killing an embryo, not by the murder of his mother, not by the murder of his father; if he has done any evil, the dark color departs not from his face.”¹⁹ This has been interpreted by some to mean that knowledge cancels past sins and permits continuing evil deeds without consequences.²⁰ However, these verses are referring to the nature of the knowledge which elevates the knower beyond the world of dualities. As such, distinctions are concepts of partial knowledge as they are derived from verbal distinction,²¹ “Verily, if there were no speech, neither right nor wrong would be known, neither true nor false, neither good nor bad, neither pleasant nor unpleasant. Speech, indeed, makes all this known.”²² This might mean that ethical life implies duality that does not align with the nature of *Brahman* and sets forth constant conflict and can only exist so long as there is duality; thus, the nature of ethical life is duality. Some scholars conclude that since our nature is *Brahman*, then if *Brahman* is beyond ethics, then so is the one who knows.²³

¹⁹ Olivelle, *The early Upanishads*, 329.

²⁰ Hume, *The thirteen principal Upanishads*, 60

²¹ Hume, *The thirteen principal Upanishads*, 63; See also: Olivelle, *The early Upanishads*, 125.

²² Olivelle, *The early Upanishads*, 259.

²³ Richard H. Jones, *Mysticism and morality: a new look at old questions* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2004), 88.

The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* states that “If the slayer thinks to slay, If the slain think himself slain, Both these understand not. This one slays not, nor is slain.”²⁴ This suggests that the wise know that they are unborn, that the self is not killed when the body is killed, therefore if one thinks that he can kill or be killed, he does not know. This teaching has reached the *Bhagavadgītā*, where Kṛṣṇa paraphrases this verse when he encourages Arjuna to fight.²⁵ As Robert Hume acknowledged, the Upaniṣads recognize that these teachings can be misapplied as conveyed in the story of Virocana, Prajāpati’s student, who received this teaching and used it in a way that reflects complete selfishness and utilitarianism. Such understanding was rejected by Prajāpati and the author.²⁶ This could indicate an ethical concern in the text, yet could also refer to the notion that in the enlightened state there is no self to be selfish about.²⁷ Nevertheless, it is important to distinguish that the Upaniṣads do not promote unethical actions, and in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, good conduct is equated to knowledge “Not he who has not ceased from bad conduct...Can obtain Him by intelligence.”²⁸ This perhaps implies the importance of moral conduct before transformative knowledge. Moreover, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* expresses the idea that one who knows the self will see the self in all beings, teachings that might indicate ethical implications for the one who knows.²⁹

Another prominent teaching from Yājñavalkya in the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* explains that “Not for love of the wife is a wife dear, but for love of the Soul a wife is dear.” Similarly, “not for love of sons, wealth...the worlds, the gods, things, anything, are they dear, but for love of the Soul they

²⁴ Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Charles A. Moore, *A source book in Indian philosophy* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2014), 43.

²⁵ Hume, *The thirteen principal Upanishads*, 66.

²⁶ Hume, *The thirteen principal Upanishads*, 65.

²⁷ Jones, *Mysticism and morality*, 90.

²⁸ Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A source book in Indian philosophy*, 43-44.

²⁹ Olivelle, *The early Upanishads*, 127.

are dear.” This can be interpreted to indicate that the Upaniṣads don’t address ethics or morality in a sense of regarding another. On the other hand, this teaching can also be interpreted to convey the idea that within everyday experiences one can find “the great doctrine of the individual self-finding his selfhood grounded in, and reaching out towards, that larger Self which embraces all individuals and all things.”³⁰ Thus, family and all forms of social interactions are also based upon the sense of unity the Upaniṣads highlight and it is the individualistic sense that is absent.³¹

Personality is at the core of ethics and morality and as suggested might present conflict in the Upaniṣads as it is in the realm of duality. Nonetheless, some teachings address personality characteristics. For example, in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, Yājñavalkya states that the one who knows becomes calm, restrained, withdrawn, patient, and composed and asserts that knowledge changes one’s personality and behavior for the better.³² This has led some scholars to conclude that when one is knowledgeable, one necessarily acts morally and will abstain from evil.³³ Some scholars describe this as a progression in which the finer the knowledge, the conduct becomes more graceful.³⁴ Conversely, others claim that the ethics of personality and individuality cannot find full expression in the unity of the Upaniṣads.³⁵

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is the earliest trace to the foundational concept of *karma*: “A man turns into something good by good action, and into something bad by bad action.”³⁶ The notion of *karma* might indicate ethical implications; good (*puṇya*) actions lead to a good birth,

³⁰ Hume, *The thirteen principal Upanishads*, 65.

³¹ Mahendra N. Sircar, “Social and Moral Ideas in the Upanishads,” *International Journal of Ethics* 44, no. 1 (1933), 95.

³² Olivelle, *The early Upanishads*, 127.

³³ Brian Black, “The Upaniṣads,” *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <https://iep.utm.edu/upanisad/>.

³⁴ Sircar, “Social and Moral Ideas in the Upanishads,” 94.

³⁵ Sircar, “Social and Moral Ideas in the Upanishads,” 100.

³⁶ Olivelle, *The early Upanishads*, 225-227.

while bad (*pāpa*) actions lead to evil births. Moreover, in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, Uddālaka teaches that people who are pleasant will enter a “pleasant womb” while people of foul behavior will enter the womb of a dog, a pig, or an outcaste.³⁷ Thus these effects on *saṃsāra* can have positive implication and be seen as an incentive toward ethical actions. Some argue that these teachings on *karma* are the “impersonal moral force” that governs existence and implies the moral consequences and interconnectedness of all beings and their actions.³⁸ However, some scholars claim the criterion of good (*puṇya*) and bad (*pāpa*) are not ethical concepts and that this verse should be limited to the concepts of *saṃsāra* and liberation, arguing that *puṇya* in this context does not mean good toward others and doesn’t require moral standpoint.³⁹ Furthermore this verse can be interpreted as advocating for self-control rather than an explicit moral preference.

Another key teaching is given in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, where Yama, the lord of death, advises Naciketas to choose *śreya* over *preya*. *Preya* refers to pleasure-seeking or sensory enjoyment and *śreya* is often translated as choosing good or that which is better,⁴⁰ perhaps pointing to seeds of ethic inclinations or the theory of *karma*. Some claim that an accurate translation of *śreya* is “control” thereby expressing the importance of controlling the outcome or consequences. Such a translation might indicate deontological ethics with emphasis on personal duty.⁴¹ It should be noted that the *Kaṭha* and *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* describe some early practices to achieve control of the senses, breath, and body, practices called Yoga in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*; these concepts are developed in later traditions.

³⁷ Olivelle, *The early Upanishads*, 235.

³⁸ Black, “The Upaniṣads,” *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <https://iep.utm.edu/upanisad/>; Olivelle, *The early Upanishads*, 21; Lindquist, “Narrating the Upaniṣads,” 311.

³⁹ Jones, *Mysticism and morality*, 84.

⁴⁰ Hume, *The thirteen principal Upanishads*, 346.

⁴¹ Shyam Ranganathan, *Hinduism: A Contemporary Philosophical Investigation* (Routledge, 2018), 178, 61.

Many Upaniṣads discuss the role of desire and express the idea that it is the desire that drives actions and lead to rebirth. For example, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* asserts “As is his desire, such is his resolve: As is his resolve, such the action he performs; what action he performs, that he procures for himself.”⁴² And thus the notion of becoming free from desire or detachment is emphasized in many teachings. There is no conclusive effect on moral conduct, since becoming desireless or detached can have positive implications on conduct yet can also imply no conduct at all. Yet these seeds are explored in later texts such as the *Mahābhārata*.

The teachings presented have resulted in a wide variety of interpretations. Some conclude that the Upaniṣads’ ontology conflicts with ethics and the two cannot coexist, hence, the Upaniṣads are not concerned with ethics and morality as it relates to the reality of others.⁴³ This view also excludes selfishness, and thus, the Upaniṣads are nonmoral or morally indifferent. Some scholars conclude that the Upaniṣads “show that a nonmoral value-system is one option in mystical ways of life,”⁴⁴ and that the Upaniṣads were a time of an “unsettling of the accepted ethics and a substitution of knowledge for religion and morality.”⁴⁵

On the contrary, some scholars conclude that it is the ontology of the self that establishes ethics, and that knowledge gives rise to morality.⁴⁶ When one attains knowledge, he becomes a person of good character. Thus “the very doctrine of the One Ultimate Reality is the strongest support and foundation of morality and the social sense or feeling.”⁴⁷ As will be explored, later

⁴² Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A source book in Indian philosophy*, 87.

⁴³ Jones, *Mysticism and morality*, 89-90; Sircar, “Social and Moral Ideas in the Upanishads,” 100.

⁴⁴ Jones, *Mysticism and morality*, 92.

⁴⁵ Hume, *The thirteen principal Upanishads*, 58.

⁴⁶ Ashwani Peetush, “The ethics of radical equality: Vivekananda and Radhakrishnan’s neo-Hinduism as a form of spiritual liberalism,” *The Bloomsbury research handbook of Indian ethics* (2017): 357-358; Brian Black, “The Upaniṣads,” *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <https://iep.utm.edu/upanisad/>.

⁴⁷ Bagmita Sandilya, “The Upaniadic concept of value as revealed in the legends of the Upaniads: from modern perspective,” *The Clarion-International Multidisciplinary Journal* 3, no. 2 (2014): 149.

traditions developed systematic ways to cultivate virtues on the path to knowledge, such as the eight limbs in Patañjali's *Yogasūtra*. Still, some argue that the Upaniṣads presuppose those virtues as inherent when one attains knowledge.⁴⁸ For example, non-violence (*ahiṃsā*) can be logically deduced: if we cause harm to ourselves, we cause harm to others since the Self is in each of us.⁴⁹ Yet it should be noted that this view does not align with the *Yogasūtra*'s ontological standpoint. Another opinion in academia is that ethics are a prerequisite to knowledge and are implicitly carried into the enlightened life.⁵⁰

Conclusion

There is no simple answer to the role of compassion and ethics in the Upaniṣads that could encapsulate the complexity of the texts, in the same way as there is no single philosophy in the text. Thus, drawing extreme conclusions based on isolated verses might also be problematic or incomplete. The Upaniṣads are primarily focused on the inner life, though it is also evident that that inner transformation has profound effects on all aspects of life. And so, even though the explicit teachings on ethics or conduct are sparse, the inner transformation shapes moral conduct. The unity traced through interconnectedness between the macrocosm and microcosm applies to all things and beings. This view was expressed by Joel Brereton: "each Upanishadic teaching creates an integrative vision, a view of the whole which draws together the separate elements of the world and of human experience and compresses them into a single form. To one who has this larger vision of things, the world is not a set of diverse and disorganized objects and living beings, but rather forms a totality with a distinct shape and character."⁵¹ Moreover, perhaps more than

⁴⁸ Brian Black, "The Upaniṣads," The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <https://iep.utm.edu/upanisad/>

⁴⁹ Jones, *Mysticism and morality*, 90.

⁵⁰ Jones, *Mysticism and morality*, 91.

⁵¹ Olivelle, *The early Upanishads*, 24.

providing answers or conclusions, the Upaniṣads emphasize the importance of raising these fundamental questions of existence, questions that were addressed by later traditions. The underlying interconnectedness becomes a lens to understand life as a whole. Through “arranging” the inner world one will become ethical. Therefore, even though compassion is not discussed in the texts, ethics and morality are still part of the Upaniṣadic corpus; they set the foundation for ethical and moral conduct through the impacts of knowledge on *karma* and *saṃsāra* and the underlying interconnectedness, both through incentive and the conception of *Ātman* and *Brahman*.

Chapter 2 - The *Yogasūtra* and Compassion

The relationship and exchange between Buddhism and Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* has drawn scholarly attention, often pointing to the influence of Buddhist thought on the *Yogasūtra*.⁵² Nevertheless, the classical period is characterized by a plurality of yoga forms and a complex landscape consisting of the yoga in the *Mahābhārata*, later Upaniṣads, the Purāṇas, proto-tantra, *Yogācāra* and *Vajrayāna* Buddhism, and Jain yoga. Consequently, distinguishing between traditions and practices is often not definite. Nevertheless, exploring and understanding the concepts used by Patañjali and their roots offers a distinct perspective and awareness to the text.

There are several shared themes between the *Yogasūtra* and Buddhist thought such as impermanence, suffering, the elimination of *saṃskāras*, and the eightfold path.⁵³ The term compassion, *karuṇā*, is mentioned in the text once in *sūtra* 1.33 as part of the *brahmavihāras*. The correlation between the Buddhist *brahmavihāras* and *sūtra* 1.33 has been identified by early scholars such as Émile Senart who wrote about the Buddhist influences on the *yogasūtra* and the origins for the *brahmavihāras*. Yet it should be noted that *sūtra* 1.33 does not mention this term. The four *brahmavihāras* are friendliness (*maitrī*), compassion (*karuṇā*) sympathetic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekṣā*); these virtues are presented in both traditions as objects of cultivation through meditation (*bhāvanā*).⁵⁴ In *sūtra* 1.33, the *brahmavihāras* are said to be practiced toward beings:

⁵² Dominik Wujastyk, "Some Problematic Yoga Sutras and their Buddhist Background," in *Yoga in Transformation. Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on a Global Phenomenon*, eds. Karl Baier, Philipp André Maas, and Karin Preisendanz (Vienna: Vienna University Press, 2018), 23.

⁵³ Karen O'Brien-Kop, *Rethinking 'Classical Yoga' and Buddhism: Meditation, Metaphors and Materiality* (Bloomsbury, 2021), 147; interestingly, the *sūtras* leading to the description of the eightfold path parallel the Buddhist Four Noble Truths in which an eightfold path is described as a remedy. Thus, it could point to a similar medical framework of Patañjali's eightfold path as a remedy.

⁵⁴ Wujastyk, "Some Problematic Yoga Sutras and their Buddhist Background," 24

“By cultivating an attitude of friendship toward those who are happy, compassion toward those in distress, joy toward those who are virtuous, and equanimity toward those who are non-virtuous, lucidity arises in the mind.”⁵⁵

It should be noted that the practice is part of a series of *sūtras* that describe practices and techniques for controlling the mind. The meditative practice leads to a lucid mind of the nature of *sattva guṇa*, an essential component for the attainments of one pointed concentration.⁵⁶ In this regard, Śaṅkara, an eighth-century commentator and formative figure in *Advaita Vedānta*, quotes the *Bhagavadgītā* and relates these to the attitude of non-attachment.⁵⁷ Vācaspati Miśra, a ninth-century commentator on the *Yogasūtra*, suggests that compassion toward those in distress means wishing to remove someone’s miseries as if they were your own and results in the removal of the desire to inflict harm on others.⁵⁸ Christopher Chapple suggests that the practice of the *brahmavihāras* in the *Yogasūtra* aims to minimize our separation from others and to weaken our emotional patterns.⁵⁹

Yogasūtra 1.33 is a part of a list of practices Patañjali offers to support the mind in meditation.⁶⁰ The result of these practices is stated in *sutra* 1.41:

“*samāpatti*, complete absorption of the mind when it is free from *vṛttis*, occurs when the mind becomes just like a transparent jewel, taking the form of

⁵⁵ Edwin F. Bryant, *The yoga sūtras of Patañjali: A new edition, translation, and commentary* (North Point Press, 2015), 128-129.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Christopher Key Chapple, *Yoga and the Luminous: Patanjali's Spiritual Path to Freedom* (State University of New York Press, 2008).

⁶⁰ Bryant, *The yoga sūtras of Patañjali*, 142.

whatever object is placed before it, whether the object be the knower, the instrument of knowledge, or the object of knowledge.”⁶¹

Chapple suggests that this *sūtra* points to a close relationship between the Yoga school and the Buddhist *Yogācāra* school.⁶² In the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra*, a *Yogācāra* text, the transparent jewel metaphor is used to describe the state of the *bodhisattva*. While the schools are theologically different, Chapple points to a correlation between their processes of transcendence.⁶³

The *brahmavihāras* are not explicitly referred to again in the *Yogasūtra*, yet they are implied in several contexts as pointed to by several commentators. Bhoja Rāja, an eleventh-century commentator on the *Yogasūtra*, states that cleanliness, one of the *niyamas* (or observances), is both external and internal;⁶⁴ external cleanliness refers to the body and internal cleanliness refers to the cleansing of the impurities of the mind. He states that internal cleanliness is achieved through friendliness, *maitrī*, and so forth, thus, relating cleanliness to the practice of the *brahmavihāras*.⁶⁵ Moreover, *Yogasūtra* 3.23 states that the practice of *saṃyama* on friendliness and so forth results in strengths.⁶⁶ This *sūtra* also refers to the practice of the *brahmavihāras*. Hariharānanda, a nineteenth-century commentator on the *Yogasūtra*, states that by *saṃyama* on the feeling of friendliness one becomes free of malice and hardness, and no thoughts of harming others darken his heart. Vācaspati Miśra states that by *saṃyama* on the feeling of compassion, one can lift the

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Chapple, *Yoga and the Luminous*, 224.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Bryant, *The yoga sūtras of Patañjali*, 2.32.

⁶⁵ Bryant, *The yoga sūtras of Patañjali*, 2.32, p.253; Rājamārtanda, Bhoja Rāja’s commentary on verse 2.32: *śaucaṃ dvividham. bāhyam ābhyantaraṃ ca. bāhyaṃ mṛjjalādibhiḥ kāyādiprakṣālanam. ābhyantaraṃ maitryādibhiścittamalānāṃ prakṣālanam.*

⁶⁶ *saṃyama* refers to the practice of *dhāraṇā*, *dhyaṇa*, *samādhi* performed together. See: Bryant, *The yoga sūtras of Patañjali*, 3.4, p.310; Bryant, *The yoga sūtras of Patañjali*, 3.23, p. 350: *maitryādiṣu balāni.*

suffering out of people's pain.⁶⁷ Therefore, these commentaries suggest the strength of the mind as a result of these practices emanates, expands, and affects others.

Compassion and the *brahmavihāras*

The Buddhist literature is vast and diverse, therefore drawing a firm conclusion is impossible. Nevertheless, in this part I will explore the Buddhist notion of compassion within the *brahmavihāras* and highlight themes that are relevant to the understanding of the practice within yoga. In various Buddhist sources the *brahmavihāras* are seen both as a tool for cultivating meditative skills and morality, as well as the comportment of the enlightened and an ethical end.⁶⁸ Jay L. Garfield suggests that the cultivation of the *brahmavihāras* enables one to see the world from a nonegocentric perspective.⁶⁹

Compassion is often featured in the early Buddhist discourses as the second among the four *brahmavihāras*, often called the immeasurables: loving-kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*), empathetic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkha*). They were systematically detailed in the *Visuddhimagga*. In earlier texts, the meditative cultivation of the *brahmavihāras* is often presented as boundless radiating in all directions. In the *Madhyama-āgama* for example, the cultivation of compassion is expressed as pervading all directions:

“Being endowed with diligence and virtue in this way, having accomplished purity of bodily deeds and purity of verbal and mental deeds, being free from ill will and contention, discarding sloth-and-torpor, being without restlessness or conceit, removing doubt and overcoming arrogance, with right mindfulness and right comprehension, being without bewilderment, the learned noble disciple

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Garfield, *Buddhist ethics: A philosophical exploration*, 131.

⁶⁹ Garfield, *Buddhist ethics: A philosophical exploration*, 149.

dwells having pervaded one direction with a mind imbued with compassion, and in the same way the second, third, and fourth directions, the four intermediate directions, above and below, completely and everywhere. Being without mental shackles, resentment, ill will, or contention, with a mind imbued with compassion that is supremely vast and great, boundless, and well developed, [the learned noble disciple] dwells having pervaded the entire world.”⁷⁰

This discourse also relates the practice of compassion to moral conduct, thus suggesting a moral basis for meditative practice and wholesome mental states.⁷¹

In later texts, the meditative cultivation of the *brahmavihāras* includes beings as objects for meditation. As such, the *Visuddhimagga*, describes the practice as involving beings such as a friend, a neutral person, and an enemy.⁷² Nevertheless, Anālayo argues that this practice is portrayed as an initial stage of practice towards a boundless radiation of compassion.⁷³ This is supported by the claim that the *Visuddhimagga* is a text that bridges the gap between monastics and laity.⁷⁴ Buddhaghosa’s *Visuddhimagga* characterizes *karuṇā* as actively alleviating suffering and the inability to bear suffering, while the manifestation of *karuṇā* is described as lack of cruelty.⁷⁵

Jenkins suggested that in early discourse *mettā* subsumed *karuṇā*, and accordingly, it is the most frequently mentioned *brahmavihāra*. He argues that in early Buddhism the term *mettā* tends

⁷⁰ Anālayo, *Compassion and emptiness in early Buddhist meditation* (UK: Windhorse Publications Limited, 2015), 21.

⁷¹ Anālayo, *Compassion and emptiness in early Buddhist meditation*, 22.

⁷² Anālayo, *Compassion and emptiness in early Buddhist meditation*, 27.

⁷³ Anālayo, *Compassion and emptiness in early Buddhist meditation*, 27.

⁷⁴ Ann Gleig, *American dharma: Buddhism beyond modernity* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2019), 20.

⁷⁵ Garfield, *Buddhist ethics: A philosophical exploration*, 137; See: *Visuddhimagga*, IX.94.

to indicate a predominantly ethical context and *anukampā*, another common term for compassion, was also seen as part of *mettā*.⁷⁶

Mettā, the first of the *brahmavihāras*, is translated as loving-kindness or benevolence. The quality of *mettā* has been depicted in the *mettā-sutta* as the protection of a mother:

“Just as a mother who has an only son would protect her own son with her life, so one should cultivate a boundless mind towards all living beings.”⁷⁷

This implies an active component of protection towards others that extends beyond mental cultivation alongside a detached boundless mind.⁷⁸ In the *Mahāyānasūtrāṅkāra*, *mettā* is said to be the foundation of compassion and depicted as the water that nourishes the roots of compassion. Therefore, the practices are seen as interrelated; thus, based on *mettā*, compassion grows and develops. Anālayo suggests that framing compassion within the *brahmavihāras* provides support to possible self-centered drawbacks and diminishes one’s sense of self.⁷⁹ Thus, it points to the importance of the practice of compassion alongside the other virtues.

It should also be noted that *mettā* (and as extension compassion) is also portrayed as having mundane benefits. For example, the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* mentions that one’s sleep becomes peaceful, and one is protected, loved, and respected by others.⁸⁰ Moreover, in the *Ekottarika-āgama*, the cultivation of compassion is said to give rise to joy:

“Being pervaded within by this mind of compassion one has gained gladness and joy, and the mind has become straight.”⁸¹

⁷⁶ Stephen Jenkins, *The Circle of Compassion: An Interpretive Study of Karuṇā in Indian Buddhist Literature*, Cambridge Buddhist Institute Series, Ed. R.C. Jamieson. Edinburgh: Hardinge Simpole (Ph.D. diss., Harvard, 1998) 28, 37.

⁷⁷ Anālayo, *Compassion and emptiness in early Buddhist meditation*, 30.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Anālayo, *Compassion and emptiness in early Buddhist meditation*, 71.

⁸⁰ Anālayo, *Compassion and emptiness in early Buddhist meditation*, 52; Stephen L. Jenkins, “Benefit of Self and Other: The Importance of Persons and their Self-Interest in Buddhist Ethics,” *法鼓佛學學報* 16 (2015): 7.

⁸¹ Anālayo, *Compassion and emptiness in early Buddhist meditation*, 24.s

The Objects of Compassion in Buddhism

A common claim regarding the nature of compassion in Buddhism is the perceived conflict between living beings and the concept of emptiness or no-self.⁸² As Jenkins asks, “who is the object and who is the agent of this compassion?”⁸³ Yet the ontological concept of emptiness or no-self does not negate the reality of existence, rather it suggests that living beings are empty of a substantial and permanent self. Consequentially, being empty of self relates to all phenomenon of experience, internally and externally, towards self and others.⁸⁴ Furthermore, Anālayo suggests that cultivating compassion towards living beings does not contradict the idea of emptiness “as long as these living beings are seen with insight as the impermanent products of conditions, and thus as not-self.”⁸⁵

Another common claim is that compassion arises due to the realization of emptiness and is grounded in ontological perspectives.⁸⁶ While it also arises from the realization of ontological truths, compassion is presented as the means to the realization and a prerequisite for it.⁸⁷ Hence, this implies a motivational aspect for the practice of compassion.

In several *Mahāyāna* traditions,⁸⁸ compassion is classified as threefold according to its objects, *ālambana*. The first is compassion with sentient beings as its object. The second is compassion with dharmas as its object; although not consistent in the literature, it tends to refer to the Buddhist view that beings are compounded. The third is compassion with no object that originates from the realization of emptiness.⁸⁹ Each category is a mode of realizing sentient beings.

⁸² Anālayo, *Compassion and emptiness in early Buddhist meditation*, 94.

⁸³ Cowherds (Authors), *Moonpaths: Ethics and emptiness* (UK: Oxford University Press, 2016), 97.

⁸⁴ Anālayo, *Compassion and emptiness in early Buddhist meditation*, 98.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Stephen L. Jenkins, “Benefit of Self and Other: The Importance of Persons and their Self-Interest in Buddhist Ethics,” 6.

⁸⁷ Cowherds (Authors), *Moonpaths: Ethics and emptiness*, 103.

⁸⁸ See: Cowherds (Authors), *Moonpaths: Ethics and emptiness*, 100.

⁸⁹ Cowherds (Authors), *Moonpaths: Ethics and emptiness*, 101.

Jenkins highlights that the third type of compassion is rare as it refers to those who reach the realization of emptiness. Therefore, for most *Mahāyāna* Buddhists, compassion involves sentient beings as their object and the conventional awareness of the suffering of sentient beings.⁹⁰

Possible Origins for the *Brahmavihāras*

The *brahmavihāras* are well established as a Buddhist practice and principle. While the *brahmavihāras* are not found in any *Brāhmaṇa* or Jain scriptures, several Buddhist sources imply that the *brahmavihāras* were known and practiced in other traditions which affirm the existence of a Self.⁹¹ As presented above, compassion with sentient beings for its object is shared between Buddhism and the *Yogasūtra*'s conception of the *brahmavihāras*. Johannes Bronkhorst suggests that "at least for some time the Brahmic States were practiced identically by Buddhists and certain non-Buddhists."⁹² He further suggests a possible relationship between the *brahmavihāras* and the Jain reflections on infinity.⁹³

Rhys Davids, Mudagamuwe Maithrimurthi, and others argue that the *brahmavihāras* have *Brāhmaṇa* origins.⁹⁴ Barbara Stoler Miller points out that early Buddhist terms and practices were often reinterpretations of *Brāhmaṇa* sources.⁹⁵ She examines the term *brahmavihāra* and suggests a technical meaning as a foundation for the Buddhist conception. As such, Miller argues that the use of the term Brahma in a compound tends to indicate something extraordinary, yet not the

⁹⁰ Cowherds (Authors), *Moonpaths: Ethics and emptiness*, 102.

⁹¹ See for example, the Bodhisattvabhūmi: Jenkins, *The Circle of Compassion*, 197; The Saṃyutta Nikāya (SN V. 115f)

⁹² Johannes Bronkhorst, *The two traditions of meditation in ancient India* (Motilal Banarsidass Publ., 1993), 68.

⁹³ Bronkhorst, *The two traditions of meditation in ancient India*, 69.

⁹⁴ Mudagamuwe Maithrimurthi, *Wohllwollen, Mitleid, Freude und Gleichmut: eine ideengeschichtliche Untersuchung der vier apramānas in der buddhistischen Ethik und Spiritualität von den Anfängen bis hin zum frühen Yogācāra*. Vol. 50 (Franz Steiner Verlag, 1999); Barbara Stoler Miller, "On cultivating the immeasurable change of heart: The Buddhist brahma-vihāra formula," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* (1979): 209-221, 210.

⁹⁵ Barbara Stoler Miller, "On cultivating the immeasurable change of heart: The Buddhist brahma-vihāra formula," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* (1979): 210.

ultimate ideal.⁹⁶ She further argues that the term *vihāra* indicates transposition such as the exchange of *pādas* within a hymn to achieve specific results in the ritual.⁹⁷ Thus, this implies a magical transportation which Miller suggests underlies the concept of the *brahmavihāras*. She concludes that this reinterpretation highlights the Buddhist view of internalization of Vedic ideas: “One can achieve even the goals of Vedic ritual by practicing the brahma-viharas by magically transmuting egotistical emotions into the four immeasurable virtues of love, compassion, joy, and impartiality.”⁹⁸

Notes on Ethics in the *Yogasūtra*

The *yamas*, restraints or rules, are the first limb of Patañjali’s eightfold path. Referring to both the *brahmavihāras* and the *yamas*, Chapple underlines that “Ethics plays a central, foundational role in the eightfold path outlined by Patañjali.”⁹⁹ The five *yamas* are nonviolence (*ahiṃsā*), truthfulness (*satya*), not stealing (*asteya*), sexual continence (*brahmacarya*) and non-acquisitiveness (*aparigraha*).¹⁰⁰ Nonviolence, *ahiṃsā*, is said to be the foundation of the *yamas* and results in the absence of hostility in the presence of the practitioner.¹⁰¹ Stuart Sarbacker suggests that explicitly *ahiṃsā* refers to restraint from killing living things, yet may also refer to harmful speech and thought.¹⁰² While compassion is not explicitly mentioned as a part of the *yamas* within the *Yogasūtra*, it could be argued that compassion is subsumed within nonviolence, the foundational practice for ethics in the *Yogasūtra*. This is an argument that I will examine in chapter 6.

⁹⁶ Miller, “On cultivating the immeasurable change of heart,” 214.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Miller, “On cultivating the immeasurable change of heart,” 213.

⁹⁹ Chapple, *Yoga and the Luminous*, 33.

¹⁰⁰ Bryant, *The yoga sūtras of Patañjali*, 2.30.

¹⁰¹ Stuart Ray Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga: The History and Philosophy of Indian Mind-Body Discipline* (State University of New York Press, 2021) 100-101.

¹⁰² Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 99.

These restraints predate Patañjali and are found in the *Ācārāṅga Sūtra* (fourth-third century BCE) of the Jain tradition. Moreover, seeds for the conception of the *yamas* can also be found in the *Mahābhārata*. The *Mahābhārata* contains several lists of ethical virtues to follow. For example, the *Śāntiparva*, chapter 262.37-38 mentions:

“non-cruelty, forbearance, tranquility, nonviolence, truthfulness, honesty, absence of malice, lack of pride, modesty, patience, calmness. And these are the path of a Brahmin (on) the path. By these, a wise person attains that highest, which he should know through the mind, action (and) firm belief.”¹⁰³

Another ethical aspect is discussed in the *Yogabhāṣya* on *sūtra* 2.33. The *sūtra* suggests the practice of *pratipakṣa-bhāvanam* for countering harmful thoughts. The *Yogabhāṣya* states that when wrong thoughts of violence arise the practitioner should contemplate:

“While being baked in cyclic existence, I have taken refuge (*śaranam*) in the practice of yoga (*yogadharmā*), by giving protection to all living beings.”¹⁰⁴

Taking refuge in the *dharma* and the use of the term *śaranam* echoes the Three Jewels of Buddhism: the Buddha, the *dharma*, and the *saṃgha*.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, the emphasis on the protection of living beings further establishes an ethical foundation in the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ *Mahābhārata* 12.262.37-38: *ānṛśamsyaṃ kṣamā śāntir ahimsā satyam ārjavam adroho nābhimānaś ca hrīṣ titikṣā śamas tathā* 38. *panthāno brahmaṇas tv ete etaiḥ prāpnoti yat param tad vidvān anubudhyeta manasā karma niścayam.*

¹⁰⁴ *Yogabhāṣya* on *sūtra* 2.33, translated by Zoe Slatoff.

¹⁰⁵ The threefold refuge in Buddhism: *buddhaṃ śaranaṃ gacchāmi, dhammaṃ śaranaṃ gacchāmi, saṅghaṃ śaranaṃ gacchāmi*

¹⁰⁶ The *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* refers to the *Yogasūtra* along with the *Bhāṣya*.

Conclusion

Compassion, *karuṇā*, is not part of the *yamas* or the eightfold path of Patañjali. It is mentioned in *Yogasūtra* 1.33 as part of the *brahmavihāras*. As explored, the *brahmavihāras* are foundational in Buddhist literature and are seen as meditative skill, moral cultivation, as well as the characteristics of the enlightened being. While this practice is given in the *Yogasūtra* among other meditative practices, it seems likely to also address moral cultivation. As discussed, compassion with a sentient being for its object is shared between Buddhism and the *Yogasūtra* conception of the *brahmavihāras*. The origins of the practice remain vague, yet it is clear that the practice was known and shared between several traditions. Nevertheless, the Buddhist influences on the *Yogasūtra* are well established and the reference to compassion in the text draws directly from Buddhism.

Chapter 3 - Compassion as a Core Element in the *Mahābhārata*

The *Mahābhārata* is an epic text, or *itihāsa*, which translates to “thus it was.” The *Mahābhārata* is considered an all-encompassing epic with complex narratives, and intentions, with philosophical inclinations. Even though it is a “remembered” (*smṛti*) text, it is also referred to as the Fifth Veda, conveying its importance and elevating the authority of the epic to a “heard” (*śruti*) text.¹⁰⁷ The epic was initially composed by poets from the *kṣatriya* or warrior class, but later was passed to *brāhmaṇa* traditions.¹⁰⁸ It is considered to contain all the knowledge necessary for religious, social, and material aspects of life. Consequently, extracting a cohesive and precise conclusion is challenging. The historical composition of the *Mahābhārata* is roughly estimated between fourth century BC to fifth century CE and thus it has been composed over approximately seven to nine hundred years.¹⁰⁹ There is a scholarly debate as to whether the *Mahābhārata* is a combined text. Some suggest it was initially an epic and the didactic components were inserted into it, while others suggest it is a unified text with intentional and cohesive meaning.¹¹⁰

This period in India saw major shifts in the social, political, and cultural spheres. James Fitzgerald notes that these changes impacted the Brahmins due to the rise of other religious groups that received acknowledgment and patronage and thus grew in political power, as in the case of the Buddhist emperor Aśoka.¹¹¹ According to Fitzgerald, the *Mahābhārata* is a new kind of Brahmin text that presented a shift from the exclusivism of the Vedas for the Brahmin tradition to a Veda for all society.¹¹² He argues that the text can be seen as an attempt to reclaim the Brahmins’

¹⁰⁷ Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 108.

¹⁰⁸ Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 111.

¹⁰⁹ James L. Fitzgerald, “The Great Epic of India as Religious Rhetoric: A Fresh Look at the Mahābhārata,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (1983): 612

¹¹⁰ See: Fitzgerald, “The Great Epic of India as Religious Rhetoric,” 611-630.

¹¹¹ Fitzgerald, “The Great Epic of India as Religious Rhetoric,” 613.

¹¹² Fitzgerald, “The Great Epic of India as Religious Rhetoric,” 614.

status by grounding a new vision of a Brahmanic ideal and dismissing the kingship of the *kṣatriya* class as violent and divisive.¹¹³

Hence, the *Mahābhārata* represents the changing social and cultural climate in India during the early centuries of the Common Era and the reshaping of the importance of Vedic *dharma*, the integration of renouncer ideology into householder contexts, the tension between the *kṣatriya* warrior-ideology of *dharma* and the renouncer ideology of yoga and *ahiṃsā*, as well as countering the *śramaṇa* traditions' rejection of Vedic worldview. It is also the foundation for the later development of *bhakti* traditions.¹¹⁴ Upon this complex background, the main narrative tells the story of the Pāṇḍava princes from the *kṣatriya* class defending *dharma*—law and duty—in the face of *adharma*, injustice and disorder.

While the *Dharmaśāstras* provide rules of conduct and coherent instructions to deal with dilemmas, the *Mahābhārata* raises questions concerning *dharma*'s complex nature and tends to provide multiple answers. The text often states that *dharma* is *atisūkṣma* (extremely subtle), and offers various perspectives to what constitutes *dharma*, which raises the question of whether *dharma* is contextual.¹¹⁵ Fitzgerald suggests this conveys the idea of the complexity of human life and the acknowledgment that action requires the evaluation and rating of virtues.¹¹⁶ He stresses that *dharma* in the context of the *Mahābhārata* does not signify the cosmic natural law, rather meaning law, right, or virtue.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ Fitzgerald, "The Great Epic of India as Religious Rhetoric," 625.

¹¹⁴ Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 112.

¹¹⁵ Naama Shalom, *Re-ending the Mahabharata: The Rejection of Dharma in the Sanskrit Epic* (State University of New York Press, 2017), 16.

¹¹⁶ James L. Fitzgerald, "Dharma and its translation in the Mahābhārata," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 32, no. 5/6 (2004): 672.

¹¹⁷ Fitzgerald, "Dharma and its translation in the Mahābhārata," 674.

Dharma is a pivotal concept in the *Mahābhārata* with vast dialogues and narratives that examine various elusive terms that shed light on the understanding of compassion. In particular, the last third of the text consists of instructions and discussions on *dharma* between Bhīṣma and Yudhiṣṭhira.¹¹⁸ Yudhiṣṭhira, the eldest of the five Pāṇḍava brothers, is depicted as the embodiment of dharma and is often referred to as *dharmarāja*, the *dharma* king. In the beginning of the epic, he is also referred to as the truthful knower of compassion (*satyaṃ karuṇavedinam*).¹¹⁹

Notes on Buddhist Influence on the *Mahābhārata*

The debate on the boundaries between the religious traditions of Southeast Asia during the period of the *Mahābhārata* is an old one. Particularly, the influence of Buddhism on the text has received much attention in scholarly literature. While a text of this magnitude might have absorbed and assimilated Buddhist references passed down through many centuries, scholars tend to argue that Buddhism had a significant influence on the text due to the cultural and political atmosphere at the time.¹²⁰ However, scholars reach different conclusions as to the implications on the text. For example, Fitzgerald sees the character of Yudhiṣṭhira as a “dark” representation of King Aśoka seeking to restore the authority of the Brahmins, while Nicholas Sutton sees his character as a representation of Aśoka as a figure of non-cruelty and forgiveness.¹²¹ Thus, they see the Buddhist influence through a historical and political lens. Nevertheless, it seems more likely that Buddhism is referenced in various ways just like the other concepts in the text.¹²² Thus, traces of Buddhist

¹¹⁸ Fitzgerald, “The Great Epic of India as Religious Rhetoric,” 619.

¹¹⁹ The *Mahābhārata* 1.129.7

¹²⁰ Alf Hiltebeitel, “Buddhism and the *Mahābhārata*: Boundary Dynamics in Textual Practice,” in *Boundaries, Dynamics and Construction of Traditions in South Asia*, ed. Federico Squarci (Anthem Press, 2011), 107.

¹²¹ Hiltebeitel, “Buddhism and the *Mahābhārata*: Boundary Dynamics in Textual Practice,” 114.

¹²² Hiltebeitel, “Buddhism and the *Mahābhārata*: Boundary Dynamics in Textual Practice,” 29.

thought are spread across the epic, such as the reference to the eightfold path of Buddhism and using various terms associated with Buddhist doctrines.¹²³

For example, in chapter twelve of the *Bhagavadgītā*, which discusses the yoga of devotion, Kṛṣṇa declares that “one who has no hatred for any living beings, friendly (*maitra*) and compassionate (*karuṇa*) indeed,” is dear to him.¹²⁴ Charan Gaya Tripathi suggests that using the terms *maitra* and *karuṇa* “must be regarded as a terminus technicus of Buddhism which has lent this word a special connotation,” and highlights the significance of the pairing of the two virtues in this verse.¹²⁵ She further point to the Buddhist origin and connotation of the term *sarvabhūtānām*, “all living beings.”¹²⁶

The ideal of *ānrśamsya*

The word *ānrśamsya*, often translated as non-cruelty, is an important concept and is often related to the understanding of compassion in the epic. Numerous discourses explore the meaning of *ānrśamsya* and illustrate Yudhiṣṭhira’s character as evolving and embodying *ānrśamsya* throughout the text. Mukund Lath argued that *ānrśamsya* is the ideal for the path of action, *pravṛttimārga*, as opposed to the ideal of non-violence, *ahiṃsā*, which is associated with the path of renunciation, *nivṛttimārga*.¹²⁷ Alf Hildebeitel suggests that *ānrśamsya* is a critique and alternative to the *śramaṇic* traditions’ emphasis on renunciation through the concept of absolute

¹²³ The Mahābhārata, 3.2.71, 3.2.73cd-75.

¹²⁴ The *Bhagavadgītā* 12.13ab: one who has no hatred for any living beings, friendly and compassionate indeed, who is unselfish, free from egotism, indifferent to suffering and happiness, patient; *adveṣṭā sarvabhūtānām maitraḥ karuṇa eva ca nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ sama-duḥkha-sukhaḥ kṣamī*.

¹²⁵ Charan Gaya Tripathi, “TRACES OF BUDDHIST THOUGHTS IN THE BHAGAVADGĪTĀ,” *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* 78, no. 1/4 (1997): 54.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Mukund Lath, “The Concept of Anrshamsya in the Mahabharata,” in *Reflections and Variations on the Mahabharata*, ed. T. R. S. Sharma (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 2009), 82–9.

ahimsā. He identifies that the epic explores the tensions between three values that are considered the highest *dharma*: truth, non-cruelty, and non-violence. Hildebeitel explores the distinctions between *ānṛśaṃsya* and *ahimsā* and demonstrates that *ānṛśaṃsya* is said to be the highest *dharma* more than any other ideal in the epic.¹²⁸ *Ahimsā* is characterized by the desire not to kill or harm creatures and on a deeper level represents the desire to overcome the desire for life.¹²⁹ On the other hand, *ānṛśaṃsya* is often explored as a family value, hence he suggests it is a relational virtue with a “spiritual sense” that honors the bonds that connect “all forms of life through the spiritual presence that permeates all beings.”¹³⁰

Sibaji Bandyopadhyay argues that the *Mahābhārata* illustrates the limits of non-violence through a discourse between a meat seller, Dharmavyadha, and a Brahmin. Dharmavyadha’s profession as a meat seller entails violence, however, he strives to follow the path of *dharma* and lead a moral life.¹³¹ Bandyopadhyay analyzes Dharmavyadha’s argument:¹³²

1. “Ahimsa is the highest dharma, which is founded upon truth.
2. But even though men of learning and wisdom have advocated non-violence from the earliest times, reflection shows us that there is none who is non-violent.

¹²⁸ Kanad Sinha, “Redefining Dharma in a Time of Transition: Ānṛśaṃsya in the Mahābhārata as an Alternative End of Human Life,” *Studies in History* 35, no. 2 (2019): 152; Alf Hildebeitel, *Dharma* (University of Hawaii Press, 2010), 85.

¹²⁹ Alf Hildebeitel, *Rethinking the Mahabharata: a reader's guide to the education of the dharma king* (University of Chicago Press, 2001), 203.

¹³⁰ Hildebeitel, *Dharma*, 81.

¹³¹ Sibaji Bandyopadhyay, “Beyond Non-Violence,” *Global-e: A Global Studies Journal* 11, no. 19 (March 27, 2018): 1.

¹³² *Ibid.*

3. Hence, the best way to resolve the paradox is to temper the exacting demands of 'non-violence' by emphasizing 'leniency' or 'non-cruelty' and, for all practical purposes, replacing the commandment 'ahimsa is the highest dharma' with 'anrsamsya is the highest dharma'."

Non-violence is an unattainable ideal and therefore *ānṛśamsya* is recommended. Bandyopadhyay further suggests that the ideal is based upon a personal attitude rather than the action and is based on non-attachment.¹³³ Sinha Kanad argues that Yudhiṣṭhira represents the criticism against the violent duty of the *kṣatriya* class rather than the renunciants' strict adherence to *ahimsā*.¹³⁴ He proposes that the text portrays a gradual evolution of the *ānṛśamsya* ideal through the character of Yudhiṣṭhira.¹³⁵ Interestingly, at the end of Yudhiṣṭhira's journey he relinquishes heaven and chooses to stay with his lifelong dog, referred to as his *bhakta* or devotee, out of his commitment to *ānṛśamsya*.¹³⁶ According to Kanad, this narrative establishes *ānṛśamsya* as an end goal for one's life as opposed to the attainment of heaven in *kṣatriya dharma* or the liberation from *samsāra* in *śramaṇic dharma*.¹³⁷

The epic consists of sub-tales or *upākhyānas* which focus on the conception of *dharma* (*dharmyāni*).¹³⁸ Hildebeitel notes that the sub-tales often include discussions on unofficial laws and address grey areas.¹³⁹ In a discourse in book 13, the *Anuśāsana Parvan*, Yudhiṣṭhira asks

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Kanad Sinha, "Redefining Dharma in a Time of Transition: Ānṛśamsya in the Mahābhārata as an Alternative End of Human Life," *Studies in History* 35, no. 2 (2019): 151.

¹³⁵ Sinha, "Redefining Dharma in a Time of Transition: Ānṛśamsya in the Mahābhārata as an Alternative End of Human Life," 147, 152.

¹³⁶ Sinha, "Redefining Dharma in a Time of Transition: Ānṛśamsya in the Mahābhārata as an Alternative End of Human Life," 155; this relationship will be further explored in the chapter.

¹³⁷ Sinha, "Redefining Dharma in a Time of Transition: Ānṛśamsya in the Mahābhārata as an Alternative End of Human Life," 155.

¹³⁸ Alf Hildebeitel, "Among friends: Marriage, women, and some little birds," in *Gender and Narrative in the Mahabharata*, eds. Simon Brodbeck and Brian Black (Routledge, 2007), 222-223.

¹³⁹ Hildebeitel, "Among friends: Marriage, women, and some little birds," 224.

Bhīṣma about the nature of *ānṛśaṃsya*. Even though it is not considered a sub-tale, the chapter is situated in a series of sub-tales and supports the main narrative of the epic. The nature of *ānṛśaṃsya* is explored through the following story:¹⁴⁰

Yudhiṣṭhira said,

I wish to hear all the characteristics of non-cruelty and moral conduct of devoted people.

Tell me that, O' Grandfather.

Bhīṣma said,

In the kingdom of King Kāśi, a hunter departing the villages,

having taken with him a poisonous arrow, hunted for deer.

And there, in the big forest, having seen deer nearby,

an arrow was discharged by the hunter greedy for prey.

There, by he who desired to kill, whose arrows were hard to restrain,

with an arrow that was off the mark of its target, a big forest tree was pierced.

That tree, shot with great force by an arrow smeared with poison,

letting go of its fruits and leaves, became dried up.

¹⁴⁰ See appendix no. 1 for the full translation with Sanskrit breakdown.

When the tree became thus, the parrot, who had dwelt for a long time in the hollow of the tree, did not abandon his habitation, out of his devotion to the forest tree.

Not moving, fasting, weary, and also silent,

the parrot, grateful and virtuous, withered along with the tree.

Indra, the instructor of the ignorant, was surprised,

having understood him as generous, with noble essence, superhuman behavior and indifferent to suffering and happiness.

From that, a sorrowful thought occurred to Indra.

How could this bird be engaged in non-cruelty, not suited for one born as an animal?

“Or else there is nothing extraordinary here,” was the thought of Indra.

For all beings in this world are seen as acting in every way towards all.

Then, assuming a human form, with the appearance of a Brahmin,

Indra, having descended to earth, said to the bird:

“O’ Best of Birds, O’ Parrot, Sir, Granddaughter of Dākṣa, who possesses good offspring due to you,

I ask you, why don’t you abandon this withered tree?”

Then, being questioned, the parrot answered, having saluted him respectfully by bowing his head, “Welcome King of the Gods! I have recognized you by my austerities.”

Then, by Indra, with the ten thousand eyes, “Excellent! Excellent!” was said.

Thus, honored by his tapas, then he thought, “Oh, he is very knowledgeable!”

Thus, Indra, the destroyer of Bala, even knowing that parrot as possessing pure action and highly virtuous, asked about the attainment of that [reason for not abandoning the tree].

“Why do you stay in the withered tree, who is leafless and has no fruit,

and is not fit to be the refuge for birds, when this forest is vast?

In this great forest, there are also many other beautiful trees,

whose hollows are covered with leaves, with abundant paths.

O’ Steadfast One, surely consider with wisdom, this unsteady and decaying tree whose life is gone, whose essence is diminished and whose splendor is diminished.”

The distressed and virtuous parrot having heard that which was spoken by Indra,

sighing deeply, said these words:

“O’ Husband of Śaci, the gods are not to be dishonored. O’ Lord of the Gods, listen to that.

Where there was non-existence, there I came into existence.

I was born in this tree, and in this tree I was endowed with the virtues by the seers,
and in this tree, I was protected in my youth and not defeated by enemies.

O' Sinless One, why have you made an issue out of the fruitlessness of my
compassion?

I am devoted to non-cruelty and filled with devotion.

Compassion is indeed the great characteristic of virtue of good people,
and compassion always brings joy to good people.

You alone were questioned by all the gods about their doubts on virtue,

From that, you were established in sovereignty among the god of gods.

O' Thousand-Eyed One, it is not worthy of you to suggest abandoning this tree at
this time, having offered me livelihood when it was capable.

Certainly, out of devotion, how can I abandon it this day?"

Indra, the punisher of the demon Pāka, delighted and pleased with his lovely words
and non-cruelty, replied to the *dharma*-knowing parrot:

“Choose a boon.”

Then, that parrot in the hollow of the tree who possessed the highest non-cruelty,
asked for the boon of the existence of that tree, forever.

Knowing that firm perfection of morality in the parrot, Indra was pleased.

Therefore, he sprinkled the tree with nectar.

Then, that tree obtained beautiful fruits, leaves, and even branches,

because of the firm devotion and radiance of the parrot.

And the parrot by that action, performed out of non-cruelty,

O' Great King, at the end of his life, obtained residence in the same world as Indra.

Thus, O' Best of Men, fixed in devotion alone, one obtains success in all things.

Just as the tree, attaining fulfillment through the devotion of the parrot.

Through this discourse I would like to point to several observations about the nature of non-cruelty and compassion:

1. The forest tree got hurt by a hunter who was hunting for deer. Interestingly, the act of hunting itself is not condemned in the story. This echoes an early narrative where a sage and his wife in the form of deer were killed while they were making love. In this narrative the killing is said to be lacking *ānṛśamsya* since it was done while they were making love.¹⁴¹ This distinction might express the critique about strict adherence to non-violence, indicating that some forms of violence may be accepted when done in accordance with the personal *dharma* of class.

¹⁴¹ Hildebeitel, *Rethinking the Mahabharata: a reader's guide to the education of the dharma king*, 200.

2. The parrot refuses to abandon the decaying tree out of his devotion to the tree that nourished him and protected him all his life.¹⁴² Thus, the story establishes *bhakti* as an important component of *ānṛśaṃsya*. This association is also observed in the relationship between Yudhiṣṭhira and his dog (referred to as his *bhakta*) mentioned above.¹⁴³ Hildebeitel points to a broader association between birds and friendship in the text and traces it back to the *Ṛgveda* which tells the story of the friendship between two birds who live in the same tree. This relationship is reinterpreted in the *Muṇḍaka* and *Śvetāśvatara Upanisads* with a *bhakti* element between the soul and the Lord.¹⁴⁴ Accordingly, the *ānṛśaṃsya* ideal includes sentiments of devotion and friendship.

3. One of the Sanskrit words used for a bird is *dvija*, or twice-born which also refers to a Brahmin. As Hildebeitel points out, sub-tales that incorporate birds might be discussing *dharma* that applies to Brahmins. Nevertheless, he recognizes that some birds are “more brahmin than others.”¹⁴⁵ In the translation below, the word *dvija* is used within a verse that distinguishes class:

“How could this bird be engaged in non-cruelty, not suited for one born as an animal?”¹⁴⁶

In the following verse, Indra admits the ideal is suitable for all beings. This seems to emphasize that *ānṛśaṃsya* can be practiced by all beings and toward all beings, regardless of class distinction. In this regard, Hildebeitel argues that *ānṛśaṃsya* has an expandable quality. While *ahiṃsā* is addressed in the epic as hypocritical and exclusive,

¹⁴² The Mahābhārata, 13.5.6.

¹⁴³ Shalom, *Re-ending the Mahabharata: The Rejection of Dharma in the Sanskrit Epic*, 81.

¹⁴⁴ Hildebeitel, “Among friends: Marriage, women, and some little birds,” 232.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ The Mahābhārata, 13.5.9.

ānṛśaṃsya “is a matter of a human heart that can expand and contract as character and circumstances allow.” He argues it begins with absence of harm toward a man (*nṛ*) and expands to a fellow-feeling for all beings, including a tree.¹⁴⁷ The expanding quality of *ānṛśaṃsya* along with the link to friendliness and devotion could be seen as echoing the Buddhist ideal of *mettā* (or *maitrī* in Sanskrit) and the practice of the *brahmavihāras*.¹⁴⁸

4. *Anukrośa*, is an essential virtue for understanding the nature of *ānṛśaṃsya*. *Anukrośa* literally means crying alongside, through it has also been translated as commiseration,¹⁴⁹ to feel another’s pain, pity, or compassion. The literal meaning resembles the English meaning of compassion, both capturing an experience of suffering with another. This translation points to an emotional component to compassion. In the narrative above, I suggest it indicates compassion:

“Compassion is indeed the great characteristic of virtue of good people, and compassion always brings joy to good people.”¹⁵⁰

Compassion is regarded as the highest characteristic of *dharma* of virtuous people. Beyond the benefits compassion provides to others, it is also seen as benefitting the self as it brings virtuous joy. Hence, compassion can be seen as the moral course of action.

5. Many virtues or normative ideals in Sanskrit are expressed by negation (through an initial *a*), such as the *yamas*. While *ānṛśaṃsya* is derived from *nṛśaṃsa* negated with *a*, it is then turned into an abstract noun that starts with *ā*. Nevertheless, Lath

¹⁴⁷ Hildebeitel, *Rethinking the Mahabharata: a reader's guide to the education of the dharma king*, 212.

¹⁴⁸ [Refer to the relevant chapter]

¹⁴⁹ Hildebeitel, *Rethinking the Mahabharata: a reader's guide to the education of the dharma king*, 212 -213.

¹⁵⁰ The Mahābhārata, 13.5.23.

argued “the word has more than a negative connotation; it signifies good-will, a fellow feeling, a deep sense of other.”¹⁵¹

To conclude, the perfection of morality in this chapter is accomplished through the ideal of *ānṛśaṃsya* which subsumes the virtues of devotion and compassion. *Ānṛśaṃsya* accepts that violence is sometimes inevitable. Drawing from the *Bhagavadgītā*'s teaching, the ideal might imply skillful action based on nonattachment, as will be further discussed below. Whether *ānṛśaṃsya* is intended as a response to renouncer traditions' strict adherence to non-violence (such as Buddhism or Jainism) or as a response to the violence of the *kṣatriya* class, it can also be understood as a relational virtue which applies to all beings and enables one to attain the heavenly realms.

“And the parrot by that action, performed out of non-cruelty,

O' Great King, at the end of his life, obtained residence in the same world as Indra.”¹⁵²

Notes on Terms That Shed Light on Compassion

In the opening scenes of the *Bhagavadgītā*, Arjuna stands on the battlefield and is “filled with the highest pity, falling into despair” (*kṛpayā parayāviṣṭo viṣīdan*),¹⁵³ because of the sight of his enemies, whom he identifies as friends, uncles, and teachers. The Sanskrit word *kṛpā* is translated as pity, tenderness, or compassion.

¹⁵¹ Lath, “The Concept of Anrshamsya in the Mahabharata,” 115.

¹⁵² The Mahābhārata, 13.5.31

¹⁵³ The Bhagavadgītā, 1.28.

Graham M. Schweig translates *kṛpā* as compassion, while Hildebeitel suggests that *kṛpā* means pity instead of compassion.¹⁵⁴ He argues that broadening Arjuna’s sentiments to include aversion to war or killing is not accurate.¹⁵⁵ I agree that *kṛpā* indicates Arjuna’s pity as he reveals the source of this sentiment as stemming from the attachment to his relatives, the fear of becoming a sinner, the tension between his renunciation and social commitments,¹⁵⁶ and the *dharma* of the four classes.¹⁵⁷ Pity, as opposed to compassion, can be seen as a state in which one is overcome by an emotional response to suffering and thus an obstacle because it amplifies suffering. Arjuna’s pity is rejected by Kṛṣṇa stating it is “not agreeable with you, does not lead to heaven, it causes disgrace,”¹⁵⁸ and addressing pity as weakness of heart (*hṛdayadaurbalya*), he encourages Arjuna to flight.¹⁵⁹ Arjuna then admits his “being is afflicted by the fault of pity” (*kārpaṇyadoṣopahatasvabhāva*),¹⁶⁰ and asks for Kṛṣṇa’s guidance to overcome his confusion. Thus, compassion is not dismissed, rather it is pity that is based upon states of confusion and ignorance.¹⁶¹ While pity seems virtuous, ultimately it is egocentric. In his answer, Kṛṣṇa defines yoga as equanimity and skillfulness in action.¹⁶² He encourages performing actions without attachment to the fruits of the actions.¹⁶³ This suggests that Arjuna’s *kṛpā* is dismissed as it is intermingled with attachment.

¹⁵⁴ Winthrop Sargeant, *The Bhagavadgītā* (Aleph, 2016), 14; Graham M. Schweig, *Bhagavad Gītā: the beloved Lord’s secret love song*, (Harper San Francisco, 2007), 28.

¹⁵⁵ Hildebeitel, *Dharma*, 113.

¹⁵⁶ Sargeant, *The Bhagavadgītā*, 18-19; The Bhagavadgītā 1.40-45

¹⁵⁷ Sargeant, *The Bhagavadgītā*, 18; The Bhagavadgītā 1.41.

¹⁵⁸ Bhagavadgītā, 2.2.

¹⁵⁹ The Bhagavadgītā, 2.3.

¹⁶⁰ The Bhagavadgītā, 2.7.

¹⁶¹ Sargeant, *The Bhagavadgītā*, 26; The Bhagavadgītā 2.11.

¹⁶² Sargeant, *The Bhagavadgītā*, 38-39; The Bhagavadgītā, 1.50, 1.47.

¹⁶³ Sargeant, *The Bhagavadgītā*, 38; The Bhagavadgītā 1.47.

Similar to *kṛpā*, the word *dayā* translates as pity, tenderness, mercy, or compassion. In chapter sixteen, of the *Bhagavadgītā*, Kṛṣṇa lists *dayā bhūteṣu*, compassion for living beings, as one of the characteristics of those born to a divine destiny.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, book twelve of the *Mahābhārata* includes a presentation of yoga in which *dayā bhūteṣu* is said to be achieved by the yoga of knowledge and yoga of harnessing of the senses.¹⁶⁵

Conclusion

The *Mahābhārata* represents the formation of new *dharma* ideals at a time of dramatic changes in the social and political landscape. Within the context of violent war and rivalry, the epic encourages morality through sentiments of sympathy and becomes pivotal to the understanding of the nature of compassion. As noted, the time in India involved the rising of various traditions and thus an exchange of ideas and concepts is expected. Generally, *karuṇā* seems to indicate a Buddhist influence and means compassion explicitly. Other terms are less clear cut and denote an array of sentiments; *ānṛśaṃsya*, non-cruelty - a crucial ideal - subsumes the ideals of compassion, *anukrośa*, and devotion, *bhakti*. *Dayā* and *kṛpā* could refer to sentiments of pity, tenderness, or compassion. Nevertheless, in the narratives explored above, *dayā* usually translates as compassion and *kṛpā* as pity. These notions of compassion in the epic are not absolute and recognize that harm or violence might be necessary in the material world of action. Therefore, they can be interpreted as attitudes accompanied by skillful action established in non-attachment.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ The *Bhagavadgītā* 16.2

¹⁶⁵ James L. Fitzgerald, "2. A Prescription for Yoga and Power in the *Mahābhārata*," in *Yoga in practice*, ed. David Gordon White (Princeton University Press, 2011), 53-54.

¹⁶⁶ This argument echoes Sibaji Bandyopadhyay assessment of *ānṛśaṃsya*.

Chapter 4 - The *Yogavāsishtha*'s Morality and Compassion

The *Yogavāsishtha* is a narrative text based upon the tales of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. It is dated roughly between the sixth to the fourteenth century CE,¹⁶⁷ and parts of the text may have been composed at different times. Sarbacker suggests that the text links the *itihāsa* tradition to the continuous developments of ideas and practices of yoga.¹⁶⁸

The *Yogavāsishtha* demonstrates influences from *Vedānta* schools, Jainism, *Sāṃkhya*, *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, and Śaivism.¹⁶⁹ Chapple notes that the *Yogavāsishtha* is unique due to its emphasis on the doctrine of mind-only associated with the *Yogācāra* school of Buddhism. Hence, it negates the reality of the world which originates from the constructive power of the mind and is shaped by past influences (*vāsanā*) and stresses the importance of meditation as the means to enlightenment.¹⁷⁰ Yet as opposed to Buddhism, the *Yogavāsishtha* also highlights *Vedānta* ideas of the bliss of self-realization.¹⁷¹

The text narrates spiritual instruction given by the sage Vasiṣṭha to prince Rāma over six books which describe Rāma's progression towards enlightenment.¹⁷² The soteriological ideal of the text is similar to the *Vedānta* liberation in life, *jīvanmukti*, and ultimately the attainment of *nirvāṇa* at the time of death.¹⁷³ In this ideal, the text demonstrates a balance between world-affirming and world-rejecting and allows Rāma to fulfill his social duties equipped with

¹⁶⁷ Christopher Key Chapple, *The Concise Yoga Vasistha* (Suny Press, 2010), introduction p. x.

¹⁶⁸ Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 115.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.; Chapple, *The Concise Yoga Vasistha*, introduction p. xii

¹⁷⁰ *The Concise Yoga Vasistha*, introduction p. xiii

¹⁷¹ Bhikhan Lal Atreya, *The philosophy of the Yoga-Vāsishtha* (Adyar, Madras, India, The theosophical Publishing House, 1936), 632-633.

¹⁷² Chapple, *The Concise Yoga Vasistha*, introduction p. xii.

¹⁷³ Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 115.

wisdom.¹⁷⁴ Similar to the *Mahābhārata*, through the character of Rāma, the text bridges between *Brāhmaṇa* ideals and social duties and stresses there is no need to renounce action in the world. Yet, Rāma is not facing an ethical dilemma, rather he is struggling with mundane flavorless life.¹⁷⁵

Chapple suggests that Rāma becomes the symbol of compassion and Maurice Winternitz suggests he represents a Buddhist influence on the text.¹⁷⁶ The text's *Advaita Vedānta* influence sets the struggle to explain the importance of moral conduct in an unreal world of illusion and unity; this paradox was explored and demonstrated in the Upaniṣads notion of unity.¹⁷⁷ In the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, separation between individuality and multiplicity exists only in the world of phenomena and thus moral action seems to contradict non-duality. Menaha Ganesathasan argues that Vasiṣṭha overcomes this paradox by developing the analogy of a dream.

“1. The world is nothing but a long dream.

2. Just as in the dream, the dreamer is caught up in the dream and sincerely believes that her experiences of objects and events are real, and the awoken individual is so entangled in the machinations of the world that she regards her sense experiences as constituents of reality.

3. Given the psychological impact of this phenomenological snare, particularly in the generation of pain or pleasure, it is necessary to introduce rules of moral conduct in order to reduce suffering and increase happiness.”¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Menaha Ganesathasan, “The kingdom within the hut: ethical education and story-telling in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*” (PhD diss., University of Hawai’i, 2004), 3.

¹⁷⁶ Chapple, *The Concise Yoga Vasistha*, introduction p. xiv, note 12; See also: Maurice Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature, Volume I, Part II: Epics and Puranas* (2nd edition, University of Calcutta, 1963), 448.

¹⁷⁷ See chapter 1; Menaha Ganesathasa, “Dreams, Fictions, and the Quest for Morality in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*,” in *Engaged Emancipation: Mind, Morals, and Make-Believe in the Moksopaya (Yogavasistha)*, eds. Christopher Key Chapple and Arindam Chakrabarti (SUNY Press, 2015), 189.

¹⁷⁸ Ganesathasa, “Dreams, Fictions, and the Quest for Morality in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*,” 191.

Therefore, the symptoms triggered by the world of illusion should be alleviated through moral conduct. This also suggests that moral conduct is part of the path to liberation and the ultimate state. David Schulman suggests that the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* seeks to wake us up into the illusion that the mind creates as opposed to *Advaita Vedānta* that seeks to awake us from the illusion.¹⁷⁹ Ganesathasan highlights that Vasiṣṭha advocates for moral conduct even for the one who is driven by desires to ensure harmony and order in society.¹⁸⁰ She demonstrates that the text portrays a fiction analogy. As such, through story, creative imagination, and identification between reader and character in the text enhances one’s moral capabilities and allows for the liberated being to evolve into the ideal moral being.¹⁸¹ Chapple argues that the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*’s emphasis on action holds a deep ethical message; the ultimate good requires purification of desire and reengaging in the world following a transformative experience.¹⁸²

The liberated person is said to be a great doer (*mahākartā*), great enjoyer (*mahābhoktā*), and great renouncer (*mahātyāgī*). While he is active in the world, his attitude is of non-attachment, not swayed by dualities. Bhikhan Atreya suggests that these concepts could be seen as Vasiṣṭha’s transcendental ethics.¹⁸³ Thus, moral conduct is the inherent nature of the liberated person’s state of equanimity.

Ganesathasan argues that Vasiṣṭha’s morality promotes empathetic identification and compassion. Seeing the world as illusion fosters the removal of the distinctions between

¹⁷⁹ David Schulman, *More Than Real: A History of the Imagination in South India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), p.113; This view resembles the *Madhyamaka* and *Yogācāra* Buddhist perspective.

¹⁸⁰ Ganesathasan, “The kingdom within the hut: ethical education and story-telling in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*,” 6.

¹⁸¹ Ganesathasan, “Dreams, Fictions, and the Quest for Morality in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*,” 194, 210.

¹⁸² Christopher Key Chapple, “Ethics and Psychology of the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* in the *Upaśama Prakaraṇa*,” in *Engaged Emancipation: Mind, Morals, and Make-Believe in the Moksopaya (Yogavasishta)*, eds. Christopher Key Chapple and Arindam Chakrabarti (SUNY Press, 2015), 184.

¹⁸³ Atreya, *The philosophy of the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*, 511.

individuality and multiplicity and enhances compassionate identification with the other.¹⁸⁴ She highlights that “the compassionate identification of the reader with the fictional character, in the form of the witness, provides the explanation as to why the enlightened being continues her work, even though she knows that the world appearance and all its occupants are illusion. The sage is both witness to the world appearance and participant in the world appearance.”¹⁸⁵ Therefore, the liberated being continues to act morally in the world equipped with wisdom.

The Growing Tree of *Samādhi*

In book 6, *Vasiṣṭha* describes the tree of *samādhi* (*samādhānataruṃ*),¹⁸⁶ which grows in the field known as the heart of the wise.¹⁸⁷ Its seed “should be sprinkled, [watered] by the fresh milk (...nourishment...) of the company of good people, which is pure, loving, sacred, sweet, beneficial to oneself, like lunar nectar.”

Thunderstorms and lightning that devastate the field and could destroy the tree are said to manifest in the form of transient enjoyments (*bhogabhāṅgurāḥ*).¹⁸⁸ “These all should be prevented by steadiness, generosity, compassion (*dayā*), and mantras, by chanting, ablution, austerities, and self-control, and by bearing the trident whose meaning is OM.”¹⁸⁹

Thus, because the seed of the tree was preserved, “the seed of meditation comes forth as a beautiful new sprout whose aspect is discernment.”¹⁹⁰ As a result, “by that (seed of meditation), the ground of the mind shines brightly, [and] blossoming, it becomes beautiful in appearance, just

¹⁸⁴ Ganesathasa, “Dreams, Fictions, and the Quest for Morality in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*,” 207, 193.

¹⁸⁵ Ganesathasa, “Dreams, Fictions, and the Quest for Morality in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*,” 215.

¹⁸⁶ The *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, book 6 (part 1), chapter 44, verse 2.

¹⁸⁷ The *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, book 6 (part 1), chapter 44, verse 4; Swami Venkatesananda, *Vasistha's yoga*, 560.

¹⁸⁸ The *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, book 6 (part 1), chapter 44, verse 14; Swami Venkatesananda, *Vasistha's yoga*, 560.

¹⁸⁹ The *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, book 6 (part 1), chapter 44, verse 15.

¹⁹⁰ The *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, book 6 (part 1), chapter 44, verse 16.

as the new moon [in] the sky.”¹⁹¹ Eventually, when the tree is grown it is said to be “thick with the flavor of nonattachment, the purpose of scriptures, and contact with virtuous people; it does not even tremble slightly by the monkey-agitation of likes and dislikes.”¹⁹²

“Then from that appearance adorned by knowledge, [the tree] produces these branches, shining with water, spreading all places, far and wide.”¹⁹³ These branches of wisdom are “correctness, truth, goodness, strength of mind, unwavering, equanimity, peacefulness, friendliness, compassion (*karuṇā*), splendor, and honorable behavior.”¹⁹⁴

This narrative explores the path to *samādhi* through the analogy of a growing tree. It describes the right conditions for it to grow and flourish and eventually become stable and strong. The narrative also places importance on the means of scriptures, company of the wise as role models, and meditation to attain liberation.

Compassion is initially described as an instrument to counter worldly desires and thus it is the moral behavior to grow the seed and provide the right conditions for the path to liberation. When wisdom is gained, the mind is said to shine bright. This implies a mind predominated by the *sattva guṇa* and resembles the result of the practice of the *brahmavihāras* in *yogasūtra* 1.33.¹⁹⁵ It should also be noted that friendliness is also part of the *brahmavihāras* linked to the Buddhist practice and concept. Ultimately, when one is no longer swayed by *rāga* and *dveṣa*, likes and dislikes, compassion is a byproduct of wisdom and thus is inherent to the nature of the liberated

¹⁹¹ The Yogavāsiṣṭha, book 6 (part 1), chapter 44, verse 17.

¹⁹² The Yogavāsiṣṭha, book 6 (part 1), chapter 44, verse 21.

¹⁹³ The Yogavāsiṣṭha, book 6 (part 1), chapter 44, verse 22.

¹⁹⁴ The Yogavāsiṣṭha, book 6 (part 1), chapter 44, verse 23.

¹⁹⁵ See p. 17.

being. As Ganesathasan notes, egolessness results in a spontaneous emergence of virtuous qualities.¹⁹⁶

It is interesting to note that the initial “instrumental” compassion is denoted by the word *dayā*, and the ultimate compassion is denoted by the word *karuṇā*. Moreover, this narrative did not place the suffering of others or empathetic identification as the basis for compassion, rather compassion is the result of self-effort and the realization of the self. The narrative ends in describing the experience of peace and bliss attained in the shade of the tree of *samādhi*.¹⁹⁷ The text emphasizes that when one is freed from desire, the self reveals itself as the pure experience of bliss (*ānanda*).¹⁹⁸ Bliss is the nature of the Ultimate reality, *Brahman*, as pure consciousness and is presented as the source of all happiness and delight. The *Yogavāsiṣṭha* emphasizes *Brahman* as fullness.¹⁹⁹ Consequently, the subject of compassion is ultimately the same *Brahman* and its source is not rooted in lack, rather it comes forth from the realization of unity, bliss, and fullness.

Furthermore, book 6(2) chapter 102 explores the nature of the liberated being and highlights his nature as one of compassion and generosity (*karuṇodārayā*).²⁰⁰ His great compassion is said to be unpitied (*nirdayo'tyantakarūṇo*).²⁰¹ The text clarifies that in contrast to compassion, pity is a state in which one is overcome by an emotional response to suffering and therefore an obstacle because it amplifies suffering.

¹⁹⁶ Ganesathasa, “Dreams, Fictions, and the Quest for Morality in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*,” 213.

¹⁹⁷ Swami Venkatesananda, *Vasistha's yoga* (SUNY Press, 1993), 561.

¹⁹⁸ Ganesathasan, “The kingdom within the hut: ethical education and story-telling in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*,” 178.

¹⁹⁹ The *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, book 6 (part 1), chapter 3, verse 11; The *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, book 6 (part 1), chapter 50, verse 2.

²⁰⁰ Book 6(2), 102, 47.

²⁰¹ Book 6(2), 102, 7; In the context of this verse, *nirdaya* seems to highlight the quality of compassion which is without egocentric pity.

Conclusion:

As examined, the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* highlights the importance of ethical conduct throughout the path to liberation and after one is liberated. On the path, compassion is described as a tool to counter desire and reduce suffering. When one has no desire and ego, the *mahākartā*, great doer, is described as naturally friendly and compassionate to all beings. This compassion arises from the newly gained wisdom centered upon bliss and fullness. *Vasiṣṭha* states that the result of knowledge is that “the world with all its beings is one. From stupidity, one’s essence is not reached. From knowledge one speaks of two mutually. Knowledge bestows friendliness.”²⁰² Thus, the liberated being is free from duality and yet he is friendly to all beings.

²⁰² The *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, book 6 (part 1), chapter 45, verse 61.

Chapter 5 - Compassion in *Hathayoga*

Haṭhayoga as a term began appearing in textual history in the tenth century CE.²⁰³ *Haṭhayoga*, “the yoga of force,” encapsulates a range of methods and techniques for manipulating the yogic body for the purpose of perfection, liberation, and power. Medieval formulations of *haṭhayoga* emerged out of a synthesis between classical Patañjali’s *aṣṭāṅgayoga*, Tantra, and asceticism. Its soteriological orientation was also influenced by *Advaita Vedānta* which began to incorporate *haṭhayoga* practices from the thirteenth century.

According to Sarbacker, the term *haṭhayoga* encompasses “a wide range of medieval, and especially tantric, innovations in the practice of yoga...acting as a nexus for the consolidation of a range of classical and medieval practices.”²⁰⁴ Many *haṭhayoga* texts are compilations drawing their instructions from various sources and highlight techniques; thus they pay less attention to philosophy and the cohesiveness of the text and themes. While moral or ethical conduct is not a substantial theme within *haṭhayoga*, many of *haṭhayoga*’s teachings have been formative for the modern development and understanding of yoga. As will be explored, *haṭhayoga* reinterpreted Patañjali’s five *yamas* and expanded them to include compassion. Yet, these *yamas* are less known and referred to in modern yoga.

Haṭhayoga altered the number of *yamas*; some texts added more behavioral guidelines to their list while others omitted the *yamas* completely. The texts that include the *yamas* tend to follow Patañjali’s eightfold format (*aṣṭāṅgayoga*), while those who omit them follow a different *aṅga* system. Most texts that omit the *yamas* are dated between the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries

²⁰³ James Mallinson and Mark Singleton, *Roots of Yoga* (London: Penguin, 2017); However, it should be noted that some of its techniques can be traced back at least a thousand years earlier.

²⁰⁴ Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 173-174.

CE.²⁰⁵ Jason Birch highlights that the *ṣaḍāṅgayoga* format is associated with tantric Śaiva traditions that included behavioral guidelines outside of the *aṅga* format of the *yamas*.²⁰⁶ He further suggests that since *haṭhayoga* was practiced by people from different traditions, the texts may be “morally neutral” while expecting their audience to follow the behavioral and moral guidelines of their own tradition.²⁰⁷ However, Csaba Kiss suggests that the omission of the *yamas* and *niyamas* might indicate that some practices taught in these traditions might not be in line with these rules.²⁰⁸ Therefore, the lists of *yamas* were adapted based on the tradition attributed to the text and its intended audience.

The *Śāradātilaka* is a twelfth century Orissan tantric text that dedicates a chapter to teachings on yoga. It incorporates elements from different systems, such as *haṭhayoga* and *mantrayoga*, within the *aṣṭāṅgayoga* format.²⁰⁹ Gudrun Bühnemann, argues that the concise presentation of the teachings on yoga highlights the familiarity of its audience with the subject,²¹⁰ pointing to the popularity of *aṣṭāṅgayoga* in that period. The *Śāradātilaka* lists ten *yamas*: non-violence (*ahiṃsā*), truthfulness (*satya*), not-stealing (*asteya*), celibacy (*brahmacarya*), kindness or compassion (*kṛpā*), sincerity (*ārjavam*), patience (*kṣamā*), steadiness (*dhr̥ti*), moderation in eating (*mitāhāra*), and purity (*śauca*).²¹¹ Interestingly, the *Śāradātilaka* is predominantly based on the

²⁰⁵ Jason Birch and Jaqueline Hargreaves, “The Yamas and Niyamas: Medieval and Modern Views,” *Yoga Scotland* (2016): 3.

²⁰⁶ Birch and Hargreaves, “The Yamas and Niyamas: Medieval and Modern Views,” 2.

²⁰⁷ Birch and Hargreaves, “The Yamas and Niyamas: Medieval and Modern Views,” 3.

²⁰⁸ David N. Lorenzen and Adrián Muñoz, eds. *Yogi Heroes and Poets: Histories and Legends of the Naths* (State University of New York Press, 2011), 153.

²⁰⁹ Gudrun Bühnemann, “The *Śāradātilakatantra* on yoga: A new edition and translation of chapter 25,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 74, no. 2 (2011): 207; Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 165.

²¹⁰ Bühnemann, “The *Śāradātilakatantra* on yoga: A new edition and translation of chapter 25,” 207.

²¹¹ Bühnemann, “The *Śāradātilakatantra* on yoga: A new edition and translation of chapter 25,” 225: *ahiṃsā satyam asteyaṃ brahmacaryaṃ kṛpārjavam | kṣamā dhr̥tir mitāhāraḥ śaucaṃ ceti yamā daśa |*

Prapañcasāra, however, the *Prapañcasāra* lists only eight *yamas* and does not include compassion.²¹²

As discussed in chapter 3, *kṛpā* translates to pity, tenderness, or compassion,²¹³ yet in the context of behavioral guidelines it likely indicates compassion or kindness.²¹⁴ In a *bhakti* context, the term also denotes grace as seen in the *Purāṇa* literature, which was formative to the theistic Hindu traditions.²¹⁵ Bühnemann translated *kṛpā* as forbearance,²¹⁶ perhaps pointing to the text's ontology and theistic origins.

The *Vasiṣṭhasaṃhitā* is a *Vaiṣṇava vedānta* text composed between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.²¹⁷ The text lists ten *yamas* in a list that seems to parallel the *Śāradātilaka*: non-violence (*ahiṃsā*) truthfulness (*satya*), not stealing (*asteya*), celibacy (*brahmacarya*), steadiness (*dhṛti*), patience (*kṣamā*), compassion (*dayā*), sincerity (*ārjava*), moderation in eating (*mitāhāra*), and purity (*śauca*).²¹⁸ This list seems to echo an earlier list from the *Purāṇa* literature, particularly the *Devībhāgavatapurāṇa* and the *Dattātreyapurāṇa*.²¹⁹ It then became

²¹² *Prapañcasāra* 19.17 lists 8 *yamas*: *satyam ahiṃsā samatā dhṛtiḥ asteyaṃ kṣamā ārjavaṃ vairāgyam*

²¹³ See p. 40.

²¹⁴ Birch and Hargreaves, "The Yamas and Niyamas: Medieval and Modern Views," 1; Mallinson and Singleton, *Roots of Yoga*, 85.

²¹⁵ Jayant Lele, *Tradition and modernity in Bhakti movements* (Vol. 31. Brill Archive, 1981), 10; Georg Feuerstein, *The Yoga Tradition: It's History, Literature, Philosophy and Practice* (Vol. New format ed. Prescott, Ariz: Hohm Press, 2001), 9; Gupta M.Ravi and Kenneth R. Valpey, *The Bhāgavata Purāna : Sacred Text and Living Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).

²¹⁶ Bühnemann, "The Śāradātilakatantra on yoga: A new edition and translation of chapter 25," 225.

²¹⁷ Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 283; Jason Birch, "The meaning of Hatha in early Hathayoga," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 131, no. 4 (2011): 528; James Mallinson, "Haṭhayoga's philosophy: a fortuitous union of non-dualities," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 42, no. 1 (2014): 225.

²¹⁸ *Śāradātilaka* 1.38: *ahiṃsā satyam asteyaṃ brahmacaryaṃ dhṛtiḥ kṣamā | dayārjavaṃ mitāhāraḥ śaucaṃ caiva yamā daśa*.

²¹⁹ Ritesh Umashankar Joshi, "Exposition of yoga tenets in the Puranas: a critical and comparative study," PhD diss., The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, 2013, 196-197.

even more common in later texts such as the *Yogayājñavalkya* dated between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.²²⁰

The *Haṭhapradīpikā* was compiled in the fifteenth century by Svātmārāma. Verse 1.3 states that the compassionate (*kṛpākaraḥ*) Svātmārāma composes the *Haṭhapradīpikā* for those who are ignorant of *rajā* yoga through wandering in the darkness of too many opinions.²²¹ This verse might point to the grace of the guru and the notion that compassion involves alleviating ignorance through teaching and knowledge.

Interestingly, the original manuscripts of the *Haṭhapradīpikā* do not include the *yamas* and *niyamas* and verses concerning them were inserted into modern versions of the text.²²² The modern versions list ten *yamas*, thus following the early medieval texts and the Purāṇas. Birch suggests that modern versions of the text borrowed the *yamas* from the *Jyotsnā*, a nineteenth-century commentary by Brahmānanda.²²³ The *yamas* that were added in the *Jyotsnā* are non-violence (*ahiṃsā*) truthfulness (*satya*), not stealing (*asteya*), celibacy (*brahmacarya*), steadiness (*dhr̥ti*), patience (*kṣamā*), compassion (*dayā*), sincerity (*ārjavam*), moderation in eating (*mitāhāra*), and purity (*śauca*).²²⁴ This list is said to be stated by those who are proficient in the scriptures of yoga (*samproktā yogasāstraviśāradaih*).²²⁵ Therefore, Brahmānanda inserted a list that was well

²²⁰Birch, "The meaning of Hatha in early Hathayoga," 528; Bühnenmann, "The Śāradātilakatantra on yoga: A new edition and translation of chapter 25," 216 note 21; Yogayājñavalkya 1.63; Mallinson and Singleton, *Roots of Yoga*, 477 note 7: Other tenfold lists occur, for example, in the *Śivayogapradīpikā*, and in three Pāñcarātra/Vaikhānasa texts: the *Pādmāsamhitā*, the *Vimānārcanākalpa* and the *Ahirudhnyasamhitā*.

²²¹ Muttusvami Srinivasa Aiyangar, *The Haṭhayogapradīpikā of Svātmārāma: With the Commentary Jyotsnā of Brahmānanda, and English Translation* (Adyar Library and Research Centre, 1972), 21; verse 1.3: *bhrāntyā bahumatadhvānte rājayogam ajānatām haṭhapradīpikām dhatte svātmārāmaḥ kṛpākaraḥ*.

²²² Jason Birch, "The meaning of Hatha in early Hathayoga," 4; Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 174.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Srinivasa Aiyangar, *The Haṭhayogapradīpikā of Svātmārāma: With the Commentary Jyotsnā of Brahmānanda, and English Translation*, 32.

²²⁵ Ibid.

established as common knowledge to practitioners at the time of the *Haṭhapradīpikā* and therefore it was not repeated and elaborated upon in the text.

Nevertheless, verse 1.38 indicates a different list;

“Just as *mitāhāra* [is the principal] among the *yamas*, and *ahiṃsā* [is the principal] among the *niyamas*,

Siddhāsana is the principal one among the *āsanas* [for] the accomplished wise [ones].”²²⁶

This seems to contradict Brahmānanda’s list since *ahiṃsā* is mentioned as part of the *niyamas*. The verse parallels the verse from the *Dattātreyayogaśāstra* that recognizes that there are ten *yamas* and mentions moderation in eating as the most important *yama* and non-violence as the most important *niyama*.²²⁷ This suggests that the list which the *Haṭhapradīpikā* referred to was different than the list of ten *yamas* mentioned above. Regardless, this also points to the fact that the ten *yama* lists, which include compassion, were understood as foundational and widely accepted at the time of Brahmānanda.

The list of ten *yamas* is also incorporated in several late medieval texts referred to as the Yoga Upaniṣads, in particular the *Darśana Upaniṣad*, *Śāṅḍilya Upaniṣad*, *Varāha Upaniṣad*, and *the Trisikhibrāhmaṇa Upaniṣad*.²²⁸ According to James Mallinson, the Yoga Upaniṣads borrowed

²²⁶ *The Haṭhayogapradīpikā* verse 1.38: *Yameṣviva mitāhāram ahiṃsāṃ niyameṣviva mukhyaṃ sarvāsaneṣvekaṃ siddhāḥ siddhāsanam viduḥ*.

²²⁷ James Mallinson, “Dattātreyā’s Discourse on Yoga,” (2013): 2-3

²²⁸ Bühnemann, “The Śāradātilakatantra on yoga: A new edition and translation of chapter 25,” 216 note 21: *Darśana Upaniṣad* 1.6 and 2.1; *Śāṅḍilya Upaniṣad* 1.4 and 2.1; *Varāha Upaniṣad* 5.12cd –14ab; *Trisikhibrāhmaṇa Upaniṣad* 2.32cd –34ab.

substantially from the *haṭhayoga* corpus and represent the orthodox acceptance of *haṭhayoga* in the late-medieval period.²²⁹

The *Darśana Upaniṣad* 2.1 defines *dayā* as:

“The knowledge with respect to all beings as the self, through the body, mind, and speech, that alone is said to be compassion by the knowers of *vedānta*.”²³⁰

The verse echoes earlier texts such as the *Mahābhārata*.²³¹ This view of compassion points to the *vedānta* ontological basis of non-duality.

Conclusion

Haṭhayoga texts focus on methods and techniques drawing from various yoga traditions such as Patañjali’s *aṣṭāṅgayoga*, Tantra, and asceticism. Accordingly, morality and ethical conduct are not discussed extensively. Most texts that address moral conduct follow the *aṣṭāṅgayoga* format and thus their guidelines are encapsulated within the *yamas*. The list of *yamas* change in numbers, although the most common list consists of ten *yamas* and includes either *kṛpā* or *dayā*. As demonstrated, these expanded lists probably originate from the *Purāṇa* literature. While these terms can translate to pity, tenderness, or compassion, I suggest that they indicate compassion in this context.

²²⁹ Mallinson and Singleton, *Roots of Yoga*, introduction, xx.

²³⁰ *Darśana Upaniṣad* 2.1: *svātmavatsravabhūteṣu kāyena manasā girā anujñā yā dayā saiva proktā vedāntavedibhiḥ; anujñā* translates to permission, yet in this context it might have Buddhist origins, thus meaning knowing or consideration.

²³¹ *Mahābhārata* 3.281.34-35.

Chapter 6 - Conclusions

The Evolution of the Conception of Compassion

This paper has set out to explore the nature of compassion in the traditional literature of yoga and to clarify its role through historical and textual examination. In doing so, I traced its conception and development across various texts. The Upaniṣads do not provide a simple answer to the role of compassion and ethics. Perhaps more than providing answers the Upaniṣads emphasize the importance of raising fundamental questions that were addressed by later traditions. As primarily ascetic texts, the Upaniṣads are focused on one's inner life; however, it is evident that the inner transformation has profound effects on all aspects of life. And so, even though the explicit teachings on ethics or conduct are sparse, it seems that the inner transformation shapes moral conduct. The Upaniṣads set the foundation for ethical and moral conduct through incentive, the conception of *Ātman* and *Brahman*, and the impacts of knowledge on *karma* and *saṃsāra*.

The *Yogasūtra* presents the evolution of the seeds planted in the Upaniṣads and clearly addresses ethical conduct in the form of the *yamas*. Nonetheless, compassion is not part of the *yamas* or the eightfold path of Patañjali. *Karuṇā* is mentioned in *Yogasūtra* 1.33 as part of the *brahmavihāras*. While the practice in the *Yogasūtra* is among other meditative practices, they likely also promote ethical cultivation as seen in several Buddhist contexts. As discussed, the practice of compassion with a sentient being for its object is shared between Buddhism and the *Yogasūtra*'s conception of the *brahmavihāras*. The origins of the practice remain vague, yet the practice was known and shared among several traditions. Nonetheless, as described, the Buddhist influences on the *Yogasūtra* are well established and the source of the *Yogasūtra*'s conception of compassion draws directly from Buddhist sources and notions.

The *Mahābhārata* represents a time of dramatic changes in the social and political landscape. It displays the tensions between renunciators and householders. The *Mahābhārata* incorporates renouncer concepts into householder life and increases the accessibility to these practices and knowledge. Accordingly, it sets forth the formation of new ethical ideals by placing greater emphasis on relational values. As demonstrated, the epic encourages morality through sentiments of sympathy and becomes pivotal to the understanding of the nature of compassion.

In the examined narratives, the term *karuṇā* indicates a Buddhist influence on the text and translates as compassion. Other terms vary according to context and denote an array of sentiments; *ānṛśaṃsya*, non-cruelty, includes the ideals of compassion, *anukrośa*, and devotion, *bhakti*. Both *kṛpā* and *dayā* can refer to sentiments of pity, tenderness, or compassion. Nevertheless, in the narratives explored above, *kṛpā* translates as pity and *dayā* translates as compassion. As the *Mahābhārata* repeatedly stresses, no ethical value is absolute and thus the text recognizes that harm or violence might be necessary in the world of action. The solution might be to interpret compassion as an attitude accompanied by skillful action founded upon non-attachment. While not absolute, it should be noted that compassion is repeatedly said to be practiced toward all beings, including animals and trees.

Similar to the *Mahābhārata*, the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* advocates a world-affirming view, emphasizes action in the world, and incorporates many different viewpoints and traditions. The *Yogavāsiṣṭha* sets the ideal of liberation in life, *jīvanmukti*, and it attempts to provide a solution to the tension between nonduality and ethics. In the text, ethics are of utmost importance both on the path to liberation and after it. First, compassion is described on the path as a means for reducing suffering and counteracting desire. Then, the one who is free of desire and ego is described as a *mahākartā*, great doer, who eliminated self-centeredness and therefore is naturally friendly and

compassionate toward all beings. The *mahākartā*'s compassion is rooted in bliss and arises from his wisdom.

Medieval *Haṭhayoga* texts focus on methods and techniques drawing from various yoga traditions such as Patañjali's *aṣṭāṅgayoga*, Tantra, and asceticism. The emphasis on ascetic practices, tantric methods, and celibacy varies based on the text's origins. Some texts are meant for renunciators while others for householders, nevertheless *Haṭhayoga* texts appealed mainly to an elite *brāhmaṇa* ascetic audience.²³² As demonstrated, morality and ethical conduct are not discussed extensively. It is typical for texts that follow the *aṣṭāṅgayoga* format to address moral conduct within the *yamas*. While there are several lists of *yamas*, the most common include ten *yamas* and either *kṛpā* or *dayā*. By the time of the Yoga Upaniṣads, *Haṭhayoga* became widely acknowledged and accepted as authoritative. While the Yoga Upaniṣads emphasize ascetic discipline, they also refer to worldly attainments and are diverse in their ontological views.²³³ Several of the Yoga Upaniṣads present an expanded list of *yamas* that includes compassion, *dayā*, drawing from different sources.

The different examined texts vary in their goal and nature of liberation as worldly or transcendent. These differences are often tied to the text's audience as renouncer, householder, or an integration of these models. These could be also seen as world-affirming, *pravṛtti*, and world-negating, *nivṛtti*, emphasis.²³⁴ The evolution of compassion can be seen as following the adaptations of traditions and texts to suit a wider range of practitioners and followers.

The Upaniṣads and the *Yogasūtra* emphasize renunciation and asceticism which places a higher value on achieving mental stillness. The *Yogasūtra*'s audience consisted mostly of

²³² Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 30.

²³³ Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 63.

²³⁴ Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 19.

brāhmaṇa practitioners.²³⁵ While the *Yogasūtra* correlates between ethical transformation (the *yamas*) and progression on the path of yoga, it does not include compassion and it could be argued that the emphasis on ethics is primarily meant to support the goal of renunciation and to counter desire.²³⁶ As part of a progressive path, the *yamas* are prerequisites for the ascetic's goal. It should also be noted that renunciate traditions often had caste restrictions and limited the accessibility to participation.²³⁷

Narrative texts such as the *Mahābhārata* and the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* seem to appeal to broader audiences, thus increasing accessibility to their teachings and practices. These texts place greater emphasis on relational values such as compassion, rather than strict renouncer ideals. Narrative texts also enable greater relatability between the reader and the characters, thus evoking emotional responses for the reader.

Haṭhayoga texts and the Yoga Upaniṣads do not articulate a cohesive goal for renunciators or householders. Yet the medieval period is characterized by the establishment of ascetic orders. Accordingly, they tend not to highlight relational feelings or compassion. Nevertheless, with the growing popularity and acceptance of *Haṭhayoga*, an expanded list of *yamas* became more common and even read back into texts. Since *Haṭhayoga* repurposed the *aṣṭāṅgayoga* model, the *yamas* can be seen as preparatory practice or ethical cultivation depending on the specific text and audience.

Modern Yoga is the result of this continuous tension between renunciation and householder traditions as well as questions revolving around accessibility and inclusion. Yoga traditions have always evolved alongside culture, politics, and society. Today, yoga is no longer an ascetic

²³⁵ Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 93.

²³⁶ As will be elaborated upon later, these *yamas* originate from the Jain tradition which emphasize the adherence of vows to purify *karma*.

²³⁷ Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 29.

practice, rather it is often used as a tool to live a fuller life and enhance the ways one relates to the world. This reflects the common modern ontological understanding of yoga as union.

Tirumalai Krishnamacharya, also known as the “Father of Modern yoga,” systematized an approach to yoga that impacted much of the yoga practiced today.²³⁸ Krishnamacharya studied extensively and is known for his ability to merge teachings and concepts from various traditions and sources. He adapted his teachings to suit the changing socio-culture climate of his time, resulting in increased accessibility to yoga. His teachings also changed over the decades he taught, from rigorous physical movements to an individualized form of practice that emphasizes therapeutic applications, thus, conveying Krishnamacharya’s willingness and effort to adjust the practices of yoga to a wider audience.

The *Yoga Rahasya* is a text attributed to the *Vaiṣṇava* saint Nāthamuni, though it is said to have been received by Krishnamacharya in a vision at the age of sixteen.²³⁹ Yet, it is likely that Krishnamacharya composed the text himself.²⁴⁰ The *Yoga Rahasya* consists of four chapters and weaves together many teachings aimed for householders. The text also emphasizes the therapeutic application of yoga; as such, it states that diseases are removed by the practice of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*.²⁴¹ Therefore,

“Knowing this, the student must learn from the teacher, what is appropriate for him. He must then practice with compassion (*dayā*) for himself as well as for the sake of others.”²⁴²

²³⁸ Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 207-208.

²³⁹ Sarbacker, *Tracing the Path of Yoga*, 211; Mark Singleton, *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2010), 185.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Yogarahasya 1.25; T.K.V Desikachar trans., *Nathamuni's Yoga Rahasya* (Chennai, India: Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram, 2003), 40.

²⁴² Ibid; Yogarahasya 1.26.

It is noteworthy that in the Patañjali's *Yogasūtra*, the description of the *aṣṭāṅgayoga* model is preceded by *sūtras* that echo the Buddhist foundational Four Noble Truths which are presented in a medical diagnosis scheme.²⁴³ This model frames the Buddhist path in medical terminology in which an eightfold path is described as a remedy to the disease of suffering. Therefore, it could point to a parallel medical framework of Patañjali's eightfold path as a remedy and shed light on the *Yoga Rahasya*'s association with healing.

Interestingly, the *Yoga Rahasya* encourages practicing an individualized form of *aṣṭāṅgayoga* with self-compassion in order to remove one's disease first and then practice for the sake of others. This conveys the idea that unless we are healthy, we cannot help others.²⁴⁴ While yoga recognizes the benefits of compassion for the self, it does not address self-compassion explicitly. This notion of compassion is tied to the experience of suffering and resembles the modern understanding of compassion as a tool for personal healing. It echoes the growing emphasis on health and self-compassion, as seen in programs like the MSC in the Buddhist context. Hence, the *Yoga Rahasya* represents the transformation and adaptability in the teachings of yoga that contributed to this modern role of compassion in yoga. Furthermore, it demonstrates the correlation between the increasing importance of compassion and the growing accessibility to the householder audience.

Another recent development in yoga is the "yoga off the mat" movement. This movement is rooted in engagement in the world and often understands yoga as a tool for collective liberation rather than for individual liberation. Accordingly, it highlights putting yoga principles into action for the social benefit of the collective. Even though the movement can be grounded in the historical literature of yoga, its concepts are often being interpreted to suit the contemporary social domain.

²⁴³ See for example sutra 2.24; Bryant, *The yoga sūtras of Patañjali*, 232.

²⁴⁴ Desikachar, *Nathamuni's Yoga Rahasya*, 40.

For example, the *yamas* which are formulated in a negative form (through the *a* prefix) as restraints are interpreted positively to prioritize action in the social justice context. As such, Jivana Heyman, the founder of the Accessible Yoga Association, interprets *ahimsā* as compassion and caring for everyone equally. In the social domain this can be expressed as universal healthcare.²⁴⁵

He suggests that modern yoga should further be adapted for the contemporary householder practitioners: “It’s time to let go of the image of a yogi meditating alone in a cave divorced from society and examine the way we are practicing right now and the way it impacts not only ourselves but the community around us.”²⁴⁶

This view emphasizes that modern yoga enhances social justice by making it more inclusive, accessible, and for the benefit of the collective. Accordingly, this approach places compassion at the heart of yoga for the sake of its householder audience.

Compassion’s role in modern yoga is two-fold; some movements focus on individual healing while others focus on collective healing. Nonetheless, they are not unrelated; as the historical texts suggest, compassion enhances our lives - by benefiting others we ultimately benefit ourselves. While the concept of compassion has adapted to suit the modern context, I have identified that it reflects the relationship between the growing importance of compassion and the growing demand for yoga’s householder accessibility. This echoes and continues compassion’s evolution as traced in the historical literature of yoga.

Compassion and Nonviolence

Ahimsā is a concept of great importance in yoga traditions. It is the fundamental practice of the *yamas* and demonstrates the progressive path to liberation in the *Yogasūtra*. Its primacy in

²⁴⁵ Jivana Heyman, *Yoga Revolution: Building a Practice of Courage and Compassion* (Shambhala Publications, 2021), 53.

²⁴⁶ Heyman, *Yoga Revolution: Building a Practice of Courage and Compassion*, 1.

modern yoga is linked to the immense influence of Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* in many modern Gurus' teachings. As demonstrated, some modern yoga movements interpret the *yamas* as positive action in the social domain.

The origin of the *yamas* is the *Ācārāṅga Sūtras* (fourth-third century BCE) in the Jain tradition.²⁴⁷ In the Jain context, they are called *mahāvratas*, great vows, which are meant to encourage self-perfection.²⁴⁸ The vows are strongly linked to *karma* theory and seen as necessary tools to purge the accumulated *karma*. The idea of *karma* purification through the *yamas* is also central in the *Yogasūtra*. Chapple suggests that the *yamas* allow self-correction and thus are necessary for the cultivation of personal ethics.²⁴⁹ However, while the *yamas* lead to personal ethics, they also reflect ideals of world renunciation and social disengagement. *Ahiṃsā* is an ideal that reflects renouncer ideologies; the desire not to kill is essentially the desire to overcome the desire for life.²⁵⁰ Practically, progression on the path of renunciation and achieving higher states of consciousness is impossible while engaging in immoral actions.

Compassion is not explicitly mentioned as a part of the *yamas* within the *Yogasūtra*. It could be argued, as some modern yoga movements do, that compassion is subsumed within the concept of nonviolence, *ahiṃsā*, in the *Yogasūtra*. Nevertheless, I would like to point out several justifications to distinguish the two. First, the Sanskrit language, *Samskṛta*, literally means refined, polished, or well-formed, and implies its highly meticulous use of words. There are many terms to indicate compassion in Sanskrit yoga texts, and thus if compassion was intended it would have been stated as part of the *yamas* as some *Haṭhayoga* texts have done.

²⁴⁷ Chapple, *Yoga and the Luminous*, 34.

²⁴⁸ Chapple, *Yoga and the Luminous*, 45.

²⁴⁹ Chapple, *Yoga and the Luminous*, 47.

²⁵⁰ Hildebeitel, *Rethinking the Mahabharata: a reader's guide to the education of the dharma king*, 203.

Second, to view *ahiṃsā* as an all-encompassing term aligns with an ontological view of union that might not be a part of *ahiṃsā* in the context of the *Yogasūtra*, in which the ultimate goal is separation (*kaivalya*). The modern popularity of non-duality and the definition of yoga as union could hinder relevant intellectual distinctions and accurately represent the yoga tradition. This argument might be more applicable to texts or traditions that highlight the interconnected nature of all beings. As the nature of compassion is described in the *Darśana Upaniṣad*:

“The knowledge with respect to all beings as the self, through the body, mind, and speech, that alone is said to be compassion by the knowers of vedānta.”²⁵¹

Cultivating compassion entails more than ontological aspects. In this context, it could be argued that compassion is the basis or motive of nonviolence that manifests as the desire for acting with nonviolence. Thus, conveying a positive aspect which is also seen in the composition of these words, nonviolence is expressed negatively (through the *a* prefix) while compassion is expressed positively. As examined, this approach is prevalent in modern yoga and echoes Vācaspati Mīśra’s commentary on the *brahmavihāras* who suggests that compassion results in the removal of the desire to inflict harm on others.²⁵² Furthermore, the view of compassion as the motive for action points to the possibility of compassionate acts of violence that can be seen as nonharmful.²⁵³

As discussed, *ahiṃsā* is often seen as a renouncer ideal, one that cannot be absolute or applied to all. The *Mahābhārata* suggests that relational ideals of *ānṛśaṃsya* are an alternative to

²⁵¹ *Darśana Upaniṣad* verse 2.1: *svātmavatsravabhūteṣu kāyena manasā girā anujñā yā dayā saiva proktā vedāntavedibhiḥ.*

²⁵² Bryant, *The yoga sūtras of Patañjali*, 128-129.

²⁵³ This idea is implied in the teachings of the *Mahābhārata*; In a Buddhist context this points to the importance of the intention of compassion. See: Stephen L. Jenkins, “Buddhism: Confronting the Harmful with Compassion,” in *Nonviolence in World Religions*, Ed. Mark Juergensmeyer (Routledge, 2022).

the absolutism of *ahiṃsā*. While no ideal is absolute in the *Mahābhārata*, the texts emphasize that it is applied to all beings. The end of Yudhiṣṭhira's journey conveys *ānṛśaṃsya*'s importance in the *Mahābhārata*; Yudhiṣṭhira enters the heavenly realms after demonstrating *ānṛśaṃsya* for his dog and being congratulated for his capacity for feeling compassion, *anukrośa*.²⁵⁴ *Ahiṃsā* is still regarded as the highest *dharma* in several instances, yet as Hildebeitel demonstrates, it is mainly applied to Brahmins.²⁵⁵ He argues that while *ahiṃsā* tightens the great chain of beings, *ānṛśaṃsya* softens it with compassion that cuts through the great divides.²⁵⁶ Furthermore, in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* the liberated being is described as compassionate and friendly while rarely described as nonviolent.

Compassion and nonviolence are not unrelated as many texts recognize and the cultivation of compassion can be associated with the practice of non-violence. Yet the principal difference seems to be their intended audience or practitioners and consequently affects the accessibility to the teachings. While nonviolence is mainly correlated to renunciation ideologies and has the imprint of ascetics, compassion is seen as an ideal that can be cultivated by all and toward all and ultimately indicates that liberation is available for all.

The Nature of Compassion

Many Sanskrit words can translate as compassion, such as *karuṇā*, *kṛpā*, *dayā*, *anukrośa*, and *ānṛśaṃsya*. These terms can vary according to the tradition, specific text, socio-cultural background, and audience. Therefore, the following conclusions are based solely on the texts and discourses examined in this paper.

²⁵⁴ Hildebeitel, *Rethinking the Mahabharata: a reader's guide to the education of the dharma king*, 272.

²⁵⁵ Hildebeitel, *Dharma*, 85.

²⁵⁶ Hildebeitel, *Rethinking the Mahabharata: a reader's guide to the education of the dharma king*, 213.

The term *karuṇā* tends to indicate Buddhist influences on a text and is often accompanied by *maitrī*, as seen in the *Yogasūtra* and the *Bhagavadgītā*. Moreover, in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* the term *karuṇā* implies a higher state of compassion which is achieved in the ultimate state of the awareness of one's own bliss, as opposed to *dayā* which is cultivated on the path. This indicates that *karuṇā* is more than a sentiment but rather an attitude towards all beings.

Other terms for compassion are less clear-cut and denote an array of sentiments. In the examined texts, *dayā* which translates as pity, tenderness, mercy, or compassion is used to denote compassion. Drawing from the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, it indicates compassion that is cultivated. In the *Mahābhārata*, *dayā bhūteṣu* (compassion for living beings) is the result of practicing yoga. Furthermore, *dayā* became part of the *yamas* in some *Haṭhayoga* texts and thus further strengthens its role as seen as a preparatory cultivation.

Kṛpā translates as pity, tenderness, mercy, or compassion. As seen in the *Bhagavadgītā*, it denotes pity. Pity, as opposed to compassion, can be seen as a state in which one is overcome by an emotional response to suffering and thus an obstacle because it amplifies suffering. In the *Śāradātilaka*, *kṛpā* is mentioned as a part of the *yamas*; in later texts, the term is replaced with *dayā*. This could point to the origin of the text in the tantric Śaiva traditions in which *kṛpā* tends to denote mercy or grace.

The ideal of *ānṛśamsya* in the *Mahābhārata* translates as non-cruelty and becomes a crucial ideal that subsumes compassion, *anukrośa*, and devotion, *bhakti*. *Anukrośa* literally means crying alongside and indicates an emotional component to compassion in relation to other beings' sufferings.

The nature of compassion is as diverse and dynamic as yoga itself; it is to be cultivated in practice and inherent in the ultimate state of liberation, partial and absolute, emotion and attitude, benefits the self as well as others, and is related to both suffering and bliss. While it is the intermingling and exchange between modern forms of Buddhism, Western culture, and yoga that influenced compassion's role within modern yoga, this paper exhibited that compassion is widely embedded within the literature of yoga. Compassion's evolution correlates to the unfoldment of yoga through the centuries, from renunciation to householders and from exclusivity to accessibility. This study allows modern practitioners to sustain a connection to historical traditions while moving forward and shaping modern yoga for the needs of contemporary society.

Appendix 1 – Mahābhārata Book 13, Chapter 5 Translation

1 yudhiṣṭhira uvāca

yudhiṣṭhira – m.nom.sin - yudhiṣṭhira
uvāca – 3rd, sin, red. Perfect – said

Yudhiṣṭhira said,

1 ānṛśamsasya dharmasya guṇān bhaktajanasya ca
śrotum icchāmi kārtsnyena tan me brūhi pitāmaha

ānṛśamsasya – n.gen.sin – non-cruelty
dharmasya – m.gen.sin – moral conduct, dharma
guṇān – m.accu.pl - characteristics
bhaktajanasya – KD - m.gen.sin - devoted people
ca – ind. - and
śrotum – infinitive - hear
icchāmi – 1st, sin, present – I wish
kārtsnyena – ind. – all in all, entirely
tan – n.acc.sin - that
me – dative.sin – to me
brūhi - 2nd, sin, imperative, 2p - speak
pitāmaha – m.voc.sin – name for Brahman, O' Grandfather

I wish to hear all the characteristics of non-cruelty and moral conduct of devoted people.
Tell me that, O' Grandfather.

2 bhīṣma uvāca

bhīṣma – m.nom.sin
uvāca - 3rd, sin, red. perfect - said

Bhīṣma said,

2 viṣaye kāśirājasya grāmān niṣkramya lubdhakaḥ
saviṣaṃ kāṇḍam ādāya mṛgayām āsa vai mṛgam

viṣaye – m.loc.sin – kingdom, territory
kāśirājasya – KD - m.gen.sin – King Kāśi
grāmān – m.accu.pl - village
niṣkramya – gerund – going out, leaving

lubdhakaḥ - m.nom.sin - hunter
saviṣaṃ - pronominal - m.accu.sin- sa – he; viṣaṃ - poison, poisonous
kāṇḍam – m.accu.sin - arrow
ādāya – ind. – having taken, along with
mṛgayām āsa – 3rd, sin, periphrastic perfect – pursued/hunted
vai – ind. – indeed, certainly
mṛgam – m.accu.sin – deer

In the kingdom of King Kāśī, a hunter departing the villages,
having taken with him poisonous arrow, he hunted deer.

- 3 tatra cāmiṣalubdhena lubdhakena mahāvane
avidūre mṛgaṃ dṛṣṭvā bāṇaḥ pratisamāhitaḥ

tatra – ind. - there
ca – ind. - and
āmiṣalubdhena – dative TP, m. ins.sin - prey, meat + greedy
lubdhakena – (m.ins.sin) - hunter
mahāvane – KD – big, great + forest
avidūre – ind. Not far off, near
mṛgaṃ - m.accu.sin - deer
dṛṣṭvā – gerund – seeing, having seen
bāṇaḥ - m.nom.sin – arrow
pratisamāhitaḥ - ppp – discharged

And there, in the big forest, by the hunter, greedy for prey,
having seen deer nearby, an arrow was discharged.

- 4 tena durvāritāstreṇa nimittacapaleṣuṇā
mahān vanatarur viddho mṛgaṃ tatra jighāṃsatā

tena – m.ins.sin - by him
durvāritāstreṇa – BV, m.ins.sin - hard to restrain
nimittacapaleṣuṇā – m.ins.sin – KD arrow off the mark (of its target)
mahān – m.accu.pl – great, big
vanatarur – m.nom.sin – forest tree
viddho – m.nom.sin PPP - pierced
mṛgaṃ - m.accu.sin - deer
tatra – ind. - there
jighāṃsatā – PP, m.ins.sin – kill

There, by he who desired to kill, whose arrows were hard to restrain,
with an arrow that was off the mark of its target, a big forest tree was pierced.

- 5 sa tīkṣṇaviṣadigdhenā śareṇātibalātkṛtaḥ
utsrjya phalapatrāṇi pādapaḥ śoṣam āgataḥ

sa – m.nom.son – he, that
tīkṣṇaviṣadigdhenā – m.ins.sin – Gen TP – smeared with poison
śareṇa – m.ins.sin - arrow
atibalāt – KD m.abl.sin – from great force
kṛtaḥ - PPP m.nom.sin – made, shot
utsrjya – gerund – abandon, give up, let go
phalapatrāṇi – m.accu.pl – dvandva – fruit + leaf
pādapaḥ - m.nom.sin - tree
śoṣam – m.accu.sin – dried up
āgataḥ - PPP m.nom.sin – arrived, occurred

That tree, shot with great force by an arrow smeared with poison,
letting go of its fruits and leaves, became dried up.

- 6 tasmin vṛkṣe tathābhūte koṭareṣu ciroṣitaḥ
na jahāti śuko vāsaṃ tasya bhaktyā vanaspateḥ

tasmin – m.loc.sin – in him
vṛkṣe – m.loc.sin - tree
tathābhūte – m.loc.sin – of such qualities or kind or nature
koṭareṣu – n.loc.pl – hollow of a tree
ciroṣitaḥ - m.nom.sin – ppp – one who has dwelt for a long time
na – ind. no
jahāti – 3rd, sin, present, 3p – leave, abandon (translated as past)
śuko – m.nom.sin - parrot
vāsaṃ - m.accu.sin - habitation
tasya – m.gen.sin – of him
bhaktyā – f.abl.sin – devotion
vanaspateḥ - m.abl.sin – forest tree

When the tree became thus, the parrot, who had dwelt for a long time in the hollow of the
tree,
did not abandon his habitation, out of his devotion to the forest tree.

- 7 niṣpracāro nirāhāro glānaḥ śithilavāg api
kṛtajñaḥ saha vṛkṣeṇa dharmātmā sa vyaśuṣyata

niṣpracāro – BV m.nom.sin – not moving
 nirāhāro – BV m.nom.sin – fasting
 glānaḥ - BV m.nom.sin – weary, exhausted
 śīthilavāg – BV f.nom.sin – relaxed, weakened decayed
 api – ind. Even, also
 kṛtajñaḥ - m.nom.sin - grateful
 saha – ind. Together with (saha +ins.)
 vṛkṣeṇa – m.ins.sin - tree
 dharmātmā – BV m.nom.sin – virtuous soul
 sa – m.nom.sin – he, that
 vyaśuṣyata – 3rd, sin, imperfect, passive-causative (śuṣ) – lifeless, withered

Not moving, fasting, weary, and also silent
 the parrot, grateful and virtuous, withered, along with the tree.

- 8 tam udāraṃ mahāsattvam atimānuṣaceṣṭitam
 samaduḥkhasukhaṃ jñātvā vismitaḥ pākaśānaḥ

tam – m.accu.sin - him
 udāraṃ - m.accu.sin – great, beat, generous
 mahāsattvam – BV m.accu.sin – great essence
 atimānuṣaceṣṭitam– BV PPP m.accu.sin – superhuman behavior
 samaduḥkhasukhaṃ - m.accu.sin – BV + dvandva – indifference to suffering and happiness
 jñātvā - gerund – knowing
 vismitaḥ - ppp m.nom.sin – surprised
 pākaśānaḥ - m.nom.sin – gen TP – the instructor of the ignorant (name for Indra)

Indra, the instructor of the Pāka, was surprised,
 having understood him (the parrot) as generous, noble essence, with superhuman behavior
 and with indifference to suffering and happiness

- 9 tataś cintām upagataḥ śakraḥ katham ayaṃ dvijaḥ
 tiryagyonāv asaṃbhāvyam ānṛśaṃsyam samāsthitaḥ

tataś – ind. – from that, thence
 cintām – f.accu.sin – thought, sorrowful thought, reflection
 upagataḥ - ppp, m.nom.sin – gone to, approached, arrived, occurred, obtained
 śakraḥ - m.nom.sin – Indra, strong, powerful, mighty
 katham – ind. - how
 ayaṃ - m.nom.sin - this

dvijaḥ - m.nom.sin – bird, twice-born, brahmin
tiryagyonāv – m.loc.sin – born as an animal, animal creation
asaṃbhāvyam – fpp, m.accu.sin – not + to be respected, suited
ānṛśamsyaṃ - m.accu.sin – non cruelty
samāsthitaḥ - m.nom.sin – engaged in, standing upon, abiding in

From that, a sorrowful thought occurred to śakra (Indra).

How could this bird be engaged in non-cruelty, not suited for one born as an animal?

10 atha vā nātra citraṃ hīty abhavad vāsavasya tu
prāṇinām iha sarveṣāṃ sarvaṃ sarvatra dṛśyate

atha – ind. – then, also, now
vā na- or, either not
atra - here
citraṃ - m.accu.sin – bright, clear
hīty – ind. indeed + thus
abhavad – 3rd, sin, imperfect - was
vāsavasya – m.gen.sin – Indra
tu – ind. But, and
prāṇinām – m.gen.pl – living beings
iha – in this place or world
sarveṣāṃ - m.gen.pl - all
sarvaṃ - m.accu.sin - all
sarvatra – ind. Always, everywhere, at all times
dṛśyate – 3rd, sin, passive, 4a

“Or else there is nothing extraordinary here” was the thought of Indra.
For all beings in this world are seen as acting in every way towards all.

11 tato brāhmaṇaveṣeṇa mānuṣaṃ rūpam āsthitaḥ
avatīrya mahīṃ śakras taṃ pakṣiṇam uvāca ha

tato – ind. From that, thence
brāhmaṇaveṣeṇa – gen TP, m.ins.sin – with the appearance of a brahmin
mānuṣaṃ - f.accu.sin – human, human being
rūpam – n.nom.sin – form
āsthitaḥ - ppp, m.nom.sin – abiding in, undertaken
avatīrya – gerund – having descended
mahīṃ - f.accu.sin - earth
śakras – m.nom.sin - Indra

taṃ - m.accu.sin – him
pakṣiṇam – m.accu.sin (possessive) – possessing wings, bird
uvāca – 3rd,sin,red.perfect - said
ha – ind. Indeed

Then assuming a human form, with the appearance of a Brahmin,
Indra, having descended to earth, said to the bird.

12 śuka bhoḥ pakṣiṇāṃ śreṣṭha dākṣeyī suprajās tvayā
pṛcche tvā śuṣkam etaṃ vai kasmān na tyajasi drumam

śuka – m.voc.sin
bhoḥ - ind. – sir, voc
pakṣiṇāṃ - m.gen.pl - birds
śreṣṭha – ppp, m.voc.sin – best, most excellent
dākṣeyī – f.nom.sin – granddaughter of Dākṣa
suprajās – f.nom.pl – BV – good offspring
tvayā – ins.sin – by you
pṛcche – 1st,sin,present,1a - ask
tvā – accu.sin - you
śuṣkam – m.accu.sin – withered, dried up
etaṃ - m.accu.sin - this
vai – ind. – indeed, certainly
kasmān – ind. - why
na -ind. - not
tyajasi – 2nd,sin,present – leave, abandon
drumam – m.accu.sin – tree

O' best of birds, O' parrot, sir, granddaughter of Dākṣa, who possesses good offspring due to
you,

I ask you, why don't you abandon this withered tree?

13 atha pṛṣṭaḥ śukaḥ prāha mūrdhnā samabhivādya tam
svāgataṃ devarājāya vijñātas tapasā mayā

atha – ind. – then, now, also
pṛṣṭaḥ - ppp, m.nom.sin – asked questioned
śukaḥ - m.nom.sin – parrot
prāha – 3rd,sin,red.perfect – answered
mūrdhnā – m.ins.sin – forehead
samabhivādya – gerund – salute respectfully

tam – accu.sin – him
svāgatam - m.accu.sin – welcome (goes with dative)
devarājāya – gen TP, m.dative.sin – king of gods
vijñātas – ppp, m.nom.sin – known, understood
tapasā – n.ins.sin –austerities
mayā – ins.sin – me

Then, being questioned, the parrot answered, Having saluted him respectfully by bowing his head,

I have recognized you by my austerities.

14 tato daśaśatākṣeṇa sādhu sādhu iti bhāṣitam
aho vijñānam ity evaṁ tapasā pūjitas tataḥ

tato – ind. From that, thence
daśaśatākṣeṇa – BVm.ins.sin – ten thousand eyes
sādhu – m.voc.sin - excellent
sādhu - m.voc.sin - excellent
iti – quote
bhāṣitam – ppp, m.accu.sin – said, spoken
aho – ind. Oh! (implying joyful surprise)
vijñānam – n.accu.sin – knowledge, understanding
ity - quote
evaṁ - ind. Thus, so in this way
tapasā – n.ins.sin - austerties
pūjitas – ppp, m.nom,sin – respected, honored
tataḥ - ind. From that, thence

Then, by the one with the ten thousand eyes (Indra) “excellent! Excellent!” was said. Thus, honored by his tapas, then he thought, "Oh, he is very knowledgeable/realized!" from that and by means of his tapas.

15 tam evaṁ śubhakarmāṇaṁ śukaṁ paramadhārmikam
vijñānann api tāṁ prāptiṁ papraccha balasūdanaḥ

tam – m.acci.sin -
evaṁ - ind. – thus, so in that way
śubhakarmāṇaṁ - BV m.accu.sin – bright, beautiful+ action
śukaṁ -m.accu.sin - parrot
paramadhārmikam – BV m.accu.sin – highest best + virtuous
vijñānann – m.nom.sin – sage, wise knowing

api – even, also
tām - f.accu.sin - her
prāptiṃ - f.accu.sin – obtaining attainment, gain,
papraccha – 3rd,sin,red.perfect - asked
balasūdanaḥ - m.nom.sin – gen TP, name of demon + destroyer

Thus, Indra, the destroyer of Bala, even knowing that power as possessing bright action and highly virtuous,
he asked about the attainment of that (reason for not abandoning the tree)

16 niṣpatram aphalaṃ śuṣkam aśaraṇyaṃ patatṛiṇām
kimarthaṃ sevase vṛkṣaṃ yadā mahad idaṃ vanam

niṣpatram – BV m.accu.sin - leafless
aphalaṃ - BV n.accu.sin no-fruit
śuṣkam – m.accu.sin - withered
aśaraṇyaṃ - fpp, m.accu.sin – not fit to protect
patatṛiṇām – m.gen.pl - bird
kimarthaṃ pronominal – why + purpose, what for
sevase – 2nd,sin,present 1a - dwell
vṛkṣaṃ - m.a
yadā -ind. - when
mahad – n.accu.sin – great, vast,big
idaṃ - n.accu.sin - this
vanam – n.accu.sin – forest

Why do you stay in the withered tree, who is leafless and has no fruit, and is not fit to be the refuge for birds, when this forest is vast.

17 anye 'pi bahavo vṛkṣāḥ patrasaṃchannakoṭarāḥ
śubhāḥ paryāptasaṃcārā vidyante 'smin mahāvane

anye – m.nom.pl - other
api – ind. – even, also
bahavo – m.nom.sin – in great numbers
vṛkṣāḥ - m.nom.pl - tree
patrasaṃchannakoṭarāḥ - m.nom.pl- ins TP, BV – leaf, covered, hollow of a tree
śubhāḥ - m.nom.pl – bright, beautiful, virtuous
paryāptasaṃcārā – m.nom.pl – BV – sufficient, abundant + roaming, path
vidyante – 3rd,pl,present,passive – exist, to be

asmin – m.lon.sin - this
mahāvane – m.loc.sin – great forest

In this great forest, there are also many others, beautiful trees,
whose hollows are covered with leaves, with abundant paths

18 gatāyuṣam asāmarthyam kṣīṇasāram hataśriyam
vimṛśya prajñayā dhīra jahīmaṃ hy asthiraṃ drumam

gatāyuṣam – BV m.accu.sin – dead, gone+life
asāmarthyam - BV m.accu.sin - decaying
kṣīṇasāram - BV m.accu.sin – diminished + essence
hataśriyam - BV m.accu.sin – gone, destroyed + splendor
vimṛśya – gerund - consider
prajñayā – f.ins.sin - wisdom
dhīraja – m.voc.sin – UTP steadfast + born
hi - ind. indeed
imaṃ - m.accu.sin - this
hy – ind. - indeed
asthiraṃ -m.accu.sin – not firm, unsteady, trembling
drumam – m.accu.sin – tree

O' steadfast-born one, consider with wisdom,²⁵⁷ this indeed unsteady and decaying tree
whose life is gone,
whose essence is diminished and whose splendor is diminished.

19 tad upaśrutya dharmātmā śukaḥ śakreṇa bhāṣitam
sudīrgham abhiniḥśvasya dīno vākyam uvāca ha

tad -n.accu.sin
upaśrutya – gerund -hear
dharmātmā – BV – virtuous who has the nature of virtue
śukaḥ - m.nom.sin - parrot
śakreṇa – m.ins.sin – bright, radiant, shining, pure (Indra)
bhāṣitam – m.accu.sin ppp – said, spoken
sudīrgham – m. accu.sin – very long, extended
abhiniḥśvasya – gerund - sigh
dīno – m.nom.sin – miserable, sad, poor, distressed
vākyam – m.accu.sin, fpp, speech, word
uvāca -3rd,sin,red.pflect - said

²⁵⁷ I chose to translate the gerund as an imperative.

ha – ind. Indeed

The distressed and virtuous parrot having heard that which was spoken by Indra, sighing deeply said these words.

- 20 anatikramaṇīyāni daivatāni śacīpate
yatrābhavas tatra bhavas tan nibodha surādhipa

anatikramaṇīyāni – n.nom.pl – not to be avoided, dishonored
daivatāni – n.nom.pl - gods
śacīpate – m.voc.sin – husband of śaci (Indra)
yatra – ind. - where
abhavas – m.nom.sin – non- existence
tatra – ind.there
bhavas – m.nom.sin - existence
tan – n.accu.sin – that (referring to the answer)
nibodha – 2nd,sin,imperative - listen
surādhipa m.voc.sin – lord of the gods

O’ husband of śaci, the gods are not to be dishonored. O’ lord of the gods, listen to that.
Where there was non-existence there I came into existence.

- 21 asminn ahaṃ drume jātaḥ sādhubhiś ca guṇair yutaḥ
bālabhāve ca saṃguptaḥ śatrubhis ca na dharṣitaḥ

asminn – m.loc.sin - this
ahaṃ - I
drume – m.loc.sin - tree
jātaḥ - m.nom.sin – ppp – born, brought into existence
sādhubhiś – m.ins.pl – sage, seer
ca – ind. - and
guṇair – m.ins.pl – virtue, good quality
yutaḥ - m.nom.sin -ppp – united with, endowed with
bālabhāve - m.loc.sin – young, child + being, becoming
ca – ind. – and
saṃguptaḥ - m.nom.sin – ppp – guarded, protected
śatrubhis – m.ins.pl - enemy
ca – ind. - and
na – ind. - no
dharṣitaḥ- m.nom.sin -ppp- overcome, defeat

I was born in this tree, and in this tree I was endowed with the virtues by the seers,
and in this tree I was protected in my youth and not defeated by enemies

22 kim anukrośavaiphalyam utpādayasi me 'nagha
ānṛśamsye 'nuraktasya bhaktasyānugatasya ca

kim – ind. – why, what

anukrośavaiphalyam – gen TP, m.accu.sin – compassion + fruitless

utpādayasi – 2nd,sin,causative,present – born, arise, originate

me – gen.sin – of me

anagha – m.voc.sin - sinless

ānṛśamsye – m.loc.sin – non-cruelty

anuraktasya – m.gen.sin – ppp – devoted, beloved, loyal

bhaktasya – m.gen.sin -ppp – devoted, worshipped

anugatasya – m.gen.sin – ppp- followed, acquired, filled with

ca – ind. – and

O' sinless one, why have you made an issue out of the fruitlessness of my compassion?

I am devoted to non-cruelty and filled with devotion

23 anukrośo hi sādḥūnām sumahad dharmalakṣaṇam
anukrośaś ca sādḥūnām sadā prītiṃ prayacchati

anukrośo – m.nom.sin – compassion

hi – ind. - indeed

sādḥūnām - m.gen.pl – seer, sage, virtue

sumahad – n.accu.sin – abundant, vast

dharmalakṣaṇam – m.accu.sin – gen TP - characteristics of virtue, right conduct

anukrośaś – m.nom.sin – compassion

ca – ind. - and

sādḥūnām - m.gen.pl – seer, sage

sadā – ind. always

prītiṃ - f.accu.sin – pleasure, joy

prayacchati – 3rd,sin,present – to offer

compassion is indeed the great characteristic of virtue of good people and compassion

always brings joy to good people.

24 tvam eva daivataiḥ sarvaiḥ pṛcchyaśe dharmasaṃśayān
atas tvam deva devānām ādhipatyē pratiṣṭhitaḥ

tvam – nom.sin - you
 eva – ind. alone
 daivataiḥ - m.ins.pl - gods
 sarvaiḥ - m.ins.pl - all
 pr̥chyaśe – 2ns, sin, passive - ask
 dharmasaṃśayān – m.accu.pl – loc TP – right conduct + doubt
 atas – ind. From that
 tvam – nom.son - you
 devadevānām – m.gen.pl – gen TP – god of gods
 ādhipatyē – n.loc.sin – sovereignty
 pratiṣṭhitaḥ - m.nom.sin - fixed, established

You alone were questioned by all the gods about their doubts on dharma, right conduct.
 From that, you were established in sovereignty among the god of gods.

- 25 nārhasi tvam sahasrākṣa tyājayitveha bhaktitaḥ
 samartham upajīvyemaṃ tyajeyaṃ katham adya vai
 na – ind. - no
 ārhasi – 2nd,sin,present – worthy of, suited
 tvam - nom.sin - you
 sahasrākṣa – m.voc.sin BV – thousand-eyed
 tyājayitva – gerund – leave, abandon
 iha – ind. - here, in this world
 bhaktitaḥ - m.nom.sin – ppp – devotion (taḥ - indicates the ablative)
 samartham – m.accu.sin – strong, powerful, capable, qualified
 upajīvyā – gerund – afford livelihood
 imaṃ - m.accu.sin - this
 tyajeyaṃ - 1st,sin, optative – leave, abandon
 katham – ind. - how
 adya – ind. – today, this day
 vai – ind. – indeed, certainly

O' thousand-eyed one, it is not worthy of you to suggest abandoning this tree at this time,
 having offered me livelihood when it was capable.
 Certainly, out of devotion, how can I abandon it this day?

- 26 tasya vākyena saumyena harṣitaḥ pākaśāśanaḥ
 śukaṃ provāca dharmajñam ānṛśaṃsyena toṣitaḥ

tasya – m.gen.sin - him
 vākyena – n.ins.sin – speech, word, saying

saumyena – m.ins.sin – gentle, soft, lovely (lunar)
harṣitaḥ - m.nom.sin – ppp – delighted, happy
pākaśāśanaḥ - Indra, the punished of Pāka (demon)
śukaṃ - m.accu.sin - parrot
provāca – 3rd, sin, red. perfect – answered, replied
dharmajñam – m.accu.sin – UTP – dharma-knowing
ānṛśaṃsyena – m.ins.sin – non-cruelty
toṣitaḥ - m.nom.sin – ppp – satisfied, pleased

Indra, the punisher of Pāka, was delighted and pleased with his lovely words and non-cruelty,
he replied to the dharma-knowing parrot.

27 varam vṛṇīṣveti tadā sa ca vavre varam śukaḥ
ānṛśaṃsyaparo nityam tasya vṛkṣasya sambhavam

varam - m.accu.sin – boon, wish
vṛṇīṣva – 2nd, sin, imperative – choose, select
iti – ind. - quote
tadā – ind. - then
sa – m.nom.sin – he, that
ca – ind. - and
vavre – m.loc.sin – hiding place, cavern, hole, cave
varam - m.accu.sin – boon, wish
śukaḥ - m.nom.sin - parrot
ānṛśaṃsyaparo – m.nom.sin – BV – non-cruelty + highest
nityam - ind. – always, regularly
tasya – m.gen.sin - him
vṛkṣasya – m.gen.sin - tree
sambhavam – m.accu.sin – arising, existence, birth

“Choose a boon.”

Then, that parrot in the hollow of the tree who possessed the highest non-cruelty, asked for the boon of the existence of that tree, always.

28 viditvā ca dṛḍhāṃ śakras tām śuke śīlasampadam
pṛītaḥ kṣipram atho vṛkṣam amṛtenāvasiktavān

viditvā – gerund - know
ca – ind. – and
dṛḍhāṃ - f.accu.sin – fixed, steady, firm

śakras – m.nom.sin - Indra
 tāṃ - f.accu.sin - her
 śuke – m.loc.sin – parrot
 śīlasāmpadam – f.accu.sin – gen TP - morality + perfection, attainment
 prītaḥ - m.nom.sin – ppp – pleased, delighted, satisfied
 kṣipram – m.accu.sin – quickly, immediatel
 atho – ind. – now, therefore
 vṛkṣam – m.accu.sin - tree
 amṛtena – n.ins.sin - nectar
 avasiktavān – m.nom.sin – PAP – sprinkled

Knowing that firm perfection of morality in the parrot, Indra was pleased.
 Therefore, he sprinkled the tree with nectar.

29 tataḥ phalāni patrāṇi śākhās cāpi manoramāḥ
 śukasya dṛḍhabhaktitvāc chrīmattvaṃ cāpa sa drumah

tataḥ - ind. – from that
 phalāni – n.accu.pl - fruit
 patrāṇi – m.accu.pl - leaf
 śākhās – f.accu.pl - branch
 ca – ind. - and
 api -ind. - even
 manoramāḥ - m.nom.pl – pleasant, charming, beautiful
 śukasya – m.gen.sin - parrot
 dṛḍhabhaktitvāt – m.abl.sin – KD fixed,firm + devotion
 śrīmattvaṃ - possessive + abstract - m.accu.sin – quality of śrīmat – radiance, beauty, glory
 ca – ind. - and
 āpa – 3rd, sin, red.perfect - obtain
 sa – m.nom.sin – he, that
 drumah - m.nom.sin – tree

Then, that tree obtained beautiful fruits, leaves, and even branches,
 because of the firm devotion and radiance of the parrot.

30 śukaś ca karmaṇā tena ānṛśaṃsyakṛtena ha
 āyuso 'nte mahārāja prāpa śakrasalokatām

śukaś – m.nom.sin - parrot
 ca – ind. - and

karmanā – n.ins.sin - action
 tena – m.ins.sin - him
 ānṛśamsyakṛtena – m.ins.sin – abl. TP – non-cruelty + made, done, performed
 ha – ind. – indeed
 āyusaḥ - m.gen.sin – life
 ante – m.loc.sin – in the end, finally
 mahārāja – m.voc.sin – KD – great king
 prāpa – 3rd, sin, red.perfect – obtain
 śakrasalokatām – f.accu.sin – ppp – gen TP – Indra + being in the same world

And the parrot by that action, performed out of non-cruelty,
 O' great king, at the end of his life, obtained residence in the same world of Indra.

31 evam eva manuṣyendra bhaktimantaṃ samāśritaḥ
 sarvārthasiddhiṃ labhate śukaṃ prāpya yathā drumahaḥ

evam – ind. – thus
 eva – ind. – alone, only
 manuṣyendra – m.voc.sin – best of men
 bhaktimantaṃ - m.accu.sin – possessing devotion
 samāśritaḥ - m.nom.sin – ppp – fixed in, taking refuge with
 sarvārthasiddhiṃ - m.accu.sin – loc TP +KD – success, prosperity, fulfillment + thing,
 object + all
 labhate – 3rd, sin, present – get, obtain
 śukaṃ - m.accu.sin - parrot
 prāpya – gerund – attain, achieve, reach
 yathā – ind. - just as, in which way
 drumahaḥ - m.nom.sin – tree

Thus, O' best of men, fixed in devotion alone, one obtains success in all things.
 Just as the tree, attaining fulfillment through the devotion of the parrot.

Appendix 2 – Bhagavadgītā Translations

2:

- 1.28 kṛpayā parayāviṣṭo viṣīdann idam abravīt
dṛṣṭvemaṃ svajanaṃ kṛṣṇa yuyutsum samupasthitam

kṛpayā – f.ins.sin – by pity/compassion?
parayā – f.ins.sin – highest, supreme, greatest
āviṣṭaḥ - ppp – m.nom.sin - entered, filled with, full of, overpowered or overcome
viṣīdann – m.nom.sin – he who is + sink down, exhausted, dispirited or cast down,
afflicted or sorrowful, despond, despair;
idam – n.acc.sin – this
abravīt – 3rd,sin,imperfect 2p – speak
dṛṣṭva – gerund – see
imaṃ - m.accu.sin - this
svajanaṃ -KD – m.accu,sin - self+people – my people
kṛṣṇa -m.voc.sin
yuyutsum - desiderative m.accu.sin – desiring to fight
samupasthitam – ppp – approach, come to

Translation:

filled with the highest pity, falling into despair, he spoke this:
Having seen my people, Kṛṣṇa, desiring to fight, approached.

- 2.2 kutas tvā kaśmalam idaṃ viṣame samupasthitam
anāryajuṣṭam asvargyam akīrtikaram arjuna

kutas - ind. - From where, whence
tvā -accu.sin - you
kaśmalam – m.accu.sin - dirty, disgraceful, ignominious, dejection of mind, weakness,
despair
idaṃ -n.acc.sin - this
viṣame – m.loc.sin - uneven, rough, rugged, irregular. difficult, hard to understand,
mysterious, painful, troublesome, very strong, adverse, unfavorable,
samupasthitam – ppp m.accu.sin - appeared, come to, fallen to, arisen
anāryajuṣṭam – ppp m.accu.sin loc/ins TP- practiced, observed, possessed, agreeable +
non- ārya
asvargyam – m.accu.sin – UTP not leading to heaven
akīrtikaram - m.accu.sin – UTP causing disgrace

arjuna – m.voc.sin

Translation:

From where has despair come to you in this difficult time?

It is not agreeable with you, does not lead to heaven, it causes disgrace, O' Arjuna.

2.7

kārpaṇyadoṣopahatasvabhāvaḥ pṛchāmi tvāṃ dharmasammūḍhacetāḥ
yac chreyaḥ syān niścitaṃ brūhi tan me; śiṣyas te 'haṃ śādhi mām tvāṃ prapannam

kārpaṇyadoṣaupahatasvabhāvaḥ – m.nom.sin - pity + fault, defect – gen tp– ppp – afflicted
+ self + being, state, existence (character) – acc tp + ins tp – My own being is afflicted by
the fault of pity.

pṛchāmi – 1st,sin,present – ask

tvāṃ - accu.sin - you

dharmasammūḍhacetāḥ - dharma + ignorant, perplexed +mind – BV (cetas is neuter)

yac – n.nom.sin - which

chreyaḥ - n.nom.sin – better (ś)

syān – 3rd,sin,optative – should/might be

niścitaṃ - ind. - certainly

brūhi -2nd,sin,imperative – tell, speak

tan – n.accu.sin that

me – dative,sin – me

śiṣyas – m.nom.sin – pupil, student

te – gen.sin – of you

ahaṃ - I

śādhi – 2nd,sin,imperative – śās, instruct

mām - accu.sin – me

tvāṃ - accu.sin - you

prapannam – m.accu.sin – ppp - arriving at, reaching or going to. Resorting to, betaking
oneself to; Taking refuge with, seeking protection with, suppliant or submissive to

Translation:

My being is afflicted by the fault of pity, my mind is perplexed of my dharma, I ask you

which should be better, for certain? Tell that to me, your student. Instruct me, who has
resorted to you.

16.2 ahimsā -f.nom.sin – non-violence
satyam – n.nom.sin - truth
akrodhas – m.nom.sin – free from anger
tyāgaḥ -m.nom.sin - renunciation
śhāntir – m.nom.sin - peace
apaiśhunam – n.nom.sin – non-calumny
dayā -f.nom.sin - pity, compassion
bhūteṣhu -n.loc.pl – living being
aloluptvaṁ -n.nom.sin – freedom from desire
mārdavaṁ -n.nom.sin – gentleness, softness
hrīr – m.nom.sin - modesty
achāpalam – n.nom.sin - not fickleness, steadiness

Translation:

non-violence, truthfulness, freedom from anger, renunciation, peace, non-calumny, compassion for living beings, freedom from desire, gentleness, modesty, non-fickleness.

Appendix 3 – Yogavāsīṣṭha Translations

Translations book 6, 44:

2

samādhānataruṃ - tree of samādhi – n.nom.sin -gen tp

7

śuddhaiḥ snigdhaiḥ pavitraisca madhurairātmanohitaiḥ |
satsaṃgamanavakṣīraindavairamṛtairiva

śuddhaiḥ - m.ins.pl – pure, clean BV

snigdhaiḥ - m.ins.pl – loving, affectionate, friendly BV

pavitrais – m.ins.pl – sacred, holy BV

ca - and

madhurair – m.ins.pl – sweet, charming, delightful BV

ātmanaḥ — m.nom.sin - self, soul

hitaiḥ - m.ins. pl – put, laid, placed, held, taken, beneficial, friendly, kind, affectionate,
well-disposed

satsaṃgama-nava-kṣīrain – m.ins.pl - company of the good people– m.ins.pl – sap of trees,
water, milk + fresh KD + gen tp – by the fresh milk of the company of good people

aindavair -m.ins.pl - lunar

amṛtair – m.ins.pl - nectar

iva -just like, as

Translation:

[watered] by the fresh milk of the company of good people, which is pure, loving, sacred,
sweet, beneficial to oneself, like lunar nectar.

14

bhogabhaṅgurāḥ - m.nom.pl – enjoyment+ transients –accu-tp - transient enjoyments

15

dhairyaudāryadayāmantrairjapasnānatapodamaiḥ |
vinivārayitavyāstāḥ praṇavārthatrīśūlinā

dhairy+audārya+dayā –f.nom.sin –dvandva - firmness, strength + generosity +
compassion, pity

mantrair – m.ins.pl – mantra

japa + snāna + tapodamaiḥ - m.ins.pl – dvandva - repetition, muttering + ablution +
austerities + self-control

vinivārayitavyās – m.nom.pl – FPP- destroy, remove, prevent

tāḥ - they all

praṇavārthatrīśūlinā – m.ins.sin – OM + object, purpose + bearing the trident –this could
be translated as either a dative or a genitive TP with a KD.

Translation:

These all should be prevented by steadiness, generosity, compassion and mantras, by
chanting, ablution, austerities, and self-control, and by bearing the trident whose purpose
(meaning?) is OM.

16

iti saṃrakṣitādasmāddhyānabījātpravartate |
ābhijātyonnataḥ śrīmānvivekākhya navāṅkuraḥ

iti - thus

saṃrakṣitād – m.abl.sin – ppp – protected, preserved

asmād- m.abl.sin – from that

dhyānabījāt - m.abl.sin – gen tp - seed of meditation

pravartate – 3rd,sin,present – come forth, originate, arise, be produced

ābhijātyonnataḥ - m.nomsin – BV – beauty, noble birth + ppp raised, great, eminent

śrīmāt – m.abl.sin – pleasant, beautiful, prosperous

vivekākhyo – m.nom.sin - viveka + ākhyo? –discernment + (f) ākhyā - appellation, name, total amount, appearance, aspect –BV – whose appearance/aspect is viveka

navāñkuraḥ -nava+añkura m.nom.sin – nava - new, fresh, young, recent + añkuraḥ - A sprout, shoot, blade KD

Translation:

Thus, because that was preserved, the seed of meditation come forth as a beautiful new sprout whose aspect is discernment.

17

tena sā cittabhūrbhāti saprakāśā vikāsinī |
bhavatyālokaramyā ca khaṃ yathābhinavendunā

tena -m.ins.sin – by him

sā - f.nom.sin – she, that

cittabhūr – m/f.nom.sin – gen tp – mind + [ind – earth or f. ground] – ground of the mind

bhāti – 3rd,sin,present - shine

saprakāśā –f.nom.sin – sa - with + brightness, light, radiance

vikāsinī – f.nom.sin – blossoming, blooming, expanding

bhavati – 3rd,sin, present – be

ālokaramyā – f.nom.sin – gen tp appearance, seeing, beholding, sight + pleasing, pleasant, delightful

ca - and

khaṃ - n,accu.sin – ether, space, sky

yathā – just as

abhinavendunā – f.nom.sin – KD – new, fresh, blooming + moon, bright drop, soma

Translation: by that (seed of meditation), the ground of the mind shines brightly, [and] blossoming, it becomes beautiful in appearance, just as the new moon [in] the sky.

21

śāstrārthasādhusaṃparkavairāgyarasapīvaraḥ |
rāgadveṣakapikṣobhairna manāgapi kampate

śāstrārthasādhusaṃparkavairāgyarasapīvaraḥ - m.nom.sin – śāstrārtha – gen tp – object of scriptures; sādhusaṃparka – gen tp + contact with virtuous (people); vairāgyarasa – gen tp – flavor of detachment; pīvaraḥ - ins tp - thick, stout,

rāgadveṣakapikṣobhair – m.ins.pl - rāgadveṣa – dvandva – passion, aversion; kapikṣobhair – KD – monkey+ shaking, agitation

na - no

manāk – ind. – only, merely, slightly

api -even, also

kampate – 3rd,sin,present – tremble

Translation:

thick by the flavor of nonattachment, the purpose of scripture, and contact with virtuous people, it (the tree) does not even tremble slightly by the monkey-agitation of likes and dislikes.

22

atha tasmātprajāyante vijñānālaṃkṛtākṛteḥ |

latā rasavilāsinya imā vitatadeśagāḥ

atha – then, now

tasmāt – from him

prajāyante – 3rd,pl,present – born, bring forth, produce

vijñānālaṃkṛtākṛteḥ – f.abl.sin – ins tp +ppp + KD - knowledge +decorated, adorned + form, appearance – from the appearance adorned by knowledge

latā – f.nom.pl – creeping plant, branch

rasavilāsinya – f.nom.pl – ins tp – flavor, taste, water, fluid+ vilāsin - shining, beaming, radiant, wanton, sportive, playful

imā – f.accu.pl - these

vitatadeśagāḥ - m.nom.pl – dvandva + UTP – wide + place + go,come

Translation:

then from that appearance adorned by knowledge, [the tree] produces these branches, shining with water, spreading all places, far and wide.

23

sphuṭatā satyatā sattā dhīratā nirvikalpatā |

samatā śāntatā maitrī karuṇā kīrtirāryatā || 23 ||

abstract F nouns

sphuṭatā – f.nom.sin – correctness, distinctness, manifestness

satyatā – f.nom.sin – truth, love of truth, truthfulness

sattā – f.nom.sin – goodness, existence, being

dhīratā – f.nom.sin – strength of mind, wisdom

nirvikalpatā – f.nom.sin - unwavering

samatā – f.nom.sin -equality, sameness, impartiality, equanimity

śāntatā – f.nom.sin – calmness, peacefulness

maitrī – f.nom.sin -friendliness

karuṇā – f.nom.sin -compassion

kīrtir– f.nom.sin – fame, renowned, celebrated, glory,

āryatā – f.nom.sin – honorable behavior

[the branches of wisdom are]: correctness, truth, goodness, strength of mind, unwavering, equanimity, peacefulness, friendliness, compassion, splendor, and honorable behavior.

Translation book 6, 45.61

61

bodhādekam jagadbhāvairjāḍyānnātmatvamāgatam |
mitho bodhāddvivadati maitrīm bhajati bodhataḥ

bodhād – m.abl.sin - knowledge

ekaṃ - n.accu.sin – one, unity

jagad- n.accu.sin – the world

bhāvair – m.ins.pl – being, existence, object, state of being

jāḍyān – m.abl.sin – dullness

na – no

ātmatvam – m.accu.sin – selfness, nature, essence

āgatam – ppp – arrived, came, reached– m.accu.sin

mitho – m.nom.sin – mutually, with each other

bodhād - m.abl.sin - knowledge

dvi- two (cardinal)

vadati – 3rd,sin, present – speak, tell, say

maitrīṃ - f.accu.sin – friendliness

bhajati – 3rd,sin,present – adore, love honor, , grant

bodhataḥ- m.nom.sin – understanding

Translation:

From knowledge, the world with all its beings is one. From stupidity, one's essence is not reached. From knowledge one speaks of two mutually. Knowledge bestows friendliness.

Bibliography

Aiyangar, Muttusvami Srinivasa. *The Haṭhayogapradīpikā of Svātmārāma: With the commentary Jyotsnā of Brahmānanda, and English Translation*. Adyar Library and Research Centre, 1972.

Anālayo. *Compassion and emptiness in early Buddhist meditation*. UK: Windhorse Publications Limited, 2015.

Atreya, Bhikhan Lal. *The philosophy of the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*. Adyar, Madras, India, The theosophical Publishing House, 1936.

Birch, Jason and Jaqueline Hargreaves. "The Yamas and Niyamas: Medieval and Modern Views." *Yoga Scotland*, 2016.

Birch, Jason. "The meaning of Hatha in early Hathayoga." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 131, no. 4 (2011): 527-554

Black, Brian. "The Upaniṣads." The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <https://iep.utm.edu/upanisad/>.

Bühnemann, Gudrun. "The Śāradātilakatantra on yoga: A new edition and translation of chapter 25." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 74, no. 2 (2011): 205-235.

Bronkhorst, Johannes. *The two traditions of meditation in ancient India*. Motilal Banarsidass Publ., 1993.

Bryant, Edwin F. *The yoga sūtras of Patañjali: A new edition, translation, and commentary*. North Point Press, 2015.

Bandyopadhyay, Sibaji. "Beyond Non-Violence." *Global-e: A Global Studies Journal* 11, no. 19 (March 27, 2018): 1.

Chapple, Christopher Key. *Yoga and the Luminous: Patanjali's Spiritual Path to Freedom*. State University of New York Press, 2008.

Chapple, Christopher Key. *The Concise Yoga Vasistha*. State University of New York Press, 2010.

Chapple, Christopher Key, and Arindam Chakrabarti, eds. *Engaged Emancipation: Mind, Morals, and Make-Believe in the Moksopaya (Yogavasistha)*. SUNY Press, 2015.

Cowherds (Authors). *Moonpaths: Ethics and emptiness*. UK: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Feuerstein, Georg. *The Yoga Tradition: It's History, Literature, Philosophy and Practice*. Vol. New format ed. Prescott, Ariz: Hohm Press, 2001.

Fitzgerald, James L. "The Great Epic of India as Religious Rhetoric: A Fresh Look at the Mahābhārata." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (1983): 611-630.

Fitzgerald, James L. "Dharma" and its translation in the "Mahābhārata." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 32, no. 5/6 (2004): 671-685.

Fitzgerald, James L. "2. A Prescription for Yoga and Power in the Mahābhārata." In *Yoga in practice*, edited by David Gordon White, 43-57. Princeton University Press, 2011.

Ganesathasan, Menaha. "The kingdom within the hut: ethical education and story-telling in the Yogavāsiṣṭha." PhD diss., University of Hawai'i, 2004.

Ganesathasa, Menaha. "Dreams, Fictions, and the Quest for Morality in the Yogavāsiṣṭha." In *Engaged Emancipation: Mind, Morals, and Make-Believe in the Moksopaya (Yogavasistha)*, edited by Christopher Key Chapple and Arindam Chakrabarti, 189-218. SUNY Press, 2015.

- Garfield, Jay L. *Buddhist ethics: A philosophical exploration*. Oxford University Press, 2021.
- Gleig, Ann. *American dharma: Buddhism beyond modernity*. Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2019.
- Heyman, Jivana. *Yoga Revolution: Building a Practice of Courage and Compassion*. Shambhala Publications, 2021.
- Hiltebeitel, Alf. "Among friends: Marriage, women, and some little birds." In *Gender and Narrative in the Mahabharata*, edited by Simon Brodbeck and Brian Black, 130-163. Routledge, 2007.
- Hiltebeitel, Alf. "Buddhism and the Mahābhārata.: Boundary Dynamics in Textual Practice." In *Boundaries, Dynamics and Construction of Traditions in South Asia*, edited by Federico Squarcini, 107–32. Anthem Press, 2011.
- Hiltebeitel, Alf. *Dharma*. University of Hawaii Press, 2010.
- Hiltebeitel, Alf. *Rethinking the Mahabharata: a reader's guide to the education of the dharma king*. University of Chicago Press, 2001.
- Hiltebeitel, Alf. *Dharma*. University of Hawaii Press, 2010.
- Hiltebeitel, Alf. *Rethinking the Mahabharata: a reader's guide to the education of the dharma king*. University of Chicago Press, 2001.
- Hume, Robert E. *The thirteen principal Upanishads: translated from the Sanskrit, with an outline of the philosophy of the Upanishads and an annotated bibliography*. UK: Oxford University Press, 1983.

- Jenkins, Stephen L. *The Circle of Compassion: An Interpretive Study of Karuṇā in Indian Buddhist Literature*. Cambridge Buddhist Institute Series, edited by R.C. Jamieson. Edinburgh: Hardinge Simpole (Ph.D. diss., Harvard, 1998).
- Jenkins, Stephen L. "Do bodhisattvas relieve poverty?." In *Action dharma*, edited by Keown, Damien, Christopher Queen, and Charles S. Prebish, 38-49. UK: Routledge, 2003.
- Jenkins, Stephen L. "Benefit of Self and Other: The Importance of Persons and their Self-Interest in Buddhist Ethics." *法鼓佛學學報* 16 (2015): 1-25.
- Jones, Richard H. *Mysticism and morality: a new look at old questions*. Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2004.
- Joshi, Ritesh Umashankar. "Exposition of yoga tenets in the Puranas: a critical and comparative study." PhD diss., The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, 2013.
- Lath Mukund. "The Concept of Anrshamsya in the Mahabharata." In *Reflections and Variations on the Mahabharata*, edited by T. R. S. Sharma, 82–9. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 2009.
- Lele, Jayant, ed. *Tradition and modernity in Bhakti movements*. Vol. 31. Brill Archive, 1981.
- Lindquist, Steven E. "Narrating the Upaniṣads." *Religion: Narrating Religion* (2017): 303-316.
- Lindquist, Steven E. "Transcending the World in World Literature: The Upanishads." *A Companion to World Literature* (2020): 1-14.
- Lorenzen David N. and Adrián Muñoz, eds. *Yogi Heroes and Poets: Histories and Legends of the Naths*. State University of New York Press, 2011.

- Maithrimurthi Mudagamuwe, Wohlwollen, Mitleid, Freude und Gleichmut. *eine ideengeschichtliche Untersuchung der vier apramāṇas in der buddhistischen Ethik und Spiritualität von den Anfängen bis hin zum frühen Yogācāra*. Franz Steiner Verlag, 1999.
- Mallinson, James and Mark Singleton. *Roots of Yoga*. London: Penguin, 2017.
- Mallinson, James. "Haṭhayoga's philosophy: a fortuitous union of non-dualities." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 42, no. 1 (2014): 225-247.
- Mallinson, James. "Dattātreya's Discourse on Yoga." (2013): 1-9.
- Miller, Barbara S. "On cultivating the immeasurable change of heart: The Buddhist brahma-vihāra formula." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* (1979): 209-221.
- Neff, Kristin D., and Christopher K. Germer. "A pilot study and randomized controlled trial of the mindful self-compassion program." *Journal of clinical psychology* 69, no. 1 (2013): 28-44.
- Neff, Kristin D., and Christopher K. Germer. *The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook: A Proven Way to Accept Yourself, Build Inner Strength, and Thrive*. New York: Guilford Publications, 2018.
- O'Brien-Kop, Karen. *Rethinking 'Classical Yoga' and Buddhism: Meditation, Metaphors and Materiality*. Bloomsbury, 2021.
- Olivelle, Patrick. *The early Upanishads: Annotated text and translation*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Peetush, Ashwani. "The ethics of radical equality: Vivekananda and Radhakrishnan's neo-Hinduism as a form of spiritual liberalism." *The Bloomsbury research handbook of Indian ethics* (2017): 357-382.

Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli, and Charles A. Moore. *A source book in Indian philosophy*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2014.

Ranganathan, Shyam. *Hinduism: A Contemporary Philosophical Investigation*. Routledge, 2018.

Ravi M. Gupta, and Kenneth R. Valpey. *The Bhāgavata Purāna: Sacred Text and Living Tradition*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2013.

Sandilya, Bagmita. "The Upaniadic concept of value as revealed in the legends of the Upaniads: from modern perspective." *The Clarion-International Multidisciplinary Journal* 3, no. 2 (2014): 145-152.

Sarbacker, Stuart Ray. *Tracing the Path of Yoga: The History and Philosophy of Indian Mind-Body Discipline*. State University of New York Press, 2021.

Sargeant, Winthrop. *The Bhagavadgītā*. Aleph, 2016.

Schweig, Graham M. *Bhagavad Gītā: the beloved Lord's secret love song*. Harper San Francisco, 2007.

Schulman, David. *More Than Real: A History of the Imagination in South India*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012.

Shalom, Naama. *Re-ending the Mahabharata: The Rejection of Dharma in the Sanskrit Epic*. State University of New York Press, 2017

Sinha, Kanad. "Redefining Dharma in a Time of Transition: Ānṛśaṃsya in the Mahābhārata as an Alternative End of Human Life." *Studies in History* 35, no. 2 (2019): 147-161.

- Singleton, Mark. *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2010.
- Sircar, Mahendra N. "Social and Moral Ideas in the Upanishads." *International Journal of Ethics* 44, no. 1 (1933): 94–105.
- Sullivan, B. Marlysa and Laurie C. Hyland Robertson, *Understanding Yoga Therapy: Applied philosophy and science for health and well-being* (Routledge, 2020), 50; Andrea Jain, *Selling Yoga: From Counterculture to Pop Culture*, New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2014.
- T.K.V Desikachar trans. *Nathamuni's Yoga Rahasya*. Chennai, India: Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram, 2003.
- Tripathi, Gaya Charan. "TRACES OF BUDDHIST THOUGHTS IN THE BHAGAVADGĪTĀ." *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* 78, no. 1/4 (1997): 41-60.
- Venkatesananda, Swami. *Vasistha's yoga*. SUNY Press, 1993.
- Winternitz, Maurice. *A History of Indian Literature, Volume I, Part II: Epics and Puranas*. University of Calcutta, 1963.
- Wujastyk, Dominik. "Some Problematic Yoga Sutras and their Buddhist Background." In *Yoga in Transformation. Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on a Global Phenomenon*, edited by Karl Baier, Philipp André Maas, and Karin Preisendanz, 21-48. Vienna: Vienna University Press, 2018.